



Hampshire County Council Community Safety Service

Update October 2010

1 Background

The ACSO service was established in 2004 to tackle community safety issues, such as anti-social behaviour and nuisance, which were highlighted as areas of concern in the MORI residents survey. The service has clear links to the County Council's priority of "Safer and More Secure for All ", as well as reflecting the organisation's commitment to Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act. ACSO's are community-driven and deal with everyday concerns that can affect residents' quality of life, such as youth nuisance and under-age drinking etc.

There are currently 57 officers and one manager based in teams throughout the County in 4 tactical areas of responsibility (TAOR).

2 Current Position

The Service continues to work to its dual aims to:-

- reduce the fear of crime and deter anti-social behaviour
- encourage community regeneration by engaging with young people.

It is by this twin track approach that the service seeks to make Hampshire a better place to live.

The Service was launched in four pilot areas (Basingstoke and Deane; Gosport; Havant and the New Forest) with a complement of 36 officers. The establishment currently stands at 47 officers, including 4 who are co-sponsored by Totton and Eling Town Council and Hythe and Dibden Parish Council. A new team was also set up to cover central Hampshire which extended the service across the county. In January 2010, a joint community safety patrol team was established with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. This team comprises 16 ACSO's , 6 of whom are employed by HCC and 10 employed by BDBC.

Officers continue to carry out high-visibility patrols on foot and in prominently marked vehicles equipped with CCTV. They work closely with a wide variety of partners such as Hampshire Constabulary, the 11 District Councils, the voluntary sector, Hampshire Fire

and Rescue Service, Wessex Youth Offending Team and other County Council colleagues. Joint tasking procedures have been established with these partners, together with information-sharing protocols.

Current neighbourhood warden services provided by district council partners are as follows:

- Hart – 2 staff
- Rushmoor – 6 accredited staff
- Test Valley - 6 staff
- Winchester - 4 staff

Surveys of residents who have contacted the ACSO Service show that as a result of using the service:

- 62% felt it was a lot better/safer place to live
- 23% a little better/safer
- 79% were fairly or very satisfied with the service

These figures have been consistent to within +/- 5% over the past 4 years.

In the first 5 years of operation the ACSO's dealt with over 50,000 incidents, the majority of which would not otherwise have been recorded. Officers have issued 170 fixed penalty notices and introduced an innovative 'Yellow Card' scheme, designed to challenge the behaviour of young people and to help them recognise their responsibilities to others. Over 1,700 Yellow Cards have been issued and letters sent to parents and occasionally the need for additional specialist support is identified.

A summary of recent incident statistics are attached as Appendix 1.

3 Local Area Agreement and National Indicators (NI's)

The ACSO Service featured as a performance indicator in the Local Public Service Agreement, and is now incorporated in the LAA for the period 2008 – 2011, which is based on national indicators. In particular NI 17 is specific to the Service and measures perceptions of anti-social behaviour and is measured by the Place Survey on a two-yearly basis.

Other relevant NIs are :

NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police

NI 27 Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police

NI 41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem

The following demonstrates how the service positively contributes to meeting the aspirations associated with the national indicators:

Anti-Social Drinking – The consumption of alcohol by the under 18's is a growing national concern and since the formation of the Service, well over 1,700 incidents have been attended to by officers in Hampshire. To help tackle this problem, a considerable amount of joint working has been undertaken particularly with Hampshire Trading Standards. There are a number of initiatives in place to educate and deter retailers from selling alcohol to the under 18's. In particular, over 900 under age sales packs have been delivered and communicated to off licenses across the county. The result of test purchases from retail units has seen illegal sales fall from 32% in 2005 to below 10% in 2010.

Anti Social Behaviour – This includes a variety of behaviour covering a whole complex of unacceptable activity that can blight the quality of community life. It includes activities, such as rowdy and nuisance behaviour, vandalism, graffiti and anti-social drinking. To help combat such activity, the Service is committed to a range of supportive interventions which can engage individuals in changing their own behaviour and help them to tackle some of the underlying problems. The Service regularly provides evidence on breaches of ASBO's or ABC's, follows up on curfew orders and issues juvenile nuisance reports. It is fair to say that ACSO's have played a major part in combating almost nightly anti social behaviour in some areas of Hampshire.

Close Working with the Police, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and other partners - The Service has forged excellent working relationships with the Police, the Fire Service and local district councils. It is only by partnership working that real community benefits can be realised. To this end, joint tasking arrangements have been developed. These take the form of attendance at Tactical and Coordinating Groups (TCG's) which are chaired by the local police inspector, and at Joint Action Groups (JAGS), which are chaired by District Councils. In these ways, the patrols and operations are targeted to meet local community needs, and residents benefit from a joined up service delivery to maximise all available resources. Partnership arrangements have also been established with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. These include the regular surveying of arson risks by the ACSO's, plus attendance at youth inclusion events such as the LIFE Project and Young Fire-fighters Associations. The positive relationship with partners is reflected in the following quotes:

"The ACSO's are a real asset to the community safety family in Havant. They are a highly motivated team, responsive to requests and supportive of both local and County wide priorities. We are really impressed with their willingness to take on challenges and their supportive presence at problem solving and tasking meetings"

Community Safety Manager, Havant Borough Council

"In Havant a huge amount of work has gone in to developing Safer Neighbourhood policing and a problem solving approach with partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Over the three years covered by PSA 1 all crime was reduced by 18%. In the last 12 months crime has been cut by 8%.

Chief Inspector, Hampshire Constabulary

ACSOs have worked closely with Safer Neighbourhood teams in targeting problem areas and individuals. Their work has been coordinated through the CTCG so that it compliments rather than duplicates what is being done by other agencies. ACSOs have built up a good rapport both with the policing teams and with the community and have been one of the key partners in our success.

In addition they have worked in many community engagement activities such as CREW events, SNAP discos and local football competitions. This is a testament of how agencies can work together to add value and achieve tangible improvement in the quality of life for the community we serve."

Engaging Young People – Engaging and understanding young people is crucial for prosperous community life. Particular attention is paid by the Service to those who have been identified as being engaged in crime or identified as being the most at risk of offending, truancy, or social exclusion. A number of community based initiatives are organised, such as drop in centres, youth disco's and sports training. The training of ACSO's to help deliver Duke of Edinburgh schemes and the roll out of citizenship packs to primary schools will further develop engagement with young people.

Working with District, Town and Parish Council Partners – Joint working and collaboration is central to the delivery of LAA targets. A number of multi-agency initiatives such as Crime Reduction Environment Weeks (CREW) are underway, focussing on reducing levels and perception of crime in localities. The Service also gets involved on other local issues, such as littering, fly tipping and cycling on pavements in town centres etc.

Links to Rural Communities

The ACSOs are intelligence-led, and a majority of their time is therefore concentrated on the urban areas. However, it is recognised that sometimes anti social behaviour can have a disproportionate impact on rural communities, and the service has regularly been deployed to rural and rural fringe areas. Increasingly, anti-social behaviour reports are coming through parish councils, and as a result, good working relationships have been established with up to 50 of these groups. Examples include Swanmore, Bishops Waltham, Hook and Valley Park.

The established practice is to carry out an initial assessment of an area by undertaking patrols at key times, and analysing 101 reports and other intelligence. The Parish Council will then be advised accordingly with a suggested action plan. As a result of these interventions, there have been positive outcomes in many areas. The interventions can last from between 2 weeks and 12 months, depending on the severity and regularity of the problems.

4. **Junior Community Team**

In May 2007 the JCT was launched at Rowner Junior School. This initiative is aimed at young people between the ages of 11 and 12 years. Children's Services youth work caters for 13 years upwards.

The main aims of the scheme are to:

- Provide constructive, educational and diversionary activities for local young people that benefits the community.
- Improve the physical environment.
- Tackle inter-generational relationships.
- Tackle anti-social behaviour and juvenile nuisance by encouraging young people to develop a sense of community pride in their neighbourhood.
- Encourage good citizenship.
- Give the children an opportunity to have an impact on issues that matter to them in their communities.
- Create a sense of ownership of the environment in which the children live.

This pilot group comprised 15 volunteers from Year 6 at Rowner Junior School. Various factors are taken into account including children who do not have access to activities, children who are showing challenging behaviour, those on the verge of being excluded from school; and children displaying low self esteem and confidence. Children were also selected for their potential to develop into student mentors.

Uniforms, which include the unique JCT logo designed at the launch, by a member of the team were supplied to all those on the team. The children participated in varied and constructive activities on three Tuesdays a month after school hours. Sessions were also held in the summer holidays.

Since 2007, JCT has expanded and now operates in up to 20 schools each year.

The JCT work alongside the ACSO's to help improve their local area. These community events have ranged from patrols, learning about the environment, litter picks, baking cakes for the elderly, car washing for the community, and gardening projects.

For further details, please contact Jon Whale (01962 833691) or Paul Hayes (01962 833694)

Appendix 1

Incident statistics PDA reporting1/12/08 - 10/10/2010

	Basingstoke	Gosport	Havant	New Forest	Winchester	Total Incidents
Abandoned Vehicles	303	1143	1313	839	389	3897
ACSO Community	1148	950	1812	3766	1045	8721
Drug Related ASB	101	15	56	80	65	317
Intimidation and Harassment	69	30	239	61	27	426
Noisy neighbours	16	3	6	15	4	44
People being drunk or rowdy	175	67	362	356	473	1433
Rubbish, litter and fly-tipping	1215	847	689	2896	450	6097
Street lighting	200	56	33	1582	403	2274
Trading standards	10	5	6	1	5	27
Vandalism, graffiti and property damage	1262	251	315	2531	469	4828