



Lancashire
POLICE AUTHORITY
Your County, Your Police, Your Say

“DIALOGUE”

Issue 8 - August 2008

Eastern

“Investors in Policing”



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Editor note: We want to ensure that this newsletter is addressing the issues that are important to you. If you have any suggestions about any issues or topics you would like us to include in the next edition, please contact Danielle Norton on 01772 531209 or e-mail danielle.norton@lpa.lancscc.gov.uk

www.lancspa.gov.uk

“SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS & WITNESSES”

As a victim or a witness of crime it's important that you know what's happening, whether the offender has been caught and what the outcome is.

Over the last two years the Police Authority has worked closely with the Constabulary to focus on improving the service provided to victims and witnesses. Authority Member David Winthrop explained: "Keeping victims and witnesses informed is tremendously important. That's why Witness Care Units, formed in partnership with the Crown Prosecution Service, have been introduced. They provide a single point of contact for those cases going to Court, giving support and information throughout the process.

"People giving evidence are also offered help from Victim Support's Witness Service, a confidential service designed to help them through what can be a stressful time.

"We have monitored the progress made using a process called VICMAN, which checks that people have been kept properly informed."

Other successful initiatives include promoting the use of Victim Personal Statements, so that victims can explain to the Courts

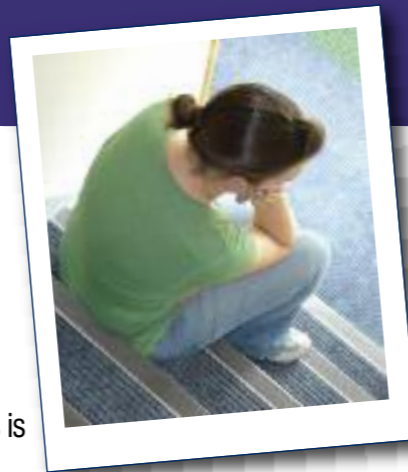
how a crime has affected their life.

Facing up to the impact of crime

Making offenders take responsibility for their actions is central to the Restorative Justice process.

Restorative Justice focuses on the victim receiving some form of compensation or amends from the offender, which victims say they find more satisfactory than other forms of punishment. This alternative method has been very well received. Those given a conditional caution, which is usually only offered to first time minor offenders, are expected to admit their offence and make good the harm they have done. The case doesn't go through the Criminal Justice System, saving time and money for the taxpayer, and the offender doesn't end up with a criminal record for a very minor offence.

Mr Winthrop added: "Victims are pleased to see offenders putting their wrongdoings right and the number of re-offenders goes down."



Delivering Results on your investment - Protecting People 2008

When local people supported the Police Authority with extra funding through the police part of their Council Tax, the Constabulary pledged to address serious and organised crime and terrorist activities.

Protecting People Week, a hugely successful operation held in May, saw a number of important achievements including:

- Almost 200 people arrested
- £130,000 worth of drugs seized
- 41 people charged with Class A drugs offences
- 8 cannabis farms discovered
- £31,880 cash seized
- 60 illegal cars taken off the streets



Chief Constable Steve Finnigan was keen to show the public of Lancashire what they can expect from a top-class police force and demonstrated, through a series of high profile operations in every geographic area, that when he says his priorities are to invest in serious and organised crime, counter terrorism and neighbourhood policing, that these promises transfer into action.

Congratulating the Force, Chair of the Police Authority, Cllr Malcolm Doherty who went out with the officers on the first day of the operation, said: "This is not just a one off crackdown. I know that the Constabulary will continue to target crime in each division, proving that the extra investment local people have made in their police force is paying dividends."

Tell the Police Authority what you think. Log on to the website www.lancspa.gov.uk

Lancashire Crimestoppers is top!

Calls to the Crimestoppers charity from people living in the county have increased and one in four calls has resulted in a detection. According to Home Office figures that put Lancashire as the joint top performing Crimestoppers board in the country alongside Leicestershire.

PC Kay Armstong, who co-ordinates the Crimestoppers hotline said: "Crimestoppers is a valuable tool for people who do not wish to be identified by the Police but have information on crime. Information from people in Lancashire helped with the success of the recent Operation Protecting People in the county.

"If people are afraid to ring the police with information about criminal activity then we would urge them to pass it anonymously to Crimestoppers. There isn't a call line identifier, calls are not traced, and calls by a landline don't appear on an itemised bill."

The head of the county's Crimestoppers charity, Mrs Gail Porter, said: "We act on all these calls and we are really pleased with our current success but we would urge people to continue to contact us with any information they have about crime in their area."

Crimestoppers can be contacted round-the-clock on 0800 555 111.

People can also supply information anonymously on the Crimestoppers website www.crimestoppers-uk.org where there are also details of suspects wanted by police in the district.



CSI: Lancashire

In the glossy world of television, 'CSI' programmes don't have an issue with the big budget costs of forensic materials. In the real world, the Police Authority's role is to ensure top notch 'CSI' results on a Lancashire budget.

Thanks to a groundbreaking project, 14 forces are working together to buy forensic services as a whole to make savings and perform better. The contracts were agreed with the providers in April this year.

This approach will see Lancashire Constabulary save over £1m. By joining together savings on things like DNA mouth swabs, which used to cost £45 per swab, now cost £22. With around 1,000 such swabs being submitted each month, the savings soon mount up!

In addition, turnaround times have improved and the reporting procedure has improved so that we can ensure value for money.

County Councillor Geoff Roper, Chair of the Police Authority's Resources Committee, said: "The project offers many advantages, such as economies of scale, continuity of service provision, reduced costs and greater effectiveness. This is all part of our pledge to the local taxpayers that we will invest their money wisely and to good effect."

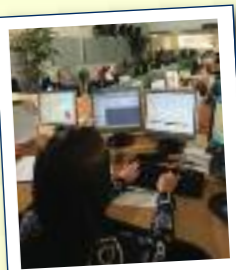
The 'QUEST' for Service

Lancashire Constabulary's hugely successful Operation QUEST is now making its way across the force following its first successful trial within Northern Division last year.

QUEST is driving the Police to provide a service tailored to the needs of the public who need their help. Communication Room Operators will be able to offer better initial advice over the phone or members of the public can book an appointment, at a time convenient to them, to see a police officer at a police station 'surgery'. Where appropriate the appointment can be at the caller's home address or other preferred place.

These surgeries have been very well received and have proven their

worth with 99% of customers being satisfied with how their enquiry has been managed. As well as improving the service for non-urgent matters, since the changes came into effect repeat calls to the Communications Rooms have fallen by 52%.



One member of the public who had requested to see an officer said: "The service was very good, a polite response to the initial call, the appointment was made within two to three hours of the call, and the officer attending was very polite and helpful."

Have you experienced the new QUEST system? Let the Police Authority know what you think



CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT
ANDY RHODES

“TARGETING SERIOUS CRIME”

In Eastern Division we have led the way in targeting serious criminality, particularly in relation to Class A drug dealing and tackling those offenders who present a real threat to our communities. We have also invested heavily in the areas of child protection and counter terrorism. We are proud of the way that both police and partners work as one team when faced with challenging situations.

For those of you who live, work or visit Eastern Division, you can be confident what the police here know what the local issues are and are doing exactly what needs to be done to tackle them. We want to hear about the priorities in your neighbourhood through PACT meetings and these are an ideal opportunity for you to influence how your community is policed.

BOGUS CALLER INITIATIVE

This initiative, which ran in conjunction with Lancashire County Council Trading Standards, Lancashire Constabulary and Hyndburn Community Safety Team, was aimed at reducing the number of bogus callers in the area.

Bogus callers usually target the most vulnerable members of our community, often leaving people distressed or injured. By encouraging communities to get involved in Neighbourhood Watch schemes and to display the brightly coloured cards in windows or on doors the initiative encourages people to be bogus caller aware and on the look out for suspicious activity.

For more information on Hyndburn Community Safety Partnership visit: www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk

Disrupting criminals to keep you safe

Launched in June, Operation Titan is tackling prolific criminals across East Lancashire using various ways to disrupt criminality.

Officers use Automatic Number Plate Recognition systems to target travelling criminals and operational support units to target drug related crime, while Neighbourhood Policing Officers provide a highly visible presence to reassure people and tackle community concerns.

Chief Inspector Damian Darcy leading the operation said: “Operation Titan is Eastern Division’s long term plan to tackle the issues which are of greatest concern to the public.

“We are addressing drug dealing, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage - and demonstrating our determination to deal robustly with criminals.”



Police get on board to tackle crime

Police have teamed up with Lancashire County Council’s Safer Travel Unit to tackle crime and vandalism on buses in Blackburn, following reports of problems of anti-social behaviour and youths throwing stones at buses in the area.

Plain clothed police officers and members of the Safer Travel Unit have been travelling on the Trogan bus in the Shadsworth, Highercroft and Galligreaves areas of Blackburn in a bid to drive down anti-social behaviour and identify the culprits.

Police said they were pleased that no incidents of anti-social behaviour were reported during the operation.



Sgt Andy Winter from the Neighbourhood Policing Team said: “The results demonstrate that the message is getting through. We will not tolerate crime and disorder on our public transport and will continue to work with the Safer Travel Unit in the future to make sure that the people of Blackburn can travel around the borough safely and without fear.”

JUNIOR POLICE ACADEMY IS SPECTACULAR SUCCESS IN SCHOOLS

The Blackburn with Darwen Junior Police Academy, a scheme to encourage positive behaviour in school children, has been so successful that it is to be rolled out across the county.

The programme, which centred on three schools, Witton Park High School, Darwen Vale and Blakewater College, has been remarkable in helping teenagers engage with school life and the community in a

constructive way, encouraging positive attitudes and behaviour and destroying the popular perception that bad behaviour in teenagers is inevitable both in and out of the classroom.

Many of the teenagers taking part want to continue and several are considering careers in the police force based on the positive experiences they have had as Junior Police Officers.



POLICE CLOSE SUSPECTED DRUGS DEN

Police closed the door on a suspected drugs den in Heatley Close Blackburn for a period of three months.

The Crack House Closure Order was granted after the local Neighbourhood Policing Team gathered evidence of Class A drug use at the address, following complaints from local residents about suspicious behaviour, serious nuisance and disorder along with Class A drug use prompted police to take action.

Speaking after the Order was granted, Community Beat Manager, PC Chris Hammill said: “This order should demonstrate our determination to take firm action against anyone involved this type of behaviour.

“We are extremely grateful to the local community for providing us with information to help us to close this flat and I hope people are reassured that we have listened to their concerns and acted on the complaints they have made.”



Getting serious... about serious and organised crime.

Following a major police investigation into a Blackburn shooting, three men who carried out a violent attack on two brothers have been jailed for a combined total of 31 years.

The attack, a result of a dispute between two rival groups of Asian men, involved the firing of two gunshots through the windows of a house on Whalley New Road, Blackburn. Police enquiries soon revealed that the family living at the address were not the intended targets and the shots had been intended for two men living next door.

Detective Inspector Andy Hulme who was in charge of the investigation said: “This has been a long and complex enquiry and I hope that the sentence acts as a deterrent to all criminals and illustrates that Lancashire Constabulary will not tolerate serious and organised crime.

“I would also like to reassure members of the public that incidents of this nature are thankfully rare in Blackburn, and that the fear of gun crime is much greater than the risk of becoming a victim.

“We will continue to work very closely with community leaders, councils and the communities themselves to look for ways to prevent serious and organised crime and I urge anyone with information or concerns to contact us on 0845 1 25 35 45 or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.”

Residents Note!
Crime in Hyndburn has dropped by 22.4% in the last 3 years - that means less victims of Burglary, vehicle crime, violent crime and criminal damage!



“LANCASHIRE INVESTORS GET UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL AT OPEN DAY 2008”

Start with 7000 tickets, a mix of weather, add our very own ‘Bond, Investor Bond’ coin character and what do you get? A fun filled, activity packed Police Authority marquee at the Summer Nights Open Day launch, at Police Headquarters, Hutton.

Lots of activities were available for people to take part in at the Police Authority stand where members of the public were invited to give their views on policing priorities by spending ‘policing pounds’, rate their awareness of neighbourhood policing and talk about policing services. There was also the opportunity to ‘win back your council tax’ by grabbing golden tokens from the money grabber machine – where the Authority gave away £135 (the average amount paid from council tax towards policing) kindly sponsored by SMSR research.



Chief Executive Miranda Carruthers-Watt was pleased to welcome so many people to the Authority’s stand. She said: “There was no doubt that they were enjoying a wonderful day out. There was so much to see and do, I was delighted that so many people visited us to have their say on policing. They loved the money grabber machine and of course everyone likes to try and win some money, but people were also keen to put their views forward on policing and get involved. This shows that ‘Investors in Policing’ is really working.”



What has Investors in Policing achieved?

Since its launch, Investors in Policing has enabled the Authority to raise awareness of its role and to encourage people to become more involved.

It’s about shaping policing services: as council tax payers, you have the right to have a say in the way your money is spent on all local services and this includes policing.

Have your say!

You can give us your views by:

Telephone: 01772 533587
Email: info@lpa.lancscc.gov.uk
Visiting our website:
www.lancspa.gov.uk

Quick Glance

We asked - Do you know your local officer?
74% said yes, 26% said no.



Investors indicate top police investment choices by spending policing pounds

We gave members of the public £135 ‘policing pounds’ and asked them to spend it against the nine policing emphases that the Authority sets for the Constabulary each year. The top 5 choices were:

1. Public safety
2. Serious and organised crime
3. Anti-social behaviour
4. Counter terrorism
5. Violent crime

The bottom line

We asked - Are the police good value for money?
82% said yes, 13% said no.



Future investment areas identified

When asked to identify further policing priorities the top responses were :

1. Having more police
2. Tackling street crime (guns and knives)
3. Combating youth crime and protecting young people



“Winning Back your council tax”

The lucky winners of the £135 prize were the Patel family from Preston. Mr Patel said “I am delighted to win this prize and it was a real surprise. I enjoyed thinking about how I would spend my ‘policing pounds’ and the whole family, especially the children, thought the event was interesting, informative and worthwhile.”

PICTURE: INVESTOR BOND, THE PATEL FAMILY AND MIRANDA CARRUTHERS-WATT



“We win award, thanks to you!”

With your help Lancashire Police Authority’s Investors in Policing Campaign was rewarded with the ‘Community Engagement through Scrutiny’ Award, from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS).

At the awards ceremony in London, Judge Andy Sawford, Chief Executive of the Local Government Information Unit, said: “I liked Lancashire’s campaigning approach and also their ambition and scale. This was about using scrutiny to raise public awareness and it had clear and impressive outcomes.”

Malcolm Doherty, Chair of Lancashire Police Authority said: “Everyone in Lancashire who has given us their views and enjoyed our innovative methods of consulting them has helped us win this award. It is proof that local people do want to help shape local policing delivery and that we have provided them with the opportunity to do this. It also demonstrates that the Authority offers people very good value for money.”

PICTURE: NAOMI WALKER, DANIELLE NORTON AND JOHN HEALEY, MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT





Lancashire
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“IMPORTANT NEWS!”

The future of our Police Authority Community Meetings (PACs)

As you may be aware, in recent months we have been reviewing the way we engage and consult with the diverse communities of Lancashire.

Finding out your views on policing and ensuring the local police are answerable to the public is really important to us. Historically, we have used PACs as well as undertaking three pilot Local Policing Boards across West Lancashire, South Ribble and Chorley. What the PACs and the Policing Boards have demonstrated is that whilst you want to get involved you have told us that these approaches may no longer provide the best way.

Through the review we have listened to your views and in the coming months we will be working with our partners who have responsibility for crime and disorder to move from the current PAC process to a new ‘face the public’ approach. This means that the September / October cycle of PACs will be our last.

We are working very hard to ensure that our new form of consultation will be more accessible, and that the local police will be more publicly accountable on the delivery of policing services.

Next Steps

In the next few months there will be a transition process where we move to our new style of meeting. We will keep you updated about the meeting times and venues through our website, newsletters and letters to you.

Whilst we are shaping the way we consult with you there are other ways you can influence how policing is delivered. You can contact us through our website. www.lancspa.gov.uk. Since its launch in February 2002, we have received over 3 million hits with over 14 thousand visitors in June 2008 alone.

We also obtain the views of a broad cross-section of the population through our ‘citizens panel’ – Opinion. Through our latest survey we received the views of over 2500 members of the community on a number of policing issues from confidence in the police to feelings of safety and the use of CCTV.

Finally, we will continue to engage with the community through our public events. Last year we received the views of approximately 900 people on policing priorities during our ‘Investors in Policing’ road shows. In June this year 700 people expressed their preferences on how they would like their council tax money for policing allocated and over 400 people provided feedback on Neighbourhood Policing.

Have your say in the neighbourhood

The Constabulary’s PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings will still give you the opportunity to discuss policing at a very local level and, of course, you can visit the website or talk to your neighbourhood policing team. If you want more information visit www.lancashire.police.uk

Staying Involved

We are developing a role for people to stay involved in helping shape policing priorities. If you want to help us please let us have your contact details.

If you have any queries please contact us. ian.dickinson@lpa.lancscc.gov.uk

You said:
“How is our money being used and what results am I getting for it?”

You said:
“I want to understand police performance better.”



You said:
“I don’t want to go to a meeting.”



You said:
“I want more interaction and innovation on the ways you consult with me.”

