

Torrige District Neighbourhood Watch



**Minutes of Forum Meeting held at
West Croft Junior School, Bideford
Tuesday 12th July 2016 at 7.15 p.m.**

Members Present:

Tom Carrick (Chair), David Braziel (Vice Chair), Mike Jackson (Secretary), Angela Lovering (Bideford), David Butler (Monkleigh), John Bowers (Winkleigh), PCSO John McGovern, Luke Brennan (Bideford), Robin Edmonds (Woolsery), Jane Wilson (Woolsery)

Guests: PCMO Donna Woolway

1. Welcome & Apologies.

Tom welcomed everybody to the meeting and introduced Donna Woolway who has recently taken on the new position as the Police Community Management Officer (PCMO).

The following apologies were given: Helena Schiller (Treasurer) and Roger Copp (Milton Damerel).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 8th March 2016. These had been previously circulated and no amendments were needed. With all members in agreement, Tom signed the master copy as a true record of the proceedings.

3. Matters Arising. So that the matter is not overlooked, David Braziel was asked if any progress had been made with DBS Checking through DaCCWA, but they have not had a meeting since our last Forum Meeting.

4. Chair's Report (Tom Carrick). Tom and David had recently had a meeting with our new Police Superintendent, Toby Davies. This went well and Spt. Davies has been invited to be our guest speaker at our next AGM. Luke has been undertaking a one week work experience attachment at Police HQ, Exeter, which entails catching the 7.00 am train, but Luke said that he was thoroughly enjoying the experience. Police changes are still ongoing and in Tom's view these are still too many and too often. Sally has asked that she be given topics for her to produce articles for the Crime Reports rather than she just putting together random articles. There also seems to be a good chance that Sally will be remaining stationed at Bideford for the foreseeable future, which should be good for NHW. There are still six vacancies on the Forum and Tom is happy to contact any co-ordinators who might be considered to be potential new members. In the 6^{1/2} years that he has been Chairman, Tom said that he had written 120 welcome letters to new co-ordinators and 99 thank-you letters to co-ordinators stepping down, and that the rate of the latter was currently increasing, which was a worrying trend. Overall, he felt that our Forum was on a sound base and he was aware that other Forums were suffering, some quite badly. Cllr Robin Julian attended our Meeting at Woolsery and had mentioned that if we needed any additional equipment that he was happy to consider a grant application.

5. Donna Woolway our new Police Community Management Officer (PCMO). Donna was already known to most of us because she was previously our Crime Prevention Officer, a job she has done for 11 years. The new role is a twelve months' secondment and is part of a pilot exercise over eight Force areas. Progress will be monitored and at the end of the 12 months there will be a review to decide the best way to roll out the scheme to the rest of the Police areas. She has been doing the job for only six weeks, following some training, and Donna said that she will be working closely with our two sergeants, Kelly Edwards and Sally Ferris, and also reporting to Insp. Phil Gray. The job itself is best described as problem solving in the work field of the Neighbourhood Team. Looking at problems with a view to preventing them recurring and this will involve other partners and agencies. One aspect will be to build links with communities to make them safer and better for everyone and to get communities to take ownership of some problems, rather than the Police always being the lead agency. For example, a large percentage of PCSO work will be involved with the safeguarding of young children and vulnerable people. If say the Police were faced with two concurrent problems, one involving a child and the other a car parking issue, then the child problem would take preference. It may be that the parking issue could be placed with the local Council for resolution. Donna will also be looking at the ways that increased levels of volunteering can be utilised, which is where NHW is involved. It is basically looking at effective ways that can reduce demand on the Police Services, such as 101, which we all know to be struggling simply because of the very heavy demand, many calls which could have been directed initially elsewhere and it is a matter of educating people about the best channels to go down rather than the police always being the first option.

Q. John Bowers raised the subject of Speed Watch and he was concerned that it was no longer taking place in Winkleigh.

A. Apart from training new Speed Watch volunteers the PCSOs are no longer leading SW sessions. Volunteers are expected to run their own sessions and data input is done by the volunteers from home using a special spreadsheet provided by Elaine Hartley who oversees CSW. Health and Safety is a major concern for volunteers and all Speed Watch sites need approval from the Traffic Safety Officer. Speed Watch is an area that Donna still needs to investigate and will do this in the near future and look to see what is happening at Torrington and then get back to John. Tom mentioned that this was perhaps a subject for a future NHW meeting presentation and John and Donna said that they could put something together. Tom mentioned the September meeting but as this could possibly be too soon so no firm commitment was made.

Q. How is it envisaged that NHW will be involved? Donna is looking to promote the crime prevention side of Police work and NHW are ideally placed for this. She would also like to see more Watch schemes developed. Torridge NHW has a good working relationship with the Police although there could possibly be link-ups with the Cadets for helping with mail drops and the like and we have an established and well run Forum.

6. REPORTS:

Treasurer. In her absence, Helena produced an 'Income & Expenditure' statement to 12 July 2016 which is summarised below:

	Expenditure		Income	
No Expenditure	0.00	Grant from Torr. Commons Allots		25.00
		Grant fro Holsworthy TC		25.00
Total Payments	0.00	Total Receipts		50.00

Closing Balance at Bank on 12/07/2016 = £1,886.57

DaCCWA (David Braziel). David reported that their next Meeting is this Thursday and has a very full agenda because there has not been a Meeting for some time. He understands that the new window stickers and 'Safe' booklets have been printed and hopes to bring back a supply of both. We also need more Farm Watch leaflets and DVDs which John McGovern needs for the Clovelly show at the end of this month as they have previously been out of stock.

Torrington Records (John Bowers). No changes to report, but his computer is now working again and so he is able to take back management of the Torrington data base.

Bideford Records (Angela Lovering).

- ❑ We still need Area Co-ordinators for Buckland Brewer and Appledore.
- ❑ We have two new Co-ordinators. One in a new Watch in Kathleen Grange, East the Water and one in College Close, Westward Ho!, who has replaced a retiring Co-ordinator.
- ❑ We have lost 4 other Co-ordinators. In Northam one has sadly died – but it is hoped his wife may continue as the Co-ordinator. Another has resigned, but a new Co-ordinator for that Watch is in the process of being vetted.
At East the Water a Co-ordinator has not lived there for 5 years and another has resigned – a replacement has not been found for either Watch.

Holsworthy Records (Mike Jackson). Since the last Forum Meeting we have had one new co-ordinator vetted and I am currently waiting for the Watch registration form to be returned. This is Lorraine Harris from one of the new estates in Holsworthy Town.

Grants (Mike Jackson). We held a Finance Committee meeting in May and Notes were distributed to all Forum Members at that time. Since then, Helena has collected £25 from Torrington for last year's grant and I collected a £25 cheque from Holsworthy TC from this year's application.

Publishing (Mike Jackson).

The 'What's Neighbourhood Watch All About?' leaflet needs updating before we order a reprint. A number of suggested changes have already been made and circulated, and any others need to be advised to me as soon as possible please. Donna suggested on page 4 that the Police contacts be reversed with the website taking the first option with a view to reducing pressure on 101. This was agreed. John McGovern mentioned that he could use these leaflets at his drop-in sessions to help to promote NHW.

The 'Meeting Notification' leaflet which was originally produced by the Home Office is no longer available and not used as many co-ordinators produce their own stationery on home computers, which is far easier than filling out many 'MN' forms. It was agreed that the leaflet would be discontinued.

Various pages of our Co-ordinator Pack have been updated recently with only the 'useful telephone numbers' page still to be done. A volunteer was requested who could take on this review and Luke agreed to take on this task.

Secretary (Mike Jackson). The only item to mention which is not covered elsewhere is that David Butler's apologies for not being able to attend the Woolserly Meeting were missed off. They were emailed to me on 29 May but I didn't receive them and somewhat strangely I didn't get any emails that day which is very unusual. I've been in touch with my ISP who wasn't very helpful, so there may be others who aren't known about.

Report from Newsletter Editor (Angela Lovering).

- ❑ The Spring Newsletter was issued in June. If anyone has suggestions for inclusion in the Autumn Newsletter, please let me know. To: angela.jl@btinternet.com
- ❑ As we have so many Area Co-ordinator vacancies now, this has created a problem for the distribution of the Newsletters. A considerable number having to be posted this last time.

PCSO (John McGovern). John confirmed what Donna had mentioned earlier, in that the priorities for the PCSOs were changing, with child protection, vulnerable people and terrorism coming to the fore. His 6 months attachment to Exeter has now finished and he is back working in Bideford. He found the experience very useful and one area that they looked at was web design of the Police site and a number of pages have now been updated to make them more user friendly. John mentioned that the Police mission statement still remains the same despite all the changes that are taking place and it can be found in full at <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/our-people/our-mission-vision-and-values/>

7. Review of the Holsworthy and Woolserly NHW Meetings. Mike mentioned that attendance of our recent Meetings continues to be disappointing with 26 people at Holsworthy and only 19 at Woolserly. Three years ago we split our joint Forum/NHW Meetings, because it was felt that the admin. side of the meetings was putting people off from attending. The new format still isn't delivering increased attendances and Mike has suggested a questionnaire to all co-ordinators to try to ascertain what the Members actually want from "their" meetings. Helena had sent a letter on this subject which Mike read out and the salient points are set out here:

I HAVE BEEN THINKING LONG AND HARD ABOUT HOW WE CAN GET MORE PEOPLE TO ATTEND THEIR LOCAL VILLAGE NHW MEETINGS.

THE ATTENDANCE AT ALL THE RECENT LOCAL MEETINGS HAVE BEEN MADE UP MOSTLY OF FORUM MEMBERS AND CO-ORDINATORS.

THE IDEA OF THESE LOCAL MEETINGS IS TO GET AN OVERALL PICTURE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THESE AREAS AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP THEM. THESE MEETINGS SHOULD ALSO BE CHAIRED BY LOCAL CO-ORDINATORS BECAUSE THE PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE ARE KNOWN TO THEM AND THEY FEEL MORE AT EASE WITH SOMEONE THAT THEY KNOW.

I THINK THE CO-ORDINATORS SHOULD CONTACT THEIR MEMBERS IN SOME MANNER TO LET THEM KNOW THE DATE OF THEIR MEETING AND GET SOME IDEA OF THE THINGS THEY WOULD LIKE BROUGHT UP. IT IS THE LOCALS MEETING AND WE ARE THERE AS VISITORS. I.E. TO TAKE A BACK SEAT BUT GIVE GUIDANCE IF NEEDED. AT THE END WE COULD HAVE A SMALL INPUT, FOR INSTANCE, ASKING IF THEIR WATCH IS REGISTERED ETC.

A draft questionnaire had been put together by Tom and Mike and this was distributed to members to take away and consider. We need to make sure that we are asking the right questions and it might be better if responses were anonymous so that people may answer with honesty. If it

was sent out as a separate exercise this would be costly from a postal point of view so sending them out with the next Newsletter might be a better option.

8. Appledore NHW Meeting – 15 September. This is to be at the Appledore Football Club which Luke has managed to arrange for us without a hire charge. Whilst the Club does have a bar it would be difficult to get somebody to run it for us and so we are to stick to tea & coffee which has gone down well at other venues. Luke has volunteered to organise the refreshments with assistance from another Forum member who is present on the night.

9. Printing Databases (Angela Lovering). Angela said she was becoming concerned at the regular production of the **printed** databases for a number of reasons:

- For many years we have produced a printout of our 3 Databases twice yearly. Last year the Forum agreed to change to an annual issue – in August.
- Last August it was quite a nightmare because as fast as we were preparing the printouts, we were being informed of changes to Co-ordinators and Police. We had to re-do a lot of them.
- **I think we need to review** whether we are making the best use of our resources – to do a print out of the 3 databases involves many hours filtering the information on the computer – (which Eric helps me with), a lot of paper, photocopying, labels and envelopes and then distribution.
- **Do Police/PCSOs** use them? Should we be sending their lists by email now?
- **How much are the printouts used by Area Co-ordinators?** – where possible these are emailed to the ACs. I rarely get an acknowledgement that they have received them – do they all want or use them? We are hardly ever informed of changes to household numbers, however large we make the font requesting it! And there have been occasions when Co-ordinators have died or moved away and Area Co-ordinators are unaware. Sometimes they are aware but still fail to inform the Record Keepers! At present we have several areas throughout Torridge who haven't an Area Co-ordinator now!
- **I am not suggesting we cease Record Keeping!** But it is what we do with them that needs looking at. Perhaps we should just issue changes, to the ACs as Barry Taylor used to do?
- **We have some efficient Area Co-ordinators** so should we only send out a printout if it is requested? If possible by email and put the ball in their court!
- We could still produce the statistics for the 3 areas which I believe DaCCWA & the Police find useful.

There was then a general discussion on the various points raised and both John and Donna felt that emailed copies would be sufficient for Police requirements. John said that the Police found the lists to be very useful. It was decided that in future we will just issue changes to the area co-ordinators and if an AC does require a new list this can be issued, preferably by email, on a request only basis. Any ACs without internet access will still receive correspondence in paper format. All ACs receive copies of these Minutes and so will be made aware of this change in procedure. We could also put a note in our next Newsletter if there is space available.

10. Co-ordinator Vetting/Watch Registration. The current procedure for a new CO is to complete the vetting procedure prior to the issue of a CO Pack and then wait for the Watch Registration form to be completed and returned to us. If the registration form is issued, stapled to the vetting form, both can be completed by the applicant at the same time and as soon as the vetting has been completed we will be in a position to action the registration form. This small change is simply to speed up our current procedures on the admin. side and is not a change to the actual process. It was agreed that we can go ahead with this change.

11. Bideford NHW Meeting – Venue Required. Several options were raised and discussed with Mike requested to investigate the Function Room at the Pollyfield Centre, which is used for election voting and should be big enough for our Meeting.

12. Any Other Business. Nothing raised.

13. Dates of next meetings:

NHW Meeting - Thursday 15 September 2016 at Appledore Football Club

FORUM – Tuesday 11 October 2016 at West Croft School, Bideford

All meetings start at 7-15 pm and aim to close by 9.00 pm.

With no further matters to discuss, Tom thanked everybody for coming and the Meeting closed at 9.00 pm.