

Problem youths targeted by partnership project

A housing estate plagued by anti-social behaviour and congregating gangs of youths has had normality restored once more - thanks to a targeted partnership project.

Mayflower Way, a small estate in the north of Sudbury, was not known for criminal damage offences with only one report in 2006 and one in 2007.

But during early to mid 2008, anti-social behaviour and youth-associated criminal damage increased. A primary school in the area suffered 11 crimes of damage, arson and burglary in just four months. Police officers were called to the area 71 times in three months.

Now - because of a project that has seen Babergh District Council, the council's Be Active project, Suffolk Police and the

Sudbury and Great Cornard Safer Neighbourhood Team, among others, all working together to combat these problems - Mayflower Way is back to normal again.

Sally Watson, Babergh's Anti-Social Behaviour Network Officer, said: "Literally overnight this area became a real problem.

"A multi-agency approach was implemented with the deployment of a mobile police station and the area patrolled by an increased police presence, funded by the Babergh Community Safety Partnership. Residents were also involved by keeping diary sheets and anti-social behaviour reporting forms."

Actions taken by the partnership included identifying offenders, using Acceptable

BOGUS COLLECTION WARNING

Residents are being warned to beware of leaving clothes and bric-a-brac for charity collection companies after several bogus collections were carried out in Babergh. Last year, Babergh District Council revealed that one company which had been collecting in Hadleigh and Sudbury had been carrying out unauthorised collections because it did not have the proper permit issued, the charity had never filed any accounts and was having its charity status investigated.

Lee Carvell, Babergh's Licensing Officer, said residents should be aware that other illegal collections could be targeting the area and that people should save their donations for legitimate charities and collections.

He said: "These types of companies trade off people's goodwill. Anyone carrying out charity collections -

either in the street or door-to-door - needs to have applied for a permit from Babergh and we are happy to confirm which ones are legitimate and which ones could be suspicious."

Residents who would like to report instances of possible bogus collections can either call the Charities Commission direct on 0845 3000 218 or speak to a member of Babergh's licensing team on 01473 826622.

Further information on which collections are legitimate - and how to apply for permits - can be found on www.babergh.gov.uk. Anyone in doubt can also speak with Babergh's licensing team who are happy to verify licensed collectors in the district.

Behaviour Contracts, interviews and official warnings at police stations, as well as referrals made to inclusion programmes, such as Babergh's Be Active programme. The project had an immediate effect on crime levels in the area - with a reduction of 74 per cent in anti-social behaviour incidences being reported.

Increased CCTV monitoring a success



CCTV cameras covering Sudbury and Hadleigh are now being monitored at Sudbury police station in a bid to improve crime detection rates in the two market towns.

The new control room replaces a previous system that saw images from Babergh viewed in Ipswich.

Now it means police officers and staff with local knowledge can use the system and respond to incidents more effectively.

Babergh's Community Safety Partnership (CSP), which brings together a range of organisations to develop ways of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

The move is part of ongoing community safety work at Babergh District Council and partnership working to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Nick Ridley, Chairman of the CSP, said: "Not only will this mean better and more effective use of CCTV - but it will also mean a lower cost to the council.

"The primary aim here is to use the system as effectively as possible. In a very low crime area like Babergh, one of the key challenges is to find ways to drive crime levels down even further."

Cllr Ridley said the CSP had identified criminal damage and public order issues as two key concerns for the area and made the management of town centres, particularly on weekend evenings, a priority.