

Tilley Award 2006

Application form

Please ensure that you have read the guidance before completing this form. By making an application to the awards, entrants are agreeing to abide by the conditions laid out in the Guidance. Please complete the following form in full and within the word limit. Failure to do so could result in disqualification from the competition.

Completed application forms should be e-mailed to Tricia Perkins;
patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on Friday 28th April 2006. No entries will be accepted after this time/date. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262. Any queries regarding other aspects of the awards should be directed to Michael Wilkinson on 0207 035 0247 or Lindsey Poole on 0207 035 0234.

Please tick box to indicate whether the entry should be considered for the main award, the criminal damage award or both;

Main award

Criminal Damage Award

Both Awards

1. Details of application

Title of the project Burglary Reduction Programme

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s)
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Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) Community Safety Co-ordinator

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s)
Joint Community Safety Team
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2. Summary of application

The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Audit of 2001 identified burglary in people's homes as a key crime problem for the borough. Consultation with Wirral's communities also identified it as a key driver of fear of crime. The Audit (Scan) identified a distinct concentration of burglary dwelling offences in the wards on the east side of the borough that was further analysed using the SARA model. From this analysis a Strategic Burglary Reduction Programme was developed, which has developed a series of projects that in isolation reduce burglary but whose combination magnify the effects each of the other and most importantly have a significant element of sustainability. Through a regular cycle of Scan, Analysis, Response and Assessment this programme has been adapted to address changes in offender, victim behaviour and maintain a sustained programme of location improvements. Strong linkages with the Police NIM process have been developed and there is close working between the CDRP and DAAT to deliver projects and interventions.

Location Responses:

- Repeat Victimization Prevention Project: implemented October (2001) target hardening provided via a sub unit created with Victim Support which addresses security issues of burgled premises within 21 working days.
- Alley Gating to reduce burglaries in terraced areas implemented March 2003 – programme for the whole borough will be completed by 2014. Hotspot areas will be fully gated by 2008.

Victim Responses:

- Operation Feelsafe: Low-level target hardening package of lights and locks delivered to the vulnerable elderly. Introduced 2002.
- Marketing Campaigns: analysis of daily crime sheets and reports from the Repeat Victimization Project revealed that increasingly failure by the victim to lock a door or use the security measures had lead to a walk in sneak theft burglary. As a response a number of marketing campaigns have been run to raise householders' awareness and use of existing security on their premises. Introduced June 2005.

Offender Responses:

- Pier Project: developed and implemented May 2004. Multi agency team incorporating police officers, probation officers and drug worker linked to Intelligence Unit that targets top 20 substance abusing burglary offenders within the BCU.
- Operation Hawk: partnership operation targeting local street dealers aimed at disrupting supply of drugs combined with community education events and support for users affected by elimination of their supply, linked to Pier through DAAT.

The impact of these linked interventions developed from a continuous cycle of problem solving has been to reduce total burglary dwelling offences from 2734 for 2001/2002 to 1230 in 2005/2006, a reduction of 55% in an area with 142,000 households.

3. Description of project

The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Audit (Scan) undertaken in 2001 identified burglary dwelling as a key crime problem for the borough and subsequently set challenging targets within its Community Safety Strategy to reduce the number of offences occurring. Consultation with Wirral's communities also identified it as a key driver of fear of crime. The total number of offences reported for the borough for the year 2001 was 2734 , with a borough average of 14%. The Audit revealed a disproportionate geographic distribution in rates of this offence when compared to the national and Wirral average. (See Map 1 in Data Section)

Having identified the generic problem the partnership undertook further analysis of burglary within the seven most affected wards, the hotspots, to identify the specific factors influencing that pattern. Factors including housing type, tenure, age , gender, marital status of victims, age, gender of offenders and modus operandi related to housing type. The analysis utilised the problem analysis triangle focussing on the three elements of victim, offender and location.

The victim analysis examined burglary data for the preceding 12 months within each hotspot and across the general hotspot area to see if there were any specific linking traits that could be used, for example were single females or one parent families a particular target. Analysis of gender, age and other demographic factors including ethnic origin (were recorded) was undertaken but provided no distinct pattern by age or gender within the target areas that would enable a focussed or targeted response to be developed based on that analysis.

Analysis of offender data was undertaken using data from police and youth offending sources available at that time. Again this revealed no discrete target group but confirmed that the majority of offenders for this offence were in the age group 14 – 25 years, with the majority in their late teens and early twenties. The data available was insufficiently detailed to identify specific characteristics such as substance misuse, poor educational achievement on which to develop a specific focussed response. This separate but related issue was treated as a separate problem solving opportunity and work has been ongoing to improve both quality and availability of data and the partnerships capacity to undertake more timely and detailed analysis of problems.

The most reliable data available from police and local authority sources was regarding location, housing type and modus operandi. The modus operandi data although incomplete, due to poor recording practices, was sufficiently robust to allow a reliable analysis of factors such as whether the burglary was via the rear, the front, ground floor or other storey, whether force was used on a door or window, if an implement was used or whether or not it was a distraction burglary.

The modus operandi analysis revealed that the majority of burglaries in the hotspot areas involved the use of force on a ground floor window or door with more attacks via the rear rather than the front of premises, 52% to 48%. When the modus operandi was examined further adding housing type to the analysis revealed distinct differences in the MO used which were related to housing type. Two distinct patterns of attack were noticed.

In hotspot areas where Victorian terraced housing predominated, with rear alleyways, a minimum of 54% to a maximum of 75% of attacks were at the rear. This appeared to indicate that the rear alleyway was being used as the access route, the alleyway giving easy and unobserved access. These areas were also those housing the most disadvantaged groups within the borough who, by inference, were least able to improve security. In the wards of Birkenhead, Tranmere, Seacombe and Claughton terraced housing predominated.

In areas where the housing type was of predominantly detached or semi-detached design the analysis of the modus operandi showed a fifty/fifty split between attacks via the rear and the front of the premises. As with terraced housing the main method used to gain entry was by forcing a window or a door. The data available to analyse the reason for that particular premises being targeted was insufficient to identify any common factors. As an initial response to this data weakness physical visits were made to premises that had been attacked in the preceding 2 months. These observations identified that the majority of the premises appeared to have no alarms or other visible security. This type of housing predominated in the wards of Leasowe and Bidston.

Analysis at the enumeration district level for each ward revealed that within each ward the levels of victimisation varied greatly when compared to the national average ranging from below to over 6 times the national average. This formed the basis of the targeting of our responses.

Based upon the analysis undertaken, research into what works information from the Home Office's research, resources available and the reliability of data the partnership decided to focus upon location related responses.

The partnership identified two responses/interventions to start addressing the overall problem:

- For the terraced areas where the easy access to rear alleyways was a key contributor to the level of incidents of burglary the partnership decided the most cost effective and appropriate intervention would be the physical closure of the alley ways by installing gates. Using the enumeration district data a programme of gating was developed that dealt with the worst areas first, installation began in March 2003 and continues to date. The prioritisation of areas continues using SOA level data.
- For non-terraced areas a programme of target hardening was developed in partnership with Wirral Victim Support who acted as the delivery vehicle designed to prevent or reduce revictimisation. This scheme was introduced in October 2001.

Assessment of the target-hardening project was undertaken in March 2002 when 100 properties had received the service. Only four of these properties all in the highest risk areas had been revictimised but none had actually been successfully burgled. At that time the national average was a 20% re victimisation rate. As a result of this assessment the project was further refined and developed. The refinement included improving the referral system, agreeing basic specifications for the equipment and employment of permanent staff to deliver high volume and cost work at a reduced rate. In addition the programme was extended to deliver Chrysallis Operations in particularly vulnerable areas. To date seven such operations have been undertaken. Assessment of these operations showed that they eradicated the problem in that particular location. The programme has been continued to date with funding being provided from donations, BCU fund, Neighbourhood Renewal, Housing Market Renewal and Communities Against Drugs. The budget assigned for the next two financial years, 2006 – 2008, is £400,000.

In 2004 the first two alley gating schemes were assessed based on a comparison of the same time period before and after the installation of the gates. The results revealed a reduction of 75% in the targeted areas. All burglaries in the gated area now being from the front of the premises. These attacks had been referred to the target-hardening scheme and subsequent corrective action taken thus reducing further the risk of further attacks. The reduction achieved has been sustained year on year.

A recent assessment of the impact of the alleygating scheme confirmed the effectiveness of this simple tactic as the graph 1 in Data Section illustrates.

The CDRP Audit in 2004 revealed that although these interventions were impacting upon the

problem of burglary dwelling it still remained as a significant issue for the CDRP and our communities. (See Map 2 Data Section)

Planned improvements in data collection, quality and sharing processes combined with planned enhancements in our capacity to scan and analyse problems allowed further analysis of the problem was undertaken with an emphasis on offenders using data from police DAAT and YOS to identify common traits or behaviours within the already identified primary offending group. This analysis revealed, or rather confirmed the hypothesis, that substance misuse leading to a chaotic lifestyle was a key factor in the most persistent and prolific of our offenders.

Further research enabled the identification of an initial cohort of offenders to be targeted. Research into responses identified the Tower Project of Lancashire Constabulary as a successful model or program. This project was further researched and subsequently adapted to develop a Wirral variant, the Pier Project. Working closely with our partners in the DAAT and Probation Service the CDRP identified the resources and systems required to implement the project. The police provided a team leader a Sergeant and three constables as case workers, CDRP funded a drugs worker, DAAT provided treatment services from their Joint Commissioning Budget, housing and employment nominated designated liaison officers and probation provided an officer. The project became fully operational in January 2004 and is now the model all such schemes in Merseyside must base themselves.

To date the Pier team have closely monitored and supervised 95 identified clients, The high majority have actively engaged in treatment and a significant proportion have either completely reduced or stopped their previous offending behaviour, Those who fail to engage with the scheme or treatment have been actively targeted for disruption by the police. Immediate revocation of licence instigated by the probation service has greatly assisted in returning the non-compliant subjects back to custody. Drugs testing regime that was implemented as part of the project has confirmed 19 clients have been drug free for the period they have been engaged while 35 have reduced their variety and levels of consumption. The team has secured 9 clients with full time employment and they still remain fully integrated back into society.

Our assessment is that this has made a significant contribution to burglary reduction and continues to do so.

Ongoing consultation with communities through various partner organisations had consistently identified the illegal supply of drugs at a street level as a major cause of concern for communities. Analysis of the data available revealed a correlation between the distribution of supply offences detected, areas in which substance abusers lived and burglary dwelling offences occurred. These findings supported the hypothesis that substance misuse was a key factor affecting burglary dwelling. Having already implemented a response, the Pier Project, that looked at the demand side of the substance misuse equation the partnership identified the need to address the supply side of this equation, it developed Operation Hawk.

Operation Hawk provides a series of linked interventions providing enforcement and education activity. The operation is lead by Police on behalf of the CDRP and DAAT. The Police part of the operation focuses upon enforcement operations using a virtual squad. Three officers are dedicated to developing operations based upon intelligence and reports received from the community, police colleagues and partner agency staff. The aim being to respond rapidly to information to reassure the community that action will be taken. Once a target is identified a warrant is obtained, a raid team brought together, briefed and the premises raided. The raids are executed at a time when the local community will see the operation, in addition once entry has been gained police officers undertake a leaflet drop to the surrounding community informing them what is happening and why.

Prior to the raid the DAAT is informed and additional outreach staff supplied to assist users whose supply has been disrupted. The ethos being to encourage people into the treatment and support that is available, to reinforce the pressure upon the demand side of the equation. As part of the process when possible a 'crack house' closure will be sought for the premises to further disrupt the supply source.

The education element is delivered by the DAAT supported by police and education authority. These events are designed to focus attention upon the support mechanisms available to substance users and their families and to provide information to the community regarding the effects of various drugs and the behaviours they cause, again to enable families to more effectively identify an issue at an earlier stage. The events are community based using local schools, mobile units and local supermarkets. A minimum of 8 events are planned each year but additional events can be provided if necessary. These events also reinforce existing DAAT strategies linked into the local Education Plan and DAAT school drugs advisors.

During the problem solving process analysis phase the issue of how the partnership could publicise both its activities and impact to provide the reassurance to communities that something was being done was identified as a key issue. The issue of community perception was identified as crucial to the ultimate impact of the intervention. The response developed by the partners to this problem was to develop a marketing and information strategy, agreed between the CDRP, DAAT and BCU. The marketing involved the establishment of a strong brand for Operation Hawk using the strap line 'OPERATION HAWK RECLAIMING YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD' and the use of a series of marketing campaigns using billboards, bus adverts and posters in the underground rail network. These posters were based upon strong visual images linked to witty/humorous phrases, e.g. a picture of a police officer in full 'riot' clothing breaking down a door with the catch phrase 'TRY OUR DOORSTEP CHALLENGE'. Analysis of these campaigns revealed a high level of recall by those surveyed of the advertisements and their key message. Anecdotal evidence obtained from those suppliers brought to justice also revealed a significant recognition of the operation and the development of an expectation that they would eventually be caught.

The second element of the marketing and information strategy was to develop a rigid system of leaflet drops to the community when a raid took place and also a second leaflet drop to that community informing them of the outcome of the prosecution, this is combined with extensive use of the press to further publicise the successes of the operation.

To date the operation has successfully executed 375 warrants, seized controlled drugs with a street value of in excess of £3 million, obtained 2 crack house closures and maintained a one hundred per cent conviction rate following charge.

The final element to be developed within the partnerships burglary strategy has been a structured and focussed marketing strategy. The analysis of the pattern of burglary over the year revealed two distinct seasonal peaks, July/August and December/January. The analysis of the summer peak revealed that the method on entry was predominantly through insecure (open) window or unlocked door. Feedback from the target hardening unit (described ante) revealed that in many of the properties there was no further target hardening that could be implemented, the causal factor being poor use of existing security by the occupier. The winter peak when analysed showed no significant variation from the 'normal' modus operandi of force to window or door. The hypothesis was that this was that the peak was linked to the increased availability of 'new' goods associated with the Christmas spending season, interviews with Pier clients, our most prolific burglars, tended to confirm this hypothesis.

The analysis of existing tactics to reduce these particular peaks identified the need to raise the

awareness of the public to the raised threat at these times combined with advice on the preventative measures that they could take. To achieve this a set of marketing campaigns were developed. These were planned so that the message was delivered 2 months prior to the anticipated peak and during the period of the peak. The effect of this campaign was assessed using a comparison with previous year same period. This comparison revealed that the anticipated peak did not occur. As a consequence of this result further targeted seasonal related campaigns are being planned to maintain levels of awareness among the public.

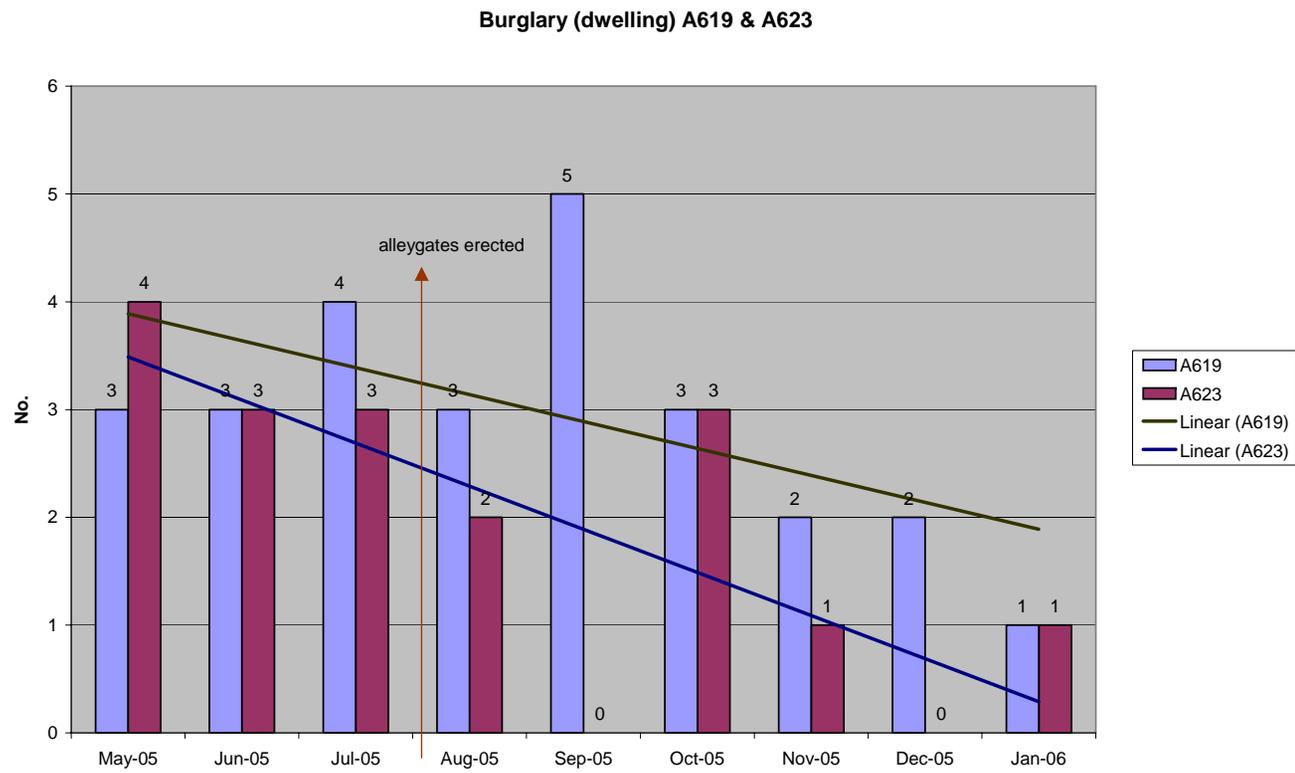
Combined with the marketing above we also developed an awareness programme for the elderly, who had been identified by analysis were particularly vulnerable to distraction burglaries. The key issue identified from the analysis was that the elderly were less security conscious and were less likely to utilise door chains when answering their door. Working with Wirral Community and Voluntary Sector Network and Age Concern

Assessment of this ongoing strategy is that the burglary dwelling rate within the borough of Wirral has fallen by 35.7% since the start of the strategy. The individual projects/ operations/ interventions that together deliver this strategy have all contributed to this reduction. Graph 2 in Data Section clearly shows the impact of these interventions upon the level of burglary in Wirral.

The process of problem solving has been fully adopted by the Community Safety Team, the delivery/co-ordination unit for the CDRP, and is the modus operandi adopted for both strategic and tactical issues. the way that the partnership team 'do business' and has become an ongoing sustained process. Monitoring has become a daily event and as previously stated provides a daily scan of the problem, through the Volume Property Crime Group and monthly meetings with the police linked to Tasking and Co-ordinating and Joint Agency Group, which allows a more rapid tactical response to emerging issues.

DATA SECTION

Graph 1: Alley Gating Impact (Alleygating Assessment 2006)



Graph2: Burglary Levels 2001 – 2006 Showing Intervention Implementation.

