

LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION

Final DRAFT Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held at the Civic Offices, Sutton, on Wednesday 16th September 2026

1. Members Present – Appendix A. Not for circulation

2. Apologies for absence – Appendix A. Not for circulation

3. Opening remarks by the President. The meeting was opened by Ruth Dombey who welcomed all of those attending and said that the SNHW had has a busy year with some important changes but would leave the detail of what has happened through the year to the Chair Anna James.

Ruth introduced herself and added that she was happy to be President at the AGM and that she valued those present for their individual contributions. She reminded everyone that Sutton remains a very safe borough and that is because everyone contributes to good interaction between neighbours and police, and for her those partnerships have a vital role. The downside may be that the safety of the borough when viewed in some quarters might equate to a reduced level of support and resources; however recent arrests are evidence of the progress that is being made as is seen in Met Engage (which she considers a very useful tool) communications. She added that perception of crime is often very different from actual crime, and it is important to understand the real story and not the sound bites that one sees so often, and the recent issues with the RNLI are a good example of how this gets out of hand.

So, in summary she encourages communication, sign up to Met Engage, and sharing of the information that emanates from SNHW, and in that sense she feels the police themselves could do a better job of sharing good news. She then handed over to the Chair.

4. Minutes of the 2025 AGM. The Minutes were approved with no amendments/alterations.

5. Chair's Report. Anna James again welcomed the attendees and the fact that it offered an opportunity to meet for a closer understanding of the local situation. She said that there were three things that she would like to cover:

a. The rising costs of communication, and the lack of funding, had severely impacted the SNHW and precipitated the move to the national scheme. This had not been an easy process after 20 years of working with the previous system, and the lack of initial sign-ups meant that approximately 4000 existing members had to be uploaded centrally (which had in itself caused some concerns about possible scam or data breach with Alert) but had led to some progress. Unfortunately, use of the national scheme is now the only available method of communication.

b. Membership of the Central organisation. At the present time we are in great need of both a Membership Secretary and a Social Media Lead. Regarding the membership secretary, over the preceding year two potential candidates had been identified but for different reasons had not been able to take up the role. For both roles any help members can give or could assist in identifying potential candidates that might be interested would be of enormous help.

c. Partnerships and links. We work closely with Sutton Council, the police, Trading Standards, the Ward Panels, Sutton Women's Centre, and others, to make sure we are fully aware of what is happening around the borough. It is these links between the partners, and the police, together with the committee members that we continue to be successful, and I thank each of those for their valuable contributions.

On funding in general, in 2025 we obtained a MOPAC contribution of £1900 that was used to target areas within the borough with a low membership using a leaflet drop. This year we have also been successful in obtaining MOPAC funding of £1500 which is designated specifically to improve communications. These funds are always specific to a particular project and cannot, for example, be used to cover our general running costs such as posters, or general communications, so the move to the national system remained our only option. Today we have a project team made up of IT specialists to continue that transition and maximise the resulting messaging. In this way we continue to do everything possible to keep the membership, and residents of the borough informed.

6. Treasurer's Report. In the absence of the previous Treasurer Anna ran through the 2025/26 report and accounts. She referred to the most recent accounts, copies of which were available at the sign-in desk, which demonstrated the need to meet general running costs, such as the previous communication system and website hosting, without funding was not sustainable.

7. Election of President, Officers and Committee Members.

The following were re-elected:

Ruth Dombey as President
Anna James as Chair
Jim Dalton as Vice Chair/Secretary
Rehan Zaidi as Website Manager
Heather Smiles as Domestic Abuse Lead
Colin Pye as Special Advisor
Kim Stephens as Trading Standards Advisor
Jeff Pao as Newsletter Editor
Shri Mehrotra as Committee member
Maria Connor as Committee member
Noor Sumun as Committee Member

The following were newly elected:

Colin Bartram as Technical Support Officer
Zeno Foltin as Technical Support Specialist
Anne Barnes as Treasurer

The following roles remain unfilled:

Membership Secretary
Secretary
Social Media Officer
Youth Engagement Officer

Anna and the committee would like to thank Malcolm Booth for serving as Treasurer for a period of 5 years.

8. Talk by Inspector Paolo of Resteghini, Sutton Police. Insp Resteghini introduced himself and explained that the Sutton Safer Neighbourhood Teams currently have an inspector for each of the three areas of the borough, i.e. North, Central and South. He further said that he would like to cover 4 items of particular importance.

- Structure of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams,
- The Sutton Way of policing
- Met Engage,
- Statistics.

He went on to give his thanks to Ruth and Anna and to add his support to the comments in Ruth's opening statements which he applauded. The Safer Neighbourhood Teams rely heavily on data gathering and online monitoring, and then resources are applied as needed. As to Met Engage he felt communications are improving and that they will get better, but strongly encouraged people to sign up as this was how the police will communicate now and going forward. He agreed that Partnerships are key to ensure that resources are properly targeted and apologised that the police simply do not have enough resources to engage with all partners, but that SNHW continue to be important one for the police. He reiterated that all operations are data led, so rely heavily on the reporting from everyone in the borough, so his message is report continuously to ensure essential focus. *[Post meeting note: on September 17th Sutton police issued the following statement via NW Alert regarding a 'Drugs warrant executed in Sutton' which went on to include "This morning, officers from Sutton Neighbourhood Policing Team, supported by colleagues from the Territorial Support Group, executed a warrant at an address on Spencer Road, Hackbridge, following concerns raised by local residents about anti-social behaviour and suspected criminal activity Officers also believe the property had been exploited by those involved in criminal activity. As part of today's action, the address has been returned to its lawful owners." Community reporting had been at the core of these arrests]*

The current police focus is

- Crime,
- Vulnerability,
- Antisocial behaviour.

Each of these topics is monitored by a Superintendent supported by a Sergeant to get an overview of the borough, but they do not take the prime responsibility away from regular teams.

There is also a regular crime fighting forum to provide supervision, of both internal and external priorities, recognising that situations can change quickly, in months or even weeks. He went on to cover reporting statistics, looking at two periods - the preceding month and 6 months. Overall, the figures reflected a general downward trend, the exception being Anti Social Behaviour.

As to current activity, a lot of work is being done with youth and include motorcycles which impact open spaces and present environmental issues. The police role is primarily enforcement but as part of their work with youth they try to encourage them to find other outlets. He then handed over to Sgt James Carvey of his Sutton Central team.

Sgt Carvey introduced himself and first apologised for his appearance but as he was prepared for an overnight operation with his team focusing on overnight robberies, which required civilian attire.

He explained that Met Engage Surveys are also very important and are monitored closely. This is how the police get a better idea of what is happening in individual areas; it supplements any other data that has been provided and enables resources to be more effectively targeted. In terms of SNHW membership the input of several thousand people on the ground is significant.

He explained that CCTV is a valuable tool in police work and is extremely helpful. He asked that residents register their CCTV installation, of whatever form, with the police, so that in the event of an incident in their area they can be contacted. This ensures any CCTV recordings are linked with other recordings and events nearby. It is this location-based focus which contributes to the apprehension of offenders.

Shoplifting. The majority of issues do take place in Sutton town centre. Is the situation changing? In his view the increase in numbers of reported incidents can to some degree be a result of increases in reporting, rather than actual increases in incidents. He added that he is very proud that his team has a 66% positive outcome on crimes. In addition, the police are now trialling access to a civilian system called AURA where shopkeepers can register/record incidents and police can have an overview of what is happening.

Sgt Carvey pointed out that he is a resident of Sutton, born and bred, and he of course like everyone else wants to live in a low crime area, but that this can only be achieved with good partnerships. He then opened the floor to questions.

Q1. A member referred to Wallington High Street and offered to help Sgt Carvey getting information about incidents to the police. Sergeant CARVEY gave his thanks and would be in touch. He took the opportunity to point out that Met Engage importantly contains a number language options useful to non-English speakers.

Insp Resteghini reinforced the need for reporting with the caveat that the result may look like incidents are increasing as a result.

Sgt Carvey added that in a recent case of repeated theft from M&S, the staff response had been 'what's the point'? when asked about reports not being made. Sgt Carvey responded that every report is a contribution to data, and in this particular case the perpetrator was finally charged with 67 shoplifting offences.

Q2. Followed on from the earlier reference to registering CCTV, a resident asked does this mean the police are asking to see all footage? The answer was no, the police are asking for registration of 'systems' so that they can call upon residents known to have recording facilities in the event they are needed.

Q3, Norman Summerfield asked if AURA is linked to facial recognition. Answer no. it is simply a civilian information intelligence system that the police will use as needed rather than using directly.

Q4. Norman Summerfield then asked what the situation is with regard to youth and masking of faces. Insp Resteghini explained that the police are working with the council to consider the issue of masks, but it is always the case that evidence is needed rather than just making that assumption that someone is wearing a mask for bad reasons. He is aware that other boroughs are implementing restrictions currently and obviously this is dependent on a particular area, but the Public Space Protection Order between the police and the council requires a high level of proof, and as a result courts are unlikely to allow the order to take place without that burden of proof. One element of this consideration relates to decision made on 16th September that

Sutton High Street is formally recognised as a road and is therefore covered by the Road Traffic Regulations which can be applied as appropriately. He added that nuisance in itself does not meet the legal threshold of a risk to the public, and the previous comments regarding burden of proof apply.

Q5. Raised by a member regarding recent burglaries in a small close. Percentage wise the number is high and as a result residents feel that they are being targeted, and the question was is this common across the borough? Answer no. Sgt Carvey mentioned it is possible that it may be possible for patrol vehicles in the area deployed in the area*.

Q6. A member raised a question regarding data led processes and whether members could help by providing any other data that is over and above actual crime reports. In answer Sgt Carvey said that incident reports, plus Met Engage, plus internal systems used by the police are the current basis for gathering data, and as more reporting takes place this becomes more efficient. So not at present but he reiterated the need for response to crime surveys. The other reporting routes are Crime Stoppers (where anonymity is guaranteed), phoning 101 (though this can be a long wait), your Neighbourhood Watch contacts, and best of all reporting serious incidents/crime incidents on the Met Police website (<https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>).

Q7. A member enquired police cannot simply act to remove E-bikes from the streets where e-bikes (and similar) are being ridden potentially illegally? Sgt Carvey explained there are no facilities available permanently to Sutton police to carry out the necessary tests on the street. There are however dedicated central teams that do operations in Sutton, and as a result of any illegality the police work with Trading Standards to establish where the bikes were obtained and then work with shopkeepers to ensure they are operating legally when supplying.

Q8a. A member asked, in the context of antisocial behaviour what are environmental issues? Answer was that at this time, and in this quarter, E-bikes are considered the important issue, but this can, and potentially will, change and become for example open spaces.

Q8b. In this respect how do we compare with other areas? The answer was we are good compared to the rest of the BCU, that is Croydon and Bromley.

9. Presentation on cuckooing by PC Will Holden. PC Holden provided some background on his time with the police and he then explained what ‘cuckooing’ is. “Cuckooing is named after the nest-stealing practice of wild cuckoos. It is a form of criminal exploitation where vulnerable people are conned, coerced, controlled, or intimidated into sharing, providing or offering up their accommodation to people, who then use it to base their criminal activity”. PC Holden’s operations in this area are under the umbrella of Project ADDER (Addiction | Diversion | Disruption | Enforcement | Recovery) and he is part of a team of three officers with links into support services enabling any necessary referrals etc using a specialist App. PC Holden took those attending through a presentation describing the types and reasons behind Cuckooing; the upcoming legislation; and ‘Police days of action’ to find and apprehend perpetrators. The latest Cuckooing Newsletter (April 2026) can be found, along with these minutes, on our [website](#). He ended his presentation by reinforcing the earlier message to ask the public to report any suspicious activities, because even small items of information can contribute to a successful outcome.

Q1. Heather Smiles asked if cuckooing could be reported historically, and if a flat that had been cuckooed would then be used again. PC Holden said this should be reported. Sgt Carvey does not recommend using Met Engage for this scenario as speed can be important, and that the Met Police website is, in general, better for urgent reporting, to which PC Holden added his agreement.

10. Any other business.

Anne Barnes said that any time she had occasion to make police contact the response had been very good and she congratulated the police on their work.

Anna James closed the meeting at 9:03 PM.