



Practice Note 26

Pathhead Problem Solving Profile

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Topic Areas: Community Engagement, Partnership Working, Public Space Safety

Project Background and Aims

Pathhead is a small rural village, with approximately 500 homes, located 11 miles south of Edinburgh. Despite its close proximity to Edinburgh, Pathhead is relatively remote due to infrequent public transport and thus residents without their own transport have limited opportunity to utilise resources outwith the village.

The main community facility in Pathhead is the village hall gifted to the village by the Callander family in 1954, along with the provision of a trust fund for the upkeep of the premises. However, by 2009 these monies had run out and the hall had consequently fallen into a state of disrepair, limiting its use.

This lack of local amenities had been identified in late 2009 as a driver of increased antisocial behaviour amongst young people within the area. In addition, the local community had lost confidence that the police were able to address the youth disorder. These areas of concern were identified after a rise in complaints from local residents who communicated their concerns through their local elected member and the local community council.

The Problem Solving Profile (PSP), led by community police, was thus introduced in January 2010 to Pathhead to tackle the increase in youth problems and antisocial behaviour in the area, and to address the identified lack of confidence within sections of the community towards Lothian and Borders Police.

The Pathhead PSP set out to improve police visibility and accessibility in the area and to augment community engagement and communication. The objectives of the PSP were achieved in a variety of ways; police pedal cycle patrols were introduced, along

with a bi-monthly newsletter and weekly community radio slot. The regeneration of the village hall was also identified a key part of this process.

Outcomes

National 9: 'We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger',
10 - We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
11- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

Resources

Funding: Tynewater Community Council, private sector.
Partners: Dalkeith Sector Community Policing Team, Pathhead residents, Pathhead and District Community Association, Pathhead Youth Project, Crichton Church, Lothian and Borders Police Corporate Communications Department, Midlothian Council, IKEA, John Lewis PLC, Colourprinz, McSence and Black Diamond FM.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Further information on the Pathhead PSP can be found at <http://www.pathhead.info/>.

Activities

The Pathhead PSP utilises a community partnership approach, involving local residents, groups, community organisations, businesses, and public sector services. The PSP is led by the Dalkeith Sector Community Policing Team (DSCPT), with officers often dedicating many hours of their own time.

The initial step of the Pathhead PSP was for community police to engage with all sections of the community to identify local issues and develop pragmatic measures to address these. The PSP engaged with a number of local groups over a two-month period, including Tynewater Community Council, Pathhead and District Community Association, Pathhead Youth Project and Crichton Church, as well as individual residents.

Various means of communication were used to engage with local people and maintain a strong dialogue. The aims of the PSP were communicated to local residents through the existing village website, <http://www.pathhead.info>. In addition, a newsletter was compiled and delivered to each household and business. Individual contact was made with specific businesses that may have been in a position to assist. A meeting involving interested parties was thereafter held and a project plan was drawn up, with each individual or group given specific roles and responsibilities.

The community engagement process identified three fundamental local issues; a lack of community facilities within the village, an intolerance toward the local youth and a lack of confidence in the police. However, a problem of divide within the community itself was also identified; between residents of the original village and those from the newer estates.

A number of suggestions on how to improve the situation were discussed and considered. These included measures to increase public confidence in the police through improved communication and accessibility, and improve facilities in the area. The renovation of the village hall was seen as the perfect vehicle to improve community facilities, divert behaviour, and create community unity. By playing an active part the project also offered Lothian and Borders Police the opportunity to engage and integrate with all sections of the community.

The proposal was accepted by the community and plans were drawn up by the PSP and community through a steering group and several public meetings, to which all local residents and businesses were invited.

Assistance to demolish the old kitchen in the village hall was provided by McSence, a social enterprise company based in Mayfield, Dalkeith. Midlothian Council provided advice and support in relation to building regulations, health and safety, as well as legal aspects of the project. They also removed all debris from the site.

Community police contacted IKEA to request their assistance and involvement in renovating and refurbishing the village hall. IKEA agreed to supply goods and services (approximately £10,000 worth) free of charge including a large fully fitted kitchen, work surfaces, sinks, oven, hob, white goods, furniture, blinds, soft furnishings, paint and carpeting. In addition, John Lewis PLC supplied a 40 inch plasma television free of charge.

The work to renovate the village hall was carried out by officers from the DSCPT, staff from IKEA, young people of the Pathhead Youth Project, some of whom as part of their Youth Achievement Award, representatives from the Pathhead Drama Society, Music Collective, Mother and Toddlers, Pathhead and District Community Association, Crichton Church, as well as numerous residents and tradesmen who gave their time for free, or at markedly reduced rates.

The village hall was reopened in March 2010, with the event attended by 90 local residents, elected members, and community council leaders from across Midlothian. The opening was covered by the Midlothian Advertiser, Radio Borders and Black Diamond Radio, who all reported the positive impact and outcomes of the PSP.

Alongside the work on the village hall, community police officers introduced a number of measures to increase communication, public reassurance and confidence. Regular 'police surgeries' were held in the village, with the divisional command vehicle acting as a mobile police station. Moreover, funding was secured from local businesses and community councils for pedal cycles and equipment enabling police

to conduct high visibility cycle patrols in the area. Consultation took place with the appropriate internal departments within Lothian and Borders Police to ensure the integrity of individuals, and the force, in relation to contributions from local businesses and community councils.

A bi-monthly Midlothian Community Policing Team newsletter was also introduced, as well as a weekly radio programme aired on a local community radio station, Black Diamond Radio. Consultation was regularly carried out to ensure the corporate image and integrity of the police was not compromised by any communication being released. Black Diamond Radio provided training, time and expertise to allow the introduction of the weekly DSCPT radio slot "On the Beat".

Impact

Lothian and Borders Police have benefitted from dialogue with all sections of the Pathhead community as a result of the introduction of the community engagement strands of the PSP. Lothian and Borders Police have recorded a sustained reduction in the number of ASB/youth calls in the area since the PSP was established. There have been several weeks when no ASB/youth calls have been recorded. This is despite a dramatic increase in community confidence in the police and greater access to police resources and information.

The community radio programme is aired throughout East Lothian, Midlothian, and parts of Edinburgh. Whilst the show is Midlothian orientated it includes generic crime prevention advice, which is relevant throughout the force area.

The renovation of the village hall has delivered necessary community facilities for local residents. The improvements have allowed the PDCA to increase the charge of rental for the facilities, allowing the hall to be self-sustaining. Despite the increase in rental charge there has been a marked increase in the number of bookings received, as well as monies donated. There have also been recorded increases in attendances for organised events. The PDCA have submitted grant and funding requests in partnership with local community groups to obtain monies for further improvements to the village hall.

Other local organisations and groups have benefitted from the renovated village hall. The Pathhead Youth Project has received an increased level of interest in productions from the community. The improvement of kitchen facilities in the hall have allowed the Pathhead Youth Project to undertake a number of cooking nights and raise funds by selling baked goods. Other local residents gained from the project, learning new and different skills during the renovation of the hall. Some young people carried out the work as part of their Youth Achievement Award.

The Pathhead PSP won a Community Engagement Award at Scottish Government's inaugural Safer Communities Awards in 2010.

Lessons Learnt and Sustainability

Over the period of several months Lothian and Borders Police actively engaged with all members of the community to build trust and win confidence. A real dialogue was established between the community police and Pathhead residents. Through listening to residents' concerns and acknowledging previous failings, the police were able to win trust, confidence and goodwill within the community, and subsequently work together to address key issues. The success of the engagement and communication strands of the PSP involved Corporate Communications Department who offered support, advice and assistance in relation to the design and introduction of the bi-monthly newsletter.

The Pathhead PSP has been used as a model for community engagement throughout E Division within Lothian and Borders Police, and is seen as vital as the force embarks on its Community Commitment programme. For example, the local 'police surgeries', Operation Ether, have been rolled out to the urban areas of Woodburn, Gorebridge, and Newbattle, as well as to the rural communities of Carrington, Temple and Moorfoot. Plans to introduce these, as well as 'partnership surgeries' with elected members, into other areas are, at the time of writing, ongoing.

The bi-monthly newsletter has evolved into a Midlothian Community Policing Team Newsletter, which is electronically distributed to groups, organisations and individuals all over Midlothian. A similar newsletter is soon to be introduced into East Lothian.

These engagement measures have been adopted as working practice within Midlothian. As there is little or no direct cost to these initiatives, they are sustainable over the long term.

Substantial resources were provided for free from the private sector. Most large business organisations have a commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and support community projects. IKEA have given a commitment to assist in further police initiatives throughout Midlothian, with projects identified in Woodburn and Mayfield. However, many smaller local businesses also participated in the Pathhead village hall renovation project, recognising the benefits of community goodwill.

In August 2011, a number of individuals from the Community Payback Scheme (CPS) repainted the village hall as part of their community service orders. Further improvements required which fall within the remit and skill area of the CPS will be carried out in the future.

In September 2011 The Pathhead and District Community Association (PDCA) undertook a number of World Café consultation events to canvass opinion from local residents on how they would like to see the village hall further develop. The events were well attended, with numerous suggestions and proposals made. The PDCA will compile a consultation paper, which will form the basis of future funding applications.

Summary

The Problem Solving Profile (PSP) was established by Dalkeith Sector Community Policing Team to tackle the increase in youth problems and antisocial behaviour in the small rural village of Pathhead. The PSP utilises a community partnership approach and won a Community Engagement Award at the inaugural Scottish Government Safer Communities Awards in 2010.

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