



Neighbourhood Policing Neighbourhood Action Group Case Studies University and Redlands NAG Chairman: Keith Jerrome

The University and Redlands Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) is well attended and is made up of residents, PCSOs and partner agencies including Local Government Services (environment, youth service, licensing, street wardens, councillors), voluntary organisations and the Housing Association. The NAG is also attended by two universities (Security Department, Student Union and Community Liaison) and the Security Department of the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

The NAG consulted with 700 members of the community and the following priorities were identified:

- 1 Anti-social behaviour (ASB) - including young people intoxicated in the streets causing a disturbance
- 2 Environmental issues - such as litter in the streets and gardens, poor lighting and bin collection
- 3 Fear for personal safety

The NAG is chaired by Keith Jerrome, who recognises the importance of keeping the meetings focussed and structured. Keith chairs the meetings around "Action" to avoid becoming a "talking shop" thus determining actions on each agenda issue. Keith ensures notice is given for new issues/topics so that the NAG can be informed and he seeks to keep meetings to time.

The NAG is addressing the priorities in the following ways:

Priority 1

The NAG has worked jointly with Reading University and Reading University Students Union to develop an information pack entitled "Up our Street". NAG members delivered packs to 600 student houses.

The NAG has supported the "Silent Students Happy Homes Campaign" and has promoted activities for young people.

Priority 2

The NAG has carried out Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) which identify graffiti, excess waste and fly tipping. These are followed up by RBC Environmental Liaison. Keith Jerrome highlighted that "the EVAs are a good way to get everyone involved in identifying problems in the area. Reading Borough Council has been fantastic at dealing quickly with graffiti, fly tipping and rubbish. There is a marked improvement from this time last year"

Priority 3

The NAG regularly reviews the crime figures to ascertain "hotspot" locations and is developing a problem solving approach to tackling this priority.

Feeding back to the Community

It is essential for the NAG to feed back to the community on the progress made against the identified priorities. The University and Redlands NAG has developed leaflets which update the community on the NAG's work, as well as promoting the NAG/PCSO surgeries, "Safer

Reading" crime reduction messages and provide the community with contact details for the key agencies. The NAG has delivered over 3000 leaflets within the community.

The NAG plans to hold a one year public meeting in March, where progress on the identified priorities will be reported and discussed. The NAG will ask the community to rate how effective they have been so far. Priorities for the future will be identified and the NAG will look to recruit more residents (including those with secretarial skills).

Keith Jerrome recognises that the NAG is a new forum and points out that it is unique to link Police, residents, Local Authority and community organisations. Keith attributes the success of the NAG to the dedication of its members. He concludes "the residents are volunteers and the professionals all have heavy workloads of which the NAG is a small part. I think we have been fortunate that across the board everyone has given considerable time, effort and energy. Slowly the community is, I think, seeing positive improvement in the "quality of life" and this is the best motivator".