



Improvement

Customer led transformation programme

Case study – London Borough of Croydon

Safety through street services

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The Customer Led Transformation Programme

The London Borough of Croydon's work has been funded under the customer led transformation programme. The fund aims to embed the use of customer insight and social media tools and techniques as strategic management capabilities across the public sector family in order to support place-based working.

The customer led transformation programme is overseen by the Local Government Delivery Council (supported by the Local Government Association).

The fund was established specifically to support collaborative working between local authorities and their partners focused on using customer insight and social media tools and techniques to improve service outcomes. These approaches offer public services bodies the opportunity to engage customers and gather insight into their preferences and needs, and thereby provide the evidence and intelligence needed to redesign services to be more targeted, effective and efficient.

About the London Borough of Croydon

The London Borough of Croydon is by population the largest borough in the whole of Greater London. According to data from the 2011 Census it is home to some 363,400 people. As well as being well-populated Croydon contains a significant mixture of affluent and deprived areas across its neighbourhoods

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), of the 220 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Croydon, 33 fall within the 20 per cent most deprived areas in England. These areas are concentrated in Croydon's major social housing estates and in the north of the borough. By contrast, areas in the south of the borough are relatively rural, and tend to house high-income earning commuters.

Crime rates are lower in Croydon than they are for London as a whole. Currently there are 95 Total Notifiable Offences per 1,000 of population, somewhat below the London average of 120 offences per 1,000. Geographically, Croydon's criminal activity is more concentrated in the wards encompassing the town centre and district centres; a good example being Fairfield ward, which contains most of Croydon Town Centre. Whilst having broadly similar proportions of crime to the rest of London, Croydon has a greater proportion of criminal damage and drug-related crime than the City as a whole.

Housing tenure patterns are reflective of Outer London trends. Levels of owner-occupation are far higher in Croydon than in London as a whole, especially in the south of the borough. For example, 93 per cent of households in Selsdon and Ballards are owner-occupied compared to 68 per cent in Croydon overall and 57 per cent in London itself.

Figure 1. Ward map of Croydon



Background

Crime, fear of crime and the quality of the physical environment are primary concerns for local residents and businesses in Croydon. Residents have indicated through Croydon's Place Survey that a low level of crime and clean streets are two areas that are important in making an area a "good place to live".

In successive Place Surveys, reducing the level of crime topped residents' list of issues needing to be addressed most in their areas – with 48 per cent highlighting this to be the number one priority. Meanwhile 34 per cent of residents identified clean streets as being the issue the council most needed to improve upon. Only a quarter of residents thought that the local police and other services were dealing with crime and ASB effectively¹.

¹ Croydon Place Survey, 2009

Based on these findings, Croydon commenced a review of street based services in 2009. Before instigating customer insight work in 2010, Croydon commissioned a review of current practice across the borough and of best practice across the local government sector. This initial review found the following:

- Street based services play a key role in creating public confidence. Fear of crime is linked to the perception of safety in public places – and this is strongly influenced by the quality of the physical environment and how well it is maintained.
- Services in the borough were delivered in relative isolation and in a disjointed manner. There were multiple 'functional identities' (including different uniforms and different enforcement powers) which were potentially confusing to the public.
- Furthermore, staff were not aware of the capabilities of many of their colleagues working in similar fields.
- Although each team dealt with its own range of issues it was also clear that there were areas of overlap – an example being Safer Neighbourhood Teams undertaking environmental audits of their wards.

We have a lot of "boots on the ground" – various people on the street and various uniforms doing various things from monitoring highways permits, scaffolding, street lighting, fly tipping, waste, recycling, antisocial behaviour, crime and the like. And it was confusing to us so must have been confusing to the public. So we decided that we would design a service based on what the communities needed and wanted – and given the variety across Croydon the service would need to be different in different places.

Tony Brooks, Director of Public Safety and Public Realm

At the commencement of the review, the council provided a range of street-based services including:

- street scene officers – responsible for identifying fly tipping, graffiti etc, and arranging for it to be dealt with
- neighbourhood enforcement officers (NEOs) – uniformed council officers who work with the police Safer Neighbourhood teams
- the mobile enforcement unit – uniformed council officers with dogs
- the environmental response team – who deal with graffiti
- Veolia staff who deal with street cleaning and fly tipping
- park rangers
- neighbourhood wardens – uniformed council staff who work on housing estates
- two separate anti-social behaviour teams – one in the community services department and one in the adult services and housing department.

Each of these services had separate management arrangements and use a number of different IT systems.

Following the review of best practice in Street based services, Croydon began to seek to develop:

- a high profile, uniformed enforcement service that could respond to the borough's problems
- a highly accessible local street scene service in touch with local people and on hand to help them.

Insight work comprised activities designed to gain the views and ideas of residents across the borough, and included:

- Analysing existing data, whereby the project team looked at data already available to Croydon. This was done in order to understand social demographics and the nature of street-based issues.
- 'Walkabouts', whereby the project team met with local residents in four locations and literally walked round parts of the borough whilst discussing local issues.
- Focus groups, whereby the project team convened small groups of local residents to continue discussions begun in the walkabouts and verify any content generated.

Objectives

The customer insight project was conducted in spring 2010 to:

- generate an evidence base founded on customers' perspectives that would challenge and enhance Croydon's emerging vision
- provide insight to support the design of the new service model in terms of the systems, knowledge and skills required by the frontline
- inform the configuration of the new service in terms of resourcing in order to meet different demands across the borough.

The customer insight project sought to do this by:

- exploring issues directly with local residents in four areas
- engaging a significant number of residents and businesses in the walkabouts and focus groups
- ensuring recommendations for future service developments reflected the geographic and demographic differences across the borough.

Approach

The project used a range of customer insight techniques to develop an understanding of how residents' experience their local environment in terms of street scene, antisocial behaviour and crime. The insight techniques included:

- reviewing socio-demographic data
- review existing sources of customer insight
- conducting 'walkabouts' across Croydon
- facilitating focus groups with Croydon residents
- presenting findings at workshops with Croydon managers to identify points of learning for service redesign.



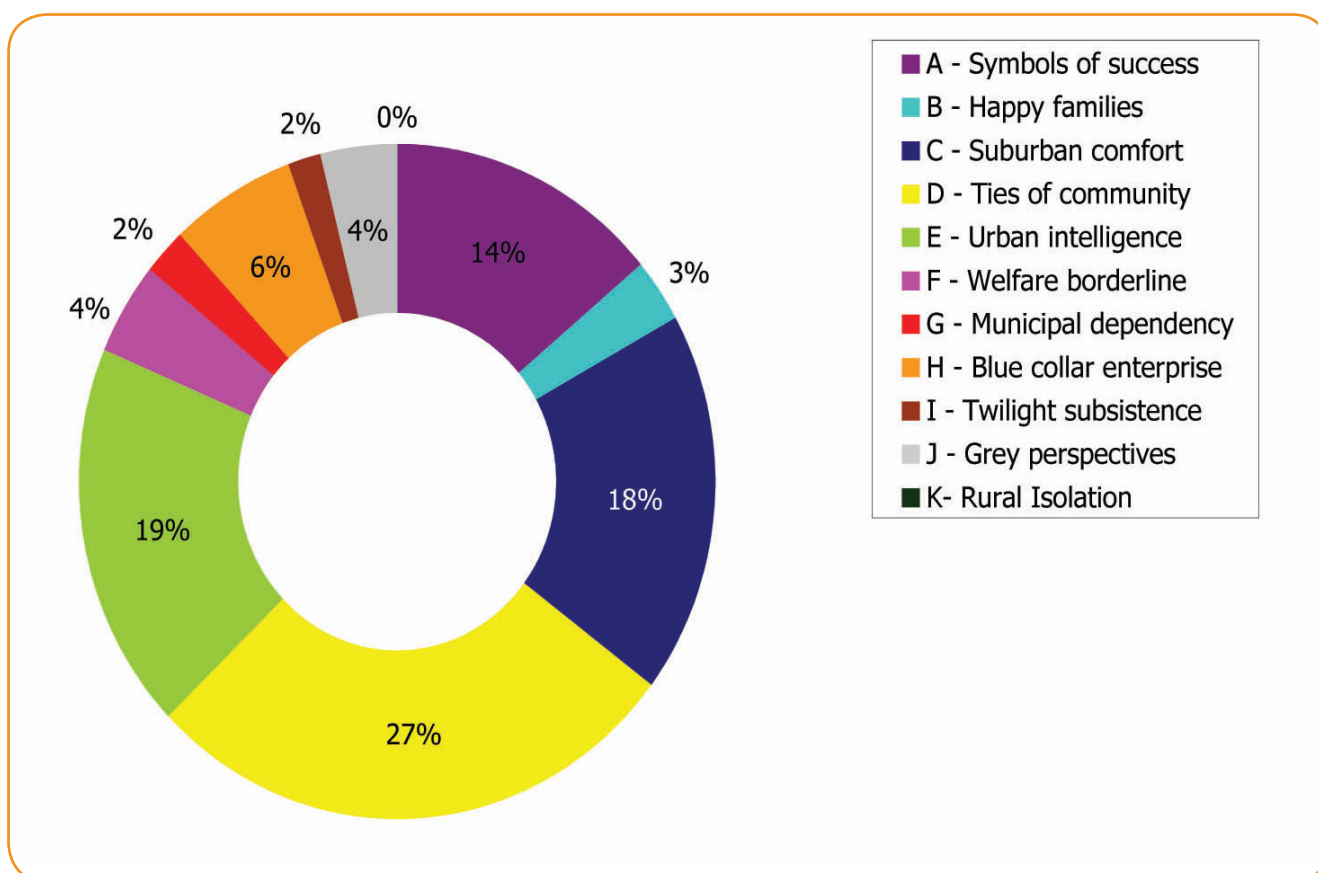
Reviewing socio-demographic data

The project builds on the existing custom socio demographic profiles that had been developed in 2008 and 2009 based on Experian's Mosaic segmentation. The social demographic data informed the council's subsequent approach to service re-design, particularly with regards to residents' preferred channels of communication. The social demographic data also provided the framework for extrapolating the findings from the focus groups and walkabouts to other parts of the borough with the same demographics.

Croydon's customer insight team found that 78 per cent of Croydon's residents fell into four of Mosaic's 11 groups.

Croydon's original customer insight project also found that the majority of residents in the smaller Mosaic groups were of types that could be aligned with one of the major groupings. For example, the analysis revealed that 68 per cent of those who were classed as 'Grey Perspectives' were childfree living in town centres – frequently in areas also populated by residents classed as in Group D – 'Ties of Community'.

A similar case was made for 'Happy Families', many of which were classed as 'Middle Rung Families living in 'Sprawling Suburbia' and hence displaying similar traits to Group C 'Suburban Comfort'. In contrast, 'Blue Collar Enterprises' could not be connected to any other group in Croydon, and hence were identified as a discrete group.



As a result of this work, Croydon regrouped the MOSAIC profiles into six more appropriate workable segments and reordered them based on size. The table below summarises the derivation and rationale for the new groups.

Name	Included groups and segments	Reasons why
** Community Perspectives **	All of MOSAIC group D and J	MOSAIC group J is a small percentage in Croydon and display similar traits and have close ties to MOSAIC group D
** Secure Suburbia **	All of MOSAIC group B and C	MOSAIC group B is a small percentage in Croydon and displays similar traits and has close ties to MOSAIC group C
Urban Intelligence	All of MOSAIC group E	
Symbols of success	All of MOSAIC group A	
** Social Dependents **	All of MOSAIC group F,G and I	All very small proportions of Croydon's population All likely to be high need and high contact
Blue Collar Enterprise	All of MOSAIC group H	

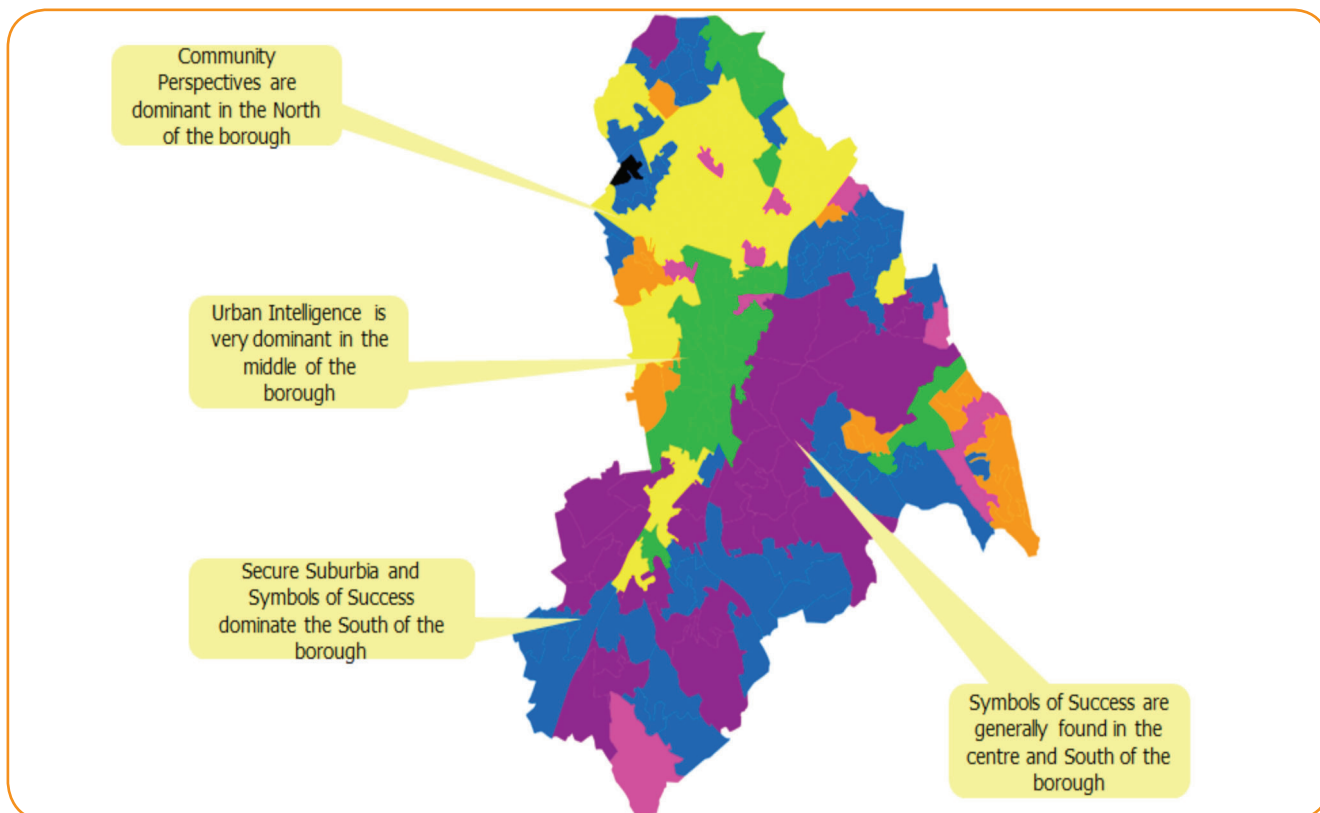


Each segment has distinct characteristics which could affect the services and channels constituents wished to use in their interactions.

- **Community Perspectives:** People living in close knit inner city and manufacturing town communities, responsible workers with unsophisticated tastes. Concentrated in the North and North West wards and around Croydon town centre.
- **Urban intelligence:** Young, single and mostly well educated, these people are cosmopolitan in tastes and liberal in attitudes. Concentrated in Central wards and close to train stations.
- **Social Dependents:** Families or elderly people on lower incomes or reliant on the council for accommodation and benefits. Predominately scattered across the North and West of the borough.
- **Secure Suburbia:** Families who are successfully established in comfortable mature homes. Children are growing up and finances are secure. Dispersed throughout the edges of the borough, particularly in the South and West.
- **Symbols of Success:** People with rewarding careers who live in sought after locations able to afford luxuries and premium quality products. Concentrated in the South of the borough.
- **Blue Collar Enterprise:** People who, though not well educated, are practical and enterprising and may well have exercised their right to buy. Scattered around the outskirts of the borough.

The map below illustrates the geographical location of those different groups. Symbols of Success and Secure Suburbia dominate the south of the borough, Community Perspectives dominate the North, and Urban Intelligence are clustered around the train line.

The 'Safety Through Street Services' project began by identifying each segment's communication preferences and then identifying the prevalence of each social demographic group in each ward – this helped the project design subsequent stages of the research including the 'walkabouts' and the focus groups.



The segmentation produced by this original project has been used to understand and communicate customer preferences in support of a number of projects since 2009, and has become embedded as a way of working in Croydon. For example, prior to informing the street scene project described by this case study, the customer segmentation informed the reformatting of the council's newsletters as well as a project to develop Croydon's parks and recreational spaces.

Figure 2. Communication preferences of Croydon’s customer groups

Mosaic Group	Receptive to	Preferred access channel
Community perspectives	Personal contact, communal centres	Face-to-face
Secure suburbia	Telephone advice lines, internet and e-mail	Phone and web
Urban intelligence	Internet, telephone, direct mail	Phone and web
Symbols of success	Telephone, internet	Phone and web
Social dependents	Personal contact, drop-in centres, Post Office	Face-to-face
Blue collar enterprise	Telemarketing	Face-to-face

Reviewing and analysing existing data

The analysis phase comprised of desk research to compile and interrogate available sources of existing data, and the representation and discussion of this data to help shape Croydon’s emerging plans.

The data sources reviewed included:

- Croydon’s Place Survey 2009
- Talkabout Survey – an annual local focus group involving 2000 residents
- Croydon’s Crime Statistics
- Audit Commission National Indicator Set.

Analysis involved combining these data sources into graphical representations illustrating the relationships between street scene, crime, anti-social behaviour, and fear of crime. Where appropriate, these comparisons were conducted at Ward level.

For example, the project:

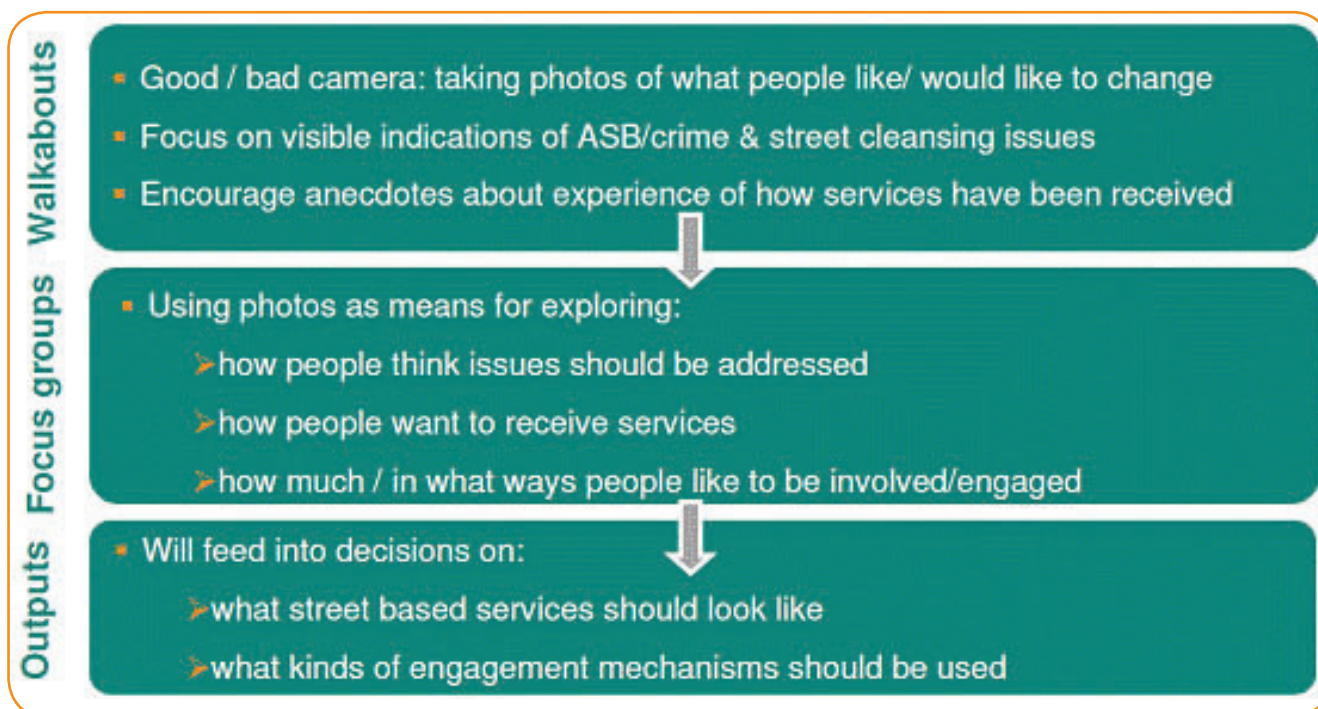
- Compared residents responses to different questions in the Place Survey such as ‘What service most needs to be improved?’ with ‘What is most important in making somewhere a good place to live?’
- Compared residents responses to the Place Survey with Croydon’s Crime statistics to examine the relationship between the crime rate and the fear of crime.
- Compared Croydon’s performance for National Indicators relating to a number of factors – including antisocial behaviour and street cleanliness – against regional averages for London and outer London.
- Compared Place Survey data against National Indicator data at Ward level ie the percentage of residents in each ward stating that street cleanliness “most needed improving” against the ward’s National Indicator score for Littering.

For the outputs from these analyses, see 'Findings'.

The outputs from these analyses were presented to a group of senior managers at an interim workshop in March 2010. These discussions informed subsequent stages of the research (outlined in Figure 3 below), influencing their approach to neighbourhood-based information gathering and included:

- the choice of location for the walkabouts (i.e locations that were demographically representative of wider areas)
- the key lines of enquiry pursued with local residents during the walkabouts and subsequent focus groups.

Figure 3. Insight through engagement and neighbourhood based information gathering



Walkabouts

The project conducted four 'walkabout' tours with residents, one in each of the areas identified by the social demographic profiling. The walkabout exercises, together with the focus groups, were concerned with establishing the customer viewpoint as an input into service redesign. The four locations for the walkabouts (and subsequent focus groups) were:

- Fairfield – a city centre area – dominated by Urban Intelligence residents and small businesses (relatively high crime rate, but only moderate fear of crime).
- Fieldway – a housing estate in the East, populated by Blue Collar Enterprise and Social Dependents (relatively high crime rate, but only moderate fear of crime).
- Thornton Heath – in the North, densely populated with Community Perspectives (moderate crime rate, high fear of crime).
- Kenley – in the South, focusing on the area around Kenley station traditionally populated by Symbols of Success (characterised by low crime rate, and low fear of crime).

These four areas were chosen to be a representative cross-section of the borough, and the insights generated in these areas could be extrapolated to others areas which were of a similar socio-demographic profile.

The route of each walkabout was designed to 'get a feel' of the lives of local residents and included housing, shopping and recreational areas.. However, the project adopted a flexible approach and researchers were free to improvise and follow any suggestions local participants had. A map of the route taken by the walkabout in the eastern part of Croydon is included below.



The walkabouts consisted of two members of the project team meeting with a group of local residents and spending 90 minutes walking around the area, speaking to local residents and taking notes and photos of issues that were emblematic of the wider scene. Fly tipping for example, if and where this was an issue.

These photographs, together with quotes from the residents who participated, were later use to prompt discussions during the focus groups. Examples of some of the photographs taken are given below.

Figure 4. Incidence of fly tipping in Fieldway, Eastern Area



The two project members typically conducted the walkabouts with a group of eight to 10 residents, and the exercise was led by a social researcher with experience of studying socially deprived housing estates in London.

Participants in the walkabouts were recruited via residents associations and with the assistance of local neighbourhood police teams.

The walkabouts also attracted the participation of local residents on the day, with a couple of residents joining groups as they progressed.

Focus groups

Following the walkabouts, the project then convened four focus groups with local residents – as before, one in each of the four areas that the social demographic profiling had revealed. Each focus group involved between six to eight local participants and lasted for about two hours..

Many of the attendees of the focus groups had also participated in the walkabouts, and these roundtable sessions enabled the discussions of issues raised to continue and also provided scope for the project to challenge and validate any views that have been expressed.

The facilitators used the photographs and quotes collected on the walkabouts to drive discussions. Flipcharts we used to capture feedback. Where a participant in the walkabout was unable to attend the focus group, the project team followed up with a telephone interview.

Between the walkabouts and focus groups, the neighbourhood consultation phase involved just over 50 local residents. For details of the insight generated by the walkabouts and focus groups, see 'Findings'.

Findings

Socio demographic review

As outlined in the Approach section, Croydon used a variant of the Experian Mosaic Classification from which they regrouped segments into a set of six profiles. These are summarised below:

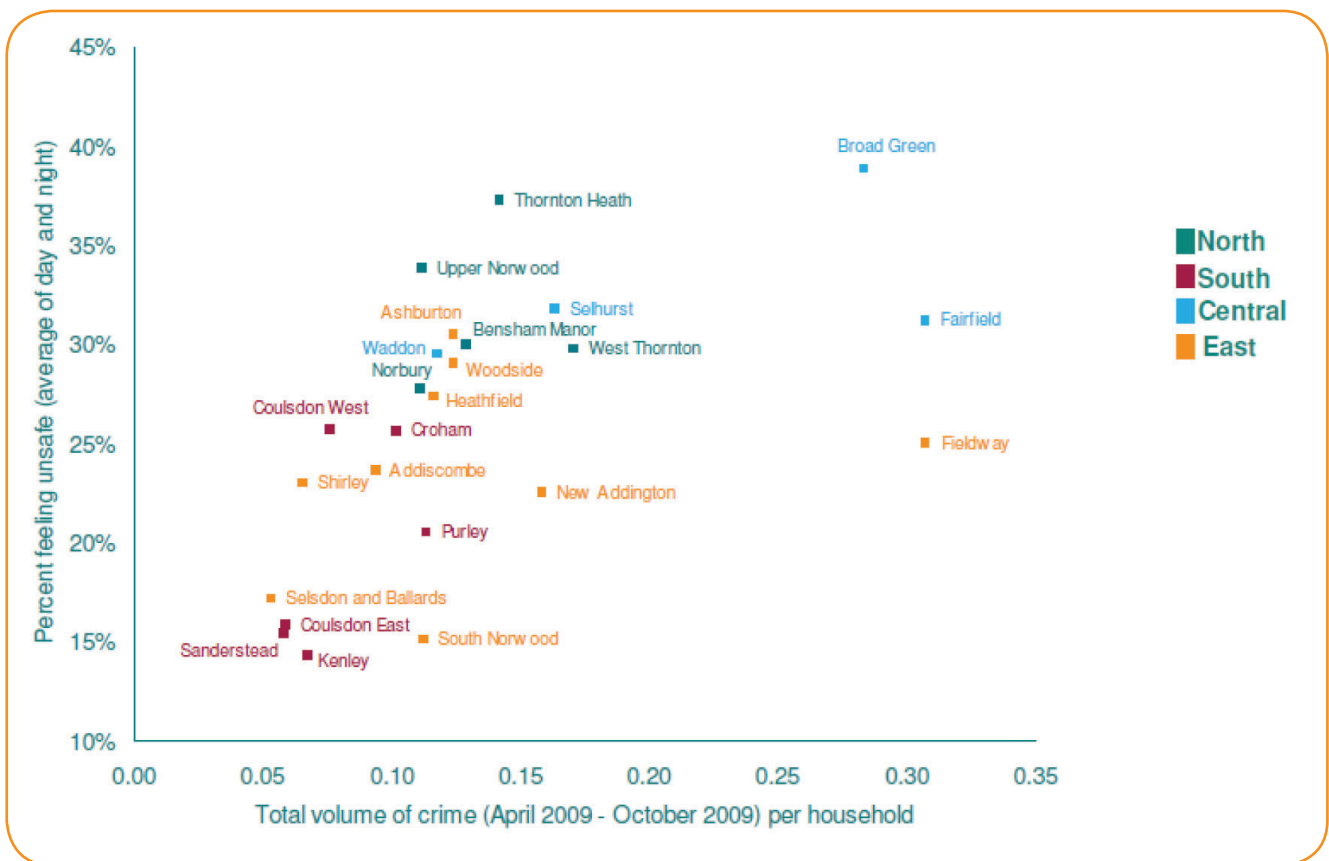
Major Mosaic Segment	Description
Symbol of Success	These residents have high incomes and are settled in their work, often in senior management positions. They have expensive leisure tastes and are predominantly White British (although not exclusively).
Secure Suburbia	These people live in secure suburban homes and their children are becoming independent. Work is less of a challenge. Whilst they rarely earn significant wealth, they have personal equity locked into their homes and investments.
Community Perspectives	These people live in established communities. They are traditionally married young and have manual jobs. They often have young children and a close support network of friends and family.
Urban Intelligence	This group is categorised by younger residents who are well educated and are open to new ideas and influences. In areas where this group resides there are generally fewer children and more of a transient population, such as students.
Social Dependents	These neighbourhoods are characterised by small local authority flats, occupied by people with low-paying jobs or who are in receipt of social benefits. Levels of social deprivation are high.
Blue Collar Enterprise	Blue Collar Enterprise comprises people who are practical and enterprising in their orientation. Many of these people live in what were once council estates but where tenants have exercised their right to buy. They own their cars, provide a reliable source of labour to local employers and are streetwise consumers.

Broadly speaking, the graphic below – which maps how safe residents feel in relation to the actual crime rate in each Ward – shows that people living in higher crime areas have a higher fear of crime.

However, there are areas where the fear of crime is disproportionate relative to the actual crime level. For example, New Addington and Thornton Heath are areas with a similar crime rate – both roughly 0.16 per household per year. This is relatively moderate crime rate for Croydon, whose crime rate ranges between 0.6 and 0.31 per household per year. However, 38 per cent of Thornton Health residents said they felt unsafe, compared to only 23 per cent of residents in New Addington.

Similarly in Fieldway where there are 0.30 crimes per household per year 25 per cent of the population reported feeling unsafe. By comparison, Broad Green with a lower crime rate of 0.29 per household reported yet 40 per cent of residents felt unsafe.

Figure 6. Crime rate and fear of crime



Levels of ASB and crime are actually lower in Croydon than the London average but the borough scored poorly in relation to understanding concerns about ASB and crime. Hence the project team recognised the need to improve communication between residents and the authorities. The socio demographic profiles indicated the communication strategies that would prove most effective with each customer group, and highlighted the importance of face-to-face contact for many residents.

Figure 7. LB Croydon performance against select national indicators compared with outer London and London



Clean streets are important to residents – particularly with regard to their overall satisfaction with the local area. More than 10 per cent of respondents said that clean streets was the most important thing in making somewhere a good place to live, while over eight per cent of responses reported that street cleanliness “needs improving”.

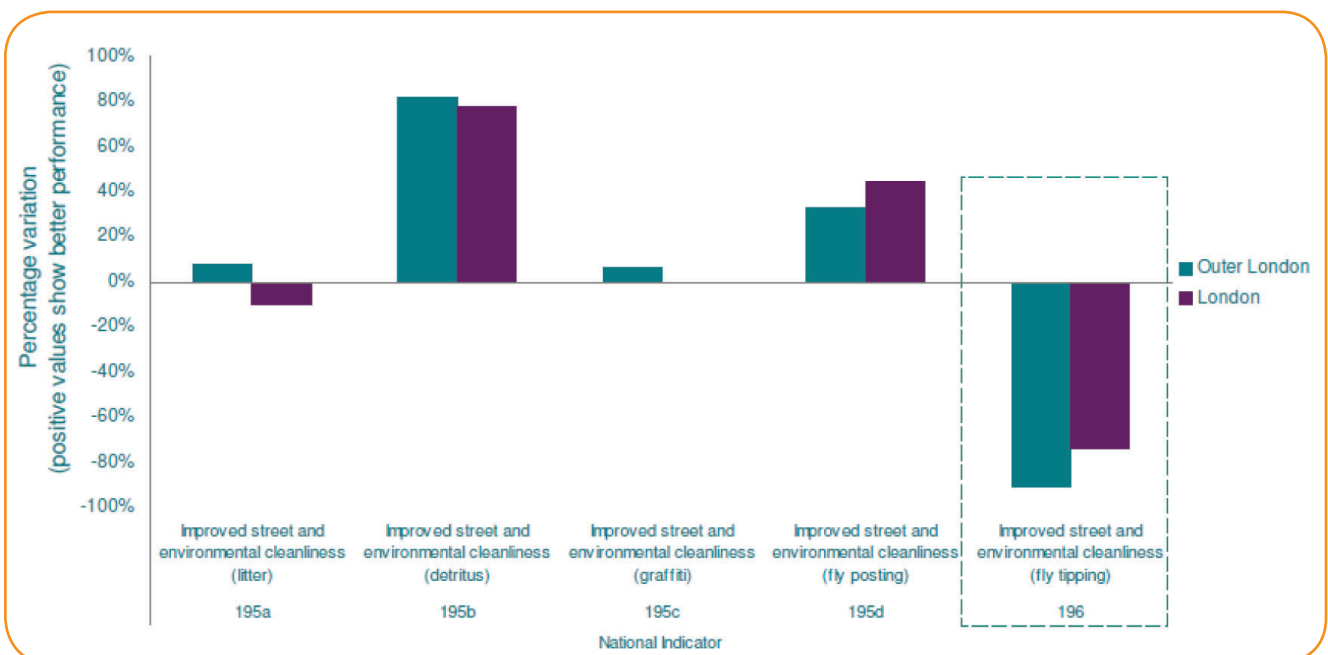
Given that there were over 20 possible responses to each of these questions, and that the vast majority of responses did not earn more than five per cent, this is a relatively strong indication of the importance of clean streets to local residents.

Performance is relatively high across the borough although fly-tipping is an issue.

Figure 8. What is important to making a place a good place to live and what needs improving in Croydon?



Figure 9. LB Croydon performance against select national indicators compared with outer London and London



The graph below highlights how much each ward prioritised 'Clean Streets' as needing improvement, and compares it to each wards' score for litter collection (from National Indicators). The graph shows that there is no strong relationship between the council's effectiveness in collecting litter, and residents' perception of how well the streets are being cleaned. This suggests that residents' opinions of the service are not exclusively linked to performance – and that other factors must be influencing people's perceptions of street cleaning performance.

Figure 10. NI195a Performance and Residents' perception of the cleanliness of their local area



Findings from Walkabout and focus groups

As discussed, engagement activities focused on four specific locations. These areas were selected as being representative of the housing and land use types across Croydon. They therefore provide learning points for other similar areas of the borough.

At a top level, the findings served to validate the findings from the desk research that residents closely associated the issues of ‘crime’ with ‘grime’. The findings also indicated that most residents did not care who dealt with antisocial behaviour and low level crime – so long as it was dealt with effectively.

Most residents also recognised that some of these issues are the responsibility of the council rather than police matters. Residents also emphasised how important it was for the authorities to have a visible and engaging presence in addition to an enforcement role. Hence, insight into the customer’s perspective supported the vision of a council led, joined up approach geared towards delivering better outcomes for residents.

The tables below highlight the relative importance of different issues in each of the different areas. This intelligence has been used to structure the new service in these areas.

Figure 11. The following findings influenced service design

	Fairfield	Fieldway	Thornton Heath	Kenley
Specific issues				
Flytipping – actual	Low	High	High	Med
Flytipping – perceived	Low	High	High	High
Youth Behaviour and ASB (various degrees)	Med	High	High	High
Structural hotspots – garages, alleyways etc.	Low	High	High	Low
Croydon Council ‘gaps’				
Communications loop – where to report issues? what is being done about those issues?	Med	High	High	Med
Provision of activities for young people	Low	High	High	High
LBC activities/personnel not visible in local areas	Low	High	Med	Med
Interaction with the call centre/getting action from the call centre	Low	High	Med	Low

	Fairfield	Fieldway	Thornton Heath	Kenley
Locally known	X	X	X	X
Police or council?	Council	Council	Police	Council
Visible common branding	X	X	X	X
Focus on enforcement?	X	X	X	
Focus on prevention?		X	X	
Focus on ASB	X	X		X
Focus on crime/gang issues			X	
Focus on flytipping		X	X	
Review services provided by waste/ cleansing contractor	X	X	X	X
Immediate proportion of available resources	Med	High	Med	Low
On-going proportion of available resources	Med	Med	Med	Low

Outcomes

Launched in March 2012, the new integrated street-based service brings together previously disparate teams from Community Services, Adult Services and Housing and the Safer Neighbourhood Teams into a unified structure which reports directly to the council and to the Metropolitan Police.

The four local area teams have a mix of functions dependent on the nature of the area and serve as principal local contact points for the local community. Flexible resourcing allows parts of the team to be deployed across the borough according to need.

The key features of the new services are:

- The ability to deploy the new 'Area Enforcement Officers' (AEOs) across the borough on the basis of need.
- Four locally-based teams of AEOs with a mix of functions specific to the nature of concern in their area, who provide a local contact point for residents and business. A summary of the new AEO role is given in the text box overleaf.

- A common uniform for all officers, making it easier to customers to identify Croydon Council staff. This should help residents to understand what officers do.
- Following training, all AEOs will be accredited under the Police Reform Act 2002 (Section 50) Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS). In addition, all AEOs can now issue Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Close collaboration with the Police's Safer Neighbourhood Team. Once AEOs are CSAS accredited and cleared by the Criminal Record Bureau, they are allowed to use Police offices and will be able to access appropriate Police information systems.

The restructuring of the service was an iterative process which began with designing and agreeing the new organisational structure, and then re-modelling employment roles.

Area enforcement officers

The council's area enforcement officers (AEOs) work closely with the police safer neighbourhood teams and other partner agencies to support the implementation of the community safety strategy.

Each AEO is accredited under the Police Reform Act 2002 (Section 50) Community Safety Accreditation Scheme and has the power to:

- request name and address for fixed penalty notice (FPN) and offences that cause injury, alarm and distress to another person or damage or loss of another's property
- request the name and address of a person acting in an anti-social manner
- confiscate alcohol from any person under the age of 18 years
- confiscate alcohol from any person in a designated public place
- confiscate cigarettes and tobacco products from any person under the age of 16 years.

AEOs investigate incidents of anti-social behaviour and environmental crime (graffiti, littering and fly tipping). They also gather evidence, interview witnesses and perpetrators and take statements that can be used as evidence in the courts. They can also act as professional witnesses in conjunction with the council's witness support service and undertake a raft of prevention, intervention and diversion activities eg referring a young person for acceptable behaviour agreements (ABA).



Throughout the process, the project team sought to remove duplication and overlap between roles and to focus on activities that added value from a resident's perspective (see 'Benefits'). However, part way through the restructuring, in October 2010, the work was re-scoped to deliver £1 million in efficiency savings. This changed the nature of the re-design activity, and required a significant reduction in posts which in turn required engagement and negotiation with the workforce's unions.

The value of the insight as an evidence base in these circumstances is highlighted under 'Challenges and Lessons Learnt'.

The development of the frontline workforce has been key, with the emphasis being on cross-training and up-skilling staff. The project has employed a 'buddying' system, with each AEO paired with a former member of an erstwhile team (ie environmental street-scene or community safety).

AEOs have also been trained in the range of services that are likely to be needed in their area in order to enable them to effectively signpost to relevant sources of support (In circumstances where an AEO cannot help directly, they can still help to deliver a positive outcome for residents).

"I am writing to compliment your staff on their prompt response to our request for clearing rubbish that had been dumped in our road. Not only was the rubbish taken away very speedily your staff took the trouble to knock on our door to reassure us that they would be keeping an eye open for any further problems. What a great service!"

Feedback on the new service from a resident of Croydon

Benefits

Benefits to customers and the community

By creating area-based and 'joined-up' teams, the project delivers a visible, co-ordinated service that is proactive in dealing with litter, graffiti and enviro-crime.

Improved communication between services and better links to Croydon's CRM system are also helping residents to see a fast and more effective response – as is illustrated by feedback from customers (see Text Boxes). AEOs log incidents – such as fly-tipping – on Croydon's corporate CRM system, and on a second system for monitoring incidents and interacting with waste collection service providers. Hence, the corporate contact centre can respond to any subsequent customer enquiry relating to the same incident, including providing the caller with information on time-to-resolution.

"Amazing response to my notification of blockage to footpath in Waddon Way. All debris cleared this morning. Thank your team please – very impressed!"

Compliment from a member of the public

Croydon are also continuing to improve and streamline their reporting system to incorporate mobile working (see 'Next Steps')

The integration of teams in the remodelling of roles also means that Area Enforcement Officers can present a clear and coherent offer to the community. They are able to enforce legal requirements and deal effectively with public enquiries. This is a clear improvement from having multiple teams, in different uniforms, each with different enforcement powers.

“To Whom It May Concern – the young man who looks after the area in Shirley is extremely helpful. He was very kind when I was concerned about some young people who were hanging around the bus stop near to where I live. It made me feel much safer when he spoke to them. I’m 82 and although the young people are probably very nice they can be a bit threatening to us old folk when they are in a gang. Sorry I don’t know his name but wanted to say thank you.”

Feedback on the new service from a resident of Croydon

The council also hope that this will help to bolster confidence among residents that authorities are actively tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

Despite the new service being delivered on a smaller overall budget using a workforce that has been reduced by one third, both resolution times and complaints have remained consistent and levels of customer satisfaction have remained stable. For example, the council are continuing to uphold its commitment to clear fly-tipping within 72 hours.

Furthermore, while only 53 per cent of residents were satisfied with the Street Cleaning services according the Place Survey in 2009 – at the commencement of this process – 64 per cent of residents reported that they were satisfied with the service in Summer 2012.

“Our role has expanded so that we are responsible for things that make a real difference to people’s lives. Litter, fly tipping, graffiti and anti-social behaviour really affect people so it is great that we can tackle everything now...Issues also get dealt with more quickly, which is great because when a resident makes a complaint they want a fast response.”

Feedback from one of the new Uniformed Enforcement Officers

Benefits to the council

Croydon Council have saved nearly £1m through this project. The principal changes that delivered these savings were:

- the merger of the Street Scene (environmental management) and Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer (Anti Social behaviour) Teams and the creation of a single Area Enforcement Team that manages enviro crime and ASB
- the reduction in personnel in other teams affected (dog patrol and graffiti removal)
- the overall restructure reducing management positions by half
- patrol/frontline officers numbers being reduced by one third – the new service now has 24 officers, including two supervisors.

These reductions were managed through efficiencies in working practices eg the improvement of processes and reduction of bureaucracy, the better use of electronic systems, changes in shift rotas, the reduction of coverage at certain times (in locations where officers were less needed) and the transferring of certain functions to other departments. As a result, Croydon are managing to achieve a similar quality outcome with significantly less resources –thereby meeting the demands of austerity while protecting others services.

Croydon have also designed the service to concentrate more resources where demand is highest. The geographical sizes of the four areas are not equal, but the two comparatively small urban areas were found to have the highest rates of fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour. Hence, the greater flexibility in the deployment of staff from the AEO also supports operational efficiency.

For example, under the old system Croydon provided Taxi Marshalling for the centre of town. This was night-time work and officers were paid overtime. Based on feedback from customers, this service was deemed non-essential and the resource has been re-deployed to the daytime.

Frontline officers have also provided the following feedback on how their role has been improved to be more effective and satisfying:

‘The new structure is still bedding in but we can already see the benefits of bringing the old teams together. There is clearly a move for the new service to be doing more enforcement which we are all for as it helps make our job easier. We are already working together closely and I can see that developing further. For example, as part of the council’s push for more enforcement we are planning for a joint campaign to tackle trade waste in the Town Centre.’

**Paul Southall, Contract Manager,
Croydon Municipal Veolia
Environmental Services (UK) Plc**

“In the past I had to pass fly tips on to another team to deal with who then had to pass it on to someone else to clear. Now I just do it myself. It makes so much more sense as we are dealing with things as we see them and not having to wait for other people to respond.”

“I was nervous about becoming a uniformed enforcement officer but the training, equipment and support provided has really helped me adapt in to my new role. I feel like I am making a difference now and helping to prevent problems rather than just dealing with the symptoms.”

“I feel like I am part of a team. Rather than working in a single ward on my own I share responsibilities with team mates across a larger area. This means I deal with a wider range of issues and can both share and learn from other officers.”

Feedback from three Uniformed Enforcement Officers

Benefits to partnership working

The remodelling of the service has improved links across the various council teams; in particular, waste and recycling, highways, public health, planning and parking. Many of the issues that the new team deal with require input from a variety of other teams so bringing together officers with diverse skills and experience and contacts has enabled much better problem solving. It also makes it more straightforward for other teams to refer queries to the frontline as they are aware that they only have to deal with one team..

The new structure has enabled a more joined up approach to environmental enforcement. Previously different teams were responsible for different types of enforcement. Now these roles have been placed side by side it means that the council can enforce consistently and have identical processes for taking forward prosecutions. Joining up back office functions has helped ensure that the council are co-ordinating enforcement effectively. It has also enabled a larger pool of CCTV cameras and other monitoring equipment.

In addition to this the accreditation of all front-line staff to CSAS level has improved communication and joint action between the council and the police. The Mobile Unit can now be deployed to provide a visible deterrent. The new service also supports the Youth Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour and Safer Communities strands of Croydon's Crime Reduction Strategy.

Bringing these functions together has enabled a more joined up approach to the gathering and use of intelligence and performance information. This ensures that Croydon have better information on exactly where problems are and means they can deploy resources to best effect much more efficiently.

Governance

The work was governed by a project board comprising of an Executive Director as sponsor, together with the Director of Public Safety and Public Realm, representatives from the Finance and Legal Departments, HR and Community and a Project Manager.

The Project Board reported to the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environmental Services, who was a vocal support of the re-modelling of the service.

Resourcing

The Customer-Led Transformation Programme provided the London Borough of Croydon with £53,000 to fund the customer insight element of the Street Services Redesign Project. The money was invested in the tasks outlined in the table below.

Activity	Costs
Initial collation and desktop analysis of current data	£10,000
Customer insight and engagements work (including survey and focus groups)	£25,000
Analysis and interpretation	£6,000
Testing and confirmation/ clarification of findings	£4,000
Final recommendations and report	£8,000
TOTAL	£53,000

Challenges and lessons learnt

Taking a systems approach

The main change brought about by the project was the merger of two sets of officers – Street Scene officers and Neighbourhood Enforcement officers – into one generic officer role.

Due to the timescales of the project and the imperative to deliver financial savings, much of the rethinking and remodelling of the systems has had to take place once the new role of Area Enforcement Officer was up and running.

With the benefit of hindsight the project could have been delivered in a timelier and smoother manner had Croydon taken a more systems based approach to understanding what needed to be changed in terms of processes, information sharing, communication and systems from the outset.

Staff communication and engagement

The financial imperatives driving the restructuring that is at the heart of the project meant that many members of staff felt threatened and at risk of redundancy during the development of the new service. As a result, the project found it difficult to engage staff to contribute ideas to the development of the new structure.

Members of staff reported subsequently that they did not feel that the projects delivery team involved them in either generating or responding to ideas. Since the launch of the new service, front-line staff have contributed their views and ideas to the evolution of the service. The project would recommend seeking and facilitating input from staff earlier in the service development process.

Engaging key stakeholders

The focus groups and walkabouts took a location-based approach to understanding customer needs. Although individual tenants and leaseholders participated in the walkabouts and focus groups, they were not recruited to represent the interests of 'Tenants and Leaseholders' as a stakeholder group, and contributed their views as private individuals.

On reflection, identifying the key stakeholder groups in the borough – irrespective of geography – would have complemented the location-based approach of the focus groups and walkabouts. This became clear in a presentation to the council's tenants and leaseholders – who did not feel that their views had been taken in to account until that point.

As a stakeholder group, tenants and leaseholders proved to be very influential in this context as they directly fund the Neighbourhood Housing Wardens (NHWs) through their rents and were reluctant to see the NHWs integrated into the new AEO team.

In the projects view, had the council engaged this group earlier – at the insight gathering phase of the project – and come to understand their concerns, it may have been possible to continue with the original plan which was to include the Neighbourhood Housing Wardens in the restructuring process.

Next steps

Croydon are continuing to develop the service, and the next steps are to:

- Continue to collect feedback from both residents and the new AEOs on how well they perceive the service to be performing, and then incorporate that feedback into operations
- Increase the amount of enforcement the team does. This includes increases in the usage of fixed penalty notices and various other notices that can be issued to business and private land owners regarding environmental issues.
- Map the processes involved in reporting incidents and sharing information with the CRM and back-office systems with a view to deploying mobile working technology and automating back office processes. These changes will enable the AEOs to do far more work in the field rather than having to pick up and close off work in the office.



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