

OUR NEWS



FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS ACROSS ENGLAND & WALES

Household budgets for many people are severely under strain due to the increasing cost of living. We are seeing the cost of everyday essentials rise faster than average incomes - leaving people with tough decisions about how to cover their bills. These are extremely challenging times for many people.

We think the financial strain may also impact people's social connections, at a time when many people are already feeling more isolated and lonely, as we do fewer things than we did before that connect us with others.

The financial strain could also make us more fearful of becoming a victim of a crime as the emotional and financial impact of this will be felt greater than before by many of us.

We want to help ease some of these impacts as much as possible. So we have pulled together guidance on

- [Steps to take to avoid becoming a victim of crime](#)
- [Where to go for financial support, money-saving tips, help with energy and food costs](#)
- [Support to help reduce loneliness and isolation](#)

Our advice is not intended to be exhaustive, but we hope it offers you and your community some support at this difficult time.

If you are a Coordinator and would like to offer your support to others through this challenging time, we have collated six ideas on actions that you can take [here](#).

Think 'WIDEN' to reduce your chances of being burgled this Winter



Taking simple measures, such as locking your windows, leaving indoor lights on a timer, double or deadlocking your doors, and having exterior lights on sensors, can significantly reduce your chances of being burgled.

A combination of WIDEN actions is the most effective and recommended by police throughout the country. Additionally, at Neighbourhood Watch we believe neighbours keeping an eye out for each other is also key to preventing burglary.

Click on each area to find out more:

- [WINDOWS](#): Lock your windows
- [INTERIOR](#): Put your interior lights on a timer
- [DOORS](#): Double or deadlock your doors
- [EXTERIOR](#): Put your exterior lights on a sensor
- [NEIGHBOURS](#): Keep an eye out for neighbours

DID YOU KNOW.. 77% of people think about their safety when out in public and four times more likely to be concerned at night?

So is enough currently being done to make sure people are safe when in public spaces? Designing better spaces can improve both physical and psychological safety. We're supporting Marshalls to launch their seven essential design pillars that should be used when creating safer spaces. Find out more [here](#).



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Do you know an older person who may need support?

Spiralling household costs have driven millions to cut back on their essential spending with day-to-day expenses like food, fuel, and heating increasingly difficult for those on lower incomes to afford.

Driven by skyrocketing prices inflation hit 10.1% in September - with Bank of England forecasts suggesting it could soar to 13% by year's end. The typical annual energy bill has now doubled compared with last year, plunging millions into fuel poverty.

As winter approaches spiralling prices combined with plummeting temperatures present substantial risk to the health and wellbeing of many of the most vulnerable older people.

Those reliant on the State Pension and benefits to make ends meet are particularly exposed. 29% (2.8m) of older households in England will be in fuel poverty this autumn and winter, compared to just 10% only a year ago. That is an additional 1.8 million older households spending a tenth or more of their post-tax income on energy.

Last year many older people reported rationing their heating in the depths of winter in a bid to balance their budget, but with prices now twice what they were last year the reality is many more will be forced to switch off their heating system entirely.

Colder temperatures, plus insufficient food and heating, as well as reduced contact with friends and family, mean this winter could be really bleak for many of our most vulnerable older neighbours.

Checking in on them is more important than ever. It's easy to start a conversation - from a 'hello, how are you?' when passing by, to popping by for a cup of tea and a chat.

A functioning neighbourhood community can give a much-needed lift to an isolated older person struggling to get by. This may also lead to the opportunity to direct them to local voluntary organisations or council services which could provide them with much needed support.

Although some help has been announced in recent months by the Government, it by no means addresses the inflation lower income households are faced with at the checkout, petrol pump and when they receive their energy bill.

This winter could be the worst in living memory for many of our older neighbours, so it has never been more important for older people to be aware of available financial support.

Age UK provide [up to date guidance](#) on the latest energy support schemes as well as their [Save Energy. Pay Less](#) information guide and their [Help with Heating Costs](#) factsheet. These cover everything from temperature controls to how to access household insulation grants and could be a real lifeline for your older neighbours.

Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director at Age UK, said: *"With the cost of day-to-day essentials soaring pensioners on low and modest incomes are confronting the fact that basic goods and services are increasingly beyond their means.*

They are looking ahead to the winter with great fear as a result. Extending a helping hand and offering to chat with our older neighbours can be a real boost in these times of hardship.

Never has it been more important to look out for the most vulnerable in our communities and help support those in greatest need".

As part of its cost-of-living campaign, 'It Doesn't Add Up', Age UK is urging any older person living on a low income or struggling with their bills to contact Age UK's free Advice Line on 0800 678 1602 without delay to check they're receiving all the financial support available to them.

Alternatively, people can visit www.ageuk.org.uk/money or contact their local Age UK for further information and advice.



Combatting the never ending cycle of stress



As with many companies Avast, our Cyberhood Watch partner, are very aware that our online behaviour can impact on our mental health. Avast are keen to support people to make good mental health decisions whilst being secure online. The following advice has been put together by Avast in partnership with [yppah](#).

The last two years have put our physical and mental wellbeing to the test. If the separation from our loved ones for almost two years wasn't enough, there is the added stress of the energy cost crisis or observing the distressing battle being fought in Ukraine. Not to mention that in a crisis, it's easy to get overwhelmed with information. So how do you take back control during these turbulent and uncertain times?

Today's 24/7 news and social media can drain your energy and keep you in chronic stress mode without you even realizing it. Often, what makes us feel out of sorts is our constant attempt to control things that are beyond our reach. The overload is exhausting and stressful and the emotional turmoil can be overwhelming. It is important to switch off and unplug after getting the information we need. So how do we combat this never ending cycle?

Take the time to slow down and be present in the moment, instead of thinking and worrying about what happened in the past or might happen in the future. Take a walk, read a book or write a journal, to separate your mind from the immense flood of negative information.

Make time for you in the morning and in the evening. How you spend those few minutes at the beginning or at the end of the day can set the tone for the entire day or night. By practicing simple rituals such as waking up and going to bed at the same time every day whilst avoiding electronics at least one hour before bed you can positively impact your resilience, mental and physical wellbeing.

Spending 15 minutes on a short walk, reading a book or meditating early in the morning and before bed can positively affect our stress & anxiety levels. And whilst you might not be able to rid your personal stress entirely due to circumstances, you can bring it down to a level that both your mind and body can handle.

Maintain a positive attitude. Creating a habit of gratitude by reflecting on all the positive things in your life can bring about many positive changes both mentally and physically, after all our mission is to help you take back control of your wellbeing; that all starts with your thoughts and intentions.

Complimenting people as a random act of kindness can have such a profound effect, both for you and the person to whom you give the compliment, this can cause a ripple effect that allows the positive energy back to you; try it out and challenge yourself to give out one complement to someone once a day for a week and start to see the change that you can create!

The fundamentals of wellness stem from exercise and nutrition. The relationship between our diet and our mental health is complex. However, research shows a strong link between what we eat and how we feel.

Research on mental health has demonstrated stress can be a major player when it comes to impacting our memory and ability to focus, our physical wellbeing as well as our ability to detect and avoid risks such as those we frequently take online whether that's through fake profiles, financial scams or clicking on bad emails with dodgy links. To help make your digital life a safer place consider downloading [Avast One](#). You'll get access to your personal online guardian, helping to safeguard your privacy, speed up your devices, connect securely and avoid scams!

In life, you always have choices. What happens next is up to you. Taking back control of your health and wellbeing through self discipline, engaging in simple daily habits and practicing gratitude is a great place to start!

In partnership with Avast we have launched our annual Cybercrime Survey.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. Your responses will be anonymised and help to form an up to date picture of the impact of cybercrime on communities across England and Wales, and how this has changed over time.

[Click here to complete the CYBERCRIME 2022 SURVEY](#)

The survey will close on Sunday 20th Nov 2022.

Create places for connection as part of the Great Winter Get Together

Each January the [Great Winter Get Together](#) brings together communities to alleviate loneliness, inspired by the late Jo Cox MP and her advocacy on this issue.

Starting on so-called 'Blue Monday' - 16 January 2023 - the Jo Cox Foundation is encouraging people to create and advertise local places for events where those who may be feeling lonely can go to form meaningful connections with others.



Loneliness is a hidden epidemic across the UK. 5% of adults feel chronically (always or often) lonely and 45% of people sometimes feel lonely. Despite common assumptions, young people are actually the worst affected, with 15% of 10 - 25 year olds being chronically lonely.

The cost of living crisis may exacerbate this by making it difficult for many of us to go along to our usual social activities. With people being unable to afford the costs of social activities, whether that be membership fees, transport costs or simply the price of a drink, there is a real danger that many become more isolated.

That's why this year, more than ever, the Great Winter Get Together will be vital. The Jo Cox Foundation want to both raise the issues of loneliness and ensure that there is a place for connection available in every community in the UK. This could be anything; a existing, regular event or one which is being specifically held for the Great Winter Get Together; a walk, a zoom call or a coffee morning... anywhere people can connect!

They'll be advertising the events on their website and directing people to them throughout the campaign. They would love your community to be involved!

You can register your event, access our resources and find out more at greatgettogether.org/winter.



Email and social media hacking is the most common form of cyber-dependent crime

Email and social media account passwords should be **strong and different from all your other passwords**. Enabling 2-step verification (2SV) will keep criminals out of your account, even if your password is stolen.

Working in partnership to protect the UK public and businesses from fraud and cyber crime.



Three new Trustees join to support us in achieving our 2025 Strategy

We are mid-way through our 2020-2025 Strategy which aims to re-invigorate Neighbourhood Watch to be more relevant and diverse, by being active in all communities and clearly demonstrating the positive impact of Neighbourhood Watch across England and Wales.

We have made great strides in the past two years and are heading in the right direction to achieve our strategy by 2025. We are more regularly seen as the authoritative voice on community-based crime prevention. Our volunteers are becoming more instrumental in connecting neighbours with other and local partners for mutual support; and we are increasingly recognised for our role in increasing community cohesion and reducing loneliness and isolation.

To ensure we do all we can to deliver on our strategy 2025 goals we are delighted this month to welcome three new trustees - Hugh Ind, Tayo Oguntonade, and Andrew Whyte - to our Board. Together they bring with them a wealth of expertise, skills and knowledge to add to those already on our Board.



Hugh Ind is the Chief Executive of the British Transport Police Authority and was previously a civil servant for over 25 years. He spent most of that time in the Home Office where his last role was as Director General for Immigration Enforcement.

Hugh brings to Neighbourhood Watch a firm belief in the benefits of active communities for effective crime prevention.

Tayo Oguntonade has a background as an experienced Mortgage Broker, Property Expert, Investor and Commentator. Tayo regularly uses his expertise to break down complex and relevant property topics for the everyday person to understand. Tayo can be seen presenting The Great House Giveaway on Channel 4. As the co-founder of BrickzWithTipz, a property blogging platform he founded with his wife, Tayo's expertise and advice have reached over 100,000 people in need.



In a career spanning more than 30 years, Andrew Whyte has worked in senior communications roles across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Over the last 15 years, Andrew has been Director of Communications at the Arts Council England, two government departments – Defra and the Foreign Office – and most recently

at the Financial Conduct Authority until April 2021. He is currently a member of the Advisory Board of specialist research company Echo Research and is a Chartered Practitioner of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.

Our full 2020-2025 Strategy can be read [here](#) and our Impact Report 2021/22 which sets out our achievements over the past year can be read [here](#).

Sandra Bauer joins us as our Head of Policy, Partnerships and Projects



We are thrilled to announce that Sandra Bauer has joined the Central Support Team as our new Head of Policy, Partnerships and Projects.

Sandra takes over from Jayne Pascoe as she headed off on retirement last month. Jayne was a great asset to us and support the movement to take great strides forward. We wish her all the best in her new ventures.

Sandra has responsibility for setting policies, working with partners from

public, private and voluntary and community sectors, including police forces across England and Wales, and the Home Office to develop and help deliver key priorities in line with our 2020-2025 Strategic plan.

A strong believer in the power and value of partnership working, Sandra looks forward to building on the strong foundations of collaborative working at Neighbourhood Watch Network. If you would like to get in touch with Sandra, you can reach her on sandra.bauer@ourwatch.org.uk.

NEW Coordinator pack in our online shop

Last month we opened our first-ever online shop selling official Neighbourhood Watch branded merchandise.

Our shop launched with a bang and we had over 150 orders in its first month - a massive thank you to everyone who placed an order with us.

Since its launch we have introduced a couple of new products, one being our Impact Report 2021/22 and the other being a Coordinator Pack.

Our **Impact Report 2021/22** is free but we do charge for delivery. It highlights the fantastic work that Neighbourhood Watch has done over the past year and is a useful tool when promoting membership to Neighbourhood Watch, or approaching local partners.

Our **Coordinator Pack** is a special item for our valuable volunteers. We wish we could give these away but we need to ensure we cover our costs to ensure the shop can keep running, so we have priced the pack as keenly as we can at £13.00 plus delivery.

The Coordinator Pack includes:

- 1 tote bag
- 1 trolley coin keyring
- 1 quality A5 notebook with a wallet holder at the back, and
- 1 limited edition 40th anniversary Neighbourhood Watch pin-badge.



In the lead up to Christmas, this pack makes a ideal thank you gift for your local Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator.

[SHOP NOW](#)

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SECURED BY PATLOCK

SPECIAL OFFER

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
1982 - 2022

Providing a clear visible deterrent for dark nights

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH MEMBER OFFER

Order a Patlock for **£42.50** at patlock.co.uk/neighbourhood-watch

ENOUGH.

If you saw a man harassing a woman, what would you do?

"I'll interrupt and ask what the next stop is"

"I'll ask the driver to help"

"We'll ask if she's ok"

Find out different ways to safely tackle violence against women and girls at gov.uk/enough



HM Government

If you think it's wrong, act on it

Our Autumn round of Community Grants Fund is now OPEN

We are pleased to announce the launch of another round of funding for community projects open to Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Applications are now open for our Autumn round of funding, closing on 30th of November.

We want to help you kickstart, improve or expand your community work as part of Neighbourhood Watch.

For this round, 100% of available funds will go towards activities or one-off development projects that help your group or Association promote and support the work of Neighbourhood Watch.

We're also interested in funding events which address crime prevention and those that draw out some of our hard-to-reach communities, connecting them with neighbours in a social setting – it could be a street party, or a coffee morning – anything that helps address loneliness in your area.

You may wish to focus your activities on supporting people through the cost of living crisis. To get ideas on actions you can take, click [here](#).

The size of grant you can apply for in the Autumn round is between £100 - £500.

Groups can only hold one grant at a time and only hold one grant in each financial year. The grant will need to be spent by the end of June 2023.

Groups are defined as: schemes, areas, districts or Associations, e.g. several schemes can hold grants within an Association, and that Association can also hold its own grant, but all projects or applications must be clearly defined and separate from each other.

Applying couldn't be easier

1. Visit ourwatch.org.uk/communitygrants to read the guidance and download the application form and budget form
2. Return the completed form to fundraising@ourwatch.org.uk by 30 November 2022.

We look forward to receiving your applications.

THINKING ABOUT STARTING A NEW SCHEME?

We can help.

Our comprehensive [Knowledge Hub](#), provides Coordinators (and other volunteers) with role support, resources, access to training, early access to events, unique volunteer offers and the opportunity to connect with others.

[Find out more](#)

NEW Airbnb Host and guest guides

We are proud to be continuing our partnership with Airbnb as part of their UK Trust and Safety Alliance.

Together we have produced a Host guide '[How to be a better neighbour](#)' and a guest guide



How to be a good neighbour during your trip



on '[How to be a good neighbour during your trip](#)'.



Host Guide:

How to be a better neighbour



The guides contain tips on building a resilient community, how to be a considerate neighbour, and protecting your home. Learn more about the UK Trust and Safety Alliance [here](#).

New neighbour? Get gas safe, not gas-stumped

According to new analysis of the latest gas safety inspection figures carried out by Gas Safe Register, 1 in every 6 properties on the average British street, houses at least one dangerous gas appliance – from boilers, to cookers and fires. And, worryingly, they have been most commonly found in homes that have changed hands recently.

What many people don't realise is that, left not serviced and unchecked year-on-year, gas appliances can cause carbon monoxide poisoning, as well as gas leaks which – in some extreme circumstances – can lead to fires and explosions that cost lives and shatter neighbourhoods.

With many homeowners potentially putting on the heating in their new home for the very first time as the clocks go back and shorter, darker, colder days arrive – we're partnering with Gas Safe Register on a new campaign urging all householders, especially new homeowners and people who are currently in the home buying process, to get clued up on the gas safety basics to be aware of and act on.

If you're moving into a new home, or have recently done so, from a gas safety perspective there are things that you should be aware of and have the confidence to ask about, so you can avoid being 'gas-stumped'.

To help ensure that you don't put your new property, loved ones or even new neighbours in danger, Bob Kerr – Gas Services Director at Gas Safe Register – has [shared some tips](#) on how every home owner, whether new to their home or not, can get clued up on gas safety basics.

Prepare

Find out where your gas Emergency Control Valve is located, so you can quickly switch the gas supply off in an emergency

Paperwork

Ask the current owners for all records they have about installation, maintenance and safety checks for their household's gas appliances and gas pipework

Peace of mind

If they can't provide a record, or it's been more than 12 months since the last check, get in touch with a local Gas Safe registered engineer who can carry out a safety check for you

Play it safe

Only Gas Safe registered engineers are experts in gas appliances, flues and pipework. So, your homebuyer or structural surveys might not confirm if the gas appliances in your new property are working as they should be – get them checked to be on the safe side

Pause use

If you're worried about any gas appliances in a new home, don't use them until you've had them checked out by an expert. Signs that something could be wrong include lazy yellow flames, black marks or sooty stains on or around the appliance, increased condensation or intermittent pilot lights

Perfecting your home

If doing work to a home after you've moved in:

- Don't try to fit, fix or move gas appliances such as boilers, hobs or fires yourself. Use a Gas Safe registered engineer
- Don't block or cover air vents and flues – your gas appliance will need ventilation to work safely
- Before drilling, hammering or putting screws into a wall or floor, check what's behind

For more information on how to stay gas safe in your home, and to find a local Gas Safe registered engineer in your area, visit www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk or call 0800 408 5500.



ERA's Top tips on keeping your home safe during Winter

With the winter nights drawing in, and people out much more than we have been in the last two years, home security is now at the forefront of most homeowners' minds.

Whilst we all know the importance of keeping doors locked and windows closed, there are other ways to keep your home safe over winter.

Sumier Foster-Shah, Product Support Manager at ERA, provides some top tips on how to improve home security during the winter months.

Put a lock on windows

We all know the importance of making sure windows are closed before leaving a property, but it's also important to understand the mechanisms on your windows and make sure they are locked.

Aside from the traditional lock and key approach, another option for homeowners is to add technology to confirm their windows are locked. A smart window sensor will add an additional layer of discreet monitoring and security to any window. The ERA Protect WindowSense uses innovative technology to alert the property owner via a smartphone notification if they detect an attempted break in.

Push notifications can also provide a reminder if the window is left open or if the sensor has itself been tampered with.

Remove places people can hide

Rather than enhancing security, big hedges and tall fences can actually offer burglars an easy place to hide. We recommend keeping fences at the front of the property low to allow clear visibility and use taller fences at the side or rear to make access more difficult.

When it comes to hedges, try to keep those at the front to a height where you can still have a clear view over the top. You can also use prickly or barbed shrubbery along boundary lines to act as an effective natural barrier.

Protect your garden

Whilst we all pay attention to the home itself it is also important to protect the surrounding areas of the home.

Keeping an eye on side gates, rear boundaries and any public footpaths around the house can seem like a big task, but investing in cameras to monitor sheds or side entrances will instantly offer peace of mind.

A floodlight camera, such as the ERA Protect Floodlight Camera, will allow you to see and hear what's happening outside your home. With smart functionality, you can monitor the property day or night and access live stream footage, all via the app.

ERA

Check your door security

Updating your door lock can seem like an expensive or complex job but it is actually relatively easy and can be carried out as a DIY task.

Rather than adding a new lock, you can easily update the door cylinder, the locking mechanism, to offer added security and peace of mind.

Create a checklist

It is increasingly common to have an 'escape plan' for fire alerts but we would also recommend homeowners create 'exit routines' to ensure that they don't forget to carry out any important items before leaving the property in the event of an emergency.

A list that covers not leaving valuables near windows or settling your burglar alarm will ensure that your property is always left as safe as possible.

As a valued partner of Neighbourhood Watch, ERA Home Security are offering all Neighbourhood Watch supporters 25% off their range of security cameras until the 21st of November, to help secure your homes during these dark nights.

SPECIAL OFFER

Each camera will provide a live feed, straight to your smartphone through the free ERA Protect app. You can view your property and perimeter from anywhere in the world. Included is ninety days protect cover plan, which records all activity triggered by motion and stores it in a secure cloud for up to thirty days.

After your ninety day trial of the plan, recording and storage plans are available for as little as £2 per month, or expand your security layers with 4G sim activation and professional monitoring. Alternatively, the camera's live feed is free, with no ongoing charges so the choice is yours.

To take advantage of this exclusive offer, simply visit eraprotect.com and use the code NHCAM25.