

Report for Gerrards Cross Annual Parish Council Meeting April 2009

The Neighbourhood team for Gerrards Cross has been up and running fully since January 2008 comprising of a Neighbourhood Specialist Officer, two PCSO's and is overseen by a Sergeant who is responsible for Gerrards Cross, Fulmer, Hedgerley, Beaconsfield and Denham teams and an Inspector who covers the whole of South Bucks .

We have had a few staff changes over the current months and the team currently consists of:

Insp 4671	Beverly Pearse
A/Sgt 5159	Stephen Bobbett
PC 5252	Claire Woodcock (NSO)
PCSO 9433	Ceri Paul
PCSO 9432	Matthew Bingham

The three priorities that were identified for the area of Gerrards Cross, Hedgerley and Fulmer are as follows;

Burglary
Parking
Speeding

These are the three areas that as a neighbourhood team we concentrate on in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Action Group. A Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) is a non statutory groups focused on tackling the top three community safety priorities identified by the community.

NAGs include volunteer representatives in the community and they bring together organisations and partners like residents, the police, elected local councillors, local authorities, businesses and schools and normally meet every 4 – 6 weeks.

They are key to the success of neighbourhood policing. They plan and agree the actions to be taken to resolve the priorities. This improves community safety and reassurance and reduces crime, disorder and disproportionate fear of crime.

Updates on the three priorities

Burglary

There has been an ongoing problem with burglary dwelling in the Gerrards Cross, Hedgerley, Fulmer area of South Bucks Local Policing Area, and there are clear hotspots for offences. The main problematic area of concern seems to be the area of Fulmer and in particular Fulmer Road, and also the Dukes Wood Estate. Although the majority of the offences have no known suspects, a number of offences have had known offenders dealt with through the criminal justice system.

The offences have occurred regularly throughout the year, with the peak months for offences being October and November. For the Month of January 2009 there were 6 offences, which is only 2, less than the total in the whole of January 2008.

The offences are occurring throughout the day and overnight, but with a slightly higher amount occurring during the day.

For the Gerrards Cross, Hedgerley, Fulmer neighbourhood, there have been 102 Burglaries in Dwellings between the 01/01/2008 – 12/01/2009.

As a Neighbourhood team and a local police area we have carried out a number of automatic number plate recognition operations, with the main aim of identifying and catching burglars. Towards the end of last year and the beginning of this year a burglary operation was in place providing dedicated resources to attend all burglary dwellings and to provide increased patrols in the burglary hotspots.

In conjunction with South Bucks District Council we have been distributing Community Safety Packs containing information on how best to protect your property. Burglaries whereby the offenders steal car keys and then take high value vehicles are the most prominent in the area. We recommend you keep your keys in a safe area within your property and not left anywhere near your front doors.

Dedicated Beat surgeries have been held in hotspot areas distributing Smartwater property marking kits. This resulted in Smartwater signs being installed in the area with the aim to deter burglars.

Parking

Historically Gerrards Cross has had issues with vehicles parking illegally on the roads surrounding the main town centre. Matt and Ceri daily patrol the town dealing with those illegally parking, resulting in hundreds of tickets being issued over the last year. On top of this we have parking enforcement weeks whereby we draft other officers and PCSO's into the area to assist with the issuing of tickets.

The main areas of concern are the abuse of the hour bays, double line parking outside Marks + Spencers, Costa Coffee and along Station Road. I would like to thank those that park legally within the town and for the thanks we receive from passer-bys for enforcing the law.

The NAG is working on ways to improve the parking situation within the town. We are doing this by concentrating on the following four areas:

- 1 2nd Tier on the Station Car Park
- 2 Driver education and Season tickets
- 3 Road Markings
- 4 Enforcement (including civil enforcement)

Speeding

The stage we are with the NAG is researching where the areas of concern are. This is being carried out by using a speed indicator device (similar to a speed gun) and the community SpeedWatch device. This was born out of the National Reassurance Pilot, Community SpeedWatch is about empowering local communities to solve their own speed problem, or in some cases to prove they do not have a speed problem.

Community Speedwatch is a traffic monitoring scheme that is co-ordinated by the Police and the local highway authorities but managed and run by helpers in a community and the Neighbourhood team. It is a low level speed solution to a community speed problem, which allows us to record vehicles speeding and to send the owners of those vehicles a letter informing them of their speeding. The results we have had to date shows majority of persons speeding in the area are local vehicles, but we are using the device at different times of the day to see if there is any difference in results.

Above is only a fraction of the work we have been involved in, but gives you all a brief insight into areas we have been concentrating on. To find out what we have been doing on a month to month basis, please go to the Thames Valley Police internet site.