

## Target setting checklist

### 1. Set targets for intended outcomes.

Targets should reflect the actions planned and what the partnership is trying to achieve.

### 2. Specify what must actually *happen* for the desired outcome to be achieved, detailing:

- target inputs (e.g. resources in terms of staff or cash)
- processes (e.g. the activities which staff will have responsibility for)
- target outputs (e.g. the immediate consequences of these activities)
- milestones (stages to be reached by given dates)

These detailed targets may not need to be included in the strategy, but having them helps partners be clear about the level of investment and activity needed to achieve the desired result.

It also helps managers check that projects are on course. Setting targets for, and monitoring, inputs as well as outputs is vital for assessing the cost effectiveness of particular initiatives and understanding why a project may not have achieved its intended results.

### 3. Start from good baseline information.

Meaningful targets and good project design depend on having good information on the scale and nature of the problem. Where there are gaps in the baseline information, set a target date by which the data will be obtained.

### 4. Estimate the impact that the activities will have

Estimating impact is easier for some crimes than for others. Examples of good practice can help to give a feel for the expected impact from taking a similar course of action in similar conditions. For example, see (insert reference)

Running through this series of questions can help in judging where to pitch a target:

- What is the starting position?
  - What is the scale of the problem?
  - What is the trend?
  - How do these compare with other areas?
- What has similar activity achieved elsewhere?
  - Are we planning to tackle the problem in the same way?
  - Are the conditions the same?

Are we putting in the same resources?

- What else is going on that may affect performance?  
How might the target(s) be affected by other local or national initiatives?
- How does the local target relate to national targets?  
In the case of disorder and racist incidents, police forces and local authorities are now required, under the new duty of Best Value, to provide information on their performance against specific indicators.
- Has the staff providing services been consulted on the target?  
Does the target set take account of their input?  
How will staff commitment be secured?
- Is the target worthwhile?  
Will the public regard it as acceptable?  
Will achieving it be satisfying?  
Based on what has been achieved elsewhere, does it represent value for money?

5. Consider how the target is best expressed

**There are many different ways of framing targets. Some options include:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Absolute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>reduce the number of malicious arson incidents by 200</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proportional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>reduce the number of malicious arson incidents by 10%</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relative to a benchmark</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>reduce the rate of malicious arson incidents in Ward A to the borough-wide average</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relative to expected level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>reduce the rate of malicious arson incidents by 15% relative to expected background trends</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relative to cost/value for money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>save twice the amount invested in recovering burnt out vehicles</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tied to a tolerance threshold</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>reduce risk of malicious arson to less than 5% threshold</b></li> </ul>

**6. Make sure the targets set are clear and unambiguous, i.e.:**

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Realistic**
- **Timely & Timescaled**

Where possible a named person should be responsible for delivering and reporting on each target.

**7. Consider how the target might be met.**

Could the target be met in ways *other* than those you intend? If so, how will you check for / guard against this?

**8. Consider setting targets that reflect the role of different partners.**

Targets that reflect different partners' objectives can help in tracking and acknowledging contributions made by different agencies.

**9. Consider how the targets will be communicated to people who need to know about them.**

When, and how, will targets be built into work plans? How will the targets be shared with a wider audience?

**10. Review progress at regular intervals**

Checks against the targets will help to highlight where projects need adjusting or where targets need revising to reflect a changing situation. The action plan may also need revising to take account of new developments.