

B.A.N.D.

BURNLEY AGAINST NIGHTTIME DISORDER

LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY, BURNLEY POLICE STATION, ENGLAND, 2002

SUMMARY:

Burnley Against Night-time Disorder (B.A.N.D.) was established in November 2000. The project was launched in an attempt to provide a holistic and partnership approach to reduce incidents of violence and disorder within the confines of Burnley town centre. During the summer of 2000, it was evident that the number of assaults within Burnley town centre were at an unacceptable level and this was coupled with a widely held perception that Burnley was a violent environment at weekends. It was therefore decided to implement a sustainable approach to reduce violent crime and incidents of disorder within Burnley town centre and attempt to modify peoples' attitudes in order that violent or anti social behaviour would not be tolerated.

Before a response could be formulated, extensive scanning of the issue was undertaken in conjunction with Burnley town centre management. The scanning involved analysing violent crime figures, disorder figures and the number of incidents attended within Burnley town centre. This provided quantitative data but it was also deemed necessary to obtain qualitative data to define the general perception of Burnley. As a result, consultations took place with town centre licensees, door staff, retail outlet managers and members of the public. Therefore, it was possible to establish how relevant parties viewed a night out in Burnley.

The response therefore was to establish a pub watch style scheme where licensees could ban violent or anti social people from their premises in addition to being dealt with via the criminal justice system. By banning such people, the privilege of enjoying a night out in town and consuming alcohol would be removed for a period of ;valve months. This would assist in modifying people's behaviour as well as reduce the possibility for people to commit violent crimes whilst intoxicated. Burnley Police established a dedicated town centre team to deal with daytime and night-time incidents and improve liaison with external partners. All participants subscribed to the community radio scheme thereby allowing timely exchanges of information.

As a result comparative figures of violent crime prior to the inception of the scheme along with crime figures for the same period of the following year were prepared. In addition, analysis has been conducted into crime figures during the last five months. There has also been dip sampling of licensees, door staff and members of the public to see if perceptions of Burnley have been altered.

SCANNING

Burnley town centre was widely perceived as being a violent place to spend a night out at weekends. This perception was reinforced by research conducted by members of the Town Centre management office. Staff at Town Centre Management had held regular meetings with licensees and other interested parties concerned with the night time trade in Burnley. The parties who were consulted widely believed that violence was a regular event at weekends within the confines of Burnley town centre. Dip sampling members of the local community reinforced this perception. The results of the dip sample clearly showed that members of the community felt that they could be victims of violent crime if they came into Burnley town centre at the weekends.

As a result of these discussions it became apparent that licensees and members of the public wanted to change the perception of Burnley and reduce violence within the town centre. Therefore, members of the Town Centre Management approached Burnley Police and outlined the results of their initial research. The fact that there was a perception that Burnley was a violent place to spend a night out was insufficient to establish the true nature of the problem. This is not to state that the fear of crime is to be ignored when implementing a response to a problem, but more detailed data is required to establish an appropriate and proportionate response.

Therefore a review was conducted of the amount of violent crime that occurred within Burnley town centre in the months of June to October 2000. This data was compared with other town centres within Pennine Division to compare the levels of violent crime. In addition to this, the number of disorder incidents that occurred within Burnley were also reviewed to establish a benchmark of disorder within Burnley town centre. The number of violent crime and disorder incidents that occurred were further analysed to establish the times that the incidents occurred. Details of the crime and disorder figures are attached at the rear of this report but

to give a brief outline of the level of crime within Burnley town centre, there were 86 violent crimes and disorder incidents in August 2000 and 102 in September 2000. It is clear that these figures are unacceptably high. It was also clear that Burnley town centre was the busiest crime area in relation to violent crime and disorder for the entire Division.

Whilst undertaking the scanning stage, other information came to light relating to other perceived problems within Burnley town centre. There was widespread concern that a large number of underage persons were consuming alcohol within licensed premises in Burnley town centre. As a result, there was also a significant problem in terms of underage persons causing public order problems due to them being intoxicated. There was also a perception that drugs were freely available within Burnley town centre at weekends.

As a result of this scanning, it was agreed that a viable solution was required to reduce the amount of violent crime within Burnley town centre. The four main objectives of the B.A.N.D. scheme were therefore identified as follows:

- To reduce alcohol related crime, violence, disorder and quarrelsome behaviour in Burnley town centre.
- To eradicate the use of and supply of drugs within licensed premises.
- To reduce the incidents of underage drinking in the town centre.
- To promote the ideology that anti social behaviour will not be tolerated within Burnley town centre.

ANALYSIS

Upon conducting the initial research and establishing the fact that there was a problem with the level of violent crime it was obvious that more detailed analysis needed to be considered to establish the level of the problem

and what responses could be implemented to deal with the problem.

As previously stated, Burnley town centre management conducted an extensive market research programme with licensees and members of the public. The point of this research was to establish the views of these stakeholders. This research provided qualitative data stating that people perceived Burnley to be a violent town centre at weekends. The other clear message from the people asked was that they believed there to be a tangible problem of underage persons being able to purchase alcohol in licensed premises within the town centre. This particular market research involved liaison with all licensees within Burnley town centre, 40 retail outlet owners and 300 members of the public. These widely held views were further reinforced by anecdotal evidence supplied by Police officers at Burnley Police Station. There was extensive analysis of violent crime within the town centre, which is clearly defined by the encircling ring road, and Burnley police station's intelligence analysts conducted this. The analysts researched the level of violent crime within Burnley town centre and it was discovered that the levels of violent crime fluctuated throughout the year. (Copies of the levels of violent crime are attached at the rear of this report in the form of bar graphs.)

Further research was conducted into offender, victim and location profiles utilising the model of the problem analysis triangle. It became immediately obvious that the vast majority of violent crime (92%) committed within Burnley town centre occurred either inside or directly outside licensed premises. Further analysis showed that the vast majority of violent crimes were committed on Hammerton Street, Burnley which is where the two largest night-clubs in Burnley are situated. These two clubs alone can hold a combined occupancy level of 2500 people. These two venues were by far the most popular within Burnley and by the time people reached these establishments, they had been consuming alcohol for approximately four hours.

The research also showed that violent crime committed at this particular location occurred mainly between 01.00 and 02.30 which is when most people were leaving the clubs to go home. The second most prevalent place for violent crime was St. James's Street, Burnley. There are numerous kebab shops and taxi offices located on this street and is a natural focal point for people wanting to go home after purchasing food. This location also resulted in a large number of people being in a confined space within a short space of time, namely between 01.30 and 03.00.

Analysis also showed that violent crime committed within the town centre was predominantly at weekends and between the hours of 20.00 and 03.00. However, the vast majority of assaults took place between 00.30 and 03.00.

Victims of violent crime within the town centre were normally other members of the public who were also drinking within town centre pubs and clubs. Whilst it was possible to ascertain from witness statements as to whether or not they were under the influence of alcohol at the time of offence, there were no other means of verifying this from records or crime reports. People who are under the influence of alcohol are more susceptible to become victims of violent crime as their sense of personal safety and reasoning are diminished.

Contact was made with the accident and emergency department at Burnley General Hospital in an attempt to see if they recorded the number of people injured as a result of violence and particularly if the person had been injured with a glass or bottle. They were also asked to provide data stating whether or not the victim was under the influence at the time of assault. Burnley General hospital were asked to provide this data in an attempt to clearly define the true extent of violence in Burnley town centre as some assaults may not be reported to the Police. Surprisingly however, Burnley General Hospital did not keep such data and were therefore unable to provide information that could assist in the analysis of victims of violent crime.

Other victims of violent crime were clearly identifiable following analysis of crime reports and were as follows:

- Licensees and bar staff
- Door staff
- Police officers
- Ambulance staff
- Taxi operators and drivers

Research was also undertaken by Burnley town centre management to establish how many people were coming into Burnley each night at the weekends. This research involved liaising with bus and taxi operators and licensees to establish the numbers of people conveyed into and out of town. Licensees were also spoken to. As part of their licence, they must check the numbers of people entering and leaving their premises. These logs are maintained at each premise and are available for inspection at any time by the Police or local council licensing officer. These figures combined with cash till receipts provide a good indication of how many people are in town. Prior to the inception of B.A.N.D. it was estimated that between 2000 and 3000 people were entering town centre premises on both Friday and Saturday nights. As a result, this allowed the analysts to establish the number of incidents (violent crime or disorder) per 1000 people within the town centre.

In June 2000, there were 26 incidents per 1000 people and in November 2000 there were 33 incidents per 1000 people. This provided an indication of how likely a person was to become a victim of crime, an important factor in people's perceptions on the level of crime.

Crime reports were studied to establish if there was a pattern relating to offenders in violent crime cases. Analysis showed that in the vast majority, the offenders were white males, aged 17 to 30 years and were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the offence. Analysis also

revealed a significant number of repeat offenders.

Analysis also revealed that a significant number of offenders and victims were under the age of eighteen. This was reinforced by complaints from members of the public relating to pubs and clubs serving underage persons. Some licensees also reported other licensees for serving underage people. Police officers also witnessed underage persons entering or attempting to enter licensed premises. This was not acceptable.

Results of the survey conducted by Burnley town centre management also revealed widespread concerns that there was open drug dealing taking place within the town centre and licensed premises. This was supported to some extent by the number of drugs recovered from persons detained in the town centre for violent or public order offences.

It was therefore apparent that there were significant levels of crime taking place within Burnley town centre at weekends. The perception was that the level of crime was greater than the actual level of recorded incidents. There was also a view, albeit by anecdotal means, that the Police did not respond adequately to incidents at licensed premises or investigate assaults to the fullest extent. This view needed to be challenged and the perception of the Police needed to be changed.

Analysis did show how many reported violent crimes were as a result of an attack using bottles or glasses. However, Burnley General Hospital as previously mentioned could not support this data. Following discussions with Burnley General Hospital, they have now started to record this data and this will allow for a more detailed and accurate analysis of the extent of woundings next year.

There was also a gap in the data because of the old crime recording system. If members of the public did not want to report a crime to the Police, no records were made. As a result, the true level of violent crime could have been far greater than it already was.

It was decided by the geographical Inspector at Burnley (now Supt. Hartley) to provide a response to this overall problem. Burnley was receiving negative publicity due to the perception it was a violent town. The level of crime was unacceptably high and Burnley town centre was the busiest crime area in Pennine Division.

Therefore, if progress could be made in Burnley town centre, crime levels could be reduced, the image of Burnley would be enhanced and the image of the Police would also improve. Prior to the inception of B.A.N.D., there were quite a few empty units in Burnley town centre and due to the levels of disorder, significant amounts of broken glass were on the roads and pavements of Burnley on Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings. This was an eyesore and people did not like coming into town to shop until the afternoons when street cleansing had been done. This obviously had an adverse impact on retail outlets within Burnley town centre.

Therefore, it was decided to launch a partnership approach to reducing this particular problem and reduce crime. Any scheme that was launched would be judged on the following criteria:

- Levels of violent crime and disorder.
- Levels of drug related offences.
- Dip sampling of licensees and the public to gauge perception of a night out in Burnley town centre and Police response to incidents.
- Number of incidents to which the Police respond.
- Regeneration of empty premises within Burnley town centre.

RESPONSE

Due to the initial research conducted by Burnley town centre management, it was apparent that local licensees wanted to work in partnership with the Police to resolve the problems. There

were other various key stakeholders who were vital to participate in the scheme in order that a truly holistic approach was adopted. The partners that came together to discuss how to deal with the problem were:

- Burnley Police.
- Burnley town centre management.
- Licensees.
- Royal British Legion Association (who monitor CCTV and town centre community radio.)
- Burnley Borough Council (licensing officer.)

It was agreed that the Police appeared to be responding to incidents in Burnley town centre as opposed to dealing with the real issues.

Licensees accepted that they had a vital role to play in reducing disorder by ensuring that they complied with licensing legislation and that their door staff adopted a professional approach whilst employed at pubs and clubs.

The partners also felt that the criminal justice process was not effective in preventing or deterring offences and that an alternative was needed. If an effective alternative was found, it could be possible to not only prevent and reduce the number of offences, but also to modify people's behaviour. As a result, B.A. N. D. was launched in November 2000. The scheme involved all of the partners outlined above.

The guiding objectives of the scheme were outlined earlier in this report. The rationale behind the scheme was to form a cohesive group united behind the philosophy of making Burnley town centre a fun, safe and vibrant night out. It was decided that if violent crime and disorder was to be reduced, people arrested for such offences, along with drug dealing, be banned from all participating premises for a period of twelve months. This would be in addition to any penalty imposed by a court. This may appear as

an extremely coercive approach to resolving the problem. However it was believed that any other method would not be effective. If people's ability to meet friends and enjoy a night out in Burnley was taken away from them, then there was a realistic chance of establishing a very effective deterrent to people considering committing offences. If people did commit relevant offences, then they would be unable to enter town centre pubs and clubs and cause problems.

This intervention needed to be proportionate to the problem. Whilst consideration was given to individuals who would be banned, it was felt appropriate to protect innocent members of the public who by the majority come into town and do not cause problems. The fact that licensees would collectively ban people would ensure that there would be no breaches of Human Rights as in effect licensees were effecting their right to refuse admission to any person.

It was agreed that there would be monthly meetings of all partners to discuss the previous month's incidents within the town centre. To become a participating member, you had to pay a joining fee of £100 and pay an annual subscription of £50. Members also had to sign a membership agreement agreeing to implement all policies and members also had to sign a Data Protection Act document stating that all information passed to them through B.A. N. D. would remain away from the gaze of the public. Due to B.A. N. D. being self financing, there were no direct cost implications for the Police.

B.A.N.D. was launched in November 2000. There was significant media attention and specific branding. The acronym B.A. N. D. in itself allowed for a play on words and all participating members were given window stickers, posters, badges, "T" shirts and baseball caps all of which had the B.A.N.D. logo clearly displayed. This media campaign and branding allowed members of the public what steps all interested parties would take to make Burnley a safe place to be at night. It also ensured people were aware of what sanctions would be implemented if they committed offences.

At monthly B.A.N.D. meetings, all interested parties attend. Police representatives outline the details of any offences falling within the criteria. No names of persons are mentioned. Licensees then decide as to whether or not that person is banned. If the licensees vote to ban a person, then they are banned from all participating premises. Following the meeting, photographs of banned persons are supplied to all participating premises and licensees must ensure that they comply with the details provided within the Data Protection Form that they signed when they joined the scheme. The banned person is then visited by a Police officer and served with a banning notice stating why they are banned and when the ban expires. They are also issued with a list from all participating premises.

Police officers dealing with a detained person for a relevant offence issue these persons with an interim banning notice. This informs the detained person that upon their release after charge, or release on bail they are banned from all participating licensed premises. At the monthly committee meeting, details of any interim bans that have been issued are also voted on. Licensees can either revoke the interim ban or impose a full ban, in which case, the above procedure is repeated. Once a ban expires, a banned person receives a letter stating this fact and that they are welcome to return to licensed premises. The letter also warns them that if they commit further offences, they will be banned again.

As previously highlighted, there is a CCTV system and community radio system in operation within Burnley. The Royal British Legion Association (RBLA) monitors these systems. (All participating members of the BAND scheme have a community radio.) The operators also receive copies of photographs of banned persons. This allows operators to monitor the town centre at night and in the event of spotting a person on the banned list, they inform all premises and they then refuse admission to this person in the event that they try to enter a pub or club. The community radio scheme also allows licensees or door staff to warn other premises if they see a banned person in town.

There is now a dedicated town centre Police team consisting of one sergeant and four constables. This dedicated team has led to improved links with licensees and door staff. The knowledge of banned persons by these officers also allows them to make positive interventions if they see a banned person in town. The town centre officers also have community radios and therefore there is always timely passing of information relating to the B.A.N.D. scheme. The improved liaison has now ensured that there is a sense of trust between licensees and Police. The improved communication has resulted in early positive interventions being made when necessary.

There is a clearly defined drinking circuit in Burnley town centre. This has not previously been policed. It was accepted that there was a perception that Burnley was a dangerous place for a night out. Therefore, to reassure the public and prevent offences, the support unit devised a patrol plan.

Two officers would be deployed outside the first pub on the circuit in high visibility clothing thus allowing people to see them when they entered the pub. When leaving the pub, people would again see these officers. As people walked to the next pub, they would see another two officers stood outside the next pub. Therefore, people would regularly see Police officers on the circuit as these four officers would leapfrog from pub to pub thereby providing maximum visual impact with limited resources. Other officers on the support unit would be deployed in a vehicle and patrol the town. Town centre officers would support these officers.

There were regular licensed visits made by the town centre officers in conjunction with the council licensing officer. This allowed door staff, who have to be registered with the council, to be regularly vetted. It also showed the public that the Police and council would uphold licensing laws. It also reminded licensees that they would be rigorously checked. By ensuring that licensees are regularly checked they are encouraged to operate orderly houses. Members of the public also see that licensing laws are

upheld and this adds to a safe environment within the town.

There were some problems in implementing the scheme. The major problem was the delay in circulating photographs of banned persons. Following legal advice, B.A.N.D. purchased a digital camera and all banned persons are photographed on this at the time of charge in addition to the photograph taken for Police purposes.

This allowed swift distribution of photographs and minimised the opportunity for people to enter licensed premises before photographs were distributed.

ASSESSMENT

The scheme has now been running for over a year and 54 people are currently banned. Research has been conducted to ascertain the numbers of people coming into town by the same method as before. There are now between 4000 and 5000 people coming into town on Friday and Saturday nights. This would indicate that the perception that Burnley is a violent night out has been successfully changed.

Empty premises within the town centre have now been filled and there have been two national chains of pubs coming into the town. The Weatherspoons and Walkabout chains have both stated that one of the major factors for them coming to town was the increase in volume of people coming into town and the existence of the B.A. N.D. scheme.

The number of licensed premises participating within the scheme has increased and the scheme now includes taxi drivers. Taxis were identified as being an integral part to the evening economy as they brought people into the town and took them away at the end of the night. Following the disorder in Burnley last year, taxi drivers felt vulnerable to attack as 98% of taxi drivers in Burnley are of Asian origin. Therefore, it was

felt appropriate to incorporate them into the scheme.

Therefore if a person attacks a taxi driver after being picked up from the town centre, that person is banned from all taxi operators and all licensed premises. Anyone who is now banned receives the same punishment. This prevents banned people from one particular supply route into town and reduces the opportunity for them to come to town to cause disorder.

Violent crime and disorder has continued to fluctuate. However, due to the increased Police presence in town at weekends, new crime recording systems and the increase in the number of people in town, it is not surprising to learn that the overall trend is an increasing one in relation to violent crime. However, following dip samples of victims of assaults, an encouraging trend is emerging. There is now a tangible perception that more people are reporting assaults because they believe that there is an increased chance of detection, or at the very least a thorough investigation by Police. There are now fewer incidents per 1000 people in town and this is shown in the figures at the end of this report.

The scheme has proved very successful and recently won a Certificate of Merit by Crime Concern. B.A.N.D. has also won outright the Effective Active Partnership category in the 2001 Association of Town Centre Management awards. Other areas have implemented copycat schemes and there has been extensive television, radio and newspaper coverage.

It is intended to implement the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 within Burnley town centre and this is currently going through the consultation phase, with the support of the local council, B.A.N.D. and retail outlets. This would go some way in reducing the number of woundings whereby offenders use glasses or bottles.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PC 2143 Andy Moore, Town Centre Co-ordinator; Burnley Police Station; Parker Lane; Burnley BB11 2BT; Phone: 01282 425001 or 01282 472120.