

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 1.1 <<Church>> has developed in recent times a view that crime and fear of crime in our area is affecting the way that we operated within our community.
- 1.2 The philosophy of <<Church>> is that by working together the incidence of crimes against Churches will diminish. In particular the collaboration between Churches, Police, Fire Service, Insurance Companies, National Churchwatch and local community is required.
- 1.3 In recent years there has been an increase in crimes against clergy in both the Diocese and generally around the country. We recognise that we need to pay particular attention to clergy housing, to ensure the safety of clergy and their families in their homes.

1. DEFINITIONS AND PARAMETERS

- 2.1 While the <<church>> is concerned about all crime there is an emphasis on disorder, violence, damage, particularly arson.
- 2.2 The protection of people includes the ministers of religion, members of the Churches, visitors to the Churches and surrounding property and local neighbours.
- 2.3 The protection of property includes the Church and it's contents, grounds including <<cemeteries, hall/social centre, ministers' homes and the property of those visiting the Church>>.

1. NATURE & EXTENT OF TARGETED CRIME

- 3.1 Certain factors make it difficult to comment on the nature and extent of crime against people and property. Geographically the boundaries of the <<church>> are not co-terminus with other boundaries, such as the local authority. This has implications for calculating the nature and extent of crime.
- 3.2 Differences between agencies are apparent in the definition of certain terms – for example, the term “burglary” is defined differently by Police and Fire Service.
- 3.3 A study of the crime data available makes it very difficult to analyse the nature and extent of the crime problem. The data is clearly incomplete, and any analysis based on current data could compound problems by prioritising inappropriately. The collection, collation and analysis of data referring to crimes against the church, the minister and related visitors is a significant piece of work which ought to be started as soon as possible. Accurate, reliable and contemporary information must underpin the <<church>> Strategy

1. STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDERS

- 4.1 Interest in, and commitment to, the reduction of crimes against people and property connected to Churches is shared by a wide group of stakeholders:
<<Delete where required>>
 - Members of the Clergy

- Users of the Church
- Community groups who use the hall
- Community leaders connected to different denominations & faiths
- The Church treasurer
- The Manager of the Church
- Police, particularly neighbourhood Inspectors and Crime Prevention Officers
- Fire Service, particularly Fire Safety Officers
- Local Councilors
- Media representatives
- Regeneration agencies, whose investment decisions will relate to the function performed by Churches rather than the location themselves
- English Heritage
- The Local Community Safety Group

4.2 Certain bodies have a particular interest in the development and implementation of the strategy:

- <<Insert name of Church>>
- <<Local Ecumenical Assembly >>
- Churches tourism Group

1. STRATEGIC ASSUMPTIONS

5.1 This strategy is based on certain assumptions about the crimes against Churches and people related to them. It is also based on certain assumptions about the perpetrators of these crimes.

5.2 It is assumed that there are certain characteristics relating to the Church and the people related to them that are uniquely relevant to the crimes committed.

- i) The contents of the Church are relatively easy to steal.
- ii) There is a regular flow of people to and from the Church. Not all people are known to each other.
- iii) Access to the Church is encouraged.
- iv) The isolation of the Church, and the separateness from other properties can make it vulnerable.
- v) The isolation of the clergy can render them personally vulnerable.
- vi) The activities which occur in the Church can make it easy for certain crimes, such as sneak thefts, to be committed.
- vii) On certain occasions, particularly after services or community charitable events, it can be widely known that money is on the premises.
- viii) Certain times of the year can make it easier for different crimes to be committed - for example dark winter nights.
- ix) There can be a misperception that the appearance of the Church is a sign of affluence.
- x) Low surveillance levels can persuade potential offenders that the risk of being caught is minimal

5.3 Knowledge about those who perpetrate offences against Churches and related people is scant. There is little known information available about the profiles of these individuals. It is possible that studies have been conducted in other parts of the country. It would be an important development if a search could be conducted. It may be possible to initiate specific enquiry lines into the profiles of those convicted locally of certain crimes such as Arson of Churches.

- 5.4 There is knowledge available about perpetrators of general crimes in the community. A triangulation of certain factors will make it more or less likely that an offence will be committed:

Offender motivation Level of Guardianship Specific Location

It is clear from the descriptions contained in 5.2 that there are certain location features that are very pertinent to the understanding of why crimes are being committed. It is also clear that lax guardianship is a contributing factor:

- Open doors
- People not confronting strangers
- People connected to Churches being perceived as “helpful”
- Vulnerable/older people
- Unprotected property, eg cars

- 5.5 The theory of crime contributes further to our knowledge by differentiating between “marauders”, who tend to commit crimes locally and “adventurers” who are prepared to travel to steal particular objects. It would be helpful if a fuller understanding were obtained which connected different crimes to different profiles of offenders.

1. STRATEGIC STRENGTH

- 6.1 The <<church>> is capable of bringing together people who are knowledgeable about crime in general and those who can relate experiences of crimes related to Churches.
- 6.2 A range of materials is already available, including a video and booklets.
- 6.3 Risk appraisal documentation is already available.
- 6.4 Key people need to be committed to this initiative, including the church leaders, the local police chief and the local fire Chief
- 6.5 A wide range of people can be called upon to implement action, including the members of the congregation, officers of the different Churches, users of the property

1. STRATEGIC INVESTMENT

- 7.1 The cost of securing the Church and protecting the minister, the congregation and visitors is seen in general as the responsibility of the Church. Given the current pressure on finances experienced by the Church it is a matter of extreme importance that the current situation should change.
- 7.2 It is clear that the investment in the security of the Church is considerably below an acceptable level. All possible funding streams should be identified, including Lottery fund, Safer Communities Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Learning and Skills Council.

1. STRATEGIC VISION

“<<church>> will be safe from crime against people and property. A collaboration between faiths, involving ministers and key stakeholders will ensure that the risk of crime is effectively managed, all crime is recorded and receives an appropriate response.”

1. STRATEGIC TARGETS

- 9.1 To increase the level of reporting of crimes against Churches, ministers, members of congregations and visitors to Churches.
- 9.2 To reduce crimes against Churches, ministers, members of congregations and visitors to Churches.
- 9.3 To strengthen the strategic structures which support the security of Churches, through training and education. These should include inter-denominational and inter-faith structures.
- 9.4 To improve the level of information and knowledge available to reduce crime against Churches. In particular this should include agreed data sets, the recording of data, the analysis of data, knowledge about crime patterns and profiles of offenders.
- 9.5 That all denominations and faiths should develop and implement security policies relating to their own area of operations and inter-faith issues.
- 9.6 To develop a suggested framework for improving the basic security system of every church in the <<Name>> Diocese. The system will maximise the strengths and resources of each church to secure premises and people. Responsibilities for security should form part of the framework.
- 9.7 To secure increased sustainable investment in the security of all Churches, particularly those which are most vulnerable.
- 9.8 To develop and implement an accredited training programme, available to all Churches, which will support the implementation of improved security systems.
- 9.9 To put in place improved practical security in the most vulnerable Churches in the <<Name>> Diocese
- 9.10 To achieve improved response levels from Police in connection with offences against Churches, ministers and all related people.

10 ACTION PLAN (*Some examples!*)

- 10.1 The <<Church>> to offer specific personal safety training courses to staff to reduce violence and the fear of violence
- 10.2 The <<Church>> will also develop common conflict and aggression management techniques appropriate for the <<church>>.
- 10.3 Under reporting of crime to be studied by the <<Church>> with initial focus on <<Insert priority crimes>>
- 10.4 A common proforma for the reporting of all offences to the building, ministers, members of the congregation or visitors to be designed and distributed to all Departments in the <<Church>>.
- 10.5 To organise regular crime reviews in association with the << Name>>shire Constabulary and National Churchwatch to keep up to date with the latest crime reduction techniques.

- 10.6 An initiative to raise the awareness of the need to report crime will be taken forward by the <<Church>>
- 10.7 The development of a basic security system will be taken forward the <<Church>> in consultation with <<Constabulary>>, Ecclesiastical Insurance and National Churchwatch.
- 10.8 The exploration of different funding streams will be taken forward by the <<Church>>
