



Update for Parish Councillors. July 5th 2023

- **Weston on the Green Neighbourhood Watch Scheme**
- **Parish Liaison Meetings with Thames Valley Police.**

Neighbourhood Watch:

The Weston on the Green Neighbourhood Watch scheme is a member of the Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association (TVNWA) which covers the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. The main aims of our Neighbourhood Watch schemes are:

- To enable members to reduce the opportunities for crime and to make it more difficult for criminal activity in their neighbourhood.
- To reduce the fear of crime, and pass on crime information and other important messages from the police and Neighbourhood Watch
- To encourage the reporting of crime or suspicious activity directly to the police or through CrimeStoppers.
- To foster a caring, neighbourly attitude to improve the wider resilience and friendliness of the areas we cover.
- To help inform the public at large how to stay safe and improve the safety of our communities.

The scheme for Weston on the Green was set up in 2015. The Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has members from up and down the village. People are encouraged to contact a street coordinator or call the police on 101 if they see anything suspicious or worrying. (But call 999 if a crime is being committed or there is risk of injury.)

The village is divided up into 8 areas, and each has a "street" coordinator. Anyone wanting join the Watch Scheme or get more information should contact their coordinator, or the scheme direct at: wotg.nhw@gmail.com.

That was how it was originally set up. However a change in the Scheme Co-ordinator, lack of support from Thames Valley Police (TVP), lack of funds and then the Covid pandemic meant the scheme has been virtually inactive for a number of years. That is about to change with a relaunch of the scheme being scheduled for early September. TVP have promised more support for NW schemes. This has been recently been boosted by the announcement by TVP that the number of police constables in Thames Valley's Neighbourhood Teams is set to double, increasing the number of officers by 80 available to deal with local crime across the region.

The relaunch will include a need for a street co-ordinator for the new houses north of the village. Some of the businesses by the airfield have expressed an interest in the scheme and offered help towards funding.

- **Bicester Police Rural Community Resilience Group**
- **Kidlington & District Community Forum**

These are two liaison groups between Thames Valley Police and local villages. It's an opportunity for residents in the area and surrounding villages to have their say on the force's 'priority setting'. Representatives from each local village are entitled to attend. Because Weston sits between the two areas (Kidlington & Bicester), we attend both. Unfortunately they are poorly attended by parish representatives and on occasions, by TVP themselves! Neither group has met since November 2022. (Normally at least two meetings a year). Unfortunately, minutes of previous meetings, along with the Agenda for the next meeting would appear a few days before the next scheduled meeting

The long serving Chair of the Bicester group (Ken Howard – Piddington P.C.) died in April when we would normally have had a meeting. The Chair of the Kidlington Group (P.C. Scott from the Kidlington Neighbour Office of TVP has moved on to other responsibilities. He would also attend the Bicester group meetings.

News received this week - there is a proposal that the two groups merge. P.C Gavin Staniland (TVP) and Cllr. Nigel Simpson (OCC & CDC), have been working on setting this up with a plan to launch in October. Meetings would take place in Chesterton Community Centre. The sort of topics that come up at such meetings are:

- Cyber crime
- Speeding and road safety
- Youth clubs / community Safety
- Emergency Planning
- Illegal drug issues
- Fly tipping / Littering
- Cold Calling
- Etc. etc., etc.!!!

I'm hoping that this will lead to more purposeful and constructive meetings!

Hope this is helpful.



Bob Hessian

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and Parish representative for TVP Community Forum meetings