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Press Release

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Neighbourhood Watch Two-Way Radio Scheme Contributes to 8 Arrests in 3 Months

Car crime and anti-social behaviour have fallen and eight arrests have been made since the introduction of a two way radio scheme by the Rotherham Neighbourhood Watch Association. They bought 20 Neighbourhood Watch two-way radios in Spring 2003 and have been using them to exchange information between members.

Jack Mackay, Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator who is Joint Chairperson of the Rotherham Neighbourhood Watch Association and also Chairperson for South Yorkshire Neighbourhood Watch Association, was behind the decision to start up the radio scheme. To fund the purchase, the association applied through the local police authority to the ABC Awards 'Community Initiative Programme' fund and, crime "hot spots" were identified with the help of the local community constable.

Before the radio scheme was set up, residents had felt levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the area were very high and that they were very likely to become victims. Indeed many had been victims in the past with the greatest concern being burglary, car crime and youth nuisance.

Just three months into the scheme, NW members and other residents are now feeling safer and more relaxed. As offenders are seen moving around the area, members use the radios to pass information between themselves and to channel it to the NW Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator then uses the telephone to contact the police in the normal manner, allowing them to take appropriate action more quickly.

Jack Mackay believes the success of the scheme can be measured by the reduction of fear of crime in the community as well as its contribution to six arrests for anti-social behaviour, two arrests for shoplifting and a successful drugs raid - all within a three month period

Local community constable PC Howard Saul was in favour of the radio scheme from the start and confirms that the police had been helped by the enhanced information gathering of the NW Co-ordinator.

Mr Mackay said, "Our members feel they now have a tool to help them do their bit for the community. They can contact each other, pass on information more quickly and discuss problems which makes them feel safer. They feel their efforts are now actually bringing rewards and are also improving their relationship with the local police."

For further information about the NNWA Two-Way Radio initiative, please call NW Radio Helpline on 01296 632758. Alternatively email: two-wayradios@neighbourhoodwatch.net or visit: www.neighbourhoodwatch.net

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J peg image is available and can emailed upon request.

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