



Working together for a safer
Chiltern and South Bucks

Chiltern Community Forum – 10th September 2019 – Chiltern District Council Offices, Amersham.

Chair: Andy Garnett

Introduction from Andy Garnett and from the 20 attendees. Some of the concerns raised initially by the attendees were speeding, parking around schools, anti-social behaviour and burglary.

Priorities survey – Katie Galvin (KG) Community Safety Unit manager CDC. KG gave an explanation of how the survey was distributed and publicised. The main methods are TVP Alerts, Twitter and Facebook. Also, there are posters at various locations. PCSO Jacqueline Day (JD) said that during Have Your Say events members of the public were also asked what issues they considered important.

KG said that the returns for this survey were the lowest we had ever had – under 50. She explained that normally there are between 200-300 responses.

Police report – Sergeant Darren Walsh (DW) and PCSO Jacqueline Day (JD).

Burglary

Area CID review all burglaries and lead on investigations. They will consider forensic and CCTV opportunities.

Victims of burglaries receive crime prevention advice from the Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NHPT). This includes cocooning with neighbours and victims being offered SMARTWATER property marking kits.

NHPT have been tackling burglaries by being involved in a number of cross border operations with other forces targeting criminals whilst they are travelling into our area from predicted locations. NHPT continue to attend events, conduct HYS's and raise awareness of burglary.

Recent analysis has shown that Chalfont St Peter offences have been occurring in the afternoon, attacks in Knotty Green have occurred in the evenings whilst a number offences in Gerrards Cross have happened in the early hours of the morning. Analysis suggests that large numbers of the burglaries are being committed by people who do not live on our area.

Figures show that Chiltern & South Bucks is the most targeted area in the Thames Valley Police area by burglars.

Results;

Op Greenbelt.

- 20 + vehicles were seized for a variety of motoring offences.
- Multiple drivers were reported for the above traffic offences.
- 2 males cautioned for drug possession in the Chalfont area.
- 8 other arrests for various offences.
- 33 traffic offences reported.

Op Groundhog

- 5 arrests.
- 5 vehicles seized.
- 3 donor vehicles stopped.

1 person reported

The detection rate target for burglaries is 15%. For Chiltern and South Bucks there were 596 burglaries in the last year. This is a 7% increase on the previous year. 41 have been detected which equates to just under a 7% detection rate.

Drug dealing and usage

Drug related reports have increased which some may think is a concern, but the increase highlights the proactivity with stop searches, arrests, warrants, intelligence development and partnership working.

The Operation Stronghold team is leading the response to County Drug Lines (CDL) and working with NHPT in safeguarding potential victims of CDL.

A person was arrested last month for dangerous driving and possession with intent to supply drugs. Stronghold officers attempted to stop suspect whilst driving, who then rammed the police car, forcing his way past and causing damage. The suspect was found and arrested. This was shortly after the murder of PC Harper and is another example of risk that police face in dealing with these criminals.

Three persons were arrested in Amersham following threats being made of stabbing a male if he did not assist an organised crime group by driving for them.

Working with our Problem Solving Team, we have managed to obtain numerous closure orders (3 in Chesham). These orders prohibit unwanted people visiting the address of a person who is vulnerable in order to prevent any criminal activity continuing.

Neighbourhood Teams have been working on and developing intelligence on addresses and people. With this intelligence, warrants can be obtained if appropriate and addresses searched.

We continue to work with partner forces in trying to halt the supply of drugs into our area. Other forces include the British Transport Police, Hertfordshire Constabulary and the Metropolitan Police.

Rogue traders

We have been raising the awareness of saying “No to doorstep selling” and working with Trading Standards and Chiltern & South Bucks District Council in creating no door stop selling zones. This will help to prevent would be burglars using the pretence of knocking at addresses pretending to sell goods and also assist in protecting vulnerable people from rogue traders. 22 roads have signed up to the scheme.

A recent incident involved a trader posting flyers which stated he was working at a neighbours and was available for work if required. The note also claimed that discounts were given to OAP's. The victim called the trader who agreed to do some work. He was later found looking around through drawers. This is another example of the need to choose your tradesmen carefully.

The NHPT are frequently engaging with victims or potential victims of fraud and scams. When notified, the NHPT will conduct visits and complete assessments to identify vulnerable people as part of Operation Signature.

We continue to provide education for carers and potential victims to raise awareness of the various different types of fraud. We work in partnership with the Community Safety Team at the council and NatWest as part of Operation Gauntlet.

We are also using the banking protocol. An example of this in work recently was a sharp eyed banker who spotted a suspicious withdrawal by an elderly person. Intervention led to us discovering that he had been the victim of fraud by people claiming to be from his internet provider. Measures have been put in place to protect this person from further frauds. Whilst he was being dealt with at home the fraudsters called twice, even speaking to the police. This protocol is also in place to protect the vulnerable from rogue traders who in the past have actually taken people to their bank in order to be paid.

Again, this is another example of the need to pause and think when you receive unexpected calls.

Knife crime

In the last 12 months there have been 57 recorded incidents of knife crime. This is a 24% increase on the previous year. 27 crimes have been detected – 47% detection rate.

On 18th July 2019 a male was run over and stabbed in Chesham. A suspect was charged and has been remanded in custody awaiting trial for attempted murder.

On the 24th July a male was stabbed by an unknown person. The victim was from London and on bail and did not want to engage with the police.

On the 7th August male stabbed in the bottom. Three people were arrested, and case is still under investigation with the suspects release under investigation.

Youths were stopped in a park with knife.

Youth stabbed in Chalfont St Peter.

Motor vehicle crime

Chiltern & South Bucks is the 3rd highest area for vehicle crime in the TVP force area.

Last year there were 1193 incidents. This is a 32 % increase on the previous year. Only 14 were detected less than 2%.

Assaults with violence

Last year there were 2489 crimes. This is a 10% increase. 257 were detected. Chiltern & South Bucks is the 2nd lowest in TVP.

General matters

There was discussion regarding how the safety camera (speed) van was tasked. It was often seen on a bridge over the M40 but not on 30 mph where enforcement was needed. DW explained that where the van is tasked to go is dependent on the number of accidents in an area. JD said that if people pass registration numbers of vehicles that are speeding or committing other traffic offences then it can be followed up by visits to the drivers. Question regarding the design of static speed cameras, can they be less obvious? No, there must be signs and they must be hi-vis yellow.

DW said that with the current Operation Glare, officers were tasked twice a month to deal with speeding in target areas. These are not dependent on accidents but complaints from the public. Speedwatch was increasing with members and is popular with the public.

Discussion about burglary methods of entry to properties. Question as to whether we could have statistics on how burglars have gained entry. JD said that there are many different ways of getting into houses and we give general crime prevention advice. As the days are getting shorter we target houses in darkness as these advertise that they are empty.

Discussion regarding assaults and violence. Robert Gibson (RG) said that violence is the most reported crime in Chiltern & South Bucks. However, this includes low levels of 'violence' with minor nuisance being included. DW said that domestic violence in particular is under reported and that TVP are keen to have a more robust response to offenders.

Discussion regarding parking around schools. Brushwood School in Chesham (and others) were having problems at dropping off and picking up times. The yellow zig zag lines were being ignored and were not actually enforceable by police. There needs to be 'No Stopping' signs with the yellow zig zag lines. It appears there are none in Chiltern district but there are in Wycombe and other parts of the country. DW & JD explained that tickets can be issued for obstruction if necessary and if the offenders were taxi drivers they can also be reported to the council who issue their licences. DW said that generally the police response is low level and try to work with parents, children and the school. Chris Brown said it was advisable to find the cost of the plates to be able to ask the county council to assist with the cost.

Action Andy Garnett to research a joint approach regarding traffic and parking around schools.

Chiltern Community Forum website

RG discussed the website and more recent developments/additions. Neighbourhood Policing Reports are now accessible from a drop-down on the Home page, and we have continued to develop news content on organisations which may be considered natural partners to the Forum – for example, Neighbourhood Watch and Street Associations.

Asked whether we could embed the Crime Map from the Police.UK website, he clarified that there are links on the 'Crime Stats' web page (<https://www.chilterncommunityforum.org/priorities/crime-stats/>) to the crime maps for each of the four Chiltern areas, and we also present those stats in graphical form on the page.

There is a steady roll-out of web pages covering the main priority areas in the quarterly survey. The goal is to give respondents context for their choices for the coming Quarter, and an idea of what a neighbourhood policing focus on the priorities would look like over time. The web site has also started to develop a narrative on neighbourhood policing and choices.

Anti-social behaviour regularly scores highly in surveys. The stats show that ASB is often seasonal – longer days, nicer weather means more reports of ASB. So, should this be a priority in winter? It was arguably odd that we dropped this as a priority in May when we were approaching the peak time for ASB, and indeed there has been the usual summer surge. Question as to whether antisocial-type speeding and other traffic related issues could fall within ASB?

Another example is knife crime. Last February knife crime was all over the media but we dropped it as a priority for our local policing team because we looked at the numbers and the incidence of knife crime was very low, and we also could point to the upcoming Operation Sceptre, the work of the Chiltern area schools and youth liaison officer and other initiatives. Drugs have been a priority for the last 12 months. The more the police concentrate on drugs the more the level of reported offences rise and the more this reflects the level of importance. Absolute levels of drug offences are relatively low.

These all contribute to a developing narrative, which we shall continue to try to convey through the web site and social media.

RG explained that the usual under 18's survey was not held this time for sensible reasons, i.e. that it would have been hard to get much interest in the school holidays. The focus ahead of the next quarterly survey would need to be on means of raising the profile and response rates for both the youth and main surveys. Question as to whether alcohol is included in the crime figures. No, but general agreement that it is often a contributing factor.

Priorities

The priorities were decided upon by electronic vote.

1. Burglary,
2. Drug dealing,
3. Speeding.

Question as to who else gets to know the feelings expressed by the forum and the priorities. AG said that the results are published on various social media and the minutes published on the Chiltern community forum website.

Discussion regarding cyber-crime and what can be done. This is a priority for the TVP Police & Crime Commissioner but not really a neighbourhood issue. JD explained that the team regularly are involved with reassurance visits and scam awareness meetings.

Question regarding where can issues about road safety be raised. Is there a joint forum? Is the local area forums a suitable arena?

Action – AG to make enquiries.

Date of next meeting to be arranged.

Chiltern Community Forum website:

www.chilterncommunityforum.org

Feedback, ideas, contributions, involvement welcome. Please send all comments to Robert Gibson – contact@chilterncommunityforum.org