Guidance and Learning from Elderly Victimisation Prevention in Avon & Somerset Police

May 2019

Authors

Dr Laura Knight and Dr Matthew Callender, IPSCJ

Ashley Jones, Avon and Somerset Police

Contents

Introduction and Context

Introduction and Context

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of an elderly victimisation programme working with Avon and Somerset police, outlining the approach, components and key learning from the initiative.

The Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT) is an all-volunteer group of police officers/staff/VIP's who provide a tailored crime prevention and victim support service to the older adult population of the wider Avon and Somerset area, led by Sergeant Ashley Jones. The SCLT is a registered UK charity (No: 1148383) which operates in collaboration with the Avon and Somerset Police and in conjunction with the Force Cyber Crime User Group and the Distraction Burglary Silver Group. The SCLT operates under the direction of a volunteer management committee, who set targets and goals for the team within the boundaries of the SCLT constitution and the PCC's Objectives. The SCLT fully complies with all requirements of the Charity Commission. All volunteers receive routine supervision and guidance from the initiative leader.

With the support of Home Office Transformation funding, the project sought to extend the reach of the voluntary work and to produce guidance to enable a roll out of this model in other forces.

In particular, funding was used to:

1. pilot two substantially increased print-runs of the 'The Senior Siren', a crime prevention magazine;

2. add a new addition to the portfolio of protective services to be run and operated by Police Support Volunteers identified as 'Senior Safety Surgeries'; and

3. redesign website materials to be more accessible to older adults.

The detail herein provides other forces valuable information and guidance to support the development of similar initiatives across UK. The report adds to knowledge from 16 other projects that substantially enhance the understanding of 'what works' in police volunteering, that will lead to improved policy and practice across UK forces which enable volunteering models to have greater impact on public safety and public engagement with policing.

The report first provides a contextual overview of why the initiative was created. It then goes on to detail the analytical approach to understand the problem or challenge utilising the Problem Analysis Triangle, indicating how objectives were formed and the approach was designed. Details of the structure of the initiative are provided alongside information on the design of materials and activities. The final section provides key learning identified by the project lead and researcher reflections on key success factors within the project.

Introduction and Context

2. Context

The global population is aging significantly, a demographic transition that will result in older populations in many countries. As fertility rates decline, the proportion of persons aged 60 and over is expected to double between 2007 and 2050, and their actual number will more than triple, reaching 2 billion by 2050. In most countries, the number of those over 80 is likely to quadruple to nearly 400 million by 2050.

The ageing population is a significant social challenge facing the UK society today. There are currently 10.3 million people aged 65 and over in the United Kingdom. This is an 80 per cent increase over the six decades since 1951, and in the next two decades, the number is set to rise by another 50 per cent. Within that, the number of people aged over 85 is set to double.

Older adults are often the most vulnerable people in our communities and are frequently targeted by heartless criminals who seek to exploit the inherent fragilities associated with older age, such as ill-health, immobility and diminished mental cognition.

With a higher than average proportion of older adults in the population (within Somerset more than half of the population is projected to be aged 65 or older by 2033), older adult crime is having a significant impact upon the most vulnerable citizens in the community.

A survey of people aged 65-years and over, which was conducted by the respected charity, Age UK identified that 53% of the people (aged 65yrs and above) had either been the victims of fraud or had been targeted and had failed to be deceived into parting with money. The survey also found that only approximately 5% of fraud-type deception offences against older persons were ever reported to the authorities. This being caused by a combination of; embarrassment, intimidation, fear, coercion, concern of loss of independence, etc. from the elderly victims.

Frauds of all types (doorstep, telephone, internet and mail) has a disproportionate effect upon the elderly, who have less ability to overcome the financial losses and often suffer poor health and early mortality due to becoming involved in fraudulent criminal offences.

When it comes to obtaining an accurate assessment of the extent of fraud offences within the population and specifically that which is targeted at the elderly, we find an extremely challenging situation due to the vast non-reporting of fraud offences by victims and by ongoing changes to the way that the government records fraud offences. What can be extrapolated from the Office of National Statistics, England & Wales Crime Survey (Jan 2017), is that there were 5.6-million fraud and computer misuse offences in 2017, an increase of 8% over the previous year.

Overall, the context set above indicates the necessity of taking measures to protect the

Introduction and Context

(growing) elderly population, engaging with them to raise awareness and equip them with knowledge to protect themselves. The next section details the approach to define the problem and set objectives for the pilot.

Problem Analysis Triangle

3. Problem Analysis Triangle

This chapter provides an overview of analysis based on the Problem Analysis Triangle (PAT), that was used to analyse the problem of fraud victimisation of the elderly and plot objectives to address the issue.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS TRIANGLE (PAT)

Location:

Unlike many other offences against the person, fraud offences almost always occur in the privacy of the victim's own home, usually using a method of intimate communication (email, letter, phone, etc.) Hence it is extremely challenging to target an effective crime-prevention programme at known victims (particularly as 95% of these offences go unreported)

Therefore, it was decided the activities of this initiative would be directed at older adults throughout the regions covered, by engaging with high-density community groups and elder gatherings to deliver the safety education package. This also included targeted delivery of the Senior Siren (safety)

magazine through home-meals-delivery services and local neighbourhood-watch schemes in conjunction with our statutory and voluntary partners.

Suspect:

Due to the nature of most fraud offending (doorstep crime excluded), most suspects remain remote to their victims and communication is made via telephone, email, or letter. A very high proportion of these frauds originate outside the national borders of the United Kingdom and suspects are consequently beyond the reach of traditional law enforcement.

Through this initiative, the suspect element of the PAT is addressed by way of educating the victim cohort as to the victimology commonly adopted by suspects in many fraud instances, thus assisting potential victims to be prepared and to have a safety regime in place when dealing with possible frauds.

Victim:

A 2015 national survey by the charity Age UK determined that more than half (53%) of those questioned aged 65-years+ had been the victim of a fraud/scam. However, professional experience gleaned over many years of specialised law enforcement suggests that this statistic is most likely an extreme underestimation, with survey results suggesting as many as 95% of elders (and the general population) have been the victim of fraud or attempted fraud.

The financial loss for older victims was nearly twice as much per victim than those from

younger age groups and it can be theorised that elder victims on a fixed income have no capacity to replace loss of funds through fraud and hence suffer more profoundly from victimisation. A study into the impact of doorstep crime on older victims has shown that their health declines faster than non-victims of a similar age. The study also found that victims of doorstep crime are 2.4 times more likely to be in residential care two years after the burglary than their non-burgled neighbours.

Nearly half (49%) of all those aged 75years+ live alone and 17% of older people have less than weekly contact with family and friends. Those more isolated residents are more vulnerable to fraud, due to their inability to discussing matters with others and seek support.

Assessment of the Fraud Problem Profile for the Avon and Somerset Police area points to 51% of victims being female, 35% being from the 60 – 79 years of age category. Analysis of the profile further shows that the area recorded 5,273 frauds from April – Sept 2016, of which, 37% were perpetuated by means of telephone, 14% by online sales and 13% by mail. The amount lost amounted to £9.5-Million and resulted in 0 (zero) judicial outcomes against offenders.

It is worth reiterating a point made by many others in the world of fraud prevention – that this crime type will not be defeated by way of law enforcement detection, due to its global nature and its intensely personal delivery (i.e. that most victims are targeted within their own homes in a manner where no other person is aware). The issue of fraud being

targeted at the elderly will be best met by way of crime-prevention education, delivered directly and in a bespoke manner to the specific victim cohort, taking into account and catering for, the distinct vulnerabilities of the victim cohort (ill-health, mental cognition, etc.)

Clearly those most vulnerable within the elder community, such as those suffering cognitive impairment, such as dementia, would be rendered most at risk from deception-type offending and are most likely not to report their victimisation. 1 in 6 people over the age of 80 have dementia in the UK today.

Whilst there are variations in the specifics of how each operation is delivered, there is a clear pattern in terms of the use of volunteers and weekend operating hours seeking to address peak demand. Some of the more established models could provide a valuable source of learning for developing operations.

Structure and Approach

Structure and Approach

4.   Structure

This section provides an overview of structure of the teams involved, outlining their value and input into the project.

There were three teams involved in the project: Senior Citizen Liaison Team; Public Presentation Team; and Senior Minorities Outreach Team.

Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT)

The Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT) initiative is to be an excellent example of how the statutory sector (public services), can work symbiotically with the voluntary sector (charity) to achieve significant results in respect to public safety.

The SCLT has 3 objectives:

- Crime prevention;
- Victim support; and
- Social advocacy.

The concept of the SCLT is relatively simple. This is to look at a new way of addressing a burgeoning community safety need (financial harm safety for the elderly), by being innovative and agile in the delivery of a uniquely, bespoke safety service which has been tailored for the target demographic.

This model of intervention goes beyond traditional crime prevention and takes prevention to the socio-micro level. Essentially the initiative identified that elderly people are at enhanced risk of financial harm through the new wave of frauds delivered via telephone, cyber, mail and doorstep. And set about seeking a mechanism to redress the balance in the favour of the targeted community.

In addition to working symbiotically with Avon and Somerset Police (principal police partner), the leadership of the SCLT forged extremely close links with other statutory and voluntary agencies which share the same or similar community safety goals. This included members of the trustee team also holding similar, decision-making roles on such bodies as; Age UK (Charity), Gwent Association of Voluntary Agencies, South West Forum on Ageing and a host of other bodies which were able to offer shared advocacy opportunities for the elder community.

This allowed the initiative to benefit from financial grants and skills-transfer from this highly functioning cohort of allies. The SCLT has always benefited from being highly agile and adaptive and as such utilises the HR and 'back-office' functions of its larger partners (the police agencies), whilst also retaining independence in financial matters and governance as a consequence of its registered charity status.

The project relies on the active involvement of volunteers. How this works in effect is that volunteers with the SCLT all register as Police Support Volunteers and hence benefit from the full support of the police HR functions (i.e. administration of expenses, criminal records checks, etc.), whilst their volunteering activities are directed by the SCLT activity co-ordinators.

The volunteers who support the project are typically recruited via exposure to our

Structure and Approach

activities and traditionally our core volunteer base have been police officers and staff who seek to volunteer their skills and time to the activities of the SCLT project, to date, this currently includes a majority of police officers, PCSOs and other enabling services staff.

To support other sites who wish to replicate the project, a role profile is provided in Appendix A.

Additionally, where specialist skills have been required, such as in the position of treasurer, suitably qualified and experienced professionals have been recruited to fulfil these positions – in this instance, through personal and/or professional knowledge of the individual concerned.

Public Presentation Team (PPT)

The team engage, face-to-face with potentially 10,000's of the senior community each year with their Public Presentation Team by giving hundreds of crime-busting presentations for seniors at community locations, where older adults meet and socialise. The PPT offer a catalogue of highly professional presentations, which include audio/video content, which enthuse and engage audiences from across the wide spectrum of society, from higher-functioning older adult groups, to others who require specialist engagement, such as Alzheimer's and Stroke Groups, who's specific needs are individually catered to.

Such is the success of the PPT, that volunteer presenters have been asked to deliver the safety presentations throughout the UK and in Germany, Holland, and Belgium in law-enforcement conferences, as the innovative

and holistic nature of the PPT concept has been extremely widely embraced. Additionally, the PPT have been invited by the Home Office to present at national events throughout the UK, to promote the initiative to other regions and encourage the cross pollination of innovation.

Demand for PPT presentations have grown exponentially over the last 18-months, particularly in new areas, such as Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and throughout Wales. Funding from the Citizens in Policing Grant has allowed this growth to take place, this has been used to recruit a new volunteer and has funded the expansion of the travel area covered (equipment and travel expenses).

Senior Minorities Outreach Team (SMOT)

In 2012 the SCLT further adapted to the needs of the community by establishing a Senior Minorities Outreach Team, led by volunteers with specialist skills in crossing the boundaries of language and culture, to spread the senior safety message to citizens who may not have access to other statutory and voluntary agencies (8% of the UK population do not speak English as their main language).

The SMOT has seen volunteers attending community events, such as annual Eid Festivals and the Annual Peace Symposia, as well as participating in cultural charity events and even having volunteers at the annual 3-day Muslim 'Jalsa Salana' (Festival of Faith), where 30,000 adherents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim faith engaged with SCLT volunteers and obtained senior safety advice.

Structure and Approach

5.   Approach

This section details the approach and activities involved in the project.

The project involved 3 key activities, each of which will now be summarised: The Senior Siren Magazine, Website Services and Senior Safety Surgery.

The Senior Siren Magazine

To engage with the wider senior community, the team produce a free magazine, 'The Senior Siren', which contains crime prevention and victim support information, as well as lifestyle and health advice. The magazine is delivered via a network of volunteers and partner agencies, which ensure the most vulnerable, receive their copy by hand.

The magazine has become one of the most successful magazines of its kind and is now been made available to 250,000 readers nationwide (online). The team website (www.sclt.us) receives thousands of weekly hits worldwide. In 2019 an audio version of the magazine will be launched for the visually impaired and those who prefer to access the content via the spoken-word method, funding has already been received and it is estimated this project will go 'live' in late-2019.

In the last 18-months, the Senior Siren has been additionally professionalised with the recruitment and training of a new, volunteer editor, who has brought new insight and vision to the project. This has seen the magazine transform to a 'lifestyle' publication, released twice a year, which contains recipes, puzzles and original content in the form of short stories and celebrity interviews, making the magazine ever more attractive to the target reader cohort.

To the casual reader, the Senior Siren now appears to be more of a companion-style magazine, but on closer examination, it contains even more crime prevention and safeguarding advice, often from partner agencies, such as the Fire Service and Trading Standards.

Website Services

The SCLT operates an extensive website, www.sclt.us, which has been in existence since 2010 and has continued to evolve over the last 9-years. The site contains a wide variety of safety education information, as well as being an easy portal for elders to

Structure and Approach

access the suite of services offered by the initiative. The site has been specifically designed to be easy to navigate and use for the less digitally competent user and receives serves as a centre-point for users and volunteers to keep updated and aware of the activities of the charity.

In the last 18-months, there has been a review of the functionality of the website and how its services are used and accessed by members of the older adult community. This has involved an expansion of the size of the website and the content this is specifically focused at elder users. The website is now visually simple to use, contains links to appropriately vetted support agencies and a regularly updated news feature, which encourages users to revisit the website to stay abreast of activities and updates on services.

Senior Safety Surgery

Additionally, Senior Safety Surgeries were introduced in 2018 throughout the area of SCLT operations. These are essentially pop-up, advice surgeries, held in local, public spaces, coffee shops and community

gathering locations, where elder citizens can consult with a trained senior safety adviser in regard to fraud prevention and other senior safety matters. Users are frequently referred to other statutory and voluntary agencies, which are able to add value to the lives of the

clients. This is yet another example of the benefit of the SCLT initiative extending far beyond traditional law enforcement boundaries to the wider betterment of the community.

In the last 18-months the Senior Safety Surgery initiative has been greatly expanded and incorporated with the core elements of the Public Presentation Team (PPT), is so much as every public appearance of the PPT also features a Senior Safety Surgery. In the last 18-months (to May 2019) there have been approximately 100 PPT events that have also featured a Senior Safety Surgery element.

Learning and Reflections

Structure and Approach

6. Learning

This section explores learning from the project lead.

The first item of learning is that perseverance, above all, is the skill that has been fundamental to the success of the SCLT initiative. When a good idea has been researched and the project leader is ready to progress to the delivery phase of any volunteer-based initiative, there will be those who will be thwarted or put-off by the withering level of bureaucracy that seems to inhabit all aspects of the police world.

Second, in the case of the SCLT initiative, when it became apparent that funding would be an issue, with it being very easy to accept this situation and decide that the project was unviable without appropriate funds. However, the project team decided that the initiative was too important to side-line, so sought out alternative, non-police avenues of funding. This ultimately resulted in the SCLT initiative being granted registered charity (11483830) status in 2012, thus throwing open access to numerous funding streams not accessible to non-charity projects.

Finally, it is recommended that project teams access the many national and even international recognition processes, which grant wider awareness and credibility to many new initiatives. In the case of the SCLT, the work was submitted for consideration to several awards processes, such as:

- The National Fighting Fraud Award (SCLT - Awarded 1st Place)
- The Civil Service Diversity & Equality Award (SCLT - Awarded 1st Place)
- The Prime Ministers Big Society Award (SCLT - Awarded 1st Place)
- The European Public Sector Award (SCLT - Awarded 1st Place)
- The Improvement & Social Enterprise Award (SCLT - Awarded 1st Place)
- The United Nations Public Service Award (SCLT - Awarded 1st Place)

The above list is not exhaustive but notes the most high-profile awards bestowed upon the SCLT Charity. These awards have not been sought as an act of vanity, but as a method of demonstrating the professional competence of the initiative and also that the initiative is capable of self-reflection and progressive development. It is recognised that it also does not hinder applications for funding, when initiatives are able to demonstrate they have won the UN Public Service Award – the World's most prestigious public-sector recognition and the only British initiative to win such an accolade in the Award's 20-year history).

Structure and Approach

7. Reflections

This section provides a series of reflections based upon the above report, outlining key factors and issues that have been instrumental to the success of the project.

- **Undertaking analysis to understand and define the problem fraud victimisation of the elderly.** This supported the definition of objectives and activities to meet the needs of the target population, as well as the design and medium of content.
- **Gaining charitable status alongside symbiotic relationship with Avon and Somerset Police was strategically advantageous.** This enabled the SCLT to maintain independence in relation to financial matters and governance whilst receiving benefits from 'back office' functions from a consortium of allies.
- **Adopting an agile and flexible approach** to the delivery of materials to the target population. An important success factor of the project was capitalising upon different mediums to deliver accessible and relevant materials to the older people. Furthermore, a critical feature was engaging in different outreach styles to meaningfully engage with older people.
- **Creating and maintaining positive links with statutory and voluntary agencies** which have similar community safety goals. Through such links, the teams were able to maximise the benefits of information and support provided, especially in relation to skills-transfer for volunteers.
- **Strategic positioning of volunteers as Police Support Volunteers** to facilitate access to important HR functions the full support of the police HR functions (e.g. administration of expenses, criminal records checks, etc.), whilst their volunteering activities are directed by the SCLT activity co-ordinators. Such positioning created advantageous conditions to maximise the impacts of volunteers to achieve the aims of the SCLT.
- **Balancing universal delivery with specialised inputs** for specific and targeted populations. This supported the creation of important links into specific communities and populations that otherwise would have not engaged with the materials and content provided through the magazine and website. An additional benefit of such an approach was the ability to attend large events to disseminate key messages.

Appendix A: Police Support Volunteer Role Profile

Appendix A

Task Description and Specification	
Opportunity Title:	Volunteer Caseworker ~ Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT)
Line Manager:	3359 Ash Jones ~ Manager - Senior Citizen Liaison Team
Location:	Force wide in all Districts
Hours:	Flexible – Volunteers provide senior safety presentations as required. On average we would target 2 presentations to be completed per month.
Person Responsible for this proposal:	3359 Ash Jones
Main responsibilities of role:	The Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT) is an all-volunteer group of police officers/staff/VIP's who provide a tailored crime prevention and victim support service to the older adult population of the wider A&S area. The SCLT is a registered UK charity (No: 1148383) which operates in collaboration with the A & S Police and in conjunction with the Force Cyber Crime User Group and the Distraction Burglary Silver Group. The SCLT operates under the direction of a volunteer management committee, who set targets and goals for the team within the boundaries of the SCLT constitution and the PCC's Objectives. The SCLT fully complies with all requirements of the Charity Commission. All volunteers receive routine supervision and guidance from the initiative leader (3359 Ashley Jones) • Provide presentations to senior citizen groups throughout your designated area on crime prevention, home and personal safety. • Maintain regular links with senior citizen community groups within your designated area to build a positive and productive relationship with the target community. • Distribute the Senior Siren magazine to public buildings, senior citizens community groups and individuals within designated area. • Actively promote the SCLT and its services to the older adult population by using media, press and any opportunity to make the target community aware of the work and functions of the team.

	Required	Desirable
Experience:	Effective communicator including written communications skills.	

Appendix A

Avon and Somerset Constabulary – Volunteers In Policing
VOLUNTEER REQUEST FORM

	Personal skills and the confidence to work with the police and the volunteer's community.	
Skills:	Use of PowerPoint	Basic computer literacy
Knowledge:		
Other:	Public Speaking	
Additional police checks required:		
Potential identified risks:	Requirement to visit victims of doorstep crime at their home addresses to deliver befriending/crime prevention service	
Expected investment required:	Basic computer training may be required.	
Any Diversity Considerations:		
Training Requirements:	Basic computer training may be required.	
Access requirements:	Will the Volunteer have unsupervised access to police premises? Y Will the Volunteer have access to Police IT? Y Will the Volunteer have access to Police data e.g. restricted information or personal data? N	

V-20
Version 5   200312 - Page 2 of 5

Appendix A

Avon and Somerset Constabulary – Volunteers In Policing
VOLUNTEER REQUEST FORM

Guidance Notes

It is the responsibility of the submitting member of staff to ensure the first Human Resources box is completed by your local HR Manager. For generic requests the HR team at HQ will be approached.

To be completed by Human Resources (HR):

Please say whether you will support this opportunity or not with reasons.

Q1   Does the proposed volunteer post profile replace an existing/former paid police staff job?

~ Short answer is no. These are new volunteer posts which have never been performed in this format before. There may be parts of this role which may be performed by police staff in other roles and departments around the force.

Q2   Are there any elements of the proposed volunteer post currently/previously performed by police staff?
~ Possibly. But as previously stated, not in this format. It is also important to emphasis that the Senior Citizen Liaison Team is an all-volunteer policing project which also holds the status of a registered charity (charity no: 1148383). Every person involved in the project, be they police officer, staff or volunteer are pure volunteers and no role in the SCLT has <u>ever</u> been carried out by any paid member of police staff. I can see no conflict with any staff association in respect to taking a role which has been performed by a paid member of staff.
Q3   Has funding ever been requested for the proposed post?
~ Short answer is no. The SCLT is funded through it's charity status and has never drawn any police funds.

Signed by............R Nash............
Date.........16.8.12.....................
Endorsed by Rachel Bridgeman 28.08.12:

Please say whether you will support this opportunity or not with reasons.

Q1   Does the proposed volunteer post profile replace an existing/former paid police staff job? Not that I am aware of
Q2   Are there any elements of the proposed volunteer post currently/previously performed by police staff? No (as above)
Q3   Has funding ever been requested for the proposed post? Not that I am aware of.

Signed by: Rachel Bridgeman   Date 10 September 2012

Once signed by HR this form should be sent to Kate Masters who will submit the form to the Force Vetting Office and will arrange for the Volunteering Opportunity to be considered by the Volunteer Panel.

To be completed by the Force Vetting Office:

Please state the level of vetting recommended for this volunteer opportunity with reasons.

This post has been designated as requiring the following vetting levels in accordance with the National Vetting Policy, NPPV Level 2.

V-20
Version 5   200312 - Page 3 of 5

Appendix A

Avon and Somerset Constabulary – Volunteers In Policing
VOLUNTEER REQUEST FORM

Signed by......Nick Nicklin ....   Date......22/08/2012.........

To be completed by the Learning & Development Team:

Please state any training implications for this opportunity with reasons.
Please state whether this training need can be met.

The Caseworker may need some instructions about visiting people in their own homes.
Presumably they would be looking for someone who has had experience of making
presentations. Again vetting as working with older persons.

Signed by............Vicky Smith...........................   Date...04/09/12....

Appendix A

Avon and Somerset Constabulary – Volunteers In Policing
VOLUNTEER REQUEST FORM

Reviewed by Volunteers Panel

Agreed   Y

Rejected

Further
Clarification

Chair…………Nikki Watson..   Date of review…19/09/12………………..

If Rejected does the Chair wish to appeal?   Yes ☐ | Reasons

No ☐ | Reasons

APPEALS DECISION LOG

Appeal Date…………………………………….

Panel Chair – Allan Johnston

Other Panel Members……………………………………………………………………………

Decision :   Upheld ☐

         Rejected ☐

Reasons

Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice

Portfolio Innovation Centre, University of Northampton, Avenue Campus, St. George's Ave, Northampton, NN2 6JD

www.ipscj.org