

## Chairman's report for Lowestoft NWA AGM Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018

During the past year we have :

- Sent out over 30 newsletters
- Supported several local police Public Engagement Meetings
- Continued to provide leaflets and New Member packs to Coordinators
- Circulated appeals for information or crime prevention matters from the police as part of our working relationship with them
- Have engaged with Carlton Colville and Oulton Parish Councils and now have information about NHW on their websites
- Given talks to local organisations
- Met with Constabulary Community Safety Team, PCC and Chief Constable to discuss issues
- Substantially improved our financial position
- Sold over 600 of the credit card protection covers

On the **DOWNSIDE** we have had a further loss of support on your Committee reducing our ability to sustain existing work and promote NHW in the community.

### **The CHALLENGES:**

- Recruitment to the committee in order remain in operation and effective
- Identify what is required to support coordinators in the work they do
- How to engage our members in a two-way dialogue
- Maintain a working relationship with police
- Ways to promote NHW in the community

The changes within the police service over the past year has meant that we have had to rely on ourselves even more than in the past and we must step up to the mark if we are to continue.

Over the last two years I have repeatedly called **for help** to fill posts. Only the position of Treasurer has been filled. There only remains four on the Committee with my wife acting as Secretary. This year another member has stepped down which makes the challenge to run the Association even more difficult.

**If you wish the Association to continue then more help is needed. Lack of response to requests for help has caused the Committee to question its viability and whether the membership needs us and the support we try to offer. It is rare to get feedback and yet only by getting feedback can we ascertain that we are sending you information that is relevant. The Committee has decided that if no further help is forthcoming then it gives notice that at our next AGM in 2019 there will be a motion seeking to close the Association. This would be a sad situation to be faced with, but this is the choice you, the members will have to make. We still feel there is that need for Neighbourhood Watch in the town to make it a safer place to live in. The Committee wants to support you and the work you do in your community but without help we shall be unable to continue. Why is likely to happen? There is a need to reduce the workload (none of us are getting any younger), personal and family commitments and health etc all play their part.**

**What is needed?** Help with running of meetings, taking of Minutes, possible work with crime prevention products for members and the community, overseeing entries on websites, newsletters, developing use of social media These are roles which can help with the development of NHW in our town. Some require more time than others, but none need be onerous.

Suffolk NWA has continued to work hard at supporting NWA Schemes across the County. The registration of schemes was completed and though it saw a reduction in numbers, there still over 1000 schemes in the County, nearly 80 of those being in the Lowestoft area. A number of new schemes have been registered. Police cuts have caused further changes in the way we interact with the them. However, there have been several new initiatives by the police recently to improve crime prevention advice and engagement with the public. Only time will see how these develop.

Further cuts to police finances, despite the increase in local precepts to try and fill the gap have meant that the Community Safety Dept. is being axed with posts at risk from there and elsewhere in the Force though not among uniformed staff. It is this department that Suffolk NWA mainly liaises with in the Constabulary. This will not make our task any easier, but we shall sit down with the police and PCC to find solutions. The Suffolk NWA is working to re-establish Networks of schemes across the County as a means of more localised self-support. This is a big task but is moving forward slowly. Once again there is a need for more help at County level.

I still believe Neighbourhood Watch is a valuable Community tool not only to promote personal and property safety within our community but also to help bring local communities together. How much that occurs depend entirely on members within individual Schemes. My thanks to all of you that give of their time in whatever way to achieve this.

Brian Sivyer, Chairman 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018