# **Southwater Neighbourhood Wardens**

Annual Report for April 2024- March 2025

# Background:

Horsham District Council's first Neighbourhood Warden Scheme started in Ashington in 2001 and today, HDC is now 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 2025, 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.

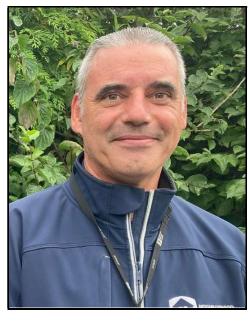
| Illegal/Nuisance Activities                   | Actions  |
|---|--|
| Anti-Social Behaviour                         | <ul> <li>Responding to Reports of ASB</li> <li>Visual foot patrol at relevant times and locations</li> <li>Time critical reporting of incidents and updating outcomes</li> </ul>   |
| Criminal Activity                             | <ul> <li>Responding to reports of crime where appropriate</li> <li>Reporting crimes to Sussex Police</li> </ul>  |
| Public Spaces Protection<br>Order             | <ul> <li>Responding to reports of breaches of PSPO</li> <li>Time critical reporting and retention of information</li> <li>Issue of FPN if and when appropriate</li> </ul>  |
| Road Safety/Traffic                           | Actions  |
| Dangerous and irresponsible Driving & Parking | <ul> <li>Visual Monitoring of Traffic Speed</li> <li>Liaison with Southwater Speed Watch group</li> <li>Information collation and dissemination to authorities</li> <li>Advise vehicle owners and request vehicles are moved</li> <li>Regular school attendance at peak times</li> </ul> |

| Community Liaison    | Activities   |
|----------------------|--|
| Vulnerable residents | <ul> <li>Maintain regular contact</li> <li>Retain appropriate data</li> <li>Liaise with proper authorities</li> </ul>  |
| Local Business       | <ul> <li>Establish business links and networks</li> <li>Retain list of business contacts</li> <li>Explore the principles of DISC</li> </ul>  |
| Activity Groups      | <ul> <li>Regular scheduled visits to Community Groups</li> <li>Education and Awareness Programmes to groups</li> </ul>   |
| Schools/Playgroups   | <ul> <li>Establish links with all schools and pre-school groups</li> <li>Create an education awareness package for Yr 6</li> <li>Visible presence at start/end of day when possible</li> </ul> |

| Environmental            | Activities   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Health and Safety Issues | Reporting any concerns to SPC immediately  |
| Litter/Fly Tipping       | <ul> <li>Liaison with Southwater litter picking volunteers</li> <li>As appropriate investigating incidents of fly tipping</li> </ul> |

| Communication | Activities   |
|---------------|--|
| Sussex Police | Regular contact with NPT/PCSO & Police Volunteer Office  |
| Residents     | <ul> <li>Scheduled monthly 'surgeries' for residents to make contact</li> <li>'Drop box' positioned in Beeson House</li> </ul> |
| Social Media  | <ul> <li>Establish relevant social media platforms</li> <li>Regular media updates</li> </ul>                                   |

# Southwater.Wardens@horsham.gov.uk



Dominic Woodhead 07789 943193 <u>Dominic.Woodhead@horsham.gov.uk</u>



Bettina Long 07789 943156 Bettina.Long@horsham.gov.uk

Table 1 below shows the Neighbourhood Warden activities for 2023-2024:

| Patrol hours TOTAL:                 | 1243.25 | ASB incidents reported to us TOTAL: | 177.00 |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Foot (high visibility)              | 529.75  | Noise                               | 8      |
| Vehicle                             | 713.50  | Neighbours                          | 7      |
| Notices/warnings TOTAL:             | 124.00  | Driving/vehicles                    | 124    |
| 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    |

Table 2 below shows Neighbourhood Warden activities from April 2024 to March 2025 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:                 | 1534.00 | ASB incidents reported to us TOTAL: | 289.00 |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Foot (high visibility)              | 566.75  | Noise                               | 9      |
| Vehicle                             | 967.25  | Neighbours                          | 5      |
| Notices/warnings TOTAL:             | 222.00  | Driving/vehicles                    | 231    |
| Verbal Warning                      | 102     | Bicycles                            | 9      |
| Parking Alert                       | 120     | Alcohol/Drugs                       | 1      |
| Yellow card warning (ASB)           | 0       | Other                               | 34     |
| Fixed Penalty Notice                | 0       |                                     |        |
| Community Protection Warning/Notice | 0       | Clear up/disposal reports TOTAL:    | 274.00 |
| Police reports TOTAL:               | 249.00  | Fly tipping / flyposting            | 35/35  |
| In person                           | 106     | Graffiti                            | 8      |
| Phone (including 101 and 999)       | 95      | Dog fouling                         | 62     |
| Email                               | 31      | Litter                              | 75     |
| E-CINS (multi-agency reporting)     | 0       | Drug litter                         | 18     |
| Intelligence report                 | 17      | Hazards                             | 41     |
| Media reports TOTAL:                | 59.00   | Community events attended           | 61     |
| Press release / Community magazines | 15      | School contact                      | 77     |
| Social Media Posts                  | 44      | Youth engagement                    | 760    |
| Vulnerable People Welfare Checks    | 90      | Reports to DVLA                     | 7      |
| Signposting                         | 82      | Reports to Operation Crackdown      | 14     |
| Safeguarding referral               | 1       | Admin                               | 420    |

### Anti-Social Behaviour – Our Role

- 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), NonEmergency 101 phone number or the webform <a href="https://www.sussex.police.uk/reportcrime">https://www.sussex.police.uk/reportcrime</a>
- 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 three years ago and the positive transformation has been significant and long-lasting. This is to be celebrated and the young people who live in our village deserve considerable credit for choosing not to succumb to the negative influences they are subjected to.

That said, a small group of under 14-year-olds has started to fall short of our expectations so we have initiated banning orders and letters have been sent to their parents. We work to establish professional relationships with young people in the village and offer positive interventions where appropriate. We work in close collaboration with all partner enforcement agencies to modify unacceptable behaviours and promote positive engagement within our community.

#### **Business Community**

We have been working very closely with Co-Op, Budgens and Texaco in particular this year as they have suffered a notable and disproportionate increase in thefts from their outlets. The vast majority of high value thefts are committed by prolific, adult offenders and occasionally by organised crime groups that travel around the district.

With the roll out of the DISC information sharing platform, the collective mentality of shop staff within Southwater is that we do not deserve to be targeted by criminals and action will be taken. Information sharing between all of us has improved and we have enjoyed some notable successes resulting in arrests and the recovery of stolen goods. We continue to deliver a clear message 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 (ASB) incidents witnessed by or reported to us over the past year is again in relation to the use of vehicles with over 200 incidents being dealt with by us directly. 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.



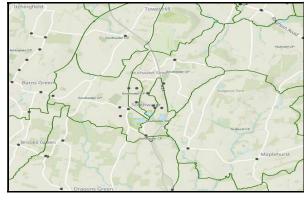




# Fly Tipping/Fly Posting/Litter/Graffiti

<u>Fly tipping</u> continues to be an issue due to our geography, access routes and 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 and arranging removal.















<u>Fly posting</u> incidents increased considerably this year as small commercial advertisers attempted to increase their visibility in a competitive marketplace. Any signage contravening regulations needs to be removed promptly in order for advertisers to avoid legal action.









When <u>Graffiti</u> 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. Thankfully, the parish has only had a very small number of issues in this regard.





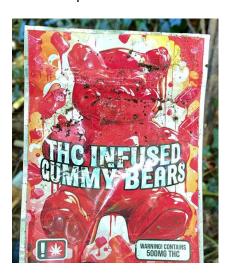




We work with our fabulous Parish <u>Litter</u> Pickers, Community Groups and other amazing volunteers who work tirelessly to keep street litter to a minimum.

### **Drugs Litter**

We are delighted that the drugs litter has continued to remain low after a notable drop two years ago. We did however locate the packaging for a number of different edible Cannabis products which we published in order inform and educated parents in particular to the potential risks.







For more information please visit: <a href="https://www.talktofrank.com/news/dodgycannabisedibles">https://www.talktofrank.com/news/dodgycannabisedibles</a>

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 try to link up with as many of these as possible throughout the year in order to support residents of all ages and abilities throughout the village. Below is just a snapshot of the community engagement we have undertaken this year.

- Southwater Infant & Junior Academies' Summer Fair
- The Southwater Family Fun Fest



With the assistance of Southwater Parish Council and Horsham District Council, we were able to supply bungee trampolines free of charge for our younger residents





- Southwater Youth Project summer sports session
- Ashington Festival to support colleagues at this busy event
- Southwater Games Club
- The Welcome Club
- Southwater Horticultural Society Flower Show









# Bat Walks in conjunction with our colleagues from HDC's Parks & Countryside Team





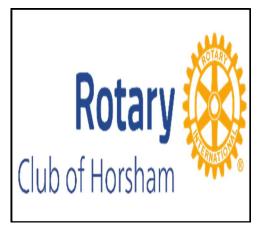




- Blackberry Fair at Castlewood Primary School
- Parking Promise event held by the Southwater Infant Academy
- VIP visit to Southwater from Pudsey bear and the team from the Rotary Club of Horsham







• We held our first 'Journey in Southwater' event in the Parish Chamber of Beeson House for parents and carers of Autistic and SEN Children. This is an opportunity to meet other residents in a relaxed and supportive environment, share experiences, strategies and concerns in a safe space. These are now held monthly and are well attneded.





• The Southwater 'Op Jingle Bells 2024' went ahead, completely funded by SPC's Chairman's Discretionary Fund. We supported Chairman, Derek Moore to deliver a few gifts to our three schools as we offered a little extra sparkle to their Christmas celebrations.



- 'Are you Scam Savvy' presented by the Digital Safety & Fraud Team from WSCC
- Southwater Christmas Festival organised by the Community Partnership
- Decoration of the Phoenix Tree









- Christmas Fair held by Southwater Junior and Infant Academies
- Welcome Club Christmas Lunch held at The Sports Club
- Set-up meetings for a friendship group for residents at Roundstone Park







• Great British Spring Clean organised by Southwater Parish Council & Community Partnership











#### **Chairman's Discretionary Fund**

On Christmas Eve, following a call from a concerned resident in Christs Hospital, we went to help a vulnerable adult. With the support of Southwater Parish Council, we helped them to travel to a Charity Hostel which was able to provide them with a warm and safe space for the night.

#### 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 and help others find the right guidance and advice to improve their situation.

#### Case Studies

- Helped vulnerable people find lost keys and other property during their visit to the village
- Home visit to a concerned resident who thought they had found hazardous waste
- Home visits to several vulnerable people after they received **Scam phone calls**
- Provided **food parcels** to more than 12 vulnerable residents
- Worked with PCSO Cecil to check on the welfare of a resident who had declined to engage
- Undertook welfare checks at **insecure homes** found whilst on patrol
- Undertook an Early Intervention home visit with parents of a young person in relation to knives
- Carried out Welfare Checks on victims of crime after Police investigations were completed
- Supported a vulnerable resident who is unable to make phone calls by themselves
- Assisted Police with a search for a **suicidal Missing Person** who was later found safe and well
- Supported a victim of verbal abuse
- Dealt with several **medical emergencies/accidents** some requiring emergency services
- Supported a resident recovering from a serious injury sustained in an accident at home
- Assisted a vulnerable, partially sighted, older person to remove trip hazards outside their home
- Provided information about meetings and clubs in Southwater to a resident feeling isolated
- Guided a resident who was mis-sold a high value item and they received a full refund
- Visited an unwell, vulnerable resident who had previous declined medical help
- Reunited a **lost child** separated from their parent in Southwater Country Park
- Helped several people sleeping rough to engage with appropriate services and get support

#### Young People

We get to know and support younger members of the community in an informal context often outside of organised groups when we are out on patrol. We are able to feedback any causes for concern to agencies and schools, 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.

#### **Southwater Youth Project**

We continue to drop in to the Southwater Youth Project sessions which help children by promoting self-esteem through activities. These sessions provide a safe place for young people to ask difficult questions, learn about themselves and develop skills whilst being supported by trusted adults. This has helped us to maintain our existing relationships with young people and encourage new ones plus provides a further layer of support should the children need to talk in confidence.

# Dog related issues

Dog fouling is an offence and if caught, we are authorised to issue Fixed Penalty Notices but, alternatively, you could find yourself in court. The situation has stabilised over the last two years which is a real credit to all responsible dog owners. There is more to do though as over 60 incidents of dog waste being left in public areas is still far too much. This year we have also engaged with animal charity search teams and provided awareness literature in relation to specific campaigns.







# 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. We have also had a number of complaints relating to electric motorbikes (which are illegal to ride in public areas) being ridden in an anti-social manner within the village. These incidents and further intelligence have been passed to Sussex Police.

# Parish specific/other

#### **Hazards**

As part of our role, we are always looking for Hazards. This is just a small number of incidents we have dealt with this year:

- Organised a temporary road closure on A24 to protect loose dog attempting to cross
- Organised for the removal of dead wildlife
- Cut back low hanging branches causing issues for motorists
- Reported an abandoned vehicle on a bend in a live lane to the police
- Dealt with collection of bladed articles and provided education around carrying of knives
- Alerted a dog owner that their pet was trying to escape through their broken fence
- Reported overgrowing vegetation presenting risk to pedestrians and road users to WSCC
- Reported need for urgent remedial works on several drain covers and paving
- Reported missing or damaged road signs to WSCC Highways for replacement
- Reported missing or damaged road bollards
- Located owners of numerous insecure vehicles in order to protect property
- Assisted Air Ambulance with crowd control to enable their safe departure following emergency









# Other

Due to the amazing generosity of **Alpesh Shingadia** and the wonderful team at **Budgens**, we were provided with lots of bottles of Lucozade which we were asked to share with Community Groups, Volunteers, residents and anyone else we met who help our village to be such a great place to live. Here are just a view pictures of some who accepted this donation.















We joined the **Conversation Starter Project** for their weekly walk in Southwater. We took a gentle walk through Southwater Country Park together which gave everyone the opportunity to have a relaxed conversation whilst enjoying nature.







# **Training**

Orlo a system used by HDC for managing social media.

Fraud Prevention training from WSCC.

**Naloxone** awareness training delivered by a CGL (Change Grow Live) Harm Reduction Lead **Alzheimer's Society** refresher training

**Book When** training for an online event booking system to support delivery of future projects **Rest Centre** training to set up a short term, temporary, emergency welfare shelter

# **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 (on Facebook) and @HorshamWardens (on Twitter)

# **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.

# Watch this space:



# **Stakeholders and Community Groups**

### **Sussex Police**

Since our arrival in the village, we have worked closely with PCSO, Damian Cecil, who is a great support to us and continues to provide residents with the benefits of his extensive local knowledge and a further layer of support. We have worked collaboratively on Missing Persons searches, vulnerable persons checks, early intervention in relation to youth anti-social behaviour and intelligence development relating to shop theft and drugs in the village.

### West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

We have established our relationship with WSFRS through our attendance at regular meetings where we are made aware of issues specific to Southwater and the District as a whole. We have linked them in with our local community organisations to provide presentations and carry out a free **Safe and Well Visits**. These involves a pre-arranged visit to your home to offer advice on how to make it safer and, where appropriate, fit smoke alarms or other specialist fire detection equipment.

<u>Sussex Community Search Team</u> is an all-volunteer group of dedicated and enthusiastic people who are ready and willing to be called out by Sussex Police or participants in the Sussex Resilience Forum. During incidents and emergencies, they bring together emergency services, councils, utilities and other essential public and voluntary services to work in partnership to support the local community.

<u>West Sussex Trading Standards Service</u> has a limited number of call blockers available to residents that may be vulnerable to phone scammers. To qualify for a call blocker which is proven to block up to 98 per cent of nuisance calls, residents need to live in West Sussex and regularly receive scam and nuisance calls and have care or support needs due to factors such as age, mobility or mental health. Installations will be prioritized to those assessed as being most vulnerable and at risk.





### **Neighbourhood Watch Association**

We continue to collaborate with Neighbourhood Watch in relation to awareness campaigns and creating supportive, street level, engagement to collectively protect residents and their property.

<u>Turning Tides</u> provides a range of homeless support services in West Sussex. Every year they accommodate over 200 homeless people in their 20+ properties across the county. We have collaborated with them in relation to several people passing through Southwater who needed help.

<u>AgeUK</u> aim to provide life-enhancing services and vital support to people in later life. With local partners, they deliver a range of services across the UK. Representatives have attended our Warden drop-in sessions and provided expert advice to residents.

# Registered Social Landlords and Property Management

We have worked closely with a number of local RSLs in relation to several neighbour disputes being dealt with by the HDC ASB Coordinators. Also, Roundstone have become an active partner, helping to identify vulnerable, isolated residents and setting up of support networks.

# NHS/GPs/Prevention Assessment Team/Adult Care Services

We have received considerable practical advice and guidance from these services particularly during several medical incidents that we have attended but also in developing care packages for some residents particularly following a stay in hospital.









### **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.

