



Crime Reduction & Community Safety Group

Tilley Awards 2007

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, within the stated word limit and ensuring the file size is no more than 1MB. Failure to do so will result in your entry being rejected from the competition.

Completed application forms should be e-mailed to tilleyawards07@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

All entries must be received by noon on **Friday 27th April 2007**. No entries will be accepted after this time/date. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Alex Blackwell on 0207 035 4811. Any queries regarding publicity of the awards should be directed to Chaz Akoshile on 0207 035 1589.

Section 1: Details of application

Title of the project: **Retail Theft Initiative (RTI)**

Name of force/agency/CDRP/CSP: **London Borough of Redbridge Metropolitan police**

Name of one contact person with position and/or rank (this should be one of the authors):
Insp. Mark Robertson

Email address: **Mark.Robertson@met.police.uk**

Full postal address: **Ilford Police Station, 270 – 294 High Road, Ilford IG1 1G7**

Telephone number: **0208 345 1620 (21620) Mobile 07769 724 860**

Fax number: **0208 911 9659**

If known please state in which Government Office area you are located e.g. Government Office North West, Government Office London etc: **Government Office London**

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): **Chief Superintendent David Grant**

Name of organisation, position and/or rank of endorsing senior representatives(s):
Borough Commander Metropolitan police

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s): **Chief Superintendent David Grant, Ilford Police Station,
270 – 294 High Road, Ilford IG1 1G7**

Please tick box to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry (this is to prevent duplicate entries of the same project):

Section 2: Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project (see guidance for more information).

Retail Theft Initiative

Background

The London Borough of Redbridge has a large retail community mainly based in Ilford town centre. It has a participating town centre partnership, which includes over 120 retail stores.

Outline of Problem

Dealing with retail crime places a considerable demand on police resources. An arrest can invariably lead to officers being engaged for an anything between 5 – 9 hours. Arresting shoplifters also places additional pressure on custody suites at times of peak demand. There has also been some criticism particularly from the Business community over police response times. This had led to deterioration in relationships between stores and police. Prior to the Introduction of the RTI first time offenders were seeing very little consequence to their offending behaviour. This was particularly the case for Juveniles who quite often where the value of the goods was low would be released without calling police. The introduction of PND's has given police an option other than to arrest but does not address the underlying reasons for offending.

Description of Initiative/Intervention principles

The aim of the RTI is to:

- Reduce officer time dealing with shoplifters, and
- To reduce re offending particularly in Juveniles through Partnership working

The RTI deals with first time offenders for shoplifting. **How does it work** - Police attend call to a detained shoplifter in the normal way; confirm with store detective that an offence has taken place. If a certain Criteria is met offenders are de-arrested and voluntarily agree to attend Ilford police station at a pre arranged time. On return Offenders participate in a restorative justice conference utilising the local business community as victims. This is a powerful tool as retail

crime is often viewed as a victimless crime. In addition Juvenile offenders are referred to M power the youth crime prevention team attached to the Youth Crime Prevention Service who carry out a number of interventions prior to delivering a reprimand.

Outcomes

- 460 offenders through scheme
- The introduction has led to a significant reduction in officer time spent dealing with shoplifters
- Reoffending rate reduced
- Increase in judicial disposals
- Improved partnership working
- Identified as good practise

Design/evaluation

The scheme was designed after extensive consultation with both the business community and YOT team. The scheme recently received 1 favourable comments following an Inspection of the YOT and Youth Crime Prevention Service by the HMI Inspectorate of Probation.

Section 3: Description of project

Describe the project in no more than 4000 words (see guidance for more information in particular Section 7 - judging criteria).

Retail Theft Initiative

Background

The London Borough of Redbridge has a large retail business community mainly based in Ilford town centre. It has a participating town centre partnership REDBAC, which includes over 120 retail stores. Both Valentines and Clementswood Safer Neighbourhood teams support Town centre policing.

Outline of Problem

Dealing with retail crime places a considerable demand on police resources. An arrest can invariably lead to officers being engaged for an anything between 5 – 9 hours. Arresting shoplifters also places additional pressure on custody suites at times of peak demand. There has also been some criticism particularly from the Business community over police response times. This has led to deterioration in relationships between stores and police. Prior to the Introduction of the Retail theft initiative (RTI) first time offenders were seeing very little consequence to their offending behaviour. This was particularly the case for Juveniles who quite often where the value of the goods was low would be released without calling police. The introduction of Penalty notices (PND's) has given police an option other than to arrest but does not address the underlying reasons for offending.

Definition of the problem

To identify the problem, data was used from a variety of sources Internal and external including CAD, CRIS and Custody. This allowed us to gauge the response times and also the impact on officer time spent dealing with offenders. Initial research showed that if the RTI had been implemented at that time 52% of offenders would have been suitable for the scheme with a significant reduction in officer time and demand on custody facilities.

External data was used from The Ilford town centre partnership, which revealed a number of incidents were not being reported to police. Research showed that only a third of all incidents of shoplifting were being reported to police. It is thought that this was in part due to police response times. The analysis supported the fact that shoplifters were placing a significant demand on police resources, which was having a knock on effect in terms of other areas of service delivery.

The analysis also revealed that a number of particularly young offenders were not being detained for police and were therefore seeing no consequence to their offending behaviour. These young people were not receiving an assessment of the nature or extent of factors triggering this offending behaviour, no help to address the same and no input about consequences of offending for them selves, their families or the victim. Following analysis of this information a meeting was held with stakeholders to discuss options to tackle these identified problems.

Response to the Problem

The stake holders meeting considered a number of options including use of the civil recovery scheme and reporting offenders for summons although both of these methods would reduce officer time spent dealing with offenders, neither tackled the underlying causes for offending or reduced re offending. The preferred option was:

The setting up of a retail crime Initiative. Research carried out on similar scheme run in Milton Keynes demonstrated a positive impact on reoffending rates as well as increased resource efficiency for the police. An independent Home Office evaluation showed the following results:

- A reduction in the reoffending rate for first time offenders from 17% to 14%
- A reduction in the average time it takes police officers to deal with shop theft from 5 hours to 2 hours and

- A reduction in the time spent by the patrolling officers on shop theft to an average of 20 minutes.

Key benefits for Police and partners in Redbridge. The scheme would free up resources to respond to reports of shoplifting from stores more quickly thus improving relations with the business community. This could lead to an increase in the number of reports to shoplifting but would also decrease the number of people particularly young people seeing no consequence to their behaviour. It would also free up police units at times of peak demand to concentrate on other areas of service delivery and local priorities.

There would be a substantial increase in the number of offenders both adult and juvenile receiving a diversionary disposal accompanied by an intervention at an early stage in their offending career.

Partnership working

Key partners were identified at an early stage these consisted of the YOT, The Youth Crime Prevention service, local business community and other referral agencies such as Education and Drug & Alcohol misuse teams. Through meetings with the YOT manager a Standard Operating Procedure was agreed to ensure adequate resourcing of staff. It was agreed that the whole intervention programme would last no longer than 4 sessions to comply with Proportionality objectives in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The first appointment for all offenders would take place at Ilford police station on the second Tuesday after the offence. Suitable accommodation was located within the police station for conferences.

The business community were informed of the scheme by a series of presentations at local retail crime conferences. Joint training was undertaken with the M Power team to ensure staff were fully informed. Police officers were also trained through a series of presentations at police training days. A number of local business managers were identified as willing to take part in the scheme as surrogate victims and provided training in restorative conferencing.

A successful bid was made for an additional police officer to run the project under the management of the town centre /SN sergeant. This role was later expanded to include one day a week at the Youth Crime Prevention team to further develop the scheme and joint working practises. Additional officers were identified to take part in the scheme and provided with Restorative Justice training.

Criteria

The RTI deals with first time offenders for shoplifting. **How does it work** - Police attend call to a detained shoplifter in the normal way and confirm with the store detective that an offence has taken place. If a certain Criteria is met

- Offence must be admitted
- Name and address verified
- Offender willing to participate in scheme
- Must not be part of organised group
- No previous convictions or cautions for related offences
- Low value good stolen/Damaged

Offenders are de-arrested and voluntarily agree to attend Ilford police station at a pre arranged time. On their return all offenders participate in a restorative justice conference with a surrogate victim normally a member of a local store. This is a powerful tool and used to explore the underlying reasons behind the offending behaviour and also the impact on the victim, as Retail crime is often viewed as a victim less crime. In addition Juveniles who are dealt with by M power the Youth Crime Prevention Team undergo an ONSET assessment, which identifies any underlying concerns and highlights risk factors for further offending. Juveniles undergo a number of interventions before receiving a reprimand.

The RTI scheme has identified a number of issues, both for adults and young people, which would *not normally* have been identified, particularly in relation to personal health and education. These have been referred by the team to Partner agencies who carry out follow up enquiries and take positive action to address the problems. Examples include:

- 1.16 year old female, arrested on 04/10/06 theft shoplifting, whilst in a meeting with M Power, she made them aware that she self harmed and that help was needed. No one in her family was aware of her self-harming apart

from her 10-year-old sister. The RTI scheme put her in contact with a mental health nurse that deals in child problems from Tower Hamlets YOT. As a result counseling has been offered.

2. 15 year old female arrested for theft shoplifting on 03/01/2006. Whilst she was being Reprimanded for the offence she opened up and made police aware that she was being bullied at School, she stated that the only reason that she had shoplifted was because of peer pressure. Neither her school nor parents were aware of this. The names of all the people involved in the bullying were supplied to the schools officer. As a result of some restorative work in the school she is now happy at school and feels that even though she did receive a Reprimand that it brought to light the problem with the bullies.

3- Two 14 year old males were arrested for shoplifting 20/10/2006, whilst speaking to both families it became apparent that the two boys were demonstrating symptoms for ADHD, neither family was receiving help and did not know who to speak to. Advice was given with contact names and numbers. As a result before this case was completed both boys were seen by a psychologist and correctly diagnosed. They are now both receiving the correct medication. This has resulted in an immediate improvement in both home and school life for both families.

Outcomes

- 460 offenders through scheme
- The introduction has led to a significant reduction in officer time spent dealing with shoplifters
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Evaluation of the scheme

The RTI was introduced in September 2003. To date 460 persons have been through the scheme. A dip sample of adult offenders shows that since the scheme was implemented only 6 out of 76 (7.89%) have reoffended. There have been significant reductions for Young people entering the scheme.

April 2004 - March 2005 cohort - 47 young people went through the project - after 6 months 9% had reoffended (4 yp) and after 1 year 21% (10 yp)

April 2005 - March 2006 cohort - 70 young people went through the project - so far 38 young people have reached the year stage of these only 2 have reoffended which is 5%.

It is difficult to gauge the amount of officer time saved but taking an average of 4 hours per person, this equates to an estimated saving of **1840 officer hours**. This doesn't reflect the additional burden on custody facilities.

Partners Views

Tania Riedel - Manager of the Youth crime prevention service

The Retail Theft Initiative has been an effective partnership project between the Youth Crime Prevention Service and the Metropolitan Police. All young people going through the scheme receive an ONSET assessment. This identifies the risk and protective factors which may lead them to reoffending. Young people and their families participate in the restorative conferences. This is a powerful process, which enables the young people to gain a better understanding of the impact of their offending on the victims. Young people are also required to carry out some reparation to make amends for the harm they have caused. All Redbridge young people going through the scheme are discussed at a multi agency panel to identify if further support needs to be offered to the young people and their families. The project therefore helps the Youth Crime Prevention Team (M Power) to work with young people to reduce their risk of reoffending. The reoffending statistics demonstrate that the project is effective and that the effectiveness of the project is improving as the project continues to develop. Prior to the establishment of the project young people receiving Reprimand for

shop lifting offences received no intervention from the Youth Crime Prevention Service or the Youth Offending Team.

Carl Cieluch, Store Manager Marks & Spencer, High Road, Ilford.

I have been delighted to represent retail as part of the Retail Theft Initiative for the last two years. During this time an effective partnership has built between retailers in Ilford and the Metropolitan Police. In my role as chairman of Ilford Business Against Crime, the Retail Theft Initiative is constantly referred to in terms of the success of the scheme.

At the meeting that the offender attends, I take the opportunity to explain the impact of the offenders' actions on the retailer. Security is a major cost to the store and every item that is stolen without payment being made means a potential increase in price paid by genuine customers for their goods. I also explain that there could be a potential loss of jobs within a retailer due the actions of theft. It is very often the case that the offender does not realise the impact caused by the theft taking place. There then follows an acknowledgement of the implications of their actions and the distress caused to both customers and staff in the store who witnessed the offenders' actions.

I fully support the suggested course of action that is recommended that the offender should take. This includes writing a letter to the retailer where the theft took place apologising for the actions that caused the theft. If the letter is written sincerely it goes a long way to convincing the retailer that the individual will not re-offend in the future and is genuinely sorry for the theft that occurred.

In conclusion, the Retail Theft Initiative has been successful in forming an effective partnership between the Metropolitan Police, Crime Prevention Service and Retail. Most importantly the re-offend rate has been reduced significantly and this confirms the success of the programme. I am happy to continue to support the RTI during the coming months.

Summary

The Retail theft initiative is an innovative concept and is tailor made to meet the needs of Redbridge borough. It has a unique mix of partnership working involving the Youth Crime Prevention team, local business community and other key agencies in delivering and supporting interventions. This was a new area of work and required considerable training and support. Regular review meetings are held with key partners to identify any issues, where difficulties have been identified the scheme has been altered. The RTI has been promoted as good practise and several other London boroughs have expressed an interesting in developing their own version.

Mark Robertson Insp.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Please insert letter from endorsing representative.



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

TERRITORIAL POLICING

Redbridge Borough

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Borough Commander's Office

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Facsimile: 020 8345 2776
Email: Dave.Grant@met.police.uk
www.met.police.uk

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date: 18th April 2007

This scheme is an excellent example of a partnership that is working extremely effectively. I am not aware of any other scheme where the re-offending rate is so low, which in itself is an endorsement of the skills and abilities of those who administer the scheme. Of particular interest is the offending rate amongst young people, which is incredibly low when compared with the average offending rate of juveniles.

The scheme only works as all the organisations involved wish to participate because they can clearly see the benefit to their organisations, as well as the social good for all the local communities. In police terms, it saves considerable man-hours at the time of the offence, but also in not having to deal with further offending. For the shops, it reduces losses through theft, sends a strong message to offenders or potential offenders, as well supports their staff in taking action.

A recent inspection of the YOT commended the work being undertaken with RTI, further endorsement of the value of the work being carried out.

I endorse this application for an award strongly recommending it to you

Yours sincerely

Dave Grant
Chief Superintendent
Borough Commander

Checklist for Applicants:

1. Have you read the process and application form guidance?
2. Have you completed all four sections of the application form in full including the endorsement from a senior representative?
3. Have you checked that your entry addresses all aspects of the judging criteria?
4. Have you advised all partner agencies that you are submitting an entry for your project?
5. Have you adhered to the formatting requirements within the guidance?
6. Have you checked whether there are any reasons why your project should **not** be publicised to other police forces, partner agencies and the general public?
7. Have you saved you application form as a PDF attachment and entitled your message 'Entry for Tilley Awards 2007' before emailing it?

Once you are satisfied that you have completed your application form in full please email it to Tilleyawards07@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. Two hard copies must also be posted to Alex Blackwell at Home Office, Effective Practice, Support & Communications Team, 6th Floor, Peel Building (SE Quarter), 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.