

Crime Reduction initiative 2001/02

UNIVERSITY OF WALES
SWANSEA
STUDENT VILLAGE.

P.C. Alan Murphy

SOUTH WALES POLICE

**Title: Crime Reduction Initiative 2001/2002
University of Wales, Swansea, Student Village**

Category: Crime Reduction

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Tilley Award Summary

Crime Reduction Initiative, University of Wales, Swansea Student Village

In December 2000, The University of Wales, Swansea, was approached in an attempt to engage them in a partnership approach to all crime and safety issues relating to their students.

There are approximately 20,000 part and full time students attending the UWS.

It was recognised that a number of factors made them more vulnerable to becoming victims of crime.

- They are in the main young people, often away from home and parental care for the first time.**
- They are often low-waged and are unable to afford adequate security measures.**
- Many of them live in homes of multiple occupancy.**
- Combined with the above, they often have a quantity of valuables such as computers, electrical and sports equipment.**

The following is a brief list of the initiatives completed, their aims and outcomes.

- Secure mail system at Hendrefoilan Student Village**

An approach was made to Royal Mail and UWS to solve the problem of Burglary of student mail from shared accommodation blocks, resulting in credit fraud and

deception, which in this case was to fund the wholesale purchase of controlled drugs.

As a result, a room was supplied in the site Superintendents office to house a mail rack, supplied by Royal Mail. Students must pick up their mail using identification to do so.

- **Crime Prevention Initiative**

It was decided to take the crime prevention message directly to the students. This was done by a series of "Kitchen talks" at Hendrefoilan Student Village, which provides accommodation for 1600 first year and foreign students.

This involved Crime Prevention Officers and Community Officers from the local sector, visiting the students in their homes. There, the officers would gather the occupiers together in their communal area and distribute prepared crime prevention packages, give crime prevention advice from an agreed syllabus, post-code items of property with U.V. pens included in the packages and also address any questions and fears. Additional public reassurance measures were also put in place, an example being the locating of the divisional Mobile Police Station to raise the profile of the initiative and to give a "drop-in" base.

Analysis was based on numbers of students spoken to and crime prevention packages distributed.

Following the success of the previous year, the initiative, was repeated during October 2001 at both the Student Village and The UWS Campus, to address the needs of new students.

- **"Freshers" week Initiative**

This involved the positioning of The Mobile Police Station at the area used by students for enrolment at the beginning of term.

There, three Crime Prevention Officers approached all students and issued them with a prepared crime prevention package. This resulted in direct contact being made with approximately 3000 students in the two days allocated.

Students and staff were encouraged to call at the Mobile Station for any advice.

Conclusion

The above are examples of working initiatives, achieved through a long-term, sustainable partnership with UWS and South Wales Police, through Swansea Community Safety Department.

At present, our efforts have contributed to a reduction in reported crime at Hendrefoilan Student Village of:-

- **Autocrime – Year-on-year (2000/2001) - 31 %**
- **Burglary — Year-on-year (2000/2001) — 40%**
- **Overall Crime — Year-on-year (2000/2001) — 18%**

This partnership has allowed the development of a number of additional working protocols and relationships, which auger well for future crime reduction strategies being introduced and is a positive example of partnership working in action.

The most important outcomes relating to the success of this long-term partnership approach were to:-

- **Identify the best "first point of contact"**
- **Be prepared to review and repeat initiatives to cope with the demands brought by an ever changing student population**
- **Be imaginative and innovative. Take time to find out the communities needs and "what makes them tick" and then use this to tailor your initiatives to that information.**

**Alan Murphy
Community Safety Officer**

Intoduction

The University of Wales, Swansea (UWS) is situated on the western side of the city in **Singleton Park**, between the **City of Swansea** and the seaside village of Mumbles. The main road access is provided by Mumbles Road, a dual carriageway seafront road, linking Mumbles with the city centre and Sketty Lane, again a main dual carriageway linking Mumbles Road and the residential suburbs of Sketty and the surrounding area.

A promenade seafront path provides pedestrian and cycle access to the main entrance of the University and again links with Mumbles and the city centre. There is further pedestrian access available through the numerous gateways joining the University grounds, at the side and rear to, Singleton Park and Hospital.

The University has approximately 10,000 students in attendance, who reside at three main locations, provided by UWS.

- Halls of Residence on Campus.
- Halls of Residence, Clyne (approximately one mile from Campus).
- Hendrefoilan Student Village Self Catering Accommodation (approximately two miles from Campus).

In addition to the above, there is plenty of privately owned, multiple occupancy accommodation available in the **Brynmill** and **Uplands** areas, situated approximately one mile from Campus, on the outskirts of the city centre.

Through my experience as a local uniform beat officer and as a resident of this part of Swansea, I was aware of the general crime trends of which the University, its buildings and students were the victims. These consisted mainly of dwelling burglaries and autocrime. I conducted a crime pattern analysis in order to gain an accurate picture of these problems.

The result of this analysis was that UWS Campus and Hendrefoilan Student Village have area specific crime problems, i.e. autocrime and dwelling burglary respectively.

For the purposes of this project, I have decided to concentrate on the Hendrefoilan Student Village area and it's specific crime problems.

It was felt that because of the physical size of Hendrefoilan Student Village, its buildings, geographical location and existing layout, a partnership approach to an on-going programme of improvement in crime prevention/reduction measures was required.

In view of this, a meeting between myself, my colleague, C.P.O. Andy O'Flanagan, UWS Site Services Manager, Ian MacPherson, Admissions Officer, Helen Barney and Hendrefoilan Village Superintendent, Vaughan Davies.

As a result of this meeting, the crime pattern analysis and site visits, it was decided that there should be a three-part strategy to achieve an overall reduction in crime at UWS.

- In the short term, the security of all mail delivered to Hendrefoilan Student Village must be established.
- In the medium term, a target hardening campaign, aimed at the students, their property and their homes, to be implemented.
- In the long term, a "STUDENT WATCH" scheme to be initiated at Hendrefoilan Student Village.

The following section of this project deals with the methodology and its implementation chosen to meet the aim, target and objectives of this crime prevention initiative.

Hendrefoilan student Village.

This location provides accommodation for approximately 1600 students, most of whom are in their first year at Swansea. The Village was built in the 1980's on open fields and farmland, forming a valley, the remainder of which lies to the rear of the Village, separated by a single-track road. The original tree line surrounding the whole site has been retained, providing a self-contained environment.

The accommodation consists mainly of multiple occupancy blocks of flats with a communal hallway area and is situated in the suburbs west of Swansea.

Access is gained via a main driveway, from a junction with a major arterial road, known as Gower Road. This is a busy road serving as the main route from the residential area west of Swansea to the city centre and also to the popular tourist destination of the Gower Peninsular.

There is secondary vehicular access via a single-track road to the rear of the village that borders a semi-rural area. Also, there is pedestrian access via a footpath established when the area was originally open fields and farmland, leading from the western side of the Village to a newly built housing estate. This is used by local residents as a short cut to the main road and also as a point of Access for the Village shop.

During 2000, there were 28 reported crimes at the above location, 10 of which were burglaries.

(See **appendix 1 and 2**)

Collect and Analyse Data

Burglary of mail.

Originally, Royal Mail delivered all mail through a letter box into the communal hallway of each accommodation block. This was then picked up by the individual students or distributed around the rooms by one of the residents.

My own experience relates specifically to an M.O. whereby the culprits would target the mail delivered to students at their accommodation blocks, particularly during the holiday periods when students had returned home and there was a build up of mail in the hallway areas of the accommodation blocks. Much of this mail would be finance-related, coinciding with the release of grant funds to individual students.

The culprit(s) would gain entry to the hallway area and steal the mail therein. This mail would then be sorted by the culprit(s) and any finance-related document would then be used in theft and deception.

My experience as a beat officer and as a detective in this area was essential in highlighting this particular type of burglary, as it was largely a "hidden" crime.

I had personally dealt with a case concerning 22 victims of this type of burglary. All of the victims were unaware that they had had any documentation stolen until they were traced and presented with the evidence. Therefore, the crime data available was unreliable.

Development and implementation of preventative measures.

As part of a partnership approach to solving this type of burglary and, as a result of our initial meeting mentioned in the introduction, I contacted General Management staff and the Security Department at Royal Mail. I set up an arrangement between them and The University so that all mail for Hendrefoilan Student Village is delivered to a secure central mail room at the office of the Hendrefoilan village Superintendent.

UWS have supplied a suitable room, with the supply and installation of the racking system, at Royal Mail's expense. Postal delivery staff now divide all mail for the Village into accommodation block numbers and deliver to the mailroom. The mail is placed into "pigeon holes" and from there, is collected by the individual student, through the Superintendent and his staff.

Signage has been placed in the foyer of each accommodation block and at the mailroom, setting out the new procedure for residents and staff.

Both Royal Mail management and the Hendrefoilan Superintendent have addressed staff training.

Also a circular has been sent to each individual student as part of their starter pack crime prevention information.

In addition, the official student union newspaper ("*Waterfront*"), radio station ("*Extreme Radio*") and UWS website has publicised **the** initiative.

A timescale for implementation of this part of the overall crime initiative was set for September 2001, to coincide with the start of the new term and the release of grant funds, as previously stated.

The scheme was implemented on time, to run as a pilot scheme for the main accommodation blocks within the Village, bringing in excess of 1000 students under the scheme, with a view to

expand to the whole village and UWS Campus by September 2002.

The benefits of this arrangement are;

- 1. Provision of a secure mail system for student residents at Hendrefoilan Student Village and so, preventing them becoming a victim of this type of crime.**
- 2. Prevention of theft and deception involving the use the documents stolen in this way and the "knock-on" effect of any associated crime, in this case, it is known to have financed wholesale drug supply.**
- 3. Reducing administration for Royal Mail.**

This initiative addresses the following principles of crime prevention:

- **Target Hardening**
- **Target Removal**
- **Access Control**
- **Formal and employee Surveillance**
- **Environmental Design**
- **Rule Setting**

Monitoring and Evaluation

The system has been evaluated by means of reported crime figures alone. Figures from Royal Mail relating to the quantity of mail delivered to Hendrefoilan Student Village are not available.

To date, there has been only 1 reported crime involving burglary of mail.

Collect and Analyse Data

Also discussed at this meeting were methods of combating general thefts and burglaries of student's property.

The crime pattern analysis showed that there was a regular increase in reported crime around the start of each new term.

(See **appendix 1 and 2**).

It was acknowledged by all present that, despite previous initiatives by South Wales Police to raise the awareness of this problem with Swansea's Student population, these had sometimes failed to get the message across and that apathy on the part of students was partly the cause.

An example of this was the number of dwelling burglaries to which there was no forced entry required. In addition, a site visit revealed many accommodation blocks left insecure, in that their entrance doors were left wide open.

Development and implementation of preventative measures.

Targethardening campaign.

First year students were targeted during the initial enrolment process.

With regard to the perceived apathy on the part of students, as previously mentioned, Crime Prevention Officers set up the Divisional Mobile Police Station at the enrolment site on Campus where they distributed prepared crime prevention information packs.

The packs included information aimed at combating autocrime, i.e. The South Wales Police "**ACT AGAINST AUTOCRIME**" literature, promotion of the Victim Support run vehicle security device offer, basic anti-burglary advice literature and an

ultraviolet marking kit. This comprised a U.V. pen and record sheet and would allow the students to complete the marking of their property on first arrival at UWS.

Following the above, other C.P.O's and myself attended at Hendrefoilan Student Village for a weekend.

During this time, together with Special Constables and local Community Officers, we initiated a target hardening campaign, aimed at both the students and their accommodation.

The divisional mobile police station was deployed on site to act as a focus point for the campaign and as a call-in centre for any student seeking information or advice

Each accommodation block was visited at a pre-set time. These were divided into two-storey and multi-storey blocks. Each two-storey block was the subject of a crime prevention survey. Each multi-storey block was also the subject to a crime prevention survey, concentrating on ground floor window security and access control.

The results of these surveys were forwarded to the Estates Dept. of UWS for actioning.

There, we marked a small number of items of property belonging to each resident with an ultra-violet pen, educated them in the postcoding procedure, supplied an information pack including a U.V. pen to any resident who had not already received one and gave any necessary crime prevention advice. The above was supported by the purchase and distribution of 25 U.V. screening lamps to all divisional stations and relevant departments.

The Accommodation Officer arranged appointments for officers to be at specific blocks at pre-arranged times and these were sent by post to each individual student.

In addition to the target hardening of the residents and their accommodation, the campaign looked at ways to improve the vehicle access control to the general site area. This involved the Hendrefoilan Village security staff.

Each student owning a vehicle is now issued with a vehicle permit. Vehicles belonging to friends and family on visits are issued with a temporary permit by security staff. Any vehicle found by security staff to be parked and unattended not displaying a permit will have its details noted and placed in a checks record book. This book is available to any Police Officer conducting enquiries into any crime at Hendrefoilan Village. The officer can then cross-refer the details of the vehicle in question with the details entered on the accommodation officers' records. This ensures that, in the case of a resident simply having forgotten to display their permit, the officer would make no unnecessary enquiries. Any vehicle then found not to be registered to the scheme would be subject to follow up enquiries by the officer.

Signage to this effect is erected on-site.

This system runs in conjunction with an on-site

"VULNERABLE VEHICLE SCHEME" that mirrors the scheme in operation throughout the force area.

A patrolling officer who sees a vehicle that is "vulnerable", in that it has items on display, etc, making it susceptible to attack, will issue a notice to bring the matter to the attention of the owner and raise their awareness of the causes of autocrime.

Carbon copies of the notice would be collated by C.P.O.'s for evaluation.

This scheme operates in Hendrefoilan Village, with the notices issued by the security staff. This does not prevent any Police Officer entering the Village area and patrolling in this manner also.

The permit scheme allows another avenue of enquiry to any investigating officer, provides part of a structured patrol plan for security staff and, combined with the on-site vulnerable vehicle scheme in operation, further addresses autocrime in the area.

The benefits of this approach to a target hardening campaign are:

- **To provide the necessary information and equipment to new residents to allow them to reduce the likelihood of them becoming victims of crime.**
- **To provide evidence for our partners to effectively target their resources.**
- **To provide qualitative and quantitative analysis to measure it's effectiveness.**

This initiative addresses the following principles of crime prevention:

- **Target Hardening**
- **Remove the means to commit crime**
- **Reducing the payoff**
- **Access control**
- **Surveillance (employee)**
- **Environmental design**
- **Rule setting**
- **Increase the chances of being caught**

Monitoring and Evaluation

The following is an quantitative evaluation of the initial target hardening campaign:-

- The number of students receiving crime prevention literature directly – **3000**.
- A comparative analysis of crime/incidents recorded on a quarterly and annual basis – See **Appendices 1 and 2**.
- The number of students reached by media, i.e. circulation figures. –
"Waterfront" -- **approx. 10,000**
"Extreme Radio" – **approx. 4-6000**
Personal e-mail addresses – 22,500
- The number of items of property marked. – **4200**
- The quantity of hardware installed by UWS in response to the C.P.O. surveys conducted. – To date, this part of the initiative is due for purchase in the new academic year. (**July, 2002**)

In addition, the permit scheme will be monitored and evaluated by:

- The number of permits issued - 421
- The number of non-permit bearing vehicles identified - 45
- The number of police enquiries allowed by this scheme. - 5
- The number of *"VULNERABLE VEHICLE SCHEME"* notices issued by police and security staff. - **105**

The above initiatives are intended to adopt a more pro-active approach to crime prevention, in the medium term, at Hendrefoilan Student Village, using a method that is designed to take the initiative directly to the target audience.

Collect and Analyse Data

In addition, it was felt both at the initial meeting with UWS staff and in discussion with my C.P.O. colleagues, that another method of combating the perceived apathy on the part of the students was to give them greater involvement in the crime prevention process.

To address this issue in the long term, the partners in this overall process initially suggested the setting up of a "*STUDENT WATCH*".

Development and Implementation of Preventative Measures

Student Watch

It was envisaged that this would function in a similar way to any Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

There followed a meeting between UWS staff, Students' Union and Crime Prevention staff, during which the proposed scheme was discussed.

It was felt that the main problem with such a scheme in a University was sustainability. This was due to the turnover of resident students in any one location.

Hendrefoilan Student Village is mainly used for first year students, before they move onto privately rented accommodation throughout the City for the remainder of their course.

A compromise was reached whereby the Crime Prevention Department and UWS would utilise existing facilities to

communicate crime prevention information, awareness on incidents and trends and appeals for information.

To achieve this aim, the following is now in place:-

- **Post graduate Tutors and UWS media managers are registered on the ringmaster as co-ordinators**
- **Information is disseminated via e-mail to all students and staff**
- **Replies to the e-mail are filtered and distributed by UWS I.T. staff**
- **Regular articles and columns are published in the Media**

The above allows for all relevant information to reach students and staff by the following mediums:-

- **"Floor" and "Kitchen" talks by tutors**
- **Local notice board announcements**
- **Personal e-mail (Each student and staff member – 22500 people has a personal internal e-mail address)**
- **"Waterfront", "Extreme Radio" and UWS Website media**

This is further intended to increase the ownership of crime prevention and community safety on the part of the students.

Campaign Management

The committee formed at the start of the overall initiative takes overall responsibility for its management. Regular meetings take place between the partners and, from those present, a group of representatives provide progress reports to the partnership members.

During the committee meetings, information is shared regarding issues raised by the initiative as well as information from outside sources, e.g. crime trends.

This information sharing is subject to a protocol, considering confidentiality, data protection and Policing priorities.

The launching of the initiative and any subsequent related initiative is promoted through UWS media as well as relevant mainstream media.

Any venue used for launch/media coverage is selected following committee consultation.

The above approach to the initiative provides the following:

- **Shared information on crime statistics/trends**
- **Product knowledge and advice**
- **A partnership approach encouraging greater confidence, trust and a closer working relationship**
- **A model for expansion**

The scheme addresses the following principles of crime prevention:

- **Target Hardening**
- **Access Control**
- **Surveillance (Natural, employee)**
- **Rule Setting**
- **Increase the chances of being caught**

Summary

With reference to the attached appendices, the following outcomes apply:

- **Autocrime—Year-on-year (2000/2001)
reduction of 31%**

- **All Burglary — Year-on — year (2000/2001)
reduction of 40%**

- **Overall crime — Year-on -Year (2000/2001)
reduction of 18 %**

The above initiatives implemented at the Hendrefoilan Student Village form part of an overall crime reduction initiative for the whole of UWS, it's staff and students.

The aim of the initiative is for South Wales Police to offer a structured approach to crime prevention and community safety. As previously stated, the initiative adopts a partnership approach, with the essential partners being South Wales Police, UWS and the students. In addition, the invited partners are Royal mail.

This partnership approach to the Hendrefoilan student Village initiative and UWS as a whole ensures it's sustainability and provides a framework upon which to build for the future.

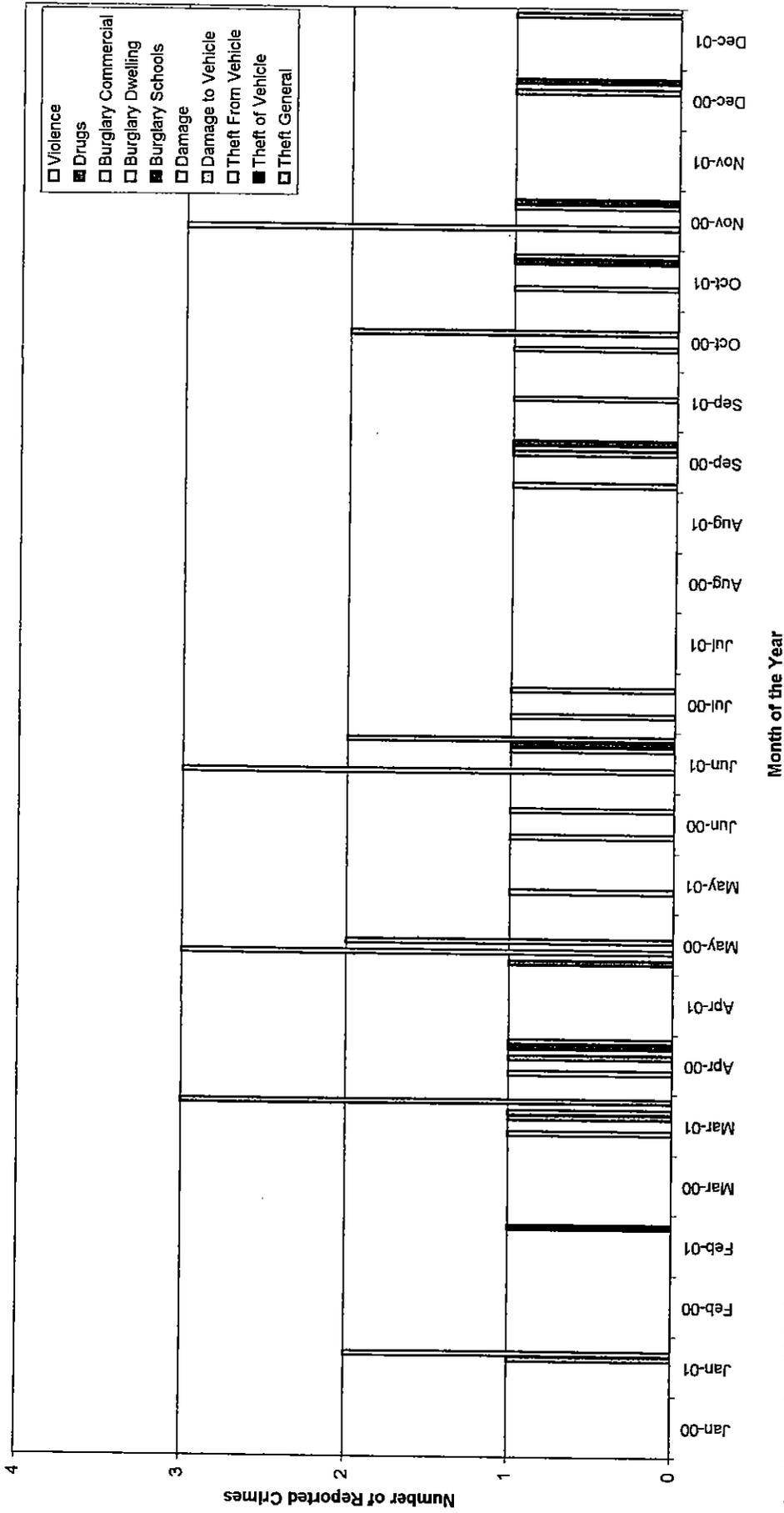
Appendix 1

Reported Crimes on University Grounds 2000.

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Drugs	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Burglary Commercial	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Burglary Dwelling	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	8
Burglary Schools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Damage	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Damage to Vehicle	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	5
Theft From Vehicle	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	4
Theft of Vehicle	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
Theft General	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	4	6	2	2	0	4	3	5	2	

Appendix 2

**Reported Crime Type and Frequency Committed in Swansea University's Student Village
for the years 2000 and 2001.**



Graph created and printed by K. Sutton (Intelligence Analyst) on 29/05/02.
 All data extracted from CIS and the SWP Daily Bulletin, by J. Watkins - Researcher.
 (Graph - Both years), University figures/For A. Murphy/Products for Others/52802.