



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: **Operation Larches Storm**

Name of force/agency/CDRP/**CSP**: **Lancashire Constabulary**

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

Police Community Support Officer Michael Fox & Police Constable Scott Archer

Email address: **Michael.fox@lancashire.pnn.police.uk**
Scott.archer2@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

Full postal address: **Lea Police Station**
785 Blackpool Road
Preston
Lancashire

Telephone number: **01772 209441**

Fax number: **01772 209420**

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

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): **Acting Deputy Chief Constable Mr Adrian Mc Allister**

Name of organisation, position and/or rank of endorsing senior representatives(s): **Acting Deputy Chief Constable – HQ Corporate Services Directorate**

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s): **LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY POLICE
HEADQUARTERS, PO BOX 77, HUTTON, PRESTON, LANCS PR4 5SB**

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).

Operation Larches Storm

A reduction in crime and nuisance disorder

In March 2006 there had been significant increase in crime and nuisance disorder on Larches estate on the outskirts of Preston City. Residents and shop keepers raised concerns regarding levels of anti-social behaviour which was affecting their quality of life. This was highlighted through residents / public meetings and complaints to the police.

A problem profile was developed by the neighbourhood policing team to address nuisance disorder. To understand the nature of the problem extensive data was analysed. This research was carried out through public surveys, questionnaires, residents committees, Gateway housing and finally police data. Through this analysis responses were developed to tackle these issues

Consequently, Operation Larches Storm (OLP) was initiated and a series of Problem Orientated Partnerships were formed to address this problem.

A number of key partnerships were forged to move this operation forwards. A multi agency approach was adopted to address the major areas of concern i.e. youth provision within the area, improved lighting around the estate and secure funding to address the operations exit strategy.

The OLP initiative was to reduce anti-social behaviour therefore improving the quality of life for all people residing and working on the estate.

Throughout OLP regular Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings, residents committees and police surgeries were held to formulate priorities to address the issues and appropriate targets. These meetings were essential and through these meetings regular contact was made with our key partners. It was clear from analysis of the data that we needed to focus on problematic youths which had been identified throughout operation. After identifying the youths who were causing the problems multi agency visits were conducted at their home addresses and parents were warned concerning breach of tenancies.

On identifying the problems and tackling these issues along with our partners key successes include:

- Youth provision introduced on the estate
- Refurbishment of the Co-op store
- Reduction in crime and nuisance disorder
- Improved lighting around the estate

A major success of this operation can be highlighted through Problem Orientated Partnerships. This approach contributed to a large reduction of nuisance disorder. As a result this improved the quality of life for residents and businesses who were previously suffering from numerous acts of anti-social behaviour. They no longer need to live in fear and intimidation from the disorder that was effecting there everyday life.

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*).

A reduction in crime and nuisance disorder on the Larches estate

SCANNING

Larches estate comprises of over 1000 homes and approximately 400 are Community Gateway owned. The estate is situated on the outskirts of the city of Preston. For a number of years the estate suffered from a number of problems which affected both businesses and residents alike. Some of the problems that were occurring on the estate ranged from numerous levels of anti-social behaviour, theft, graffiti and damage.

The problems on the estate were in close vicinity with each other and were mainly occurring around a retail island. These acts of anti-social behaviour and crime disorder were mainly carried out by youths predominantly between the ages of 12-18 years. These youths were congregating around the shops and causing distress to shop keepers and residents. This was affecting their quality of life as they were living in fear and intimidation.

Some of the incidents occurring included noise nuisance, criminal damage, theft and graffiti. This group's behaviour was disorderly. They intimidated passers by, obstructed the pavements and also entrance/exits of shops mainly the Co-operative store located on the retail island. It was clear that by their presence, residents on the estate were discouraged from using the store and even leaving their homes during the evening.

Residents, businesses and local councillors were able to voice their concerns at PACT meetings, residents committees, neighbourhood watch and police run surgeries, in total confidence without fear of reprisals. They demanded to know what could be done to tackle these youths unruly behaviour and wanted an end to large groups causing anti-social behaviour.

A multi agency approach was undertaken to address these issues as it was impossible for the neighbourhood policing team to achieve their long term plans working alone. Partnerships and key contacts were forged with some of the following agencies:

- Lancashire County Council
- Preston City Council
- Preston Transport (Bus Patrols)
- Larches Neighbourhood Watch
- Community Gateway Association (Housing)
- Preston Sports Development
- LANPAC funding
- Larches Retailers
- Lancashire County Council Youth Services
- Group Intervention Panel (GRIP)
- Youth Offending Team (YOT)
- Preston Parenting
- Highways Department
- Lancashire Education Authority
- Larches Boxing Club
- Preston Army Careers Office
- Princes Trust
- National Health Service (NHS)
- Lancashire Evening Post

In order to achieve our aims a number of partners were selected. One key objective was to keep in regular contact enabling all agencies to remain updated. This was held through weekly and monthly meetings and consisted of representatives from all our agencies. Its aim was to oversee the project and direct priorities discussed in previous meetings.

Objectives of the project

- To develop a multi agency strategy that could be incorporated onto the estate to deal with the identified issues and the scale of the problems to be addressed.
- To provide and expand youth provision within the area therefore covering short, medium and long term goals.
- To make improvements to the estate giving residents and businesses an improved quality of life and making the area of Larches a safer place to live.
- To implement an exit strategy on the estate to determine the success of the project for the future, therefore, reducing anti-social behaviour and crime/nuisance disorder in the long term.

Definition of the problem

To identify the issues in the area, extensive research was undertaken in order to gain a better understanding of the problems. Consultation with the our following partners was implemented to gain background research:

- Community Gateway association
- PACT/residents associations
- Local Councillors
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Police Data System (Sleuth)
- Liaison with Police Response officers
- Local Businesses (Co-operative store)

Time period to achieve project completion = 12 months

ANALYSIS

After reviewing the problems currently ongoing in the area, the analysis had to be broken down to gain a better understanding. This was carried out by incorporating a Problem Analysis Triangle. This problem triangle highlighted three sub categories; Location, Victim and Offender

Location:

The Larches Estate suffered from numerous acts of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. Most of the behaviour problems are caused around the retail island. The island situated in the centre of the estate comprised of a number of shops providing convenience to the community. Youths were congregating in numbers around and outside the retail island and causing intimidation, nuisance and damage. The lighting around these retail outlets and surrounding roads was extremely poor especially the alleyway which runs to rear of the shops. The area was covered in graffiti and was a general eye sore which has been neglected for some time. All the above were identified following a visual audit conducted by all project partners.

Victim:

A large percentage of the victim/callers are staff who worked within the retail outlets. For example, staff working at Co-op Store, had raised a number of concerns with their head office re: their personal safety whilst on duty and thefts/damage/graffiti at their premises – female staff refused to work evening shifts. In addition local residents of all age profiles, felt intimidated whilst approaching these premises, by the large groups congregating and conducting anti-social acts. This was highlighted at local police surgeries and community meetings. Many of the businesses and residents were repeat victims and were living in fear from these issues.

Offender (Root Cause):

Following information collated via community/partnership meetings, letter drops and police data it was clear that the epicentre was the Larches retail island and the persons responsible were mainly youths under 18 years. From research, information gained from local knowledge, meetings with the youth development service, and sports development it was identified that the estate had poor youth activities available for them. The existing facilities were not adequate i.e. too small and in poor state of repair.

Through high visible foot patrols conducted by the Neighbourhood Policing Team and other agencies including Community Gateway Housing, Councillors and Youth Services it became apparent through speaking with the youths that a clear root cause of the anti-social behaviour was a direct result of under-age drinking and boredom.

After collection of resident questionnaires, surveys and further consultations with our partners it became evident through police data that the main problems were occurring around the Co-op store between 18:00 hrs – 22:00hrs each evening with an increase at weekends particularly Friday and Saturdays.

Between 1st December 2005 and 1st June 2006 there had been a total of 78 incidents in and around the vicinity of the store itself.

These incidents included:

- Anti-social behaviour = 42
- Theft = 18
- Damage = 8
- Other incidents = 10



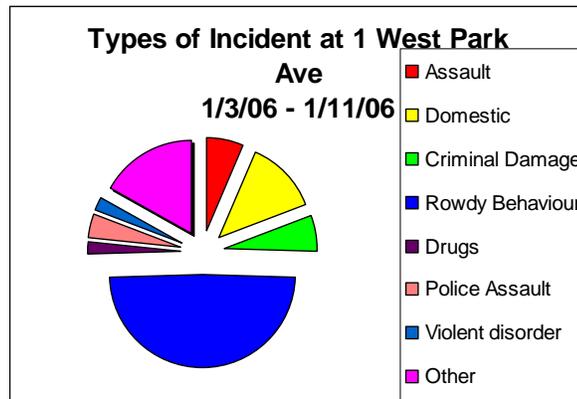
On reviewing the incidents at the Co-op store, a number of meetings were scheduled with the Co-op store's manager, area manager and head office relating to the issues that concerned them. Through these meetings it was brought to the team's attention, the money the store was losing. Between 1st January 2006 and 1st June 2006 the store had lost £7,800 due to theft and £3,000 due to damage, which was a total of £10,800 in just 6 months.

Second Location:

On analysing where the problems were occurring, a second location was identified as being equally problematic. The youths that were committing these acts of crime and disorder were also frequenting one privately owned address on the estate and consuming alcohol and acting in an anti social manner. Through feedback from our meetings and evaluation of our recent survey from letters that were distributed to residents and businesses, problems at the second location was having a massive impact on the quality of life for those who lived in close vicinity to the problem address. On reviewing the data there were a number of incidents occurring at this location that residents referred to as an "Open House for Disorder". Between 1st March 2006 and 1st November 2006 there were a total 90 calls and complaints in relation to this address concerning what problems were occurring.

The incidents included:

- Rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour = 43
- Criminal damage = 8
- Violent disorder = 2
- Drugs = 3
- Domestic violence = 10
- Police assault = 5
- Assault = 7
- Other = 12



These youths would attempt to purchase or steal alcohol from the Co-op store and consume it around the retail island or at the second location mentioned above.

In order to combat these problems, the team needed to find out how 'nuisance disorder' had been dealt with elsewhere around the division and looked at various schemes executed to tackle nuisance disorder. On viewing numerous projects previously adopted to address similar problems to those experienced on Larches Estate, it allowed us to put plans in place using best practice (previously tried and tested) to help achieve our aims and objectives.

Response

Having recognised that there were a number of substantial problems on the estate the team and partners set about achieving the objects of this project. Through regular meetings with our formed agencies a plan was set, along with time scales for achieving each priority.

Response to the problem

The Multi-agency approach we implemented has made significant steps in helping address the estates main causes. Another partner that the Neighbourhood Team looked at to assist with this project was Geographic Police Response officers based at Lea Police Station which covered Larches Estate. Through regular briefings and task meetings, the team made a request to senior officers to give responsibility to the response officers to provide extra policing of the estate. The neighbourhood teams and response officers gave the estate high visible presence at all periods of the week and monitored activities on task sheets. This enabled a close working relationship and created detailed knowledge of the area, the problems and its root causes. In addition the team requested the assistance of additional resources i.e. specialist units which included Operational Support Unit, Armed Response Vehicles, Dog Officers and Mounted officers.

Co-op Store:

A problem orientated partnership meeting was held with the Co-op senior management team. Key issues were discussed relating to the problems that the store were experiencing. During this meeting crime prevention advice was provided which addressed the environmental design of the store and what could be implemented to reduce opportunities for crime. It was highlighted that a refurbishment programme was scheduled for the Co-op store however this was not due until late 2008. Through these meetings it was agreed with senior management present because of the magnitude of the problems being encountered, the store would bring forward the renovation work to June 2006 so it would run in conjunction with the project. The redevelopment would contribute in tackling these problems, as the work would include internal and external improvements. The redevelopment was to include an extensive CCTV system, additional internal/external cameras including revised sites to cover entry/exit points, shop floor lay out changed to ensure staff have a clear/unobstructed view of customers whilst in the aisles, improved/extended lighting outside the store, a Mosquito device was installed which emits sounds waves and disperses groups of youths congregating for a 20 minute period and extensive graffiti was removed. This created a more pleasing site, which was confirmed by residents and other businesses.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts:

Through working with our partners, seven Acceptable Behaviour Contracts were drawn up by the policing team in cooperation with Community Gateway. The offenders that were identified as being contributory factors to the problems on the estate were visited at their home addresses and issued with an Acceptable Behaviour Contract which they were to adhere to, over a set period of time. It was thought that the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts would be an ideal way of defining for the individual, the behaviour that was considered anti-social/unacceptable. The Acceptable Behaviour Contract would be discussed with the individual prior to them signing it along with a parent or guardian. This was done to ensure that they understood what was being asked of them and what they would have to comply to with the selected conditions imposed.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders:

Throughout the "Operation Larches Storm" project it was decided that Anti-social Behaviour Orders would also be sought for regular problematic offenders beyond the application of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and who were regularly conducting in acts of crime and disorder. A file was prepared in order to gather relevant intelligence on six key individuals and is still currently ongoing in order to help secure further orders.

Dispersal Order:

A six month dispersal order was sought and implemented to tackle the groups who were causing the problems and congregating around the estate causing alarm and distress to residents and shop keepers. The dispersal order would restrict the youths who were causing the problems associating in a groups of two or more. This order ran over a 24 hour time period and covered all boundaries on the estate. This order which ran through most of the project helped tackle a large percentage of the problems and was successful in reducing crime and incident logs recorded to the police.

Closure Order on Second Location:

In relation to the problems that were occurring at the second location the partnership approach was paramount in gathering the necessary information and data to seek a Closure Order at the address in question. One of the problems was that a closure order had never been sought on a private dwelling before and had only ever been granted on Council houses. Through our agency approach a number of aggrieved statements had to be obtained from residents who had once complained and had lived in fear from this "Open House for Disorder". The closure order was granted and both tenants received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. Since the order was granted the home has been re-possessed and the tenants are on longer residing on the estate.

Off – licenses:

To address the problems of under-age drinking which was one on the contributory factors of this disorder visits were made to licensed premises to make them aware of the issues. The team also worked closely with the licensing department and trading standards. Both these agencies would conduct numerous visits to stores throughout this project and make staff aware of the under-age and identification policies. Through necessary research and community intelligence it was highlighted, that a number of persons over 18 were purchasing alcohol and supplying it to the youths on the estate. These persons were targeted by the neighbourhood policing team through leaflets distributed to licensed stores containing pictures of these identified persons who were supplying alcohol to minors. Through partnership with the retail stores, alcohol related incidents reduced significantly. Approximately nine people on the estate were dealt with by way of £80 fixed penalty notices for supplying alcohol to under 18's.

Lighting:

Referring back to the analysis and location of the lighting on the estate, which was of an extremely poor standard and contributed to many of the problems. The streets around the retail island and the estate didn't have sufficient lighting therefore youths could congregate and go unseen. Contact was made with the Highways Department and meetings were scheduled to address this problem. Through this partnership approach the highways department upgraded the street lighting by making them taller and fitting them with a brighter bulb. The council upgraded 25 street lights through their planning programme at no cost to project.

CCTV:

Prior to the project beginning a CCTV system had already installed and it was situated around the retail island. The system was regarded as dated as it had been on the estate for approximately four years. In that time CCTV technology had advanced. The CCTV system was of poor quality and the images were not clear to identify the youths causing the problems around the retail island. Through the multi-agency approach and the numerous partnership meetings the team expressed a need for CCTV upgrade to be installed on the estate, to help address the issues. Funding was addressed with a number of our partnership agencies and through the residents committee, local councillors, PACT council, Community Gateway Association and LANPAC a sum of £15,000 was secured. Of which £10,000 was used to upgrade and install a new CCTV system to be situated again around the retail island leaving the following £5,000 to be spent on mobile cameras. It was proposed that the mobile cameras would be owned by the residents committee and the PACT council. The cameras would assist residents on the estate who were suffering from rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour and damage and help reassure them, tackle the problems and identify future problem offenders.

Other related work:

The team worked with Preston City Council to secure a grant of £10,000 in order to demolish garages on Elswick Alley and there are proposals at the planning stage to extend the premises of Larches Boxing Club. This expansion will allow provision of fitness suite and enhance the boxing facilities therefore providing more youth provision for the estate. These plans were incorporated into the projects exit strategy. This will achieve extra youth provision on the estate for the future, therefore covering our long term aims and objectives for the area of Larches

The NHS have also assisted on the estate by nurses/officers coming down during the evenings (weekends) and targeting youths on the estate along with the neighbourhood team in offering advice to these young adults in relation to the effects of alcohol and substance misuse.

ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of the intervention:

This Partnership was first initiated in March 2006 and a multi agency approach was adopted to combat the existing issues. The following interventions have been delivered to date:-

(1) There is an obvious physical improvement to the Larches "Retail Island" in particular the Elswick alleyway which has received extensive treatment from Preston City Council, Community Gateway and Princes Trust. All of these agencies had removed large quantities of graffiti which improved the general appearance of the area. A further partner namely "Coop Store" Norbreck Drive have also removed extensive quantities of graffiti from the rear/side elevations of their store again improving the physical appearance. This work has been sustained via Police, Council and Coop Stores working together and removing any further graffiti and preventing the "Broken Window Syndrome!" This has seen a reduction in new graffiti as offenders realise it is removed rather than left.

(2) Youth involvement has been raised and was identified as a PACT priority on a number of occasions with a view to securing larger facilities to conduct youth activities in. The "Community Link Building" conducts youth activities and is situated next door to the Ashton Housing office which is due to close in December 2006. This property is limited due to its physical size however through conducting the necessary multi agency meetings the Ashton Housing office premises have now been secured. This will enable the Community Link building to expand and double in size therefore be able to accommodate more youths from the estate and engage them in social activities. Whilst working with Steve Daily at Sports development and Community Link the team have submitted a successful funding bid for £22,000 to rebuild the Larches recreation zone which will be shared with the Larches Boxing Club to provide an additional training facility and enhance the number of local youths they can train.

(3) Positive feed back has been received via PACT and Resident meetings. Councillors, Shop keepers and Residents voiced their praise for the actions taken. There have also been a number of emails and letters received from other residents and shopkeepers welcoming and praising the measures deployed. With the reduction in crime and nuisance disorder businesses and residents are now living and working without fear and intimidation this in effect has improved their quality of life.

(4) There has been a reduction in the number of reported crimes and incidents which have been compared between

01/01/06 - 01/06/06 and the 01/06/06 - 17/12/06. During these periods anti social incidents are down by 50% and theft is down by 40% which includes a 100% detection rate. All reported incidents have been reduced by 55%.

(5) Feedback from residents, questionnaires and calls to the police shows a clear reduction of anti-social acts around the retail island and free from nuisance disorder.

All partners have worked well. The Council, Community Gateway and The Co-op store have removed much of the graffiti. The Coop have listened to the Larches Policing team and brought forward the stores up grade by 18 months. In addition they have implemented their recommendations i.e. state of the art cctv operation, improved lighting, static security officer and a mosquito device which deters youths from gathering around the store. The Coop have reported an increase in their profits which was a result of customers feeling safe and reassured when approaching the store. The same feed back has been received from all the retail outlets.

Following, the redevelopment by the Co-op store there was a dramatic reduction in reported crime and nuisance disorder around there premises. The team collated the incidents before and after the refurbishment to determine if any improvements had been made.

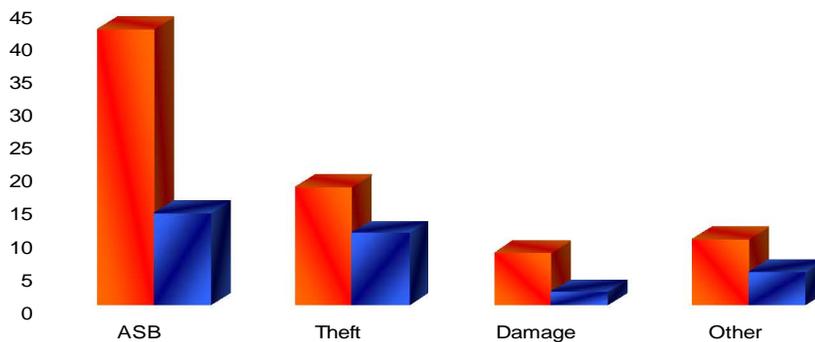
The Co-op and the police have viewed the problems and comparisons in the number of incidents can now be made.

Six Months BEFORE (As previously mentioned in analysis)

- 01/12/05 – 01/06/06 = **78 incidents**
- Anti-social Behaviour = **42**
- Theft = **18**
- Damage = **8**
- Other incidents = **10**

Six months AFTER

- 01/06/06 – 01/12/06 = **32 incidents**
- Anti-social behaviour = **14**
- Theft = **11**
- Damage = **2**
- Other incidents = **5**



The above results highlight that there has been a 66% reduction in Anti-social Behaviour, a 39% reduction in Theft, a 75% reduction in Damage and a 50% reduction in other incidents.

These figures show a significant reduction in all crime and nuisance disorder which was occurring around the retail premises and also it confirms a reduction in calls to the police service.

In relation to Offender (root cause) in the Analysis stage it was highlighted that the Co-op store was losing £7800 due to theft and £3,000 due to damage. The results that we have recently collated highlight a massive reduction which was achieved within 6 months following the Co-op refurbishment. The figures to date illustrate theft to be £1,100 that's a reduction of £6,700 and damage to be £100 that's a reduction of £2,900.

The co-operation has also resulted in successful targeting of problem tenants who have been identified and dealt with via Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), interventions and evictions being taken against them.

This problem orientated partnership has attracted recent attention with visits being conducted by Home Office Police and Terrorism Minister Tony McNulty November 2006 who whilst on the estate went onto say “ *it is clear that a great deal of partnership work has been directed at solving issues*” and senior Civil servant Sir David Normington. This resulted in all partners meeting the dignitary’s and receiving extensive positive media coverage for their respective organisations (Lancashire Evening Post).

In order for the project to achieve its long term aims an exit strategy was incorporated to address youth provision. Along with what has already been achieved with youth provisions on Larches, regular multi agency joint action groups (JAG) forums are scheduled to discuss youth development for the future which will address any problems that may arise in the long term.

This operation was successful mainly due to using a problem orientated partnership approach and the final outcome reduced crime and complaints with enhanced public safety. In conclusion this project has won the current Problem Orientated Policing (POP) award in Preston.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Please insert letter from endorsing representative:

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.