

# WILFORD COMMUNITY GROUP

## The Tenants and Residents Association for Wilford

Website: [www.thisiswilford.org.uk](http://www.thisiswilford.org.uk)

Email: [WilfordCG@hotmail.com](mailto:WilfordCG@hotmail.com)

### NOTES FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING

#### CRIME AND POLICING IN WILFORD

THURSDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2003

AT

#### THE NOTTINGHAM EMMANUEL SCHOOL, WILFORD

Chairman, David Boulton, opened the meeting by introducing Inspector John Woodward, Local Area Commander and PC Jon Cooper, Local Beat Manager for Silverdale and Wilford.

John Woodward began by outlining the restructuring of the Police Units in Nottinghamshire that had taken place over the last twelve months. The introduction of call handling had been realigned to the City and had become geographically smaller. Policing in Clifton, Silverdale, Wilford and the Meadows has been reduced by 50%. Currently there are under his command, 28 officers that included John Stirland, Crime Prevention Officer, a Field Intelligence Officer, a Local Intelligent Officer and they also relied upon Community Informants. There were 850 officers overall for Nottingham

In covering Clifton, Silverdale, Wilford and the Meadows there are 18 Officers available on any given shift. This will often be reduced to only six being available due to various reasons, i.e. sickness, court appearances, courses, holidays and secondment to another division, this was the reason that sometimes, there is difficulty in responding to emergency calls and this is where there is a need for prioritising.

Another reason is that there is a lack of experienced Officers, the force has many probationers who require an experienced officer to accompany them on duty, therefore, they are not acting to the level of police response that we, the public are entitled to.

John Woodward followed his opening remarks by answering Residents' Questions, which had been submitted prior to the meeting.

1. Why isn't there a better policing presence in the village so that the vandalism can be discouraged? We never see a policeman, sometimes even when they are sent for.

**There are not enough officers to show a presence and meet Government guidelines for training in specific areas such as dealing with drugs and crimes of violence. It is difficult to tackle petty crime such as nuisance and disorder. Local officers are taken out of local stations, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights to tackle the violence in the City Centre. Jon Cooper, is back at Clifton after 2 months in the City on a specific operation, so will now be available for local duties.**

2. Why are residents being asked to pay an extra £22 a year when police stations are not manned and we never see a police officer in Wilford?

**Although no able to answer the specific question about the Council Tax increase, Inspector Woodward pointed out that many officers do a lot of overtime. He also pointed out that Clifton Police Station is manned 24 hours and the Meadows work until 3.00 am.**

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3. (a) What is being done to prevent speeding along Wilford Lane – there are no speed limit signs between the Silverdale roundabout and the Chateau?

**This will be checked. He will speak to Traffic Enforcement Teams and the City Council. If there should be speed limit signs, there will be. If not, he will be in touch with David Boulton to explain the situation.**

(b) Could something be done with regard to having a filter light for traffic turning right into Main Road off Wilford Lane?

**This would be looked into at the same time.**

4. What can be done to prevent speeding in Wilford?

**John Woodward will speak to the Traffic Enforcement Team on the subject.**

5. (a) A gang of young people hang about near the Village Hall, writing graffiti, drinking and possibly taking drugs on most nights. A better police presence patrolling the whole of Wilford, but especially the quieter areas (such as near the Church and Hall) and around dusk would help to prevent these problems.

**It was agreed that patrolling is the best way to drive away the issue but it is not a police priority. It would help if residents could form and run a club; perhaps build them a place to gather. Wilford Youth Club opened only on Tuesdays and Thursdays and were struggling to employ Youth Officers.**

**If you see drug taking the police must be contacted.**

(b) What would you advise?

**A contact number is available in the Meadows, this is an answer machine and is answered twice a day. The lack of response is due to a lack of time and money.**

**There is a Force Internet Site: it will be placed on a data base if contacted by Email they receive 70 messages a day by this method.**

6. Do the police know who is carrying out the vandalism, thefts and graffiti in Wilford. It is easy to point the finger at outsiders coming in from neighbouring communities, but is there any evidence to support this? Is our village 'crime problem' from elsewhere or is it home grown?

**Statistics prove that Wilford does not have a particularly larger proportion of crime than anywhere else, it is how we perceive it. Crime in the Meadows is not particularly threatening to the general public it is usually the younger members of the community fighting with each other or stealing mobile phones off their peers.**

7. What real levels of crime are taking place here, what are the figures and what are the crimes? Do we perceive the problem to be greater than it really is?

**Answer as for Question 6.**

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8. We are very concerned about the unregistered motorbikes/scooters being used by under-age persons, without wearing crash helmets, and travelling at great speed around Main Road, Vernon Avenue and Holly Avenue. What can the police do about this?
9. How can residents stop motorbikes riding up and down the river embankment?
10. Regarding motorcycles, does anyone have permission to use the Emmanuel Sports Field as a racetrack. Half a dozen children on motorcycles were witnessed racing around the field on the weekend of 16<sup>th</sup> March. There were adults with these children so they had obviously been brought there for this purpose. One or two were also using the footpath from off the former railway track and along the footpath on the bank by the river. What are the police doing about this?

**There has been a meeting with Councillors to tackle this problem and we want a group of people from Wilford, Silverdale and Clifton to help the police. An officer is given 80 hours a year, this is allotted per year, and John Woodward has to bid for this resource.**

**This has been done and for the next few weeks they will see if anything can be done with these bikes.**

**Fences and barriers can be erected on public land, private land is the responsibility of the owners but they will be approached about this problem.**

**The police try to catch them in different ways by using tracking devices, identifying the parents, prosecuting and fining the parents. Tackling the parents would be a priority.**

**If residents know who the culprits are, they should report them to the police – anonymously if they prefer.**

11. There have been many instances of the telephone box at the junction of Main Road and Holly Avenue being vandalised as well as the benches on the village green near Glebe Cottages. What do the police suggest they can do to prevent this?

**Anyone seeing this type of vandalism should report it to the police. Information can be treated anonymously if requested. A lot of people do not want to be involved in giving evidence at court, and people are frightened of retaliation. Stand by your convictions because nothing can be done against these people unless you do.**

12. There has been a recent spate of break-ins in the village. The response to 999 calls has been very slow. Why was this?

**Never confront a burglar, look after yourself first, do not put yourself in harms way. The best advice is to give a good description therefore take a good look i.e. face, clothing etc. and then ring 999.**

**Muggings – again contact the police; get a good description and the direction the offender took.**

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**Graffiti – if you see anyone, it is a crime, obtain details and pass through to police and let them deal with it.**

**Be careful confronting anyone because you could end up with being prosecuted.**

13. Can anything be done with regard to the young people loitering around street corners (especially Vernon Avenue, Holly Avenue, Main Road and the Co-op)? They also gather outside and on people's properties. These seem to be the same youngsters who gather near the Church Hall. They are intimidating – especially to women approaching this area during hours of darkness and also due to the fact that they are always wearing hooded garments.

**Street Wardens are an excellent deterrent to deal with a large amount of anti-social behaviour. They have been very successful in the Meadows. Street Wardens meet once a week with police. If a crime is committed contact the police. Street Wardens could be used in this area. The Meadows are due to get 2 Community Support Officers if not 4.**

14. How should a resident confront an aggressive burglar?

**See answer to Question 12.**

15. How should a resident respond to the sight of a mugging or theft?

**See answer to Question 12.**

16. What should residents do when acts of vandalism, graffiti and litter dropping are witnessed?

**See answer to Question 12.**

17. How can residents work with the police to report and prevent crime in the confidence that this will be responded to in a timely manner?

**Many residents fear reprisals, do it anonymously but to obtain a prosecution the police would need a court appearance, stand by your convictions.**

**By far the most effective policing and crime being solved is by officers on patrol. We would like to put them back on patrol.**

**Beat Officer, Nigel Brown, has been at Clifton for 29 years and is respected by three generations.**

**Officers patrol on their own during daylight ideally it should be in twos.**

18. Why are 999 calls directed to Radford Road instead of to a station more local to Wilford?

**Calls have now been diverted as part of the realignment of the Police Force.**

19. How do the police work with City Council Street Wardens? Where has this been most effective?

**Yes, it has been very effective. See Answer to Question 13.**

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20. Local Residents are reluctant to report crime for fear of intimidation. Do the police think that an increased level of policing would improve this? What would their solution to this problem be?

**The Residents' Association could be the catalyst and it is suggested we encourage a resistance to prevent crime and further encourage residents to come forward with information and then we break it down i.e.: Vandalism, Drug Dealers, Speeding, Telephone Box**

**The Field Intelligence Officer could be in touch with the Community Group and facilitate informal meetings with the Officer.**

**CCTV cameras are another way of crime prevention.**

**Anyone having problems with young people loitering around their property, could have a CCTV camera placed in their home to detect and keep surveillance, or an officer could be set up with a camera and make notes. It is possible to do this from a quarter of a mile away so that property cannot be identified thus avoiding reprisals.**

**Video evidence will be acceptable to the courts.**

21. The Metropolitan Police have decided recently that police officers on the beat are the best way to reduce crime. Are Nottinghamshire Police following this lead and if not, why not?

**Yes, Police Officers on the beat are the best way to reduce crime. At the moment there are too many inexperienced probationers and lack of funding prevents it happening at the moment.**

22. What do the police suggest is the most appropriate and safest way for Residents to prevent crime such as intimidation, vandalism, drug use, drug dealing and graffiti?

**Although this question was not answered directly by the Inspector, previous responses about reporting crime apply here.**

23. What impact will the CCTV camera on the Meadows side of the Toll Bridge have on crime and policing in Wilford?

**They have been installed in the Meadows but are not totally up and running as yet. Some thoughts are it is the panacea to everything or a waste of money. It is a deterrent but the effect is that it pushes crime beyond the camera. It is not the panacea but we can work with it. It is Government funded and is an important information gathering system.**

24. What can residents do to prevent footpaths and fields in and around Wilford from being used as a dog toilet?

**Not a police problem – this is a City Council issue.**

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25. How can residents work with the police to reduce the levels of vandalism and anti-social behaviour in Wilford?

**Voice our opinions and write to our Councillors and urge the Government to act, if enough of this is done, they will have to take notice.**

26. Is it the policy of the police to ignore minor drug dealing in Wilford while they wait to catch the main culprit?

**No. The police are aware of some drug dealing and taking in Wilford; this crime is defined as a priority by the government and the police are acting on this.**

At the end of Residents' Question Time, Brian Hardy, Manager of the Bowling and Social Club, stated that the club had been broken into three times in ten days and the police had responded within 10 minutes and he was very pleased with this response. Could they help him with this problem?

**John Woodward replied that it is a group operating in the area who are travelling around breaking into pubs taking cash and breaking into cigarette machines.**

**Information from one of the criminals involved, or being caught in the act, is probably the only way in which they will be stopped.**

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm with David Boulton thanking John Woodward and John Cooper for attending our meeting. John Woodward responded that he would be pleased to attend any future meetings if the Group felt it necessary.

***The committee of Wilford Community Group approved these notes for publication on Thursday 1st May 2003.***