



Welcome to Home and Neighbourhood Watch

Watch schemes are a popular way for people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved in working together in the community.

Watch schemes operate all over the country and can:

- Cut crime and the opportunities for crime and disorder
- Help and reassure those who live in fear of crime
- Encourage good neighbourliness and closer communities



Integrity

Professionalism

Fairness

Respect

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1. Introduction

Everyone knows that the police are there to fight crime, but they cannot work in isolation. They need the help and support of the community.

Home and Neighbourhood Watch¹ is about local people working in an active partnership with the police and other agencies to reduce crime and make the area where they live a safer and nicer place for all.

2. What is a Watch Scheme?

A watch scheme is a community led initiative that brings people together to address local crime and other community issues. A successful watch scheme requires close liaison between residents, the local police and other agencies.

A watch scheme can be large covering most households on an estate, or it may involve just a few local residences.

3. Am I in a Watch Scheme?

To find out if you belong to a scheme, contact your local Safer Neighbourhood Team² who will be able to tell you if there is one in your area, and if not help you to set one up.

4. What are the Benefits of Watch Schemes?

- Areas of local concern can be addressed
- Your problem is shared and so easier to tackle
- Opportunity to know and work together with your neighbours, local police officers and other agencies

5. How Do I Start a Watch Scheme?

Every scheme is different – one size does not fit all, and each will reflect the area in which it is based and the expectations, vision and energy of the members.

Keep it simple....

- Start small. Ascertain how many households in your road, street, estate or village are interested in forming a scheme. If only two or three homes are interested that's fine, you can build on this.
- Contact your Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT). If there is already an established scheme in your area, they will be able to introduce you to the co-ordinator.
- If there isn't a scheme and other residents are interested, a member of the SNT will assist you in setting one up. In this case someone will have to volunteer to be the co-ordinator.

¹ Home and Neighbourhood Watch are the same, the only difference being the name. For ease of understanding they are referred to in this document as 'watch schemes'.

² To find out how to contact your local Safer Neighbourhood Team, please ring 101 and ask for their contact details, or view the local policing pages on www.dorset.police.uk.

- Having gained support to start a scheme, you need to arrange an initial meeting, and invite a member of the SNT to attend.
- The meeting should be held in a suitable venue, and at a time convenient to most residents. The objectives for the meeting could include:
 - Identifying a name for the scheme
 - Identifying the scheme co-ordinator, a deputy if required and any street contacts
 - Identify the aims of the scheme (what is it that concerns local residents?)
 - Determine how you are going to communicate within your scheme, e.g. regular meetings, newsletter, phone, email, word of mouth etc.
 - Consider whether you will need funding for your activities – signage, producing newsletters etc all cost money
 - If you intend to have signs, consider where they should be sited for optimum effect

6. What is Your Role in the Scheme?

Watch scheme members should never underestimate the importance of their role, as it is crucial to the success of the scheme.

The range of functions, and the energy with which they are carried out will vary greatly from scheme to scheme, and will be determined by the vision and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator and members.

Co-ordinators of larger schemes should not try to manage alone. It is advisable to appoint a deputy, as this will help to sustain enthusiasm and prevent apathy as well as maintaining the group when the main co-ordinator is away.

Role of the Scheme Member (householder)

- Know what to do when a crime or emergency occurs
- Know their neighbours and be willing to help should the need arise
- Observe the unusual and be willing to record and if appropriate report it to the police
- Take sensible precautions for their home security and personal safety

Co-ordinator (smaller schemes) and Road/Street Contacts

All of the above, plus:

- Communicate with local police
- Maintain good communication links with the community
- Encourage participation, help to set up new groups and promote good citizenship
- Promote crime prevention initiatives and encourage members to participate in property marking and recording
- Attend relevant watch meetings, or send a representative if unavailable
- Maintain the motivation of members
- Maintain chosen communication methods

- Encourage the identification of the concerns of residents and communicate to police and/or other appropriate agency
- Register for Dorset Police Community Messaging³
- Welcome new residents to the area and encourage them to join the scheme
- Keep a check on vulnerable residents and provide advice/support when dealing with cold callers

Main or Area Co-ordinator (associations and larger schemes)

All of the above, plus:

- Recruit new road contacts/co-ordinators and support existing schemes within a defined area
- Register new schemes with Dorset Police

7. What is the Role of the Police?

Watch schemes are **not** police run groups, but it is important to build a close working partnership with your SNT and share with them all information relating to crime and other incidents in your area. The police can provide information for your scheme as well as crime prevention advice, whereas watch members can provide valuable local knowledge about their neighbourhood. Together, you have a powerful tool to tackle crime and improve your neighbourhood.

8. How Will the Scheme be funded?

Watch schemes are free to join, but as a volunteer you must be mindful of any expenses you may incur when running the group.

Smaller schemes may operate on very little funding, but as a scheme grows members may need to raise funds for their activities. Scheme members need to decide amongst themselves how they will pay for running costs.

The aim is to empower communities to make their own contribution to reducing crime and disorder. Funding may be available from the local authority, parish councils or through sponsorship and/or member donation⁴.

9. How to Maintain a Successful Scheme?

Communication is key.....

Communication is the fuel on which your scheme will run; when it fails your scheme will come to a grinding halt. The following tips will help you to maintain communication lines:

- Register key members of the scheme for Dorset Police Community Messaging⁵ and encourage distribution of information to neighbours

³ A registration form is attached to this pack, if missing please ask your SNT contact for one.

⁴ For more information on funding go to www.ourwatch.org.uk - Resource Centre - Toolkits, where you will find a module on Finance and Fundraising.

- Act as a link between the scheme, other co-ordinators and the police
- Arrange delivery and distribution of any relevant publications to scheme members
- Consider how to pass on information, if it is very urgent information word of mouth may be the quickest method. Matters of less urgency may be dealt with by email, or a local ring round system, whilst non-urgent matters can be managed through newsletters, at meetings or parish notice boards

Above all, keep communication simple.

Maintain the partnership approach.....

- An effective partnership between a watch scheme and police is vital. The police must contend with competing demands and it is not always possible for local officers to attend your meetings, but it helps if there is an established point of contact within your SNT.

In addition:

- Maintain clear objectives for the scheme, once you have successfully tackled a problem, set new aims
- Don't rely on one person or a small number of individuals, the scheme is about everyone working together and all must play their part
- Make sure the scheme is inclusive, encourage everyone to join in, we can all contribute in some small way – even if it is just noticing unusual events

10. Street Signs

Street signs are an effective way of informing everyone that the area is covered by a watch scheme.

If you wish to erect an official sign on street furniture i.e. a lamppost, you must apply to the local authority for permission. The cost of an official sign varies depending on the area in which you reside, and may be paid for by neighbours jointly contributing towards the cost, although some town and parish councils, and housing associations may provide funding towards the cost.

To find out more about street signs contact your Safer Neighbourhood Team.

11. Useful Numbers

Below are some useful numbers for you to keep for reference. Blank spaces have been left for you to add your own numbers and websites.

Non emergency calls to Dorset Police*	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Consumer Direct	08454 04 05 06
Mail Preference Service	0845 703 4599

⁵ Dorset Police Community Messaging is an automated communication system, which the police will use to notify residents of local crime and crime patterns, safer neighbourhood team activities and other information of note.

Telephone Preference Service	0845 070 0707
Watch Scheme Co-ordinator	
Water Company	
Electricity Supplier	
Gas Supplier	
Telephone Provider	

****Only dial 999 if a crime is in progress, the offender is still at the scene or has just left, or there is risk of injury.***

12. Useful Websites

The following websites may be interest to you. Sites such as the Mail and Telephone Preference Service are FREE⁶ and allow you to register online to stop junk mail and marketing calls (we recommend that you refresh your details on an annual basis).

Dorset Police	www.dorset.police.uk
National Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network	www.ourwatch.org.uk
Association of Dorset Watches	www.nhwdorset.org.uk
Crimestoppers	www.crimestoppers-uk.org
Consumer Direct – South West	www.consumerdirect-southwest.gov.uk
Mail Preference Service	www.mpsonline.org.uk
Telephone Preference Service	www.tpsonline.org.uk
NHS Direct	www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

⁶ Be wary of anyone who contacts you and asks for payment for your registration to the Mailing and Telephone Preference Services, these are FREE services.

13. Register of Members (Scheme Co-ordinators only)

You will find that most of your neighbours will be very pleased to meet you, and will be grateful that you are taking the time to start up a group. Of course, very occasionally you may come across people who do not wish to be involved. Our advice is not to try and persuade them. Just leave the door open for them to join at a future date if they wish to do so.

It is important to keep records of members and to notify the police of any changes in membership, a Register of Members form (appendix A) is provided for your assistance.

Please also complete the Dorset Police Watch Registration form (appendix B) and give to your SNT contact.

14. Association of Dorset Watches (ADW)

The ADW is the officially recognised, Dorset County Association representing all Watch Schemes in the Dorset Police Force area. Watch Schemes registered with Dorset Police are automatically affiliated to the ADW, unless they give notice that they wish to opt out. (See appendix B).

Benefits of affiliation include automatic registration for free Public Liability Insurance provided by the Home Office (until March 2012). Full details of the cover provided can be found on the Dorset Police website, www.dorset.police.uk, under the local policing pages – watch schemes.

You can find out more about the ADW by visiting www.nhwdorset.org.uk.

REGISTER OF MEMBERS

Please keep this list for your own records

Name	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address

Name	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address

DORSET POLICE WATCH REGISTRATION

Please hand completed form to your Safer Neighbourhood Team

Co-ordinator Name	
Full Postal Address	
Contact Telephone Number	
Deputy Co-ordinator Name (generally larger Neighbourhood/Home Watch schemes)	
Street Contact Names (generally larger Neighbourhood/Home Watch schemes)	
Scheme Name or Location of Scheme (usually area or street/road name)	
Type of Scheme, e.g. Neighbourhood or Home Watch/ Shop Watch etc	
Number of households/properties in scheme	

I have registered for Dorset Police Community Messaging (tick appropriate box)

Yes No

I would like my scheme to be affiliated to the Association of Dorset Watches (tick appropriate box)

Yes No

Signed: Date:

Print Name: