



National Neighbourhood Watch Association Toolkit for Neighbourhood Watch Two-Way Radio Schemes



RADIO SOLUTIONS FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY



NNWA Official Telecommunications Sponsor and Radio Partner

Introduction

The overall aim of this toolkit is to provide guidance to those wanting to set up a two-way radio scheme to improve safety in their community. This is not the definitive guide as different areas will have different problems and two-way radio schemes will develop in practice. However, it does outline the basic principles and therefore gives a good starting reference. Setting up a community two-way radio scheme is not just for members of Neighbourhood Watch but any group of responsible citizens, for example members of Home Watch or tenants' and residents' associations. It is up to each group to determine their own problems and to be proactive rather than reactive in addressing their concerns about crime and community safety. It is strongly recommended that two-way radio schemes are run in conjunction with the local police and radio users act in a vigilant not a vigilante manner.

Please see appendix 1-7. These appendix sheets may be copied and used in their entirety or amended as necessary.

This National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) "Toolkit for Neighbourhood Watch Two-Way Radio Schemes" has been prepared with the assistance of the following police officers and NNWA acknowledges their commitment to community two-way radio and a safer community;

Inspector Martin Wright, Local Authority Liaison Officer - West Midlands Police

Inspector Steve Lavin, Community Safety Department - South Yorkshire Police

PC Wayne Cooke, Community Safety Officer - Warwickshire Police

PC Mick Wright, Neighbourhood Watch Police Liaison Officer - Kent Constabulary

Please note neither the Home Office, the above police officers, nor their respective police forces recommend individual communication equipment manufacturers.

The Aims and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Watch Two-Way Radio Scheme

- To reduce crime and anti social behaviour
- To increase public safety
- To reduce the fear of crime and improve public confidence, thus improving the quality of life
- To improve communication and relations between neighbourhood watch members, the community, the police and other community safety agencies

Planning;

Consideration should be given to those who may be involved in setting up and or running of a two-way radio scheme and those who may need to be notified.

For example, the police, other emergency services, community safety agencies, local authority (including emergency planning officers), community safety department at the local council, Neighbourhood Watch, Home Watch or other residents groups, local businesses, funding agencies.

Crime statistics should be looked at for the area and objectives recognised.

An initial survey should be carried out in the proposed area to ascertain the perception of crime and opinion on communication and relations between neighbours and community safety agencies. (see appendix 4).

There may be other local issues that you may wish to incorporate in the survey. The survey should target either proposed radio users only or include other members of Neighbourhood Watch, Home Watch, residents association etc.

So that the two-way radio scheme can be evaluated further surveys will need to be carried out. Ideally, after 3, 6 and 12 months and if appropriate on going each year (see appendix 5). An evaluation of the success of the two-way radio scheme should be made at given periods using the latest crime statistics and the results from the surveys for that area, setting the aims and objectives of the two-way radio scheme against achievements.

Where possible the two-way radio scheme should be dovetailed into existing crime reduction, prevention and community safety measures.

Identifying areas for a two-way radio scheme;

Target areas are those of high crime and anti social behaviour and / or where the fear of crime is found to be unacceptable. The two-way radios may also be used following crime trends, deployed in crime “hot spots”. Ideally the two-way radios should be on continuous deployment in “hot spot” areas to prevent a reoccurrence of high crime levels and anti social behaviour.

The range of the two-way radios is approximately up to a mile in built up areas and up to 2 miles in rural areas, depending on the terrain and conditions. Large buildings, hills and overhead power cables may affect the reception. Before deploying the radios, test them to see if reception is adequate in the area of the proposed two-way radio scheme. Starting a two-way radio scheme in an area of poor reception will not have the desired effect and lose the confidence of the public, the police and other community safety agencies. This will have a negative effect on community relations. The radios are to be used in a localised situation, such as a group of people spanning for example, a street, an estate or within a Neighbourhood Watch group.

Identifying members of the community to take part in a two-way radio scheme;

- Responsible citizens
- Members of Neighbourhood Watch
- Members of Home Watch
- Members of residents’ or tenants’ associations.

Proactive members of the community should be involved in the two-way radio scheme with one person being appointed as two-way radio scheme co-ordinator. This could be a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator or any other proactive member of the community. They should have the time to manage and liaise with all radio users in their scheme and the police or other community safety agencies as necessary.

Other members of the community who may benefit from having a two-way radio are disabled, vulnerable or elderly people and those who may have suffered from being a victim of crime or anti social behaviour, for example victims of bogus callers, burglary, mugging or harassment. You may also wish to include a local shopkeeper, local authority housing officer, caretaker (housing / school) or community nurse.

Deciding how many two-way radios will be required per scheme;

The greater number of radios used in a group will increase the likelihood of a positive effect on community safety. Between 10 – 20 radios are recommended in an average size Neighbourhood Watch group. However this number may not be possible and therefore a radio scheme can start with less. More radios can be added to an existing radio scheme in the future.

The Neighbourhood Watch (NW) two-way radio;

The NW two-way radios operate on the PMR 446 frequencies which does not require a licence and there are no airtime charges. The NW two-way radios come with a UK mains charger and rechargeable battery and have 8 channels and 38 operational codes giving a possibility of 304 talk combinations. However, there is a chance of being overheard by someone outside the radio scheme using this type of two-way radio. Therefore it is suggested that if problems are experienced then the operating channel should be changed but to ensure all radio users in the scheme are aware of the change. At the onset of a two-way radio scheme and prior to changing channels, the proposed channel should be monitored to confirm no local activity. The NW two-way radios are supplied with an operating manual and radio users should make themselves familiar with the radios functions.

Call signs, radio procedure codes and the phonetic alphabet;

Call signs should be used to conceal the identity of the radio users and a call sign sheet should be distributed amongst radio users in the two-way radio scheme (see appendix 2). Also the use of radio procedure codes and the phonetic alphabet may be useful (see appendix 1).

Training

Training in the use of radios and radio etiquette is essential and this may be available from the police or other approved organisations. Consideration should be given to training additional volunteers who may be required to provide cover for radio users when not available. There should also be a radio user trained to take over from the radio scheme co-ordinator when unavailable.

Agreement

It is advisable that individual members of the two-way radio scheme sign an agreement stating that the rules of the two-way radio scheme will be adhered to.

If the two-way radios are owned by a collective body, for example Neighbourhood Watch, Home Watch, residents' association etc., which is often the case when grant money has been used to purchase equipment, the agreement should include a section stating that individuals will take reasonable care of the radio equipment (see appendix 6). If individuals own their two-way radios the two-way radio scheme co-ordinator may well consider advising them to ensure their radio equipment is regularly maintained.

Security;

Radio users must not give or loan the radios to any person outside the radio scheme. Any loss must be reported immediately to the radio scheme co-ordinator and the police. The security of the radio scheme may be compromised if the radios get in to the wrong hands. Radio users must not pass information gathered or

operating details, to those outside the scheme as this may also compromise security of the scheme and put individuals at risk.

The operation of a radio scheme may be overt or covert and this can be decided by radio users and discussed with the police or other community safety agencies. It may be decided to operate covertly in order to ensure the safety of the radio users. In some areas signs have been erected to warn that community radio surveillance operates in the area, and this may act as a deterrent to criminals.

Messages;

The responsibility for receiving radio messages and monitoring the operating frequency is with the radio scheme co-ordinator and the members. The police will play no part in monitoring the frequency and the police will not provide an enhanced service to radio users.

No messages should be passed that may be considered libellous or offensive including those containing bad language, homophobic, sexual or racial innuendo.

Should messages be passed that breach any of the above resulting in criminal or civil action or breaches of the Data Protection Act then individuals will be personally and individually liable.

Local Beat Officers, Neighbourhood Wardens;

Local beat officers may wish to carry a NW radio and this can have added benefits to the police and the community. When in the area they will normally announce their presence and if appropriate give information to radio users and visa versa. This would also be applicable to Neighbourhood and Street Wardens. If there are several radio schemes in the beat officer's area they can communicate with each scheme as they patrol. Radio schemes close to one another should operate on different channels enabling the beat officer to speak to members of each group individually. Radio scheme co-ordinators should be aware of the channels used by nearby radio schemes so that if the case arises information could be passed between groups.

It must be stressed that radio users should not expect a police officer with a NW radio to be constantly in range and therefore should not expect a response. The radio scheme co-ordinator or the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator should be responsible for contacting the police if necessary, by the normal communication method. However in certain circumstances, in an emergency, it may be appropriate for a radio user to call 999 prior to contacting the radio scheme or Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator. It is hoped that in non emergency situations, a decision between radio users could be made over whether or not to contact the police.

Day to day running of a radio scheme;

In the day to day running of a radio scheme the members can use the radios to pass information between themselves regarding community safety. This information may include recording details of a suspicious vehicle or person, reporting anti social behaviour, or even witnessing a crime taking place. The radios can be used to warn of undesirable people in the area, such as suspicious door to door callers or groups of youths messing around.

When police officers pass information concerning local crime, to the radio scheme co-ordinator this can be passed instantly to other radio users so they can be extra vigilant. The gathering of information between radio users can also provide the police with first class intelligence which may lead to the arrest of criminals or prevent criminal activity.

The radios also enable users to keep an eye on vulnerable or elderly people and to warn of the possibility of impending local disasters, for example floods or high winds.

Activity log;

An activity log (see appendix 3), should be kept by each radio user to record incidents and together with descriptions of suspicious people or cars.

Funding;

Anyone can apply for funding. It is often possible for police officers to apply for funding to set up two-way radio schemes in their community from regeneration and partnership funds. Other forms of funding may be available to community groups (see appendix 7).

The success of the radio scheme is dependant upon disciplined usage, the ability of radio users to operate radios effectively and the collaboration between members and their co-operation with the police and other community safety agencies.

NB. The above does not create a contractually, legally binding document between any parties and merely intends to set out the voluntary arrangements and an understanding of how a radio scheme will operate.



**For further information, “Radio Solutions for a Safer Community” leaflets and to order
Neighbourhood Watch two-way radios contact:
Motorola Neighbourhood Watch customer services – Tel: 0880 389 3632
www.neighbourhoodwatch.net**

Appendix 1

Radio Procedure - Call Signs - Procedure Codes - Phonetic Alphabet

A two-way radio is not to be used like a telephone or mobile phone. The radio should be considered as an alternative to existing means of communication and not the only method for contacting other radio users.

Only one person at a time can talk on the frequency therefore brevity is of the utmost importance. Speak clearly and precisely at a speed that will enable other radio users to make note of relevant details if necessary.

The contents of messages are confidential and only to be communicated to other radio users in your scheme.

The 446 waveband you are transmitting on is not secure therefore care must be taken to avoid the transmission of any material which could be of special interest or use to an unauthorised person who could be listening in.

No messages should be passed that may be considered ambiguous, libellous or offensive including no bad language, homophobic, sexual or racial innuendo.

To transmit a message press the talk button and keep it depressed while talking and release it as soon as you have finished. If you finish your message with “over” others will know you have finished.

Call Signs

Preferably operator call signs are to be given to radio users rather than using real names, to conceal their identity. (see appendix?). At the beginning of transmitting a message the call sign should be said twice and used to identify the caller to other radio users in the radio scheme. The call sign can be a word or initials of Neighbourhood Watch group or area followed by a number. If a local beat officer or Neighbourhood Warden has an NW radio they should also have a call sign.

For example; NW 1 / NW 2 / NW 3 / NW 4 etc.

Procedure Codes

Radio procedure codes may be used to give clear and concise communication and thus keeping talk time to a minimum and avoiding confusion during transmission. The person giving radio training will advise on relevant procedure codes.

For example; “Code 21” is the police code for personal attack. An alternative phrase is “Assistance”

Standard Expressions

The following are standard expressions and may also be of benefit to the radio user;

<u>Expression</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
“Go ahead”	Pass your message
“Over”	Transmission finished
“Roger”	Message received and understood
“Say again”	Retransmit message
“Standby”	Message acknowledged but I am unable to reply or deal with it at this time.

Phonetic Alphabet

The Phonetic Alphabet may be useful to know especially when communicating a car registration plate.

<u>A</u> lpha	<u>N</u> ovember
<u>B</u> ravo	<u>O</u> scar
<u>C</u> harlie	<u>P</u> apa
<u>D</u> elta	<u>Q</u> uebec
<u>E</u> cho	<u>R</u> omeo
<u>F</u> oxtrot	<u>S</u> ierra
<u>G</u> olf	<u>T</u> ango
<u>H</u> otel	<u>U</u> niform
<u>I</u> ndia	<u>V</u> ictor
<u>J</u> uliet	<u>W</u> hiskey
<u>K</u> ilo	<u>X</u> ray
<u>L</u> ima	<u>Y</u> ankee
<u>M</u> ike	<u>Z</u> ulu

The above information is a guide and training in the use of radios and radio etiquette will be required. This may be available from your local police or other organisation approved by the police or local council.

Appendix 4

Initial Survey Prior to Commencement of Two-Way Radio Scheme

Please tick one box in each question and give details where applicable;

Q1. Personal Details

Name.....

Address.....

Male Female

Age

18 - 30 31 - 40 41 - 50

51 - 60 Over 60

Q2. Do you feel the levels of crime and anti social behaviour in your area are?;

Very High Acceptable Very Low

High Low

Q3. How likely do you think you are of being a victim of crime and anti social behaviour?;

Very Likely Possibly

Likely Unlikely

Q4. Have you been a victim of crime or anti social behaviour?

If so please give brief details;

Q5. What crime and anti social behaviour elements worry you most?

Q6. How do you feel about communication with the following?;

a) Police

Very Good Acceptable Very Poor

Good Poor

b) Neighbours

Very Good Acceptable Very Poor

Good Poor

c) Other community safety agencies e.g. local council community safety dept.

Very Good Acceptable Very Poor

Good Poor

Appendix 5

Follow up Survey of Two-Way Radio Scheme

Please tick one box in each question and give details where applicable;

Q1. Personal Details

Name.....

Address.....

Male Female

Age

18 - 30 31 - 40 41 - 50
51 - 60 Over 60

Q2. Do you feel the levels of crime and anti social behaviour in your area are?;

Very High Acceptable Very Low
High Low

Q2a. Has this changed since being part of a the two-way radio scheme?;

Yes No

If yes please give your reason;

Q3. How likely do you think you are of being a victim of crime and anti social behaviour?;

Very Likely Possibly
Likely Unlikely

Q3a. Has this changed since being part of a the two-way radio scheme?;

Yes No

If yes please give your reason;

Q4. Have you been a victim of crime or anti social behaviour since receiving the radio?;

Yes No

If yes please give brief details;

Q5. What crime and anti social behaviour elements worry you most?;

Q5a. Has this changed since receiving the radio?;

Yes No

If yes please give your reason;

Q6. How do you feel about communication with the following?;

a) Police

Very Good Acceptable Very Poor
Good Poor

b) Neighbours

Very Good Acceptable Very Poor
Good Poor

c) Other community safety agencies e.g. local council community safety dept.

Very Good Acceptable Very Poor
Good Poor

Q7. Do you feel being part of the radio scheme is worthwhile;

Yes No

Please give your reason;

Q8. To help us to improve the radio scheme and to benefit others please tell us what is;

a) The best part of the radio scheme;

b) The worst part of the radio scheme;

Q.9 Any further comment;

Please use separate sheet if necessary;

Appendix 6

Toolkit Agreement

*I acknowledge receipt of a two-way radio - Model / Serial no.....
with rechargeable battery and UK mains charger.

*I understand that the above radio equipment remains the property of;

.....

and I will take reasonable care of the equipment and return it upon request.

Your two-way radio scheme co-ordinator is:.....

Your call sign is:.....

I understand the relationship of the police to the radio users and agree to abide by the rules of the two-way radio scheme as set out below;

- The provisions of the Data Protection Act and the integrity of the Police National Computer will be observed at all times.
- The police will not provide an enhanced level of service to two-way radio scheme users.
- If the police agree to carry a NW two-way radio they cannot guarantee a response to a request from the two-way radio scheme. There must not be any expectation of a police officer monitoring the radio frequency. Therefore at all times the normal method of contacting the police should be used. However if in the area the police officer may choose to announce his/her presence.
- The two-way radio scheme co-ordinator will be responsible for contacting the police through the normal communication method.
- The responsibility for monitoring the designated radio frequency and receiving messages will be with the two-way radio scheme co-ordinator and radio users. The police will not be responsible for monitoring the frequency.
- No messages should be passed that may be considered libellous or offensive including those containing bad language, homophobic, sexual or racial innuendo.
- Should messages be passed that breach any of the above resulting in criminal or civil action or breaches of the Data Protection Act then individuals will be personally and individually libel.
- Radio users must not give or loan the radios to any person outside the radio scheme.
- Any loss of radio equipment must be reported immediately to the radio scheme co-ordinator and the police.
- Radio users must not pass information gathered or operating details, to those outside the scheme.

- Radio users, prior to transmission, must announce their call sign and observe radio procedures as outlined in either written guidelines and / or radio training.
- Radio users to operate in a discreet and vigilant manner not in a vigilante manner.
- Any radio user in breach of the rules may render themselves liable to removal from the two-way radio scheme.
- *Radio users must return radio equipment, in good condition, if ask to do so.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Telephone number:.....

Email:.....

Signed:Date

*Not applicable if an individual buys their own radio.

NB. This agreement shall not create a contractually, legally binding document between the parties and is intended to set out the voluntary arrangements and an understanding of how a radio scheme will operate.

Appendix 7

Funding

There are many possible areas of funding for community two-way radio schemes. The list below is just a few of the funding budgets and organisations where funding may be possible;

- Partnership funding
- Regeneration funding
- Neighbourhood Watch Renewal funding
- Burglary Reduction fund
- Local authority grants
- European funding
- Commercial funding
- Lottery funding – National Lottery Charities Board – “Awards For All” (Lottery grants for local groups)

The following websites, depending on circumstances, may be useful;

www.abbeynational.com for local charities working with disadvantaged groups and disabled people.

www.community-fund.org.uk for local charities working with disadvantaged groups and disabled people.

www.tudortrust.org.uk a fund which in particular supports – rural isolation
Accessible, integrated and sustained support to people who are vulnerable. Families and older people living in disadvantaged or marginalized communities.

www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/volgrant/index.htm for grants to the voluntary sector.

www.doh.gov.uk/sect64/grants.htm grants to voluntary groups relating to health and personal social services.

www.citizensconnection.net

www.citizensconnection.net/getting-funded

www.volcomgrants.gov.uk

Please find below some ideas and suggestions as to the means to get funding to establish a radio scheme.

Local Authorities - It may well be worth initially making contact with your local authority and liaising with either the community safety officer or external funding department. You may have to think about how your scheme fits in with the various funding streams. For example, while your immediate concern may be issues surrounding crime and disorder the actual amount of money available to local authorities for such issues is really very small. But they have budgets, that they have to spend, for schemes which might fit the right criteria, for example;

- Address loneliness amongst the elderly, consider perhaps how your radio scheme might be used to support elderly neighbours in keeping in touch with one another.
- Support children walking to school – think how your Neighbourhood Watch scheme could link in with local schools and assist in supporting children's safety.
- Promote exercise and healthy living – many Councils and health departments actively look to support schemes that encourage people to walk, use the parks etc. Often one of the reasons people don't exercise is because they feel uncomfortable in such locations and a radio scheme could act as a useful means of getting people to exercise together or just use it for listening out for each other when out and about.

Other funders – if there is a member of your Watch who has access to the Internet they will be able to find lots of sources of funding for you. It's well worth thinking about some of the larger schemes, such as the National Lottery as well as some of the major banks and companies who often have some sort of charitable fund. Most of these will have quite strict criteria you'll have to meet but if you think about the way in which your radio scheme might operate, see above for some ideas, you might find an ideal match. If the application forms are very detailed don't be put off, take them to someone who has experience in these matters, try a voluntary group or the Council again. Finally, it's worth looking through your local telephone directory to see if there are any sizeable or long established companies in your area. Some of these may also have charitable funds, which may be specifically set up to support local groups.

If you would like further advice on funding for a community two-way radio scheme please call Inspector Martin Wright – West Midlands Police on 01902 554005.