

BOAT WATCH SCHEME

September 2009 saw the launch of a new 'Boat watch' scheme to help improve marine services and reduce boat crime in St Helier.

The initiative is led by The St Helier Yacht Club and the St Helier Boat Owners Association and is being supported by the Port of Jersey and the States of Jersey Police Crime Reduction team.

The scheme is based on the principles of the well known UK Neighbourhood Watch and its aim is to bring those involved in boating together to help keep an eye on the day do day well being of the marinas and to prevent marine crime.

David Langlois, Commodore of the St Helier Yacht Club said: "This scheme is designed to help ensure boat owners keep a watchful eye on the welfare of the boats and people in the harbour using them. It will be helpful in many ways, for example it could just be something as simple as somebody spotting a large piece of polythene floating in the water which could damage a vessels engine or foul a propeller. It is really about involving a little community spirit, along with an easy method of calling the 24 hour hotline line for assistance. These types of schemes have been very successful in many other sailing communities in the UK, and Jersey is the ideal place for Boat Watch to work well."

The scheme was jointly organised and is run by the St Helier Boat Owners Association.

Honorary Chairman Mike Stevens is proud to be involved: "Anything which gathers the community together to help benefit all harbour users or prevent crime in any way is important, particularly when it is the boat owners themselves taking the lead. It will help raise awareness among boat owners and encourage people to think about safety and preventative measures. It will also ensure that anyone in the harbours area who spots anything, even something like a moored dinghy which has capsized, or any suspicious activity, is able to report it confidently and swiftly, meaning that action can be taken to resolve matters far more quickly."

New signs are now in place around the harbour and a 24 hour helpline has been set up for people to report any incidents of boat damage or crime. The phone line connects directly to Jersey Coastguard staff working in the control room at St Helier VTS, (St Helier Vessel Traffic Services), who can refer any serious incidents to the police.

Anyone who believes they have witnessed an incident of boat crime or who sees something they feel is suspicious is asked to report it to the St Helier VTS line on **01534 447705**.



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