

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.

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

suenelson@comsafetypartners.com
or aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com

Brown's name and shame pledge

UK prime minister Gordon Brown has pledged to publicise the names and details of people subject to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and other orders using photographs, public leaflets and the internet. In a podcast from Downing Street, available on Number 10's iTunes channel and YouTube, the prime minister also reiterated a number of recent plans to improve neighbourhood safety and said that he will be renewing the government's focus on crime in the coming weeks. More details in next month's Brief Lines.

Policing Pledge: Forces could do better

The majority of police forces in England and Wales have further to go if they are to keep their promise to the public on the service they provide, an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has found.

Of the 43 police forces inspected, 33 were graded fair. To varying degrees, these forces fell short of their Pledge commitments and needed to improve.

Eight forces – Kent, Surrey, Leicestershire, West Mercia, Humberside, Lancashire, Merseyside and Northumbria – received good grades. They have generally kept their Pledge with the public and listened to their concerns, acted on them and kept people informed on the progress they have made.

Two forces – Suffolk and Cumbria – have performed poorly and consistently fell short on their commitment to the public. No force was graded excellent and exceeded Pledge standards.

HMIC investigated all 10 Policing Pledge promises with inspectors acting as customers, or 'mystery shoppers', to get a realistic, first-hand view of the public's experiences.

Inspectors attended meetings, visited police stations and sent emails to police teams to test how they were treated.

The time taken to answer the phones and reply to messages was logged, police posters in public places were checked for accuracy and force websites were read to test whether the contact details and police station opening hours were up to date.

Frontline staff in all 43 forces were interviewed and inspectors spoke to members of the public who have recently used their local police service to get a balanced picture of how the police delivered on their promises.

Inspectors found mixed results and HMIC's report reveals:

- Some police stations were not open when advertised while others used volunteers to ensure rural stations were staffed.
- In one force in July, 17% of non-emergency calls were abandoned in a week after being passed to other departments while free phone numbers have been introduced by some forces for non-emergency calls.
- Some calls to Neighbourhood Policing Teams were never answered while some forces were praised by the public for their high profile neighbourhood policing. The public in some areas were given the opportunity to meet their local police at meetings or informal 'surgeries' in supermarkets or libraries while an officer from the neighbourhood team didn't even attend meetings held in other areas.
- Not all force websites had the correct opening times for police stations with out of date contact details and public meeting times while some forces used social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook and podcasts to advertise their local policing teams.
- Some forces log all complaints and trawl press articles to pinpoint dissatisfaction and contact the complainant while most forces rarely gave the public the opportunity to discuss their concerns with someone in person.
- Two forces translated the Pledge into several languages while there was little evidence of other forces communicating with minority groups about the Pledge.

Jane Stichbury, Her Majesty's Inspector, said: "Although the performance of most forces did not consistently match the level promised to the public, the majority of forces have made efforts to build a



stronger relationship and dialogue with local people.”

She added: “Forces cannot deliver an effective public service without asking the public what they want. They must listen to the public’s concerns, act on their concerns and keep them informed on the progress they have made.

“The public want and deserve improvement from their police forces and they should expect a high level of service tailored to their community.”

- A conference on delivering the Policing Pledge and sharing good practice has been organised by the National Policing Improvement Agency at the Bramshill police college, Hook, Hampshire on Monday, December 7. The event is free but places are limited. It is suitable for citizen focus leads and is also relevant to police authority members and partners.

Email cfnp@npia.pnn.police.uk or call 020 7147 8026 for more details.

Neighbourhood action in the spotlight

Thousands of community safety practitioners and neighbourhood policing officers are taking part in the third national Not in My Neighbourhood Week (NIMNW).

Now in its third year, the Home Office sponsored NIMNW provides the opportunity for local agencies, police forces and partners to highlight the work they do. Partners from all over England and Wales were taking part in the week, which reinforces efforts to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep communities safe.

And for the second year running, British Transport Police (BTP) has adopted the NIMNW theme with the message “not on my railway,” with 55 railway Neighbourhood Policing Teams across Britain involved in a variety of rail-related initiatives.

Activities during the week include:

- A session for primary school pupils in St Helens, Lancashire providing advice on how to keep themselves safe on Bonfire Night as well as discussing acceptable behaviour over the Halloween period,
- A "nominate your grot spot" campaign in the London borough of Brent supported by a roadshow bus touring the borough providing advice on crime prevention and support around any crime or anti-social behaviour concerns
- Operation Champion in Leeds involving crime and grime agencies working together with communities in targeted areas to combat environmental crime, nuisance, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.
- Calderdale Fire and Rescue Service in West Yorkshire visiting schools during week to raise awareness of bonfire safety and the dangers setting fires
- Operation Confidence in the Thames Valley Police area that sees local operations to target drunken disorderly behaviour and violence, criminal damage and other crimes that impact upon the quality of life of those living within our communities.
- A DVD produced by Salford Community Safety Unit of the work carried out by the city’s Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) to improve the quality of life in the local community, including front line policing, environmental clean ups and fire assessments played onboard a refurbished vehicle touring the city.
- Partners in Knowsley, Merseyside undertaking test purchasing operations on both alcohol and fireworks, truancy sweeps, family activity events including firework displays, environmental audits to identify potential bonfire sites and removal of rubbish and local clean-ups including the Community Payback scheme

Railway NPTs were undertaking a range of activity during the week including late night train and station patrols, crime prevention surgeries, anti-knife operations, Travel Wise initiatives, truancy patrols and theft operations.

BTP Assistant Chief Constable Alan Pacey said: “Stations and trains are an important part of community life. Railways connect people to their families, friends, shops and all aspects of their work and social lives. They are key to the very fabric of our communities and when anti-social behaviour and crime affect them, they affect all of us.”

The key objective of NIMNW is to inform local people of action taking place in their area to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and to make their communities safer. NIMNW aims to:

- Increase awareness among the local community of what the police and local agencies do to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- Increase public confidence in the work the police and local agencies are doing to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and make communities safer.
- Encourage the public to engage with police and local agencies and play their part in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Engage local and regional media and encourage them to support the work being done locally.

Crime map initiative

A new interactive national map giving the public access to local statistics and details on neighbourhood policing in their area has been launched by the Home Office National Policing Improvement Agency.

The online map allows residents to view figures for all crime as well as burglary, robbery, violence, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour in their area at the touch of a button.

For the first time people can compare one police area with another, compare figures over a

three-month period against the same period for the previous year and see annual crime rates.

The public will also be able to see details of their neighbourhood police team, local policing priorities and information about forthcoming local events such as crime prevention meetings and local surgeries

The website was developed by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) and police forces across England and Wales, on behalf of the Home Office.

The CrimeMapper initiative (www.maps.police.uk) builds on the Policing Pledge, which sets out what the public can expect from their local force and how they can get involved in policing. It follows all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales launching their own individual crime maps earlier this year. Since the sites went live they have received approximately 50,000 visits per month.

More help for ASB victims

Extra help for victims of anti-social behaviour, a crackdown on those that breach ASBOs and new local minimum service standards agreed with the public that outline what they should expect from councils, police and social landlords to deal with intimidation, has been pledged by the government.

As part of a drive to ensure that anti-social behaviour is dealt with more swiftly and effectively, Home Secretary Alan Johnson says he will improve the measures available to tackle the harmful impact of disorder and harassment that can make life a misery for local residents.

According to latest figures from the British Crime Survey there has been a fall in people's perception of ASB as a problem in their area over the last six years. But feedback shows communities want better support for victims when it does arise.

For the first time, all victims taking a stand in magistrates' courts against offenders whose anti-social behaviour is blighting communities will be offered help by Victim Support's witness service. This will

include support in court proceedings, offering someone to accompany the witness when they give evidence and providing follow-up assistance when the court case is over

Almost £2.8m will be earmarked over the next two years for a network of 85 victims and witness champions to be set up in priority areas across the country to stand alongside victims, delivering practical help. This will include ensuring more people get support as victims of ASB, more joined up services where they already exist, training offered to local anti-social behaviour coordinators and a single local referral point for all victim and witnesses.

There will also be a clear expectation that local areas through the activity of CDRPs will ensure court action is taken against those who break the law by breaching ASBOs

In addition there will be a new assessment, with commitment from the Justice Secretary and the Attorney General, of how breaches are currently being dealt with, plus new guidance on dealing effectively with breaches.

New crime figures

Quarterly update figures show that based on British Crime Survey (BCS) interviews in the year to June 2009, crime remains stable compared with the year to June 2008.

The latest statistics show that overall recorded crime continues to fall and the British Crime Survey shows risk of being a victim remains historically low.

Violent crime and firearm offences continue to drop with a continued fall in knife related violence, including a 35% drop in knife-related homicide, down from 71 to 46.

According to the data 50% of people say they are confident that the police and local agencies are dealing with the antisocial behaviour and crime issues that matter locally, an increase from 45%, while overall the number

of people who think antisocial behaviour is a problem remains stable.

Although overall acquisitive crime is falling there is continued upward pressure on burglary, robbery and some theft. The government claims that since 1997 crime as measured by the BCS has fallen by 36%, violence is down by 41% and burglary is down by 54%.

Communities gain from crime proceeds grab

Communities across the country are benefiting as ill-gotten gains confiscated from criminals are used to fund worthwhile community projects.

The £4m Community Cashback scheme gives local people a direct say on how criminal assets are spent. The new scheme is funded by cash and assets seized from criminals.

More than 45,000 votes were received from members of the public for 1,225 community projects via a dedicated website, neighbourhood policing meetings and through citizens' panels. A total of 269 projects will receive a share of the fund with work now beginning on the first projects.

Schemes benefiting include:

- Renovating a burnt out skate park near Brighton
- Funding for a 'young people against knife crime' project to visit schools in Merseyside
- Renovating a derelict BMX track in Rochdale
- Opening a cricket club for young people in Newcastle
- Restoring a derelict churchyard around a community centre in an industrial area of Sheffield

The Home Office says seizing assets deprives criminals of money, reduces the incentive for crime and promotes fairness and confidence in the criminal justice system. Each project has to help tackle anti-social or criminal behaviour locally and show the community had made it clear this was something they wanted to see.

Until now money recovered from criminals has been split between frontline services, such as the police, and government departments involved with the criminal justice system. This is the first time communities can influence how that money is spent.

Home Office figures show the value of assets recovered from criminals in the year 2008/9 rose to an all time high of £148m. This is up from £136m recovered in 2007/08.

The Community Cashback fund is a pilot scheme for 2009/10 and more details can be found at www.cashback.cjsonline.gov.uk

Restorative justice cuts re-offending

Getting young offenders to face their victims helps reduce crime, according to a new report.

A study published by the Prison Reform Trust on restorative justice in Northern Ireland reveals that re-offending rates were much lower when offenders were involved in such schemes. Figures showed four in ten 10 to 17 year-olds committed another crime within a year, compared to 71% of those who had been locked up. And nine out of 10 victims, most of who came face to face with the criminal who harmed them, backed the process.

Now the trust is calling on ministers to consider implementing more restorative justice schemes across England and Wales. Current schemes are limited to first time and minor offenders in some areas.

The report describes the case of "Peter" accused of assault, who comes face to face with his victim "Gary" who challenges him to change his behaviour.

In another, a 16-year-old who broke into and vandalised a church met the vicar to hear about the impact of his crime. As a result, he donated money to charity and did 10 hours' voluntary work inside the church fixing the damage.

On Britain's railways some reparation schemes have been set up where, for example, offenders have cleaned up graffiti on railway property, but in the wider

community such schemes tend to be operated on an ad hoc basis rather than in a co-ordinated way.

The study highlights activities that offenders can be involved in to pay back their debt to society. They include:

- An apology either verbal or written
- Doing something for the victim or community to make up for the harm caused (reparation)
- Activities to address offending such as engagement in mentoring, an offender behaviour programme, education or diversionary activity
- Unpaid work
- Preventing the young person from undertaking activities or going to certain places. This can entail electronic monitoring
- Payment of compensation to the victim or a charity

Go to www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk to download the report or find more information on the work of the trust.

High profile anti-knife campaign

The Home Office has launched phase two of the 'It Doesn't Have to Happen' national marketing campaign, which aims to reduce knife carrying among 10-16 year olds. The campaign seeks to raise awareness of the harsh consequences of knife carrying by harnessing the power of peer influence.

The new central element is two 60-second adverts showing the punitive and physical outcomes from knife carrying. The adverts are supported by posters at bus stops near schools, on shop shutters and inside buses.

Go to www.bebo.com/itdoesnthavetohappen for more information.

Project to showcase neighbourhood activity

The Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network (NHWN) will be launching a project to showcase the achievements of local groups in early 2010.

The network has called for case studies which demonstrate increased diversity of their membership, groups established in new areas and communities where NHWN has not previously existed, groups that influence local policy and decision-making processes at any level including engaging with local CDRPs and groups that have partnerships with other local organisations or have expanded beyond traditional network activities such as co-ordinating visiting services for the less mobile or more vulnerable.

Meanwhile the Home Office has pledged £500,000 to support local neighbourhood and home watch groups across England and Wales. The network is being supported by Capacitybuilders, a non-departmental public body working with the third sector to ensure the growth, development and increased effectiveness of local Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Currently membership of many local groups is under represented in hard-pressed areas, among the younger generations and in some sectors of the community. This project, led by a partnership between Capacitybuilders and the NHWN seeks to address those challenges. Go to www.mynhw.co.uk/index.php to find out more about the network.

Keep crime down campaign

Boxing Day sees the launch of a new national 'Let's keep Crime Down' acquisitive crime marketing campaign with the aim of helping people minimise their risk of becoming a victim of burglary, theft from vehicles, robbery and identity crime. It will advise the public on the simple things they can do to protect their property and identity.

The campaign will use several media channels, including national TV, national radio, national press, regional press, on-line and outdoor media.

Contact: emma.keegan@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk for more information.