

**2009 Herman Goldstein Award for
Excellence in Problem-Oriented
Policing Submissions**

**Clare Street Anti-Social
Behaviour Initiative**

Summary of Project

Scanning

This initiative aimed to address the issue of youth related anti-social behaviour on Clare Street in Blackpool

- PACT priority
- Reassurance Plus priority
- Increase in reports of ASB to the police
 - 109 reports of anti-social behaviour in 2007
 - 103 reports related to rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour
- Daily visits to Clare Street made by NHP Team

Analysis

- Large congregation of young people in end terraced property and on two nearby feature walls
- Issues of anti-social behaviour, in particular rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour, noise nuisance and graffiti
- Major physical, emotional and behavioural issues of family living in end terraced property, including alcohol and substance misuse, non school attendance and neglect of animals
- Accumulation of rubbish inside and outside end terraced property
- Far reaching effect of behaviour on Clare Street residents, wider community, landlady of property, staff of nearby hostel, partner agencies and the family living at the end terraced property

Response

- Multi-agency meetings
- Action Plan
- Railings installed on walls
- Re-siting of CCTV
- Re-housing
- Extensive support to address physical, emotional and behavioural needs of family (mother, daughter and son)
- Reassurance of the public

Assessment

- No further congregation of young people
- Reduction in number of reported incidents of ASB
- Improved perceptions of ASB and Safety
- Landlady able to re-let her property without cost implications of lengthy eviction process
- Improved working relationships with partners with greater understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Mother of family getting all help she needs and getting stronger every day
- Daughter and son beginning to achieve their potential and developing good relationships with peers and other positive role models

Description of Project

Scanning

This Initiative aimed to address the issue of Youth related Anti-Social behaviour on Clare Street in Blackpool

During 2007 increasing numbers of complaints relating to issues in and around Clare Street in Blackpool were received by the Police. On average at least 6 members of the Community were attending the Neighbourhood Policing Team's monthly PACT meetings specifically, with a range of issues relating to this small street

Residents of the Street complained of the congregation of a large group of young people in and around a specific address on Clare Street. The group, often under the influence of alcohol and drugs, were responsible for noise nuisance and general rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour.

Business owners from a nearby main shopping area complained of intimidation by young people when they attempted to purchase alcohol and were refused.

As well as members of the public attending PACT meetings, in 2007 109 reports of Anti-social behaviour were reported by telephone to the Police. 103 of these were related to rowdy & inconsiderate behaviour

The impact this had on the Neighbourhood Policing Team was that they were visiting Clare Street daily, not only responding to reported incidents but attempting to reassure the public that they were taking action and were taking the matter seriously.

Analysis

Location

Bloomfield ward is an area of high deprivation. Of the 21 wards in Blackpool it has the highest indices of multiple deprivation score, the highest under 18 conception rate, and the lowest level of GCSE attainment

Bloomfield ward falls within the Reassurance Plus South area, one of three priority neighbourhoods across the town identified as being the most deprived and in need of extra resource. Due to the size of the area and complexity of its issues, Bloomfield is divided for policing purposes into 3 areas, Bloomfield 1, 2 and 3. Clare Street is located in the Bloomfield 2 area. (see Appendix 1)

Clare Street is a small residential Street, typical of many across the Country

There are 23 terraced properties, a church and a hostel housing young males aged 16 to 17 years old.

Clare Street is a no through road for traffic, but allows pedestrian access from a busy arterial Road. It is often used as a cut through to the newly developed Central Gateway, large Council Car parks, Blackpool Football Club and the new Bancroft Park (see Appendix 2).

There were 2 specific locations which attracted the congregation of young people in and around Clare Street:

- 1) Firstly the end terraced property. Access was allowed by the tenant resulting in significant damage both inside and out. Rubbish accumulated both inside and in the front and rear gardens. The rear door to the property was inaccessible due to the amount of rubbish in the rear yard. Animal faeces was embedded in the carpets

throughout the house. Windows were broken and the side of the property and front walls were covered in graffiti.

- 2) In good weather young people congregated on two landscape feature walls located close to the end terraced property resulting in regular graffitiing of the walls and the area being strewn with empty beer cans, fast food packaging and cigarette butts (see Appendix 3)

Offender

The first two offenders to be mentioned are residents of the end terraced property. Although aspects of their behaviour warranted them being classified as offenders, their vulnerabilities most certainly warranted them being classified also, and perhaps more importantly as victims.

Mother

Aged 45 years. Allowed access to large groups of young people day and night in exchange for alcohol and cigarettes. Being alcohol dependant, the majority of her money was spent on drink, often failing to provide even food for the family. A stroke earlier in life had left her with muscle wastage and resulted in her basically living in one downstairs room.

Son

Aged 15 years. Excluded from school and reluctantly caring for his mother he spent every day and night at his home address. He rebelled against authority drinking large amounts of alcohol and smoking cannabis. His behaviour was often rowdy and inconsiderate, verbally abusive and involved fighting with other group members.

Group

Not an established group but one which was made up of smaller ones all meeting up in the same location predominantly to drink. For example some friends of the son, young people playing truant from local schools, some young males from the nearby hostel and friends of friends from as far afield as Fylde and Wyre.

Victim

Residents of Clare Street & wider community

The effect of anti-social behaviour in and around Clare Street was far reaching. The group were intimidating and verbally abusive to Clare street residents, passers by and to local business owners who refused to sell them alcohol. The increase in graffiti and litter increased fear of crime and the perception that the area was unsafe.

Staff of Clare Street Hostel

Residents wrongly assumed that the hostel was the magnet which attracted the congregation of young people in the area. Although a couple of group members were residents at the Hostel they were by no means the main perpetrators of the Anti-social behaviour.

Landlady of property

The landlady was being faced with a lengthy and costly court process to evict her tenants whilst being subjected to escalating costs of repair due to the damage being caused to her property.

Partner agencies

This small street was proving a considerable drain on Police resources with officers attending on an almost daily basis.

Daughter

There was a third family member living at the address, the daughter, aged 17 years who was deaf and the main carer for her mother. Although registered at college attendance was poor due to the responsibility she felt to look after her mother and also the lack of money available to get her there.

Mother and Son

Finally the mother and son, already mentioned as offenders who were also very much victims.

Response

As the broad range of issues in Clare Street became apparent to the Neighbourhood Policing Team, they soon realised that a broad range of specialist assistance was required in order to find a solution. They contacted Blackpool's Anti-Social Behaviour

Co-Ordinator to assist in convening an initial multi-agency meeting. Fourteen individuals representing the agencies detailed below attended this first meeting at which an Action Plan was drawn up. A further 3 review meetings were held during the life of the initiative at which Action Plan progress was reviewed (see Appendix 4).

Location

Social Care arranged for 2 blitz cleans of the inside of the property. Two dogs and a cat were placed in the care of the RSPCA due to their neglect.

Environmental protection arranged for the front and rear gardens to be cleared

Reassurance Plus paid for railings to be put onto each of the two walls at the bottom of Clare Street to help deter the congregation of young people.

Negotiations with Leisure Services resulted in the re-siting of a CCTV camera which was originally planned for location further up on the Central Gateway. It was re-sited at the bottom of Clare Street enabling a clear view of Clare Street onto Lytham Road and also allowing visibility of the surrounding car parks and much of the Central Gateway (see Appendix 5)

Offender

Mother

Social Care and Housing Advice attended the property and carried out an initial assessment. A care plan was drawn up and a care worker was allocated who made regular visits to the property to monitor progress. Following a fall which rendered her bedridden, Social Care arranged hospitalization. After two weeks in hospital, she was discharged to a respite care home. Following this Housing Advice arranged for a move to independent living in a specially adapted property still remaining supported by her

care worker. After a short period of time, it became clear that she was unable to cope living independently. She has subsequently been moved to a permanent residential care home.

Son

An Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) was drawn up with the son in attempt to get him to acknowledge his anti-social behaviour and its effect on others with the ultimate aim of stopping it. An appointment was arranged with Connexions for careers and education advice and also with the Armed Forces Recruitment Office. A member of the Neighbourhood Policing Team escorted him to each appointment as he was unlikely to attend otherwise. While his mother was in hospital the son went to stay with friends. When his mother was re-housed into the newly adapted property he went to live with her. When his mother was moved to permanent residential care he was accepted into the Foyer due to letters of support which were provided by the police and Housing Advice. The Foyer provides quality self contained living accommodation, support and training for young people aged between 16-25.

Group

Youth Referral Forms and ABCs were used in an attempt to address the behaviour of key individuals. The Young Persons Alcohol Outreach worker regularly attended Clare Street to offer alcohol harm reduction advice to the group. The hostel staff assisted the police in dispersing the group by attending and escorting their residents back to the hostel. Teachers attended Clare Street with the police and identified truants and escorted them back to school.

Victim

Residents of Clare Street and wider community

Whilst agencies worked to address the multitude of issues of Clare street the Police and Reassurance Plus Community Engagement Officers retained a high visibility presence in the area, keeping the community informed of action being taken and offering reassurance. Following resolution of issues a neighbourhood bulletin was distributed informing residents of all the issues they had raised and all action taken to address them.

Landlady of property

Although determined initially to evict her tenants the police persuaded the landlady to be patient and reassured her that our intended action would prove a more cost effective option for her as well as being the most supportive action for her tenants.

Partner agencies

As mentioned earlier a comprehensive action plan was drawn up at an initial multi agency meeting with three subsequent review meetings taking place to review progress.

Daughter

A Young Carer Worker and an Educational Support worker attended the address and carried out an assessment of the daughter's needs. A grant was provided to fund transport costs to college and meals while she was there. When her mother was hospitalized she was re-housed at the Foyer. Letters of support from the police and housing advice resulted in her being prioritised for housing and took her to the top of a waiting list of 11 others.

Mother and Son

The mother and son received the wealth of support as detailed previously.

Assessment

Location

Following the installation of the railings and the reciting of the CCTV camera there were no further reports of young people congregating outside on Clare Street. No congregation also meant that the issues with associated graffiti were also eliminated. The CCTV camera still acts as a positive deterrent to crime in the area and has already been responsible for detecting an offender for an incident of graffiti on a near by car park. Research has shown that even with a relatively simple measure such as CCTV that there are various ways in which it can contribute to crime control (*Nick Tilley, Understanding car parks, crime and CCTV: Evaluation lessons from Safer Cities*)

A 75% reduction in the number of Anti-social behaviour incidents reported to the Police in 2008 compared to 2007 is complimented by positive improvements in the feelings of safety of street residents with 15 out of 18 people surveyed stating that they felt much safer as a result of action taken

- Reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour to the police
 - 109 reports of ASB in 2007
 - 27 reports of ASB in 2008

 - 103 reports of rowdy & inconsiderate behaviour in 2007
 - 25 reports of rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour in 2008

- Improved perception of “signal crime” as a problem in the area

Safety

18 Surveys returned

15 Stated "much better"

2 Stated "little better"

1 Stated "the same"

Offender

Mother and Son

The success of the interventions with the Clare Street family is detailed under the victim assessment below. However, one thing we learnt from this initiative was the ineffectiveness of our ABC intervention with the son. This case reinforced our view in Blackpool that without the supportive measure of a Parenting Contract to accompany it is a worthless intervention. Obviously in this case the parent was incapable of providing any structured support due to her alcohol dependency.

Group

The intensive interventions with the family and subsequent re-housing of them resulted in the dispersal of the large group of young people – removing the magnet which was attracting them meant that congregation at Clare Street was no longer an attractive option for them.

Victim

Residents of Clare Street and wider community

The actual reductions in reported incidents in Anti-social behaviour were complimented by residents actually confirming that they felt safer and that Anti-social behaviour had been reduced as a result of our action. The survey was undertaken approximately four months after action was completed and issues resolved and results therefore confirm sustainability.

- Improved perception of Anti- Social Behaviour as a problem in the area

Anti-Social Behaviour

15 Stated "much better"

3 Stated "little better"

Landlady

The landlady was able to re-let her property without the inconvenience and cost implications of a lengthy court eviction process.

Partner agencies

Close working on this initiative has forged relationships with partners and laid foundations for closer future partnership working with a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Mother, Daughter and Son

Perhaps the greatest successes were the interventions with the Clare Street family. The mother is finally getting all the help and support she needs in residential care and is getting stronger by the day. A member of the Neighbourhood Policing team has

recently met with both the son and daughter and their progress has been phenomenal. Both are living at the Foyer and staff there report that they are model residents and actively participating in organised activities. Both are studying, the daughter graphic design and the son for a Sports Award and re-sitting his maths and english GCSEs. Both now have partners and they visit their mother together twice a week. The most important thing is that these two young people are finally able to be young people, that they are beginning to achieve their potential and are developing good and productive relationships with their peers and other positive role models.

Quotes from people who benefited from the initiative

“I have noticed a big difference in relation to anti social behaviour since the police have carried out their work on Clare Street” (resident of Clare Street)

“No personal fears like there use to be, the street is a lot quieter. We feel safe when coming home late at night” (resident of Clare Street)

“There has been a reduction in youth nuisance on the street in the last 6 months, I feel I have my own home back now and feel a lot safe” (resident of Clare Street)

“A massive difference in anti social behaviour, there have been less incidents and no street drinking and it has had a positive impact with the residents staying at the Hostel”
(member of staff at Clare Street Hostel)

“I am really happy living at The Foyer, especially now that my brother is here too”
(daughter)

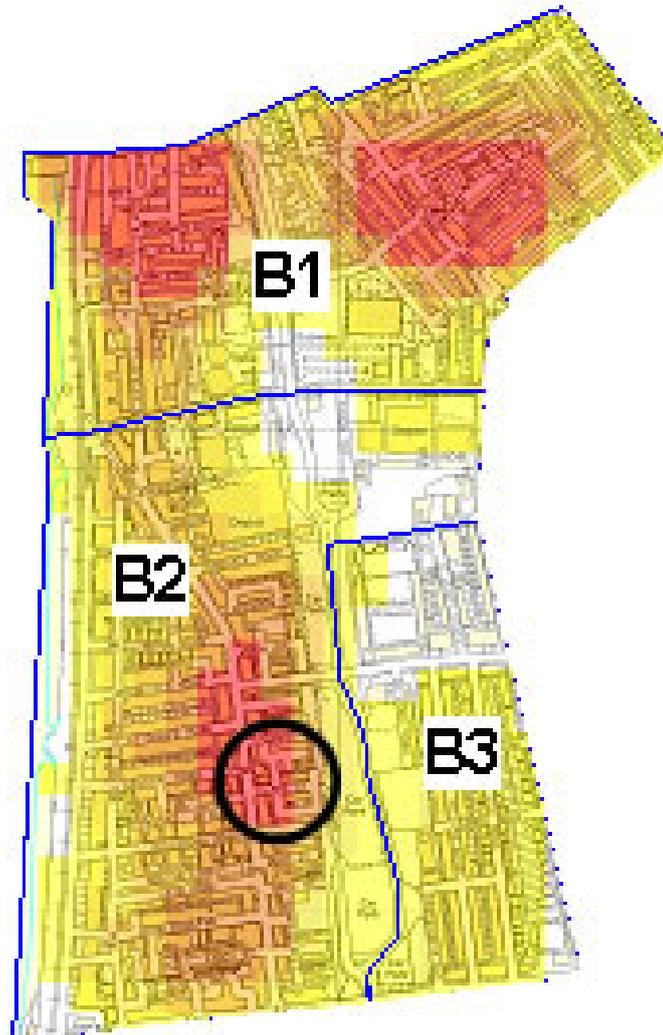
“I knew I had potential and I didn't want it no more. I'm not going to let nothing hold me back now” (son)

Conclusion

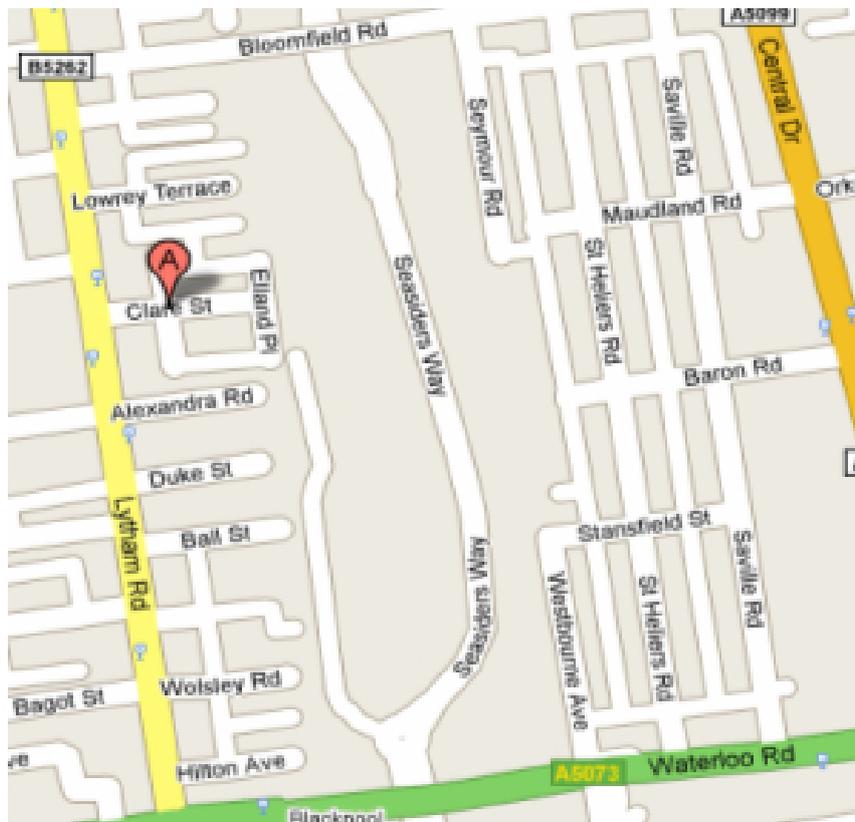
There are two key components of success of this initiative:

1. Firstly it addressed the root cause of the problem – that being the complex vulnerabilities of a family who needed and deserved more than simply to be evicted from their home without any help or support.
2. Secondly effective partnership working. No agency in isolation could have addressed the Clare Street issues and achieved such a successful and sustainable resolution for all involved and affected.

Appendix 1



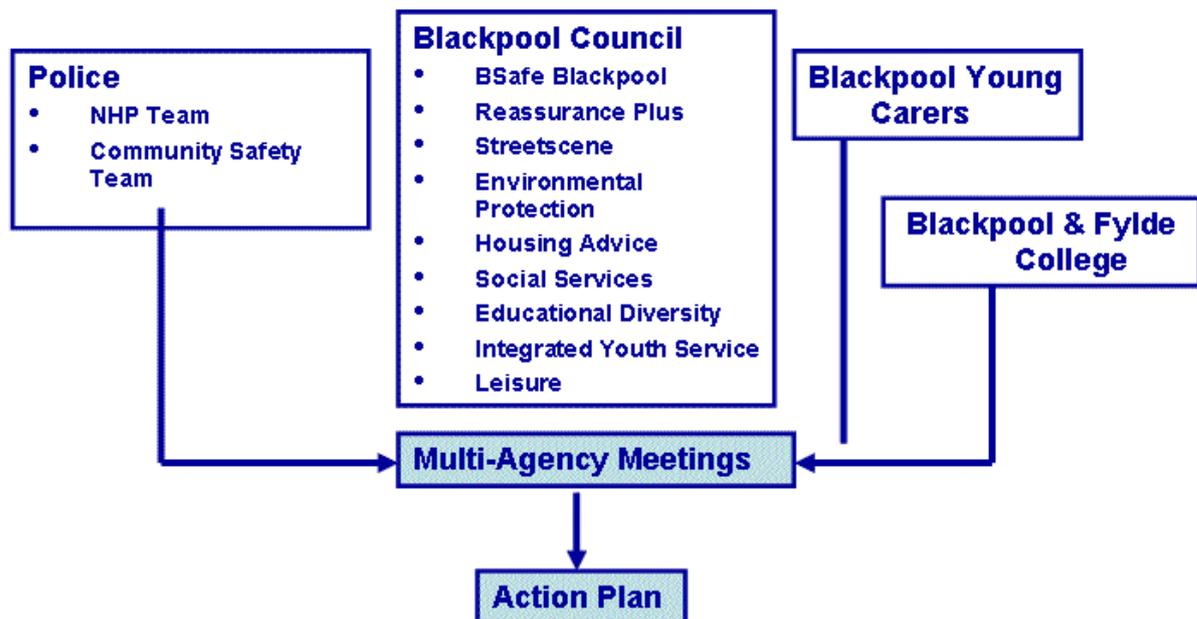
Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Appendix 4



Appendix 5



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