

Our News - January 2026 [#596413800]

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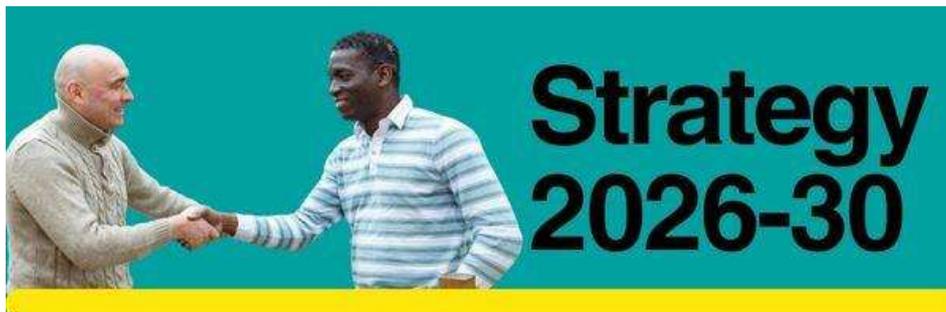
JANUARY 2026
OUR NEWS



Happy new year Neighbours!

I hope that 2026 is treating you very kindly. For me, January arrived with a bang, or two bangs actually. I toppled over on an icy patch of pavement, not once but twice. It was **extremely** painful. Please take extra care of yourselves. I feel very fortunate to only have a couple of bruises.

The advice from [RoSPA](#) (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) and at least one [NHS Trust](#), for navigating slippery pavements is to [walk like a penguin](#). I know it sounds silly, but it's better than a broken bone. Take small, careful steps and keep your knees slightly bent to stay balanced. Find more guidance on how to stay safe in the cold weather [here](#).



Neighbourhood Watch launches new strategy

As you may know, 2025 saw Neighbourhood Watch come to the end of our five-year strategy. We started work with members, staff and stakeholders to develop a new strategy which will shape our work until 2030.

After extensive collaboration and consultation, the strategy has now been published. We are very grateful to all the members, staff, volunteers and stakeholders who gave up their time to contribute to this important and inspiring work. Read the full strategy document and find out more [on our website](#).

National Crime and Community Survey

The results of the 2025 National Crime and Community Survey are in, and they reveal a nation feeling increasingly on edge. More than thirty-eight thousand respondents shared their experiences.

What emerged is that nearly 42% of respondents believe crime levels in their neighbourhood have risen in the past year, similar to the figure reported in the previous year's survey. Read the full story [on our website](#).



Staying Cyber Secure with ERA

The latest Neighbourhood Watch Crime and Community Survey found that almost half (45%) of members were worried about experiencing cybercrime. But what steps can you take to make sure you're protected?

Sumier Foster-Shah, Customer Service Manager at ERA, shares his top tips to help keep yourself safe from cybercrime – discover his advice [here](#). - AD

Do you have what it takes to be a Cyberhood Ambassador?

Cyberhood Ambassadors educate, help and protect people from online crime. They share information, answer cybersecurity questions and concerns, and deliver Cyberhood Watch events and activities.

Find out what our ambassador [Anthony, based in Devon](#) did to support his local community [here](#).



Funding for police announced by Home Office

The Home Office has announced that police forces across England and Wales are set to receive a funding boost of up to £798 million in the next financial year. This brings total funding up to £19.5 billion.

The majority of this funding is for local forces, with an additional £746 million allowing them to prioritise the crimes impacting their communities, including knife crime, anti-social behaviour and shop theft. Full story [here](#).



Protect what matters: start the year future-ready

As a Neighbourhood Watch member, you already believe in protecting people and property. Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) do the same for your household, making sure your wishes are followed and trusted people can step in if something unexpected happens.

The New Year is a natural time to get organised and put your affairs in order - making sure the right people are in charge, your wishes are known, and your hard-earned assets go where you want them to. A few documents can make all the difference. [Future Proof Estate Planning shared their advice on where to start](#). – AD



Happy 100th birthday Laurence!

Our oldest Coordinator in Cambridgeshire, and indeed the country, recently turned 100 years old. Laurence Medlock was presented with an award by local Chairman Stan Geering. He said that now he is 100, it is time to retire!

Kevin Evans organised a surprise presentation and celebration – you can see [photos on our Instagram page](#). Congratulations and many happy returns of the day Laurence. Thank you so much for decades of volunteering, what an inspiration you are.

Have you heard about the switch to digital landlines?

Landlines are changing, and the UK's telephone network is going digital by January 2027. If you have loved ones with additional needs such as elderly relatives or someone who uses a telecare device or pendant alarm, BT's Connected Together initiative encourages you to take a few simple steps to support them through the switch.

BT's Connected Together website is where customers can access all the guidance and support they need. [Start the conversation today](#). – AD

Congratulations to our Christmas giveaway winners

Well done to our Christmas giveaway winners. Rebecca in Littleborough got the SimpliSafe bundle, Nicola in Crewkerne was our lucky ERA winner and Cindy in Plymouth was the recipient of the Patlock. Our ERA winner, Nicola said:

"This was a lovely surprise over Christmas. I'm delighted to get the ERA bundle. I'd been looking at getting a smart security system to keep our home safe. I was so pleased when it arrived, and the M&S voucher was great too."

Don't miss out on our next giveaway – make sure you are following us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Stuff you should know...

The 'Stuff you should know' podcast recently did a short show about the history of the Neighbourhood Watch in the US. It's a fascinating look at the similarities, and differences, between the two cultures. Our need to feel safe and part of a community is universal but some of the challenges and histories differ. Listen to it [here](#).

That's it for our news this month,. I'm always keen to know how we can improve and to share the best of our wonderful network.

Hope you have a very safe and warm January.

Best wishes

Charmian

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