



Distribution: NHW Forum members, Area Co-ordinators, C/I Ryan Doyle, Insp. Shaun Kenneally, Insp. Phil Gray, Beat Sgts. Paul McWhinnie & Kellie Edwards, PCs, PCSOs & CPO Donna Woolway.

Torrige District Neighbourhood Watch

Notes of the Neighbourhood Watch Meeting held on

Tuesday 19th April 2016 at 7.15pm

At the Holsworthy Football Club

Forum present: Tom Carrick (Chair), David Braziel (Vice Chair), Mike Jackson (Secretary), Helena Schiller (Treasurer), John Bowers, Bob Line,

Co-ordinators: Barry Jenkins, Moira Hall, Margaret Parfitt, Ken Gray, Ken Hamlyn, Ric Hallett, John Wickett, Keith Cornwell, Colin Burton, John McDougall, Chris Hitchings, Chris Summerfield,

Police: Sgt. Kellie Edwards, PCSO Raquel Rowe

Visitors: Jackie Beckles, Sandra Goss, Tony Goss, Steve Schiller, Christine Wilkins (Holsworthy Post), Nigel Johnson (Agent for prospective PCC Jonathan Smith)

1. Welcome by Tom who thanked everybody for coming and explained the format for the evening.

Apologies were given from PCSOs Melissa Baker & Sandra Brown from Torrington PS, Angela Lovering, Robin Edmonds, Jane Wilson. Luke Brennan, Roger Copp, Val. Gray, Mike Herrero, Maureen Cobbledick, Liz Moore, Ann Balcomb, Ron Fletcher and Jonathan Smith (candidate for PCC)

2. Introduction by Tom Carrick who mentioned the reasons for non-production of the Crime Sheets recently, being down to refurbishment which is taking place in Bideford Police Station and which has restricted the access to computer terminals. There are six vacancies on the Forum at the present time and it would be nice to have some 'new blood' and possible new ideas. Falling membership numbers were raised briefly with Mike Jackson to give more detail later. Torrige is still a very low crime area with most of our crime taking place in Bideford and comparatively very little in Holsworthy and Torrington.

3. Presentation by Holsworthy Neighbourhood Beat Team. Our local PCSO Raquel Rowe introduced herself and mentioned that she had now been in the area for seven years during which time she had received various types of training to help in her role. Sgt Kellie Edwards told us that she was covering for Sgt Pennie Channing who was currently running a project for the Home Office and based in Barnstaple. Kellie told us that she was previously a response officer and that she was enjoying this new Neighbourhood Team position and Public Protection role. The presentation was a DVD and discussion on the subject of "Modern Day Slavery". It showed us some of the signs to look for in everyday situations because Modern Day Slavery is different from its historical counterpart, and often involves subtle means of coercion and control. If any of the following are involved it is classed as slavery:

- They are forced to work – through mental or physical threat;
- They are owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse;
- They are dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property';
- They are physically constrained or have restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement;
- They are pressured into a forced marriage.

Most forms of Modern Slavery include some element of forced labour, which is 'any work or services which people are forced to do against their will'. Some of the main industries are: farming, building, laundries, hotel cleaning, restaurants, sex trade,

but there are many other situations as well, including domestic servitude where victims are forced to work in private houses for little or no pay and very often with restricted or no freedom.

Two very good websites which cover this subject in great detail and with short films to watch can be found at:

www.unchosen.org.uk and www.antislavery.org

The British Government estimates that there are around 13,000 people classed as slaves in the UK today. In 2015, some 3000 people were referred to the authorities as potential victims, including 1000 who were children, and this was a 40% increase on the previous year. A surprising statistic is that about 80% of these victims would be able to legally work in this country if they were free to do so. The police request that the public can help them by reporting any suspicious circumstances to them. As the South West is largely a rural area with low wages it is just the sort of area that these types of problem can exist and thrive, with very little chance of being caught. We also have the fact that local residents tend not to fill the more menial types of job, which opens up opportunities for others to be recruited to do this work for little or no wages. With our Police colleagues spread thinly over the rural areas, we in NHW are ideally situated to be able to assist by keeping our eyes and ears open, and passing on any concerns that might come to our attention.

4. Local NHW Matters by Holsworthy Record Keeper – Mike Jackson. There are a couple of matters which we would like to bring to your attention. The first, relates to membership numbers in Holsworthy and its surrounding Parishes which have actually fallen over the past 12 months by approx. 5%. This is despite new Watch schemes having been set up in Bradworthy and Derril. The reason for the falling numbers is that we have lost 5 co-ordinators during the twelve months due to various reasons, and nobody has been prepared to take over and run the schemes. This means that those schemes have closed down and when a new co-ordinator hopefully does come along they will need to start again from scratch, rather than taking over an existing unit. Current household numbers stand at 1690.

We also need replacement area co-ordinators for Cookbury, Pyworthy Village, Sutcombe and part of Holsworthy Town. If anybody would be interested in taking on any of these roles, would you please have a word with me after the meeting.

The second thing that I need to mention concerns changes which came into effect from 1st April this year at National level, but which have an impact on us. All co-ordinators and area co-ordinators who are also co-ordinators in their own right, need to register their Watch schemes on the National website. I am aware that some of you have done this already but there are still many who haven't. Consequences of not registering, are that you will lose the benefit of the free third party liability insurance cover and will no longer have the right to use NHW branded street signage. I have a handout which explains how to do this registration, which is quite easy, and which you can collect from me after the meeting. Even if you don't have internet access, your Watch will still need to be registered – and if this is the case, David Braziel will be happy to do this for you. David is here tonight, so please do have a word with him after the meeting if this affects you.

That is all I am proposing to say on membership at the moment but I will be happy to answer any questions during the Q & A session later.

5. Open Forum. The session started by Nigel Johnson being allowed to speak for a few minutes on the subject of the PCC election which is on 5 May this year. Nigel was standing in for Jonathan Smith, one of the candidates who had intended to come along himself, but his car had broken down *en route* from making a recording for BBC Spotlight South West. Jonathan is a former serving police officer of 30 years' service and feels that he is fully in tune with the people, their needs, and that he believes in an independent Police Service which is free from political interference. Full details of all the candidates can be found at "www.choosemypcc.org.uk". The last time that there was a PCC election the turnout was very poor and we were urged to make every effort this time to utilise our votes.

This was followed by a Q & A session:

- Q.** Mr Smith's manifesto states that his intent is to get more police onto our streets, but at the last NHW meeting Superintendent Munday said that their priority was to target cybercrime which was escalating, whereas the more traditional types of crime were falling. How will he be able to achieve this?
- A.** Mr Smith feels that considerable savings can be made by reducing the running costs of the PCC and this will release funds to allow for more 'feet on the ground'.
- Q.** What is going to happen to Holsworthy Police Station?
- A.** Both Holsworthy and Torrington are classed as 'community stations' and some sort of presence will be maintained, although not necessarily in the present buildings. Some offices are classed as 'base stations' which are where officers will start and finish from each day. The situation at Holsworthy is still under consideration.
- Q.** Some PCSOs have received Fire Brigade training so that they can help with local 'retained' fire service call outs. Sandra at Torrington and Mark at Holsworthy being examples. Are all PCSOs going to receive this training?
- A.** No, it is not a requirement for all PCSOs.
- Q.** Our PCs and PCSOs have in the past attended village carnivals and events. With all the cutbacks will they still be able to do this?
- A.** There is no intention to change this as long as long as operational duties don't need the officers elsewhere. We still want to build links with our communities so please continue to send details of your events to your police stations and we will attend when possible.
- Q.** The subject of drones was raised as they have been prominent in the news media recently and it would appear that they have been seen flying around various parts of Bridgerule, followed by 'cold calling' salesmen trying to sell aerial photographs of the area. Are there any rules associated with the flying of drones?
- A.** There are rules in respect of flying drones which are governed by the Civil Aviation Authority and these cover flying height, proximity to buildings and people etc. The Police asked that they be notified of instances of drone flying which cause concern.
- 6. Close of Meeting.** Tom thanked Kellie and Raquel for being with us and giving a very interesting and informative presentation. The audience were thanked for coming and the meeting closed at 9.00 pm. with everybody being wished a safe journey home.

Our next Neighbourhood Watch Open Meeting is to be held on:

Thursday 16 June 2016 at Woolsery Community Centre, starting at 7.15 pm

See our official web site at

<http://torridgenhw.ourwatch.org.uk>