

ABSTRACT

REACH FOR SUCCESS

"A project designed to take a generation of young people in a small area of Cleveland out of the influence of crime, and to improve the quality of life of all residents. It is an attempt to tackle the causes of crime on a local basis and move from confrontation to compromise".

This problem solving initiative was initiated in 1997 following extensive analysis of crime and disorder trends and consultation in the form of public crime meetings and surveys.

The target areas of Grangetown and South Bank suffered from high levels of unemployment, crime and disorder. These issues dominated public debate and it was obvious that there was a lack of confidence within the community. This revealed itself in a cynicism at Police efforts to effectively deal with these problems, In short, there was a great deal of frustration and due to the closure of businesses and the moving from the area of long established residents, a spiral of decline was gaining an increased momentum. In particular, young people saw no future and had no sense of purpose. They were turning to drugs and crime as a consequence.

Both areas had been granted Challenge Fund status to regenerate the housing stock and improve community facilities, however, both the police and the community believed this work would be undermined if the problems of drugs, crime and disorder were not tackled.

The opportunity was there to take a new approach and work in full partnership with other concerned agencies, businesses and most importantly the residents.

The problem was tackled by a combination of initiatives driven by the Police. Central to these was an attempt to involve the main perpetrators of crime, the young people of the area, in compromise, not conflict. It was done through sport - Basketball, using positive role models from England, the United States and Canada.

The target age group was from 6 - 18 years.

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This initiative resulted in a unique partnership between the author, his Community Policing Team and an American Special Needs Teacher who is the Player/Coach of a local basketball team, the Teesside Mohawks. His experience and rise from a ghetto background to achieving success in the USA and Europe provided a refreshing approach to dealing with young people.

Outdoor facilities have been manufactured and installed in the centre of the most troubled areas. Role models from the Mohawks basketball club coach and counsel young people in all schools as well as providing evening and school holiday sessions. In excess of 3,500 young people have already participated and local teachers, residents and youth workers praise the impact the project has made to attitudes of their children.

More importantly there has been a dramatic reduction in crime and disorder in the area. In the past few years burglary has more than halved and car crime has dropped to a quarter of its previous levels. This has allowed effective economic and social regeneration to take place and be maintained.

Sports England have recognised the value of this scheme and are now providing finance to evaluate the possibility of rolling Reach for Success out into other parts of the United Kingdom as a 'showcase' project.

CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE(S)
SCANNING	1 - 2
ANALYSIS	2 - 4
RESPONSE	4 - 9
ASSESSMENT	10 -12
CONCLUSION	12
COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM OFFICERS	13
APPENDICES	14

SCANNING.

Grangetown and South Bank lie within the Langbaugh Police District of Cleveland. Cleveland, formerly known as Teesside is an urban area in the North East of England with a history of heavy engineering, chemical processing and ship building, centred on the River Tees. (See Appendix 1).

The Force area is 59,090 hectares and has a population of 557,700. It is Policed by 1,416 Officers and 635 Support Staff. It is split into four Police Districts.

The Grangetown and South Bank areas are at the heart of Cleveland with a combined population of 16,000. They have the following characteristics:-

Unemployment	40%
• Single Parent Families	38%
• Population under age of 16 years	33%

This compares with a National Average of 12% unemployment and 18.9% single parent families and highlights the social deprivation of the areas.

Both areas suffered badly due to the closure of major industries and restructuring of others such as British Steel and the Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI). They still retain a proportion of residents who were born and bred in the area who have either retired or have been made redundant, but there has been a steady population decline over the last 20 years.

Crime has increased in almost direct proportion to the exodus of the working population. The areas have featured in the press both locally and nationally for all the wrong reasons, and they became notorious for young people racing around the streets in stolen motor cars which would then be set alight. Burglaries and other offences were being committed, with local shop keepers being particular targets. Robberies occurred on a very regular basis and even reasonably profitable businesses saw their profit margins cut or were forced to close.

These problems were further exacerbated by the fact that these crimes were being committed by youths who lived in the area. It was difficult to obtain evidence on which to convict, due to reluctance from witnesses for fear of reprisals. Groups of young people would hang about on street comers drinking, being abusive, causing damage to property and would victimise those who complained.

Although these problems were not unique within Cleveland the scale of crime and vandalism particularly by young people was such that it was the most challenging to address. It also became a disproportionate drain upon the resources of the Force in preventing these localities becoming 'no go' areas. The cost of vandalism to publicly owned properties in Grangetown alone, in the year 1995/1996 totalled £333,580.

Clearly this spiral of decline, could not be allowed to continue and the Police undertook crime surveys, attended in excess of ten public meetings and listened to the concerns from the business community. Discussions took place with local politicians and council officials and the fact that basic work from the public utilities could not routinely be carried out underlined the scale of the problem. There was almost no affordable local youth facilities available and many of those that existed had been vandalised.

It would therefore be wrong to attribute the identification of the problem to any one individual organisation. Police managers and patrol officers, as well as the whole community, recognised it but no one organisation had the means to tackle all the issues themselves. It was a multi agency local government problem from the outset but it required a catalyst and a driver in the form of the Police.

ANALYSIS

The crime problems were analysed by the author and the District Crime Analysts using the Cleveland Police Crime and Incident Pattern Analysis System (CIPAS). It indicated the scale of the, increase in crime in Grangetown and South Bank over the past twenty years. (See Appendix 2).

It also indicated a dramatic increase between 1993 - 1996. (See Appendix 3).

Burglary and auto crime were the most prevalent and young people between the ages of 11 – 18 the major offenders.

The analysis revealed that if the underlying causes of crime were not tackled crime would continue to rise. The analysis did not reveal, however, the willingness and desire of the community to improve their area.

Public meetings were held and there were a number of major public concerns which emerged. (See Appendix 4).

A comprehensive crime survey was conducted on behalf of the Police by Safe in Teesside, a business partnership with the remit to make the whole of Cleveland a safer place to live. (See Appendix 5).

Analysis clearly showed that the public had serious concerns over the effects of crime and disorder on their daily lives, particularly with regards to young offenders. The community also saw that the issue of auto crime and burglary needed to be resolved before any lasting improvements could take place.

Analysis of the custody records at the designated Police Station at South Bank indicated that, traditionally, between 50 - 60% of offenders were between the ages of 11 and 18. They were the age group responsible for most burglaries and auto crime.

Clearly the entire community would have to become involved, as crime and the fear of crime had become an integral part of every day life. Not only would it need to include residents, businesses and housing providers but also the Local Authority and the remaining industries in trying to provide employment opportunities.

A member of the Probation Service was tasked to consult the young people of the area. It became evident that they were particularly concerned about crime and the impact it had on their own lives and futures, albeit they were friends, colleagues and school mates of the perpetrators, as well as the victims. (See Appendix 6).

The greatest harm felt by the public in general was the loss in confidence in their ability to enjoy a normal life, to leave their home after dark and to feel safe walking the streets. There was also a great deal of frustration at the Police's apparent inability to resolve these issues. The public saw it as a 'Police' problem.

Prior to the project the Police and the Local Authority were simply fire-fighting. A great deal of effort was being made in the areas of crime prevention but much of this was defensive. Unsightly bars and grills escalated the fear of crime and deterred new businesses moving into these areas. There was a philosophy of "just keeping the lid on it" and Police patrols were carried out in vans and cars with protective grills on their windows. A great many high profile, manpower intensive operations were carried out in attempting to tackle the problems but none appeared to instil public confidence.

Despite these efforts analysis revealed crime was continuing to escalate and throwing resources at the problem was not having the desired effect.

Having identified the problem, the issue became one of, "how to tackle it?". Further extensive consultation was clearly necessary and in late 1996 and early 1997 further meetings were held. An example of this was in February, 1997 when in excess of 120 people attended a conference at St. John's Church Hall, South Bank, to discuss and explore the way forward.

This group comprised of a broad section of the community, i.e. residents, business, the Church, Local Authority, Police and representatives from the ethnic minorities, pensioners and women's groups. Facilitated workshops were created and from these it became clear that they wanted the following:-

- Locally based Officers patrolling on foot;
- Full liaison with a nominated community group at monthly intervals;
- Officers to work with young people and help devise a youth strategy;
- Agencies to work together and to share information;
- Criminality to be tackled vigorously.

These consultations were pivotal events as the Police were now asking, how do you wish to be Policed? What are your priorities? in order that we could respond and be answerable for the actions taken to combat the highlighted problems. In turn the wider community and other authorities fully accepted their responsibilities and role in tackling crime and its related issues.

At an early stage the criteria for success was determined as a reduction of 25% in burglary and auto crime over 3 years and for the police to work with young people to reduce the fear of crime in the community and to sustain these reductions.

RESPONSE

The Force has three main operational strategies in its effort to reduce crime:-

- Zero Tolerance to burglary and auto crime, of life issues as a short term expedient;
- A longer term Problem solving approach to reduce demands upon resources;
- Partnerships between the Police and other interested parties, particularly the Local Authorities.

It was determined that a combination of these three strategies would be the most appropriate response, but to tailor these to the needs of Grangetown and South Bank, delivering them by locally based officers.

The primary response was to begin to restore public confidence in the Police and this was believed to be necessary to underpin all future initiatives. This was done in the following ways:-

ADDITIONAL POLICE AND NEW OFFICES

Following an economic option appraisal approval was given by Government Office for the North East for funding for six additional Police Officers to work in these areas. This doubled the number of Officers available and provided a kick-start for a Community Policing Team initiative. Community Police Offices were opened in the North and South of Grangetown and in the West of South Bank. Two of which are shared with other Housing, Health and Social Services agencies using the one stop shop philosophy.

MOBILE PHONES

The Officers working in these areas were provided with mobile phones which were variously paid for by Resident Associations, Housing Providers and Businesses. Contact cards were printed giving the Officers' names and telephone numbers. The Police paid the phone bills and also for delivery of the contact cards to every home and business in the area to allow immediate contact on a formal and informal basis. A bonding process began.

WITNESS/NICTIM SUPPORT

Because of the problem of securing evidence to prosecute offenders a retired Army Officer was recruited to work with victims of crime and to provide support for witnesses in Grangetown throughout the judicial process. Similarly an ex Local Government Worker, was employed to look after witnesses in South Bank. Help was therefore always on hand to provide support and to counter any witness intimidation. They work from the same Offices as the Community Policing Teams.

CCTV

A partnership was developed between the Police and the Local Authority to install CCTV cameras in the most vulnerable areas. The Police acted as Project Manager and secured contracts for the installation and establishment of a Control Room on local authority premises.

Consultation with the local community took place and sites were established where the cameras could, and should, be installed.

CASE CONFERENCING

To prevent young offenders climbing the criminal ladder Police Officers from the Community Policing Team began to work with the parents of first time offenders in an attempt to divert

them away from more serious crime. It was determined that a focus for diversion was necessary and many were referred to the 'Reach For Success' Project which is discussed later.

On the other hand recidivist offenders who failed to take advantage of diversion were targeted and arrested.

OTHER POLICE TACTICS

The Community Policing Team with the consent of the residents, made a point of stop checking and searching anyone suspected of being involved in crime. A special effort was made to continually check those individuals subject to conditions of bail. Any breach of these conditions would result in the offender being arrested. Full use was also made of every available Force resource from motorcycles to horses to implement these policies. All, however, under the direction and control of the Community Police Team and reported upon to the local community forums.

These policies were **visible** to the community and were all designed to meet the primary objective of restoring public confidence in the Police and reducing crime and the fear of crime.

It was recognised by all the parties that enforcement and defensive crime prevention alone would not deal with the root cause of the problem, generation after generation of young people being indoctrinated into crime. At the heart of the response was an attempt to divert the next generation away from crime. It was called 'Reach for Success'.

THE REACH FOR SUCCESS PROJECT

Whilst still striving for a solution to the problem of crime being committed by young people living in these areas it was clear that a solution had to be found within the same locality. It was also evident that a strategy was necessary to deal with and work with young people. This was the birth of the Reach For Success Project which is the keystone to this problem solving initiative. It involved the introduction of a relatively new sport to the area - Basketball.

Space and opportunity to install basketball facilities existed in the local Cromwell Road School, South Bank, which suffered from repeated vandalism and burglary. The Headteacher, [REDACTED] commendably agreed to the use of her school playground to pilot the project.

[REDACTED], a Special Needs Teacher at another local school, was approached. He is a Player/Coach for the Teesside Mohawks Basketball Team and has played professionally at the highest levels in the United States. He is an American who was raised in a ghetto and through

sport and with the help of the Police and Church had achieved success in the USA. He therefore had both motive and opportunity to help.

A partnership was formed between [REDACTED] and the Police with the intention of giving sporting opportunity to the young people in Grangetown and South Bank. It was essential that this project strived to change a culture where role models were often derived from the criminal elements and drugs dominated.

Consultation took place with the youth panels, youth clubs and youngsters on the street corners where the ideas were put forward. [REDACTED] message to them was "Listen, here is a Police Officer who is looking for an alternative to confrontation". Overwhelming backing was received.

S In order to make an impact it was necessary to move quickly but the cost of providing facilities was prohibitive. Imperial Chemical Industries and the local apprentice training school known as TTE designed and manufactured the posts, backboards and basketball rings without cost as their contribution to the community. The Local Authority staff erected them and the project was formally launched on 4th July, 1997.

A bid was made to the Single Regeneration Budget Community Chest Fund and the pilot project was established. The Local Education Authority allowed the use of indoor facilities at another local comprehensive school, St. Peter's at South Bank and at the Grangetown Boys' Club.

The success of the scheme was demonstrated by the level of support from all sections of the community.

r Two hundred and fifty young people together with representatives from the Public and Private Sector, Local Councillors, Church and ethnic minority leaders attended the launch of the project. Perhaps most important was the attendance of those who had suffered most, the local residents.

Each youngster received a T-shirt printed with the Reach For Success and anti-drugs logos. A combination of local businesses provided 50 basketballs and refreshments for the day.

In brief, in the words of a local youth leader [REDACTED], "A phenomenon had begun". The impact was immediate and it was pleasing to see parents joining in with their sons and daughters making use of the basketball facilities in the school yard. (See Appendix 7a).

The whole ethos of the scheme was to instil the philosophy of team work with emphasis on respect for themselves and others. The target group was 6 - 18 years and quality role models were vital. All sessions begin with 'counselling' from individuals considered suitable to be "role models". Issues affecting young people, ranging from drugs to self-esteem, are debated.

The "role models" have grown with the scheme and are recruited through the United States Collegiate system and are prospective teachers taking time out to broaden their knowledge.

A small management team was established involving Police and local businesses and from there the project began to expand. The growing reputation of the scheme saw demands from other schools to take part.

Consequently, consultation took place with all the eleven headteachers in the area and their staff. A meeting was held at South Bank Police Station and they enthusiastically agreed full co-operation. They stated that with the influence of Reach For Success, children were easier to teach. As a result the scheme spread to all the schools in Grangetown and South Bank.

The local Health Trust recognised the work being done and provided formal training for the coaching staff on Health and related issues. These actions were designed to lay the foundation for the long-term future of the project.

As the scheme grew and more coaches were requested, the Tees Valley Housing Association provided a home free of charge in Grangetown for the young American basketball coaches. They relate very well to the young people in the community and are having a very positive impact.

[REDACTED]

Support and management assistance were pledged by Rotary Clubs and an organisation called Teesside Tomorrow, a business group made up of the top 80 companies in the area, is backing the project.

When the project commenced in April, 1997 there was a promise of a prize to the most improved young people. Four young people were later selected by an independent panel who recognised their improvement and the contribution they had made within the community.

The prize was a trip to an American Basketball Camp in Connecticut in July, 1998 followed by a stay as guests of Connecticut State Police. This was awarded regardless of the young persons financial status. These same young people now work within the project.

In 1999 an exchange visit took place where a dozen young people from the Police Athletic League in Connecticut visited Grangetown and South Bank to play basketball against the local teams. The visit was hosted by the local community in partnership with the University of Teesside.

There are now in excess of 3,500 youngsters who have completed the Reach For Success project and school Heads now recognise its value. Excluded and disruptive youngsters are now being channelled into the scheme because of its effectiveness.

SINGLE REGENERATION BUDGET FUNDING (SRB)

As part of the response to the problems, and with police support, both areas competed for and were awarded Central Government Single Regeneration Budget Challenge funding. A great deal of investment is currently being made to improve the environment, with major renovations in the housing stock. This also includes the provision of recreation areas. To allow this to take place and to secure such funding, the restoration of public confidence was vital.

The Police have played a full part in the SRB process with the District Commander being a member of the board appointed to approve and allocate expenditure. In addition a Police Officer has been seconded to the Local Authority Policy Unit to assist in co-ordinating the efforts of the Police and Local Authority.

Already the SRB **Boards** have been asked for help to further develop the Reach for Success programme throughout every school and to maintain its impact and momentum. The Board comprises of local residents, Councillors, businesses, Council Officers and representatives of public and private sector bodies. Approval and future funding for Reach for Success has been **approved**.

A mini-bus has been provided by the South Bank SRB partnership to transport children between schools, to attend competitions and also for the benefit of the wider community.

An outdoor floodlit basketball pitch has been constructed in a purpose-built park in Grangetown and Reach For Success provide coaching facilities for the local youngsters.

ASSESSMENT

Since; the launch of the Reach For Success project. in 1997 the improvements in the quality of life around Grangetown and South Bank have been dramatic.

From April, 1997 to April, 1998 crime in Grangetown and South Bank fell dramatically. The major. reductions were in burglary and auto crime where reductions of 62.8% and 77.7% were noted:

From April 1997 to April 1999 these reductions have been maintained at 59.5% and 66% respectively. (See Appendix 8)

These figures for Grangetown and South Bank compare favourably with this type of crime for the same period in the rest of the Force area where burglary and auto crime increased by 5.8% and 5.3% respectively.

A change of attitude in the community was evidenced by the letters from the Grangetown Residents' Association (See Appendix 7c), and the South Bank Community Forum. (See Appendix 7d).

Another measure of change was the reductions in arrests of people aged between 11 - 18 years old from Grangetown and South Bank. As assessment on the first 4 months of the years 1996 - 1999 showed the following:-

1996 - 249 arrests	1997 - 212 arrests	1998 - 130 arrests	1999 - 110 arrests
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i.e. between 1996 - 1999 a reduction of 56.8%

As a further check detailed research has been made on CIPAS which shows that detected crimes committed by offenders under the age of eighteen years have also dropped.

This is evident as in the first four months of 1997, '135 persons of this age group were either charged or reported. In 1998 this figure was 48, a reduction of 64.5%. In 1999 this figure stabilised at 47.

Incidents, including crime and minor disorder, in Grangetown and South Bank also fell from 6,037 in 1996/97 to 3,189 in 1997/98. A reduction of 2,848 or 47.2%. (See Appendix 9).

The cost of damage to Local Authority properties also declined dramatically (See Appendix 7e). The same reduction applied to local businesses. One local supermarket chain, A. Heagney Ltd., state they have shown a reduction of 62% in crime at their Grangetown supermarket and 50% at their South Bank branch. (See Appendix 7f). The public utilities have also been able to complete their work on schedule. (See Appendix 7g).

A second crime survey was carried out by Safe in Teesside in the Grangetown area in early 1998, to evaluate the impact of our Policing policies. A summary of results is included in (Appendix 10), however it was pleasing to note that 65% of those questioned thought the Police had a better relationship with local people than had been the case twelve months before. There was also less fear of crime and people felt safer when going out after dark.

Assessment is a continual process and involves residents and businesses from both the public and private sector. In addition the Police report to a Police Consultative Group on a monthly basis in accordance with their wishes. The Police report on their performance and issues surrounding crime and quality of life are addressed at these meetings.

As with all plans there were minor procedural and practical difficulties in implementation. Many of which rested upon interpersonal relationships between the players. The major difficulty was changing the culture of those involved to believe that success could be achieved. The greatest asset in achieving this was success itself - once this became tangible belief flowed back.

Reduction in crime, improved quality of life, reduced demands on Police time have all allowed Officers to target and spend time dealing with issues which otherwise would have been overtaken by demands.

During the implementation phase great effort was required to ensure that the surrounding communities were not to be the subject of displaced crime. An examination of the crime statistics for the adjacent areas of Eston, Normanby and Teesville show a 30% reduction in crime and a letter is included from Eston Residents' Association describing the efforts made by the Police. (See Appendix 7h).

Most importantly this initiative has led to a fundamental change in the relationship between the Police Management and the Operational Officers involved. The ownership of the problem now rests with the Officers on the ground. They have been given the necessary support from their District Commander and his Senior Managers, but the successes achieved have been directly

attributable to their own efforts. Within Langbaourgh Police District the hierarchical chain has been broken and there is a developing expectation that initiative and best practice emanates from the grass roots and does not cascade from above.

in May 1999, Sports England, formerly the England Sports Council, selected Reach for Success as a 'showcase' project and have agreed to fund the staffing and administration for the next five years to evaluate a possible national roll-out programme.

CONCLUSION

This problem solving initiative was conceived and initiated by the Police with a view to reducing repetitive demands upon patrolling officers and achieving the criteria for success outlined earlier. It is now being driven by the community.

There is no doubt it has achieved its objectives and crime reduction has been sustained.

Sponsorship of the Reach For Success project was approximately £55,000 in the financial years 1997/1998 and 1998/1999. In kind contributions e.g. peoples' time, the use of facilities and the design and supply of equipment totalled around £50,000. The additional Police Officers, Witness Victim Support Workers totalled around a further £200,000. By the end of 1999 it is anticipated that the total number of young people passing through the scheme will have reached 5,000.

This Problem Orientated Policing Initiative although Police driven has resulted in solid partnerships being developed with a view to making a long-term contribution to improving the quality of life for the people of Grangetown and South Bank. It has already been successful in reducing crime and the fear of crime, more importantly, however it prepared the ground for a successful SRB programme which should increase employment opportunities and the general prosperity of the area. It is not impossible for a community to **'Reach for Success'**.

Not a bad result for an organisation which Herman Goldstein has described as "an anomaly in a free society".

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PC 813 HANSOM
PC 1541 BAINES
PC 912 COONEY
PC 498 MILBURN
PC 591 GRAY

GRANGETOWN

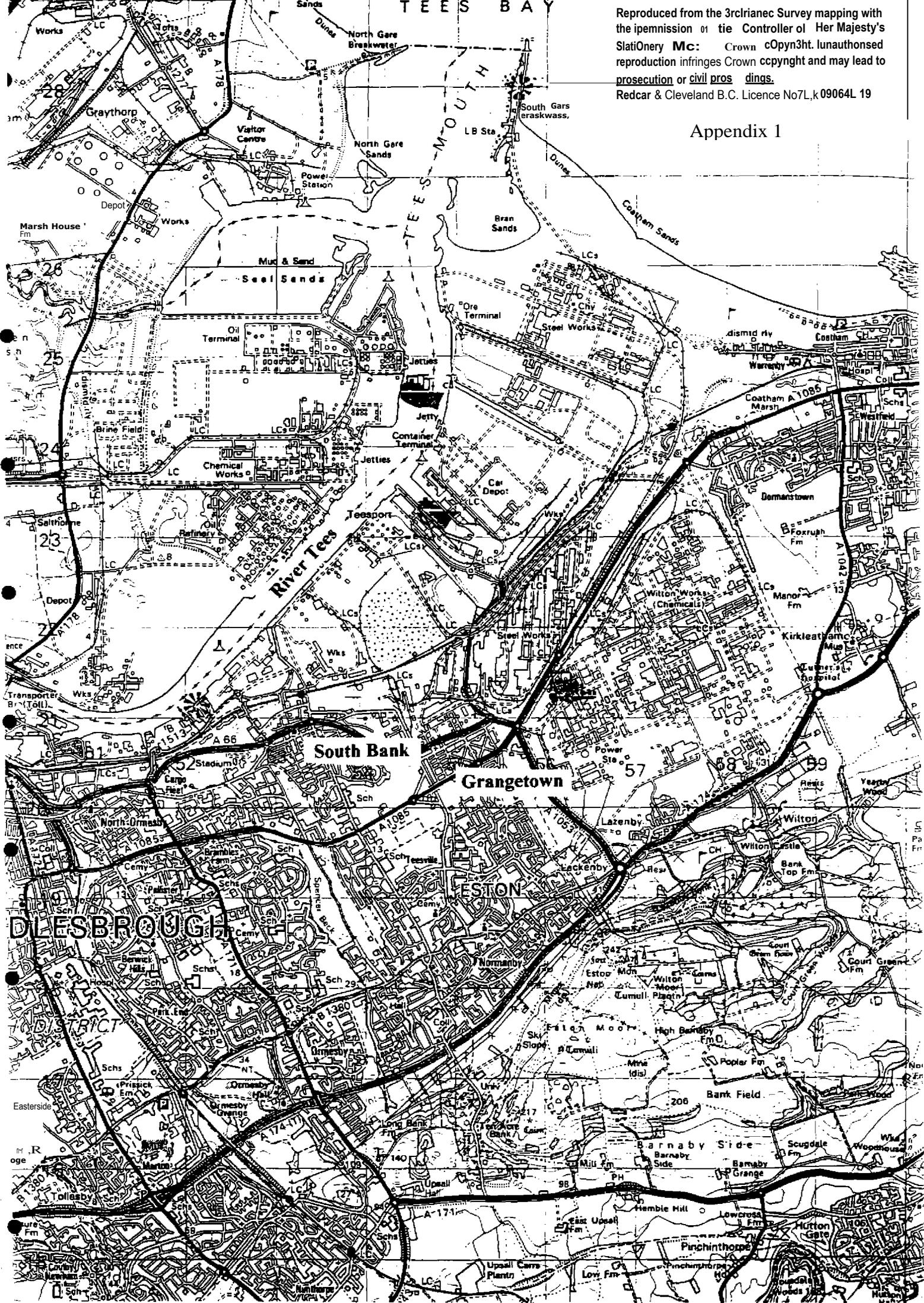
SGT. 317 DULKU
PC 137 WHITELY
PC 41 MATTHEWS
PC 460 MCCABE
PC 616 JOHNSON
PC 219 JAMES

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Location of Grangetown and South Bank
Appendix 2	Increase in Crime 1976 - 1996
Appendix 3	Increase in Crime 1992 - 1996
Appendix 4	Public Concerns
Appendix 5	Safe in Teesside - Crime Survey I
Appendix 6	The Views of Young People
Appendix 7	Letters of Appreciation
a)	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Appendix 8	Crime Reduction in Grangetown and South Bank 1997 - 98
Appendix 9	Incident Reductions in Grangetown and South Bank 1997 - 98
Appendix 10	Safe in Teesside - Crime Survey II

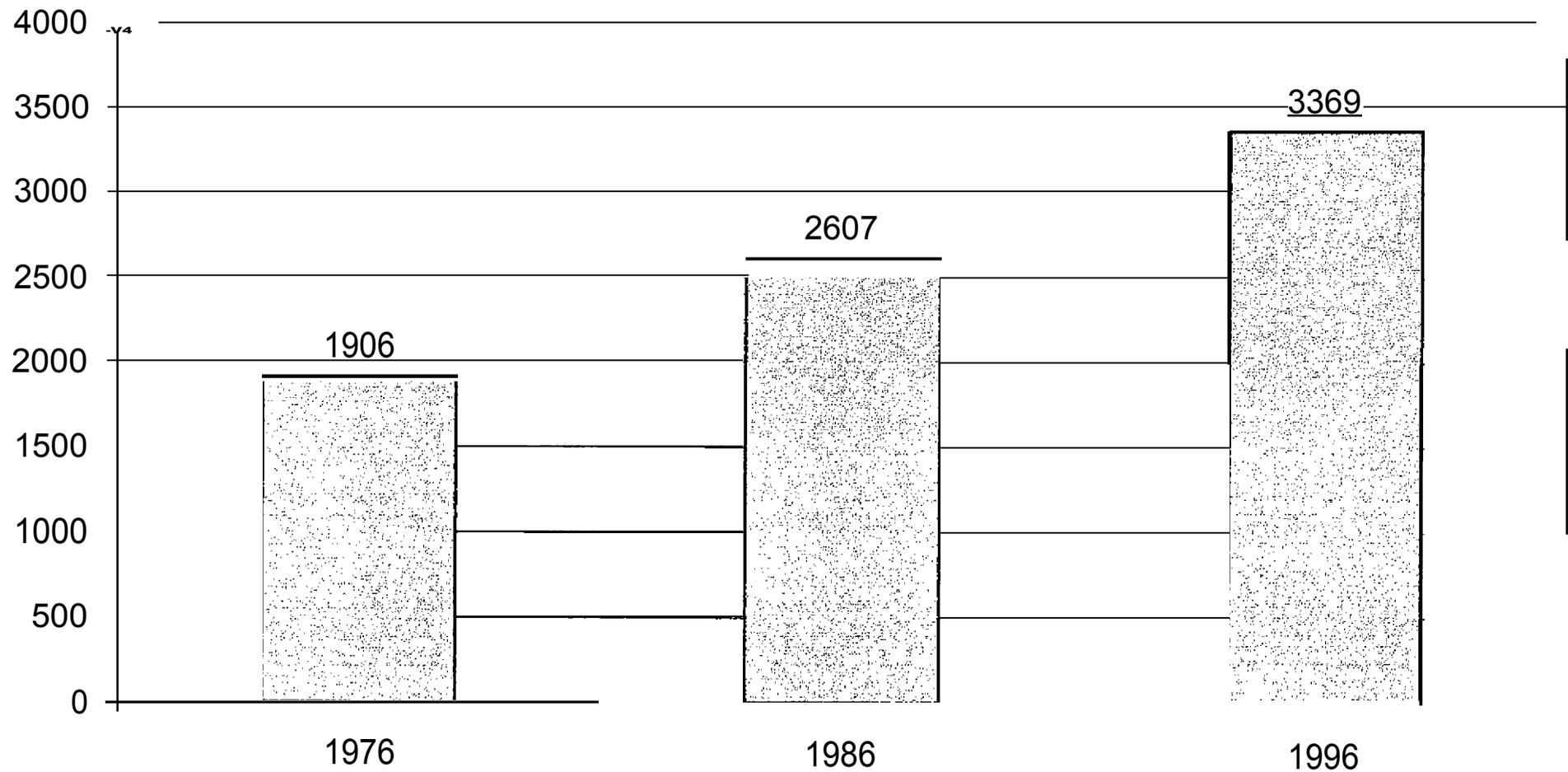
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Appendix 1



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Reported crime in Grangetown and Southbank Area between 1976 and 1996



Total number of reported crimes

