

# Neighbourhood Warden Annual Report 2020

## Southwater Parish

### Background:

Since 2000, approximately 500 Neighbourhood Warden Schemes have been set up in England and Wales. Horsham District Council's first started in Ashington in 2001 and today, HDC's Community Safety Partnership is operating 7 schemes with 14 Wardens across the Horsham district with Southwater's Warden Scheme commencing one year ago.

### Role:

- ✓ To contribute to the delivery of the Community Safety Partnership Plan by working in partnership with Sussex Police, to provide a highly visible and reassuring uniform patrolling presence across Horsham district, deterring low-level criminality (including environmental and antisocial behaviour)
- ✓ To promote community cohesion, resilience and solidarity to encourage communities and neighbourhoods to identify and solve their own problems
- ✓ Working in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Be trusted friend for the community
- ✓ Improve access to local authority services
- ✓ Promote social inclusion by undertaking a range of community development functions

On Wednesday 22nd May 2019, following mandatory Core Skills, CSAS and First Aid training provided by Horsham District Council, Jacquie Cave and Dominic Woodhead became Southwater's Neighbourhood Wardens and arrived in the parish.

In June, following meetings with the SPC Chair Graham Watkins, Parish Councillors Pauline Flores-Moore and Hayley Timson, District Councillor Claire Vickers and Parish Clerk Dawn Spouge, they started at the deep end by patrolling, introducing themselves to local businesses and support services, reporting graffiti/waste for removal and submitting intelligence reports to Sussex Police. Whilst getting a clearer understanding of the parish demographic, location of physical assets and potential ASB hotspots, they also undertook five formal partner agency meetings, 7 community engagement events and responded to 20 public enquiries.

From July, they expanded points of interest whilst on patrol to include reporting and collecting of litter, reporting overflowing or damaged bins, enforcing cycling prohibitions, conducting playground inspections, reporting graffiti and overgrowing hedge-rows on pavements near the schools for removal due to health and safety concerns.

As a result of the first Steering Group Meeting, the Neighbourhood Warden Key Performance Indicators were agreed as follows:

1. Reduce the Fear of Crime with Uniform Presence
2. Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Enforcement (Underage Drinking/Smoking/Littering)
3. Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour
4. Support Vulnerable Residents
5. Report Highway Obstructions (ASB parking, Stewarding community events)
6. Monitor & Report Drugs Litter
7. Provide Crime Prevention & Safety Advice
8. Reduce Environmental ASB/Crime (Abandoned cars/Fly-tipping)
9. Support Community Events
10. Report overflowing bins

A new reporting format was designed to secure specific data collation and monthly reports began to be submitted to SPC for dissemination via their website and social media platforms.

The data displayed in this table accounts for Warden activities between August 2019 up to and including March 2020 and should be read in conjunction with the monthly reports for greater clarity around specific events, awareness promotions or national publicity campaigns.

<b>Patrol hours TOTAL:</b>	<b>481.5</b>	<b>ASB incidents TOTAL:</b>	<b>65</b>
Foot (high visibility)	222.75	Noise	4
Vehicle	258.75	Neighbours	3
<b>Notices/warnings TOTAL:</b>	<b>71</b>	Driving/vehicles	41
Fixed Penalty Notice	0	Bikes	8
Yellow card warning	0	Alcohol/drugs	7
Community Protection Warning/Notice	0	Public order	2
Parking alert	71	<b>Clear up/disposal reports TOTAL:</b>	<b>684</b>
<b>Police reports TOTAL:</b>	<b>41</b>	Fly tipping / flyposting	63
Phone (including 101 and 999)	0	Graffiti	10
Email	6	Dog fouling	199
Intelligence report	29	Litter	151
E-CINS (multi-agency reporting)	0	Drug litter	253
Verbal	6	Hazards	8
<b>Admin</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>Community events attended</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Visits to vulnerable people (all ages)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>School contact/engagement</b>	<b>48</b>
		<b>Youth Engagement</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Signposting</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>Reports to DVLA</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding referral</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Reports to Operation Crackdown</b>	<b>3</b>

## ASB/crime/criminal damage

- We routinely monitor crime reporting websites for information about suspicious activity including people and vehicles, enabling us to understand and respond to emerging trends. We undertake targeted high visibility foot and vehicle patrols to disrupt ASB and prevent opportunist crimes. In this way we also reduce the fear of crime by providing a reassuring presence and a visible deterrent making your homes and property a harder target for criminals. We have been directly involved in the recovery of a missing child, the dispersal of groups of people exhibiting anti-social behaviour, engaging with people acting suspiciously and encouraging them to move on and passing real-time information to the police in relation to actual offences. Where appropriate, we disseminate information to potential target businesses and also provide intelligence reports to Sussex Police. We conduct joint patrols with local officers and other partner agency or enforcement representatives.
- We actively support and encourage residents to report all 'crimes' to Sussex Police either via the Emergency 999 where a crime is taking place or there is an immediate threat, the Non-Emergency 101 or via <https://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>
- We are not an emergency service but we respond as promptly as is practicable. We have been asked by residents for support with many forms of anti-social behaviour and even crimes. Incidents included where shoplifters were still in the shop, a high value phone had just been stolen, a suspicious male in a vehicle was allegedly approaching school children, a group of males were taking drugs in a play area, scammers had approached a vulnerable resident for money, a post burglary reassurance visit resulting in property being recovered, dispersing groups of people causing a noise nuisance or threatening people and responding to a concern for neighbours and lost pets.
- Neighbouring Parishes have suffered spates of burglaries this year from dwellings, offices, sheds and outbuildings. Southwater has, in the main, avoided this which is in no small part due to the community spirit in our village and neighbourly concern but also our awareness campaign. We have been highlighting the potential risks posed when vehicles are left insecure with personal possessions inside, garage doors are left open often providing access to the house via internal doors, ground floor windows are wide open when no one is at home and generally strengthening soft targets.
- We continued to monitor, report on and dispose of drug litter whilst working in partnership with WSCC and Sussex Police by providing intelligence reports.

- We have identified a number of locations requiring regular patrols and are working with strategic partners to address environmental factors that may positively impact on future outcomes and regularly interact with people found in these areas.
- We will have no hesitation in reporting drink or drug driving offenders to the Police immediately as well as feeding intelligence in to the bigger picture in an attempt to secure improved police resourcing for our village in the future.

## Parking/vehicles

- We continued to support staff and parents at Southwater schools by promoting conscientious parking, the turning off of idle engines and the safe transportation of pupils. In consultation with both SPC and HDC representatives, we have initiated a feasibility study of alternatives to the current arrangements. Naturally we will consult with school staff and partner agencies, including but not limited to Sussex Police, WSCC Highways and HDC Parking Services.
- Where appropriate, advice leaflets or parking notices have been issued to raise awareness of anti-social parking and we actively encourage residents to be more aware of the impact of their parking and discourage drivers from sitting in their cars with the engines running particularly outside our schools.
- We frequently receive reports about high-sided or commercial vehicles apparently parking inconsiderately in residential areas. We try to encourage drivers to take ownership of their actions and in future adapt their behaviours in recognition of other peoples' needs but all resident's should be aware that just because a vehicle's position is inconvenient does not automatically mean it or the owner are committing any offences.
- ASB driving and abandoned vehicles can be reported directly by residents to Operation Crackdown at <http://www.operationcrackdown.org/>

## Fly tipping/littering/graffiti

- Fly tipping is an ever present threat to our parish due to it being situated on the A24 corridor and having secluded rural borders. We have located, reported and liaised with HDC Environmental Enforcement in relation to a number of fly-tipping incidents which have ranged from a mattress thrown in a hedge, several large boxes full of rotting commercial meat products, to several tonnes of aggregate or barrels of unidentified liquids. In all appropriate situations we have acted as professional witnesses by securing and preserving evidence, taking evidential photographs and writing our own supporting statements prior to arranging specialist removal by HDC.
- Fly posting is also prevalent at times in the parish and we have worked hard with, predominantly out of area, businesses to raise awareness around the need to find appropriate ways to advertise their business without negatively impacting on road safety and the inherent beauty of our village. We have been successful in securing evidence, liaising with offenders and providing clear timelines for the removal of offending material in order for them to avoid legal action.
- Littering and dog fouling are offences and if caught, we are authorised to issue a Fixed Penalty Notices but you could find yourself in court instead. There are numerous litter bins and dog waste specific bins which we make every effort to inspect as we patrol, reporting those that are full or damaged. We work closely with the Parish 'Litter Pickers', in conjunction with Community Groups such as 'Adopt A Street' and the fabulous volunteers trying to keep litter to a minimum by picking it up and disposing of it appropriately. It is a community issue and we should all do our part to address it whether that means not dropping it in the first place or picking it up/reporting it when we see it which you can do very easily through the HDC website <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/report>
- When we first arrived in the parish there was a fairly large number of historical graffiti sites all of which have now been reported to HDC for removal and since then we have noted a rapid decrease in this offence. There are two specific sites currently still causing issues and this is predominantly due to the clarification of ownership being sought in order to secure its removal.

## Community engagement/events/meetings

Southwater residents are fortunate to have excellent provision of community groups and organisations. Since arriving on parish 22nd May 2019, we have endeavoured to link up with as many as possible so that we can work towards supporting residents of all ages across the village.

### **Events Supported/Attended:**

- Attended Southwater Royals Football Fun Day.
- Joined Councillors and Parish staff at the opening ceremony for the new Play Area and Skate-Park on Church Lane.
- Attended the Horticulture Flower Show.
- Attended the annual Parish Church Fete.
- Cheered on The Swifts in their first home games of the West Sussex Premier Division season.
- Attended and left warden leaflets at The Topsy Fox preview event
- Joined the volunteer community litter pick group at the Country Park for an end of summer litter pick.
- Remembrance Sunday parade and service - We provided a 'welcome' with order of service distribution, high visibility patrol and traffic management
- Southwater Christmas Fair 2019 - Coordinated by Southwater Community Partnership with great success. We assisted with setup and high visibility presence during the event.

### **Community groups:**

- Attended Know Dementia Sporting Moments session.
- Welcome Club:
  - A presentation of the warden role, Q & A and get to know you session.
  - Virtual Reality session (to be re-arranged due to Covid-19)

### **Charities/Other organisations:**

- HOPE charity project
- Age UK
- Tapestry Lunch Club
- Dementia Friends

### **Schools**

We have supported schools with regular school parking patrols, PTA and school events.

- Road Safety session for Reception class at Castlewood School prior to the annual walk to the post box to send letters to Father Christmas.
- Regular school patrols at Southwater Junior and Infant Academies
- Support at the annual Castlewood and Academy schools' PTA Fireworks Celebration. We supported this event with a high visibility presence and worked closely with staff to monitor unaccompanied teenagers and locate lost children.
- Attended Tanbridge House School for a production of 'Skin Deep' to Year 11s; an excellent performance and workshop delivered by Solomon Theatre Company as part of a powerful and inspiring PSHE package helping nurture a positive pathway for young people whilst addressing issues around knife crime, gang violence, drugs, sexuality and relationships.

### **Community Wellbeing - Drug Awareness Week**

In addition to the session with Southwater Youth Project (see below) we also distributed leaflets and offered information and advice to rail users at Christ's Hospital Station.

### **Community Wellbeing - World Suicide Prevention Day**

We distributed The Samaritans suicide prevention packs and posters across the community in the following venues: Southwater Village Hall, Boots, The Lintot Pub, Dominos Pizzas, Shades Barbers, The Little Tea House and the library.

## **Warden Drop-Ins**

We have publicised and organised warden drop-ins at a variety of locations, so that residents are able to chat with us in person, to identify issues, raise concerns and suggest ideas for future work.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> July – The Little Tea House.
- 19<sup>th</sup> September – Southwater Sports Club.
- 7<sup>th</sup> December - We held a joint drop-in session with Parish Councillors, Billy Greening and Claire Vickers.

## **Leaflet Drops**

We have carried out leaflet drops to new housing developments in Southwater so that new residents are aware of the warden scheme and leaflets have also been included in new residents' packs by the marketing teams of Miller Homes and Berkeley Homes.

## **Community Speedwatch**

We have referred two local residents to the community Speedwatch scheme and it is hoped that with sufficient (trained) volunteers the scheme will soon be operational in Southwater.

## **Road Safety Week**

- Though our partnership working with Budgens, they shared their excellent monthly Health and Safety bike check procedures for their newspaper boys/girls. We provided 15 high visibility vests to support their fantastic work in keeping their employees safe on the roads.
- We erected a large 'SPEED DOWN' banner outside the Infant Academy to remind people of the 30 mph speed limit through most of the village.

## Patrols (foot/visible and car)

- We continued patrols of local businesses designed to disrupt shoplifting, ASB and improve engagement.
- We continued to provide high visibility patrols both on foot and in a liveried vehicle throughout the Parish.

## Elderly and youth

### **Vulnerable People**

- We have worked in liaison with the Community Link Team at Horsham District Council to carry out welfare visits to vulnerable and older people across the parish. We have been able to refer or signpost people to other agencies for further information and support, make safeguarding referrals if necessary and to provide advice on scam prevention.
- We have supported the residents of Roundstone Park in an ongoing campaign for a zebra crossing so that they are able to cross Worthing Road to reach the bus stop safely.
- We attended a refresher Dementia Friendly Awareness training session in order to strengthen our support to older and vulnerable members of the community.

### **Young People**

- Organisation and delivery of a successful Shoretrax Bike Pump Track session which was attended by over 30 children in the summer holidays.
- Organisation and delivery of a half-term indoor multi-games session.
- We have got to know some younger members of the community in an informal context outside of formal/organised groups when we are out and about on patrol.

## **Southwater Youth Project**

We have forged an excellent relationship with Angie Choat and Southwater Youth Project. We have supported the group with projects and events and regularly drop in to the group, which has helped us get to know some of the younger people in Southwater:

- Delivered a drugs advice, information, activity and Q & A session.
- Delivered a Disc Golf/Kubb activity session in the summer holidays.
- Supported a summer holiday arts and crafts session.
- Supported preparation and delivery of the Summer Fun Fest.
- Supported the Old Skate Park and user group.
- Supported the end of summer Active Friday water-fight.
- Supported two boxing workshop sessions to explore issues around identity, self-esteem, life goals and personal safety.

## **Junior Neighbourhood Watch**

We have referred one local volunteer to the Junior Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

## Licensing

Nothing to report

## Dog related issues

- We have undertaken numerous activities to raise awareness of the negative impact caused by irresponsible dog owners not clearing up their dog waste. As part of this campaign, we used social media, highlighted waste on footways using a pink eco spray paint and placed information notices in strategic locations particularly on the Downs Link and Red Route. We also saw that a local resident initiated creating their own notices which they place next to offending material in public areas. Incidents were also reported to HDC.
- We have responded to complaints of noise caused by a neighbour's dog and by numerous reports of dogs being out of control in the road. Where ever possible we have identified owners, engaged with them and then encouraged them to address the specific issue relating to their pet offering support or signposting them to specialist agencies if required.

## Cycling

- We have been working to enforce the cycling & skateboarding prohibition within Lintot Square by stopping offenders; educating them as to the health & safety issues and associated risks. It appears that although signage is in place, this is being ignored by cyclists of all ages potentially as this restriction has not been enforced for some time. Since we began raising awareness in this area we estimate that we have spoken to over 30 cyclists who have all agreed (some more reluctantly than others) to dismount and walk with their bike.

## Parish specific/other

### **Covid-19 Response**

We have been working pro-actively during the fast-changing and unprecedented situation regarding the Coronavirus pandemic:

- Prior to the lockdown restrictions, we continued to carry out foot and mobile patrols in the village and to be a reassuring presence and point of contact for residents.
- As a priority prior to full lockdown, we phoned approximately 100 vulnerable Southwater residents to ascertain their situation regarding family and wellbeing support and needs, regarding food and medication.
- Since the introduction of lockdown on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and increased physical distancing measures across the UK, establishment of a support system for vulnerable and older people was of prime importance for local communities. Consequently the nature of our work shifted to more essential administration tasks.
- As essential key-workers we have worked in partnership with the Horsham District Council Community Link and Community Hub teams, phoning vulnerable residents to ascertain details of their existing support networks and needs regarding food, supplies, medication and mental health support.

- As the Volunteer Community Hubs have become established locally throughout the district, the residents on the lists have widened from the initial Community Link lists to all those that have registered via the HDC CoVid-19 support website.
- Jacquie has also linked in daily with the Southwater Community Hub Volunteer Co-ordinator (Angie Choat) to provide any necessary support.
- By linking in with different HDC departments, partner agencies and volunteers we have supported the creation of processes that are delivering life-changing results on the ground. Naturally when running such vast and complex support networks there can be difficulties which is again where we have played a crucial role and Dominic has been instrumental in reporting back on system issues and offering improved working practices in order to effectively streamline the process whilst ensuring a high standard of delivery.

## **Example Case Study**

### **Parking Problem at School**

We were forwarded an email from a resident from the village community police office. The resident tries to walk most of the time to her child's school, but sometimes she has to drive. She had been approached by a resident of the road to complain to her that she was in their parking space, shouldn't park there at all and should contact their housing association. The parent was concerned about the manner in which this was said to her, particularly as it looked as though the space outside of this specific property was part of the public highway and not allocated parking space. On talking to other parents, she found out that some others had also had the same experience.

Initially we attended the area to examine the layout of the road and the disputed parking space, which did, as the parent had suggested appear to be part of the public highway.

After some internet research and phone calls, we were able to locate the relevant housing association and communicate with an advisor. We also explained how the resident had behaved towards this parent and others when disputing the parking space.

We later received an email from the advisor which included a map of the area and highway in question. Most properties in the road did indeed have an allocated parking space, but the disputed space was part of the public highway and this property did not have an allocated space.

We were able to forward this map onto the parent and to inform her that she and others were able to legally park in that space. We also explained, that this property was an exception in this road in that it did not have an allocated parking space.

We also made contact with the housing association again to request that as the registered landlord, they should ensure that the tenants of the property fully understood the parking regulations concerning their property, to avoid any future conflict with school parents.

This was an interesting case in that it also threw up an issue regarding limited available information regarding local housing association officers. There are a number of housing associations with properties located throughout Southwater and it would be beneficial to have the contact details of named local officers, so that communication can occur at a local level and we can build up positive working relationships with the local officers. We have therefore started to work on building a database of local housing association officers.

Through partnership working, (as the email was initially passed to us by the Police Office), with the assistance of the housing association and the correct information we were able to empower both the school parents and the property tenants to avoid future conflict.

## **An Inspiring Future**

Throughout the coming year, subject to the complete removal of Covid19 lockdown restrictions, we will continue to effectively deliver on the wide range of routine tasks currently undertaken by us but we are always looking for ways to improve our service delivery, develop existing support or create new ways to help our community.

HDC's award winning Virtual Reality for Health sessions offer a range of immersive virtual reality experiences for people living with dementia and other healthcare needs. It is also used to reduce stress levels in medical and care staff, to improve attendance and quality of life. Planned bookings we had in place for May naturally have had to be postponed but we will be liaising with local support groups to organise new events in the coming months.

We would like to expand our welfare checks to those 'invisible' vulnerable people that are not using the Community Link service. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed other vulnerable residents in Southwater that could really benefit from regular contact and support.

The Covid-19 lockdown has also brought to light a large number of individuals that have been giving up their free time to support the older and vulnerable in the community. We would like to seize the opportunity to work with these community-minded volunteers to support vulnerable people and on other future projects.

Last year we delivered a number of free activity sessions for the younger residents either directly or in partnership with other services. These were so successful, we are in consultation with HDC's Sports Development Team and looking to bring back the incredibly popular ShoreTrax plus a diverse range of other activities some of which will be new to all attendees. We will advertise each event nearer the time. In conjunction with SYP we are looking at potentially delivering some combined, mixed-topic workshops to develop leadership and self-belief. Although still in the planning phase, there is the potential for the involvement of guest instructors from elite level sport including GB internationals and Champions in their respective disciplines. Watch this space.

We also would like to expand our activities for younger people to include eco-initiatives and creative projects and are fortunate to have links with two professional artists who can deliver workshops for young people.

We will support the Co-ordinator's efforts to promote the creation of the Southwater Speed Watch group which could potentially be up and running in the coming months subject to the completion of all training and liaison with Sussex Police.

We are always looking for ways to increase engagement and provide residents of Southwater with the opportunity to voice their opinions to us, offer up new ideas or initiatives, feedback on existing services or take us to task where you feel improvement is needed. We produce monthly reports which are published on the SPC website and provide dedicated time via our drop-in sessions at varying times for this purpose but we are also more than happy to be stopped in the street, phoned or emailed. Please get in touch.