

# New Deal for Communities

## The National Evaluation

### Research Reports

#### **Community Based Policing Changes in New Deal for Communities**

Research Report 36

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit is currently sponsoring the 2002-2005 national evaluation of New Deal for Communities. This evaluation is being undertaken by a consortium of organisations co-ordinated by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

Those wishing to know more about the evaluation should consult the evaluation's web site in the first instance  
<http://ndcevaluation.adc.shu.ac.uk/ndcevaluation/home.asp>



*Sheffield Hallam University*

# **Community Based Policing Changes in New Deal for Communities**

Research Report 36

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## Executive Summary

- changes in policing have been widely used in New Deal for Communities (NDC) to tackle crime problems
- experience of crime in NDC areas is higher than the national average, particularly theft from, and vandalism of, cars but there is considerable variation between Partnerships in the amount and types of crime. This variety was reflected in the case study areas
- policing solutions have included funding of additional officers, establishment or extension of community based policing and introduction of intelligence led problem solving approaches. Most NDC policing changes incorporate more than one of these elements
- community based policing interventions have laid emphasis on Partnership working and involvement of the community. Police have worked with a wide variety of both statutory and voluntary agencies in identification of problems and in joint operations to solve those problems. NDC has introduced formal structures to provide a vehicle for community consultation but police have also developed informal contact processes. Newham's innovative approach involves community participation in problem solving at local level
- high visibility and accessibility of officers have been important. Numbers of uniformed police foot patrols have increased in all the NDCs studied with some police teams supplementing these with civilian wardens. Proactive efforts have been made to raise the profile of police presence and to improve relationships with residents
- schemes studied have also featured the tackling of underlying causes of individual crime problems adopting the theory of Problem Oriented Policing (POP). Newham has developed a particularly structured POP approach
- problems encountered have reflected some but by no means all of those identified in previous research. Difficulties in the case study areas included recruitment and retention of officers, appropriate team composition in terms of gender and ethnicity for the area, conflicts of interest between partners in joint working and a divergence between public expectations and realistic police performance. Some have been resolved, for example, by introduction of female support workers and wardens to supplement male police teams or by use of awaydays to promote team building but some issues remain
- total crime trends in the case study areas have generally been favourable compared with the surrounding police Basic Command Units (BCUs). However, crime change is inconsistent between NDCs and between different types of crime and, where success can be identified, a causal relationship with the policing changes can be only tentatively ascribed
- benefits seen as resulting from the policing changes have included perceptions of reduced crime, increased crime reporting, solution of particular crime problems, improved relationships between the police and the community, increased trust in the police, increased police visibility and more effective partnership working

## Key Lessons from Policing Interventions

### Problem Appraisal

- satisfying public demands for more police is unlikely alone to solve crime problems in an area. Partnerships should start by assessing the nature of problems to be addressed and consider the relevance of alternative policing solutions
- additional police resources provided to locally based dedicated police teams can provide opportunities for proactive policing but are best used as part of a wider partnership problem solving approach to crime reduction. Formal POP approaches provide a structure for effective working. Ring fencing of police teams will help to minimise abstraction of police officers to other duties

## **Planning**

- early effort to involve partners and the community, to identify clear and detailed objectives and divide responsibilities will pay later dividends in ease of implementation. Poorly planned implementation of additional resources may lead to lack of direction and piecemeal interventions which are not sustained. Late involvement of partners may result in duplication of effort, wasted resources and inefficiencies. Lack of consultation with the community may cause unrealistic expectations
- implementation of integrated crime and disorder intelligence systems will require detailed planning in terms of software, availability of data and recruitment of an analyst

## **Partnership working**

- Partnership working with statutory agencies, voluntary bodies and the community has been shown to be important to policing initiatives in providing data for identification and analysis of problems, joint operations to resolve those problems and building of trust. Sharing of premises between police and other agencies has been found to promote close working

## **Policing roles**

- police officers in community police teams should take a holistic approach and carry out the whole spectrum of police duties rather than concentrating only on high visibility and public reassurance. Community members and agency representatives value high visibility aspects of community policing but also quality of police response and the building of trust. Civilian patrol officers such as neighbourhood wardens can provide a valuable extra resource to supplement regular police

## **Personnel issues**

- there are benefits in continuity of officers and in use of experienced officers with knowledge of the area
- there can be problems in recruiting community police officers because of differences in pay and working practices and particular problems in recruiting beat officers to work in disadvantaged high crime areas
- conversely high levels of police job satisfaction have been found among community police officers, deriving from the sense of ownership implicit in involvement in the range of police work and ability to follow cases through all stages and from the availability of time to give thought and planning to problem solving

## **Publicity**

- development of an early communications strategy to ensure that residents are informed of successes and understand police operating methods is vital. This can overcome difficulties in reconciling public demands and perceptions with police resources and encourage support
- it is important also to feed back progress to partner agencies to ensure their continued engagement

## **Prospective strategy**

- impacts of policing interventions on crime figures are unlikely to be immediate and may be difficult to separate from impacts of other initiatives. It is therefore important to regard initiatives as part of a long term strategy and ensure that schemes are funded for sufficient

time for effects to be seen. This will be facilitated by long term commitment by police forces

- it is also important to continue long term monitoring of crime and disorder in order to measure outcomes

## 1. Introduction

The nature of areas of socio-economic deprivation means that they often face higher than average crime rates, crime being recognised as both a symptom and a cause of deprivation. The New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme run by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and poor living conditions at the heart of its agenda. Initiatives to tackle crime include huge spending increases on police services. The money has been spent in a variety of ways including funding police overtime or extra targeted policing, developing or extending community police teams, developing dedicated police teams for the area and funding development of crime analysis systems.

This report will briefly consider the types of crime problem identified in NDC areas. It will review some of the policing interventions used in the NDCs with particular reference to projects implemented in four case study NDCs. It will discuss problems encountered in implementing these projects to date and preliminary results achieved. It will point to key messages and lessons learned and offer a check list for those considering tackling crime problems using these types of initiative.

## 2. Methodology

Two of the policing interventions implemented in the case study NDCs have been locally evaluated and one NDC has commissioned a local evaluation of its total approach to community safety. Where available, use has been made of these local evaluations. Preliminary telephone interviews have been carried out with representatives of a number of the NDCs reported to the NDC National Evaluation as implementing policing changes and from these four NDCs selected for more detailed study. The case study areas for policing schemes are:

- Bradford
- East Brighton
- Newham
- Leicester

All of these NDCs have been able to provide aggregate crime data for the NDC area or an approximation of that area. Comparative data for the Basic Command Unit (BCU) in which the NDC is situated has also been provided although BCU boundary changes in Leicester have prevented meaningful comparison there. Information has also been derived from interviews with NDC community safety managers and police officers.

## 3. Crime in the NDCs

Analysis of the NDC household survey has shown that the number of people experiencing crime is higher in NDC areas than the national average. The proportion of those experiencing crime in the last 12 months was between two and three times higher than those in the British Crime Survey (BCS) for crime categories where comparable data is available. Experience of crime varies by crime category. Vandalism of, and theft from a vehicle are the two most commonly experienced crimes, with 34% and 17% answering yes to these items. Theft of a car was less prevalent, experienced by 6% of respondents. Theft from the person and violent crime were the least prevalent crimes in the sample (5%) and the proportion of respondents reporting racial harassment and abuse was also low. There are wide differences between NDC areas with some NDCs such as Nottingham,

Luton, Middlesbrough showing high victimisation figures for a majority of types of crime and others showing high levels for one or two types only. For theft from person, all but one of the top ten ranking NDCs are London boroughs. Luton, Bristol, Hartlepool and Southwark all have a high proportion of vehicle crime victims. Nottingham and Derby have the highest proportions of respondents experiencing violent crime and threatening behaviour.

The household survey also examined fear of crime. When asked 'How safe do you feel walking alone in or around this area after dark' 66% of respondents feel either 'Very safe' or 'Fairly unsafe'. Feelings of safety after dark are lower in NDCs compared with the national picture derived from the British Crime Survey. In all but one NDC (Islington), respondents are more likely to feel 'very or a bit unsafe when alone in their area after dark relative to BCS respondents. Feelings of safety after dark also vary across NDCs, ranging from Nottingham where 74% of respondents feel 'Very or Fairly unsafe' to Islington where 41% of respondents feel 'Very or Fairly unsafe.'

The selected case study areas showed varied crime problems. In Bradford reported offences more likely in the NDC than in the rest of the city are burglary, criminal damage, drugs offences, violent crime, robbery and theft from a vehicle. The MORI survey showed Bradford to be in the top 10 ranked NDCs for experience of car theft and assault and a particular problem was that of racial tension. In Brighton total crime rates were not especially high compared with the surrounding area but there was a sizeable underreporting problem. There were high levels of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage and a lack of confidence in mainstream services being able to tackle the problem. In Newham the problem crimes were seen to be vehicle related crime, criminal damage, burglary, assault and a high level of racial incidents although the 2002 MORI survey showed that Newham was one of the 10 lowest crime NDCs overall. Crime was however still above the national average and for theft from the person Newham was in the top 10 NDCs. Particular problems include abandoned and burned out cars, racial harassment, people being attacked or harassed, car crime, teenagers hanging about on the streets and property being set on fire. In Leicester key crime issues were the levels of vandalism, anti-social behaviour and nuisance especially that committed by young people and high levels of burglary, vehicle crime and violence especially domestic violence. The MORI survey showed Leicester to be in the top 10 NDCs for crime overall. Community consultation emphasized a high fear of crime and a desire to see more police on the beat. However Leicester, Newham and Brighton all showed low levels of fear of crime relative to other NDCs in the MORI survey although levels were still above the national average.

## 4. Policing Solutions

Changes in policing introduced in the NDCs in the main fall into four categories although as will be seen below these are not mutually exclusive and the case study schemes at least include elements of more than one category. They have also incorporated some of the key areas emphasised in the Home Office Consultation document of November 2003 (Home Office, 2003). These are:

- empowering local people to use information and networks to engage with their local police
- ensuring a policing style which is both visible and accessible and helps local people to take action themselves
- strengthening voluntary, community and business involvement in policing
- strengthened accountability for delivering effective neighbourhood policing



## a. Additional policing

<b>Box 1: Additional Policing as a result of NDC</b>	
Leicester	2 officers part funded by NDC 2 officers funded by police under contract with NDC 4 officers funded from elsewhere but covering a wider area 2 police motorbikes funded by NDC
Bradford	4 officers funded by NDC
Newham	4 police officers funded by NDC 4 additional uniformed neighbourhood wardens funded by NDC

Since the essence of New Deal for Communities is its community led nature, it is not surprising that the changes in policing introduced as NDC interventions are frequently a response to the usual public demand for more policing. The public generally want more patrols and a reasonably rapid response to emergencies. From information supplied to the NDC National Evaluation, eight NDCs are funding some kind of additional policing ranging from police overtime in Salford, through additional targeted police in Knowsley and Rochdale, additional beat police in Hull and additional community police in Bristol. However, it is notable that, apart from possibly the Salford police overtime, the additional policing is not simply more officers but more officers to be employed in a specific way. This reflects research which has shown that there is no relationship between the number of police officers employed and the incidence of crime (Morgan and Newburn, 1997). Furthermore experimental increases in car patrols have not led to significant changes in reported crime, rates of victimization, levels of fear of crime or satisfaction with the police (Kelling et al, 1974). Experimental evidence from the United States suggests that that foot patrols are not effective either in reducing crime rates although positive benefits in fear of crime, neighbourhood safety and public satisfaction with the police have been noted (Bayley, 1998). The additional policing in the case study areas of Leicester, Bradford and Newham shown in Box 1 is all in the form of community police, with in Leicester an additional feature of funding of police motorbikes.

## b. Community policing

Community policing is not a single concept. As noted by Fielding (1995) it may mean: *“a contrast to rapid response and enforcement oriented policing, so that constables are closer to the community and can represent its norms; a process by which crime control is shared with the public, as in neighbourhood watch; or a means of developing communication with the public and interest groups.*” Bennett (1994), suggested that there are at least six strong models of community policing in practice: area based policing; multi-agency partnerships; community crime prevention; police-public contact strategies; area based foot patrols; and community involvement and consultation. Some of the components may be: community constables; community liaison officers; schools liaison schemes; youth programmes; police consultative communities; local crime prevention initiatives; neighbourhood watch schemes; decentralised command structures; commitment to foot patrols; police public partnerships; and an emphasis on non-crime problem solving. The NDC experience includes several of these elements.

In the 12 NDCs where the emphasis of the policing changes is specifically on local policing, there are a variety of approaches but features generally included are:

- involvement of the community in assessing local problems and setting policing priorities
- a problem oriented approach to crime considering wider community safety issues rather than only those of law enforcement

- improved visibility and accessibility of policing for increased public reassurance
- Partnership working with local voluntary and statutory agencies and with community groups to solve problems
- development of trust between the police and community

### **Box 2: NDC Community Based Policing**

**Brighton Ring Fenced Police Team** - The police team consists of a sergeant and 6 PCs based in two multi-agency offices in the area. The sergeant's post was originally funded by NDC but in the second year of the project was mainstreamed because the project was seen as of proven value. The six PCs are not additional to the police strength in the area before the NDC. Rather the essential feature of the team is that it is ring fenced and officers will not except in case of emergency be abstracted for other duties. The officers work flexible hours as they work closely with other parts of the Community Safety Team and need to fit with when activities are required. The officers' role is not simply that of reassurance and public visibility but also includes making arrests, responding to calls about crime, detecting crime, executing misuse of drugs warrants and all the duties required in terms of delivering police services. The local interaction role extends to involvement in youth work, in schools, in contacts in the community, in working alongside the community and being seen to be approachable. Problems tackled include those of traffic, truancy and harassment - including joint visits with housing staff.

**Leicester Community Police Officers** - The Community Police Officers are based in the Local Policing Unit on the edge of the NDC, operating alongside general duty officers as a team to fulfil the whole range of police duties in the area, including taking reports, dealing with offenders, proactive patrols, action plans and initiatives to reduce core areas of crime. Two officers have a special remit, operating on motor bikes which can cover the large area of Leicester NDC more easily than foot patrols and thus fulfilling the requirement from the community for more police visibility and providing public reassurance. Motorbikes can also access a local park where there was a problem in youths causing a nuisance by riding stolen motor cycles. The two NDC funded officers are more rigorously ring fenced than the others and as a result have more time for proactive work with children and surveillance activities.

**Bradford Community Police Team** - The police team is based a short bus ride outside the NDC. The original proposal was that officers should be recruited from the area, but while the recruitment has taken place, those recruited are not deployed in the NDC area because police officers like to keep their personal lives separate. While the community consultation placed emphasis on high visibility policing, the approach taken is much wider, tackling the four Home Office identified areas of law enforcement, public reassurance, educational diversion and social exclusion. Officers take part in the spectrum of police work relating to the NDC area, making arrests, doing investigative work, going to court and effectively seeing a case from beginning to end. This assists them in being able to feedback information to complainants or victims about the situation with which they are concerned. The officers also have a brief to develop partnerships with relevant agencies and organisations in the area. The Community Police Team operates on a basis of Problem Oriented Policing (POP).

These are all features generally regarded as those of community policing. The case study NDCs include Brighton, Leicester, Newham and Bradford (Boxes 2 and 3) and illustrate the breadth of approaches adopted. Some police teams, for example Brighton, which have been at pains to state that they are not "community police" but operate the full range of police work, are here considered under the community police heading.

### **Box 3: NDC Community Based Policing - continued**

**Newham Intelligence Led Policing** - The Community Policing Team of ring fenced police officers and neighbourhood wardens operate together to police the area. The wardens focus on lower level crime and environmental issues (anti-social behaviour, nuisance, abandoned vehicles, litter etc) allowing the Met officers to concentrate on more serious crime. From the beginning it was felt that it was essential to ensure that deployment of the officers was intelligence led in order to ensure maximum benefit from resources. Patrolling randomly would not be cost effective as the officer would not be tackling identified problems. The policing team's work is therefore informed by an NDC Crime Reporting System providing a free telephone hotline to allow flow of intelligence about crime and antisocial behaviour between the community and the team. A Crime Tracking System has been set up to gather detailed multi agency intelligence about crime in the area and enable analysis to identify causes and solutions. An NDC dedicated analyst was recruited. The Crime Tracking and Analysis systems conform to the National Intelligence Model.

A holistic Problem Oriented Policing approach is used with solutions as well as problem identification involving multi agency working. Information from official sources and residents is pooled in a sophisticated analysis system to facilitate decision making. Action resulting from that decision making may take a wide variety of forms, including traditional enforcement action by police and wardens but also interventions aimed at tackling causes of problems and involving a variety of agencies and including the community in Problem Solving Panels. The approach is to use the lowest level of intervention necessary in a spectrum of action. An essential part of the system is a revisiting of the problem after the action stage to assess the effectiveness of the intervention used (the "assessment" part of the SARA model).

#### **c. Problem oriented policing**

Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) is an alternative approach to policing that has been implemented in recent years in many police forces. Rather than simply responding to calls for service, the approach offers a more effective strategy by addressing the underlying conditions which prompt those calls. Patterns in crime and calls for service are analysed, incident clusters and possible underlying causes identified and those causes addressed using solutions which may require partnership working with a range of agencies and the community rather than only the police. Since POP was first proposed in 1979 it has been widely adopted in the United States and more lately in the United Kingdom. Projects make use of conceptual tools such as PAT (the Problem Analysis Triangle) and SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) to systemise problem solving and assist officers to think in a structured and disciplined way. POP is an important part of community policing and has been particularly emphasized by the community police schemes in Bradford and Newham (Boxes 2 and 3).

#### **d. Intelligence led policing**

Intelligence led policing is "essentially about doing the practical business of policing more smartly, incorporating modern information technology and modern methods" (Tilley, 2003). The National Intelligence Model, developed by the National Criminal Intelligence Service, has become its instrument. The approach involves developing and maintaining detailed and up to date information on patterns of crime and criminality in order to intervene effectively to disrupt networks and remove prolific offenders. It depends on effective data gathering and sharing, skilled analysis and prompt informed action in response to that analysis. Newham has developed a system using this approach (Box 3).

## 5. Implementation of Community Based Policing

In Section 4b above a number of common elements to community policing were identified. The case study NDCs have sought to implement these approaches in a number of ways.

### a. Involvement of the community

Since the NDCs are by definition community led, the involvement of the community in the policing projects has generally been via the structures set up by the NDC Partnerships. In Leicester and Bradford there is a good working relationship between the NDC and the police at a management level. In Leicester the inspector sits on the Community Safety Forum and, with the recent appointment of an NDC Community Safety Manager, contacts are increasing. However at a working level there have been some past problems and the relationship is not so close. In Bradford the police team are managed by West Yorkshire Police but are accountable to the NDC Crime Working Group which is dedicated to policing matters once a quarter and attended by the sergeant and all four PCs. This enables detailed analysis of the crime figures and identification of the response required. The Crime Working Group makes recommendations to West Yorkshire Police. From the NDC end it is felt that a SLA should have been established sooner and the police sergeant felt that there were some problems in deciding the priorities for the SLA as the police had insufficient resources to achieve everything that was first desired. Contact with the community is being pursued by the issue of officers' mobile phone numbers to contacts in the community, visits made to victims and those who report an offence, visits to schools and businesses and attendance at community organisations such as Neighbourhood Forums.

In Newham where results of the problem analysis suggest that solution requires more than a simple response these are considered by the NDC Steering Group of professionals and then by a POP Solving Panel which additionally includes community members. A need has been recognised for greater involvement of the community in setting priorities and monitoring performance. Attempts have been made to involve community members in problem solving in addition to professionals by dividing the NDC into five sub-regions, small enough that people can identify with the area as a community. These five service user groups will discuss local issues and put forward problems identified to the main NDC Crime Theme Group. Three of these groups are in place to date. To assist them in contributing, local residents are to have training in POP thinking with the aim of getting the community engaged in solving its own problems and understanding that problems are too complex to be solved by simple inputs of money or additional police officers. The aim is capacity building to provide sustainability after the NDC has finished.

### b. A problem oriented approach

All the police teams considered have used some kind of problem solving, tackling crime by considering underlying causes rather than merely symptoms. However the teams have varied in the degree to which they implemented a formal problem-oriented policing approach incorporating the SARA model and in the amount of partnership working involved in their problem solving activities. In Newham the adoption of the SARA model has been central to the operation of the community police team. An example of use of SARA on a particular problem is shown in Box 4. It is intended that problem solving will be increasingly intelligence led as the Crime Tracking and Analysis System becomes more established.

### c. Improved visibility and accessibility of policing

#### Box 4: Hermit Road Scanning and Analysis

##### Scanning

*Suspects* - review of suspect activity, calls to police, police crime figures, police "stop" figures, council disorder street watch figures

*Victims* - demographic information from police, external agencies, community survey, interviews with local shopkeepers, meetings with local focus groups, information from community crime theme

*Location* - estate walkabout, geographic hotspots, routes to crime, geographic crime enablers

##### Analysis

*Suspects* - 52 individual youths involved in local crime and disorder centred on Hermit Road. 3 distinct gangs. Some belong to local crime families with links to far right organisations.

*Victims* - Large number of Asian victims of assault, harassment and racial crime.

Specific Bengali families targeted. Repeat victims identified. General alarm and distress to the local community

*Location* - Local Park acting as a focus point. Youth club in the park brings youth together. Asian shops have higher disorder and harassment rates. Drug dealing near secluded bushes behind the Youth Club.

##### Response

Formation of a multi-agency problem solving panel including community representation - residents, shopkeepers, Asian members

Best practice examined and options for action considered. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Relevant, Time-tabled.

Action plan initiated - examples include issue of alarms to victims, use of covert CCTV, reassessment of role of youth club including staff training and involvement of detached youth workers, tackling of links with football.

##### Assessment

Ongoing assessment against quantitative and qualitative targets set early in the response phase.

Accountable individual given ownership of each option.

Improved visibility of police has in all the NDCs studied been pursued by the use of increased patrols. These patrols have been mainly on foot, in line with research which has shown that while car patrols have no effects, foot patrols can have benefits in public reassurance (Bayley, 1998). Leicester, exceptionally, has used patrols on motorbikes. Uniformed police officers have formed the main part of the patrol complement, but some NDCs have supplemented these by the use of civilian patrols of one kind or another. In Newham former parks officers have been recruited as wardens into an integrated team sharing a joint base, briefings and radio channels with police. In Brighton Neighbourhood Wardens work with the police officers at shared bases within the NDC offices. In Bradford there is a police Community Support Officer and Neighbourhood Wardens are being recruited, although these are separate from the Community Police Team and outside the NDC community safety management structure. This has necessitated separate agreements to use police radios, support structures and training which has caused delays and may lead to ongoing problems. Leicester has as yet no civilian patrol officers but is hoping to implement civilian uniformed Community Safety Officers, part funded by the city council.

Specific efforts have been made in some instances to increase police visibility. In Leicester for example officers try to be near schools at closing time or near the shops when they are busy. In Bradford officers make visits to victims and those who report an offence, to schools, businesses and community organisations.

#### **d. Partnership working**

Partnership working has been an important part of the NDC policing schemes. In Newham, for example, the intelligence system depends on data sharing between a number of different agencies including the Metropolitan Police and the London Borough of Newham Emergency and Security Service, Housing Enforcement and Community Safety Unit. Education and Health are being invited to join. Implementation of solutions relies on partnership working between agencies and the community. In Bradford partnership working with public sector providers in the area has included the local authority, schools and the youth service. A specific project with the youth services and schools started in April 2003. The police team has built links with community organisations and with local service providers such as a childrens home and a housing trust. Links with the community centre have been built by joint working on community events, with the children's home by visiting the home and building relationships with young girls at risk of being groomed for prostitution and with the housing trust by accompanying an officer to remove squatters. Joint working with a youth project has provided leaflets about police stop and search practices to educate young people in terms of what the police can and cannot do. It is felt that this will help to prevent young people becoming defensive or hostile towards the police. In Brighton Partnership working has been facilitated by the sharing of premises. Particular Partnership operations have been a youth initiative called the Crew Club, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) working with young people and the fast system of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). In Leicester the police also work with other agencies in the area with whom they have operational connections such as the local authority housing department concerning ASBOs and the Neighbour Nuisance Team.

#### **e. Development of trust between the police and community.**

Efforts have been made by all the NDCs to build relationships with the community, increase trust and improve satisfaction with the police. In Bradford, for example, trust has been built by going to community centres, being involved with the Youth Inclusion Project and by activities with young people. One councillor in the area is quoted as saying "the officers put in lots of work to build trust within the community and improve the reputation of the police. They are very flexible with their time and committed to the needs of the community." A councillor mentioned a specific incident where following a series of racially motivated firebombs and a subsequent arrest, an officer helped to build trust by going to a community meeting to reassure people and reduce the anger felt by many community members. In Newham officers have attended meetings, a "fun day" and undertaken walkabouts. In Leicester an officer tries to go to schools and pre-schools to make contact with children with the intention of in the long term improving relationships between police and youths. He recognised that this was not likely to bring quick results but felt it important.

## **6. Problems encountered**

A number of problems have been encountered by community based policing schemes some of which are described by Bennett (1994). Others in connection with POP and intelligence led policing are noted by Tilley (2003). Some but by no means all of these problems have been encountered in the case study NDCs. They can be grouped as follows:

### **a. Police resistance**

Problems noted in the literature (Bennett, 1994, Tilley, 2003) have included a police culture that real policing must be related to enforcement and police resistance because of undermining of reactive cover and manning levels. There has been reluctance to accept changes in rotas, computerised systems, and increased paperwork. A need for training to overcome these problems has been noted. In the NDCs considered most of these issues have not been apparent. The increased manpower which has been provided in three of the areas has meant that reactive cover has been less likely to be affected. In Leicester the inspector considered that because the contract with the NDC says that there are six officers on the two beats covering the NDC, she is enabled to always have staff on those beats and not carry vacancies. Since the two beats concerned are busy and, as a socio-economically deprived area, are felt to have increased policing needs, this is felt to be a benefit rather than a problem. Officers in both Bradford and Brighton reported high levels of job satisfaction in the team. In Bradford it was thought that the officers appreciate the different kind of work from standard policing in having more time to think and plan, in not just reacting to a stream of incidents and in having the resources to follow incidents through. In Brighton a PC remarked that working on such a team can be a stepping stone to promotion.

However in Bradford and Brighton difficulties in recruiting officers to the team were mentioned. In Bradford it is felt that officers are reluctant to become community beat officers because the pay can be appreciably less as a result of fewer bonuses and because the community police do not use the otherwise universal shift patterns. In Brighton when one post was advertised force wide no applications were received at all. It is felt that officers do not like the idea of working in a dedicated team to address issues of deprivation and high crime. The inspector remarked that for some *“working in a deprived area may be too much of a challenge.”* Another reason mentioned was that the posting is for a minimum of two years. The result has been that one post was vacant for much of the last year.

### **b. Area basis**

In both Newham and Bradford a potential problem has been identified in the ethnic and gender make-up of the police teams. The NDCs have no choice in the officers appointed but rely on applications in response to advertisements within the police. This has resulted in all white teams in both Bradford and Newham where a greater cultural diversity would be desirable. There was one BME warden for a time in Newham. In Bradford the team is also all male leading to potential difficulties in, for example, domestic violence in the Asian community. There is however a female Community Support Officer who has been able to make contact with Muslim women and set up an all female neighbourhood watch. A further potential problem identified has been the need for a base within the area for community police teams. In Newham this was solved by use of a British Transport Police station and in Brighton by establishment of police officers in two multi-agency NDC offices in the area. In Leicester the Local Policing Unit is on the edge of the NDC anyway while Bradford officers work from a station just outside it.

### **c. Multi-agency working**

Problems noted in the literature (Bennett, 1994) have related to tensions because of differences in seniority in levels of representation of agencies, unequal workloads, levels of commitment and clashes between inter-agency work and other work. There have also been perceptions of threats to the independence of agencies and encroachment of police on other agencies territory. In the NDCs these problems have not been significant although some difficulties have been experienced. In Newham for example there was an initial problem in Newham of getting the Met and Parks constabulary to work together, the

Met officers feeling the Parks officers were impinging on their role and some later difficulties arising from different line managers for the two sets of officers. Newham also found some problems in involving particular agencies in data sharing, specifically education and health and a need for training of all agencies involved in data analysis in POP methodology.

#### **d. Area based foot patrols**

Bennett (1994) describes problems arising from the proportion of time that officers are able to spend out in the area compared with that spent in the station doing paperwork or withdrawn from community policing duties to conduct other duties. In the case study NDCs the time of the police officers concerned is ring fenced to the areas but there are nevertheless duties required of the officers which cause a divergence between the public expectations of the officers in visible policing and realistic performance by the police. In Brighton the community wants officers visibly walking the beat and also available on the phone and arresting people. The problem is partly because of the amount of paperwork which has to be done in modern policing and partly because of the diversity of work which is carried out, much of which is not visible. In Leicester the police feel that they are doing as much as is reasonable, with the motor bikers saying that they travel down every street in the NDC twice every day.

#### **e. Community involvement and consultation**

Problems in this field noted by research (Bennett, 1994) have generally centred on either the reluctance of the community to become involved at all or the bias of the community members who participate towards being male, middle class and middle aged. NDC by its nature is community based so that some level of involvement is in place. However there have been some problems in joint working. In Bradford residents wanted faster action than the system could provide and made allegations of corruption and collusion about officers because no apparent action was being taken. In Leicester there have been some problems arising from the long history of criminal attitudes on the estate and a perceived lack of feedback to the community about successes. In Newham the amount of community reporting of crime and other issues has not been as great as would be preferred. It is felt that the reporting levels result from problems remaining from pre - NDC days of promise fatigue. Therefore an important part of the work of the team is in building trust and giving feedback to the community about what is being done.

## **7. Achievements of policing changes in NDCs**

Previous research has shown mixed results for community policing. For example, Smith (1987) concluded that community policing *"has made little difference or has not produced the intended results"*. The Criminal Justice Commission (1995) however found that the Toowoomba project in Australia had helped to reduce or at least contain the incidence of certain types of crime, had led to successful problem solving activities and increased residents' levels of satisfaction with the police. Wycoff and Skogan (1994) found benefits in increases in police visibility and perception of police working with citizens to solve problems, reduced perceptions of crime generally and robbery specifically as problems and reduced experience of burglary. It is likely that the successful or otherwise outcomes of community policing schemes depend on the exact nature of the schemes. Although the popularity of the approach suggests that it is regarded as successful, Leigh et al (1998) found that POP was interpreted and implemented in too many ways to allow a firm conclusion. However, where impact was recorded, 85% of problem solving exercises were deemed to have been successful although there were some concerns as to the degree of rigor of the assessments. The NDC policing schemes achieved success in a variety of ways, considered under the general headings identified above.



**Box 5: Changes in total recorded crime figures**

	<b>NDC</b>	<b>Rest of BCU</b>
Brighton	Reduction 18% 1999-02 Reduction 11% 2000-02	Reduction 8% 2000-02
Bradford	Increase 13% 2000/01-02/03	Increase 27%
Leicester	Reduction 5% 1999/00-02/03	Not comparable
Newham	Reduction 6% 1999/00-02/03	Increase 5%

**a. Crime Reduction**

Total crime change in the NDCs has not been consistent between the case study NDCs as shown in Box 5. Where comparable information is available however, trends have generally been favourable compared with the surrounding BCUs. In addition the changes in total crime figures mask fluctuations in total crime levels within the periods considered, much more considerable changes in certain categories of crime and variations in those types of crime both in time and between different parts of the areas. Brighton has, for example shown consecutive year on year reductions in total crime from 1999 to 2002. In Newham on the other hand, a reduction of 8% in the first year of the project has been reduced to 5% in year two and becomes an increase of 7% in year three. In Leicester there have been different patterns in the two separate beats which comprise the NDC. Changes in some indicative types of crime are shown in are shown in Box 6. Again in Newham sizeable reductions in year one for autocrime, street crime and disorder in year one have not been maintained.

Various explanations have been offered for the inconsistencies, including changes in national recording practices and increased reporting of crime. In Bradford the establishment of three nightclubs in the area has sent violent crime rates soaring because of drunken brawls and in Leicester wholesale evacuation of housing prior to redevelopment has impacted particularly on burglary. It must also be remembered that the policing is not the only change in the NDC areas which may have impacted on crime rates. NDCs have introduced a wide variety of other crime prevention measures and economic and social interventions may also have effects. For example in Bradford burglar alarm and Secure by Design projects are thought likely to have affected burglary. Therefore a causal effect to any reductions in crime may be only tentatively ascribed to policing changes, although the NDCs themselves are convinced of the effectiveness of the schemes. In Brighton for example the Community Safety Manager ascribed a substantial contribution in reducing crime to the police team.

**Box 6: Changes in categories of crime**

	Brighton 1999-02	Bradford 2000/01-02/03	Leicester 1999/00-02/03	Newham 1999/00-02/03
Criminal damage	-18	-27		-11
Burglary	-32	-12	-27	+12
Vehicle crime	-24	+7	-26	-26

## **b. Perceptions of crime**

There is a perception that levels of crime have reduced in the areas. For example an elected councillor in Bradford is quoted in the local evaluation report as saying *“the level of crime has gone down since the project began”*. A housing worker saw the police team as having a preventative effect on drug dealing and use. *“Without the police presence the drug dealers and users would have moved into the remaining blocks of flats and the situation would have worsened.”*

## **c. Crime reporting and criminal intelligence**

Although no statistical evidence has been provided, the police teams generally felt that there had been increased reporting of crime as a result of the building of trust and enhanced reporting systems. In Newham while the NDC analyst did not find crime patterns which suggest increased reporting generally, Community Intelligence reports, while mainly concerning low level disorder, have also provided information which assisted the police in a drugs operation. In Leicester police officers regarded increased reporting levels as a positive result of the police team’s attempts to build links and improve relations. In Bradford the police sergeant has said that there has been increased community intelligence resulting from the building of trust. Particularly mentioned was one of the community support officers who works with the business community. A local evaluation report concluded that better links with the community are increasing the flow of information to the police. A housing officer is quoted as saying *“If there are disturbances in the high rises, tenants feel confident to report it and the police officers sort out the problems”*. It was also said that the introduction of a helpline as well as 999 had encouraged reporting because it was felt to be more personalised. In Brighton there is some increased flow of information from the public, for example from parents who take aside officers outside the school.

Additional police resources have also provided opportunity for police officers to do more proactive work in looking for stolen cars and carrying out observations on suspected properties.

## **d. Problem solving activities**

There have been successful problem solving activities. In Newham, these have included a disorder problem found to be caused by distinct gangs of local youths (see Box 4) and a fly tipping problem which was investigated using mobile CCTV, involving partnership working with housing who operate it. A man with mental health problems was caught on camera emptying out rubbish. He was confronted with stills from the camera, has since signed a good behaviour contract and not re-offended. A further problem of black sacks full of rubbish discarded on the streets has been tackled by wardens looking inside for evidence of address and returning the bag to the address along with a fine notice.

In the part of the Bradford NDC adjoining the town centre the problem of increased violent crime because of three nightclubs attracting clients from all over Bradford has been tackled. Discussions with the club owners or licensees have obtained their cooperation in putting up notices in the premises drawing attention to the CCTV before drinking dulls the clients’ perceptions. Safe drinking was also pursued, for example by discouraging cheap drink offers. Some success was achieved in preventing theft from vehicles but as a result of a POP approach to reducing theft of vehicles. Free steering locks were provided as part of an event where young people washed cars, with proceeds going to youth diversionary activities. Autoglass and security marking of car radios were involved and talks were given about avoidance strategies such as parking locations and not leaving coats in the car. It is thought that theft from reduced rather than theft of because people do not always use the steering locks if their stay is brief or if they do not perceive there to be a threat. Work done

by a Community Support Officer building capacity in the business community and setting up a business watch has been successful in preventing some businesses from moving away.

In Leicester a problem concerning youths riding stolen motor cycles in the park has been successfully reduced by employing police officers on motorbikes. A comment made was:

*"I know there is less motor bike joy riding. It used to be mobbed with them at weekends. You get the odd one or two cutting across. As soon as the motor bikes come they are gone. We don't always catch them but we are stopping them committing offences. Offences are not always thefts but riding with no insurance."*

In Brighton a problem raised at a crime prevention forum was one of young people firing openly available BB guns (which look like replica guns and fire ball bearings) at buses and breaking windows. An amnesty asked young people to trade in their BB guns for water pistols which were then used in a water fight on the football pitch. It was a partnership between the police, fire brigade, the NDC, youth projects, residents and young people and was funded from the police joint initiatives fund. It was about breaking down barriers and getting young people involved in a project with a crime reduction outcome but it was also fun. It was a huge success.

#### **e. Relationship with the community/trust in and satisfaction with the police**

There has been considerable evidence of improvements in police/community relationships although measured changes in satisfaction for NDCs will not be available until the MORI poll of 2004. In Bradford police officers are said to have developed a rapport and relationship with the community and even learned basic Urdu in order to communicate better. The goodwill that this has brought has been out of proportion to the level of expertise that they attained. As a result there has been an impact on perceptions of unequal treatment and satisfaction with the police. A respondent from a housing association said *"Local people get familiar with the officers and feel they can trust them."*

In Newham the Community Police Team was said by a local evaluation report to be extremely popular with local people, instilling feelings of confidence by providing police "on the beat." Some letters of appreciation have been received. In Leicester it is felt that the efforts of the police officers have resulted in a situation where the people of the area welcome the police to patrol on the streets and this is regarded as an achievement in itself. It is felt that *"The public feel that there is a credible force out there that they can rely on."* In Brighton the BB gun amnesty was driven very much by local people, involved local people and was felt to be instrumental in building relationships.

#### **f. Police visibility**

The police teams have been able to point to increases in visibility. In Newham a local evaluation report quotes the analyst as saying that there is evidence that people *"have been impressed with the increase in uniform patrols in the area"*. The NDC Team believe that fear of crime has been reduced as a result of high profile policing although this has been more difficult to achieve with some BME residents. In Bradford a local evaluation report states that there was a general appreciation for the level of visibility of the police in the area and the efforts to increase confidence in the police. One councillor is quoted as saying *"The project has led to on-foot patrolling round the NDC area which did not happen previously."* A further comment was *"They are very visible and if they are missing for a few days...the residents call us asking where they are. People rely on the officers and know them by name."* In Leicester the bikes are highly visible by their nature and comparative rarity and their manoeuvrability assists officers in getting *"in and out, up and down the streets, get to areas which are too far out for foot patrols because it's time consuming."*

### **g. Partnership working**

Partnership working has been a means of facilitating other achievements. In Newham the NDC Crime Theme Manager regards the main success so far as having been in getting the system operational, developing partnerships with other agencies and in actively involving the community. In Brighton the reason for the improved crime figures is generally seen to be not the result of one particular intervention but as the result of the increased joined up working.

## **8. Lessons from NDC implementation**

### **a. Additional policing**

- additional police resources can provide opportunities for proactive policing but best use of these resources may require a planned approach
- too great a flexibility in use of time freed by additional resources may lead to lack of direction and piecemeal interventions which are not sustained
- implementation of additional policing may be assisted by gaining the support of the community whose demands and perceptions may otherwise cause difficulties in relation to availability of resources

### **b. Ring-fenced teams**

- it is necessary to recognise that ring fenced policing may cause conflicts with other police priorities
- ring fenced police teams should be part of a wider partnership approach to reducing crime

### **c. Role of officers**

- the role of police officers in community police teams should be not simply high visibility and public reassurance but the whole spectrum of the police service including, for example, making arrests, detecting crime, responding to calls, interaction with the community and roles in housing enforcement
- community members and agency representatives value high visibility aspects of community policing but also quality of police response and the building of trust
- active involvement by officers in community events and activities together with quality of response to calls for service assists in building relationships with the community
- use of motor bike officers can contribute by providing a highly visible police presence on the streets and patrol of areas which are hard to reach on foot
- motor bikes may also be valuable in providing off road capability such as access to park pathways to deal with problem motor cycle riding

### **d. Personnel issues**

- there are benefits in continuity of officers and in use of experienced officers with knowledge of the area
- turnover in officers can result in the necessity for repeated efforts at team building and reestablishment of identification with the project

- there can be problems in recruiting community police officers because of differences in pay and working practices and particular problems in recruiting beat officers to work in disadvantaged high crime areas
- a holistic approach to policing with officers' involvement in all spheres of police work and in all stages of cases provides a sense of ownership
- high levels of police job satisfaction derive from this ownership, from the ability to give thought and planning to problem solving and from the availability of resources to follow incidents through

**e. POP**

- a POP approach using SARA principles assists in effective community policing
- a dedicated analyst will permit development a fully integrated crime and disorder analysis system and close links with police analysts facilitate data provision. Seconding of a police analyst might be even more advantageous
- action following analysis benefits from regular briefings of implementation teams
- targeted action as a result of intelligence can lead to effective solution of problems

**f. Partnership working**

- Partnership working with statutory and voluntary agencies is important in the exchange of information, identification and solution of problems and building of trust
- flexibility in working with partners will be required
- including a dedicated solicitor in the team can assist in pursuing enforcement action
- problems can arise in regeneration and crime prevention strategies when all partners are not fully involved in the early stages. The effects may be duplication of effort, wasted resources and inefficiencies
- clear and detailed objectives are required so that police, partners and the community understand what is to be achieved and their separate responsibilities
- establishment of a SLA with partners involved in operation will facilitate effective working
- a forum at which representatives from different agencies can meet will also assist
- community policing teams involving wardens or other civilian patrols as well as police officers require common radio frequencies, briefing and deployment systems and a common base to ensure efficient working
- problems may arise in combined teams where different officers have separate line managers
- awaydays are effective in solving initial problems in team working

**g. Community involvement**

- participation of the community in problem solving is best implemented with regard to small neighbourhoods with which residents can identify
- community representatives may be enabled to take a fuller part in problem solving as a result of training in the processes followed by professionals
- development of an early communications strategy to ensure that residents are informed of successes and understand police operating methods is important. This can overcome difficulties in reconciling public demands and perceptions with police resources and encourage support

- improved relationships between the police and community can lead to a greater flow of intelligence from residents
- community reporting systems may suffer from lack of capacity in telephone systems, a problem which may be assisted by encouragement of website reporting systems

#### **h. Other issues**

- long term police commitment to the area will enable a forward strategy

## **9. Conclusion**

Under the New Deal for Communities programme at least 25 of the 39 partnerships are implementing some kind of change in policing as part of a crime reduction strategy. Consideration of a small number of case studies has provided a number of lessons concerning problems encountered and solutions found and concerning the value of different approaches. In line with previous research, preliminary evidence of the effects on reported crime in these NDC areas are not consistent and there are difficulties in certainly attributing benefits to the policing schemes. The limited time frame and scope of this study has limited the thoroughness of the evaluation. A feature of the case study areas has been the long term nature of the policing strategy with either continuity over the whole NDC 10 years being provided for in the contract with the NDC or a long term commitment being less formally articulated. The projects recognise that it is likely to take time for the true effects of the changes to be seen. It is therefore necessary that there is a detailed collection and recording of data in order to assess long term impact.

Issues which may benefit from further research include:

- assessment of the value of a base within the geographic area and multi-agency offices to community policing
- assessment of the value of integrated teams of police and civilian patrol officers
- assessment of the contribution made by integrated analysis systems
- effects of community policing on satisfaction of the public with the police
- effects of community policing on levels of fear of crime

#### **a. Checklist for tackling crime with changes in policing**

An assessment of the nature and scale of the crime problem is a necessary first step in forming a strategy to deal with the problem.

- what is the scale of the problem? What is the nature of the problem? What kind of crime is involved? Or is it a problem of disorder rather than actual crime?
- is the problem one of perception by residents? If so, how is that measured?
- can it be backed up by statistics? Are statistics available for the area in which you are working?
- is it concentrated in particular areas, particular victim groups, particular offenders?
- has the nature and the scale of the problem changed in recent years?
  - how has it changed?
  - and why has it changed?

When developing your policing approach to dealing with crime you may need to be flexible, innovative, and prepared to learn from other organisations.

- have you tailored your planned change in policing to the particular nature of the problem in your area?
- how is the change you propose intended to impact on the problem?
- are there lessons you could learn from implementation elsewhere?

There are numerous bodies who could be involved in tackling crime problems in partnership with the police.

- which statutory bodies may have an input?
- are there voluntary bodies who could also be involved?
- how might it be best to engage the interest and commitment of these organisations?
- is there already a forum for the meeting of these organisations?
- do they have different approaches to the problem?

Successful community policing approaches require the involvement of the community.

- how can the community be involved in assessing problems and setting police priorities?
- what systems are available for feedback to the community of achievements?

When implementing changes in community based policing you will need to consider a number of issues including:

- how will the policing intervention relate to existing police and regeneration partnership management structures?
- are the objectives of the two bodies compatible?
- are there issues in relation to recruitment and retention of police officers?
- is there a need for training of police officers?
- is the time scale of the funding sufficiently long term for expected impacts to be achieved?

It is vital that you know whether your approach to tackling crime is working or not.

- have you drawn-up clearly defined and measurable objectives?
- has a system been put in place to monitor the effectiveness of your approach?
  - and are you able to track the costs of your approach?
- have you considered the question of displacement?
- has sufficient time been allowed to undertake evaluative work?
- do partners need to be involved in the evaluation process?

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## Website links

The Home Office

Research Development Statistics

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm>

Crime Reduction website. This has a knowledge base, toolkits and down loadable publications

<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk>

Crime Reduction website. Information concerning the SARA problem solving model.

<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/learningzone/sara.htm>

## Further reading

Tilley (2003) provides a good starting point in his overview of community policing, problem oriented policing and intelligence led policing. Fielding (1995) gives a description of what community police officers actually do and what makes it distinctive from other policing approaches and Bayley (1998) reviews what works in policing including community policing and patrols. Povey provides an overview of the role of the police in public reassurance. Useful information concerning the SARA model is available on the crime reduction website <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/learningzone/sara.htm>.