

GALLON PHEONIX PROJECT

Category:	Crime and Disorder Reduction
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ENDORISING OFFICER —

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Callon Pheonix Project — Po Summar

Scanning

- Callon Estate built 1924 -1930, 650 properties.
- High levels of nuisance, crime and disorder.
- Two thirds of the estate modernized in 1993 by Borough Council — cost 13 million.
- Remaining one third about to be modernized by Collingwood Housing Association — cost 7 million.
- Estate full of empty and burnt out properties.
- Victimization of service providers i.e. schools, Fire Brigade, Water Board, YMCA.
- Spiral of decline well advanced.

Analysis

- 191 st most deprived ward in England (top 2.27%).
- Substantial levels of crime and disorder.
- Estate described by Fire Brigade as Problem Hotspot, substantial number of call-outs, well above average.
- Staff from other service providers i.e. Water Board, Gas Board, often victimized and vehicles damaged.
- Primary schools cannot function due to threats of violence and intimidation.
- YMCA Community Centre suffering daily damage and threats to staff.
- Local shop suffering damage and racially motivated crime. Businesses will not deliver direct to the shop.
- Constant negative reporting in local media.(see examples in Appendix)
- Estate featured on Carlton TV Neighbours From Hell showing gangs of youths intimidating young family.

Response

- Callon Action Team (CAT) set up involving following main stakeholders:- Preston Borough Council, Police & Collingwood Housing Association and produce CAT Map.
- Team also working with Callon Action Group (Residents Association) and Callon Care on the `Planning for Real *Project*'.
- Police visit all service providers and speak to their staff with regards to the problems they face on the estate. All made aware of the Callon Action Team.
- Using multi agency approach CAT also involve LCC Youth Services, Guild Community Health Care, Social Services, St. Theresa's Church, Local Health Centre.
- Evidence gathered (video/statements) against principal offenders by Police and Professional Witnesses.
- Residents who had moved off the estate due to fear are re-visited and retrospective statements obtained.

- Range of legal remedies pursued including Breach of Tenancy Agreements, Notice of Seeking Possession Evictions, Civil Injunctions, Criminal Proceeding and Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

Assessment

- Between April and December, 2000 a 40% reduction in crime on the estate has been achieved compared with the same period last year.
- Of residents surveyed 67% state that due to the CAT actions instances of anti social behaviour have reduced.
- Council Voids list significantly reduced.
- Service providers now feel more secure and attend alone.
- Local shop now taking deliveries.
- Plans approved and money available to develop the pad into children/family recreation area. (see Plan in the Appendix)
- Residents group and Callon Care to move into community house next to the pad.
- To maintain and build upon success. CAT have submitted a bid for CCTV to cover the whole estate. The bid has been short listed and stage 2 is being prepared.

SCANNING

Description of Project

Trigger

In 1999 the residents who lived in properties that had not been modernized by the Council had voted for a stock transfer to Collingwood Housing Association. The Estate Manager for Collingwood and the Site Manager for the building company had spent the day looking for a suitable area in which to locate the site operating area. They had eventually chosen 'the pad' which was a large patch of grass in the centre of Callon. They had spoken to residents who faced the pad and none had made any objections to the site being located there. One resident in particular was particularly helpful and reassured the managers by saying that he would keep an eye on the site especially at night. Pleased with their work the managers returned to their office and began to make plans. Two days later they mentioned the site location to the local beat officer and the Phoenix Project began.

Houston we have a problem

In 1993 the local council had spent 13 million pounds on modernizing and improving two thirds of the Callon Estate. When the funding ran out the remaining residents campaigned long and hard to have their houses improved. Eventually after voting for a change of landlord Collingwood Housing Association were poised to spend 7 million pounds on improvements.

Stop..... take a look at the part of the estate that had already been improved.

Why are so many properties boarded up?

Why are so many fire damaged?

Why do new tenants not seem to be able to live on the estate?

Why is crime and disorder such a big problem when people have nice houses.

Why do all the stolen cars keep getting dumped and set on fire on the pads?

And finally

Why are there some houses that don't seem to be affected by this?

At this stage would it be 7 million pounds well spent?

ANALYSIS

Formation of the CAT Team

In March 1999 the main stakeholders on the estate had their first meeting. This was made up of the Police, the Borough Council's Housing Managers, Collingwood's Housing Manager and respective solicitors.

From the outset the Project aim was to improve the quality of life for all residents and make the Callon Estate a safe and attractive place to live. The team believed that if this goal was achieved then the investment made in 1993 and the further 7 million pounds about to be spent would not be wasted.

At this meeting the CAT team eventually sat around a large map of the estate and began to pinpoint specific problems and hotspots. The team were also aware and involved in a separate project being run by a voluntary group who worked on the

estate called 'Callon Care'. This project was called 'Planning For Real' and worked as follows:-

- Both primary schools and the Callon Residents Group made a scale size model of the estate.
- At schools, public meetings, social gatherings etc. people pinpointed what they liked and disliked on the estate. Also flagged what was missing and what they would like in the future.

Provide a service? — you must be'okin

Service providers were also experiencing real problems on the estate and various meetings were arranged to listen to their concerns.

The local shop

At the centre of the estate (next to the pad) there is a general store run by an Asian family. The family were often subjected to racial abuse and on one occasion a family member was subjected to a violent assault. The shop was often damaged and due to the fear of people who had to deliver goods to the shop the family were forced to collect papers, bread, milk, etc. from another shop off the estate.

The two primary schools

Constant targets for damage, children and staff threatened with violence and abuse on most days. Cars and motorbike nuisance on the playing field at the rear of the school. On one occasion the headmaster's car was set on fire whilst he attended a parents evening.

The Fire Brigade

Would only attend the estate with a second tender to back up the first one. Described by the Station Officer as a nightmare hotspot with constant call-outs to burning cars and houses.

The Utilities

BT were forced to remove the only public telephone box from the pad area due to constant damage. The Water Board were constantly called out due to the water hydrants being tampered with. Transco and Norweb would not allow their staff to come onto the estate unless they were in pairs.

The YMCA

The staff found it virtually impossible to run youth clubs or provide any service to the community. The building was being constantly damaged and the staff terrorized.

Maps, Models and Figures

The CAT Map and Planning For Real Model provided valuable and specific information about problems and hotspots on the estate. The model and map clearly showed that the residents and stakeholders felt that there was a problem. The views of the service providers, the crime figures, nuisance reports, council voids list and repair costs also backed this up, as can be shown. What was also taken into consideration was the fear of reporting crime which according to the residents was a very real problem. This would therefore suggest an under reporting of crime.

Crime Type	97/98	98/99	99/00
Theft	29	22	51
Criminal Damage	67	119	133
Nuisance/Disorder	468	409	304
All Other Crime	98	101	67

RESPONSE

The CAT Team were meeting on a regular basis and by this time funding had been obtained for the Local Beat Officer to set up a Satellite Police Office on the estate. The team were backed up by respective solicitors from both the council and the Housing Association who assisted in analyzing the information. It became apparent from analysis that the main problem was focussed around 'the pad' at the centre of the estate. It was also apparent that a small number of families and their offspring were responsible for many of the problems. Although evidence of crime, nuisance and disorder was available via police sources there was very little evidence coming from the tenants. The fear of reporting crime or giving statements with relation to occurrences on the estate was a real problem.

At this stage after recognizing the problem Collingwood and the Borough hired a company called 'Private Witnesses' who specializes in covertly gathering evidence of problem estates. The team leader worked closely with the local police officer in choosing the correct observation points on the estate.

During the summer of 1999 private witnesses worked on the estate gathering video evidence. This involved:-

- Filming over fixed 3 day periods from empty properties onto problem areas.
- Filming from covert vehicles driving around the estate.
- Moving a 'bogus' family into a property which had been wired up with surveillance equipment.
- Posing as workmen leaving tools and mobile telephones etc. in their insecure vans.
- Fitting surveillance equipment into the troubled local shop.

At the same time the local police officer was monitoring all incidents on the estate and collating any information about potential targets. Copy statement, charge sheets and eventually court convictions were gathered over this period. The housing office was also recording all reported incidents to them. Residents who were too afraid to

make statements were encouraged to complete anonymous nuisance diaries. Residents who in the past had moved off the estate due to fear were revisited and retrospective statements taken of their experiences.

CAT, assisted by the two solicitors began to sift through the evidence and planned how to implement their response. A mass of information had been gathered and it was important to use it in the correct way.

- Any evidence of criminal activity was used by the Police in criminal proceedings.
- Evidence of nuisance or disorder with regards to housing matters was used by the Borough or Collingwood in respect of Breach of Tenancy Agreements, Notice Seeking Possession, Evictions and Civil Injunctions.
- To facilitate exchange of information the main stakeholders signed up to a Data protection Protocol under the Provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act. This meant, for example, that although evidence had been submitted in a criminal court it could be used again to show that the individual's behaviour was not just a one off.

This proved invaluable when after much hard work the team succeeded in applying for x 3 Anti Social Behaviour Order against youths who had caused misery on the estate.

- Video evidence was also used with regards to crime prevention and safety. For example, children were filmed trying to ignite an aerosol can. This was highlighted to their parents/guardians.

These measures resulted in:-

- Criminal Convictions
- Evictions
- Civil Injunctions
- Final Warnings (Breach of Tenancy Agreements)

As a result of this process CAT introduced an ABC scheme which has since been adopted by the whole of Preston Borough. This mechanism deals with nuisance, crime and disorder in a systematic approach. It is generally used on council estates in partnership with the police and local authority. It is used as a framework when dealing with estate problems and could eventually head in the serious measures already highlighted.

ASSESSMENT

From April 2000 the steps taken began to have an effect on the estate.

- Between April and December 2000 recorded crime on the estate fell by 40% compared with the same period in the previous year.
- Following a survey by Collingwood 67% of residents stated that due to CAT instances of anti social behaviour had reduced.
- Council voids had significantly reduced, thereby saving the £700 'tin up' cost per house.
- Tenant turnover had gone down.
- Fire Brigade call outs have significantly decreased. Callon is no longer a 'hotspot' and when attending an incident x 2 tenders do not automatically have to attend.
- Service Utility Providers can now also attend single manned. They confirm that the level of intimidation suffered by their staff has fallen considerably.

- The local shop 'Hussains' can now get goods delivered direct to the shop and so far have not reported any more racial conflict.
- In conjunction with the local schools, tenants group, Callon Care and the Borough Planning Department funding has been secured to redesign the pad'. This includes traffic calming measures and converting the pad into a children's/family recreation area. NB: Work not to start until CCTV system is in place.
- Residents Group and Callon Care have secured funding to develop a community house next to the pad. This would be used for a variety of community initiatives and would be a symbolic 'reclaiming' of the pad by the law abiding residents.

As the measures began to take effect the opportunity arose to prepare a bid to fund CCTV on the estate. CAT continued with their multi agency approach and worked together to put a bid together. This involved many hours of joint work and a lot of consultation with groups previously mentioned. We have been successful in stage one of the bid process and are just about to submit stage two. If all goes to plan and the funding bid is successful we could see CCTV by the end of summer 2001. Our projected figures for nuisance, crime and disorder will obviously depend on whether the cameras are fitted. The team are convinced that if successful the improvements would be sustainable and would achieve our aim —

TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL RESIDENTS AND MAKE THE CALLON ESTATE A SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE.

Gary Salisbury
PC 1623
Callon Community Officer