

Hub 1: Community Engagement

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Why community engagement?

- Promotes democratic legitimacy
- Central to operational effectiveness
- Offers longer-term, more stable solutions
- Enables preventative, holistic approaches

Why collaborate?

- Evaluating aspects of police practice aimed at community engagement
- Longstanding challenges of delivering meaningful 'community-orientated' policing
- Such challenges have become acute in era of austerity and increasingly diverse populations
- Gaining evidence 'from below', 'from outside', to inform responses 'from above'

What work was undertaken?

- A 'difficult' case study area: an inner-city (NPT) area of Leeds, transient and ethnically diverse population
- Methods of data collection
 - (a) interviews with community groups
 - (b) focus groups with a mix of Constables and PCSOs
 - (c) documentary analysis of force policy

What were the key findings?

- Community engagement valued, but its practice is in retreat – by default, less by design
- Practice focused more on ‘information gathering’ from ‘individuals’ rather than ‘problem solving’ with ‘groups’
- Inhibited by a range of internal and external factors, some more entrenched than others
- Enabled by structures, cultures, individuals which give rise to sustained, fruitful relations

What are the implications of the research?

- Community engagement activity cannot be taken for granted, it needs to be valued, nurtured and enabled through variety of structures / processes
- It requires stable assignments, but also a 'horses for courses' approach – it may not be for everyone!

What are the implications of the research?

- Individual or piecemeal elements of good practice should be recognized, captured and institutionalized
- More broadly, the findings suggest the purpose(s) of, and expectations for, 'community engagement' ought to be clarified

What is WYP doing as a result?

- What works – the evidence base
- Peelian Principles 1829
- Demands
 - Here and Now`
 - Future
- NPT (2015) dedicated, accessible, familiar
- Understanding Communities
- Dedicated resources
- Protect the Blue Line

Questions?

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