



### An Innovative Public Sector in 2017 – New Solutions to Complex Challenges

#### **EPISA2017002 Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT)**

*Submitted by SCLT – Avon and Somerset Constabulary (UK)*

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.

A survey of people aged 65-years and over, which was conducted by the charity, Age UK, identified that 53% of the people surveyed 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.

It is with this background of socio-criminal behaviour change, that the Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT) was born in 2009 as a volunteer-enabled initiative of Avon and Somerset Police. With financial harm rising to epidemic proportions and a swiftly ageing population, coupled with falling public sector funding and increasing capacity demands, it became apparent that a swift and innovative solution was required.

The SCLT was created to address the issue of senior financial harm in all its guises, from fraud and doorstep crime to loan-sharking and distraction burglary. The team, which is 100% volunteer resourced, provides a suite of bespoke safeguarding services, designed to protect the vulnerable, elder community from financial abuse wherever encountered.

The team reach out the senior community with their Public Presentation Team (PPT) by giving crime-busting presentations to thousands of seniors at community locations. The PPT offer a catalogue of highly professional presentations which include audio and video content, which enthuse and engage with audiences from across the wide spectrum of society.

The SCLT further established a Senior Minorities Outreach Team (SMOT) to spread the senior safety message to citizens who may not have access to support due to language or cultural issues.

To engage with the wider senior community, the team produce a free, quarterly 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 & partner agencies and has become one of the most successful magazines of its kind - now made available to 250,000 readers, nationwide. The team website ([www.sclt.us](http://www.sclt.us)) receives thousands of weekly hits, worldwide.

The volunteers, of whom there are approximately 20, undertake every function of the delivery of the work of the SCLT. This has included the formation of a board of trustees and the establishment of the SCLT as a registered UK charity.

Coming at a time of shrinking public sector budgets, the SCLT is 100% self-funding. This was achieved by registration as a charity and by applying for grant funding to cover the initial set-up costs. The SCLT remains extremely financially stable into its 8th year of operation and now has reliable funding streams, such as donation income from supplying guest speaker and presentation services at conferences and seminars as well as advertising sales within the Senior Siren magazine.

With the early success of reducing doorstep (fraud) crime by over 50% in 2009, the SCLT initiative has since been expanded to now encompass all fraud offences that are targeted at the elder community and the victim-centred approach to educating elders to prevent victimisation has been expanded to 3 police force areas, with a potential population of over 500,000 elder citizens.