

Meeting with Cheshire Rural Policing and Local Parish Councils

Meeting held at Barbour Institute, Tattenhall, Cheshire on Wednesday 20th April, 6pm

Attended on behalf of Huntington Parish Council:

Louise Gibson – Clerk of Huntington Parish Council

Purpose of the Meeting

To launch 'Operation Shield' for Rural Local Parish Council and ask Parish Councils to consider whether they would like to use this initiative within their Parish.

How would it work within the Huntington Parish?

Cheshire Rural Police Unit are describing this operation as providing 'Ring of Steel' around Rural villages within our vicinity. This latest launch includes Tushingham to the South and spread North up to Huntington, taking in Malpas, Tattenhall, Waverton, Christleton, Rowton, Gt Broughton and so on. Cheshire Police believe that if each Parish took on this initiative, criminals would be deterred from travelling in this direction to carry out crime as they would be aware that the Operation is widespread within the area.

The Parish Council could decide whether the entire Parish or key areas within the area could be targeted. Each household would then be visited by a PC or PCSO and, at least, half an hour, would be spent talking to the resident and applying the Operation Shield kit that would be supplied (Please see below for how it works).

These households would display a small sticker in their window. If every house in the street has a sticker, this does deter criminals as they know that street is 'covered'.

How does it improve our Parish and Relationship with the Police?

Cheshire Police believe that making home visits to each participant has a positive impact because visibility of the Police presence in the neighbourhood is higher and word gets spread to the criminals that police are visiting homes in our area so this acts as a further deterrent. With PC's or PCSO's visiting so many homes within our Parish, it enables the police to build better relations with our residents.

What is Operation Shield?

Operation Shield is Cheshire Constabulary's **unique DNA marking system** that is protecting homes and businesses in Cheshire by reducing burglary opportunities, deterring offenders, and identifying and recovering stolen property.

How does it work?

Operation Shield works by using state-of-the-art **unique DNA liquid** which contains an individual code to mark property in your home, garage and shed. The DNA coding in the liquid is registered solely to your address and added to a database. This means that **if anything is ever stolen it can be traced back to you.**

The liquid is barely visible and is hard for offenders to see. Once it's applied to property it is **extremely difficult to remove.** This means if an offender is ever caught in possession of stolen items **they can be linked directly back to the crime scene.**

All property recovered by Cheshire Police is **scanned by Ultra-Violet beams** under Operation Shield to check for traces of unique DNA liquid. If we detect any evidence of the liquid, the property is then closely examined with high-power microscopes which can identify the individual code. This information is then inputted into the database of registered addresses and items and can be traced back to the owner.

Homeowners can get marking kits which come with a container of the unique liquid, an application brush and details of how to register property. Once property has been marked and registered, stickers can be displayed around your property to work as a deterrent to any burglars who may be looking to target your home.

The Parish Council would also get Lamp post signs to display in the areas protected.

What happens to burglars who are brought into police custody?

Operation Shield now means that anyone who has been arrested and brought into custody is scanned for traces of unique DNA liquid – not just offenders who have been arrested for burglary. As well as scanning offenders, Cheshire Police also process any recovered property for DNA code. This process now means that police can link offenders back to burglaries which may have happened weeks before, with the evidence that associates them with individual crime scenes.

Do business owners benefit from Operation Shield?

As well as protecting homes across Cheshire, Operation Shield is also dedicated to protecting businesses and the property within them. The system works the same way as it does for private premises, with business owners able to mark goods, equipment and cash tills with the unique DNA liquid. Businesses can also use an intruder spray system which releases a spray of the liquid onto offenders who force entry into business premises. The liquid then marks the offenders clothes, hair and skin, and is extremely difficult to remove. In fact, the liquid can stay on skin and hair for up to six weeks. They might not see it – but we will.

Success Rates So Far

Operation Shield has been launched in the following areas:

Area	Criminal Activity Reduction
Blacon	Reduced by 8% *
Lache	Reduced by 25%
Upton	Reduced by 43%
Hoole	Reduced by 33%
Frodsham	Reduced by 90%
Newton	Reduced by 76%
Saughall	Reduced by 26%

*(*Blacon seems lower compared to other areas. However, only half of Blacon had Operation Shield initially. This saw a 50% reduction in crime. Due to its success, the other half has now been included for the initiative so been included in these statistics even though it has only just been introduced)*

Promotion

To make the general public more aware AND make criminals aware of this initiative so to deter them from 'Operation Shield' areas, Cheshire police will be responsible promotion in the following ways:

- Posters in the community
- Posters in all Custody Suites and Police Stations in Cheshire
- Coverage in the local Press featuring Success Stories of when criminals have been caught/property has been returned to the owner as a result of this initiative
- Leaflets in local shops
- Adverts on Public Transport

Cost to Huntington:

It would cost Huntington Parish Council £1000 which provides Shield kits to 100 homes. It would be up to the Parish Council to consider how many homes to buy for, which areas to target if not all homes are purchased for. Cheshire Police would provide the kits, deliver them to each individual home and ensure promotion of the scheme.

Questions for the Parish Council to Consider now:

1. Does Operation Shield seem a good initiative which Huntington would benefit from?
2. Can we as a Parish Council afford it?
3. If we did decide to purchase, where would the money come from (Money has been not set aside for crime prevention in the 2016/2017 budget BUT we do have other funds available)
4. If we did decide to purchase, would it be all homes or targeted areas and, if so, which ones?
5. Other Parish Councils in the area are considering purchasing 100 kits BUT then charging £10 per resident to recover the cost. Is this something that Huntington would be interested in?