

Brief Lines

A bridge between business and the local community

About CSP

Welcome to the latest edition of the Brief Lines newsletter, published by Community Safety Partnerships Ltd (CSP) which offers quality solutions to help address safety and other risks. Specialising in personal, community and system safety issues, CSP provides a holistic intelligence-led approach to partnership between business and community, business and regulator and other interfaces where risk arises.

CSP is headed by Aidan and Sue Nelson who between them have wide experience in corporate reputation handling, developing and delivering community safety strategies and campaigns, crisis management, and the advancement of health, safety and environmental policy both internationally and nationally at industry, multi-party programme and individual company levels.

Cleaning up their act

Four Merseyside teenagers who went on a graffiti spree have been ordered to clean up the 169 sites they sprayed. The four - aged 15, 16 and two 17-year-olds, all from the St Helen's area - were sentenced to a nine month referral order for criminal damage and have been in front of a referral panel, made up of residents and victims affected by their actions. As part of their order they will now repair the harm they have caused to their community. The four convictions are part of a restorative justice project which aims to bring offenders and victims together to look at the effects of crime on communities, with victims having a say in how offenders are sentenced as a deterrent to reoffending.

Home Office reform

May 9th sees government changes to the Home Office in a bid to strengthen the capacity to deal with the threat of terrorism. A new Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism, based in the Home Office, has been set up and a new ministerial committee on security and terrorism, chaired by the Prime Minister has already met. Alongside these changes a Ministry of Justice has been formed to provide a stronger focus on the criminal justice system, and on reducing re-offending. This new ministry takes over the staff and responsibilities of the Department for Constitutional Affairs and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), including the prison and probation services, and has lead responsibility for criminal law and sentencing. Responsibility for the Crown Prosecution Service and the other prosecuting authorities remains with the Attorney General who has a statutory duty to superintend them. These changes build on the 'Security Crime and Justice' strand of the government's policy review, which will inform the government's response to security, public protection, and the Criminal Justice System over the next decade. The changes also respond to a review of counter-terrorism policy by the Home Secretary.

Recorded crime falling

Overall crime in England and Wales has remained stable says the latest British Crime Survey (BCS) interview data, and has fallen by two per cent according to recorded crime statistics, both published in the quarterly update in April. While the BCS showed violent crime as stable during 2006, there were 4,000 fewer violent crime incidents recorded by police compared with the same quarter in 2005, with the greatest falls in serious violent crime. Statistics from the BCS for the year ending December 2006 show:

- Overall crime levels stable at 11.1 million crimes
- Violent crime stable
- Risk of crime up by 1 percentage point from 23 to 24 per cent
- Personal crime and household crime both stable
- Vehicle thefts stable
- Theft from the person stable
- Vandalism up by 11 per cent

The recorded crime quarterly update to December 2006 shows:

- Total recorded crime down 2 per cent
- Domestic burglary down 3 per cent
- Vehicle thefts down 3 per cent
- Violence against the person down 2 per cent
- Robbery up 8 per cent
- Drug offences up 3 per cent

Mobile phone thieves thwarted

New figures show that almost all mobile phones are barred on home networks within the first day of being reported as stolen. Independent test results show that the Mobile Industry Crime Action Forum - made up of government, industry and the police - has also made good its pledge to block 80 per cent of mobile phones, across all networks, within 48 hours of them being reported stolen, making them less attractive to criminals.



Partnership profile - A is for Arun



In this new series Brief Lines will each month feature a crime and disorder reduction partnership or community safety partnership operating in England, Scotland or Wales. Next month will feature a partnership beginning with 'B' so let us know which one you think it should be and why. The Arun partnership, covering the West Sussex towns of Arundel, Littlehampton and Bognor Regis starts off the series.

Arun's current three year strategy draws on the findings from its crime audit which showed that effort needed to concentrate on reducing antisocial behaviour in its many forms, including nuisance, vandalism and graffiti, as well as alcohol-related violent crime. The audit showed that criminal damage, which includes damage to property and vehicles, graffiti and vandalism, made up 26% of all recorded crime in Arun. Deliberate fires have also been an ongoing problem in Arun which had the highest reported incidents in West Sussex.

Arun's number one priority is to tackle anti-social behaviour by reducing the percentage of the population who consider antisocial behaviour a serious problem; cutting criminal damage by 26%; reducing the number of deliberate fires by 15% by 2008, and increase the engagement of local communities in the fight.

Priority actions are delivered locally through various partnership delivery groups such as Neighbourhood Management Teams (NMTs) and Local Action Teams (LATs). They are supported by other specific themed working groups by applying the SARA (Scan, Analyse, Response, Assess) problem-solving approach to identify the most appropriate actions. These actions fall into one of four main strands of Arun's crime prevention approach which underpin activity.

They are:

- Prevention - Creating an environment where crime is less likely e.g. improved security, targeted patrols, CCTV etc

- Intervention - Diverting offenders away from crime, providing facilities aimed at reducing crime and raising public awareness about how communities can contribute to crime reduction
- Enforcement - Targeting persistent offenders and enforcing ASBOs, injunctions, prosecutions, fixed penalty notices and fines
- Victim and witness support - Ensuring support, help and advice is available to victims of crime and encouraging witnesses to have the confidence to report offences

The seven district and borough councils in West Sussex, together with West Sussex County Council and the Sussex Police Authority, made a joint bid for Beacon Council Status under the crime and disorder partnership theme.

The county-wide partners won the award for the crime and disorder category and as a result have been engaged in a national initiative to share good practice. For more information go to

www.arun.gov.uk/cgi-bin/buildpage.pl?mysql=23

10 years for vandalising railway

A former railway worker has been jailed for a total of 10 years for attacking the West Midlands rail network in a sustained campaign of vandalism and destruction.

Allan David Nicol, aged 48, of Yardley, Birmingham paralysed the network and affected up to one million passengers because he had a grudge against Network Rail. The court heard he conducted a "sustained and carefully planned" campaign after he had become "obsessive" about perceived safety failings of the company. Nicol was sentenced to a total of six years in prison for 11 attacks between June 2004 and October 2005, and ten years for the final offence at Rugeley in November 2005. The sentences are to be served concurrently making 10 years in all.

The investigation into the attacks was one of the largest ever undertaken by British Transport Police. The breakthrough came when a receipt dropped at the scene of Nicol's last attack led police to trace it back to the shop where CCTV footage led to his

identification. In sentencing Nicol, Judge Robert Orme said the crimes were a catalogue of vandalism and destruction on the West Midlands railway network without precedent in the UK.

Call to improve rail safety

Two derailments in Canada's Rail Safety Week, including one that claimed the life of a train driver, have led to calls to strengthen the country's Railway Safety Act.

Canadian Pacific driver Lonnie Plasko was hailed a hero for trying to control a speeding train in British Columbia. Two of his co-workers jumped to safety but he stayed at the controls and to try and slow down the train. His body was recovered from the train's wreckage a day later. On the same day a CN Rail train was derailed in central Alberta when eight cars left the track and three locomotives tipped onto their sides. The crew escaped with light injuries.

Now Canadian rail experts are calling for legislation to be strengthened to protect rail workers, the public and communities most vulnerable to rail accidents.

The most recent data from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada show a 10 per cent increase in total rail accidents in the country from 2004 to 2005.

First class fraudster jailed

Britain's cheekiest train traveller has been stopped in his tracks after he was caught by British Transport Police sitting in a first class carriage, whisky in hand, tucking into a free meal. James Nicholls, aged 26, from Coulsdon, Surrey had been travelling the network for years for nothing, courtesy of his charm. His usual ruse was to walk into a police station telling them he was an army captain who had lost his papers. He would be issued with an official letter saying he had reported his loss and would use this document whenever challenged. He had been arrested on numerous occasions but still continued to offend. Police caught up with him when he was on a train to Birmingham to answer bail. Nicholls had previously broken into a locked staffroom at Horley railway station and stolen a uniform and staff ID. He was jailed for four months when he appeared at Guildford Crown Court.

Kids set an example

Children from across the country will soon be publicly calling upon those acting anti-socially on the streets of towns and cities to change their ways and take responsibility for their actions.

Competitions are being run in schools in 20 towns and cities across England that have received nearly £500,000 funding from the government's Respect Task Force to introduce innovative new 'Talking CCTV' in trouble hotspots. The winning schoolchildren will be invited to become the 'voice' of the Talking CCTV in their town or city's CCTV control room for one day - the day of the switch-on, later this year.

The initiative is aimed at getting the public to reflect on their behaviour and the example they are setting to others, especially children. The competitions and activities, such as designing posters that challenge bad behaviour and taking part in neighbourhood litter picks, help educate children about acceptable behaviour while at the same time encouraging them to use their 'pester power' in a positive way - reminding grown-ups how to behave.

Talking CCTV allows operators to talk directly to those involved, when they spot irresponsible behaviour. The 20 areas granted Talking CCTV funding are: Barking and Dagenham, Blackpool, Coventry, Darlington, Derby, Gloucester, Harlow, Ipswich, Mansfield, Middlesbrough, Northampton, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Reading, Salford, Sandwell, South Tyneside, Southwark and Wirral - all of which are served by the railway. For more information go to www.respect.gov.uk

Violent crime measures introduced

Tough new measures to tackle violent crime came into force during April. The measures, part of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006, give police and communities strong powers to tackle violent crimes involving weapons, alcohol, mobile phones and football. For example, it is now an offence to use someone to hide or carry a weapon. Previously, offenders could avoid prosecution if they passed a weapon to someone else to hide or carry for them. New powers have also been granted to

the police and trading standards officers to penalise licensed premises that persistently sell alcohol to under-18s.

It is also now an offence to offer to or agree to (or offer or agree for a third party to) re-programme a mobile phone. Anyone caught doing this faces up to five years in jail and/or an unlimited fine.

Powers to apply for football banning orders are extended for the first time to the Crown Prosecution Service and British Transport Police. These powers have previously been limited to local chief police officers.

Ticket touting laws are also extended to cover the sale of unauthorised football match tickets on the internet, leading to a maximum fine of £5,000. It is now illegal to advertise the unauthorised sale of match tickets.

Anti-vandalism competition

The Home Office has launched a schools competition across England and Wales in a bid to discourage vandalism. The initiative calls on youngsters to produce a publicity campaign to deter people from vandalising property, with the incentive of winning a prize for their school. The Home Office is looking for fresh ideas on how to get messages out to young people about the impact and consequences of damaging property and are looking for citizenship students to help. Campaigns can take any format whether a DVD, poster, game, activity, a play or website. Entries should consider why people vandalise property, the risks and consequences for them, how vandalism affects the people around them, and how people can be deterred from doing it - particularly young people. For more information go to:

www.crimereduction.gov.uk/criminal_damage/competition.htm

£700 fine for urinating

A man has been fined more than £700 for criminal damage after he urinated on a Virgin Train service. Kevin Anthony Penn, aged 23, from Birmingham, was arrested by British Transport Police (BTP) for criminal damage and being drunk and disorderly in a public place. Penn was on his way home from a football match between Hull and West Bromwich Albion. As the train approached Tamworth station he was seen by a guard urinating on the

carpet in the vestibule area of the train. He was found guilty of both offences by Tamworth magistrates and ordered to pay £100 fine, £60 costs, and £300 compensation for criminal damage, plus a £250 fine for his drunken and disorderly behaviour, totalling £710. After the hearing Sgt Martin Smith of BTP said: "We take a very dim view of this sort of anti social behaviour and the impact that it has on train staff and the travelling public."

Youngsters take the lead against shop theft

Young people have come up with anti-theft tags to be attached to goods in a bid to cut shoplifting. The "Deter, Detect, Decide" tags depict anti-theft messages similar to anti-smoking messages on cigarette packets. The tags will be fitted to CDs and other goods in Wolverhampton's Mander Centre from the summer. The youngsters are part of the Prudential 4 Youth programme, a partnership between Crime Concern and insurers Prudential which brings together shopping centre staff, retailers, young people and local agencies to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour, shop theft and vandalism. The Wolverhampton programme is one of 11 currently operating in England and Wales under the Prudential 4 Youth banner. For more information go to:

www.crimeconcern.org.uk then click on Prevention Services>Prudential 4 Youth.

Watch out for...

...Passengers, a film starring Anne Hathaway who had a leading role in the 2006 blockbuster *The Devil Wears Prada*. The film, to be distributed by Sony Pictures, is about a grief counsellor (Hathaway's character) who helps the survivors of an air crash through their trauma. Real-life survivor experiences have close parallels with other transport disasters and those involved in recent rail tragedies have learned much from their stories.

Keep in touch...

If you have any news you wish to share, details of an event you want to highlight, or would like further information on Community Safety Partnerships Ltd contact

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