



Crime Reduction Basics: Case Studies

Anti-Social Behaviour Order – Targeting Ringleaders

Issue

A group of youths were hanging round a village engaged in abusing drink and drugs, racially motivated incidents and causing damage.

Approach

Four ASBOs were obtained on the ringleaders, which prohibited them from:

- loitering in particular areas
- entering named shops
- using threatening, abusive or racist language.

The police engaged the community in the process. The local beat manager and local councillor arranged a meeting with local people where they were able to voice their concerns. The police anti-social behaviour representative set out the plan to tackle the problems and explained what support and assistance was needed from the community for gathering evidence.

The ASBOs were used in parallel with other measures. These included:

- targeting shop keepers selling alcohol to under 18s
- tackling the local drugs problems by preventing incoming phone calls to local telephone boxes which were being used to arrange drug deals
- working with the local bus company to make it more difficult for the troublemakers to get to their usual meeting place. Alternative arrangements were made for other users of the bus service.
- following up on the behaviour after the ASBO had been made
- meeting with the community again to review progress
- prosecuting for a breach of the order.

Outcome

Local police measured 24 reports of disorder in the month before the order and five in the month after. There was no evidence of displacement of the problem to other areas. Following the success of the ASBOs local councillors took ownership of the situation and the community committed itself to helping with local initiatives to deter anti-social behaviour.

Acceptable Behaviour Contract

Issue

A young person was entering a housing association estate and continually damaging property, smoking and drinking until the early hours and abusing a number of the vulnerable residents.

Approach

Police and housing staff held an ABC meeting with the young person and his mother. It became apparent that he was not aware of the effect of his behaviour on others and his mother was unaware of his actions. Through discussions at the meeting the underlying cause of the problem was identified: due to lack of space in their accommodation the mother was asking her son to leave the property at night. An ABC was signed by the young person and the lead agencies. In addition the housing officer placed the family on the priority housing list for more suitable accommodation on the condition that the son kept to the terms of the contract.

Outcome

The family was moved during the six month period of the ABC. Since signing the contract the young man has not come to the attention of the police or housing staff.

Tool Library

Background

The group was formed in September 2000. Originally coming together for a local initiative which helped to encourage people to take up gardening. Their first major project was to help the local primary school develop a garden. The idea of a tool library resulted from the group realising that some members had no tools or equipment. After consultation with the community the viability of a tool library was assessed and it was agreed to set one up.

Purpose

The purpose of the organisation is to hire out DIY equipment and gardening tools, at a low cost, to residents to enable them to take care of their gardens and undertake DIY jobs around the home.

Eight people currently run the organisation on a voluntary basis (the Management Committee). Five of these are involved in the day-to-day running of the 'Library Shop'. The shop is housed in accommodation provided by a Social Landlord for a peppercorn rent and run solely by volunteers. Currently the shop is only open in the mornings. That is due to change in the near future as more volunteers are being sought to enable it to open from 5pm to 7pm as well.

Membership and Funding

Membership of the Tool Library in the first year stands at 105, although it is rising sharply. Members are aged between 22-75 years. Cost of membership is £3 per year.

The Library is working in partnership with other local tool libraries to prevent duplication of service. The Tool Library is helping to bring people together and create a sense of community spirit as well as contributing towards community safety.

The Library makes no profit and all money raised through hire of tools and equipment is used to repair and maintain the items available for hire. The group has also purchased carpet cleaners and larger items to hire to members. The shop sells plants and seedlings, items for gardens (bird tables, plant pot stands etc) and

has just started to sell small hardware items (nails, screws etc). The sale of these small items at low cost is very useful to the members as it saves them the travel expenses of visiting major DIY stores that are only accessible by private car or public transport.

The local housing provider has provided accommodation and the Management Committee seek funding through any available channel. Funding is sought through grants to voluntary organisations, Single Regeneration Budget and charitable trusts. A small grant from the local Community Safety Partnership has been made during 2002.

Community Safety Implications

The implications for crime reduction achieved through this small project are immense and though the many outcomes may not be immediately recognisable the project makes a big contribution to making the area a safer place with a more attractive environment.

Tackling Crime

Research has identified that areas which are unkempt and in a state of disrepair are far more likely to suffer from vandalism, graffiti, fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles. Helping the local residents to keep the area tidy will reduce these problems.

Undertaking gardening and DIY keeps people active and assists in maintaining good health. It also provides a positive outlet for time and energy in an area of high unemployment.

Taking a pride in one's surroundings encourages the community to take ownership of its area and subsequently encourages increased participation in other initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch and residents' associations. Resident's drop-in to the shop to talk over gardening issues with other members. Those involved in running the shop have extensive gardening experience and can offer help and guidance to less experienced gardeners.

Community & Partnership Working

A further outcome and one that is difficult to measure, is the impact this project has on reducing fear of crime. The residents are taking pride in their area. Time spent in gardens and allotments can improve relationships amongst neighbours and their participation in the scheme encourages them to get to know other residents, building community networks. The 'feelgood factor' of any project is difficult to record, but living in a pleasant environment, where the community takes a pro-active role in keeping it that way is sure to have many positive impacts on the area. The group has also organised accredited courses such as First Aid, Paediatric First Aid and a four-day course covering issues around Fund Raising. The group is currently involved in working with a local church to create a new garden and disabled access to bring members of the community together. The church premises are used by many local groups.

Bringing together younger and older members of the community allows relationships to be formed between the generations and encourages members of all age groups to develop a greater awareness and understanding of the local problems and their impacts on people's lives.

Results – Monitoring & Local Impact

The project is not for profit. In the period February – August 2002 (7 months) 506 individuals hired items from the library. Local gardens and green spaces on the estate look tidier and residents feel pride in their area.

Good Practice

The group is involved in several other projects and helps to run an After School Gardening Club.

Pit Stop

Background

The Pit Stop Motor project was established in 1991 by the Local Community Safety Partnership. The project offers young people a range of activities associated with motor vehicles. The project involves young people on a weekly basis and attracts voluntary input from parents on a regular basis.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to give young people a positive way to spend their leisure time. The activities offered work to ensure young people's involvement in crime, both as perpetrators and victims, is reduced.

Attendance and Funding

The project is voluntary and includes children and adults from all walks of life and ages from 7 to 70 years.

During 2001 3,800 young people took part in the project. In total 5,000 individuals (including adults) visited the project.

To make the project accessible to youngsters a charge of 50p per person is levied for a 2 hour session and this covers petrol and insurance.

The project also undertakes outreach work that entails going out with the go-karts and equipment to meet youngsters in their own environment.

Money comes from fundraising activities and grants from other organisations, such as Communities Against Drugs.

Community Safety Implications

The project meets the local Crime and Disorder Strategy objectives to reduce vandalism, anti-social and irresponsible behaviour, to build public confidence and reduce the fear of crime. It will also have an indirect impact on vehicle crime and offences relating to drugs and alcohol.

Tackling Crime

This initiative targets young people at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour in an area with persistently high levels of crime and disorder.

Community & Partnership Working

The wider community, the Police, the Metropolitan Borough Council Youth Services and the Community Education Dept support the project. The Community Safety Partnership established Pitstop as a pilot scheme.

The project would very much like to develop its own local go-kart track to encourage young people off the streets, particularly with the rise in anti-social behaviour. Offering this diversionary activity will hopefully persuade them of the benefits of socialising with others and encourage them to participate in other activities. Children of mixed ethnic background work together on the project and it seeks to promote cohesive communities through addressing homophobic, race and other hate crime.

Through the project trips are organised to karting tracks as well as residential camping trips where a programme of varied activities including mountain biking, canoeing and orienteering is offered.

Results – Monitoring & Local Impact

The project will be evaluated using statements and evaluation sheets from the young people and photos. Attendance figures will be recorded.

Good Practice

This initiative is based in a high crime area and carries out outreach work across the borough. There are facilities for the disabled and the scheme works closely with the Police, Youth and Community Education Service and local residents' and tenants groups. It is run by volunteers and young people for the young people of the area.

RAMPAGE

Background

Rampage started in 1997 when a parent with her son and friends presented plans and ideas for a skateboard park. The presentation was to the first meeting of the local Youth Forum, and the concept and target was agreed. A ramp park was to be the first project to be supported by the Forum. Over the years, new parents and young people have been involved. With the support from a Communities Against Drugs development worker an external trust was approached and a grant received for £25,000.

The Forum is now in negotiation with the local parks department and proposed site has been put forward. With further support from the environmental agency the project should hopefully start construction in 2003.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to give young people a positive way to spend their leisure time. The activities offered work to resolve young people's involvement in crime, both as perpetrators and victims. Between 500 and 1,500 young people would attend the scheme per year.

Funding

Funding for the scheme came from:

- a Local Trust who donated £50,000
- a Communities Against Drugs (CAD) grant of £10,000
- Community Safety Partnership who gave £2,500

Community Safety Implications

Young people will have an alternative to using car parks and the market area for skateboarding. This project will give young people a new focus, alleviate tensions with the wider community and help to reduce nuisance levels. The initiative fits the objectives in the local Crime and Disorder Strategy to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and to build public confidence and reduce the fear of crime.

Tackling Crime

The project will divert young people from anti-social behaviour.

Community & Partnership Working

Although Rampage is for young people, the project has been supported by the wider community for the past 4 years. The bid is supported by Communities Against Drugs, the Youth Forum and Regeneration and Leisure Services have been working closely to designate an area of land for the site.

Results – Monitoring & Local Impact

The scheme will be evaluated by the local Youth Committee. The evaluation will measure the project's achievements against its targets and will record the number of young people using the skate park, community consultation and the impact on local crime statistics.

Good Practice

The project has been developed in response to demand from local young people. At a recent public meeting, 72 young people attended to voice their desire for the skatepark.

The initiative also meets a strategic aim of the Leisure in Action `Strategy for Sport` to establish a local `wheelspark`. It corresponds closely to the local Crime and Disorder Strategy and is supported by the wider community.

Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme

Background

The scheme described here is on a 'hard-to-reach' estate. It was launched in August 2001, on a deprived estate suffering a complex range of social problems, including high levels of crime.

Purpose

The purpose of the scheme was to establish a neighbourhood warden on the estate to act as a link between the community, the head of the Tenants Association and the Community Police Officer working on the estate. The warden's role was to prevent crime, act as a mentor to children and act as a go between in tenant disputes.

Funding

The project is centrally funded for three years.

Community Safety Implications

The project meets the Crime and Disorder Strategy objectives for reducing crime and disorder in designated hotspots, preventing offending by young offenders, and impacting on the connection between drugs, alcohol and offending.

Tackling Crime

The scheme tackles a wide range of crime problems especially burglary; youth offending and drug problems, anti-social behaviour and social exclusion.

Community and Partnership Working

Good liaison with the residents through the Tenants Association and Neighbourhood Watch helped the Warden to develop the role. In particular, the community base was assured by successfully running competitions and activities such as young people doing up gardens, and the community has become proactive in helping to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, reporting incidents to the Warden. The community has become visibly more tight knit.

The Neighbourhood Warden Scheme has initiated a voluntary curfew in order to get children under the age of 15 years inside by 10.30pm. It has a clean up

campaign involving young people and children both with and without convictions. It is also involved in reducing problem tenant behaviour, such as supplying illegal substances, fighting, abusive behaviour and other anti-social behaviour.

With regards to Partnership working, a protocol for information sharing and working practices has been drawn up between the Chief Inspector and the Project Supervisor. The Youth Offending Team also works closely with the Supervisor and Warden. Other members of the Steering Group include the Community Safety Officer, local residents, members of the community centre, health visitors and a resident Warden.

Results - Local Impact

Results are very promising. The scheme has seen a 54% reduction in calls to the police and a drop in complaints of anti-social behaviour. Previously, the estate had the highest number of vacant properties in the Authority, now housing voids are greatly reduced: indeed, a waiting list is developing. There has been a big increase in reported residents' satisfaction with their quality of life on the estate. At the last reporting, one tenant had been evicted due to ASB, and three other evictions are pending on the same breach of tenancy or following successful drug convictions.

Good Practice

The estate is seen as an example of good practice. The team will receive a Commendation at a national (UK) Neighbourhood Warden Conference, having been shortlisted from over 300 schemes.

Housing Association Gold Service Scheme

Background

This Gold Service Scheme was set up on a housing association estate in 1998. Tenants could join if they had no rent arrears and did not commit anti-social behaviour.

Purpose

The purpose of this scheme is to develop the rights and responsibilities of tenants and to provide an incentive to improve the estate. Tenants eligible to join the scheme are entitled to quicker repairs, discounts in local shops and a small cash bonus each year.

Funding

Members receive the equivalent of £1 for every week they are Gold Service Members. This reward is paid out three times a year in the form of Bonusbonds. Bonusbond vouchers can be redeemed at over 25,000 redemption points in the UK, including Boots, Mothercare, Homebase and Iceland. The scheme is funded by an Housing Corporation Innovation and Good Practice Grant.

Community Safety Implications

The scheme meets the local Crime and Disorder Strategy objective “Responding effectively to nuisance and disorder” and one of its cross cutting themes “Improving locations ...(to) help communities to develop local solutions.”

Tackling Crime

The initiative targets anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Community and Partnership Working

The scheme is a partnership between the Housing Association and residents. It is based on residents’ needs, which were established using a referendum and a series of meetings with every resident. As well as promoting individual responsibility for behaviour on the estate, the scheme also promotes community projects. If people want to donate their Bonusbonds for wider community benefit and to stimulate community cohesion, they can pool them in the Community Gold

Scheme. This scheme buys facilities that are available to all tenants, one example being a pool table for the youth centre. The scheme is managed by Community Officers and a Director of Consumer Protection who makes sure that the scheme is delivered fairly.

Results

When the scheme started only 40% of residents were eligible to join. Now 80% of residents are members. This has reduced the amount of anti-social behaviour on the estate.

Safe Areas for Everyone (SAFE)

Background

This project was established in Bradford after the disturbances in 2001. The project is an extension of the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to give women the confidence to challenge anti-social and criminal behaviour in the area. Training is given to the women including subjects such as assertiveness, safety issues, body language, calming techniques and first aid.

Funding

The project has been funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

Community Safety Implications

The project meets the local Crime and Disorder Strategy priorities on burglary, vehicle crime, youth crime, drug and developing local solutions.

Tackling Crime

The project tackles issues of vandalism, anti-social behaviour, graffiti, street crime, vehicle crime and burglary.

Community and Partnership Working

The group is run on a voluntary basis, including both white and Asian women. The funding was available to train 55 people and currently there are 50 members in the project. Members of the group patrol the streets in the afternoons and evenings and, using the negotiation skill they have learned, challenge anti-social and criminal behaviour. One of the success factors has been that women are seen to be successful at dealing with young people and are less confrontational than men. Project members do not tackle serious situations and have been issued with mobile telephones with a preset number to the police.

Results and Local Impact

The projects aims to reduce the fear of crime felt by women, but it also provides an opportunity for women from different cultures to mix and regain their trust in one another. The group have challenged drug dealers, returned truants to school and helped cut graffiti and vandalism.

Community Partnership

Background

The partnership was formed between the local council, social landlords and residents in several problem estates in one area with low community involvement.

Purpose

The purpose of the partnership is to establish:

- a Joint Estate Agreement between landlords which clarifies management responsibilities and the services residents can expect
- a Community Declaration spelling out an agreed code of conduct for neighbour relations
- a Community Forum giving residents an input into decisions over how things are run.

Community Safety Implications and Tackling Crime

The partnership contributes to the local Crime and Disorder Strategy targets for:

- residential burglary
- youth nuisance
- anti-social behaviour
- racist incidents
- drug related crime.

Community and Partnership Working

The partnership helps community and partnership working by bringing together the three groups with a stake in the area - the city council, housing associations and residents.

The Joint Estate Agreement covers issues such as:

- dealing quickly with empty homes to make them safe and secure
- landlords stating clearly to all future residents what is and what is not acceptable behaviour before they offer them a home
- landlords acting against anyone involved in crime such as drug dealing, violence (including domestic violence), harassment and vandalism.

The Community Declaration sets out commitments on:

- using reasonable language with neighbours
- respect for the property of others
- noise disturbances, such as playing music too loud
- crime - watching over other people's property and not supplying drugs on the estate
- children - treating children with respect and taking action if children are being bullied
- community action - keeping the welfare of senior citizens on the estate in mind and supporting minorities and to report problems to the police.

It is hoped that every member of every household on the estate will sign the Declaration. To inform neighbours that they have signed up, they place a 'Community Declaration' sticker in their window.

The Community Forum meets regularly to give residents their chance to have a say on how the estate is run. The Forum receives reports from landlords about their performance on the Estate Agreement. It also promotes the Community Declaration and invites representatives from statutory agencies and City Council departments to discuss other issues important to residents not directly related to the running of the estate. Police representatives also attend the Community Forum. It does not discuss individual problems.

Results

The work carried out by the partnership has improved the area and has contributed to a drop in crime and disorder. This has also contributed to the regeneration of the area.

Good Practice

The partnership offers a good approach for areas of lower community involvement. The local city council is planning to take up the format in other areas and the scheme is cited as good practice nationally.

Rewind Drugs Project

Background

The Rewind project was started in November 2001. The project, based on an estate with a drugs problem, was set up and run by a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator who realised that there was a lack of drugs education and advice in her area.

Purpose

The scheme has two aims:

- to provide drugs awareness training to residents and school children
- to provide support and advocacy to families affected by drugs.

Membership and Funding

Initially the project was set up and run by its founder working from home and on her own. There was no external funding and the founder paid for all the project expenses herself. The project is now based with the local Neighbourhood Safety Project and has secured funding for three years. The project now employs the founder and a part-time support.

Community Safety Implications

This project meets the local Crime and Disorder Strategy Objective of tackling substance misuse.

Tackling Crime

In addition to reducing substance misuse, the project will have an effect on domestic burglary, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour.

Partnership Working

The project has worked closely with the local community, the police, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership the Youth Inclusion Project and the local prison. The founder undertook training as a drugs trainer and facilitator and has used these skills to deliver a basic drug awareness course to young people and adults. In addition the project also provides counselling to drug users and their families.

Results and Local Impact

So far, the project has trained 230 children and 70 adults in basic drug awareness.

This has included 10 offenders from the local prison. The local city council has also requested training for their staff. The training provided has increased awareness of the impact of drug related crime on the local community.

The support and counselling service of the project has helped reduce the impact of drug related crime on the estate. For example, by working with a 17 year old heroin addict and his family, the project founder has helped the addict come off heroin and find work.

Good Practice

The success of this project has lead to it being recognised as good practice both locally and through the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. The founder has won the local Chief Constable's Award for her work on the project.