

# Brief Lines

A bridge between business and the local community

## CSP up and running

Welcome to the first newsletter published by Community Safety Partnerships Ltd (CSP) which has been set up to help bring together business and community. Specialising in personal and community safety issues, CSP is focused on supporting organisations wishing to take forward their work in this key area, as well as offering post crisis-support and communications expertise. CSP is headed by Sue Nelson who in recent years has specialised in developing and delivering community safety messages and campaigns to combat crime and anti-social behaviour on Britain's rail network.

## Police powers to tackle young offenders

Police are to be given the power to force young people who commit minor offences to make amends for their crime or face a court appearance. Plans to extend conditional cautions to under-18s are outlined in a new government publication, *Delivering Simple, Speedy, Summary Justice*. Currently conditional cautions can only be given to adults. If an offender admits guilt for a minor crime, the police can give them a caution subject to them making amends or taking action to deal with problems that may have led or contributed to committing the offence. If the offender fails to comply with the conditions of their caution they can be prosecuted for the original offence.

## Neighbourhood Policing takes off rail style

A high level workshop to bring neighbourhood policing further into the railway community has been held by the British Transport Police (BTP). Led by Acting Assistant Chief Constable Alan Pacey, the workshop brought together key police and railway personnel along with other relevant bodies, including CSP, to look at how best the industry can use the national neighbourhood policing policy to the benefit of the rail network. Neighbourhood policing is the latest weapon in the wider policing armoury to tackle crime and disorder. Key to success is the requirement for police, partners and the public to work closely together in solving problems to improve neighbourhood conditions and feelings of security.

Mr Pacey outlined how the national strategy can be used to deliver rail industry requirements, for a station or line of route is a community in its own right where the principles of neighbourhood policing can be applied in the same way they might be for a housing estate or street.

Following consultation, the BTP identified four pilot sites in London and one in Wales for the roll-out of the neighbourhood policing strategy on a test basis. They are the Victoria-London Bridge loop; between Lewisham and Dartford; Queens Park to Harrow and Wealdstone; between Stratford and Shenfield, and the Cardiff Valleys.

Now the force wants to expand its programme with the potential to include stations and/or routes around Glasgow Central, Manchester Piccadilly, Birmingham New Street, Leeds and Liverpool Lime Street. Officers and local industry partners are now working together to identify how best to introduce the neighbourhood policing strategy in these areas.

## Community railways can help fight crime

A personal security conference aimed at community railways highlighted how local activity at grass roots level can help combat crime and anti-social behaviour. The conference, organised by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), demonstrated how working in partnership can achieve results, with improvements at Northwich station in Cheshire being highlighted as a case study in how local communities working together can drive down crime and increase rail usage.

The Manchester conference was opened with a keynote address by Councillor Roger Jones, the chair of Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPT). Presentations included the work of the British Transport Police in tackling crime, the work of Docklands Light Railway in creating a safer travelling environment, how Northern Rail is tackling youth crime on its network and what the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) is doing to promote partnership with operators at local level. CSP outlined the importance of building relationships with crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) in key areas, and in doing so align the rail industry with the objectives contained in the government's National Community Safety Plan.



## High Court ruling on Potters Bar bid

The family of a victim of the Potters Bar rail crash has failed to secure a public inquiry into the events surrounding the train crash which occurred on 10 May 2002. The family, from Taiwan, had sought a High Court order requiring the Transport Secretary to convene a public inquiry. On 31 July 2006 the judge, Lord Justice Moses, rejected the argument that the decision of the Department for Transport not to convene a public inquiry was a breach of the provisions set out in Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights which relate to the "right to life", because member states were obliged to investigate deaths where it might be at fault. Lord Justice Moses said a "full and enhanced" inquest - headed by a High Court Judge acting as Coroner - was to be held next year into the deaths of the seven people who lost their lives at Potters Bar. Lord Justice Moses further said that this approach should meet all the needs of the families. In October 2005, the Crown Prosecution Service said no corporate or individual manslaughter charges would be brought against either Network Rail or Jarvis who at the time of the accident were responsible for track maintenance. The enhanced inquest will be held around five years after the tragedy which occurred on May 10th, 2002. It has to be asked whether such a long delay is in the best interests of the bereaved families.

## Community orders for youth robbers?

The UK's Sentencing Guidelines Council has said non-custodial sentences can be considered for young offenders who commit low-level robbery. In its guidelines on robbery,

published at the end of July, the council said where there is 'only a threat or use of minimal force, a community sentence may be appropriate.' Such guidance needs to be considered in light of the rail industry's recent efforts to get the Crown Prosecution Service to agree that railway staff are classed as public servants, so giving a more hard line approach to prosecution in the event of assaults. For more information go to [www.sentencing-guidelines.gov.uk](http://www.sentencing-guidelines.gov.uk)

## Platform leg-dangler prosecuted

In what is thought to be the first successful prosecution of its kind, magistrates in Cheshire fined a man a total of £1,000 after he was caught sitting dangling his legs over the edge of a station platform as train approached. The 37-year-old man pleaded not guilty to obstructing and stopping a train, and the use of threatening and abusive language. He failed to appear before magistrates who heard the case in absence and found him guilty of all charges. He was fined £500 and ordered to pay £300 costs and £200 in compensation. Phil Cook, the debt recovery and prosecutions manager for Northern Rail, said: "We all know the dangers of people dangling their legs over platform edges but this is the first time there has been a prosecution. Hopefully this will serve as a warning to others."

## World experts to gather in Montreal

Tackling crime on Britain's railways is just one of the themes in the spotlight at the 9th International Level Crossing Safety and Trespass Prevention Symposium in Canada in September. Under the banner of "partners in safety" delegates from around the world will gather in Montreal to look at advances in highway/railway

crossing technology and operations. The symposium's goal is to exchange ideas, provide networking opportunities, and showcase the newest and best safety-related developments from across the globe. Delegates will hear from international experts on human behaviour, suicide prevention, law enforcement, and education methods and techniques, all related to crossing safety and trespass reduction.

CSP will be presenting a case study at the symposium on how Britain's rail industry has been tackling crime and anti-social behaviour on the national network in the past decade and highlighting how lessons learned can impact on the future. Britain will be well represented at the symposium with presentations from the Rail Safety and Standards Board and Network Rail, among others.

## Sign up for Respect Academies

The government's Respect Task Force is organising a series of Respect Academies across the country to promote new ways of working to drive up standards of behaviour and crack down on anti-social behaviour. Community safety officers, police, anti-social behaviour co-ordinators, neighbourhood managers, youth and social workers and housing and regeneration specialists are being urged to go further in their efforts to tackle anti-social behaviour and "join forces to prevent the next ASBO generation."

A total of 1,500 people attended five events across the country earlier in the summer and a further nine events are being held in London, Bristol, Solihull, Cardiff, Carlisle, Sheffield and Peterborough during September and October.

To register for an event go to [www.coievents.co.uk/respect](http://www.coievents.co.uk/respect) but hurry, as places are limited.