

# THE FUTURE IS...YELLOW!

## AN INITIATIVE TO IMPACT QUALITY OF LIFE AND FEAR OF CRIME

LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY, LANCASTER POLICE STATION, ENGLAND, 2002

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### **SUMMARY:**

During 1998/99 police officers within the Lancaster city area were set the target of reducing autocrime by 10% within five years. The division reached this target within twelve months and by March 2001 autocrime had reduced by 26%. There was also a significant reduction in burglaries. In spite of these results feedback from the public showed that they did not feel safer nor were they happy with the level of policing that their communities were receiving. In fact the fear of crime seemed to be rising, which appeared to be part of a nationwide phenomenon.

A considerable amount of analysis was initiated to establish what actions could be implemented to reverse this trend. Police forums, public meetings, and local media were monitored, particularly "letters to editors". Consultation also took place with community leaders and elected representatives, which all showed the same thing ... the public were concerned with more than crime reduction, they required reassuring. This was corroborated by a survey, which showed that people in Lancaster area had a fear of crime that exceeded the national average. The analysis showed residents wanted: increased visibility of authority figures; increased accessibility to the police; increased willingness and ability to tackle quality of life issues.

The response was difficult. Analysis at Lancaster Police Station by PA Consulting and replicated in 6 other BCU's highlighted the increased burden of bureaucracy necessitating officers spending up to 43% of their operational time in the police station. However it was also shown that police powers were not necessarily an issue, as approximately 60% of police deployments required no further action. An opportunity arose in 2001 when local authorities informed the Constabulary of their intention to undertake responsibility for the decriminalisation of policing parking legislation in two years time. As a result a radical redeployment of 6 traffic wardens to police controlled community safety wardens was introduced in the Bulk ward, an area, which suffered the symptoms mentioned earlier. The wardens moved from a role that was perceived by some as being entirely enforcement driven. Instead they were expected to promote public reassurance, impact positively on quality of life issues and reduce fear of crime.

The scheme was evaluated independently by amongst others Lancaster University. The overall assessment found that crime & disorder had reduced in the ward by 14%. Further the evaluation by the University team established that the initiative had increased levels of reassurance over the period of the pilot by 10%. The assessment also provided assistance to the Home Office in terms of the national debate on Community Warden Schemes.

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## SCANNING

During 1998/99 police officers within the Lancaster city area were set the target of reducing autocrime by 10% within five years. The division reached this target within twelve months and by March 2001 autocrime had reduced by 26%. There was also a significant reduction in burglaries. However the public perception was that crime was rising (British Crime Survey) and this polarisation of views has been labelled the "Reassurance gap".

This perception was replicated within the Lancaster area, and was shown in a number of ways.

The *Media* constantly illustrated this issue. During October 2000 a local newspaper. The Morecambe Visitor, ran the banner headline "The Police say crime is down - just how safe do you feel? It followed with a survey with local residents and community groups in relation to how vulnerable to crime they felt. From the point of view of police officers the results were surprising. As the headline had stated the police were able to produce results that illustrated a significant reduction in crime particularly autocrime and burglary. Despite these results respondents to the survey stated in most cases that fear of crime concerned them greatly.

*Public Meetings and Community forums* are regularly held within the division. Senior management attend these meetings to report on police performance and also to ensure that they are accessible to the public at large.

Despite impressive crime reduction figures members of the public continued to raise matters that related to quality of life issues. The public's experience of incivilities such as graffiti and litter belie the soothing message of criminal statistics.

*Correspondence* received by the police and from elected representatives reinforced the message that the public are generally concerned with matters that the police have tended in the

recent past to downgrade. Disorder; antisocial behaviour; neighbourhood neglect and troublesome individuals all regularly featured in letters with a request that the police take action.

*Internal focus groups*, which are open to all ranks and grades within the BCU identified that for a variety of reasons, the police were not dealing with those issues that were of great concern to the public. It was also identified that by failing to deal with those issues the police were in effect adding to the Reassurance gap and undermining their reputation. The objective of this initiative was to continue the focus on crime reduction whilst increasing reassurance.

## ANALYSIS

The Lancaster & District Community Safety Partnership includes the local and county council authorities, the police, probation and health services and other local groups. Its purpose is to ensure that the district is a safe place to live, work and visit. During 2001, The Partnership produced an audit report on local crime issues over the preceding three years.

Amongst the findings of the audit it was discovered that Lancaster city residents were as likely as the national average to think crime has increased in their area. Fear of burglary was 13% higher than the national average. Around one fifth of respondents stated that worries about crime affected their day-to-day lives.

As the media stated, 'Members of the community believe the figures do not tell the whole story and are concerned that unreported crime, fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour are sometimes forgotten.' A local councillor was quoted as saying, 'I am happy that the statistics have improved but we have to understand that the perception of crime is totally different.' Community representatives explained the phenomenon in a number of ways, that issues were brought out into the public domain much more and the level of crime on the television. The local branch manager of Victim Support Services summed it

up by saying, 'the fear of crime is still very strong. We are afraid and we should not be.'

It was discovered that these issues were mainly highlighted on the council estates in the area, which were areas that suffered from higher deprivation and youth issues. It was here that local councillors were most vociferous. These concerns were reflected across Bulk Ward of Lancaster. The ward comprises of 3 main estates, namely Freehold, Ridge and Newton. Each estate has its own distinct identity and covers a wide spectrum of urban housing and demographic make up.

Both the Ridge and Newton Estate are predominantly council estates they also include a high proportion of sheltered housing for senior citizens. Freehold conversely comprises as the name suggests of terraced housing stock, which traditionally has been owner occupied. To its West Side the ward has a large industrial unit, which has in the past suffered from a wide range of crime issues, as well as the usual Juvenile related matters.

Bulk Ward has a high incidence of crime & disorder demonstrated by the following statistics taken from Lancaster Community Partnership Crime & Disorder Audit 2001. (all figures April 2000 & March 2001). 1558 reported crimes in the area, equated to 213 crimes per 1000 inhabitants compared to a district average of 67. Criminal damage was twice the county average and violent crimes four times the Lancashire average per 1000 inhabitants. 397 victims of crime in the ward, compared with a district average of 210. 21 house burglaries per 1000 households compared with the district average of 15. Given these crime trends within the ward it was felt that reassurance was an increasingly important issue. It was felt that unless levels of reassurance could be increased any reduction in crime would be devalued.

Analysis concentrated on this area. Initial consultation with residents of the estate took the form of a mailshot for all residents. Of the 2392 questionnaires that were issued 247 were returned, approximately 11 %. Residents

wanted more intervention in terms of dealing with quality of life issues such as litter, troublesome and intimidating youths, rubbish etc.

Further to this the local beat officer for the Bulk ward area regularly took part in audits, in conjunction with local council staff. These audits took the form of surveys of the estate systematically recording what they saw as an area of concern whilst engaged in a drive or walkthrough; this could be termed as a visual audit. This process has been reflected in a partnership between the Metropolitan and Surrey police services with the objective of reassuring the public. Similar to the findings of the beat officer the partnership identified five regular causes for concern they termed these as visible cues of environmental degradation.

- Graffiti
- Poor Lighting
- Apparently abandoned and/or burnt out vehicles
- Vandalism
- Litter/Rubbish

It was thought by focussing on these issues the levels of reassurance would increase. Further increases could be gained by the provision of such things as neighbourhood watch signs, presence of police or other authority figures, level of lighting, the obvious presence of CCTV, and working telephones.

The work clearly illustrated that a visible presence by an authority figure was a significant "comfort factor" in relation to providing reassurance. Police resources were limited. Indeed during August 2001, the Home office asked PA Consulting to undertake a study into the "Diary of a Police officer". The study focussed on seven Basic Command Units across England and Wales, including Lancaster. It recorded the activities of police officers throughout their shifts. Some 378 "diaries"

were properly completed and over 70 police officers were spoken to gain a more detailed understanding of the pattern of demands on their time and what prevents them doing more reassurance policing.

Amongst others some of the studies findings were as follows

- Police officers were spending almost as much time in the police station (43.1 % of their time) as they are on the streets.
- Most of the time out of the police station is spent dealing with incidents and making enquiries. Only around 17% of police officer time is spent on reassurance patrol.
- Foot patrol appeared to be a rarity.
- Patrol officers are often "double crewed" for reasons other than health and safety therefore the visibility of the police diminishes.

A further local study also identified that of all deployments of police officers approximately 60% require no further action. This is not to say that it is not appropriate for police officers to attend these incidents, however it does reinforce the need to question the requirement for double crewing and also illustrates the potential for a reassurance patrol without enforcement powers.

## RESPONSE

The analysis clearly demonstrated that there was a need for increased identifiable patrols, however 'there appeared no potential for that to be provided by police officers.

About this time Lancashire Constabulary was formally informed that Lancashire County Council and the Unitary Authority of Blackburn and Blackpool intended to consider applying to undertake responsibility for the decriminalisation of policing in January 2001. This provided Lancaster police with the opportunity of re-deploying Traffic Wardens

into a reassurance role. This move would involve a huge cultural shift for those who would volunteer to take part in the scheme, which would be the first warden initiative under the direct control of the police in the country. It was agreed that this opportunity should be pursued.

Considerable effort went into the preparation of the wardens and the community for this role. It was essential that they were provided with the appropriate uniform that represented their allegiance to Lancashire Constabulary whilst being distinct from the uniform that represented their previous role. This was done with full consultation with the wardens and resulted in 'smart but casual' dress code. The patrols were instantly recognisable from the bright yellow polo shirts, which quickly became their trademark.

For the scheme to be successful the local authority (Lancaster City Council) had to be supportive. Existing links with the council were good and communication was led through the Local Authority Liaison Officer. The Director of Corporate Services was met to discuss the implementation and co-ordination of the scheme. The council was supportive of the pilot as long as agreement could be made on protocol etc. It was considered best that management and direction of the scheme would be through the Council Community Safety partnership, which would provide objectives and monitor performance. Later the Council went on to successfully bid for government funding to create a complementary scheme within Morecambe which would also be managed by the Community Safety Partnership.

The traffic wardens were consulted throughout. 6 traffic wardens were required for the scheme and 12 were available. 7 volunteered and one was deselected through consultation. The Traffic Wardens were initially apprehensive of the scheme for a number of reasons such as the move from clear enforcement led objectives to increased ambiguity over role and purpose. Similarly the name of the patrol and uniform were also issues that had to be worked through and eventually agreed upon. Unison also

supported the project and it was they who submitted the pilot to the Home Office as a Home Office Reassurance pilot. This was accepted and funding (£34,500) was provided to assist with the project.

Overall measures of success for the scheme would be whether there had been an increase in a positive improvement in public reassurance within Bulk Ward, this would obviously include a positive public reaction to the scheme. Also there was a need to ensure that the deployment of traffic wardens in a community safety role, which impacted on public reassurance, was feasible. This was to be achieved by undertaking activities such as patrolling, providing crime prevention advice, visiting vulnerable victims, and witness care and dealing with community problems.

Preparing the wardens was extremely important. They needed to be provided with sufficient training to ensure they had confidence in their abilities to achieve the aims and objectives of the pilot. Further to this the patrols had to have a clear framework within which they could operate, knowing that they had the support of management. To undertake this new role, Traffic Wardens would have to adopt new skills and competencies, as well as adopting new attitudes.

The Wardens had all performed the role of Traffic Warden for between five and fifteen years. It was accepted from the outset that in the absence of a rigorous recruitment and selection process there would be issues with the suitability of individuals. Normally a recruitment and selection process will ensure that prospective applicants consider the role in detail. The expectation was that the Wardens would improve against the Lancashire Constabulary's Support Staff personal competencies. The competency framework details the most critical behaviours based upon four underlying activity themes.

This consisted of *critical behaviours* which included problem orientated policing; team working; partnerships; quality assurance; and problem solving. The other part comprised

*underlying personal competencies* including team working; communication; team development; problem solving; team performance; team and self-motivation; and knowledge and understanding.

The key activity areas for the Wardens from an operational perspective were:

- Patrolling
- Working with the community
- Dealing with crime
- Dealing with incidents and disputes
- Arresting
- Preparing and giving evidence
- Dealing with large-scale incidents

These formed the basis of a 'Professional Development Portfolio' to guide the Wardens' activity through the initial 4 weeks of the pilot & beyond. The units were divided into elements where appropriate and each element contained specific activity. Evidence was to be logged on 'evidence sheets' and then signed off by their supervisor when a satisfactory level of competency had been reached.

There was a 4-week learning programme. Week 1 focused on group development, to loosen the 'safety net' of being a Traffic Warden and to begin the process of accepting the challenge of the new role. Learning areas were law centred (offences, powers of arrest, incidence and impact of specific crimes within Bulk Ward, linking activity to the divisional policing plan), communication and problem solving.

Weeks 2 & 3 focused on links with the community, community issues and to introduce the Wardens to partners in their key activity areas. Examples being visits were planned to a dependency rehabilitation unit, Victim support, Local Authority housing and environmental health issues.

Week 4 was designed to consist of inputs that would bring the course together. Sessions were planned on youth intervention schemes within the Division, Community Safety Partnerships, and an introduction to the 'professional development portfolio'. Following commencement of the pilot the Wardens received 4 weeks tutoring from an experienced police tutor who provided: feedback on performance; assessment of actual performance; providing assistance to implement acquired skills; drive activity through the professional development portfolio. This element of the training was seen as critical to ensure that new skills were put into practise and overcome many of the fears and concern expressed by the Wardens in adopting their new role.

## The issue of powers and deployment

A decision was taken very early on that the Community Safety Patrols should have no further powers other than those that are available to all citizens, and that those powers that were available to staff as traffic wardens were not transferable.

Initially some staff was concerned that the denuding of powers would leave them as "toothless tigers" however it has transpired that this has not been an issue. In fact the lack of enforcement powers has caused the patrols to be increasingly imaginative when dealing with community issues and encouraged them not to fall back into "comfort zones" of simply issuing tickets. There have been several discussions as to the requirement for powers of detention. The unanimous view of the patrols was that they were not required nor sought.

The CSP's were extremely well briefed as they were able to use the Lancashire Constabulary 'Sleuth' system which allowed them to be constantly updated on all incidents occurring on their beats. Similarly their safety was constantly monitored. They booked on, and kept the communications room updated on their position and the fact that they could be deployed via the police 'Airwave' system,

which also allowed for encrypted communication.

It was felt that it was simpler to give guidance Communications room staff as to the type of incident that it would not be appropriate to deploy patrols to. These included:

- Ongoing violent incidents, The patrols were not suitably trained nor were they issued with equipment such as batons or CS spray. It had also been stressed to patrols that they were not expected to be regularly making arrests although, patrols did have the powers of arrest that are available to all citizens if required.
- Patrols were available to report "low level" crime such as thefts from gardens and minor criminal damage. However, they were not able to report crimes that fell within the best value performance indicator categories. In practice that meant means that CSP'S should not be deployed to burglaries, violent crime and autocrime. This decision was taken as it was felt that all those classifications of crime required a degree of investigation that the patrols could not provide.
- As the patrols gained knowledge of their areas they identified via beat plans appropriate areas to patrol to deter groups of youths that were causing problems for residents. However, they did not have powers to move people on and it was important that they should not be perceived as juvenile nuisance patrols.

There was some reticence initially on the part of the Communications staff to fully utilise the patrols. However, this was gradually overcome by a combination of familiarity with the scheme and also willingness by the patrols to volunteer for appropriate deployments. By focussing on the visible cues of degradation and enhanced partnerships the patrols had notable successes over the following six months including:

- Initiating several street cleaning exercises.
- The removal of abandoned vehicles.
- Assisting in the arrests of a number of volume criminals by monitoring radio transmissions and providing pertinent information.

## ASSESSMENT

There were four parts to the assessment of the scheme, with the Home Office providing funding for two separate evaluations.

The first assessment was conducted by NTS Management Training and looked at the impact of the training on behaviour. The comparative pre and post course scores, in relation to the Professional Development Portfolio units are presented in the Appendix 3.

It is apparent that the Wardens were already strong in areas that related to teamwork and team building and over the period of the training the level of competency remained constant. The biggest increase was in relation to problem solving with a 1.5 increase in competency. This was clearly significant, given the requirement of their former role and what was now expected of them.

The second assessment was done at the time by the community safety patrols utilising mailshots, in an attempt to establish the needs and wishes of the community. The feedback provided a dynamic assessment, which was used to shape response on a weekly basis particularly the shift pattern worked by the patrols. Members of the public provided encouragement in the form of comments such as, "There is a greater feeling of security walking home in the dark".

There was also constructive feedback such as, "telephone contact number would be of use to raise matters if resident does not have chance to talk personally" This comment led to telephone stickers being produced and sent to all residents. Other comments such as, "I have

not seen your hi-vis patrol - I finish work at 7pm. Do you work evenings?" resulted in the patrols extending their periods of cover.

The patrols could see that although their task was extremely challenging it was making a difference in terms of reassurance. They also felt that it was reducing crime and disorder. A look at reported incidents confirmed this, in the period between October and December there were a total of 229 incidents of crime and disorder within the Freehold area alone. Between January and March there were 60 this represents a drop of 73%.

The overall scheme also received independent evaluation from two different sources. Lancaster University was assigned the task of evaluating the Safety Patrol initiative. Their research question was 'did the presence of the CSP's contribute to reassuring the public?' This question was addressed by three household surveys on the estate at two monthly intervals. Similarly two consultations with a focus group and semi-structured interviews with the CSP's and the police management team completed the evaluation. The individual sweeps aimed to cover three hundred households in the Ridge, Newton and Freehold estates. Residents were asked about their awareness and perceptions of the CSP initiative and any impact upon their anxiety about crime. The lack of affiliation with the police allowed the university team to objectively approach the research question avoiding any preconceived expectations and bias associated with prior knowledge of the initiative.

The University team evaluation drew several conclusions from their work. Throughout the six months that the initiative was proceeding, the number of residents' who had seen the CSP's had increased steadily from 70% in the first contact with residents to just over 90% in the third sweep. The numbers for those that had received information about the CSP's also increased, from 60% to begin with to 83% six months later.

Most importantly for the pilot was the test of how well the CSP's had been accepted into the

community The question about presence and the connected feelings of reassurance was the key to this. In the first sweep the response was mainly positive with 63% saying that they were reassured to some extent by the CSP's. This improved to 72.5% in the second sweep and 73.9% in the final sweep. It was also found that as the initiative went on more people felt they would contact the CSP's if they felt concerned.

A further report was commissioned from an external consultant, Dr Graham Barlow, who had considerable knowledge in this area. While the success of the initiative was assessed wholly upon feedback from the public, a significant outcome concerned second tier policing, controlled and directed by the police, and the effectiveness of the bridge which the initiative is anticipated to provide between the two tiers. Fieldwork was undertaken at intervals of approximately one, three and five months after the initiative began. Police and former traffic wardens, now community safety officers, were interviewed along with traffic wardens who had chosen not to volunteer for community support duties.

He found that substantial differences exist between auxiliary functions of community support and enforcement. It also suggests that effective community safety patrol may contribute to reductions in nuisance and street crime. This is borne out by initial analysis that would suggest that crime and disorder across

the entire Bulk Ward reduced by approximately 14.7 % when comparing the first three months of the pilot with the last three.

What appears clear is that the dynamics of enforcement and community support activities diverge over a range of factors. These tend to reflect different values, priorities and assumptions of what in effect are two contrasting models, of professional and community policing. It is advisable to determine the principal thrust of auxiliaries' duties at the outset, whether towards enforcement or community support, and to select personnel accordingly.

Finally Dr. Barlow stated that while regretting the loss of certain former powers (in particular, enabling them to respond to traffic emergencies occurring in their area), Lancaster's community safety officers currently do not feel a need for powers of arrest or detention, regarding these as potentially counter-productive to their community support activities.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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# APPENDICES

## **Appendix 1: A Summary of an Evaluation of the Northern Division Traffic Warden Initiative**

By The Department of Applied Social Science, Lancaster University.

### **Executive summary**

- Residents had increased levels of reassurance as the six-month pilot progressed.
- The CSPs presence became more prominent as time went by.
- The initiative was accepted to a different degree in the three areas
- The percentage of residents who would contact them if in need increased.
- People's understanding of the CSPs roles and responsibilities remained unclear.
- Different working hours were the most common suggestion for alternative roles.
- Juvenile nuisance was believed to be the main cause of anxiety not tackled by the CSPs.
- For improved results the community must be involved from the outset.
- Communication in all areas needs to be addressed and streamlined.

### **Introduction**

We were assigned the task of evaluating the Community Safety Warden (CSW) initiative which was primarily aimed to provide a high visibility presence and accessibility to the public in order to enhance residents reassurance and confidence. This was to be achieved by undertaking activities such as patrolling, providing crime prevention advice, visiting vulnerable victims, and witness care and dealing with community problems.

Our research question was 'did the presence of the CSPs contribute to reassuring the public?' We were provided with the methodology in which this question would be addressed: to undertake a household survey (three sweeps at two monthly intervals), a focus group (two consultations) and semi-structured interviews with the CSPs and the police management team. The individual sweeps aimed to cover three hundred households in the Ridge, Newton and Freehold estates. Residents were asked about their awareness and perceptions of the CSW initiative and any impact upon their anxiety about crime. The lack of affiliation with the police allowed us to objectively approach the research question avoiding any preconceived expectations and bias associated with prior knowledge of the initiative.

The methodological techniques used will be illustrated within the research. The results of our surveys, interviews and focus groups will then be presented with key issues highlighted. These will consequently be critically evaluated within the discussion, enabling conclusions to be drawn and recommendations made.

The findings highlight that the initiative has achieved its aim of improving reassurance. However, it has indicated areas for revision such as closer involvement of the community from the outset, clarification of roles, improved communication and altered working times.

## **Methodology**

We set out to explore this research question using triangulation of method, in an attempt to compensate for any problems within any one measure, adhering to the code of ethics proposed for researchers within criminology. We undertook three household surveys, carried out bi-monthly; focus groups with members of the community; and semi-structured interviews with the wardens and their supervisors. During the procedure of interviewing the CSPs, we also managed to obtain a semi-structured interview with the wardens' instructor. We also attended monthly meetings with all those involved, discussing the progress of the CSP initiative.

### **Household Surveys**

The questions finally used for our subsequent three sweeps (with minor developmental alterations for each sweep) were based on the strengths and weaknesses we identified in our pilot questionnaire (see Appendix B). We conducted a pilot questionnaire, on the Ridge, obtained 20 responses and consequently restructured the final questionnaire on the basis of our successes, difficulties and findings.

The questions in the survey reflect our aims adequately whilst keeping the questioning process simple and brief. They also offered a range of questions suitable for all participating individuals. For the first sweep we visited approximately 2,700 households, obtaining 301 responses, a response rate of 1:9. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used to collate the data, allowing us to view responses from each area and obtain cumulative results from all the sweeps.

To enable us to ask the residents if they were aware of the CSPs roles, we divided the questionnaire into two (side A and side B). Respondents classified as Side A are respondents who demonstrated some form of knowledge about the CSPs' roles and duties (both correct and incorrect). Side B represents those who were not previously aware of the CSPs' roles within the community. This classification of people will hence be referred to in this report as 'Side A' and 'Side B'.

The questionnaire consisted of both open and closed questions, which served as variables for the analysis. Open questions were used in order to obtain maximum information from participants within the time available also allowing us to incorporate any unexpected information and material. Coding of the questionnaires was left until all results had been obtained, allowing any additional information from the more open questions to be included.

For the second sweep, which was carried out in January 2002, we decided on keeping the same questionnaire format and the same questions. Minor alterations needed to be made in order to encompass additional roles which were being suggested, such as walking witnesses and responsibilities regarding traffic. This enabled a more accurate understanding of the changes in responses over time. The same methods were used and the data was inputted into SPSS for analysis. This time however, we had a more positive response rate from the residents of 1:8 (2,400 households visited). The same principle was used yet again in the third sweep, gaining 301 responses, with a response rate of 2:13.

In the third sweep further developmental alterations were made to encompass the amount of times people had seen the CSPs over the six-month initiative. This gave a different scale of possibilities of

frequency, incorporating the possibility that people will have seen them more often towards the end of the initiative.

### Industry Interviews

From the list of industries present in the Newton area, we selected eight at random to complete the same questionnaire as the residents had been asked to do. We felt that the roles of the CSPs should not alter for different areas of the community and thus neither should the questions. The industries were willing to talk about the CSPs and answer the questionnaire, more so than the residents, with a surprising 1:1 response rate.

### CSP Interviews

We obtained more detailed knowledge and feedback about the nature of the initiative its practicalities and successes from the CSPs themselves. The CSPs were interviewed in their patrolling pairs, ensuring that we could gain information in relation to the individual areas, as well as feedback about the whole initiative. It also meant they could talk and discuss issues amongst each other and give a general impression of how the initiative was operating in their particular area. Two researchers were present in each interview creating an atmosphere of an informal 'chat' rather than that of a formal interview situation. This helped to put the CSPs at ease and facilitated the discussion held. Two interviewers were used in order for communication to flow continuously; one was allocated to note taking and operating the tape recorder, whilst the other maintained the conversation without interruption.

### Focus Groups

A focus group of nine members of the area (three from each individual area-patrolled) was organised by the research project manager (Ian Paylor) and held twice over the CSW initiative six-month period. They were given a sum of £15 for their participation (for each of the two focus groups). For the second focus group the same respondents participated, which was the desired group, so as to maintain continuity and an insight into how their responses changed in different periods of the initiative. The focus groups were led by a professional researcher, giving us the opportunity to concentrate on making rich and detailed notes for analysis. It was held in a pub in the area, known or frequented by most of the participants and was described as an important community building for the Ridge. This was considered to make the participants feel comfortable, being on their 'own territory' and to aid open and free-flowing discussion amongst themselves.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The research undertaken has demonstrated that the CSP initiative has impacted upon levels of reassurance amongst the residents of the three areas.

Our results indicated the diversity of potential outcomes: in Newton the initiative was extremely successful; in Freehold the aims were achieved but to a lesser extent; and in the Ridge the initiative was viewed by some as not being worthwhile. Despite the variety of experiences, we conclude that the pilot scheme achieved its main aim of reassuring the public.

In order for a more successful initiative the following issues need to be redressed. The community needs to be involved from the conceptual planning stages to the implementation of the scheme. This would result in the community feeling less imposed upon and enable the initiative to be tailored to their needs. The community would therefore feel a responsibility to utilise the CSPs, having understood the roles and responsibilities of their respective CSPs.

Clarification of the roles undertaken by the CSPs is important so that the community have no misconceptions about their presence and expectations about the job. This may also help to maintain focus and motivation amongst the CSPs as they would have a set of guidelines to refer to.

The methods of communication, between the CSPs and the community, the CSPs in the initiative, and between the CSPs and the police, need to be cemented before the scheme is implemented.

Our research demonstrates that the hours worked by the CSPs do not necessarily correlate with the times identified by the community as preferable. Therefore to maximise the CSPs potential revised shifts would be advisable.

## **Appendix 2: Summary of The Lancaster Traffic Warden Initiative.**

Community and Policing, A Socio-Cultural Analysis  
Graham Barlow, BA Dip Crim MSt Msc PhD

### **Background, remit and scope of the report**

As a result of the provisions of the Road Traffic Act, 1991, the regulation of parking (hitherto undertaken primarily by traffic wardens) will become a responsibility of local authorities. Traffic wardens (who will continue to be employed by Police Authorities under the jurisdiction of Chief Constables) thus may be assigned to other duties.

A pilot initiative was introduced in June 2001 in Lancashire Constabulary's Northern Division to train a volunteer sample 'of six traffic wardens as community safety officers. It was intended that the initiative's patrol element would last for six months, from October 2001 to April 2002; subsequently, this was extended for a further two months. The initiative's objectives include promoting public re-assurance, reducing fear of crime, impacting positively on quality of life issues and, essentially, testing the feasibility of using traffic wardens in a non-confrontational community support role. Such a role includes advising on crime prevention and dealing with community problems.

While the success of the initiative will be assessed wholly upon feedback from the public, a significant outcome concerns second tier policing, controlled and directed by the police, and the effectiveness of the bridge which the initiative is anticipated to provide between the two tiers. This report considers the initiative's implications from this perspective and (as requested by the Project Manager, Superintendent J.M.Graham) it has taken other schemes and, in particular, historical and cultural factors into account. It does not deal with public reactions to the community safety officers as these are the subject of a separate appraisal.

Fieldwork was undertaken at intervals of approximately one, three and five months after the initiative began. Police and former traffic wardens, now community safety officers, were interviewed along with traffic wardens who had chosen not to volunteer for community support duties

Thus, the report begins by considering cultural and operational issues around foot patrol along with various types of wardenship scheme and two community patrol initiatives in Lancashire. The latter, at Hyndburn and Skelmersdale, both involve issues relevant to the current Lancaster initiative.

Subsequently, the status, characteristics and development of the role of traffic warden are reviewed, along with the nature of the role transition wardens must undertake in becoming community safety officers and the anxieties which elements of their new role can induce. The report then goes on to examine the dynamics of enforcement and community support activities, along with the attitudes, aptitudes and occupational characteristics of those involved.

The report concludes by considering the transferability of what has been learned, divergences in values, priorities and assumptions between professional and community policing, and steps towards maintaining effective operational bridges and working interrelationships between police and community support auxiliaries.

## Principal findings

- The initiative suggests that substantial differences exist between auxiliary functions of community support and enforcement. It also suggests that effective community safety patrol may contribute to reductions in nuisance and street crime.
- Police responsibilities and demands upon police time continue to expand; police responsibilities extend to an array of tasks which, though minor and not involving powers of arrest, nevertheless are necessary and time-consuming.
- Certain lesser tasks (for example, closing roads, directing and diverting traffic and other activities involved in police responding to road traffic accidents) have been undertaken by traffic wardens; such auxiliary assistance is valued by police.
- The range of ancillary activities undertaken by traffic wardens has expanded far beyond town centre patrol; for example, traffic wardens contributed substantially to Northern Division's capacity to respond effectively to exigencies arising from the recent epidemic of foot and mouth disease.
- Traffic wardens' activities primarily have been concerned with enforcement, response and surveillance. The Lancaster initiative has involved a sample of traffic wardens being detached from enforcement-oriented activities and engaging instead in work concerned with community support.
- The dynamics of enforcement and community support activities diverge over a range of factors. These tend to reflect different values, priorities and assumptions of, what in effect are two contrasting models, of professional and community policing.
- The two categories of activity, enforcement and community support, tend to mobilise different skills and mind-sets, the latter represented (for example) by practitioners' relative toleration of uncertainty and ambiguity or relative need for the security of demonstrating control. Those characteristics enable them to work effectively within one category do not necessarily work effectively in the other.
- Enforcement-oriented activities tend to be discontinuous and other-directed. Normally, they operate within procedurally defined structures and produce short-cycle results.
- Those engaged in community support tend to operate within diffuse structures; they need to be self-directed and to undertake activities contingent to the communities patrolled. Often, officers' work is remedial and concerned with bringing about longer term benefit and results.
- As the dynamics and practitioner characteristics associated with enforcement and support policing are differentiated, at the outset of a scheme it is advisable to determine the principal thrust of auxiliaries' duties, whether towards enforcement or community support, and to select personnel accordingly.
- The nature and patterning of the work of community patrols is influenced by and reciprocates with the communities they patrol.

- Most of Lancaster's community safety officers are enthusiastic about their new roles. Police constables and superordinates who have developed working relationships with safety officers are similarly approving and advocate introducing community safety patrols to other areas.
- Lancaster's community safety officers and traffic wardens are both proud of being members of Lancashire Constabulary. They acknowledge that they are not police, but nevertheless identify strongly with the functions of police in society and derive job satisfaction from their work in support of the police.
- A signal value of community safety officers is that they have been vetted and trained by Lancashire Constabulary, are acculturated to working within the Constabulary's codes and expectations and operate with professionalism under the jurisdiction of the Chief Constable.
- Over many years, studies have demonstrated that effectively functioning community foot patrols contribute to public order, promote senses of community reassurance and security, and enhance public satisfaction with the police. Initial results of the (separate) evaluation of public responses to Lancaster's community safety officers suggest similar positive findings.
- Patrol officers provide the only direct evidence that most of the general public ever see of the police at work; moreover, in the eyes of the public, patrol officers' accessibility and behaviour symbolise and legitimate the police as a whole. If Lancashire's police are to accrue similar benefit from their community safety patrols, it is advisable that community safety officers should be identified unambiguously with the Constabulary.
- Through discreet 'eye and ears' surveillance, community safety officers operating effectively in a residential area can become well aware of personalities and activities there. Such local knowledge may prove useful to CID officers.
- While regretting the loss of certain former powers (in particular, enabling them to respond to traffic emergencies occurring in their area), Lancaster's community safety officers currently do not feel a need for powers of arrest or detention, regarding these as potentially counter-productive to their community support activities.
- Community safety officers represent an additional, subordinate, rank at operational level. It is highly advisable that expectations of working interrelationships, mutual responsibilities and support between community beat managers, police and community safety officers should be established at the outset of their working together.
- Those engaged in community policing normally operate most effectively where relationships are cooperative and participating. Community safety officers are expected to be self-motivated and to exercise initiative and in developing their own operating structures and community interrelationships as active makers rather than other-directed performers of the community support role.
- As an exploratory project, concerned with organisational learning as well as community patrol, the Lancaster initiative has benefited from informed, thoughtful and perceptive leadership. Similar leadership qualities are likely to prove most effective in establishing and maintaining mutually supportive bridges and fruitful working relationships between police officers and community support auxiliaries.

**Appendix 3: Table of Warden Ratings by Competence Criteria**

| COMPETENCE                  | RATED CAPABILITY (OUT OF 10) | RATED CAPABILITY (OUT OF 10) | SHIFT |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| Team working                | 9.5                          | 9.5                          | 0     |
| Team development            | 5                            | 5                            | 0     |
| Communication               | 7.5                          | 8                            | 0.5   |
| Problem solving             | 6.5                          | 8                            | 1.5   |
| Team Performance            | 8.5                          | 8.5                          | 0     |
| Team and self motivation    | 8                            | 8                            | 0     |
| Knowledge and understanding | 6.5                          | 7.5                          | 1     |