

# policebriefing

November 2004



The future of modern policing has been outlined in this month's Policy Paper

## A better service for the 21st century

**A** broad and ambitious agenda to build a better police service was set out in the police reform Policy Paper published earlier this month.

The paper, Building Communities, Beating Crime: a Better Service for the 21st Century, represents the next stage in a sustained programme of police reform which has produced real results including record officer numbers, community support officers, improvements in the use of science and technology and a sharper focus on performance.

### RESPONDING TO CHANGE

Society continues to change at a rapid pace and the police service must adapt to meet new challenges while maintaining its core values of independence, integrity and commitment to public service.

The paper seeks to respond to these new challenges and sets out the Government's vision for continued improvements in policing to help build safety, security and stability in our communities.

The Government aims to further reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder; reduce people's

fear of crime and anti social behaviour; and ensure that law-abiding citizens and families are protected. Fundamentally, the Government wants to ensure that the police service is a genuine service for communities.

### KEY THEMES

To achieve these goals this paper has three broad themes at its heart:

- The spread of neighbourhood policing improved responsiveness and customer service
- Further modernisation of the police workforce to ensure that the service is able to deliver these changes
- The greater involvement of communities and citizens in determining the type of policing delivered to their communities.

Alongside the paper, the Home Office has published two leaflets to set out ten clear commitments on how the service will be improved and what changes will be implemented to achieve this. One of the leaflets is aimed at the public and the other at the police. These are also available on the police reform website [www.policereform.gov.uk](http://www.policereform.gov.uk).

**The society we live in continues to change at a rapid pace and the police service must adapt to meet key challenges**

Continued over ►

## Inside policebriefing

### 2 Welcome

*Hazel Blears, MP*

### 3 New police powers

*Legislation will help police be more effective by updating the law relating to search and drugs*

### 4 The copper's contract

*Improving police understanding of public needs in focus*

### 5 Beating anti-social behaviour

*Successful strategies to tackle yobbish behaviour*

### 6 Organised crime watch

*Plans are afoot to give supervillains the elbow*

### 8 News update

*The latest news and at-a-glance updates from the Home Office*

  
Home Office

# Welcome

## Shaping the future

I am delighted to be able to introduce this edition of *Police Briefing* at such an exciting and important time for policing. The extensive reform programme has already helped to achieve a drop in overall British Crime Survey crime by 30 per cent since 1997 through record investment, record numbers of police officers, the introduction of community support officers and the development of a more performance-based culture. The chance of being a victim of crime is the lowest for 20 years. We are now looking to build on these successes and further reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and people's fear of crime.

The police reform Policy Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime: A Better Police Service for the 21st Century', published earlier this month, sets out the Government's vision for further improvements with the spread of responsive neighbourhood policing and better customer service at its core. It is vital that everyone who comes into contact with the police, for whatever reason, is provided with a consistent, high quality service. To deliver this we need to further modernise the workforce and invest more in career development and leadership training. We are also encouraging the greater involvement of communities and empowering local people to have a real say in the way their areas are policed.

The third National Policing Plan (2005-08) has also just been published and sets out the Home Secretary's priorities for the next three years. The Plan complements the Policy Paper by providing the focus for forces and police authorities to engage with their communities on local issues.

I would like to thank you all for your continued efforts, your courage and professionalism as you continue to meet the demands and challenges you are faced with every day.



Hazel Blears, MP, Minister of State for Crime Reduction, Policing, Community Safety, Counter Terrorism and Resilience

Continued from page 1

### POSITIVE FEEDBACK

The proposals outlined in the Policy Paper build on the responses received to the consultation 'Policing: Building Safer Communities Together' published in November 2003. The response was very encouraging.

A wide range of groups including the police service, police authorities, local government, community and voluntary groups and the general public engaged in the debate.

The key message received was that, while there were some areas in which debate would continue (for instance on the question of changes to force structures), there was broad agreement that the reform programme was heading in the right direction – in particular with regard to increasing community engagement.

### WORKING TOGETHER

The results (available at [www.policereform.gov.uk](http://www.policereform.gov.uk)) were published in September this year at a police reform conference attended by the Home Secretary David Blunkett, Home Office Minister Hazel Blears, chief constables and chairs of police authorities.

The discussions at the event were very constructive and echoed the responses to the consultation.

It was clear there was much common ground between the police service,



police authorities and the Home Office and that all were agreed on the direction of the reform programme.

It was felt that the reform process had now moved on from discussion about the direction of reform to how to deliver the shared vision of a more citizen focused, responsive and accountable service.

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### Contacts

For details of the Policy Paper, visit [www.policereform.gov.uk](http://www.policereform.gov.uk)  
For a copy of 'Policing: Building Safer Communities Together' summary of consultation responses, visit: [www.policereform.gov.uk/docs/policing\\_responses.pdf](http://www.policereform.gov.uk/docs/policing_responses.pdf)

## NATIONAL POLICING PLAN FORGES AHEAD

The National Policing Plan 2005-08 was launched at the Association of Police Authorities Conference on 24 November.

This is the third National Policing Plan (NPP) which sets out the Home Secretary's key priorities for the police service for the next three years. It has been informed by ACPO's National Strategic Assessment, which is based on the strategic assessments all 52 UK police forces, and highlights the key issues facing the police today.

The NPP sets out the Government's vision during 2005-08 of a police service which puts the law abiding citizen at the heart of all it does, while working in partnership to create and maintain secure and confident communities. This will require the

creation of a culture for policing which can tackle crime successfully at a local, national and international level.

This year's plan should be seen in the wider context of the Home Office Strategic Plan 2004-08 published in July 2004 and the Policy Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime: A Better Police Service for the 21st Century'.

### Contacts

For details contact Narinder Tamana at [narinder.tamana@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:narinder.tamana@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)  
For a copy of the National Policing Plan for 2005-08 visit [www.policereform.gov.uk/nationalpolicingplan05.html](http://www.policereform.gov.uk/nationalpolicingplan05.html)

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# New police powers a framework for the future

Proposed new legislation will help police be more effective by updating the law relating to arrest, search and drug testing powers

**N**ew powers to help police act effectively and improve the quality of life in our neighbourhoods are being considered for future legislation.

The raft of measures, suggested in the consultation document *Policing: Modernising Police Powers to Meet Community Needs*, would provide police and other agencies with appropriate powers to tackle crime. They would remove barriers, allowing more effective targeting of criminals, and free-up more time for officers to take up front-line duties.

Home Office Minister Hazel Blears said: "It is important that we maintain the crucial balance between the powers of the police and the rights of the individual. But we need to address any imbalance that prevents the police doing their job effectively and which restricts the ability to prevent and investigate crime or which helps the criminal to avoid detection and conviction.

"We need also to make sure that the investigative process promotes more efficient and effective use of officers' time."

The measures include redefining the framework of arrest powers so that a police officer can make an arrest for any offence, subject to a necessity test that would allow constables to apply their powers to fit the individual circumstances of the offence.

This would not only simplify and clarify procedures but also help raise the confidence of the community in knowing that the police have adequate powers at their disposal to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour.

Changes to the search warrant process would mean that a police officer could apply for one search warrant to cover multiple premises owned by the same person instead of having to apply repeatedly for warrants for each premises. This new super warrant would ease the burden on police officers seeking material that was being moved from location to location. However, it would still safeguard the rights of the individual because an officer would need to apply to the court, and use of the warrant on more than one occasion would need the prior agreement of an inspector.

The measures would also allow officers to carry out drug testing for certain trigger offences on arrest, rather than charge, and anyone tested positive would be required to receive treatment. This would help raise the rate of contact between drug users and drug workers.

Police would be permitted to take impressions of suspects' footwear without their consent. At present, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) states this can only be done with the suspect's full

knowledge and consent, which has enabled criminals to avoid identification by not wearing that footwear again or destroying it.

As part of the workforce modernisation process, some responsibilities would be transferred from police officers to police staff, leaving officers more time for frontline duties and working with communities to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

These include allowing Community Support Officers to direct traffic, deal with begging in the street and enforce local byelaws. Consideration is also being given to the roles of custody officer and identification officer being carried out by suitably trained and qualified police staff. This would free up time for sergeants and inspectors who are currently required by law to carry out these functions.



## Contacts

A copy of the consultation paper is available at

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/consults/closed/index.html>

For further details, visit:  
<http://www.policereform.gov.uk>

# Committed to good policing

A 'copper's contract' will help create an efficient, service and improve public confidence



A 'copper's contract', setting out the minimum standards of service that the public should expect to see from their police force, is to be introduced over the next two years. The contract aims for a consistent, high level of service to the public setting out national minimum standards which will:

- make it easier for the public to contact the police via call handling systems
- improve the way initial enquiries from the public are dealt with
- keep victims better informed about the progress of their case.

Standards will also cover the way people are treated by police staff, ensure that all forces properly monitor the quality of the service provided, and act on any feedback received.

These standards will be in place by the end of 2006. Each force will agree how these can be built on locally to reflect the particular needs of the communities they serve.

Home Secretary David Blunkett said the contract was a "vital part" of his vision of a police service focused on serving the public. He said that, all too often, the public's impression of the police service is poor because their initial contact with the police is disappointing.

The second stage of the work will encourage the police to focus on the service it gives to the public, particularly the needs of victims and witnesses. There will be a strong emphasis on policing with the public.

The way forces handle calls is an important part of the contract as 40 per cent of the adult population contact the police by telephone. The national call handling strategy will embrace:

- the ACPO programme of work to bring all forces up to the same high standard of call handling, which is due to complete in April next year
- a thematic inspection on contact management to be carried out during 2005 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)
- a manual of best practice on the most effective way to manage calls from the public, to be published following HMIC's inspection.

The project is being led by Chief Inspector Brian Hills, on secondment from Durham Constabulary: "You get a lot of

complaints from members of the public who try to contact the police by phone and don't get a very good service," he says. "This can make them feel disillusioned because they think they weren't taken seriously, didn't receive a professional response or were transferred from department to department. We will put

steps in place to improve this."

One of the key issues for improvement is the disparity between forces about how they measure the standards of call handling. As a result, levels of service vary from force to force.

CI Hills is working with ACPO and HMIC to set national call handling standards that will be introduced in April 2005. The aim is to provide a much more professional service for the customer and help forces measure whether they are doing a good job. Forces will be encouraged to pay particular attention to the quality of their calls and how to give a positive impression of the organisation.

CI Hills says: "A better understanding of customer needs will increase customer satisfaction, and hopefully reduce both the amount of repeat calls and complaints."

**"A better understanding of customer needs will increase customer satisfaction, and reduce repeat calls and complaints"**

## A CONTRACT TO EMPOWER LOCALS

The contract encourages the police to work with the public to reduce crime and to empower them to take responsibility for their own areas.

In Merseyside, police are working alongside the public to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. In the Orrell Park area, they have already embraced the concept by introducing a Community Template for Action.

This initiative provides a truly community-focused approach to dealing with local problems, and has not only reduced crime by 18 per cent in six months, but has also helped instil community spirit and pride.

A key part of the Community Template for Action is to involve residents in identifying local problems and encourage them to work with the police and other local partners, such as the local council, to find solutions.

Inspector Geoff Cheshire, Neighbourhood Inspector for Fazakerley and Warbreck, says the public has an important role to play: "They are there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so they know what the real problems are. This means they are in a position to set minimum standards from the outset."

### Contacts

For more information contact Inspector Geoff Cheshire at: [geoff.cheshire@merseyside.police.uk](mailto:geoff.cheshire@merseyside.police.uk)

# More power to the people

A survey shows that the Anti-Social Behaviour Act and the TOGETHER campaign are having a real impact on crime in the community

**N**ew powers to help parish councils tackle anti-social and environmental crime have been announced as encouraging figures were published for the Government's anti-yob strategy.

At a conference last month, the Government simultaneously revealed a huge extension of its TOGETHER campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour, including plans to engage anti-social people in drug treatment.

The Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan and the TOGETHER campaign have now been running for a year. The figures show that communities are making good use of the new powers extended to them.

Home Secretary, David Blunkett, told the conference: "We have brought in tough new laws and, with local partners, driven forward an ambitious national action plan. The TOGETHER campaign has produced real results, with around 100,000 cases of thuggery and nuisance dealt with over the past year."

He said: "This is against a background of record numbers of police officers – nearly 140,000 – backed up by more than 4,000

community support officers and cuts in crime on both statistical measures (the British Crime Survey and recorded crime). In particular, I commend local authorities and the police for taking early action in linking new powers to curtail misuse of fireworks with dispersal powers, including curfews for under 16s, in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act."


A one-off survey, published by the Home Office, shows that local authorities, agencies and police have responded positively to powers in the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act. Estimated figures show:

- 5,383 acceptable behaviour contracts were made in the 12 months between October 2003 and September 2004
- 2,633 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were issued in the 12 months between October 2003 and September 2004
- 158 crack house closure orders were made in the nine months between January 2004 and September 2004
- 418 dispersal orders were made to tackle the problem of intimidating groups in the nine months between January 2004 and September 2004



- 66,000 cases were tackled in the 12-month period from October 2003 and September 2004, ranging from early intervention to court proceedings. Projecting the results of the survey nationally this is in excess of 100,000 cases.

Mr Blunkett added: "Over the past year we have seen what can be achieved. Working in partnership with local people and agencies up and down the country, we can do much more to tackle thuggery, to help create safe, secure communities where people can live and work free from harassment and fear."

He also urged everyone to keep up the good work: "Much has been achieved over the past year, but there is still much more to do." 

## A FRESH APPROACH TO CRIME STATISTICS

The Home Office is committed to promoting good practice to ensure crime recording is as accurate as possible

To promote best practice and crime recording accountability, the Home Office hosted a conference in London entitled Crime Recording: Right From the Start. It was chaired by Jon Simmons, Head of Statistics in the Home Office Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group, who said that, until the Review in 2000, gathering crime statistics had not changed greatly since the 19th century.

Jon Simmons said: "We are now much more aware that police statistics do not provide a complete picture. The British Crime Survey has shown clearly that many crimes do not get reported, nor in some

cases are they recorded even when reported, and this varies depending on the type of crime."

Careful attention had to be paid therefore both to refining the way in which data is gathered and improving the way in which it is analysed and used. Improvements had been achieved following the introduction of:

- the National Crime Recording Steering Group and the Counting Rules website
- the National Crime Recording Standard and other improvements to the rules and processes for managing crime recording
- improved publications on crime

statistics including the new annual volume and the quarterly update. Delegates attending the conference heard the strategic messages delivered by key speakers including Stephen Rimmer, Director of Policing Policy and Paul Evans, Director of the Police Standards Unit.

The event presented an opportunity to develop the community of crime recording and statistical experts from within forces and the Home Office. It also enabled forces to engage in discussion with the Police Standards Unit over auditing issues following the recent Year 2 reviews of crime recording data in all forces.



# Partner power

Crime bosses will have to find another country to further their careers as a new agency starts to take a tough line on serious organised crime

**A** Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) is being created to make this country one of the most hostile environments for organised crime and criminals anywhere in the developed world.

The agency will be relentless in its pursuit, investigation and prosecution of those individuals and organisations who are at the heart of serious organised crime. Its vision is for a country in which it will simply be too difficult, dangerous and unprofitable for organised criminals to operate.

SOCA will be an intelligence driven organisation that will work with partners towards the development of integrated harm reduction strategies, providing an operational perspective on the powers and approaches required.

The White Paper, *One Step Ahead: A 21st Century Strategy to Defeat Organised Crime*, published on 29 March this year, sets out the Government's clear strategy for tackling organised crime. The determined approach places SOCA as a centrepiece of the proposals.

## Working together

The agency will bring together the National Criminal Intelligence Service, the National Crime Squad, the investigative and intelligence work of Her Majesty's Customs

and Excise on serious drug trafficking and the recovery of related criminal assets and the Immigration Service's responsibilities for organised immigration crime.

Specialist prosecutors, answerable to the Attorney General, will work closely alongside the agency's staff to provide advice and help shape investigations.

The agency's remit will include:

- Class A drugs trafficking and the recovery of related criminal assets
- organised immigration crime (people smuggling and human trafficking)
- firearms
- money laundering
- crime against business with an organised crime component e.g. extortion
- cyber hi-tech crime
- intellectual property crime (counterfeiting).

The Agency will also offer specialist assistance to local police forces and other law enforcement agencies, both in terms of intelligence analysis and operational support.

Sir Stephen Lander was recently appointed as SOCA Chairman and William Hughes as its first Director General.

Sir Stephen said: "The Director General and I are determined that the new agency should be uniquely placed and capable of disrupting and disabling the organised criminals that are damaging this country."



## Contacts

For further information contact Mark Steels on **020 7084 8016**

## CSO'S REMIT IS WIDENED TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community Support Officers (CSOs) are to be given new powers in order for them to support police officers in their duties more effectively and allow them to concentrate on specialist work more appropriate to their higher level of training.

The measures contained in the consultation document *Policing: Modernising Police Powers to Meet Community Needs* include proposals for CSOs to have new powers to direct traffic, deter begging, enforce byelaws and a power to search a detained person who may present a danger to himself or others.

The Government has also proposed extending the powers of CSOs to deal with the night-time economy and alcohol related anti-social behaviour, says the consultation paper.

The consultation period has now closed and the Government is considering a response to the replies received.

Local evaluations have shown that CSOs have been well received by the general public and that they have had a positive

effect on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Home Office is also developing a national evaluation of CSOs; there will be an interim report at the end of 2004 and a final report in summer next year.

### TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

In consultation with the police service and other stakeholders, the Home Office is looking at adding to the powers available to CSOs and people accredited under Community Safety Accreditation schemes to make them even more effective in tackling anti-social behaviour (see page 5).

The new powers would not increase the bureaucratic burden on CSOs nor reduce the amount of time that they can spend on high-visibility duties. CSOs currently spend around 70 per cent of their time on high-visibility duties – a key aspect of community-focused policing that helps to prevent anti-social behaviour.

# News

## RACE AND DIVERSITY SKILLS FOR LIFE

In November, the publication of the Strategy for the Police Race and Diversity Learning and Development Programme was launched to highlight training needs for officers. The new Learning and Development Skills Framework for police trainers will be introduced by March next year.

## CHRISTMAS CRACKDOWN ON ALCOHOL CRIME

This summer's crackdown on alcohol-related anti-social behaviour proved so successful that it is to be re-introduced in the run-up to Christmas and New Year.

The summer 2004 alcohol campaign, run in 39 forces (92 BCUs) and co-ordinated by the Home Office's Police Standards Unit and the Association of Chief Police Officers, targeted alcohol-related crime and disorder and under-age drinking across the country.

The favourable response to this joint strategy has prompted the Police Standards Unit to produce a Lessons Learned Document, which was made available following the Post Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign conference on 8 November.

The conference was attended by the Minister for Policing, Crime Reduction and Community Safety, Hazel Blears, the President of ACPO, Chris Fox, BCU Commanders, Chief Executives from Local Authorities as well as representation from the alcohol industry.



## CITIZEN-FOCUSED POLICING BOOSTS ENGAGEMENT

A recent community engagement seminar brought together delegates from police forces, authorities, the Home Office, engagement practitioners and members of the National Practitioner Panel for Community Engagement (NPPCE) to discuss input into developing and sharing effective practice to support engagement with communities.

Providing a citizen-focused service is one of the key priorities set out by the Home Secretary in the National Policing Plan (2004-2007). A key element in achieving this will be the need to engage more effectively with communities. This emphasis is supported by the new measures for public confidence and satisfaction within PPAF – reflecting the more active role of the public in future policing.

The Home Office is keen to help forces and authorities engage more effectively and, with the Association of Police Authorities, established the NPPCE, and three projects in Northumbria, Cheshire and Merseyside, each testing a different way of engaging the community. The panel is part-funded by HM Treasury's Invest to Save Budget.

### SHARING BEST PRACTICE

The panel, a team of practitioners chosen for their practical skills, experience and their enthusiasm for engaging communities, aims to build and share effective practice and provide practical support, as well as developing one point for information on community engagement.

Chief Insp Rob Odell of South Yorkshire Police said of the seminar, held in London: "There was a good mix of people there, all

talking about the same agenda, swapping ideas and taking notes. Pooling ideas and best practice is so important to avoid duplication. I had a real sense that things are getting organised. It was also useful to have a local authority perspective throughout the day."

Helen Shaw, NPPCE member of Merseyside Police said: "The day was useful as it enabled us to get information from practitioners about what they want to see in their toolkit, rather than us telling them what they need."

Delegates took part in various workshops during the seminar before being updated on the three demonstration projects.

### POSITIVE EXAMPLES

The panel is currently developing a toolkit for practitioners, including a menu of options to help identify potential problems and offer practical solutions, and is compiling a 'what works' database. It is intended that the database and toolkit will be initially available early next year, with work continuing on further developments. The evaluation of the three projects in Cheshire, Merseyside and Northumbria will also inform the development of effective practice in community engagement through the database.

Anyone who has any examples of community engagement projects that have worked is urged to share their experiences. The panel is not just looking for large-scale projects that have been fully evaluated but any smaller initiatives that are at varying stages of evaluation and/or analysis.

**Email details of projects to: [engagementinpolicing@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:engagementinpolicing@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)**

## PND SUCCESS PROMPTS TEN NEW OFFENCES

Ten new offences have been added to the Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND), among them three relating to breach of firework regulations. Four of the other offences apply to the sale and consumption of alcohol while the remainder deal with vandalism, litter and petty theft.

The PND scheme was introduced as

part of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 and piloted among a handful of forces before September 2003.

During that pilot, more than 6,000 PNDs were issued by five forces over a 12-month period. It is now being introduced nationally. **See next month's *Police Briefing Bureaucracy Special* for more details of the new PNDs.**

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