



15th October 2010

Halloween poster for residents concerned about Trick or Treating

An initiative led by Barnstaple Neighbourhood Support Team, with the help of the North Devon Gazette is being launched for Halloween, to help ensure those who are concerned about unwanted night-time visitors can give a clear message that they do not wish to be involved with Trick or Treating. Householders who do not wish to be disturbed can cut out the poster alongside/above and put it in their window.

Halloween will soon be upon us and generally it is a time for young people to dress up and have fun. No-one wants to stop the fun but there are some who take it too far, causing real distress and anxiety for residents. This is unfair, particularly to vulnerable or elderly people living on their own. Police are therefore urging parents to make sure their children take note of this Halloween message and to not call at homes displaying the poster.

Crime Prevention Officer Donna Woolway said: "We want people to have fun, but without being threatening or anti-social. In past years there have been problems with throwing flour and eggs and we are asking retailers to be vigilant if young people come in to buy quantities of these items. It may seem fun to them, but many won't realise that these materials can cause damage to some brickwork and surfaces and that this is classed as criminal damage.

"We are asking parents to accompany their children and also to help plan their Trick or Treat routes, so that they call on family and friends or people known to them. They should avoid homes where vulnerable people may be and also, for their own safety, not knock on the doors of people they do not know.

"Although youngsters are well aware of Trick or Treat there may be people who do not even realise it is Halloween and who will not have any treats to give them. What is fun for children may be just the reverse for other people, who can be distressed to open their doors to be confronted by ghosts and ghouls."

Cont'd/.

2/.

Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators across the region are being asked to be especially mindful of their vulnerable residents over the Halloween period. Local police and Police Community Support Officers will also be out keeping watch on the night and if anyone is acting in an anti-social way or causing harassment to others they will be dealt with by the officers.

Advice to householders who do not want to be involved in Trick or Treat is:

- Display a Devon and Cornwall Police poster that says "no trick, no treat, no thanks"
- Don't open your door if you are unsure who is there
- Have a contact number of a close relative or good neighbour to hand by your telephone, just in case you need to phone them
- If you feel threatened or vulnerable call the police on 0845 2 777 444
- If you are in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme let your co-ordinator know that you will be on your own at Halloween
- In an emergency phone the police on '999'.

- Ends -

For more information contact:

Donna Woolway
Crime Prevention Officer
Email: donna.woolway@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk
Tel: 01271 335220