



**Home Office**

BUILDING A SAFE, JUST  
AND TOLERANT SOCIETY

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING**

## **Progress Report May 2006**

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING: PROGRESS REPORT**

**This note summarises progress made in rolling out neighbourhood policing, in support of the Government's commitment to ensure a neighbourhood policing team in every community by April 2008, and the early results of implementation.**

**It comes jointly from Matt Baggott, Chief Constable of Leicestershire who leads for the Association of Chief Police Officers on neighbourhood policing and Moira Wallace, Director General of Crime, Policing and Counter-Terrorism in the Home Office.**

### **1. The commitment**

The Government's commitment is that:

- by 2008, every area in England and Wales will have a dedicated neighbourhood policing team;
- and before then, by April 2007, every community in England and Wales will see increased patrolling, better local information and a greater focus on confidence and reassurance.

### **2. Delivery**

The programme of delivery is being led by the Police and Home Office together. Matt Baggott, Chief Constable of Leicestershire and Vice President of ACPO is leading the reform and reports regularly to Home Office Ministers on it. The national programme probably represents the biggest change in policing for many years with individual forces being provided with up to date support and good practice through a national team. The implementation of neighbourhood policing is also the largest element of this year's inspection by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary.

Today, delivery has now extended to about 6,000 neighbourhoods who have dedicated neighbourhood policing. Over 50% of police Basic Command Units have implemented substantial coverage. Nearly 11% of police officers and PCSOs are already involved in neighbourhood policing. This will now rise substantially.

We envisage that, by April 2007, every community in England and Wales will see increased patrolling, better local information and a greater focus on confidence and reassurance. By April 2008, there will be a dedicated neighbourhood policing team embedded into every area in England and Wales.

### **3. Who is in a neighbourhood policing team ?**

Neighbourhood policing is being delivered by mixed policing teams. A mixed neighbourhood team will typically be made up of:

- ***uniformed police officers*** - who will lead the teams, acting as community leaders and tackling crimes which require the full range of police officer powers.
- ***Police community support officers*** (PCSOs) - uniformed members of the police team who provide a high-visibility, reassuring presence in communities and provide follow-up to victims of crime. By focusing on low-level crime and anti-social behaviour, they are improving people's quality of life. They can be designated with a range of powers by their Chief Constable (like issuing Fixed Penalty Notices or confiscating alcohol) which can have an immediate impact on dealing with problems of nuisance behaviour and disorder. The Government is currently legislating for a set of standard powers for all PCSOs, though a small number of powers will remain at the discretion of the Chief Officer.
- ***special constables*** - specials are volunteers with full police powers. They play an important role in tackling crime and providing a visible, reassuring presence in communities.
- ***neighbourhood wardens*** - who are employed by local authorities, housing associations and community groups. They play a vital role in neighbourhoods, particularly in deprived areas. Wardens can be the first point of contact for local people on issues of local concern – such as littering or abandoned vehicles. They are working as part of joint teams with the police in some areas.
- ***other authority figures*** - who are not employed directly by the police but who work within communities to help improve people's safety and quality of life, eg security guards, park rangers, housing association employees and environmental officers. They provide additional 'eyes and ears' for the police and are important for forging links, improving communication and delivering effective policing to neighbourhoods.

Clearly, a 'neighbourhood' to an inner-city resident is very different from someone living in a rural area. For the former, their neighbourhood could be a few streets or the estate where they live; for the person in the country, it could be their village, or group of villages or parish. Local communities, police forces, police authorities and partners are deciding what neighbourhoods mean, rather than being told by the Government – but typically, we would expect it to cover one or two local authority wards.

Similarly the size of teams will vary according to local decision – in effect, deploying the right people in the right places, to have the capacity to really make a difference. For example, the Metropolitan Police will be operating with teams of one Sergeant, two Constables and 3 PCSOs, with phone and e-mail contacts widely publicised, including through the Met's website. Other forces are configuring their teams differently, in accordance with local needs.

#### 4. The purpose of neighbourhood policing

The purpose of neighbourhood policing is to tackle crime and fear of crime better and bring the police closer to communities. Its key principles are:

- ***Visible and accessible police*** - local people seeing and having regular contact with the same officers - week in and week out - who stay in the job long enough to build lasting and trusting relationships with the communities they serve;
- ***Influence*** - over community safety priorities in their communities which might be dealing with persistent burglaries; clearing up graffiti and vandalism or tackling open drug dealing or gun crime. Local people who are closest to the problems in their communities are often best placed to help shape and participate in the solutions to them;
- ***Interventions*** - joint action with communities and partners to solve problems and harness everyone's strengths;
- ***Answers*** - sustainable solutions to problems and feedback on results. People will know the names, numbers and email addresses of their neighbourhood policing teams. They will also know who is responsible for what in terms of reducing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping the areas where they live and work safe. The Government is legislating to make it possible for local people, through the Community Call for Action, to trigger action by the police and other partners to address acute or persistent problems of crime or anti-social behaviour.

The Government's goal is that forces should be able to guarantee that neighbourhood police teams stay in neighbourhoods and are not taken away to deal with other events: this is one reason for restructuring police forces so that they have the capacity to deal with major events without having to divert neighbourhood teams.

But neighbourhood policing is not an island, separate from concerns about more serious crime and terrorism. It links closely to the National Intelligence Model which is the foundation on which forces today carry out their operational business – it enables the police to direct policing operations based on information and intelligence. It is key to the police service moving away from being reactive to being more proactive – using local information and real time intelligence to better target crime hotspots, increase detections and bring more offenders to justice.

## 5. Resources

The Government is putting substantial resources, through the Neighbourhood Policing Fund, into neighbourhood policing and the recruitment of PCSOs. Over £220 million will go into neighbourhood policing this year and £385m next financial year.

Police Community Support Officer numbers have risen from a standing start in 2002 to 6,300 at present and are planned to reach 16,000 in 2007 and 24,000 in 2008.

## 6. People

The PCSO role has proved particularly attractive to ethnic minority recruits and women. The diversity of PCSOs in terms of ethnicity, gender and age has been one of the successes of this role. Over 14% of PCSOs are from minority ethnic backgrounds (compared with 3.5% of police officers) and over 40% of PCSOs are women (compared with only 21% of officers). In the Metropolitan Police Service over 32% of PCSOs are from an ethnic minority background and over 30% are women.

## 7. Results

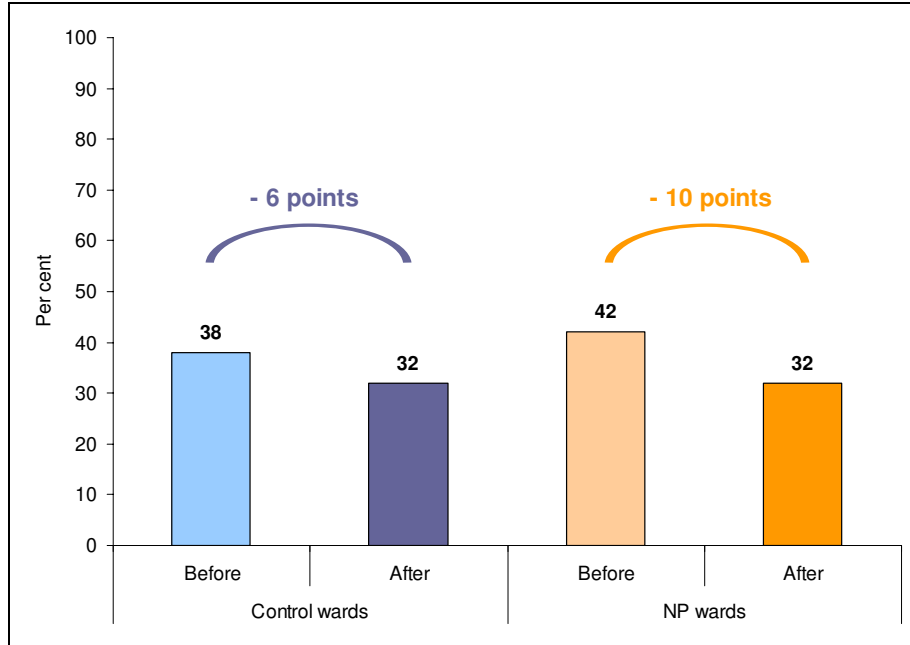
Neighbourhood policing is just one of a number of initiatives that are having success in reducing crime and fear of crime. The British Crime Survey shows that overall crime has fallen by 35% and violent crime by 34% since 1997 in England and Wales. The risk of becoming a victim of crime is at its lowest level since the British Crime Survey began in 1981.

But, a very rigorous evaluation of some of the first Neighbourhood Policing pilots shows that the initiative has the capacity to drive dramatic improvement.

The evaluation results of the *National Reassurance Policing Programme*, drawn from sixteen ward-level sites, in eight forces in England and beginning in October 2003 indicated that:

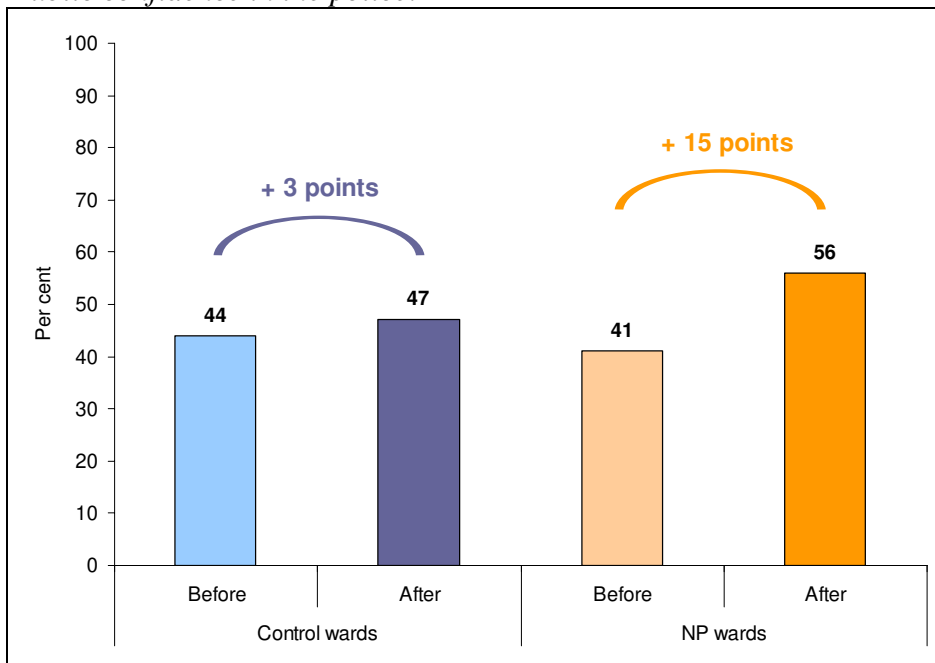
- *crime fell by nearly a quarter in the pilot areas*, almost twice the fall in wards without neighbourhood policing activity;

*Victimisation:*



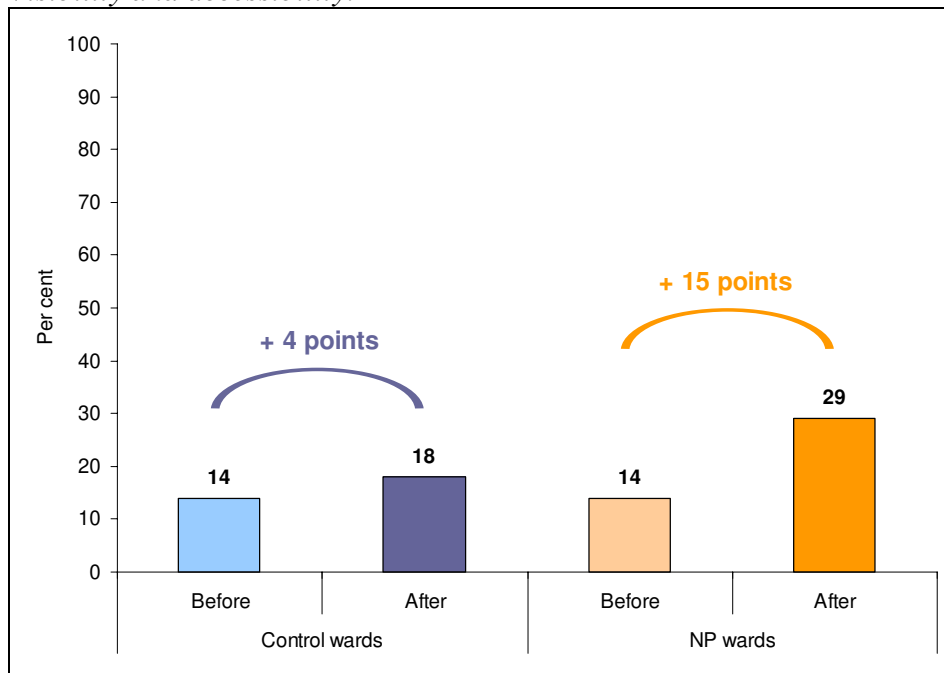
- the public's *confidence in the police increased by a third* in the wards with neighbourhood policing activity, five times more than in the wards without.

*Public confidence in the police:*



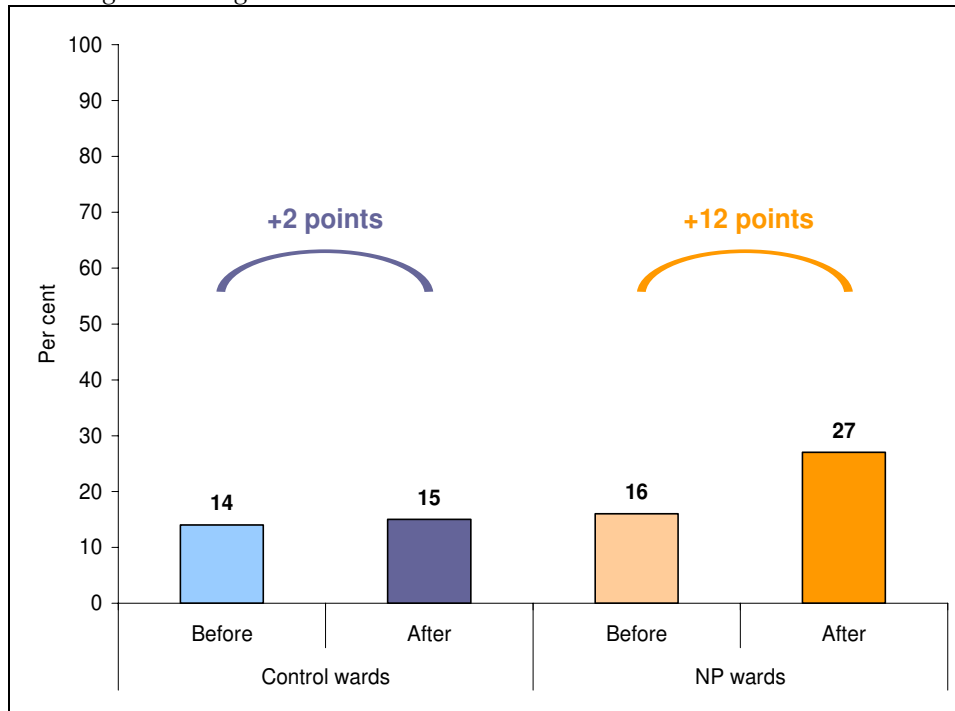
- the public were *twice as likely to be aware of foot patrols* as before the pilots started.

*Visibility and accessibility:*



- the public noticed a reduction in anti-social behaviour in wards with neighbourhood policing.* In one of these wards, the percentage of people who thought teenagers hanging around was a problem fell from 70% to 54%, while in the similar ward without neighbourhood policing, the percentage of people perceiving a problem with young people increased from 52% to 57%.
- and the *percentage of people who knew police who worked in their local area by name or by sight increased six times* as much in the wards with neighbourhood policing, compared to the wards without;

*Knowing their neighbourhood teams:*



These results are similar to the findings of the Audit Commission's report 'Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-social behaviour' (published yesterday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006) which makes clear that for a majority of people, it is their daily experience of anti-social behaviour in their streets and neighbourhoods that fuel their fears and perceptions.

**Case study: Leicestershire police – local problem-solving**

Neighbourhood beat officers and Police Community Support Officers in Leicestershire worked with the local community, Leicester City Council, and the local Joint Action Group to tackle a specific example of anti-social behaviour.

A gang of youths were vandalising a derelict toilet block, a focal point for drug users, in a park opposite a Hindu Temple. Bricks were thrown at people using the park and were also used to break the windows of the temple, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. The police, working with their partners, identified key individuals involved and issued warnings that stopped the damage in the short term. A long term solution was also sought and the council agreed to demolish the toilet block. A PCSO has maintained the links developed with the users of the temple and makes regular visits.

### **Case Study: Northumbria – Community engagement in rural communities**

A demonstration project in Northumbria involved close partnership working between the police and two rural communities. Participatory appraisal methods were used to build community capacity and involvement in local problem solving. Action planning meetings were held where Community Beat Managers, local residents, partner agencies and community groups all came together to highlight problems and plan achievable, jointly delivered solutions. Local residents in one area were trained to undertake their own surveys on local problems and experiences of crime.

Community Beat Managers and Sergeants in Northumbria felt the project had been a success, especially in relation to greater opportunities to share information and intelligence with the public. The sector Inspector has extended the project to neighbouring areas.

### **Case study: Metropolitan Police Service – Tower Hamlets**

The MPS has 630 Safer Neighbourhood Teams across London. The Tower Hamlets Safer Neighbourhoods Team have used partnership approaches to tackle a number of problems in the borough. In Gordon House, Shadwell there was a problem with drug abuse in stairwells. The Safer Neighbourhood team met with relevant partners and residents groups before introducing high visibility policing. Following a local authority review of housing security, covert cameras were installed and repairs made to buildings. A poster and media campaign helped highlight to local residents the response.

Large scale anti-social behaviour was a problem on the Martineau Estate and Shadwell Gardens. After meeting with partners, the Safer Neighbourhood team introduced high visibility policing alongside visits to schools to raise awareness of the problem. A number of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were taken out and enforced and several offenders referred to the Fire Service LIFE course. There was active participation from the professional witness scheme, and the local authority secured regeneration funds for improvements in housing security and lighting. Voluntary and community groups were also engaged, with the local church used as a youth club. The operation led to a reduction in crime above the borough average.