

Lancashire Constabulary

CRANKSHAFT

Crime & Disorder Reduction Category

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Summary

Bamber Bridge & Walton le Dale Crime and Nuisance reduction incorporating 'CRANKSHAFT' (Specifically targeting pedal cycle theft.)

On 1 April 1997 PC Nigel Baker became the community beat officer for Walton le Dale. Prior to this date the POP approach had not been encouraged or implemented. He realised that using the approach great improvements could be made. At that time he identified numerous problems in that area that were not being redressed. Using the POP and partnership approach, not in isolation but repeatedly and in a range of different ways, he has made a significant reduction in crime and nuisance demonstrating the practical application of the philosophy.

The Walton le Dale Ward Beat area is mostly residential but contains a large out of town retail and leisure park, namely the Capitol Centre. The Capitol Centre at one time had a reputation for vehicle crime, youth nuisance and disorder. The residential parts of the beat comprised two very large modern (and still expanding) housing estates and one large established estate. The cycle theft problem was widespread.

The initiatives can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ Capitol Centre Police Radio link scheme.
- ◆ Walton le Dale Police Newsletter.
- ◆ Newsletter for the Talking Pages for local blind people.
- ◆ Newsletter via Internet sites.
- ◆ Articles written for other newsletters and other media involvement.
- ◆ Use of old Walls Ice Cream sign used to promote a number of postcode events.
- ◆ Cycle Postcode kit and poster supplied to each cycle retail outlet in South Ribble.
- ◆ Posters displayed at the site of each cycle theft to highlight the problem.
- ◆ Crime Prevention and Community Safety vehicle used, crime prevention packs handed out and cycles post code events organised.
- ◆ Holland House Estate letter drop.
- ◆ Armed robberies awareness campaign at McDonalds Restaurant
- ◆ Walton Park play area nuisance reduction..
- ◆ The Capitol Centre Secure Car Park Award.
- ◆ Capitol Centre Catch and Ban scheme.
- ◆ Cycle theft Poster competition.

The assessment of the success of the crime reduction measures is complex due to the recent increased size of the Capitol Centre complex and the massive increase in housing. However, recorded crime statistics show that last year, 2001, there were only 15 recorded auto crimes of which just 3 were stolen vehicles. This, from a free car park that can hold nearly 4,000 vehicles, is remarkable. Crime and nuisance generally were substantially reduced.

Pedal cycle theft was reduced by 45%

Bamber Bridge & Walton le Dale

Crime and Nuisance reduction incorporating 'CRANKSHAFT'

(Specifically targeting pedal cycle theft.)

POP & Partnership approach to crime, nuisance and cycle theft reduction

Introduction

On 1 April 1997 PC Nigel Baker became the community beat officer for Walton le Dale. Prior to this date the POP approach had not been encouraged or implemented and he realised that using the approach great improvements could be made. At that time he identified numerous problems in that area that were not being redressed. Using the POP and partnership approach, not in isolation but repeatedly and in a range of different ways, he has made a significant reduction in crime and nuisance demonstrating the practical application of the philosophy.

Scanning

Problems

PC Baker attended an incident at the Capitol Centre, Walton le Dale, where a man had attempted to indecently assault a young lady at the Warner Village cinema. The offender was pursued by staff but was never caught. It transpired that he walked passed the on site security guards; they were unaware of the incident. Subsequent enquiries highlighted the problem that staff at different premises were not communicating to each other. Even worse, none of them knew how to contact the on site security guards.

Vehicle crime was also a problem at the Capito[Centre, at times up to three cars a week were being stolen.

It was apparent that the same offenders were returning time and time again to commit crime or nuisance.

Juvenile nuisance was a noticeable problem at several sites within the Walton le Dale area.

PC Baker quickly realised that the Neighbourhood Watch groups in Walton le Dale were not communicating with the local police. There was only an input at Divisional level from the Neighbourhood Watch Officer. There was, in fact, a missed opportunity to work with local people to redress the local problems.

Neighbourhood watch coordinators were very willing to assist in crime and nuisance reduction but required help and guidance.

During the summer of 1999 it became apparent that pedal cycle theft was a significant problem in the Walton le Dale and Bamber Bridge Police area. Many of the offences were

easily preventable. Cycles were being left insecure outside shops, also not secured properly when stored inside sheds or garages.

In addition a significant number of found cycles were not being returned to owners.

Analysis

PC Baker undertook a survey; sending a questionnaire to all the managers on the Capitol Centre site. It became very apparent that the on site security officers were not being contacted to deal with incidents, and minor incidents were escalating to the point the police had to be called. Almost all of the people questioned did not know how to get in touch with the on site security. The survey indicated total support for a Police Radio Watch scheme. When questioned it was also clear that there was no unifying policy of banning offenders from the entire site. At this time offenders were only being banned from the premises they were caught offending at; they could be banned from the entire complex.

PC Baker then arranged a meeting with Nicholas Eckesley of Richard Ellis Ltd the agents for the company that owns the Capitol Centre. A range of issues were discussed and he agreed to fund a Radio Watch Scheme.

Analysis of incident logging system indicated juvenile nuisance was concentrated in several key areas. Hemel Lane shops, Walton park play area and the Megabowl at the Capitol Centre were the primary problem areas.

When the youths were spoken to it transpired that large numbers of them were not local and had little respect for the area.

PC Baker spent two weekends in plain clothes at the Megabowl complex on the Capitol Centre and observed at first hand the juvenile problems and underage drinking at the premises. He found that whilst youths were not purchasing alcohol on the site they were taking cans and bottles in to the Megabowl that had been purchased earlier and elsewhere. In addition, it appeared common practice for groups of youths to steal unattended pints of beer that were left near the bowling area.

Analysis of the crime statistics revealed that 114 pedal cycles were stolen between 1 May 1999 and 1 October 1999. A vast proportion had not been secured properly.

At this time there were 34 cycles in the property store that were unclaimed none had been post coded and owners could not be found.

Response

Police Response

To assist the introduction then support the Capitol Centre radio Link. To have a radio fitted to the allocated Walton le Dale police vehicle and for the response driver to monitor the radio when on patrol in the area and to use the radio when attending incidents at the Centre.

To support, advise and encourage the Capitol Centre management to adopt and implement crime prevention measures in pursuance of the 'Secured by Design Car Park Award.'

To write a newsletter providing information on current, locally relevant crime and nuisance problems and offer crime prevention advice. Also, to write articles for other newsletters.

To target specific locations and to highlight problems, give crime prevention advice and make potential offenders aware of positive police actions by using posters and letter drops.

To target all sections of the local community, especially young people, to highlight the problem, to inform, educate, encourage property owners in to taking simple crime prevention measures and encourage others to generate solutions. To provide opportunities for cycle owners to post code their cycles. To target harden the locality against opportune offenders.

Planned Partners Response

- Local business and Police Graphics Department to repaint 1 redesign board to promote cycle events.
- Capitol Centre to fund Capitol Centre Radio link.
- Capitol Centre to fund car park improvements.
- Capitol Centre Management to introduce 'Catch and Ban' scheme.
- Megabowl at the Capitol Centre to take steps to tackle under age drinking.
- Local Council to move benches and cut hedges at local park.
- Local company with printers department to print newsletter.
- Local media to promote and highlight campaigns.
- Local councillor to include articles in newsletter.
- Galloway Society for the Blind to incorporate Police Newsletter on Talking Pages.
- LANPAC (Lancashire Partnerships Against Crime) to provide funding for seven post coding kits to be supplied to cycle retail outlets.
- Police Schools liaison with Lancashire Education Authority to incorporate a lesson on theft and cycle safety and children to enter poster competition.
- Martin Wallis Cycles and other local businesses to provide suitable prizes.

Cost

The total cost of the Capitol Centre Radio system, fitting base station and supplying portable radios to each premises, security and the police was £6,125. There was a press and radio launch and a continuing poster campaign; these were arranged at minimal cost. All of the costs incurred have been met from the Capitol Centre security budget.

The costs of improved security for the 'Secured by Design Car Park Award' were met from the Capitol Centre security budget.

The cost of the professionally reproduced newsletters equates to about £1,600 per year, James Hall Spar absorb this cost within the day to day running cost of their printing department.

The cost of providing cycle coding kits and professional reproduction of winning posters met by LANPAC and Community Safety Partnerships fund. Also locally funded was a trophy presented to the best overall school entering the poster competition, this trophy will be presented annually for different initiatives, hopefully, for many years to come.

Prizes donated by local businesses.

Wallace Cycles	BMX pedal Cycle
Sherwood Recovery	BMX pedal Cycle
McDonalds	Meal Vouchers
Megabowl	Bowling Vouchers
Virgin Active Gym	Family Day Passes
Warner Village Cinema	Cinema Tickets
Inter Brew (Whitbreads)	Meal and Leisure Vouchers
The Vineyard Restaurant	Family Meal
Batleys Cash and Carry	Tins of Sweets
LDV	Model Vehicles
BAe Systems	Binoculars

All other costs, services and donations provided by local businesses.

Assessment

The Capitol Centre Radio Watch Scheme was launched on the 12th April 1999. There were no recorded incidents of Juvenile nuisance in the following six months. There were 12 incidents recorded during the equivalent six-month period in 1998.

It is clear that because all employees can now contact the security guard on site, rather than allowing problems to escalate then call the police, that problems are being dealt with early and as a result nuisance has been significantly reduced.

In addition the direct link between police and the security guards has given the guards greater confidence when dealing with problems. Also, when police officers attend incidents at the Centre they now make a point of contacting the security guards via the radio. They then see at first hand how the police deal with incidents and the offenders see a greater uniform presence.

The radio system was also used successfully to trace a missing handicapped person. That person was found wandering in the Comet Store. Use of the radio showed she was reported missing at the Megabowl. The occurrence was quickly resolved and a more serious incident prevented.

The radio has been used many times as a deterrent by shop staff. Simply using the radio near to suspected shoplifters inside the store has prevented crime.

A catch and ban scheme was established by the Capitol Centre management, this was encouraged and supported by the police. This meant that if an offender was banned from one of the units he or she was then banned from the entire site and could not continue to cause problems outside in the car park area.

Working with the Capitol Centre management a number of youths causing relatively minor but persistent nuisances were warned and asked to leave the site. The site manager then sent letters to their parents informing them of the facts.

Following a spate of armed robberies at McDonalds Restaurants in Lancashire and elsewhere. PC Baker gave crime prevention advice at the Capitol Centre restaurant. Officers were asked to attend at the key times. To encourage this a special discount for officers purchasing meals was arranged. There have been no armed robberies at this site.

A meeting was arranged with the managers of the Megabowl complex and they were informed of the plain-clothes observations at the premises. They were given advice regarding preventative measures and informed more visits could follow. Information was passed to the Divisional Licensing officer for possible future action. However, the management implemented a number of measures including a poster campaign. More importantly, they introduced the employment of permanent door staff at the key weekend times. They monitor the young people and prevent unauthorised alcohol entering the building. They also monitor and appeared to have dealt with the problem of drinks being left unattended near to the bowling area. Visits to the Megabowl complex indicate underage drinking and its associated nuisance are no longer a problem.

At the beginning of May 1999 PC Baker published the first Walton le Dale Newsletter. Initially it was circulated to each Neighbourhood watch co-ordinator who then distributed copies to each house in the group. (One lady made 200 photocopies of the first newsletter, at her own expense, and delivered them by hand to each house in her scheme.)

The newsletter informs the community generally and specifically with regard to problems in Walton le Dale and gives specific crime prevention advice relevant to the crimes occurring in the locality.

For example, in a two-month period there were nine vehicles broken in to on the Walton Park estate. This was pointed out in the following newsletter and people were asked not to leave items of high value on open display in their vehicles. The result was that there were no vehicles at all broken in that area for the subsequent four months. (The potential victims either being more careful and heeding advice or the offenders being made aware of the positive police action.)

The newsletter has been used to reduce juvenile nuisance. For example, there was a recurring problem at the Dalgety's factory, it was reported in the newsletter that there were CCTV pictures of the offenders at the police station and the problem stopped. It has also been used to make parents aware of other juvenile problems at specific locations; this has helped to reduce complaints. The problem of underage drinking in the Walton Park area has been reduced if not eradicated by highlighting it and announcing positive police action.

The newsletter has been used to make direct requests for information. For example, the request for information about a possible drug dealer on Marlborough Drive in issue two saw the appropriate information received at the police station within a week and appropriate action was taken.

The newsletter has been a resounding success with the neighbourhood watch groups. PC Baker also distributes it via local sheltered accommodation, nursing homes, Spar shops, the Capitol Centre and public houses. Other volunteers distribute the newsletter in non Neighbourhood Watch areas.

PC Baker has successfully sought sponsorship of his newsletter from James Hall (SPAR) distribution of Preston, they recognise the potential of this innovative partnership. They print up to 2,000 copies of the newsletter each quarter.

He also arranged for his newsletter to be distributed via the 'Talking pages for the Blind' circulated to blind people across Lancashire. This was done in partnership with the Galloway Society for the Blind at Penwortham and they reproduce over 1,350 copies of each newsletter on tape for blind people. There have been articles in the newsletter, such as that on bogus property repairers, specifically written for the benefit of the more vulnerable members of the community.

The information is also made available on the Internet.

In the latter newsletters PC Baker has sought to name and shame offenders. It is genuinely believed that this has had a positive effect. One of the named persons became aware that his picture had been published and a certain type of burglary, a known modus operandi of that person, stopped.

Following a spate of burglary on the Holland House estate PC Baker wrote a letter highlighting the problem there and offered advice. Local volunteers delivered about 400 letters on the estate. This had a positive effect.

An example of an unusual POP approach was shown when information was received indicating that a suspect burglar may have been using a particular short cut from a housing estate via a fence to a footpath. PC Baker obtained a quantity of sand from a local quarry

and it was spread evenly near the fence. The intention was to establish if that route was being used at night and possibly to obtain footwear impressions. It was established that the route was not being used.

The Capitol Centre received the 'Secured Car Parks' award on 23 October 2000. The implementation of recommended crime prevention initiatives such as limiting unauthorised access, improved CCTV, allocating zoned areas and the closing of unused sections at night have resulted in enviable vehicle crime rate.

When PC Baker took over the Walton le Dale beat it was practice for groups of up to 50 youth to congregate near the Spar shop on Hannel Lane. Consequently the police received two to three calls per weekend complaining about their behaviour. A poster was placed in every shop on that road indicating action would be taken. The owner of the shop was approached and he agreed to support positive action. It was agreed that the land at the side of the shop belonged to the Spar shop and youths congregating there would be regarded as trespassers and asked to leave. This was supported by a poster in the shop and regular police visits and the youths were re-educated. There have been no reports of juvenile nuisance at that location for two years even though the poster has now been removed and there is no targeted police response there.

In response to juvenile nuisance problems at the Walton Park play area a report was sent to South Ribble Council, they were asked to relocate benches and reduce the height of the surrounding hedges. This had a positive effect.

In autumn 1999 PC Baker, with PC 2177 Spencer, utilised an unclaimed ice cream promotions board from the found property store at Bamber Bridge police station. This was repainted, in partnership with the BAe Systems paint shop at Samlesbury. The Graphics department at Headquarters then redesigned it and it was used to promote numerous cycle coding events. The officer's post coded hundreds of pedal cycles and several other officers made use of the board to promote similar cycle coding sessions. A crime prevention vehicle was utilised and thousands of cycles were post coded and crime prevention packs were handed out at such events.

In October 1999 PC Baker, this time with PC 6051 Harrison, applied to LANPAC and successfully received funding for seven cycle post coding kits. Every cycle shop in the South Ribble area was given a cycle post coding kit and a large poster to promote cycle coding at their premises. The Lancashire Evening Post was contacted and on 17 December 1999 they published a substantial feature in the newspaper highlighting the problem of cycle theft and crime prevention advice was offered.

In spring 2000 PC Baker published articles in his Walton le Dale newsletter again highlighting the problem and offering advice. 2,000 newsletters were circulated in the Walton le Dale area. He wrote a similar article for Cllr. Sharratt's newsletter 'The Idle Toad' that has a circulation of over 10,000 and is distributed throughout the Bamber Bridge police area. The article was reproduced in a Lostock Hall newsletter and together the whole of the Bamber Bridge police area was covered.

PC Baker created posters and these were displayed in areas cycles had been stolen.

In spring 2001 PC Baker, this time with PC 1903 Simpson, approached the School Liaison officer, PC Stephenson, and together they organised a competition for every child in the top years of primary education in the South Ribble area. The officers approached numerous local businesses and obtained a substantial number of suitable prizes including two new pedal cycles, binoculars, meal and leisure vouchers. The children were asked to create a poster on the theme of cycle theft or road casualty reduction. Over 300 children created posters and entered them in to the competition. Some of the schools incorporated cycle proficiency lessons and the officers went out to schools and spoke to some of the children.

The winning posters were then professionally printed and the officers distributed the posters at key sites in the community.

Since the summer of 1999 there has been a substantial reduction in the number of pedal cycles stolen in the Bamber Bridge police area.

From 1/1/98 to 31/10/98 there were 169 reported crimes.

From 1/1/99 to 31/10/99 there were 123 reported crimes.

This represents a reduction of 27.2%

From 1/1/98 to 31/10/98 there were 78 reports of juvenile nuisance.

From 1/1/99 to 31/10/99 there were 49 reports of juvenile nuisance.

This represents a reduction of 37.2%

Whilst the six monthly crime statistics show a dramatic reduction of 25% for 1999 compared to 1998. It is worthy of note that there was a reduction of 25.12% when comparing the 1998 figures against 1997. General crime statistics and nuisance figures show a levelling out if not slight rise for the subsequent period. However, direct comparison is difficult if not impossible due to the massive increase in new housing in the area. In addition different methods and standards of recording crime and new ethical practice further complicate the picture.

The assessment of the success of the crime reduction measures at the Capitol Centre is again complicated due to the recent increase in size of the complex and the substantial increase in the number of people and vehicles visiting. However, recorded crime statistics show that last year, 2001, there were only fifteen recorded auto crimes of which just three were stolen vehicles. For a free car park that can hold about 3,000 vehicles, this is remarkable. For the Capitol Centre as a whole, in 2001 there were 91 crimes of which 22 were recorded as detected.

It is impossible to ascertain how many pedal cycles have been returned to the victims or how many potential offenders have been deterred from stealing a cycle because it had been post-coded. Pedal cycles found that are post-coded are usually returned directly to the owner and there is no record of this action, also the recording of found property at police stations does not indicate if a cycle is post-coded. However recorded crime statistics show there has been the following reduction in cycle theft:

1999	1 May - 1 October	114 cycles stolen
2000	1 May – 1 October	89 cycles stolen
2001	1 May -1 October	63 cycles stolen

This represents a reduction of 45%

Conclusion

It is viewed that a whole range of sustainable solutions have been used successfully, that education, information and awareness have been pitched effectively across the entire community. These initiatives, at the Capitol Centre in particular, are self-perpetuating and continue to give long-term benefits to the community.

The high profile media and information awareness campaigns will in turn encourage ongoing crime prevention and target harden the whole area for at least the medium term.

Lancashire Constabulary

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29 May 2002

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The Tilley Award 2002

As Chair of the force `Problem Oriented Policing Steering Group' I am delighted to forward Lancashire Constabulary's nominations for the Tilley Award 2002.

There has been an enthusiastic response from the force's divisions/departments in respect of this Award, therefore the Lancashire Constabulary is submitting a total of 19 applications, all of which have been quality assured.

I personally endorse each individual entry and commend each one on its own particular merit. Many of the nominations were used as case studies in the Constabulary's own Annual `POP' Conference that took place in May of this year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P.R. Stephenson QPM', with a long horizontal line underneath.

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