

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 "From Prejudice to Pride"

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Croydon

Name of one contact person with position/rank (this should be one of the authors):
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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) Mark Gore

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) Borough Commander

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s)

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2. Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project. Include details of the problem that was addressed a description of the initiative, the main intervention principles and what they were designed to achieve, the main outcomes of project particularly in relation to the problem, evidence was used in designing the programme and how the project is evaluated.

'From Prejudice to Pride' - Summary

This project relates to severe and continuous youth disorder that occurred within the environs of a local shopping at Headley Drive, junction with Frensham Drive, New Addington, and Croydon. The disorder involved significant ant-social and racist behaviour which disrupted the local community and, in particular, the Somalian Community, making their lives a misery. It reached a peak in the summer of 2004 when a serious racist arson attack took place on a car owned by a Somalian family that completely gutted the vehicle.

In May 2004 The New Addington and Fieldway Safer Neighbourhood Team became operational. It quickly established contacts in the community and formed a representative Community Panel. The Panel identified the situation around Frensham Drive and applied a structured partnership approach:

1. Conduct analysis to find out the extent of the problem
2. Define the problem
3. Set objectives to solve the problem
4. Agree and implement action
5. Evaluate.

Three objectives were agreed to resolve the problem:

- a. Immediate action was required to prevent youth anti-social behaviour and crime, and to arrest offenders.
- b. The investigation into the arson attack must be thorough in order to arrest the perpetrators, to rebuild the trust and confidence of the Somalian Community in the authorities, and to reduce racist crime.
- c. A medium term solution must be introduced to divert local young people away from the street and away from crime

The underlying principle that governed this project was the need to address the problems through a joint partnership and community approach. This principle enabled all parties to have a degree of ownership of the problem and readily contribute towards its resolution.

Several responses were implemented by different partners with specific aims in mind. For example, the police and local authority authorised a dispersal order to bring immediate control to the area; the Environmental Department removed graffiti and assisted in trying to secure evidence against offenders; the Primary Care Trust and housing department provided support to the Somalian Community; the close involvement of the press promoted a positive impression through the media; and the Youth Service opened a youth club and provided a holiday for some Somalian boys in support of the objectives.

Success of the project was evaluated principally through the qualitative evidence obtain through formal and informal arrangements. This was supported by various quantitative measures.

Describe the project following the guidance above in no more than 4000 words

'From Prejudice To Pride'

Introduction

This application deals with the complex problem caused by young people in New Addington, Croydon in the summer of 2004.

The background to the problem highlights the deprived nature of the area and large youth population. The problem is defined and depicts a lack of facilities for young people as being the underlying cause for many of the difficulties being faced in the area. In particular, severe racist tension against the Somalian Community became apparent and this led to a series of partnership responses to integrate it more completely into the wider community. The success being achieved on this front stimulated the name for this project –'From Prejudice to Pride', as we moved from an environment of hate and misery to one of community cohesion and pride.

This report explains the measured partnership response to all of the problems that were defined. It will be seen that a wide range of partners and local people came together to bring about the successful resolution that was achieved. Finally, the Evaluation describes the outcomes in more detail, the involvement of partners and the qualitative and quantitative measures used to demonstrate the tangible evidence of success.

Background

New Addington is located in the southeast part of the London Borough of Croydon. It is a relatively deprived area with a high youth population, a higher than average number of households that are rented from the council or Housing Associations, and where 43% of working age people have no academic qualifications compared to 23% in Croydon and 29% in England overall. The population is predominately White-British, but there are increasing black minority ethnic communities emerging in the locality. One such group is the Somalian community.¹

Despite the larger than average youth population one of the two youth club facilities to serve New Addington, The Goldcrest Centre, had been closed down. The consequence of this was that young people began to congregate on the street, particularly around the shopping parade located near to Frensham Drive and Headley Drive. The numbers of young people meeting at this locality steadily increased until they reached fifty or more on a regular basis during a number of evenings each week.

Definition of the problem

The Safer Croydon Crime Reduction Strategy 2001 – 2004 highlighted an intention to tackle problems of anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Data indicated that these problems appeared to be prevalent in New Addington, due in part to the deprived nature and high youth population of the area. Following consultation with local politicians and community leaders Croydon Police decided to deploy one of its first safer neighbourhood teams (SNT) in New Addington and its adjacent ward, Fieldway. The team, led by Sergeant Janet Bridger, took up post in May 2004 and consisted of four police constables and six Police Community Support Officers.

Sergeant Bridger made early contacts with key individuals from residents associations, business representatives, councillors, The Housing Department, and the local London Fire Brigade to form the backbone of a community panel. There were ten members in all and the group had its inaugural meeting on 2nd June. Anecdotal evidence provided at the meeting indicated that significant youth related problems existed at the shopping parade in Headley Drive, near to the junction with Frensham Drive. In order to define the problem the panel decided to conduct some further qualitative and quantitative research.

Community Panel members and the SNT consulted a number of key stakeholders in the community. Head teachers, young people, the local Youth Service, the Housing Department and Housing Associations, faith leaders, residents, community leaders, and business representatives, together with media reports in the local press, all contributed towards building a picture of the problem at Headley Drive. The SNT also ran enquiries of various police databases, such as the National Criminal Intelligence System (Crimint) and the Crime Reporting Investigation System (CRIS).

When the panel next met the extent of the problem had become clear. It can be summarised as follows:

- Young people in New Addington had nowhere to go so they congregated at the shopping parade at Headley Drive.
- A number of the young people engaged in intimidating and disorderly behaviour that undermined the quality of life for the local community, especially in relation to the local 'Man on the Moon' pub, a burger bar and local residents who used the shopping parade. Local people were scared and frightened, and some residents had already asked the Council Housing Manager if they could be moved from the area because of the fear and worry of living there.
- Some young people were unlawfully drinking alcohol and, or, smoking cannabis both in the street and in the communal areas of local flats.
- Graffiti was evident and Signal Crime on the whole was being under reported.
- Racist behaviour was on the increase, especially against the local Somalian Community in New Addington.

The latter problem culminated in a severe racist attack on a local Somalian family at the end of July 2004, followed several days later by a serious arson attack on the family car, that was completely gutted. The family had to be re-housed so that they were not further attacked. To reassure the local community that the authorities were dealing effectively with the myriad of serious problems identified, and especially after the shock of the racist arson attack, the Police Borough Liaison Officer, Chief Inspector Morrell, called a public meeting.

The public meeting was widely advertised and well attended on 17 August by some 50 people from the local business and residential community, councillors, community panel members and the press. To reaffirm the partnership approach being taken to resolve the problems the meeting was co-chaired by Chief Inspector Morrell and Norman Watson, the local Council Housing Manager. Additionally, the local London Fire Brigade officer, Peter Clark, and the Senior Investigating Officer for the racist arson attack, Detective Inspector Jacque Hands, formed part of a panel to answer questions. The SNT was also present.

Those who attended the meeting made strong representations about the problems that they were experiencing. These were noted, and when the initial volatility of the meeting and emotions had subsided there was an overwhelming acceptance that all parties present would have to work together if the quality of life was to be improved. A number of collective objectives were agreed at the meeting:

- a. Immediate action was required to prevent youth anti-social behaviour and crime, and to arrest offenders.
- b. The investigation into the arson attack must be thorough in order to arrest the perpetrators, to rebuild the trust and confidence of the Somalian Community in the authorities, and to reduce racist crime.
- c. A medium term solution must be introduced to divert local young people away from the street and away from crime

It was agreed that successful resolution of this complex problem would be seen in the achievement of these objectives, particularly in relation to the reduction of anti-social behaviour, less racist crime, and alternative lawful activities for young people. Another tangible element of success would be evidence of integration by the Somalian Community into the wider community. It was further agreed to fix another public meeting for the 27th September so that progress could be monitored.

Response to the problem

Various options were considered by members of the community panel and the SNT to tackle the three objectives detailed above. Tactical options included:

- a. *Immediate action was required to prevent youth anti-social behaviour and crime, and to arrest offenders.*
 - ⊗ **Police:** Introduce high visibility patrols (HVP) and effective use of 'Stop and Search/Account' powers
 - ⊗ **Police and Local Authority:** Put a Dispersal Order in place
 - ⊗ **Environmental Department:** Make environmental changes to design out crime
 - ⊗ **Community Panel:** Exploit the media

- ⊗ **Environmental Department:** Remove graffiti and use covert cameras to combat signal crime
- ⊗ **Local Authority:** Introduce CCTV
- ⊗ **Police:** Engage off-licence managers to prevent the under-age sale of intoxicating liquor

'Taking no action' was not an option, so the panel decided that a combination of the above options was the best approach. The use of HVP alone without some further supportive enforcement powers would not adequately resolve the problem, especially since the officers were effectively dealing with children.

The panel decided that it should look to utilising powers that had been provided by the new Anti-social Behaviour Act. Much of the data that was gathered to analyse the original problem was therefore used to support the introduction of a Dispersal Order. The Order, the first in Croydon, was authorised on 24th August by the Mr Mike Pilgrim, Assistant Director for the Environment and Crime at the Local Authority and Police Superintendent Peter Gibbons. It took affect from 31st August, originally for six months but was extended to nine months in order to publicly reinforce our partnership determination to deal with the youth problem.

The Dispersal Order was vigorously enforced through the careful deployment of police resources and stop and search/account powers. SNT officers rearranged their rota so that they were on duty at the times when a prevalence of young people was at the shopping parade. Other local and external police resources, such as the Territorial Support Group, were also drafted in to provide support, albeit costs and other demands necessitated that their deployment was used sparingly. Additionally, the local press were contacted and patrolled with the police on the first day. This provided maximum publicity with the intention of reassuring the community and sending the right message to those that were causing the problems.

The Environmental Department, in consultation with the police, erected a fence to prevent offenders from fleeing the police and dissuade them from committing offences in the first place. The Housing Department introduced extra security to the communal area front doors of flats to stop youths congregating and smoking cannabis. The Local Authority was consulted with regard to the installation of CCTV, but this was perceived to be prohibitively expensive.

The Local Authority cleared all graffiti from the local area. Once cleared, it utilised its own personnel to operate covert cameras from within a van that was parked in the locality. The purpose of this was to secure evidence to identify and prosecute offenders. Community panel members closely monitored the use of the van. Unfortunately, the youngsters soon realised what the van was being used for and so for safety reasons a decision was taken to withdraw the use of this tactic. In its place the SNT utilised hand-held cameras. This approach was useful in helping to identify those individuals who consistently breached the Dispersal Order, many of whom were subsequently arrested, and to gather intelligence.

SNT officers made an approach to the managers of local off-licence stores with the aim of highlighting the problems being caused by young people's consumption of intoxicating liquor. There was widespread support by the licensees in trying to prevent the acquisition of alcohol by youngsters.

b. The investigation into the arson attack must be thorough in order to arrest the perpetrators, to rebuild the trust and confidence of the Somalian Community in the authorities, and to reduce racist crime.

- ⊗ Engage closely with the local community
- ⊗ Pursue the investigation through the Police Community Support Unit
- ⊗ Work with the Somalian community

Key witnesses made themselves known to the police following the public meeting. Detective Inspector Hands and her team engaged with these and with other witnesses that subsequently came to light. The involvement of councillors and the Council Housing Manager through their verbal support at the meeting were crucial in engendering an aura of confidence that encouraged local people to approach and help the police. The witnesses provided excellent information and subsequent evidence.

Somalian community representatives met with the SNT at the public meeting and this relationship positively progressed. The Youth Service became involved and by working closely with the police a number of positive outcomes were achieved that have helped Somalian youth become integrated into the New Addington community. After discussion, the Housing Manager also provided support in relation to advice regarding tenancy and occupation concerns. He arranged for a number of Somalian

families to be established on the estate.

Sergeant Bridger, in particular, established excellent links with the Somalian community that, the analysis showed, had been generally targeted for racial attacks. It transpired that some of these had not been reported because of fear, intimidation and a cultural mistrust of the police.

In starting to think of ways to overcome these and other cultural concerns Sergeant Bridger needed the assistance of an interpreter. The interpreter was appointed by the council and helped by both publicising details of 'coffee' mornings', that had been arranged with the aid of the Housing Manager, and then to assist overcome language barriers at the gatherings.

Only female members of the community attended the coffee mornings. Sergeant Bridger therefore made a point of not inviting male police officers or staff in case those present took offence, and for this reason she also attended the meetings in plain clothes.

The fear held of the police by the wider Somalian community emanated from their experiences of police service practices in their own country. To aid them in overcoming these issues the SNT utilised the assistance of a key individual from the Somalian Community who had attended the Public Forum. The Housing Manager also used his influence and familiarity with the Somalian community to good effect in helping the police to address this problem.

c. A medium term solution must be introduced to divert local young people away from the street and away from crime.

⊗ Stimulate a debate to consider options and costs

Debate was engendered at two levels. Chief Inspector Morrell explored options with the Head of Youth Services, Mr Ian Marshall, for opening the Goldcrest youth club, which had apparently been previously closed due to a lack of resources. Meanwhile, at a local level Sergeant Bridger engaged the community panel and New Addington representatives of the fire service, the youth service, and housing department.

Evaluation of the intervention

Evaluation was used throughout this project to inform decision-making so that approaches might be continued, altered or amended, as necessary. Evaluation deployed both quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques using police data systems and the views of interested parties, as described below.

Qualitative data

The first formal qualitative evaluation took place at a follow-up public meeting on the 27th September. This meeting was well attended. On this occasion it was solely chaired by the Housing Manager, Mr Norman Watson, with Chief Inspector Morrell, Detective Inspector Hands and Sergeant Bridger all in attendance. This measure maintained the partnership approach towards solving the problem, whilst providing reassurance to those present by moving away from the urgency of having to have the police take a leading role in running the meeting.

The overall opinion at the meeting was that Objectives (a) and (b) were being positively progressed, but that action to achieve them must continue. There had been a noticeable decrease in the number of disorderly incidents at the shopping parade, but there was a view that the area covered by the dispersal order should be extended. Authority was subsequently sought from the Local Authority and Police Superintendent to significantly increase the dispersal order area.

Police action was reported positively in the New Addington Advertiser. Readers were informed about the police response to youth disorder at Frensham Drive and the licensee of the 'Man in the Moon' public house stated in the article "I've been here 22 years as manger of the pub and it's just got out of control with the kids for the past 6 months. However it was much quieter after the police arrived".ⁱⁱ

Detective Inspector Hands provided an update to the meeting of 27th September of her investigation into the racist arson attack. She reported that a number of witnesses had come forward and that the investigation was being progressing well. Following a further request for additional witnesses more people, both White British and Somalian, came forward after the meeting to give evidence. This was significant, because it was an indication of the renewed confidence that members of the community were beginning to have in the authorities. We could collectively be seen to be listening to their

concerns!

Chief Inspector Morrell reported that discussion between the Youth Service and partners was being well received. In light of the problems that had been experienced in the area it was the intention of the Youth Service to open The Goldcrest Centre as a youth club as soon as resources permitted and as part of the reform being undertaken of the Youth Service at that time.

The media were also invited to attend the second meeting. Its subsequent report reinforced the determination by the partnership to deal robustly with individuals and their families who sought to disrupt the community. Norman Watson, from Housing, was quoted as saying "Anti-social behaviour of any nature is unacceptable.....Parents need to be made accountable and so do the children. The Council would not hesitate in organising ABC's, ASBO's or even instigating evictions in appropriate cases".ⁱⁱⁱ

Beyond the second public meeting integration of the Somalian Community into the wider community has continued. The Primary Care Trust have arranged for a speaker to attend the coffee mornings and provide advice to Somalian women on health issues. Now that the meetings have become established Sergeant Bridger only attends on an informal basis. The Youth Service have taken some young Somalian boys out on a barge holiday; the SNT have helped the Somalian Community set up a youth football team and £1.6k has been provided from the Police Property Act Fund to purchase football kit and training equipment.

Detective Inspector Hands and her team charged 8 suspects on 14th December 2004 for the racist arson attack. By continuing to work in partnership throughout the case and keeping the victims apprised of progress confidence in the police and council soared. After the individuals had been charged a case conference was held between the relevant Housing Associations and the Community Support Unit where it was agreed that post-charge anti-social behaviour orders and property possession orders would be sought.

In spring 2005 The Goldcrest Centre opened its doors as a youth club. The club is properly managed by youth service personnel and is very well attended by local young people.

During the autumn 2005 a formal review of the dispersal order was undertaken by Assistant Director Mike Pilgrim, Police Superintendent Gibbons, Chief Inspector Morrell, the Police Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, New Addington SNT constables and the youth service. Anecdotal evidence with reference to local publications such as the Newsletter and the New Addington Advertiser, plus verbal confirmation at minuted local police consultative group and Neighbourhood Partnership meetings, together with some data, were provided that indicated the Order had achieved its purpose. Indeed, Sergeant Bridger had not made a request in May 2005 for a further extension to the Order because she perceived that the quality of life in New Addington had significantly improved.

The Somalian community have now organised a more strategic representative group. Local and central partner representatives, such as the police Partnership Team and the Youth Service regularly contact members. Recently there was a meeting at the Town Hall with the Mayor, Cll. Maggie Mansell, Chief Inspector Morrell, Assistant Director Mike Pilgrim, Ian Marshall (Head of Youth Services) and representatives from Housing, Social Services and Education. This was called to help the Community resolve some of its related concerns and showed that it had a voice that was being listened to.

Quantitative data

A number of databases have provided some information that indicates the effectiveness of the response by all of those partners to the problem of Frensham Drive:

- The number of disorder calls to the police dropped from an average of 13 a day during the three months before the inception of the Dispersal Order to 7 a day during the three months thereafter.^{iv}
- 437 youths were stopped and dispersed during the nine months of the Order. 17 arrests were made for breaches of the Order and 95% of these were White-British youth.^v
- Members of the SNT made 20 referrals to the Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) of young people they believed warranted further support to stop them falling into crime.^{vi} Mainstream services, the Youth Offending Team, and the police are represented on the YISP.

- Allegations of racist hate crime fell from 10 reports to 2.^{vii} This is encouraging because during the latter period from which the data was taken the rapport between the police and black ethnic minority groups had improved, so reporting a crime would have been that much easier.
- The police arrested and convicted 8 people for the racist arson attack. One of these is still in prison and has been served with a post –conviction Anti-social Behaviour Order. This will constrain any bad behaviour once the individual is released. All have been evicted from the estate.

Conclusion

The problems experienced at Frensham Drive were significant and persistent. The lives of local people were made a misery and the Somalian Community were suffering from unacceptable hate crime.

This project has demonstrated how partners and the community can work brilliantly together in order to turn a problem on its head. Together we have made excellent use of a variety of legislative tools to ultimately force out troublemakers and to provide support for law-abiding people. The result is that this community has been moved from prejudice to pride.

How the Partnership would use the £10k

The partnership would form a small panel with key representatives from the community, the Youth Service and other identified relevant agencies to consider diversion options for young people in Croydon, where youth crime is a significant problem.

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ⁱ <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/AreaProfile1.do?tab=6> (06.01.06)

ⁱⁱ New Addington Advertiser (03.09.2004)

ⁱⁱⁱ New Addington Advertiser (01.10.2004)

^{iv} CADMIS – excludes all domestic violence calls. Figures cover New Addington.

^v Custody database and Crimint.

^{vi} Croydon Youth Offending Team data

^{vii} 01.01.2004 to 31.08.2004 compared to 31.08.2004 to 31.05.2005. Data taken from the Police Crime Management Unit.