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Keep up to date with Herts police news on the go

Residents in Hertfordshire will now be able to get police alerts on the new OWL app that is being launched today (Friday 16 July).

Instant notifications about local crime, scams and crime prevention advice will be available once the app has been downloaded on your phone or tablet.

Detective Chief Inspector Pete Frost from the Crime Reduction and Community Safety Unit said: "It's a great opportunity to encourage people, including younger residents, to join OWL so they know what is going on in their local area and they can take on board relevant crime prevention advice, including cybercrime and personal safety."

OWL currently has over 160,000 households signed up to the scheme – which is over a third of the county, making it one of the best in the country.

"But we are keen to make it more appealing to more residents," explained DCI Frost. "We hope students and families will download the app and read the alerts – this is a great example of Prevention First, an approach the force is taking to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour happening in the first place."

As well as alerts, users will be able to see contact details for their local policing team, join other watches including dog watch, business watch and rural watch. Users will also be able to contact police online or via the web chat facility or tell us what they think we should be working on via our feedback platform echo.

Residents will receive alerts based on their postcode or your current location if your settings are on. The most important alerts such as a burglary, car crime, robbery or missing person appeal will arrive as an instant notification while anything less urgent will be inside the app to be read more leisurely.

David Lloyd, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, said: "One of the priorities of my police and crime plan is the increased use of social media and digital technology for Neighbourhood Watch. This app will continue to drive forward the prevention of crime in our communities and keep people safer."

No registration is needed. To get the app, search the App Store or Google Play for 'OWL crime alerts' or use the links below:

Google Play <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.directpath.owlapp>

App Store <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/owl-crime-safety-alerts/id1563254499>

Residents can also sign up to receive OWL messages via the website www.owl.co.uk/herts

Safer Neighbourhood team officers run 'live chats' to address local concerns and neighbourhood priorities, which are advertised on OWL and on social media. DCI Frost added: "There's never been a better time to get the app or sign-up to OWL online – together we can all help prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and make Hertfordshire an even safer place to live, work or visit."

Ends

For further information, contact Ailsa Roe, Senior Press & PR Officer, in Corporate Communication on 01707 355816.