



GRAMPIAN
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The Tilley Award **2001**



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Title	"The Kings of Sin"
Category	Crime Reduction
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"KINGS OF SIN"- SUMMARY

Problem - A 400% increase in crime by a group of criminal juveniles calling themselves the KOS (Kings of Sin)

For approximately 3 years, police officers in the small coastal town of Lossiemouth fought a tide of rising crime of a unique nature.

This trend was unique locally because the town had never experienced anything like it before. Unique nationally, because the crime was at the hands of an almost finite juvenile gang whose only motive for doing so was pure illicit fun with no fear of being caught and no intention of stopping.

Initially, townsfolk were amazingly unaware of the extent of the crime being inflicted upon them, which proved to be a major factor in generating the ease by which crime could be committed there.

Although detection rates were exceptionally high it was clear that the problem would not go away and stay away by the use of enforcement alone.

A Multi Agency Group was formed and drew together key personnel from every possible area of expertise, from Youth Diversion and Education Psychology to Housing and Criminal Justice.

Early discussions and research by each agency revealed a clear picture of the problem and prompted a range of solutions, some of which were unique to policing in Grampian and certainly befitted the unique nature of crime being tackled.

In essence the intended approach can be described as two fold - Enforcement and prevention - in equally concentrated measures

These two words unfairly simplify the true extent of the approach which involved hundreds of individual partners, dozens of business partners and a substantial amount of funding in kind.

Over the period of a year every single house in the town was visited and left in no doubt of what was being done and what was needed from them. Every single crime, past and present was scrutinised for every scrap of evidence to indicate involvement by the KOS which resulted in the largest single indictment in Scotland.

Roadshows, Discos, Youth Shelters, Consolations, Travel Schemes and even prayer were used to cease the climate of crime.

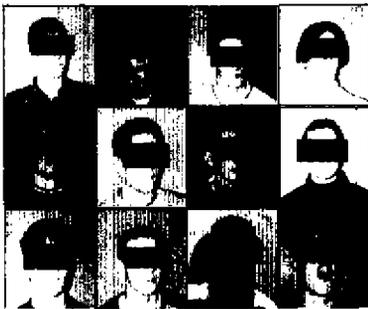
This holistic approach eventually realised the incarceration of the main offenders, a **35% reduction in reported:crime** and the creation of a fresh and quality understanding between the Police, the community and every other agency involved. Many of the offenders have ceased offending on being released, allowing the Agencies to continue working together to ensure that such a trend never happens again.

THE "KINGS OF SIN"

A 400% increase in crime at the hands of an almost finite group of juveniles calling themselves the KOS (Kings of Sin)

"What 's the problem and what did you intend to do about it?"

In early 1999, weekly crime management meetings held by Moray Local Command became increasingly frustrated at the continual tide of crime being fought in the small coastal town of Lossiemouth.



The town hosts **8%** of Morays' population yet it suffered a staggering **24%** of all domestic housebreakings, **31%** of all Thefts and **39%** of all car thefts in the entire Moray area..

Thus far the townsfolk themselves were not aware of how severe the situation had become. Nevertheless, officers policing the town faced a queue of reported crime at the start of every shift which very quickly impacted on their ability to investigate effectively and work pro-actively.



Every possible assistance was afforded by specialist departments by way of enforcement operations and additional manpower. These brought about significant results and even short periods without crime but every time, without fail, the same crime pattern would return by the same offenders.

Whilst detection rates had been extremely satisfying it became clear that the offenders involved had no intention of stopping and appeared unfazed by the punitive sanctions being imposed on them by the Criminal Justice System.

Lossie goes all out to reverse soaring crime



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It was equally clear that enforcement alone would not be effective and that a Multi Agency approach would be required. The partners listed at appendix A were drawn together, some for the first time and it would be fair to say that initial discussions were quite tense and entrenched as each party delivered their own perception of the situation,

From the outset, it was quite evident that the people around that table, collectively held a holistic picture of the offender, the community, the background and a vast range of solutions.

The research and expertise presented by each agency contributed to three main categories which allowed for a detailed **Analysis and Assessment** of the problem to be carried out.

ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

OFFENDER

- Crime record** - All members of KOS were known and had juvenile records
- Age Range** - 11 to 19 years old with significant peer pressure
- Family Conditions** - most had stable family units and good living conditions
- Parental Attitude** - Generally supportive but frustrated at lack of control
- In care** - Only a couple had not been under Social Work Supervision at some time
- Empoyment** status & intent - None employed and only one indicating a desire to work
- Offending Rate** - Exit interviewed and charge rates confirmed identities of ringleaders
- Alcohol/Drug use History** - very little although shoplifted alcohol did contribute to crime
- Intellect** - Varied but generally poor school performers with some significant needs.

CRIME

- Crime Type** - Thefts, Housebreaking and Car Theft
- Crime Rate - Peaked** and held during course of Multi Agency Intervention
- Crime Pattern** - Spread throughout the town
- Detection Rate** - approximateley 40% before and during Multi Agency Intervention
- Crime Trends** - Any day of the week and peaking at weekends
- Crime Generators** - Poor car security, insecure properties, peer pressure & fun

ENVIRONMENT

- Crime patterns** - Several scattered hotspots but whole town affected generally
- Environmental Crime generators** - "rat runs" in Coulard bank Estate allowing ease of escape
- Community Consultation** - revealed a need for something to do and somewhere to. go
- Comfort Zones** - The "Steps" a favoured congregation point where offenders met
- Facilities** - very few which were acceptable or credible to young people

This level of investigation and findings proved to be the thin end of the wedge in terms of research as the offenders attitudes, habits and needs continually changed. All agencies were tasked with going that "extra mile" in terms of prioritising their own workloads to focus upon solutions in Lossiemouth. This was to be an important aspect of the multi agency co-operation, where extra effort really did make a difference over and above what would normally be achievable.

The criteria for success set by all agencies was simple - **a reduction in crime and an end to the kudos and lure of the "KOS"**. In addition, the need **to establish a model for earlier intervention with challenging youth behaviour** was seen as a priority and another measure of success in itself

"How did you define the problem?"

Interestingly, as the groups efforts gathered pace, the willingness to think broadly and try "anything that works" was an encouraging success in itself when recalling its entrenched beginnings.

An Action Plan was prepared outlining each proposal of the group and the results of each action as and when completed. (*See appendix C*)

The following bullet points highlight the major areas of research and main findings.

Crime statistics - Whilst the rising crime trend had been tracked and tackled from its earliest beginnings, the realisation of its fourfold increase was the watershed which prompted the Multi-Agency Approach and interest of local residents and media (*see attached Appendix B*)

Youth Consultations - All agencies agreed the need to provide services and facilities in response to the needs of those committing the crime. In an attempt to make clear to the community that any such action was not "pandering" to criminal behaviour, the wider youth of the town were consulted and asked what they needed. The results of this consultation can be viewed at Appendix D and revealed common ground with the needs of the those offending. It was these areas of common ground on which the group focused its efforts. ie a Youth Shelter.

Community Consultations - During the annual police public consultations and an extra ordinary meeting with the residents of Lossiemouth the perception of crime in the minds of the townsfolk was measured and their priorities identified. It was evident that they were not aware of the true extent of the crime but held a disproportionate and unwarranted fear of those involved.

Crime Pattern Analysis - Using the Force Intelligence Section, detailed maps were created which pinpointed the location and amount of dishonesties inflicted upon the town. This exercise revealed a crime toll spread throughout all quarters of the town. The condensed nature of housing within the Coulardbank Estate drew more attention than any other but still did not justify any particular favour in terms of response, than any other area.

Strategic Development - Routine Analysis carried out by Force Statisticians indicated shifts in crime type and rises in comparisons to previous periods. Apart from continuing to show a general rising crime toll, this service was vital in forcing the preventative responses toward autocrime as it emerged as being the principle crime type.

Crime Management - Weekly meetings attended by supervisors from throughout the area to discuss the entire areas crime focused closely on Lossiemouth where suggestions and good practice were encouraged and resources freely given by departments and supervisors outwith the Lossiemouth area.

Police exit interviews - A unique exercise in establishing the causes of crime from the offender, prior to release, revealed many valuable indicators. Their clear desire to continue crime, their comfort zones, the drinking habits and most importantly the gangs hierarchy, were all revealed through these interviews and proved vital in co-ordinating responses.

Social Work Interviews - Although not revealed in hard copy, the summary results of social work engagement with those under supervision assisted in differentiating the offenders true thoughts from simple bravado and allowed all agencies to see, at least a glimpse, of the poor backgrounds some of the offenders had.

"How did you actually deal with the problem?"

Lossiemouth Multi Agency Group - Set up in the summer of 1999 and drawing together key personnel from The local Authority, Education, Mental Health, Police, Social Work, NCH Scotland, Youth Diversion Groups and local Community Council.

This group met monthly to co-ordinate the efforts and knowledge of all agencies. The tentative beginnings of this group was a tense environment where each agency defended its own usual manner of approach. Very quickly thereafter, those views were moulded by circumstances and the frustrations being encountered. This resulted very quickly in those around the table becoming more

united and understanding of each others limitations.

By far the biggest benefit was the ability to 'raise the stakes' in terms of the actions of any particular agency which was identified as having a significant role to play in any particular aspect. Going that extra mile on behalf of the Group became a feature which proved its worth and would probably not have come about had each agency been acting in isolation.

Focus on Lossiemouth Initiative An extensive partnership involving too many partners to list. Similar to Operation restore, it was decided that an equally exhaustive crime prevention campaign be launched to guarantee that no resident is left unaware of the problem and what they can do about it.



A bid was presented to the Scottish Executive for funding which resulted in a £1000 award. This enabled each and every one of the 2700 households to be visited personally and given the "how to, how much and where from" to enable them to prevent and deter crime. (See attached appendix D)

Career Development Intervention - Grampian Careers and Social Work Department partnership. In consultation through members of the Multi agency group, members of the KOS who were believed to desire work were identified and that "extra mile" was asked of those involved in Careers to source employment. Only one offender was thought to want work and following three months of gainful and crime free employment, the lure of his offending peers proved too strong.

This single action, however limited in long term impact, convinced many onlooking cynics that diversion works.

Youth Shelter - A Grampian Police and Moray Council partnership. Again in response to the results of the Youth Consultation which indicated a need for somewhere to go, research with Thames Valley Police revealed the worth of " Youth Shelters" as a means to encourage legal gatherings of young people in a place they choose.



In February 2001, funding was obtained from the Social Inclusion Partnership for approximately £5000 to site a Youth Shelter at a location chosen by the community in consultation. This is now in place and will be added to as funds become available.

Youth Diversion - Moray Youth Action, Social Work and NCH Partnership. The Youth Consultations made it quite clear that there was "nothing to do". Although all agencies recognised that traditional activities would hold little interest for any of our offenders, it was felt important to productively engage the remainder of Lossiemouth Youth. Special evenings were created for the

differing age groups of the offenders and where willing they were collected by minibus and taken to the facility in an attempt to engender ownership.

This effort has had limited worth as the main offenders would not attend and those on the outskirts of offending eventually ceased to attend,

Coulardbank Regeneration Scheme - Grampian Police and Moray Council Housing

partnership. In response to statements made by the offenders and local anecdotal evidence it became clear that an area known as "Sin City" was a major comfort zone for the offenders. It's maze of pathways, rat runs and open spaces made the properties vulnerable and the means of escape easy.

Spread over some 500 sq metres, this proved impossible to efficiently survey on the ground. Assistance was obtained from the Royal Air Force at Kinloss who kindly scrambled a Nimrod Aircraft to obtain aerial images of the entire area.

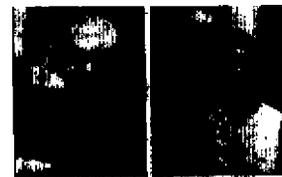
These proved vital in formulating the proposed changes and will be equally vital in the forthcoming consultation phase with the community itself.



Fair Travel Scheme - A Grampian Police, Moray Council and Stagecoach partnership. In an effort to engage the wider youth, a free scheme was launched throughout Moray which offered under 16's cheap travel by public transport into Elgin city centre where other discounts at major facilities were offered to those who subscribed

Operation Restore - Grampian Police, Social Work Partnership. In conjunction with the preventative approach of the Multi Agency Group and others, a high profile and concentrated enforcement phase was required to drive a message home to those involved and those outwith that there are consequences to crime and to simply pull together the sheer quantity of uncleared crime.

A fifty five **page** indictment detailing one hundred and seventy eight charges was served upon the eight leading members of the KOS resulting in custodial sentences totalling **eight and half years.**



Lossieitouth dime-spree gang members locked up



"Did you succeed? "

Aside from the anticipated success criteria's set at the outset, the level of partnership working between personnel who had not previously done so was extremely satisfying. The quality relationships built between agencies and individuals within those agencies impacted significantly on the attitudes of all involved and will benefit everyone's work from this point on.

Did the response achieve what was intended? It is worth repeating the success criteria stated at the outset. *"a reduction in crime and an end to the kudos and lure of the "KOS". In addition, the need to establish a model for earlier intervention with challenging youth behaviour in schools"*

Before detailing how successful the approach was in meeting that criteria the effect of some of the major tasks and initiatives within the strategy are worthy of mention.

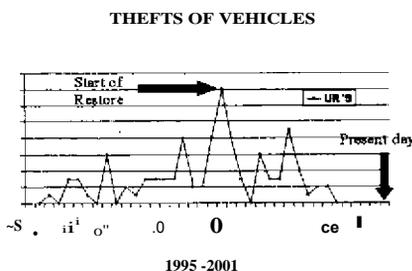
On the Offender - Unfortunately, very little in the approach of any agency impacted upon the attitude of the main offenders toward crime. During the course of the effort however all offenders were engaged and the greatest attempts made to include them in society. As stated previously one member of the gang was found employment.

As a result of the largest indictment in Scotland most were eventually imprisoned and from the significant prison sentences imposed at least one vowed not to return to offending.

Youths Generally - Again, an unfortunate realisation was that many of Lossiemouth Youths became acutely aware of the limitations of the Criminal Justice System to deal effectively with juvenile crime. This has already resulted in other young people experimenting with crime knowing there to be few sanctions to stop them.

However, without doubt, the majority of youth now have greater access to services and advice and a greater feeling of service provision within the community aimed at their age group.

On the Community - One of the first request from the community was for a Community Police Officer and this was one of the first "extra miles" achieved by the Police in the face of very limited resources. The town enjoyed an almost total eradication of car theft during period of "Operation Restore" and a heightened awareness of the crime problem and the identity of the culprits.



A 15% increase in the use of security property marking was also noted through the research mounted by agencies involved in the Markers on the Move Initiative and a two fold increase in uptake of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes was realised in the aftermath of public meetings.

Just as important as reduced crime levels was the greater confidence in the Police, fostered by the constant communication through community organisations

throughout the difficulties. That relationship in turn encouraged a greater understanding of the means to prevent and deter crime whilst also ensuring the removal of crime hotspots and major crime generators as the community saw them.

Generally - Without doubt, the lasting impact of the efforts so far must be the quality of relationship and understanding which had been created between every agency involved who are now acutely

aware of each others remits and limitations.

Numerous policies for implementation have been created in the event of future crime trends of this nature anywhere in the Moray or Force area and made available to any other Force who suffers this manner of crime problem.

"What about the Success criteria though?"

The word success must be applicable but with the caveat that the process is ongoing. A comparison between the years 1999 and 2000 reveal a 35% reduction in reported crime and a removal of the activities and reputations of the "KOS". The gangs principle offender, following his release, has not returned to offending in an attempt to gain employment.

Incidences of crime do occur and at the hands of similar age groups but there is no intelligence to suggest that the offenders consider themselves to be a continuation of the KOS.

Now that the immediate and acute need for intervention and response is over the Multi Agency Group continues to concentrate on creating policies which will prevent this trend from recurring and in doing so provide a model for use in any other area.

Already significant hurdles have been overcome in terms of Data Protection, information sharing and speed of intervention. Sub groups are in the process of creating a localised long term motor cycle diversion project using land donated by local landlords. Housing Officers and Police have already prepared a protocol for the earliest intervention of offenders living within authority housing by means of joint visits where services and sanction can be put to best effect.

The worth of going that "extra mile", for each other is a feature which has been carried away from the Multi Agency table, to such an extent that individuals involved in this project will always be able to pick up the phone to each other and informally bring about change or focus the attention of fellow agencies as problems arise anywhere in Moray.

"Is that it then?"

Far from it. The Multi Agency Group continues, as do the Sub Groups and spin-off teams dealing with various ongoing tasks set by the Group.

The varied measures used to fight the Kings of Sin problem mentioned in this report are only limited by the amount of words permitted and their significant impact on the situation.

What must be made clear is that those mentioned were not conceived in isolation but were born of the Multi Agency process on behalf of the process and in consultation with those steering the process.

Put together these measures each contributed to meeting the success criteria set at the start and will reap so much benefit beyond those criteria in the future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - LIST OF MULTI AGENCY, COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS PARTNERS

APPENDIX B - CRIME SCHEDULE SHOWING 400% INCREASE

APPENDIX C - MULTI AGENCY GROUP ACTION PLAN

APPENDIX D - FOCUS ON LOSSIEMOUTH EVALUATION REPORT

-THE PARTNERS"

Multi Agency Group

Moray Council Education Department
 Moray Council Community Development Department
 Moray Council Social Work Department
 Moray Council Housing Department
 Moray Youth Action
 NCH - Scotland
 Moray Council Legal Department
 Grampian Police

Moray Community Safety Group

Neighbourhood Watch
 Lossiemouth Community Council
 Lossiemouth Residents Forum
 Grampian Police

Focus on Lossiemouth Partners

Elgin Rotary Club
 Forres Rotary Club
 Lossiemouth Air Training Corps
 Lossiemouth Venture Scouts
 1st Lossiemouth Boys Brigade
 Gordon Highlanders Army Cadet Corps
 Buckle Senior Citizens
 4th Elgin Boys Brigade
 Grampian Police

Focus on Lossiemouth Business Support

The Scottish Executive
 Homebase
 Decoras
 Stewarts of Lossiemouth
 Halfords
 Arnold Clarke

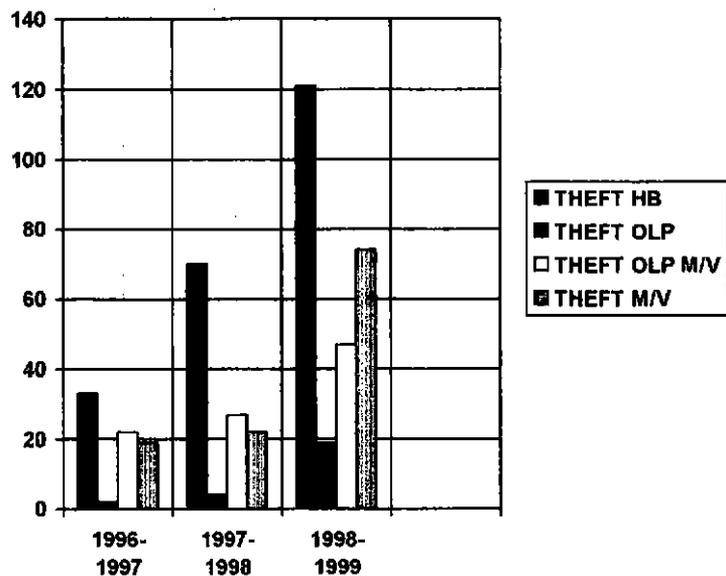
Environmental Audit Partners

Royal Air Force
 Moray Council Housing Department
 Lossiemouth Community Council
 Lossiemouth Residents Forum
 Grampian Police

LOSSIEMOUTH CRIME

THE FOLLOWING FIGURES INDICATE RECORDED CRIME BETWEEN THE PERIODS
SEPTEMBER TO SEPTEMBER ON EACH YEAR INDICATED

CRIME TYPE	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999
THEFT HB	33	70	121
THEFT OLP	2	4	19
THEFT OLP M/V	22	27	47
THEFT MV	19	22	74



INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS

THEFT HB - Theft by Housebreaking
THEFT OLP - Theft by Opening a Lockfast Place
THEFT OLP M/V - As above but in respect of motor vehicles only
THEFT M/V - Theft of a motor vehicle

**LOSSIEMOUTH MULTI-AGENCY GROUP
ACTION PLAN PROGRESS**

APPROACH	ACTION	AIM	BY	RESULT I DATE COMPLETED
Youth Intervention	Creation of Youth Clubs for P.5 - P.7 age group and 12 - 16 year olds and specifically known offenders by means of a direct approach. to all as a means of diversion and to re-integrate with youth provision already <i>in</i> place.	In the short term, to address offending behaviour and in the longer term, to re-integrate with existing youth provision	MYA	Jan 2000 - 4 known offenders already on board and others already showing voluntary interest to join.
	Support worker attached to Lossiemouth High School	To liaise with known offenders and young people in general on a regular basis	MYA	April 2000 - liaison resulted in an excluded pupil being placed directly into care of MYA rather than left to roam the town.
	Liaise with Criminal Justice Senior to establish what work is being undertaken with known individuals over the age of 16 at present Encourage use of buddy mentoring scheme already in operation in all primary schools in Lossiemouth	To identify areas where additional support can be focused by all agencies	SWD	
	Exclusion support to all pupils at risk of school exclusion or about to be excluded.	To prevent exclusion in advance of and raise awareness of facilities	ALL	March 2000 - protocol being prepared for

		on offer whilst excluded		approval April 2000 - protocol prepared but still causing difficulties
	Explore use of ex-offenders in schools	To deter those on the edges of criminal activity and educate all	PC Mackay	Initial reply from Head of education indicates this not to be an option meantime
	Sub Group of key agencies to meet to discuss knowledge of each known offender	To identify the needs of each offender and any possible area for focused intervention	SWD/YA/ POLICE/ COM.ED	One individual identified as particularly desiring and benefiting from employment.
	Source employment for known offenders seeking work	To divert from need and desire to offend	CAREERS /MYA/SW D	Feb 2000 - one key offender found a work placement and has not offended since April 2000 - The individual named above starting to re-offend
	Examination of known offender list by Grampian Careers to identify those individuals being serviced and those in need of service	To expedite any work being done with key individuals with a view to diverting them from offending through employment.	Careers	21.12.99 - All but 4 members of the known group already being dealt with to varying degrees
	Increase the use and awareness of the parenting skill services to those in need	To assist in care of young persons at risk of offending	SWD	

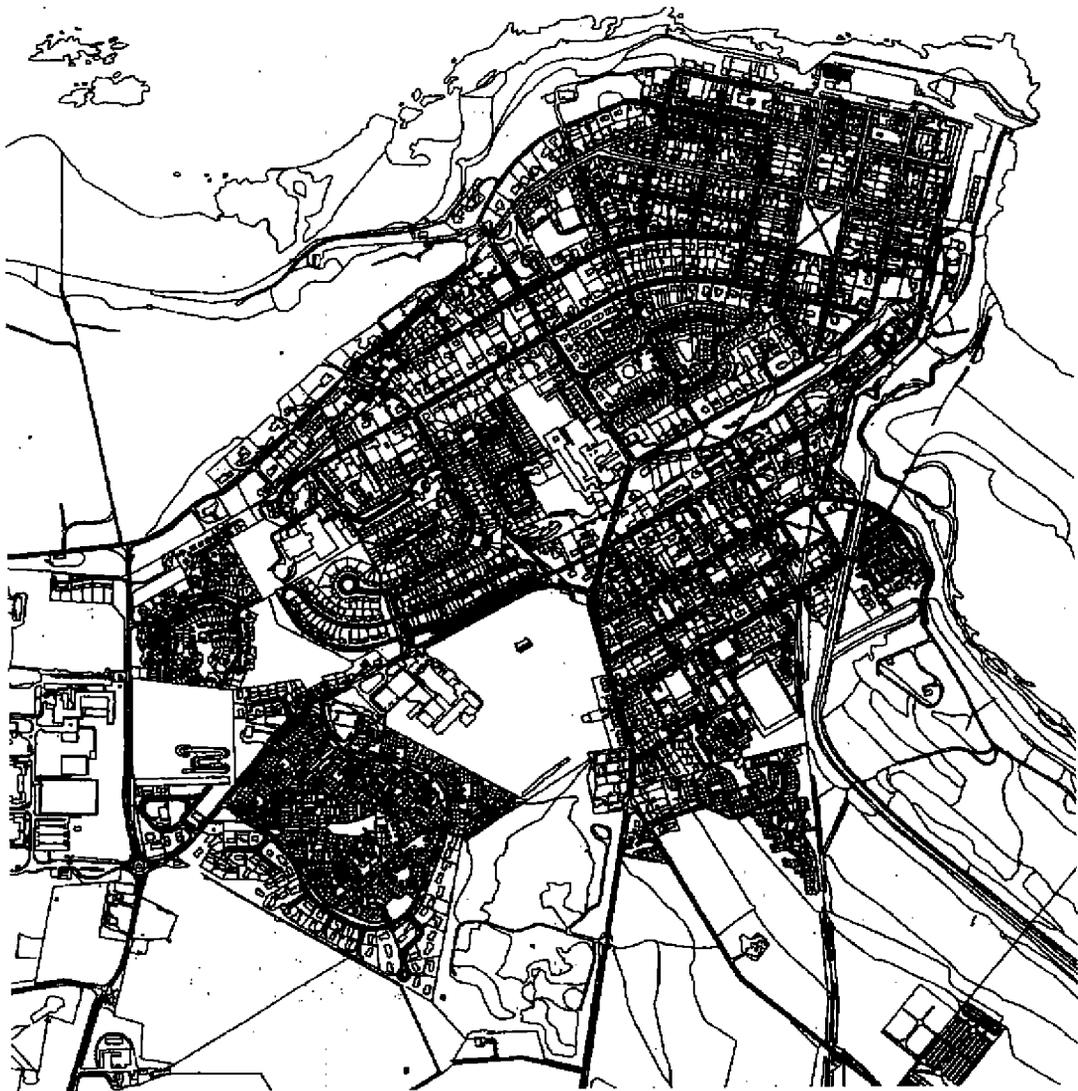
	Proposals for new parenting scheme for parents of 0 -3 years age group		SWD	
	Carry out Youth Consultation exercise for all secondary and P6 & 7 pupils	To identify the needs and desires of the towns young people	COM.ED/ LALO	21.2.2000 - Held and report to follow.
	Creation of new Friday and Saturday night group aimed at offending group to run from 7p - 1am	To engage offenders during the common day and time of offending.	MYA	
APPROACH	ACTION	AIM	BY	RESULT
Environmental	Tackle the availability of alcohol to underage youths in Lossiemouth.	To address the use of alcohol by known offenders prior to criminal activity	CPO	
	Approach Coop store in Lossiemouth, claimed by offenders to be major source of stolen alcohol	To tighten security and working practices in relation to alcohol sales	CPO	9.2.2000 - Head office propose to fit CCTV ASAP
	Explore the availability of land for youth provision	To host any facility deemed appropriate	COM. ED	
	Police <i>officers</i> to attend Coop store at busy periods during High School lunch break	interim measure to establish level of difficulty for staff in dealing with volume of youths and prevent almost daily thefts	PS Duncan	
	Conduct environmental appraisal.	To establish comfort zones, hot spots and crime generators in terms of poor town design. To approach relevant parties with a view to removal, alteration or other measure to remove crime	CPO/ HOUSING	Dec.'99 - The `steps' Coularbank identified as being main comfort zone to known offenders. For further action.

	<p>Explore possibility of addressing problem presented by the `steps' and other housing layout problems nearby.</p> <p>Feasibility study of use of `Youth Shelter' provision</p>	<p>generator</p> <p>To enhance community safety and remove crime generators</p> <p>To provide a safe and non confrontational meeting place for young people away from the usual comfort zones.</p>	<p>CPO/ HOUSING</p> <p>CPO</p>	<p>March 2000 - site visit with SMP re costing and placing of youth shelter, sports arena /skateboard facility</p>
APPROACH	ACTION	AIM	BY	RESULT
Enforcement	<p>Pending case reviews to be carried out in respect of all known offenders</p> <p>Prepare proposals for joint Police/Housing visits to offenders residing in LA housing</p> <p>Prepare proposals for restricted driver scheme in Lossiemouth where vehicle owners display a sign requesting that the vehicle be stopped if seen with driver under a certain age or during certain hours.</p> <p>Operation Restore</p> <p>Implement an age card scheme and enforce its use for sale of alcohol</p>	<p>To expedite court proceeding in respect of charges pending</p> <p>To identify need and offer support of all agencies and to inform, where appropriate, implication for tenancy if offending continues</p> <p>To assist identification of stolen vehicles and provision of deterrent</p> <p>To scrutinise all crimes past and present to detain offenders and present a single report to Procurator Fiscal</p> <p>To assist downturn in underage drinking and offending whilst</p>	<p>PC Mackay</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>PC Mackay</p> <p>CID</p> <p>PC Mackay</p>	<p>Dec `99 - Operation restore addressed all pre cons held by key offenders.</p> <p>Sept 99 - draft protocol prepared for further development.</p> <p>Nov 2000 - eight main offenders jailed for total of 8 and half years.</p>

	Increase number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes	under the influence To enhance community ownership and assist detection of offenders	PC Mackay	Nov `99 - requests for schemes received from Stotfield Road, Inchbroom Avenue, Castle Court Sunbank Place. Coulardhill, Church Street & Seatown
	Implementation of a Community Beat Officer for Lossiemouth	To forge links with all levels of Lossiemouths public and in particular the youth	Insp Jenkins -BY..	13.3.2000 - PC Traynor posted as lossie CBO RESULT- .
Prevention	Research common types of vehicles stolen and make all Lossiemouth owners aware	To increase awareness of problem and increased use of preventative items	PC Mackay	Operation Restore sent letters to over 300 owners informing all of what to do and inviting all to a one day roadshow. Poor response at the roadshow and not much evidence of uptake of advice.
	Visit every household in Lossiemouth and deliver a pack detailing what requires to be done in terms of crime prevention	To increase the use of preventative measures	PC Mackay	The Moray Community Safety Group won £1000 from Scottish office to do this and commenced on 27.3.2000.

The Moray Community Safety Group

"FOCUS ON LOSSIE" Initiative



THE MORAY COMMUNITY SAFETY GROUP (MCSG)

'FOCUS ON LOSSIE'

INITIATIVE

IN THE BEGINNING....

During November 1999 The Moray Community Safety Group applied for and won a Scottish Executive Competition offering funding to voluntary agencies engaged in Crime Prevention

The Group centred their bid on the incessant and, at that time, rising crime rate being inflicted upon the town of Lossiemouth. This bid focused on a fundamental gap in the approach by all agencies to the problem, namely the comprehensive target hardening of the towns households and householders property against crime.

The group therefore proposed to visit every household in Lossiemouth to deliver well chosen and specific advice selected solely for the towns purpose.

To do this, it was suggested that the funding be used to purchase high profile folders in which to package the information. This would also bear the details of all agencies that could be of assistance.



It was also asked that the remainder of the funds be used to purchase quality magnetic vehicle livery to be used on every visit to the town and for the groups work over the years ahead. The bid was successful and won the full award of £1000.00

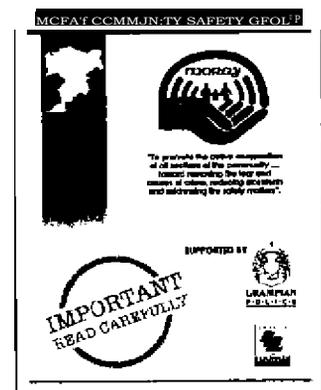
GET READY

The folders

With the money in hand shortly before Christmas, assistance in creating a value for money yet effective folder was sourced from graphic designers at Royal Air Force Lossiemouth. Funds did not allow for the originally sought dayglow yellow pack but did permit a two colour folder which was excellently designed. It emphasised the importance of the contained information and useful contact numbers helped ensure that it would be kept for future reference and escape the householders bin!

5000 folders were duly purchased and received in an unfolded state, due to the cost of the folding process. An urgent request for assistance was relayed to Morays' army of Neighbourhood watch members. Over the days to follow they journeyed back and forth to Elgin Police Office to collect the folders which were returned folded.

Meanwhile, Police and civilian staff sat white faced during quiet moments of night shift doing the same until the required 2700 folders were ready to be filled with the chosen literature.



The contents

The task of preparing the packages for delivery to each and every household was always suspected to be a major one at the outset but the reality was even more challenging.

It was agreed that the pack should contain literature from local stockists detailing the prices of the recommended crime prevention items needed. This would help to overcome the many excuses for apathy by clearly stating the "how to, how much and where" to tackle Lossiemouth Crime.

Homebase, Halfords and other small businesses were permitted to feature in the pack, each of which provided their own insertions and special offers to encourage an uptake in the purchase of preventative products. In addition to the Governmental Crime Prevention literature and a covering letter, a total of 13 separate but necessary leaflets were chosen for inclusion in the pack. This equalled **40,500** separate actions to fill the required amount of packs.



The packing

150 volunteers and over 350 man hours over a 4 week period were required to ensure that enough packs were collated to serve upon the towns 2700 householders.

- Army Cadets
- Boys Brigade
- Scouts
- Air Cadets
- Neighbourhood Watch and even
- Senior citizens clubs were



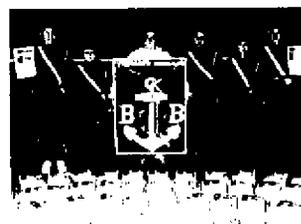
approached for assistance and willingly gave up their time to pack folders for the cause.

The 'production line' process used to collate the packs caused some minor difficulties, not at least due to some of the young age groups involved.



Nevertheless, quality control was maintained and with the exception of a few mishaps the MCSG was content with the quality of the finished packages.

The use of the various groups not only served to ease the burden on the group whose members simply could not have achieved such a task in the time available but also significantly raised the awareness by all, of the crime problem and of the existence of the MCSG. This extent of multi agency approach was not anticipated but proved both fruitful and enjoyable.



GET SET

The Volunteers

It was originally intended that the effort to deliver to each household would span the year. Following further group discussion it was decided that the impact would be greater if executed in a more concentrated fashion. Therefore a schedule of work was drawn up which committed manpower over four nights a week for a 5 week period.

In the run up to the launch date, presentations on the initiative were made to business lunches and other forums where volunteers were requested to augment the finite amount of MCSG members available. Those that signed up to assist included

- * Elgin Rotary Club,
- Moray Neighbourhood Watch,
- Lossiemouth Community Council
- Forres Community Council
- + Forres Rotary Club

Advance press coverage was obtained from our local and regional press who gave the effort a sufficiently high profile. So much so that during the exercise, it was apparent that residents were expecting their pack and others even called the Police Office enquiring as to when they will receive theirs!

There was a concern expressed that the impact of The Groups efforts was lessened by the existence of an ongoing Police Operation concerning Lossiemouth crime at the time. Certainly, press items did mention both and, whilst the waters of ownership may have been grey, it is equally thought that presenting the preventative and detective message together satisfied many points of view in the town as to how the problem should be tackled.

GO!!!

The launch

On the evening 27 March 2000 the launch went ahead with 11 police officers and approximately 20 group members and volunteers. Teams were formed to tackle chosen streets where houses had been counted from Ordinance Survey mapping obtained from the Local Authority. Over 1000 homes were visited in the first evening in a manner which could not have escaped the attention of the towns citizens.

The packs were received well with only half of residents being at home when the volunteer called. No difficulties were experienced by the 'cold calling' nature of the task and it is thought that the presence of uniformed officers all over town and the advance publicity put paid to any concern about the legitimacy of the caller.

The initiative unfolded over the next 4 weeks and on occasions in terrible weather conditions.



Lossie goes all out to 1 reverse soaring crime





A team of 4 was decided for each night at the outset of the effort, it being up to them to ensure that everyone turned up on the night or to arrange alternatives. An office at Elgin Police Station was set up for use by these teams where all packs and maps could be collected. At the end of the night a large detailed street map was colour coded to show the following nights team which area had been covered.

Several evenings of severe weather halted the effort on occasions but surprisingly the town was saturated by the end of the week 4.

The reason for such an unexpectedly quick conclusion can be attributed to the coverage achieved on launch night and the enthusiasm of all those involved. All households where an answer was not recieved were left with the pack which in itself is self explanatory.

The effort was completed on a very rainy Friday night of week 4 where all involved were satisfied that all but a very few obscure located households had recieved packs.

As a fail safe, all public buildings, main retail outlets and the local police office were given packs to made freely available to anyone.



EVALUATION.....

It was a sincere aim of The Group that the effect of the effort would be measured in some way. As an initial and early means of doing so, it was decided to re-visit a sample of the households to ask some key questions. The results of the evaluation were as follows.

5% of the towns households were visited. 30% of those had been a victim of the crime trend. **35%** perceived crime to have reduced since the effort. **86%** claimed to have read some or all of the contents of the pack. 40% stated that they had implimented some part of the advice given within.

Comments were invited from householders which resulted in a generally favourable response ranging from "*Great to see this initiative*" to "*the courts should do more*". Many stated that they were more aware of what was happening and were pleased to see a positive attitude from the Group toward solving the situation.

Any longer term impact on crime in the town can only be measured following a satisfactory "soaking in period" of the advice given and must be observed within the context of other efforts being undertaken by other agencies.

Already clear, is the impact the effort had in raising the awareness of The Group identity in Moray alongside the benefit to its members who, by acting together, pulled off a large scale challenge with relative ease. **Until the next one!!!**