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SPRING 2026

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH AUSTRALASIA

NHWA

Official Journal of Neighbourhood Watch Australasia
incorporating Neighbourhood Support New Zealand



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Neighbourhood Watch Australasia

Merchandise Shop

Outfit your Neighbourhood Watch group with some great polo shirts and merchandise from the Neighbourhood Watch Australasia Shop

Take a look at what's on offer at the Neighbourhood Watch Australasia shop



Mens (Unisex) NHW Polo Shirt
$35 Each



Womens NHW Polo Shirt
$35 Each



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1 for $32 2 for $42



Water Bottles Stainless Steel
1 for $20 2 for $30 3 for $40



LED Mini Torches
5 for $35



Rain Ponchos
10 for $30

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH AUSTRALASIA

www.nhwa.com.au/nhwa-shop









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Cover photo: NHW WA Chair Dr Atul Garg OAM JP with NHW Melville volunteers Peter Best, Deb Ferraro and Lyn Cuthbert

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FROM THE CEO

MELISSA ROBERTS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH AUSTRALASIA

Welcome to the 2026 Spring edition of the Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHWA) Journal



This year marks a special milestone for NHWA as we celebrate our 20th anniversary — two decades of bringing together members, volunteers and partners across Australia and New Zealand to support safer, stronger and more connected communities. It also marks 20 years since the very first edition of the NHWA Journal was published, making this a particularly proud moment for our organisation and a wonderful opportunity to reflect on how far we have come and look ahead to the future.

Against this backdrop, it is an honour to take on the role of Chief Executive Officer following six years with NHWA. During this time, I have seen first-hand the passion and commitment of our members, volunteers and partners across Australia and New Zealand.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Selina Otto for her leadership and contribution to NHWA. I look forward to building on this work, strengthening our partnerships and supporting the communities at the heart of Neighbourhood Watch.

I'm delighted to share the latest projects and initiatives from Neighbourhood Watch (NHW), Neighbourhood Support NZ (NSNZ), and our valued partners. Happy reading!

NATIONAL SECURE YOUR HOME DAY

National Secure Your Home Day 26 – 27 September

Held annually over the last weekend of September, National Secure Your Home Day marks its fourth year in 2026, encouraging households to dedicate one day to reviewing and improving their home security. Registered households receive a free Home Security Checklist, Cyber Security Checklist and practical tips to help stay secure at home and online. This year's competitions once again offered great prizes for registered participants — good luck to all entrants! To the thousands of households who took part, thank you for being part of this important annual event. Together, we are making our homes and neighbourhoods safer.

For more information and to register, visit:
www.secureyourhomeday.com.au



Annual Report ARA Silver Award

NHWA has been honoured with a Silver Award for our 2024-25 Annual Report at the Australasian Reporting Awards, our third consecutive Silver. This recognition reflects our continued commitment to transparency, accountability and the work we do to keep communities safe. Thank you to our team for their effort and attention to detail, and to our Board for their guidance and support. To view the NHWA Annual Report go to:
www.nhwa.com.au/about/annual-reports

Donations to NHWA of $2 or more are tax-deductible.
To donate go to www.nhwa.com.au/donate

Keeping Kids Safe Online

Our Keeping Kids Safe Online Community Service Announcements, produced in partnership with the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) and funded by the Queensland Government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund, continue to screen on television and radio networks nationally, with placements scheduled through to mid-2027.

Partnering to Protect Families Online

Together with the Australian Federal Police's Joint Policing Cybercrime Coordination Centre (JPC3) and supported by the Department of Home Affairs Cyber Security Awareness Support for Vulnerable Groups grant, NHWA is developing free, practical cyber security resources for families with children and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. The resource suite, including practical guidance and video content, is expected to launch in early 2027 and will be made freely available through NHWA's online platforms.


Acting Superintendent Jacqui Honeywood


David Holly

NHWA Board Update

Thank you, Acting Chief Superintendent Rob Fleischer, and welcome Acting Superintendent Jacqui Honeywood and David Holly.

We thank Rob for his dedication and contribution during his tenure as our Queensland Board Director. Jacqui joins the Board as our new Queensland Director, bringing more than 28 years of experience with the Queensland Police Service, where she is currently Acting Superintendent, Community Safety. David joins as an Independent Director. A retired Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and Maldives, David is the NHW Area Coordinator for Farrer in the ACT.

2026 and 2027
Recent and Upcoming Events

NHWA 2026 Award Nominations

Nominations for the NHWA Malcolm Grant OAM Volunteer of the Year Award and Police Commissioner's Award closed on 30 October 2026. Good luck to all nominees! Winners announced soon. For more details, go to:
www.nhwa.com.au/news-media/awards

NHW Week 12 – 18 October 2026

Neighbourhood Watch Australasia and Bunnings partnered for the eighth consecutive year to present the combined NHW Crime Prevention Week. Events were held across Australia and New Zealand promoting safety and security to local communities.

Get Online Week 19 – 25 October 2026

Get Online Week (GOLW) events took place around the country to teach digital skills and improve online safety across Australia.

NHW Month 1 – 31 March 2027

Neighbourhood Watch Australasia and Crimsafe will present NHW Month in March 2027, a national campaign helping Australians take practical steps to improve their home security and build stronger community connections through their local NHW groups.

Neighbour Day 28 March 2027

NHWA is once again taking part in Neighbour Day on the last Sunday of March 2027, creating, sharing and growing a sense of belonging. Neighbour Day, presented by Relationships Australia's Neighbours Every Day, is a day dedicated to connecting with your neighbours and community. For more information visit:
www.neighbourseveryday.org

To keep up to date with upcoming events and opportunities, go to:
www.nhwa.com.au/calendar

Wishing you a safe and happy holidays!

Melissa Roberts

Melissa Roberts
Chief Executive Officer
Neighbourhood Watch Australasia

BOARD DIRECTORS & STAFF



Bernie Durkin OAM
Chair

Bernie retired from the Western Australia Police Force after 38 years of service, including more than 17 years as an Executive Manager in crime prevention and community engagement. Throughout his career he maintained strong ties with Neighbourhood Watch at state and national levels, and in 2025 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to community safety. Bernie remains passionate about Neighbourhood Watch and crime prevention.



Margaret Pearson
Company Secretary

Throughout Margaret's career she has made a significant contribution to the voluntary sector by being involved with numerous community organisations including ACT Neighbourhood Watch Association Inc. where she held a number of positions within that organisation and has recently retired from the role of President. Having lived overseas for a number of years Margaret returned, with her family, to Canberra where she continues to follow her great interest in local and international politics. Margaret is currently the Company Secretary of NHWA.



Angela Di Pauli
Australian Capital Territory

Angela has a background in corporate governance and risk management, with experience in both the public and private sectors. She has significant volunteer and Board experience, and since moving from NSW to Canberra, has been an active member and Secretary of Australian Capital Territory Neighbourhood Watch.



Chief Inspector
Melissa Gilchrist
South Australia

Chief Inspector Melissa Gilchrist joined South Australia Police (SAPOL) in 2002, performing general duties in metropolitan Adelaide, Intelligence, IT Project Management, HR, Media and Communications and Community Engagement roles. In 2024, she commenced her current role as the Officer in Charge of Community Engagement Section, responsible for Corporate Events Unit, Awards and Recognition Unit, the Band of South Australia Police, Neighbourhood Watch Unit and Public Engagement Unit.



David Holly
Independent Director

David is the NHW Area Coordinator for Farrer, ACT and is passionate about community cohesion and safety and security. He joined NHWA as an Independent Director in June 2026. David is also a carer for his father, a volunteer, a keen gardener and enjoys family life. David retired as the Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and Maldives, having previously served overseas as Consul General, Chennai and Deputy Head of Mission, New Delhi. Outside of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, he also worked in the Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet, The Treasury and a merchant bank.



Deputy Commissioner
Lesa Gale APM
Australian Federal Police

Deputy Commissioner Gale's passion for combatting all forms of human exploitation and maintaining community safety has been admirably demonstrated throughout her 35 year career, most notably in her previous role as head of the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation. During her career in the AFP, Deputy Commissioner Gale has combined significant leadership expertise across serious and organised crime and national security portfolios, leading the delivery of business outcomes across AFP Commands in Sydney, Canberra and Brisbane. Deputy Commissioner Gale holds a Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Management and was awarded the Australian Police Medal in 2019.



Inspector Brett Callander
New Zealand

Inspector Brett Callander is the Manager Community Prevention Partnerships for New Zealand Police and is based at Police National Headquarters, Wellington. He manages Community Policing, Community Partners, Health Partnerships, Alcohol Harm Prevention, Community Inclusion, Rural Policing and Crowded Places. Brett has been a Police officer for 29 years and has worked in Frontline Policing, Youth Services, Diplomatic Protection, Alcohol Harm Prevention, Mental Health and Community Policing. Brett served with NZ Police in Timor-Leste for four years.



Acting Superintendent
Jacqui Honeywood
Queensland

Jacqui Honeywood is a Queensland Police Service officer with more than 28 years of experience across a broad range of policing and organisational functions. Her career has encompassed frontline policing, the Criminal Investigation Branch, Education and Training, Recruiting and Recruit Training, and Multicultural Affairs. Jacqui is currently Acting Superintendent, Community Safety, with strategic oversight of the State Crime Prevention, Police Citizen Youth Clubs, Youth Programs, and Multicultural Affairs portfolios within the QPS.



Peter Edwards BM APM
Tasmania

Peter Edwards is a former Commander in the Tasmanian Police Service. He has extensive experience across diverse policing portfolios within his home State, as well as national and international law enforcement representation. He has served as a Detective, Prosecutor, Intelligence Officer and Head of Training. Peter is currently the President of Neighbourhood Watch Tasmania.



Melissa Roberts
Chief Executive Officer

Melissa has extensive experience across operations, project delivery, marketing, communications and people leadership, gained through a career spanning diverse sectors, international markets and more than 10 years working in the United Kingdom. She combines strategic thinking with a practical, people-focused approach, building strong relationships and turning ideas into meaningful outcomes. Melissa is committed to bringing people and organisations together to prevent crime, strengthen community safety and create safer, more connected and inclusive neighbourhoods.



Darcy Hart
Executive Assistant/
Project Manager

Darcy holds degrees in Business Management and Psychology, bringing experience in domestic violence crisis response and youth, family, and disability support services. Passionate about building safer, more connected communities, she takes an evidence-based approach to crime prevention and wellbeing while leading key initiatives such as Get Online Week, the NHWA Journal, and the Target Hardening Support Program.



The Board Directors of Neighbourhood Watch Australasia serve voluntarily and are drawn from Neighbourhood Watch, Neighbourhood Support New Zealand, and the police.

Spring Cleaning with Security in Mind

Crimsafe and Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHWA) are proud Crime Prevention Partners, working together to strengthen community safety through initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Month and Secure September.



With spring's warmer weather and fresh air come more open windows, unlocked doors and overlooked security risks, creating opportunities for burglars.

That's why Crimsafe and NHWA joined forces for Secure September with one simple message: spring clean and secure your home.

The Secure September campaign encouraged Australians to combine everyday spring-cleaning tasks with simple home security checks to help them improve safety and their Secure Score. A new downloadable resource, the Spring Clean for Home Security Checklist, was shared to help Australians make their homes safer.

Throughout September, Crimsafe and NHWA share helpful tips across their social media channels, covering everything from checking outdoor lighting and securing yard tools to protecting personal information and reducing security risks around the home.

Some of the key campaign reminders included:

Protecting personal information

One in four Australians have been a victim of identity crime at some point in their lives*. Safely disposing of documents containing personal details helps reduce the risk of identity theft.

Secure yard tools and equipment

Homeowners were encouraged to store ladders, garden equipment and tools safely, preventing would-be intruders from using them to access their property.

Remove hiding spots

Trimming overgrown trees and shrubs helps to keep house entrances and windows visible from the street.

Improve outdoor lighting

Checking existing lights and considering sensor lighting helps make the home less appealing to intruders.

Strengthen entry points

Households were reminded to check that windows and doors were secure, lockable and fitted with suitable security measures. Strong security screens with triple locks protect homes while letting in fresh air and natural light.

Connect with neighbours

Being part of a watchful community helps deter crime and encourage reporting of suspicious activity. Consider joining your local NHW group.

Secure September may be over, but households can continue improving their security by downloading the Spring Clean for Home Security Checklist at **crimsafe.com.au/secureseptember.**

See how these small home security changes improve your Secure Score at **securescore.crimsafe.com.au.**

ag.gov.au/national-security/publications/identity-crime-statistics

Belonging Starts at the Letterbox:

Why Neighbourhood Watch Matters More Than Ever

Every new neighbour welcomed, every barbecue or catch-up over the back fence – it all mattered more than many realised.

Loneliness Awareness Week (3–9 August) was a chance to recognise something Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) volunteers have always understood: safety and connection go hand in hand. When neighbours know each other, streets are safer, and people are less alone.

The research backs this up. Relationships Australia's latest Social Connection Survey found that up to a quarter of people often feel very lonely, and loneliness is linked to poorer mental health and even suicide risk. But the same research is clear that connection can be built, deliberately and steadily, street by street. That is exactly what NHW groups have been doing for decades: creating small, regular moments for people to notice each other, check in and belong.

So, thank you. To every coordinator who organised a meeting, every volunteer who doorknocked a new resident, every group that hosted a barbecue, morning tea or street meeting this year, you were doing genuine prevention and community-building work, even on the days when it just felt like getting the newsletter out.

There is always more room to grow that connection, and NHW groups don't have to build it alone. Neighbours Every Day (NED), Relationships Australia's national social connection campaign, is a free, evidence-based resource NHW groups can tap into alongside their existing activities. Four years of independent research by the Australian National University found that 85% of participants built stronger neighbourhood connections that lasted, and 63% reported improved mental health.



Connection Cards are free to download from the NED website



Building connection, one street at a time

As Neighbour Day 2027 approaches (the last Sunday in March), it's worth considering a small NED-style connection activity for your next event: a 'meet your street' walk, a welcome pack for new residents or simply encouraging members to check in on someone who has been quiet lately.

Because a street where neighbours know each other isn't just safer, it's a street where people belong. Belonging isn't a luxury, it's prevention, and it starts with all of us.

Find NED resources at: neighbourseveryday.org

If this article raises concerns for you or someone you know, support is available from Lifeline on 13 11 14.



ThinkUKnow 9th Edition Launches

Empowering children, families and communities to navigate the online world safely.

The ThinkUKnow team and Neighbourhood Watch volunteers

For children and teenagers today, growing up online is a normal part of everyday life. From social media and online gaming to messaging apps and artificial intelligence, the digital world offers incredible opportunities to learn, connect and create. However, as digital technology continues to evolve at a rapid pace, so too do the risks and challenges children and teenagers may encounter.

ThinkUKnow is a national online child safety education program developed to help children, teenagers, parents, carers and communities understand these risks and build the confidence to navigate the online world safely.

Led by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and delivered through a unique partnership with Microsoft Australia, Datacom, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Neighbourhood Watch Australasia and all state and territory police, ThinkUKnow provides practical, evidence-based advice on preventing online child sexual exploitation.

Drawing on intelligence and real case studies from the AFP-led Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE), the program addresses key online safety issues, including online grooming, sexual extortion, self-generated child abuse material and, most importantly, help-seeking behaviours.

The release of the ninth edition of ThinkUKnow reflects the program's ongoing commitment to keeping pace with an ever-changing online environment and ensuring communities have access to current and trusted online safety information.

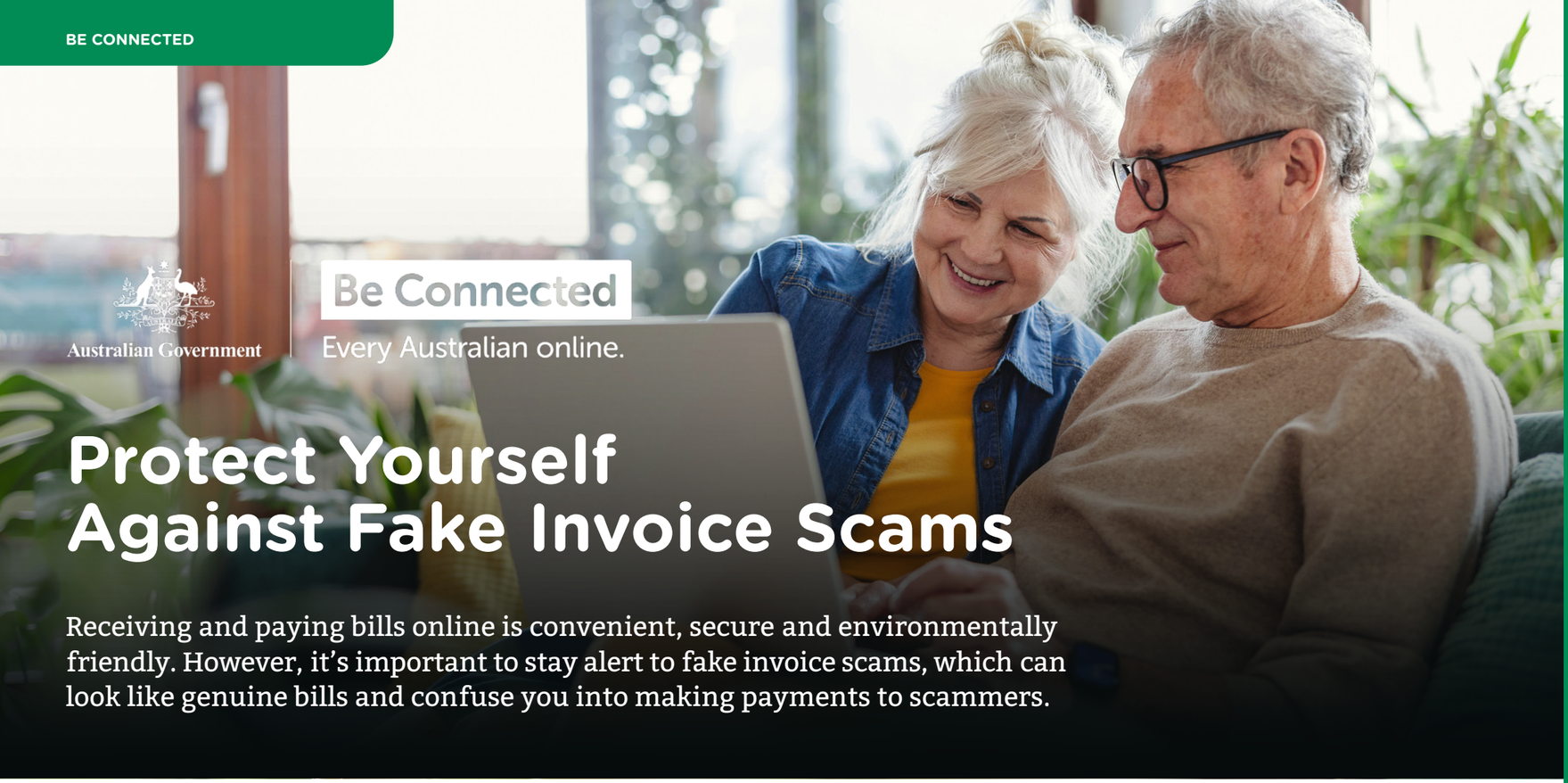
ThinkUKnow is supported by a network of volunteer presenters across Australia, including Neighbourhood Watch members, who help deliver online safety education in their communities.



ThinkUKnow training session led by the AFP



A ThinkUKnow presentation to primary school students



Australian Government

Be Connected

Every Australian online.

Protect Yourself Against Fake Invoice Scams

Receiving and paying bills online is convenient, secure and environmentally friendly. However, it's important to stay alert to fake invoice scams, which can look like genuine bills and confuse you into making payments to scammers.

Australians aged 55 and over lost more than $147 million to scams in 2025*, highlighting the importance of staying scam-savvy and protecting your personal information.

This Cyber Security Action Month, take the opportunity to boost your digital skills and learn how to spot and avoid fake invoice scams. In the new Be Connected video course, developed in collaboration with Scamwatch, you can learn about:

- The warning signs of fake invoice scams
- Ways to protect yourself before making a payment
- What to do if you've been targeted by a scam

***Source: Scamwatch, 2025.**

Boost your digital safety skills and confidence

Be Connected is a free Australian Government program designed to build your digital skills, confidence, and online safety. You can learn at your own pace with hundreds of easy to follow resources on topics such as advanced online safety, getting the most out of your smartphone, using government services and more. There are also regular online presentations and free in-person computer classes and support at local community organisations.

Learn more:
beconnected.esafety.gov.au

Supporting young people online

Helping young people in your care to stay safer online can feel overwhelming, but the Be Connected online safety for grandparents and carers guide is designed to make it easier. It offers clear, practical advice on key online safety issues, with simple tips to help you start conversations and support safe digital habits, from setting up devices to managing screen time. You'll also find information on dealing with challenges like cyberbullying and image-based abuse, plus a helpful overview of online gaming and popular social media platforms so you can better understand where young people spend their time and how to support them to stay safer online.

Read more: **esafety.gov.au/seniors/online-safety-grandparents-carers**

Bringing generations together through digital mentoring

The Be Connected Young Mentors program is a valuable initiative that brings young people and older Australians together to share digital skills and knowledge. Older Australians gain support to engage safely online and access services, while young people develop leadership and communication skills through meaningful community involvement. The free Young Mentors Program Toolkit provides practical resources to help libraries, schools, tertiary institutions and organisations deliver successful mentoring partnerships and digital learning experiences.

Learn more:
beconnected.esafety.gov.au/young-mentors

Free online safety presentations

Keep up with technology from the comfort of your own home at a free Be Connected online safety presentation - where you'll learn directly from expert trainers and have the opportunity to ask questions along the way.

October sessions

- **Staying safe on Facebook:** Tuesday 6 October, 10am AEDT
- **Protecting your personal information online:** Thursday 15 October, 3pm AEDT
- **Can you spot a scam?** Thursday 22 October, 3pm AEDT

Find out more:
beconnected.esafety.gov.au/online-safety-presentations

"Boost your digital skills and confidence to spot scams, protect your personal information and stay safer online."

Be Connected is a joint Australian Government initiative between the Department of Social Services, the eSafety Commissioner and Good Things Australia.

NHW ACT

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



NHW ACT volunteers during the museum tour

Hidden History: NHW ACT Steps Inside the AFP Museum

At the end of an unobtrusive laneway in Canberra is an unmarked warehouse housing a unique museum. Open by appointment only, small group tours are available to community organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch (NHW).

The museum collects, exhibits, preserves and promotes the history and achievements of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and its predecessors – including the Commonwealth Police Force – through its members' objects, images and stories.

Founded in 1992, it aims to educate AFP members and the public on federal policing, foster pride among staff, and document key operations, forensic advancements and peacekeeping missions.

Enriched by the donation of more than 20,000 historic items – including uniforms, forensic evidence and vehicles from the early 20th century to the present day – the museum tells the stories of those who serve, those who have served before, and those the AFP currently serves.

The collection includes items from the ACT Police, Commonwealth Police and the Peace Officer Guard. During NHW ACT's recent visit, members were told stories on AFP members and the evolution of policing, covering areas such as international peacekeeping, forensics and protecting Australia's interests.

The museum team is always interested in new objects to help add to its story or highlight a specific AFP operation or anniversary. All donations are subject to assessment and review by the museum team to ensure they represent a connection with the history of the AFP. To contact the museum, email **museum@afp.gov.au.**

Watson's Neighbour Day

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Australian Capital Territory (ACT) took its safety message to the heart of one of Canberra's most vibrant communities, hosting an information stall at Watson's Neighbour Day.

The event showcased the area's cultural diversity through a vibrant program of song and dance performances, from the Pacific Islands to Spain.

The NHW ACT stall was a popular stop, providing practical advice and resources on personal safety and securing your home and vehicle. NHW ACT President Jude Bowman was among those on hand, chatting with residents about how the program helps neighbours get to know and look out for one another. The stall also gave locals the chance to find out how to become a volunteer for their local NHW group, with membership open to ages 18 and above.

For NHW ACT, the day was a timely reminder that connected neighbourhoods are safer neighbourhoods, and the team looks forward to joining Watson's celebrations again next year.



NHW ACT President Jude Bowman at Neighbour Day 2026



Bigger, Better and Bolder: NHW ACT at the AusIndia Fair

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) ACT volunteers were among the 8,000 visitors who attended the 2026 AusIndia Fair. Staffing a busy booth at the new, larger South Point venue, the free event drew a wider multicultural audience, providing valuable opportunities for community engagement.



Performers on stage at the 2026 AusIndia Fair

Throughout the event, performers showcased music and dance from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America, highlighting the rich cultures of these regions. In between performances, visitors could peruse the booths promoting education, IT, fashion, digital media, handicrafts and tourism, or enjoy some traditional Indian cuisine.

Throughout the day, NHW ACT volunteers spoke with curious visitors and handed out crime prevention brochures. Several new NHW members volunteered for the first time, broadening capacity to support NHW ACT's attendance at community events.

Annual events such as the AusIndia Fair give NHW groups an opportunity to connect with people from a multitude of countries who have made Australia their home. With new faces on the team and new communities reached, NHW ACT looks forward to returning next year.



NHW ACT Flies the Flag at the 2026 Volunteering Expo

More than 900 visitors and nearly 60 volunteer organisations filled the University of Canberra Refectory in March for the 2026 ACT Volunteering Expo – a celebration of the volunteers who keep the Canberra region connected and thriving.

Hosted by Volunteering ACT, the Expo brings together organisations from across the region to showcase their work, highlight volunteering opportunities and connect with potential volunteers.

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) ACT has been a regular exhibitor at the event, networking with fellow volunteer organisations, promoting NHW and the volunteer roles it has to offer. The Expo attracted people with diverse backgrounds, ages and abilities, and organisations were encouraged to showcase volunteering opportunities that are accessible to anyone. Attendees were invited to enjoy a smoking ceremony, children's activities and plenty of food and drink – making the Expo a fun family event.



47,000 Letterboxes and Counting: NHW Ryde Delivers Community Safety by Hand

NHW Ryde members Philip Brown, Mary Walker, Jerry Loo, Warren Smith and Stuart Reid at a Bunnings sausage sizzle

Six times a year, 230 volunteers from Neighbourhood Watch Ryde (NHW Ryde) set out across seven regions to hand-deliver the group's printed newsletter to more than 47,000 letterboxes, taking practical crime prevention to the doorsteps of the Ryde Police Area Command (PAC), an area stretching from Gladesville and Hunters Hill to Eastwood and Epping.

What lands in those letterboxes is more than a newsletter. Each edition carries region-by-region lists of recent crime incidents provided by Ryde police, alongside practical guidance on securing goods and property, and the importance of staying alert to, and reporting, suspicious activity in the neighbourhood.

Behind the publication sits a close working relationship with Ryde PAC, whose Commander, Superintendent Vincent Hole, addressed the membership at the group's 2025 combined annual general meeting and Christmas dinner.

The delivery rounds are only part of the story. NHW Ryde volunteers are regulars at Bunnings sausage sizzles, community events such as West Ryde's Easter and Christmas celebrations and the Salvation Army's Red Shield Days.

That community presence is backed by close liaison with local Members of Parliament, Ryde councillors and local sporting clubs, with grants from these sources helping to cover the cost of producing the group's literature.

Together, it all adds up to a simple idea done well: neighbours keeping neighbours informed. With new members always welcome, NHW Ryde looks forward to reaching even more households in the year ahead.



NHW Ryde members David Samuelsdorff and Mark McGrath volunteering at the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal

Scam Alert: AI Deepfake Scams

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the latest technology being used by scammers to deceive people into giving away personal information and money.

What are deepfake scams?

Deepfake scams use AI technology to generate videos, voices and images resembling people you may know, as well as prominent international and Australian business people, celebrities and politicians. The content is used to manipulate people into investing in fake investment platforms, or to steal personal information and money.

How to spot a deepfake scam

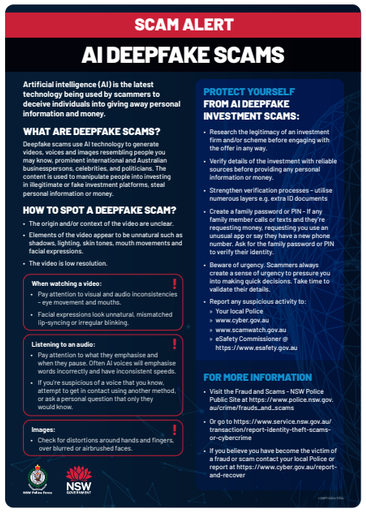
- The origin and/or context of the video are unclear.
- The video is low resolution.
- Elements of the video appear unnatural, such as shadows, lighting and skin tones.

When watching a video

- Pay attention to visual and audio inconsistencies, such as unnatural facial expressions, mismatched lip-syncing, irregular blinking, and eye or mouth movements that don't look right.

When listening to audio

- Pay attention to what the voice emphasises and when it pauses. AI voices will often emphasise words incorrectly and speak at inconsistent speeds.



- If you're suspicious of a voice you know, try to get in contact using another method, or ask a personal question that only they would know.

Images

- Check for distortions around the hands and fingers and over-blurred or airbrushed faces.

Protect yourself from AI deepfake investment scams

- Research the legitimacy of an investment firm and/or scheme before engaging with the offer in any way.
- Verify details of the investment with reliable sources before providing any personal information or money.
- Strengthen verification processes by using multiple layers, such as an extra identity document.
- Create a family password or PIN. If a family member calls or texts requesting money, asks you to use an unusual app or says they have a new phone number, ask for the family password or PIN to verify their identity.
- Beware of urgency. Scammers often create a sense of urgency to pressure you into making quick decisions. Take time to validate their details.

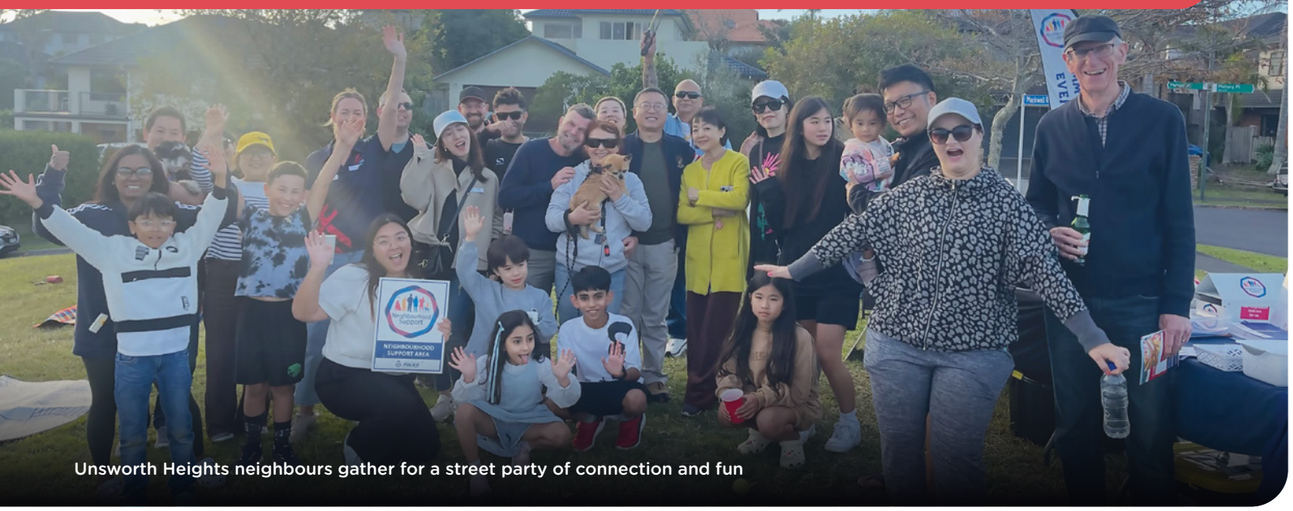
Report any suspicious activity

- www.cyber.gov.au
- www.scamwatch.gov.au
- The eSafety Commissioner at www.esafety.gov.au

If you believe you have been a victim of a fraud or scam, contact your local police or visit: **www.cyber.gov.au/report-and-recover**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT

NEW ZEALAND



Unsworth Heights neighbours gather for a street party of connection and fun

Neighbourhood Support Street Parties Connect the North Shore

North Shore Neighbourhood Support has been helping neighbours across Auckland's North Shore come together for street parties, with residents making the most of sunny days right up until the end of June.

From a relaxed driveway barbecue, to a pizza party, to one big shared celebration across several streets, residents have been meeting new faces and reconnecting with familiar ones. People of different ages, backgrounds, cultures and walks of life have come together, building stronger and more connected neighbourhoods.

Coordinator Selena Wong said the gatherings have sparked connections that last well beyond the day, with residents keen to start their own neighbourhood groups and sharing stories of street-led connection after each party. 'We had some great chats about looking out for one another and preparing the street for an emergency,' she said.

'We were also grateful to have Auckland Emergency Management join us at one event to chat with residents and share valuable information about household emergency plans and preparedness resources.' The group also thanked the local boards that supported the events, including Upper Harbour and Kaipātiki.

With several streets now looking to form their own neighbourhood groups, each party has fostered and strengthened connection between residents.



North Shore Neighbourhood Support Coordinator Selena Wong fostering neighbourhood connections in Fairview Heights

SAFE HOME, HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Your holiday season safety guide from Neighbourhood Watch Australasia

SAFETY TIPS FOR HOME, ONLINE AND AWAY

AT THE FRONT DOOR

- Expecting parcels? Arrange secure delivery, request signature confirmation or have a trusted neighbour take them in.
- Be wary of texts or emails claiming a missed delivery and never click the link; check the sender's address instead.
- If you keep a spare key, leave it with a trusted neighbour rather than under a mat or flowerpot.

INSIDE THE HOME

- If festive light cords run through a window or door, check it can still close and lock securely.
- Keep gifts out of view from the street and choose decorations that are flame resistant.
- Never leave lit candles, cooking or heating appliances unattended, and switch off Christmas lights before bed.

OUT AND ABOUT

- Distraction is everywhere during the festive rush. Stay alert in busy car parks and shopping centres, keep your belongings close and set your phone to do not disturb while driving.
- Planning festive drinks? Organise a safe way home before you head out. Book a rideshare or taxi, take public transport or arrange a designated driver.
- If travelling, share your itinerary with family or close friends so they know where you are.

HEADING AWAY

- Make your home look lived in. Put lights on a timer and use smart plugs to switch a lamp or radio on and off each evening.
- Ask a trusted neighbour to collect mail, bring in the bins and keep an eye on your property.
- Check that all doors, windows, sheds and side gates are locked before you leave.

IN THE DRIVEWAY

- Lock your vehicle every time and keep the keys away from the front door, where opportunistic thieves can easily reach them.
- Ask your NHW group or police about one-way anti-theft screws for your number plates.
- When shopping, park in well-lit areas and remove valuables from your vehicle.

ONLINE

- Scammers work overtime at Christmas. Treat bargain offers, charity appeals and unfamiliar websites with caution, and never share personal or financial details with anyone you don't recognise.
- Avoid posting gifts or travel plans on social media, as thieves can learn when a home will be empty.
- Children spend more time online during the break, so know which apps they are using and talk openly about the risks. For more advice, visit **accce.gov.au**.

LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

The best holiday security measure is a connected street. If you haven't already, consider joining your local Neighbourhood Watch or Neighbourhood Support NZ group.

If you notice suspicious activity, report it to police. All numbers below are available 24/7. Find your local NHW contacts at **nhwa.com.au/contact/jurisdictions**

000
In an emergency or when a crime is taking place

131 444
Police Link if a crime has already happened

1800 333 000
Crime Stoppers to report crime anonymously

Celebrating New Zealand's Community Volunteers

Neighbourhood Support (NS) New Zealand is marking the United Nations International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development by recognising the 'hidden gems' across its networks: the quiet champions who give their time, energy and care to their communities.

Every June the 'Get Involved' theme puts the spotlight on volunteerism, and this year it carried extra weight. The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2026 the International Year of Volunteers, an opportunity to emphasise the power of volunteering, encourage greater investment in it and secure commitments from governments and others to support it.

NS acknowledged the volunteers across its networks whose contributions span community initiatives, emergency response, sport, welfare, arts, youth, environment, advocacy and more. Many give their time not only to NS but to numerous other organisations as well. Volunteers are rarely comfortable with fanfare, but the people behind it deserve recognition.

To view a carousel showcasing a selection of these volunteers, visit the NS New Zealand website: **neighbourhoodsupport.co.nz.**



ANNE CRESSWELL
PALMERSTON NORTH NS
Palmerston North NS (Board Member + Street Contact). *Previously*: Flood clean-up Volunteer, Swimming Instructor (Edgecumbe Swimming Club), Edgecumbe College (Board Member).



BLAIR WILKINSON
WAITAKI / OTAGO NS
Waitaki/Otago NS (Board Member), Air Training Corps (ATC – Unit Commander).



ANGELA OLIVER
PALMERSTON NORTH NS
NS Palmerston North (Board Member). *Previously*: Rural Residents Group Upper Hutt, Taihape Museum, Scouts, Soccer Teams.



ALESI DRAUNIMASI
WAITAKI / OTAGO NS
Waitaki District Fijian Community, Church, NS Waitaki / Otago (Board Member).



SHERYL & ROGER RULE
NORTH CANTERBURY NS TRUST
Silverstream Social Club, Community Emergency Hub (Team Members), Christian Based Support Group for the community, NCNS Board Member and Street Leader, Provide meals for our church to distribute to those in need.



TIM BARTLE
NORTH CANTERBURY NS
NCNS, Clarkville Hall (President), Waimakariri Health Advisory Group, Coastal + Clarkville Council Drainage Advisory Boards, The Mainland Staffordshire Bullterrier Club.



KAHLIA MCDOUGALL
NSNZ - TĀMAKI MAKAURAU
Riding for the Disabled (Horse Volunteer)



DAVID PARRY
PALMERSTON NORTH NS
Palmerston North NS (Chairperson). *Previously*: Riverdale Kindergarten (Treasurer), Riverside Junior Football Club (President), Manawatu Junior Football Association (President).



ELIZABETH MORTLAND
TAIHAPE NS
Awarded a King's Service Medal (KSM) for her services to the Taihape community over the past **40 years**! She has initiated more than 20 groups or services in and around Taihape, dating back to 1985.



KATHY WEBB
WESTERN BAY OF PLENTY NS
Awarded a King's Service Medal for services to the Bay of Plenty community over **35 years**! Tauranga Community Foodbank, Alzheimer's Society, SociaLink (Co-founder), Graeme Dingle Foundation, Rotary Club, Toastmasters, Zonta.



LOUISE GREVEL
NSNZ CEO
Waitākere Volunteer Fire Brigade (Senior Firefighter & Community Portfolio), Waitākere Residents & Ratepayers Association, Waitākere Township Hall (Trustee), Whangateau Cemetery (Trustee), The Right Track - Te Ara Tutuki Pai.



MARGARET FAED
RODNEY NS
Mahurangi East Community Emergency Network, Rodney NS, Springboard. *Previously*: Brownie/Scouts Leader, Snells Beach Ratepayers & Residents Association (Chair).



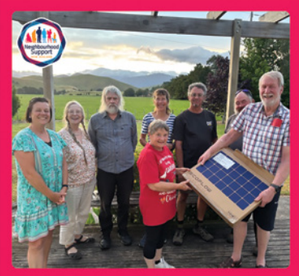
LOIS SCOTT-MUIR
WAITAKI / OTAGO NS
Otepoti Community Builders (Trustee), Dunedin Bowling Club (Trustee), Otago Neighbourhood Support - Waitaki (Trustee), Life Member Neighbourhood Support NZ.



JENNY BARTLETT
RODNEY NS
Neighbourhood Support, Mahurangi East Community Emergency Network, Toy Library, Womens Centre, Scrabble Club, Stitch and Yarn Group.



MICHAEL ANDREWS
TAIHAPE NS
Taihape Volunteer Fire Brigade, Taihape NS, Otaihape Health Trust, Taihape Community Civil Defence Response Group, Friends of Taihape, One Step Project, Masonic Lodge, Wooden Trees.



SANDRA BURLES
CARTERTON NS
Wairarapa Land Search and Rescue, Neighbourhood Support Mount Bruce, Masterton Tramping Club, Holdsworth Restoration Trust.



KELSEY ARDERN
NSNZ NATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS MANAGER
Vice Chair and Secretary of my son's daycare board.



CHRISTINE DORSEY
WAITAKI / OTAGO NS
The Rotary Club of Oamaru, St Mary's Church (Lay Minister and People's warden).



DALICE STEWART
NORTH CANTERBURY NS
NSNZ Board Member, Kaiapoi Netball Club (Coach, Committee, Fundraising), Kaiapoi Promotions Association, Kaiapoi North School PTA, Kaiapoi North School (Sports Coach), Kaiapoi High School (Netball Senior Coach).



LICHELLE GUYAN
WAITAKI / OTAGO NS
Waitaki EOC (CD Emergency Operations Centre - on call controller), Stronger Waitaki (Part of Steering group & Waitaki Health Futures rep), Sending You Happiness Project (Fundraiser for Endometriosis NZ), NS Otago (Board Chair).



CLAIRE STEER
PAUANUI NS
NSNZ Board Chair, Justice of the Peace, Royal Federation of Justices' Associations Board (Northern Region Rep), Civil Defence Lead - Pauanui Community Response.



BRYAN WARD
NSNZ AMBASSADOR
Rangitoto College Girls Rugby Coach, Neighbourhood Support NZ Ambassador, Pink Shirt Day Ambassador, White Ribbon Day Ambassador, NZ Police.



JOHN RUDDUCK
WAITAKI / OTAGO NS
Lower Waitaki Golf Club, Special Olympics North Otago, Neighbourhood Support (Board Member + Street Contact), Masonic Lodge.



JEFF & GAIL STRATTON
RODNEY NS
Mahurangi East Community Emergency Network, Rodney North Community Patrols, Rodney NS (Committee Members).

New Zealand will continue to recognise the people whose quiet work strengthens communities across NZ.

NHW QLD

QUEENSLAND

Neighbourhood Watch Week across Queensland



NHW volunteers and Queensland Police Service officers at a Bunnings NHW Week event

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Week offered a timely reminder of the role local connection plays in keeping communities safe, with Neighbourhood Watch Queensland volunteers, local police and community partners coming together across the state to share practical safety advice and spend time with residents.

In the Ipswich District, the week unfolded through daily information displays at local Bunnings stores, creating informal opportunities for conversation. The activities culminated in a community barbecue held alongside Crime Stoppers, where residents could stop, chat and pick up home and property safety information in a relaxed setting.

Along the Gold Coast, NHW volunteers and officers from the Queensland Police Service were a familiar presence at several Bunnings locations, including Mermaid Waters, Pimpama, Burleigh Waters and Oxenford. Conversations ranged from e-bike and e-scooter safety to protecting tools and worksites, with families drawn in by interactive activities and the ever-popular Seymour the Owl mascot. The interest in resources and volunteering reflected a shared desire to stay informed and connected.

In the Moreton District, NHW volunteers worked alongside Crime Stoppers Pine Rivers Branch and local police at Bunnings North Lakes, offering practical advice and answering questions about everyday ways to improve home and vehicle security.

North Brisbane District events followed a similar theme, providing residents with opportunities to connect with NHW volunteers and local officers to exchange ideas, access trusted information and talk through simple steps for safer living.

Across Queensland, NHW Week captured the spirit of community partnership, showing how conversations, visibility and collaboration continue to strengthen local connections and support safer, more resilient neighbourhoods.

Mackay Students Choose Safer Roads



Ken Rehbein, Mackay Northern Beaches NHW Area Coordinator, Police Liaison Officer Hill, Queensland Police Service (QPS), Sergeant Smith, QPS, Nigel Dalton, Member for Mackay and Melissa McGuinness, YOU CHOOSE Program Presenter with program attendees

Mackay Northern Beaches Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) brought Melissa McGuinness and the youth-led YOU CHOOSE Youth Road Safety program to local high schools and the wider community in June, supported by a $6,000 grant from the Mackay Regional Council Community Grants Program.

Over two days, presentations were delivered at Holy Spirit College, Mount Pleasant; Mirani State High School; Mackay State High School; and Catherine McAuley College, marking the sixth year that Mackay students have stepped up to become part of the movement for saved lives, safer roads and stronger communities.

A community presentation was also held at the Northern Beaches Bowls Club, sponsored by Rod Irwin and the team from the Road Accident Action Group and Mastermyne. Parents, teens, community leaders and local champions stood side by side, united by a desire to protect the people they love most. Among the students, senior cohorts are already stepping into service, carrying the YOU CHOOSE message back to their peers and helping to shape a safer road-use culture and prevent harm.



Ten Years of Muscle in Maculata: From Local Gathering to Community Icon

Crowds enjoying the show cars, market stalls and family entertainment during the tenth Muscle in Maculata event

When Riverview Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) held the first Muscle in Maculata in 2016, the vision was simple: create a family-friendly event that brought the community together, discouraged hooning and promoted positive engagement between residents, NHW and the Queensland Police Service (QPS). Ten years later, that vision has grown into one of Ipswich's premier community events.



Riverview NHW volunteers, Sandra Smrecnik Zone 6 Coordinator and Jocelyne Harris Treasurer and Zone 2 Coordinator

Under the leadership of Riverview NHW Area Coordinator Amanda Draheim, and with the unwavering support of a dedicated team of volunteers, friends and family members, Muscle in Maculata has evolved from a modest gathering of around 20 cars into a highly anticipated annual event. Each year has seen new attractions, stronger community partnerships and increased public support, with the event continually adapting to meet the needs of the growing community while maintaining its welcoming, family-focused atmosphere.

The success of the event has always been built on collaboration. Surrounding NHW groups, including Goodna17 NHW, have generously provided volunteers to assist on event day, reflecting the strong network of support that exists across the NHW community. QPS, emergency services, local businesses, community organisations and sponsors have all played an important role in the event's continued growth.

The 2026 event marked the biggest milestone yet. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, Muscle in Maculata 2026 attracted more than 140 vehicles, along with market stalls, food vendors, live entertainment and activities that drew hundreds of families and visitors. What began as a local car meet has become a celebration of community pride, volunteerism and partnership.

Looking back over the past decade, Muscle in Maculata is more than just a successful car show. It is a testament to what can be achieved when passionate volunteers, supportive partners and a committed community work together. As Riverview NHW celebrates this significant milestone and looks ahead to its second decade, the turnout stands as proof of the enduring strength of the NHW motto, 'Connecting Communities for a Safer Tomorrow'.



River Downs residents and volunteers came together at Rivertree Park for Easter Fun Day

Small Actions, Stronger Community in River Downs

River Downs is a unique acreage community where neighbourly connection helps keep the estate welcoming, informed and safe. Over the past year, River Downs Neighbourhood Watch (NHW Coomera 5), known locally as RDNHW, has brought residents together through events, safety updates and simple ways for neighbours to take part.

RDNHW's approach is built around small, consistent actions. Residents attend events, support raffles, share feedback, help with setup and look out for one another, while regular newsletters and meetings keep the community informed about ways to reduce safety risks around homes and vehicles.

One of the clearest examples was the Easter Fun Day, held annually on Good Friday at Rivertree Park. This year the event drew one of RDNHW's biggest crowds yet, with local families enjoying activities, games, sweet treats and a visit from the Easter Bunny. Three lucky raffle winners took home hampers, but the real success was seeing neighbours relax, chat and enjoy the park together.

The same spirit carried through the year. Christmas in the Park provided a relaxed end-of-year gathering, while the annual Mother's Day and Father's Day raffles gave residents another simple way to support local activities. Face-to-face ticket sales at the estate entrance also gave committee members a chance to speak with residents about local safety concerns and community activities.

Small ongoing contributions made a difference too. Through Containers for Change, residents turned everyday recycling into practical support for shared event resources, while local businesses and supporters contributed prizes, printing, food, equipment and practical assistance.

Resident feedback, gathered through surveys, meetings and conversations at events, has helped shape what RDNHW improves next. Attendance from local politicians and police has strengthened community meetings, giving residents the opportunity to hear local updates and ask questions. A clear improvement has been the growth of the River Downs newsletter into an eight page quarterly letterbox drop.

RDNHW's safety updates focus on useful actions residents can take, including using the right reporting pathways, being alert to scams and suspicious activity, and recording police incident report numbers in case follow-up or camera review is needed. In an acreage estate shaped by green spaces and local wildlife, awareness also extends to koala safe behaviour, responsible pet ownership and simple choices that help residents and wildlife share River Downs safely.

For River Downs, the past year has shown that community strength grows from steady volunteer effort and small, repeatable actions, that continue to build a safer, more connected neighbourhood.



Forestdale's Food Truck Jam a Huge Success

Forestdale NHW Treasurer Clay Yates, Hon Leeanne Enoch MP and Forestdale NHW Secretary Brad Yates

Forestdale came alive as the community gathered for Forestdale Neighbourhood Watch's (NHW) much-anticipated fourth Food Truck Jam.

From the mouth-watering treats to the friendly atmosphere, the night was buzzing with energy and excitement.

Beyond the food, the evening provided an opportunity for residents to strengthen local connections and enjoy time together in a relaxed community setting. When neighbours know each other and feel they belong, they are more likely to look out for one another and notice when something is not right.

Events such as the Food Truck Jam highlight the important role NHW events play in building connected communities.



Forestdale residents enjoying the Food Truck Jam

Inside the Gold Coast's Emergency Nerve Centre

On 30 March, members of the combined Gold Coast Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) groups were given a rare, behind-the-scenes look at how emergency services coordinate their response to major incidents across the region, during a visit to the Gold Coast Disaster and Emergency Management Centre.

Hosted by Community Liaison Officers Courtney and Emma, the visit gave members valuable insight into the centre's role as the hub of emergency coordination for the Gold Coast. From severe weather events to large-scale emergencies, the facility enables agencies to work side by side, ensuring information, resources and response efforts are coordinated quickly and effectively.

Members learned how the centre can be activated at short notice, bringing together representatives from the Queensland Police Service, State Emergency Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the City of Gold Coast to support a unified response when communities need it most.

The visit also highlighted the important role that community organisations such as NHW can play before, during and after an emergency. Discussions explored ways local volunteers can strengthen preparedness, support community resilience and help residents stay informed during times of crisis.

For Gold Coast NHW members, the visit was a reminder that their work on the ground connects directly to this larger response network, and a chance to bring fresh ideas on preparedness back to their own neighbourhoods.



Members of the combined Gold Coast Neighbourhood Watch groups with Community Liaison Officers Courtney and Emma at the Gold Coast Disaster and Emergency Management Centre



Community Connections on Queensland Day

Frivolous Faces face-painting hard at work creating a fun design

On 6 June, Bundaberg and District Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) marked Queensland Day by hosting a free Community Fun Day at Alexandra Park West.

The day marks the anniversary of Queensland's establishment as a self-governing colony in 1859, and the group saw the occasion as the ideal opportunity to strengthen local connections.

Visitors chatted with local volunteer organisations and emergency service personnel, tried out giant hand-crafted lawn games, enjoyed live music and relaxed with something tasty to eat and drink. Younger visitors flocked to the face-painting and balloon-twisting tent, a favourite stop throughout the day.

The NHW team fitting anti-theft screws also had strong community interest throughout the day. This small change helps prevent opportunistic thieves, who steal plates to use in other criminal offences.

It was a lively, welcoming and memorable day and Bundaberg and District NHW looks forward to more opportunities to bring the community together in the year ahead.



A New Chapter for NHW Oakey

NHW Oakey volunteers Belinda Horvath and Kimberley Hammett with Area Coordinator Donna Taylor

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Oakey has a new Area Coordinator, three new members and a full calendar of community events ahead.

NHW Oakey elected Donna Taylor as its new Area Coordinator in February 2026, bringing new leadership to a group that has served its small rural community for more than two decades.

In a town of 4,756 inhabitants (2021 census), the group depends on the commitment of its volunteers to build a safer, connected and inclusive community, and it has benefited from dedicated leadership throughout its history. Former Area Coordinator Ellisa Parker steered the group through the post-COVID years and raised NHW's profile in the community.

Donna has a strong commitment to small town communities and their growth. The first events under her leadership were the 118th Annual Oakey Show and the 2026 Cuppa with a Cop, attended by a large contingent of Queensland Police Service (QPS) members from Oakey, Toowoomba and Jondaryan.

Planning is under way for a busy second half of the year: a sausage sizzle at Bunnings Dalby, the annual drawing competition for the Under 8's Day at St Monica's School in Oakey, an engraving day focusing on pushbikes and scooters during the September school holidays, a Protect Your Plates event in November and the annual Oakey Santa Fair in December.



NHW Oakey volunteer Diane Meredith managing the raffle with Area Coordinator Donna Taylor

More than two decades on, NHW Oakey is entering its third era with a strong team in place.

Goodna17 NHW Connects with the Community at Goodna Marketplace



Officer Hyland alongside Goodna17 NHW Volunteers Peter, Chrissy, Julieanne and Bronwyn

Goodna17 Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) continued its commitment to community engagement by hosting an information stall at Goodna Marketplace on 9 May, providing locals with an opportunity to connect with volunteers and learn more about the role of NHW in creating safer communities.

Positioned alongside the Queensland Police Service (QPS) Mobile Police Beat, the stall attracted a steady flow of visitors throughout the day. Community members took the opportunity to speak with NHW volunteers and local police, discuss community safety concerns and access information on crime prevention, personal security and how to become involved in their local NHW group.

Adding to the friendly atmosphere was a popular Mother's Day Raffle, which generated plenty of interest from shoppers while helping to raise awareness of the group's activities. The raffle provided another opportunity for volunteers to engage with residents, answer questions and encourage greater community participation.

Events such as these play an important role in strengthening relationships between police, volunteers and the wider community. By maintaining a visible presence in local spaces, Goodna17 NHW continues to foster community connections, promote crime prevention initiatives and encourage residents to work together to make Goodna a safer and more connected place to live.

The success of the day reflects the dedication of the group's volunteers and the ongoing support of the QPS, demonstrating that community safety is strongest when everyone works together.



Sergeant Jo Curyer: Dedicated to NHW and Crime Prevention

Sefton Park Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Police Coordinator, Sergeant Jo Curyer has dedicated much of her career to crime prevention. Sergeant Curyer has been involved in South Australia's NHW program for more than 30 years. First joining the Lockleys NHW Area as Police Coordinator in the early 1990s, she prioritised proactive crime prevention from the beginning.

"I joined the Lockleys group because it was a chance for me to have a proactive impact on the safety and security of the area I was living in," she said. "I was already in crime prevention, so I figured I would have good knowledge and insight to help my community." Her proudest contribution to the Lockleys NHW Area was in securing a grant to help ensure emergency services can quickly locate people in need by painting house numbers onto kerbs. This small but effective measure can mean all the difference in the response times to an emergency situation.

Later in her career, Sergeant Curyer's crime prevention role saw her play a significant part in other NHW groups, both established and emerging. Sergeant Curyer went on to become Police Coordinator for both the Clearview and Sefton Park NHW Areas, and has remained with Sefton Park for 15 years, where the hands-on approach has continued.

"We would use the shopping centre as a location to educate the community about securing their vehicles," Sergeant Curyer said. "It had a big impact in evaluating the safety and improving the peace of mind of my community." Sergeant Curyer has supported Sefton Park with two successful NHW grants over the years, including an NHW SA 40th anniversary grant last year that funded personal alarms for vulnerable people.

One of her favourite crime prevention initiatives was providing security audits for victims of break-ins in her local area. "I would contact the victims and arrange for their audits all in my own time. When you join the police, you want to help the community and NHW is doing that at the grassroots."

Sergeant Curyer has seen community connection flourish through NHW. The Sefton Park Area Coordinator often picks people up for their meetings if they can't get there themselves. "The community spirit is incredible," she said. "It's all linked: by providing our support and resources to the community, crime is reduced and, as a result, things are easier for everyone."

NHW SA Announces 2026 Grant Recipients

South Australia Police (SAPOL) and the Neighbourhood Watch Volunteer Association of South Australia Inc. (NHW VASA) are pleased to announce the successful recipients of the 2026 Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) South Australia (SA) grants program, supporting innovative community-led projects that strengthen crime prevention, improve safety and build more connected communities across SA.

This year's grants, funded entirely by NHW VASA, will help local NHW Areas deliver practical initiatives tailored to the unique needs of their communities.

The successful projects showcase the diverse ways volunteers are working alongside SAPOL, local councils, schools and community organisations to make a positive difference.

Goolwa - Helmet Heroes

Goolwa NHW has been awarded funding to improve road safety for local children by providing bicycle helmets to young people from families experiencing financial difficulties. The project works with local schools to increase helmet use, improve road safety awareness and ensure more children have access to appropriate safety equipment.

Murray Bridge - The SafeLock Project

Murray Bridge NHW will launch the SafeLock Project, providing more than 250 combination padlocks to vulnerable and at-risk community members. The initiative aims to reduce opportunistic crime by making it easier for residents to secure sheds, gates and other valuable property, while reinforcing practical crime prevention messages.

West Beach - A Community Barbecue

West Beach NHW will host a community safety barbecue to bring residents together, promote crime prevention awareness and encourage greater community engagement. The event will provide an opportunity for local residents to connect with NHW volunteers and SAPOL while strengthening relationships that contribute to safer, more connected communities.

Kingston SE - Visibility Safety

Kingston SE NHW will deliver a community safety initiative focused on the growing use of e-bikes, scooters and other recreational mobility devices. The project combines education with the provision of high-visibility vests and helmets, encouraging safer riding and helping protect riders and other path users.

These projects reflect the strength of NHW volunteers across SA and their ongoing commitment to create safer, more connected communities through local action. By supporting practical, community-driven initiatives, the 2026 NHW grants program continues to empower local groups to identify solutions that address the specific needs of their neighbourhoods.



Goolwa's Helmet Heroes

Goolwa NHW members Pat Salter, Lorraine McDonnell and Debbie Smith with Jeff the Road Safety Dog at Goolwa Primary School's road safety education event

Goolwa Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) has helped ensure every Year 2 student at Goolwa Primary School has access to a compliant bicycle helmet, backing a community-driven road safety initiative that has strengthened partnerships between police, volunteers, schools and local businesses.

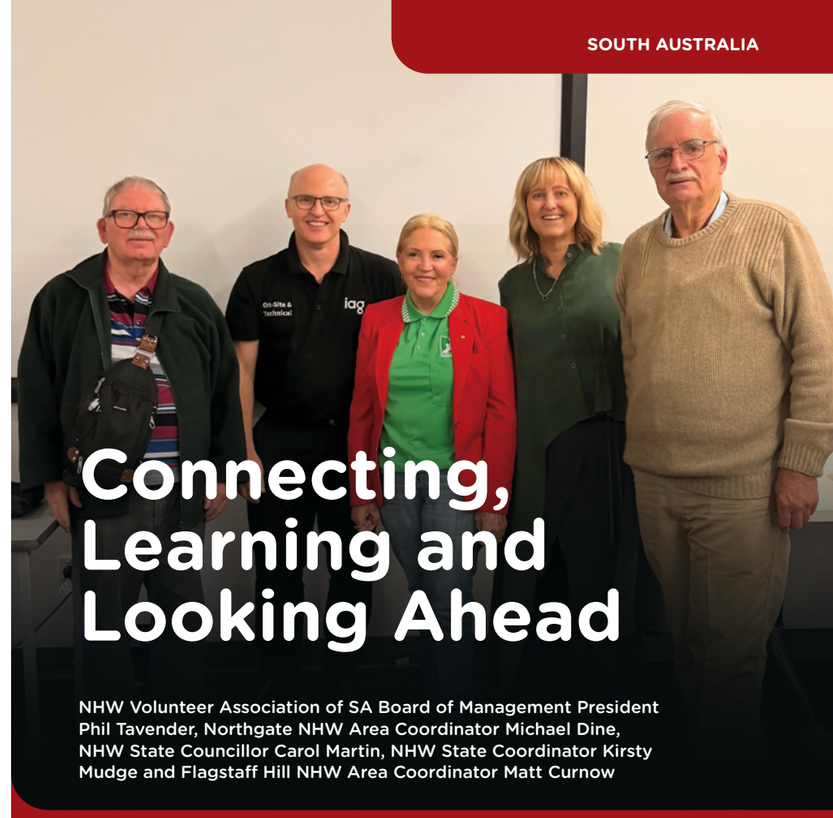
The initiative was developed after Goolwa police identified an increasing number of children riding bicycles without appropriate safety equipment. Officer in Charge of Goolwa Police Station, Sergeant Benjamin Scheltus, said it was important to address the cause of the problem, not just the symptoms. "Through discussions with families, schools and local police, we identified that many children either didn't have access to a suitable helmet or their families were experiencing financial barriers to purchasing one," he said.

In response, Goolwa NHW was approached with a proposal to increase helmet ownership and encourage safe riding education among young people. The idea quickly gained the support of NHW volunteers, local police, Goolwa Primary School, the South Australia Police (SAPOL) Road Safety Section and local businesses. "Together, they brought the initiative to life, providing compliant bicycle helmets and positive road safety messages to local children," Sergeant Scheltus said.

The initiative secured $1,200 from the NHW SA grants program, but it quickly became clear this would not be enough to cover every student. In response, a generous local helmet supplier provided the helmets at a reduced price and Goolwa NHW covered the difference. "Neighbourhood Watch played a critical role in supporting and promoting the program," Sergeant Scheltus said. "Without their commitment and willingness to invest in the safety of local children, we would not have achieved the same outcome."

Year 2 students were chosen as the recipients to establish safe riding habits early, as children of this age typically start to gain confidence on their bicycles and begin riding in public spaces. In July 2026, the initiative culminated in a road safety education event at Goolwa Primary School, where all 43 Year 2 students received a professionally fitted and compliant bike helmet, along with a visit from Jeff the Road Safety Dog. The event provided a valuable opportunity for police, NHW volunteers and the community to interact with young people and their families in a positive environment, strengthening community relationships and promoting shared road safety responsibility.

Goolwa NHW Area Coordinator Pat Salter said the project reflected the organisation's commitment to building safer, more connected communities. For Goolwa's NHW volunteers, the outcome was clear: safer children, stronger community connections and proof that local partnerships make a real difference for the riders of tomorrow.



Connecting, Learning and Looking Ahead

NHW Volunteer Association of SA Board of Management President Phil Tavender, Northgate NHW Area Coordinator Michael Dine, NHW State Councillor Carol Martin, NHW State Coordinator Kirsty Mudge and Flagstaff Hill NHW Area Coordinator Matt Curnow

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) South Australia (SA) volunteers got together at South Australia Police (SAPOL) Headquarters in May to network and hear the latest from the SAPOL NHW team.

The volunteer update session was an opportunity for members, both in person and online, to learn about the team's recent work and plans for the next year.

State Coordinator Kirsty Mudge gave updates on the NHW SA home security advertising campaign, the 2026 grants program, the work of other Australian NHW jurisdictions and some of the challenges facing the program in an increasingly technology-focused world.

The statewide campaign, launched on the back of the program's 40th anniversary in 2025, provides practical home security tips and features a ten-question home security habits quiz to help residents identify free changes they can make to reduce the risk of a break-in.

"We wanted to impress on our incredible volunteers what a strong and trusted brand they have created over the years," Ms Mudge said.

"We are always looking for opportunities to leverage the brand to get home security messages out to residents statewide, not just in areas where there are NHW groups."

"We told the volunteers about some of the opportunities we are pursuing including engaging with community Facebook groups through an NHW profile, branching into other social media platforms to find new audiences, sharing online stories about how to create community connections and having a presence at events where we can reach at-risk community members."

Volunteers were also able to ask questions and provide valuable feedback on the program, and with plans set for the year ahead, the SAPOL NHW team now turns to putting those ideas into action.

NHW TAS

TASMANIA

A Brief History of NHW Tasmania

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) in Tasmania started in 1986, and this article takes a brief journey down memory lane to pay respect to those who created the vision and to celebrate where the organisation stands today.



Inspector John Woolley, Dr Michael Readett and Mrs Mary Guy raise Tasmania's first Neighbourhood Watch sign in Risdon Vale, 1986

NHW Tasmania began through the efforts of Dr Michael Readett in what is now the City of Clarence. The first Neighbourhood Watch was in Risdon Vale, and this photo shows the initial Tasmania Police and NHW Tasmania Coordinators, Inspector John Woolley, Dr Readett and Mrs Mary Guy raising the first street sign in that suburb.

It is now 40 years later and although membership numbers have ebbed and flowed, NHW Tasmania continues to be active and innovative in helping to reduce crime and promote healthy community relationships. This is achieved through strong partnerships with Tasmania Police, Crime Stoppers, Bush Watch, local governments, corporate sponsors and a host of other community-minded organisations.

Along the journey, NHW Tasmania has developed a number of flagship events and activities, many of its own making, and some in support of initiatives run by other organisations and agencies. Everything the organisation does is about trying to make neighbourhoods safer, more secure and better connected, and its members take real pride in that work.



NHW Tasmania (NHWT) 'Stronger Together, Safer Together' sticker

The Calendar

Each year NHW Tasmania produces a free calendar that captures the essence of NHW being active in communities across the state. In recent years, a primary school student drawing competition has been incorporated, with winning entries featured in the publication. A true highlight of the year is the annual prizegiving ceremony for competition winners and their families, held alongside NHW Tasmania's award presentation for volunteers.

Get Online Week

Get Online Week began in Australia in 2018 through the Good Things Foundation, to help older people build confidence and stay safe online. NHW Tasmania embraced this initiative, and each October runs free events that teach essential digital skills, raise awareness of scams and support those unsure about using technology.

Cuppa with a Cop

NHWT held its first Cuppa with a Cop (CWAC) in 2019, and has become one of its most well-known and popular events, to the point that a CWAC is now held on average every fortnight. CWACs are held in shopping centres, cafes, outdoor settings with coffee vans and even in shipping containers. The positive community engagement that occurs is a two-way street for both the community and Tasmania Police.

NHW Week

There are seven Bunnings Warehouses in Tasmania, and every year they support NHW Week. Outside of this, Bunnings provides prizes for fundraising raffles and the opportunity for groups to host their famous sausage sizzles. A significant innovation in 2026 was their Junior Cordial with a Cop (JCWAC), which included popcorn, face painting, a children's workshop and plenty of police, with just as many big kids joining in.

Bush Watch

Across Tasmania, NHW Tasmania encourages its communities to take pride in where they live, and the organisation is always prepared to lead from the front. Bush Watch is a unique and active member of NHW in Tasmania with a strong focus on protecting the environment, flora and fauna in rural areas. Whether it's organising working bees or removing dumped tyres from bushfire-prone areas, NHW volunteers can be found doing something to make a difference.

Forty years on, NHW in Tasmania is alive and well. Its volunteer members continue to serve the program's founding purpose, improving the quality of life for all Tasmanians by minimising preventable crime and fostering good community relationships. With 50 years approaching, the focus shifts to what comes next, and there's always a place for new members.



NHWT volunteers with Tasmania Police



Calendar front cover featuring artwork from a competition winner



Improving digital confidence is a vital part of keeping communities safe



Indoors, outdoors, anywhere NHWT can get people together is a good place for a CWAC



Bunnings builders' workshop



Whether in Devonport, Old Beach, Maydena or New Norfolk, NHWT takes pride in its communities



Christmas Cheer and Connection at Melville's Night Market

NHW Melville volunteers Lyn Cuthbert and Sebastian Mann at the 2025 Christmas Family Night Market

In 2025, Melville Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) took part in the annual Christmas Family Night Market. The event had a welcoming atmosphere, as families enjoyed the chance to gather, browse stalls and soak up the Christmas spirit together.

Melville NHW hosted an information stall that provided a friendly point of contact for residents throughout the night. The stall was coordinated by NHW volunteer Lyn Cuthbert and supported by fellow volunteer Sebastian Mann, who spent the evening engaging with visitors, answering questions and sharing information about local safety and NHW activities.

The night market offered an ideal opportunity to connect not only with members of the public but also with other local volunteer groups, all coming together in a relaxed and positive environment. Giveaways and activities added to the sense of celebration, while the presence of many families brought extra energy and warmth to the event.

With festive decorations, a visit from Santa and a strong sense of community throughout the evening, the Christmas Family Night Market highlighted the value of local partnerships and shared celebrations. For Melville NHW, it was another chance to remain visible, approachable and connected, reinforcing the importance of community connection.

Staying Connected in Melville, One Conversation at a Time

Melville Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) continues to focus on thoughtful planning and meaningful community connection.

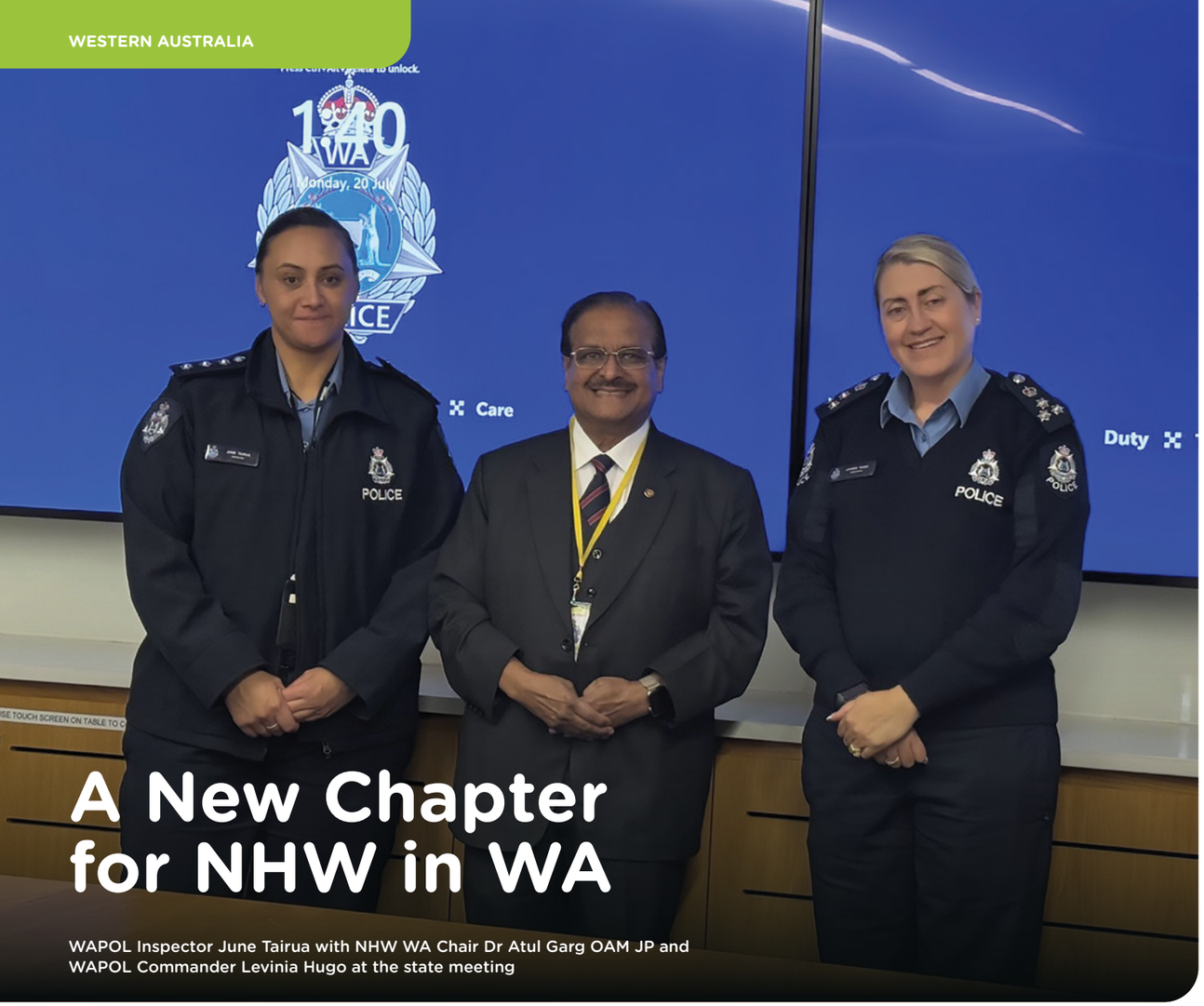
The year began with the group's Annual Planning Workshop, a valued opportunity for members to come together, reflect on the past 12 months and shape priorities for the year ahead. Facilitated by Souzi Clifford, the session allowed the team to review achievements, refine meeting formats and revisit procedures and guidelines. Just as importantly, it provided space for open discussion and shared ideas, reinforcing the strong teamwork that has supported Melville NHW for more than 30 years.

That collaborative spirit continued when Melville NHW hosted a promotional event at Hawaiian's Melville. More than 150 community members stopped to chat, collect NHW information and receive practical safety items including bin stickers and personal alarms.

Together, these activities reflect Melville NHW's ongoing commitment to staying organised, visible and connected. By combining strong internal planning with approachable community engagement, the group continues to play an important role in supporting a safe and connected City of Melville.



NHW WA Chair Dr Atul Garg OAM JP with NHW Melville volunteers Peter Best, Deb Ferraro and Lyn Cuthbert



A New Chapter for NHW in WA

WAPOL Inspector June Tairua with NHW WA Chair Dr Atul Garg OAM JP and WAPOL Commander Levinia Hugo at the state meeting

A significant milestone was reached for Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) in Western Australia (WA) with the formal establishment of NHW WA Inc. and the announcement of Dr Atul Kumar Garg OAM JP as the organisation's inaugural Chair.

The announcement was made during a statewide online meeting hosted by the Western Australia Police Force (WAPOL), an important step for the newly incorporated organisation. Dr Garg brings 33 years of NHW volunteer service to the role, beginning in the City of Melville, where he has held positions from street representative through to Committee Chair, and serving on the state Board since 2017.

The incorporation reflects the ongoing commitment of volunteers, police, local governments and community organisations to strengthen crime prevention and community engagement across the state. The transition was supported by a range of contributors, including Assistant Commissioner Peter Healy, Commander Levinia Hugo, Inspector June Tairua, Neighbourhood Watch Australasia Chair Bernie Durkin and Crime Stoppers WA CEO Dr Vince Hughes, whose efforts helped bring NHW WA to this important stage.

Dr Garg said he was excited about the transition: “We now have the opportunity to build an even stronger, volunteer-led organisation that embraces modern technology to better engage communities and support crime prevention across WA.”

Being online has made meeting and interacting with others easier than ever before, but it’s important to know how to stay safe.

Here are ThinkUKnow’s top tips for safer online interactions:

- Question suspicious accounts, and trust your instincts if something doesn’t seem right - not everyone is who they say they are.
- Avoid meeting someone in person that you have only ever spoken to online. However, if you do meet, choose a public place and take someone with you.
- If something goes wrong, know how to block or un-match and report.
- Your safety should always come first!

Sometimes things don’t go to plan but there is always help available.

For more information, visit **www.thinkuknow.org.au**

ThinkUKnow is a national online child safety program led by the Australian Federal Police, delivered in schools through educational presentations and resources for young people and their parents and carers.

the ACADEMY NEWS
from Tasmanian Chinese Buddhist Academy of Australia
2026











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