

## **Community Support Unit**

The Valleys and Vale Neighbourhood Watch Association is co-terminus with the Stroud District Council area (except Quedgeley and Upton St. Leonards areas which are covered by Gloucester NHW). This is mostly rural in nature with larger population centres in the towns of Stonehouse, Stroud and Dursley.

In order to support existing Watches and promote new ones throughout the District, the Association realised that operating from a static office in Stroud was not sufficient and looked at ways to take Neighbourhood Watch into the community. The mobile police station for the District was made available for us to use as a mobile office to evaluate the proposal. While this was a success, it became apparent some people, who would otherwise come forward, were reluctant to approach a vehicle with 'police' written all over it. The Association set about raising funds to purchase a small display trailer to use as a mobile office.

A trailer was chosen because

- Very little mechanical servicing and repairs
- No fuel costs
- No road tax
- Cheaper to purchase than a motorised vehicle

Financial assistance and positive support from Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire Police enabled a twin axle trailer, painted yellow, arrived in February 2003. Sponsorship from five local companies and Stroud Town Council provided the means to kit it out internally and have it sign-written. Local co-ordinators provided the labour.

It has a TV/video facility to show crime reduction and bogus caller videos. It can seat 6 people so that small groups in rural areas can be accommodated without the need for a building.

It carried a comprehensive range of crime reduction and fire prevention literature together with a range of security marking equipment.

Up to the end of 2010 it has been used 145 times at locations in most Parishes in the District. The trailer provided a much needed pro-active service to rural communities