



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

Torrige District Neighbourhood Watch

Notes of the Neighbourhood Watch Meeting held on

Thursday 16th June 2016 at 7.15pm

At the Woolsery Community Centre, Woolsery

Light refreshments were available prior to the start of the Meeting

Forum present: Tom Carrick (Chair), David Braziel (Vice Chair), Mike Jackson (Secretary), Roger Copp, Robin Edmunds and Jane Wilson

Co-ordinators: Liz Moore (Weare Giffard), Derek Moore (Halspill – Weare Giffard), Graham Shackston (Bucks Cross & Bucks Mills),

Police: APS Sally Ferris, PFCSO Steve Huxtable

Visitors: Cllr. Robin Julian, Graham Turner (Barnstaple), T & S Goss (Hartland), JP & E Faramus (Bideford), J Hawkins (Trew)

1. Welcome by Tom Carrick (Chair) who introduced APS Sally Ferris and PFCSO Steve Huxtable.

Apologies Angela Lovering, Luke Brennan, Neville Course, Louis Bach, John McDougall, Margaret Parfitt, Bob Line, John Bowers, Barry Jenkins, Clive Mitchell, Philip Smith, Vanessa Saunders (Holsworthy TC Clerk)

2. Introduction by Tom who told us that Devon was one of eight areas chosen to take part in a trial involving the PCSOs. Full details of what is envisaged have not yet been released to us but from his past experience he has felt that it is usually better to be fully involved in pilot schemes from the outset so that we can help to develop and mould systems to our best mutual advantage. Sally was able to add a little more detail in that the pilot would be for 12 months and Donna's position would oversee Torrige and West Devon. The Chief Constable fully supported this initiative and with Donna's background in crime prevention, her role could be best described as an "expert problem solver". The aim being to free up staff time to allow more involvement with "safeguarding" which is a growing and developing part of the policing role. Sally said that her job entailed overseeing both PCs and PCSOs who are involved in community policing and so she will be fully involved in this pilot scheme which will be closely monitored.

Tom mentioned that the Crime Report production was now going well and that Sally had also been involved with the revamping of the format which most people seemed to be happy with. Regrettably a few Watch schemes have been lost over the past year due to the loss of their co-ordinators, where no replacements have come forward, but new Watch schemes are still being created which is encouraging.

3. Steve Huxtable explained that his role as a Police and Fire Community Service Officer (PFCSO) started in March, when he started his training, and whilst it was originally planned that he would be going to work in Ilfracombe, this was changed and he is now in Bideford where he covers the Town Centre Beat area. He is not able to cover the outlying areas because he needs to be only five minutes from the Fire Station in readiness for call-outs. He is not new to Bideford as he spent fifteen years in the Town as a traffic warden and so he knows the area well. The joint service role is not just about saving money but also helps with manpower at critical times. Whilst he is nominally only "on call" to the Fire Service during the times that he is working as a PCSO, he is able to volunteer to do extra Fire Service duty during his own time. The PCSO job which he does is still the same and the only conflict comes if he is in the middle of a PCSO job when his pager sounds calling him to the Fire

Station. He is usually able to break off from the PCSO role but occasionally this still may take preference. Cornwall is apparently very keen on this joint venture scheme and are closely watching how it works. Whilst he is not yet fully trained on

the Fire Service side he is able to participate in “shouts” and when there needs to be joint service involvement, such as an RTA, then he is able to work for both sides, which will be a cost benefit. The uniform is very similar to the normal PCSO one except for the red Fire Service badging. There are six retained fire-fighters in Bideford. Steve then opened the floor to questions.

Q. The Police Service covers Devon & Cornwall and the Fire Service covers Devon & Somerset. Is there any conflict due to this cross over of areas?

A. There is no conflict as there are separate contracts and he is paid for Fire Service call-outs.

Q. If you are called out to a fire which appears to be an arson attack and you see a suspicious person running away, where do your priorities lie?

A. The Fire Service always takes preference in this type of situation. The lives of people and property must have priority. The aspect of arson would be dealt with later from the evidence, and they frequently have ideas as to who is involved in this type of activity.

Q. Are there any plans to involve Paramedics/First Responders in this scheme?

A. Not immediately, but Tri-Service may come in, in due course. Volunteer responders are being used more and more, to very good effect, and are able to reach patients in many instances far more quickly than ambulances.

Sally mentioned that first aid training for PCs is being reviewed with the possibility of increasing it to a higher level.

Tom thanked Steve, saying that his talk had been very informative and that he had learned a lot about this new dual role.

4. Local NHW Co-ordinator Jane Wilson told us that it was she who started Neighbourhood Watch in Woolsery many years ago and that the community is very supportive and active. In recent years due to health problems and failing eyesight, she has had to step down as the local area co-ordinator and Robin Edmunds, who was her assistant, has taken over the reins, but she still acts as his assistant. Jane is still a Forum member and is able to play an active part in meetings which makes for a valuable contribution due to her depth of experience.

5. Open Forum.

- A vehicle has been left parked in a dangerous position for four months. As it is not stolen and is taxed it is down to the local authority to deal with this matter.
- The Devon and Cornwall Police web site has recently been enhanced and there are various new links to agency partners which can be used for reporting problems.
- As part of his routine when checking fire and smoke alarms in the homes of vulnerable people, Steve mentioned that he keeps a look out for piles of mail which is an indication of scammers at work. If any are found, then appropriate action can be taken.
- The slowness of the 101 reporting service was again raised and criticised. If internet access is available it is usually easier to send an email to 101 and Sally brought to our attention the Police website which also has a reporting link to 101, which has gone live today.
- The “Registration of Watch Schemes” handout was queried and whether it is just new Watches that need to register or existing Watches as well. David explained that it applies to all Watches, new and old, and if any existing schemes are not sure if they have already registered he can check with his records as he is the local administrator. All

schemes need to be registered to be able to benefit from the free third party liability insurance cover and have permission to display the official street signage.

- How does Farm Watch Work? Tom explained that the various different types of Watch scheme, Farm Watch, Boat Watch, Horse Watch and Garage Watch, all come under the umbrella of DaCCWA and are related organisations. They receive messaging from 'CMS' and 'Neighbourhood Alert' appropriate to their interest. As farms tend to be more remote and isolated they are not able to form the close community bonds which NHW tries to build in the more urban areas but never the less they do tend to form bonds and links with other farm units within specific areas.
 - Graham Turner, our guest visitor from Roundswell, Barnstaple had come along to see how we operate. It would appear that he has been trying to set up a Watch scheme in his area for some time and with no Forum operating in N. Devon is struggling to get information to get the scheme up and running. He has approached the Barnstaple PCSOs who have referred him to the NHW National web site. As David is the DaCCWA rep. for the whole of Devon he is to organise some leaflets and booklets to send to Graham together with application forms for street signage, which is currently being updated with the revamped logo.
 - Tom explained the Crime Reports, how they developed out of the weekly 'Crime Ring Round', what we include and which crimes are outside our remit and are therefore excluded. These are available to anybody by email and to get on the mailing list people should contact either himself or David.
 - NHW signage, both street signs and the window/door stickers make criminals aware that an area is covered by NHW and that there is a good likelihood that suspicious activity will be noticed and reported. It does seem effective in reducing criminal activity in a 'signed' area.
 - As Cllr Julian had missed the start of the Meeting, Tom took the opportunity of welcoming him and thanked him for his assistance with the purchase of our PA system. Whilst the particular room we were using didn't really warrant its use, most halls that we use tend to be much bigger and it is then most useful and necessary.
- 6. Close of Meeting.** Tom closed the Meeting by thanking everyone for coming and participating, which helps to make for an interesting Meeting. Everyone was wished a safe journey home and the Meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

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

Thursday 15 September 2016 at Appledore Football Club, starting at 7.15 pm

See our official web site at

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