



Neighbourhood
Watch **SCOTLAND**

Safer Neighbourhoods Stronger Communities

NWS Communications Strategy 2026-2028

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1. Purpose

This Communications Strategy sets out how Neighbourhood Watch Scotland (NWS) will communicate with members of the public to support safer, stronger and more resilient communities.

As a small national charity, NWS will adopt a planned, proportionate and cost-effective approach to communications, ensuring activity is aligned to organisational priorities, supports membership growth and maximises the impact of available resources.

This strategy supports NWS's wider NWS strategic objectives and will:

- ✓ Improve Community Engagement
- ✓ Build Trust and Confidence
- ✓ Support Crime Prevention
- ✓ Strengthen Partnerships
- ✓ Increase Awareness of NWS Services and Initiatives
- ✓ Enhance Crisis and Incident Communication
- ✓ Promote Inclusion and Accessibility
- ✓ Deliver Consistent Key Messages
- ✓ Support Measurement and Improvement
- ✓ Increase the use of new digital platforms e.g. Instagram and LinkedIn
- ✓ Support development of new media such as podcasts, webinars and digital content

2. Strategic Communication Outcome

Through effective and collaborative communications, NWS will increase awareness, strengthen engagement, support crime prevention, grow membership and contribute to safer, stronger and more connected communities across Scotland.

3. Strategic Communication Priorities

Communications activity will support the following priorities:

- 1) Community Safety and Crime Prevention** - Providing trusted advice, alerts and information that help people stay safe and reduce the risk of crime and harm.
- 2) Membership Growth and Participation** - Promoting the value of Neighbourhood Watch and encouraging people to join, volunteer and become active participants within their communities.
- 3) Community Wellbeing and Connection** - Supporting neighbourliness, social connectedness, resilience and inclusion.
- 4) Partnerships and Influence** - Showcasing collaborative working and demonstrating the contribution of NWS to community safety and community wellbeing across Scotland.
- 5) Organisational Sustainability** - Supporting organisational development, funding opportunities, digital growth and long-term sustainability.

4. Communication Principles

NWS communications will be:

- Clear, consistent and accurate.
- Timely, relevant and evidence based.
- Inclusive and accessible.
- Positive, community-focused and solutions-led.
- Non-political and impartial.
- Proportionate to organisational capacity and resources.

5. Communication Planning

NWS will maintain a rolling annual Communications Calendar in the form of a spreadsheet, which will identify and project the timing of key messages, campaigns, awareness events and messaging priorities throughout the year. This will take cognisance of the Events and the Cultural Calendars as well.

The Communications Calendar will support forward planning, efficient content creation and consistent messaging while ensuring flexibility to respond to emerging issues and opportunities.

A Content Schedule of pre-planned communications will be developed around the following core themes:

- **What is Neighbourhood Watch?** - Increasing awareness and understanding of the role, purpose, values and impact of Neighbourhood Watch Scotland.
- **Neighbourhood Alert System** - Promoting the benefits of the Alert system, encouraging registrations/sign-ups and demonstrating its role in keeping communities informed and connected.
- **Safety and Crime Prevention messages** - Providing practical advice on crime prevention, scams, fraud, cyber security, personal safety and community resilience.
- **Community Connection and Wellbeing** - Promoting neighbourliness, volunteering, wellbeing, inclusion and activities that strengthen local communities.
- **What Happens in a Watch?** - Highlighting local Watch activities, events, initiatives and examples of communities taking positive action.
 - **‘Spotlight’: Stories from Members** - Showcasing the experiences, achievements and contributions of members, volunteers and community champions.

- **Getting Involved** - Encouraging people to join a Watch, start a Watch, volunteer or engage with NWS programmes and activities.
- **Partners and Collaboration** - Promoting collaborative work with Police Scotland, local authorities, community organisations, third-sector partners and Neighbourhood Watch England & Wales.
- **Rural Watch and Special Groups** - Recognising and supporting the specific needs of rural communities and other groups, including young people, older people and under-represented communities.
- **Building Safer Communities** - Bringing all themes together through positive stories and campaigns that demonstrate the collective impact of communities, members, volunteers and partners working together.
 - **Campaigns**
 - **Seasonal**

Whilst planned communications will provide the strategic framework, the Engagement Team will retain autonomy to publish:

- Community safety alerts and messaging.
- Event promotion and reporting.
- Local engagement activity.
- Relevant social and cultural awareness days of community interest.
- Reactive communications where appropriate.

This approach provides consistency whilst ensuring NWS remains responsive to community needs and emerging issues.

6. Digital Channels

NWS will adopt a channel-specific approach to maximise impact and make best use of available resources as follows:

Neighbourhood Alert

The primary channel for community safety information, alerts, crime prevention messaging and member engagement.

Facebook

Used primarily to promote events, campaigns, community activity and organisational updates.

As membership and audience reach increase, interaction will be managed proportionately to minimise the resource burden associated with negative or inappropriate comments while maintaining positive community engagement.

Instagram

Used to increase visibility through visual storytelling, including:

- Reels and short-form videos.
- Campaign content.
- Community stories.
- Volunteer and member features.
- Partnership activity.

LinkedIn

Used to engage stakeholders, partners, funders and professional audiences, highlighting impact, partnerships and organisational development.

Other Platforms

NWS will periodically review opportunities to utilise additional platforms where there are a clear strategic benefit and sufficient capacity.

7. Partnership Working

NWS recognises that effective communications are strengthened through collaboration. The Joint Communications Group established with Neighbourhood Watch England & Wales will continue to identify opportunities for:

- Joint campaigns.
- Shared resources and communications materials.
- Co-branded content.
- Shared learning and best practice.
- Collaborative funding and sponsorship promotion.

NWS will also work closely with key partners to amplify community safety, wellbeing and resilience messaging across Scotland.

8. Governance

Strategic oversight of communications will be provided by the NWS Communications Coordination Group. The Group will:

- Oversee delivery of this strategy.
- Agree key messages.
- Review communication performance and emerging opportunities.
- Ensure alignment with organisational objectives and available resources.

Operational delivery will remain the responsibility of NWS staff and authorised contributors.

9. Monitoring and Review

Success will be measured through:

- Membership and Watch growth.
- Neighbourhood Alert registrations.
- Website and social media performance.
- Campaign reach and engagement.
- Partner and stakeholder feedback.
- Regular membership surveys

The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned to organisational priorities, available resources and emerging opportunities.