

Millwall Safer Neighbourhoods Team step up patrols

During the month of June, police in Tower Hamlets made 24 arrests when conducting a pro-active operation targeting priority areas in Millwall ward.

These offences included common assault, criminal damage, theft, possession of drugs, assault ABH and GBH and public order. Millwall Safer Neighbourhoods team (Tower Hamlets borough) have been listening to residents concerns and stepped up their high visibility patrols in addition to covert patrols across the ward.

A group of five youths were arrested for criminal damage (graffiti) to a wall that had recently been painted in Westferry Road, E14. These five youths have now been charged with criminal damage and are awaiting trial.

Sergeant Alex Burzotta from Millwall Safer Neighbourhoods team said: "This is yet another successful operation conducted on the Isle of Dogs working closely with the council and our partners. Our team is committed to dealing with quality of life issues that local residents highlight to us. We will continue to take action and target those people that commit crime and anti-social behaviour in Millwall ward."

SNAC time in Islington

Up to 350 young people from Islington showcased their ideas and projects on ways to improve their local environment and make it a safer place to live in.

Their hard work was all part of the second Islington Safer Neighbourhoods Annual Challenge (SNAC) organised by police officers from Islington borough.

The SNAC was launched in January by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) (Islington borough) in partnership with Islington Council and supported by other agencies, as a fun and interesting way to get young people to invest in the safety and well being of their neighbourhoods through projects they design, develop and run themselves.

Their projects ranged from designing clothes to organising games, planting flowers and shrubs in local parks, to cleaning up the streets and neighbourhoods.

Their hard work culminated in the SNAC awards ceremony hosted by the MPS (Islington borough) in partnership with Islington Council. The evening was jointly compered by DJ Treble T from Radio One Extra and DJ Abranteee from Choice FM. Awards were handed out by the head of Islington Council, Catherine West, Superintendent John Sutherland from the MPS (Islington borough) and Freddy Hudson, Head of Arsenal in the Community who are one of the major sponsors of SNAC.

The winners, divided into three different age groups: Under 11, 11-14 and 15-19, were chosen for creating a positive difference to their local area.

In the first category, Under 11s, the winners were the Sunshine Kidz Zone from Archway who created and designed a model of Archway town centre to show how it could look without fly tipping.

In the second category, 11-14s, a group of young people who played football in Elthorne Park decided to clear up the litter in the park and plant flowers to make the area aesthetically pleasing.

In the third and final category, 15-19s, the winners, were the 'The Obsessive Painters and Decorators' from Tufnell Park Estate who created a mural on a wall in the estate that had previously been covered in graffiti.



Police Constable Matt Fletcher of Tollington Safer Neighbourhoods team (Islington borough) said: "The Safer Neighbourhoods Annual Challenge is a great opportunity for young people in Islington to channel their energy and creative talents into something positive that benefits their local area. The enthusiasm and can-do attitude of the youngsters was tremendous. Congratulations and well done to all of them!"

Divine Intervention launch

Sergeant Steven Brown and PCSO Chloe Sutton from Faraday Safer Neighbourhoods team (Southwark borough) attended the official launch of Divine Intervention at their new office at Thurlow Lodge in SE17 at the beginning of July.

Divine Intervention started in 2005 after two local residents wanted to improve where they lived and to tackle the poverty that they encountered. A street-based outreach facility, offered support and guidance to the homeless near to East Street Market/Walworth Road.

Sergeant Brown led the response into the problem of street drinkers in Walworth Road, which was affecting community confidence due to the high levels of anti-social behaviour and crime it generated. Sergeant Brown liaised with several agencies of the problem with street drinking and government agencies whose remit was to improve the residents' job prospects and make the community safer. They facilitated partnership funding previously to help improve the services available to the drinkers, many of whom had alcohol and/or drug dependency problems.

The Aylesbury New Deals for Communities, (NDC) agreed to match funding, and a Southwark-based agency Red Ochre piloted a project to improve residents prospects of running their own community enterprises as the mechanism in which funding and business support would be directed. A 'dragons den' style interview took place and Divine Intervention gained further success in bidding for funding and just as important, business support.

Divine Intervention along with Southwark Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (SASBU) and the funding made the difference by addressing the needs of the group of drinkers and they are no longer on the Walworth Road. The multi agency funding and successes from the Street drinking initiative, has led Divine intervention to secure an office at Thurlow Lodge, on the Aylesbury estate. It was apparent, that the group needed a base from which to work from, (the team is now 20 strong and growing), a site where the homeless can attend and also to improve the level of support and better placed to tap into funding streams, as it runs on a shoestring budget. This new site will assist the Faraday Safer Neighbourhoods team with the current ward panel priority of addressing homelessness and rough sleeping on the ward. The local community, Faraday Safer Neighbourhoods team and Creation, the NDC's successor, has provided further invaluable support, and the police can refer individuals to identify their needs such as health, clothing, a hot meal, and of course identifying alternative accommodation such as hostels and supported accommodation.



Sergeant Steven Brown said: "We have allocated £1000 of partnership funding from the MPS, which was matched by the Creation trust, who are assisting with the regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate. The community has been very positive about what Divine Intervention can deliver by partnership working with the Faraday SNT".

Two men arrested during motor vehicle crime initiative

Over the last few months, Wandsworth Common Safer Neighbourhoods team (Wandsworth borough) have been working hard to tackle motor vehicle crime which is one of their ward priorities. At local meetings, residents voiced their concerns and were convinced that suspects were using some sort of electronic device to gain entry to their cars. During the months of March and April, ward officers carried out their own research and discovered that a large number of parked vehicles were inadvertently being left open by residents. The vast majority of these were large family cars, often with child seats in the rear. Officers were certain that this method of entry may have accounted for over 60% of the recorded theft from motor vehicle crimes on the ward.

At the beginning of July using Wandsworth Council CCTV and utilising plain clothes officers on unmarked bikes, Wandsworth Common Safer Neighbourhoods team ran a pro-active operation targeting those worst affected areas. This resulted in a man being arrested after he was seen trying a number of car door handles in the hope of discovering unlocked vehicles.

The operation was repeated a few days later where another man was arrested for exactly the same offence on an adjacent road. Both men are currently on bail. The operation confirmed officers suspicions of how entry was being gained to vehicles.

Sergeant Jerry Ostrowski of Wandsworth Common Safer Neighbourhoods team said: "Listening to residents concerns prompted us to carry out our own research. This resulted in an excellent pro active operation where two men were arrested and a large amount of intelligence gathered. These men were blatantly caught trying car door handles and looking into vehicles in the hope of finding unopened ones that they could steal from. We can now move on to the next stage of this problem solving process which will be highlighting the importance of vehicle security to residents."

Brent Safer Neighbourhoods Teams conduct search arch operation

At the beginning of July, Kenton Safer Neighbourhoods team (Brent borough), in partnership with other officers, carried out a search arch operation at Kingsbury tube station. This was timed to coincide with the 5th anniversary of the 07/07 London bombings.

In total, 115 people were searched for weapons outside the tube station during a four hour period. One passenger was issued with a cannabis warning after being found in possession of a small quantity of herbal cannabis.

Leaflets explaining the purpose of the search arch operation was handed out to all passengers and passing members of the public to provide reassurance and increase public confidence.

PC Gail Stanton of Kenton Safer Neighbourhoods team said: “We conducted a successful search arch operation in full view of traveling passengers and residents of Kenton, Queensbury and Fryent wards. No weapons were found during the operation which provides an encouraging sign that our recent public campaigns to the local community explaining that the carrying of knives, firearms and other weapons will not be tolerated are having the desired effect. Search arch operations reinforce that message. We received many messages of thanks and support from members of our community who recognise the efforts of their local Safer Neighbourhoods officers in keeping their neighbourhood safe, particularly on such a poignant date.”

Club Watch scheme a success in Redbridge

Fairlop Safer Neighbourhoods team (Redbridge borough) are pleased to announce yet another extension of their Ward’s comprehensive Neighbourhood Watch network.

The latest scheme is unusual in that rather than covering residential homes, “Club Watch” caters specifically for organisations involved in running sports clubs, playing fields, and open spaces in Fairlop Ward.

As Fairlop Ward covers Fairlop Plain, adjacent to Forest Road it contains an unusually high number of such organisations.

Six of these; Old Parkonians, Ilford Wanderers Rugby Club, Power League, Frenford Clubs, London Marathon Sports Ground, and Redbridge Sports and Leisure Centre came together at Ilford Wanderers Rugby Club recently to launch Club Watch.

The clubs involved had identified a number of shared problems involving trespass, minor damage and security concerns and sought the advice of Fairlop Safer Neighbourhoods team. Whilst having worked closely with individual organisations in the past, it became apparent the Safer Neighbourhoods team could be best advised to resolve these issues by working together.

The obvious answer was to form a group similar to Neighbourhood Watch but made up of organisations rather than residents. “Club Watch” is the first of its kind in Redbridge, and first such Watch in London.

Sergeant Chris Chandler of Fairlop Safer Neighbourhoods team said: “Launching this watch seemed an obvious thing to do. In the past, most of the clubs have felt their concerns are too minor to trouble police but playing fields and open spaces are important parts of any community. I hope that by working together we can further reduce the issues that might otherwise spoil people’s enjoyment of these facilities, and I would like to thank all involved.”

Partnership day a first for local Safer Neighbourhoods team

Soon after mid-July, Fryent Safer Neighbourhoods team (Brent borough) hosted its first ever partnership day. The day focused its resources towards the priorities identified by the community representatives who make up the ward panel. Throughout the day the team conducted weapons sweeps, traffic operations, directed patrols, a crime prevention stall, Neighbourhood Watch recruitment and many other activities. They were assisted by partner agencies, including the Council anti social behaviour team, London Fire Brigade, Brent Council Street Care team, Brent Housing Partnership and many others. The ward panel were there to see the results first hand.

The results of the partnership day included 92 stop and accounts, six stop and searches, 56 vehicles stopped and nine fixed penalty notices.

Sergeant Gary Pidgeon from Fryent Safer Neighbourhoods team said: “This proactive day was organised by myself with the assistance of Ashley Cumberbatch from Brent anti-social behaviour team. It would not have taken place and been such a success had it not been for the hard work put in by all our partners and officers. This is a very good example of everyone pulling together for the benefit of the residents and retailers to help continue to make Fryent ward a safe place for all.”

Brent Safer Neighbourhoods inspector Claire Smart added: “There will be one partnership day a month and all the wards will have an opportunity to use the additional resources to solve the problems that matter the most to our local community. Today has demonstrated that working closely with our partner agencies, we are able to have a big impact in the locality.”