

Welcome to the May edition of the Sutton Neighbourhood Watch (SNHW) newsletter. We hope you and your family have been enjoying the welcome brighter days and getting out and about in your communities. Thank you, as always, for your continued support in helping keep Sutton a safe, resilient and connected community.

In this edition, we highlight opportunities to volunteer at upcoming community events, share an important police update for residents; outline new resources to help young people protect themselves from scams; report on a recent Volunteer Police Cadets Day of Action; provide an update on new police technology tackling shoplifting; and offer guidance on staying vigilant against investment fraud. We also include a reminder on how you can continue supporting SNHW through the Co-op Community Fund.

Event Volunteers – Your Association Needs You!

Although we have around 8,000 members, our work continues thanks to a small number of dedicated people who give a significant amount of time and effort freely for the benefit of the whole borough so we would really encourage more of you to please get involved. This could be a regular commitment - such as joining our committee in one of the vacant roles - or sharing your IT skills as part of a social media team. Equally, one-off help makes a huge difference too, for example, supporting events over the summer – please see the list of events below. With a few more hands, we can achieve a great deal together and ensure that as many people as possible work together to keep ourselves, our homes and communities safe.

- **Cheam Charter Fair**, Park Road, Cheam, SM3 8PY - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on **Saturday 16 May** – volunteers needed
- **St Helier Festival**, field opposite David Weir Centre, Carshalton, SM5 1SL - 12 noon to 4 p.m. on **Saturday 20 June** – volunteers needed during the day and for set up.
- **Belmont Festival**, Belmont Village, SM2 6BS (between the Brighton Road and Belmont Rise – A217), - 12 noon to 5 p.m. on **Sunday 5 July**, - volunteers needed
- **Carshalton EcoFair**, Carshalton Park, Ruskin Road, Carshalton, SM5 3ET from 10.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Bank Holiday **Monday 31 August** – volunteers needed during the day and for set up.

An hour or two of your time can make a meaningful impact — so if you're able to help, please get in touch here: <https://www.suttonneighbourhoodwatch.co.uk/contact/>

Community Safety Update – Police Statement (23 April)

Many of us have been shocked and alarmed following the report of a serious sexual assault in Epsom in the early hours of 11 April so in view of the ongoing public concern, we are sharing the latest information from the police.

Sarah Grahame, Assistant Chief Constable, Epsom and Ewell Beat (Surrey Police): This is an update in relation to a report of a rape in Epsom which we received in the early hours on Saturday, 11 April.

“A thorough investigation, including an extensive examination of CCTV footage of the woman’s movements, house to house enquiries, interviewing witnesses and forensic tests, has been carried out. Through this examination of all evidence, we can conclude that no sexual offence occurred on this occasion, and we are closing the investigation.

What has become clear is that a woman in her 20s during a night out in Epsom, sustained an accidental head injury prior to making a confused report.

The woman involved has given us permission to share this information with you and she continues to be supported by relevant services.

To be clear, we take every report of sexual offending seriously, and any such report is treated with sensitivity. To do this, it is imperative that the appropriate time is allowed to complete a thorough investigation and support is given to the complainant to progress enquiries at their own pace. This limits what information we are able to release publicly.

At the early stages of this investigation, we issued an appeal for any witnesses or information that could help us progress our enquiries and identify any potential suspects. There was a lack of information in our initial appeal particularly regarding potential persons of interest. This was because the descriptions given were vague and limited. We recognise this caused concern amongst the community. We are now confident that there was no offence, and there were no suspects.

Our local officers will maintain a visible presence in Epsom over the coming days so please speak to them if you have any concerns or questions.”

Young Friends Against Scams – Supporting Our Young People

The National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team has relaunched its Young Friends Against Scams resources, providing valuable tools for educators, youth leaders and volunteers working with young people aged 11 and above.

The refreshed materials are designed to help young people recognise and protect themselves from a wide range of scams, including doorstep crime, postal scams, telephone fraud and online threats. They also raise awareness of how to identify when others may be at risk.

The resource pack includes structured lesson plans, training presentations, interactive activities and certificates of completion, making it easier for organisations to deliver engaging and effective sessions.

These resources represent an important step in strengthening early awareness and resilience, helping to equip younger members of our community with the knowledge and confidence to stay safe in an increasingly complex environment.

For further information: <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/young-friends>

Volunteer Police Cadets – Day of Action

The Sutton police volunteer cadets are an admirable group of young people who often participate in local operations to assist the police and Trading Standards colleagues, so it is with interest that

we are pleased to report on Friday, 10 April, the cadets, supported by Safer Neighbourhood and special police officers, undertook a coordinated day of action across the borough.

The presence of knives in our borough is always of great concern, and the operation began with a weapons sweep at Collingdale Recreation Ground, where officers recovered six large nitrous oxide canisters, vehicle licence plates, tools and a small knife. In addition, two weapons - a small sword and a double-sided blade - were voluntarily surrendered.

The second phase involved a joint test purchase operation with Sutton Council's Trading Standards Team, focusing on preventing the sale of knives and vapes to underage individuals. Of all the premises visited, only one store was found to be in breach, and this lapse has since been addressed by Trading Standards.

This collaborative initiative highlights the continued commitment of young cadets and partner agencies to maintaining safety standards and supporting enforcement activity across Sutton and all involved should feel proud of all that has been achieved.

Investment Fraud – Staying Vigilant

We are all faced with the possibility of being scammed in one way or another and investment fraud continues to present a significant and evolving risk. Latest figures indicate that victims nationally lost an average of £1,675 every minute last year, with total losses reaching £879.8 million - equivalent to approximately £2.4 million per day.

In 2025, 34,673 reports of investment fraud were recorded, representing a 31% increase compared with the previous year. This rise reflects both growing criminal activity and increased awareness, with many individuals identifying fraud when reviewing investments or financial positions.

Criminals often exploit trust through unsolicited messages, persuasive advertising and promises of unusually high or guaranteed returns. They may also encourage secrecy, which should be treated as a warning sign.

Residents are encouraged to take a disciplined approach before committing funds. The Financial Conduct Authority's firm checker tool provides a reliable way to verify whether an organisation or individual is authorised. Additional support is available via the FCA consumer helpline on 0800 111 6768.

Any suspicious activity should be reported promptly via www.reportfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. Early reporting plays a critical role in disruption and prevention, helping to protect both individuals and the wider community.

Tackling Shoplifting – New Technology Update

The Metropolitan Police has introduced new retail crime reporting technology as part of a wider effort to tackle shoplifting more effectively across London.

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Since January, the system has been piloted in areas including Lewisham and central London. It enables retailers to submit crime reports and CCTV footage instantly, giving officers immediate access to high-quality evidence and helping identify repeat offenders operating across boroughs.

Early results show a positive outcome rate of 21.4%, meaning more than one in five cases lead to an arrest, charge or conviction - significantly higher than the Met average of 14%. The initiative also supports faster investigations and stronger case building.

This technology forms part of a broader approach that combines neighbourhood policing, improved intelligence, and closer collaboration with retailers. Where clear CCTV footage is available, officers can identify a large proportion of suspects, demonstrating the value of timely reporting and evidence sharing.

Co-op SNHW Partnership – a Reminder

And finally, our usual reminder to support us by choosing Sutton Neighbourhood Watch as your local Community Cause. Your support helps us expand our work across the borough and reach more residents.

<https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/99128>