

Kenton Safer Neighbourhoods Teams Aim to Reduce Knife Crime

Kenton and Fryent Safer Neighbourhoods teams (Brent borough) assisted by other Brent police officers recently carried out a search arch operation in the foyer of Kingsbury tube station on Kingsbury Road.

The aim of this operation was to reduce knife crime and reduce the fear of crime in general. In all 82 people went through the search arch. A young man was arrested in possession of a knife and has been bailed to attend court.

Police Sergeant Phil Malin of Kenton Safer Neighbourhoods team said: "I'm pleased to have taken a knife off the streets and hope that the people searched realise the value in police conducting this type of operation. Whilst it's good to make arrests and remove knives from the streets, it's also encouraging that 81 people searched were not carrying weapons. We will continue to use these types of operations not only to catch those who foolishly decide to arm themselves, but also to deter people thinking of carrying weapons."

Cathall Safer Neighbourhoods Team Disrupt Major Cannabis Dealer

Officers from the Cathall Safer Neighbourhoods team (Waltham Forest borough) in conjunction with colleagues from TSG (Territorial Support Group) recently carried out a search warrant at a house in Leytonstone. As officers entered the house they found four men in the rear of the house weighing cannabis and placing it into small self-seal bags ready for distribution. A further search of the house revealed more small self-seal bags containing cannabis and a substantial amount of cash. Four air pistols were found (two of which were gas driven) and two air weapons. Four men were subsequently arrested and are currently on police bail.

Police Sergeant Leigh Galilee of the team said: "This warrant was executed as a direct result of stops and searches near to this premises and information from the community. This address had become a blight on the area and was making local residents lives a misery. We are now working closely with the housing provider to initiate eviction proceedings. The team will always act swiftly and decisively to deal with drug dealers on Cathall Ward."

Barnet Safer Transport Team in Operation Clean Sweep Success

More than 180 officers from Barnet police, British Transport Police, Transport for London (TfL) and the UK Border Agency, recently conducted operations in six underground stations to tackle crime and disorder on and around the transport network in Barnet.

Operation Clean Sweep was put into action between Golders Green and Edgware on the Northern Line in an effort to reassure transport users and pick up those travelling without a valid ticket on the network or seeking to cause trouble or carry

out criminal activity.

Knife arches and knife wands were in operation to tackle the issue of knife crime while passive drugs dogs were also deployed to pick up any hint of illegal substances.

As well as the six Underground stations, officers also had a presence on The Concourse in Grahame Park estate in Colindale, where a static fare evasion operation on the buses in the area took place.

In total, the operation led to six arrests, and the issuing of 47 penalty fares on the tube and buses. There was a drugs seizure as well as two warnings for cannabis possession. More than 1,000 crime prevention advice leaflets were also distributed to transport users.

Sergeant Lee Cannon, of Barnet Safer Transport team, said: "This was a very successful operation which illustrated how, when agencies work together, they can achieve some really positive results.

"Thankfully, the level of crime on our networks is quite low, but the fear of crime is high. Hopefully, this operation will have had some impact on that and reassured the public that we are committed to keeping transport networks safe in Barnet."

Bexley's Safer Transport Team Hold Surgery

Bexley's Safer Transport team recently held a surgery in the heart of Bexleyheath's busy shopping area.

Bexleyheath bus garage provided the team with a bus and it was parked on the pedestrian area near the shopping mall. Police Community Support Officers were available to talk to shoppers listen to their concerns and distribute leaflets and their latest team newsletter. Nearly one hundred shoppers stopped to speak to members of the team.

Inspector Carol Marsh of the team said: "We are grateful for the praise we received from the public. They have been reassured by our presence, feel safer and are noticing the difference that the Safer Transport team is making. Buses are no longer smothered with etchings and graffiti and crowded areas are closely supervised before and after school hours to prevent and deter anti-social behaviour at peak times. These tactics are proving highly successful and this is recognised by the public using the transport network."

Regular shoppers to the Broadway, Mrs Barbara Luetchford and Margaret Dixon of Mottingham, stopped to speak to PCSO Sara Burtenshaw. Mrs Luetchford who travels on the 132 bus said, "I think the team are making a vast difference, I often see PCSOs around the bus stops and chatting to members of the public. They were a great help one day when they got on the bus to deal with a rowdy group of children on the top deck. They took them off the bus and had firm words with them about their behaviour."

Junior Citizen Scheme Educates and Empowers the Young of Lambeth

Lambeth Police in partnership with Transport Police, London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance, Lambeth Youth ACAPS (drugs and alcohol advice agency), Road Safety and volunteers from the community held a two-week Junior Citizen scheme in March for the young people in Lambeth.

In total 630 children attended the Junior Citizen Scheme and came from various primary schools across the borough.

The scheme aims to promote citizenship, educate young people in safety and to equip them with skills to deal with situations where there are no adults. The focus is on the transitional year from primary to secondary school, as this is a time when young people are and feel most vulnerable.

This year the workshops included; internet safety, fire safety, kitchen safety, first aid, road safety, drugs and alcohol, bus safety and new for this year; personal safety including 'guns, knives and gangs' ran by PC Barry Browne, an ex-Trident officer now working for Lambeth in their firearms team.

Chief Inspector Jon Kirkpatrick of Lambeth police comments: "Junior Citizens is a successful scheme where we focus on the transitional year for the 10-11 year olds. The 'guns, knives and gang' workshop, refreshed this year was very well received by both young people and students and we will endeavour to keep this workshop involved in future Junior Citizens."

Hackney Borough Involved in Youth Surgery

Haggerston Safer Neighbourhoods team (Hackney borough) recently held it's first youth surgery at the Suleymaniye Mosque. The team have had several meetings over the last few months with the Secretary General Omer Ozcan Gokcek and the Education Director Hakan Yildirim leading up to the introduction of the new proposal to integrate and work alongside youths from this particular sector.

The first meeting was aimed at introducing the Safer Neighbourhoods team to the pupils of the mosque who attend there everyday after school and on Saturdays, giving them a summary of the services that their local team provides. Haggerston Safer Neighbourhoods team provided the youths with an outline of the various roles within the police and the aim of the Safer Neighbourhoods teams as well as the differences between police officers and Police Community Support Officers. They answered a wide variety of questions put to them from the pupils to clear up common confusions and uncertainties regarding points of law and what the pupils can and cannot do in different scenarios. By interacting with the pupils, the team was able to get an idea of what their main concerns were on a daily basis and issues surrounding their mosque.

Haggerston Safer Neighbourhoods team will be going back to the mosque on a regular and slightly less formal basis to get to know the pupils and become a familiar link to the police. Already certain issues and questions have been expressed which can be explored such as issues with gangs and getting to and from the mosque safely. Haggerston Safer Neighbourhoods team is using this opportunity to start addressing these issues and to reassure pupils, who had not contacted the police before with their concerns, who were unaware that the team are there to help and support them.

PS Jeremy Hinde of Haggerston Safer Neighbourhoods team said: "The Suleymaniye Mosque is a very friendly and welcoming place. Hakan and Omer are always keen to help us and to have a police presence and connection. Haggerston Safer Neighbourhoods team and Hakan hope that through these surgeries, pupils at the mosque will learn a lot more about the police and that they will feel able to talk to us more freely about any problems they are experiencing."

Brent Borough Involved with Youth Crime Prevention

At the end of March in the Advait Centre, Wembley, four groups of young people pitched innovative ideas on how to prevent youth crime to Brent's very own Dragons. Inspired by the hit BBC series, the teams presented their ideas before a panel of judges who decided that a team of students from Willesden's Capital City Academy deserved the £6,000 investment to make their concept a reality.

Damion Stewart, Justyn Page-Allen and Jordan Kurankyi made up the team for Ride 4 Life and the winning concept was to set up a local community cycling project. Inspector Neil Anderson, who heads up Brent's Safer Neighbourhoods teams thought of the idea. He said: "I meet lots of young people who have some great ideas about how to stop young people engaging in crime. I thought by using the Dragons' Den format we could give young people the opportunity to pitch their proposals and roll them out for real.

"In particular we were looking for initiatives which will help promote positive images of young people or projects that will improve the local environment and make residents feel safer. I was really inspired on paper by the applications we received and was even more impressed when their ideas were brought to life in their presentations. The ideas from the all entrants were fantastic and I know the judges had a tough time picking the winner. Congratulations to Ride 4 Life."