

Coffee with PC Connie

In mid-February, the Springfield and Cazenove Safer Neighbourhoods teams (both Hackney borough), in partnership with Hackney Council's Community Safety team met residents over a cup of coffee outside Netto's supermarket in Stamford Hill, N16.

With the help of "PC Connie", a Metropolitan Police mascot, the teams were able to get the serious message of their role across in a fun and friendly way. The event gave local residents the opportunity to meet their local police team in an informal and relaxed location. This allowed them to raise any issues they may have and receive crime prevention advice.

Over eighty residents met with officers and two were recruited as KINS (Key Individual Networks). A key individual is someone who has lived or worked in the ward for a long period of time. People are able to tap into their local knowledge and they are often able to explain the local problems and sometimes identify solutions.

A number of residents also agreed to join the local CAP (Community Action Panel). A CAP is made up of local people who will assess the different concerns requiring police or partner involvement and help Safer Neighbourhoods teams establish priorities for policing in their ward area.



Sergeant Tony O'Rourke, of Springfield Safer Neighbourhoods team, said:

"I am new to the team and this was a fantastic way to meet with the local community we represent. We were right in thinking that instead of using traditional methods of holding a drop-in surgery in a police office, this location and style of event caught the eye of passing residents, allowing us to build community links and to encourage future contact."

Police Officer Inspires Youngsters

An officer from Hampton North's Safer Neighbourhoods team (Richmond borough) has proved a hit with local school children following a stirring talk.

PC Robin Claydon, Schools Officer for his ward, gave the talk to 13 and 14-year-old youngsters from Hampton Academy ahead of the Youth Crime Conference. The conference, which took place in mid-February at Rugby Football Union, Twickenham, is an initiative of the Community and Police Partnership. Its key aims include raising awareness of key community safety issues among young people; to encourage young people to engage with the police, local authority and other partnership bodies; and to understand community safety issues that concern young people so that they can be incorporated into community safety plans.

PC Robin Claydon said:

"The pupils asked me a range of questions, from 'What do you carry?' and 'Have you ever shot someone?' to 'What's your funniest experience in the job?' and 'How do I become a police officer when I'm older?'"

"I also spoke to the youngsters about the dangers of cannabis use and the consequences of getting criminal records. I thought the talk would only take me 10 minutes but I ended up staying for an hour as the students didn't want me to leave."

"When I was their age, the police didn't visit the school to speak to us. I believe that, by interacting with the students at this age, it promotes better understanding of what we do and hopefully discourages youngsters from committing crime."

One of the pupils said:

"Today I learnt what it's like to be a policeman. I also learnt what tools a policeman carries and how they are used."

Roadshow Offers Crime Prevention Advice

King's Park, Leabridge and Chatham Safer Neighbourhoods teams (all Hackney borough) in partnership with Hackney Council's Community Safety team, held a crime prevention roadshow.

At the beginning of February, in Chatsworth Road, E5, the team offered local residents crime prevention advice and aids to protect themselves and their property. They provided residents with free Smartwater kits, which are advanced property marking technology, worth £50 each. This anti-theft marking system codes property with a forensic DNA style solution, which is uniquely registered to the owner. When placed under ultraviolet light the liquid glows to reveal its unique chemical signature, which means stolen property can be checked on a database and traced back to its rightful owner.

Police routinely screen all prisoners as they come into custody to check they have not come into contact with forensic coding systems. All officers carry ultraviolet torches when on patrol.

The marking systems can be used for marking high value items, from computers to jewellery. The liquid used is invisible to the eye and cannot be removed. Many more crime prevention aids were available, including micro-chips for cycles, panic alarms, window shock alarms, handbag bells and security timers.



PC Carina Ioannou, from King's Park Safer Neighbourhoods team said:

"Over 50 Smartwater kits were registered on the day and this was an excellent result considering the terrible weather! I hope that many more residents consider marking their property. By coding your valuables and displaying the Smartwater deterrent signs, you are sending out a powerful warning to any thieves and burglars operating in your area."

Ward Border Crackdown in Place to Reduce Crime

At the beginning of February, police officers from Herne Hill and Coldharbour Safer Neighbourhoods teams (both Lambeth borough) conducted an operation on the ward borders to crack down on known gang members using hire cars to commit crime.

The Safer Neighbourhoods teams were joined by the South East automated number plate recognition (ANPR) team and a pro-active drugs dog.

The ANPR van identified vehicles travelling along Loughborough Road, Brixton, SE5. Other police units spotted and detained vehicles seen trying to evade the stop site.

In total 28 vehicles were stopped during the operation. Two vehicles were seized for having no insurance and two arrests were made for drug offences, courtesy of the pro-active drugs dog.



Sergeant Tony Dodd, of Herne Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team, said:

"This was a successful operation. We gathered some valuable intelligence, which will also assist future investigations. We intend to continue running these operations on main arterial routes in Lambeth to reduce gang violence."

Sergeant Anton Menzies, of Coldharbour Safer Neighbourhoods team, said:

"We work with Herne Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team on a regular basis in order to disrupt gang-related crime and disorder. This was a considerable success and we plan to make this a regular occurrence at varying times of day and night. This will hopefully send a message to our respected communities that their Safer Neighbourhoods teams mean business."

Officers Catch Man Wanted on European Arrest Warrant

PCSO Simon Dowley and PCSO Mohammed Mughal both from Dudden Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team (Brent borough) were on patrol in Dudden Hill Lane when they spotted two men standing on the pavement drinking alcohol. The PCSOs stopped the two men and carried out checks to verify their identity. The checks revealed that one was currently wanted/missing although the date of birth did not entirely match the one logged on the police system so the PCSOs called for police assistance.

Whilst waiting for a police unit to arrive the PCSOs questioned the man over the date of birth discrepancy, the man then revealed that he had given them false details and revealed his true identity. On carrying out checks on the new details PCSO Simon Dowley and PCSO Mohammed Mughal discovered that he was actually

wanted on an international warrant for a crime committed in Poland. When the police unit arrived the man was arrested and taken to a police station and has now been deported on a European arrest warrant.

Sergeant Gareth Squance, of Dudden Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team, said:

"This is another great piece of work by the Dudden Hill team. Both the officers perseverance has placed another criminal before his home courts. This is a great example of what PCSOs can achieve."

Kickz Project Attempts to Find the Next Wayne Rooney

On the 7th February 2011, the Specialist Firearms Command (CO19) visited the Kickz Project at Newman College, Harlesden, to talk to children attending the project about the dangers of being involved in gun crime and the consequences of their actions.

Kickz is a project funded by the Metropolitan Police Service, the government, and local football clubs - in this case QPR, where local young people can play football after school, under the supervision of professional coaches.

Local Safer Neighbourhoods teams are involved too, they engage with youths, building a rapport with them with the aim to steer them away from crime. There has been a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour (ASB) where the project has been running, giving youngsters a clear alternative to crime.



PC Ajay Saluja, of Kensal Green Safer Neighbourhoods team (Brent borough) said:
"It's great that the Kickz Project allows the police to talk to potential young victims of crime, and inform them of what has happened elsewhere in the capital. This is a new way of being proactive and I know the attendees were enlightened and will think about their choices in the future. We are all committed to reducing gun crime and this is part of our tactic to do just that."

PC Vicki Farrington from CO19 Operation Makepace said:

"It's always good to speak to young people about what is happening around them. CO19 are often involved in the aftermath of these unfortunate incidents, and this is my team's way of educating and informing young people about the dangers they face - before they face them."

Matt Lock from QPR Kickz Project said:

"It's great to see the police interacting with the kids in this way and making it clear what choices the kids have. After watching the input from Vicky, I am sure this will make them think long and hard about committing violent crime and getting involved with gangs."