

## Online Watch Link (OWL) in London Borough of Richmond

25 January 2022

### 1. Background

The Online Watch Link (OWL) is a communications tool that has been jointly commissioned by the Met Police and Richmond and Wandsworth Council to send crime prevention alerts and information to residents across the two boroughs.

### 2. OWL Registrations in Richmond

#### a) OWL Neighbourhood Watch

**Grouped by: Ward. Date range: 21 Oct 2021 to 21 Jan 2022**

**Number of members signed up by ward:**

Ward	Members
Barnes	54
East Sheen	77
Fulwell and Hampton Hill	73
Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside	62
Hampton	82
Hampton North	64
Hampton Wick	71
Heathfield	72
Kew	95
Mortlake and Barnes Common	57
North Richmond	122
South Richmond	191
South Twickenham	110
St Margaret's and North Twickenham	151
Teddington	60
Twickenham Riverside	112
West Twickenham	78
Whitton	65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1596</b>

### 3. OWL Messages

The Community Safety Officers (CSOs) continue to send localised messages on specific issues taking place within their areas.

Messages sent by CSOs: 11 messages in the last 3 months.

**Summary of the messages put out from the council:**

- Theft from motor vehicles – crimes and advice
- Richmond crime review
- Halloween - trick or treating advice
- Distraction theft - card and pin – crimes and advice
- Community Conversations – Domestic Abuse
- OWL Survey
- Scam alert – awareness and advice
- Refuge, IDVA and domestic abuse contact details

Messages sent by Police: 13 messages in total.

**Summary of messages sent out by police:**

- Monthly Crime Figures
- Information of Safer Neighbourhood Team contact sessions
- Police Liaison Group Meeting information and local survey
- Richmond Fraud and Cybercrime Summary; including advice
- Catalytic Converter Theft – Crimes, reassurance, and advice
- Police recruitment webinars

**4. OWL User Survey**

Community Safety Service rolled out at an OWL User survey between 23 November 2021 – 13 December 2021. Its aim was to gather feedback from current OWL users on how they are using the system and how we might improve. It also asked about the public perception of anti-social behaviour and crime in their local ward and borough. We had 157 responses, of these 87 were from Richmond Borough. We are currently analysing the result of this survey and will circulate the key headlines shortly.

**5. Additional OWL Promotion**

Barnes ward was identified as having the lowest number of members on OWL. As a result, the OWL Coordinator and the CSO identified primary schools as a key partner in facilitating parental engagement as an under-represented group within the OWL user base. Leaflets and information packs were handed out to promote OWL as well as local guidance on reporting crime and accessing services.

Further consideration has also been given to how this model can be expanded with themed packs utilising school's comms at key periods such as Autumn Nights campaigns, religious festivals and holiday periods to reach specific groups.

OWL continues to be promoted at local ward panel meetings and a renewed offer to housing providers will also be considered following initial engagement.

## 6. Local Police Messaging

We have not seen all local SNTs using OWL over the past quarter. OWL's key purpose is for subscribers to receive local crime alerts and updates directly from their local ward officers. This is OWL's most important 'selling point'. This would significantly increase uptake throughout the borough, allowing both the Council and the Police to gain maximum value from their license.

## 7. Funding

The OWL coordinator role has been funded until March 2022. Angelika Nielsen the previous OWL coordinator left her post on Wednesday 8 December. We have not been successful with recruitment through Adecco so there are discussions undergoing internally to carry out some of the key functions of the role through current staff.

The OWL software has been agreed to be funded through the Richmond Uplift for a further 12 months until 31 March 2023.

**To download the app, please scan the QR Code below:**

