

Tilley Award 2005

Application form

The following form must be completed in full. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the competition.

Please send completed application forms to Tricia Perkins at patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on the 29 April 2005. Entries received after that date will not be accepted under any circumstances. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262.

1. Details of application

Title of the project

The Edlington Project

Name of force/agency/CDRP:

South Yorkshire Police

Name of one contact person with position/rank (this should be one of the authors):

Inspector Ray Mountford

Email address:

Ray.Mountford@southyorks.pnn.police.uk

Full postal address:

**Edlington Police Station
Main Avenue
Edlington, Doncaster
South Yorkshire DN12 1AN**

Telephone number: **01302 385489**

Fax number: **01709 86221**

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): **Mr R Dyson**

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s)

Assistant Chief Constable – South Yorkshire Police

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s)

**Senior Command Suite
South Yorkshire Police Headquarters
Snig Hill
Sheffield S3 8LY**

2. Summary of application

Edlington is a post industrial mining village five miles from Doncaster. It has high levels of deprivation, unemployment, academic under achievement, drug related acquisitive crime and run down housing estates. Residents have felt that the police could not provide a high enough level of reactive and reassurance patrols and levels of anti social behaviour/burglary highlighted this, being the highest per 1,000 population in Doncaster. A lack of confidence in the Criminal Justice system prevailed with under-reporting of offences or failure to give statements due to a fear of intimidation. The police station and officers' private vehicles were damaged from time to time undermining their morale to work in the village; they felt as though they were not making any difference.

Criminals and youths engaged in Anti social Behaviour (ASB) were not being challenged rigorously plus a lack of joined up working meant the community were not engaged and felt isolated. A lack of youth provision/engagement and a higher concentration of persistent and prolific offenders were detrimental.

Objectives were set to reduce the incidence of burglary dwelling and ASB by 5%, re-engage the community and improve the feeling of community safety by installing a dedicated Police Inspector, Community PC and two PCSOs working in a high visibility fashion, engaging the community and joining up other agencies and services in the Problem Solving Model. Costs of £90,000 were met by external funding with matched funding and use of the time-framed 'Community Copshop' from the Doncaster Community Safety Partnership (DCSP) budget.

Burglary dwelling fell by **14.5%** in the first year and **17.9%** the second. ASB fell by similar amounts (**14% and 10%**). Some ASB was displaced and some local burglars changed their habits when they were caught in other areas of Doncaster.

Surveys showed that there was a perception of a reduction in crime and disorder and a greater feeling of safety. South Yorkshire Police (SYP) statistics echoed this perception. The project empowered the community to take a stand against certain issues with their own self-sustaining projects. It has helped to give it a new hope for the future.

Key successes were opening up channels of communication to listen to and respond to community needs, their engagement/partnership to own some of their own problems, and dovetail NIM with problem solving.

The project has helped to shape the new policing model for Doncaster - the Safer Neighbourhood Teams currently being developed.

3. Description of project

Edlington is a post industrial mining village five miles from Doncaster town centre. It has high levels of deprivation with the concomitant high levels of unemployment, academic under achievement and run down housing estates. Edlington was at the start of this project in the top 20% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2001 (Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC), Poverty in Doncaster 2001). At enumeration district level the situation is significantly worse and Edlington is a prime example of a hidden pocket of deprivation. Crime and fear of crime is often a key feature of deprived areas and Edlington was identified by the council, local residents and South Yorkshire Police as a hotspot for crime and disorder. The police station was damaged from time to time, officers private vehicles were damaged, undermining their morale to work in the village, they felt as though they were not making any difference and Edlington Police Station was not seen as a 'prime posting' for dynamic, ambitious officers.

During the period April 2001 to March 2002 Edlington had a crime rate of 164.2 per 1000 population compared to a borough average crime rate of 117.8 over the same period (source SYP Comrad System). For 2002 to 2003, Edlington had a crime rate of 185, compared to a borough average of 131.3. There were also hot spot areas within Edlington that had significantly higher rates of crime and disorder than the rest of the town. For example crime statistics for the Royal Estate for the periods between April 2001 and March 2002 and April 2002 to March 2003, showed the rate for domestic burglary to be twice that experienced on average across the borough (source South Yorkshire Police Crime Management System). Statistics also showed that Edlington also had a significant problem with youth nuisance and anti-social behaviour (source SYP Comrad & Doncaster Police).

The 2003 Doncaster Council 'Planning for Real' consultation exercise mirrored the SYP statistics and further captured the mood and tenor of the community. Throughout this process the majority of respondents felt that crime and disorder was *seriously* affecting their quality of life and that only improved or increased policing could effectively address the issues identified. A major issue was also the lack of incident reporting due to fear of reprisals and intimidation (also identified as a major issue in the Community Safety Audit 2001). Both these audits showed that many businesses were facing major problems of theft and youth nuisance, indeed the 2001 audit found that 58% of businesses surveyed felt that trade had declined due to crime and anti-social behaviour. The fabric of the village was in decline and a visible manifestation included a plethora of unoccupied business premises and housing stock. The Royal Estate in particular had a very high volume of private rented accommodation owned by absent landlords from the London area who had taken advantage of the depressed housing market and bought large numbers of houses due to their low prices, and without even seeing them. These were then let out via local letting agencies without robust checks on prospective tenants being made which brought with it additional problems.

Issues had been compounded earlier when the Thompson Road and Dixon Avenue housing estate were vacated by the 'decent families' who were driven out by crime, the fear of crime, harassment and intimidation. The offenders in this systematic offending cycle were comprised of key members of 5/6 families who locals felt were above the law and untouchable. This cycle involved repeated burglaries, thefts, assaults and intimidation culminating in properties being burnt out. In less than 10 years and after millions of pounds had been spent on this estate by DMBC, the extent of the arson, decline and lack of interest [fear] by prospective council tenants, the estate was up for demolition. At the time of writing the last houses have now been demolished. This has proved a lasting legacy and a visual reminder of what can go wrong when problems are not resolved at an early juncture.

The high levels of the fear of crime and the need for increased/improved policing had been identified earlier in the Edlington Community Safety Audit of 2001, and also in the Edlington Town Action Plan. These findings led to the formation of the Edlington Action Group in January 2003 who was tasked with developing local initiatives to address the identified issues of crime and disorder. One of the initiatives and one which was seen as pivotal and catalytic was a bid to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) for external funding for the Edlington Neighbourhood Policing Project based on Problem Orientated Policing using an intelligence led, partnership enhanced and community engaged philosophy. This involved funding a dedicated police inspector to have ownership, accountability, and co-ordinate resources and engage the community in the development of community safety initiatives.

OBJECTIVES/PROBLEMS

In terms of the overall rationale, reducing crime was seen as a pre-requisite for renewal and regeneration to take place. The relationship was seen as direct. The key objectives set therefore, were to secure sustainable reductions in:

- Burglary dwelling (by 5% year on year for the life of the project - following several years of increases)
- Anti-social behaviour (by 5% year on year of the project - following years of increased levels of offending)

Furthermore by the end of the project the following **outcomes** would have been achieved:

- Increased community involvement in crime prevention
- Increased reporting of crime and witness statements
- Increased public re-assurance and confidence in the police
- Sustainable reductions in the fear of crime
- Substantial increase in the quality of life for local residents

The objectives set, whilst well identified and documented statistically, were generic and did not identify the 'problem' well enough. Further analysis of the problem via letters of complaint, statistics and more importantly by listening to the community at different forums and even on a one to one basis identified the main problems as:

- Burglary dwelling on the Royal Estate
- ASB/dog fouling/littering of alcohol containers on the recreational ground
- ASB outside the library during opening times and afternoons/evening times
- ASB/damage on the Broomhouse Lane shop and garage area
- Arson to empty houses, motor cars and wheelie bins
- Graffiti and abandoned sharps

RESPONSE

The response stage was not rigid and indeed with hindsight it proved to be iterative rather than a linear process. Some initiatives were not in the initial response stage and almost developed by accident as things developed, rather than by strategic design. A Copshop with a one-stop shop philosophy and the Neighbourhood Watch camera project being two examples in this organic process.

One of the first local strategic initiatives to be undertaken, and one which failed, was to take duty groups away from the Doncaster Eastern Sector into an autonomous cadre. The initial project manager made them responsible for all reactive functions as well as trying to problem solve the long-term issues. This caused her to have health problems and resign within several months and put untold pressures onto the officers. It was clear that a different approach would be required. A new manager was installed in August 2003 and the response issues were revisited. Together the following was mapped out:

- Multi Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) team formed purely for Edlington to analyse and 'own' the problems
- Prioritise issues and concerns and have some 'quick wins', i.e. drugs/arrest warrants and use central resources for impact and visibility i.e. mounted, task force, CCTV van, Crime Reduction caravan.
- Use pulse policing with the District Estates Team (high visibility and covertly) to challenge all aspects of visible ASB, especially the ringleaders
- Use intelligence and integrate NIM to target resources (including using council wardens and two dedicated PCSOs. By working from the same building as the 'reactive' teams and CID this had the potential to stop divisive attitudes and engender 'joint' successes.
- Target prolific burglary offenders
- Communicate with the community formally every 3 / 4 months to get concerns (written on flipcharts to capture and give ownership and feedback). Also increase confidence and garner more community intelligence.
- Engage the community by getting them to take some responsibility for their own problems and curtail a total reliance on police and other statutory agencies. This later yielded the externally funded Neighbourhood Watch Camera Initiative, target hardening and the 'Friends of the Rec' Group.
- Invest time in local community meetings to for example, reinvigorate Neighbourhood Watch (NHW)/Tenants and Residents Associations (TARA) as a two-way conduit for information.
- Use ASBO legislation, i.e. ASBO 1 forms, letters, ABC's, ASBOs (stand alone and on conviction), to target key offenders and Section 30 Dispersal Order specifically for the Royal Estate.

- Pilot the Doncaster Community Safety Partnership (DCSP) funded Copshop for 20 weeks as a one stop shop philosophy to bring the agencies and community practically together, forge joint working, instil more confidence and increase the flow of intelligence/information.
- Use the Youth Engagement Project (YEP) and Youth Services to 'outreach', consult and divert the young people away from Broomhouse Lane and the Royal Estate.

RESULTS

BURGLARY

The baseline figure for burglary dwelling from April 1st 2002 to March 31st 2003 was **209**. It was the highest figure for three years following successive rises. This figure was likely to be quite accurate as crime numbers are required for insurance claims and for private landlords who require this prior to undertaking repairs to damage caused by the burglars, otherwise 'bonds' would be forfeited. Although due to intimidation, 'identification evidence' would probably be not forthcoming.

During the first year April 1st 2003 to March 31st 2004 reported burglary dwellings dropped to **179** which equates to a **14.5% reduction**. During the second, and last year of the project to 31st March 2005, the figures dropped even further to **147**, which was a **17.9% reduction**.

In terms of a possible displacement, contiguous areas saw a reduction also; however certain prolific indigenous burglars to Edlington were caught in other areas. 'SW' and 'SH' being two in particular who were caught in a neighbouring village. When questioned by detectives they stated that *"there were too many cameras and nousey folk and pigs are all over you"*.

One interesting issue came from another prolific who had changed his habits as a result of the change in culture in the village. 'TH' and his girlfriend 'LMc' changed from burgling to identity crime and shoplifting in Doncaster as a means of funding their drug habit and lifestyle.

The use of intelligence products including police NIRs, community intelligence and analytical support were key here, aligned to a robust policing style. High visibility policing (directed patrol) mixed with plain clothes and the use of the NHW/TARA camera initiative kept the burglars on their toes and took the fear of being observed and caught, to them. A number of the prolific offenders were caught, found guilty and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, which had a significant impact on the overall burglary figures. A 'beat the sneak' and 'door' project run by SYP and the council wardens together with external funding for general target hardening wove a Situational Crime Prevention theme through this problem. It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty which particular aspect of the strategy resulted in a certain percentage drop in the reported statistics, as they were rolled out almost together. With hindsight this was a weakness and similar future projects would do well to implement and then evaluate initiatives one stage at a time.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

These problems can be notoriously difficult to resolve but a great measure of success was obtained in the two-year lifespan of the project. Perhaps more importantly is the resilience and sustainability of some initiatives, which will continue for many years to come.

LIBRARY

The ASB outside of the library was perhaps the easiest to resolve. Outside of opening hours it as left people feeling easier about using the adjacent cash machine. SITA, the contract cleaners, have reported a cleaner environment with much fewer metal canisters and broken bottles strewn about. There have been no damaged windows or graffiti since the shutters were installed and the smell of urine and vomit is a thing of the past in the entrance way. However during opening hours, especially just before closing time on late openings, some elements revert back to their old habits prior to the shutters coming down. This is something which is being monitored.

RECREATIONAL GROUND (the 'Rec')

The problems on the recreational ground have reduced greatly with many less calls to the police for a response to ASB and damage. The 'Friends of the Rec' group have been a particular success in taking on a life form and force of

its own. Their reliance on the police to respond to [COMRAD recordable] incidents has shown a remarkable decrease as has their reliance on the councils Community First Team to clean the area and repair equipment. There is also more use of the facilities by the community.

Each morning a rostered 'friend' visits the recreational ground with a bag and 'pooper scupper' and collects any discarded bottles, cans, evidence of dog fouling and discarded rubbish. This is part of their 'broken windows' philosophy and discourages people from following the lead of other people. Qualitative feedback suggests that the trend has been downwards since their formation with only the odd incident occurring.

Following the fitting of a doggie toilet, an initial period of enforcement by the council wardens and leaflets handed out to dog walkers to educate as to the health dangers; dog walkers are now more responsible. The strategy has defiantly changed the culture; residents close by report this problem to be much less than it was.

When 'new' youths go to the park and leave 'bongs' and bottles behind this is quickly and directly reported to the police who nip the situation in the bud and 're-educate' in the use of the 'Rec' and what will be tolerated. This can be time consuming for police per se but in reality it is undertaken by the PCSO's and the wardens.

The 'friends' have become quite adept at seeking out and securing funding to continually improve the facilities, following consultation and use of the problem solving cycle. The illegal motorcycling problem for example has all but been eradicated now. It has made the park safer for children, young people dog walkers and displaced the motorcycles to more remote common land. Whilst this does still present as noise pollution, it is much less of an evil, impacts on fewer people and is less likely to injure innocent parties, especially when off road motorcycle operations are run.

In the two year project they have secured funding for and built:

- A BMX cycle track
- A skateboard park
- Lighting with automatic timer
- Doggie toilet
- Restricted access entrance/exit gates (to prevent motorcycles entering)
- Tubular fencing around the football pitch
- New goalpost/nets/footballs/strips etc.

They have also secured funding to demolish the old pavilion and build a new one; work is shortly to commence.

One unforeseen consequence however is that whilst their successes have improved facilities for all the age range, on an evening it attracts a lot of the older young people (YP) and the younger sections feel intimidated and tend to leave when the others come or turn around when they see the older YP. There has been no statistics to back this assertion up in terms of reported assaults, threats etc. but anecdotal evidence from outreach workers. That said, during the day time parents with younger children are now using the Rec. and as a consequence the group have very recently secured resources to build a 'tiny tots play area' making the Rec. available for all age ranges.

BROOMHOUSE LANE

The outcomes for the residents in the Broomhouse Lane hotspot area have been equally if not more successful than the 'Rec'. Following the innumerable letters of complaint at MP, mayor, local councillor, Superintendent level, COMRAD incidents and hostility at public meetings, ongoing reports of ASB since the introduction of all the initiatives have reduced to a trickle. A 'one off' incident is the only thing of note in the last four months. There were in fact five separate but inter-related initiatives, which have brought about a greater feeling of community safety, empowerment and quality of life. These are:

1. Initial high visibility patrol by PCSO's, wardens, community police and the Doncaster Estates Team. This quick fix, which was not sustainable or particularly effective in terms of a longer-term solution, gave re-assurance to residents and started the education process for the YP. Some of these were not even aware that their actions were interpreted as ASB. Similarly some residents were undoubtedly 'guiding the lily', using 'decibel democracy' by reporting behaviour which would not be interpreted as ASB by an objective third person. Residents then were educated as to what constituted ASB and what needed to be reported.
2. ASB letters and contracts were used to target the ringleaders with the first letter being posted, the second being hand delivered or given on appointment at the police station. They were then taken to the MAPs meetings for multi agency involvement prior to the ABC stage and warnings of a possible ASBO.

3. The YEP and Youth Services out-reach workers targeted this group, made contact and identified a lack of suitable provision. Girls were one attraction for some of the boys and it was decided to form a girls group at the local family centre on a Thursday night (one of the hot days). Football was a common request but this group would not travel to the other end of the village to use the 'Rec' facilities as it was not seen as 'theirs'. As a consequence negotiations were made with the help of the local councillor to the sports centre attached to the local comprehensive school for discounted five a side football provision on a Friday night (the hottest time/day). This diversionary tactic had a good degree of success but only targeted a certain section of the group and further interventions were required.

One of the youth workers formed a new football team to play in a weekend league with training on a weekday evening. This targeted some of the real 'hard core' and made further inroads into the problem. It came to national prominence and gave them a great deal of kudos when they played a multi-agency team including the local inspector who was an ex Manchester United, Rotherham United and England under 18 goalkeeper.

4. As identified, the illegal sale of alcohol to under 18's was a part of the attraction to this area and part of the perceived problems. The licensee was personally visited to advise and assist. He was given a letter with contact details but warning of test purchasing and possible prosecution. High visibility patrols continued but on a more scaled down approach and it was obvious that intoxicants from this shop were finding their way into the hands of under 18's. However following three separate test purchasing operations run by the local Trading Standards and then by the Police themselves, no evidence has been secured for prosecution. The licensee is 'wise' to new faces and continues to flout the law albeit to fewer YP who do not now gather around this area. Whilst this could be seen as a failure, from a PAT perspective other interventions have ameliorated the problem. This is still work in progress and a prosecution/licence challenge will occur.
5. Working closely, but at arms length with the local TARA, the camera initiative strategy has changed the culture of the remaining YP. Very few reports of ASB are being made. The 'threat' by residents of capturing YP's ASB on camera to give to the police for ASB proceedings has been sufficient for YP to desist and move on. Other targeted ASBO's are also proving to be effective with the individuals subjected to them changing their habits. Equally as powerful though is the 'ripple effect' with the ASBO legislation hanging like the sword of Damocles over would be offenders. In short the cameras locations are kept a secret but the YP know they are somewhere recording 24/7. Interestingly only one incident has been brought to the attention of the police, and that was three under 10 year olds pulling up newly planted bedding plants! The fear of being caught on camera by the older YP has been a sufficient deterrent to seemingly reduce, at least from the public's view, the levels of ASB. Residents comment on feeling safer knowing that they have access to the cameras. Those that have used them know that they possess a weapon to fight back and that reported incidents will be given priority to underpin the credibility of the project.

In general terms the overall strategy is to seek to use the ASBO legislation. Individuals like 'NB' who attacked the police station and private officers vehicles, set fire to cars, empty houses, wheelie bins and caused serious nuisance throughout the village was targeted. She even made the front page of the Sun newspaper when her ASBO was granted. Being in the public domain, and following advice from Alex Rhind at the Anti Social Behaviour Unit, 'NB' and the other prominent persons on ASBO's were brought to the attention of people at the quarterly public meetings and to key members of the NHW and TARA's to help 'police' their conditions vigorously. A mobile telephone number was given to them to report any breaches, and circumvent a well-documented SYP problem, its switchboard. This helped to re-assure the community that such behaviour would not be tolerated and that the conditions would have 'teeth' if breaches were witnessed and arrests were made. This helped the community to feel part of the solution.

There is strong evidence to suggest that the three people on full ASBO's have changed (publicly at least) their behaviour with no breaches and a visible reasonableness when the police are nearby.

ARSON OFFENCES

This was a very visible and psychological weapon used by some criminals to intimidate and stamp their authority. Edlington had the highest levels of 'secondary fires' in the Doncaster area and at one point when the fire service was restructuring it was planned to move another fire appliance to Edlington to cope with the demand. Via the MAP's meetings it was found that SY Fire and Rescue had statistics and information which could be shared with the local policing project to target areas at the hot times (no pun intended). Working via this meeting, Community First undertook a fly-tipping initiative (a source of combustible fuel) and the TARA's ran 'skip days', again to help rid the

village of combustible material and improve the appearance, securing funding and helping to resource the filling of the skips. The council removed the wheelie bins from empty properties taking away opportunity and the main culprit was identified, targeted and subsequently imprisoned (she set fire to 8 vehicles in one single incident). Fire stats and comments from fire officers now show levels have reduced significantly.

CONCLUSIONS/THE FUTURE

This 2 year project was always about outcomes for people in the village, their quality of life and community safety. Qualitative feedback from key residents shows that they now feel consulted, engaged and empowered. New initiatives are now coming from the community themselves i.e. 'Smartwater' and a drug resource/drop-in centre. People have a level of expertise and confidence to seek out and secure funding streams. An 'out' survey quantitatively shows consistent improvements.

"This project has shaped the future of the policing strategy in Doncaster" (Chief Superintendent King) and Edlington has now become part of one of the five Local Partnership (policing) Teams (LPT's) continuing the work.