



Friday, 11th December 2009

Late night troublemakers shown red card

A football-style referee scheme using red and yellow cards to warn late night troublemakers of the consequences of their behaviour has been launched in North Devon and Torridge by Devon & Cornwall Police in partnership with Safer North Devon* and all participating pubs and clubs.

The scheme incorporates a banning system whereby anyone committing more than one alcohol-related anti-social crime, in or outside pubs and clubs, between 6.00pm and 6.00am can be excluded from participating pubs and clubs in North Devon and Torridge. A yellow card will be issued following a first offence and a warning letter sent by the Police spelling out the consequences of further anti-social behaviour and providing alcohol help agency details. A red card will be issued to anyone re offending within 12 months and they will also be given a 12 month ban from any pubs or clubs participating in the scheme. Anyone committing a third offence within 12 months risks facing an Anti-Social Behaviour Order or Drink Banning Order banning them from town centres in the evening.

“We don’t want to stop people going out and having fun, we just want to reduce drunken anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related crime and to encourage people to think about the impact of drinking on themselves, their family and the wider community, especially over the Christmas period,” says Kevin Harris, Superintendent for Northern Devon. “People can still go out and enjoy themselves without getting involved in drunken violence or disorderly behaviour which can also lead to misperceptions that crime and anti-social behaviour is higher than it actually is.”

All town centre pubs and clubs in North Devon and Torridge have joined the scheme with all other pubs and clubs in the villages and outlying areas being asked to join the scheme within the coming weeks. Licensees have been provided with leaflets and posters to display the scheme together with a window sticker showing the ‘Three Strikes’ logo which banned offenders will be told to look out for. Licensees will also be given access to photographs via a secure website and the names of people who have been banned, so anyone choosing to ignore the 12 month ban will soon discover they will be recognised and that their night out will be considerably curtailed.

“This is the first banning scheme of its kind in North Devon and Torridge giving the Police and Licensees a tool to deter people who choose to engage in alcohol-related crime,” says Amanda Sharpe, Alcohol Related Crime Reduction Officer for Devon & Cornwall Constabulary.



2/.

“Our anti-social behaviour and crime figures are low in North Devon and Torridge, but one crime is one too many for the victim and so ‘Three Strikes’ is a preventative measure we are enforcing together with the Licensees so our communities feel reassured, confidence and safe about going out and enjoying a night out.”

The ‘Three Strikes’ campaign has been running very successfully in Exeter since 2005, where since its inception 200 people have been issued with a yellow card. Only 10 of these have gone on to receive a red card and full 12 month ban and thus the scheme has proved an excellent deterrent to repeat offending in and around pubs and clubs between 6.00pm and 6.00am.

“North Devon is a safe place to live, work and visit and we want to keep it that way,” says Kate Morne, Safer North Devon Anti-Social Behaviour Co ordinator. “The Councils and Police, working with local partners under Safer North Devon, are committed to reducing the impact of anti-social behaviour in our community and will respond to the few individuals who choose to engage in anti-social behaviour where alcohol is the trigger.”

More information and help can be found at www.three-strikes.co.uk/northdevon and www.safernorthdevon.co.uk - Ends -

For more media information contact:

PC Paul Daw, NBM for the Night Time Economy, Police
Tel: 01271 335259 Email: paul.daw@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Kate Morne, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, Safer North Devon
Tel: 01271 335241 Email: Kate.Morne@northdevon.gov.uk www.safernorthdevon.co.uk

Note to Editors:

1. Offences covered by the scheme include; drunk and disorderly behaviour, arson, criminal damage, violent crime, and public order and racial offences.

2. *Safer North Devon is based at Barnstaple Police Station and was set up 10 years ago to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour across North Devon and Torridge. Safer North Devon works jointly with eight other partner agencies including: Devon County Council, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, North Devon Council, Devon Primary Care Trust, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Torridge District Council and Devon and Cornwall Probation Area.

3. An Anti-Social Behaviour Order or Drink Banning Order can be applied for by the Police or local authority, in consultation with each other, for behaviour which causes alarm, distress or harassment to one or more people in the community. The minimum duration for an order is two years. Breaching an order is a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years in prison.