Economic Evaluation of the Four Tests

There are a number of previous studies that can be used to help assess the economic impact of the four tests; recognising that these tests are still in various stages of activation.

This evidence helps support a cost/benefit evaluation of each test area and gives impetus to conclude activation where the ROI and community impact is positive.

Evidence for Lighting of Underpasses (Spelthorne) and Parks (Old Dean)

1. Dudley and Stoke-on-Trent Lighting Trials (Painter and Farrington, 2001)

The main aim of this research was to assess the effect of improved street lighting on crime. Victimisation surveys were carried out before and after improved lighting in experimental and control areas.

Key findings:

- Crime decreased in the experimental areas compared to control areas.
- In Stoke, crime also decreased in adjacent areas, suggesting diffusion of benefits.
- Cost–benefit analyses showed that tangible savings from crimes prevented more than paid off the full capital costs within one year.
- Savings included prevented burglaries, vehicle crime, assaults, reduced victimisation, policing time, and increased community use of space.
- Improved lighting contributed to increased quality of life and encouraged residents to obtain further government funding.

A direct quote from the report:

“The financial savings from reduced crimes greatly exceeded the financial costs of the improved street lighting installed.”

This study has historically been relied upon by Treasury officials.

2. College of Policing Crime Reduction Toolkit

A synthesis of 13 studies showing:

- An average **21% reduction in crime** in areas receiving improved lighting.
- No evidence of crime displacement.
- Crime reduction linked to increased visibility, increased usage, and visible investment in neighbourhoods.
- Reductions are greater where existing lighting is poor — as in the three Positive Futures tests.

Average reductions:

- UK: **38 fewer crimes** (five studies)
- USA: **7 fewer crimes** (eight studies)

3. Cost-Effectiveness Perspective (Ditton, Nair and Bannister, 1993)

This work emphasises value for money, drawing on research by Bailey and Lynch (1991).

Findings:

- Lifetime cost of enhanced lighting across two sites: **£11,228**
- Value of crimes prevented in one three-month period: **£7,287**
- Saving rate: **£2,429 per month**
- Investment theoretically repaid in **less than five months**

Evidence for Graffiti Removal (Tadworth and Spelthorne)

1. Cost–Benefit Evaluation – Nevada Highways Study (2016)

Key findings:

- Graffiti cost Southern Nevada **$30 million per year**.
- Chain link fencing, coatings and landscaping were cost-effective.
- Security cameras were not cost-effective where graffiti reduction was small.

2. UK Local Authority Costs (2018–2023)

London Councils spent **£20–30 million** on graffiti removal over five years.

Urban Hygiene's 2025 guidance outlines ROI metrics:

- Reduction in cleaning costs
- Lower recurrence rates
- Positive impact on property values
- Reduction in law-enforcement and admin costs

UK councils justify graffiti removal economically even without controlled trials.

3. Policy Effectiveness Review (Heritage Sites, 2025)

Findings:

- Graffiti has significant cultural and economic impact.
- Research base is limited compared to lighting.

Evidence for Litter Picking and Installation of Litter Bins (Maybury, Tadworth, Old Dean)

1. Defra Extended Producer Responsibility (2019)

Key figures:

- Total litter cost to UK local authorities: **£662 million per year**
- Ground litter cost: **£138 million per year**

Ground litter is cost-heavy due to:

- Manual labour
- Vehicle deployment
- Waste disposal
- Repeat visits

Adding bins reduces littering and shifts waste into the cheaper “bin litter” category.

2. Keep Britain Tidy Evidence to Parliament (2014)

Indirect costs of litter include:

- Reduced property values
- Lower business footfall
- Vehicle damage
- Public health impacts
- Environmental degradation

Litter picking and bin installation reduce these externalities.

3. Behavioural Evidence (Professor Michael Brown, 2007–2025)

Findings:

- People litter more in already-littered environments.
- Clean environments reduce future littering.
- Resident involvement and local ownership are powerful.
- Supports the basis of **Positive Futures**.

Costs, Budget and Next Steps for the Four Tests Spelthorne

Total costs to date: £24,621

- £20,000 — lighting of the underpass
- £3,493 — Police time and related costs
- £1,000 — School engagement
- £128 — Recognition event

Estimated activation costs: £60,000

- Council quoted £60,000 for graffiti removal and repainting — deemed excessive.

Budget

- Lighting costs covered by the Borough Council.

Next Steps

- Tadworth has shown small-scale graffiti removal is affordable.
- Possible to challenge the underpass costings.

Maybury

Total costs to date: £4,888

- £3,488 — Police time
- £1,000 — School engagement
- £200 — Recognition event
- £200 — David Huse costs

Estimated activation costs: £6,000

- £1,315 — Two new standard bins
- £1,193 — New signs
- £3,492 — Plants and bushes

Budget

- PCC office has made available up to £6,000 (held pending Woking Council discussions).

Next Steps

- Email contact made with Woking Council to arrange meeting.
- Project to be community-led.

Tadworth

Total costs to date: £2,664

- £264 — Police time
- £800 — Youth Club workers
- £1,100 — MYTI Club (initial park activation)
- £500 — CIL funds for graffiti removal

Estimated activation costs: £4,764

- £1,500 — Remove hut
- £3,264 — Three interactive bins

Budget

- Hut and bin costs via CIL or PCC request.

Next Steps

- Plans and budget submission underway.
- Positive engagement by the Club.

Old Dean

Total costs to date: £2,554

- £1,914 — Work by Iain Britton and Katy Baker
- £640 — Police time

Estimated activation costs: £16,088

- £1,088 — New interactive bin
- ~£15,000 — Six new column lights

Budget

- David Huse will cover trial bin cost (needs local owner).
- No owner or plan for lights.

Next Steps

- Awaiting communication from bin manufacturer and Old Dean.
- Awaiting guidance from Councillor Shaun Garrett on lights.

Summary / Key Points

1. Covered and paid costs for all four tests: **£34,727**
2. Further activation costs: **£26,852**, of which **£6,000** is covered via PCC grant
3. £15,000 of the £27,352 relates to Old Dean lighting — no owner or plan
4. David Huse would like PCC to cover the **£1,088** trial bin at Old Dean
5. Excludes costs for Surrey University grant, David Huse's time, Andy Hill's time, and McLaren recognition event

Applying the Research Data to the Test Areas

Lighting

College of Policing data shows a **21% reduction in crime** in areas benefiting from lighting.
This metric can be applied to the Old Dean lighting proposal.

Litter Picking and Bins

- No numeric benefit equivalent to lighting.
- Old Dean will supply test criteria for the interactive bin.
- Tadworth intends to measure impact through weekly collection frequency and cost savings.

Graffiti

- Tadworth removed graffiti at minimal cost — a blueprint for other communities.
- Original Spelthorne ambition: repaint underpass and run a school art competition to create ownership.
- Given London wide spend, revisiting this is worthwhile.