

Aims

- ◆ To reduce the level of crime (house burglary) in the Hartlepool area.
- ◆ To rehabilitate offenders.

Location

The initiative is delivered in the Hartlepool Borough Council area.

Hartlepool is a coastal town which is heavily urbanised and has a history of heavy industry.

The initiative is focussed on the New Deal for Communities (NDC) and NRF specified areas of the town. Offenders who live or offend in these areas are targeted.

The Intervention Strategy

Staffing

P/T Team Manager, (in Year 1 this was a shared post between the Initiative Manager and a Probation Officer), Drugs Nurse, two Outreach Workers, Police Constable (seconded to Dordrecht Initiative (in Year 1 this post was NRF funded, it is now mainstreamed), Probation Officer (in Year 1 this post was NRF funded, it is now mainstreamed).)

Funding

The programme has received joint NDC and NRF funding. NRF funding has been secured for the next year. Hopefully NRF funding will be secured for the year after next. An attempt is being made to secure NDC funding for 2005.

Operating method

Staff visit a list of offender targets in prison and work with them so that when they are released they have a structured list of organizations and individuals to contact whilst they commence the initiative's activities. Participation within the initiative is a condition of either a Community Rehabilitation Order or a Post Custody Licence.

The bulk of funding is spent on activities relating to the role and function of the Drugs Nurse. The role of the Drugs Nurse is crucial as in the Hartlepool area it is difficult to gain General Practitioners agreement to prescribe controlled drugs. As a consequence there is a long waiting list for drugs related services/support. With the Drugs Nurse as a part of the

initiative these services are readily available for offender use. This role is a key part of the initiative and sets the Dordrecht scheme apart from other similar schemes in the area. In relation to this aspect of the initiative, funding is required for, for example, prescription payments and drugs testing equipment.

There is an agreement with a large leisure centre within the NDC area for the use of their facilities to promote the use of positive leisure time and social re-integration of the offenders within the initiative. The initiative also hopes to work with the 'Hoop Dreams' Basketball Project, in the future to engage the offenders in further sports activities.

Offenders are also assisted in gaining secure accommodation, and entering education/training/ employment.

Offenders who do not comply with the conditions of their order or licence are (respectively) swiftly processed through the Magistrates Court or recalled to prison.

Achievements of the Intervention

Main achievements

Since July 2001 the initiative has worked with 80+ offenders. Since July 2001 the initiative has worked with 80+ offenders. By April 2003 18 participants had successfully completed the six months of the initiative. 12 of the 18 were at six months post initiative with 7 of these having committed no further offences.

Some individuals have turned their lives around. There are case studies of individuals who have, since completing the initiative, remained out of the prison system for the longest time in their lives. Some NDC area residents have stated they have seen a change in some of the participants who are present in the initiative and who live in the NDC area.

An example is one participant in the scheme (37 year old male) who had first been convicted at age 11 and continued offending throughout his life. In February 2003 the participant was recruited to the Dordrecht initiative and has been out of prison for nearly a year, the longest time in almost 20 years.

Mainstreaming Strategy

Post Year 1 the Police and Probation Officers are now mainstreamed. A long term view is to see the Health component of the initiative mainstreamed but this is unlikely to be realized at the moment.

The Dordrecht Initiative is shaping the way mainstream services are being developed as Police and Probation Services are now being

required to deliver prevention/treatment additional to prosecution.

Criminal Justice Intervention Programme (CJIP) funding will be arriving in Hartlepool this year. (The allocation of this funding is based upon crime, drug and deprivation statistics.)

The Learning Curve

Initially NDC residents did not feel the initiative should be focussed on non-residents. It was felt the benefit of the initiative would be 'exported' to non-NDC areas. However it was pointed out that non-NDC area residents of Hartlepool travelled into the NDC area to offend.

The Programme Manager has a far more hands-on role in the day-to-day nature of the initiative than may be expected through the dual role of Supervisor of the Police Constable working with the Dordrecht Initiative.

Key Lessons

The multi-agency nature of the initiative is a main key strength of the initiative. Prior to the Dordrecht Initiative there was no/minimal communication between the Police and Probation Services. The initiative has opened-up levels of communication between the two services.

The Drugs Nurse and this role in the accessing of immediate treatment is key in the success of the initiative. The importance of this can be seen by comparison with similar initiatives without a Drugs Nurse role.

Accommodation for Dordrecht Initiative participants has proved problematic. There is great reluctance among housing providers (including the Local Authority) to provide housing even when the participants are drug-free and in compliance with the initiative requirements. Early discussions are in place with a Housing Association with regard to accommodation provision, however the Local Authority and housing associations have to 'come-on-board' with the initiative

Contact Details

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Dordrecht Initiative

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NRF Priority:

Crime

NRF Authority:

Hartlepool Borough Council

NRF Funding Level:

Medium

PTO for additional information

Lead Agent:

Cleveland Police,
National Probation Service, Teesside

Main Partners:

Primary Care Trust, Stonham Housing,
Hartlepool Borough Council,
Action Team for Jobs (Jobcentre Plus),
Holme HMP Holme House

Location:

Hartlepool, Tees Valley

Main achievements:

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