



Home Office

Neighbourhood Policing

your police; your community; our commitment





Foreword by the Home Secretary

The primary responsibility of Government is to ensure that law-abiding citizens and families are safe and secure. Effective policing is key to this.

We have been working with the police service, police authorities and their local and national partners on an ambitious programme of reform. This is showing real results. Overall crime is down 30% since 1997. Driven by record Government investment, we now have historically high numbers of police officers – over 140,000 – and over 5,000 community support officers. We have been cutting red tape and improving police technology.

But the challenges facing policing have never been greater. Criminals are more sophisticated; public expectations are greater; society is more open and diverse; the terrorist threat is real and present; communications are global and instant.

We want to get the best out of our record policing resources and further reduce crime and people's fear of crime. We want to see greater public trust and confidence in policing, particularly amongst victims of crime and communities that feel vulnerable. We want – simply – to make policing more effective. This means all forces doing better at preventing crime, catching and convicting more criminals and reassuring the public.

Revitalised neighbourhood policing is central to achieving this. It reflects what the public wants, what the police service and police authorities see as the way to do police business, and is championed by the leadership of the police workforce at all ranks. And it has the Government's full support. This is a real opportunity to better tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, help instil respect and decency in local areas and build more cohesive communities.

Neighbourhood policing today is about having dedicated resources for local areas, with mixed teams of officers, special constables, community support officers, wardens and others using intelligence and real time data to catch more criminals. And it is about developing a new relationship between the police and the public – one based on active co-operation.

Other partners, like local councils for example, have key roles too. Later this year we will publish ideas for a National Community Safety Strategy and proposals for making partnership working to tackle crime and disorder more effective. Neighbourhood policing is part of a wider programme to improve the overall effectiveness of policing in this country.

Our commitment – as the Prime Minister said last year – is that by 2008, every area in this country will benefit from dedicated neighbourhood policing teams. We will have freed up the equivalent of 12,000 officers for frontline duties. There will be 24,000 community support officers on our streets. The public will know who their local officers are and how they can be contacted. And local people will have a genuine say in policing priorities and an opportunity to be a part of the solutions to local problems.

This is a significant challenge. But I am confident that police and local people working together can be a powerful change for good.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles Clarke'.

The Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP

Our promise to you

We all want to see crime and anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods reduced and our communities made safer. Effective neighbourhood policing is central to achieving this. We believe that people will see real, long-term benefits as a result – and so will police forces. We are committed to supporting the neighbourhood policing approach set out in this booklet so that people are, and feel, safer in their homes and the areas where they live.

The Government has provided, and will continue to provide, policing with the resources it needs. Government funding for policing has increased by 26% over and above inflation since March 1997. There are now record numbers of police officers in this country – at over 140,000 – working with record numbers of police staff, at nearly 69,000, and over 5,000 community support officers – to help reduce crime and keep our communities safe. We will fund the police service in a way that enables them to continue the historically high numbers of police officers that have been built up in recent years.

The Government will work with the police and other partners at national and local level so that by 2008:

- **every area in England and Wales will benefit from dedicated, visible, accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing teams – led by police officers but**

involving special constables, community support officers, volunteers, neighbourhood wardens and others too;

- **there are record policing resources on the frontline – with the equivalent of 12,000 officers being freed up from back-office bureaucracy;**
- **there will be 24,000 community support officers (over four times as many as now) providing up to 36 million hours a year out in communities to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and reassure the public;**
- **you will know who your local police officers are and how to contact them;**
- **you will have a real say in local policing issues and setting local priorities; and**
- **you will know how well your police are doing locally in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.**

The programme to get us to these commitments is already underway. In some areas, a lot is already in place. But we, and the leaders of the police service, recognise that it will be a significant challenge to ensure that neighbourhood policing becomes the fundamental way of doing police business for all forces. It will require organisational and cultural change within forces. By the end of 2005, there

Merseyside – neighbourhood policing with edge

Merseyside's approach to neighbourhood policing has been in place for four years. Local surveys show that crime has gone down and public satisfaction has increased.

The force serves a population of 1.4m people. Merseyside has been divided into 43 'neighbourhoods' which are typically equivalent to two to three council wards. Neighbourhoods are policed by inspector-led teams (usually consisting of three sergeants and 16 constables, with support from community support officers, special constables and volunteers) who target the crimes that really matter to local people. In Liverpool North, for example, the police work with a steering group of residents and other partners to prioritise or against local issues of concern. This has led, for example, to drives against anti-social behaviour, programmes to introduce security lighting to properties and litter 'blitz' days. The police have seen a 60% reduction in burglaries, 67% reduction in car thefts and 18% reduction in overall crime.

will be 43 pathfinder areas (in what are known as Basic Command Units) across each of the forces in England and Wales which will help develop and accelerate learning and good practice. We envisage that, by 2007, half the country will be benefiting from neighbourhood policing. And we will work with the leadership of the police service to agree progress against investment, for all forces, in meeting our commitment to the public that, by 2008, every area in England and Wales will benefit from neighbourhood policing.

Neighbourhood policing – what the public wants ...

The consultation exercise on police reform which we began in November 2003¹ showed very clearly that the public wants more visible, accessible and responsive policing. Over 70% of respondents said they wanted better information about their local police officers, how they could be contacted and the results their police are getting. Sixty per cent wanted to get their views across by personal contact with local officers while on patrol. A common theme was the need for continuity of officers in post so that trust and familiarity can develop. The Government agrees with this – and the spread of neighbourhood policing will make it happen.

Despite significant reductions in crime since 1997, especially in crimes like burglary and car theft, and the risk of being a victim of crime being at its lowest level since the early 1980s, we recognise that crime and the fear of crime remains too high. Anti-social behaviour and thuggishness can also fuel people's fears. And it is just this type of disorder that dedicated neighbourhood policing teams can help deal with more effectively – as the Metropolitan Police Service's 'Safer Neighbourhoods' teams have proved.

... and there are benefits for the police too

The police service itself has been developing and driving neighbourhood policing, based on a growing body of evidence of what works coming out of national programmes to, for example, better reassure the public and improve community cohesion. The police believe that effective neighbourhood policing should be central to how forces today tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and serve their communities – because they have seen it working and making a difference.

London: Metropolitan Police Service – Safer Neighbourhoods

The Metropolitan Police Service launched its Safer Neighbourhoods programme in April 2004 – putting dedicated teams into London's boroughs. The aim is to improve public confidence by working with local people to identify and deal with the issues that most affect their daily lives. The most commonly identified areas of concern raised by local residents have been youth crime, anti-social behaviour – including by motorists – drug dealing and drug use.

A total of 96 wards have been involved in the programme so far. Each pilot ward has a dedicated team of officers consisting of one sergeant, two constables and three community support officers.

Teams hold 'have a say' days for local residents to tell the police what their top concerns are. In one ward in Bexley, for example, the number one priority was alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour. In response, the police designated the local Broadway an alcohol control zone. Anyone caught drinking or with an open container of alcohol can now receive an instant fine of up to £500 if they refuse to comply with police instructions, or if they are persistent offenders.

The Metropolitan Police are already seeing an impact, with a reduction in crime levels of 2.9% in safer neighbourhoods areas, compared with a reduction of 0.8% in other areas.

¹ *Policing: Building Safer Communities Together* was published in November 2003; a summary of results was published in September 2004 – both papers are available at www.policereform.gov.uk

Developing a deeper, stronger connection with local people is also crucial to building trust and confidence in the police – and the criminal justice system more generally. This is vital if people are going to be willing to go to court and give evidence – or provide the kind of information that will lead the police to catch the serial car vandal, the persistent burglar, the drug dealer or the terrorist. And this is a circular process – catching more criminals, in turn, brings greater reassurance to local communities.

Neighbourhood policing does not exist in isolation. Getting things right at the very local level is crucial in terms of the effectiveness of policing at the regional and national level. And the leaders of the police service see neighbourhood policing as an opportunity – not just to catch and convict more criminals, but also to develop realistic and fair expectations about what forces can deliver and, importantly, to provide the opportunity for neighbourhood teams to act as catalysts for increasing community cohesion.

Given the vital role which the police play within society, it is also important that the service's workforce is truly representative of the communities it serves. This is particularly important if the police are to command increased public trust and confidence. We think the mixed team approach to neighbourhood policing can

help with this. It provides opportunities, for example, to draw in local people as volunteers from a variety of backgrounds. There are real pluses in neighbourhood officers living in, and having strong connections with, the communities they serve. The community support officer (CSO) role has also proved particularly attractive to ethnic minority recruits and women. Seventeen per cent of CSOs are from visible ethnic minorities, as opposed to 3.3% of police officers, while 39% of CSOs are women, as opposed to 20% of police officers. In the Metropolitan Police Service a very large proportion of CSOs – 35% – are from visible ethnic minorities. CSOs are diverse not only in terms of ethnicity and gender, but also in terms of age and experience – many CSOs join later in life, attracted by the opportunity to work with and get to know a particular community.

A number of forces across the country are already a good way down the neighbourhood policing path. The leadership of the police service is fully committed to supporting and spreading neighbourhood policing – which will be underpinned by a dedicated work programme. We will work with the police service at all levels, and with police authorities, to meet our commitment that all areas in England and Wales benefit from neighbourhood policing by 2008.

Leicestershire – right people, right numbers, right place

Leicestershire Constabulary's approach to neighbourhood policing is based on having the right people in the right numbers in the right place. Officers are given small areas or 'microbeats' to patrol and oversee. These can cover a few streets, an estate, crime hotspots or vulnerable locations – like a children's home, for example. Officers are encouraged to become guardians for their areas – building relationships with residents, listening to local people and solving their problems.

On the St Matthews estate in Leicester, crime has fallen by more than 20% in just nine months thanks to this approach. Teamwork between local officers, housing staff and residents means that problems such as broken windows, damaged locks and graffiti are dealt with quickly – providing rapid improvements in people's quality of life.

Neighbourhood policing today – what is it?

Neighbourhood policing today is about fighting crime more intelligently and building a new relationship between the police and the public – one based on active co-operation rather than simple consent. We want to harness the energy of people themselves to make neighbourhood policing a success. It is about local people – for the first time – being truly part of the solution to the kind of local crime and disorder problems that can blight their lives and their neighbourhoods.

What is a neighbourhood?

A ‘neighbourhood’ to an inner-city resident will be very different from what it means to someone living in a predominantly rural area. For the former, their neighbourhood could be a few streets or the estate where they live; for the person in the country, it could be their village, a group of villages or their parish.

In some cases, a whole council ward might be the neighbourhood. In others, a neighbourhood might be only part of a ward, or more than one ward. We think that local communities, police forces, police authorities and partners should decide what neighbourhoods mean, rather than being told by the Government.

What will the public see?

Our commitment is that, by 2008, every area in England and Wales will benefit from neighbourhood policing. For individuals and communities, this means:

- **more visible and accessible police** – local people seeing and having regular contact with the same officers – week in and week out – who stay in the job long enough to build lasting and trusting relationships with the communities they serve. That means communities having **dedicated resources** for each area, to ensure that officers are not – save in real emergencies (like large scale accidents, terrorist attacks or natural disasters, for example) – taken away from neighbourhoods to deal with other issues elsewhere;
- **having a better say** – with more effective ways of identifying and responding to what local people see as priorities – which might be dealing with the effects of binge drinking (like the example in Bexley above); combating persistent burglaries; clearing up graffiti and vandalism or tackling open drug dealing or knife or gun crime. Local people who are closest to the problems in their communities are often best placed to help shape and participate in the solutions to them – there should be real opportunities for them to do so;
- **holding people to account** – the public should know who is responsible for what in terms of reducing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping the areas where they live and work safe. We know this can be complicated at the moment. So we will clarify and strengthen existing arrangements. In this way the police, police authorities and their partners – like local councils – who are responsible for making neighbourhoods safe can be held effectively to account for their performance in doing so. As part of this, we will make it possible for local people to trigger action by the police and other partners to address acute or persistent problems of crime or anti-social behaviour.

Neighbourhood policing teams

In practical terms, we see neighbourhood policing being delivered by mixed policing teams. These already exist in a number of areas. A mixed neighbourhood team will typically be made up of:

- **uniformed police officers** who will lead the teams: fully fledged police officers will continue to be at the heart of local policing, acting as community leaders and tackling crimes which require the full range of police officer powers. We see this as a skilled, specialist role.² Neighbourhood officers will lead the response to local people's concerns – it is a critical role which should be properly recognised, supported and rewarded;
- **community support officers (CSOs)** – CSOs are uniformed members of the police team who provide a high-visibility presence in communities. They have a different role from their police officer colleagues but can be designated with a range of powers by their chief constable (like issuing Fixed Penalty Notices or confiscating alcohol) which can have an immediate impact on dealing with problems of nuisance behaviour and disorder, thus releasing police officers for other frontline duties requiring a wider range of powers. CSOs are an addition to police officers, not a substitute. Their number will rise to 24,000 in 2008;
- **special constables and other volunteers** – specials are volunteers with full police powers. They play an important role in tackling crime and providing a visible, reassuring presence in communities. There are other police support volunteers working in forces in a wide variety of valuable roles, from administrative support to front desk duties, which help free up uniformed officer colleagues to spend more time on the frontline;
- **neighbourhood wardens** who are employed by local authorities, housing

Devon and Cornwall – working with communities

In Devon and Cornwall, neighbourhood resources are deployed and managed within teams, led by police sergeants, with police constables (known as Neighbourhood Beat Managers) working with community support officers, special constables and others to provide a dedicated service for local communities. The role of the dedicated constable as Neighbourhood Beat Manager has proved its worth locally and is supported by the force through a minimum two-year tenure period and extra money (known as Special Priority Payments) for officers.

At the time of the severe flooding in Boscastle in August 2004, Neighbourhood Beat Managers PC David Green and PC Simon Hayes were the first officers on the scene and used local knowledge and contacts to help deliver a local recovery plan.

In Torquay, by working directly with local people, local Neighbourhood Beat Manager PC Steve Stoppard has been pivotal in resolving continuing complaints by residents in two particular streets whose lives have been blighted by persistent abuse, stone-throwing and damage to property by local youths. A meeting with the community led to an agreed plan of action. The police received 33 complaints about nuisance behaviour between January and May 2004, when the discussion with residents took place. There has been just one call since then.

² As we said in our November 2004 White Paper on police reform – *Building Communities, Beating Crime* – we agree with Lord Scarman's sentiments when reporting on the 1981 Brixton disorders that beat officers should be seen 'not as occupying the bottom of the police pecking order ... but at its apex, in the forefront of the police team'.

associations and community groups. They play a vital role in neighbourhoods, particularly in deprived areas. Independent evaluation shows that they reassure residents, help reduce crime and the fear of crime and help improve people's quality of life. Wardens can be the first point of contact for local people on issues of local concern – like littering and graffiti, for example. Already in some areas, such as Bradford and Nottingham, they work as part of joint teams with the police;

- **other authority figures** who are not employed directly by the police but who work within communities to help improve people's safety and quality of life. Community Safety Accreditation Schemes are important here. They allow chief constables to accredit people in community safety roles – like security guards, park rangers, housing association employees and parking attendants – and give them some limited powers. This is important for forging links, improving communication and delivering effective policing to neighbourhoods.

The numbers and staffing mix of teams should be for local forces to determine – based on local needs.

Intelligence is the key

Having dedicated policing teams is only part of

the story. Being clear about how they can best be used is every bit as important. Neighbourhood policing today must be intelligence led. The police service has developed what is known as the National Intelligence Model, which is the cornerstone on which forces today carry out their operational business. It is about the professional management of information and intelligence to help direct policing operations. It works at every level of crime from anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods to the kind of serious and organised crime – like drug smuggling, for example – at national level.

The Government and the police service believe that the National Intelligence Model must drive the development of neighbourhood policing. It is key to the police service moving away from being *reactive* to being more *proactive* – using local information and real time intelligence to better target crime hotspots, increase detections and bring more offenders to justice. Local people may not see the behind-the-scenes activity on intelligence-led policing. But they will absolutely see the results in terms of reduced crime and safer neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood policing – what it isn't

We are not harking back to some mythical bygone age of policing. There never was, in reality, a bobby on every street corner in Britain. But we do want policing to be more visible and

South Wales – authority figures in the community

In Cardiff, the local Community Safety Partnership has created a scheme to increase the support to local police officers from visible authority figures like park rangers, bus inspectors and city centre security staff. The scheme, which is accredited by the Chief Constable of South Wales Police, aims to have 200 to 400 such support figures in the community over the next two years.

Joint operations between police and park rangers are already tackling anti-social use of motorbikes in the city's parks and estates – confiscating machines and recovering stolen ones. And joint working between officers, British Transport Police and bus inspectors is addressing anti-social behaviour in the central bus station area.

Cleveland – ‘Dealer a Day’

Intelligence received from the public is central to Cleveland’s campaign to tackle drugs. The ‘Dealer a Day’ initiative aims to ensure at least one drugs search warrant is executed every day. Officers concentrate on lower level drugs dealers who blight neighbourhoods with nuisance and criminal activity – and they rely, daily, on the information and intelligence they receive from communities themselves to target offenders. The police follow up this intelligence with high profile, uniformed enforcement action – supported by media coverage. And they provide local neighbourhoods with information about what action they’ve taken – giving advice and reassurance to residents.

Since its first introduction in December 2001, ‘Dealer a Day’ has led to the arrest of 2,000 people, the recovery of over £1.7m worth of drugs and the confiscation of over £400,000 in cash.

accessible – and to make the absolute best use of the record numbers of police officers we have now. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour successfully today means acting on intelligence and community information – which means directing resources to the right place at the right time.

Nor is this about the Government imposing a one-size-fits-all approach. Patterns of crime, policing imperatives and the needs of communities differ, clearly, across the country. Different forces are trying out different approaches. We will encourage innovation and support what works.

Responding to the public

The police service being more responsive to the public – with forces focussed on customer service – is also vital to making neighbourhood policing work. This means people receiving a much better service when they contact the police, wherever that contact takes place – whether reporting a crime or incident by telephone, visiting a police station or being interviewed as a victim of, or witness to, a crime.

We are working with the police service on a range of ways to increase police responsiveness, including:

- **a single non-emergency number** – we will introduce a national three-digit number that the public can call about non-emergency issues of policing, crime and anti-social behaviour (such as vandalism, noisy neighbours, graffiti, fly tipping and abandoned cars). This service will put the public directly in touch with the police, local authorities or other public services and agencies that have responsibility for these issues, and reduce the number of inappropriate 999 calls. We are aiming for a pilot system to be in place by the end of 2006, with a full national service by 2008;
- **improved 999 response** – in order to build more confidence in policing we will bring together, during 2005, current work by the leadership of the police service and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary to help ensure that people get a better response when they contact the police in an emergency;
- **Quality of Service Standards** – by the end of 2006, all forces will have standards in place covering the quality of service that local people can expect to receive whenever they contact the police. The aim is to make it much easier for the public to get in touch

with their local police – and to provide better ways of monitoring the feedback from the public about their experiences;

- **Airwave** – there are now nearly 100,000 users of the new generation Airwave police radio system. This is providing officers, police staff and community support officers with vastly improved quality and coverage of their communications. We expect all forces in the country to be fully operational on Airwave by 2006. It enables officers out on patrol to speak securely to colleagues on the network, regardless of location, including officers in specialist units – such as observers in police helicopters;
- **mobile data** – increased use of mobile data will help to cut down on paperwork and ensure that officers spend as much time as possible out in their communities and not stuck behind desks in police stations. In Lancashire, for example, traffic officers can use in-vehicle mobile data terminals to access the Police National Computer to check vehicle information and criminals' names and records checks within seven seconds at the simple touch of a button. Already the system has helped officers to catch offenders who have, for example, given false details.

Making it happen

Making a reality of neighbourhood policing requires a genuine partnership – between Government, the police service, police authorities, local councils and other partners responsible for community safety; and with local people themselves having a role.

Individuals and communities

Individuals and families have every right to live in a safe and secure society. But we believe that people also have a responsibility to play their part in helping tackle crime and disorder and keeping their communities safe. At the

neighbourhood level, policing is done best when it is a shared undertaking between the police and local people.

Neighbourhood policing can help make active citizenship a reality. This can be about joining other residents in a local Neighbourhood Watch group to help the police prevent crime in your area. Or it can be playing a more active role – such as volunteering to help with your local police force. Volunteers are being used now in a number of areas to staff outlying police stations. Or you might consider becoming a special constable, where you'll receive training to use full police powers.

Could you be a volunteer police officer?

Special constables are volunteers, from all walks of life, who want to do something positive for their communities. They receive full training and have the same powers as regular officers. Becoming a special means a commitment of at least four hours a week.

We are committed to increasing the number and effectiveness of special constables and are funding this drive with up to £70,000 per force per year being available to 2006 for initiatives to boost recruitment and retention. Numbers of specials had been in decline for some years, but the latest figures suggest the position is now turning around with an increase in both recruits and applications. A recent police survey of forces shows numbers at 12,100 (an increase of over a thousand from March last year), with 2,500 more applications in the system.

To find out more about being a special constable, or other volunteering opportunities with the police, telephone 0845 608 3000 or visit www.policecouldyou.co.uk

What Government, the police service and local partners will do

Funding

The Government has provided, and will continue to provide, policing with the resources it needs – including to support the spread of neighbourhood policing. This is as much about refocusing activities and concentrating on the frontline as it is about additional money. The Government has provided funding for additional police officers under the Crime Fighting Fund.³ It has funded a successful programme to increase the number of special constables. It has also made money available for community support officers and will provide more.

The Government will make sure that there is adequate funding so that forces can recruit enough community support officers with the aim of reaching 24,000 in 2008. Last summer when we announced our plans for 24,000, there were nearly 4,000 CSOs. A new Neighbourhood Policing Fund was announced with funding for an increase of more than 1500 by the end of March 2005. This fund will make money available to police authorities over the next three years of around £37m, £88m and £340m. We will pay 100% of costs in the year of recruitment and 75% the year after. We will sustain this investment into 2008 and beyond.

In the longer term we will put this money into general police funding. If these numbers of community support officers are wanted locally, we believe that local police authorities should pick up some of the cost through general police funding, other government sources and from local partners.

Local businesses, communities and their elected representatives can and do already play a part in funding community support officers. Local authorities already have a responsibility for community safety and work actively with the police and local people to make it happen. Communities have welcomed the introduction of community support officers. In some areas, local councils have funded more of them – because they too are committed to reducing crime for the people in their area. They recognise the very real difference which community support officers can make.

Local businesses can also pay for special services such as patrols in large shopping centres. Business Improvement Districts provide a means for businesses in a local area to decide together what they want and how to pay for it.

Of the 5,000 community support officers already in post by mid-February 2005, almost 1,900 are funded by local partners. Around 30 forces already benefit from partnership funding. West Yorkshire Police, for example, currently have nine partners amongst local authorities, businesses and others who help fund the services that community support officers provide. They have the largest number of community support officers outside London. Of the 75 extra CSOs they plan for the coming year, they have secured funding from partners towards the costs of most of these.

We are keen to encourage joint funding of this kind with local businesses and councils. There is a real opportunity to beat crime in town centres, in estates and in rural communities and community support officers are key to this. Central and local funding can make it happen for real. People around the country are noticing a difference. They will notice a lot more.

³ The Crime Fighting Fund was launched in April 2000 to reverse the decline in police officer numbers. Since then, numbers of officers have increased by 16,000. The Fund paid for the recruitment of additional officers between 2000 and 2004 on top of forces' plans and has helped us reach record numbers. The Government continues to pay for these additional officers at a total of £277m.

Other elements of our approach

To help increase the responsiveness of policing, we will also – as outlined in the recent White Paper on police reform⁴:

- continue to remove unnecessary police paperwork; continue with a programme of civilianisation and further improve science and technological support for the police. Our target is to free up the equivalent of 12,000 officers to the frontline by 2008, supported by more efficient purchasing of services;
- work with the leadership of the police service to spread good practice; provide the right kind of training for officers and community support officers supported by the TOGETHER academy on tackling anti-social behaviour⁵; and building on good practice in forces. We will agree with the police service a set of national recruitment standards for the very large expansion in CSO numbers. And we will introduce a minimum set of powers that all CSOs will have in order to ensure that they can carry out their role effectively;
- ensure the implementation of a proposed new duty⁶ on police authorities which means that all households will receive information on local policing issues, including contact details for officers and police stations; information on how well the local police are doing in tackling crime; and details of how people can get involved in local community safety initiatives;
- establish a new National Policing Improvement Agency which will help make policing across the country more responsive to communities. The agency will have neighbourhood policing as one of its first priorities. It will help to ensure that good practice, based on a professional knowledge of what works, is spread throughout forces for the benefit of all communities;
- publish, later in the year, proposals for a National Community Safety Strategy and ways to improve the effectiveness of partnership working with councils, businesses and the voluntary sector to tackle local crime and disorder problems;
- put in place clearer, stronger methods to ensure that communities benefit from neighbourhood policing and a more responsive police service – which will include strengthening the existing role and membership of police authorities and the introduction of a specific mechanism for local people to trigger action by the police and others in cases of particular or persistent problems of crime or anti-social behaviour.

Lancashire – active communities in Ingol

Police in Lancashire are putting intelligence-led local policing into practice in a community setting. In Ingol, a neighbourhood action group has been set up – with a non-police chair – to co-ordinate the activities of a number of partners, including the police, housing associations, the local council, youth and probation services, and to help resolve priorities highlighted by the community, including long-standing issues of anti-social behaviour and problem families.

There are now regular, multi-agency tasking and co-ordination meetings to ensure clear ownership of problems and to foster a true sense of partnership working. The approach has led to clear improvements for local residents – driven by local people themselves.

⁴ *Building Communities, Beating Crime* (CM 6360) – available at www.policereform.gov.uk

⁵ Details of ongoing work to tackle anti-social behaviour, and help for people experiencing problems of anti-social behaviour, can be found at www.together.gov.uk

⁶ Details are contained in the current Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill currently before Parliament.

Useful information

To find out more about policing in your own area, visit individual force websites available through:

www.police.uk

To learn more about the work of your local police authority, visit individual websites available through the Association of Police Authorities site at:

www.apa.police.uk

Details of crime reduction initiatives and about the work of local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships can be found at:

www.crimereduction.gov.uk

There are a number of organisations which represent the interests of those who work for the police service. To find out more, visit:

www.acpo.police.uk

www.polic-supers.com

www.polfed.org

www.unison.org.uk/policestaff

To find out about the Independent Police Complaints Commission, the body with responsibility for investigating complaints against the police, visit:

www.ipcc.gov.uk

You can find details about the work of Neighbourhood Watch at:

www.neighbourhoodwatch.net

If you are experiencing problems of anti-social behaviour and want to know what can be done to tackle them, details are available at:

www.together.gov.uk

Full details of the Government's police reform programme, including the November 2004 White Paper, are available at:

www.policereform.gov.uk

