



POTENTIAL FOR PARTNERSHIP

Working together to create safer, healthier communities

September 2013



THE CENTRE FOR
**SOCIAL
JUSTICE**

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About the Centre for Social Justice

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) aims to put social justice at the heart of British politics.

Our policy development is rooted in the wisdom of those working to tackle Britain's deepest social problems and the experience of those whose lives have been affected by poverty. Our Working Groups are non-partisan, comprising prominent academics, practitioners and policy makers who have expertise in the relevant fields. We consult nationally and internationally, especially with charities and social enterprises, who are the champions of the welfare society.

In addition to policy development, the CSJ has built an alliance of poverty fighting organisations that reverse social breakdown and transform communities.

We believe that the surest way the Government can reverse social breakdown and poverty is to enable such individuals, communities and voluntary groups to help themselves.

The CSJ was founded by Iain Duncan Smith in 2004, as the fulfilment of a promise made to Janice Dobbie, whose son had recently died from a drug overdose just after he was released from prison.

Director: Christian Guy

Potential for Partnership: Working together to create safer, healthier communities

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Special thanks

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Introduction

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) works to identify the root causes of poverty and develop innovative solutions to the social breakdown facing so many of Britain's communities. Often, the CSJ sees the most effective solutions at the local level, when individuals who know and are invested in their community decide to act. The CSJ's Alliance of poverty-fighting organisations working across the country provides countless examples of local needs met by local people. In this report, the local responses to community challenges highlight the vital need for sharing of information, willingness to adapt to changing circumstances and a determination to see local areas regenerated.

All five of the CSJ's 'five pathways to poverty' are addressed through the work of the organisations and individuals highlighted in this report; educational failure and family breakdown are identified as significant drivers behind gang involvement, which is being tackled by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit through partnerships with schools and social services; substance abuse and addiction plays a significant part in many of the local issues of alcohol abuse which are being addressed in Watford and Durham; worklessness, particularly among ex-offenders, is a concern for Working Chance, based in Islington and working to help women ex-offenders back to work; debt is a fundamental concern with the proliferation of betting shops on British high streets, currently being addressed as a priority by Westminster council. In every case it is clear that local communities are best placed to recognise the root causes of social breakdown, and find solutions.

The challenges faced by local communities can often best be met by effective partnership working, harnessing the strengths of local government, the business community and voluntary organisations. This report focuses on five partnership case studies. We consider how these partnerships were formed and why, who is involved, what the outcomes have been and what progress has been made in tackling local issues of social breakdown. By focusing on specific examples of community-level action delivering innovative and joined-up solutions, this report hopes to shed light on the question of how communities can be improved. We also consider how these findings could be harnessed to form the basis of a 'national approach to localism' that uses available resources to best effect.

Local people understand their community and its challenges better than anybody else. While many communities face similar challenges, such as unemployment, family breakdown, debt or problem drinking, the factors driving the problems, and the way they play out, will often differ and require locally-tailored solutions. For example, while Brighton and Middlesbrough

both have high rates of alcohol abuse, the drivers and challenges of the problem are different. Brighton is a destination party venue for revellers seeking the 'anything goes' environment; the town lives with the legacy of these visitors, some of whom never leave.¹ Middlesbrough, with the third highest alcohol admission rates in the country,² suffers from long-term worklessness stemming from industrial decline, which has led to problems of alcohol dependency.

National policy has a key role to play, but the move to localism, recently embodied by the Localism Act 2011, provides additional tools with which local communities, business and voluntary organisations can work with local government to tackle local concerns. This report examines different models of successful partnership with the hope that they can inform future initiatives in this new political landscape for community action.

The five case studies in this report cover a range of issues and we analyse a variety of different partnerships. Some partnerships stem from a statutory requirement – such as Community Safety Partnerships – however how these actually work in practice is very much down to locality: some are simply a rubber-stamp, but some are game-changing examples of excellent local work. Other partnerships are entirely voluntary and driven by charitable organisations, businesses or public entities going above and beyond the call of duty; from the transformative work done by Working Chance to assist women ex-offenders, to the highly-effective police-initiated Scottish Violence Reduction Unit.

The Localism Act 2011

- Passed into law in 2011, the Localism Act provides extra tools with which local communities, businesses and voluntary organisations can work with local government to address local concerns.
- To achieve this, it aims to provide greater freedom and flexibility to local government. Principle amongst its reforms is an overhaul of the legal powers of local authorities, which traditionally have been defined by legislation – meaning councils can only do what the law actively says.
- This assumption is turned upside down by the Localism Act, which offers local authorities a 'general power of competence', meaning they can do anything that an individual might, so long as it is not specifically prohibited.
- This presumption in favour of action is backed by changes to how councils should be organised and run, with the central oversight system altered by the abolition of the Standards Board, and a host of new responsibilities devolved to local authorities and mayors.
- In turn, communities are given new rights and powers to challenge local government – community groups can, for example, express an interest in taking over the provision of a local authority service.
- These changes mean that local partnerships are more empowered than ever to implement locally-tailored solutions for local issues.

In some instances, successful partnerships emerge over time. Success can be hard to measure – there may be a pattern of crime reduction, other people may start to replicate the idea, or a partnership may survive and flourish despite personnel changes. In other cases there is a clear standard by which a partnership is judged. One such barometer is the Purple Flag award: Purple Flag is the accreditation scheme that recognises excellence in the management

¹ Andy Winter, Brighton Housing Trust, in evidence to the CSJ

² Local Alcohol Profiles for England, *Local Authority alcohol indicators*, PHE, 2012

of town and city centres at night. Our Watford and Durham case studies both focus on partnering to manage the night-time economy, and we analyse Watford's 2012 Purple Flag accreditation.

Martin Blackwell, Chief Executive of the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM), the body that awards Purple Flag, explained to the CSJ that there are three important stages for those wishing to build partnerships. They must:

1. Understand their location, in terms of their clientele and any gaps in the market;
2. Put together a strategy for growth and management;
3. Consider the sustainability.

Martin Blackwell's three steps can be taken into account when considering any model for partnerships. Taking the first step, in order to create a successful partnership, its function must be addressed; partnership for partnership's sake will not work. It is important that it stems from an understanding of its function and purpose, and reflects community need. In the words of one local government consultant: 'Failure arises from a model that does things to or for people, rather than with people'.³

The second step involves having a strategy – so, for example, the Violence Reduction Unit in Glasgow learnt valuable lessons about the need to sell their message to each and every level of management in a new partner organisation. Finally, sustainability requires persistence and the ability to rethink your strategy. For example, the partnerships managing the Watford night-time economy highlighted the need to keep testing ideas and adjusting them if they did not work.

Whilst national policy can change legislation and set priorities, local solutions are often needed to deliver change and to tackle the root causes of a problem. This has become particularly clear with regard to alcohol policy, with various initiatives used to engage the industry in local partnerships, including: Best Bar None, Pubwatch, Community Alcohol Partnerships and Purple Flag. Since Doncaster introduced the Best Bar None scheme in 2006, violent crime has fallen by over 40 per cent in the town centre in the evening.⁴ However, as our five case studies show, this local approach can and should be extended beyond alcohol policy into a whole range of areas.

In the new landscape of opportunity afforded to local partnerships by the Localism Act, communities should not be afraid of innovation and diversity in delivery. Solutions to local problems demand tailored, collaborative community action. Common challenges exist, however, as our five case studies show – and with them, common lessons for others wishing to develop partnerships.

³ Local government consultant, in evidence to the CSJ

⁴ The Home Office, *Next steps following the consultation on delivering the Government's alcohol strategy*, London: Home Office, 2013, p12

case study one

Glasgow: Violence Reduction Unit

'Policing alone cannot solve it. Everybody has a little piece of the puzzle. It is only when you put those pieces together that you find a solution.'

Will Linden, Analyst Coordinator, Violence Reduction Unit, in evidence to the CSJ

Karyn McCluskey, head of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU),⁵ has said that she became determined to change the level of violence in Glasgow when she saw an article in the Daily Record about a young boy who had been stabbed to death and a 74-year-old woman who held him in her arms while he died:

*'He bled to death crying for his mum. I sat back and waited for the public outrage, and there wasn't any. Nothing. And I thought: not right.'*⁶

As principle intelligence analyst for the Strathclyde Police, Karyn McCluskey set about researching violence in Glasgow. In 2004, Strathclyde Police identified 170 gangs operating within their geographical remit. Glasgow City, with a population of approximately 600,000 was home to around 100 of these gangs.⁷

In response, in January 2005 Strathclyde Police established the VRU, led by Karyn McCluskey and Detective Chief Superintendent (DCS) John Carnochan, to target all forms of violent behaviour, in particular knife crime and weapon carrying among young men in and around Glasgow. The VRU has adopted a public health – rather than singularly

5 The Violence Reduction Unit is now known as the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit and has a national remit. This case study focuses on the early years (2005 – 2006) of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the initial partnerships in Glasgow. It also focuses on the first two years of the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) c.2008 – 2010 when this was also Glasgow-based.

6 The Guardian, *Karen McCluskey: the woman who took on Glasgow's gangs*, 19 December 2011 [accessed via: www.theguardian.com/society/2011/dec/19/karyn-mccluskey-glasgow-gangs (10/09/13)]

7 Centre for Social Justice, *Dying to Belong: An in-depth review of street gangs in Britain*, London: CSJ, 2009, p55

criminal – response to violence, informed by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) work on the issue:

'Public health places emphasis on preventing disease or injury from occurring or reoccurring, rather than on treating the health consequences'.⁸

*DCS Carnochan stressed to the CSJ that 'as long as you keep talking about crime it's a police issue', but violence prevention requires a much wider response than a criminal justice one. Partnership between police and the health service and other agencies has therefore been placed at the centre of the VRU's strategic plan, aiming 'to reduce violent crime and behaviour by working with partner agencies to achieve long-term societal and attitudinal change'.⁹ The value of this partnership approach was reinforced and recommended in the CSJ's seminal report on gang violence, *Dying to Belong: An in-depth review of street gangs in Britain*, which stated that 'It is absolutely imperative that any gang strategy involves all agencies working with at-risk young people'.¹⁰*

Initial partnerships

Will Linden, Analyst Coordinator at the VRU, explained to the CSJ that before seeking out partnerships in Glasgow, it was critical that the police 'got their own house in order' and demonstrated that they were doing everything a police force could to tackle gang violence: for example they introduced more targeted stop searches and more hand-held metal detectors. They could then approach potential partners saying 'we're doing all of this, but we need to do more. We can't deal with that boy's alcohol problem alone, and we can't give him a job'. Initial contacts were made by trawling the internet and cold calling. Will Linden explains that DCS Carnochan, Karyn McCluskey and their team spoke to approximately 100,000 prospective partners (in education, health, social work etc.) at this stage through seminars and calls, and the VRU still routinely contacts 20-30,000 people a year. The VRU sought to increase awareness of knife crime statistics and the reality on Glasgow's streets through the press and by explaining to each potential partner how gangs and violence affected them. Will Linden stressed that the prospective partners 'hadn't necessarily seen it. The police have been to all the troublesome areas in Glasgow, but, for example, the directors of other services might not have been'. The VRU outlined to each organisation how their proposals could help them to achieve their own goals and targets, for example they showed schools the positive impact that campus officers (see below) had in Scandinavia, even taking them to Scandinavia to let them witness this success first hand.

Initially the VRU canvassed senior directors and leaders, which resulted in large meetings with ten or more different potential partners. Will Linden notes that '35 actions would come out of these initial meetings, and 34 of these actions would be for the VRU'. Consequently, the VRU learnt at an early stage that a purely high-level strategy would not work, nor could they always

⁸ World Health Organisation, *World report on violence and health: summary*, Geneva: WHO, 2002, pp3-4

⁹ VRU, *Mission Statement* [accessed via: www.actiononviolence.org.uk/content/about-violence-reduction-unit (09/09/13)]

¹⁰ Centre for Social Justice, *Dying to Belong: An in-depth review of street gangs in Britain*, London: CSJ, 2009, p148

draw on the teachers and social workers at ground level who recognised the importance of their message. Will Linden said:

'The strategic level got the message, but they did not necessarily cascade it down. The ground level got it, but they could not push the message up. The key issue was penetrating the middle level'.

Taking the health service as an example, the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Harry Burns (strategic level) and the doctors and nurses (ground level) saw injury surveillance (see below) as important and necessary. However, in order to actually implement injury surveillance the middle hospital managers needed to change the IT infrastructure and ensure that it was logistically possible – which required time and money. The challenge was pushing the VRU vision to the top of the middle managers' 'to-do' list: Will Linden said that 'unless people at all levels bought in, the VRU initiatives would have failed'.

The VRU also needed to make sure that they got the right member of the team in front of their potential partners – they needed to know their audience: 'I would go to divisional commanders' meetings because I've known them a long time, even if the words I was saying were words Karyn had thought up,' DCS Carnochan said. 'If Karyn went along, it'd be far more difficult for her. The other side of that coin is that Karyn would go to men's groups and women's groups about violence against women and single parents'.¹¹

To analyse the workings of the initial VRU partnerships in Glasgow this report focuses on three key interventions: injury surveillance; primary prevention; and the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence.

1. Injury surveillance

Will Linden explained to the CSJ that hospitals were quick to come on board with the aims of the VRU because they were dealing with similar problems: 'policing and emergency care are both about the end product of violence'. However, the medical professionals felt detached from the violence. Dr Christine Goodall, founder of Medics Against Violence, explained to the CSJ that she:

'was used to seeing a patient coming into the hospital, seeing one side of the story. When they came in, they were not with the gang, they were a bit subdued, often quite drunk. In that situation you are in charge, they abide by your rules. But you can't just go your whole life stitching people up and getting great clinical outcomes, that doesn't deal with the problem. Karyn shared CCTV footage which showed how the injuries had come about and the level of violence, the pack mentality, the horror of it all'.

In order to strengthen ties with the medical profession, the police funded a medical research project that was being undertaken in Glasgow in 2006 into alcohol-related facial injuries.

¹¹ The Telegraph, *The woman taking the fight to Glasgow's gangs*, 24 September 2011 [accessed via: www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8779193/The-woman-taking-the-fight-to-Glasgows-gangs.html (10/09/13)]

Links like this paved the way for injury surveillance to be undertaken in Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments to help police to ascertain the true nature and extent of the gang violence problem. The first hospital to seek to pilot this was the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, due to key consultants being strategically very engaged with the VRU. Injury surveillance was rolled out across three hospitals in greater Glasgow - Hairmyres, Wishaw and Monklands.

The A&E surveillance data provided the date, time and location of the violence, enabling the VRU to map a more accurate picture of violence hot spots. This in turn enabled a more effective police response, both in relation to prevention and enforcement.

2. Primary prevention

The VRU's 2007 strategic plan outlined six areas of priority, one was 'primary prevention – seeking to prevent the onset of violence, or to change behaviour so that violence is prevented from developing'.¹² It was this priority that provided the context for DCS Carnochan's statement that he would rather see 1000 more health visitors than 1000 more police officers,¹³ and the reason why the VRU has been involved in establishing city-level parenting support with the Director of Public Health. The VRU is also helping to make violence prevention part of the curriculum in early years, primary and secondary schools. These partnerships with education are key to teaching young people about violence and its consequences.

One of the key VRU initiatives introduced into secondary schools in Glasgow from 2005 were campus officers: community police officers based full time within a single secondary school. Will Linden explains that partnering with a school can be difficult as 'they function as mini-kingdoms, led by a head teacher'. Building partnerships requires taking a school-by-school approach, combined with 'lots of work and negotiation'. Initially head teachers were very wary of the campus officer model, assuming that officers would be policing the classroom and arresting pupils. In fact, the campus officer role is to help develop greater links with the community. Permanently based in school, the officer becomes part of daily life, providing additional moral authority and building up trust; pupils come to campus officers seeking advice on everything from bullying to drugs. Will Linden describes campus officers as a 'gateway into schools', paving the way for anti-violence campaigns (such as Medics Against Violence), and drug and alcohol programmes. There are many tangible indications of their success; teachers are taking less sick days and more pupils are signing up to the police force.¹⁴

12 VRU, *Ten Year Strategic Plan*, Glasgow:VRU, 2007 [accessed via: www.injuryobservatory.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Violence-Strategy-2007-Violence-Reduction.pdf (20/09/13)]

13 The Herald, *The high price of Scotland's drink and blade culture*, 1 April 2007

14 VRU, in evidence to the CSJ

3. Community Initiative to Reduce Violence

The Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) was founded in 2008 to bring together partners from justice, government, community safety services, housing, careers, education, social work, health and the community to communicate a clear message to gang members across Glasgow – the violence must stop. CIRV was based in part on Operation Ceasefire, which had impressive results tackling gangs and violence in the U.S. city of Boston – a 63 per cent decrease in youth homicides per month.¹⁵

CIRV and Ceasefire both had clear opening messages; if an individual within a gang committed an act of violence, law enforcement would be rigorous and focused on the gang as a whole. Alongside the message to stop violence, CIRV promotes a range of services and programmes available to violent gang members who agree to change their lives and move towards employment. Will Linden explains that:

'CIRV was only in a planning stage for about six months; we wanted to plan it as it evolved. The partners would be sharing intelligence and information and a lot more, therefore we knew that CIRV would look very different on day one from how it would look on day 100.'



One of the methods used to make contact with the gang members involves inviting them to a voluntary self-referral session; the 'call-in'. Over the first three self-referral sessions, 186 young gang members attended out of 340 invited (a 55 per cent attendance rate).¹⁶ The first call-in on 24 October 2008 was held at the Glasgow Sheriff Court. Four mounted police constables were stationed at the entrance to the courthouse, a police helicopter hovered overhead,

¹⁵ Centre for Social Justice, *Dying to Belong: An in-depth review of street gangs in Britain*, London: Centre for Social Justice, 2009, p9

¹⁶ VRU, *Community Initiative to Reduce Violence Progress Report*, Glasgow:VRU, 2009, p3 [accessed at: www.actiononviolence.org.uk/sites/default/files/CIRV%206-Month-Report.pdf (10/09/13)]

police constables cruised up and down the river and police in riot gear escorted the gang members into the courtroom. The call-in session included extensive partnership working, with presentations from police, trauma surgeons, support services, community figures and ex-gang members. Dr Christine Goodall presented on trauma injuries, and explained to the CSJ:

'we looked out the goriest pictures we could find, put it to them that this could be your mum, your dad, your brother, they were fairly stunned into silence'.

The attendees were told to relay the message to middle and lower level members of their gangs. At the end of the session, gang members were given the phone number of a 'one stop shop' where they would be given help to access education, health services, careers advice and social services if they wanted to turn their lives around. Will Linden describes the incredible impact of the first call-in:

'the last speaker asked the assembled gang members who would call the number and ask for help, eventually one boy stood up and said 'I'll do it', then 30 to 40 boys stood up and said they would too. The service workers stood up one by one and applauded them'.

Ann-Marie Rafferty, Head of Social Work Services (North East Glasgow), explained to the CSJ that she had not worked with the VRU before they contacted her about CIRV, but that their value base immediately appealed to her; they had a 'really refreshing attitude to tackling violence and a refreshing perspective on human behaviour'. The VRU explained to her that CIRV would not work if social work and education were not involved in partnership – she responded by joining the steering group and seconding a member of staff into the VRU. She explains to the CSJ that the VRU is:

'A lynchpin in bringing agencies together who wouldn't normally work together; it is hard to sit at the same table without picking up their energy and enthusiasm. Now that these agencies have proven that they can work together they are more likely to be collaborative because they know it works'.

Ann-Marie Rafferty also stressed that the scale of the gang problem in Glasgow acted as a catalyst to partnership working:

'if you work in public services in Glasgow, you realise you can't do this by yourself, the scale of the challenges is so big'.

The successful outcome of these partnerships is evidenced through the people it has helped. Stephen, 12, was reluctant to get involved when CIRV street advocates first approached him. He enjoyed hanging out with his mates and gang fighting played a big part in his life. The campus officer at his school persuaded him to give CIRV a go and encouraged him to attend the self-referral session. Listening to ex-gang members speak about their lives, he began to think more about what being involved in a gang meant to him. Two weeks after the session, he called the CIRV helpline and is now involved in diversion activities.

CIRV's second year report, published in July 2011, showed that violent offending amongst those gang members who had signed up to CIRV had dropped by almost 50 per cent.¹⁷

Outcomes

In April 2006 the VRU's remit was extended nationwide and, as of April 2011, CIRV's activity became mainstream business for Strathclyde Police. These are clear indications of the resounding success of the multi-agency approach to gang violence. Statistics support this story: for example CIRV saw a 12 per cent decrease in total violence in Glasgow East compared to a 1 per cent increase in Glasgow South where CIRV was not operating.¹⁸ But the VRU has impacted far beyond a reduction in violence; for example, campus officers have created positive new ties between the police and local communities, with 112 secondary schools in Scotland having access to a campus officer; 14 of which are based in Glasgow.¹⁹

Will Linden states that his team at the VRU has learnt three key messages about successful partnering:

1. In order to generate successful partnerships, you must communicate your message across all levels of a prospective partner organisation;
2. You must be resilient – 'don't take no for an answer'; and
3. You must get your communication strategy right. For the VRU, this meant selling the message that gang violence was everybody's problem, and that everyone played a part in solving it.

The work of the VRU is vital in bringing together the relevant agencies to tackle gang violence. Joining the dots to create a better picture of what is happening, gathering together the right support network and ensuring that information is shared between all partners is absolutely key to its success, along with a determination to tackle the problem and a vision for change.

17 VRU, *The Violence Must Stop: Glasgow's Community Initiative to Reduce Violence Second Year Report*, Glasgow:VRU, 2011, p8 [accessed via: www.actiononviolence.org.uk/sites/default/files/CIRV_2nd_year_report.pdf (10/09/13)]

18 Ibid, p10. The methodology is set out from page 11. The 12 per cent figure is calculated by comparing rates of offending for the period of engagement prior to signing up to CIRV, and the rates thereafter. The 1 per cent quoted is calculated using a random sample of 200 G Division (south side of Glasgow) gang members who are not engaged in CIRV, looking at offending for the two years before CIRV started against offending for the two years thereafter

19 VRU, in evidence to the CSJ

case study two

Watford: Night-Time Economy

'The partnerships *are* Watford. There is no room for grandstanding. We would not exist without each other. We are greater together.'

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill MBE, Elected Mayor of Watford, in evidence to the CS]

Watford has a relatively small population of approximately 91,000, but sees large influxes of people for work and recreation.²⁰ Whilst the Borough is over eight square miles, the night-time economy is centred in The Parade and High Street, a mainly pedestrianised area of less than half a mile in length. Footfall figures highlight that on average there are 2,000 to 4,000 visitors on Friday nights and 3,000 to 6,000 on Saturdays.²¹ Watford has become a tourist destination for clubbers, with coachloads of people coming in, some of them taking advantage of cheap room rates in budget hotels and staying the night.

The number of people entering the city both in the day and at night-time, and their density in particular areas has a tendency to skew statistics, with the crime rate measured against the very low resident population and not the high visitor population. In August 2013 official police statistics showed an average of 201 violent offences were committed on Watford High Street every month, placing the town fourth on the list of places with the most violent crimes committed.²²

However, these skewed statistics disguise the fact that crime levels in Watford have fallen in the year to date, reflecting the success of police and community initiatives launched since the

20 The size of Watford's population at the time of the 2011 Census was 90,300. The current mid-year estimate for 2012 puts the population at 90,700 [accessed via: www.watford.gov.uk/ccm/content/planning-and-development/population-and-statistical-information.en?page=2 (13/09/13)]

21 Safer Watford, *Strategic Intelligence Assessment Summary*, January 2013, p5

22 Watford Observer, *Watford High Street one of the most violent streets in Britain, say police statistics*, 12 August 2013 [accessed via: www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/10607220.Watford_High_Street_one_of_the_most_violent_streets_in_Britain/ (10/09/13)]

summer of 2012. In the year to August 2013, violent crime has seen 40 fewer offences than the previous year, with 640 compared to 680. Serious violent crime has dropped by a third, from 24 to 16 offences, while assaults with injury are down, at 227 compared to 243. Most impressively, thefts from the person have been cut by 54 per cent - where there were 223 thefts in 2011-12, predominantly of mobile phones, and predominantly at night, this year there have been a mere 102.²³

The impact of these reductions can be felt on the streets. The Senior Town Centre Chaplain, Richard Chewter said 'eight years ago the town at night was a 'no-go' area'. However, in 2012 Watford was awarded Purple Flag accreditation, which Mayor Thornhill regards as evidence that the Watford 'partnership approach is getting it right in terms of the quality and range of our offer'.²⁴ As set out above in the introduction, Purple Flag is an accreditation scheme that recognises excellence in the management of town and city centres between 5pm and 6am. Martin Blackwell of ATCM explained to the CSJ that:

'Purple Flag is a great way of bringing the right stakeholders together. The public, private and voluntary sectors all need to work as one. In a way, going for Purple Flag accreditation acts as a catalyst for these partnerships, even if they do not already exist. A successful Purple Flag accreditation creates a sense of achievement, the partners have done something together, and this improves the partnerships.'

Mayor Thornhill spoke to the CSJ about the growth of these partnerships. To start with the problem was that:

'people were positioning themselves within their own remit, and not working together. It takes human relationships and trust to break down demarcations. Now personnel can change and the partnerships survive.'

Once this has happened, Mayor Thornhill believes that people need to see results, she points to 'evolution not revolution, celebrating small milestones along the way'. Watford Council applied for Purple Flag because it wanted to celebrate its partners, from nightclub owners, to taxi firms and the local 'Street Angels' – an outreach programme organised by the Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy.

Purple Flag awarded Watford 'above average' for safety. However, in a recent community survey, keeping the town safe was still the top priority for residents.²⁵ The Council, police, business and voluntary sectors now all work together to try and make this happen. Mayor Thornhill explains that 'the aim is to make Watford as small as possible, so that everyone feels part of the Watford project'.

23 Inspector Deirdre Dent, Safer Neighbourhood Team Watford, in evidence to the CSJ

24 Purple Flag, *Watford Case Study* [accessed via: www.atcm.org/purple-flag-uploads/DOCS/31-Watford-Case-Study (10/09/13)]

25 Speech by Elected Mayor of Watford, Dorothy Thornhill, Budget Speech 2013/14, 30 January 2013 [accessed via: www.watford.gov.uk/ccm/content/legal-and-democratic/elected-mayor/budget-speech-2013-14.en (10/09/13)]

Night-time economy

In order to improve the night-time economy, the first step was convincing people that having a night-time economy was not necessarily a bad thing. Mayor Thornhill explains that it is about 'not believing that every young person wants to go home via Shady Lane [the local police station] or A&E'. In 2010 a night-time economy working group was set up, involving councillors, local residents, Pubwatch and door supervisors, the local authority, emergency services and the Street Angels. The group developed an action plan involving residents and West Hertfordshire College to challenge the negative perception of the night-time economy amongst local residents, and in May this year teenagers from West Hertfordshire College designed posters aimed at encouraging better behaviour from their peers on nights out in the town centre.²⁶

In parallel with changing attitudes, relationships had to strengthen at every level. This case study focuses on the role played in the Watford project by police, pubs and clubs, the Street Angels and the taxi companies.

Police

A key element in the reduction of crime in Watford is the role played by the police. Mayor Thornhill explained how important the policing style is and how she has worked with the police to get this right. The police try new things and then respond to the public's feedback on whether they are getting it right: they tried the use of police horses to patrol the town centre in the evening but this was unpopular, so they stopped. Now the police have a strong foot patrol presence. When the CSJ joined the Street Angels for an evening, the police were clearly visible on every street corner and were monitoring long queues and groups of people. The moment incidents broke out, they were there to intervene.

The police also work well with other organisations. During the London riots, taxi drivers helped to spot trouble, patrolling and reporting unusual behaviour to a special number and sharing valuable information.

Watford has introduced a Scan Net system, which involves recording people's IDs as they enter clubs and pubs so that this information can be used in police investigations. Dave Wheatley, Chief Inspector of Watford has said:

'That operation is a fantastic way of doing business - where you have the partnership with the licensing in terms of the pubs and clubs. Everyone is working together to make the town centre a safer place. It's a winning formula'.²⁷

26 Crime and Justice, *Innovative partnership with Watford students creates cutting-edge poster campaign*, 1 May 2013 [accessed via: <http://crimeandjustice.co.uk/2013/05/01/innovative-partnership-with-watford-students-creates-cutting-edge-poster-campaign/> (10/09/13)]

27 Watford Observer, *New Watford chief inspector Dave Wheatley: 'I want to protect our most vulnerable people'*, 4 July 2013 [accessed via: www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/10526924.New_Watford_chief_inspector___I_want_to_protect_our_most_vulnerable_people_/ (10/09/13)]

Pubs and Clubs

The Purple Flag team was particularly impressed by Watford's staggered closing times for pubs and clubs. Closing times are regulated by Watford Licensing Policy, however one Licensing Manager explains that

'the key to successful implementation of licensing policy is working in partnership with residents and organisations, and discussing with applicants and operators as to what they are trying to achieve.'

This Licensing Manager explains that: this approach has often led to Watford being ahead of the legislative curve: Watford introduced meetings between the council, police and door supervisors in 1997, long before national licensing of door supervisors became compulsory in 2001.

Street Angels



The Street Angels are a Christian, community-based team which provides a night-time presence on the streets of Watford. There are currently about 35 volunteers. Patrolling the streets in groups of three, they are there to provide support and assistance to the vulnerable and those who have had too much to drink. Support ranges from supplying bottles of water or tissues, to assisting someone to find their friends or a taxi home or picking up bottles and glasses on the streets to minimise violent incidents. The Street Angels deliver a targeted, local solution and respond to need: whilst they usually only patrol on Fridays and Saturdays, they provide a one-off service on particularly busy evenings, such as A-Level results night. When the CSJ joined the Street Angels on A-Level results night, David Scourfield, team leader of Watford Street Angels, explained that:

'The Street Angels, police, door staff and taxi marshals all have radios into a CCTV operator at the police station and the Street Angels wear jackets with a reflective logo designed to be picked up by CCTV cameras'.

Through this network, the police and the Street Angels liaise effectively to decide where it may be more appropriate to have a police presence and where the more approachable Street Angels can take the lead. David Scourfield explained that:

'The Street Angels are a known presence on the streets of Watford – people stop us to ask for assistance or to thank us for helping a friend on another night, and the door staff stop us to have a chat'.

Similarly the taxi drivers stop to catch up on the events of the night – on A Level results night a taxi driver came over to discuss help she had just given to an injured woman in a bar. The partnerships work because people know each other and help each other out; on A Level results night the Red Cross asked the Street Angels to help a homeless man find somewhere to sleep so that they could focus on medical cases. Similarly, when a young man had lost his friends a club doorman helped to locate them in the club. Between July 2006, when the Street Angels first began, and July 2009, Watford saw a 35 per cent reduction in violent crime.²⁸ David Scourfield explained that the Street Angels 'have certainly made a difference, with a network built up over nearly ten years'.

The Watford Church also provides a God After Dark service at St Mary's Church in Watford, supplying a safe place for the Street Angels to take those who are vulnerable or have had too much to drink. The service operates once a month on pay day when more people are likely to be out.

Richard Chewter, founder of both Street Angels and God After Dark, meets regularly with the police and local authorities. It is due to the church's strong relationship with the police that the two can work in close collaboration on the same streets. In order to strengthen this relationship, individuals from the police or council often spend the evening patrolling with the Street Angels to better understand their work. Recently Mayor Thornhill also spent the evening with them.

David Scourfield explained to the CSJ that the church is constantly looking for new ways to strengthen partnerships and improve the night-time environment:

'We are currently considering working more closely with the clubs, by introducing club chaplains to try and deal with issues at an earlier stage in the night'.

Taxi companies

The Watford taxi service involves extensive collaboration with the council, taxi marshals, taxi drivers, Street Angels and a combination of public and private funding combine to create

²⁸ Watford Observer; *Street Angels helping to reduce violent crime in Watford town centre*, 30 July 2009 [accessed via: www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/localnews/4520769.Street_Angels_helping_to_reduce_violent_crime/ (10/09/13)]

a cohesive system that the Purple Flag inspectors praised in 2012.²⁹ For example, they commented on the plentiful supply of taxis and suggested that funding from the venues was a great reflection on the value of the scheme for businesses.³⁰ They were particularly impressed by the taxi marshal scheme, which has been in operation since 2005. Taxi marshals work on the Rickmansworth queue to ensure that passengers get in an orderly queue and to turn away potential passengers who are, for example, violent or do not know their end destination. The taxi marshal position is often staffed by club staff once they have finished their shift. To avoid congestion, taxis line up outside the town centre, and a third marshal is radioed when they are required.

Going forward

The Watford model works well because lines of communication are open, and teams work together to come up with innovative solutions. Funding cuts have not halted progress: Jane Taylor-Ball, Community Safety Manager for Watford explained to the CSJ that 'as times have got harder for everyone, they have got closer together'. The Purple Flag accreditation represents a significant leap forward, but Watford intends to keep improving. For example, Watford has introduced night-time economy summits with the police, the elected mayor and representatives from all of the premises in the town centre (including managers for a particular unit of a pub or club, but also the area managers for these organisations). These meetings allow participants to pool ideas: Jane Taylor-Ball explained that it is through these summits that pub and club door staff have now proposed to help police with the late night dispersal from the town centre of people leaving clubs and pubs.

It is not just the reduction in crime and increase in crime detection that highlight the success of the Watford project. This year the Imagine Watford festival attracted an estimated 95,760 visitors, compared to 57,300 people in 2012.³¹ Kate Moore, Community Safety Manager for Hertfordshire explained to the CSJ that 'the way that Watford runs the night-time economy and deals with issues is used as a flagship for the rest of the county. They are often leading the way'. But Mayor Thornhill thinks that there is still a lot of room for progress, and explains that one of the keys to successful partnerships is not underestimating how long it takes to do things: she says 'some of the partners might not be able to go as fast as you might want them to. It is about having an awareness of that, and having someone to hold the vision, and pull it together'.

29 WatfordYou website, *Watford awarded Purple Flag status* [accessed via: <http://watfordforyou.org/watford-awarded-purple-flag-status> (13/09/13)]

30 Jane Taylor, Community Safety Manager, in evidence to the CSJ

31 Watford Borough Council, Press Release, *Imagine Watford 2013 attracts record-breaking numbers of visitors*, 4 July 2013 [accessed via: www.watford.gov.uk/ccm/content/strategic-services/press-releases/2013-07/imagine-watford-2013-attracts-record-breaking-numbers-of-visitors-.enjsessionid=FE15C9E90379FD9B1F30B2C764388AFB (10/09/13)]

case study three

Islington: Working Chance

'It wasn't just that Working Chance gave me a job, it was the support in the middle. Zara would ring, but she wasn't just there as an advisor, she would always be a pick-me-up. It was only through her and them that my life turned itself around, and I got my life back on track.'

Jane, ex-offender³²

Working Chance is a London-based charitable enterprise that enables women with criminal convictions to find and stay in work. Working in partnership with prisons and employers, Working Chance addresses the recurring issues of unemployment that so often face women leaving prison. A CSJ award-winning organisation, Working Chance offers opportunities to women to develop skills and thus improve their lives and the lives of their families.

Referrals to Working Chance are received from prisons, as well as the probation service and Jobcentre Plus. Many women will also self-refer. Working Chance has placed over 300 women into paid and voluntary work and has supported the mothers of more than 600 children.³³ The results are extraordinary; while other agencies working with women ex-offenders have reoffending rates of over 50 per cent, Working Chance reports a rate of just three per cent.³⁴

It was founder Jocelyn Hillman who saw the need for tailored support for female ex-offenders looking for work when she was working for another ex-offender charity. She started working informally with one or two women from East Sutton Prison and successfully supported them into work. Jocelyn worked for 18 months on a voluntary self-funded basis running the charity out of her bedroom before her first £1,000 grant for some desk space came through from

³² Name has been changed

³³ Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ – Working Chance's own data

³⁴ Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ

the Tudor Trust. A team of professional recruitment specialists started to grow around her, working for the charity on a voluntary basis until funding came in from the National Lottery in 2009.



Working Chance now provides an intensive level of support. They interview each candidate in depth (within the prison if she is involved with the organisations prior to her release), find out her aspirations, provide interview support, approach appropriate employers, accompany her to the interview and provide on-going support once she finds employment. They have placed women in paid employment with approximately 50 different employers, and regularly strive to build partnerships with new employers.³⁵ Zara Crane-Davies, one of Working Chance's recruitment consultants explained to the CSJ that building partnerships with new employers is not always easy:

'It can take up to 36 months to get an employer to engage. You get a lot of rejection. You have to have very broad shoulders.'

Working Chance recognises that there can be significant barriers to work for female ex-offenders, and that employers are typically nervous and reluctant to employ ex-offenders. Cait Winter, Business and Operations Manager for Working Chance, explained that often barriers arise from basic prejudices:

'If you walk past a building site and mention to someone that all of the employees are ex-offenders, they won't think twice about it. Explain to someone that a whole bay of secretaries in an office are ex-offenders, and you can have a very different reaction... Working Chance wants to dispel the underlying myths about employment of ex-offenders.'

Dispelling these myths is key to building partnerships with businesses. Cait Winter stressed that approximately 15 per cent of the ex-offenders they work with are graduates, with clients

³⁵ Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ

including former social workers, police officers and doctors.³⁶ There are also practical difficulties involved in finding work as an ex-offender: many online application forms will terminate job applications once individuals have ticked yes to the 'do you have any criminal convictions' box.

Relationships with employers

To generate interest in their services, one of the initiatives that Working Chance uses is business breakfasts, to which employers can come along, have breakfast and listen to testimonies from employers and candidates. Locations vary from prisons to HM Treasury, but Working Chance has found that those held in prisons tend to be the most popular. These sessions are used as an opportunity to inform employers of the work that Working Chance does, and to try and dispel the fears that employers have about partnering with them. For example, employers often believe that they cannot hire ex-offenders if they are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. However, 'controlled function' roles are the only instance where the regulator may prohibit employment and each application to perform a controlled function will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Similarly employers often think they need to check employees under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS),³⁷ when in fact this should only be done in specified circumstances, for example in relation to work with children or vulnerable adults.

In 2011 Pret A Manger attended one of these breakfast sessions, and heard prisoners who were in the programme talk about their experiences. One candidate spoke about the difficulties that ex-offenders face in seeking employment and ended her speech by asking if anyone in the room wanted to offer her a job; the representative from Pret stood up and offered her a position with them. A role was created for her in the customer service team at their headquarters, which she started before leaving prison. She still works there today. Pret has linked their partnership with Working Chance into their Simon Hargraves Apprenticeship scheme, which was founded in order to help homeless people get back into work. They now regularly take female ex-offenders onto the scheme. Of approximately 182 apprentices who have been through the programme, about 35 came to Pret via Working Chance. Nicki Fisher, Head of Sustainability for Pret has explained that 'Working Chance is the best partner for Pret. They prepare ex-offending women very well for their return to work. They have also spent a lot of time understanding our business and needs'. The partnership with Pret has continued to grow: testament to their appreciation of the service is the fact that they are the first of Working Chance's partners to pay for successful placements. Juanita Cracchiolo, Manager of the Pret Apprenticeship scheme told the CSJ that:

'Pret is happy to pay for the recruitment service offered by Working Chance ... The success rate of the women coming on Pret's apprenticeship scheme via Working Chance is exceptionally high, which demonstrates the care with which they are chosen and got ready for work.'

The partnership with employers is managed at every level by the ten staff at Working Chance, one-third of whom are ex-offenders themselves. At the outset, in order to build a partnership

³⁶ Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ

³⁷ Previously known as a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check

Working Chance has to focus on getting in front of the right people. Cait Winter explained to the CSJ that this can depend on someone with the authority to make decisions showing up to the breakfast meetings, but that Working Chance has to look at different approaches for different employers. For example, the recruitment consultants also use cold calls to prospective employers, or consider placing women in voluntary positions until confidence in the service has developed. Of these voluntary employees, approximately 50 per cent of the candidates move on to paid employment.³⁸ Sometimes prospective employers will get involved (often through corporate responsibility schemes) in assisting with practice interview days, and off the back of that will go on to offer an ex-offender a job.

When partnering with a new employer, questions will often be raised about the type of crime that the women have committed. Cait explains that employers will say that they do not want someone who has committed violent crime, theft or fraud – Working Chance help overcome these reservations. Working Chance will look at the position the employer is trying to recruit for and talk them through the individual applicant's situation, seeking to evidence that her criminal conviction will not be relevant in the work place – for example, the crime of domestic violence against a husband in response to abuse. Employers also have a role to play in strengthening the partnership; for example, Juanita Cracchiolo organises trips to prisons for the Pret store managers to help them understand the circumstances of the apprentices who come to Pret via Working Chance.

Once women are in employment, Working Chance provides ongoing support to the employer by maintaining contact with women they have placed: they will check in with them on the first day, and then formally check in with them at three months, six months and a year. Contact between these points will depend on the individual case, but Working Chance will always stay in touch. For women entering the workplace who are still in prison, Working Chance deals with all of the logistics so that none of this impacts on the employer. For example, helping to ensure that the National Offender Management System (NOMS) payment system has been set up and liaising with the prison to manage any necessary changes in the offender's license. Working Chance also stays in touch with the employers, helping them to deal with situations such as other people finding out about the criminal conviction at work. Juanita Cracchiolo meets with the Working Chance Recruitment Manager, Claire Howe, on a weekly basis. Juanita told the CSJ about the 'help and structured support' that Working Chance provides, and explained that:

'Pret had not seen this kind of support before and felt it was an innovative and unique way to get offenders back into the work force.'

It is because of this thorough approach that Working Chance has such an excellent sustainability record: 89 per cent of clients placed in work in 2012 were still in work after six months in the role.³⁹ This is in contrast to results from Jobcentre Plus, where only about 40 per cent of clients remain in the same role after six months.⁴⁰

38 Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ – Working Chance's own data

39 Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ – Working Chance's own data

40 Public Accounts Committee, *Responding to change in Jobcentres*, 5th report of session, 13 May 2013 [accessed via www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmpublic/136/13605.htm (19/5/13)]

Working Chance works with employers across London and beyond, but they also took the opportunity to build very local partnerships within Islington, where they are based. An example is their work with Islington Council's Business Employment Support Team (BEST) team who are responsible for brokering opportunities for the most disadvantaged individuals within the Islington labour market. Ex-offenders are one of the target groups for the BEST team. Thanks to their joint efforts with Working Chance, around two people a month are placed in Islington-based jobs. Working Chance also offer support to other BEST partners in the borough who might want to place female ex-offenders in work. BEST broker Sanjay Kataria explained to the CSJ that the partnership works because Working Chance can utilise the leads that BEST's connections and local knowledge create: 'I work with the employers to generate opportunities, but then I can pass these on to Working Chance. They understand us, and what our employers are looking for. They know employers and know what it means to get it right'. Sanjay believes that approaching Islington employers from inside the council places him in a strong position and he regularly liaises with a huge network of organisations. He stresses that Islington has the 'best of everything' – from big banks and law firms, to retailers, shopping districts and small independents. The key is 'understanding the employer's requirements ... it is so easy to just think about the client'.

Relationships with prisons

Working Chance coordinates with all five women's prisons in London and the surrounding areas: Holloway; East Sutton Park; Downview; Send; and Bronzefield.

Gary Prior, Resettlement Officer at HMP Downview explained to the CSJ that he was contacted by Working Chance when they were first starting out. When a representative came to Downview, Mr Prior showed her around and explained what Downview wanted out of the partnership. Put simply:

'For employers to not just pay lip service to what the government is asking them to do, but to actually employ women with criminal convictions.'

Mr Prior told the CSJ that there was 'nothing like Working Chance for female offenders', and therefore saw the link with them as a natural partnership. He describes how this partnership has flourished within the prison, for example:

'Working Chance notices are put up around the wings and in reception, and pamphlets are available to collect from reception on discharge so that women leaving prison have someone to turn to.'

He explains that when some other organisations send information about jobs to the prison, the women are rarely asked for interviews, but 'with Working Chance job advertisements lead to interviews and Working Chance assist the employers through the interviews'. Mr Prior stressed to the CSJ that he also has a role to play in the partnership with employers, for example Working Chance will ask him to take potential employers on tours of Downview. On these tours Mr Prior often witnesses a shift in attitudes. For example, recently:

'One gentleman was quite upfront about the fact that he was not comfortable with the situation and he was not comfortable being in the establishment. But following the tour, the questions and answers, and meeting the ladies, his opinion was starting to shift. Then he contacted me and asked if I would come and visit his organisation. Within three months of this visit, his organisation had taken on an offender employee.'

Working Chance runs workshops in prisons to help women prepare for employment, covering CV writing, information about disclosing a criminal record and interview practice. These workshops help women to engage with the concept of work before they are released. Due to geographical proximity, many of these workshops are run at Holloway, which is also based in Islington. However where possible, prisons will also license serving offenders to go out of the prison to workshops at Working Chance's offices pre-release. Gary Prior explains that Working Chance are 'very understanding of the prison situation, particularly problems around travel and expenses' and that consequently many women at Downview are able to attend external 13-week programmes, where they will meet employers and talk about CVs. He talks about the 'massive increase in confidence' that these workshops bring about. The prisons welcome the service that Working Chance provides and this has helped the partnership mature; previously Working Chance used to send two members of staff to Holloway workshops, now they send only one and a serving offender at Holloway deals with all of the logistics. The partnerships with Holloway have therefore led to the prison taking much greater ownership, understanding the role they play in helping women back to work. Working Chance tailors the service that it provides depending on the audience – special workshops are run for Holloway's young offenders.

The candidate perspective

One of the ex-offenders placed by Working Chance is Jane, who explained to the CSJ that she 'came out of prison with aspirations to get a job, but you leave and there isn't anything'.⁴¹ Her experience 'really opened [her] eyes to why people are stuck in the system. Unless you have the determination, leaving prison is really tough. Afterwards has been harder than being in prison. It has been an uphill battle the whole way'.

Jane made contact with Working Chance on the recommendation of other women at HMP Send where she served her sentence. She explains that before attending the Working Chance coaching sessions she was mortified by her situation, and refrained from telling prospective employers about her conviction. This limited the type of roles that she could take on, and she ended up working as a waitress, despite having fitness qualifications. Working Chance helped her to see that non-disclosure could hold her back and jeopardise her position in the future. Jane is now working full time in a professional position.

41 Name has been changed

Other support services

In addition to supporting the employers that recruit the ex-offenders, Working Chance recognises the importance of ongoing support for the women themselves. Cait Winter explains that the top three concerns the ex-offenders have are about housing, finance and training/education. Where women do not have accommodation to go back to on release, the government does not classify prisoners as homeless until the day they leave prison – meaning that for many the most pressing concern can be finding somewhere permanent to live. This support service is run by two dedicated employees at Working Chance in order that the recruitment consultants can focus on providing a professional and rigorous commercial recruitment service. Support is managed via a long list of contacts whereby Working Chance staff will make connections for their clients, although no formal partnerships are in place.

Outcomes

Working Chance finds long-term solutions to the difficulties faced by female ex-offenders, by supporting them to fulfill their career aspirations, rather than letting them settle for unemployment or dead-end jobs, and a cycle of re-offending. However, Jane explains that:

'It wasn't just that Working Chance gave me a job, it was the support in the middle. Zara would ring, but she wasn't just there as an advisor, she would always be a pick-me-up. It was only through her and them that my life turned itself around, and I got my life back on track.'

Partnerships with a wide range of employers are key to Working Chance's success. The team of recruitment consultants provide a professional service, which is generally completely free for the employer. The success of these partnerships is evidenced in the statistics – no woman that Working Chance has placed has ever reoffended in the workplace.⁴²

⁴² Working Chance, in evidence to the CSJ

case study four

Durham: Night-Time Economy

'Nightsafe involved all of the stakeholders, from every sphere of the economy, working in partnership, right from the outset - from the Chief Constable to the taxi drivers and licensees. At the first meeting, we asked what the problems were, and came up with a list of the things that were not working, the gaps. Then we asked the stakeholders – what are the solutions? The buy-in was there. They told us what they wanted, and then we went away and drew up action plans.'

Carol Feenan, Durham City Centre Manager, in evidence to the CSJ

Bill Bryson called it 'a perfect little city' and Condé Nast's Traveller magazine readers voted it the 'Best city in the UK'.⁴³ Durham is home to a dramatic cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site, but it also has a booming night-time economy, driven by the large student population, the thousands of people who visit every year and young people throughout the region. Between 1997 and 2007 Durham's night-time economy grew dramatically, with an explosion of pubs, bars and clubs. However, there was a corresponding increase in crime, disorder and alcohol-related issues in the city. In the period 2003 to 2005 the prevalence of binge drinking was estimated to be 26 per cent in County Durham, significantly higher than the estimated 18 per cent of adults across England.⁴⁴ Around 3,950 alcohol-related crimes were committed in County Durham during 2006/2007 and an estimated 77 per cent of these crimes were violent.⁴⁵

43 This is Durham website [accessed via: www.thisisdurham.com/explore-durham/durham-city (10/09/13)]

44 The Safe Durham Partnership, *County Durham Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2009-2012*, Durham: Safe Durham Partnership, 2009, p19 [accessed via: www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk/_library/projects/files/County_Durham_Alcohol_Harm_Reduction_Strategy_2009_to_2012_144.pdf (10/09/13)]

45 Ibid, p26

Durham reacted by developing a collaborative approach, with police, business and commerce, local authorities, the university and others working together to increase safety. These partnerships used initiatives such as 'Nightsafe' and 'Best Bar None' to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime, pooling resources to increase the impact. As a result, violent crimes fell by 57.6 per cent between 2006/7 and 2012, though footfall increased by 50 per cent.⁴⁶ According to a report published by the Complete University Guide on 22 July 2013, Durham is now the second safest university city in England and Wales.⁴⁷

Nightsafe

In 2007 a partnership of the police, local authority, Durham University and local businesses formed to establish the foundations to support economic growth, whilst keeping Durham a safe place to visit. Paul Anderson, Neighbourhood Inspector for Durham City explained to the CSJ that 'the Durham police launched the 'Nightsafe Initiative' due to problems around the night-time economy and alcohol-related issues. Through this initiative, the police work closely with the county council and the city centre managers. This has now spread out into partnerships with licensed premises and other businesses. Inspector Paul Anderson explained that one of the reasons everyone was available and quick to sign up was because Durham already had strong local government partnerships, with the cohesive Safe Durham Partnership and Area Action Partnerships. These provided the building blocks for developing an effective response. Nightsafe has been led at the outset by Inspector Ian Proud and City Centre Manager, Carol Feenan, who both dedicated most of their working day to the initiative in its early stages, as well as going out at night to see what things were like. As Carol Feenan explained:

'We became integrated into the night-time economy. We weren't just standing back, we were talking to managers and doing walkthroughs of premises. Nightsafe was a top priority for the police and the council. And promises were delivered on.'

Because Nightsafe was a top priority, Carol explains that 'the red tape had been pushed to one side. If we wanted to do something, people responded immediately. There was buy-in from the top, all the way down'. She also emphasised to the CSJ that from the very beginning:

'The strength of the partnerships lay in the fact that people were not afraid to get in touch with myself or Ian. We were not part of a licensing or enforcement team, we were there to improve trade, increase footfall and primarily to keep everyone visiting the city centre as safe as possible. A club manager can call me at 2am if they think someone is dealing drugs, and I will know who to get in touch with at the Durham Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and our officers will respond.'

Practically, the Nightsafe initiative has involved getting extra police on the streets at night, as well as making changes to police practices to encourage closer links with licensees and door staff.

⁴⁶ The Home Office, *Next steps following the consultation on delivering the Government's alcohol strategy*, London: Home Office, 2013, p12

⁴⁷ The Complete University Guide, *Crime in University Cities* [accessed via: www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/crime-in-university-cities/ (10/09/13)]

Carol Feenan explained to the CSJ that Nightsafe has led to the introduction of polycarbonate glasses in pubs and clubs, a scheme which was funded by local government, she said: 'this was the first Nightsafe initiative. It showed that we were putting our money where our mouth was. We were giving something for nothing'. Nightsafe has also led to improved late night transport: including introducing taxi marshals to control the queues of young people waiting for transport home and introducing a new late-night bus service running between midnight and 4.30am.

Inspector Paul Anderson stressed that 'because the university dominates city life, it is one of the key players' in tackling issues with the night-time economy. In 2007 Durham Police began to attend the city liaison meeting chaired by the university, which highlighted growing concerns regarding students coming into the city. Inspector Dick Dodds appointed a Police City Liaison Officer, who took the issue to the university board and got the Student Union involved. Inspector Ian Proud and Carol Feenan linked up with the Vice Chancellor of Durham University, Christopher Higgins, and the Durham University Bar Representative, John Hirst, to ensure that the university bars joined the Pubwatch and Best Bar None schemes, and that the council, police and university were sufficiently well connected to identify and combat new issues with each new cohort of students. The university now works closely with the rest of the Nightsafe team, and together they undertake an extensive programme of engagement with all of the colleges and the students to raise awareness around crime prevention and behaviour. For example a 2013 action plan is currently being drafted covering tasks around crime prevention, community safety and targeting hot spot locations, to ensure that the partners are ready for students returning at the end of September. There is also a Police University Liaison Officer, Phil Raine, who acts as a contact point between the police and the university, and provides regular advice to students and staff.

Best Bar None

Best Bar None is a national award scheme supported by the Home Office, with funding from the drinks industry. It aims to promote responsible management and operation of alcohol-licensed premises, and to reduce crime and disorder in town centres by building constructive partnerships between the licensed trade, police and local authorities. As part of the Nightsafe initiative, Durham launched a Best Bar None scheme in 2008. In 2009 Durham won the award for most innovative Best Bar None scheme in the country, out of the 95 schemes in operation at that time.⁴⁸ Durham was the first city ever to withdraw an award from a premises for offering an irresponsible drinks promotion. At the time, Carol Feenan, Best Bar None Manager, explained that the promotions that Vimac Leisure was running at The Loft 'endangered the unity gained amongst our licensees to an extent that they are bringing the reputation of Durham City Best Bar None into question. This is both an extremely unfortunate and extremely regrettable situation but it is a measure that we have had to make as the promotional material generated by Vimac was something that Best Bar None could not support'.⁴⁹

48 Best Bar None, *We're The Best – Bar None!*, 20 October 2009 [accessed via: www.bbnuuk.com/latest/were-the-best-bar-none (10/09/13)]

49 Best Bar None, *Loft stripped of BBN titles*, 7 August 2009 [accessed via: www.bbnuuk.com/latest/loft-stripped-of-bbn-titles (10/09/13)]

Andy Nicholson, manager of Varsity bar in Durham, told the CSJ that the Best Bar None scheme has meant that bars, pubs and clubs across the city have 'fantastic training and procedures in place, leading to improved knowledge of staff and a better service for customers'. Varsity was named Durham City's best bar and overall winner at the annual Best Bar None awards in 2011 and 2012. Andy explained how the Best Bar None criteria had meant that his bar, for example, began to use glass clearing as an opportunity to spot underage drinkers or people who had drunk too much. He also told the CSJ that Carol Feenan and her team had run very useful doorman training sessions.

Carol Feenan has highlighted that it can take a while for the scheme to take off and to increase the number of applicants. Key to doing this is building up a rapport with licensees, as well as publicising the scheme and offering additional benefits such as training courses for a number of premises.⁵⁰ Evidence has shown that Best Bar None has helped lead to an 87 per cent drop in violent crime in Durham and the scheme is recognised as a major contributor to safety in Durham city centre.⁵¹ Members of the scheme also attribute to it a 75 per cent increase in turnover.⁵² Other councils, such as Sunderland, have consulted with Durham on how to emulate these exemplary partnerships.⁵³ This is indicative of the way in which local partnerships can inspire neighbouring communities to better collaborate in their own areas.

Pubwatch

The Nightsafe initiative also aimed to improve the voluntary Pubwatch links between licensees. Pubwatch is a scheme set up and run by licensees to reduce crime and disorder in pubs and clubs. The scheme works by creating links between licensees, allowing information, such as the identity of troublemakers, to be passed quickly between each other and the police. It also provides a forum where licensees can share problems and solutions. Andy Nicholson is also chair of the Pubwatch scheme, and he told the CSJ how instrumental collaboration between the industry, council and police can be in effecting fast change, he said: 'everyone stood up and pulled the rug out from under their feet. It felt like things changed overnight'. In his view, the most significant Pubwatch initiative has been the barring system, whereby individuals barred from one establishment are barred from them all. Andy Nicholson said: 'part of the reason why Pubwatch took off was down to the hard work of the previous chair, Keith Draper. Keith was instrumental in bringing people together'. He stressed to the CSJ the importance of maintaining momentum in a partnership, and showing the partners what you have to offer them.

50 Sunderland City Council, *Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee Policy Review 2010-2011: Alcohol, Violence and the Night-Time Economy Final Report*, Sunderland: SCC, 2010, p18 [accessed via: www.sunderland.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=11366&p=0 (10/09/13)]

51 Safe Durham Partnership, *Alcohol and Substance Misuse Harm Reduction*, [accessed via: www.countydurhampartnership.co.uk/Pages/SDP-AlcoholandDrugs.aspx (10/09/13)]

52 Best Bar None, *Durham launches fourth scheme*, 9 February 2011 [accessed via: www.bbnuuk.com/latest/durham-launches-fourth-scheme (10/09/13)]

53 Sunderland City Council, *Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee Policy Review 2010-2011: Alcohol, Violence and the Night-Time Economy Final Report*, Sunderland: SCC, 2010, p18 [accessed via: www.sunderland.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=11366&p=0 (10/09/13)]

Safe City

The success of the Nightsafe initiative and industry-led schemes spurred the Durham partnerships on. Inspector Paul Anderson explains that the police now 'aim to make Durham the safest city in the country'. The Safe City Initiative, launched in October 2011, now works alongside Nightsafe, and includes plans to increase patrols by police and street wardens and strengthen existing links between Pubwatch and Shopwatch schemes, encouraging a coordinated approach. Bobby Sheen, chair of the Shopwatch scheme explained to the CSJ that he would like to see 'Pubwatch members attending the Shopwatch meetings, and vice versa, to bring the business community together with a more personal approach, watching out for each other, monitoring and alerting one another to potential issues'.

This partnership is in its early stages, but for example, Bobby Sheen has attended Pubwatch meetings to brief the participants on known offenders, and there are plans to introduce joint meetings to share ideas on how to tackle crime, avoid conflict and protect staff.

Inspector Paul Anderson explained to the CSJ that the key to successful partnerships is to:

'identify the key players who can make a difference, and sell the process to them. At the very first Safe City meeting, all of the key stakeholders were present, as were members of the residents association. The public was signed up.'

Inspector Paul Anderson believes that the big difference between Durham and other areas is:

'selling what we do and what we achieve. This was a big part of our action plan. It was not just about informing local residents, the police also instigated a big programme to inform students and the millions of visitors to the city each year.'

As Durham is a World Heritage Site, sometimes there are difficulties in putting notices up in windows. In order to get the Safe City message out, Durham police teamed up with local shop owners to create the Safe City Bear Hunt, with the most recent scheme launched for the school summer holidays. 115 shops and businesses have signed up to disguise a bear, with a safe city message on it, and hide it in their shop. To target students, the police have also been handing out sticks of rock with messages on them, such as 'Quiet Please' and 'Shush' to address complaints about rowdy, drunken students in residential areas. This scheme was funded by the council, Pubwatch and Durham University.

Community Alcohol Partnership

Outside the city centre, in the Stanley area of County Durham the frequency of underage young people purchasing alcohol and levels of anti-social behaviour had become very concerning to local residents and the Safe Durham Partnership. To address this concern, in 2011 a Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) was set up in the Stanley area. The CAP aims to tackle harm caused by underage drinking through cooperation between alcohol retailers and local stakeholders, such as trading standards, police, local authority licensing teams,

schools and health networks. On 24 February 2012 Teesside University published a report evaluating the Stanley CAP between July 2011 and December 2011, and assessing 'the extent to which the CAP has met, or is progressing towards, its primary aim of reducing underage alcohol misuse by encouraging a culture of community engagement and guardianship amongst alcohol retailers and the broader community in the area'.⁵⁴ The report concluded that 'for a project in the early stages of its development the overall finding is unequivocally positive'. Key findings included evidence that where seizures of alcohol from individuals were made, the early intervention by CAP patrols resulted in a clear reduction in anti-social behaviour when compared to the rest of the county (8.8 per cent compared to 37.2 per cent), and that the number and frequency of attempted underage and proxy sales from retailers declined.⁵⁵ This is a further example of how local partnerships in Durham are sharing knowledge and resources to drive real change in the community.

Going forward

Inspector Paul Anderson stresses that 'it is not our priorities that are working, it is the community's priorities, priorities that are discovered, for example, through community engagement meetings, with the priorities of the police and crime commissioner now also taken into account.' However, Bobby Sheen, chair of Shopwatch adds that he cannot praise the police service enough. He describes the force making time to join industry-led meetings on their days off, and the palpable respect for the police in Durham city.

The Durham Best Bar None and Pubwatch partnerships not only work on a local level, but are being emulated across the country, with the government holding Durham up as the standard to be followed: 'sales are up, but drunken violence is down....it is that sort of targeted action by the pubs and clubs themselves which has so far proved by far the most effective in curbing irresponsible drinking'.⁵⁶

54 Social Futures Institute, *Evaluation of the Stanley Community: Alcohol Partnership July 2011 – December 2011*, Middlesbrough: Teesside University, 2012, p7

55 Ibid, pp8 – 9

56 Home Office, *Next steps following the consultation on delivering the Government's alcohol strategy*, London: Home Office, 2013, p4

case study five

Westminster: Gambling

'[Westminster Council] can't do this on our own. We do not have the evidential link. We have feedback from residents and the community. Through public health, we can look at the evidence, and identify whether there is a problem. If so, we can see how we can work together to find out the solutions.'

Kerry Simpkin, Licensing Manager for Westminster Council, in evidence to the CSJ

Recent data shows that the number of betting shops on Britain's high streets rose by 15 per cent over the three years to 2011.⁵⁷ The 2010 British Gambling Prevalence Survey suggested that according to one measure adult prevalence of problem gambling had increased from 0.6 per cent in 1999 and 2007 to 0.9 per cent in 2010, and there were estimated to be as many as 450,000 problem gamblers in the UK.⁵⁸ Research also suggests that problem gambling may be concentrated in areas where there are more people in lower status occupations and on relatively low incomes, where the population is relatively young (under the age of 35), and where there are higher proportions of ethnic minority groups.⁵⁹ In 2012 Geofutures conducted analysis on behalf of *Channel 4 Dispatches* that demonstrated the clustering of betting shops in town centres across the UK, and showed that the density of betting shops was highest in areas where the population was poorer. Geofutures demonstrated that on average across England and Wales, for every percentage point increase in unemployment claimant counts in a local authority, the number of bookmakers in that local authority increased by 20 per cent.⁶⁰

57 Planning, *Gamblers ubiquitous*, 3 June 2011 [accessed via: www.planningresource.co.uk/news/1072839/Gamblers-ubiquitous?DCMP=ILC-SEARCH (10/09/13)]

58 National Centre for Social Research, *British Gambling Prevalence Survey 2010*, London: NatCen, 2011, p11 [accessed via: www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/British%20Gambling%20Prevalence%20Survey%202010.pdf (10/09/13)]

59 *Ibid*, p100

60 Geofutures, *Channel 4 Dispatches data*, [accessed via: <http://map.geofutures.com/dispatches/cutting/22/GeofuturesBackgroundAnalysis.pdf> (10/09/13)]



For the vulnerable in poorer communities gambling presents a particular risk. In previous work on this subject, the CSJ has stated that 'although most people gamble occasionally for fun and pleasure, gambling brings with it inherent risks of personal and social harm' and 'problem gambling can negatively affect significant areas of a person's life, including their physical and mental health, employment, finances and interpersonal relationships'.⁶¹

In 2012, the Culture, Media and Sport Committee produced a report titled '*The Gambling Act 2005: A bet worth taking?*', which highlighted (amongst other things) the growing concerns about Fixed Odds Betting Terminal (FOBT) (or B2) machines, with certain groups arguing 'that B2 machines posed a greater risk of causing problem gambling than other forms of gambling'.⁶² At present, gamblers can bet up to **£100 a spin**, every 20 seconds, meaning that it is possible to bet up to £18,000 an hour. The Committee's report found that 'the clustering of betting shops is a local problem which calls for a local solution' and recommended that local authorities be given the power to allow betting shops to have more than the current limit of four B2 machines per premises if they believed that this would help alleviate clustering. However, in its response in January 2013, the Government stated that there is currently poor understanding about the effects of these types of machines on problem gambling, and that further research needs to be undertaken to inform policy decisions.⁶³

Most examples of local action to tackle problem gambling focus around issues of staff safety, crime and anti-social behaviour: Some councils are very focussed on the regulatory approach to managing betting shops; for example, Newham was the first council in the country to seek to

61 Centre for Social Justice, *Breakthrough Britain: Gambling*, London: CSJ, 2007, p1

62 House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee, *The Gambling Act 2005: A bet worth taking?*, London: The Stationary Office, 2012, p5 [accessed via: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmcmds/421/421.pdf (10/09/13)] cf. The Guardian, *Roulette machines blamed for rise in gambling addiction*, 9 May 2005 [accessed via: www.guardian.co.uk/business/2005/may/09/gambling, uknews (09/09/13)]; The Telegraph, *Betting shop gaming machines cause concern*, 4 March 2005 [accessed via: www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/horseracing/2356152/Betting-shop-gaming-machines-cause-concern.html (10/09/13)]

63 Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Government Response to the Select Committee Report: The Gambling Act 2005: A Bet Worth Taking?*, London: DCMS, 2013, p9 [accessed via: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/86445/Select_Cttee_response_to_A_bet_worth_taking.pdf (10/09/13)]

reject a licence application for a betting shop on the basis that the primary activity in the betting premises would be gaming and not betting.⁶⁴ Shannon Hanrahan of the Outcomes Group, who has advised the London Health Inequalities Network on problem gambling, explained to the CSJ that 'gambling is still a relatively new issue for local authorities', and most local partnerships are in a fairly embryonic state. For example Medway in Kent has been looking at developing a voluntary code with the betting offices, but this has not yet been agreed.⁶⁵

However, gambling is now firmly on the agenda for Westminster council, which intends to take a multi-agency approach to addressing local concerns. This will involve the police, the licensing authority, public health, bookmakers, local and national charities, the Gambling Commission and local community groups. Since 2007 there has been a proliferation of new betting premises in Westminster, mainly concentrated within the West End and around China Town: Westminster now has 130 licensed betting premises.⁶⁶ Most of these are operated by five of the national major gambling operators – William Hill, Ladbrokes, Coral, BetFred and Paddy Power. There has been anecdotal evidence that gangs use betting premises as a meeting place and a location where illegal activity can take place. The area of most concern in this regard is within the north of the council's remit, primarily in Harrow Road and Church Street. Community groups and voluntary organisations have also been increasingly vocal in their concern: in 2010 residents and shopkeepers gathered in China Town to protest against the spread of betting shops, raising concerns about gambling addiction and debt.⁶⁷ On 5 September 2013 it was reported that Christine Yau, Chairman of the London Chinese Community Centre, had written to the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, expressing her concern about an application for a tenth betting shop in China Town.⁶⁸

The government continues to look into problem gambling and possible national solutions. In parallel, Westminster council intends to use partnerships to tackle these issues head on, to establish the reality of any significant problems and to find meaningful, local solutions.

Betwatch scheme

In June 2013 Westminster held its first Betwatch meeting. The Westminster Licensing Authority has worked with the Neighbourhood Crime Reduction Service (NCRS) and licensing police to set up this scheme, with branches of Coral Racing Limited, Ladbrokes, William Hill, Paddy Power and Betfred already signed up. Like Pubwatch for pubs and clubs, this is an industry-led initiative, which aims to work with the betting shops to tackle common concerns faster and more efficiently. The key focus will be on crime and anti-social behaviour. Kerry Simpkin, Licensing Manager for Westminster Council, explained to the CSJ that:

64 Newham Council, Press Release, *Newham first to use law to halt betting shop bid*, 13 February 2013 [accessed via: www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/News/Newham-first-to-use-law-to-halt-betting-shop-bid.aspx (10/09/13)]

65 Kent Online, *Medway Council agree new partnership with gaming and betting shops to tackle problem gambling*, 8 May 2013 [accessed via: www.kentonline.co.uk/medway_messenger/news/New-approach-to-deal-with-522 (09/09/13)]

66 This Is Money website [accessed via: www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-2290766/Council-130-betting-shops-probes-link-gambling-crime.html (13/09/13)]

67 BBC News, *Residents protest against Chinatown betting shops*, 7 November 2010

68 London Evening Standard, *China Town 'under threat' from invasion of bookies driving restaurants out*, 5 September 2013

'The council initiated Betwatch as a way for betting operators to voice problems and share information. But Betwatch was also created in order that issues and concerns raised through residential groups could be addressed by the operators. If one operator has a good way of dealing with a problem, that can be filtered out and shared with the group.'

Betwatch will see the council, bookmakers and police working together to improve security in Westminster's betting shops and to keep the community safe. The parties will share information and advice with each other to ensure that best practice is being followed across the board. Under the scheme, if someone is banned from one bookmaker in Westminster, they will be banned from all of them.

The Betwatch scheme is in its very early stages, but Kerry Simpkin explained that 'the overall aim for the next six months is to make sure attendance is maintained, to firm up and maintain the banning scheme and to work to tackle individual issues within certain areas or wider standard problems, in collaboration with the police. After six months, from that point forward, Westminster wants to be the model for best practice, with open lines of communication'.

Whilst outcomes are hard to predict at this early stage, the first Betwatch meeting was well attended by Security Managers for the betting offices, showing enthusiasm to engage. Westminster is also planning to work towards a voluntary code with the betting offices, which Kerry Simpkin hopes can find 'agreement on the way that operators will work together to tackle vulnerability'. Unlike Betwatch, which focuses on crime and disorder, the voluntary code would involve engaging a more high-level policy team within the bookmakers to look at vulnerable gamblers, and perceived issues such as underage gambling and addiction. The CSJ welcomes this development, and the recognition that gambling is a dangerous past-time for those struggling with debt or addiction.

Police

Key to the success of the Betwatch scheme will be the relationship with the police. Physically, the Westminster Licensing Authority sits in the same room as the licensing police. In terms of their relationship, Kerry Simpkin describes 'a fantastic rapport and collaboration'. Kerry points to the involvement in Betwatch of not just the licensing police, but also the NCRS and states 'in terms of partnership, I don't think we could do much better'. PC Bryan Lewis of the Westminster licensing police explained to the CSJ that he saw the physical proximity of the licensing police and authority as a key factor in the closeness of their relationship, allowing for 'casual conversations and sharing of ideas'. In addition, PC Bryan Lewis explains that Westminster used to have a smaller police licensing team, and that instead of conducting premise visits with a police partner, he would pair up with a licensing inspector to visit an operator. He stressed that this led to an appreciation of the 'different perspectives' that the council and police have, and the benefits that combining these perspectives can bring.

Building on this, PC Bryan Lewis said that the partnership with the council is:

'All about gaining knowledge and intelligence. The council bring a lot of expertise, and we also have something to offer. We see the crime side of it, and the council deal with

the operators on a day to day basis. When a crime occurs in any premises the licensing authority has a long-term relationship with that premises. They can tell you the key people, the possible indicators of why there is a problem and the shortcomings of the operator'.

The partnership strategy is 'all about prevention', working together to avoid crime and disorder before they happen.

A common concern raised by local councils is a lack of local information on gambling. Councils are receiving complaints from residents about crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour, but they do not have the local data to corroborate this. Westminster is using its partnerships to rectify this: the police's crime analyst is currently doing a piece of work on betting shops, studying reported crime and assessing the link, if any, with betting premises.

Public Health

Westminster council aims to deal with perceptions of problem gambling in an entirely joined-up way. Recognising that there is currently a lack of local data to support concerns around vulnerability, for example, concerns around whether certain groups of individuals are particularly hard hit by gambling addiction, Westminster is in the process of commissioning a report to gather evidence and look at the facts. The report will look at areas such as: whether the gambling operators within Westminster operate in accordance with best practice with regard to individuals who may be termed vulnerable; whether gambling operators have sufficient age verification policies and practices; and the extent to which low income families are particularly at risk from the clustering of licensed gambling premises. Regardless of whether action is then carried out locally, regionally or nationally, councils will need robust local data to inform their approach. The tri-borough public authority will conduct this research across Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham.

The public health department of the local authority will be taking the lead on this, but will be looking at partnering with the licensing authority, gambling charities, the community, the police and many other interest groups. Westminster are also considering involving the betting offices themselves in this research. If public health concerns are identified, then this evidence can be used to look for targeted, local solutions such as the use of a cumulative impact policy (as used in alcohol licensing) on the licensing side or improved NHS problem gambling identification on the public health side.

Outcomes

Kerry Simpkin explained to the CSJ that, when looking to analyse the anecdotal complaints about gambling, the council '*can't do this on our own. We do not have the evidential link. We have feedback from residents and the community. Through public health, we can look at the evidence, and identify whether there is a problem. If so, we can see how we can work together to find out the solutions.*'

Westminster aims to formally set up a strategic gambling policy team across the council, in order that information can be shared, channels of communication can remain open and evidence-led solutions can be formulated.

Conclusion

The CSJ is committed to helping communities to respond to local problems. As the CSJ Alliance of over 350 grassroots organisations illustrates, partnerships are essential in developing unique responses to tackle the specific issues facing local communities. Addressing the root causes of poverty and social breakdown must begin at the local level, and the five case studies highlighted in this report show just how valuable local partnerships are in tailoring solutions.

As these cases studies show, as much can be learned from the things that did not work as can be learned from those that did. Trial and error are particularly important in the early stages of the move to localism and community action, with local governments and communities still working out their personal approach to legislative changes. A willingness to experiment is key, but a recurring warning across all of the case studies is that communities should not expect change to happen too rapidly – building meaningful local relationships can take time, and lots of persistence.

As the cases studies show, there are clearly initiatives that work well and that could be adopted in other areas to drive a national approach to localism. It is important that community-led projects retain their own individuality. It is also essential however that they learn from the experiences of other similar initiatives. The five case studies presented here suggest some broad lessons which help to highlight the key considerations for other groups wishing to launch similar work.

Having a clear objective

A good partnership cannot exist without a clear objective. In Durham, Inspector Paul Anderson stressed that he listened to the community's priorities and reflected them, and that was a significant reason why everyone became so engaged. Similarly, the Watford night-time team focus on harnessing and responding to public opinion. During the planning process for Safe City in 2011 an event was held at the town hall where guests were invited to outline issues and concerns they had about the City Centre, particularly around crime and disorder. This meant that not only was there a clear objective, but the community understood both the problem and the solution, and took ownership of it.

Recognising the crucial role of local partnerships

As set out in the introduction, certain issues call for national policy and legislation. However, communities must be able to identify issues that require a local partnership approach. The

key to this is having an awareness of potential partners and what roles they can play. Ann-Marie Rafferty, Head of Social Work Services in North East Glasgow, explained that once the VRU had brought partners together, these collaborations extended out into other projects and partnerships. Communities should take advantage of Community Safety Partnerships and Area Action Partnerships to get to know their potential partners and identify when they might need to reach out to them. The involvement of local employers and businesses is also essential; companies that have a vested interest in the individual localities and communities they serve are crucial to tackling social breakdown at the local level.

Communication

A key message across all of those interviewed by the CSJ is that strong partnerships are driven by charismatic individuals who care and are persistent, such as DCS Carnochan, Karyn McCluskey, Will Linden and their team at the Violence Reduction Unit or the willing members of Westminster Council who are determined to find a solution to problem gambling. These key individuals must convey a message that they believe in, but also something that other people care about – so many of the case studies mention the importance of publicising the message and getting others on board, from Durham's Safe City bears and sticks of rock, to the Violence Reduction Unit's relentless outreach to potential partners.

Success breeds success

Another important element of local solutions is to ensure that success is publicised and celebrated. Anne-Marie Rafferty highlighted that she wanted to partner with the VRU because she had heard what a fantastic job they were doing tackling violence. Similarly, Watford applied for Purple Flag accreditation in order to celebrate its partners, and provide a catalyst for further change. Celebrating successful initiatives can inspire further partnerships.

Transferability

Successful partnerships borrow good ideas and adapt them to their needs. Just as licensing authorities and betting offices are now borrowing the theory behind Pubwatch schemes to create Betwatch, so police and other agencies have learnt from the Glasgow VRU which has now grown into a Scotland-wide initiative.

The five case studies explored in this report illustrate the untapped potential that lies in so many communities, if partnership and communication can be successfully developed. The CSJ champions the work of grassroots organisations who are working, day-in and day-out, to tackle poverty and social breakdown. Through partnering with other agencies and pooling resources and skills, the opportunities for community regeneration and improvement are endless.



The Portman Group is the social responsibility body for alcohol producers in the UK. Its role is to regulate the promotion and packaging of alcoholic drinks sold or marketed in the UK, to challenge and encourage the industry to market its products responsibly and to show leadership on best practice in alcohol social responsibility through the actions of member companies.

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