



Title: Approaches to Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour in the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund Programme

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SCS topic headings: [Safety in Public Spaces \(ASB\), Management and Evaluation](#)

[This document is an EVALUATION of effective intervention approaches.](#)

Summary of the intervention's aim

This report describes the types of activities which have been funded to promote community safety and to address crime and anti-social behaviour and their impact on Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF) Pathfinder areas. The BNSF was established as a £90 million, 3-year (2001-04) programme aimed at delivering real and substantial service improvements in twelve local authority areas in order to help narrow the gap between disadvantaged communities and the wider population.

The document describes the types of activities which have been funded to promote community safety, and to address crime and anti-social behaviour and their impact on BNSF Pathfinder areas. It is not intended to provide a *definitive* guide to good practice in community safety and anti-social behaviour. Its particular value lies in the fact that it describes experience in Scotland.

Outcomes

- Almost all the services aimed specifically at anti-social behaviour that have been developed through BNSF are targeted at young people.
- The BNSF's **direct approach** to community safety includes projects that provide for additional policing and surveillance services and improved street lighting, and include projects that target the individuals involved, challenge the anti-social aspects of their behaviour, and support them in moving away from such behaviour.
- Community safety projects taking an **indirect approach** to community safety focus more on environmental improvements to make areas feel less threatening to residents and remove signs of previous acts of vandalism, graffiti, etc. Such projects include alternative activities or diversionary projects.

- Generally, crime rates have been reduced by the initiatives which involved **direct intervention**, and the introduction of improved street lighting was reported to be particularly popular and effective in reducing the fear of crime (subsection 7, page ii).
- There has been a significant focus by communities on the role that additional policing and community wardens can play in improving community safety and reducing anti-social behaviour (subsection 8, page ii).
- Some Pathfinders reported '**negative**' **outcomes** such as higher recorded crime rates and increased repair costs as a result of the interventions. The reach of projects for young people has also been difficult to assess (subsection 7, page ii).
- Where community safety was threatened more by criminal offences than by noncriminal anti-social behaviour, additional policing was often seen as the most appropriate intervention.
- Some Pathfinders focused the additional funding on community policing, while others chose to provide additional resources for specific operations, particularly drugs related operations. Where fear of crime is considered to be a greater issue than was reflected in crime statistics, more visible patrols such as those provided by community wardens have been found to be more effective. The most appropriate form of intervention, the proportion of funding, and the requirement for any additional surveillance services will depend on the community and the particular difficulties being experienced (subsection 9, page ii).

In chapter six the authors highlight examples whereby they consider the Pathfinder projects illustrated positive features and good practice. The following aspects of best practice were widely adopted albeit in a variety of different ways.

- Community consultation
- Measuring outcomes
- Project balance (direct approaches to crime reduction were enhanced significantly by various forms of environmental improvements i.e. indirect approaches)
- Reduction of crime
- Improved coordination of services
- Visible services
- Project implementation and sustainability.

Summary of evaluation conclusions

There were a wide variety of projects aimed at community safety and anti-social behaviour developed by eight Pathfinders. Interviewees indicated that the majority of BNSF projects aimed at tackling community safety and anti-social behaviour were well received, though there is not a great deal of representative feedback from the wider communities on the impacts of BNSF (subsection 6, page ii).

The research findings indicated that significant progress had been made in many areas, with reductions in reported crime rates, improvements in the reported fear of

crime, effective improvements to the environment in many neighbourhoods, and good uptake of services for young people.

Results for specific indicators relating to individual projects were not available for many projects, but elements of good practice were evident in many initiatives developed through BNSF. In particular these related to the development of a particular focus or interaction of services towards common goals (subsection 14, page iii).

In general, it was found to be more effective to focus services on achieving a few key outcomes. However, it was also considered important to address these issues in a multi-faceted way so that many Pathfinders chose to strike a balance between:

- small and large projects.
 - capital and revenue projects.
 - services that focus on a small section of the wider community and those that can
 - provide more direct benefits for all.
 - those that tackle crime and anti-social behaviour directly and those that take an
 - indirect approach.
 - innovative services and the strengthening of existing services.
- (subsection 14, page iii).

How the evaluation gathered information for findings and conclusions

The report is based on research carried out during Summer 2004. This involved a review of the Local Outcome Agreements (LOAs) and the Pathfinders' Annual Reports, eight telephone interviews with Pathfinder co-ordinators and project managers from Pathfinders that had identified a focus on community safety and anti-social behaviour in their LOA., visits to the East Ayrshire and Renfrewshire Pathfinders, and discussions at a workshop on community safety.

The interviews were the most important source of evidence on the effectiveness of the different forms of project, as much of the monitoring information relating to specific outcomes had not been gathered at the time of writing (subsection 1.4, page 1).

The projects chosen by each Pathfinder were based on the specific circumstances in the neighbourhoods in question, and on the responses to consultations. Members of the local community were informed and involved in project development in a variety of ways including residents' surveys, community meetings, newsletters, and other promotional material, with citizens' panels often being consulted on new project developments. The timescale of the projects was a major factor in deciding what forms of intervention would be appropriate.

**Further details about the SCS evaluation of this report are available on request.
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