



# 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:

- Reduce crime and the opportunities for crime
- Help and reassure vulnerable residents
- 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 Watch<sup>1</sup> 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. 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 with neighbours, police and other agencies

## 4. Am I in a Watch Scheme?

You may already be living in an area with an active scheme, in order to find out please contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)<sup>2</sup> who will be able to tell you if there is one. You can also use the postcode search on the National Neighbourhood and Home Watch website [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) and if there is a group in your area listed you will be able to contact the scheme co-ordinator to find out about joining.

## 5. How to set-up a Scheme?

Anybody in a neighbourhood, however large or small can set up a scheme, just remember that one size does not fit all, and each scheme will reflect the area in which it is based and the expectations, vision and energy of the members.

### Keep it simple....

- Contact your local NPT. If there is already an established scheme in your area they will contact the Co-ordinator to contact you.
- If there isn't a scheme and you are interested in setting one up, contact your local NPT. A member of the NPT will arrange to come and talk you through the process and support you until the point of official start up.

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<sup>1</sup> 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'.

<sup>2</sup> To find out how to contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team, please ring 101 and ask for their contact details, or view the local policing pages on [www.dorset.police.uk](http://www.dorset.police.uk)

- The next step is to talk to neighbours to establish the level of interest, you may find that not everyone wants to get involved, but you can start small and build from there.
- Once you have established support you can then begin to plan how to run your scheme effectively, you may wish to hold a meeting to decide this. The first job will be to appoint a co-ordinator.
- Other issues you may wish to consider are:
  - The aims of the scheme (what is it that concerns local residents)
  - Is there a need for a deputy co-ordinator and street contacts
  - How are you going to communicate within your scheme - accurate contact details for communication between members is essential
  - Whether you need funding for your activities, e.g. signs, newsletters etc
  - Where signs 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 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 lead co-ordinator is away.

### Role of the Co-ordinator

- Act as a point of contact for local police and community, encouraging residents to identify concerns and communicating to the police or other appropriate agency.
- Register and Map Scheme on Dorset Alert<sup>3</sup>
- Manage Scheme Members to Register on Dorset Alert
- Invite members of local NPT's to meetings
- Keep in contact local NPT's to get support and advice for the scheme
- Maintain a register of members
- Encourage participation, help set up new groups and promote neighbourliness
- Promote crime prevention initiatives and encourage members to participate in property marking and recording
- Maintain chosen communication methods
- Welcome new residents to the area and encourage them to join the scheme
- Keep a check on vulnerable neighbours and provide advice/support when dealing with cold callers

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<sup>3</sup> Dorset Alert is a two way community messaging system operated by Dorset Police, which allows us to exchange information with you by email or phone at no cost to you. [www.dorsetalert.co.uk](http://www.dorsetalert.co.uk)

## 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 NPT 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 donation<sup>4</sup>.

## 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:

- Ask members of the scheme to register on Dorset Alert and check they have linked themselves to the correct scheme
- Act as a link between the scheme members, other co-ordinators and the police and ensure relevant information is communicated
- Arrange delivery and distribution of any relevant publications to scheme members
- Consider how to pass on information, if it is very urgent, 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

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on funding visit the Resource Centre on [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) where you will find a module devoted to funding.

*Above all, keep communication simple.*

Maintain the partnership approach.....

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

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.

To find out more about street signs contact your Neighbourhood Policing Team

## 11. Put your Scheme on the map

Register your scheme with [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) and map your scheme coverage and you will be able to access the Resource Centre for template letters, posters and flyers.

## 12. Useful Numbers

Below are some useful numbers for you to keep for reference.

Non emergency call to Dorset Police	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Action Fraud (to report scams/ internet fraud)	0300 123 2040
Dorset Alert (registering problems)	0115 9245 517

***\*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.***

### 13. Useful Websites

The following websites may be of interest to you. Sites such as the Mail and Telephone Preference Service are FREE<sup>5</sup> and allow you to register online to stop unwanted mail and marketing calls (we recommend that you refresh your details on an annual basis).

Dorset Police	<a href="http://www.dorset.police.uk">www.dorset.police.uk</a>
National Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network	<a href="http://www.ourwatch.org.uk">www.ourwatch.org.uk</a>
Dorset Alert	<a href="http://www.dorsetalert.co.uk">www.dorsetalert.co.uk</a>
Association of Dorset Watches	<a href="http://www.nhwdorset.org.uk">www.nhwdorset.org.uk</a>
Crimestoppers	<a href="http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org">www.crimestoppers-uk.org</a>
Action Fraud	<a href="http://www.actionfraud.police.uk">www.actionfraud.police.uk</a>
Mail Preference Service	<a href="http://www.mpsonline.org.uk">www.mpsonline.org.uk</a>
Telephone Preference Service	<a href="http://www.tpsonline.org.uk">www.tpsonline.org.uk</a>
NHS Direct	<a href="http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk">www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk</a>
Citizens Advice	<a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk">www.citizensadvice.org.uk</a>

### 14. 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 NPT contact.

### 15. 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).

You can find out more about the ADW by visiting [www.nhwdorset.org.uk](http://www.nhwdorset.org.uk)

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

**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 Neighbourhood Policing 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 Alert (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: .....