

Home Office

Not in my Neighbourhood Week – do you want to be involved?

15–21 October 2007

Introduction

Welcome to the Not in my Neighbourhood toolkit which aims to help prepare you in the run-up to Not in my Neighbourhood Week (15–21 October).

Across the country, imaginative communication by Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and Drug Action Teams (DATs) is helping to raise awareness of the excellent work that is being done to tackle crime and highlight what you are doing to keep people and communities safe from crime. This activity will contribute to providing valuable reassurance to your local residents.

Many of you will have been involved in this year's National Tackling Drugs Day which witnessed numerous events across the country to celebrate the unsung work that reduces drug misuse. This was a significant day which provided agencies with a platform to proactively communicate with local communities about their work to tackle drugs and change lives.

We hope Not in my Neighbourhood Week will build on this success, and only you can make it work. Many areas have already developed a multitude of ideas to showcase activity during the week. To provide additional support we have brokered some strong national partnerships, all with local representation in your area, which we hope you will use to help make your campaign a resounding success for your community.

What is the purpose of Not in my Neighbourhood Week?

The purpose of this week is to foster a sense of empowerment in your local communities, and raise awareness of the huge range of work you do, day in day out, to keep crime down, and make communities safe.

We envisage that local events organised and publicised under the Not in my Neighbourhood banner will bring residents and wider community representatives closer together with professionals on the frontline, in the drive to keep us all safe.

During the week you will be encouraging local people to join forces with you in your daily work and say no to local crime, robbery and burglary, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, and alcohol and drug misuse.

If you would like to take part in the week, why not use one of the following ideas to promote your crime fighting activities?

Working with partners to mark Not in my Neighbourhood Week

Working with supermarkets

- Some of you may have already had contact with your local supermarket to promote the work you are doing, either through stands in the supermarket entrance or handing out leaflets to customers highlighting the work being done to tackle crime in the area and what they can do to keep themselves safe. If you haven't already made this contact, get in touch with the supermarket events manager to see if they will support Not in my Neighbourhood Week.

Working with crime-fighters across the country

- The Home Office will be hosting a **national conference** for chief constables, CDRP chairs, police authority chairs, local authority chief executives and other strategic partners on the future of tackling crime. It will give a clear picture of policy, performance and delivery priorities over the next three years, in line with the recently published new strategy *Cutting Crime – A New Partnership*.

Working in partnership with Neighbourhood Watch

- The Neighbourhood Watch scheme is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Each Neighbourhood Watch scheme across the country has been informed about the activity planned for Not in my Neighbourhood Week. Many would like to be involved – please contact your Neighbourhood Watch police force lead to discuss how you can work together during the week.
- If you are a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and would like to work with your local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, please contact the Community Safety team at your local authority to discuss how to take this forward.

Working with Neighbourhood Policing Teams

- Neighbourhood Policing Teams up and down the country are already working to raise awareness of the work they do to tackle local crime and anti-social behaviour issues – please speak to your local force Neighbourhood Policing project manager to discuss how you can work in partnership during Not in my Neighbourhood Week.

Working with ENCAMS

- ENCAMS is the charity behind the Keep Britain Tidy campaign. It has worked nationwide with a number of local authorities, crime and disorder partnerships and other organisations to reduce environmental crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour, helping them meet targets around crime and environmental quality. ENCAMS also offers guidance to communities on how to tackle environmental problems that are local to them such as litter and graffiti. It runs training courses to help residents become more involved in initiatives that improve their local environment and enable individuals to become effective community leaders. If you would like to work with ENCAMS during Not in my Neighbourhood Week please call 01942 612621 for further information.

Regional visits by Ministers

- Ministers from across Government will be out and about to support your activities. If you would like a Minister to attend one of your events, contact your local Government News Network (GNN). Alternatively, contact your local MP and invite them along.

Three ideas for Not in my Neighbourhood Week

You may, of course, have your own ideas about how to communicate the work you are doing to make communities safer. However, the following three ideas have been provided as a helpful steer to give strong emphasis to the main themes of **community involvement** and **local accountability**.

i) Run a Street Safe Surgery

Street Safe Surgeries can be adapted according to your local crime reduction priorities and for a range of audiences. They offer a role for all the partners mentioned above, and the foundations have been laid at national level for you to work with your regional equivalent partners – the police, police community support officers (PCSOs), Neighbourhood Watch and residents' groups. The surgeries could comprise:

- A team from the crime-fighting family (PCSOs, anti-social behaviour co-ordinators, tenants' groups, self-defence experts) visiting schools, public libraries, estates, supermarkets or shopping precincts to talk about the best way to avoid trouble (go in groups, hide or don't carry valuables, avoid dark alleys, carry an alarm, phone your parents/carer for a lift).
- Distributing information about getting home safely from schools, clubs, work, church (this information can be added to websites and details can be released to local media).

Street Safe Surgeries present opportunities to tie in with other local agencies, such as children's charities, to strengthen messages and build opportunities for press coverage. The idea could also be adapted for specific target audiences (mosques and community centres for BME groups, churches, hospital receptions, community centres for older people).

The theme of these surgeries could be dispensing advice, meeting the locals, keeping safe messages and addressing local concerns. They are also a great way of highlighting the work being done by all partners to tackle crime in the area.

ii) Celebrate 25 years of Neighbourhood Watch

Work with your local Neighbourhood Watch lead to celebrate 25 years of making communities safer. This could be done via local roadshow events in local community sites/venues, such as shopping centres, community halls, church halls, libraries, town centre high streets and schools. Use this as an opportunity to promote how you are working together to tackle crime in the local area. You could also think about celebrating the work of local unsung heroes from Neighbourhood Watch, local charities and youth workers (to name but a few) who go over and above the call of duty to tackle crime in the area.

iii) Provide a 'picture of crime on your beat'

Do you provide local residents with easy access to crime information and statistics to give them a clear understanding of crime and police performance in your area, either online or through police bulletins? If so, invite residents and the local media so that you can showcase how this works, and demonstrate how you are encouraging community involvement in tackling crime and better accountability, ultimately helping to increase public confidence in your work. A summary of the annual Crime Statistics can be found at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs07/crime0607summ.pdf – you could think about producing a similar document for local residents using your local crime statistics.

West Yorkshire Police run an excellent service where local residents can go online, click on a map, pick a crime and find out what offences, if any, have occurred in the area. Police statistics also show police performance over the past 12 months. You can find more information at www.beatcrime.info/

Good practice around the country

In addition to these three ideas, you may be inspired by what is already happening or being planned around the country.

Gloucester CDRP recently met with 500 residents to help prioritise their actions for Not in my Neighbourhood Week. Following the meeting it was agreed that action will include a truancy sweep, home security checks, open mornings with crime prevention groups, and a Face the People walkabout by crime-fighting officers.

Plymouth CDRP is planning a week of activity based on neighbourhood policing, with PSCOs carrying out door-knocks and visiting Age Concern surgeries.

Hambleton CDRP plans to hold Street Safe Surgeries in their five market towns.

Pembrokeshire CDRP is planning five days of action which will include execution of warrants, high visibility patrols, removal of graffiti, rubbish and abandoned vehicles, an information roadshow, and a 'cheese and crime' evening for their local Neighbourhood Watches to enlist their help during the week.

Key messages for Not in my Neighbourhood Week

The following messages were found to be the most reassuring in recent Home Office research into the fear of crime. Therefore use them if you can!

- **There is a huge range of people working to keep you safe** (back this up with an introduction to some of those people and roles).
- **Here's what we're doing to keep you safe, and here's what you can do to help keep yourself safe** (give examples of the work you carry out).
- **We're successfully tackling crime** (include your local crime/drugs/outcome statistics here, including drugs busts, successful interventions, clean-up activity, local British Crime Survey (BCS) statistics).

How best to publicise your event

Talk to your local crime reporters to brief them about the purpose of the week and your planned activities. You should consider the following:

- media partnerships;
- press notices for each of your events with quotes from local spokespeople;

- the possibility of running radio phone-ins with your local radio station;
- articles in specialist media titles.

Top tips for working with your local media

1. Know what you want to achieve. Understand your audience – decide the best communication route. This is likely to be your local paper or local radio.
2. Making the first call. Your first contact is likely to be calling a journalist to introduce yourself. Be prepared; you should know the purpose of your call, what you want to achieve and your key messages. Don't forget statistics if they are relevant.
3. Build relationships. Find out what your local journalists are interested in. Keep in touch on a regular basis. Be imaginative – offer them a new take on an old subject. Really sell your event and the impact it will have locally. Be loyal – don't spoil a relationship by going to another rival newspaper with an exclusive.
4. Target all outlets. Phone your local news desk and tell them about your event. Target different outlets such as free community newspapers, residents' newsletters, hospital or students' campus radio and TV stations.
5. Recognise success. Recognise your own success or realise that the action you are taking will provide reassurance to your local community. Explain this to your media contacts.
6. Let real people do the talking. Case studies and first person accounts are the most meaningful way to communicate what you are doing. Whenever possible, back up your story with real life accounts.
7. Manage and sell your story. For example, pick out the key points from a new piece of research. Write a press release around those key points to keep the story focused and accurate. Always follow up a press release with a phone call to the journalist you have sent it to.
8. Use the right language. Be clear and direct when you speak and write. Don't use jargon or abbreviations. Keep messages short and simple.

9. Use images. Use an image to make your story visual and grab people's attention.
10. Be persistent. If your positive messages do not get through first time round, don't be put off – try again.
11. Respect journalists' deadlines. Journalists are driven by clocks and calendars so find out and don't miss their deadlines. Good stories are especially welcomed during news droughts (Mondays, August and Christmas to New Year).
12. Make your story interesting. A good story often includes:
 - new or unusual information;
 - an event that has an impact;
 - a response to a current event;
 - presence/statement of a celebrity.

Audiences

Information on crime and how to prevent and tackle it is relevant to everyone. However, we know from Home Office research that women, older people, young people and BME groups are adversely affected by fear of crime. You may therefore wish to consider tailoring some of your events to specifically address one or more of these audiences, and also getting the relevant specialist media to support it.

Who else should be involved?

Neighbourhood Policing Teams, residents, community groups, Neighbourhood Wardens, PCSOs, youth projects, residents' associations, Neighbourhood Watch, your local supermarket, local businesses, schools etc.

Good luck with your activities!