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Gypsies and Travellers

Influencing Communities to Help Stop Crime

What is the Portfolio for?

- To work towards building normal relations between Gypsies and Travellers and settled communities

How is the Portfolio Organised?

- Building Confidence
- Working in Partnership
- Criminality
- Communication

What's been done so far? Some examples

- Unauthorised Encampments Guidance approved for England and Wales
- Training package for police officers and other agencies developed
- Reps appointed in all 9 Regions and all forces to have identified Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officers

Operation Peripatetic

Recognises the need and subsequent benefits of utilising the Neighbourhood Policing Model to engage with communities that are peripatetic in nature. In addition to this, it aims to propose methods of tackling the criminal element that both prey upon and hide within this community and to address cohesion

Why do we need Peripatetic?

- Not perceived to be impacting locally (or not enough of an impact)
- No tasks to gather Intelligence
- A lack of engagement with the community
- A lack of training re Intelligence of those engaging with community

Results of the traditional lack of engagement…..

- Confidence among the criminals
- A continued lack of confidence (to the point of distrust) within the Travelling communities who are themselves victims.
- No or minimal *Community* and *Criminal* Intelligence

Where do we start?

- Firstly, it is important to recognise that Traveller and Gypsy sites are neighbourhoods in their own right and not just significant locations within a wider neighbourhood. As such, they deserve and require the same level of service that more traditional neighbourhoods such as housing estates enjoy.

Some initial things we need to know

- How many people live on the site?
- What is the social profile of the domicile residents Who is the owner?
- How is it managed?
- How are pitches allocated?
- Are there any spare pitches
- Do the same families return regularly?
- How long do people stay?

Some early lessons (1)

- There may well not be any criminal activity or element within or utilising the encampment, even though it is incorrectly perceived to be occurring. Perception of the site by surrounding communities may need to be addressed and this can also be achieved through neighbourhood policing.

Some early lessons (2)

- Utilisation of safer Neighbourhood teams to engage with children from the Travelling community has been shown to provide a useful ‘in road’ to the community. For instance, by giving talks at schools that Traveller and Gypsy children attend and then visiting sites to build relationships with parents.

Some early lessons (3)

- Understanding communities and tailoring our approach accordingly are essential elements of modern policing and Gypsy and Traveller communities are no exception. We are starting to see how trust breeds trust, increasing confidence not only to report crime, but also provide information on criminals.