



**WORKING FOR A  
SAFER COMMUNITY**

**Wycombe District Neighbourhood Watch Association**

## WYCOMBE DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION

### Notes on the development of Neighbourhood Watch to protect older people

From 2002, Wycombe District Neighbourhood Watch Association (WDNHWA) felt that it should address issues relating to older people with Co-ordinators being encouraged to look out for any of their neighbours who might be vulnerable or showing signs of being fundamentally frightened of crime. However, with many older people being grouped together in sheltered housing, retirement homes and care homes, WDNHWA decided to start Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) schemes for such locations from that time.

In 2002, Wycombe District Council owned about 40 sheltered housing sites in and around High Wycombe. Each of these sites had its own resident warden. So, they became obvious candidates to become NHW Co-ordinators and, thereby, to provide better crime prevention advice to their residents.

All of these sites became covered by NHW schemes. They were offered NHW street signs and window stickers. A representative of WDNHWA visited each site and gave talks to the residents on crime prevention during coffee mornings and returned at later dates to give 'top-up' talks along the same lines with emphasis regarding bogus callers.

The ownership of these sites was transferred to Red Kite Community Housing based in High Wycombe and they took over the same wardens. However, Red Kite reduced the number of these sheltered housing sites. The remaining wardens became roving members of the management visiting each of the 27 sites to resolve problems. So, as a result of this, the role of NHW changed. All of these former wardens continued to be NHW Co-ordinators but for all of the sites.

From 2015, WDNHWA expanded this exercise re older people and signed up NHW schemes for three more sheltered housing sites not owned by Red Kite, five retirement homes, and four care homes. In each case, there is a site manager who has taken on the role of a NHW Co-ordinator. WDNHWA has visited these sites and given crime prevention talks to the residents and the staff. The care homes accommodate dementia sufferers and these talks have been for the staff. The talks have given considerable emphasis to the increasing threat from cons & scams. A further recent development with WDNHWA has been to start a NHW scheme based on a local medical centre with very much the same ambitions as already described.

At present, in spite of the reduced number of Red Kite sheltered housing sites, WDNHWA relates to a total of about forty sheltered housing sites, retirement homes and care homes. More will certainly be added in the hope that by so doing, the residents will be better protected from crime and from cons & scams in particular.

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