

Rotherhithe Policing Action Plan

Introduction

The following document outlines Police proposals to combat anti-social behaviour on the Rotherhithe Peninsula and provide reassurance to the community.

Firstly it is important to outline the background of anti-social behaviour on the Rotherhithe peninsula and the actions taken to date by the Police and their partners to deal with such behaviour.

Background

Historically the problems associated in this area have been located within Russia Dock Woodland. The policing of this area has been frustrated by its very fabric, that of being a woodland. Complaints have been centred mainly on anti-social behaviour from youths in particular the riding of motorbikes. There has also been a history of assaults, mainly minor, centering around the Youth Hostel and Albion canal leading from Canada Water Underground station.

Rotherhithe Police, working in partnership with the local authority have been successful in obtaining one full and seven interim Anti-Social Behaviour Orders against the main perpetrators. This action, combined with several schemes to promote youth diversion saw a dramatic reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour in the area, especially around the Youth hostel.

However it would now appear that a new group of youths have started to gather and cause trouble in the area. On 21st September a male was seriously assaulted in Russia Dock Woodland by a group of youths. Arrests have been made by Walworth CID. The matter is still under investigation.

Vision

Our vision is to make Rotherhithe safe for all the people we serve by making places safer, cutting crime and the fear of crime and by upholding the law.

Strategy

To investigate the serious assault that occurred on 21st September and if evidence allows, identify and arrest suspects, and to provide reassurance to the people of Rotherhithe.

Policing style

We need to recognise that Police need to balance the demands of Rotherhithe with those across Southwark Borough and the MPS. The Policing style adopted by Rotherhithe sector team is a community based approach, working in partnership with other agencies, utilising a problem solving methods.

Action plan

The action plan described below will deliver our vision to the community. The short term measures are designed to provide reassurance to the community and to deal with anti-social behaviour to ensure that offenders receive the message that such behaviour will not be tolerated. The action plan will result in a reduction in crime and coupled with reassurance patrols, a reduction in the fear of crime. This action plan will also deliver a multi –agency problem solving approach involving the community to tackle the longer term issues.

Short term measures

- The Rotherhithe Sector Team, will maintain a presence of 2 officers 2pm to 10pm every day for the next 2 weeks at the Rotherhithe peninsula.
- For a period of 4 weeks extra resources in the form of 2 PCSO's will be patrolling the area from 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday.
- For a period of 4 weeks a response team vehicle will patrol the area when not assigned to calls from every tour of duty.
- For a period of 4 weeks all of the Rotherhithe sector and hot spot officers will be ring fenced and will only be available to work in the Rotherhithe area.
- An extra officer will be permanently transferred to Rotherhithe Sector with immediate effect. Another officer will be joining the sector team on 6th October.
- A Crime Prevention Officer has now been selected to work for the Rotherhithe Sector Team and began work on 29th September.
- Consideration will be given to covert operations in and around the problem areas to identify and arrest persons committing anti-social behaviour.

Medium to long Objectives

One of the main tools in dealing with medium to long term issues is to adopt a problem solving approach with our partners and the community. Excellent work has already been completed in this area by the Police/Council Joint Action Group who have recently agreed the following action plan specific to Russia Dock Woodland.

This Action Plan has five work stands or themes:-

1. **To improve police/council presence in the area.**
2. **To tackle anti-social behaviour.**
3. **To enhance youth provision.**
4. **To seek to design out crime and anti-social behaviour**
5. **To create enhanced natural surveillance through increased facilities, and activity and hence public presence.**

The work will be taken forward as follows:-

1. Enhanced Presence

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|----|--|-----------------------------------|
| a) | PCSOs to be deployed this autumn
Now to be treated as a priority | <i>POLICE</i> |
| b) | Police and rangers to organize blitz's | <i>POLICE/PARK
RANGERS</i> |
| c) | Council to enhance presence of mobile ranger team | <i>PARK RANGERS</i> |
| d) | Council to seek to fund Wardens for Rotherhithe | <i>COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE</i> |
| e) | Improved monitoring of the Carolcraft contract | <i>PARKS/WASTE
MANAGEMENT</i> |
| f) | Deployment of increased police resources near the Youth Hostel | <i>POLICE</i> |

2. Tackling Anti Social Behaviour

- a) Rangers/PCSOs/Police to target vehicle/bike crime and arson using criminal and civil law; as far as possible within existing resources *POLICE/PARK RANGERS*
- b) Enhanced presence will in due course result in an increase in Council and Police intelligence in the area *POLICE/COUNCIL*
- c) Community support on intelligence to be sought by Council and Police *POLICE/COUNCIL*
- d) Mobile CCTV to be deployed *PARKING & CCTV SECTION*
- e) Further work on barriers to prevent vehicle access *PARKS*

3. Youth Activities

- a) To upgrade facilities at Mellish Fields, Surrey Docks Watersports Centre, Odessa Street Youth Club and Adventure Playground *COUNCIL*
- b) To work with other local groups and youth service to put on youth activities *YOUTH SERVICE/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UNIT*
- c) To seek to establish youth outreach worker for the area *YOUTH SERVICE*
- d) Additional resources already deployed around youth hostel area *YOUTH SERVICE*

4. Designing Out Anti Social Behaviour

- a) Investment in Russia Dock Woodland *PARKS*
- b) Mellish Fields Development *SPORTS*
- c) Regeneration projects *REGENERATION*

5. Public Presence

- a) River Walk Project *DIRECTOR / ENV DEV TEAM*
- b) Signage Project *PARKS/CULTURE*
- c) Ecology and History Walks *PARKS/CULTURE*
- d) Enhancement of existing historical/educational sites – Brunel Engine House, Pumphouse Museum, Surrey Docks Farm, Docks buildings *CULTURE*

Other medium to long term actions specific to Southwark Police include

- Educating our control rooms to be more receptive to community concerns.
- To incorporate properly structured and supported volunteers into the extended Police family to harness the communities enthusiasm that already exists.
- For our Crime Prevention Officer to work in partnership with the council in relation to designing out anti social behaviour.
- To develop joint operations with TFL and BTP re disorder around transport links.
- To negotiate PCSO's to be posted to Rotherhithe Sector as a priority.
- Covert operations to target anti-social behaviour to support applications for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.
- To create a community focussed problem solving forum, involving partners(which includes the community) to adopt a multi agency problem solving approach to quality of life crimes.
- For our schools beat officers to address pupils at our four main secondary schools in Rotherhithe regarding anti-social behaviour and the public perception that large groups of youths milling about can have an adverse effect on community safety.
- When the community provide intelligence or information to the Police we will endeavour when possible and relevant to provide feedback of our actions to community groups
- To develop a 'do you know where your kids are?' scheme.

Conclusion

The area of Rotherhithe peninsula, and in particular Russia Dock Woodland, provides a unique and challenging policing environment. It's associated problems with anti-social behaviour will only be solved by adopting a multi-agency / partnership approach. The Police / Council joint action group is an excellent example of what can be undertaken when agencies work together in partnership. We should however not forget to include the community in this partnership work, for without their consent, and perhaps more importantly their co-operation, making Rotherhithe peninsula a safer place will be a much more difficult task for all concerned.

October 2003