

# Scheme improves security for local traders

The pilot scheme has been rolled out in December across Collier Row's shopping parade.



Shops along the High Street have been fitted with AlertBoxes – an in-store alarm system which enables users to alert other traders in the area to potential trouble.

The boxes, each programmed with individual location and contact details, have two functions allowing traders to warn of a nuisance or call for help.

"The AlertBoxes provide a real sense of security," says Councillor Peter Gardner, Lead Cabinet Member for Community Safety. "When we tested them out, other traders were on the phone straight away, making sure everything was ok. The speed of the response was impressive.

"It's fantastic to see the level of support for each other within this local community."

The scheme, funded by Havering Community Safety Partnership and managed by London Borough of Havering Community Safety Service has seen 50 of the devices installed free of charge already and the programme will be extended further in the near future.

Joanne Hobbes of Tudor Rose florists said, "In the past, if you were on your own there could be a real sense of isolation. The AlertBoxes completely remove that - you know you're only a button away from help if you ever need it."

The boxes are not linked directly to emergency services but actively promote community cohesion and participation among local traders. It is expected they will also lead to an increase in witness accounts to reported incidents.

The photograph above shows, from left to right: Kevin Jolly of Havering Community Safety Partnership, Darryl Roberts of AlertBox and local traders with community police support officers.

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<http://www.havering.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=8750>