

Lancashire Constabulary

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Operation Night Watchman

Operation Night Watchman was born through careful analysis of crime patterns and statistics. This, with the assistance of intelligence led policing from Divisions, gave the Air Support Unit a tangible and achievable initiative to pro-actively reduce crime on the Industrial Estates of Lancashire, in an area where a 91% undetected rate existed.

Every Division in the county has Industrial Estates of varying scales. The companies vary in size from small independents to nationally recognised household names. Invariably some companies are involved in the transfer and handling of large amounts of cash, bonded warehousing and IT products. The one thing they all have in common is their attraction to the criminal fraternity. The estates are generally positioned on the outskirts of urban areas near to surrounding countryside and provide an easy access with good 'A' road and motorway networks.

From Accrington sub-division, the Operation was tied into a business project in its infancy 'The Green Business Park Initiative' being led by Hyndburn First, the Local Strategic Partnership and Regeneration Agency. The project was launched on four Industrial sites in the Hyndburn area, an area in excess of four square miles comprising of, Altham Industrial Estate, Altham Business Park, Time Technology Park and Shuttleworth Mead Industrial Estate. The companies pledged to work in partnership with Hyndburn First, Guardhall Security and the Police in an effort to amalgamate and focus resources to reduce crime, prevent crime and standardise responses in all cases.

A series of meetings and 'behind the scenes' work, explained and examined all aspects of the project from the various agencies involved and clearly defined the Police involvement, which culminated in a high profile launch both on the Estates, and in the Media. ON99, the Police Helicopter was at the forefront due to its unique highly visible quality.

ON99 can be used as a sustainable resource in policing outlying areas quickly and efficiently and was anxious to branch out into a more pro-active role enhancing the normal reactive role it provides. This would form the basis of its involvement in the routine policing of these estates.

A highly publicised poster campaign on the estates, surrounding areas and in the media was run from the Unit along with routine patrol between the 1st October 2002 to 31st March 2003, but due to success will be continued on a random basis. Aerial photography booklets were provided for every patrol car and communications room with indexed legend of all premises to assist with prompt arrival times and easy location of Units.

Throughout the designated time frame the Unit carried out targeted patrol flights on 30 occasions. This amounted to a total flying time of 3.55 hours. Crime stats to date show a 50% decrease in recorded crime and incidents and on first indications a saving of £20,000 in lost property or production.

Operation Night Watchman

SCANNING

Across the County between 1st October 2001 & 31st March 2002 914 offences of burglary, auto-crime and damage were committed at premises on Industrial Estates . The volume of offences is actually quite small but the value of property taken/damaged is considerably high. The offences account for 3.3% of Divisions recorded crime in each of the 3 crime headings. Unfortunately an average of 91% of these offences remain undetected.

In Eastern Division for this time period the ratio of incidents tallied at 189 recorded crimes, and 145 incidents, of which the four targeted estates contributed 29 crimes and 37 incidents.

Identified Industrial Estates through examination of Sleuth, showed areas of vulnerability and potential high value crime areas over a six month period taking into account the Christmas stocks that would be held in these premises. This culminated in an approach through the Pops Co-ordinator PS Holbrook to adapt Night Watchman, to join in partnership with a multi – agency response being driven by Hyndburn First, Local Strategic Partnership and Regeneration Agency in Accrington.

ANALYSIS

FEATURES OF PLACE:

Altham Industrial Estate, Altham Business Park, Time Technology Park and Shuttleworth Mead Industrial Estate are situated on the Outskirts of Accrington and Padiham respectively covering an area in excess of four square miles. The location is between 3 sub-divisions who are not able to provide regular patrolling, which allows the criminal fraternity to work undisturbed, as the site is surrounded by countryside and is not overlooked by housing.

The road network service to this area is very good and provides excellent 'escape' routes. There is the A678 that provides routes in from the M65, Blackburn and Accrington areas from the west and from Burnley and Padiham to the East. The A6068 gives a direct link to the M65 and access to the Greater Manchester area and Yorkshire with in 10 minutes travelling time. This is also a popular 'away' day for Merseyside travelling criminals.

A predominance of Travellers sites in East Lancashire surrounds this area. The interest shown in the Units, from these people, is the cause of constant complaints to the Police. The layout of the Units and courtyards is also a hindrance to the irregular patrolling that divisions can afford.

FEATURE OF CALLER/VICTIM

As well as the Industrial Units/Warehouses being targeted for burglary, a lot of the autocrime offences are committed against HGV's parked up on the estates. Many of these are against foreign drivers asleep in cabs or vehicles that are left unattended awaiting access to make deliveries.

FEATURES OF OFFENDER/SOURCE OF PROBLEM

The offenders can be local to the Industrial estate or potentially may be employed there. This will give them intimate knowledge of the layout of the estate and the effectiveness of security measures in place. Some offences such as 'jump ups' can be opportunist. Alternatively the offenders can be well – organised teams travelling to target specific premises due to the type of property known to be stored there. Hijacking HGV's can involve violence towards the drivers.

HOW DO THESE FEATURES COMBINE TO CAUSE A PROBLEM?

The layout of these 4 Industrial estates and the ease of access and escape through the road network, combined with the knowledge that offenders possess and local issues all provide ideal criminal opportunity in the current climate.

RESPONSE

The Partnership Team.

Lancashire Constabulary
Air Support Unit
PS Holbrook – Pops Co-ordinator Accrington
PC Richard Green – Crime Prevention Officer
Beat Officers covering the 4 sites.

Hyndburn First, Local Strategic Partnership and Regeneration Agency
Mr Barry Noone – Business Liaison Officer
Helena Tinker – Groundwork Blackburn

Representatives of Companies at the 4 sites.
Donna Singleton – Raven Manufacturing
Mr Jeff Green – Graham and Brown

Guardhall Security

LANPAC – The Lancashire Constabulary Partnership group with local companies

Following several introductory and planning meetings, between the fore runners in this initiative Barry Noone , Ps Holbrook, Pc Green and Pc Jeffrey, it became apparent that the parameters of the Green Business Project more or less ran hand in hand with Night Watchman and so this seemed a good platform to work from introducing the Op to E Division.

Aerial Photographs were prepared for the 4 estates, annotated with Unit numbers and road names and packaged with maps and indexed legend and sent out for distribution to all patrol cars and security to assist with quicker location of properties. These were also despatched to key Communications officers and motorway patrols.

The planned media launch was run in two stages. The first Media release centred on a visit to the Air Support Unit by Representatives from the Estates, Hyndburn First and Groundwork Blackburn along with Representatives from the Police on the 24th September 2002. This gave everyone an insight into what the Air Support Unit could achieve and the ideal photo opportunity for the Lancashire Evening Telegraph to utilise in their promotion of the scheme.

The official launch of the project involved a seminar at Altham Business Park where all parties presented their proposals to each of the estates and company management teams.

From an Air Support point of view a video presentation was followed by a short talk and the usual question and answer session was held at the end.

A very productive meeting and launch was concluded with everyone represented and a clear vision as to the way forward and where we needed to be in the New Year.

The posters paid for by LANPAC were distributed to every company on the four sites and also extra, placed strategically on all entries onto the estates.

Throughout the time frame of our project the Air Support Unit used high visibility patrolling of the four sites in order to deter and prevent crime from taking place and to detect suspicious activity previously unseen or disturbed. There were no cost implications, as patrols were included in return transits from other deployments.

Open dialogue was maintained with all parties throughout the whole project and due to the positive steps and successful outcome and links forged, this will remain in force as a sustainable initiative by all concerned.

ASSESSMENT

Operation Night Watchman resulted in the four Industrial estates being the focus of targeted patrolling by the Lancashire Police Helicopter on 30 occasions between the 1st October 2002 and 31st March 2003. This amounted to 3.55 hours flying time in total.

Crime figures for the same period 2001 – 2002 stood at 29 crimes and 37 incidents.

Figures for this year are running at 14 crimes and 19 incidents across the estates, showing, a 50% decrease in reported incidents and first indications report a saving of £20,000 in lost property or production.

Specifically the Unit were responsible for locating 2 alarms and instigating 4 stop checks on vehicles seen acting suspiciously, one of which was followed to one of the surrounding travellers camps, subsequently abandoned and later found to be stolen.

The success of Night Watchman and the Green Business Park Initiative has proved beyond doubt that joint enterprise initiatives combining all available resources and expertises, and standardising responses, can significantly reduce crime in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

Example

Aerial Photograph

And

Legend

ALTHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

Lancashire Constabulary Air Support Unit



Altham Industrial Estate

Aitham Industrial Estate

1 & 1A	James Dewhursts
2	Vacant
3	Sabre Europe Ltd
4	Laneside
Unit 1	Senator Office International Ltd (Storage only)
Unit 2	Senator Office International Ltd (Storage only)
Unit 3	Vacant
Unit 4	Vacant
Unit 5	ASK Rewinds
Unit 6	Green Box
Unit 7	Simon Jersey
Unit 8	Vacant
Unit 9	Europrint
Unit 10	Europrint
Unit 11	Vacant
Unit 12	Vacant
5	Profit Cash and Carry (Nield Distribution)
6	Spa Web Ltd
7	Norden Enterprises
8	Gabriel Photographers Ltd
9	Raven Manufacturing
10	Nield Distribution
11	Image Chemical Products
12	Dale Print Finishers
13	System Hygeine
14	Lynch Trucks

- 15 Callender Aeropart (Lancashire) Ltd
- 16 Venture Court
- Unit 1 Thomas Fergusson Print Finishers
Unit 2 &3 Olympic Fixing Products Ltd
Unit 4 &5 Steelwood UK
- Unit 6 Siemens Traffic Control Ltd. Currently to Let
Unit 7 &8 Chantelle Lighting
Unit 9 A & H Formes Ltd
Unit 10 Aqua Source
- 17 Sleepmaster
- 18 Vacant – currently for sale
- 19 Hallmark UK, Hambledon Studios – currently For sale

Example

Copy of Poster

Original - A3, Colour and laminated

Courtesy of LANPAC

Lancashire Constabulary



OPERATION NIGHT WATCHMAN



YOU ARE BEING WATCHED!

**THIS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IS
SUBJECT TO REGULAR ANTI-CRIME
PATROLS BY THE LANCASHIRE POLICE
HELICOPTER**