



Neighbourhood
Watch **SCOTLAND**

Safer Neighbourhoods Stronger Communities

NWS Strategy 2026-2028

Version Number:	1
Written by:	Lesley Clark & Lynne Symington
Owner:	Board
Approved:	29/01/26
Publication Date:	29/01/26
Review Date:	31/12/26

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Strategic Context.....	3
2.1 Operating Environment	3
2.2 Alignment with National Priorities	3
3. North Star, Vision, Mission and Values.....	4
3.1 North Star	4
3.2 Vision.....	4
3.3 Mission.....	4
3.4 Core Values	4
4. Strategic Priorities 2026–2028.....	5
4.1 Priority 1: Develop community resilience through partnership collaboration	5
4.2 Priority 2: Maximise opportunities for community safety and wellbeing through prevention-focused engagement.....	5
4.3 Priority 3: Strengthen organisational credibility, influence and reach	6
4.4 Priority 4: Maximise funding and investment opportunities	6
4.5 Priority 5: Build organisational capacity through targeted investment and professional development	7
5. Delivery and Performance Management.....	8
5.1 Governance	8
5.2 Monitoring and Evaluation.....	8
6. Review	8

1. Introduction

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland (NWS) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and Registered Charity (Charity Number: SC036510). Established in the early 2000s, NWS was created to develop and support existing and new Neighbourhood Watches across Scotland and has continued to evolve to meet the needs of communities within a changing social, economic and technological environment.

NWS is the central point of contact for Neighbourhood Watches across Scotland, with the Neighbourhood Watch concept applied in a flexible and localised way – **‘Your Watch – Your Way.’** Our purpose is to support people to work together towards a safer, resilient and more connected Scotland.

Communities that are connected, informed and coordinated are better placed to prevent crime, reduce harm and respond effectively to local challenges and emergencies. By ensuring communities receive the right information, at the right time, from trusted sources, NWS supports realistic perceptions of safety and enables collective action to minimise the risk to the public.

The Neighbourhood Watch concept is grounded in neighbourliness, inclusion and mutual support. Individuals and communities engaged with NWS are encouraged to be welcoming, respectful and committed to treating others with dignity and respect, reflecting the inclusive values that characterise Scottish society.

Through participation in Neighbourhood Watch, people are expected to take an active role in their community, recognising that individual and collective action can make a positive difference. Well-informed and well-connected communities are better able to identify local safety concerns, build cohesion and work together to address issues collaboratively.

A core strength of NWS is its extensive community reach. Information and advice on crime prevention, safety and wellbeing are shared through Neighbourhood Watch contacts and digital platforms, including Neighbourhood Alert. These networks currently reach over 381,500 households across Scotland, significantly extending the impact of national and local community safety messaging.

Neighbourhood Watch groups help to strengthen social connections and establish trusted lines of communication. This role is particularly valuable during periods of increased risk, such as severe weather or emergencies, where coordinated community responses can greatly enhance community resilience and support.

The Scottish Government is the primary sponsor of NWS, providing core funding in recognition of the organisation’s reach, preventative role and contribution to safer communities. NWS works to align its activity with Scottish Government priorities and reporting frameworks, ensuring that outcomes, performance and impact are clearly evidenced and contribute to national objectives on community safety, wellbeing and resilience.

2. Strategic Context

2.1 Operating Environment

Communities across Scotland continue to face complex and inter-connected challenges, including:

- Cost of living pressures and financial vulnerability
- Digital exclusion and online harm
- Changes in crime patterns, including fraud and cybercrime
- Demand for early intervention, prevention and community-led solutions

At the same time, there is a strong national policy driven by Scottish Government that places emphasis on partnership working, place-based approaches, and empowering communities to take an active role in improving safety and wellbeing.

NWS operates within this environment as a trusted intermediary between communities, public services, community safety partners and Scottish Government, with a unique reach through its volunteer network and digital platforms e.g. Neighbourhood Alert.

2.2 Alignment with National Priorities

This Strategy aligns with:

- Scottish Government “Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy: Delivering for Scotland” and linked priorities on prevention and community justice
- The Christie Commission principles of prevention, partnership, people and place
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- Public protection and community safety frameworks

3. North Star, Vision, Mission and Values

3.1 North Star

To make Scotland a safe, resilient and welcoming place.

3.2 Vision

To create safer neighbourhoods and stronger communities by promoting local co-operation, safety and resilience.

3.3 Mission

To inspire, encourage and enable the people of Scotland to become more connected and actively engaged to improve community wellbeing.

3.4 Core Values

- **Ambition:** striving for continuous improvement and innovation
- **Credibility:** trusted, evidence-led and accountable
- **Collaboration:** working in partnership at local and national level
- **Inclusiveness:** accessible, representative and welcoming to all
- **Neighbourliness:** caring for communities and looking out for one another
- **Resilience:** supporting communities to anticipate, respond and recover

4. Strategic Priorities 2026–2028

NWS will deliver its Mission through five strategic priorities. Each priority is supported by clear objectives and actions designed to ensure delivery is focused, measurable and transparent.

4.1 Priority 1: Develop community resilience through partnership collaboration

Objective

To strengthen community resilience by embedding NWS within local and national partnership structures.

Key Actions

- Enhance partnership arrangements with police, fire, local authorities and third sector organisations
- Enhance partnership collaboration and shared campaign activity with Neighbourhood Watch England and Wales.
- Support Watches to develop local connectivity
- Promote shared learning and joint initiatives across partners and NWS volunteer network

Outcomes

- Improved understanding and awareness of community safety information
 - Increased community confidence and resilience
 - Stronger local problem-solving capacity
-

4.2 Priority 2: Maximise opportunities for community safety and wellbeing through prevention-focused engagement

Objective

To deliver inclusive, prevention-focused engagement that promotes community safety and wellbeing.

Key Actions

- Develop targeted engagement approaches for communities experiencing higher levels of vulnerability or exclusion
- Expand face-to-face and digital engagement activity
- Promote consistent, evidence-based prevention messaging

- Support communities to address emerging risks, including the risks posed by digital and financial harm

Outcomes

- Increased awareness of prevention and personal safety
 - Reduced risk of harm through early intervention
 - Improved accessibility and reach of NWS activity
-

4.3 Priority 3: Strengthen organisational credibility, influence and reach

Objective

To grow the NWS network and strengthen its national profile to widen the reach and improve service delivery.

Key Actions

- Increase membership and Neighbourhood Alert registration
- Review the NWS brand and communications approach
- Maintain solid governance and accountability arrangements
- Improve data quality, insight and reporting

Outcomes

- Increased membership and engagement
 - Enhanced organisational reputation and influence
 - Stronger evidence base for decision-making
-

4.4 Priority 4: Maximise funding and investment opportunities

Objective

To secure sustainable funding and investment to support long-term organisational viability.

Key Actions

- Develop a diversified funding strategy
- Strengthen relationships with funders, sponsors and partners
- Demonstrate impact through robust monitoring and evaluation

- Explore opportunities for collaborative funding bids e.g. with Neighbourhood Watch England and Wales.

Outcomes

- Improved financial sustainability
 - Increased investment in community safety activity
 - Reduced reliance on single funding sources
-

4.5 Priority 5: Build organisational capacity through targeted investment and professional development

Objective

To ensure NWS has the skills, systems and capacity required to deliver its Strategy.

Key Actions

- Invest in staff and volunteer development
- Strengthen internal systems, policies and digital capability
- Support succession planning and leadership development
- Promote wellbeing and inclusion within the organisation

Outcomes

- A skilled, supported and resilient workforce and volunteer cadre
 - Improved organisational effectiveness
 - Increased capacity to respond to emerging priorities
-

5. Delivery and Performance Management

5.1 Governance

The Board will provide strategic oversight and ensure delivery of this Strategy through:

- Annual operational planning
- Regular performance reporting
- Risk management and compliance

5.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress will be measured through:

- Clearly defined reporting indicators
- Annual review of outcomes and impact
- Stakeholder and community feedback

6. Review

This Strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued relevance and alignment with the external environment, with a full refresh at the end of the 2026–2028 period.