



**DEVON & CORNWALL  
CONSTABULARY**

**East Devon District**

**'TURN AROUND'**

**A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO CHALLENGE INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR  
AND IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY ON THE ESPLINADE IN EXMOUTH**

**TILLEY AWARD 2001  
CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION**

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Sir John EVANS OStJ DL QPM LL.B

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Your ref:	Date: 02 May 2001	Telephone: 0777 999 444	Direct Dialling: 01395 226132
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Dear Sir or Madam,

**Tilley Award 2001 — 'TURNAROUND'**

Within the Town of Exmouth Police and other agencies, notably District and Town Councils, found themselves confronting an annual problem to which simple enforcement, by the police in previous years had failed to make a discernible difference.

Together, under the auspices of the local Crime & Disorder Action Team and certainly working to one of the objectives of the Crime Reduction Strategy, that being to 'reduce anti social behaviour'. A combined strategic approach was agreed upon and enacted.

Sound and appropriate use was made of the SARA model, this being fundamental to a logical and joined up approach. As a consequence of which significant reductions in the unwanted behaviour have been achieved and the dangers of making the issues a 'cause celebre' avoided.

Locally we are very proud of this initiative and I am proud to commend it to you.

Yours faithfully,

Superintendent A J McGahan  
District Commander East Devon



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Awarded for excellence

**OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU"**  
**... a Charter for the Policing of**  
**Devon and Cornwall**

We are committed to providing you with the highest standards of service. Our Charter lays out clearly the standards we have set in answering calls and letters, attending incidents; helping victims and motorists, consulting the community and dealing with complaints. A copy can be obtained by writing to The Chief Constable, Department XRQ, FREEPOST 300, Middlemoor, Exeter EX1 1AZ

## **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary**

The Tilley Award 2001: Crime and Disorder reduction.

### **THE PROBLEM**

During the late 1990's there was an increase of complaints from the public about the standard of driving, noise from various vehicles and that some pedestrians felt intimidated by vehicles which appeared to be cruising (driving up and down the sea front) and general anti social behaviour from the occupants.

### **EVIDENCE USED**

Police Operational Information System

Evidence from the Public, Police and Traffic Wardens

The Town Council, East Devon District Council and Devon County Council

The Environmental Health Office

The Media

### **How we responded**

In May 1999 the Exmouth Action Group was set up and a Problem Solving Session was held. The Group discussed, agreed and formulated various objectives on issues that they could deal with in a multi agency response.

- 1) The council would monitor the deposits of sand on the esplanade and road and keep it clear. The police would also monitor and report back to the Devon County Control room as needed. To reduce chances of vehicles completing hand brake turns.
- 2) Wherever possible the Council would ensure that the car park would be padlocked shut during the night. To stop groups congregating and committing anti social acts.
- 3) The police would complete a high profile campaign involving marked vehicles along with a plain vehicle to catch offenders committing offences. During the evenings when traffic flows had eased, hand held laser speed detection equipment would be used. This completed as an enforcement issue to the worst offenders.
- 4) A media campaign would be completed and driven via the police with consideration of concerns raised not to popularise the problem, which could lead to the problems shown in Weston Super Mare, where large groups of cruisers congregate.
- 5) East Devon District Council and the Environmental Health Authority would monitor and report any offenders and problems. This again a response of enforcement but part of a multi agency approach.

### **IMPACT AND HOW MEASURED**

The Council and Environmental Health Agency recorded an 88% reduction of calls and offenders dealt with.

The Police recorded a 72% reduction of calls and offenders dealt with.

Community links have been made and continue with the Exmouth Car Cruisers who wish to disassociate themselves with the protagonists.

## **PARTNERSHIP RESPONSE TO PROBLEMS ON THE ESPLANADE IN EXMOUTH**

### **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary**

The Tilley Award 2001: Crime and Disorder reduction.

#### **THE PROBLEM**

Exmouth is the largest town in Devon with a population over 35 000, this is further swelled by a local holiday camp at Sandy Bay, which in season holds over 10 000 and is located within the boundaries of the town.

Over the last decade there has been a large growth in housing and population, which has led to an increase in people retiring to the area.

The town is fronted by a large expanse of beach, which is renowned for being clean and well maintained. A road also runs parallel to this for a length of two miles, with various parks, public houses, accommodation, beach huts and parking spaces. There are also various pedestrian crossings and traffic calming schemes along the route.

The final half a mile branches off towards Orcombe Point, which is a road with a roundabout at the end. This is also lined by some beach huts, shops, toilets and has parking spaces running along the majority of the beach side, where people tend to sit in their vehicles and watch the sea or friends on the beach. This road also has speed calming measures in the form of speed humps every two hundred yards.

At the turn off to Orcombe Point there is a large council run car park, which holds two hundred vehicles and is known locally as the Foxholes Car Park.

As part of a study by Exeter University on Exmouth Regeneration evidence from tourists show that the Esplanade is the most popular places to visit whilst staying in Exmouth. (Appendix A).

Exmouth to Lyme Regis will shortly be a World Heritage Site and the 'Gateway' to the site will run from Orcombe Point. The Gateway will be part of the Esplanade to Orcombe Point. (Map included as Appendix B)

## SCANNING

It was noted by Inspector Wise (the geographical inspector) that during the summer period there was an increase of complaints from the public about the standard of driving, noise from various vehicles and that some pedestrians felt intimidated by vehicles and which appeared to be cruising (driving up and down the sea front) and general anti social behaviour by the occupants.

In years gone by police have acted very much on an ad hoc basis and dealt with the inappropriate driving as and when it is reported. It was felt that a more strategic approach could be adopted to dealing with this issue.

Using the SARA model a scanning of the available information was completed using the sources easily accessible to the police.

The computerised operational information system showed that in 1997 there had been 115 calls to the police about the standards of driving up and down the sea front and various issues of anti social behaviour.

In 1998 this had increased to 127 calls all on the same issues.

Each attendance by a police officer lasted 23 minutes on average with travelling time taking 16 minutes.

In 1997 the police received 8 letters from members of the public complaining again of issues about the standard of driving and anti social issues.

In 1998 this had increased to 13.

The media officer for the district was also contacted and in 1998 the media had published 18 letters from the public again bringing the same issues to light

Consultation with local officers also reported the same findings each reporting that they had dealt with on average three drivers or incidents a week along that area. These were not recorded on the operational information system and when you consider that there are 25 officers stationed in the town, equates to a total 1575 drivers or people dealt with in the critical season period.

The analysis of this information confirmed that there was indeed a perceived problem, but did not give enough information to formulate an appropriate approach.

Inspector Wise then formulated a plan to gain further information from outside agencies, making contact with East Devon District Council, the Town Council and the Environmental Health Office. Each had been contacted by various sources and had relevant information.

The Environmental Agency had been running an out of hours service to their normal service since 1997 and had recorded 70 calls from the public covering the 1998 period complaining of loud noise and anti social behaviour.

East Devon District Council and Devon County Council in 1998 had received 16 complaints about cars racing up and down the sea front and doing hand brake turns on sand that had been deposited on the road during bad weather.

To gain a fuller picture the local traffic wardens were tasked to monitor the areas of concern and note details associated with the problems. Observations by police patrol officers over the four-week period were also included.

The areas that were to be monitored were, the time and day, any perceived problems, weather conditions, traffic flow, and how busy the area was with people and vehicles. A problem orientated policing log was created on the operational information system where information was also attached.

## ANALYSIS

The collation and analysis of the original and new information showed that there were three main problems, these being poor and even dangerous standards of driving, loud music from vehicles, which disturbed those using the beach and anti social behaviour.

The poor standards of driving were mainly committed in the early afternoon and evenings when traffic flows were low and were noted to be on days when the weather was sunny. The weekends were the high points including the Friday evening. It was also put forward that as the summer holiday period approached this would spread out to include weekdays.

The Orcombe Point road even though it had traffic calming did attract people accelerating and speeding between the speed humps when the traffic was light enough and completing hand brake turns if sand was on the road this made it all the better. Cars were also driven with people sat on the boot.

The Foxholes Car Park was also a meeting place during the late afternoons and evenings for large groups of young people with cars and motorbikes. This afforded a large open space where they could drive at speed screeching their tyres, complete hand brake turns and drive in a manner, which was totally inappropriate. Within this area various other traffic offences were noted such as drivers wearing no seat belts and defects on vehicles.

The playing of loud music was also committed by the group in the Foxholes Car Park but was of main concern by those who drove up and down the sea front (cruising) during the day and disturbed those using the beach. This being a breach of a local by-law. This occurred mainly during the day period when the weather was sunny and the beach was well used by thousands of people. Again mainly at weekends but with a proliferation during the weekdays during the holiday period.

The anti social behaviour was committed in the same areas as the driving and noise problems and at the same times. This included driving past and shooting pedestrians with water pistols, driving past shouting and swearing at those walking past and generally being a nuisance. Most of the people who appeared to be in our target group for all three problems were between the ages of seventeen and thirty years of age.

The sea front due to its length and layout was found to be conducive for young drivers to cruise up and down, showing off their vehicles to other car cruisers, members of the opposite sex and those around at the time.

During the hot weather this brought thousands to Exmouth to use the beach which again was another attraction to the car cruisers along with a shift in affordability of large and loud sound systems and the status amongst their peers that this attracted.

## **THE RESPONSE**

The project was attempting to achieve several factors, which affected a majority of the statutory agencies and councils. This also proved to be part of the key objectives for some and an area that members of the public also felt important.

- 1) To challenge inappropriate driver behaviour.
- 2) Improve road safety.
- 3) Promote Exmouth as a safe and enjoyable place for the public.

In May 1999 the Exmouth Action Group was formed as part and parcel of the East Devon Communities. Strategy Group. It is a Group consisting of designated bodies from various agencies including: Police, Devon County Council, the Exmouth Community College, East Devon District Council, Technical Services Department, Town Council, Youth Offending Team, Probation, Social Services, Devon Fire and Rescue and Highways.

This has grown within the last two years and now incorporates; the Town Manager, representative from the local parish councils, a member from the Exmouth Youth Forum. Occasionally meetings are attended by other members of the Police, e.g. the District Community Safety Sergeant, District Crime Reduction Officer, and the local Ward Officers. The Group discussed, agreed and formulated various objectives on issues that they could deal with in a multi agency response which were long term and sustainable.

- 1) The council would monitor the deposits of sand on the Esplanade and road and keep it clear. The police would also monitor and report back to the Devon County Control room as needed.
- 2) Wherever possible the Council would ensure that the car park would be padlocked shut during the night.
- 3) The police would complete a high profile campaign involving marked vehicles along with a plain vehicle to catch offenders committing offences. (Inspectors authority being obtained for plain clothed surveillance also) During the evenings when traffic flows had eased, hand held laser speed detection equipment would be used.
- 4) A media campaign would be completed and driven via the police with consideration of concerns raised not to popularise the problem, which could lead to the problems shown in Weston Super Mare, where large groups of cruisers congregate.
- 5) East Devon District Council and the Environmental Health Authority would monitor and report any. offenders and problems.

One of the objectives of concern to all group members was the 'inappropriate driving on the Esplanade -- by those named in the local media as 'boy racers' or 'boom boom boys'. It was agreed *that this* would be one of the Exmouth Action Group objectives and from that the Police opened a Problem Orientated Policing' Log (POP Log), Log 1067 of 4<sup>th</sup> May 1999.

That log is approaching 200 pages long and contains evidence of reports, warnings, etc., issued to drivers committing various offences on the Esplanade

The reason that this was a priority for those on the Exmouth Action Group was due to the volume of complaints, a belief that a serious accident would occur and the general concern for road safety. The town was seen as the key to the southwest tourism as it is the first seaside resort at the end of the M5. These were key objectives for most of those present.

It was felt that the Police alone, could not tackle the problem, as often there were cases of excess noise emanating from stereo systems within the vehicles. This is when the media labelled the offenders as the 'boom-boom boys'. As a result of this the Exmouth Action Group calling counterparts from East Devon District Council, of the Environmental Health who came to the seafront with their noise measuring equipment and worked collectively with the police. Local officers from Exmouth, Special Constabulary and Exeter Traffic Centre were involved in this initiative.

Offences which have been committed by perpetrators include; driving without due care and attention; excess speed; defective lights; no tax; obstruction; defective tyres; no seat belt; depositing litter; defective exhaust. Arrests have been made and warnings given for smoking cannabis and positive breath test. Vehicles have also been reported for no tax and the forms Vehicle Rectification Scheme (VDRS) issued for minor defects. Forms HORT/1 have been issued for production of documents. All these have been attached to the ongoing POP Log. The Log is invariably re-opened in the early part of the year, usually March/April. The log remains open until the problems desists, invariably October/November. Officers continue to patrol/detect offences ad hoc out of season.

A record was kept of all vehicles stopped/reported/warned or given advice as to inappropriate behaviour, which included handbrake turns, wheelies, driving on the wrong side of the road, tailgating, squirting water pistols etc. The research was undertaken to identify all the registered keepers who had been stopped and reported. The evidence gleaned revealed that a lot of the vehicles came from outside of the Exmouth area.

Devon and Cornwall Constabulary researched the registered keeper details of the vehicles committing excessive noise (sound systems) and through data protection working protocols provided the Police National Computer (PNC) required keeper details to East Devon District Council (EDDC). EDDC wrote to the Registered Keepers and sent a warning regarding the excessive noise, a total of one hundred and twenty in 1999. The EDDC have the power to remove sound system equipment from vehicles that ignore the warning. To date sound system equipment has not been seized.

The criteria set for the first year was to reduce the number of complaints and offences as the season continued. To improve public awareness of the underlying issues of road safety and to monitor the number and type of offences dealt with. It was fully appreciated by the Exmouth Action Group that this was to be a long-term strategy and that a continuous process of monitoring was to be made by each responsible person on the group, which would be reported at each of the monthly meetings. This ensured that if there were any changes in the circumstances or approaches needed. This could be completed quickly and robustly.

The monitoring proved effective as stated the majority of the target group were not from Exmouth. In response reusing the SARA model as it is cyclical a response was formed to ensure that the views of the local drivers were taken into account and to ensure they did not feel alienated or ignored by the group. Contact was made with a number of local drivers who had also stated that a lot of the perpetrators were not local. As a result of the concerns raised by some of the local youngsters, a small working group was formed, whereby local interested bodies would meet with the Exmouth Car Cruisers (as they are now known) to discuss their issues and concerns and with various bodies to discuss the issues with them.

Involved in this group was the Exmouth Town Council, including the Mayor, the Town Clerk and representatives from the Environmental Health Department, the Exmouth Youth steering Group and the local police Inspector.

A number of meetings took place; not only at the local Town Hall, but also actually on the Esplanade with the youngsters themselves. It was felt these meetings were useful dialogues and consultation took place to discuss the issues from both sides. Meetings were minuted. (Appendix D)

One of the main themes to come out of these meetings was that the Exmouth Car Cruisers wished to disassociate themselves from the out of town boy racers, and therefore wished to keep themselves very much to themselves.

Prior to this taking place much media coverage was given in the local papers and on local radio stations including BBC Radio Devon on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1999, and media clippings are attached. (Appendix C)

The enforcement took place with Exeter Traffic Units, which involved marked and unmarked traffic cars — involving enforcement of speed using a portable GATSO (hand held speed detection camera). On a number of occasions where offences of speeding were detected Notices of intended prosecution were sent to the offenders by post direct to their home address.

Regular updates have been given to Exmouth Town Council on the progress of this ongoing POP Log, and likewise the POP Log continues to be an ongoing objective for the Exmouth Action group.

From media coverage members of the public have also been ringing in to the local police. Residents who live in the vicinity of the car parks have been providing evidence of times dates and registration numbers of offending vehicles, and what they have been doing, excess noise etc., and obviously we have been able to act on information received from members of the public.

## ASSESSMENT

After the first season the group met and analysed the effectiveness of the campaign, utilising the figures each had collated along with any observations.

All considered this had been an appropriate response and that some of the criteria had been met. Looking at the information of the vehicles that had been stopped throughout the initiative and the concern raised by the Exmouth Cruisers, it was decided that a link needed to be made permanently with them and a ward officer was appointed to make contact and to keep in touch with them so that they were not isolated.

A positive and at first unconsidered point is the link and two way communication now set up with the Exmouth Car Cruisers.

Further information that Exmouth seafront was renowned for being one of the major places for boy racers to meet in the uk and had featured regularly in the motoring press for this type of vehicle/owner and also a television documentary was also considered.

Research by the town council into the problems of Weston Super Mare, which had become a hot spot for cruisers and numbers in the region of 2000 to 3000, also led to concern of the implications on Exmouth and care would be needed to avoid national publicity and therefore being identified as a hotspot.

Other approaches were also considered.

- 1) Finding a suitable meeting place for the Exmouth Cruisers.
- 2) Closing a part of the seafront on occasions to allow local young people to drive their cars and be separated from families and people enjoying the beach.
- 3) Leave things as they were with prosecutions of offenders taking place.
- 4) Local cruisers forming a club and organising their activities forming a point of contact with others in the town to deal with problems as they arose.
- 5) Community policeman to make contact with the young people and keep in touch with them.
- 6) Environmental Health Officer to arrange a noise level testing session with the young people to demonstrate levels of sound coming from their equipment and what levels would be subject to prosecution.
- 7) To prepare a video diary and a questionnaire to obtain the views from young people and other members of the public.
- 8) Increase traffic calming measures.

Items 5,6 and 7 were to be taken up and added to our response for the season of 2000.

In response to item 1, there were no suitable places identified in Exmouth due to nearby properties next to the open spaces. If car parks were used then this would mean mixing with other members of the public and conflict was likely.

2) Was inpractable and could place those using the area in danger and also lead to a possible hotspot as mentioned earlier.

3) This had been shown to alienate some of the young users of the seafront.

4) This was seriously considered but the implications and possible problems for all those on the group outweighed any of the benefits.

8) This proved to be costly and probably ineffective as these measures were also in operation.

Upon consideration of all the evidence and debate it was agreed that the items stated would be taken up and this would be built on the first year's approach of enforcement but the combined effect would be of enforcement and education.

The monitoring process was continued and the POP Log has been running for the past two years, it is interesting that there has been a vast reduction in the number of reported incidents during the year 2000 compared with the year 1999.

The Environmental Health Authority having a reduction from 1999 of 113 to 13 in 2000 a reduction of 88%.

The police also had a reduction of 72% in the total number of offenders and vehicles dealt with.

The number of calls to the police had also reduced by 61 %

There had also been a reduction of 50% in the number of letters of complaint received by all agencies.

There had also been 4 letters of praise for the response to the problem in the media.

The result was clearly due to the fact of education through the local media and radio, and through high profile and covert patrols and the police taking a tough firm stance against the perpetrators along with the supporting agencies and councils.

Exeter University completed a study of the social and economic assessment of Exmouth in the year 2000. Over 80% of those questioned walked along the esplanade whilst visiting and found that Exmouth was well kept and a joy to visit. Fully supporting the approach taken and the result that Exmouth was a safe and pleasurable town.

The season of 2001 will build on the previous two years and of important note is that the local inspector is also part of a working party on the regeneration of the town and redevelopment of the Esplanade (seafront route). The Local Inspector plays a vital part in advice and discussion on the road safety and traffic management of the Esplanade to ensure it is a safe and proper route and, of course, taking into consideration the design layout to make it more difficult for the 'car cruisers' to commit various offences or drive inappropriately. The 'designing out' of inappropriate driving is therefore appropriate — the regeneration of the Esplanade.

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**TOURIST RECREATIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Tourist survey asked respondents to give details about the types of activities they pursue whilst visiting Exmouth. This data helps profile the lifestyles and leisure preferences of different visitors in the town. To explore leakage of tourist survey also asked respondents to identify where they undertook recreational activities as well as indicating the amount spent.

Perhaps one to be most encouraging results from the research was that 78.4% of tourists agreed with the statement that, *'Exmouth is a holiday destination designed for people like me'*. If one bears in mind that the findings presented so far indicate that visitors to Exmouth are diverse in terms of age, social class and place of residents, this finds how that existing provisions attract many different types of tourists.

**TYPES OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES TOURIST ENJOY**

