

**UPDATE REPORT WITH REGARD TO ISSUES RAISED IN RELATION TO HILL  
RISE PARK, ST IVES**

**Report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services  
(as Chairwoman of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership)**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the outcome of the initiatives that have been discussed and considered in relation to issues that have been previously raised about Hill Rise Park, St Ives.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010, Members received a report on behalf of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership. This report advised what actions could be considered in response to a petition received from residents about anti-social vehicle-use in Hill Rise Park.
- 2.2 On receipt of the petition the signatories had been notified of the date/time of the next available Neighbourhood Forum for St Ives and were advised to have a representative report the issues to that forum. Hill Rise Park was consequently adopted as a priority area by the St Ives Neighbourhood Forum at their meeting in January 2010. When an area is identified as a priority, the Police have a responsibility to respond to calls for service to this area within 60 minutes (not including 999 calls).

**3. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM PRIORITY AREA**

- 3.1 The following action was taken by the Police as a result of Hill Rise Park being a Neighbourhood Priority (Jan–April 2010):
- Regular patrols carried out in the area, both overt and covert;
  - One report of noise associated with a vehicle in the park was received. This was dealt with by the attending officer.
- 3.2 The next meeting of the St Ives Neighbourhood Forum was held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010 where the Police provided an update on the action that had been taken during the period (January – April 2010), it was not felt that this area should be continued as a priority and therefore was not re-adopted as one at the April meeting.
- 3.3 Since this area was identified as a priority, in January 2010, until mid-August there have been only 7 incidents reported. The area has not been adopted as a Neighbourhood Priority since the meeting in January 2010.

#### 4. EVIDENCE OF AN ISSUE IN HILL RISE, ST IVES

- 4.1 The following information was provided by the police in the report that was presented in February 2010. The information details the calls for service to them for the period 18/01/2005 – 18/01/2010 relating to Hill Rise Park, St Ives:

Incident Type	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	5-year Total
Rowdy & Inconsiderate Behaviour.	5	8	3			16
Substance Misuse	1					1
Vehicle- related Nuisance/Inappropriate Use	15	7	7	8	12	49
Noise From Vehicles	3					3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>69</b>

- 4.2 More recent information with regard to calls for service to the Police in relation to issues in Hill Rise Park has been provided, this is as follows:

- Calls for service that relate to Hill Rise, St Ives have been examined between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 and 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010. There were a total of 14 calls for service during this 16 1/2 month period (this includes some that were reported to the February meeting).
- Nine different residents of Hill Rise and Pettis Road have made complaints.
- The calls as a whole related to persons parking up in the car park at the location.
  - Most calls occurred between 1600hrs and 2300hrs.
  - There are more calls on a Thursday than any other day.

- 4.3 Since 2007 figures have remained markedly lower than the peak in 2005 (24 incidents). Projected figures for this year suggest c10 incidents during the year, fewer than last year.

Incident Type	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (Jan-mid-Aug)
Rowdy & Inconsiderate Behaviour.	5	8	3	0	0	3
Substance Misuse	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vehicle- related Nuisance/Inappropriate Use	15	7	7	8	12	2
Noise From Vehicles	3	0	0	0	0	0
Suspicious circumstances	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>

- 4.4 The petition had suggested: the most common times when residents were disturbed were 11pm – 4am. Incidents were said to have occurred on every day of the week. The most recent information from the Police shows: there have only been a couple of incidents occurring in the early hours of the morning this year. The majority of reported incidents are occurring between 1600hrs and 2300hrs. This same information also suggests that Thursdays is the day when most reports are received.

## 5. BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNT FROM ELSEWHERE

5.1 In the last report to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010, Members were advised of actions that had successfully addressed anti-social vehicle use in Riverside Park, St Neots. In reviewing the issues raised by residents about Hill Rise Park, officers had considered where it may have been possible to duplicate successful initiatives. As a result of this the following action has been taken:

### 5.1.1 Hill Rise Park: Neighbourhood Priority Area

Hill Rise Park was identified as a priority by the Neighbourhood Forum in January 2010. During the next 3-months only one incident was reported; the Police responded and the appropriate action was taken. In addition both covert and overt patrols were undertaken to gather information with regard to the individuals, groups and vehicles that were causing nuisance. However, as few incidents were reported, it was difficult to gather useful information. It was initially thought that the problems, of the type raised by residents, may increase during the warmer months. Yet, review of the calls for service suggests this does not seem to be the case. From the information provided by the Police anti-social use of vehicles in this area does not appear to be an ongoing issue. It will be important, if this assessment is in error, that residents report new incidents so that an accurate picture can be established.

### 5.1.2 Zero-tolerance to anti-social use of vehicles in Hill Rise Park

A zero-tolerance approach had been successful in Riverside Park, St Neots. This involved displaying signs and regular warnings being issued to drivers/ vehicle owners that they were at threat of receiving a fine or having their vehicle seized if they were found to be using it anti-socially. This approach was applied in Hill Rise Park with officers verbally warning drivers/ vehicle owners. Regular patrols were also made by the mobile CCTV vehicle, at key times. However, due to the small numbers of incidents reported, it has not been necessary to display signage. No occasion arose that required issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

### 5.1.3 Evaluation of benefit of installing speed-restriction humps within the car park

It was initially suggested speed-humps could help stop the issues of the type that were reported in the petition. An audit of the car park has been carried out by the Operations Team and it is not thought that it would be possible to install speed-humps within the car park. An alternative suggestion has been offered: the installation of speed humps on entering the car park. Control at the entrance this may deter drivers who intend to enter the car park at relatively high-speed as they may fear damaging their vehicles by going over the humps. It may also be possible to install planters within the car park to discourage drivers driving at speed within the car park as this would limit space. It is not clear that fast-driving within the car park is still an issue. The types of issues reported in the petition were mainly associated with noise from engines being revved and loud music from stereos. Therefore altering the road-surface or restricting space would not solve this particular problem. The cost v. benefit of this is questionable.

### 5.1.4 Use of CCTV

Several site visits revealed little physical evidence of anti-social driving in the car park. Only one small tyre-mark on the car park surface was discovered. Also the Mobile CCTV Unit visited the site on numerous occasions in the evenings and has not recorded any evidence of people abusing this facility.

### 5.1.5 Evaluation of installation of a permanent CCTV Camera within the park area

Different types of CCTV have been looked at for this area. The idea was to install an appropriate camera on one of the lighting columns to cover the area. For the camera to be effective, it would need to be a full pan, tilt and zoom (PTZ) colour camera which would be able to be monitored in the CCTV Control Room. The types of camera looked at included:

- A full MIC1-400 PTZ colour camera + infra-red (as installed at St Neots Skateboard Park) with a fibre-link to the control room.  
**Capital cost >£25k + revenue cost of around £2k per year.**
- A full MIC1-400 PTZ colour camera + infra-red wirelessly linked to the existing camera in Ramsey Road, St. Ives.  
**Capital cost c£19k + revenue cost of around £0.5k per year.**  
*\*A problem was also identified with sending the signal wirelessly to the host camera: line of sight obstructed by large trees in a private garden.*
- A PTZ colour CCTV camera operating over the GSM network.  
**Capital cost unknown:** this would involve installing new equipment into the CCTV Control Room. Still images would have to be displayed on a computer. **Revenue cost** of monitoring would be extremely high – almost equivalent to a mobile phone being used 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- A PTZ colour camera using 3G technology for transmission. This again would entail the installation of additional software in the CCTV Control Room and again the images would not be able to be displayed on the monitor-wall but would have to be on a computer. Whilst the transmission costs would not be as great as above the picture quality would be poor with a very slow frame rate making identification difficult.
- A PTZ colour camera using the Ipolis system transmitting the images over broadband. Again the images would not be able to be displayed on the monitor-wall. There would need to be an installation on-site: telephone point and cabinet. As there are no dwellings on this side of Hill Rise, the cost of installing a BT line could be expensive.
- A stand-alone CCTV system was trialed for a short while but this involved a fixed camera with an internal recording system. The images from this camera were very poor and would not be suitable for identification or use in the courts. Also, as there is no monitoring facility it would not be able to invoke an immediate response to any problem in the area.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 There has been considerable investigative work to try and find appropriate solutions to address the issues raised by residents in late-2009. Hill Rise was adopted as a priority policing- area between January and April this year but there was only one incident reported during the period. Over the warmer-months, April – August, there have only been seven incidents reported in the area and only two of these related to anti-social vehicle use.
- 6.2 A zero-tolerance to anti-social vehicle use was established but there were so few incidents reported that investigations were limited. There were no instances that justified serving a fixed penalty notice.

- 6.3 Installation of speed-humps has been considered but the evidence of a continuing problem has made evaluation of likely success difficult. The cost of altering the entrance to the park, or providing planters, compared against the likely benefit is questionable.
- 6.4 Provision of CCTV presents technical difficulties: in transmitting and monitoring of useful images. This is likely to cost £20k-£25K in capital and >£2k a year to run, in addition to staffing costs. The inspection showed no physical evidence of an on-going problem and mobile CCTV monitoring failed to record any evidence of people misusing the area, so it is questionable whether there is sufficient evidence of need to justify a funding-bid.
- 6.5 The number of incidents at this location is currently very low and a cost effective solution may not be available. As the number of incidents reported is so low and is decreasing year on year basis, it may be appropriate to continue to monitor the situation rather than commit additional financial resources at this time.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are requested to:

- 7.1 Ask officers to report, to the next St Ives Neighbourhood Forum, the work that has taken place to try and address the issues. The purpose of the report is so residents are both made aware of what has happened to date and asked to report incidents to the Police.
- 7.2 Ask officers to monitor the situation over the next 6-months. Also to re-instate the zero tolerance approach to anti-social use of vehicles; if the number of calls-for-service increase above the predicted year total (and vehicles are the cause).

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Minutes of St Ives Neighbourhood Forum, 7 April 2010  
Minutes of St Ives Neighbourhood Forum, 6 January 2010.  
Report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services to Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership, 26 November 2009: Petition – Hill Rise Park, St Ives.  
Report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services to Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-being), 3 November 2009: Petition – Hill Rise Park, St Ives.  
Petition received from Mr Rigby.  
Notes of the St Neots Area Community Safety Task Group, 22 March 2005.  
Notes of the St Neots Area Community Safety Task Group, 21 June 2005.  
Notes of the St Neots Area Community Safety Task Group, 20 September 2005.  
Notes of the St Neots Area Community Safety Task Group, 20 December 2005

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