Title: South Whitehaven Partnership

Category: Crime Reduction

Force: Cumbria Constabulary

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1. **SUMMARY**

**SOUTH WHITEHAVEN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP**

A community based policing project to address high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour on the South Whitehaven estates, Whitehaven, Cumbria.

Whitehaven is a market town situated on the West Coast of Cumbria. Formerly a thriving port and mining area. Whitehaven has since suffered the effects of a decline in these and their associated industries. South Whitehaven consists of five housing estates, Mirehouse East and West, Greenbank, Woodhouse and Kells, all of which are predominantly owned by the local authority Copeland Borough Council. Mirehouse West has deprived area status.

Traditionally the South Whitehaven area has always had the highest levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, compared with the rest of Whitehaven Borough. Previous attempts to address the problems through traditional community policing methods have failed. This has caused a lack of confidence and trust in the local police. Policing of the five estates has consisted of `fire brigade' style policing or `quick fix' solutions to problems as they arose.

In recent years the regeneration of the Town Centre and Harbour area has seen significant improvements in the living environment and this has now been extended to the South Whitehaven estates in 2001. Over the next seven years £7,000,000 has been allocated to the South Whitehaven Partnership in the form of a single regeneration bid.

Whitehaven Police conducted a consultation exercise with the residents of the Mirehouse West estate, in January 2001. The aim was to identify areas, which could be addressed in partnership with the local communities, to improve public confidence, reduce the fear of crime and provide a sustainable long-term solution.

To achieve this outcome a multi-agency approach has been adopted. This involves the South Whitehaven Partnership, Copeland Borough Council, local schools, the local community and the Police, working together to provide a safer community.

Work carried out to date has produced some dramatic results, with regards to quality of life and living conditions in these areas. In some areas crime and youth disorder have been practically eliminated. This is measurable by reduced a number of incidents and crime reports. Increased positive feedback from local residents indicates they are now impressed with the Police response, which in itself has increased public confidence. This project is set to continue.
2. SCANNING: The Problem

From a Police perspective the area is regarded to be high in crime and disorder, especially Mirehouse West, Woodhouse and Greenbank. This problem has been partially resolved on the Greenbank estate by the demolition of empty properties. There are problems with disorder on all of the estates especially that involving youths, and increasingly so in the area of Mirehouse shops. The majority of Whitehavens' active criminals live on these estates. Beat V06 and V07 represent South Whitehaven. They held a 'cult like' status with local residents, who lived in fear of them.

Top 30 Active Criminals Per Beat Code

Complaints to the Police and other agencies, including the Copeland Borough Council indicated that residents were living in fear of crime, in particular drug misuse, drug related offences and disorder. This primarily highlighted anti-social behaviour involving youths.

A lack of confidence in the Police ability to effectively address crime and disorder, other than in the short term did little to improve the quality of life. Attempts to carry out community policing, by appointing designated officers, in the past had failed.

A dip sample of crime figures gleaned from weekly analysis of Polis Command and Control logs for the period of, November and December 1999 were used, these proved to be typical of crime figures compared with previous months. These figures were collated from recorded disorder, assaults, burglary and TUMV. The analysis showed that in these two months 70% of these entire categories of crime in Whitehaven was being committed on the South Whitehaven estates. When specific offences were analysed i.e. Burglary, this figure rose to 90%.
3. ANALYSIS: Cause

Mirehouse East and West are, separated by a main railway line. Mirehouse West, Greenbank and Woodhouse are separated from Kells by a main road. This road and the railway line create a natural boundary for the three estates within. The majority of Whitehavens' active criminals live within this boundary.

Woodhouse, Mirehouse West and Greenbank outwardly appear to be run down and have significantly higher unemployment levels than the rest of Whitehaven. (See Appendix A for Council Ward Profile Analysis)

The following graphs illustrate a social and economic profile of three estates in the South Whitehaven area. Greenbank and Woodhouse combined together are comparable with the population of Kells, yet the difference in the profile between these estates, which are only separated by a road, is significant and gives a clear indication of the difference in the quality of life experienced on them.

Unemployment Percentages

Situated on the edge of the Woodhouse estate is a large chemical plant. This is currently in the process of closing down and there is an ongoing program of redundancy. There are no other significant employers in Whitehaven. There is a small industrial estate on the site of the former colliery at Kells. A small shopping area is situated at Mirehouse.
In relation to Mirehouse West, Greenbank and Woodhouse Copeland Borough Council experience difficulty placing tenants in these areas because of the reputation that they have gained over recent years. Undesirable tenants who are not concerned about this reputation have been easily placed on these estates. Unfortunately this impacts on the current residents and causes an unbroken cycle – explained below:

3.1 Community Survey

This was carried out in January 2001 on the Mirehouse West estate. This estate was chosen as it was felt that from a policing perspective it had the highest levels of crime and disorder within Whitehaven town. Analysis carried out by TPI Project to compare Mirehouse West with Bransty, which was regarded to have one of the lowest levels of crime and disorder, from the same perspective, shows a significant difference in crime and disorder levels. The two predominantly Council owned estates both have a similar population. Appendix G.

Comparison of Crime Figures April 2000 – April 2001
Police visited homes on the estate canvassing residents with regards to their fears of crime, drugs, disorder or any other problems that they felt the Police could deal with. The Officers involved in this received an unexpected response as they found residents were willing to talk to them and pass on information.

Residents were willing to name those involved in criminal activity on the estates. A significant number of offenders were identified. From this it was realised that reactive Policing methods were not working. Although residents were willing to pass forward intelligence they lacked confidence in the Police ability to deal with it.

Residents felt that their priorities such as youth disorder and drug misuse, issues that effect their quality of life, were not given the same high priority by the local Police as items identified in policing plans. Residents identified a requirement for Community Police Officers. See Appendix B

Public Satisfaction Survey, of the Police response.

The Public Satisfaction Survey was conducted in January 2001 and again in January 2002 on the Morehouse West estate, at 200 households. The results above demonstrate how public confidence in the Police has increased over the last twelve months. This is as a result of the various initiatives that have been conducted on the South Whitehaven estates.

Intelligence gained from Public Satisfaction Survey
During the same survey an analysis was made of intelligence gleaned from each household. The decrease in intelligence given in 2002 reflects a reduction in the number of incidents experienced, the fear of crime and an increase in public confidence in the Police taking positive action.

Analysis of the cause of the problems indicated key issues that need to be addressed included:

- A permanent, identifiable and sustainable Police presence to restore public confidence.
- Targeting of persistent offenders
- Information exchanges between agencies especially Copeland Borough Council.
- Encouragement in the education of youths to take responsibility for the improvement in their living environment

Other options considered are as follows:

- High impact/high visibility policing
  
  *Not feasible as this was non-sustainable on a permanent basis*

- Continue to police by traditional community methods
  
  *Not an option as it hadn’t worked in the past*
4. RESPONSE

4.1 Initial Response

As a result of the information gathered during the Community Survey in January 2001, a high profile Operation was initiated to take positive action on the information received from Mirehouse West residents. This was intended to target named prolific offenders thereby improving public confidence. This was to be achieved by reporting the successful results of the Operation in the local press.

Residents were then re-visited, and although they were impressed with the results, felt it was no more than the usual `quick fix' type policing that they had become accustomed to. A need was recognised by residents to appoint permanent community officers that they could identify with and easily approach. The Police, at Whitehaven, also identified this need in order to enable them to address the problems on the estates and provide a long-term sustainable solution.

4.2 Community Police Officers

During the community Survey, residents identified a need for Community based Officers. Due to staffing implications for the Police at Whitehaven a sustainable Police presence was not an option and could not be guaranteed. To overcome this problem and to provide a long-term solution, funding was sought from sources outside the Police service.

A successful bid was made to the South Whitehaven Community Partnership and matched funding was secured to provide two community officers for South Whitehaven for the next six years. This funding will be reduced on a sliding scale over the six-year period, although the police involvement will not. It is anticipated that in this time a significant impact will have been made on the problems that are being experienced on the estates and public confidence will have been restored. The two officers PC Emma Renwick and PC Alan Hurton, were in post from 1 April 2001. They would break from the traditional image of the `bobby on the beat' and adopt a pro-active role within the community.

The intention of the Officers is:

i. Provide a high profile presence for residents through foot and cycle patrols, thereby giving reassurance.
ii. Pro-actively Gather, Collate and action community intelligence.
iii. Identify crime and disorder hot spots.
iv. Identify main target offenders.
v. Form links with other agencies, especially within the South Whitehaven Partnership groups.
vi. Adopt a multi-agency approach to establish long term solutions
vii. Work in partnership wit Copeland Borough Council
4.3 Community Intelligence Gathering

Due to the initial success of this initiative, it was agreed that two, community intelligence gathering exercises per quarter would be carried out to meet South Whitehaven Partnership outcomes. Positive feedback is received from the community, especially when they see their information being acted upon and when the results are published in the local press. This has made a significant impact in restoring public confidence.

As well as carrying out these initiatives each quarter on selected estates, they are also initiated when 'hot spot' areas have been identified, primarily to gather intelligence and secondly to offer crime prevention advice and provide reassurance.

ex,: During an increase in burglary in October 2001 on part of the Mirehouse East estate, Officers targeted the area containing premises that had been attacked. They gathered intelligence and offered crime prevention advice to residents. The intelligence gathered enabled the targeting of a number of drug offenders. The Crime Prevention advice enabled residents to target harden vulnerable premises. As a result of this initiative the number of incidents reported to the Police dramatically reduced.

Burglary Reduction — Mirehouse East

Information gained from the community intelligence gathering exercises is regularly passed to the Community Safety Team to contribute towards crime and disorder reduction partnerships.
4.4 Enforcement Tactics (Crime)

On the 1 April 2001 the two designated Community Police Officers initiated Operation Volcano. The intention of this operation was to have an initial high profile impact on crime by disrupting criminal activity. By acting on intelligence gathered from residents, mostly relating to drug misuse offences, this enabled the targeting of criminals who had gained cult status. It was anticipated that this would then make a significant impact on winning back public confidence within South Whitehaven.

Phase 1
This consisted of community intelligence gathering to identify offenders. Locals were canvassed with regards to areas of crime causing them the greatest concern. The local area intelligence unit carried out collation of information gained.

Phase 2
High profile arrests and execution of search warrants were made in this phase. The local media were invited to attend. Positive press coverage was given and a request was made through the media for further information from the local residents.

Phase 3
High visibility patrols were increased on the South Whitehaven estates to reduce the fear of crime. During this time positive feedback was gained from the local residents on the successes which had been achieved so far. A further evaluation was made from information gained from phases 1 and 2.

Phase 4
Further arrests were made and search warrants executed as a result of Phase 3.

This one-month period of disruption and targeting of high profile criminals received considerable coverage from the local media, making front-page news on three occasions. (See Appendix C) Feedback from local residents indicated that the operation had been well received.

Operation Volcano has been re-initiated, on a regular basis, to target hot spot areas and act on intelligence gathered from the local community. This disruption style operation was ongoing for a period of eight months.
Detection of Drug related Offences

![Bar Graph]

This graph demonstrates a pro-active police approach in the targeting of drug offenders through intelligence gained from the community. The increase in the number of drug offences detected is seen as a positive result as these offences had previously been left un-addressed.

The officers have also been able to work in conjunction with Copeland Borough Council to utilise the evidence gained through drug arrests, enabling the Council to enforce tenancy’s and in the case of one individual have them re-located.

One such drugs warrant executed by our Officers, acting on intelligence provided by the local community resulted in Whitehaven’s first ever seizure of cocaine.

4.5 Enforcement Tactics (Disorder)

All five estates suffer from varying degrees of youth disorder. This is mainly centred around gangs of teenagers aged 12-18 years and to some degree involved alcohol misuse.

A typical example of these problems can be demonstrated through an analysis of incidents on Castlerigg close, which contains 13 properties. The local council was having great difficulty placing residents on this close and many residents living there were on council lists to move to other areas. The only problem experienced being youth disorder.
Over a period of three months Community Police Officers monitored and responded to incidents arising on this close, gathering evidence enabling them to take positive action in partnership with officers from Copeland Borough Council. The innovative methods adopted to deal with this mentioned, post were not uncommon of the methods adopted on all estates.

**Youth Disorder Analysis – Castlerigg Close (Mirehouse)**

![Graph](image)

This graph, with figures taken from the Polis Command and Control incident logs for a period of seven months, clearly shows a reduction in youth disorder. Through the pro-active targeting of the area, use of a camcorder for evidence gathering and use of the Acceptable Behaviour Contracts in partnership with Copeland Borough Council,

**High Profile Patrols**

The initial response consisted of high profile patrols targeting hot spot areas and specific offenders and those believed to be ring-leaders. This led to a number of arrests and large quantities of alcohol being confiscated. Once again maximum publicity was gained by inviting a reporter from the local press to join the Police during one of these patrols.

Reported disorder was considerably reduced. Disorder throughout South Whitehaven was curtailed and as a result the intensity of the patrols was reduced. However, contingencies were put in place to re-introduce the patrols if disorder increased. To date this has not been necessary.
Alcohol

Working in conjunction with the Officers conducting high profile patrol. Officers on covert patrols were utilised, to direct resources, towards groups of youths in possession of alcohol. This initially resulted in significant quantities of alcohol being seized. Tactics were adapted as youths moved on to remote areas although the approach in dealing with them did not change. Youths were then taken home and their behaviour was outlined to parents.

Heightened awareness of the youth alcohol problem was made with local Off-licenses who were reminded of their licensing responsibilities. Once again the press were involved to publicise the problem and raise the awareness of the issue. This resulted in reduced alcohol seizures over the following weeks. It was felt that this was as a result of the direct action taken by the Police in partnership with local licensees.

Camcorder Patrols

The experience of Officers taking youths home to their parents found that many parents were unwilling to accept the behaviour that was being outlined to them. To overcome this problem, a camcorder was purchased for the use of the Officers, in youth disorder hot spot areas.

Unacceptable behaviour was filmed and youths were then taken home and the evidence was played to their parents. Initial results have shown that youths do not want to be filmed misbehaving. Evidence gathered has been used to place the onus on parents to accept responsibility for the actions of their child in conjunction with the ABC scheme.

Youth Recruitment Drive

One of the major complaints from youths in `hot spot' areas, which were targeted, was that there are few facilities available to them. They were unsure how to make contacts with those that they knew were available. Working with the local secondary school the Officers organised a recruitment day which involved a large number of youth organisations.

All 11-14 year olds at St Benedicts Secondary School were given a preliminary talk by the local Police then encouraged to visit all the stands where they were made aware of all the local facilities available to them. As a result a number of the organisations became over subscribed.

In the long-term officers are now working with youths to identify areas for teen spaces, where they can gather without causing annoyance to residents. As it is appreciated that not all youths are interested in joining organised clubs.
4.6 ABC Scheme

As a long-term solution to address youth disorder on the estates and in response to complaints received by Copeland Borough Council, housing officers, the ABC Scheme was initiated. This involves the Police working in partnership with the local council to identify youths who are regularly involved in anti-social behaviour.

The youth and the parents are then approached by the Police and an Officer from the local authority, who outline the nature of the behaviour and give that youth and parent the opportunity to sign to an Acceptable Behaviour Contract. Contained within this contract parents and youths are advised that a breach could involve court action, action by way of an Anti-social Behaviour Order or action by the local authority with regards to a breach of tenancy agreement. See Appendix D. This has now been adopted as best practice by the agencies involved.

4.7 Schools Partnership

The estates have three Primary Schools, which the Community Officer work in partnership with. The Officers have become a point of contact with the Schools and are easily identifiable to the children from the estates. Children from these Schools have been given Police guidance in relation to encouraging them to take a pride and responsibility for the area in which they live.

An example of this was that during School holidays, each school traditionally suffered from varying degrees of criminal damage. Consultation between the Police and local Schools confirmed that virtually all previous damage was not reported. At Valley Junior School only one incident was reported in the summer of 2000 this was due to a lack of confidence in the Police and did not give us a true reflection of the actual damage caused.

Working in partnership with the School, the children were asked to write letters to local residents encouraging them to report suspicious incidents to the local police immediately, this was publicised in the local press. During the summer of 2001 no damage at all was reported to the Police. It is felt that this is a true reflection of crime reduction at the School as they assured us that all incidents would be have been reported.
4.8 Partnership Groups

The initial success of the Police involvement in the South Whitehaven Community Partnership can be attributed to the willingness of the local community in partnership with other organisations, to forming groups which work towards long term solutions. Residents groups have been formed and are supported on each estate.

- Monthly meetings are held with Local Authority Housing Officers to share information on problem families, progress the ABC Scheme and identify potential problems at an early stage.
- Partnerships have been formed with the local schools to give support and education.
- In response to disorder at Mirehouse shops a Community Safety Group has been formed involving the local shopkeepers and the local Community Safety Team.

4.9 Publicity

Prior to the 1 April 2001 and the appointment of the Community Officers, negative publicity for the Police at Whitehaven was not uncommon. At the outset a meeting was arranged with the local press and it was found that they would be keen to report on the progress of the schemes and initiatives planned.

An initial story was publicised about the setting up of the community-policing scheme. The press now receives regular updates from the Officers and work closely with them to provide positive coverage of schemes and initiatives taking place. This has included reporters shadowing the Officers while on patrol on the estates.
5. **ASSESSMENT**

The provision of two Community Officers has provided the residents of the South Whitehaven estates with an identifiable Police presence, which residents had requested. This is best evidence by the success of community intelligence gathering exercises and the success of operation Volcano.

The Officers have addressed issues of greatest concern to residents identified through the initial analysis and community surveys i.e. Burglary, Disorder and Drug related crime.

The unexpected response experienced during the initial community survey has prompted us to prioritise the areas in which these initiatives are carried out.

Hot spot areas are dealt with more effectively which has increased community confidence and heightened the status of the Police in Whitehaven.

Feedback from the local criminals suggests that the disruptive tactics employed are inhibiting their activities.

This project is under continual assessment and review. Although funding for two Police Officers has been secured for seven years, it is anticipated that as crime and the fear of crime are reduced funding will be directed away from the permanent visible Police presence. It will be directed more towards crime prevention measures, identified through continual scanning and analysis, such as target hardening of premises.

*The critical success factors of this partnership are the following:*

- At the outset the Community Officers identified that problems on the South Whitehaven estates could not be solved by the Police alone
- It was realised that the priorities of the community were not always the same priorities held by the Police
- To solve problems co-ordinated action was required by a number of agencies including the Police
- Community support could only be gained and maintained through identifiable and dedicated Community Officers
- Positive use of the press was required to inform communities and update them with regard to the actions of the Community Officers
- No quick fix solution would work and a sustainable Police presence was required

*Negative factors arising from this project:*

- Higher crime recording through targeting offenders and specific offences which had previously not been addressed
  Although this could be seen as a positive as is proves that public confidence in the Police is improving
- Initially we were unable to deal with the volume of information that we received.
  - Dealt with this by prioritising
6. **RESULTS**

The results achieved through this community-policing scheme in its first year have been dramatic.

The actions that have been taken to restore public confidence through targeted operations have produced some excellent results, which in turn have began to restore public confidence within South Whitehaven. This is largely due to the fact that residents are now willing, through the Police, to take action against those issues which affect their quality of life. This is borne out in the community survey carried out in January 2002, the results of which are indicated in the graph below.

![Graph showing satisfaction levels]

Councillor Anne Faikney said:

*The residents really appreciate the work Alan and Emma do, especially when they go knocking on their doors to find out what their problems are.*

Elaine Jackson – Secretary at Valley Junior School said:

"*Due to the work that Alan and Emma have carried out in this area I am more confident that if I report a crime it will receive prompt attention. It has restored my faith in the local Police.*"

Liam McKinney – Pupil at Valley School (Aged 8 years):

Police were called to deal with a missing person report. Liam had run away from the School. This matter was dealt with by one of the Community Officers who the youth could identify with, Liam said:

*I am scared of going back to school. I am only going to talk to PC Alan"

The partnership groups the Police have formed, with residents and the Copeland Borough Council has proved to be highly successful especially as no links between these groups existed in the past. The most successful of all the partnerships is with the residents themselves. Another example of this is shown in the graph below which indicates the increase in search warrants executed before and after the start of this project.
This graph is indicative of the confidence residents now have in the abilities of the Police at Whitehaven to act upon information they pass.

This scheme is set to continue as already outlined in the Summary.
APPENDICES

Appendix A Council Ward Profile analysis
Appendix B Community Survey profoma
Appendix C Press coverage Operation Volcano
Appendix D Acceptable Behaviour Contract
Appendix E Press coverage
Appendix F Whitehaven Area Map
Appendix G Disorder Comparisons Bransty/Mirehouse
Sandwich ward Profile

Location
Area includes Sandwich Newtown and Rottington

Socio-Economic Profile

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Age Profile

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Unemployment - Male | 16.6% |
Female | 13.1% |

No. Job Seekers Allowance | 192 |
No. Income Support | 366 |

% Children In Families on Income Support | 45.8% |
% Pensioners on Income Support | 21.4% |

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ACORN Type Profile
House to house survey. Mirehouse

Message to officer completing this survey.

The house to house survey is to be carried out in the 'hot spot' area of Mirehouse after being identified as being high in crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

Message to the resident.

Cumbria Constabulary is committed to making the community of Whitehaven, feel safe, involved and reassured. As part of this commitment I would like to ask you some questions about your neighborhood. Anything you tell me will be held in the strictest confidence.

Road and House No

Name of resident. [Not essential]

Would you like to tell me anything about crime, disorder or drug related activity on the estate?

Who/What do you think are the main causes of the problem?

Are you in a position to name any of the offenders?

Are you satisfied with the policing of the estate.

Thank you for contributing your time in completing this questionnaire.
22 ARRESTED IN DAWN RAIDS

A 11-YEAR-OLD boy accused of burglary and his mother were among those arrested in police raids.

Police found £10,000 worth of drugs, including heroin and cannabis, in a freezer.

The raids were part of Operation Volcano, which targeted drug dealers and their associates.

The raids were successful in disrupting the criminal fraternity and eliminating key players.

Information gathering is key to success in drug raids, according to police officers.

Whitehaven police have now made 100 arrests in the crackdown.

Police say they have recovered a large amount of drugs, including heroin and cocaine, as well as cash and other property.

While the raids have been successful, police are still on high alert for drug-related crime.
ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR CONTRACT

THIS CONTRACT is made on the

BETWEEN Cumbria Constabulary, Copeland Borough Council

AND

WHO AGREES the following in respect of his/her future conduct

FURTHER agrees not to act in a manner which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household in the Copeland Borough Council area.

BREACH OF CONTRACT understands that if he/she does anything which he/she agrees not to do under this contract and which Cumbria Constabulary or Copeland Borough Council considers to amount to anti-social behaviour this may result in further action being taken against him/her which could include an application made to the Magistrates Court for an anti social behaviour order in respect of him/her.

BREACH OF ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ORDER acknowledges that where an anti-social behaviour order is made by the Court and is breached he could be liable on conviction to a fine, term of imprisonment not exceeding five years or both.

DECLARATION

I, ,confirm that I understand the meaning of this contract and agree to adhere to the terms of the contract. I further confirm that the consequences of a breach of this contract have been explained to me.

Signed Date

Signed Parent/Gaurdian Date

WITNESSED

Signed Police Officer Date

Signed Housing Officer Date
### Incidents
#### Disorder

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<th>Neighbourhood</th>
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<th>Neighbourhood IncidentType</th>
<th>Mirehouse IncidentType</th>
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