

Banned from one pub –

A new scheme called B.A.N.D, (Bedford Against Night-time Disorder), which aims to reduce the number of violent incidents in the town centre, has now come into force. Under this Bed:Safe initiative anyone involved in serious assaults, violence, criminal damage, drug supply or use, inside or outside of licensed premises could be banned from town centre pubs and clubs for 12 months. Bedford News takes a look at how the scheme will work and what Bed:Safe has planned over the next few months.



Bed:Safe



NORTH BEDS
COMMUNITY SAFETY
partnership

Why has B.A.N.D been introduced?

The B.A.N.D scheme has been introduced to combat persistent levels of violence and disorder in the town centre.

B.A.N.D has been designed to target offenders committing serious offences and aims to:

How does it work?

The scheme works by giving pub and club managers the chance to exercise their right to ban people from their premises.

What makes it unique is that all our town centre pubs and clubs will be working together to operate a banned from one, banned from all policy.

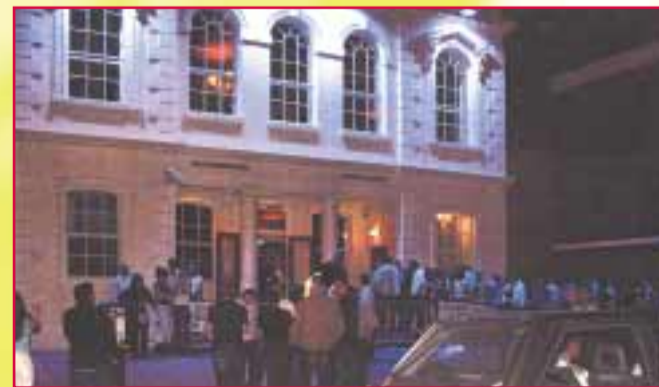
Specifically the scheme will seek to stop:

Bed:Safe – what's next?

Bedford's town centre safety initiative Bed:Safe was officially launched on March 7th 2003.

Since its launch, the Bed:Safe project has helped to reduce the amount of violent crime in the town centre area by 11 per cent and is well on its way to achieving its objectives.

B.A.N.D is one of a number of schemes launched by Bed:Safe over the past eleven months to tackle a wide range of problems and issues. Here's your guide to what Bed:Safe has planned over the next few months:



banned from all



roduced?

- Reduce alcohol related crime, violence, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the town centre
- Eradicate the use and supply of drugs within licensed premises in the town centre
- Reduce underage drinking in the town centre

The scheme is an integral part of the Bed:Safe initiative which was launched last year to tackle town centre crime and violence and reduce local people's fear of crime, making a night out in Bedford a pleasant experience for all.

Bed:Safe was established by the North Beds Community Safety Partnership, which is made up of Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire County Council, the Police, Fire Service and other local agencies.

The scheme looked to Burnley for help in developing the B.A.N.D initiative.

Burnley has its own 'B.A.N.D' scheme which aims to reduce alcohol related violence in Burnley town centre so that more people can make the most of a night on the tiles.

Since the scheme was launched in November 2000, violent crime in Burnley has been drastically reduced.

- Acts of violence – including assaults on staff at licensed premises, police officers and members of the public
- Criminal damage in the town centre, in particular to licensed premises
- The use of and supply of drugs

Any person arrested for any of these offences will be issued with an immediate interim ban from town centre pubs and clubs. The ban will identify establishments they are excluded from and that they are banned until they receive written confirmation from the Licensee's Committee.

The committee will meet on the last Tuesday of every month to debate each interim ban. The interim ban will either be lifted or confirmed as a 12-month ban.

Photos of people banned under the scheme will then be circulated to town centre licensees, door and bar staff, making sure that those banned do not enter premises.

Any person, who is subject to an interim ban or is excluded, attempting to enter a venue, will be turned away and other licensees informed. If a person refuses to leave or becomes violent then the Police will be contacted.

Should a person breach the banning order and be arrested for a further offence, they will be issued with another 12-month ban, which will start from the date that the offence was committed.

If anyone is found to have breached the banning order then the matter will be brought to the attention of the courts.

The courts have powers to issue exclusion orders which can run

for a maximum of two years.

All persons issued with an interim ban or 12-month banning order by the Licensees Committee will have the right of appeal.

Gill Anderson, Bed:Safe project manager, says: "We are planning to crack down hard on town centre thugs. Our message is clear – if you come into town to cause trouble you are not welcome.

"Being banned means you miss out on our town centre's pubs and clubs and being with your mates when they are having a good time.

"We are serious about this scheme. We want to make Bedford town centre a safer place for a good night out."

Paul Dawson, landlord of town centre pub The Rose and chairman of Bed:Safe's licensees group, says: "I welcome anything that will help to reduce violence and anti-social behaviour in the town. It is an excellent example of licensees working in partnership with the council, the Police and each other to make Bedford a safer place."

Licensing door supervisors

This year all door supervisors in Bedford will have to be licensed and regulated by the new Security Industry Authority (SIA).

The SIA is an independent body, answerable to the Home Secretary, with legal responsibility for licensing individuals working in the security industry and for raising standards of training and professionalism.

From October it will be against the law to work as a door supervisor without an SIA licence in Bedford. Locally issued licences, badges and registration schemes will no longer be recognised.

Door supervisors will need to pass a criminal background check, display effective communication skills in the English language and reach set levels of training and professional standards.

To help the local door supervisors get their SIA licence, Bed:Safe is working in partnership with Bedford College and training organisation Licenza to provide free training.

Bed:Safe approached Catalyst, Bedford College's workplace training division, to ask if they could help provide training for the door supervisors.

Bedford College was already bidding for Euro cash to help pay for the training of workers and agreed to include door supervisors in their bid.

The college was successful in its bid for European Social Funding and secured £1.2 million, some of which will help pay for the training of door supervisors in the town.

Bedford-based company Licenza will provide the training, which is set to begin shortly.

Bedford Borough Council's service manager for registration and administration, Keith Simmons, says: "Door supervisors play a crucial role in helping to ensure the safety of the general public.

"There was a real danger that we would lose some of our door supervisors because of the cost of the SIA training but, thanks to the funding secured by Bedford College, we are now in a position to offer this training for free.

"The door supervisors will receive a much higher standard of training than was previously available which will lead to greater protection of the public."

Taxi drivers to fit security cameras

A pilot project will place security cameras in approximately 80 of Bedford's taxis and private hire cars in an effort to reduce attacks on drivers, including racially motivated attacks.

The idea of fitting cameras was suggested by concerned drivers after a number of incidents involving violent, abusive and racist passengers.

Window stickers warning that cameras are on board will act as an initial deterrent while recordings of any incidents which take place will be made available in the event of a complaint by either the driver or passenger. The drivers will have no access to the cameras – only authorised officers from the borough council and Police.

Bed:Safe secured an £18,000 grant from Bedfordshire Police's Crime Reduction Fund which will be used to match fund the cost of the cameras. This means that the drivers will have to pay 50 per cent of the cost with Bed:Safe paying the remaining amount.

Keith Simmons says: "This is an excellent example of the Police, the council and taxi drivers working together to make Bedford a safer place.

"We are aware that there have been some incidents of violence and theft when passengers have not paid their fares and that some of the drivers have also been the victims of racist incidents.

"Any criminal behaviour, whether racist, an assault or robbery, will be captured on camera and will assist criminal investigations, as well as adding to overall safety."

If any drivers are interested in taking part in the pilot scheme then contact the Bed:Safe project manager Gill Anderson on (01234) 221942 or email bedsafe@bedford.gov.uk

