



Dear Watch members,

Welcome to the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. We hope you will enjoy the contents but would also like to hear from you if you have any preferences on topics to include, feedback on the current format or your own good news story. If you do, please let us know on the contact details above.

## Your Neighbourhood Watch



Over the last few months Westminster's Neighbourhood Watch Manager has run a city wide training programme, training all safer neighbourhood teams in what Neighbourhood Watch is and what the benefits

are to both the watches and their partners. This will improve the contact you have with the local police and with the council as we now have clear areas of responsibility and work areas. The Westminster Neighbourhood Watch team has

also been joined by a volunteer to support the work we do (see below).

This means that your day to day contact will be with your local police who knows the area and understand your local concerns. If you have not been contacted already, by your contact officer you will be shortly. We at city hall will provide further training, manage the data base, inquiries from new watches, organise the AGM and general policy development.

We are sure that this will provide a better service to all watches and a more coherent approach to Neighbourhood Watch City wide.

## Investigating Offences of Burglary, Robbery and Vehicle crime



### Letter from DCI Richard Neville, Detective Chief Inspector responsible for tackling acquisitive crime

Dear Resident,

As the Detective Chief Inspector responsible

for investigating offences of Burglary, Robbery and Vehicle crime on Westminster Borough I thought I would take this opportunity to consider how we can work together to prevent offences and stopping you or your friends and relatives becoming victims of crime.

As a member of the Neighbourhood Watch you are well aware of the crime prevention advice given by the police, but are your neighbours aware? If you see something that you think may leave them vulnerable please tell them or contact your local Neighbourhood Policing team.

In my job I see a lot of good police work, officers regularly stopping known thieves and finding them with property that they can give no

explanation for having. They carry out their duty and arrest the thief.

CID officers then have the task of trying to prove the property is stolen and tracing its owner. Time after time this is unsuccessful, as the property is not marked and serial numbers are not recorded. This may mean the thief walks away. Please help, mark your property and record the serial numbers. There are a number of methods for doing this and your Safer Neighbourhood Team will be happy to advise.

If you have any information to assist in identifying burglars/thieves or where they sell stolen goods please call your Safer Neighbourhood Team or if you wish to remain anonymous call CRIMESTOPPERS on 0800 555111.

Yours sincerely,  
DCI Richard Neville.



## CommunitySafe

CommunitySafe is an email system which is used by both the City of London and City of Westminster Police, to send out information about incidents such as missing persons or road interruptions. The local council and emergency services also use the system to tell members of the public when an emergency has occurred.

It is generally recommended that anyone living or working in Westminster sign up. In the failed attacks in late June 2007, CommunitySafe subscribers were notified 6

hours before the national press reported the incident.

You can register at [www.communitysafe.gov.uk](http://www.communitysafe.gov.uk) and elect to be part of the Westminster user group

If you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to go into the website [www.communitysafe.gov.uk](http://www.communitysafe.gov.uk)



## New Met Volunteer working with the Neighbourhood Watch Team

Hello, I'm Laurence, a Met Police volunteer.

At Westminster police there are currently 31 volunteers assisting with: Neighbourhood Watch, front counters, community and cohesion, arts and antiquities, safer neighbourhood teams, Police Cadets & CCTV viewing for the CID. Everyone with the time to give and the enthusiasm to make a difference can apply to the Met Volunteer Programme. There is no particular skills needed, just the right attitude. The hours are depending on your own schedule and availability.

I have been a volunteer for the Met Police at Westminster for over a year. It has been a very diverse, rewarding and unique experience. It is a great way to contribute and make a real difference to policing in London. I started at Reception Services. Training was provided to carry out the role correctly. It was very challenging and interesting to face the public in different circumstances. I then moved to Belgravia Station as a Training Team Administrator. I gained new skills and became part of a new team. My help

allowed the Police officers to spend more time doing what they are trained to do. I am now a part of the Westminster Neighbourhood Watch team. This is a new challenge, in a new team with new tasks. I am really excited to be a part of the team helping the community working together for safer neighbourhoods. Also, I am able to brush up on my work skills and develop new ones, during flexible hours. I am involved in every stage of the role as a full member of the team. I will be replying to your emails and phone messages and I am in the office every Thursday and Friday afternoon.



Certificate for One Year Volunteer Recognition, Simon Owen (OCQ) and Laurence.

If you want rewarding experiences and to contribute in helping your community, you can download a Met Volunteer Programme application form at [www.metpolicecareers.co.uk](http://www.metpolicecareers.co.uk) or call a member of our recruitment team on 0845 727 2212 between 8am – 6pm on Monday-Friday.



## Westminster Police Skills Database

On the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007, Westminster Police's Community Cohesion Team publicly launched the "Skills database" at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. The Skills Database captures and utilises the "life" skills and experiences of employees and volunteers attached to the MPS on Westminster.

All Borough personnel were sent a letter asking for them to *voluntarily* register their skills. Over 350 individuals responded and their skill was entered into the Westminster Skills database. The desired criteria is:

- The ability to speak a variety of Languages (Inc. British Sign Language)
- Knowledge of a particular faith group
- Knowledge of a culture or lifestyle
- Knowledge of a particular community
- Experience of living with a disability.

From January 2008 to date there have been over 150 separate incidents where the database has identified a police employee or volunteer with specialist skills. This has enabled them to resolve everyday policing incidents such as helping a lost Spanish tourist, or attending a social services case

conference, and assisting with knowledge of the Kurdish Culture.

The skills have been captured on an IT database and once an incident is identified that may benefit from having an individual with specialist knowledge, a request is sent to deploy them to the task/incident.

Language skills are among the most significant skill sets recorded with in the Skills Database, at 25.7%. Many Borough personnel recorded that they spoke upwards of two or three languages (over 50 different languages were identified as being spoken by Westminster Police employees). Others stated that they have family members with disabilities, or have had experience of being carers.

Early results have indicated significant cost savings (£200,000 to date) for Westminster Police. This has generated a lot of interest and recognition at corporate level, and with other statutory partners such as the Crown Prosecution Service, the London Criminal Justice Board and HM Prison Service.

## Motor Vehicle Crime

Motor Vehicle crime in some parts of Westminster is rising. But numbers are still proportionately low. The most recent figure show that over a two week period early April there was 14 thefts of motor vehicle and 103 thefts from motor vehicle, in all of Westminster. That is a reduction of 33% and 39%, respectively compared with same period last year.

Cars are usually targeted when they have small portable valuables on display, such as satellite navigation systems, mobile phones, laptop computers and Mp3 music players. However, even a jacket in the back seat or loose change can be enough to tempt someone. The method of entry is often by breaking a window, forcing a door open or vehicles being accessed whilst drivers are paying for parking.

Increasingly, distraction thieves will speak to the driver and an accomplice will slightly open the car door or boot. The car still appears secure. However

when the central locking is engaged by pressing your key fob the door or boot remains unlocked.

Please help us reduce thefts from cars, by:

- Removing all items of property when you leave your car
- Double check that all doors and your boot are locked
- Be aware that Bluetooth devices in your car can be traced - switch Bluetooth off
- If you have a Satellite Navigation device, please make sure no mark is left on your windscreen and you have removed the case from your vehicle.

Vehicle crime remains a priority and we are making good progress. If you see suspicious activity happening now, call the police on 999. If suspicious activity has already happened inform the police on 0300 123 1212.



### Watch Online

Find out more about Neighbourhood Watch and crime prevention through the following websites:

**Home Office Neighbourhood Watch:**

[www.neighbourhoodwatch.uk.com](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.uk.com)

**Home Office Crime Reduction Website:**

[www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk)

**UK Neighbourhood Watch Trust:**

[www.neighbourhoodwatch.net](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.net)

**London Neighbourhood Watch Association:**

[www.lnwa.org](http://www.lnwa.org)

**Neighbourhood Watch Info:**

[www.nwinfo.co.uk](http://www.nwinfo.co.uk)

**Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Advice:**

[www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention](http://www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention)

**Home Office Crime Reduction Advice:**

[www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk)

### Your Watch details are:

If the above space is empty and you don't already know who your Co-ordinator is, it is likely that there is no Neighbourhood Watch in your area.

Contact Westminster's Neighbourhood Watch Office on 020 7641 2117 or email [neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk) for further information, and to find out about starting up a Watch in your area.

Call the switchboard numbers of your local police stations to get in touch with your local Crime Prevention Officer and Safer Neighbourhood Team:

Paddington Green	020 7402 1212
Marylebone	020 7486 1212
West End Central	020 7437 1212
Charing Cross	020 7240 1212
Belgravia	020 7730 1212
Harrow	020 7402 1212
St John's Wood	020 7486 1212

### What you report *can* make a difference

You and your neighbours know what should be going on in your area and, importantly, what should not.

The Police and Council won't necessarily know what is going on in your area unless you tell them and the more reports they receive on a particular issue, the more evidence they have to action it. If you witness a crime or anti-social behaviour, report it.

To report non-urgent anti-social behaviour to the Police, phone 0300 123 1212 or online at [www.westminster.gov.uk/streetproblems](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/streetproblems)

To report issues with street lighting, noise, graffiti, roads etc to the Council, phone 020 7641 2000 or online at [www.westminster.gov.uk/streetproblems](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/streetproblems)

Contact your local Safer Neighbourhood Team or Police Station (details above) for non-urgent crime, community issues and long-term problem solving.

**In an emergency (i.e. where there's an immediate threat to people or property) dial 999**

Remember that working with your neighbours will improve the quality of life where you live, so please support your local Neighbourhood Watch.

With best wishes from the Westminster City Council Neighbourhood Watch Office.  
*Westminster Neighbourhood Watch is delivered by Westminster City Council in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Service and the Metropolitan Police Authority.*