



Street Watch **AREA GUIDELINES** **and** **Neighbourhood Observers Guide**

Copyright (c) 2013

Index

1. Commitment and Consent
2. About Street Watch
3. Code of Conduct
4. Health and Safety Risk Assessment
5. Child and Vulnerable Adult Policy
6. Practical Patrol Guidance
7. Induction Programme and Development
8. Personal Responsibility, Liability and Accountability
9. Starting a Scheme
10. Public Liability and Accident Injury Insurance

1.Commitment and Consent

1.1 Street Watch is a scheme run by the community for the community in partnership with the police. Street Watch is about walking your local area as a good citizen and to help take responsibility for your local areas and to help tackle the low level issues that impact most on your communities and quality of life.

1.2 Street Watch is about walking around your community just like any other resident. However, Street Watch members will walk in pairs wearing high visibility jackets in order to provide visible levels of reassurance, to promote good citizenship, to increase the feelings of safety and to engage positively with those who try and undermine our communities and in an appropriate manner to educate and bring to their attention the impact that their behaviour has.

1.3 Street Watch members commit to patrolling their streets for an average of 2 hours a month.

1.4 Street Watch members must understand that at all times they are responsible and accountable for their own actions to be lawful, reasonable, appropriate and justified.

2.About Street Watch

2.1 Street Watch can be considered a natural extension to schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch. Street Watch activity can operate alongside existing Neighbourhood Watch Schemes or can be run independently.

2.2 Street Watch members are ordinary citizens with no police powers. If they see anything suspicious, all they are asked to do is report it to the police. They can also give active support to the community by providing reassurance and a visible presence to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

2.3 Groups are managed by a co-ordinator who keeps a list of volunteers and provides advice, guidance and support in consultation with the local police.

2.4 Street Watch Groups are not run by the police but work in partnership with the support of police. The ethos of this partnership is central to the foundation and existence of the organisation.

2.5 The purpose of Street Watch is: –

- a. To prevent crime by improving security, increasing vigilance, creating and maintaining a caring and cohesive community and reducing opportunities for crime by increasing crime prevention awareness.
- b. To assist the police by promoting effective communication and the prompt reporting of activity that gives rise to concern.
- c. To reduce undue fear of crime by providing accurate information about risks and by promoting a sense of security and community spirit, particularly amongst the more vulnerable members of the community.

3.Code of Conduct

3.1 A Code of Conduct is a means of promoting a common understanding amongst members of Street Watch regarding the expectations of conduct when representing Street Watch and in their dealings with one another and the public.

3.2 Internal Conduct

Members of Street Watch should work collaboratively to promote the principles of Street Watch by:

- a. Respecting the diverse nature of Street Watch and its members
- b. Representing the right of each member to speak and represent their views
- c. Respecting each others' right to hold different views
- d. Refraining from comments that are defamatory, indecent, offensive, abusive, irrelevant, undermining, trivial or objectionable in language or nature
- e. Always speaking well of each other and Street Watch in public
- f. Always being punctual to Street Watch meetings and functions when representing Street Watch.
- g. Respect the needs, limitations and wishes of patrol partners.
- h. To represent and support the police and community partnership aims and objectives of Street Watch and not personal or other agendas.
- i. No member of Street Watch shall release any statement to any national media on any matters concerning Street Watch unless the content of any statement has been agreed by the Head Coordinator and a Police Media and Communications officer.
- j. No member may maintain or use their own data base of members details
- k. No member may share a password or allow access to the site with non members unless it is part of recognised partnership activity.
- l. No member's spouse, partner, family or friend, who is not a member of Street Watch, may take part in any activities on behalf of a member.

3.3 External Conduct

- a. Street Watch members must at all times act in a non-confrontational manner.
- b. Members must act within the law and are accountable for their own behaviour, actions and conduct.
- c. Under no circumstances are Street Watch members to display racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination towards any other member and any other person. To do so may be unlawful.
- d. No member shall carry anything that can be perceived to be dangerous and that could inflict bodily harm to a person or damage to property.
- e. Members of Street Watch shall not divulge any confidential or privileged information that they may have acquired as a result of their membership of Street Watch.
- f. No member of Street Watch may exploit his or her membership for personal advantage or benefit.
- g. Members of Street Watch must at all times act in a manner that will uphold and promote the aims and objectives of Street Watch. (See the Constitution).
- h. Street Watch members will not engage in local political issues whilst representing Street Watch. Street Watch is not a lobbying group and not affiliated to any political party.
- i. Street Watch members will at all times act with courtesy and politeness providing public reassurance.
- j. Street Watch members must wear Street Watch high visibility jackets and walk in pairs when on patrol.
- k. Street Watch members must not drive vehicles whilst on patrol or to or from patrols.
- l. Street Watch pairs must carry at least one mobile phone whilst on patrol

- m. Street Watch pairs should register their patrol on the Street Watch Area website or have an agreed logging process with the local Police station, 24 hours prior to any patrol.
- n. Street Watch members must at all times remember that they are wearing the crest of their local police force and must act in a manner that is not going to undermine the essential nature of the partnership relationship.

4. Health and Safety Risk Assessment

- a. A flexible and dynamic risk assessment should exist for each Street Watch area and be regularly updated. This document should be consulted by all members.
- b. Health and Safety Issues should form a standard agenda item at all meetings.
- c. Street Watch members should comply with all control measures around identifiable risks to minimise the potential for risk.
- d. Where an unexpected event occurs, Street Watch members should conduct a dynamic risk assessment before engaging in the activity. Where possible this dynamic risk assessment should be recorded in writing in a Pocket Patrol Book.

5. Child / Vulnerable Adult Policy

- a. Street Watch members must not accept any parental, guardian or carer responsibilities for children or vulnerable adults.
- b. Unless in life saving or emergency situations, there must be no unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- c. Street Watch members will always patrol in pairs.
- d. If a child makes a disclosure regarding a crime or criminal offence, the police must be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- e. If a child or vulnerable person is intoxicated or in need of assistance, then the appropriate emergency service should be contacted immediately.
- f. If a child is found in possession of unlawful substances then the police must be called.
- g. All Street Watch members are police vetted prior to joining to volunteer level.
- h. If there is a concern regarding a child's or vulnerable adult's physical or mental welfare, then the police must be called.
- i. Street Watch members must at all times present themselves as role models and to engage in behaviour that sets the appropriate example.
- j. Street Watch members must be socially inclusive of the youth community and seek to establish their community needs.
- k. Street Watch members may take photo or video recordings within public spaces of matters occurring within public spaces to capture or preserve evidence of a criminal offence or anti-social behaviour.
- l. Street Watch members have no powers in law and must not move children or vulnerable children away from locations. The police should be called if such an intervention is required.
- m. Street Watch members can observe and monitor the behaviour of children through a physical presence.

6. Practical Patrol Guidance

6.1 Street Watch is about residents supporting their own communities. This guide is produced and supported by Street Watch members themselves as a general good advice guide regarding their walks. This guidance remains flexible and any Street Watch group can suggest amendments or additions. This guide should be reviewed frequently by members.

'Look, listen and report, but don't have a go'

- a) Street Watch members must always patrol in pairs.**
- b) You don't have to patrol a pre-planned route but be aware and familiar of your location at all times.**
- c) You must have access to a mobile phone.**
- d) Follow Street Watch written advice and guidelines and that given by local police.**
- e) Engage but avoid confrontational behaviour and conflict.** Street Watch members can engage appropriately with people and where necessary point out the behaviour that may undermine a community. Street Watch members should not confront or enter into any confrontational situation. By 'engaging', this means to speak positively with those who try and undermine our communities and in an appropriate manner to educate and bring to their attention the impact that their behaviour has. It is also about being inclusive of others and building relationships with others.

Members of Street Watch are not required or expected to engage with any persons who is suspected of being about to commit a crime or having committed a crime. Under these circumstances, the duty of members on patrol is to report any suspicious person or vehicle in the neighbourhood to the police.

Street Watch members shall withdraw from any scene or incident forthwith upon any hostility or threat being used and shall not confront the individuals. On withdrawing to a safe location, members are to call the police on '999'

NOTHING herein contained shall restrict the rights of any member as an individual to defend him or herself using reasonable force as stated by law if faced with a situation where the member or any other person is subjected to actual or reasonably anticipated violence.

- f) If in doubt call the police.**
- g) Always stay within the law.**
- h) Remember you are providing a visible sense of reassurance, an opportunity to observe what is happening in your communities and acting as a community point of contact. You are not directly tackling or confronting crime.**
- i) Develop community links.**
- j) Encourage people to be observant**
- k) Street Watch members must wear a high visibility jacket during patrols. This will help identify themselves as Street Watch Members and also be a health and safety precaution if patrolling in the evenings when light is reduced. It will also assist police patrols to identify members if called to an area. Street Watch members should also consider carrying a personal attack alarm. (Not provided)**
- l) Street Watch members are Police vetted for suitability.**
- m) Street Watch should be concerned about local crime and disorder issues. However, Street Watch is not a political lobbying group around issues such as housing development.**

- n) Under no circumstances should Street Watch members drive or use motorised vehicles whilst on Street Watch Patrols. This includes driving to and from locations. To do so may have insurance implications and secondly, ordinary driving may become compromised if observing for any community issues.
- o) When safe to do so, any incident of significance shall be recorded briefly in writing in the note books provided with detail of time; place; and the incident. On observing any suspicious behaviour members should record, the number of persons involved; description of persons by age, size and colour and clothing and any vehicle details. This information should be passed to the local Neighbourhood Police Officer, (SNT).
- p) Pet dogs may accompany members on patrol under the following conditions. Dogs must be covered by independent 3rd party insurance, kept on a lead at all times and must not be a breed of 'dangerous' dog or Section 1 dog as defined under the 'Dangerous Dog Act'
- q) Some schemes may be permitted access to radios which form part of Shop Watch, Taxi Watch, Country Watch or Pub Watch Schemes. Such radios must ONLY be used as part of Street Watch patrols and turned off at all other times. The radios are for reporting only and Street Watch members MUST not respond to incidents required to be attended by police.
- r) Street Watch members may use pedal cycles for patrols adhering to the highway code and risk assessments.

6.2 Street Watch is not about policing, it is about good citizenship, walking around saying hello and being friendly. It is also not about directing attention specifically at youth xi groups, it is about looking at all aspects of supporting a better community. The presence of community observers will have a significant and positive impact on reassurance and quality of life issues.

6.3 By joining Street Watch, members accept that the group is run by themselves as members of the community. Individual members have the responsibility for their own safety, actions and conduct. Street Watch is not a police run scheme and members are not classed as police volunteers. However, Street Watch is supported by the local police. Members accept the above as guidance that must be followed.

7. Induction Programme and Development

- a. At the start of a new scheme, Street Watch applicants receive a presentation by police, followed by a question and answer session, in total lasting about 1 hour. The presentation covers the concept of Street Watch, history, principles and expectations. The central theme is about good citizenship.
- b. All new members receive a copy of the 'Street Watch and Neighbourhood Observers Guide'
- c. All new members receive a laminated patrol advice card.
- d. Street Watch members have access to all information and guidance in the members area of the website.
- e. On their first patrol, it is recommended that a Street Watch member or pair is accompanied by a uniformed police officer or PCSO. Alternatively a new Street Watch member can be accompanied by an experienced Street Watch member.
- f. During Street Watch meetings, there is a standing agenda of 'Patrol Issues and feedback' Here members de-brief their experiences for group learning.
- g. A police officer or PCSO may attend meetings to offer continued advice and guidance.

8. Personal Responsibility, Liability and Accountability

8.1

- a. The Guidance is consulted with and agreed by members. Updates can be made after consultation with, and agreement by, all Area Committees.
- b. Members understand that Street Watch is a voluntary association.
- c. A copy of all documents are available to members via their Area websites
- d. Street Watch is not a legal person and as such does not have powers of whatever nature which might be in law to act or be acted upon.
- e. Insurance details can be found on the website of the Street Watch insurance brokers
www.accessinsurance.co.uk/street_watch
- f. There is Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance in force for all Street Watch schemes who are advised to Access Insurance, have paid the premium and which have received confirmation of cover. Personal Accident Insurance is provided to all members under the age of 80. It is a matter for individual Street Watch members if they wish to take out additional personal accident / injury cover or public liability insurance.
- g. All individual members are to familiarise themselves with the Insurance Cover for Personal Accident and Public Liability and know that in any other circumstances they act in their own capacity as individuals and liability will be in that capacity
- h. The brochure for the insurance cover setting out the terms and conditions will be sent to each scheme and a copy will be on the Access Insurance website

8.2 Street Watch members are members of the public walking their streets just like any other member of the public. Like any person, as a Street Watch member you are responsible for your own actions to be lawful, reasonable, proportionate and justified. There is no organisation liability accepted for the individual actions of Street Watch members or any injury to members resulting from patrols or the actions of others.

8.3 Street Watch is run by the community for the community. Street Watch members have no powers other than what is stated in law for any citizen. Street Watch is about promoting the concept of good citizenship. There is no training requirement, beyond the induction and development (7) or expectation for individuals to take risks or engage in any exceptional activity. Street Watch members make their own judgements in acting as good citizens. Like any member of the public, Street Watch members have the personal accountability to observe, report or challenge in a manner that is lawful and appropriate.

8.4 Although extremely rare and unlikely, anyone could find themselves in a position where they are faced with witnessing a challenging situation. Street Watch provides you with no additional equipment or training to manage such events because it is about what you would do as a good citizen. The principle of Street Watch is that a good citizen should 'do something and not nothing .' Street Watch guidance advises that the safest option if a confrontational situation is likely is not to engage and to dial 999.

9. Starting a Street Watch Scheme

9.1 To commence a scheme the local community needs to have a minimum of 6 to 10 people who are willing to commit 2 hours a month to patrolling their communities.

9.2 There needs to be a maximum number of members for each scheme. This is set to the demographics of the local area and the demand. The reason for this is to maintain manageability of the group for the Chairperson and due to the cost of the jackets and insurance cover. Street Watch has no income generation and each member accepted to the scheme is at a financial cost. There needs to be a considered approach to the numbers for each scheme.

9.3 The approach is to start all schemes with a small number of people (approx. 6). These are introduced to patrols giving a firm commitment of 2 hours per month. Once established, further interested members are invited to join. These then patrol with the more experienced members on a cascade system.

9.4 If there are over 10 interested individuals at the start of the scheme, then these members are placed on a waiting list until the initial 8 members are up and running.

9.5 A website page is set up for each scheme. There is a facility for people to book patrols via the website which is advisable but not compulsory. Messages can also be left and received via the website.

9.6 Members on their first patrols should be either supported by experienced members a Police Officer or PCSO.

9.7 All members must read the Guidance Manual before their first patrol.

9.8 To request a Street Watch scheme for your area residents should contact their local Safer Neighbourhood Police Team or contact the Area Street Watch co-ordinator via the Area website.

9.9 It is desirable for Street Watch schemes to be supported by the local police of the District , Borough, Neighbourhood in which they operate. Area Street Watch schemes however, aim to gain the support at force level through the signing of a Service Level Agreement by an ACPO member of the force area in which they are to start. This is to help assist in establishing a strong partnership framework between residents and the police in working together to make our communities safe. Lawful citizen patrols is a civil right and the signing of a service level agreement with police at ACPO level, although helpful is not compulsory. Under the localism agenda, relationships with local police at District, Borough or Neighbourhood Level is the priority and should be widely encouraged.

10. Public Liability and Accident / Injury Insurance

10.1 Street Watch schemes are covered by Public Liability and Accident Injury Insurance.

10.2 There is no age limit under public liability but members must meet all the police vetting checks.

10.3 Under Personal accident, the upper age limit is 80 but the Permanent Total Disablement cover is only provided for those under 65. As a general rule it is linked to not being able to attend to any business or occupations as a result of injuries. Individual members wanting to extend this cover to over 65 may take out additional individual insurance at their own cost. The lower age limit for membership is 18 years.

10.4 Street Watch schemes are capped to a maximum number of members. Only members listed on the Area website 'members area' are covered.

10.5 Insurance covers total numbers and not named individuals. Hence the membership can be changed without updating the insurance.

10.6 Insurance premiums are calculated using a minimum of 15 persons who will be on patrol in pairs or more, at any one time per scheme. Those persons will be insured as being members of the scheme. Any additional persons on patrol will incur extra premium.

10.7 Access Underwriting Ltd are the appointed brokers for Street Watch schemes

10.8 Details of the insurance cover is contained within the insurance scheme brochure which is available on the Area website or on the Access Insurance website Street Watch page
www.accessinsurance.co.uk/streetwatch