Using Situational Crime Prevention in Small Areas

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Crime Science: Short Reports

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The Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science is the world's first university based department aimed wholly at measurably reducing crime. It brings together a number of disciplines under the heading crime science and forges links with policymakers and crime reduction practitioners. It was created by public and corporate donations after the death of Jill Dando.

Based in University College London, the Institute aims to make a powerful impact on crime by developing and supporting the use of Crime Science by policymakers and practitioners. It does this through teaching, education and research programmes. The Institute draws on a global pool of expertise and has an international reputation as an authoritative source of information on crime reduction.

This paper is the fifth in the Institute’s Crime Science: Short Reports series. These short papers are intended for practitioners and cover a broad range of issues. Some provide practical advice and information, sometimes of a technical nature, while others explore current issues in crime reduction. Other papers in the series can be found at www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk
Foreword

New Deal for Communities (NDCs) and other area based regeneration initiatives have a vital contribution to make to the reduction of crime in some of our most challenging urban areas.

Situational crime prevention is a very powerful and adaptable tool that NDC partnerships can use to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, while delivering other outcomes in housing, education, health and economic activity. It also links directly to the Government’s liveability priorities.

When GOWM and the NDC partnerships’ crime theme leads commissioned the Jill Dando Institute for Crime Science to undertake an analysis of the situational crime reduction work of the NDC partnerships in the region, we hoped that it would build on and develop the knowledge and skills of the officers involved in the NDC Partnerships’ crime reduction work. I am pleased to be able to say that the audit has already encouraged self assessment, network development and joint work in the West Midlands, and I hope that this in turn leads to real improvements for NDC residents. This booklet represents the distillation of the lessons learned, and frames them as practice messages to assist other regeneration initiatives. The ‘health check’ document itself is a tool for assessing the application of crime science and the effectiveness of crime reduction management systems.

I am very pleased to be able to introduce what we hope is a focused document that sets out a clear approach to unifying situational crime reduction and regeneration work.

Margaret Geary
Home Office Regional Director
Government Office for the West Midlands

August 2004
Acknowledgements

We are grateful to a number of people for their help in the conduct of this work:

Gavin Butler of the Government Office of the West Midlands managed the project in an informed, sensitive, and supportive way.

Rodger Patrick of the West Midlands Police provided police liaison.

Paul Lawless of Sheffield Hallam University, who is heading the National Evaluation of New Deal for Communities, generously released data from the MORI survey, which was conducted as part of the national evaluation, for our use in this report. Alex Hirschfield, who leads the crime reduction element of the national evaluation, sat on the project steering group and, alongside other members, provided valuable advice.

Staff of the various NDCs made time to talk to us often at great length and with great candour. NDC staff were also enormously helpful in arranging focus groups with local residents.

Across the six NDCs a large number of residents came and talked to us about the NDC and about crime issues in their neighbourhoods. We were impressed by their good humour, commitment, openness, and willingness to debate with one another the problems and prospects of their areas.

Dan Birks and Lynne Weighall, colleagues at the Jill Dando Institute, also played invaluable parts in putting together this report.

Ben Marshall
Chloe Smith
Nick Tilley

August 2004
Introduction

The Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science was commissioned by the Government Office for the West Midlands to examine the extent and appropriateness of the use made of situational and environmental methods of crime prevention within the six New Deal for Communities (NDC) areas within the West Midlands: Greets Green in Sandwell; the Kings Norton and Aston areas in Birmingham; Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore (WEHM) in Coventry; All Saints and Blakenhall in Wolverhampton; and Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore in Walsall. The review was undertaken between September 2003 and March 2004. This paper comprises an overview drawing on visits to all six NDC areas and suggests ways in which further and better use could be made of situational and environmental approaches in the future.

Situational methods of crime prevention do not attempt to reduce crime by enforcement, by altering individuals' dispositions to commit crime or by transforming social conditions that may give rise to criminality. Instead they focus on reducing opportunities for crime. The methods used operate in a variety of ways: by reducing rewards, by increasing effort, by increasing risks, by reducing provocation and by removing excuses. In spite of its apparent simplicity the situational approach to crime prevention is widely misunderstood. In particular, assumptions that situational methods inevitably lead to an equivalent displacement of crime have been comprehensively shown to be mistaken (see Hesseling 1994). Indeed, there is ample evidence that situational measures can have crime preventive impacts beyond their operational range (Clarke and Weisburd 1994).

It is important to realise that situational crime prevention does not include only target-hardening. Indeed Figure 1 shows that target hardening is just one of 25 techniques that fall under the banner of situational crime prevention. Clearly not all these techniques will be relevant to all crime problems. But few crime problems will be open to none of them. What is attempted will be a function of the careful analysis of each specific presenting crime problem to identify points of intervention that will lessen the opportunities for it.

It can be useful to think of five different forms of intervention that can be made in situational crime prevention:

1. Security improvements, for example bolts and bars, locks, gates, security tags
2. Product design, for example removable car radios, gender-free phone books,
3. Environmental design, for example street lay-out, shop lay-out, car park design, estate design, landscaping, location of types of business, provision of lighting
4. Procedure and policy design, for example requirements for countersigning of cheques, having two assistants on duty at small shops, prepayment at petrol stations
5. Service delivery design, for example quick graffiti removal, rapid repairs of burgled properties
Figure 1: Twenty five techniques of situational prevention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase the Effort</th>
<th>Increase the Risks</th>
<th>Reduce the Rewards</th>
<th>Reduce Provocations</th>
<th>Remove Excuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Target harden</td>
<td>6 Extend guardianship</td>
<td>11 Conceal targets</td>
<td>16 Reduce frustrations and stress</td>
<td>21 Set rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Steering column locks and immobilisers</td>
<td>• Take routine precautions: go out in group at night, leave signs of occupancy, carry phone</td>
<td>• Off-street parking</td>
<td>• Efficient queues and polite service</td>
<td>• Rental agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anti-robbery screens</td>
<td>• &quot;Cocoon&quot; neighborhood watch</td>
<td>• Gender-neutral phone directories</td>
<td>• Expanded seating</td>
<td>• Harassment agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tamper-proof packaging</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unmarked bullion trucks</td>
<td>• Soothing music/muted lights</td>
<td>• Hotel registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Control access to facilities</td>
<td>7 Assist natural surveillance</td>
<td>12 Remove targets</td>
<td>17 Avoid disputes</td>
<td>22 Post instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Entry phones</td>
<td>• Improved street lighting</td>
<td>• Removable car radio</td>
<td>• Separate enclosures for rival soccer fans</td>
<td>• &quot;No Parking&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Electronic card access</td>
<td>• Defensible space design</td>
<td>• Women’s refuges</td>
<td>• Reduce crowding in pubs</td>
<td>• &quot;Private Property&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Baggage screening</td>
<td>• Support whistleblowers</td>
<td>• Pre-paid cards for pay phones</td>
<td>• Fixed cab fares</td>
<td>• &quot;Exterminate camp fires&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Screen exits</td>
<td>8 Reduce anonymity</td>
<td>13 Identify property</td>
<td>18 Reduce emotional arousal</td>
<td>23 Alert conscience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ticket needed for exit</td>
<td>• Taxi driver IDs</td>
<td>• Property marking</td>
<td>• Controls on violent pornography</td>
<td>• Roadside speed display boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Export documents</td>
<td>• &quot;How’s my driving?&quot; decals</td>
<td>• Vehicle licensing and parts marking</td>
<td>• Enforce good behavior on soccer field</td>
<td>• Signatures for customs declarations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Electronic merchandise tags</td>
<td>• School uniforms</td>
<td>• Cattle branding</td>
<td>• Prohibit racial slurs</td>
<td>• &quot;Shoplifting is stealing&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Deflect offenders</td>
<td>9 Utilize place managers</td>
<td>14 Disrupt markets</td>
<td>19 Neutralize peer pressure</td>
<td>24 Assist compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Street closures</td>
<td>• CCTV for double-deck buses</td>
<td>• Monitor pawn shops</td>
<td>• &quot;Idiots drink and drive&quot;</td>
<td>• Easy library checkout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Separate bathrooms for women</td>
<td>• Two clerks for convenience stores</td>
<td>• Controls on classified ads.</td>
<td>• &quot;It’s OK to say No&quot;</td>
<td>• Public lavatories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disperse pubs</td>
<td>• Reward vigilance</td>
<td>• License street vendors</td>
<td>• Disperse troublemakers at school</td>
<td>• Litter bins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Control tools/ weapons</td>
<td>10 Strengthen formal surveillance</td>
<td>15 Deny benefits</td>
<td>20 Discourage imitation</td>
<td>25 Control drugs and alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Smart&quot; guns</td>
<td>• Red light cameras</td>
<td>• Ink merchandise tags</td>
<td>• Rapid repair of vandalism</td>
<td>• Breathalyzers in pubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disabling stolen cell phones</td>
<td>• Burglar alarms</td>
<td>• Graffiti cleaning</td>
<td>• V-chips in TVs</td>
<td>• Server intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Restrict spray paint sales to juveniles</td>
<td>• Security guards</td>
<td>• Speed humps</td>
<td>• Censor details of modus operandi</td>
<td>• Alcohol-free events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Cornish and Clarke (2004)
Analytic problem-solving depends on adequate, accurate data and specialist skills in its manipulation and interpretation. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation then follow to fine-tune strategies, to identify any need for further intervention, and to home in on newly emerging crime problems so that they too can be addressed. This forms the ‘preventative process’ illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. The preventive process
Main Findings and Examples of Good Practice

All six West Midlands NDC areas were visited, staff members were interviewed, documentation was reviewed, crime data were assembled and examined, and residents were consulted.

The best of the NDC areas in terms of situational crime prevention were performing very well: there were signs of problem analysis, understanding of the principles of situational crime prevention, appropriate use of local expertise, co-operation between agencies and organisations, and some monitoring of progress. At the other end of the continuum, there were indications that there had been an absence of analysis, absence of understanding, failure to use local expertise, organisational dysfunction and poor interagency working, weak record keeping and failure to monitor what was happening and what was being implemented. In all cases it was felt that past problems were now being addressed.

In a number of NDC areas environmental improvements have been made that can be expected to impact on crime even though not specifically introduced for that reason. Evidence was found where NDC partnerships had consciously and explicitly adapted the work implemented in non-crime streams in ways that were aimed at the same time at reducing crime.

In general, there was a great deal of highly promising work and a variety of early indications that benefits are being achieved. Some examples of good practice seen across the NDC areas are given below:

**Problem-solving in relation to high burglary rate blocks of flats in Kings Norton**
In Kings Norton, analysis showed two blocks to suffer a large proportion of domestic burglaries. A set of target hardening measures tailored to the particular problems encountered by the blocks led to a substantial fall in the number of burglaries.

**Maintained ground clearance in Greets Green**
Greets Green faced a particular problem of overgrown and neglected areas that were cleared and, as importantly, have been maintained in their cleared state making available non-threatening open space for public use.

**Installation of fencing in Kings Norton, in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore, and in Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore**
In at least two projects vulnerable blocks have been enclosed by high fencing effectively to keep potential offenders out. In Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore fencing has been effectively used to reduce problems of cars being dumped and burned in open spaces.

**Targeted alley-gating in Greet Green and Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore**
In Greets Green, All Saints and Blakenhall, and in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore, problems of rear access burglaries in housing accessed by offenders through back alleys
have been addressed by the installation of gates, keys to which are confined to residents. Gates have also been installed in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore in efforts to inhibit anti-social behaviour in alleyways. There is good evidence on the potential benefits from gating rear alleys as a means of reducing burglary (Bowers et al 2003).

**Regular rubbish collection in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore**
In Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore rather than dealing with strewn rubbish with periodic expensive blitzes, rubbish is being kept under control by regular prompt clearance of it as it appears. This is consistent with findings that prompt treatment of incivilities inhibits their reappearance and also helps to prevent a spiral into decline as predicted by the Broken Windows theory (Wilson and Kelling 1982).

**Use of wardens to mobilise maintenance and repairs in Kings Norton, in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore, and in Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore**
There was imaginative and constructive use of wardens in many NDC areas. They were instrumental, for example, in patrolling hot spots at times where incidents were believed to occur most often, in securing rapid council attention to graffiti and dumped rubbish, and in mobilising repairs and security upgrades to burgled properties. All these comprise efforts to use tested situational approaches to address particular crime-related problems.

**Built in prevention plans for redevelopment in Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore.**
Very large-scale redevelopment is planned in the Coventry NDC comprising Wood End, Henley Green, Manor Farm and Deedmore. Efforts are being made to ensure that crime is designed out of the new development, through broad application of tried and tested principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. The Coventry team are also intending to attempt to anticipate the creation of crime opportunities that will emerge during redevelopment and to try and minimise them.

**Attention to repeat victimisation in Greets Green, All Saints and Blakenhall and in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore**
There is a substantial literature showing that those victimised are at heightened risk of repeat offences, especially in the days and weeks following an incident. A MORI survey, conducted as part of the overall evaluation of the NDC programme, provided evidence that patterns of repeats are found also in the West Midlands NDC areas. In some project areas these patterns were understood and measures were being implemented to reduce risks of repeat incidents.

Some frequently used situational measures, notably lighting upgrades and CCTV, had been applied in spite of rather mixed findings about their effectiveness. Even when associated with falls in crime, lighting upgrades seem mostly to have generated their effects other than by increases in illumination per se (Painter 1995). The evidence of the effectiveness of CCTV outside car parks, where benefits are quite well-established, is rather mixed (Painter and Tiley 1999, Welsh and Farrington 2003). It appears that it can be effective but is not so always. The relevance of planned measures needs to be established by specific and detailed analysis, including a well-worked out rationale indicating how the measures are expected to bring about the intended effects where they are planned. Because it was not always clear that this form of analysis had occurred, the use of these particular techniques, where employed in the NDC areas, cannot with confidence be deemed good practice.
Recommendations

Whilst the good practice observed in many of the NDC areas visited was welcome and is noted here, the primary purpose of the study was to identify ways in which the use of situational crime prevention could be furthered and improved. Key points for enhancing the effectiveness of situational crime prevention are given below.

I. Organisational support

In the course of visits to NDC areas it became clear that several members of staff with crime reduction responsibilities felt bereft of organisational support. The local multi-agency and community conditions in one or two cases were quite fragmented. Several found that bidding processes could be slow and obtuse, frustrating good work. In relation to these issues:

• A fast, informed and efficient bid approval system within NDC partnerships, and where necessary within government departments that have to agree spends, would allow measures to be implemented quickly, with minimum frustration and maintaining the enthusiasm of partners.

• Strong, committed and involved senior NDC officers are crucial to sustained, effective work. Senior NDC officers need to have at least a basic level of competence, commitment and involvement in all key areas of NDC concern, including crime.

• Effective situational crime prevention requires co-operation within major local organisations, including in particular the NDC partnerships, police services, and the local authority. This was not always found. Local partners in these cases needed help to improve trust, communication and commitment to a shared mission.

II. Use of evidence

The efficient and effective application of situational and environmental methods of crime prevention depends on good use of evidence to identify problems, understand them, monitor them and assess the effectiveness of preventive efforts. This use of evidence in turn relies on accurate and wide-ranging routine data collection, and the availability of analysts with the appropriate skills and equipment to manipulate the data.

Specific needs include the following:

• Fast, accurate and detailed provision of police crime and incident data at specific locations, preferably supplemented with local authority data on incivilities.

• Basic training for key NDC staff in the interpretation of findings.

• Systems for detailed record-keeping about what has been done where and when.

• Dedicated, trained and skilled analytic support (see key recommendation 1)

Since crime and disorder patterns change, upskilling would not only help the NDC partnerships deliver on the current crime reduction agenda but would also increase the ability to respond intelligently to new problems as they arise.
Key recommendation 1: Organise an analytical resource

There are a number of options open to NDC partnerships to acquire analytic support. One would be to hire a dedicated crime analyst, perhaps shared between two NDC areas. Another would be to enter into a service level agreement with the police, or local CDRP, for a share of their analysts time. There are distinct advantages and disadvantages to both. Whichever is chosen, the NDC partnership should ensure the service meets the specific needs of the NDC area. In this regard, an analyst or an analyst service should be expected to:

- Identify and track specific crime problems to a level of detail where the circumstances that generate opportunities for crime are identified and explored in depth.
- Advise on means of addressing these specific crime problems
- Devise and oversee record-keeping practices enabling the systematic monitoring and evaluation of key initiatives, to track not only the ‘extent’ to which they are working, but also ‘how’ they are working.

It is unlikely that generalist analytic services will be sufficient for the detailed and informed work which will be critical to maximise effectiveness.

III. Knowledge of crime prevention and set up issues

Whilst crime prevention might not be rocket science, there is an established knowledge base for it and common-sense views are often quite mistaken. Moreover, some responses to crime can have harmful side-effects. Best use of situational and environmental measures will depend on a proper understanding of crime prevention theory and a familiarity with research findings. Those working in NDC areas have often been working in the dark. In relation to crime prevention, those responsible are for the most part intelligent and committed people of good will doing their best. Frequently, though, they lack expertise or access to expertise. There is also a significant problem with staff turnover. In order to address these issues, the following might be considered, perhaps in conjunction with one another:

- Provision of short courses, contracted from credibly experienced and expert sources
- Intimate involvement of police crime reduction officers or architectural liaison officers in scrutiny of all project plans specifically oriented to crime prevention or with a crime prevention element
- Engagement of well-qualified external consultants with strong track records
- Requirement that crime theme appointees to the NDC partnership have formal crime prevention credentials
- Strong central guidance on project planning, with requirements on evidence use.
- Provision of induction materials for incoming NDC staff working on other streams indicating the fits with crime reduction.
- Regularly updated guidance packs with sample project plans, and ‘show and tell’ examples of effective ways in which crimes have been prevented using situational measures.
- Provision of a basic library of materials (see key recommendation 2)
Key Recommendation 2:

Create a library of key crime reduction texts

Top 10 recommended readings to be made available for all existing and incoming NDC staff with specific crime responsibilities:


IV. Involvement of the community

Much store is set in NDC partnerships on the involvement of the community. The level of community participation varied across the NDC areas. There were signs of frustration at under-consultation in some places and consultation fatigue in others. The role of the community was agreed in all cases to be crucial but precisely how they should be involved was less clear. In relation to situational crime prevention, what needs to be determined is what role the community can play to help ensure that what is done is done effectively and addresses real local problems. Residents can be invaluable in identifying what these problems are especially in areas where fear of crime inhibits the reporting of incidents. However uninformed, even if popular, local views about means of reducing crime can be counterproductive.
In addition, most crime prevention measures depend critically on community co-operation, action and involvement. Moreover, members of the community unconvinced by or hostile toward measures being introduced are strongly placed to subvert them. Optimal engagement with the community could involve the following:

- Preparation and regular presentation to residents of the NDC areas crime, disorder and incivility patterns.
- NDC staff proposals for prioritisation by neighbourhood and issue type, based on analysis of patterns and needs.
- Informed NDC staff proposals about options for methods of addressing priority problems.
- Consultation with the community about preferred evidence-based methods and the ways in which their local implementation is likely to be most complete.
- Feedback to the community of progress in implementation and changes in patterns of crime, disorder and incivility.

V. Implementation

Implementation problems are common in crime prevention work (see Bullock and Tilley 2003). There are frequently delays, measures are operated poorly, and capital items are not maintained. All these implementation issues have arisen in West Midlands NDC areas. Successful situational crime prevention requires strong project management, monitoring and adjustment of implementation of measures as required, forethought and financial provision for repairs, maintenance, upgrading and updating of physical kit, for example CCTV, as well as the selection and introduction of measures that are sensitive to the local community where they are being applied. Specific means to address these issues might include some or all of the following:

- Training NDC staff in project management
- Project approval processes for capital items that require provision for revenue expenditure covering maintenance, updating and the operation of planned measures
- Requirement for continuous monitoring and adjustment of measures (see II above)
- Effective engagement with the community (see IV above)

VI. Development of strategies for short and long term crime reduction

It is relatively easy to effect short-term reductions in crime. It is more difficult to create sustainable effects. Much that has been put in place across the NDC areas risks at best producing temporary crime falls, though so far of course data are rarely available even to show these. There were only patchy signs of efforts to think strategically about ways in which sustained falls in crime could be created. The following comprise a range of tactics that can be used but have so far rarely been put in place.

- Crackdown and consolidation cycles – Police crackdowns can produce a crime lull (Sherman 1990, Farrell et al 2000, Tilley 2004). Indeed these lulls normally outlast the crackdown itself with the effects tailing off gradually. Crackdowns, if credible, can also have effects before actually put in place, provided that they are announced convincingly. Longer term measures can be put in place during the lulls, without being undermined either by high levels of crime and the sense that nothing can be done about them, or by the high levels of intimidation that are often found in high crime neighbourhoods.
- Maintenance of measures – Many measures fall into disuse through non-repair, for example locks, street lights, and CCTV. Unless maintained they can no longer be operationally effective.
• Persistence – Graffiti, for example, tends to stop reappearing if promptly and persistently cleaned (Sloan-Hewitt and Kelling 1997). One-off blitzes are much less effective in creating longer-term effects.

• Service delivery modification – Routine services oriented to attending to and pre-empting crime problems are more effective than series of one-off responses to problems as they emerge. This is important, for example, in relation to rubbish collection and fly-tipping.

• Large-scale design against crime opportunities – Where new developments, or major changes are planned, there will be opportunities to feed in attention to potential crime pattern implications, notably the inadvertent creation of crime opportunities (see Armitage 2000).

• Leverage strategies – Achieving longer-term crime reduction often requires changed behaviour by those who do not necessarily have an immediate and direct interest in reducing crime opportunities. For example, there is much that proprietors of car parks can do to lessen opportunities for crime against those using their facilities. Yet those proprietors do not necessarily have or at any rate perceive any benefit to themselves from incurring the costs of doing so. In these circumstances the task of those attempting to reduce crime is not just to work out what the problem is and what can be done about it. They need also to devise strategies to persuade those in a position to put measures in place to do so (Hough and Tilley 1998, Goldstein 1997). This is a problem of leverage or incentivisation. There was little evidence in NDC areas that those with crime reduction responsibilities were concerning themselves significantly with this.

• Attention to repeat victimisation (see key recommendation 3)

**Key recommendation 3:**

**Prioritise attention to victims and repeat victimisation**

Good practice in relation to attention to repeat victimisation was seen in some NDC areas, though it was not found in all. Focusing on repeat victimisation has a number of benefits:

• it efficiently targets crime prevention to those at high risk at times when they are at high risk (Farrell and Pease 1993)

• it naturally directs attention to higher crime neighbourhoods since high rates of repeat are associated with high crime areas (Trickett et al 1992)

• it rations the supply of preventive effort over time in ways likely to be seen to be fair.

Prioritising those who have suffered crime will seem to most a just way of allocating resources, especially if those in that situation can be shown to be at heightened risk.

Across the six West Midlands NDC areas, a great deal of what can be done to reduce crime through situational methods and environmental change is already being done or is being contemplated. Some of this is indicated in the examples of good practice described on pages four and five. There is little that can plausibly be done that was not found somewhere within the West Midlands NDC areas. Moreover, given that those within the NDC areas attempting to address crime issues were generally energetic and committed, there is much potential for more to be achieved.

A number of suggestions for ways in which improvements might be made have been described. These, in conjunction with use of the ‘health check’ provided in the Annex, should help NDC partnerships both in the West Midlands and elsewhere (as well as other area-based crime reduction initiatives) develop strategies to improve future use of situational and environmental crime prevention methods.
References


### Annex: NDC Situational Crime Prevention: Health Check

This health check has been designed as a template to allow New Deal Communities, and any other agencies involved in crime prevention and regeneration, to perform a simple and structured evaluation of the work that they do. By working through the health check, areas of strength and weakness within the organisation will be identified and plans for improvements can be formulated. The health check should be conducted annually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational support</th>
<th>Description of current situation: sample issues for review</th>
<th>Improvement plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NDC leadership interest in and knowledge of crime prevention</td>
<td>Note frequency of meetings of NDC leadership with crime theme staff; agenda for meetings; leadership familiarity with crime patterns within NDC area and comparisons with local authority; leadership references to evidence and literature; leadership offers of support to crime theme; invitations of crime theme members to strategic meetings about the NDC and work on other themes.</td>
<td>NDC leadership interest in and knowledge of crime prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence based bidding and spend approval arrangements</td>
<td>Review bidding forms and feedback to bidders, referring in particular to use of data and references to evidence supporting proposals and responses to proposals not including evidence. Take random sample of bids and critically interrogate them and responses to them.</td>
<td>Evidence based bidding and spend approval arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership co-operation and understanding</td>
<td>Do all members of the partnership show up to meetings? Do they make constructive contributions? Are the regular communications between meetings? Are partners sent evidence-based information about what they can do to reduce crime?</td>
<td>Partnership co-operation and understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular review of work of crime theme</td>
<td>Is there provision for regular written reports on progress in crime reduction initiatives and in other NDC work with a crime reduction element? Does the NDC leadership meet regularly (at least monthly) with those responsible for the crime reduction theme to discuss what is being done and planned?</td>
<td>Regular review of work of crime theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply and use of evidence</td>
<td>Description of current situation: sample issues for review</td>
<td>Improvement plan</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Regular provision of accurate point level police and other relevant data</td>
<td>Are data provided by the police with details of all recorded crime and disorder incidents on at least a quarterly basis? Does the local authority provide data on graffiti, criminal damage, noise nuisance, fly-tipping etc? Do the fire service, ambulance service, housing etc regularly provide detailed geo-coded data?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine informed and detailed analysis of crime and disorder related data</td>
<td>Are the data provided analysed for needs for preventive activity and for opportunities for preventive interventions? Are written reports produced giving accounts of crime patterns, seasonally adjusted changes etc? Have the MORI data been analysed in detail?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement of incidence, prevalence and concentration rates</td>
<td>Are patterns and changes in patterns analysed in terms of incidence (number of incidents), prevalence (number of victims) and concentration (incidents per victim)?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed record keeping on place and time of interventions</td>
<td>Are detailed records kept of when and where interventions are put in place and their full costs?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular performance management</td>
<td>Are data regularly analysed for performance management purposes, noting progress on targets and changes in crime and disorder in relation to specific initiatives?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for systematic evaluation of key projects</td>
<td>Have selected projects been identified for detailed evaluation either because of their innovative character or because later decisions either in the NDC area or elsewhere may be turn on their effectiveness? Have competent, independent evaluators been engaged?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about crime prevention</td>
<td>Description of current situation: sample issues for review</td>
<td>Improvement plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision of induction packs</td>
<td>Are induction packs available for incoming staff providing evidence-based introduction to crime prevention theory and practice? Is clear information provided on what has already been implemented?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC staff trained in crime prevention</td>
<td>Have all NDC staff been trained in basic crime prevention theory? Have specialist staff been on taught courses?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to expert advice</td>
<td>Do the crime specialists have regular contact with the local architectural liaison officer and crime reduction officer? Are the crime reduction specialists in contact with any local academics who specialise in crime reduction? Do the specialists have contact with NACRO, Crime Concern and the local Government Office crime reduction support teams?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of and access to print and internet literature</td>
<td>Does the NDC partnership have a library of basic reference materials on crime prevention? Are the subscriptions to relevant journals? Is there access to the internet? Is the NDC partnership on relevant publishers' mailing lists?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at conferences and short courses</td>
<td>Is there a budget to attend specialist short courses? Do specialist crime staff attend at least two conferences a year?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annex – Health Check
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Involvement of the community</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description of current situation: sample issues for review</strong></th>
<th><strong>Improvement plan</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supply of data to the community</td>
<td>Are regular (at least quarterly) written reports on crime patterns and changes in crime patterns provided for the community?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of evidence-based priority recommendations</td>
<td>Does the NDC team as a whole have a reasoned and evidence-based set of recommendations for crime and disorder reduction priorities that have been published, put to community representatives and endorsed?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of evidence-based response recommendations</td>
<td>Does the NDC team as a whole have a reasoned and evidence-based set of recommendations for measures to address priority crimes that have been published, put to community representatives and endorsed?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation on implementation issues</td>
<td>Have members of the community, who will be affected by measures, or who need to play a part in implementing measures, been fully consulted in all cases on their appropriateness and practicability?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply of detailed monitoring information to the community</td>
<td>Are members of the community provided with regular feedback on progress in implementing strategies and tactics to address crime and disorder problems, and on the relevant crime and disorder trends?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Annex – Health Check*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Description of current situation: sample issues for review</th>
<th>Improvement plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff training in project management</td>
<td>Have all relevant staff been trained in project management? Are they putting into practice the principles and methods they have learned?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision in project approval for capital items for necessary revenue expenditure</td>
<td>Where capital expenditure is approved, have follow-on revenue expenditure needs in all cases been identified, sources agreed and commitments to spend made?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous monitoring of implementation and adjustment of measures</td>
<td>Is systematic monitoring required and in place in relation to the implementation of all agreed projects? Are monitoring reports in practice received? Is there a system for auditing their accuracy? Are there procedures to track needs for adjustment, to document them, and to alter project plans accordingly?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous monitoring of problem and adjustment of measures</td>
<td>Where projects are in place, is there provision in all cases for continuous monitoring of the presenting problem to identify changes and the need to modify project plans to address changed needs?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of leverage on third parties to secure implementation</td>
<td>Have NDC staff identified changed practices required by third parties to reduce crime and disorder (for example shops, pubs, clubs, schools, planners etc), and have they developed leverage strategies to persuade them in practice to make the changes?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy development</td>
<td>Description of current situation: sample issues for review</td>
<td>Improvement plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of mixed crackdown and consolidation joining situational to other measures</td>
<td>Have overall mixed-approach strategies been formulated to address complex interrelated crime and disorder problems with a view to achieving sustained reductions?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistent removal of major signs of disorder</td>
<td>Have systems of routine service delivery been adapted to achieve longer-term impact, for example regular and prompt removal of graffiti, adequate bin supply and regular litter clearance and more frequent bin collection, and quick repairs to criminal damage?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in other themes for consideration of crime prevention opportunities</td>
<td>Are the crime theme staff routinely copied into and consulted on other aspects of the NDC work, for comment on the possible unintended creation of new crime opportunities and on any scope there might be to design crime out of new developments?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to repeat victimisation</td>
<td>Is repeat victimisation across all crime types routinely measured and attended to for the preventive needs and opportunities that arise?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to routine service delivery and crime consequences</td>
<td>Has an audit of service delivery practices in the area been undertaken for exploration of any scope to close off or reduce crime opportunities and temptations?</td>
<td>Note specific changes agreed with timetable and provision for monitoring progress</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Using Situational Crime Prevention in Small Areas