

# **BNW CONSTITUTION, Issue 8**

## **1. STATUS**

BROADSTONE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ('BNW') is an unincorporated membership organisation, run by volunteers. It is registered as a neighbourhood watch with the national Neighbourhood Watch Network. It is not a registered charity.

BNW was formed in 1988 and is one the largest watches in Dorset, with membership in the region of 3,500 households, roughly 70% of the total for the BH18 postal area.

## **2. AIMS**

BNW's aims are (a) to engage and work with residents and Dorset Police in furtherance of the prevention and detection of crime and antisocial behaviour in Broadstone, and (b) to help develop a vibrant, good-neighbourly and inclusive community.

## **3. ACTIVITIES**

BNW's principal activities are:

- publishing and distributing a newsletter to member households, containing information and statistics on crime and antisocial behaviour, and items on personal safety, road safety and a range of consumer, environmental and community issues;
- liaison with the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner, senior Dorset Police officers and officers from Poole Neighbourhood Policing Team;
- dealing with requests from members for advice on crime and related issues;
- holding public-facing events (e.g. coffee mornings and on social media) to inform residents about policing, crime, and related community issues;
- giving discretionary financial support to Broadstone bodies that have aims aligned with BNW's.

## **4. MEMBERSHIP**

### **(a) Eligibility**

Membership of BNW is open to all occupants of domestic and commercial properties within the Broadstone postal district (BH18) and certain adjacent roads. Membership is not conditional upon the payment of a subscription or donation, in line with the Neighbourhood Watch Network's policy recommendation to this effect.

### **(b) Membership Register**

BNW has a membership register in which membership is recorded by property address, not by personal names. The Membership Secretary maintains the register and updates it for new and cancelled memberships, as notified by members or coordinators and contacts. Membership is rolled over when a property changes hands, unless the new occupants indicate that they do not wish to be members.

## **5. NETWORK**

BNW's network for delivering newsletters and collecting funds from members consists of six sectors, covering all the roads in Broadstone. Each sector is sub-divided into 'areas', each area having a supervisory 'coordinator'. Areas are sub-divided into groups of a few adjacent roads, with a 'contact' responsible for each group. BNW has some 42 coordinators and 223 contacts, but numbers vary with vacancies and changes to the structure of the network.

## **6. COMMITTEE**

### **(a) Powers**

An elected Committee manages BNW. The Committee has the power to:

- make such arrangements for the governance of BNW as it deems necessary,
- work in partnership with Dorset Police and BCP Council, and other appropriate public and private sector bodies,
- undertake new activities, or vary or terminate existing activities,
- determine the conditions of BNW membership, and make arrangements for membership record-keeping and the newsletter delivery network,
- determine funding strategy, make arrangements for banking and accounting, and recruit a competent person to examine the books and annual accounts,
- provide financial support to local bodies with aims aligned with BNW's,
- determine policies for communications and social media,
- propose changes to the constitution (for adoption at the AGM),
- determine the distribution of net residual funds to Broadstone bodies, in the event of BNW's winding up.

### **(b) Membership**

The officers of the Committee are: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, Membership Secretary and Media Officer. The Committee also has eight elected co-ordinators, at least one from each sector. A coordinator who is a member of the Committee may combine this post with that of a Committee officer. The Committee also has the power to co-opt members to serve in any capacity. All members of the Committee must stand for election at every AGM. A member of BNW may also stand for election to any committee office at the AGM.

Officers serve an initial term of three years, and may then opt to serve a second term of three years. They are expected to stand down at the end of the second term, but may opt to remain in post until BNW is able to appoint a successor with appropriate skills and experience.

### **(c) Meetings**

The Committee meets at least once per quarter. Officers report on their areas of responsibility, and the Committee discusses topical issues of relevance to BNW. All coordinators and officers from Poole Neighbourhood Policing Team have the right to attend and speak at Committee Meetings, but only members of the Committee may vote.

The Committee is quorate with six members in attendance. Motions are decided by a simple majority of Committee members present and voting. In the event of a tied vote, motions are deemed to be lost. Minutes of Committee meetings are posted on BNW's website ([broadstonewatch.org.uk](http://broadstonewatch.org.uk)).

## **7. FINANCE**

### **(a) Banking**

BNW holds an online Barclays Bank Community Account, which the Treasurer, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary are mandated to operate.

The Committee has the power to open a current or interest-bearing account on behalf of BNW with any bank or financial institution that is covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

### **(b) Income and Expenditure**

The Committee determines the strategy for funding running costs whilst maintaining the bank account and general reserve at prudential amounts. Options include (but are not limited to) membership subscriptions, voluntary donations, sponsorship, and any appropriate fund-raising activity. The Committee sets the minimum amount requested from members for subscriptions or donations.

BNW's biggest cost is the printing of the newsletter. Other costs include other printing costs, meeting costs, upkeep of the website and sundries. Committee approval is required for any new running cost or one exceptional in amount.

Subject to the maintenance of the bank account and general reserve at prudential amounts, the Committee has the discretion to make donations to Broadstone bodies and initiatives whose aims are aligned with BNW's.

Committee members are reimbursed for any authorised expenditure that they defray on behalf of BNW. Members are not usually reimbursed for general out-of-pocket expenses and any claim must be authorised by the Chairman or Treasurer.

### **(c) Cash Book**

Receipts and payments are entered on a spreadsheet cash book, which is reconciled to the bank account each month. The cash book is supported by a file of remittance advices, invoices and Committee minutes, as appropriate. A Committee member may ask to inspect the cash book and vouchers at any time.

#### **(d) Financial Reporting**

BNW's financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Financial reports comprise:

- year-to-date accounts with a commentary, for the purposed of the bi-monthly Committee meetings, and
- annual accounts for the financial year to 31<sup>st</sup> March which, following approval by the Committee, are posted on the website, in good time for the AGM.

The annual accounts are presented for members' approval at the AGM. They include a report from the Honorary Examiner confirming that he has examined the books and records, and certifying that BNW's accounts for the year are in accordance with these.

### **8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

#### **(a) Agenda**

The AGM is held each spring, usually in May. Agenda items include:

- approval of the minutes of the previous AGM (as posted on the website),
- annual reports from the Chairman and other officers (as necessary),
- approval of the accounts and reappointment of the Examiner,
- voting on motions raised by the Committee or members,
- voting on proposed changes to the constitution,
- elections to the Committee.

#### **(b) Rules:**

- Members are given at least 21 days' notice of the date, time and venue of the AGM, in the newsletter and on the website. The notice includes the agenda and motions to be raised by the Committee.
- All members attending the AGM have the right to vote. Motions are decided by a simple majority.
- All members attending the AGM have the right to ask the Chairman and the Committee questions about BNW's affairs. A member wishing to ask a question at the AGM is required to notify the Secretary of it at least 7 days before the meeting.
- A member wishing to raise a motion at the AGM is required to have it seconded by 5 other members and to notify the Secretary of it at least 7 days before the meeting.
- A member intending to stand for an office of the Committee must notify the Secretary of this before, or at, the AGM.

