

BIRKDALE WARD MEETING – 30th September 2025

Police:

The meeting was attended by PC Luke Holden and PCSO Barry Calder. Luke gave a wide ranging and informative presentation which included the following items:

1. An overview of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
2. An explanation of the area covered by the Birkdale team which includes: all of Birkdale ward, plus north along Weld Rd to Marine Drive and houses west of the railway line to rejoin Birkdale ward at Hillside station.
3. The Merseyside Police website has now been updated and includes a new section called Your Area. <https://www.merseyside.police.uk/area/your-area/merseyside/sefton/birkdale/news/crime-map>

The Your Neighbourhood Policing Team section includes the following tabs:

- a. On The Team
Identifies your local Policing team (eg Luke and Barry and their Sgt)
 - b. Meetings and Events
This is where you will see dates and times when you can meet the team face to face
 - c. Social Media
Where you can see X tweets
 - d. News
Other posts
4. Luke stressed that the Police are there to listen to residents' concerns. If the Police aren't hearing about a problem they can't address it. "If it isn't reported, it isn't happening". Ways the public can contact the Police include:
 - a. Call in to one of the surgeries as shown in 3b above
 - b. Luke and Barry provided their email addresses and are happy for those to be released to Scheme Members:
Luke.Holden@merseyside.police.uk
Barry.Calder@merseyside.police.uk
 - c. There is a page on our website listing different ways to contact the Police:
<https://www.southporthomewatch.org.uk/how-to-contact-the-police>

Scheme Leader session:

The aim was for the session to be informal. Jacqueline led the discussion but there was plenty of input from Scheme Leaders.

1. Attendees were given a plastic wallet containing the following:
 - a. A map showing the location of current schemes in Birkdale
 - b. A list showing the roads in which schemes are currently located
 - c. 2 documents provided to Scheme Leaders as part of the current Welcome Pack:
Homewatch Group Guidelines (ethics that all Scheme Leaders should be signed up to) and Running a Homewatch Group (a guide to the kind of activities a Scheme Leader should be doing).
 - d. 2 documents provided for distribution to new members: Welcome To Southport Homewatch (a template for introducing the Scheme Leader and outlining what a

Homewatch scheme is for); Resource List (a brief guide to some of the online resources available eg. Action Fraud, Get Safe Online and many others).

- e. Samples of the current window stickers: No Cold Calling and Homewatch
- f. An AgeUK booklet “Avoiding Scams – Ways To Protect Yourself”

All these items can be provided to Scheme Leaders who want to refresh their schemes.

2. Lamp post signs are now available, free of charge, for schemes without signs or where the existing signs are damaged or faded. (Thanks to Councillor Sonya Kelly for her assistance in obtaining funding from the Birkdale councillors’ fund to enable this).
3. One issue which was raised was the difficulty in distributing the monthly newsletter email via WhatsApp. We want to support the use of WhatsApp so we will be trialling the use of an attachment containing a PDF of the email content. This should make onward distribution much easier.
4. Another item talked about was how to recruit new members. Posted flyers are often ignored and knocking unannounced can seem to be cold calling / door stepping. One scheme adopted a hybrid approach where they distributed a leaflet initially which said they would be calling round a few days later. This seemed to work well for them.
5. One of the aims of the meeting was to provide a way that Scheme Leaders can communicate easily with each other. The following proposals were discussed:
 - a. All Scheme Leaders will be provided with a list showing the roads (in Birkdale) which have a Homewatch Scheme
 - b. Scheme Leaders have the opportunity to appear on, and receive, a list showing the name, address, telephone number and / or email address of other Scheme Leaders in Birkdale
 - c. Scheme Leaders will have the opportunity to join a WhatsApp group specifically for Scheme Leaders in Birkdale
 - d. Scheme Leaders will have the option to allow the Homewatch Association to pass their contact details onto the Neighbourhood Policing team eg. to allow direct contact after an incident in their road

Southport Homewatch Association exists to support the creation and running of Homewatch Schemes in Southport. Any questions / comments / requests for support / suggestions are welcome. Please just get in touch!