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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEEDS YOU!

CAN YOU GIVE A FEW HOURS A WEEK TO HELP PROTECT YOUR NEIGHBOURS?

Calling all public-spirited citizens of Uttlesford – can you spare a little time each week to help keep your neighbourhood safe?

Uttlesford Neighbourhood Watch (Uttlesford NHW) has set up a network of co-ordinators across the district which helps protect local communities in the fight against crime.

Most of the rural villages and hamlets are very well covered but they have struggled to set up effective schemes in the larger settlements, particularly Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

Alan Johnson, Chairman of the Uttlesford NHW Steering Group, said: “We have around 300 NHW co-ordinators across the district who do a brilliant job in helping to prevent and report crime.

“But unfortunately we have had difficulties in recruiting people to act as co-ordinators in the larger towns.

“People who live in the more rural and remote areas of Uttlesford have a very well defined sense of community and are used to keeping an eye out for each other.

“But in the larger towns that sense of community doesn’t exist to the same extent and although some individual areas of Saffron Walden and Dunmow are covered, we need more co-ordinators.

“Being a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator means volunteering to give a little bit of your time each to help prevent crime in your road, cul-de-sac, hamlet or village.

“Co-ordinators typically look after between 20 and 40 properties and receive support and advice from Uttlesford NHW.

MORE FOLLOWS

“People tend to think of neighbourhood watch volunteers as being elderly retired people or old ladies with a nosy disposition – but nothing could be further from the truth!

“Anyone can be a volunteer – professionals with full-time jobs, young mums, students – basically anyone who wants to help protect their community from crime and is willing to donate a little of their time.”

Alan is hoping public-spirited residents can help Uttlesford NHW repeat the results of a highly successful re-launch and recruitment drive in Stansted Mountfitchet.

Prior to the drive Stansted had only 20 NHW co-ordinators covering 15 per cent of the parish, but now boasts more than 90 volunteers who provide 100 per cent cover.

Alan said: “We’d dearly love to be able to provide the same kind of coverage in Saffron Walden and Dunmow that we’ve managed to achieve in Stansted.

“The main role of the co-ordinators is to help educate their neighbours as to how they can stop themselves becoming victims of crime in the first place.

“But they also have an important role in ensuring that on the occasion crime does take place in their neighbourhood it is reported effectively and to the correct people.

“The role of NHW co-ordinator is most rewarding and the part they play in crime prevention is greatly appreciated by the police.”

As part of their support networks NHW co-ordinators are given access to:

- Advice on crime prevention
- Visible and invisible property-marking kits
- NHW and ‘no cold calling’ window stickers
- Essex Police’s weekly neighbourhood crime bulletins and
- Thrice-yearly newsletters

If you are interested in becoming a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator in Saffron Walden or Dunmow please call Alan Johnson on 01799-543153 or e-mail him at nhw@acjohnson4.plus.com

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