



Herman Goldstein Award Submission 2023

BRINGING IT DOWN

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BRINGING IT DOWN - SUMMARY

SCANNING

Over the autumn/winter months of 2020, in the village of Wheatley Hill, youth related anti-social behaviour was on the rise causing major community concern. Incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to Police had risen from an average of 11 incidents per month to 23 but was still potentially under reported. Police and partner agency data was scanned with a view of discovering the root causes of the anti-social problems in the village. Internal and external research was also conducted.

ANALYSIS

Data from the scanning phase was analysed. Results identified that Police reports in relation to anti-social behaviour had increased significantly. Information gathered from the scanning of reports discovered that a group of approximately 30 young people were responsible for most of the anti-social behaviour in the village, however when the data was drilled down it appeared that only several members of the group were acting as ring leaders/influencers as they were responsible for repeatedly offending. Various 'hot spot' areas were identified. Further analysis discovered that there appeared to be a lack of target hardening execution in hot spot areas. In theory, it was probable that this could have been down to a lack of police/partner agency understanding of the village.

RESPONSE

In response to the analysis, the influence model was developed, based on internal and external research. The model incorporates enforcement, education, and engagement. The model was implemented, targeting the main ring leaders of a group, challenging their behaviour with the three E's in hope that positive changes in their behaviour would influence the change in attitudes of the wider group. Multi-agency partnership work was also applied and data sharing between partners

was utilised. Meetings and group visits were held on site of 'hot spot' areas, resulting in the execution of target hardening and crime prevention techniques.

ASSESSMENT

The original assessment of the plan discovered that the responses implemented in the Wheatley Hill area resulted in a 62% reduction in anti-social behaviour calls to the Police. Multi-agency partnership work in relation to target hardening and crime prevention resulted in a reduced volume of repeated calls at various hot-spot areas. Two of the three hot spot areas recorded a 100% reduction in calls.

The plan was assessed every four months and it was proven to be more manageable and cost effective. There are proposals to embed the plan into other localities that are struggling with similar related anti-social behaviour issues.

Word count 394

BRINGING IT DOWN

DESCRIPTION

SCANNING

Wheatley Hill is a small village in County Durham (North East, United Kingdom) with an estimated population of 3,000 people. It is locally known as a 'pit village' and has a strong community spirit.

Wheatley Hill has evolved over time resulting in an increase in population, primarily due to the development of new housing estates.

During the autumn and winter months of 2020, calls to Durham Constabulary from Wheatley Hill residents increased at an alarming rate, reports ranged from youth nuisance and arson. Indeed, Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents in Wheatley Hill had increased from an average of 11 incidents per month to 23 (average). This was mainly driven by an increase in youth related incidents.

During patrols of the village officers were often confronted by members of the community concerned about the levels of ASB in the village. The level of community concern suggested that the full scale of the issue may not be recorded on Police systems.

The data was scanned twelve months prior to the inauguration of the plan. The data range was set as from April 2020 to April 2021. Graph 1, Appendix A, shows a comparison with the neighbouring village of Thornley and indicates high levels of ASB issues in Wheatley Hill. In total there were 213 reports to Police of ASB between these dates.

Throughout a weekend in February 2021 (see Graph1, Appendix A- green arrow), Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) officers conducted a successful but resource intensive operation. However, once concluded, issues quickly reverted to the highs of the previous month. At this point it was recognised that a longer-term solution problem-oriented approach was required to reduce demand.

Partnership meetings, community events and conversations with local councillors revealed qualitative data. A consensus revealed the community had little confidence in Police/Partners.

Residents had made it clear that they were dissatisfied with the services as little intervention had been shown to tackle ASB.

Figure 1, Appendix B, is a copy of an email raising concerns raised by a local councillor regarding feedback from residents. The email refers to police reporting of ASB incidents as a 'waste of time'.

Three "hotspot" locations were identified. The locations were revealed as being repeatedly plagued with ASB issues, interestingly, all three locations were within proximity of each other. Scanning discovered the following data:

Wheatley Hill Greyhound Stadium (See Appendix B, Figure 2)

Located at rear of the main street in Wheatley Hill just a short distance from Alexandra Terrace and Percy Street. The stadium was identified as a hot spot area through comments made by residents and councillors. Between 01/04/2020 and 08/04/2021 there were 19 reports of ASB to Police.

Alexandra Terrace (See Appendix B, Figure 3)

95 incidents recorded between 01/04/2020 and 08/04/2022. This was a range of ASB nuisance, environmental and personal.

Percy Street (See Appendix B, Figure 4)

(Specifically No. 1) 22 incidents/reports were reported between 01/04/2020 and 08/04/2021, the majority of which were tagged as youth related ASB. A vacant, eyesore property, with boarded windows where young people congregated.

Graph 2 Appendix A, shows data comparison between hot spots locations which are all positioned within a short distance of each other and neighbouring streets

Figure 5, Appendix B, shows the hot spot areas of ASB within Wheatley Hill contained within a triangle. Whilst Figure 6, Appendix B, shows the problematic locations in more detail and further illustrates the proximity to each other.

A review of Police ASB incident records, intelligence data, qualitative data and social media led to a number of potential offenders being identified. Further scanning revealed the identity of all 30 offenders, each of which were then reviewed in more depth. Figure 7 shows an image posted on one of the offender's social media accounts which helped identify further offenders.

Below is example of the scanning that was conducted:

Subject 1 (age 16) - Named in the majority of ASB reports, known to officers/community as the ringleader and influencer. Linked to low level crime with a terrible attitude towards authority. At point of scanning, supervised by youth offending and had received council enforcement letter.

Subject 2 (age 16) - Did not reside in the Wheatley Hill area. At point of scanning, no enforcement tactics had been deployed. Regularly named by the community as responsible for ASB.

Subject 3 (age 15) - Known to local officers, previously issued with a council enforced ASB contract, had recorded 2 breaches

Subject 4 (age 14) - Issued with 1 council warning letter and 1 police enforced hotspot letter.

Subject 5 (age 13) - Brother of SUBJECT 4, known to officers. Minimal Police and partner data available.

ANAYLSIS

Victim Analysis

The data was scrutinised, results found that ASB had created a negative impact across the whole of the Wheatley Hill community. No resident was targeted individually, issues appeared to affect the community as a whole.

It is understood that residents of hot spot areas became frustrated with issues. Frustration led to a reduction in engagement, the lack of intervention from partners created a sombre mood amongst residents. Ultimately, they became unenthusiastic and less motivated to assist in Police investigations and disengaged with officers.

Residents vented their frustrations amongst each other and directed their displeasure towards parish councillors. Residents also turned to local social media sites to vent their anger. This created a negative vibe amongst social media users and had a detrimental effect on the community. It reduced confidence in the Police and raised the fear of crime.

Location Analysis

Hot spot data was analysed, and 3 key locations were identified which were having a disproportionate impact on demand. The 3 key locations were in close proximity to each other (see Figure 6, Appendix B, Map 2) and highlighted the route used by offenders via the village shops when attending or fleeing the stadium. Summarised below are the key factors identified during analysis of the hotspot areas: -

Wheatley Hill Greyhound Stadium

- Identified as main hot-spot area. The stadium is set back at a distance to the rear of the main street Alexandra Terrace. No residential buildings were within its immediate surrounding, restricting natural surveillance and explained the lack of police reports in the scanning data. The stadium was unmanned and in a state of disrepair, several of its cabins/wooded buildings attracted youths to shelter and set fire to. No CCTV was available on site and there were no other forms of crime prevention implemented. Lighting at this location was inadequate.
- Youths were attracted to this area and motivated to do so due to the lack of crime prevention installed. The risk of being detected was extremely low and the rewards were high. Essentially youths could cause ASB, drink alcohol and commit arson knowing the fear of being detected or captured by police was extremely low. In events where Police responded, youths could make-off via various pinch points that led to rural and forestry areas. Essentially it became a vicious cycle and created huge demand.

Alexandra Terrace

- The breakdown in the data of SUBJECT 1 revealed he resided in this street. It was understood that youths would frequent the street to meet with SUBJECT 1. Data also revealed that local businesses and infrastructure provided the motivation for youths to attend the street. The location was well lit, youths could visit shops to purchase food/drink and to shelter from the elements. It was also found that the youths were managing to purchase alcohol illegally from a number of the shops on this street. The main bus route ran through the street, inevitably youths could make use of public transport to reach nearby villages or to return home. CCTV was implemented however the quality was poor.

Percy Street

- Number 1 Percy Street was an unoccupied property owned by a private landlord. Installation of home security and deterrents was poor. Windows would be regularly broken then replaced with flimsy wooded panels that were easily pulled off. The locks to the front and rear were inadequate and the doors were regularly breached. The road that ran adjacent to the property led to the Greyhound stadium.
- The motivation behind the attraction to this property was that it provided shelter and a place to avoid detection from police. The property was neglected by its owners. Youths would damage the building knowing the probability of being detected/caught by the Police was particularly low

Offender Analysis

It was agreed early that focusing on a group of 30 youths would be unrealistic and unmanageable due to the area being managed by one PC and a PCSO. On arrival at incidents, the group of 30 dispersed in different directions, making it difficult for officers to apprehend the youths.

This led into research into two theories (focused deterrent theory and the diffusion of innovation model). Results suggested that by focusing attention on the “ringleaders” of the group and directing a variety of tactics on them, this would create a positive effect on motivations of the wider group and ultimately change their behaviour. This strategy is proven to be effective; it is more manageable and allows resources to be focussed on the main ringleaders/influencers of a group.

It was decided that the top three subjects/influencers within the group would be analysed and that targeted responses would be tailored to coincide with a focused deterrent strategy. Below is a summary of the analysis completed on the top 3 influencers/motivators of the wider group:

Subject 1 (age 16)- Believed to be the main instigator of this group. Feedback from the community, young people and incident/intelligence reports identified that Subject 1 was challenged with complex vulnerabilities. Subject 1 experienced little parental support and lacked discipline. Subject 1 did not engage well with youth offending and data revealed that Subject 1's offending was escalating and becoming more frequent. Subject 1 influenced the wider group, and his poor behaviour was being mirrored by other youths.

Subject 2 (age 16) - Subject 2 did not reside in Wheatley Hill, however further analysis revealed that subject 2 was an acquaintance of Subject 1. Both subjects had previously attended the same school, however neither were currently in education. Subject 2 was challenged with complex vulnerabilities and was also placed in care.

Subject 3 (age 15) - Subject 3 was well known to local officers. Analysis revealed that subject 3 and mother shared a disdain for authority. It was understood that this was a contributing factor to the behaviour of subject 3. Subject 3 had also breached an ABC contract on two occasions

During analysis it was also found there was a knowledge gap between neighbourhood policing team officers and colleagues from other departments. This accounted for the lack of data recorded on Police systems. It was discovered that this was due to officers of other departments not being fully aware of the subjects/locations and the issues that were being caused in the village.

Analysis of this problem found that due to Wheatley Hill's remote location, it was separated from the local town centre where most of the Police demand was focused. The village did not form part of the normal patrol route for officers, meaning that officers were not regularly passing through the village. It was also understood that that Wheatley Hill was not getting the Police presence and attention it required.

In conclusion our analysis found ASB levels in Wheatley Hill were unmanageable. Considerations were given to why previous work by Police had been in-effective. It was also analysed further why the weekend operation mentioned in the scanning, did not work. As a result, it was found that the problem was so intense at the time and resource demanding, it was just not sustainable. It is proven that engagement and education is an effective way of tackling ASB, and that enforcement is a regular way of dealing with crime and ASB. However, the situation was such where neither of those 3 tactics could be done or were being done in isolation. Education would fail, as the youth's requiring education, were being influenced by the main offenders. Engagement would fail, because the main offenders would interrupt and discourage others from being involved, resulting in a complete lack of attendance at any engagement events. Enforcement on a whole, would fail as documented in the operation above. This is because the level of demand placed on officers was not sustainable to conduct on such a large scale. It was also found that due to the demand being placed on all people involved, including partner agencies, there was a reduction in multi-agency working.

RESPONSE

Based on the findings of the analysis and level of demand being faced, it was decided that any responses/interventions should be not be implemented in isolation. It was found that Police and partners were struggling to work with each other, each element of the 3 E's of Enforcement, Education and Engagement were being attempted, but were being overwhelmed. To tackle this, the Influence Model was designed, see Appendix B figure 8.

The theory being that with the assistance of partners activity should be aimed at enforcing deterrence on the "ringleaders" alongside proactively target hardening the hot spot locations via situational crime prevention. This would then influence the rest of the group of 30 and improve surrounding areas. The approach taken was that enforcement is deterrence by disruption.

Once the positive effect has set in with the group and order has been maintained then officers will be able to get into the community and schools to conduct education and enforcement. The 3 E's however, work hand in hand with each other, as without one, the other won't be effective.

To coincide with the influence model and to tackle the issues found in relation to the gap in colleagues understanding, a Red Sigma profile was created. This contained all the details of the plan, the hot spot locations and repeat offenders. This allowed officers to brief themselves and have at their fingertips all the information required to effectively Police the problem. Briefings were held with other departments and emails were cascaded to colleagues and supervisors.

Enforcement – with partnership working (using deterrence and disruption)

1. Intelligence gathering, internal and open-source (social media) searches were conducted on all subjects. This provided officers with the ability to understand how each subjects actions were contributing to the problem but also their vulnerabilities.
2. Home visits were conducted by officers on each individual subject, where they were informed, they were now "Youth Targets" and what their conditions were and what was expected of them.
3. The licensing department was utilised to go into the shops and takeaways to conduct checks and enforcement to prevent the sale of alcohol to children.
4. Dispersal order authorised on a bank holiday weekend and patrols conducted at hot-spot location. Subjects stopped by police and suspected of causing anti-social behaviour and issued notices.

5. Numerous arrests and prosecutions were instigated against the 3 main subjects.
6. Plain clothed and high visibility patrols conducted in village, subjects stopped and spoken to. Robust action taken against the 3 main subjects and the 2 E's utilised against the wider group.

Engagement – with partnership working (including situational crime prevention)

1. As a result of joint work by Police and Council wardens, following the partnership walk-about and meetings. The greyhound stadium was subsequently **demolished**. Taking away the attraction for ASB.
2. Numerous multi-agency site visits and crime prevention studies were held at hot spot locations. Advice was offered and actions taken to target harden all of the locations.
3. Enforcement tactics were deployed on the private landlord of 1 Percy Street (hot spot area) he was issued with conditions and a warning from the county council. This was then subsequently secured.
4. Attended multi-agency meetings with social services surrounding the 3 Subject's vulnerabilities and family life. As a result, Subject 1 was relocated away from the front street which reduced the attraction to this street.
5. Through meetings, the foster parent of Subject 2 assisted officers and helped to discourage subject 2 from frequenting the Wheatley Hill area. Discussions were had around how the behaviour can be managed.
6. A meeting was held with each of the 3 subjects at the Police station and Durham County Council ASB team were also present. During this meeting

subjects were issued with conditional notices such as ABC's and CPW's. This allowed conditions to be placed on them to take back control of their impact on the community.

7. Previously issued ABC's were enforced robustly on any breaches and progressed accordingly.
8. Community Protection Warning and notices were enforced by the county council following information from the Police.
9. Schools were visited to develop an information sharing approach, which opened up a line of communications between officers and teachers.
10. Local events were attended and engagement was held with the community, improving communication between Police and the community.
11. Following meetings with both the parish and county council, funding was secured to employ a detached youth worker to work within the community centre and support the local young people. The sessions were also regularly attended by local officers.
12. Local community meetings attended to ensure councillors and community were fully updated to improve confidence.
13. Youths in village were stopped and spoken to by officers to enhance engagement and positively influence their behaviour.
14. Police Social Media posts on Facebook pages to update the community on what was being done to encourage confidence.

Education – with partnership working

1. School visits were conducted to educate pupils around the risks of committing ASB.
2. Briefings were held with colleagues and partner agencies to better understand the problem and share knowledge and tactics ensuring a consistent approach was taken.
3. The 3 targets were brought into the Police station, where meetings were had with Police and the Council ASB team and signs posted to relevant agencies/charities to support their futures. (Safeguarding forms were submitted). Feedback was also sought from the subjects as to why they were behaving the way they were and what the Police and Council could do to help.
4. Worked in partnership with YOS to assist in curbing bad behaviour and impose correct conditions, such as a curfew being imposed on Subject 1. Working in this partnership also improved information sharing between departments.
5. Engaged with local community groups providing bespoke education on the consequences of crime and anti-social behaviour.

ASSESSMENT

Following the resource intensive NPT operation in February 2021 incidents levels dipped to 10 in that month (and below the monthly average of 11). However, as previously stated this Police led intensive response was not sustainable long term and incident levels began to gradually rise illustrating the need for a partnership approach to tackle the root causes. Following the development of the plan, and joint work with partners in deterring the ring leaders and tackling the

hot spot locations, incident levels have reduced further with the average now being 8 per month.

Of note, similar reductions in ASB levels are not evident within Thornley (comparison site) indicating that the partner led response in Wheatley Hill is the differential.

An interim assessment was conducted after the plan had been in place for 4 months. This found that since the implementation of the plan there was an overall reduction in ASB of 62% showing positive short to medium term outcomes. However, at the time of writing this application the overall reduction in ASB in Wheatley Hill is **53%** when comparing to April 2020 and April 2021, see Appendix A Graph 3.

Hot-Spot locations Analysis

The impact of the situational crime prevention work with partners is illustrated below:

Wheatley Hill Greyhound /Black Lane

- Demolition was carried out in late Summer of 2021 and since then there have been **0** reports made to Police. This is a 100% reduction.
- Ultimately, the demolition of this site de-motivated youths to frequent this area as the attraction was eliminated. The removal of the outbuildings increased the chance of detection from the police. It also reduced the rewards as there was limited opportunities to light fires and congregate.

Alexandra Terrace

- From 01/04/2021- 22/07/2021 there had only been 6 reported incidents of ASB which was a reduction of 45% on the previous 3-month equivalent between 01/01/2022 -01/04/2022.

Continuing our assessment now since our initial assessment, there has only been another 3 incidents reported to Police. This gives a total reduction of 90% reduction.

- Subject 1 was re-housed and his influence in this street was eradicated. This reduced the attraction to this area.

Percy Street

- This property was boarded up in May 2020 due to the multi-agency intervention between Police and the Council. Since that date there has been 0 reports of ASB at this property.
- Crime prevention and security was improved at the property, this removed the attraction and youths were less motivated to break in as doing so it became much more challenging and increased the chances of detection from the police.

As a result of the partnership work to address issues at the hotspot locations it has led to improved links between the council and Police enabling both agencies to share and better utilise resources.

Graph 4, Appendix A, shows the hot spot locations compared to the neighbouring streets. This shows there was a reduction across the whole locality and not just the hot-spot locations showing the issue was not just dispersed elsewhere. As time went on evident reductions in the levels of ASB were seen and positive feedback was received from our councillors and members of the community, as well as colleagues.

Appendix B, Figure 9 demonstrates once the Greyhound Stadium was destroyed no further incidents of ASB had been reported in that hotspot area.

Subject Analysis

Subject 1 (Age 16) - still an active ASB target for the team, however he is now well managed by conditions and local officers are aware of him and these conditions, making it very difficult for him to behave the way he was. Following his relocation from Alexandra Terrace it has been made easier to manage him and family and his vulnerabilities. Moving forward he will be one to utilise the 3 E's on regularly.

Subject 2 (Age 16) - Subject 2 was found not to reside in Wheatley Hill and only travelled in to engage in ASB with Subject 1. Due to the deterrence and disruption on the two, subject 2 has never been seen by officers in Wheatley Hill ever again.

Subject 1 (Age 16) - Subject 3 is now working in a local shop and causes Police very little issue's and engages with officers when she is stopped in the street.

Disruption tactics implemented on the 3 subjects have proven to work. Tactics placed on all the subjects acted as a deterrent to other youths associated with the group. Consequences of the subjects' actions changed the mind set of youths associated with the wider group, it had a positive effect on behaviours and mindset. Ultimately, youths on the cusp of ASB associated with the group appeared to 'drop off' and disengage with anti-social activities, leaving only the management of the 3 subjects.

The reduction in this demand provided officers with more time to focus on the wider group where engagement and education was provided.

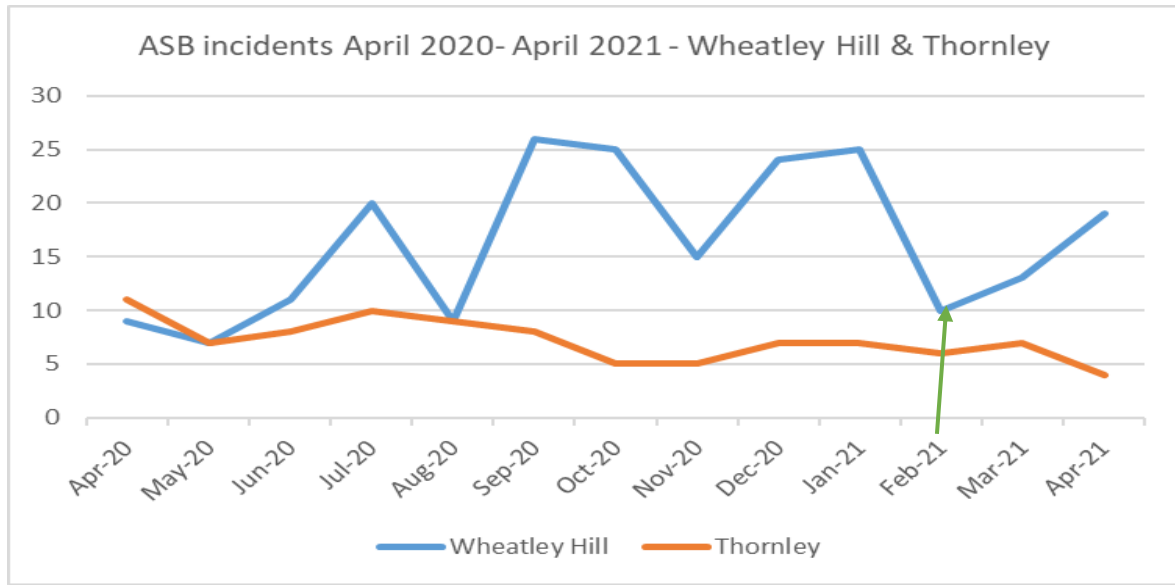
Moving forward, it's understood that social media could be utilised more effectively. Results have shown that use of the 3 E's with partnership working within the Influence Model, has been a success. However, this could have been promoted better in the community via social media. This is something that will be considered in the future.

WORD COUNT 3948

APPENDIX A

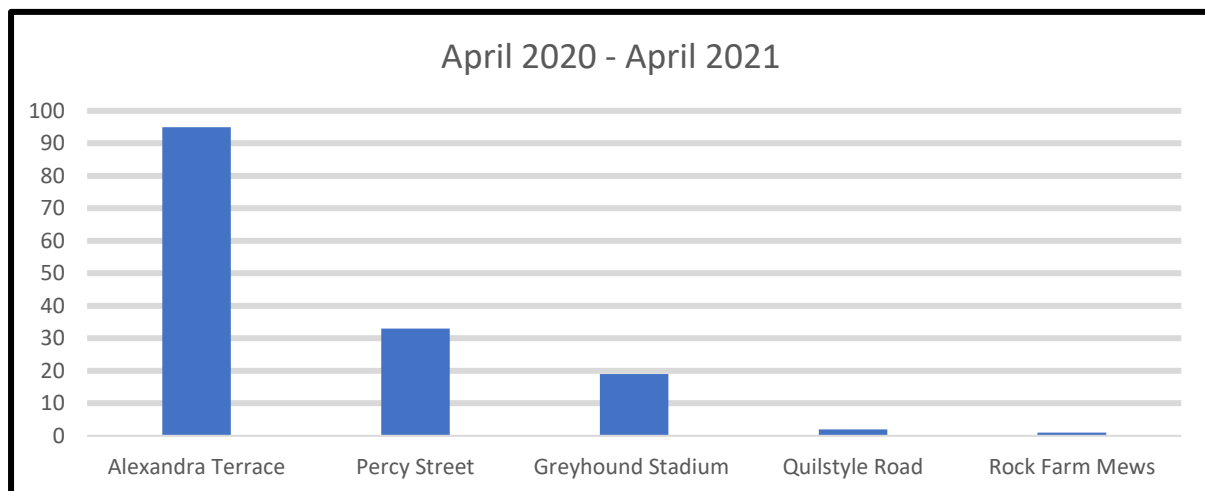
Graph 1

Comparison of ASB incidents between neighbouring villages of Thornley and Wheatley Hill.



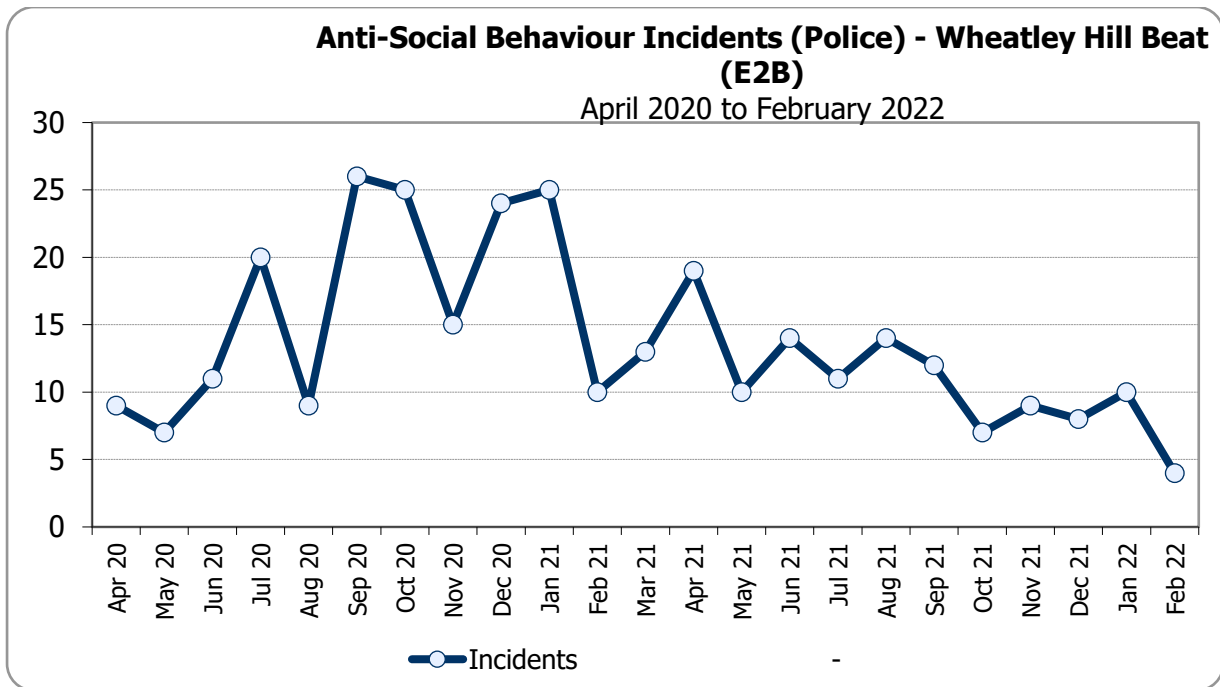
Graph 2

Comparison between ASB hot spots Alexandra Terrace, Percy Street and the Greyhound Stadium with Quilstyle Road and Rock Farm Mews



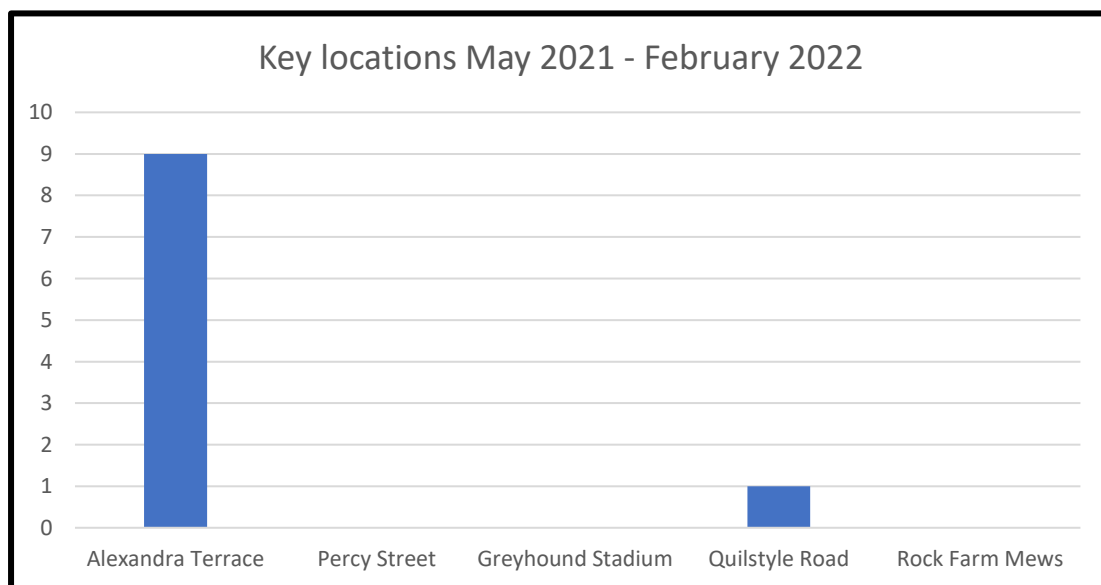
Graph 3

ASB incidents in Wheatley Hill April 2020 to February 2022.



Graph 4

Graph showing reductions across all locations



APPENDIX B

Figure 1

Email from Wheatley Hill Parish Council

Good Morning

I have been asked by the Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council to contact you regarding the use of Dispersal Orders to tackle anti social behaviour.

The Chair has been approached by a resident asking why a Dispersal Order has been imposed by the Police in Shotton Colliery and not Wheatley Hill.

Two walkabouts have recently been held in Wheatley Hill. The MP, Police, Durham County Council, County Councillors, Believe Housing, the Fire Service and the Parish Council as well as residents all took part. The purpose of the walkabout was to look at various concerns raised by residents via Councillors and the MP. One of the main areas of concern was anti social behaviour and the frustration felt by residents that not enough is being done to tackle the problem in the village. Many residents currently feel they are unable to venture out after dark and are intimidated by the groups of youths hanging about.

The Parish Council advises residents to report issues to the Police on 101 but the feedback from residents is that they feel this is a waste of time and no action will be taken.

Is it possible that these Dispersal Orders could be used in Wheatley Hill to help reduce the problem of anti social behaviour in the village?

Regards

Figure 2

Wheatley Hill Greyhound Track/Black Lane



Figure 3

Alexandra Terrace



Figure 4

Percy Street



Figure 5

Map 1 shows Wheatley Hill and identifies the problematic area highlighted:

▲ The triangle indicates the hot spot area of Wheatley Hill.

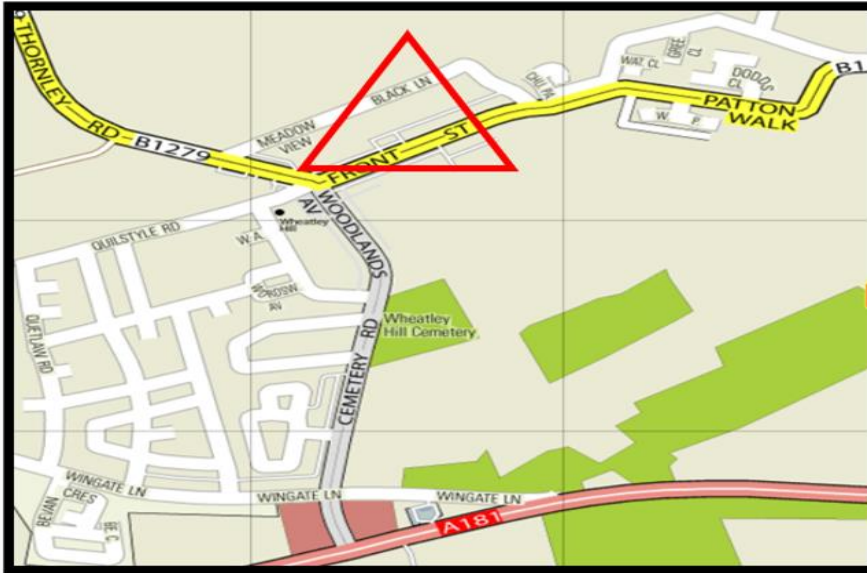


Figure 6

Map 2 shows the problematic area in detail and identifies the key hot spot locations:

The circles identify the three hot spot locations.

- Percy Street
- Greyhound stadium
- Alexandra/Granville Terrace

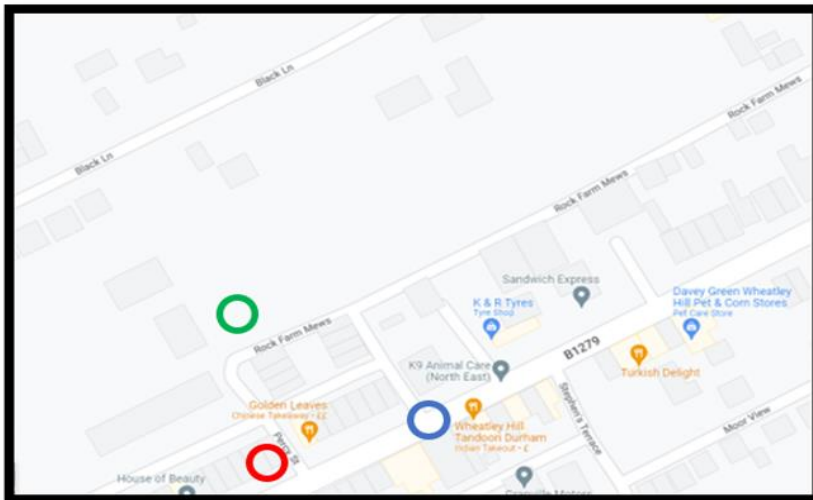


Figure 7

An image posted by an offender's social media account: -



Figure 8

3 E's Model Enforcement, Education, Engagement & Sustainability



Figure 9

Email from colleague following the demolition of Greyhound Stadium confirming 0 ASB incidents.

