

SAFER STREETS END OF PROJECT REPORT

March 2024



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A bid to the Government, supported by Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Epping Forest District Council in May 2022 aimed to address crime and anti-social behaviour in Paternoster Ward, Waltham Abbey – the most deprived ward in the district.

The bid was successful, resulting in £338,000 from the Home Office, boosted by a further £169,000 from Epping Forest District Council.

The aim of the project was to improve the health and wellbeing of residents utilising a multi-agency “whole systems approach” recognising that health and wellbeing is affected by a wide range of factors. Serious violence, driven by county lines and drug dealing together with exploitation of vulnerable adults/children was a major concern. Closure Orders had been sought and applied to several properties in the ward. Recruitment of local children into gangs was also a major concern along with child exploitation.

Environmental crime, including rampant fly-tipping coupled with criminal damage contributed to a sense of neglect and was creating fear among residents. In fact public engagement revealed high fear of crime, prevalent antisocial behaviour, and reluctance to report crime for fear of reprisals.

02. KEY TOPICS

Key topics highlighted in the bid:

- **Neighbourhood crime**
e.g., burglary, robbery, vehicle crime
- **Anti-social behaviour**
e.g., littering, fly-tipping, drug dealing
- **Safety concerns for women and girls in public places**
- **Serious violence, gang activity, and county lines operations**
- **Cuckooing**
Exploitation by drug dealers targeting vulnerable people
- **Child exploitation**
- **Hate crime**
- **Environmental crime**
- **Reluctance to report crime**
- **Youth provision and early education intervention**

03. WISH LIST



Bin store redesign

Bin store redesign to deter crime and anti-social behaviour, replacing fencing with freestanding units and metal filigree work to prevent unauthorised access.

Welcome signs and Wayfinder boards

Welcome signage and Wayfinder boards to enhance resident ownership.



CCTV

Rapid deployment CCTV cameras to increase surveillance of fly-tipping alongside community campaigns.

Improvement to Abbotts Reserve

Improvement to Abbotts Reserve to make it more of an attraction for the community



Youth engagement and education

Youth engagement and education, including diversionary activities to address youth nuisance and exploitation.

03. WISH LIST



Children's playground

New children's playground to improve health and wellbeing in the area.

Community Safety Days

Community Safety days with multi agency partners tackling all aspects of safety.



Improved lighting

Solar panelled lighting has been installed throughout the area to improve lighting.



04. ACHIEVEMENTS

Partnership working between Epping Forest District Council, Essex Police, residents and local community groups has been at the heart of the Safer Streets initiative.

The biggest spend of the project was a new children's playground costing £100,000 closely followed by £90,000 on CCTV.

Static CCTV cameras in the play area and a further 10 mobile cameras to target changing hot spots

Improved bin stores to reduce anti-social behaviour, vandalism, and flytipping

Youth club for older children with self-defence sessions, first aid, boxing and healthy eating workshops

Parents' awareness session focussed on knife crime, gangs, and violent crime

Community safety days supported by key partners

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera to identify vehicle and environmental crime

Crimestoppers Zones introduced to encourage people to share information to Crimestoppers anonymously

Improved signage and navigation to create a sense of community

Waste amnesty days to clean up the area and deter fly-tipping

Bleed kit bought and sited on wall outside the leisure centre

Metal detectors purchased to help with knife sweeps

04. ACHIEVEMENTS

'Broadcast Junior' delivered to all year 5 and 6 students at four of the local primary schools. Broadcast junior focussed on educating the young people on healthy relationships.

'Josh's story' delivered to all year 5 and 6 students at four of the local primary schools. Josh's story focussed on education around county lines, exploitation and grooming.

21 new solar lights installed across the area to improve feelings of safety.

Improvements to abbots reserve to make it more of a community attraction

Reinstating the community allotment, making it a feature for the whole community to enjoy

Overgrown bushes cut back to increase natural surveillance

Youth outreach work with Youth Unity and Red Balloon Foundation

05. FEEDBACK

Talking to local residents it is clear that most are aware of the work that has taken place in the ward. They particularly focussed on the benefits of the new children's play area, CCTV and lighting. These are some of their comments:

Certainly justified to spend this money. Gets kids away from computers and outdoors. ”

“ New playground has more equipment for young children. Really grateful for the space and investment.

New lighting and cameras is good as are the litter bins, but they are always overflowing. ”

“ Dog poo, broken glass and teenagers congregating let down what has been achieved.

I've watched all this going on, planting, lighting, CCTV cameras, I think it's a great improvement. ”

“ New planting is excellent. Now we need to get back to community litter picking.

Leisure Centre Manager Chris McCarthy said:
I've been here 5 years and this investment has certainly improved things for the community. A playground, improved CCTV and lighting were what people asked for, all of which the project has delivered. ”

