

VOWS (SUMMARY)

The following is a brief summary of VOWS:-

Vehicular Obstruction Warden Strategy

This POP was run by Traffic Wardens stationed at Burnley Police Station.

The problem to be addressed was residents parking inconsiderately or thoughtlessly on the older type, terraced streets of Burnley. Causing problems for emergency and other utility vehicles.

The problem was brought to our attention by a resident, this was the first evidence of the problem; further evidence being provided by the Fire Brigade themselves. Also Burnley Borough Council provided statistics regarding number of houses and density of population plus car ownership in the area. The area itself was chosen by the Fire Brigade for the trial run of the POP. Three areas in total being considered as potential problem areas.

After discussions with both the Fire Brigade and the Ambulance Service at both operational and supervisory levels it was decided the preferred response in both services' view was one of education of the local population as opposed to enforcement in the first instance.

The reason for this was both the Fire Brigade and the Ambulance Service had suffered in the past from attacks from some of the local populace, in their view enforcement as a first option could possibly have made the situations worse, to this end it was decided to try an educational approach. This being achieved by posters, leaflets, video footage being filmed and Neighbourhood Watch Meetings.

To run in conjunction with our POP, the Fire Brigade launched their own fire preventions initiative, and report a definite decline in both fires and parking problems.

VOWS

VOWS:- VEHICULAR OBSTRUCTION WARDEN STRATEGY

A group of Traffic Warden's problem solving approach to the ever present problem of residents or visiting drivers leaving their vehicles (thoughtlessly in most cases, carelessly in others) parked in such a way that it causes emergency response vehicles to be delayed on their way to emergency calls.

In Burnley, the place we are stationed, in common with many other northern towns, we have a large amount of the narrow, terraced house type streets built long before the car became the normal mode of transport.

The POP itself was borne of a remark made by a resident to myself about the fact that his own front street was so heavily congested that he couldn't have his bin emptied by the local dustmen. This in turn led to the logical thought that this was an inconvenience — what about the emergency services? Following a subsequent visit to the area by myself and a colleague to see the problem first hand, an appointment was made to meet Station Commander John Phidean at Burnley Fire Station. Mr Phidean's first reaction was one of surprise at our offer of help, he stated that in 23 years in the Fire Service he had never experienced any offer of help like this from another agency.

However he confirmed that the problem did exist for the Fire Service and this was later confirmed by the Ambulance Service who also use back streets as well as front streets for access.

In addition to Mr Phidean, the watch on duty that day were also spoken to. As if further evidence was then needed, Burnley Fire Brigade provided two tenders, complete with fire crews the next day to tour three potential problem areas they had identified.

Video evidence was filmed by ourselves whilst on the tour, the tour itself giving us first hand experience of the problems the Fire Brigade came across on narrow streets where no formal parking regulations are in force.

Further discussions with Mr Phidean identified **Burnley Wood** as the area chosen by the Fire Brigade as their most difficult area for the type of problem this POP was concerned with. Further research with Burnley Borough Council's Community Tax Department gave this profile of the area concerned

Size:- Approx' A mile square
Population:- Just under 6000
Car ownership:- 42% of the population 1 car per household
 9% of the population 2 cars per household.

All this added to the fact that **Burnley Wood** now consists, to a large extent of houses being rented by absentee landlords to what is a largely transient population where community spirit is perhaps not uppermost in their minds.

The response the Fire Brigade asked us to adopt was one of educating the local population, as opposed to one of enforcement.

The reason being, in the past the brigade has had personnel attacked and stoned, theft from appliances and general hindrance from some members of that community. The brigade said they did not wish to make the situation any worse by antagonising any of the 'friendly' locals.

The method to achieve this was decided as being

First:- Press publicity
Second:- A poster campaign
Third:- Leaflet drop
Finally:- Visits to community groups.

Initially permission had to be gained from Burnley Borough Council with regards to poster size, print size, minimum height when positioned on lampposts and the time limit on posters being displayed. In due course 30 posters (one included) were displayed throughout the target area. This being followed 10 days later by 500 leaflets, one of which being delivered to each household and premises throughout the area. A week later each household and premises received another similar leaflet to reinforce the message. This in conjunction with Police and Community Forums being attended where video footage was shown to local residents.

The success of this POP was difficult to quantify for the trial period because our POP ran as the Fire Brigade's computer system was in the process of being changed.

The Fire Brigade did however launch their own initiative to run in conjunction with our POP. Two fire officers visiting houses in Burnley Wood to explain escape routes — fire alarms — smoke detectors etc. and report in the last three months 9 fires and no parking problems. Last year in a similar period 17 fires were reported.

We feel the criteria VOWS has satisfied are public safety and public tranquillity.

TW 7105

Burnley Police Station

Phone 01282 472127

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature appears to be 'J. J.' and the bottom signature appears to be 'E. K.'.

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TW 7037

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