Crime is down thanks to NAG

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ANTISOCIAL behaviour and burglary are on the decrease following the introduction of a partnership between neighbours, police and the council.

The Ascot Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) was set up earlier this year following a neighbourhood policing launch meeting at Ascot Racecourse in January where almost 500 people turned up to discuss what problems in Ascot and the Sunnings should be targeted.

They decided to tackle burglary, antisocial behaviour, speeding and parking and speaking exclusively to the *News* on Thursday Sgt Colin Pike and Cllr David Hilton said the group's formation has gone a long way towards solving these issues.

Cllr Hilton said: "We've been working to educate people on how they can protect themselves and that has had an impact.

"We want to make Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale a difficult area for burglars to operate in, although we live in a low crime area that doesn't mean we should accept the crime that does go on."

But there were words of warning and a stark reminder that homeowners can help prevent burglary by taking simple precautions.

Cllr Hilton said: "Between the last two NAG meetings on May 21 and July 4 there were 21 burglaries and we think 19 of them were done by the same individual.

"The crimes tend to have taken place in the early hours and there has been no forced entry – what we're really talking about here is people leave their doors unlocked and this character walks in and takes small items such as wallets and jewellery."

Sgt Pike said that calls to the police about antisocial behaviour had dropped since the formation of the Kotch youth club at Ascot Racecourse where youngsters can go instead of hanging out on the streets.

He said: "The numbers have dramatically reduced especially on a Friday night when the club meets, it's had an effect without a shadow of a doubt."

The NAG is also working to solve parking and speeding problems and both Cllr Hilton and Sgt Pike believe the strong relationship between the police, council and members of the public will continue to work well into the future.

He said: "I'm all for neighbourhood policing and I think it's the way forward.

"The NAG is brilliant because the police can't solve everything but by pulling together we can really achieve results."

To report a crime call the police on 08458 505505 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.