

***North Wales Police  
Wrexham Industrial Estate  
Targeted Policing Initiative***



**Tilley Award submission  
2004**

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Wrexham Industrial Estate  
Targeted Policing Initiative**

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## **Wrexham Industrial Estate Targeted Policing Initiative**

### **SUMMARY**

Wrexham Industrial Estate is situated approximately 2 miles north of the town of Wrexham and some 10 miles from Chester. The estate covers approximately 550 hectares and in geographical terms, it is one of the largest industrial estates in Europe. Around 300 businesses operate on the estate, providing a livelihood for many residents of Wrexham and North East Wales. In addition to these businesses, there are ninety Local Authority houses and approximately one hundred private dwellings within the confines of the estate, together with a number of retail outlets.

There is a considerable variety in the nature and type of businesses that operate from the estate, ranging from small firms to multinational companies that are involved in manufacturing or storing a wide range of products.

Limited perimeter protection, poor landscaping, and the sheer scale of the area, combined with a maze of roads with multiple access routes, had hindered effective security patrols.

During the 10 years preceding the Targeted Policing Initiative, research had shown that the Industrial Estate had suffered significant losses through theft, burglary and damage amounting to £1.25 million annually.

Over the years a number of worthy initiatives had been put forward to reduce crime on the estate but these tended to be short lived.

In December 2000 the Home Office awarded the Eastern Division of North Wales Police £188,000 under the Crime Reduction Programme Targeted Policing Initiative. This award enabled North Wales Police to tackle the problems head on.

The aim of the initiative was to seek to provide an environment that was both safe and secure for residents, employees and businesses. The intended target was to reduce the volume of crime and other incidents on Wrexham Industrial Estate by 25% over 2 years.

The initiative ran from 14<sup>th</sup> February 2001 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003 and achieved the following results:

- Overall crime down 25.9% (compared with 1999).
- Burglary reduced by 59.6%.
- Theft reduced by 13.5%.
- In a recent independent survey 75% of people said they felt safer on the estate since the project started.
- 73% of businesses believe the TPI project to have been a success
- Business, security and environmental forums established – development of Estate Community.
- CCTV, Radio Link and multi-faceted Web site established.
- Establishment of a permanent police presence, part funded by the business community, and supported by an Estate Coordinator in partnership with the Local Authority.

## Partners

As with many problems the solution does not always lie with one person or organisation, and it was with this in mind, that a multi-agency approach was adopted. The lead agency, North Wales Police, formed the first partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council, one of the main landowners of the estate.

Throughout the initiative other partners have also been involved, including the Welsh Development Agency, Mayfield Property Consultants, local Community Councils and of course (and most importantly) the residents.

## Project Stages

In order to ensure that the initiative remained focused and on target it was divided into five stages. The first four stages were of equal duration: six months, with the fifth and final stage lasting 1 month.

## Objectives

When the original TPI bid was submitted, it was identified that five core objectives would be required to address the problems on the estate. These were:

1. Co-ordination
2. Communication
3. Analysis and Targeting
4. Target Hardening
5. Training and Accreditation

### Objective 1 – Co-ordination

It has been estimated that businesses on the estate spend at least two million pounds annually on security measures, in one form or another. Security firms ranging from national companies to what can only be described as 'one man and his dog' are deployed on the estate, with Wrexham County Borough Council and Mayfield Property Consultants also providing manned and static guarding services. The levels and quality of the service provided has been equally wide ranging, and there has been no identified training or accepted standard. Each company has worked in isolation because, in many cases, they have viewed each other as potential competitors.

Guards had reported feeling vulnerable, particularly in confrontational situations. They perceived themselves to be at risk and believed that they were isolated, with no support available if they found themselves in difficulty, even though there were other security guards on duty at neighbouring sites at the time.

Many of the security officers possessed potentially useful information about criminal activity or vehicle movements, whilst others were a source of good local knowledge, which could have been of significant benefit to both the Police and the community. None of this information was shared.

This lack of a coordinated approach contributed to crime and incident problems because movements and activity by potential offenders were not being detected, or monitored, even

within a relatively small geographical area. Consequently, potential offenders were able to move freely around the honeycomb of minor roads with a degree of anonymity.

Coordinating these resources would prove to be a significant challenge, but a necessary facet in seeking to provide a long term solution to the Estates crime problems.

### **Achievements of Objective 1**

#### **TPI office centrally located on the estate.**

The Targeted Policing Initiative unit was located centrally on the estate, and this provided both a police presence and a focal point for co-ordination. We believe that this was instrumental in gaining the trust of the businesses, as well as showing a commitment to attaining the end result.

As part of the Crime and Disorder Partnership, Wrexham County Borough Council were approached and subsequently provided office accommodation at a reduced rate.

The Targeted Policing Initiative office became the main contact point for many enquiries relating to the estate. Businesses wishing to locate to the area were enquiring which units or land were available. Existing businesses contacted the officers on a daily basis, with many diverse enquiries. It soon became clear that there was a need for a permanent office on the estate.

The daily contact with businesses also assisted the process of identifying all manner of problems, many of which were community related, but were not necessarily policing issues.

#### **Focal point for all businesses – residents.**

Businesses and other agencies were soon anxious to utilise the expertise of the officers. The office was regarded as the central co-ordination point for local business and other organisations. It became the norm for people from the estate to call at the office and pass on information. Businesses enquired about policing and community safety matters affecting their other sites in the UK.

#### **Effective Communication established between businesses – conduit for all enquiries relating to the estate**

The Business Forum brought together companies who had previously never spoken to each other. Managers started to exchange information about company policies, especially Health and Safety issues, and personnel matters.

When one large company announced 200 redundancies over 25% of staff were found jobs on the estate as a direct result of the contacts / links forged through that company being a member of the Business Forum.

## **Objective 2 – Communication**

Communication needed to be improved, both in live time terms, and in the passing and collation of information.

Although a large proportion of companies on the estate employ full time security personnel, an even greater proportion of small to medium companies exist without that facility. It is the latter sized companies that were being targeted by the criminal element, and although many had made individual efforts to reduce opportunities for crime on their premises, the problems had refused to go away. Tackling a common problem together is far more effective than separate individual efforts, and it was felt that if businesses were made aware of trends in criminal activity, they would be able to take preventative action, which they were willing to do with professional guidance and support.

It was for this reason that a radio link system was proposed. Such a system would streamline communication and increase the personal safety and operational effectiveness of people who were both directly, and indirectly, involved with security matters at their place of business. The system would benefit the whole community as well as improving lines of communication between residents, the emergency services and the local authority to name but a few.

In addition to the radio link, it was decided to disseminate a community newsletter to businesses in an effort to reinforce both the security message, and other relevant information such as company security profiles and notice boards for events.

## **Achievements of Objective 2**

### **Effective Radio Link Scheme established**

The two officers identified at an early stage that communication throughout the estate needed to be improved. The expertise of North Wales Police Radio Communications Department was obtained. 55 hand held radios were purchased with the base station being donated by North Wales Police.

The system operates on UHF, and enables users to pass information about a variety of incidents and day-to-day issues immediately. The base station and aerial are situated at a secure site on the estate, with the radios operating on an open frequency, which allows users to hear both sides of any message that is being broadcast. Everyone who is a radio user can hear exactly what is happening, which permits the individual listener to take preventative action or to render assistance, as appropriate. All participants are encouraged to use the system both professionally and accurately. It is appreciated that in the wrong hands, radio communications could be a crime aid, and it is for this reason that the radios are only issued to accredited security firms, or to persons performing a dual Health & Safety / Security role.

### **24 hour monitoring of CCTV and Radio Link, with a direct Police Link**

The 'Business Security Watch Scheme' is monitored 24 hours per day by the Local Authority CCTV centre staff. It is of major benefit to security officers who know that there is someone out there listening out for them. This means that users can request CCTV coverage of an area or suspect. A police radio, also located in the control room, enables direct contact with police area control room. CCTV staff provide valuable information on the day-to-day issues affecting the estate.

### **Effective use of existing security resources**

Static Security guards were encouraged to liaise with each other and utilise the existing company-owned CCTV systems. Mobile security patrols were encouraged and requested to check each others' areas and report anything suspicious. One particular incident witnessed by a mobile security patrol led to the arrest and conviction of five persons for criminal damage. Potential offenders were to realise that they now could be observed and their anonymity reduced.

### **Newsletter**

A community newsletter was produced and disseminated to businesses in an effort to reinforce both the security message, and other relevant information such as company security profiles and notice boards for events.

## **Objective 3 – Analysis and Targeting**

It was, and still is, important to have a full picture of what was happening on the estate. All preventative methods should be based upon a detailed analysis of where, when and how incidents occur, rather than relying on anecdotal or hearsay evidence, and then adopting an incorrect approach which could prove costly and ineffective.

The role carried out by the police researcher was to be broad. In addition to analysing trends and identifying hot spots, the researcher's brief was to seek out incentives for getting companies on board, such as insurance discounts. It was anticipated that the analysis would permit resources allocated to the project to be used to maximum effect, and would also allow the learning to be captured for use at other locations.

## **Achievements of Objective 3**

### **Estate divided into nine Zones – for ease of crime analysis**

The introduction of the National Crime Recording Standards by North Wales Police in October 2001 suggested that the original target of a 25% decrease in crime over 2 years would probably not be achieved. This issue was further compounded by the fact that the teams were actively encouraging companies to report all crime and incidents.

### **Independent survey of public perception in relation to estate activity conducted pre and post project**

Independent agencies were commissioned to carry out a pre and post project survey of perceived levels of crime on the estate.

The results of the survey are too comprehensive to give a detailed account of their findings.

All of the data obtained under the pre project survey was utilised in the scanning and analysis process, prior to deciding the overall strategy for dealing with the estate problems.

The concluding post project report showed that, 73% of businesses believed the TPI project to have been a success, and 75% of people said they felt safer on the estate since the project started.

### **Incentives to attract companies onboard (Insurance, utilities, collective purchase)**

In addition to analysing trends and identifying hot spots, the researcher's brief was to seek out incentives, such as insurance discounts. The security infrastructure created by the TPI members enabled some insurance companies to offer cheaper cover to many of the businesses. Some companies donated the amount they had saved towards the CCTV / Police revenue costs.

Cheaper waste disposal collection from all firms on the same day, and the collective purchase of items such as stationery, were issues that were tackled by the Forums.

### **Objective 4 – Target Hardening**

One of the roles of the co-ordinator was to evaluate the resources and security equipment currently available to ensure best value / usage was being achieved. Other security perspectives would be evaluated as information developed, such as linking of CCTV systems to a central point, or the provision of a fully monitored independent CCTV system.

Many of the smaller, less wealthy companies did not have the finances to target harden their premises. Initial analysis also revealed that many of the smaller companies were the most victimised. It was therefore intended to support target-hardening work at identified premises and a budget was set aside for this purpose. Identifying a fair and equitable way of distributing this resource would prove to be difficult.

### **Achievements of Objective 4**

#### **Over 30 Security Surveys completed, continual security advice provided**

All businesses and residents were offered free advice in respect of Crime Reduction and Community Safety matters, and any companies moving on to the estate were visited, welcomed and advised.

In addition to the advice over thirty companies and various homeowners, received free verbal or written crime Prevention surveys.

#### **Grant opportunities explored and acquired for 3 major businesses – ongoing**

Businesses were advised of grant opportunities, and directed to funding sources. Three companies have already received substantial grants to improve both their frontage and security with the TPI staff being involved at the planning stage.

#### **Planning liaison established with Local Authority**

Links were established with the Local Authority Planning Department, which ensured that the initiative participants were given the opportunity to make comment on all planning applications affecting the estate.

#### **Encouragement of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design**

All security and planning advice was given in accordance with the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, with businesses being encouraged to apply for awards such as secure car park / caravan park.



### **Home Security Project.**

The team instigated and funded a Home Security Project on the Pentre Maelor Housing Estate, which is located within the confines of Wrexham Industrial Estate. With the assistance of the local Community Council, they identified groups of elderly and vulnerable persons, and arranged for the supply and fitting of free burglar alarms and personal safety devices. This ensured the involvement of the local community council and members of the main residential area.

### **Objective 5 – Training and Accreditation**

The co-ordinators were to organise training courses for security personnel. The full syllabus would be decided following consultation with representatives from the security firms. However, use of radios, scene preservation and information collection and sharing would feature in the training. The overall aim would be to set up an accreditation scheme and to encourage companies to use accredited security firms only.

The Private Security Industry Act 2001 was introduced in May 2001. This act not only contained major implications for change within the Security Industry, but was also clearly about to impact upon the training needs of all Security personnel.

### **Partial Achievements of Objective 5**

#### **Continuous evaluation of security standards to establish training requirements**

Liaison with security firms and the newly established Security Forum enabled training issues to be identified expediently, and training implemented.

Personal training for Security Officers, use of radios, scene preservation, search techniques, and information collection and sharing featured in the training.

#### **Training not fully implemented due to changes in legislation**

The Private Security Industries Act 2001 contained major implications for change within the Security Industry, and it was also clearly about to impact upon the training needs of Security personnel, these needs were not clearly defined within the act. It was, for that reason, formal accredited training did not take place, although other training issues were addressed. We consider that the training of Security Officers is a highly important issue.

### **Additional Outcomes (unexpected) to those of the Original Project Objectives**

#### **Five forums established, Steering Group, Business, Environmental, Security and Business Environmental.**

These forums were time consuming to organise, but necessary to ensure that the measures the team was undertaking were sustainable beyond the lifespan of the initiative. These forums can be easily replicated on other industrial estates.

The Business Forum has now evolved into Wrexham Industrial Estate Limited.

#### **Formal adoption by estate businesses of a Memorandum of Understanding, an Estate Action Plan covering Crime, Environmental and Transport issues.**

It was realised that if business interest was to be attained in the forums, no legal liability could be attributed to the individual participants. In view of this a Memorandum of Understanding was agreed.

To maintain a focussed view on the initiative, consultation was undertaken with businesses to obtain their views on the future development of their estate. These views were formulated over several months, and an estate action plan was agreed by the forums.

#### **CCTV funding of £175,000 secured, additional £33,000 paid by estate residents annually for revenue costs**

Whilst consulting with the businesses, the opportunity arose for the submission of a bid for the installation of CCTV throughout the estate. In order for any such bid to proceed, it was necessary to consult with senior company managers for support, both in terms of ongoing revenue costs and general support for the bid. The response from businesses was excellent with the companies pledging annual revenue costs of £33,150. This response gave the project team a good indication that the businesses had embraced the initiative, and that they were prepared to take a more active role in discussions affecting the estate.

#### **Multi faceted web communication system**

The team had not been convinced that the Community Newsletter was an efficient way of communicating to the community and businesses about regular news items and information, and they had decided to try and find an alternative means of communication by utilising web-site technology. A multifaceted web communication system was developed which enabled the team to communicate with all members within minutes of an incident occurring. The site also provided a platform for all matters relating Wrexham Industrial Estate to be publicised, and an additional means of contact for any person wishing to communicate with the TPI staff.

#### **Radio Link Alarm Scheme**

North Wales Police began to dispose of their obsolete UHF intruder alarm systems. The team acquired the old equipment and arranged for it to be modified to operate in conjunction with the Business Watch Radio Link System. The alarms were developed to transmit an audible message to radio link sets, alerting both the Police and security personnel to the attack, and allowing them to provide an appropriate response. This alarm system was quick and easy to install and addressed the issue of repeat victimisation.

### **Secure Lorry parking (currently under construction)**

With regard to the subject of general facilities for the estate, the project team had observed that a large proportion of the ten thousand vehicles visiting the estate daily were from either EEC or Eastern European Countries, many of them having travelled thousands of miles and completed their statutory driving time, only to find no facilities available at their journey's end, not even a public toilet. The team liaised closely with the Local Authority which was persuaded to donate a plot of land for development. Work on the vehicle park is ongoing.

### **Audit and mapping of entire estate**

No organisation had a complete record of all the business premises on the estate. In order to obtain accurate details the team completed a full audit of the estate, plotting the location and nature of each business. The newly established Coordination Unit now maintains this useful database.

### **Establishment of Permanent Police Presence on Estate Supported by an Estate Coordinator**

This unit consists of two Police Officers, one paid for by the businesses, and a full time Business Coordinator provided by the Local Authority.

### **Bridge building – effective partnership established between Estate residents, Police and Council**

The partnership working that was established during the lifespan of the initiative has been developed and expanded. Police and the Local Authority, who are all members of the steering group, now work closely with the estate residents, and make joint decisions that directly affect the estate

### **Awarded demonstration model status**

The success of the initiative was recognised by The Home Office as a model of best practice.

## **What Worked?**

### **Flexibility.**

TPI staff worked many irregular hours, which were necessary in order to accommodate meetings, events, and dealing with crime issues.

### **Awareness of other's agendas**

Developing partnerships frequently means that your security issue becomes the last item on the business meeting agenda.

**Staff recruitment - the right people - personalities with established contacts, training and experience.**

The TPI staff were selected on the basis of their previous roles, training and experience. This ensured that all aspects of Community Safety were covered.

**Accessibility of project team and location of TPI office**

One of the most important factors in achieving the confidence and support that the team received.

**Contact at the right level, decision makers – busy people – understanding of provide solutions and gain trust their needs,**

The biggest challenge was often getting past the barrier of the Company Directors Personal Assistant. Once that obstacle was overcome, most companies opened their doors to the team.

**Deliver on promises**

The team were committed to devising solutions to all manner of problems, and ensured that solutions were delivered.

**Press involvement and interest**

Periodic updates in the local press supplemented the Newsletter and helped to positively promote the initiative.

**Early Political interest and support – locally and nationally**

Mrs Edwina Hart, Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Finance

*“As minister with the responsibility for crime reduction as a key cross cutting theme within the Assembly, I have a personal commitment to this work. Improved communications is central to the ongoing fight against crime on this estate. I have heard much of the good work undertaken as a result of the Wrexham Targeted Policing Initiative. I know too, that it is rated highly by my counterparts within the Home Office. It is a shining example of what can be achieved when separate agencies and organisations come together in order to work together for the common good.”*

**Engage with the local residents and adapt the project to meet their needs**

The development of a housing estate, within the confines of an industrial estate, creates an even greater need for businesses to consider the impact of noise and disruption. A resident of the housing estate attends meetings of the main Business Forum, and the team made regular contact with the Residents' Association.

### **Regular liaison with Crime and Disorder Partners**

It was essential to maintain these links in order to drive forward the CCTV installation, the development of roads, signage and the secure vehicle park. Furthermore, without the support of our partners, the project could have been a failure.

### **What would we do differently?**

#### **Early liaison with Security Firms**

During the early stages of the project, rumours were rife amongst security officers that the police were moving to the estate to take over all security functions. This had a two –fold effect in that some companies started to examine more closely the performance and effectiveness of their security staff, leading to some staff being suspicious of the team’s motives. In extreme cases, there was resentment towards the team. The problem was quickly remedied, which led to closer liaison with security personnel.

Advanced marketing and better liaison with security firms during the lead in period could have eliminated this problem.

#### **Engage all partners earlier at the right level**

During the early stages of the project, the team were rigidly following the initiative stage plan by meeting with senior management from companies. Several months into the project it became apparent that although it was important to secure the support of senior personnel, it was often middle to lower management level who were able to render greater assistance to the team.

### **Impact**

- Overall Crime down 25.9% (compared with 1999)
- Burglary Reduced by 59.6%
- In a recent independent survey 75% of people said they felt safer on the estate since the project started
- 75% of distributors and over 68% of manufacturers perceived a reduction in crime.
- Business, Security and Environmental Forums Established – Development of Estate Community
- CCTV, Radio Link and Web site established
- Establishment of permanent police presence on estate supported by an Estate Coordinator
- 75% of distributors and 62% of manufacturers perceived an improvement in communication.
- Improved public perception of the police and local authority

- Improved image of Wrexham Industrial Estate

## Conclusion

Enthusiasm and support for this initiative, combined with the results achieved to date, has already succeeded in reducing crime levels and the fear of crime.

There is evidence that investment and business relocation onto the estate has increased as a direct result of the measures implemented, thus improving the economic viability of the area.

The introduction of the Forums, together with the Co-ordination Unit, will ensure that the measures are sustainable.

All of the measures outlined within this document have contributed towards ensuring that the Wrexham Industrial Estate is

**A Community for the Future.**

**The information contained within this document is abridged due to the constraints of the entry requirements, and as such cannot portray the full details of the measures implemented throughout the project lifespan.**