

Unit 4 – Be the Change

Silla Carron lives in Clarence Way, one of London's most notorious neighbourhoods. She became well-known after she single-handedly transformed the 'sink estate', which had been plagued by anti-social behaviour of the worst kind. Unable to tolerate any more, she was forced to take action and stand up to the culprits herself.

Carron began her one-woman mission by calling the police every time she saw something suspicious, demanding that they clamp down on the crime. She personally appealed to the thugs and also took their photographs. As a consequence, she has been on the receiving end of vandalism, intimidation and has even received death threats, but she refuses to back down.

After persistently lobbying local government she had security on the estate escalated, ridding the area of gangs and putting an end to the 'living nightmare' the residents had to endure.

She also acts as a foster carer for the

unruly teens in the neighbourhood and has taken care of many troubled youngsters. She describes how they

caused havoc in the area, disturbing the peace and being abusive to residents. 'The problem is they have no boundaries. I give them guidance and rules and they respect that,' she says.

Carron is not afraid to take her quest to improve her neighbourhood even further, and regularly testifies in court in anti-social behaviour cases. Something she describes as, 'scary', but, she says, 'If I don't speak up, they've won.'

To add to her list of achievements, Silla started a residents' association, which fought for government grants of over five million pounds. The money has been used to transform the area with playgrounds and sports facilities.

When asked what she attributes her success to, Carron, who has won numerous awards for her courageous work, states, 'What if we just let them win? I'd rather get scared and speak up than stand by and do nothing.'



WORD ZONE

Phrasal verbs to describe taking action

1 To stand

2 To clamp

3 To back

4 To speak

5 To stand