



FORMAT FOR PROJECT'S DESCRIPTION

MEMBERSTATE: UK

NAME OF THE PROJECT: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme, Birmingham

IN USE SINCE: March 2001

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Please answer the questions on the following pages in English and in no more than the given six pages. This way the information will be as comparable as possible.

Projects can be submitted until November 1st. Entries that will be received later than this will not be eligible to compete for the European Crime Prevention Award.

You can send your projects and the one page summary by e-mail to:

Mrs Janny Pols
Ministry of Justice
The Netherlands

E-mail janny.pols@ccv.nu

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to receiving your submission for the ECPA!



PROBLEM (intelligence)

Give a short description of the problem?

The city's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership identified that a community based, partnership model was required to respond to complex problems these areas presented; Crime Concern's Neighbourhood Safety model was deemed to be the most appropriate.

Since when is it a problem?

The city had experienced crime and anti-social behaviour problems in specific, disadvantaged communities and neighbourhoods for many years.

Is it possible to give any data regarding the problem?

Crime data in all areas was measured before, at the start and during the process. All the areas recorded 11,992 crimes in the year before the programme commenced. One year after work had started, they recorded 10,518 - a drop of 12.3%. The areas still being targeted continue to experience reductions in recorded crime.

Describe the type of offenders?

Offenders at a neighbourhood level will usually be the same people causing most of the problems. The programme targets the identified priorities for each neighbourhood, which includes several offence types. Within each chosen priority, work has been done on the offenders of each crime.

What is their modus operandi?

It is usually the case that a small number of people cause many problems and commit the majority of crimes at a neighbourhood level. Within each area of project activity, work is done on the situational, victim and offender aspect of the problem so tackling the 'modus operandi' from three sides.

Who are the victims?

The programme targets the neighbourhood priorities that have been identified by the local partnership. The victims will differ in accordance with the aspect of work identified as a priority. The programme aims to improve the quality of life for all people living in the target area.

What are the causes?

Historical under-investment, social deprivation, problem families and poor partnership working between the agencies and the community. Also, priorities that have been set by people who do not work or live in the area being targeted.

Do's

The key to the success of the programme is partnership working and taking a 'bottom up' approach. Communities know the problems they suffer and experience better than anyone else. Setting priorities for work is therefore best undertaken at a local level. If lead agencies are to be successful in engaging the communities' support and help in planning, delivering and managing the programme, they need to feel some level of control over how other agencies work and respond to their needs. In the Birmingham programme, the city recognised that the need to focus at a local level was imperative.

Dont's

Areas of deprivation and social problems have historically had the will of agencies forced upon them for many reasons. The programme sets out an agenda for change which offers agencies the opportunity to shape services to fit local community needs. Partnerships with communities and agencies are difficult to manage, however, and require commitment from all sides if they are to work.

WHAT (intervention)

Give a short description of the project.

The Birmingham programme was based upon the tried and tested 'Audit to Action' approach of Crime Concern's own Neighbourhood Safety Pilot programme that ran successfully from 1998-2002. The programme offers a way into priority neighbourhoods which engages both the community and the agencies. Through the identification of the problems, the planning, delivery and performance management of work, the local partnership targets the key priorities for the community using situational crime prevention methods.

What is the short, medium and long term objective of the project?

Short term - Effective local audit and consultation followed by planning and delivery as soon as possible. Medium term - Effective delivery and performance management. Long term - Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour to agreed targets and enhance the quality of life of those people living within the areas.

What are the activities in the project?

Audit to Action: Find out what the local priorities are, draw together a key group of local partners, plan together, deliver and performance manage the process. Ensure that the process is sustained where possible at a local level. Measures tackled anti-social behaviour, the environment, youth crime, burglary, vehicle crime and training.

Is the project to address

- situational
- offender or
- victim

orientated causes? Namely,

The 'crime triangle' approach is used to target problems through a variety of activity, crime specific measures and best practice. These activities will fit into work on 'victim', 'offender' and 'the location'. If all three are targeted at the same time, in a coordinated way, the problem will be significantly reduced.

Do's

Best practice, what works and the development of innovative work have been used to ensure best possible success and local ownership. In any one project, 20-30 pieces of work have been delivered using the crime triangle approach. For example, tackling youth anti-social behaviour required work around: targeting offenders using legislation; support to victims to come forward to supply evidence; work around locations to develop alternative activities for young people to become involved in; and educational programmes through schools aimed at 8 and 9 year olds to deter further problems.

Dont's

Choosing too many priorities in each area will normally stop success and only make the programme moderately successful. Four areas of work over 18 month-two year period works best. Also, disallowing partners to not deliver is a key to success, as is political input, organisations' hierarchy, pure determination and a supportive approach to partnerships. In the areas in which the programme is based, communities think they have been let down by the agencies and feel as though they cannot work with them. To engage and support communities when they feel ignored, and empower them to be active partners remains the biggest challenge. The programme offers real, active community involvement.



HOW (implementation)

Give a short description of the history of the project?

Crime Concern first started delivering the Neighbourhood Safety model in 1998 after the implementation of the Crime and Disorder Act. The programme has worked in a variety of neighbourhoods. The challenge in Birmingham focused very much on effecting impact and change in different areas, and using a simple formula that worked in each.

Is there a projectplan?

The Audit to Action approach is used which includes: a fear of crime survey of 10% of the area's population; 15-25 focus groups representing all of the population of the area; 20-30 agency stakeholder interviews; and further local data research. This forms the agenda from which the partnership plan, deliver and performance manage the process.

How is the project customised for the local situation and context?

Through the audit findings and a series of workshops, an agenda for action is drawn up. The planning process is then developed using the 'Crime Triangle' method. Plans are then drawn up and signed by the relevant agency and community representatives. This creates local context and a performance management framework.

Do's

Crime Concern and the partners it has worked with throughout the Birmingham programme have learnt that to be successful, simplicity is important. Trying to do too much, too soon usually creates confusion and poor outcomes. Using the Audit to Action approach and managing the process at a local level empowers local networks and people to take responsibility for what they do. The importance of the local Project Manager, who takes responsibility for driving the process and ensures where possible that the project never stops delivering, is also a key success factor.

Dont's

The audit process must be locally representative and be actioned as soon as possible. To labour the set up element only sends messages to the local community that this is another process that is not to be trusted and will not deliver. The installation and delivery of quick wins is therefore very important. Measuring impact and performance managing the programme is important, not only to note success, but also to help early identification of where things are not happening and why. It is important to use measurements that employ the use of data, local intelligence and community feedback. Soft and hard information is the only way to measure the true impact of such a programme.



WHO (involvement)

Which –both public and private- partners are involved in each fase of the project?

All partners are involved in all parts of the process.

What role and task does each partner have?

This will depend on what resources they have and what level of commitment they can realistically give. The local Project Manager leads the process; the key is to ensure that the other partners maintain commitment and involvement and that the action plans they have signed up to are delivered.

Who gave the input on the know-how?

The national crime reduction organisation, Crime Concern. An experienced Programme Manager from Crime Concern was seconded into the city to oversee the implementation and delivery of the first two years of the work.

How is the project financed?

City-held Thematic Neighbourhood Renewal Funds initially. It is now funded through local monies which are either local Neighbourhood Renewal funds, savings made from crime reduction or funds made available through partner agencies.

Did the project effect them who it was ment to, or also others?

Yes. The impacts are various, but the feedback in the evaluation was clear. The programme has made a real difference and also there was a meaureable diffusion of benefit in many cases to neighbouring areas.

Do's

A major success factor is the partnerships through which the programme is delivered. These groups are never always 'fully representative' and need to have some flexibility in agency membership as the work changes. The constant, however, should be the community and certain key agencies and, where this has occurred, it has proved the most fruitful. Where there has been the most consistent community and key partner involvement, there has been most success.

Dont's

The funding processes are still not accessible and take too much time. Agencies, in some cases, are getting far better at recognising the benefits of well run partnerships. However, there was much evidence of partners who would not be open to community empowerment, nor working to mutual benefit.



EFFECT (impact)

Has the project been evaluated?

Yes. An independent evaluator was contracted by the city.

What was evaluated?

The whole process effectively within the context of Neighbourhood Renewal

At what stage did the evaluation take place?

Their process was undertaken alongside the programme for an eighteen month period.

Who did the evaluation?

Janice Webb Research. An independent consultant with some knowledge of the Crime Concern pilot neighbourhood safety programme from 1998-2002

What are the results?

The project delivered against most of its targets Youth crime in the target areas was reduced by an average of 29%, against an average comparator area reduction of 12%. All crimes across the programme areas were reduced by an average of 14%, against an average comparator area reduction of 7%.

Are the goals of the project achieved?

Yes. A key goal of the programme was for it to continue after the initial two year funding. This has been achieved by securing funding from a variety of sources to further develop the programme and mainstream activity. This has ensured sustainability. Through cost benefit analysis, a total of £6.5 million pounds has been saved.

Do's

The method of the Neighbourhood Safety model should not be skimped. Technical support is likely to be necessary to guide new members of staff through the process. Work with young people was seen to be key to reducing crime. Using a broad range of methods was important to maximise impact. Using as many evaluational methods as possible is imperative.

Dont's

Ensure that partners and communities are informed of what is going to happen as early as possible. This ensures better early buy in and ownership. Accessing and securing funding should be made easier, particularly when programmes can be evidenced as successful.

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

TACKLING PRIORITIES FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL: FINAL EVALUATION OF THE BIRMINGHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY PILOT SCHEMES SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

1. Five Safer Neighbourhood Projects were funded through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for three years from April 2001-March 2004. The projects were located in varying neighbourhoods in the City of Birmingham, namely Fox Hollies, Glebe Farm, Kingstanding, Nechells and West Northfield. The main partners to the programme were Birmingham City Housing Department, West Midland Police, Crime Concern and Regulatory Services/Street Services.
2. The Safer Neighbourhood Project model is based on a programme successfully piloted by Crime Concern. It follows an evidence-based, problem solving method using the Audit to Action Approach developed by Crime Concern.
3. The first year was spent in identifying the Safer Neighbourhood Project areas and the production of a Toolkit Manual by Crime Concern. At the beginning of Year 2 a full-time Development Officer and a Support Officer was appointed to each Project. Crime Concern provided technical support in the form of a Cluster Manager.
4. The findings for the first year of operation of the Safer Neighbourhood Projects was very positive, with an overall fall in crime of 17.6% over the five areas and a cost in savings attributable to crime of £6,406,840. The final evaluation assesses the 18 months that the Safer Neighbourhood Projects have been in operation and the impact of their work.
5. The Safer Neighbourhood Projects identified priorities for action through the findings of the Audit. Action Plans were drawn up by multi-agency Neighbourhood Action Groups most of which also included residents. The role of the Safer Neighbourhood Project staff was to act as a catalyst for action rather than deliver work themselves. They had £40,000 in Year 2 which could be used for Quick Wins and to support local initiatives.
6. All five Safer Neighbourhood Projects prioritised the Environment. Clean Up days were felt to be very successful in both clearing rubbish and drawing the community and partners together.
7. Youth was a priority for all the Safer Neighbourhood Projects. Success in obtaining funding and the services of youth workers was mixed but working with young people was said to be the most rewarding aspect of their work by several respondents.
8. Other priorities tackled by some of the Safer Neighbourhood Projects were Anti-Social Behaviour; Racially Motivated Crime; Dwelling House

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Burglary; Drugs; Car Crime; Domestic Violence; Community Involvement; and Communication.

9. Analysis of recorded crime comparing the 18 months before the Safer Neighbourhood Projects started work in their areas and the 18 months that they had been in operation showed that four of the five showed a decrease, and the fifth, the area with the lowest amount of crime initially, only a small increase.
10. The figures for dwelling house burglary over the same periods showed a reduction of 40.7% in the Safer Neighbourhood Project areas, compared to a decrease of 13.3% across the City. In Kingstanding burglary had fallen by over half (-59.4%) and in West Northfield by nearly half (-47.5%). All of the Safer Neighbourhood Project areas had targeted dwelling house burglary to some extent though only two, Glebe Farm and West Northfield, had a full burglary reduction Action Plan.
11. The costs of crime attributable to domestic burglary fell by £1,170,700 in the 18 months the Safer Neighbourhood Projects were in operation. None of the Projects showed an increase in costs attributable to burglary. The cost of crime for robbery, which was not targeted by any of the Projects, also fell although by a smaller amount (£183,000).
12. Most of those interviewed as part of the final evaluation felt that the Safer Neighbourhood Project had increased community cohesion. Although some remarks referred to racial cohesion, most people saw the bringing together of agencies and the engagement of residents as the main cohesive factors.
13. The Safer Neighbourhood Project model was seen as sound in itself, but unclear management structures, lack of funding and the early departure of staff had a negative effect on how it was perceived.
14. Issues arising and lessons learned from the Safer Neighbourhood Project pilot programme are:
 - There should be adequate and secure funding.
 - Staffing levels should be maintained and continuity of staff is highly beneficial in short-term projects.
 - Active and supportive partners are essential. The agency and not just the individual should be signed up to the work of the programme, so that involvement does not cease if an individual leaves.
 - Networks should be maintained and regular meetings held in order to review progress and develop new ideas.
 - The management of the projects should be clear and preferably local.
 - Short-termism should be avoided as residents become angry and cynical if support is withdrawn too soon.

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- The method of the Safer Neighbourhood Project should not be skimped. Technical Support is likely to be necessary to guide new members of staff through the Audit to Action process. Adequate training is necessary.
 - Work with young people was seen as key to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. A range of methods of provision so that all young people can be engaged should be aimed for.
 - Initiatives should have monitoring systems in place so that take-up and impact can be assessed.
 - Communication, from managers to the projects, and from the projects and agencies to the residents, is essential to maintain active and effective partnerships
15. The Kingstanding Safer Neighbourhood Project has been funded for a six months from April 2004, the Fox Hollies, Glebe Farm and West Northfields Projects have received further funding and there is to be one new project each in Fox Hollies, and Glebe Farm. All these are to be funded through their Ward Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. In addition, West Northfield is to have two new Safer Neighbourhood Projects funded through CBHO pathfinder monies, based on housing services savings on repairs due to the burglary initiative.
16. The only Safer Neighbourhood Project not to be awarded further funding was Nechells. A combination of a high number of staff changes, not winning the support of the Ward, the historical reluctance of agencies to work together and the lack of strong resident involvement worked against it. However, aspects of the work started under the Safer Neighbourhood Project will continue.
17. With the support of the Wards, the right people in post to lead the Safer Neighbourhood Projects and adequate time spent in preparing the partners and consulting with the residents, the four new Safer Neighbourhood Projects should match and possibly excel the results obtained through the Birmingham Safer Neighbourhood Project pilot programme.

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

Key points from the first evaluation report were:

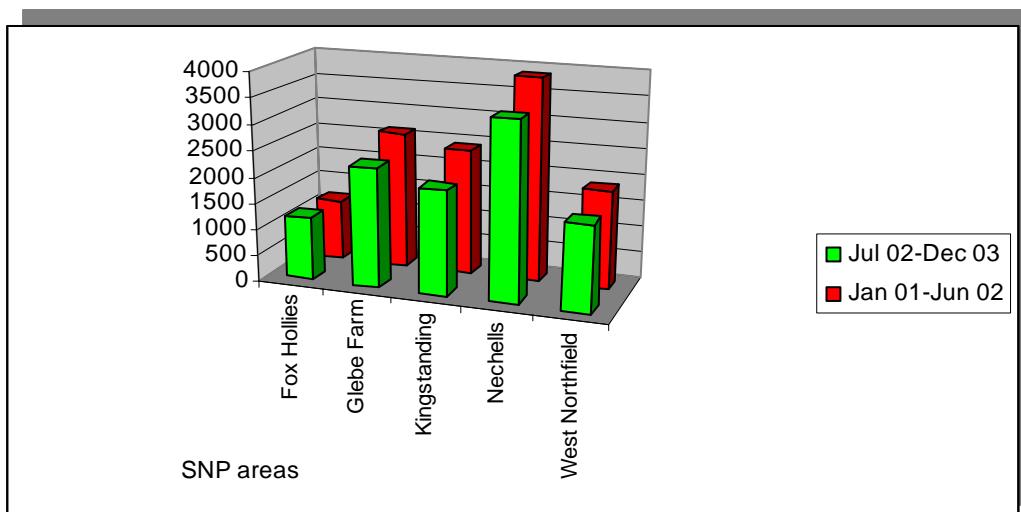
- The Crime Concern Audit to Action model had been successful in profiling the neighbourhoods and bringing almost all partners and many residents on board.
- The Cluster Manager was essential in the early stages to help the Safer Neighbourhood Project teams to understand their role and carry out the Audit to Action planning process. He also assisted when there were difficulties with partner agencies.
- The initial training of two days was not sufficient. Members of staff needed at least a week of training, especially as many did not have a background in community safety.
- Safer Neighbourhood Projects need a longer lead in time, in order to do the ground work with partner agencies so that they are prepared to sign up to the process and have time to be able to allocate resources.
- It was widely felt that one year of delivery would not be sufficient to make an impact in deprived neighbourhoods.

Key points from the second interim report were:

- Much work had been undertaken by the Safer Neighbourhood Project teams and their partners, although the strength of the partnerships varied between the different areas.
- The level of resident involvement also varied between the Safer Neighbourhood Project areas. The role of community champions, who were prepared to become fully involved with professional partners and also promote the work of the Projects to other residents seemed crucial to sustaining resident involvement.
- Nineteen of the 21 respondents interviewed said that the Safer Neighbourhood Project had added value to their work. The main ways that the Safer Neighbourhood Project added value was by drawing people together; providing expertise, skills and knowledge; and by working alongside partners on the ground.
- Recorded crime had fallen in four of the five areas. The falls were greatest in the areas which had the highest initial amount of crime. The overall fall in crime over the five areas was 17.6%.
- The reduction in crime resulted in a saving of costs attributable to crime of £6,406,840 in the first twelve months of the Projects' operation.
- The combination of preventative and diversionary work with deterrent and enforcement measures is unusual in one crime prevention programme and may be a contributory factor to its success.
- All organisational partners and residents wanted the Safer Neighbourhood Project to continue in their area after March 2004.

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

Chart 1. Recorded Crime in the Safer Neighbourhood Project areas, Comparison Areas and Birmingham, 18 months before Implementation and for 18 months of Implementation



Have the Safer Neighbourhood Projects provided a model for delivering Co-ordinated Neighbourhood Management?

This question was designed to test the Safer Neighbourhood Project model in the light of developments in Birmingham towards devolution and local management.

Opinion was divided on whether the Safer Neighbourhood Projects provided an adequate model for delivering co-ordinated Neighbourhood Management. Forty-three per cent said 'definitely,' 30% said 'a little' and 27% said 'no.'

Those who approved of the model pointed to the co-ordinating work that was carried on, the skills and personal qualities of the Safer Neighbourhood Project staff and their position which was seen as more or less independent of the City Council, although they were its employees.

There were some reservations from one or two working at Ward Level who thought that the small neighbourhood approach did not fit with the wider Ward strategy.

Most of the criticism came not of the Safer Neighbourhood Project model *per se* but of the way it had been managed by the Housing Department and funded.

"It was a good idea but badly done. The finance disappeared which meant that the planned work had to be restrained. The Support Officer was not replaced. Really frustrating." (Ward Support Officer, Kingstanding)

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

Communication between the Housing Department centrally and the Area Housing Offices was not always good. This was most closely shown when the Safer Neighbourhood Project staff were moved to another area. Housing Officers expressed anger that a Project Officer in their area, and who was part of their team, could be moved by unknown persons at the centre without consulting them. Worse, often the first they knew about the change was when the outgoing Officer told them or they heard about it at third hand.

Although the feeling of lack of control over events is likely to be one reason why the Area and Local Offices did not fully own the Safer Neighbourhood Projects, there had been problems from the outset. The Safer Neighbourhood Project Co-ordinator in the Central Housing team and the Cluster Manager had made considerable efforts to bring local operational housing management on board in the first year. Monthly meetings were organised, where all relevant personnel could share problems and reflect good practice.

However, the meetings were poorly attended and instead of fulfilling an active problem-solving function they became simply an opportunity for the Safer Neighbourhood Project Central Co-ordinator and Cluster Manager to tell the local Housing Managers what was happening in the area, when it should have been the other way round.

Local meetings were offered on a one-to-one basis but most local managers repeatedly cancelled. The exceptions were at West Northfield and Fox Hollies, where Housing Management at either local or area level was consistently supportive and active in thinking of ways to develop the Projects.

The high staff turnover within local Housing management did not help matters and was another reason why seamless ownership was hard to achieve in some areas. Although there were no changes in Housing management relating to Kingstanding during the lifetime of the Safer Neighbourhood Projects and only one at West Northfield, there were three changes at Fox Hollies, four at Glebe Farm and six at Nечells.

During the last six months of the Safer Neighbourhood Projects, the involvement of the Cluster Manager in relation to local Housing management tapered off, and instead concentrated on supporting the development of local ownership.

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

The Length of the Project

All respondents were consistent in their opinion that less than two years was an insufficient length of time to deliver work on the ground in a deprived neighbourhood. Most people advocated at least three years, a few suggested five years and one said 'forever.' Even in Kingstanding, where resident participation was strong, and West Northfield, which had strong partnerships of local workers, respondents said the Safer Neighbourhood Projects would be sorely missed if they did not continue. The reason that was given why no residents took part in the final evaluation consultation from Fox Hollies (except the Ward Support Officer, who is also a local resident) was said to be because they were upset that the Project might not continue beyond March 2004.

The residents that did take part in the consultation were most outspoken and expressed feelings of anger and disappointment. It is regrettable that the future of the Safer Neighbourhood Project was not decided even as late as 10th March 2004 and so a lot of the feedback from residents reflected the feeling of being let down:

"It's not the time to stop the Safer Neighbourhood Project now, just when it is beginning to come together. It will be waste of everyone's time and effort if it just goes." (Resident, Nечells)

"The area had been let down for such a long time and then at last there was support for us – two workers who worked non-stop. It's just starting to have an impact on the community and gaining people's trust when the Council says they aren't going to fund it any more. I don't just feel disappointed, I feel angry. I think have I wasted my time? I could have done other things. People will now think why should I put the time in if the Council won't support us?" (Resident, Glebe Farm)

"I was surprised and shocked when I heard the Safer Neighbourhood Project might not be continuing. It will all be wasted without [Safer Neighbourhood Project officer] as people haven't the confidence to carry on without someone to refer to." (Resident, Glebe Farm)

"I was very cynical at first but have been very pleasantly surprised. I just wish they had said the funding was continuing and then [Safer Neighbourhood Project officer] would have stayed. People's attitudes have changed in the last few months. There were only six at the Steering Group last night, three were residents and 10 agencies gave apologies. People have lost interest." (Resident, Kingstanding)

It must be recognised that although there may be Quick Wins there are no Quick Fixes in Neighbourhood Renewal. Service delivery needs to be consistent over a long period of time in order to build up the trust and the confidence of residents in neighbourhoods that have been neglected for many years.

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

The Need to Follow the Method of the Audit to Action Model

It is important to realise that the Safer Neighbourhood Projects were based on a tested model and the experience of the pilot programme in Birmingham confirms that when the model is followed closely it can greatly aid the development of a neighbourhood based community safety project by providing a framework to firstly understand the problems in a given neighbourhood and then develop an Action Plan which prioritises issues and gives ownership of delivery to the partners.

However, the experience of the pilot Safer Neighbourhood Projects suggests that additional support will be necessary to provide the technical expertise. The Cluster Manager has been invaluable in ensuring the model was followed consistently. His work with partner agencies was also helpful.

CONCLUSION

The Future

By the middle of March 2004 the future of the Safer Neighbourhood Projects was finally decided.

- In Fox Hollies two Safer Neighbourhood Projects were to be funded through the Ward Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The existing one would continue, together with a new one on the neighbouring estate of Yarnfield.
- In Glebe Farm, two projects were to be funded through the Hodge Hill Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, continuing the existing one plus a new one in Hodge Hill.
- The Kingstanding Safer Neighbourhood Project, which was carrying on with a seconded worker for the final month of the pilot programme, had secured 6 months initial funding through the Ward Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and there were hopes that it would go for a full year.
- The Nechells Safer Neighbourhood Project was not successful in obtaining further funding and closed. However, at their final meeting members of the Steering Group agreed to take forward a number of aspects of the Safer Neighbourhood Project's work, or to ensure that the agencies and organisations that had started to deliver the work continued to do so. Funding was to be sought for a series of rubbish and litter enforcement days. The Cluster Manager was to provide information for funding so that the Fun Day could be retained for 2004, to improve contact with the local community.

Summary of Evaluation: The Safer Neighbourhood Programme

- The West Northfield Safer Neighbourhood Project was to continue through funding from the Weoley and Northfield Ward Neighbourhood Renewal Funds and two further Safer Neighbourhood Projects were to be set up through CBHO pathfinder monies, based upon housing savings on repairs via the dwelling house burglary initiative.

Therefore there would be eight Safer Neighbourhood Projects in Birmingham from 1st April 2004.

The extension of the Safer Neighbourhood Projects is a vote of confidence by the Wards in the model and the way in which they have been delivered. The hard work of the Safer Neighbourhood Project staff, the commitment and energy of the participating agencies and the willingness of some residents to give up their time to become involved has been inspiring.

However, those responsible for delivering and managing the new Safer Neighbourhood Projects should realise that the conditions need to be right in order for the Projects to succeed. With the support of the Wards, the right people in post to lead the projects, adequate time spent in preparing partners and consulting the community, the four new Safer Neighbourhood Projects should be able to match and possibly, with the benefit of an increased body of experience in running such Projects, see similar results to that achieved through the Birmingham Safer Neighbourhood Project pilot programme.