



Title: Evaluation of the Impact and Implementation of Community Wardens

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SCS topic headings: Offending Management, Safety in Public Spaces (ASB), Personal Safety, Community Engagement, Partnership Working, Monitoring and Evaluation

This document is a REVIEW of effective intervention approaches.

Summary of the intervention's aim

In mid-2004 GEN Consulting was commissioned by the Executive to undertake an evaluation of the implementation and impact of the warden schemes across Scotland.

This comprehensive research involves case studies of warden schemes in nine Scottish local authority areas. The case studies were selected so that they covered the diversity of warden schemes across Scotland. They were in: Aberdeen, Dumfries and Galloway (North West Dumfries), Dundee, East Renfrewshire, Edinburgh, Inverclyde, Orkney, Perth and Kinross and South Lanarkshire. (The document's appendix 3 presents overviews of each case study in detail.)

The research sought to understand the progress to date about:

- The impact of the community warden schemes on reducing crime, the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour and improving environmental quality
- The extent to which the schemes in different authorities had achieved their specific aims and objectives
- Views of local communities on the wardens' roles and the benefits of having the schemes
- The extent to which there was evidence of problems being displaced, as a result of the wardens' interventions, to other areas.

NB. The views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and do not necessarily represent those of the Department or Scottish Ministers.

Outcomes

This review is an exhaustive evaluation of the warden's role, operation and management. The text below highlights a selection of some key findings but consult the original document to read more about the following themes the research identified:

- A profile of the community wardens
- The warden's role
- Management and partnership working
- Community engagement
- The warden's impact on crime statistics
- The impacts of the wardens on crime in the case study areas
- Assessing overall change
- What impact have community wardens had upon residents' perceptions?
- The wardens and scheme managers' views on impact
- Emerging issues
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Good practices: including recruitment and training; scheme management; relationships with partners and relationships with the community.

Selected headline outcomes

- Dealing with antisocial behaviour by young people seemed to be one of the main activities of the wardens, both across Scotland and in individual schemes (Table 5.2).
- **Crime and antisocial behaviour** was the most obvious activity associated with the warden schemes (page 50). Key activities included:
 - High visibility patrols designed to act as a deterrent
 - Reporting suspicious incidents
 - Acting as professional witnesses
 - Attending minor antisocial behaviour incidents.

A closely linked theme was that of community safety. This largely involved wardens working with other services (in particular fire and rescue and police) on key safety messages and personal safety issues.

- Wardens in 5 of the 9 schemes shown in Table 5.4 spent much of their time dealing with environmental issues (page 57).
- Other warden schemes are more focused on dealing with antisocial behaviour and issues surrounding crime, particularly with regard to young people. Other schemes in Table 5.4 dealt with a more varied mix of incidents (page 58).
- The wardens' role differed across schemes and was very much linked to the scheme's focus. However, the development process across all schemes can be distilled down to 3 key elements:

- The establishment of a multi-agency working group made up of the main services involved in delivery, such as police, fire and rescue and other council departments (for example cleansing and housing)
- Identification of, and visits to, similar warden schemes in other areas. This element helped to provide a framework on which to base the duties and responsibilities
- Consultations with local community groups in order to refine the role of the wardens in line with public concerns.

Each of the above elements happened to varying degrees across the case studies. Consultation with community representatives was found to be the least undertaken element.

- Schemes vary considerably in relation to the number of wardens and local population size (Table 3.2).
- TABLE 5.1 highlights the activities that reportedly took up the most and the least Amount of the wardens' time in an average week

Summary of evaluation conclusions

There is evidence from a number of sources that community wardens are having a positive impact upon the quality of life in their patrol areas. They have helped to reduce both the levels and perceptions of some crimes and antisocial behaviours. This is not a pattern that is consistent across all schemes and all types of antisocial behaviour. However, the conclusion has been reached by drawing upon a variety of complementary and reinforcing sources of evidence, which tend to point in similar directions.

How the evaluation gathered information for findings and conclusions

This research project demonstrates clear robustness by gathering data from a wide range of sources, and the written report uses combinations of all these to conclude and discuss findings in each chapter. The authors acknowledge that data was often contradictory yet the availability of sources presented evidence that complemented one another and supports the validity of findings and conclusions (page 3).

The methodology used a number of mutually reinforcing approaches:

- Analysis of the monitoring templates
- A survey of scheme managers targeted at all 32 schemes, undertaken on 3 occasions using email
- An analysis of wardens' activities largely based on the details provided in the 24 month reports
- Selection and analysis of the schemes' development in 9 case study areas
- Analysis of crime and antisocial behaviour statistics and survey work

- Analysis of regular reports to Scottish Executive that were submitted by all the warden schemes.

This evaluation of the Scottish Executive's national community warden programme was undertaken over a 30 month period.

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