



Street and Dog Watch Handbook



'Promoting the concept
of good Citizenship'



CONTENTS:

	Page
- ABOUT STREET/DOG WATCH	1
- AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
- COMMITMENT AND CONSENT	3
- PRACTICAL PATROL GUIDELINES	4
- CODE OF ETHICS	8
- CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY	11
- INDUCTION PROGRAMME AND TRAINING	12
- STARTING AND DEVELOPING A STREET/ DOG WATCH SCHEME	14
- INSURANCE	16



About Street Watch

Street Watch originally emerged in Four Marks, Hampshire where a group of residents wanted to promote good citizenship in their village. The concept started in 2008 with a blaze of publicity. The scheme acted as a conduit to the police relaying information from the public that would have otherwise been unreported. This information would often be valuable intelligence contributing to a “bigger picture”.

Bedfordshire Police visited Hampshire and our Street Watch was born in 2010. Initially run independently of the Police, Street Watch operated with its own constitution and insurance.

In 2015, Bedfordshire Police embraced the scheme, adding Street Watch members to the Police Service Volunteer family enabling local policing teams to work closer with the community and task the schemes to gather intelligence on issues of local police priorities. Dog Watch was introduced in 2021.

Street/Dog Watch can be considered a natural extension to schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch and activity can operate alongside existing Neighbourhood Watch Schemes or run independently.



Aims and Objectives

Street/Dog Watch members are community citizens with no police powers. If they see anything suspicious, all they are asked to do is report it to the police. They can also give active support to the community by providing reassurance and a visible presence.

Groups are managed by a co-ordinator who provides advice, guidance and support in consultation with the local police.

Street/Dog Watch aims to prevent crime by improving security, increasing vigilance, creating and maintaining a caring and cohesive community and reducing opportunities for crime by increasing crime prevention awareness. Members can assist the police by promoting effective communication and the prompt reporting of activity that gives rise to concern.

The visible presence of Street/Dog Watch can assist by:

- Reducing the fear of crime
- Providing accurate information about risks
- Promoting a sense of security and community spirit
- Reassurance for vulnerable members of the community



Commitment and Consent

- Street/Dog Watch is led by Bedfordshire Police in partnership with the community
- Street/Dog Watch is about patrolling your local area as a good citizen. You will be helping to take responsibility for your local area and helping to tackle the low-level issues that impact most on your community and quality of life.
- Street/Dog Watch members will patrol in pairs, wearing high visibility jackets, in order to provide visible levels of reassurance. This promotes good citizenship, increases the feelings of safety and engages positively with those who try and undermine our communities, highlighting the impact of negative behaviour.
- Street/Dog Watch members commit to patrolling their streets for a minimum of 2 hours a month.
- Street/Dog Watch members must understand that at all times they are responsible and accountable for their own actions to be lawful, reasonable, appropriate and justified
- Street/Dog Watch members will abide by the Code of Ethics. The Code of ethics can be found via the College of Policing's website: <https://www.college.police.uk>



Practical Patrol Guidelines

Street/Dog Watch is about residents supporting their own communities. This guide is produced and supported by Street/Dog Watch members themselves as a general good advice guide regarding their patrols. This guidance remains flexible and any Street/Dog Watch group can suggest amendments or additions. This guide should be reviewed frequently by members. Any suggestions for amendments should be sent for consideration to: **WatchSchemes@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk**

'Look, listen and report, but don't have a go'

- Street/Dog Watch members must always patrol in pairs and have access to a mobile phone
- Street/Dog Watch members must wear a high visibility jacket during patrols. This will help identify themselves as Street or Dog Watch Members and also be a health and safety precaution if patrolling in the evenings when light is reduced. It will also assist police patrols to identify members if called to an area
- Street/Dog Watch members should also consider carrying a personal attack alarm which is provided at induction along with a torch
- You don't have to patrol a pre-planned route but be aware and familiar of your location at all times



- Street/Dog Watch members should engage but avoid confrontational behaviour and conflict. By 'engaging', this means to speak positively with those who try and undermine our communities in an appropriate manner to educate and bring to their attention the impact that their behaviour has. It is also about being inclusive of others and building relationships.
- Members of Street/Dog Watch are not required or expected to engage with any person who is suspected of being about to commit a crime or having committed a crime. Under these circumstances, the duty of members on patrol is to report any suspicious person or vehicle, in the neighbourhood, to the police
- Street/Dog Watch members shall withdraw from any scene or incident forthwith upon any hostility or threat being used and shall not confront the individuals. On withdrawing to a safe location, members are to call the police on '999'
- When safe to do so, any incident of significance shall be recorded briefly in writing in the note books provided with detail of time; place; and the incident
- On observing any suspicious behaviour members should record, the number of persons involved; description of persons by age, size, colour, clothing and any vehicle details
- This information should be passed to the local policing team or reported via the non-emergency number of 101
- **If in doubt call the police and always stay within the law.**



Remember you are providing a visible sense of reassurance, an opportunity to observe what is happening in your communities and acting as a community point of contact. You are not directly tackling or confronting crime. You are developing community links and encouraging people to be observant.

With the advances of modern technology the availability and use of Body Worn Video (BWV) is becoming more common. There is absolutely **NO** expectation that Street/Dog Watch members have to deal with confrontation therefore the use of Body Worn Video is **NOT** permitted to adhere to Article 8 of the ECHR- Right to private and family life and also to reduce the risk of aggressive encounters.

Use of radios is only permitted in conjunction with Parish Council led Shop Watch Schemes to alert retailers of suspicious activity with approval from the Watch Scheme Coordinator and Local Policing Team Inspectors.

Street/Dog Watch members are security vetted by Bedfordshire Police for suitability.

Under no circumstances should Street/Dog Watch members drive or use motorised vehicles whilst on Street/Dog Watch Patrols. To do so may have insurance implications and secondly, ordinary driving may become compromised if observing for any community issues.



Dogs

Pet dogs may accompany members on patrol under the following conditions:

- Dogs should be covered by independent 3rd party insurance
- Kept on a lead at all times
- Must not be a breed of 'dangerous' dog or Section 1 dog as defined under the 'Dangerous Dog Act'

Cycles

Street Watch members only may use Street Watch pedal cycles for patrols adhering to the Highway Code and completing a cycle assessment prior to cycle patrols.

Membership

By joining Street/Dog Watch, members accept that the group is run by Bedfordshire Police working with the community. Individual members have the responsibility for their own safety, actions and conduct. Street/Dog Watch is a police run scheme and members are classed as police volunteers. Street/Dog Watch is supported by the local police. Members accept the above as guidance that must be followed.

NOTHING contained herein shall restrict the rights of any member as an individual to defend him or herself, using reasonable force as stated by law, if faced with a situation where the member or any other person is subjected to actual or reasonably anticipated violence.



Code of Ethics

A Code of Ethics is a means of promoting a common understanding amongst members of Street/Dog Watch regarding the expectations of conduct when representing Street/Dog Watch and in their dealings with one another and the public.

Internal Conduct

Members of Street/Dog Watch should work collaboratively to promote the principles of Street/Dog Watch by:

- Respecting the diverse nature of Watch Schemes and its members
- Accepting each other's' right to hold different views
- Refraining from comments that are defamatory, indecent, offensive, abusive, irrelevant, undermining, trivial or objectionable in language or nature
- Always speaking well of each other and Street/Dog Watch in public
- Always being punctual to Watch meetings and functions when representing Street/Dog Watch
- Respect the needs, limitations and wishes of patrol partners
- To represent and support the police and community partnership aims and objectives of Street/Dog Watch and not personal or other agendas



No member of Street/Dog Watch shall release any statement to any national media on any matters concerning Street/Dog Watch unless the content of any statement has been agreed by the Head Coordinator and a Police Media and Communications Officer.

No member may maintain or use their own data base of members' details.

No member's spouse, partner, family or friend, who is not a member of Street/Dog Watch, may take part in any activities on behalf of a member.

External Conduct

Street/Dog Watch members must, at all times, act in a non-confrontational manner, acting within the law and being accountable for their own behaviour, actions and conduct.

Under no circumstances are Street/Dog Watch members to display racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination towards any other member and any other person. To do so may be unlawful.

No member shall carry anything that can be perceived to be dangerous and that could inflict bodily harm to a person or damage to property.



Members of the schemes shall not divulge any confidential or privileged information that they may have acquired as a result of their membership of Street/Dog Watch.

No member of the schemes may exploit his or her membership for personal advantage or benefit, nor will a member engage in local political issues whilst representing Street/Dog Watch. The schemes are not a lobbying group and not affiliated to any political party.

Members of the schemes must at all times act in a manner that will uphold and promote the aims and objectives of Street/Dog Watch.

Watch members will at all times act with courtesy and politeness providing public reassurance.

Watch members must wear Street/Dog Watch high visibility jackets and walk in pairs when on patrol carrying at least one mobile phone whilst on patrol.

Watch members must not drive vehicles whilst on patrol.

Street/Dog Watch pairs should register their patrol by emailing **Force.Control@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk** please ensure that a copy is also sent to the force Watch Scheme Coordinator

Watch members must at all times remember that they are wearing the crest of their local police force and must act in a manner that is not going to undermine the essential nature of the partnership relationship



Child and Vulnerable Adult Policy

Watch members must not, at any time, accept parental, guardian or carer responsibilities whilst on patrol. Nor should any physical contact be made unless in life saving or emergency situations.

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses information of a crime the Police should be informed at earliest convenience.

Watch members should not seize any unlawful substances from a child but should report it to the police as intelligence.

If a member of a watch scheme has concerns for a child or vulnerable adult's mental or physical state then they should contact the police.



Induction Programme and Training

At the start of a new scheme, Watch applicants receive a briefing by the Police followed by a question and answer session, in total lasting about 1 hour. The presentation covers the concept of Watch Schemes, history, principles and expectations. Induction training is delivered which covers patrol guidance. The central theme is about good citizenship.

Volunteers are required to undergo Conflict Management and First Aid Training which will be provided following successful vetting clearance.

On their first patrol, it is recommended that a Street/Dog Watch member or is accompanied by a uniformed police officer, Police Community Support Officer or member of Beds Police Staff.

During Watch meetings, there is a standing agenda of **'Patrol Issues and Feedback'** Here members de-brief their experiences for group learning. The Watch Scheme Coordinator will attend meetings to offer continued advice and guidance.



Watch members are members of the public walking their streets just like any other member of the public. Like any person, as a Watch member you are responsible for your own actions to be lawful, reasonable, proportionate and justified. There is no organisation liability accepted for the individual actions of Watch members or any injury to members resulting from patrols or the actions of others.

Street/Dog Watch is led by Bedfordshire Police for the community. Street/Dog Watch members have no powers other than what is stated in law for any citizen. Street /Dog Watch is about promoting the concept of good citizenship.

Additional training will be provided on bespoke subjects if there is suitable demand.

Refresher training is also offered to ensure all members are confident in their role as a Street/Dog Watch volunteer.



Starting and Developing a Street/Dog Watch Scheme

To commence a scheme, the local community needs to have a **minimum of 6 to 10 people** who are willing to commit a **minimum of 2 hours a month** to patrol their communities. There is no maximum number of members required for each scheme. It also helps to have the support of your local Parish Council who can assist in the recruitment of new members.

The approach is to start all schemes with a small number of people (approx. 6). These are introduced to patrols giving a firm commitment of 2 hours per month. Once established, further interested members are invited to join. These then patrol with the more experienced members on a cascade system.

Members on their first patrols should be supported by a Police Officer, PCSO or Beds Police Staff along with existing members.

Please Note:

For certain areas including **Luton and Bedford** a crime comparison must be carried out indicating what types of crime have occurred in the previous year. Each application to start up a Watch Scheme is conducted on a case by case basis. Support for any application is required from the Local Policing Team (LPT) Inspector.



Following approval for a new scheme to commence in Luton or Bedford, members should consider registering with their Neighbourhood Watch group and are required to complete Security Vetting by Bedfordshire Police in order to become a member of Street Watch.

Initial patrols are conducted with members of the Local Policing Team in uniform.

Patrols will develop through a staged approach - LPT in uniform then LPT in plain clothes. Short unaccompanied patrols may then be carried out by Scheme members in pairs.

All patrol details are to be captured and shared with the LPT to review success and improvements.

Vetting is repeated every three years.



Insurance

Watch volunteers are covered under Bedfordshire Police Insurance. Watch volunteers are covered by Bedfordshire Police's Public Liability and Personal Accident Cover Policies whilst carrying out their patrols if adhering to set safety practices.

Please see the below for the Personal Accident cover provided.

Category:	C
Insured Persons:	Volunteers of the Insured including <u>Speedwatch Volunteers</u> and <u>Streetwatch Volunteers</u>
Operative Time:	NSOTo2- Non-employees (See Non Standard Operative Times Section for full definitions)

Section A: Personal Accident Cover

Item	Description	Sum Insured	Max Individual Limit
1	Death	£150,000	
2	Loss of sight in one eye or loss of one limb	£150,000	
3a	Loss of sight in both eyes or loss of two or more limbs, or loss of sight in one eye and loss of one limb	£150,000	
3b	Loss of speech	£150,000	
3c(i)	Loss of hearing in both ears	£150,000	
3c(ii)	Loss of hearing in one ear	25% of 3c(i)	
4a	Permanent Total Disablement	£150,000	
4b	Permanent Partial Disablement	Yes	
5	Temporary Total Disablement Deferment	£150	
	Period 0 week(s) 104 Benefit Period week(s)	per week	
6	Temporary Partial Disablement Deferment	£75	
	Period 0 week(s) 104	per week	
7	Accident Medical Expenses incurred with connection with a valid claim under claims 1-6 of the Policy not exceeding 25% of the compensation paid under items 1-4b or 30% under items 5 and 6 whichever is the greater but subject to a maximum payment of £25,000 per person.		

Please note that benefits are reduced from the age of 75 for Personal Accident Cover. There is no upper age limit on Employers Liability Insurance.

We would like to thank you for choosing to become a Volunteer with Bedfordshire Police. With continued strained resources we rely more and more on the public to support us and our volunteers do just that. Not only do you give your time to help make your community a better place but you also bring your skills and perspectives, you are Citizens in Policing.

