



Merton Watch

The Official Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter for Merton



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Can you beat the burglar?

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Your Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is:



Merton NHW Association receives Commendation



From left to right: Jack Sims, Brian Terrett, Cllr. John Dehaney (Mayor at time of award) Borough Commander, Chris Bourlet, Lee Roberts, Walter Picano, Peter Steiner, Roger Steele

Thousands of Merton's residents are seeing the value of safety in numbers as they join forces in setting up Neighbourhood Watch schemes, supported by the council and the award winning Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association

Significant increases in Merton's Neighbourhood Watch schemes being set up over the last 12 months means that there are now more than 370 schemes in the borough covering an impressive 30,000 homes.

On the 25th March 2008, in recognition of their work, the five-strong committee of Merton NHW Association and the NHW Manager received a special Police award to congratulate and thank them for their work in the borough.

The Merton NHW Association were the only community group to have won a 2008 Special Commendation for Services to the Community awarded by the Police Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Chris Bourlet.

Merton is currently the third safest borough in London but fear of crime is much higher.

Neighbourhood watch schemes are designed to help eradicate fears and keep the borough as safe as possible through a variety of means.

Walter Picano, Merton resident and Chair of Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association commented:

"Neighbourhood Watch is about looking out for each other especially the elderly and the vulnerable and improving the quality of life for yourself and your neighbours. By working together, neighbours can help reduce all sorts of local crimes and issues. They can also take action to improve their environment by getting something done about things like vandalism, graffiti, poor lighting and a lack of local amenities. It is a fantastic way to help build and share a safer community."

Aside from being safe and sound Merton residents can also gain other benefits from setting up or becoming part of a scheme. Membership can qualify homeowners for a 10- 20% reduction on home insurance.

Joining or setting up a NHW scheme couldn't be easier and can be done by contacting the Merton Neighbourhood Watch Manager Lee Roberts on **020 8649 3213**.

Metcall Centre at Lambeth

by Eric Matthews,
West Barnes Ward
Safer Neighbourhood's Panel

Contacting your local police station should now be easier since the Metropolitan Police established a Central Communications Command Centre. This has integrated with all the 32 London Borough's control rooms, the emergency service, telephone call centres, special events and incident support services within three purpose built facilities across London.

Metcall Invitation

I was invited to view the Metcall Centre at Lambeth. In the building one floor receives emergency and non emergency calls from the public. They handle between 6,000–10,000 emergency calls and 15,000 non emergency calls each day and their aim is to answer all emergency calls within 10 seconds and non emergency calls within 30 seconds.

Another floor houses Despatch where small groups (pods) are in contact with the Boroughs emergency response vehicles. The technology available allows the operator to know which officers are on duty and the location of the response vehicles. The operators have interactive maps and can control the 32 Boroughs CCTV cameras to aid the officers when attending an incident. Another member of the pod can carry out computer enquiries and search intelligence databases to aid the officers at the scene.

The last floor houses the Special Operations Room, where during an emergency, key information including CCTV can be displayed on large plasma screens, this facility was used for the Tour de France, the Notting Hill Carnival and will be used for any major event including the 2012 Olympic Games.

In the event of one of the Metcall centres being temporarily out of service, the other centres act as a backup.

The Metcall centres do not control your local safer neighbourhood's teams who can still be contacted by calling them on their mobile telephones.



West Barnes Best for Burglary

A Merton ward has been named as being one of the safest in London for residents.

West Barnes, on the west side of Merton, was ranked 8th in the latest London burglary figures, which rank all of London's 758 wards in order of the number of burglaries.

In total, eight of the ten lowest wards in London were in Merton, Kingston or Sutton, providing further proof that South West London is the safest part of the city.

Merton has the 4th lowest level of burglary in London, and burglary in Merton fell 7% over the past 12 months, compared to a 0.5% fall across London.

Crimestoppers uses Facebook to fight crime

To reach wider audiences with its crime-fighting message, the charity Crimestoppers has set up a page on the social networking site, Facebook.

The Facebook page not only provides information about what the charity does, but also has a live feed of some of its 'Most Wanted' featured appeals, where members of the public can play detective and pass on information anonymously if they recognise anyone.

Additionally, there are case studies, YouTube videos and a discussion forum, encouraging people to discuss crime topics that have been in the news recently, like gun and knife crimes.

Crimestoppers Communications Manager, Hannah Daws, said: "Social networking



sites are becoming increasingly important media outlets for charities as they have the potential to reach huge untapped audiences, especially amongst young people.

"Our mission on Facebook is to tell more people about the invaluable community service we provide. Anybody who has information about criminal activity can pass it on to Crimestoppers anonymously, without living in fear of the consequences. Many criminals exploit people's fear to avoid arrest."

Safer Merton opens its ears to residents

Tackling burglary and anti-social behaviour are just two of Safer Merton's top priorities in Merton, after the crime-busting team carried out a survey to find out what the residents' biggest concerns within the Borough were.

During the survey it emerged that local residents said that, anti-social behaviour, youth crime, substance misuse, road safety and drunken violence were among their biggest worries.

Safer Merton, a partnership of council staff and Merton police officers, had also included tackling the number of burglaries committed in the borough, combating youth crime and helping young victims of criminals as well as addressing domestic violence among its top five priorities.

A total of 130 residents – including Neighbourhood Watch members - filled in the Safer Merton Joint Strategic Assessment survey and Anthony Pearce of Wimbledon received £200 after he was entered into a prize draw.

Does your street sign need replacing

Merton NHW Association have designed a new style NHW street sign. Approval has been granted for the installation of these signs within the Borough.

These will replace any old, discoloured or damaged NHW signs, following requests from the boroughs NHW coordinators.

If you require a new NHW street sign, please contact the NHW Office for a street sign application form.



The Chair's Corner

by W.B.Picano

On 15th May 2008, Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association held its 3rd AGM at the Civic Centre Council Chamber.

Co-ordinators, members, police and council partners attended the meeting, which was a great success with record numbers in attendance.

At the meeting, we had three guest speakers from the Magistrates Court, who explained their role as magistrates, and how they sentence cases.

Since becoming Chair of NHW in Merton in 2007, our Association have been on a bit of a rollercoaster ride. The Association have all assisted in achieving the following:

Successfully bid for funding to purchase 400 new NHW street signs.

Continued to produce the Merton Watch Newsletter and increase publication to 30,000 households in Merton

Offered free Women's self protection training sessions.

Celebrated the 25th Anniversary of NHW.

Introduced a New Business Plan outlining objectives and tasks.

Agreed a Service Working Agreement between Safer Merton, Merton Police and MNHWA.

Invited to sit on the Safer Merton Engagement board and Community & Police Consultative Group

Trained all PCSO's and Sergeants on how to setup up and support NHW schemes

Setup record number of NHW schemes, bringing the total of number of schemes in Merton to 371.

Set up and attended a record number of NHW launch meetings, stretching us to the limit.

Winners of a Borough Commanders Commendation Award.

The Borough Commanders Commendation Award for me was the cherry on the cake and was received on the 25th March by all the Association Members and Lee Roberts, NHW Manager.

I would like to thank all the members of the MNHWA, Lee Roberts, and all those people involved with NHW in Merton, Merton Police and Safer Merton for all their efforts during 2007 making NHW in Merton what it is today.

In my view, 2007 will be a hard act to follow on from, but with all the coordinators and members support I'm sure it can be achieved.

Focus on Crime

Merton is divided into three police areas, Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden, supported by Safer Merton. Here Annalise Elliott, the Safer Merton Manager provides us with her profile and commitment to the Borough

Profile of Annalise Elliott, Safer Merton Manager

Annalise Elliott is the Safer Merton Manager and joined Safer Merton eighteen months ago.

Annalise has the responsibility for three distinct areas within the remit of her work, and these are:

1. Community Safety Operations:

This includes the delivery of Anti-Social Behaviour, CCTV and Wardens services across the borough of Merton.

2. Community Safety Partnerships:

This includes the Prolific and Priority Offender Scheme, Schools Officers (Police), Crime Prevention Officers (Police).

3. Community Safety Strategy:

This includes all Drug, Alcohol and Community Safety strategy including domestic violence, hate crime, commissioning of Drug and alcohol services and bringing the voluntary and community sector together.

Before coming to Merton, Annalise worked at Bath and North East Somerset Council for four years as the Head of Community Cohesion, where she had the responsibility for all of the above as well as Voluntary Sector Development, Equalities, Local Regeneration and Community Cohesion.

Prior to that she spent two years working for the Legal Services Commission auditing solicitors and managing contracts for Legal Aid and ran her own Management consultancy business for eight years.

Head of Safer Merton

As the head of Safer Merton, Annalise has seen the team that she leads go from strength to strength, and in partnership with Merton Police and the Community this has meant that the borough of Merton has maintained its excellent record of reducing crime and also continues to remain as one of the safest boroughs in the whole of London.



Annalise Elliott

From this success, Annalise said "Merton is a lovely borough, where people are a little more afraid of crime than statistics would support.

It is only through our excellent community and voluntary sector organisations within Merton such as Neighbourhood Watch that we can tackle both these perceptions and the low level of actual crime within our communities."

She also went on to say, "Neighbourhood Watch is one of the jewels in Merton's crown as far as fighting crime and building community confidence is concerned, we have a fantastic relationship with our local schemes and are proud of them and the work that they undertake.

Safer Merton
Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

CRIME
LET'S BRING IT
DOWN

Can you beat the burglar?

By A. Burglar

Hello to all the members of NHW in Merton, its that time year when it becomes busy for me. Summertime gives me more time during the hours of daylight to go round your neighbourhood and look for homes that would make an easy target for me to break into. Your home could be one of them if you give me the opportunity.

What I look for

As a burglar, I tend to look for houses where windows have been left open, or doors just pulled shut but not locked. In order to avoid detection, I favour the back of your property, which also allows me to get on with my business without being disturbed by your neighbours. When I carry out a burglary, I may just take what's lying around and not make too much mess, other times I will raid cupboards and drawers and leave your home in a right old mess and that's when you know

I've been. The things that are of value to me are the items that I can get rid of quickly which are most electrical goods, jewellery, cash and if you leave your car keys where I can find them, then I'll take your car as well to carry off my stash.

Advice on keeping safe

So the advice from the Merton NHW Association, Safer Merton and Merton Police is to follow the tips below, and don't give burglars the opportunities to burgle your home this summer.

Tips to follow

- Keep ladders locked up or out of sight so they can't be used to gain access to windows.
- If possible get someone to look after your home whilst away. They can make it looked lived in by drawing curtains, picking up mail, parking in your drive or even mowing the lawn!
- Don't let people see into your home, you may want to put up net curtains. where possible, keep valuables out of sight, you could hide them in a cupboard or wardrobe whilst you are away.

- Lock doors, windows and side gates when you leave.
- Buy a timer switch and use it to turn on a light or your radio or TV, especially during the evenings when you would normally be at home.
- Royal Mail provides a 'Keep Safe' service to hold on to your post whilst you are on holiday so it doesn't build up. For information on mail services visit www.postoffice.co.uk
- If you leave keys with your neighbour, do not label them with your address, if you haven't given a key to your neighbour, leave them the phone number of a friend or relative that they can contact if there is a problem with your home whilst you are away
- Cancel any milk or newspaper deliveries, including free papers.
- Make sure that your shed and garage are locked securely and any plants are trimmed back.
- Do not put your home address on your luggage when you are travelling to your holiday destination.
- Don't overly publicise that you are going away, you never know who might be listening in.
- Cut your lawn before you go and trim back any plants that burglars could hide behind.

Calling all Neighbourhood Watch Members!

Merton NHW Association is currently on the look out for interested members to join their Committee. They would welcome applications from any member, and are keen to hear from you.

If you are interested, then why not come to our next Association meeting
For more details please contact
Lee Roberts, NHW Manager
020 8649 3213



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NHW Manager
on
020 8649 3213

Useful Numbers to Note

Emergencies	999 or 112	Wimbledon Sector Office	020 8649 3144/3145	Highway Safety	020 8545 3206
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111	Mitcham Sector Office	020 8649 3218/3267	Safer Merton	020 8545 4146
Crime Prevention Office	020 8649 3245	Morden Station Office	020 8649 3125	Victim Support	020 8545 1637
NHW Manager	020 8649 3213	Graffiti Team Helpline	020 8545 3170	Abandoned Vehicles	020 8545 3189
Merton Police	020 8947 1212	Fly-Tipping / Fly-Posting	020 8545 3170		

Disclaimer

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