

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



Torrige District Neighbourhood Watch

WHAT'S "NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH" ALL ABOUT?

Our aim is "to increase the awareness of crime without increasing the fear of crime"

Devon and Cornwall are among the safest places in the country to live, but crime still does happen. The public plays a vital role in helping the police to reduce crime and Neighbourhood Watch is a popular way for people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved.

It is a proven fact that neighbourhoods covered by a Watch scheme are less likely to become victims of burglary. This is backed by insurers who usually give a discount on household insurance policies to members of active Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes

- are set up by a voluntary Co-ordinator who enrolls his or her neighbours as
- Members
- can cut crime and the opportunities for crime
- can help and reassure those in fear
- encourage community awareness
- are community initiatives supported by the Police, but not run by them

All About the Watch

Watches encourage people to share crime prevention advice and activities, keep an eye on each other's property and improve home security. Building two-way communication with the police helps achieve this.

Neighbourhood Watch is about more than reducing local crime —it's about bringing people together and improving quality of life. It helps to build communities that are empowered to deal with local issues and tackle any problems that may arise.



Residents often feel more secure in their homes and their fear of crime is reduced with the knowledge that neighbours and friends are keeping an eye on their house whilst they are out.

The police, through the local Neighbourhood Watch Forum, will supply crime prevention literature to all members of Watch schemes, so that simple and cost-effective steps can be taken to improve home security.

Watch schemes can vary in size from just two or three residents to several dozen on an estate or blocks of flats. Do be aware that these higher numbers mean that greater effort is required from the Co-ordinator to make contact with his or her members, Often, in a larger Watch, sub-Co-ordinators will assist the Co-ordinator. The most important thing is that the residents are willing to participate and there must be a willing Co-ordinator, ideally with a deputy, to run the scheme.

Neighbourhood Watch is **not** a vigilante group and the role the Co-ordinator plays should not put anyone, especially the Co-ordinator, at risk

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme cannot operate and cannot be registered without a Co-ordinator to run it.

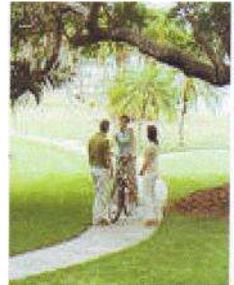
The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator



The Watch Co-ordinator registers his or her scheme with the local **Neighbourhood Watch Forum** who will notify the police. By doing this he or she is agreeing to be a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator in a defined area and this area is the name of the Watch. It can be any identification of the locality, such as "High Street, nos. 16 to 35", (for instance).

The aims of the Co-ordinator's role are to:

- **promote crime prevention**
- **receive information from the police via the Community Messaging Service (CMS) or Neighbourhood Alert**
- **distribute messages and information to members of the scheme by any appropriate method**
- **organise Watch meetings if required and welcome newcomers to the Watch area**
- **identify any problems in the neighbourhood and work with the police, local authority and other agencies to try to solve them**
- **act as a voice for the community and as a link with the police and other organisations**
- **keep the police informed of any suspicious activity in the neighbourhood**



The way each watch is run will depend solely on the Co-ordinator, as he or she alone will know the locality and the members. There is no need for the Co-ordinator to take action on every CMS notification from the police - it is up to the Co-ordinator to decide what is appropriate for his or her members

The Co-ordinator should ideally have a Deputy who is able to run the scheme in the absence of the Co-ordinator.

Getting started as a Co-ordinator

The first step is to find out whether your neighbours would support you if you were prepared to become a Co-ordinator — do they think that Neighbourhood Watch is a good idea and would they support the scheme? You could ask them door-to-door or hold an introductory meeting.

Whichever method you choose, there is a first vital contact to be made. This must be with a member of the local Torridge District Neighbourhood Watch Forum. They will be able to give advice and help you progress your plans.

Once you have decided to become a Co-ordinator and established that your neighbours are willing to support you **the Neighbourhood Watch Forum** will arrange for vetting, prior to supplying you with a "**Welcome Pack for Co-ordinators**" giving you advice and information. Following your registration as a Co-ordinator, upon your request, sufficient Members Packs will be made available to you for every member of your Watch

To contact the police

- visit the police web site at www.devon-cornwall.police.uk
- ring **101** and ask to speak to your local **Police Station - Neighbourhood Team**. No one may be immediately available and you should leave your contact details and a brief message.

To contact a member of Torridge District Neighbourhood Watch Forum see our website or:

- ring the Support Office at Bideford Police Station **01237 428046** and leave a message. Please note that the Support Office is only manned on Friday afternoons from 2.15 to 4 pm.
- On all other occasions please leave a message and the first Forum member attending the office will deal with it.