



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:

PSP004WW2005School age robberies Graveney School

Name of force/agency/CDRP/CSP:

Metropolitan Police Service

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

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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):

Ch. Supt. Joe Royle

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

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s):
Battersea Police Station 112-118 Battersea Bridge Road London SW11 3AF

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):

y

Section 2: Summary of application

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

School Age Robberies

Problem

This summary outlines a problem solving initiative by Furzedown Safer Neighbourhood Team (FSNT) to reduce school age robberies at Graveney school.

Previous police operations had little effect on reducing robberies and there was little confidence in police, their partners with reluctance to assist with investigations. Police attendance at the school aroused distrust and underreporting was suspected.

Robberies placed a requirement on:

- Police
- Local Authority
- School
- Parents
- Pupils
- Education and Welfare officers
- Ward Councillors
- Parks Police

Aim.

To reduce reported incidents of school age robberies against Graveney School pupils by 13.5 offences (**20%**) period 1st September 2005 to 31st August 2006 against the same period 2004/2005. Achievable by improved engagement with pupils, School and community in consultation with partners. Intervention was necessary due to underreporting and community reluctance to engage in a long term solution.

Research

- Graveney pupils were regularly identified as robbery victims.
- Analysis highlighted 67 robberies from 1/9/2004 to 31/8/2004 linked to Graveney School.
- School staff highlighted under reporting.
- Police and Partner encouragement of victims to report all incidents of robbery saw **31%** rise during 1/9/2005 – 31/8/2006, with 89 offences. 55 of these were reported 1/9/2005 – 31/3/2006, a 58% increase on same period previous year.
- Stolen items were mobile phones, cash, pedal cycles.
- Majority of victims were boys (80%) with an age peak of **15**.
- Majority of suspects were black aged **14-18**, and were twice as likely to act in pairs, or larger groups, than alone.

Response

To put in place an effective strategy agreed by all partners to tackle the issue by way of education, engagement and enforcement centred on victim, offender and location by

- Consulting with teachers
- Officers eating in the School canteen and carrying out informal surgeries.
- Anonymous school email reporting system
- Guest Speakers
- School based 'drop box' system
- Student advice leaflets
- Consultation with student council
- Parent forums
- Student workshops

Evaluation.

This initiative has been evaluated and acknowledged as a demonstration of successful partnership working. Robberies have substantially reduced with an overall reduction of 35 offences (**24.5% to 28th February 2007**). Confidence in the police has increased with new methods of communication being adopted. The project has been adopted borough wide with the introduction of the **Spark2life** scheme, which has been included by the education department in the Curriculum.

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).

School Age Robberies Graveney School

Introduction

Historically, the roads surrounding Graveney School have been a high robbery area due to offences against school-aged victims. In addition staff at Graveney School highlighted their concerns regarding robberies of their pupils. Police have repeatedly mounted intelligence led operations, reducing incidents of robbery in the short term, followed by an increase. Over time, the pattern of robberies has remained the same. In recent years, due to greater ownership of items like mobile phones and I-pods, school age children have become a more attractive target, with offenders travelling across South London to commit offences. On average, on Furzedown ward police were called to an incident related to Graveney School every third day between the periods 1st September 2004 to 31st August 2005. These included 67 Robberies, 12 Thefts, 6 Pickpocket offences, and 36 calls to the school relating to a variety of offences including Criminal damage, burglary and general Anti Social Behaviour in the school grounds.

Furzedown Safer Neighbourhood Team (**FSNT**) was launched in April 2005 with PC Keeley Webb being the sole police officer and the ward was fully staffed in May 2006.

In September 2005 PC Keeley Webb identified robberies as a crime generator on Furzedown Ward. Research revealed a link between suspects, victims and location. FSNT requested meetings with senior teachers, the schools elected school council and Wandsworth Borough Intelligence unit to identify concerns. These meetings highlighted that the police had failed to fully involve the victims or the school, and assist with prevention strategies. The school council had failed to encourage victims to report crimes. The police and the school had failed to inform the pupils of the scale of the problem and how not to become a victim of crime. The Borough Intelligence Unit (BIU) had failed to identify the scale of the problem and the lack of success of previous operations. FSNT made a commitment to the pupils, Graveney School and the local community to break the robbery cycle and reduce the incidents of offending.

Three initial partnerships were formed, and the following was agreed with :

i) Graveney School

- ♦ That FSNT would update the school and acted as the point of contact for current robbery investigations and personal safety advice affecting Graveney pupils, identifying repeat and other vulnerable/intimidated victims (In Compliance with The Victim Code of Practice April 2006- **VCOP**)
- ♦ FSNT would feedback on arrests made in relation to robberies on Graveney pupils.
- ♦ FSNT would attend the school twice-weekly basis to eat with the pupils at lunchtime, and carry out informal surgeries at the request of pupils.
- ♦ Police Patrol in the vicinity of the school at the various finishing times.
- ♦ To initiate a confidential means of communication for the students to pass information directly to police. (Confidential E mail system)
- ♦ FSNT would attend meetings with the school Council to provide an opportunity for pupils to give police feedback.
- ♦ FSNT would attend Careers events at the school to speak to students about careers in the Police Service.
- ♦ FSNT would provide a presentation to parents at parents and teachers association (PTA) meetings in relation to the role of Safer Neighbourhoods Teams.
- ♦ FSNT recommended to senior school staff to suspend detentions on Mondays. As it was identified that pupils held on detention were more likely to be victims of robbery, due to the finishing time of Ernest Bevin School on Mondays and a greater number of potential suspects attending the area
- ♦ FSNT advised on the content of a leaflet to be sent to parents about personal safety and bringing items such as mobile phones to school.

- ♦ Promotion of the immobilise property registering scheme.

All of the above were incorporated into a Service Level Agreement.

ii) School Council

- ♦ FSNT would attend school council meetings to discuss issues of crime and barriers to reporting
- ♦ Reassure pupils that police were offering a long-term commitment to resolve the problem.
- ♦ Provide ongoing high visibility patrols in the area.
- ♦ Police would respect pupils views in an open forum and be willing to discuss issue of concern to them.

iii) Wandsworth Council

It was clear that the density of the foliage and location of Tooting and Graveney Common, which was used as a short cut by Graveney pupils, made it a contributory factor in robbery offences. After discussion with the biodiversity officer at the Local Authority it was agreed that as the Common was not the primary factor, they declined to action large-scale reduction in foliage cover, as it was considered a disproportionate response to the problem. Therefore FSNT in partnership with Bedford Safer Neighbourhood Team introduced a high visibility patrol strategy to ensure that officers were in the worst effected areas to offer reassurance and disrupt offenders offering a safe route home.

FSNT Delivery Strategy.

FSNT met with the Borough Intelligence Unit to discuss options and review intelligence. FSNT requested an opportunity to carry out ward-based research in conjunction with the school, pupils, and staff to assess whether a Safer Neighbourhood Team could impact on the robbery problem. A request was made by FSNT to run an operation targeted at school age robbery, success being measurable by an overall reduction in all robberies of 13 offences (20%) in a one year period 1st September 2005 to 31st August 2006

What Do We Know?

Victim

Pupils from Graveney were suffering a higher proportion of robbery offences per head than any other School in Wandsworth Borough. It is also evident that this problem had existed for at least twelve years. It was also understood that many victims through fear or distrust did not contact Police. 80% of victims were males aged 11 – 16 years. It is clear that pupils remain at higher risk in the vicinity of the school and peak time for offences is between 1500-1700 hours, Monday to Friday during school term.

Offenders

Profile 1- Robberies committed by pupils from Ernest Bevin Pupils. Intelligence showed that offences that occurred on the main routes to, and on Tooting Bec common, often had suspects wearing Ernest Bevin uniform. These suspects were groups of males ranging between 2 and 20 in number, aged 14 and 16 years old.

Profile 2- Males aged 16 to 18 years visiting Furzedown. These offences were committed in roads close to the school. The suspects attended in small groups of up to six and were dressed in plain clothes.

Others contributory factors

Graveney Pupils- Pupils assisted offenders in the following ways

- Approximately 30% of offences were unreported leading to a distortion in the crime figures and preventing proper analysis of the robbery pattern.
- Pupils hid losses related to offences by telling parents that the stolen property was either lost or had been lent to a friend, due to embarrassment or intimidation.
- Pupils failed to assist police when the identity of offenders was known

Pupils Parents

- Despite numerous letters and appeals by Graveney School parents still allowed their children to attend school with expensive electrical items.

Graveney Teachers

- Despite releasing approximately 2000 pupils at the end of the school day teachers remained very close to the main gates during dispersal and declined to walk further than the school boundary to prevent attacks

Location

Offence location was primary between residential roads on routes home from school and on Tooting Bec Common.

What don't we know?

Victim

Although the victim type was clear the true scale of robberies is harder to establish due to under reporting.

Offenders

Offenders were all teenagers who normally targeted younger pupils. It is unclear why Graveney School is such a target for offences but it is clear that offenders are territorial. **Profile One** offenders commit offences on the common, and **profile Two** Offenders commit offences close to the school. It is apparent from arrest data that the two robbery groups do not work together.

Location

Robberies are confined to the area close to Graveney School within 2 hours of school dispersal. Although it is hard to identify particular individual roads where offences will occur, the common was a definable location.

Barriers to successful investigations

After initial reporting the borough robbery squad assume responsibility for investigation. This can lead to a delay, sometimes of days, in contacting the victim, leaving them feeling unsupported. This may contribute on occasion to the victim feeling unsupported and withdrawing the allegation. As a result of these failings victims felt police were unable to impact on the problem. Graveney pupils clearly held the key to solving the problems but were unaware the significance of their evidence.

Other barriers

To gain credibility with pupils in a diverse inner city London Borough it was evident that a dynamic and motivational role model was required to deliver the core anti robbery message. In September 2005 a process to identify a suitable candidate was launched. This involved liaising with the London Probation service, Prison service and other agencies. Candidates were identified but after an extensive process lasting 4 months nobody suitable was identified. The search continued but was hampered due to the sensitivity of working with children. Dez Brown was identified as a suitable candidate however his conviction for manslaughter was of grave concern to the borough and its partners. Police and a senior head teacher after interview both supported his involvement in the project. Dez Brown is a youth pastor from North London who offers a personal insight into his experiences of committing crime and his journey to re-establish himself within the community after serving a prison sentence. His series of talks and workshops challenge pupils to re-examine their own life choices.

His involvement to date has proved vital to the project's success.

Maximising victim support opportunities.

It was clear that to offer a long-term solution it was vital to gather information from pupils and implement appropriate support measures and after care for victims (as per VCOP). In addition to the Service Level Agreement already outlined, the following measures were agreed.

Graveney School.

- Allow guest speakers to attend the school including an ex-pupil, **Detective Chief Superintendent Splinder** and reformed offender **Dez Brown** to talk at assemblies about crime, its effects and life choices.

- Encourage pupils to report offences to police and name known suspects
- Teachers to report the presence of any unknown youths near the school at dispersal times.
- Speak to the school nurse about unusual injuries to pupils which indicate a robbery is likely to have occurred.

FSNT

- Presented a short, middle and long term plan (0-18 months) outlining a commitment to reduce the incidents of robbery
- To interrogate the Computer Aided Dispatch to establish victims/witnesses.
- To review all investigations in the 3 months before September 2005, to ensure evidential quality of investigations
- To search the police intelligence system for suspects
- To carry out intelligence gathering patrols
- Research previous crime patterns to monitor seasonal trends

Subjects arrested

- Speaking with arrested persons to establish why Graveney pupils were targeted. Particularly in relation to Profile Two offenders. (Offenders profile Page 5)
- Disrupting crime by the use of stop and search and stop and account, to build lifestyle pictures.

Parents

- Empower and support parents by providing feedback relating to police action
- Encourage parents to attend and collect children at school closing times thereby deterring offences. (Informal parent watch).

FSNT Response.

The Police response would be separated into three defined areas of engagement, education and enforcement, these three strands could be interwoven to reach the aimed reduction of 13 offences (**20%**). It was also decided that responses would need to be aim at both suspects and victims in equal measures as the locations were fixed and outside the polices powers to change.

Victim Engagement

i) Removing barriers to communication

It was clear that the unfamiliarity of police made officers unapproachable. Posting officers on a daily basis outside the main gates ensured that pupils were used to seeing the same officers. These officers attended the school on a twice-weekly basis to eat with pupils and offer informal surgeries. This continued presence helped break down barriers and rebuild trust. Officers were no longer seen as a threat and pupils started to confide in the officers.

ii) Reassurance patrols

Once officers were well known to the pupils, two officers were posted to Tooting and Graveney Common, identified as a high robbery area. Officers patrolled in high visibility jackets to enhance their presence, and sought out Graveney Pupils using the common offering advice and guidance. In addition they challenged the presence of Ernest Bevin pupils using the common. On many occasions the Ernest Bevin pupils would disperse when approached by police, this behaviour was witnessed by Graveney pupils, increasing confidence.

iii) School E mail link to police

It was identified that some pupils that were still unwilling to communicate information they had. During a meeting with school staff it was identified that the majority of students had a keen interest in computers and the school chat room. In January 2006, police trailed a hyperlink on the school chat room site, which allowed pupils to contact police anonymously with information. This received 15 hits in the first month, and continued to receive hits until September 2006. This drop off is reflected by an increase in direct approaches to police.

iv) School Drop box

As a further engagement tool the school introduced a drop box to allow pupils to write directly to police. This box proved less successful than the E-mail system only receiving 5 messages,4 of which were jokes .

v) School council consultation

All proposed engagement methods were discussed with the school council at an open forum where feedback was encouraged. This gave the school council a sense of ownership and a degree of empowerment to contribute to possible solutions.

vi) Monday detentions ceased

During an initial review it was noted that Ernest Bevin School finished earlier on a Monday and those Graveney School pupils placed on detention on this day were at greater risk of being robbed. In light of this information Graveney School Staff agreed to terminate Monday afternoon detentions.

Suspect engagement

i) School patrols

In consultation with Tooting SNT a patrol plan was created allowing officers to monitor dispersal at Ernest Bevin School to deter offenders. Later extended to include Wandsworth Common SNT after it was discovered that youths were using a short cut across hospital grounds to avoid officers from Tooting SNT.

ii) School meetings

Officers attended Ernest Bevin school to highlight the belief that a minority of pupils were giving the whole school a bad name. This in turn could lead to Ernest Bevin pupils being blamed unnecessarily for crime they did not commit. The school agreed to greater monitoring of pupils.

Victim - Education

i) Guest speakers

Two speakers were approached with a simple request that they talk to a school assembly about their experiences and how choices and decisions made in their teenage years affected the rest of their lives. Reformed offender, Dez Brown, delivered a powerful message about the distorted perceptions surrounding 'gang culture' challenging the image that many youths aspire to. After each talk, individual pupils approached Dez. Staff commented that many of these were the known 'troublemakers' and that in most cases, their behaviour had improved following the speeches. A second speech was delivered by ex pupil Detective Chief Superintendent Spindler. This speech was well received and focused on positive choices and his personal example of what could be achieved with hard work and determination.

ii) Information leaflets

It was highlighted that pupils had little understanding of the law. The challenge was to deliver a crime prevention message in a content that students could understand, without making it boring. FSNT identified a leaflet, which simplified the law, in areas such as offensive weapons, drugs and robbery. This was provided to the school for circulation.

iii) Immobilise

PCSO Marsh publicised the Immobilise marking scheme at the school. He identified vulnerable pupils and offered a simple solution, allowing them to register their property online, which could be traced if stolen. He also offered practical crime prevention advice and safe route home information.

Education – Suspects

i) Guest Speakers

Dez Brown delivered a similar speech at Ernest Bevin. By his own admission, this was a more challenging speech as the needs of the audience were far different to that at Graveney School, and he was talking to pupils, many of whom, had already embraced gang culture.

Enforcement – Victims

i) School Property Policy

Pupil's behaviour was a contributory factor in many robberies. It was clear that pupils boasted about new items, especially after holidays, making them susceptible to robberies. A decision was reached with the school that pupils would not bring high value electrical goods to school, and those that did would receive detention. A letter sent to parents highlighted this. To facilitate a smooth introduction lockers were provided for the first month for safe storage of items until pupils were fully aware.

ii) Victim Identification

A proactive approach was adopted in order to identify victims. It was agreed that the school would inform police of any pupils that they believed either through third party reporting, or direct intervention, had been a victim of robbery. This included pupils that had been seen by the school nurse. Police followed up all referrals to assess if an offence had been committed.

Enforcement – Suspect

i) Suspect profiling

Any description of robbers was actively researched. FSNT was able to build up profiles of the most prolific offenders and link them to offences by either clothing, or method. One notable success was a robber who was a gang member identified by his dog. Once arrested he was also charged with drugs and firearms offences.

ii) Stop and Search/Stop and Account

Known suspects would on all occasions be stopped and accounted, and a full description taken of all persons accompanying them. However, officers, whilst speaking to suspects, would always indicate that they were involved in the decision whether a search was conducted. This led to suspects becoming very uneasy when approached by Police, because they never knew where they stood. On at least one occasion, a suspect implicated himself in an offence because he was so nervous.

Evaluation

This evaluation will show that the current partnership between Graveney School and the FSNT has been successful, and that the aim of reducing all robberies by 13 offences (**20%**) has been achieved in the short term, but importantly strategies have been introduced to make such reductions sustainable.

Success measures

The three main indicators of success are

1. A reduction in the number of robberies committed
2. A reduction in the number of other calls to Police from Graveney School.
3. Improved community engagement and confidence (though hard to quantify).

1 Number of robberies committed

It is generally held that as a result of successful community engagement there will be a rise in reported crime, which will then be followed by a fall. This indicates a rise in community confidence and a reduction in underreporting. The figures do show this pattern, with an initial increase in reported robberies of **41% (additional 23 offences)**. However, latest data produced by the Borough Performance Unit end of February 2007 show an overall reduction in robberies on Furzedown ward of **24.9% (35 less offences)**, compared to the same period last year when figures were on an upward trend and Furzedown registered a **49%** increase in robbery offences. Put into context, Wandsworth Borough had been set a target of **0%** increase in robberies for 2006/2007.

Thirty-eight robberies were committed against Graveney pupils between 1st September 2005 and 30th June 2006, these offences lead to 14 arrests, 5 of which were made by FSNT.

Furzedown ward adjoins Bedford ward to the north, separated by Tooting Bec Road. It was important that robberies prevented on Furzedown Ward were not displaced. The adjoining ward Bedford suffered 65 robberies 1st September 2004 to 31st August 2005 and 64 robberies 01st September 2005 to 31st August 2006, there is no evidence of displacement.

2. Number of calls to police by Graveney school

To assess the success of this project it is important not to look at robbery offences in isolation, other factors affect the feeling of progress and security including calls to the school. In common with many inner city schools Graveney suffered from a range of offences from petty crime and minor damage to burglaries and arson. Interaction with the school encouraged exchange of ideas, swifter reporting and logging of incidents. FSNT monitored and reviewed calls and crimes reported at the school, any suspects were researched and quickly identified with arrests being fed back to the school.

Figure 1

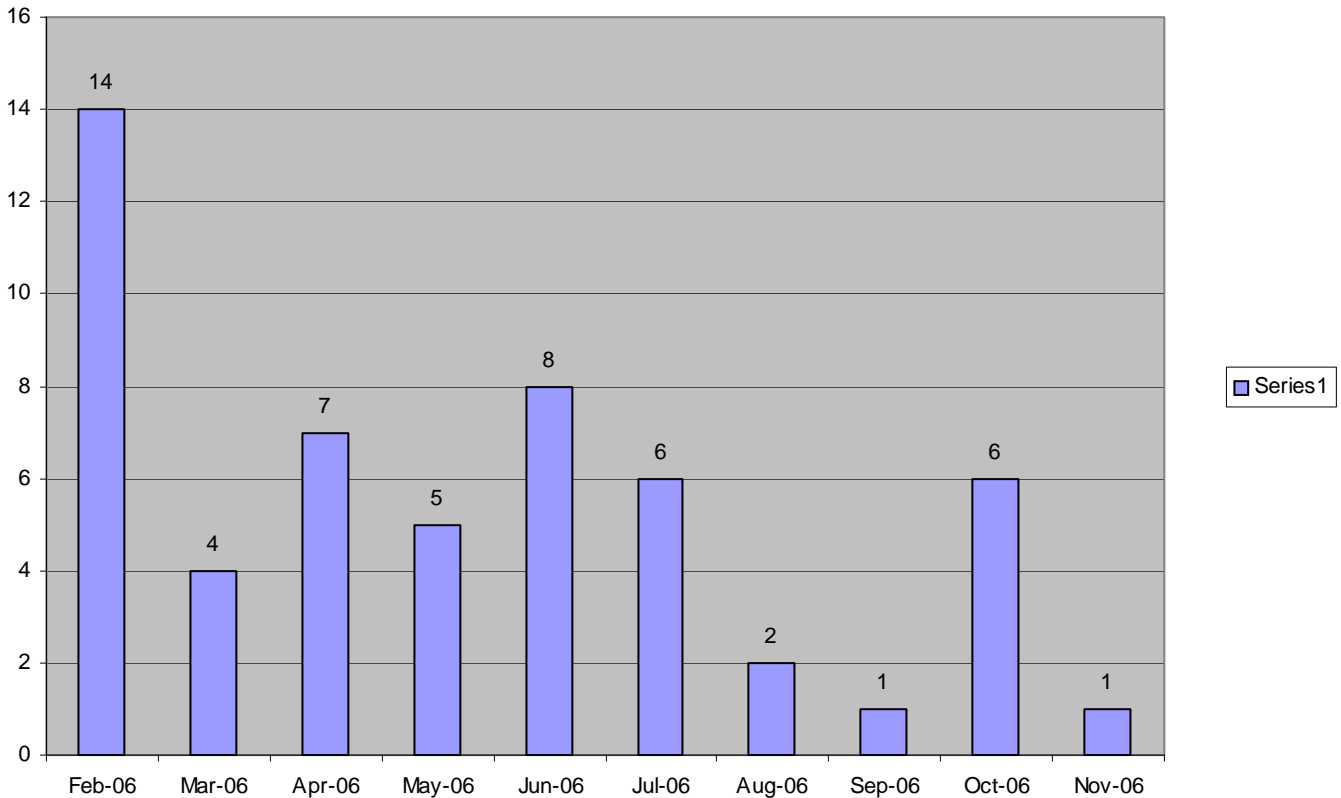


Figure 1, highlights calls to the school itself over a 10-month period. This indicates a drop in calls to police, as there were 38 calls from February to June and only 16 calls to date in the period July to November. Also the school did not suffer offences normally linked to the summer break. Unfortunately we are currently limited to the above 10-month comparison, therefore we are unable to make a direct comparison with last years figures.

3 Improve community engagement

The last Key Individual Network (Key Individuals within the community) survey of **fifty** Furzedown residents in July 2006 indicated that **76%** of respondents were satisfied to some degree with the way Furzedown Ward was policed. **66%** of respondents had noted an increase in police presence, **86%** of respondents were satisfied to some degree that FSNT could respond to the needs of all the community.

56% of respondents believed that the crime levels were the same or had dropped compared to two years ago. However an area needing improvement was that **20%** of respondents believed robbery offences had increased against an actual continuing drop in such offences (decrease **26.9%**). This highlights the need for better public engagement and the need to bridge the oblivious reassurance gap. The December edition of FSNT newsletter will highlight police success in combating robbery on the ward. The newsletter is delivered to every household on the ward.

Unexpected benefits

During the numerous visits to Graveney School FSNT were asked to carry out various talks including the associated dangers of carrying knives, drinking and drugs. It was clear from conversations outside the school that the message was not lost on pupils and encouraged discussion at home with parents.

Whilst engaged in antisocial behaviour patrols on the ward, a Graveney pupil supplied information regarding a local drug dealer. This intelligence lead to the execution of two drugs warrants, one in Penwortham Road, Tooting and the

other an address in the London Borough of Sutton. This resulted in two firearms (S 1 and S 5) being recovered and a quantity of class A drugs being seized. Forfeiture orders have frozen £30K in bank accounts and £45K that was recovered at the time the warrant was executed. Two properties belonging to the suspect are also part of a detailed investigation under the Proceeds of Crime Act. This area of work has attracted national recognition as officers from FSNT have received a formal commendation from the sub committee on drug enforcement of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), for outstanding community Policing in drug enforcement. One of the persons arrested has recently been sentenced to three and a half years in prison. As a result of his conviction, £37000 forfeited from this address has been awarded to Wandsworth Borough under the proceeds of crime act, allowing the borough continuing investment in problem solving.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Home office
Tilley awards

**WW - Wandsworth Borough
WW - Wandsworth Police Station**

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Your ref: Wandsworth application
Our ref: Furzedown SNT
27th April 2007

Tilley Award 2007

To the judging panel,

Please refer to the attached submission representing Wandsworth Borough in this years Tilley award

This submission has my support.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Royle
Wandsworth Borough Commander

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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.