GOLDSTEIN AWARDS

BROMLEY SAFER TRANSPORT TEAM

METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE, LONDON, UK.

Summary

Orpington College is a large, well established community college situated off Orpington High Street. While the majority of students are law-abiding, there was a minority who were intent on disruptive behaviour, bringing gang-affiliations and youth violence from neighbouring London boroughs.

Bromley has the largest population of elderly people (40%) of any London borough and they are frequent users of the bus network, particularly in the afternoons. The loud, intimidating behaviour exhibited by the college students directly affected the elderly community, forcing some not to use transport at all in the afternoon.

Problems were first identified in autumn 2007 which escalated and peaked in late 2009 with violent disorder on a bus and a gang related stabbing in the Orpington area. Problems were particularly prevalent between Monday and Friday at the end of the college day. The scale of the crime and disorder, and its impact on the fear of crime, raised significant political and community concern.

In late 2007, the Safer Transport Team began to implement a series of immediate, short-term solutions (such as high-visibility policing and rigorous use of Stop & Search powers) to combat the crime and disorder associated with the college, but with limited success. It was clear that there was a genuine need for medium to long term multi-agency work if sustained reductions in bus-related crime were to be achieved. Among the more notable examples of this problem-oriented approach from 2008 onwards included: An Information Sharing Agreement with Orpington College; re-siting of the entrance to the college; redevelopment of the college and its CCTV systems; engagement days with new students; weapons sweeps; properly allocated lockers for students; working closely with the student services manager to enforce exclusions of students involved in disorder; revenue operations; knife arches; covert

CCTV at bus shelters; and a very proactive approach to the investigation of offences and arrests of offenders.

The tactical delivery of all the above was championed by the Safer Transport Team, College Officer, Orpington Safer Neighbourhood Team, TfL, BTP and staff at Orpington College. The college term of 2010-2011 has seen no incidents of serious violence or disorder associated with the college or transport network, a feat that has not been achieved for many years. Residents, shopkeepers, bus drivers and local politicians have all provided very positive feedback to the Police, all showing a significant improvement in feelings of safety and security in and around the Orpington area.

The SARA process

Scanning

Orpington town centre and the bus network serving it were identified as the main location of the problem. With crime on the increase, the primary aim was to stabilize and stop any further monthly rises in crime levels and work towards halving crime levels within two years.
The problems included anti-social behaviour, revenue fraud, criminal damage, theft, assaults and one knife related stabbing incident. Searches of the college at the end of summer term 2008 had uncovered four knives and a hammer.

The college operates from Monday to Friday with peak times for crime and disorder generally between the times of 1500 - 1900 (when students finish). The peak offending time was identified to be when the business studies students finished. The first term of the new college year in autumn was historically the worst period with attendance at its highest and vulnerable new students influenced by the behaviour of their older peers.

Shops and businesses within the local community became victims of theft, harassment and criminal damage. Shopkeepers complained of losing trade and shoppers stated they were fearful of shopping in Orpington between 1500 and 1700 due to the students congregating on

the High Street. This intimidating behaviour had a particular impact on the elderly community of Orpington causing distress. On one occasion an elderly resident suffered a broken hip when he was knocked over by students misbehaving in the high street. A lot of the services provided by the shops in Orpington appealed to 16 - 24 year olds, in particular fast food outlets such as KFC, Favourite Chicken and the supermarkets who were not used to such a demonstrative, diverse mix of young people coming from neighbouring boroughs. Most of the shops did not have adequate security either in the form of CCTV or security staff and those that did found it hard to challenge inappropriate behaviour as they felt intimidated by the large groups that would gather at one time making it easier for those who wanted to commit crime.

Transport links were similarly affected with the bus operators, staff and passengers subject to thefts, fraud, verbal abuse and general ASB. Orpington is served by a large nearby bus terminus and three mainline rail stations, all providing easy access to more deprived areas of inner London. Despite students using schemes offered by TfL and based on an agreement of good behaviour and responsible travel (such as free/discounted oyster cards), many students continued to cause disorder on the bus network.

Initially, the problems were brought to police attention in late 2007 through anecdotal evidence from members of the public, reports from the college and crime statistics provided by TfL and MPS (such as Driver Incident Reports (DIRs), crime reports and driver surveys). This showed a marked increase in disorder which was in sharp contrast with other areas of the borough, and unique when compared to other nearby colleges (such as Bromley College). The differing transport links of the colleges had a particular bearing on this as Orpington has greater options of both rail and bus transport. *(See figures 1, 2 & 3)*

Analysis

Crime statistics between the 12 month period of 01/04/08 and 31/03/09 attributed a total of 27 recorded offences recorded for which students were responsible. It is strongly suspected that there was other crime and disorder by students not captured by the data. Violent offences

accounted for 44.4% of these broken down as 4 x ABH, 2 x GBH, 2 affray, 1 x possession of a bladed article, 2 x common assault and 1 x sexual assault averaging about one offence every two weeks.

Both GBH offences involved the use of knives and large number of students. One occurred on 02/12/2008 very near to the college when the victim had been targeted. The other was on an N47 bus near Orpington BR station after students went out in the area after college.

Almost all other less serious assaults took place in the high street or in the piazza by the college. Most resulted from arguments or ongoing conflicts between students. On occasions innocent members of the public were involved and suffered minor injuries.

Of the remaining types of crime, shoplifting and thefts had the highest numbers. Most of the shoplifting occurred in the High Street area but there were 2 cases when a group of students had taken a bus to St Mary Cray BR station and proceeded to steal items from shops in the vicinity as well as cause damage and disorder inside the premises.

Out of acquisitive crime, almost all thefts were predominantly student from student.

60% of all offences recorded occurred in the high street or the piazza.

The victims of crime were many and varied, with shops, businesses, bus companies, passengers and law abiding college students all affected.

The problems encountered by businesses, local residents, police and other services existed mainly due to the college being located in the middle of town centre, with crime and disorder usually happening at the end of the college day from 1500 - 1900.

The motivation of those who committed the crime is difficult to ascertain, but it appeared to stem from the opportunity afforded them by local police and businesses being unfamiliar with their modus operandi and from a minority of students who not only failed to notify the college of previous convictions for violence (as required on the prospective student application form), but were simply intent on disruptive behaviour, bringing gang-affiliations and youth violence from their place of residence on neighbouring inner-London boroughs.

2010 student induction data shows that over 40% of students attended the college from various London postcodes including Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark - all areas that

historically experience far greater levels of Serious Youth Violence (SYV) and gang associated disorder. It is unclear exactly how many problems were directly attributable to youths traveling in from other boroughs, but what is certain is that such demographics contributed to a rise in the fear of crime compared to actual crime rates (with the former tending to be far greater than the latter). Such fears were further exacerbated by the fact that, out of a total student population of 1230, 49.1% were from Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. Compared to the local population, where just 5% of residents consider themselves from BME backgrounds, cultural and social misunderstandings and ignorance caused friction and clashes within the Orpington community which, upon occasions, was subject to racial undertones.

<u>Response</u>

Following the analysis that was conducted over several months, an initial response was drawn up and implemented during the first half of 2008. This was primarily to reduce the incidents of anti-social behaviour and disorder involving college students travelling on transport systems. The initial aim was to reduce the symptoms of the problem (through education, engagement & strategies to 'design-out' crime) followed by a period of enforcement to further reduce/resolve causes of the problem. Success would be governed by a reduction in crime figures on buses and businesses within the Orpington area as well as passenger, driver and general public perceptions. A target reduction of 50% within 12 months from the end of College term 2008/2009 was planned. All interventions were created to suit the specific requirements of each strand of the problem with the overall aim of these to collectively work towards reducing and eventually resolving the problem.

- The Safer Transport Team (STT), working with the college and college officer, initiated an information sharing agreement which allowed Police to undertake checks via recognised police intelligence systems and share the information with the college. Working within the boundaries of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and in accordance with ECHR (specifically regarding proportionality and legality) the college

was made aware of prospective students who had not declared unspent criminal convictions relating to violence (as required to do so during the application process). This led to applications being refused and enabled the College to fully safeguard the Human Rights of other potential applicants. Implemented in 2010, this has been, and continues to be, a highly successful tool in ensuring potentially disruptive students with links to criminal gangs are prevented from entering the college from the start of term thus reducing the likelihood of crime and disorder, and protecting the majority of law-abiding students from harm.

- The STT liaised with the college course planning department establishing times when classes finished in order to gauge times for potential problems and disorder, times when there were fewer students attending or for those classes finishing early. This maximised resources for deployment of police and was a success as flooding the correct areas allowed the smooth exit of students and limited any student disorder. Quiet college days resulted in redeployment of officers to concentrate on other police priorities.

- The STT, at the instigation of Chief Superintendent Griggs, were moved from Bromley Police Station to Orpington Police Station based immediately next door to the College. This played a significant part in the overall policing presence, vastly increasing patrols of the area around the College by dint of its proximity.

- The STT, in partnership with Orpington Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), conducted a high visibility approach to the disorder hotspots which was successful in ensuring any disorder was limited. While a useful tactic this had limited success, aptly highlighted when an incident of serious disorder on a 51 bus made the national press. On the 3/11/09, a large group of students attempted to board an overcrowded bus and were refused entry by the driver. A group of 40 or so students forced their way onto the bus and refused to alight, culminating in a PCSO being violently assaulted. The high street area was shut for an hour and about 10 police units were

deployed to quell the disorder. There were seven arrests leading to criminal convictions for disorder and assault along with exclusions from the college.

• The STT enquired into the creation of a dispersal zone outside the college to encourage students not to loiter and leave the area earlier giving less opportunity to cause disorder. This was never implemented owing to the council's upcoming redevelopment of Orpington Town Centre. The multi million pound redevelopment of the high street was completed in June 2010. These works coincided with a large refurbishment and extension programme at Orpington College. The work of the Bromley Crime Prevention Design Advisor was instrumental in the re-positioning of the college entrance from the main square in The Walnuts shopping centre to Lychgate Road at the rear the college. This has made a big difference stopping large groups gathering in the main square and has shown a sharp decline in public order offences in the area. Work is still ongoing with the council to re-position the bus stop from the High Street to Lychgate Road and the dispersal zone is once again subject to council, college and police consultation. This will further prevent large groups gathering at bus stops in the high street blocking pavements and shop entrances as they wait to board for their homeward journey.

• With a certain number of college students having links to gangs, it was imperative to ensure the college provided adequate security to prevent others from gaining access to the college or from loitering within the entrance vicinity and this helped raise public perception of the college. During consultation with the college, the STT highlighted CCTV issues which were addressed during refurbishment and extension works of the building. CCTV both within and around the grounds of the college was fully updated to a digital system providing better image quality and easy access to copying to assist police in identification and prosecution of offenders.

• Working together with Orpington SNT, the STT organised class presentations to explain the Safer Transport/Neighbourhood Teams role, the help on offer and the

consequences for any students should they engage in crime and disorder on the transport links within the local vicinity and highlighted the quality of CCTV on the buses and in the town centre.

- To allow students to fully participate in helping police tackle the problems associated with Orpington College and to gauge student perceptions, students were encouraged to complete surveys in association with the college, the council and police to convey their views on police action and issues concerning them which helped build links between police and students. Questions were also asked about the student's mode of travel and the results led to questions being asked around the need for a travel plan, which was subsequently initiated by Bromley Council, with STT engagement from the outset. From the resulting survey, over 68.8% of students said they traveled to and from the college by bus. The Travel Plan's primary object was to encourage a sustainable modal shift from public transport to cycling and walking where feasible. This project was two years in the making and has only just been launched so has yet to yield results. The STT plan to work with the college on this project in the coming years. *(See figure 4)*

- Police engagement with students went further with STT stands during enrolment days at both Orpington and Bromley College. Along with information and useful contacts, students enrolling were assisted with their OYSTER card application forms and were offered a digital passport sized photo to alleviate the problem of the student's late OYSTER card applications. This assisted in reducing revenue fraud and consequently reduced driver disputes and ASB that were intrinsically linked. These forms were then collated on the student's behalf and forwarded to TfL with OYSTER cards arriving in time for the start of the new college year. This figure has now risen yearly whereby this process is now standard offering the necessary tools for legal travel to and from the college and reducing fare evasion. The stand also offered crime prevention advice with the IMMOBILISE database whereby students could register items such as mobile phones, i-pods and laptops which assists

students with the recovery of such items should they become lost or stolen. Students were also made aware of COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION NETWORK (CCN) in locations such as stores (MacDonald's), cafes, colleges (Orpington) and health and community centres around the borough which broadcasts important messages to let people know what is happening locally, how to keep safe and how they themselves can take action with regular input from the STT.

- Those enrolling into the college had their locker allocation organised and managed by the college police officer in conjunction with the college itself to maintain an audit trail of all those issued lockers and to assist in any locker sweeps if required. This helped in the prevention and detection of any drugs, knives and offensive weapons. Prior to this there was no record of who had what locker and as a result, many weapons were concealed and later used in disorder outside the college. This was established later after the arrest of some of those concerned in disorder.

- In order to address victim concerns from any associated college disorder, Shop Watch and Bus Watch were created whereby albums of images of anonymous priority local offenders were circulated to shops and bus companies so they could identify any offenders within their shop or bus. This allowed police an identification tool working with victims without breaching any data protection laws. This was followed up by both shop and bus surgeries which allowed those the chance to voice their concerns and also a chance to disclose any offences which they may not have ordinarily reported. College students were given their own surgeries so they too could report any incidents in the same manner.

- Shop safe radios were introduced to allow shops to communicate with each other and the channel is monitored by the newly created Orpington Town Centre Team offering a personal police response to all crime and disorder in the Orpington Town Centre area.

- Passengers were consulted via consultation groups which provided them with information on how they could report incidents with contact cards created for passengers with learning difficulties to assist drivers and the public with awareness of the difficulties encountered by people with disabilities traveling on the bus network.

- Enforcement consisted of multi agency police archway metal detector operations involving MET Police (Safer Transport along with Orpington, St Mary Cray and Petts Wood Safer Neighbourhood Teams), British Transport Police (BTP), support units and Orpington College. These were undertaken at the college and three local BR stations used by students travelling to the college. Students would be subject to the screening arch as a condition of entry on such days with the full co-operation and support of the college. College staff trained in search techniques conducted the searches. In addition to uniformed police presence, covert police would operate in the surrounding area to watch for tip offs and turnarounds. Many minor drug seizures and arrests would result from this practice. From these operations, there were arrests for offences such as drugs, offensive weapons and fraud as well as offering reassurance to students

- Revenue operations with revenue inspection officers on both rail and bus networks, highlighted the opportunity for students to engage freely in fraudulent travel whereby they could choose to travel both to and from unmanned BR stations. The figures collated with police and Rail Enforcement Officers on such operations showed an alarmingly high number of students traveling without valid rail tickets. The installation of barriers at these stations would push those without rail tickets back towards bus travel and other alternative sustainable travel. Enquiries were made on the installation of barriers at these stations and Network Rail have installed OYSTER card reading technology at all South Eastern BR but barriers are dependant on refurbishment plans at the relevant stations. Good quality digital CCTV is now

operational at all BR stations and footage is quickly retrievable through South Eastern BR central office.

- The use of the newly purchased APOLLO scanning equipment allowed police to scan mobile phones of those being stopped, check on the registered keeper's details and on occasions, arrest those caught in possession of stolen or unaccounted phones. This equipment was also used in conjunction with crime prevention initiatives and the IMMOBILISE database

- With knife enabled crime in London a rising concern, the STT conducted regular weapon and drug sweeps of the college buildings and grounds coupled with searches of those both entering and leaving the college premises to combat knife crime and other offences such as drugs and to ascertain the details of suppliers where possible. A zero tolerance approach by the college for problem offenders, particularly violent ones or those found with weapons meant the immediate exclusion of those concerned.

- Criminal damage on the bus network, particularly at bus shelters was found to be an ongoing problem and was also highlighted as a major contributor towards the fear of crime. To address this the police worked together with Bromley council, TfL Bus Tag and a private security firm (Covert Security Systems) to select hotspot bus shelters for criminal damage in the Orpington area and place covert cameras in them for a three week period in an operation called Op Monica. The cameras were later removed and footage revealed a total of 8 offences which were investigated by police and resulted in five arrests and 8 parental intervention letters. The success of this operation was advertised locally helping to deter future suspects and raise public confidence in the police.

- Parental letters were found to be a very effective tool in preventing those coming to police attention at a very early stage from committing further offences. This led to the

introduction of the Traffic Light Database (TLD). Those first coming to police notice received a parental letter (green), second incidents a home visit (amber) and a third (red) meant a referral to the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit at Bromley Council for the review and possible creation of an ABC and ASBO later (if required). Its effectiveness has resulted in 95% of those receiving a first incident parental letter (green), not coming to police attention again. The TLD has been mirrored by the TfL Earn Your Travel Back (EYTB) scheme, which took its design from Bromley STT's good practice, whereby those involved in a 2nd incident on buses automatically have their details referred to the council and then to TfL for consideration of having their OYSTER cards removed and only "earned back" on completion of voluntary work. To date there have been over 200 referrals to TfL.

Assessment

All of the interventions created, deployed or utilised by Bromley Safer Transport Team have been carefully tailored to the specific needs of each individual problem associated with the college students and Orpington Town Centre over the past four years. All have been successful in varying degrees but statistics provided by a Safer Transport Command analyst show a very significant drop in bus related crime and disorder since the creation of the Orpington College problem solving process in 2008. This is highlighted by two very important statistics those being the sharp fall in 3 year bus related DIR's and the 3 year offences in Orpington High Street. Both these figures have seen a 70% reduction from the highest levels in 2008 which was a staggering 20% more than the initial ambitious reduction target. The multi agency partnership approach with police, BTP, TfL, Bromley Council, the bus companies and the college and students themselves have been the key to this success, with all working on the initiatives detailed in this application. *(See figures 5 & 6)*

Today the atmosphere is more relaxed with feedback from shopkeepers, businesses, students and bus drivers all noting a vast reduction in problems on buses in and around the Orpington area. There has only been one recent incident involving college students with no

reported incidents in the Autumn period (the first time in five years) The input towards the college in terms of police education, awareness and partnership work is considered to be imperative in further building links and trust with the college and the students. Offering to help and assist in the enrolment process from the beginning of the academic year, along with promoting the Safer Transport Team shows the level of commitment to helping students with all their bus related transport issues throughout the year, although students are fully aware that whilst they will be supported, any offences and disorder will be fully investigated with the support off the college and criminal convictions and exclusions sought where applicable.

The Bromley Safer Transport Team conducted a survey in MARCH 2011on buses serving Bromley borough. In total 431 surveys were completed which showed Bromley town centre has the highest bus usage (36.7%) on the borough with Orpington the second highest with 24.65%. Over 61% of persons surveyed said they used buses on a daily basis with social usage the highest at 51.97% (which appears linked to the high percentage of senior citizens on the borough). 48.03% stated commuting/school/college as their main reason for using buses. The bus numbers 61, 358 and 208 were shown to be the most used buses in Bromley with all passing through Orpington. Time frame for use showed the morning period (0700 - 0900) as the busiest with the late afternoon second.

The most important figures of this survey revealed only 2.33% of users had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months and only 16.36% considered themselves 'scared'. Overall fear of crime is very low with 21.63% feeling very safe, 69.53% safe, 2.56% unsafe and only 0.70% very unsafe.

This survey clearly corroborates the work undertaken by the Bromley Safer Transport Team and its partners, showing that members of the public, students, shops, bus companies and in particular bus passengers all feel safer and enjoy traveling on buses in the Orpington area as a result of problem solving measures successfully applied to Orpington College and Orpington Town Centre.

<u>Agency and officer information</u>

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PC Darren Barlow, PC Dave Catlow, PS Matt Hume, PS Chris Swain, PC Mark Demian, PC Matt Shade, PC Jane Hughes, A/Insp Andy Buckley, A/Insp John Ward, Insp Darren Murphy, A/Insp Daren Metcalf & a team consisting of 18 Police Community Support Officers.

Bromley Borough Police, MPS:

Chief Superintendent Charles Griggs, Dave Prebble (Borough Partnership Manager), Julian Hurst (Media and Communications Manager), Lyn Poole (Crime Prevention Design Advisor), Alan Marshall (Safer Neighbourhood Analyst)

Safer Transport Command, MPS:

Chet Beresford (Problem Oriented Partnership Advisor)

Orpington Safer Neighbourhood Team, Bromley Police, MPS

PS Russell Lamb, PC Alan Hyland, PC Chris Taylor & a team consisting of 6 Police Community Support Officers

Cray Valley West Safer Neighbourhood Team, Bromley Police, MPS:

PS Dave Conyers, PC Norman Warner, PC Claire White & a team consisting of 6 Police Community Support Officers

Petts Wood Safer Neighbourhood Team, Bromley Police, MPS:

PS John Kemp, PC Katherine Reeves & a team consisting of 3 Police Community Support Officers

Orpington College:

PC Sev Coban (College Officer, MPS), Steve Cooper (Student Services Manager), Simon Norton (Principle), Robet Gee (Vice Principle)

Transport for London:

Emma Davies (Police Liaison Officer), Edgerton Rogers (SE Area CCTV Co-ordinator), Mark Little (Revenue Inspector Supervisor), Angela Miller (Infrastructure Controller), John Gowers (ID Regional Manager)

Bromley Council:

Colin Newman (Head of Community Safety), Steve Heeley (Senior Transport Planner), Jackie Baxter (Environmental Campaigns Officer), Peter Sibley (Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator), Debbie Rickson (Anti-Social Behaviour Unit), Steven Nolan (Anti-Social Behaviour Unit)

British Transport Police:

PS PC Simon Fuller, PC Alex O'Leary, PC Sing Man Lam

Covert Security Solutions:

Steve Adams (Director)

Figure 1:
The diagram below shows the steady rise in bus related DIR incidents recorded on buses in the Orpington High Street area between 01/2007 and 05/2008.
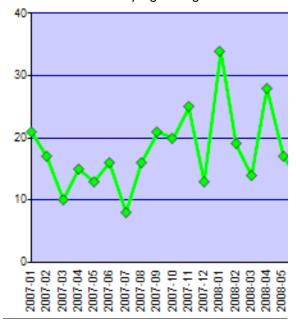

Figure 2:
The map below shows bus related Driver Incident Reports (DIRs) in the Orpington High Street Area.
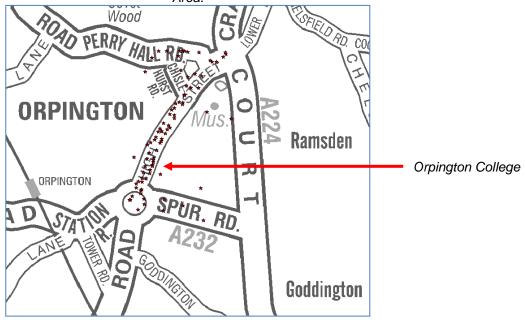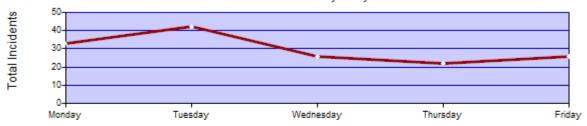

Orpington College

Figure 3:
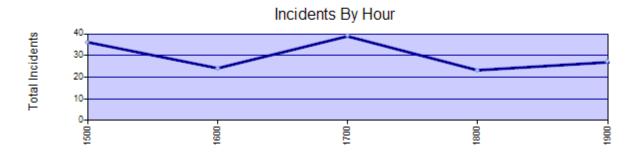*Charts showing times, frequency of DIRs, routes affected and crime types and times.*

		Incidents	Pct of Total
1	1700	52	10.6%
2	1900	48	9.8%
3	1500	43	8.7%
4	1600	37	7.5%
	2000	37	7.5%
	2100	37	7.5%
7	1800	35	7.1%
8	2200	31	6.3%
9	1400	25	5.1%
10	1300	24	4.9%
	2300	24	4.9%

		Incidents	Pct of Total
1	51	135	27.4%
2	208	87	17.7%
3	353	32	6.5%
	R1	32	6.5%
5	R11	31	6.3%
6	61	30	6.1%
7	358	23	4.7%
8	R4	20	4.1%
9	B14	19	3.9%
	R3	19	3.9%

17

		Incidents	Pct of Total
1	Travel Fraud	189	38.4%
2	Disorder	169	34.3%
3	Vehicles	89	18.1%
4	Assaults	17	3.5%
5	Buildings	12	2.4%
6	Disorder Youths	11	2.2%
7	Theft Miscellaneous	3	0.6%
8	Dips	1	0.2%
	Robbery Personal	1	0.2%

Incidents By Day

Incidents By Hour

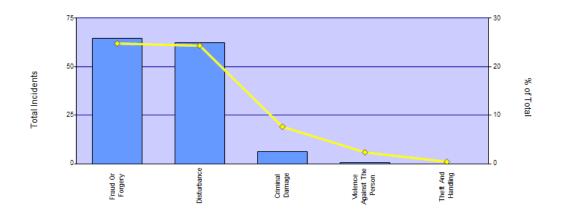|		Incidents	Pct of Total
1	Fraud Or Forgery	62	41.6%
2	Disturbance	61	40.9%
3	Criminal Damage	19	12.8%
4	Violence Against The Person	6	4.0%
5	Theft And Handling	1	0.7%

Figure 4:
Daily travel modes of Orpington College students taken from the Travel Plan Survey 2010
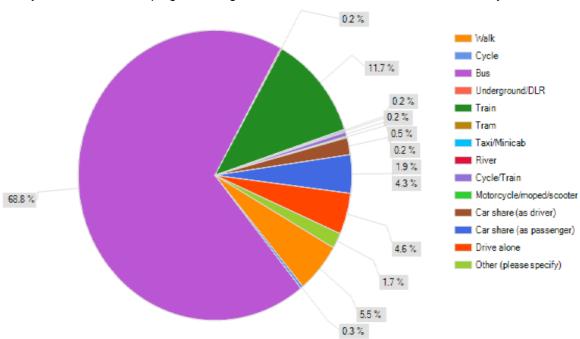
Figure 5:
The diagram below shows the sharp fall in bus related DIR incidents recorded on buses in the Orpington High Street area between 01/2007 and 05/2008 and the stabilising effect the work the Bromley Safer Transport Team from August 2008 to present.
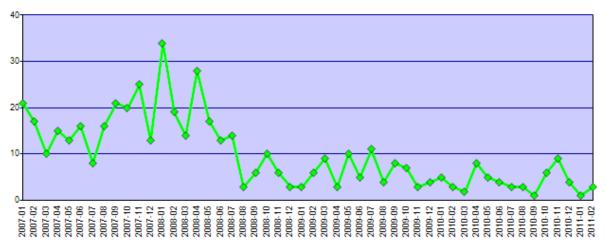

Figure 6:
The diagram below shows the sharp fall in bus related crime types and times recorded on buses in the Orpington High Street area between 01/2007 and 05/2008 and the stabilising effect the work the Bromley Safer Transport Team from August 2008 to present.