

## Tilley A~ and 202

Project Title                    The Usual Suspects.

Project Category                Crime and Disorder Reduction.

Home Office Priority Areas Covered

1.     Vehicle Crime
2.     Domestic Burglary
3.     Robbery
4.     Violence
5.     Anti-Social Behaviour
6.     Fear of Crime

Sponsoring Force                    Northumbria Police.

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## Project Summary

The Byker Wall is situated in a relatively deprived area of Newcastle upon Tyne. It has a unique design which makes policing difficult. There is high deprivation yet a recognisable community identity. In April 2001 Police and Local Authority Housing managers found youth crime and disorder was at very high levels. A problem solving approach was adopted. Data were analysed along with Police and community intelligence. There was a hotspot of activity which involved youth disorder and street crime. There was evidence of under reporting. Local residents did not support traditional forms of Police action due to fear of reprisals. A single group of Persistent Youth Offenders were responsible for the majority of this crime. They became known as 'The Usual Suspects'.

Immediate action was required to provide a fire break, longer term community safety measures could then be developed. Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO) were gained against The Usual Suspects. Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA) were used for less extreme individuals. Tenancy enforcement was selectively applied. A programme of youth work focused upon other young adults on the estate. One gang member was jailed for ASBO breach, this turned events. During the project period crime was reduced by considerable amounts and housing indicators all showed astonishing improvements. For example, less people leaving, more wanting to come to the estate. Attacks upon the increasing numbers of Asylum Seekers within the Wall fell dramatically. Local media were used in order to promote the successes, the aim was to address the fear of crime. The evaluation indicated that despite the crime successes, there was anecdotal but not empirical reductions in the fear of crime, further reassurance effort is required. The project found a dearth of financial data within the Local Authority and Northumbria Police to assist with evaluation. Accurate cost - effectiveness analysis was desirable but not possible.

The project challenged existing procedures for obtaining ASBOs. There was considerable learning about how simple the process using civil rules of evidence can become. The project obtained the second order in England and Wales to specify an exclusion zone, others followed. The team obtained one third of the total number of orders held in the Northumbria Police area. None of the ABAs were effectively breached, they are now being emulated throughout Newcastle as a cost effective method of managing less extreme individuals. Overall, the project achieved its aim.

Our ref: JP/TSLJCDA4.€le

**I**

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2002

**F**

Carole F Willis  
Policing and Reducing Crime Unit  
Clive House

**i**

CIO Room 415  
Petty France  
London  
SW19HD

Dear Ms Willis

**Re: "The Usual Suspects" - Entry for the 2002 Tilley Award**

I write in my capacity as the Director of Community and Housing at Newcastle City Council. The City owns and manages approximately 35,000 properties spread over numerous estates, which range from small infill groups of houses to large estates like the Byker Estate in Newcastle's East End, which comprises of over 2,000 properties.

A full restructuring of the Directorate during 2000 has brought together community housing management with the youth service, play service and community development staff who all work with local communities. Local staff have been given an explicit role across both public and private housing, which has been commended during our latest Housing Investment Programme submission to the Government.

In Newcastle we have a long history of multi-agency partnership working with numerous stakeholders who deliver or are involved in localised service provision. This has particularly been the case with regard to Northumbria Police with a "Safer Estates" partnering agreement and specific work in respect of combating crime and anti-social behaviour in the West end of the City leading to the launch of the local problem solving model in July 2001. This model has provided a clear method to enable our Community Safety partnership to reduce Crime and the fear of Crime through local operational managers and staff who report to as strategic joint management team.

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We recognise that we are developing this work at a rapid rate and are committing resources both in delivering this joined-up approach to "problem solving" and in jointly producing a detailed training programme for both our operational staff and officers of Northumbria Police. We hope in the near future to be recognised for leading the way with Northumbria Police in our problem solving approach.

I therefore would commend to you the example presented in "The Usual Suspects" paper. It provides plenty of material for reflection, for example, improving the range and format of data available to our local problem solving groups. This has greatly assisted these teams to define, analyse and assess the anti-social and criminal activity occurring.

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The Byker team have provided examples of some transferable practice which will benefit others in the City and I feel should be heralded as a model of good practice. For example, their approach to the Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) process has demonstrated that orders can be obtained and utilised to manage those who behave in extremely anti social ways to the benefit of individuals and communities.

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The team have also demonstrated that thoughtful use of the Acceptable Behaviour Agreement can be more cost friendly and highly beneficial, particularly when coupled with additional tenancy enforcement measures as well as the deployment of preventative interventions.

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"The Usual Suspects" is an example of a problem solving project which has delivered measurable outcomes in all of the key Home Office areas. Other Local Authority indicators suggest it has contributed to an improved and stabilised community in Byker. The Community Safety partnership have benefited from the insight this work has provided, particularly in how we can improve localised work in the early stages of the problem solving process.

I therefore support it fully as an entry for the Tilley Award.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jill Preston', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

Jill Preston  
Director of Community and Housing

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# The Usual Suspects

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**A Problem Solving Response in 2001 to a  
Surge of Youth Crime and Disorder  
within Byker Wall Estate, Newcastle upon  
Tyne.**

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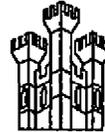
## Foreword

This report has been written as an entry in the 2002 Tilley Award. It outlines how the group of professionals named below have made significant reductions in crime and disorder and delivered considerable improvements to a troubled inner city estate. No one person monopolised ideas or practice. The group was energised by people simply wanting to make a difference and being prepared to innovate, to challenge existing practice and to work hard. This report, the collective debrief which preceded it and the host of presentations to local forums have all reflected the team effort that drove our Problem Solving Process.

I hope you enjoy reading the report as much as I enjoyed the Usual Suspects experience.

*? chward. Berry*

City Council



**Trevor Healy, Community Housing Manager**  
**Fiona Swindell, Community Development Worker**  
**Ian Willies, Tenancy Enforcement Officer**  
**Clare Tierney, Tenancy Enforcement Manager**



**Newcastle East Area Command**

**Constable George O'Hare, Community Beat Manager**  
**Constable Caroline Ord**  
**Detective Chief Inspector Richard Berry, Crime Manager**

## Introduction

*"The usual suspects have been moved on, caller not seen, all quiet, area searched negative, no offences disclosed."*

This is a real update from a patrolling Police officer in response to a report of youth disorder by a member of the public. It just happens to be from an incident, which took place in early 2001 in the Raby Street area of the Byker `Wall', Newcastle upon Tyne.

In situations where this reactive policing cycle continues, the problem is not addressed, the demand on resources is not reduced and the problem remains highly visible to the local community. In extreme cases, this can lead to apathy and sometimes a sense of disillusion. The cycle then becomes a negative one. Symptoms of this malaise were noticeable on the Byker Wall Estate in early 2001.

### Byker Wall Estate

The Wall has a unique place in world architectural history. It is in the process of being listed by English Heritage as a national asset and a conservation plan is being drafted. It has been the setting for several films and television dramas and local youth is symbolised through the BBC television programme 'Byker Grove'.

The social fabric underlying this rather grand status is less positive. There are some 1700 households, which resemble the demographic characteristics so often associated with an area of considerable social exclusion. There is high unemployment, very high numbers of single female parents, 43% of children live in a single adult household. There are high levels of under 16s per household and high unemployment compared to levels elsewhere in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Despite this picture, the residents of the area have a strong identity and a sense of community, which are underpinned by three decades of development work. Raby Street, the arterial route into the estate, has a small shopping facility next to the Byker Area Resources Centre (BARC) where community development projects are located.

There are two other community centres in the estate and the Church of England has an active local presence. There are three Ward Councillors, but only one who regularly communicates with the Police.

Asylum applicants form the main non-white ethnic groups represented on the estate. They originate from a range of countries within Eastern Europe and Africa.

### Recognising An Accelerating Decline

- a In April 2001, a meeting was held in response to a noticeable worsening of youth crime and disorder on the estate. It was recognized as the highest priority for the Police Area Command and the Area Housing Directorate, in terms of the high number of incidents, the severity of these incidents and the local political environment.

There had been a good history of partnership work, however, this meeting was a milestone; it became the genesis of a new and highly focused initiative. It pre-empted the Northumbria Police Problem Solving Mode! by a matter of weeks, but was later easily transposed into the SARAS process.

## Scanning For Information

- i The first stage was to identify sources of data and then to see what they told us. Trevor Healy provided a clear commentary about the housing situation. This was based upon his empirical data. Community intelligence came from Housing Officers, local Tenancy Enforcement Officer Ian Willins, the Community Beat Manager George O'Hare and their contacts, who included Fiona Swindell from the Community Development Staff.

- 'I Police data came in two formats. The first was low-grade intelligence put onto computer files by patrol officers and secondly Police incident logs, custody and crime data. Incident logs were coded according to Home Office criteria and provided a measurement of reported crime and disorder. The crime and custody data supplemented the information available from incident logs. Police data reinforced what most operational staff already perceived, that a

small number of individuals were responsible for much of the crime and disorder on the estate.

It was highlighted through community intelligence that some crime and disorder was not being reported. The extent of this under-reporting was not known, however, the situation was such that from reported data it was clear that immediate action was required.

.1 The Local Authority had CCTV coverage in the Raby Cross area. These cameras were monitored in a passive manner and often were the source of much Police frustration. Officers who attended incidents, often asked for evidential searches to be conducted by the CCTV control centre. These regularly failed to provide any evidential footage and this resulted in a general sense of Police disillusionment with these facilities.

On the few occasions when footage was available, other barriers existed. The Newcastle City managers who were running the service lacked confidence in data sharing and formally resisted sharing footage. This 'departmentalism' within the Local Authority hindered effective partnership between the Police and other Council Directorates, particularly Community and Housing. This issue was addressed by formally writing to the manager responsible for the CCTV and reminding him of the legal obligations and data sharing provisions outlined in The Crime and Disorder Act. The process was not adversarial; it was simply a case of overcoming misunderstandings and misconceptions about joined up working. With small effort a positive relationship was formed.

.1 Police officers were highly aware of the difficulties of responding to gangs of youths on the estate. The architecture provides many 'rat runs', the opportunities to detain people are limited because in most locations people can disperse quickly into many directions. Visibility is poor because of the layout and the estate is under lit. To increase lighting would require a major capital investment by the Local Authority. This had been previously  
ii explored and discounted as unrealistic. The vehicle access is also highly restricted with limited arterial roads into the estate. Police officers were visible on these routes thereby providing plenty of warning for a group to disperse.

## Analysing The Information

### Location

-a There was a clear disorder 'hot spot' in the vicinity of Raby Cross, Raby Street, and Raby Way. The majority of Police calls were to this area, the information provided by patrolling officers and community intelligence corroborated this trend. Graffiti, damage to walls, fences and the street furniture were also creating an environment, which fostered fear. A team member, through his role on the Newcastle Graffiti Forum obtained mapped data from Local Authority engineers. This highlighted Byker Wall as one of a three graffiti hot spots within the entire City. Ideally, these 'fear of crime' triggers needed to be addressed as part of any response.

### Offenders

It was clear that the trouble was rooted within a particular hard core of youths. They ranged from 15 to 19 years old. Most came from known 'problem families'. Generally, they were all classified as Persistent Youth Offenders. Consequently, all were known to the Youth Offending Team and some were subject to intervention projects. It was apparent that this approach was having little effect upon them. These were *The Usual Suspects*.

On the periphery to the hardcore youths were younger, less extreme individuals. Information suggested that some were vulnerable, looked upon as recruits to the gang, and thus liable to be *schooled to* a point where they might graduate as persistent offenders in their own right.

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1 The Usual Suspects were becoming more violent and confident to commit crime openly. One man was physically intimidated by the gang after he stopped them from taking his car. They surrounded and threatened him. A non-white asylum seeker was badly beaten for no apparent reason. As a result of the attack, he sustained injuries, which were consistent with grievous bodily harm. There were several, apparently planned attacks on parcel delivery vans. A hastily arranged Police 'sting' operation caught two of the gang committing this type of crime. In early May 2001, two engineers were attacked when responding to a lift alarm. This appeared to be an ambush scenario in which their vehicle was blocked in; the windows were kicked out causing serious facial injuries to the two occupants. They escaped by driving aggressively from the scene. The photograph at the beginning of this report was taken from

## Hewcastle

Cifj logic!!

Local Authority CCTV. It shows a youth being violently attacked. His mistake was to walk past The Usual Suspects.

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Interestingly, at the April meeting, Trevor Healy provided information concerning a particular recidivist who was known to the Youth Offending Team. The youth was later breached from his intervention project and placed back in front of the courts. Both managers then agreed to liaise more closely and use existing protocols to share more information on a regular basis.

### Victims

Victims were not always within the incident hot spot area. For example, the group participated in car crime, wherever they could locate a suitable vehicle, either taking it without consent or stealing from it. As such, they did steal cars from areas outside the estate. Some members of the gang were involved in burglary, but they were not an organized burglary team.

Victims of the disorder in the Raby Cross area often refused to provide their details when calling the Police. Regular callers used mobile telephones, which at least could be traced for further telephone enquiries. Often, callers would ensure that uniformed officers did not attend their address for fear of being identified. In short, there were no witnesses who were willing to provide evidence to prosecute the youths. Local residents told community workers that they were avoiding the hot spot area and becoming more afraid to walk on the estate at night.

It was clear that *a people focused* approach was required. The resulting strategy had one simple aim; *to provide the community with a firebreak which would allow more preventative and sustainable measures to be developed.*

The tactical actions were:

1. *Enforcement* against The Usual Suspects. This would focus upon the use of Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO) and tenancy enforcement actions. Six persons were highlighted as immediate targets.
2. *Robust intervention* with those on the periphery of the gang. This involved use of Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA). This concept was developed from methods used

in the London Borough of Islington who use the term Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. The problem solving team took legal advice in relation to the legal notions of contract and developed a modification called an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA). Tenancy enforcement sanctions complemented the ABAs.

3. *Diversion through pre-programmed outreach work.* This was delivered by the Youth and Play Services from Newcastle City Council and channelled through the local problem solving group.

## Ensuring Effective Response

### ASBOs

There was considerable Police frustration towards the approach for gaining ASBOs at the time. They were in the 'too hard basket', taking a considerable length of time and had unproven impact upon the recipient. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) was vague and disorganised about using ASBOs.

A process improvement review was conducted and found the following blockages to effective ASBO attainment:

1. Only Police officers were providing evidence for applications. We needed to improve on the evidence provided by the community and employees of the Local Authority.
2. Only Police legal services were being provided. The CDRP needed to address this *joint responsibility* to enable ASBOs to be obtained.
3. Police legal services were over worked and appeared over cautious in the standard of evidence required to obtain an ASBO. There was no use of admissible hearsay evidence and only partial recognition of the lower burden of proof required to obtain an ASBO.
4. The ASBO panel, a group set up by the CDRP to develop ASBO applications was ineffective. Meeting on a monthly basis, *if a case was referred up to one third of evidence could be lost due to statutory limitations upon proceedings.*
5. Police officers were dismissive of the value of ASBOs.
6. Collectively, Area Commands in the Newcastle were not focused upon ASBOs and had minimal experience in what was required.

This situation provided an opportunity to energise the partnership towards the whole concept of managing anti social behaviour. A dedicated Police Officer PC Caroline Ord readily

responded to the challenge. Her role was to collate all possible evidence to support ASBO applications. She educated patrol officers to provide statements according to civil rules of admissibility. She also worked with Trevor Healy on a scheme to educate Local Authority staff such as caretakers on the estate in evidence gathering skills. Caroline provided drive to the legal process and overall liaison for the initiative.

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The Community Beat Manager, PC George O'Hare was also pivotal to taking the response forward. He ensured that every opportunity was taken to develop ASBOs. A good example of this was his involvement in walking about with a camcorder and filming the youths involved in anti social activity. He was sometimes assisted by other officers who were directed through the Area Command weekly tasking and co-ordination process. Some of the footage was later used to good effect in the courts.

### ABAs

These had never been used in the Newcastle area, so the main inertia existed whilst the process was developed and the agreements were drafted. The next stage was a joint approach by the Community Beat Manager George and the Tenancy Enforcement Officer Ian Willins. They arranged a meeting with the youth and a responsible adult attended a formal interview at Clifford Street Police Station. The evidence of disorderly behaviour was presented and the implications of continuing this behaviour were outlined. These included potential loss of tenancy and ASBO. The parent and youth were then requested to enter into the agreement. It was highlighted that a failure to do so would be used in evidence for an ASBO application.

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### Youth Work

The combined efforts of the Youth and Play Service Manager, the Tenancy Enforcement Team, the Beat Manager, the Housing Manager and the Community Development Workers helped ensure effective use of resources. Under the new Northumbria Police Problem Solving Model a highly energetic was established under the chair of a local Police Inspector. This forum managed the problem solving process and communicated back to the community through the range of local groups and Ward Committees. The main thrust of youth work support came through the summer 'Splash' programme. This funded specific outreach work on the estate.

## Strategic Support

This came from the Police Area Command management team and the Area Housing Director; both were needed to 'lever' change. For example, by convincing the Head of Legal Services within the Local Authority to absorb ASBO related work.

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## Managing Perceptions

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Close liaison with the important media of the Evening Chronicle and Journal newspapers had already been established. There was a clear opportunity to drip feed any positive news concerning the topical area of youth crime.

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An early win was obtained. One of The Usual Suspects, who had been an ASBO target, had an order awarded against him. It was only a short time later that he had breached it sufficiently to receive an 18 month sentence of detention. The impact of this event can not be underestimated. It sent a clear message to the gang. They were reportedly shocked by this sentence.

# Assessment

## Evaluation

There were problems with both Police and Local Authority information systems. In general, lessons have been learned and improvements are planned. Some desirable information was not formatted, validated, nor sometimes available to permit meaningful evaluation. For example, enquiries were made with the Youth Offending Team (YOT) in Newcastle. Some of the Usual Suspects were referred to them during the period of the problem solving process. The YOT had only just commissioned its information system from January 2002. Previous data is not available other than by a very lengthy paper trawl process.

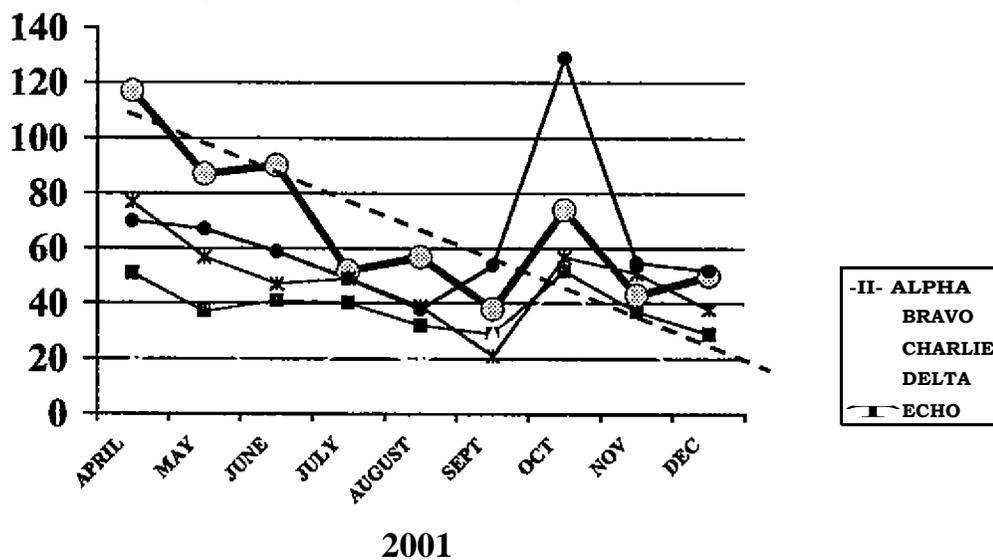
Financial data was also very sparse. For example, Northumbria Police has only just introduced an activity based costing structure. Enquiries were made nationally to see if anyone could supply their own data, which could have at least permitted an attempt at cost/effectiveness evaluation. Again, a blank was drawn. It is suffice to acknowledge that in

future years this facility should be available for problem solving schemes. A limited attempt at costing Local Authority ASBOs is shown in Appendix Two.

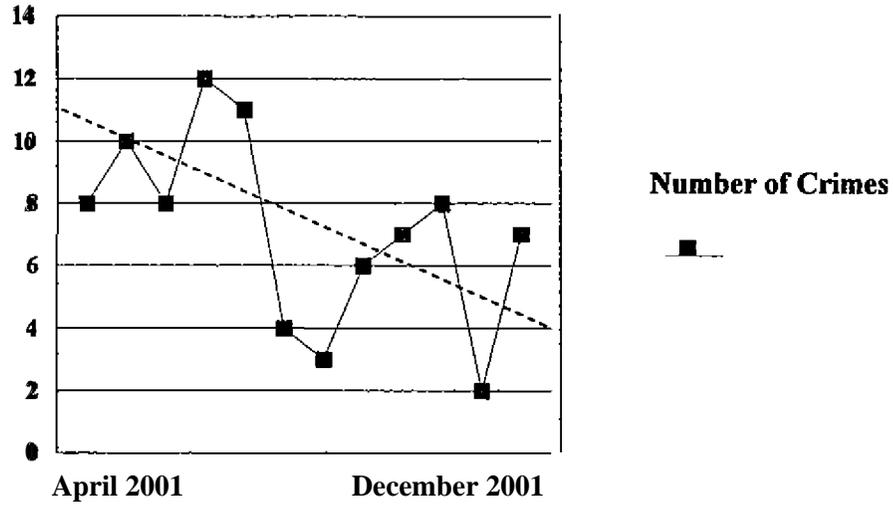
### Police Crime and Disorder Data

Figure One shows the unit car areas for Newcastle East Area Command. The area 'Charlie' is Byker Ward, predominantly the Byker Wall. At a time during the summer when disorder would not be expected to decline, it falls dramatically. The other unit areas from January until December show a relatively horizontal trend. Byker *more than halved* from about 120 incidents per month to just over 50. There was *no dispersal* of disorderly behaviour to other areas. Like the disorder trends Figures Two — Six show that core crime was reduced considerably during The Usual Suspects project. Attacks on dwellings were fairly consistent, The Usual Suspects did not often house break on the estate.

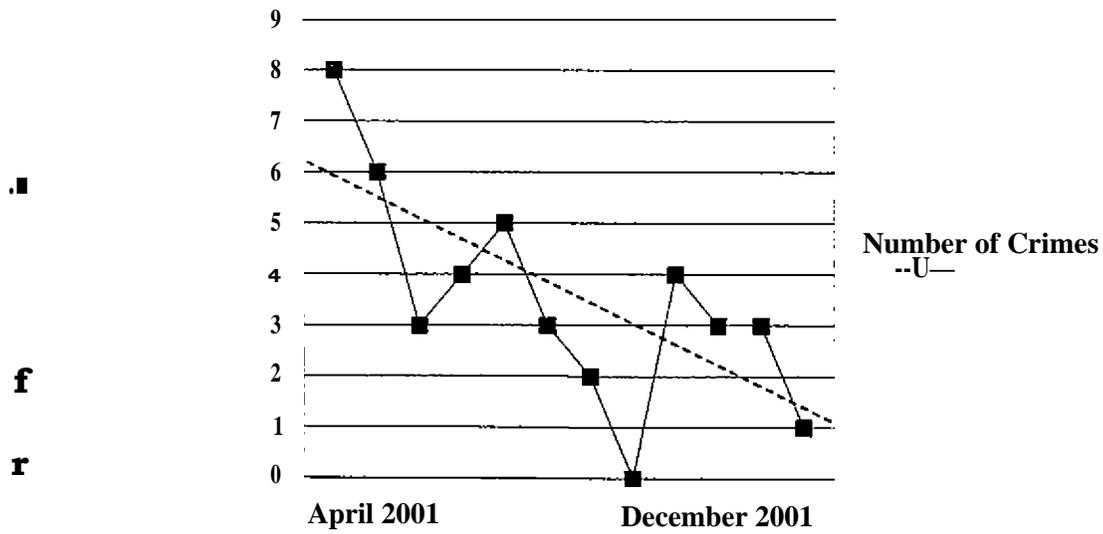
**Figure One - Disorder - Byker Area**



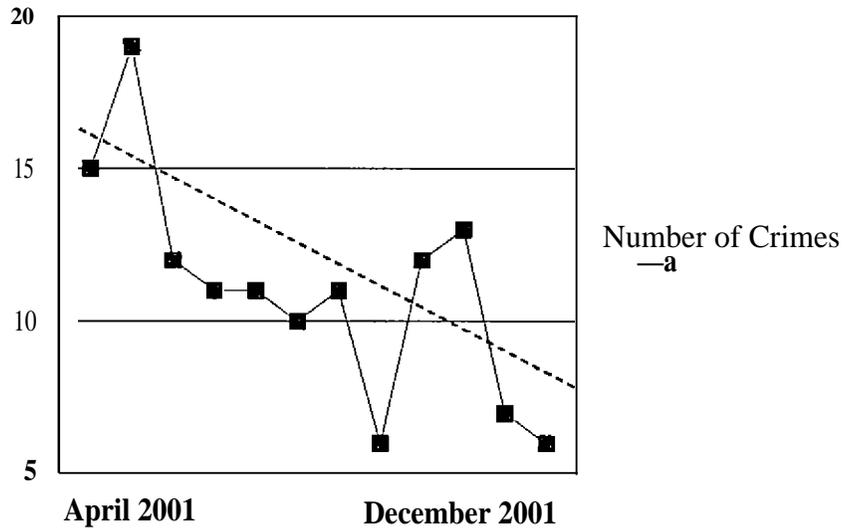
**Figure Two - Damage to Unattended Motor Vehicles — Byker Ward**



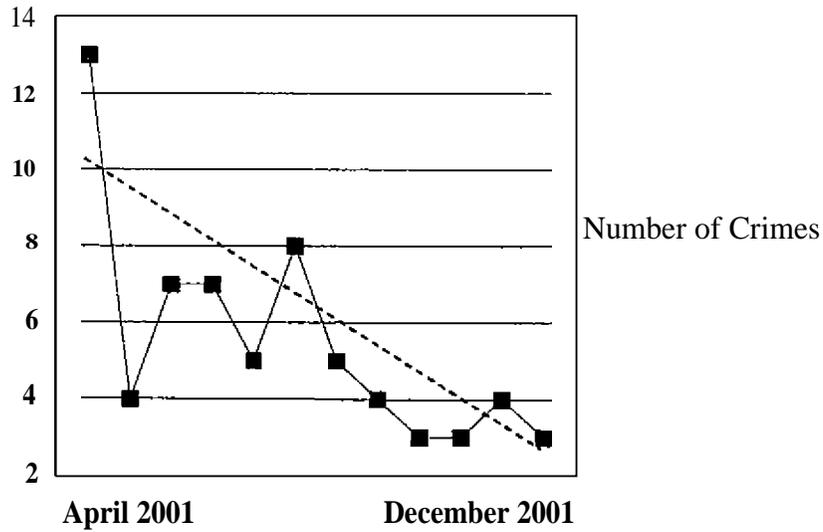
**Figure Three - Theft of Motor Vehicles — Byker Ward**



**Figure Four - Theft from Motor Vehicles — Byker Ward**

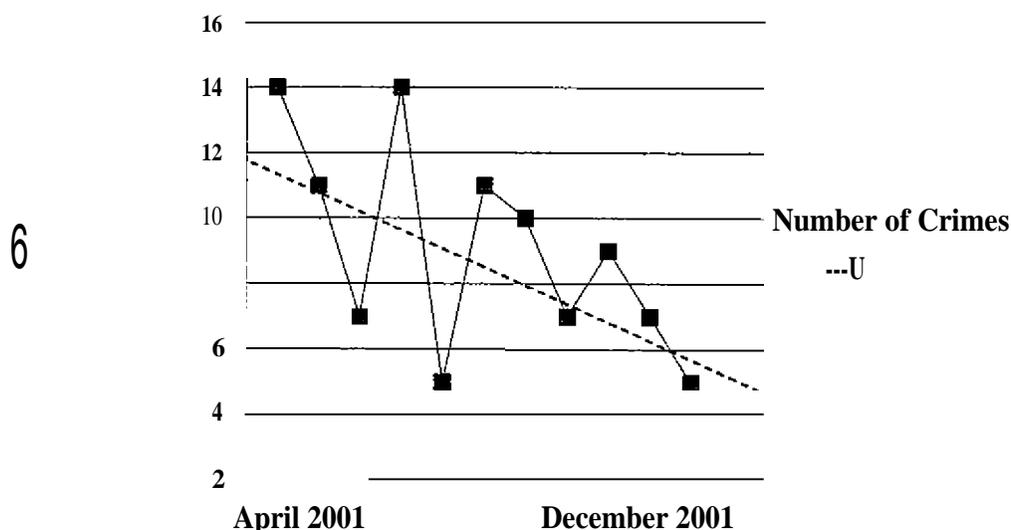


**Figure Five -- Taking of Motor Vehicles without Consent - Byker Ward**



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**Figure Six - Burglary (non dwelling) -- Byker Ward**



### Reassurance and Perceptions Of Crime

Positive community feedback was reported through the established conduits. A sense of well being was magnified in late 2001 when bids for a CCTV system and a Street Warden scheme were successful. Whilst verbal comments are anecdotal and could never be measured, it could be sensed that the myths of lawlessness on the estate were perhaps changing.

Interestingly, the same feelings have not percolated into empirical results found in two independent surveys. The baseline data is from the Northumbria Police Authority Residents Survey for 2000. Examples are shown within the Appendices. The sample size was 106 respondents for the whole Newcastle East area and not just Byker Wall itself; the results therefore must attract some caution. The comparative data comes from a Local Authority survey (Grabham, 2002) conducted specifically within Byker in January 2002 for the purposes of the Street Warden scheme. The results from both surveys are consistent and demonstrate no improvement in measures such as satisfaction with local policing, this remained at 50% before and after The Usual Suspects.

There were positive results to consider, the 2002 sample group were:

*Twice as likely to think **that** the police are performing well than to think they are performing poorly. A visible presence together with fast response times act as the main reasons behind positive views of Police performance.*

*(Grabham 2002, page 20)*

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Grabham was able to consider 'fear of crime' and found that 76% of Byker residents felt safe and just 12% felt unsafe, the remainder were undecided. The main reason for those people feeling unsafe were "as a consequence of observing youths and gangs hanging around the streets". (page 18)

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In short, the anecdotal evidence that the Byker Wall has improved is somewhat at odds with the empirical data. The conclusion has to be that promoting results requires more work and should be a fundamental part of any successful problem solving initiative.

### Information Held by Newcastle City Council

Data from the local housing repairs budget was reviewed but considered invalid for the purposes of the evaluation. During The Usual Suspects initiative, the trend was an increase in overall spending. Further research found that this represented longer term expenditure on repair and maintenance schedules rather than simply immediate responses to vandalism.

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In January 2002 the Wall was audited for graffiti. This survey indicated a 25% reduction in the levels of graffiti recorded for the previous year, prior to the problem solving process. It was concluded that the reduction may have been due to the focus upon The Usual Suspects, but was perhaps more attributable to the ABA, tenancy enforcement and youth work interventions.

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Other housing data was particularly useful; it shows that fewer people are leaving their homes in Byker. During 2001/2002 there was a reduction of about 50% in those leaving their homes because of Crime and Disorder. This indication is also backed by an increase in demand for housing in Byker of 22% between 2000/2001 and 2001/2002.



**Figure Seven - Terminations Of Tenancy In Byker**

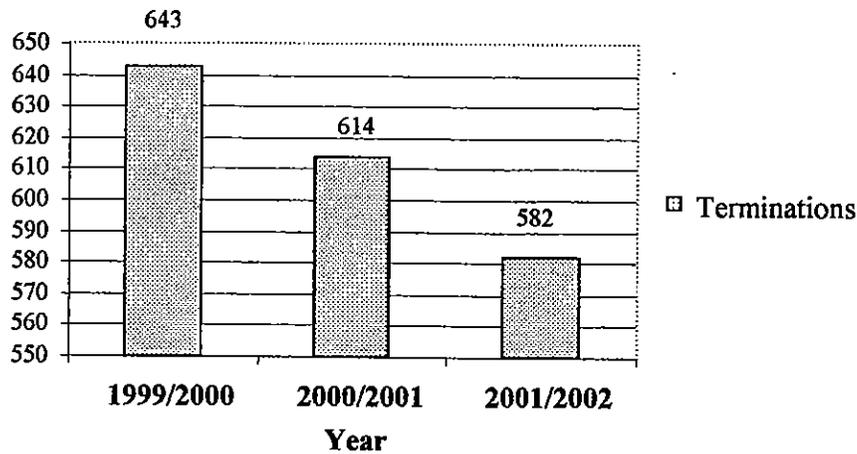


Figure Seven shows the numbers of terminations of tenancy and highlights how there has been reductions in the number of people leaving the estate since 2000. Previously, the figure had risen for five consecutive years.

**Figure Eight - Tenants Leaving Byker Citing Crime/Disorder As Reason**

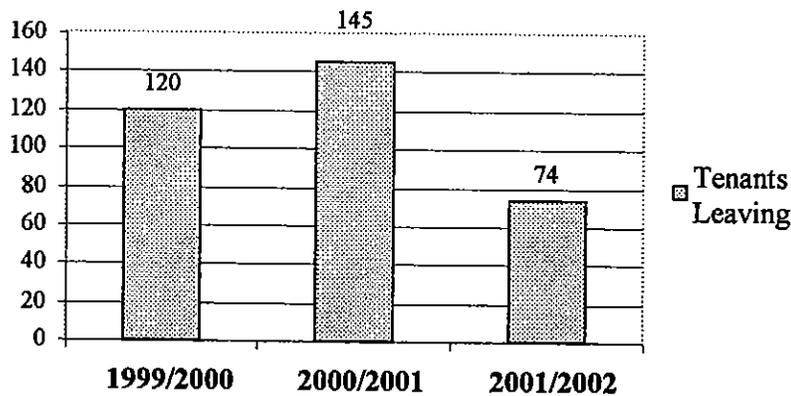


Figure eight shows a massive reduction in the number of tenancies being terminated because of Crime and Disorder. The work on *The Usual Suspects* commenced in Spring 2001.



**Figure Nine - Applicants On Housing Register For Byker**

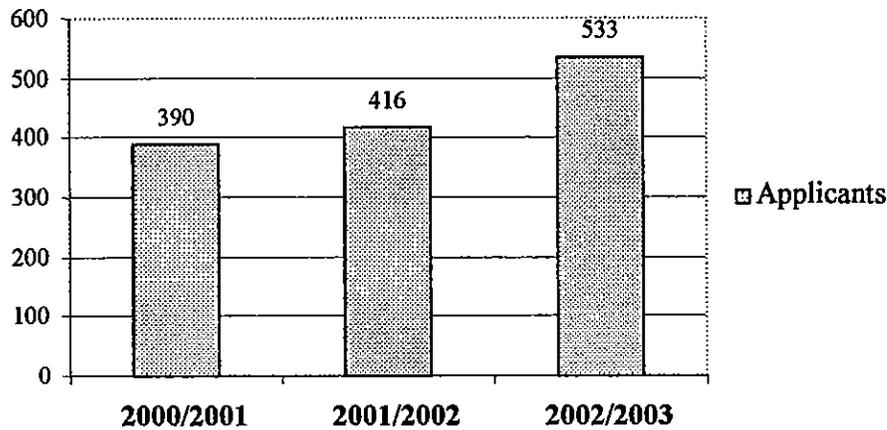


Figure Nine shows a marked increase in the number of applicants waiting for housing in Byker. The figure is a snapshot taken at the beginning of each financial year, it indicates the improving status of Byker and how confidence in the estate is returning.

**Figure Ten - Number Of Incidents Of Harassment/Serious Nuisance**

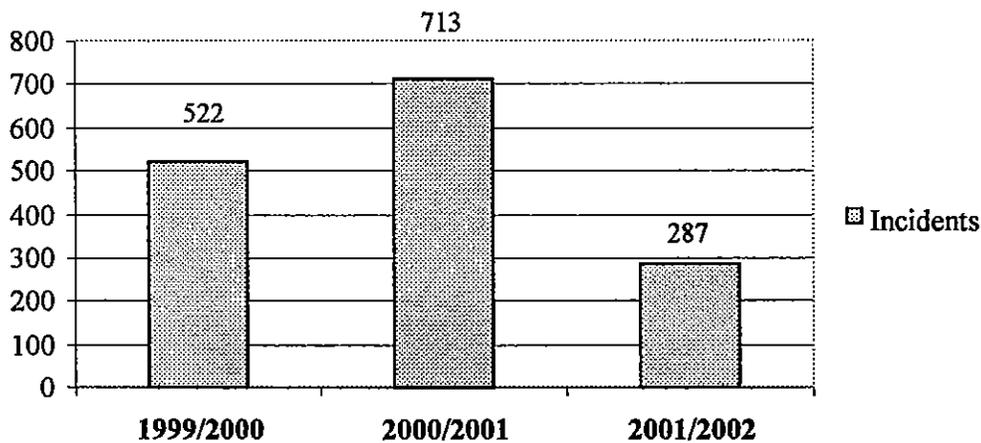
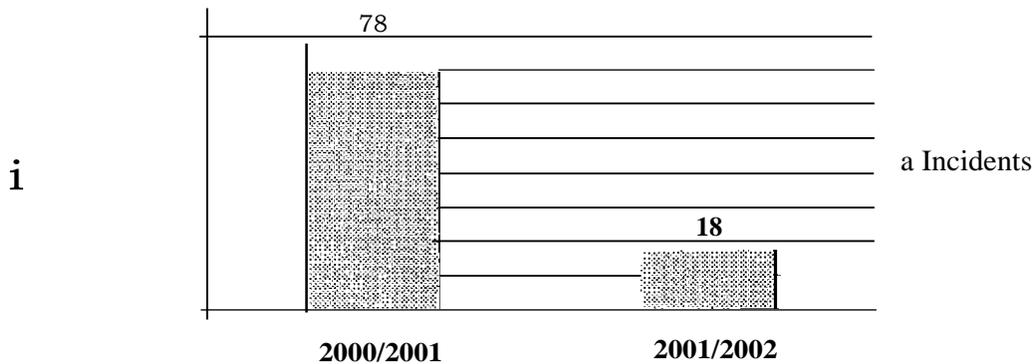


Figure Ten represents number of incidents of Serious Nuisance and Harassment reported to the Byker Community Housing Office. The peak in 2000/2001 was reduced enormously during The Usual Suspects initiative.

**Figure Eleven - Number Of Incidents Of Racial Harassment In Byker**



Racial Harassment was a particular problem prior to The Usual Suspects. Figure Eleven shows a dramatic reduction in reported incidents to the Council's Racial Harassment Support Group *at a time when an additional 85 Asylum Seeker Households moved onto the estate.* More asylum seeking families are moving onto the estate month by month.

### Conclusion

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This project had no additional revenue funding from any agency within the partnership. Those involved gave their time, this could not be costed. The expense for ASBO applications was the main increase from normal spending levels within the partnership. The corresponding financial benefits by halving disorder and reducing volume crime will massively exceed these costs. Similarly, the economic impact of increased housing demand along with other safety improvements must represent the best evidence of a successful project. We demonstrated how one council ward obtained one third of the total number of ASBOs held at the time within the whole of the Northumbria Force area. There is much interest in the ABAs, they are cost effective and so far none has been effectively breached. They are now being developed City wide.

There was vital learning for the partnership in how to streamline a bureaucratic and ineffectual ASBO process. For example, good use was made of hearsay evidence provided by Tenancy Enforcement Officers on behalf of reluctant witnesses from the community. It was also clear that Newcastle Magistrates Court were learning about the application of the

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**MEETING THE LOCALS**— Chief Insp Berry and Sgt Baker explain to a woman and children how anti-social orders work

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**OUR METHODS WORK,** — the officers believe their work and that of the council staff is making life better for tenants

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# Behave orders calming rowdies

By **BRENDA HICKMA**  
City e'E epozifer

**ORE** families plagued by neighbours

a from hell are bein>; Riven sunnort. in a 3oInt police and council crackdown.

Some residents in Newcastle East, particularly the Byker Wall, have been subjected to intimidation from rowdy youths and other council tenants.

Police and council housing chiefs have taken a firm stand and are continuing to work with law-abiding families to rid the area of troublemakers. Anti-social behaviour orders have been issued and are being processed.

Police are also taking another approach to make parents of young jobs more accountable for their behaviour.

Chief Insp Richard Berry, of Newcastle East police, said: "We are pursuing acceptable behaviour contracts which, although not legally binding, encourage parents to take more responsibility for teenagers causing criminal damage and harassment

"Th0 partnership between the council and police has already produced results.

Residents living in fear of crime don't have any ruality of life. But very often ► t is a perceived fear and not the actual relatively small amount of anti-social crime which is of more concern to families.

"We are waiting for four or five More anti-social orders to be progressed and these should have a considerable effect on the people living in the area.

"Working with the community and in partnership with other agencies can solve problems and help residents long term."

The crackdown is continuing on unruly tenants across are the first person in the Newcastle area to be jailed after breaching his anti-social behaviour banning order.

Chief Insp Berry said: "The 17-year-old was a persistent offender in Newcastle East.

"The teenager; from Byker, was made subject of an ASBO this year, preventing him from harassment or intimidation." The order was applied for in a joint action by the Northumbria force and Newcastle Council and lasts three years.

Police said the youth was warned any breaches could lead to a prison sentence of up to five years.

Earlier this month the teenager got i&-months custody for breach of the order following convictions for dangerous driving and driving while disqualified.

It sent a clear message for those who continue to breach ASBOs that the courts are ready to dole out stiff sentences.

The new acceptable behaviour orders, being piloted in Newcastle s East End, put conditions and restrictions on behaviour and a breach of them could be used as evidence in court.

Colin Barry Phillipson, a community planning member on Newcastle Council said:

"This is great work by the tenancy enforcement section and the police.

"It sends out a stron s message that the council will not tolerate such activity.

"It will serve as a serious warning to others.

legal process. It is useful to note that defence solicitors never mounted any challenge to the evidence provided. Their only tactic in the ASBO process was to bargain for the most lenient conditions acceptable to the other party and the bench. Most negotiation centred upon the size of an exclusion area, which was a specific condition of most orders.

The critical success factors are seen as having a team approach, being accountable to each other and having an emotional investment to make things work. The leadership style provided by key managers facilitated positive team working. It is the view of The Usual Suspects team that a 'corporate' evaluation template should be developed to support local problem solving. The Newcastle partnership has already undertaken to review management information systems. The Usual Suspects has helped to catalyse significant enthusiasm within the partnership to become more sophisticated in our problem solving methods.

This report has been written to reflect the generic SARAS process. It should be recognised that these were not distinct phases of a clinically executed project plan, but were in fact the natural development of a team based approach, which remained pragmatic to changing circumstances. The key learning of the group is that anti-social behaviour is too complex for a simplistic problem solving approach. The group debrief has highlighted that sustainability requires a constant focus. Under the Northumbria Police structure and the regular geographic meetings, the constant scanning, analysis and responding can now be managed in a recognised way.

Did we achieve our aim of providing a firebreak to allow longer measures to be developed? We think so. The Street Warden scheme starts in May 2002, an expanded CCTV structure and concierge service are to be implemented in the financial year 200012003. The partnership now subscribes to an over-riding vision. This is to develop a partnership intelligence function to task and co-ordinate wardens and cameras for environmental, Police and community safety activity. We aim to be ready for any realignment of The *Usual Suspects*.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix One - Copies of Some Press Content Achieved During the Problem Solving Process**

September 5th 2001

Herald & Post

### **TOUGH LIFE FOR THUGS**

Young thugs who make life a misery for people on Newcastle estates face a huge clampdown if they step out of line.

Police and council chiefs have teamed up to crack down on youth disorder.

Six eviction notices have already been served in Byker in the last month alone.

And the council is looking to punish people who are guilty of disorder and antisocial activities.

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Now, not only are parents at risk of losing their homes, but youths will also be forced to face up to their responsibilities.

In Byker the council has piloted a behaviour agreement, which is legally binding in court, should offending youths continue to misbehave.

The results of schemes like these have been positive and Coun. Barry PHILLIPSON, council spokesman for community planning is delighted. He said "This is great work by Tenancy Enforcement section and the police.

"It sends out a strong message that the city council will not tolerate such activity. In addition, it will serve as a warning to others who believe they can get away with criminal behaviour".

This was endorsed by Ruth ROBSON, council housing spokeswoman, She added: "We should not and will not tolerate such behaviour from a minority who make law-abiding peoples lives a misery.

The council will continue to work with the police to seek further orders".

Chief Inspector Richard BERRY, of Newcastle East Area Command said: "Through a problem solving approach we are working in partnership to take action against problem tenants and offenders.

"A number of orders are already progressed, which will benefit the community".

24th August 2001

### **POLICE REVIEW**

#### **Teenager Jailed after ASBO Breach**

A teenager has become the first person in the Newcastle area to be imprisoned after breaching his antisocial behaviour banning order, the force has announced.

According to Northumbria Police, the 17 year old persistent offender, from the Byker area in the east of the city, was made subject of an ASBO earlier this year preventing him from causing alarm or distress to others.

The order was successfully applied for in a joint action by the force and Newcastle City Council, and was issued for three years. The force said at the time the ban was imposed the youth was warned that any breaches could lead to a prison sentence of up to five years.

But this month at Newcastle Crown Court, the youth received an 18 month custodial sentence for breach of the order following convictions for dangerous and disqualified driving.

The force says the case is an example of its commitment to take firm action on the breaching of ASBOs.

## Appendix Two — Other Evaluation Data

### 1, Sample Data From Northumbria Police Authority Residents Survey

Percentage of respondents who reported particular views:

	1997	2000
i Satisfaction with Neighbourhood Policing:	51%	50%
Had `trust' in the Police	84%	68%
Felt Threatened by Crime	40%	26%

### 2, Costs for Obtaining an ASBO

A conservative estimate taking into account the time of Tenancy Enforcement Officers x 2 and the Tenancy Enforcement Manager in dealing with the cases. Based on an hourly rate. It also looks at admin support, and solicitor time. The costings are quite specific and do not take into account the work done by Byker Housing Office or any other agencies within or outside Tenancy Enforcement.

Time spent on drafting and service of 6 Notices of Seeking Possession	£ 270.00
Time spent on drafting and service of 1 Notice of Seeking Possession for Introductory Tenancy	£ 53.60
Time spent drafting 12 Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA)	£ 103.20
Administrative Support for all paperwork	£ 142.40
Time spent attending surgeries for ABAs by Tenancy Enforcement Officer (TEO) and Tenancy Enforcement Manager (TEM)	£ 87.60
Time spent attending meetings by TEOs x 2 and TEM	£ 208.50
Time spent at court by TEO	£ 50.40
Time spent taking witness statements and in serving letters on tenants by TEO x 2	£ 324.00
Legal Costs for ASBO (Person `x')	£ 2223.09
Legal Costs for (person `y')	£ 3208.73
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>£ 6671.52</b>

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## Appendix Three — Aerial Photograph Showing The Unique Design Of The Byker Wall Estate