

## **Chair's Report to the 3rd AGM of the Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (CNWA)**

**CNWA in Cheshire covers a population of just over 1 million people** in 439,335 households, and has 1,469 Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators (as at 10 November 2020) working to keep their communities safe. Our objectives include supporting local coordinators and members of Neighbourhood Watch, with the aim to grow and develop existing schemes and to expand the organisation across the county. We are proud to partner with the neighbourhood policing teams and PCSOs of Cheshire Police, local councils, and other community groups and organisations to prevent crime, the fear of crime and increase awareness of all forms of crime.

**Having secured a £3,700 Safer Community Fund Grant** from our PCC in the Autumn 2019, our Communications Lead (Heather Thompson) formalised our intentions by developing a Five Year Engagement and Communications Plan. This will be available on our new website in due course, or can be obtained by contacting the team. Like elsewhere some ideas have been adapted as a result of Covid-19, and some are on hold, particularly our face-to-face promotion with new communities across Cheshire.

**Our new website** is one positive adaptation to our plan. It will help us reach out to the wider community and hopefully attract a younger population in the process. It has required some investment but the drivers for this were:

- (a) to develop capability independent of the previous website which was a sub-site of the *Ourwatch* web pages and offered us little or no flexibility to develop content specific for Cheshire;
- (b) we would soon be required to pay for the Ourwatch sub-site anyway, even though it didn't meet our needs; and
- (c) the increased importance of the website to our operation given the lack of opportunities to engage in person due to the pandemic.

We are privileged to now have Bob Marshall on the CNWA Committee who is leading the development of the website, supported by Helen Kynnersley (also on the CNWA Committee). Both Bob and Helen have been leading figures in the creation of the Mobberley Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, complete with its own website, Facebook page and Twitter feed, so we are hoping to recreate that for Cheshire in due course.

**New CNWA Committee members** also include Dave Brown from Widnes and Graham Bushill from Sandbach. Dave won the New Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator of the Year Award last year for his outstanding success supporting his PCSO to reduce ASB, knife crime, drug use, criminal damage, arson, violence and robbery over a 12 month period. Graham has a long history working with young offenders, youths with special needs and children generally. He finds that Neighbourhood Watch helps to deliver a stronger and safer community and finds that everyone chips in to help with projects that are identified. We are also grateful that Graham has agreed to be our Secretary.

**We said goodbye** to Ian Walton who stood down as our Chairman after three years in that role and many years before that supporting the creation and development of the CNWA. Neil Wrench also

stood down as Secretary of the CNWA and a Multi Scheme Administrator (MSA) for Ourwatch and Cheshire Police Alert. Neil was a dedicated and knowledgeable team member who is sorely missed.

**Our experienced and longstanding CNWA Committee colleagues** include Heather Thompson who is our Communications Lead; an MSA; and has developed our 5 Year Plan; whilst also supporting National colleagues with the Strategy Refresh. Joan Gibbison who has kindly agreed to take the Treasurer role, and our Police SPOC Clare Harrison who keeps us organised.

**Our supportive partners** include David Keane (PCC), Darren Martland (Chief Constable), and Peter Crowcroft (Supt for Local Policing and Force Strategic Lead for Neighbourhood Watch) who give us ideas, resources, time and funding. The increased awareness of, and support with, Neighbourhood Watch within our PCSO community has been quite noticeable this year, and is clearly down to their training and promotion within the force.

We are happy to answer any questions you have on this report at our AGM on the 12th November.

*Julia Griffiths*

Acting Chair