

Southwater Neighbourhood Wardens

Annual Report for March 2023 - April 2024

Background:

Horsham District Council's first Neighbourhood Warden Scheme started in Ashington in 2001 and today, HDC's Community Safety Partnership is operating 7 schemes with 14 Wardens across the Horsham District. Southwater's Warden Scheme began in May 2019. All wardens remain accountable to the Parish or Neighbourhood Councils of the areas in which they work and ensure that the aims and objectives of the service are met. These are:

- ✓ To contribute to the delivery of the Community Safety Partnership Plan by working in partnership with Sussex Police and other stakeholders to provide a highly visible and reassuring uniform patrolling presence across Horsham District, deterring low level criminality (including environmental offences) and anti-social behaviour.
- ✓ Promote community cohesion, resilience and solidarity to encourage communities and neighbourhoods to identify and solve their own problems.
- ✓ Work in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- ✓ Be a trusted friend for the community.
- ✓ Improve access to local authority services.
- ✓ Support the community by encouraging activities for young people.
- ✓ Support the vulnerable members of the community by preventing social isolation.

At the SPC Steering Group meeting in February 2024, contributed to by Councillors Lewis and Pearce plus HDC's Warden Supervisor, our priorities were reviewed.

These priorities are structured to address the issues that are seen by the residents of the Parish as most relevant. Whilst the priorities are categorised, they are not listed in order of importance. It is important that the Wardens are not expected to adopt the role of replacement Police Officers.

Illegal/Nuisance Activities	Actions
Anti-Social Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responding to Reports of ASB• Visual foot patrol at relevant times and locations• Time critical reporting of incidents and updating outcomes
Criminal Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responding to reports of crime where appropriate• Reporting crimes to Sussex Police
Public Spaces Protection Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responding to reports of breaches of PSPO• Time critical reporting and retention of information• Issue of FPN if and when appropriate
Road Safety/Traffic	Actions
Dangerous and irresponsible Driving & Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visual Monitoring of Traffic Speed• Liaison with Southwater Speed Watch group• Information collation and dissemination to authorities• Advise vehicle owners and request vehicles are moved• Regular school attendance at peak times

Community Liaison	Activities
Vulnerable residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain regular contact • Retain appropriate data • Liaise with proper authorities
Local Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish business links and networks • Retain list of business contacts • Explore the principles of DISC
Activity Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular scheduled visits to Community Groups • Education and Awareness Programmes to groups
Schools/Playgroups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish links with all schools and pre-school groups • Create an education awareness package for Yr 6 • Visible presence at start/end of day when possible

Environmental	Activities
Health and Safety Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting any concerns to SPC immediately
Litter/Fly Tipping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with Southwater litter picking volunteers • As appropriate investigating incidents of fly tipping

Communication	Activities
Sussex Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular contact with NPT/PCSO & Police Volunteer Office
Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled monthly 'surgeries' for residents to make contact • 'Drop box' positioned in Beeson House
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relevant social media platforms • Regular media updates

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Table 1 below shows the Neighbourhood Warden activities from April 2022 to March 2023 inclusive:

Patrol hours TOTAL:	1124.25	ASB incidents TOTAL:	184.00
Foot (high visibility)	496.50	Noise	12
Vehicle	627.75	Neighbours	3
Notices/warnings TOTAL:	139.00	Driving/vehicles	117
Fixed Penalty Notice	0	Bikes/Skateboarder	14
Yellow card warning	0	Alcohol/drugs	9
Community Protection Warning/Notice	0	Other	29
Parking alert / Verbal Warning	105/34	Clear up/disposal reports TOTAL:	719.00
Police reports TOTAL:	208.00	Fly tipping / flyposting	31/1
Phone (including 101 and 999)	63	Graffiti	11
Email	104	Dog fouling	189
Intelligence report	4	Litter	77
E-CINS (multi-agency reporting)	0	Drug litter	67
In Person	37	Hazards	343
Media reports TOTAL:	77.00	Community events attended	61
Press release / Community magazines	8	Reports to Operation Crackdown	16
Social Media	69	Safeguarding referral	1
Admin	485	School contact	74
Visits to vulnerable people (all ages)	46	Youth engagement	453
Signposting	57	Reports to DVLA	8

Table 2 below shows Neighbourhood Warden activities from April 2023 to March 2024 inclusive and should be read in conjunction with the monthly reports for greater clarity around specific events, awareness promotions or national publicity campaigns:

Patrol hours TOTAL:	1243.25	ASB incidents reported to us TOTAL:	176.00
Foot (high visibility)	529.75	Noise	8
Vehicle	713.50	Neighbours	7
Notices/warnings TOTAL:	124.00	Driving/vehicles	123
Verbal Warning	57	Bicycles	4
Parking Alert	67	Alcohol/Drugs	5
Yellow card warning (ASB)	0	Other	29
Fixed Penalty Notice	0		
Community Protection Warning/Notice	0	Clear up/disposal reports TOTAL:	224.00
Police reports TOTAL:	247.00	Fly tipping / flyposting	31/7
In person	121	Graffiti	8
Phone (including 101 and 999)	72	Dog fouling	61
Email	48	Litter	41
E-CINS (multi-agency reporting)	0	Drug litter	24
Intelligence report	6	Hazards	52
Media reports TOTAL:	49.00	Community events attended	77
Press release / Community magazines	13	School contact	47
Social Media Posts	36	Youth engagement	1150
Vulnerable People Welfare Checks	36	Reports to DVLA	9
Signposting	52	Reports to Operation Crackdown	13
Safeguarding referral	1	Admin	420

Highlights from the Data:

Patrol Hours	up from 1124 to 1243
Youth engagement	up from 453 to 1150
Police Contact	up from 208 to 247
Community Events	up from 61 to 77

ASB (Excluding Parking)	down from 67 to 53
Dog Fouling	down from 189 to 61
Drugs litter	down from 67 to 24
Litter	down from 77 to 41
Graffiti	down from 11 to 8

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Although we are not an emergency service, we respond to incidents as promptly as is practicable and have often been asked by residents for support with many forms of anti-social behaviour and even crimes, the investigation of which is the responsibility of Sussex Police.
- We practically support and actively encourage residents to report crimes to Sussex Police either via the Emergency 999 (where there is an immediate risk to life or crime is taking place), Non-Emergency 101 phone number or the webform <https://www.sussex.police.uk/reportcrime>
- We routinely monitor crime reporting websites and social media for information regarding suspicious activity, enabling us to understand and respond to emerging trends.
- We are working to reduce the fear of crime by providing high visibility, foot and vehicle patrols during a rotating shift pattern designed to disrupt ASB and prevent opportunist crimes. Our patrols, routes and working times are flexible and often change in direct response to community needs or new information.
- We identify 'hot spot' locations requiring additional patrols and regularly interact with people found in these areas before passing data on environmental impact factors to strategic partners.
- We are involved in finding high risk Missing Persons, providing Witness Statements, the dispersal of groups exhibiting anti-social behaviour and engaging with people acting suspiciously all whilst passing real-time information and intelligence to the Police in relation to criminal offences.
- We work with local businesses to tackle anti-social customers, encouraging target hardening and engagement with the digital reporting platform DISC. We have also been instrumental in securing arrests of persistent repeat offenders and banning notices where appropriate.
- We continued to monitor, report on and dispose of drugs litter whilst providing intelligence reports to partner agencies and law enforcement colleagues.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Youth Anti-Social Behaviour

We can all remember the levels of anti-social behaviour exhibited by a small but high-profile minority of young people two years ago. The atmosphere in the village has now completely changed in this regard. Whereas in previous years we received youth related ASB reports on a daily basis, there has been a sustained reduction especially over the last 12 months which is in contrast to other areas of Sussex that have seen ongoing disruption. We continue to work to establish professional relationships with young people in the village and offer positive interventions where needed. We continue to work in close collaboration with all partner enforcement agencies to modify unacceptable behaviours and promote positive engagement within our community.

Business Community

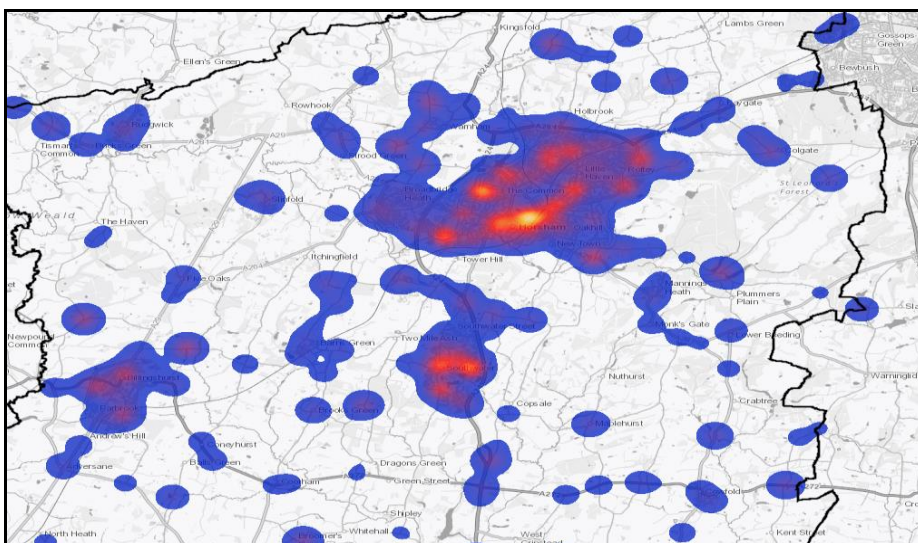
Following on from the excellent work done over the last couple of years with retailers and partner agencies, we now have an efficient and effective reporting system in place to alert other shops of potential threats, how to report offences and secure best evidence in support of prosecutions. This year we have had some notable successes including arrests and prosecutions of several prolific shoplifting offenders due to the great collaborative work we have been involved in. The message has been delivered to thieves in the district that the Southwater retail community is alert, responsive and deliberate in its approach to target hardening and works as a team to combat theft in a robust and effective manner.

Parking/vehicles

The highest number of anti-social behaviour incidents witnessed by or reported to us over the past year continues to be in relation to the use of vehicles. We regularly support our schools at key times to reduce the risks caused. Where appropriate, verbal warnings, advice leaflets or parking notices are issued to raise awareness of the risks caused by anti-social parking and several Parking Charge Notices (PCN) were issued to repeat offenders by HDC Parking Services. We challenge and report anti-social driving where appropriate as well as abandoned vehicles with no MOT/Road Tax which are reported directly to DVLA and/or Operation Crackdown.

Fly Tipping/Fly Posting/ Litter/Graffiti

Fly tipping is an ever-present threat to our parish due to its geography, access routes and secluded rural borders. We have located over 30 such incidents and liaised with HDC's Environmental Enforcement Officer acting as a professional witness by securing and preserving evidence, taking photographs and writing statements prior to arranging specialist removal by HDC.



Fly posting incidents increased slightly this year but most commercial advertisers understand that signage contravening regulations will be removed, potentially at their expense, for them to avoid legal action.

We work closely with our two, fabulous Parish Litter Pickers, Community Groups such as 'Adopt A Street' and other amazing volunteers who work tirelessly to keep litter to a minimum.

When graffiti occurs, we will try to remove it ourselves but where specialist equipment or materials are required, we call for support from HDC to have the offending material removed professionally.

You too can report all these issues via the HDC website at: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/report>

Community Engagement & Events

Southwater residents are fortunate to have access to many excellent community groups and volunteer organisations. We have endeavoured to link up with as many of these as possible in order to support residents of all ages and abilities throughout the village.

We linked in with many fabulous volunteers from the community to help set up the **Coronation Party** with bunting, access paths, lighting and gazebos. The weather was pretty dreadful but improved and it was great to see so many residents attending, some having a couple of drinks, taking selfies and even having a dance before the fireworks brought the event to a crescendo.



The first **Southwater Summer Fest** was held at The Ghyll which was organised by us in collaboration with community groups supported by both the parish and district councils plus several very generous local businesses.





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The **Southwater Skate & BMX Park** officially opened after a tremendous amount of hard work by all those involved with the planning and creation of this beautiful open space. It has already been 'tested' by Jordan Clark, described on Instagram as a 5 x World Champion who has added it to his list of favourite outdoor parks!



Bettina was invited to join Angie Choat and volunteers from the **Southwater Youth Project** on a day trip to **Chessington World of Adventures Resort** with 11 young adults and was able to get to know the youngsters in an informal setting. The day went very well and all those who attended had a lot of fun with some even conquering the rollercoasters.



We attended the **Horticultural Society Late Summer Show** in the village hall.



Together with our colleagues Maria & Charlie from Horsham Town, we attended Tanbridge House School for a parents' evening. This was a **'Growing Your Teenager'** event promoting a free course designed to help parents understand some of the challenges the teenage years present and provide some useful tips and ideas to help them and their child navigate this difficult time of life.



We visited the **Southwater Art & Craft Show** where we met some of the artists displaying their art & crafts. Some young visitors were also taking part in the art activities that were being offered.



The **Skate Jam** organised by Southwater Parish Council and hosted by Team Extreme took place at the new BMX and Skate Park off Stakers Lane. The event attracted a lot of visitors of all ages and included demonstrations by Team Extreme and a competition for both beginners and seasoned professionals.



We attended the **Blackberry Fair** at Castlewood School



We regularly visit the **Welcome Club** and **Games Afternoon** held in the Village Hall each Wednesday providing a variety of guest speakers, activities and plenty of social engagement.



We were invited to the **Southwater Sports Club** Fireworks Display which was a brilliant event.



We helped many great volunteers to set up and support the **Southwater Christmas Festival**.



We helped to decorate **The Phoenix Tree** devoted to lost loved ones in Southwater.



We attended the **Southwater Infant & Junior Academies' Christmas Fair** which was really well supported. We followed the map, joined in the fun and spoke to some wonderful people.



The Southwater Parish Council **Chairman's Discretionary Fund** helped us add some extra Christmas Cheer. In collaboration with Santa and Southwater Parish Council and our very best wishes, we organised the special delivery of some surprise gifts for some very deserving children from our three village schools.



We attended the **Southwater Santa Fun Run** with over 100 runners who registered for the event.



We joined the ‘**Local Policing for Local People**’ roadshow held at Beeson House. This event was created and delivered by Sussex Police and designed as an opportunity for residents to meet with the local Neighbourhood Policing Team Inspector and his colleagues to discuss concerns. Many conversations were had between partners agencies with representatives from Cyber Crime Team, Road Safety, HDC Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinators, Neighbourhood Watch and the HDC Neighbourhood Warden Scheme. This was the first such meeting with further events being held around the district in the coming months.

We were invited to a well-attended SPC run meeting to discuss Southwater’s approach to the **Climate Emergency**. It was a positive meeting with many great ideas and approaches discussed which will all help to build new and constructive relationships with residents, community groups and councils to tackle this crucial issue.

Warden Drop-In Sessions

We hold regular drop-in sessions at various locations across the Parish at different times, so that as many residents as possible have the opportunity to chat with us in person and can highlight issues, raise concerns, seek support and suggest solutions. These events are advertised on social media and the SPC website so keep an eye out for our next event and maybe come and pick up some of our information leaflets on everything from scams and personal safety to local community groups or support services. We would appreciate hearing your ideas on how to further improve life for everyone in our village.



Patrols

- We provide high visibility mobile and foot patrols throughout the Parish.
- We patrol local businesses designed to disrupt ASB, shoplifting and to improve engagement.

Vulnerable People

Through the relationships we have developed with community and volunteer support groups, we are able to reach out to and help others find appropriate guidance and advice.

Case Studies

Whilst on a routine patrol around Hop Oast, we saw an older resident on the edge of the roundabout who was attempting to cross in a very dangerous location. We stopped and engaged with them and due to **safety concerns**, we helped them to the Park & Ride so they could safely continue their journey in to town.

We visited a **vulnerable** resident in their home. After liaising with Age UK, we were able to provide them with advice and access to ongoing support services.

We were contacted by a resident who was concerned for the welfare of man found sleeping on a grass verge. We attended, assessed their **welfare needs**, discussed their situation and offered specialist support which they declined.

Whilst out on patrol we came across an incident involving an older pedestrian who had fallen and **badly hurt** himself. He was already being cared for by a local jogger and a passing motorist so we were able to ensure the patient's wife could join him and we stayed with him until he was taken to hospital by South East Coast Ambulance Service for treatment.

We **assisted** an older motorist by bump-starting their car and then escorting them home; ensuring they got back safely.

We were alerted to a **High Risk Missing Person** by Sussex Police and undertook area searches around the parish. We were able to pass updated information to the Missing Person Team which we hope assisted their investigation. Thankfully, they were found and support services put in place.

Following a call from a **distressed and vulnerable** resident, we undertook a home visit, listened to their concerns, offered advice and provided some potential solutions which they agreed to explore.

We were alerted by staff from a local business to a person expressing **suicidal intentions**. We located them and observed the vulnerable person until Sussex Police arrived.

We undertook a home visit to support a young person who had been subjected to **harassment and threats**. We encouraged their parent to report it to the Police.

With the authority of a vulnerable resident suffering with a **neighbour dispute**, we liaised with a relative, discussed the situation, examined the options and decided on how to resolve the issue.

We received reports of concern for a male presenting adult who had told people he was **homeless**. Having conducted searches of several secluded areas within the village and located a tent in woodland, we contacted **Turning Tides** (a local charity supporting homeless people) and together returned the next day to facilitate access to support.

Whilst on a routine patrol, we noted an older resident had been waiting a long time at a bus stop on one of the hottest days of the year. We conducted a **welfare check** and thankfully, moments later, the bus arrived and the situation was resolved.

We met a resident who felt very **isolated** due to their **medical needs** and after some research, we were able to pass on details of a specific support group that they are now in contact with.

The Police Volunteer Office made us aware of a resident who was having trouble with an Amazon delivery which we identified as a potential scam. We were able to make contact with them and talked about online security avoiding them becoming a **scam victim**.

We met an older resident whose **mobility scooter** had run out of power. We were able to escort them home safely and having moved a few things around in their garage, we made access to the charger easier.

In collaboration with Southwater Youth Project, we made an **emergency food parcel** available to a vulnerable family.

A resident alerted us to concerns they had for one of their neighbours in relation to **self-neglect** and possible **hoarding**. We alerted our local PCSO who made a welfare check and support was offered.

We found a **broken-down car** parked in Lintot Square so ensured the occupants were safe and warm before alerting our colleagues from Parking Services to avoid any parking penalties being issued prior to the vehicle being recovered.

We checked on a resident who had not been seen for some time and concerns had been raised for their **welfare**. We found the resident in good health and continue to monitor the situation.

We visited a resident who had recently complained of low-level **noise disturbance** from a neighbour. We offered reassurance and continue to support them.

We were made aware of an older resident living alone who had been **without electricity** and was unable to use her stairlift. We undertook two home visits, liaised with a family member to ensure it was addressed promptly and thankfully, power was soon restored.

In collaboration with our colleagues in Horsham Town we were able to return a handbag, which had been **stolen** several months previously to a Southwater resident. They were delighted to be reunited with irreplaceable personal items of considerable sentimental value.

We were approached by a family struggling with increased **cost of living** expenses and we were able to support them to get a crisis food parcel and contact details for local support services.

Whilst on an evening patrol we noticed a young adult **searching** a stretch of pavement in the dark with only a phone for light. We joined them in the search for their missing glasses which they had lost while jogging.

We were first on scene to a tree that had fallen on to powerlines, blocking the road. We put in road-closures, liaised with Sussex Police, UK Power Network & West Sussex County Council alerting them to the incident and helped to coordinate repairs. We provided hot water in flasks to residents affected by the **power outage** as some could not even make a hot drink to keep warm. These flasks were kindly donated to us by Caroline Paul who is the Coop Member Pioneer.

We met a resident in their 90s managing the impact of a deterioration in their eyesight which has caused feelings of **social isolation**. We were able to talk about our role and put them in touch with community groups offering support. The Southwater Parish Council Chairman's Discretionary Fund financed the purchase of a "speaking clock" to help their continued independence.

We received reports concerning the welfare of a resident who had not been seen for several days. We attended their home address which was found to be in a **state of disrepair** and neglect. Receiving no response to our repeated knocking, we alerted the housing provider and our local PCSO for priority checks to be undertaken.

We received a report that a vulnerable resident had missed an important **medical appointment** and could not be contacted by phone. We attended their home address, undertook a safe and well check and asked them to contact their medical practitioner to provide an update on their condition.

Young People

We have continued to get to know and support younger members of the community in an informal context often outside of organised groups when we are out and about on patrol. We are able to feedback to agencies and schools any causes for concern, refer for safeguarding and to signpost young people to relevant information and support where needed. Building trust is crucial and takes time especially within an ever-changing social environment often driven by social media trends and changing pressures experienced by our young people.

We attended the V.I.M (very important minor) Holiday Club held at Castlewood Primary School. This service was offered to a group of children aged between 4 and 11 years of age. There were also some spaces made available by West Sussex County Council for those children who receive free school meals.

We were very pleased to be asked to provide a Work Experience placement for a local, young person as part of their Diploma in Uniform Services course at college. It was a great opportunity to showcase Southwater, support their progression and promote positive community engagement with young people.

Southwater Youth Project

We have forged an excellent working relationship with Angie Choat and the Southwater Youth Project volunteers which helps children and young people between the ages of 8 to 19 in the Southwater area by supporting mental wellbeing and promoting positive self-esteem through activities. These sessions provide safe places for young people to ask difficult questions, learn about themselves and develop skills whilst being supported by trusted leaders. You can get in touch with Angie on 07795 835905 or by emailing southwateryouthworker@hotmail.co.uk. We continue to drop into their sessions, which has helped us to maintain our existing relationships and encourage new ones plus provide a further layer of support should they need to talk in confidence.



We joined up with some fantastic young people from SYP doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition practice session.



Dog related issues

Dog fouling is an offence and if caught, we are authorised to issue Fixed Penalty Notices but you could alternatively find yourself in court. We have seen a dramatic increase in the number of dogs within our village in the last two years but we are pleased to see the number of recorded incidents has dramatically reduced from 189 to 61 as more people take their responsibilities seriously.

Cycling

We have been working to enforce the cycling & skateboarding prohibition within Lintot Square by stopping offenders of all ages and educating them as to the health & safety issues and risks.

Parish specific/other

Training

HDC mandatory E-learning on Harassment & Bullying
Food Poverty training delivered by Citizens Advice Bureau
Food Hygiene
Carer Awareness
Scams

Social Media

To improve our visibility, accessibility and to provide more information on our work, we have increased our presence on social media over the past year, regularly posting to:

[Horsham District Neighbourhood Wardens Twitter: @HorshamWardens](#)

Southwater News

This year we had several articles for publication in the printed edition of Southwater News. This is an invaluable source of local information and news, particularly for those residents who are less mobile in the community or do not use the internet or social media.

An Inspiring Future

Throughout the coming year, we will continue to effectively deliver on the wide range of routine tasks but we are always looking for ways to improve our service delivery, develop existing support, or create new ways to help our community.

Projects

We are currently researching a number of community projects. Together with Councillors Steve Lewis and Chris Pearce, we are working on ways to reduce food waste by setting up a community larder. The principle of a community larder is to prevent food waste by picking up food items from local supermarkets and distributing it free to the community. Discussions have started about a Community Fun Fest and we are also planning to offer a number of free water sports sessions as well as a 'Bat Walk' during the summer holidays for young people in Southwater.

Stakeholders and Community Groups

The established lines of communication with our local Sussex Police PCSO, Damian Cecil, continue to afford residents a further layer of support and the benefits of his extensive local knowledge. We have an established relationship with West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service through our attendance at regular meetings so that we are aware of issues specific to Southwater and have linked them in with local community organisations to offer presentations and 'safe & well' advice.

Our relationships with the Southwater Youth Project, Neighbourhood Watch Association, The Welcome Club and Neighbour Network and many others continue to flourish.

Your Views

We are always looking for ways to increase engagement and provide the residents of Southwater with the opportunity to voice their opinions to us. We welcome suggestions, new ideas/initiatives or feedback on existing services so please get in touch.

Our monthly reports are published on SPC's website and links are also made available via social media platforms but if you need one printed, just let us know. We provide dedicated times to meet residents face to face via our Drop-in Sessions and we encourage you all to stop us in the street or contact us by phone or email if you would like support or just a chat. We would be happy to set up individual meetings in private if you need a confidential space to discuss your particular concerns.

KEY:

ASB: Anti-social behaviour.

HDC: Horsham District Council

Operation Crackdown: Joint initiative with Sussex Safer Roads Partnership and Sussex Police to report abandoned vehicles or anti-social driving.

PCSO: Police Community Support Officer

SPC: Southwater Parish Council

WSFR: West Sussex Fire & Rescue