



# Home Office

## Crime Reduction & Community Safety Group

### Tilley Awards 2008 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 [tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk).

All entries must be received by noon on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008**. 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.

#### **Section A: Application basics**

1. Title of the project: Gascoigne Estate Burglaries
2. Key issue that the project is addressing :- Burglaries on the estate, Community cohesion, quality of life issues

#### **Author contact details**

3. Name of application author: Inspector Ivan Hayes
4. Organisation submitting the application: Metropolitan Police Service, Barking and Dagenham Borough
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#### **Secondary project contact details**

8. Name of secondary contact involved in the project: John Mott - Safer Neighbourhood Analyst
9. Secondary contact email address: jon.Mott @met.police.uk
10. Secondary contact telephone number: 07740 -358116

#### **Endorsing representative contact details**

11. Name of endorsing senior representative from lead organisation: Superintendent Dave Reed

12. Endorsing representative's email address: dave.k.reed@met.pnn.police.uk

13. For all entries from England & Wales please state which Government Office or Welsh Assembly Government your organisation is covered by e.g. GO London

**14. Please mark this box with an X 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 B: Summary of application - In no more than 400 words use this space to provide a summary of your project under the stated headings (see guidance for more information).**

**Scanning:**

The Gascoigne Estate in Barking has suffered high levels of crime and fear of crime for a significant period. Police and partners determined to resolve to turn this situation around by both building confidence amongst local people, addressing general crime issues and, above all, by tackling residential burglary in the area. In recent years, residential burglary had had a significant impact upon the lives of residents – some of whom had been burgled up to 5 times in the previous 12 months.

**Analysis:**

This problem was looked at in more detail to try and find out the underlying problem and cause of these burglaries. Using comparative crime analysis it was identified that 76% of these burglaries were by entry through the window of ground floor flats. It was discovered that the windows on these ground floor flats had numerous weaknesses, relating to the locking. Due to lack of community engagement and fear of crime the residents on the estate were unwilling to come forward against the offenders of these offences. The offenders knew this and with their knowledge of the estate were able to commit burglaries without too many problems due to these things.

**Response:**

Police and partners discussed the problems and come up with some ideas to stop these burglaries and improve the safety of the streets in the area and build community engagement. These were:

- High visibility policing
- Increasing community involvement in community safety
- Operational activity to tackle residential burglary supplemented by
- Crime prevention work (i.e. Install new window locks on ground floor flats along with other measures to design out crime)
- Young people schemes
- Cleaning teams assigned
- Graffiti removed
- Domestic and bulk refuse removed
- Substance misuse workshops delivered to parents

The above responses were aimed to reduce Burglary within the estate, make the estate a safer and cleaner place to live, to build community engagement and to raise expectations within the estate.

**Assessment:**

The successes of this Operation was:

A 75% reduction in burglary residential in 3 months, Feb – Apr 07 compared to the previous period Nov 06 – Jan 07. This trend of a significant reduction in burglary continued and throughout the coming months and still remains low.

Residents being more forthcoming to police to report crime and disorder.

Crime and Disorder survey results showed a positive turnaround in resident's perception and understanding of community engagement.

**State number of words: 398**

**Section C: Description of project - Describe the project in no more than 4,000 words. Please refer to the full guidance for more information on what the description should cover, in particular section 11.**

**Scanning:**

During 2006 residential burglary offences increased by 16% within the London borough of Barking and Dagenham when compared with the previous year, which represented a five year low for the borough in residential burglary offences. This increase, although experienced across the borough, was most significant within the Barking wards of the borough, in which 44% of the boroughs residential burglary offences were committed. Gascoigne ward was shown to have the greatest volume of residential burglary offences and this had increased by 27%. Through the Borough Tasking and Coordination process it was decided that the burglary offences within Gascoigne Ward represented the greatest threat to the performance targets of the CDRP and the safety and security of the local community, and thus was prioritised accordingly by the Superintendent.

Analysis was undertaken by both police and local authority analysts to identify the nature of the offending, the offenders and the underlying problems which contributed to the increasing series of residential burglaries within Gascoigne Ward

**Analysis:**

During 2006 159 residential burglaries were committed within Gascoigne ward the majority of these offences (74%) were committed within the boundaries of the Gascoigne Estate. The Gascoigne estate is of high density housing estate, which is made up of approximately 2400 flats, within a mixture of high rise tower blocks and low rise (3-5 storeys) blocks, which are predominantly council tenanted. The analysis showed that the offences, although committed throughout the estate, were focused within the southern region of the estate including St. Mary's and Wheelers Cross.

Comparative crime analysis revealed that the offenders were targeting Specific properties on the estate, with entry in 76% of the burglaries being Gained through the windows of ground floor flats. Further analysis revealed that the UPVC windows of the low-rise blocks were most susceptible to attack. A site visit<sup>1</sup> was able to identify that the UPVC windows, although not all the same, had a number of inherent weaknesses. The windows within the UPVC units were found to have weaknesses with regard to their locking mechanisms and their degree of flexibility, such that a substantial shoulder blow or the use of a leverage device such as a screwdriver was able to easily break or bypass the windows closure mechanisms (see photo 1). It was established that when the windows were being repaired no additional security was being installed, thus the opportunity remained and contributed to a relatively high repeat victimisation rate of 1 in 13.



The flats were being targeted during the day and early evening (between 1200 and 2100 hours), when through a combination of local knowledge and the flat being in darkness the offenders were able to identify flats with the absence of a suitable guardian. A number of the offences had been witnessed by neighbours who could identify the suspects; however, the witnesses were generally unwilling to come forward and provide information to police, which further removed a 'suitable guardian' from the location. It was suggested that the uncooperative attitude was a symptom of a lack of community engagement within the estate, in combination with fear of retribution from the offenders.

The suspects were identified through arrests and intelligence to be members of a large group of youths within the estate, who were well known to the police and local authority for offences ranging from anti-

<sup>1</sup> Site visit conducted by LBBB Burglary Advisor, Crime Prevention Officer and Burglary Analyst.

social behaviour to violence against the person. The majority of the group members resided within the estate and consequently possessed an extensive knowledge of the estate. Through their associates they were able to utilise a large number of premises to evade capture and store property. The property taken in the offences was small pocketable items, especially electrical equipment, such as games consoles, which could be readily exchanged for drugs or cash. There are well-established links between acquisitional crime and the use and supply of drugs. Many of the nominals suspected of committing the residential burglaries had been found in possession of drugs, particularly cannabis, which intelligence suggested they were smoking in the stairwells throughout the estate.

The main information gaps were any specifics times and days the offences were taking place. Police tried patrolling at particular times and days but didn't have any success when doing this.

The estate suffers from a lack of community engagement; This was due to a number of reasons including a transient population and a large number of minority groups within the community. There has also been a large amount of Anti-social behaviour and graffiti on the estate mainly caused by young people and the lack of diversionary schemes/projects available to them appeared to be a contributory factor. Environmental issues such as fly tipping etc were also problems. Gascoigne Ward is the 554<sup>th</sup> most deprived ward in the country, with high levels of unemployment, people in social housing and receiving benefits.

### **Crime and Disorder Surveys**

In week 1 of the initiative 167 crimes and disorder surveys were carried out by the local authority to assess how the residents felt about life on the estate and the crime in the area. The results of these are:

#### **Section1: Your Neighbourhood:**

- 40% of people either feel Very or Fairly dissatisfied about the Gascoigne estate as a place to live
- Nearly three quarters of respondents stated that the estate is just a place to live, rather than a community and that people don't treat each other with respect or consideration.

#### **Section 2: Experiences of Crime and Anti-social behaviour in the area:**

- 43% feel there has been more Anti social behaviour and crime in the last year.
- 53% also feel the crime and the anti social behaviour will get worse in the future.
- Respondents believe parents are not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children as the biggest problem on the estate, with 57% of people stating this is a 'very big problem'.
- 43% of people feel very unsafe at night (dark).
- The top 3 issues the police should prioritise are:
  1. Anti-Social behaviour
  2. Drug use/dealing
  3. Assault and RobberyBurglary was 6<sup>th</sup> priority with 21%
- Nearly three quarters of the respondents believe Police are doing a good job in responding to local area needs.
- 66% believe they have not had the opportunity to discuss any crime and anti-social behaviour issues with police or the local council in the last year
- 45% of respondents were interested in either joining a ward panel, Neighbourhood Watch Scheme or Neighbourhood Management.

Taking into account all the analysis above including the problem with the windows of the ground floor flats, the youths causing problems, the lack of community engagement which the Crime and disorder surveys above confirmed, the problem therefore was identified as:

Residential burglary offences are being committed within the Gascoigne Estate as an opportunity has

been created by the easy access to the windows of ground floor flats, which offer little resistance to a moderate mechanical attack. This has been exacerbated by a lack of community engagement, which has further removed guardianship from the premises and allowed a group of youths to develop anti-social and intimidating behaviour, thus making residents not feel safe living in the Gascoigne estate.

### **Objectives**

To achieve a sustainable reduction in residential burglary offences within the Gascoigne Estate.

To build community engagement and raise expectations within the estate, including as many agencies within the partnership as possible.

Reduce fear of crime and improve community confidence in police and partners.

To clean up the estate to improve the look of the estate and to help with the resident's feelings of the estate they live in.

### **Response:**

The initial response to the problem was to identify burglary nominals who we believed were causing the anti social behaviour and burglary problems in the area. As part of the policing response an Operation was put together called Operation Tailgate. Three Focus events were planned working with partners on the following dates:

Focus Week one – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March

Focus Week Two – Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April to Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April and Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> April to Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> April

Focus Week Three – Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June

These focus weeks were designed to tackle the burglary problem and in particular help the police and partners to communicate with the residents in the estate to improve the community's confidence in the police and partners, as this was clearly a big issue.

The response for partners was to set up a Strategic Planning Group to include as many partners as possible. Once the group was started they come up with the ideas of running Focus weeks at various times during the coming months to deal with the problem on the estate. The group met every Friday before the focus events started to discuss performance and to set targets. When the events took place, the group would meet twice on a daily basis in both police and council premises. The partners involved in this group were:

- Safer Neighbourhoods
- Borough Intelligence unit
- Community Safety Unit – LBBD
- London Fire Brigade
- Primary Care Trust
- Thames Accord
- Graffiti Team - LBBD
- Baseline
- Youth Offending Team
- Youth Inclusion Support Panel
- Barking and Dagenham Recorder
- Leyton Orient F.C (Already have diversionary activities on estate)
- Studio 3 Arts
- Chain Reaction
- Crime Prevention Officers

As well as this group a high level steering group was formed, this group provided the strategic support and funding for the work on the ground. This group included:

- Director of Housing
- Political Representatives
- Senior Police Representatives
- Senior Council Representatives

The short-term objectives were to disrupt the offending behaviour of the nominals within the estate, by limiting their ability to move unnoticed and commit offences. The following tactics were employed with a view to reducing the number of offences being committed within the estate.

- Patrols by SNTs, office based police officers and senior management to maintain a high visibility presence on the estate between 0900 and 2200 hours.
- Police supporting council removal will take away all untaxed and abandoned vehicles on the estate. This will undoubtedly disrupt any criminals with cars.
- Proactive targeting of identified nominals by:
  - Stop and search of nominals
  - Expeditious arrest of identified suspects for all offences within the estate.
  - Rigorous enforcement of bail conditions, curfews and tagging.
  - Execution of search warrants to recover stolen property.
- Robust primary and secondary investigation of residential burglary offences ensuring that all steps are taken to preserve and capture forensic evidence.
- The execution of drugs warrants at identified addresses within the estate was prioritised, due to the links between acquisitional crime and drug use.

The long-term objectives were to reduce the opportunities for the offenders to exploit by employing situational crime prevention methods and increase the risk of the offenders being brought to justice by building community engagement and to make residents living in the estate feel safer.

- Window locks programme – Try to get all ground floor flats on the estate fitted with new window locks, free of charge for council tenants or a charge of £117.30 for renters and home owners.
- High visibility of all agencies - To contribute to 'policing' presence and reassurance
- Crime and disorder surveys – To be completed by residents to see what work is needed to be done to build community engagement to help prevent crime and disorder in the future.
- Youth diversionary activities - divert youths from criminal activity and prevent younger children from entering criminality through association with those already offending

*The following letter was sent to all residents of ground floor properties on the Gascoigne estate as part of the process of getting new window locks installed on all ground floor flats on the estate.*

#### *Appendix A*

#### **To All Residents of Ground Floor Properties on Gascoigne Estate**

Dear Resident,

Barking and Dagenham Crime Reduction Partnership brings together the Council, Police and other partners to work together to combat crime and disorder.

You may be aware that there has recently been an increase in the number of burglaries on your estate where burglars have entered homes through ground floor windows. We are working together to deal with this problem and are offering additional security for the windows of all ground floor homes. This will take the form of bars and catches, which prevent the windows opening too far and will prevent people climbing into your property.

If you are a council tenant this will be **free**, for those who own or privately rent your home there will be a debit of £117.30 from your **Service Charge Account**. We hope you will want to take up this offer, as it will significantly reduce the risk of your home being burgled.

Your local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team can help you to complete the attached form for this security upgrade. If you are not in when they call then please send the form back to us by return by using the pre-paid envelope. If you have any queries regarding these proposals please call John Mack (Burglary Advisor) on 020 8227 2938 or the Safer Neighbourhood Team on 07747 790065.

This is one of many planned initiatives to make the Gascoigne Estate a safer place to live and work. These will be happening shortly and we will be conducting a campaign very soon to find out what more you want us to do to make your area a safer place.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Ripley  
Divisional Director of Housing Services

Ch. Inspector Nick Hancock  
Community and Partnership

### **Environmental Activities:**

#### Focus Week One:

- 3 Cleaning teams on estate throughout the week.
- 600 square metres of graffiti removed
- 75 tons of domestic refuse removed from the estate
- 20 tons of bulk refuse removed from the estate
- Youth offenders as part of community payback painted fences and play areas on the estate.

#### Focus Week Three:

- 44 tons of domestic waste removed from the estate
- 38 tons of bulk waste removed from the estate

### **Young People:**

#### Focus Week One:

- Baseline, Connexions, Studio 3 Arts and Leyton Orient football club working with young people undertook sustainable diversionary activities
- Sports development UK engaged with 33 young people to teach sports.
- Studio 3Arts Street theatre engaged with several young people to deliver performance and support activity.
- 12 young people engaged on employment activities.
- Mediation activity took place between the older residents and the youth.

#### Focus Week Two:

- Chain Reaction engaged with 30-40 young people, mainly between the ages of 8-13 years old, over two days in the community center.
- "My life in Gascoigne" project carried out by baseline.
- More mediation activities organized for the next focus week.

#### Focus week Three:

- Chain Reaction 2-day workshop – 40 youths attended so was a success and had very positive feedback.

- Sports Development – used the black court to engage young people.
- Youth ward panel – 8 youths attended.
- Goals football tournament

*Photo 4 and 5 below are an example of a leaflet that went out to residents in the estate for an activity week for the young people on the Gascoigne estate.*

**Engagement:**

In Focus Week One:

- 140 Crime and disorder surveys conducted.
- Substance misuse workshops delivered to parents

Focus Week Two:

- 50 more completed crime and disorder surveys, with 40 residents signed up for either Neighbourhood Watch Management or ward panel.
- Community Centre used as a focal point to engage with residents with the following partners:
  - Tell Us
  - PCT Pals service
  - Safer Neighbourhood Teams
  - Community Safety
  - Tenancy participation
  - Neighbourhood Management
  - Housing surgeries

Focus Week Three:

- 67 Crime and Disorder Questionnaires completed
- Mediation session – Was attended by 2 adults and 8 youths
- Drug box
- Phone and Bicycle marking

**Enforcement:**

Focus Week One:

- Police executed 2 warrants
- 40 non-taxed vehicles removed

Focus Week Two:

- Police executed 3 highly successful warrant arrests for possession with intent to supply and handling stolen goods. There were 2 arrests for Handling stolen goods, which were believed to be linked to the burglaries. After this was done, there was no outstanding warrants for anyone registered as living on the Gascoigne estate.
- 18 non-taxed vehicles removed

Focus Week Three:

- Police executed 1 warrant
- 5 non-taxed vehicles removed

During the 3 focus weeks, 6 people were arrested for warrants and the following property was recovered:

- In excess of 200 Ecstasy tablets
- Herbal cannabis
- Amphetamine
- New electrical goods including microwave, carpet cleaners and vacuum cleaners

The reasons for the initial reduction in February and March were due to the enforcement methods used by the police and the partners. The high visibility policing and execution of various warrants disrupted the criminal activity and caused an immediate reduction of Burglary of 68% comparing December 2006 and January 2007 to February and March 2007. The execution of warrants particularly relating to possession and supply of drugs took various criminals off the streets for a short period of time, which helped to reduce crime.

### **Prevention:**

Focus Week One:

- Window lock program commenced to replace as many ground floor flat windows as possible
- High visibility of all agencies to contribute 'policing' presence and reassurance
- Substance misuse workshops delivered to parents

Focus Week Two:

- More window locks installed on ground floor flats, with additional key locking security
- High visibility of all agencies to contribute 'policing' presence and reassurance

### **Funding**

£4000 was given to assist staff in this initiative to help pay for extra costs like staff overtime to provide a police presence, to execute warrants and to assist with community engagement.

The local authority has committed significant funds to improve the access systems to the block of flats.

The estimated costings of the window program were £21,660 excluding VAT for all 380 ground floor flats.

As 312 of the ground floor flats were fitted with new locks at a cost of £3 a lock with each flat needing approximately 19 locks the actual cost of the window locks program was £17,784.

The average cost of a burglary residential to the Criminal Justice System is £1,137 per crime. As the burglaries have been reduced in the Gascoigne estate by an average of 6.5 burglaries a month this shows a saving of £7,390.50 per month for Barking and Dagenham.

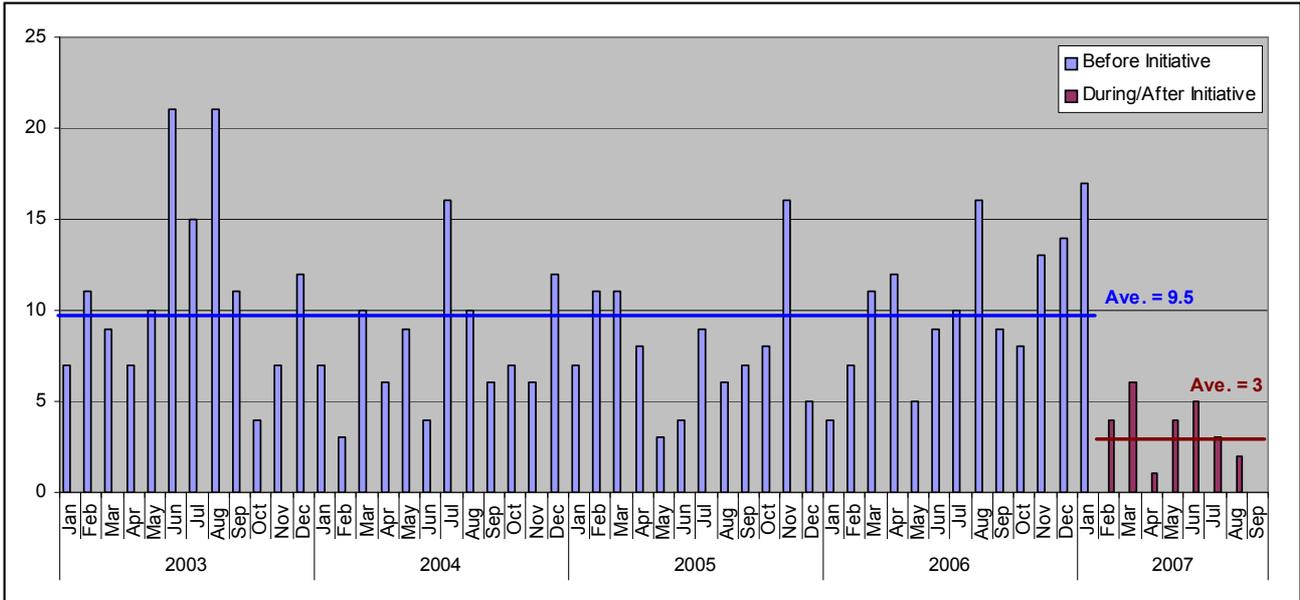
### **Window Lock Program**

The Window lock programme commenced on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2007 and a total of 312 windows have been secured to date. There are a total of 446 ground floor flats on the Gascoigne Estate and this scheme has therefore achieved a take-up rate of 70%.

### **Assessment:**

#### **Burglary**

The chart below shows residential burglary offences per month committed on the Gascoigne Estate between January 2003 and September 2007. (Data obtained from CRIS)



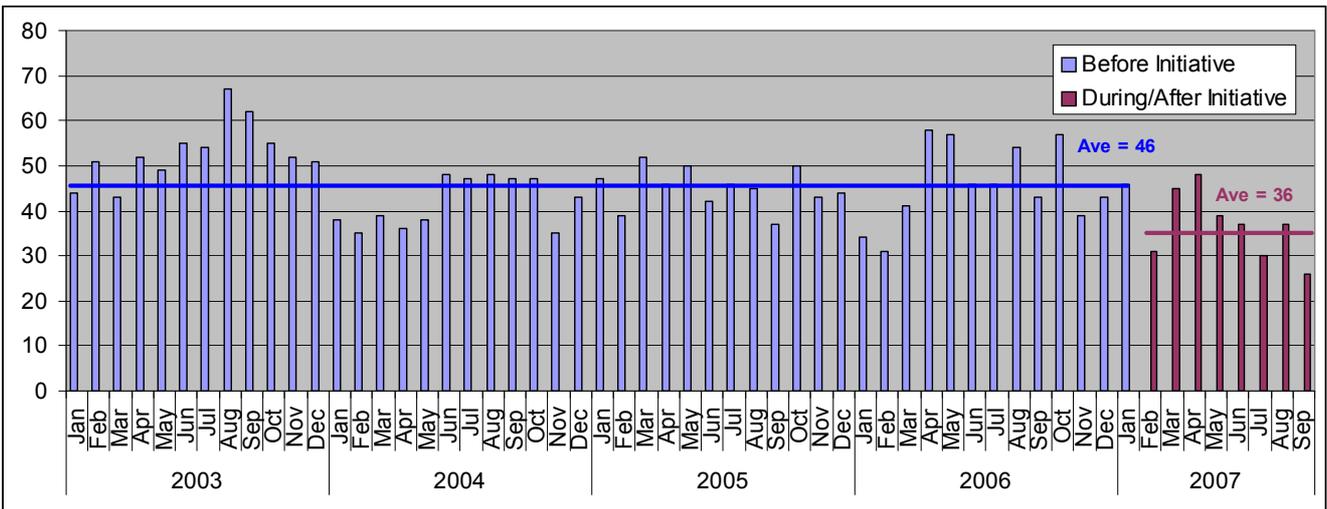
Reduction of 75% Feb 07 to Apr 07 (11 offences) when compared to Nov 06 – Jan 07 (44 offences)

Reduction of 68% Feb 07 to Sep 07 when compared to the same period the previous year.

Reduced monthly average for residential burglaries from between 9.5 to 3.

**British Crime Survey:**

The chart below shows the British crime survey offences per month committed on the Gascoigne Estate between January 2003 and September 2007. (Data obtained from CRIS)



Reduction of 3% Feb 07 to Apr 07 when compared to Nov 06 – Jan 07

Reduction of 22% Feb 07 to Sep 07 when compared to the same period the previous year.

Reduced monthly average for BCS crime from between 46 to 36.

After the initial success and the reduction in Burglary offences in the first few months of Operation Tailgate, the success continued, as these crimes remained significantly lower than that of the previous 4 years. One of the tests of this initiative was to see if the offences started to increase after the focus weeks had stopped due to:

- There wouldn't be the same police presence
- The offenders who were arrested, returned to the estate from prison

Six months after the initiative run the burglary residential crimes remained low with a reduction of 57% sustained when comparing 6 months Feb 07 to Jul 07 with the same period last year or a 70% reduction compared to the previous 6 months crime.

This showed the initiative had been a huge success and that the reduction in burglary within the estate had stayed low.

The burglary residential chart and reduction percentages above outline the huge success this initiative had in reducing Burglary residential crime within the Gascoigne estate. The average number of burglaries has reduced by 6.5 a month and has stayed low for 8 months in a row, with September having zero burglary residential in the whole of Gascoigne Ward.

The British crime survey chart and reductions show the reduction in burglary had a positive affect on BCS. As the BCS crime in the months during and after the initiative only reduced slightly this shows the initiative didn't really have much affect on any other type didn't change.

Looking at BCS without burglary shows there was an increase in the months just before the initiative started in November, December and January. This is most likely due to work done before the initiative started like, arrests made on burglary nominals and high visibility policing. There is also a seasonal decrease at this time of year, which is proved on data going back to 2003.

## **Community Engagement**

During the focus weeks that were run across the estate, all the community issues previously explained were addressed by way of strong partnership work and various levels of community engagement with young and old people as well as minority groups. This allowed us to gauge the views of a wide range of individuals and put actions in place to improve the level of community engagement on Gascoigne estate.

After the initial 169 Crime and disorder surveys were completed in week 1, more surveys were given out and completed in Focus weeks 2 and 3. There were 57 responses in week 2 and 102 in week 3. These surveys showed a change in the resident's views about certain issues on the estate. However but what was clear was the initiative showed the residents of the Gascoigne estate that they don't have to put up with the levels of crime and disorder they were experiencing that the police and partners will do everything in there power to deal with any problems that may arise in the future. The surveys showed they have more faith in police to deal with problems like anti social behavior caused by youths.

Although there is still work to be done to carry on the good work of this initiative and keep up community engagement in the future in the Gascoigne. There are plans in place to increase the levels of CCTV in some key areas of the estate where particular anti social behaviour and other crime takes place as another method of making the residents of the estate feel safer.

**State number of words used: 3906**

**Section D: Endorsement by Senior Representative - Please insert letter from endorsing representative, this will not count towards your word or 1MB size limit restrictions.**

This scheme has provided significant improvements to the quality of the lives of residents of the Gascoigne estate and is providing a template for action in other neighbourhoods across the Borough. The Borough is currently building on this initiative with further improvements to the environment and further joint operational problem solving activity.

**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 e.g. civil or criminal proceedings pending in relation to your project?
7. Have you inserted your project name as a footer note on the application form?  
Go to View-Header and Footer to add it.
8. Have you saved you application form as a word document and entitled your message '**Tilley 08 entry (followed by project name in brackets)**' before emailing it?

Once you are satisfied that you have completed your application form in full please email it to [Tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk). One hard copy must also be posted to Alex Blackwell at Home Office, Effective Practice & Communication Team, 4th Floor, Fry Building (SE Quarter), 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF and be received by 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008.