DEFACE

Criminal Damage Reduction and Early Identification and Management of Emerging Gang Threat.

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Summary

Criminal-Damage was identified by the Home Office (Central Government) as the volume crime key to securing reductions in British Crime Survey Comparator Crime (BCSCC). The indicator of performance, BCSCC includes robbery, burglary, vehicle-crime and assault. Research revealed damage was key to community reassurance. Initiated by Preston Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, POP initiatives were commissioned throughout Preston.

In the University Ward comprehensive research was undertaken:
- Community-Consultation
- Crime Analysis
- Environmental Visual-Audit

Scanning confirmed damage/graffiti as key community concerns having significant effects on neighbourhood appearance and community reassurance.

City funded clean-up scheme identified emerging graffiti tag **MLM.** Recorded damage increased 71% in 2007/8.

Analysis revealed substantial links between graffiti tagging and other damage and indicated youth offending.

- University Ward (2 neighbourhoods)
- 80% of offences one neighbourhood
    - 50% of damage occurred on 5 streets (18% of all streets)
    - 90% occurred 16.00-01.00hrs

Intelligence identified an emerging youth gang (Delinquent Peer Group) MLM .Offending activity centred on address of previously unknown McLaughlin brothers.

Rapidly expanding gang membership (30). Internet videos (self-filmed) of activity highlighted increasingly diverse and violent offending. Research showed organised crime gangs in the city first appeared as similar territorial youth gangs.

A wide variety of appropriate Multi-Agency interventions developed to address specific elements of the problem. Focused policing of identified hotspots/peak offending times. Community reassurance activity.

Intelligence and tasking profile created. Identification of all gang members vital. Comprehensive Risk Assessments carried out on each and appropriate offender managers selected. Interventions tailored to individuals with a focus on early intervention to re-engage young people and discourage gang activity. Focused criminal justice activity required on most problematic offenders.

Integrated Offender Management Unit ownership of gang leaders problematic McLaughlin brothers, specific interventions include:
- Over 40 arrests 2007/8
- 20 detected crimes
- Relocation out of area secured
- ASBO prohibits entering Preston

Assessment year 2008/9 demonstrated significant results. Remarkable 51% reduction in all BCSC Crime.
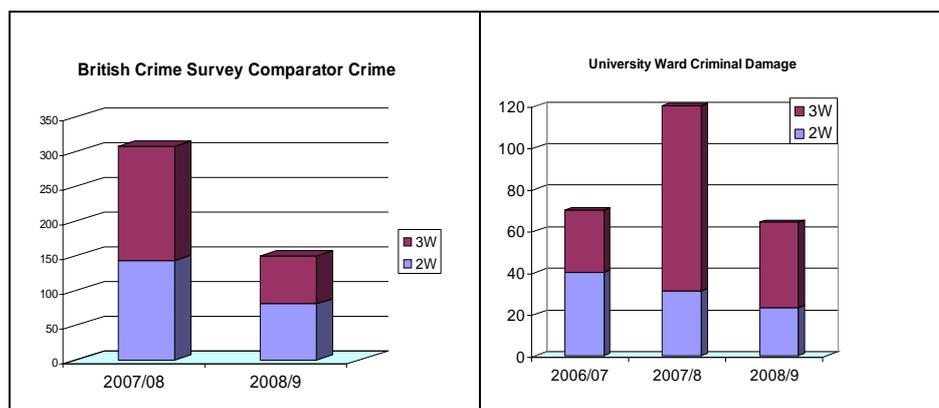
Communities reassured, concerns fully addressed by Police and partners.

MLM gang dynamic smashed. No linked offending or MLM graffiti since April 2008.

Best Practice and learning

- Established link with graffiti tagging to Anti-social behaviour, damage and crime

- Tag identification process adopted by Crime Reduction Partnership (City Council)

- Established link with graffiti tagging (Territorial Marking) to emerging youth gang threat

- Established best practice of early identification & intervention with youth gangs (Delinquent Peer Groups)

- Early intervention with youth gangs (DPGs) preventing emergence of future Organised Crime Gangs.

SCANNING

Criminal Damage

Central Government and the Home Office identified the volume crime Criminal Damage was not only accounting for a disproportionately high number of recorded crimes but research had indicated that it has a profound impact on community reassurance. All indicators pointed to action being urgently required to reduce offending and win back community confidence.

Responsibility for driving activity was devolved to Regional Government and subsequently onto the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships of towns and cities.

Reduction targets were set at an ambitious 45% over 3 years. Local Government would not be able to achieve this ambition alone. Lancashire Constabulary was identified as the key partner to help drive activity. The target was adjusted to a15% annual reduction in British Crime Survey Comparator Crime with damage identified as key volume component. BCSCC is **the** measure of crime performance and includes burglary, robbery, vehicle-crime and assault. Responsibility was further devolved and individual Neighbourhood Policing Teams were tasked with implementing Criminal Damage P.O.P. initiatives throughout Preston's neighbourhoods.

POP Ownership

One of 22 wards in the City of Preston the University ward was the focus of this initiative. In 2006 having been given the directive to adopt a POP approach the Neighbourhood Policing Team in the University Ward firstly set about understanding the scope and nature of criminal damage offending. A range of activity was undertaken to ensure a comprehensive scanning was undertaken.

- Community Consultation
- Initial Crime Analysis
- Environmental Visual Audit

University Ward

The University Ward is situated close to the city centre of Preston and in addition to being home to the University of Central Lancashire it has a number of arterial routes leading into the city, early 20th century terraced housing, local stores, light industry and businesses. The most recent government census (2001) revealed a resident population of 3,501.The University however is the most prominent feature of the neighbourhood.

- 6th largest University in UK
- 35,000+ students/staff
- 5,000+ resident in halls

Community Consultation

Community consultation was undertaken to determine public awareness and perceptions of damage. Key issues

- Impact on community confidence
- Awareness of offences/offenders
- Community damage priorities

In addition to community contact through the Neighbourhood policing Team, consultation was undertaken in distinct ways to ensure thorough representative public opinion.

P.A.C.T.

Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings held monthly in the community are the prime focus of Lancashire Constabulary's Neighbourhood Policing plan. They provide open access public meetings which are publicised, minuted and accountable allowing local public priorities to inform policing activity. Chaired by an elected member of the community the meetings are attended by the Policing Team, local Government councillors and officials and the public. In the University Ward damage was raised as consistently as one of 3 declared priorities each month.

Surgeries

Monthly surgeries hosted by local Councillor Carl Crompton and police were conducted in residential homes for the elderly. This ensured the views of this vulnerable and hard to reach group were fairly represented.
The concerns expressed were perceptions of youths being responsible for anti-social behaviour and damage.

Ward Councillors

Strong open working relationship were developed and maintained with the University Ward City Councillors and they were proactively tasked with gathering evidence to support the damage initiative. As key partners the success of the damage reduction POP was very much in their interest and they worked tirelessly to ensure they supported all stages of the process.

Whilst providing limited definitive evidence the community consultation revealed certain concerns

- Drunken students were responsible for the damage when returning to their accommodation after a night out. (There was little evidence to support this)
- Graffiti was the most widespread and worrying damage offence and made the neighbourhood look neglected.

Initial Crime Report Analysis

More commonly associated with analysis is was decided to look closely at recorded damage offences during the scanning stage. Looking closely at offences over the proceeding years the aim was to develop a thorough understanding of damage offending in the ward. However as damage had not been treated as a policing priority the detection rate for offences was only 13% in 2005/6. Consideration was given to the following crime features

- Type of damage
- Time of offence
- Location of offence
- Modus Operandii/detections

Despite confirming a damage issue in the ward thorough analysis this failed to identify any meaningful themes or trends which would aid development of the required POP. This suddenly changed during 2007 as alarming increases in damage and BCSCC were recorded.

Environmental Visual Audit

Together with the ward councillors the police carried out an environmental visual audit looking throughout the neighbourhood for visible signs of damage. What quickly became apparent was that there was a considerable amount of graffiti much of which was believed to be historic. The graffiti had been highlighted as a key community concern and it clearly had a detrimental effect on the appearance of the area.

In order to reassure the community and in a bid to highlight current offending City Councillor Crompton agreed to 'bend' the council's emergency graffiti clean-up budget to secure the resources to remove all existing graffiti in the neighbourhood. Promoted as a pilot scheme the aim was to

- Remove all graffiti to
    - Reassure the community
    - Signal to offenders graffiti would be removed
- Identify current and emerging graffiti
    - Aid identification of current graffiti
    - Focus activity to identify offenders

Identification of an Emerging Threat

As a result of the scanning process the emergence of a graffiti damage threat became apparent in the form of the graffiti tag MLM. The prevalence and sheer numbers of this tag presented a genuine concern to the community and damage reduction performance. It very quickly became clear that the tag had strong links to other damage offending in the neighbourhood. Damage and BCSCC offending rose an unprecedented 68% in Incident Location 3W.

The damage POP in the University ward now had focus, the aggressively emerging graffiti tag and as yet unidentified offenders known as MLM.

British Crime Survey Comparator Crime University Ward
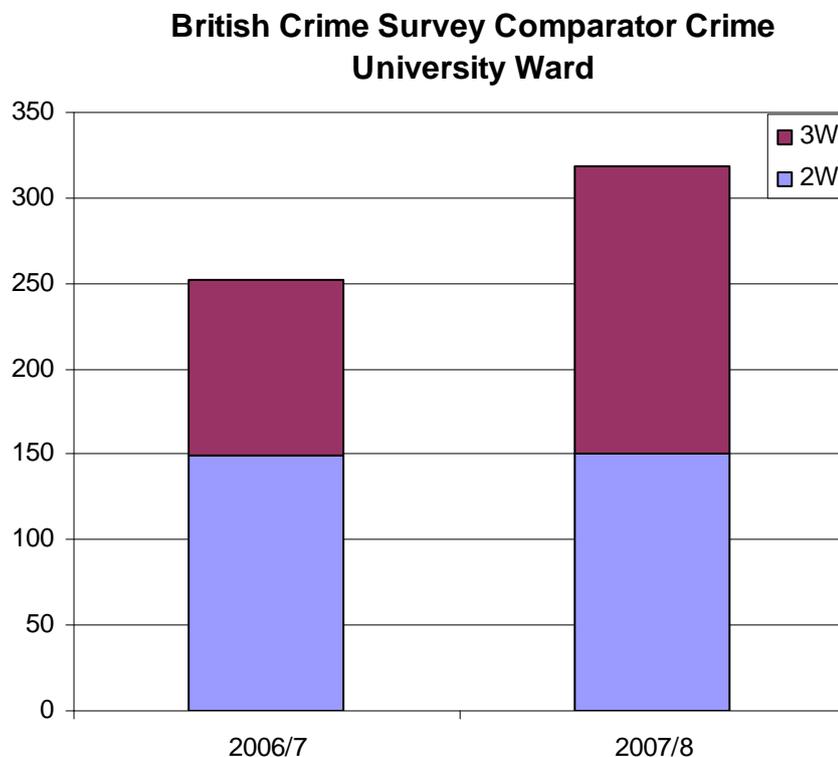
ANALYSIS

Location

The University ward has 2 incident-locations (2W/3W). Community intelligence, visual-audit and crime reports revealed damage was centred on the 3W incident-location

- Light commercial
- Limited terraced housing-low population
- Close to arterial route (Marsh Lane)
- Limited natural surveillance

STREET ANALYSIS

STREET (DA2W)	OFFENCES				TOTALS
	Dwellings	Other	Other Buildings	Vehicles	
Corporation St			1		1
Fishergate		1			1
Fylde Road		3	4	4	11
Ladywell Street			1	1	2
Leighton Street	1	1		1	3
Maudland Road				1	1
Pollard Street				2	2
St Peters Square	1				1
Vernon Street			1		1
Victoria Street	1	2		3	6
TOTALS	3	7	7	12	29

58.6% of damage in incident location DA2W is on 2 of the 10(20%) streets.

STREET (DA3W)	OFFENCES				TOTALS
	Dwellings	Other	Other Buildings	Vehicles	
Abbey Street	1				1
Ashton Street		1		2	3
Atholl Street	1		2		3
Brieryfield Road				1	1
Cheviot Street		1			1
Cooper Street				1	1
Croft Street				1	1
Fylde Road	1		1	1	3
Ingot Street	1	1			2
Lodge Street			2		2
Marsh Lane			3	2	5
Nelson Terrace			1		1
Pedder Street		2		2	4
Priory Street	1	1			2
Spa Road		1	1		2
Spa Street				2	2
St Marks Pl East			1		1
St Marks Road				12	12
Steeple View		4	6	1	11
Strand Road		1		4	5
The Cloisters				1	1
Vine Street		1		1	2
Water Lane				1	1
Wellfield Road	4	1	1	2	8
Wellington Street	2	1		3	6
West Strand			2	1	3
West View Terr	1				1
TOTALS	12	15	20	38	85

49.4% of damage in incident location DA3W is on 5 of the 27(18.5%) streets.

University Ward
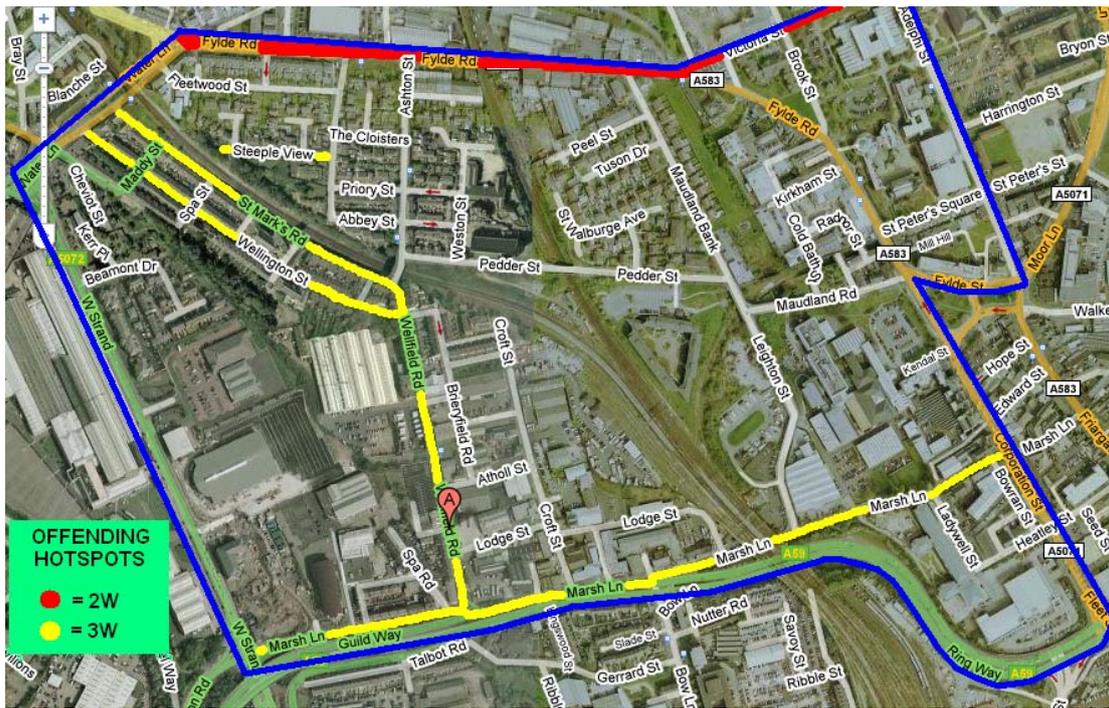
Offence Timing Analysis

TIME (DA2W)	WITHIN THE HOUR	DURING THE DAY	OVERNIGHT	TOTALS
0700-0800		2		2
0800-0900				0
0900-1000				0
1000-1100	1			1
1100-1200				0
1200-1300				0
1300-1400				0
1400-1500	1			1
1500-1600	1		1	2
1600-1700	1			1
1700-1800	1			1
1800-1900	2			2
1900-2000	2		1	3
2000-2100			1	1
2100-2200	2			2
2200-2300	2			2
2300-0000	2		2	4
0000-0100	2			2
0100-0200				0
0200-0300	2			2
0300-0400	1			1
0400-0500	2			2
0500-0600				0
0600-0700				0
TIME NOT RECORDED				0
TOTALS	22	2	5	29

TIME (DA3W)	WITHIN THE HOUR	DURING THE DAY	OVERNIGHT	TOTALS
0700-0800				0
0800-0900		1		1
0900-1000		1		1
1000-1100				0
1100-1200	1			1
1200-1300	1			1
1300-1400	2			2
1400-1500				0
1500-1600		1	4	5
1600-1700	2		4	6
1700-1800	2		3	5
1800-1900	7		7	14
1900-2000	2		3	5
2000-2100	1		6	7
2100-2200	4		2	6
2200-2300	1		4	5
2300-0000	3		1	4
0000-0100	4		1	5
0100-0200				0
0200-0300	1			1
0300-0400	1			1
0400-0500			1	1
0500-0600				0
0600-0700				0
TIME NOT RECORDED				14
TOTALS	32	3	36	85

3W - 90% of known offending times between 16.00 and 01.00 hrs

Victim

Victimisation appeared indiscriminate however offending was focused in areas which reported youth activity and disorder but occurred in circumstances where observation and detection was less likely due to combinations of

- Time of offence
- Lighting
- Surveillance

Graffiti damage had no artistic merit merely territorial marking. Painted with aerosols and markers it proved challenging to remove.

- Business premises
- Homes
- Vehicles
- Street-furniture

The most significant rise in damage offending 2007/8 was other buildings and vehicles.

Key Damage Offences by Category			
OFFENCE	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Other Buildings	11	10	27
Vehicles	33	29	50
Dwellings	16	14	15
TOTALS	60	53	92

British Crime Survey Comparator Crime
University Ward
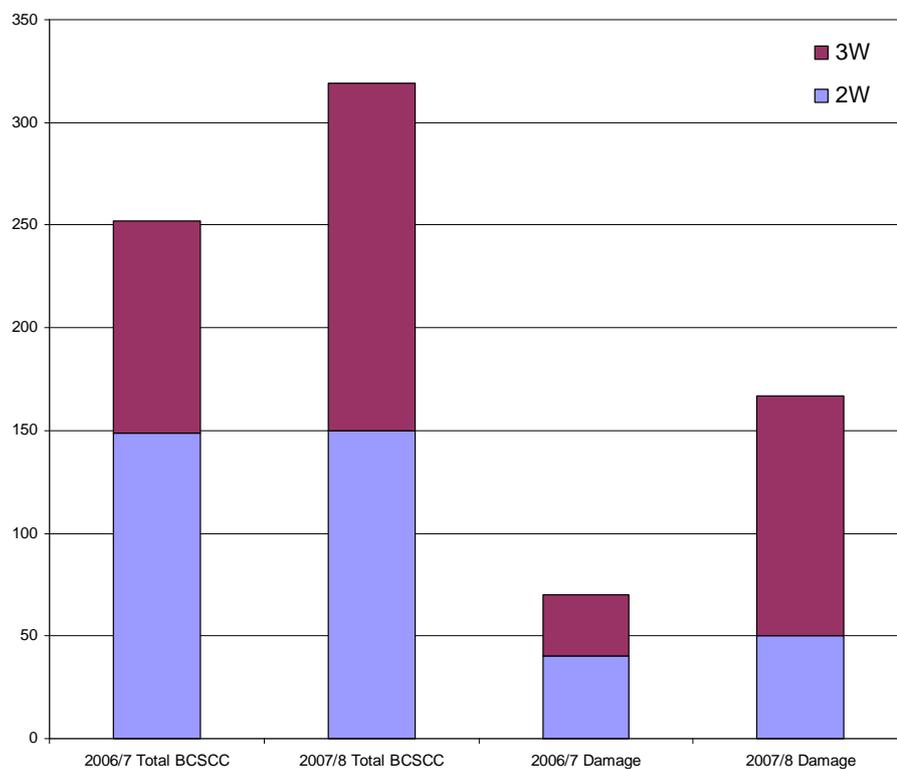
Offender

Victims and community business partners were engaged to help identify offenders. Victims and staff were briefed and CCTV focused on repeat offence locations. Focused policing activity together with community support generated encouraging intelligence and then a break through, 4 offenders captured on CCTV using the MLM tag. Identification and arrests were made and the nucleus of our understanding of MLM began.

Graffiti Tag damage University Ward (MLM specific)
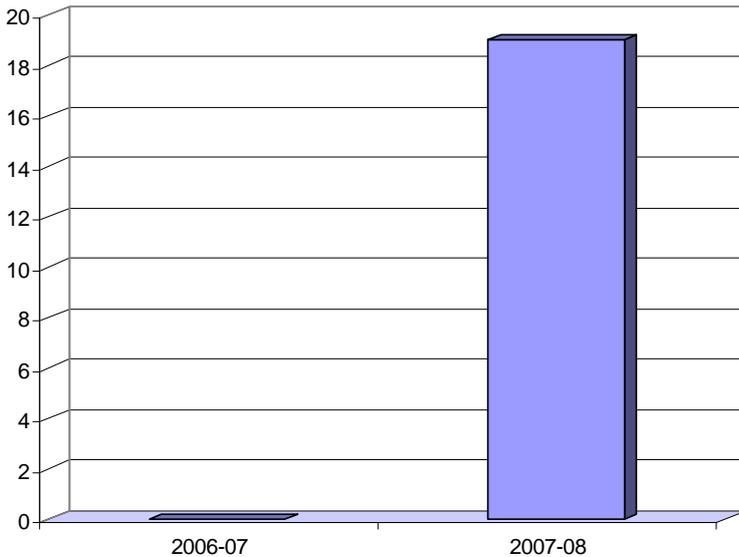
Of 50 Vehicle damages 38 (76%) were committed in 3W. A significant number of reports suggest links to youth Anti-social behaviour.

Of 27 Other-Buildings offences 20 (74%) were committed in 3W. 15 (75%) are graffiti, at least half specifically mention MLM

Of 22 Other damage offences 15(68%) were committed in 3W. 8(53%) are graffiti all attributed to MLM
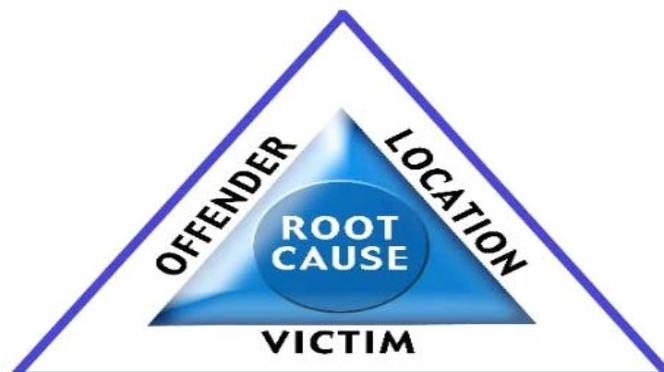
MLM

The emergence of MLM and associated tags was startlingly quick and aggressive. In 2007/8 following the graffiti clean up pilot the 'MLM' graffiti tag and activity of MLM was identified as key threat to performance. Following the clean-up it became straightforward to identify graffiti/damage as it occurred. Although MLM remained unidentified, a crime and intelligence picture was created from the ground up. Graffiti was quickly removed only to be promptly replaced. Visible damage did not correspond with reports suggesting wholesale under-reporting. Community Support Officers were tasked to document/photograph hundreds of graffiti tags. Crime pattern Analysis could then begin. Levels of offending were unprecedented and would destroy any aspirations of meeting performance targets and with it community confidence.

- Location of offences
- Number of linked offences
- Repeat victims
- Modus operandii

MLM (Marsh Lane Massive)

The intelligence picture established central to MLM were brothers Dean (30/06/91) and Jake (10/03/93) McLaughlin of 17 Wellfield Rd, Preston. They lived in a privately owned terraced property with their parents Dean (Snr) and Heather and younger sibling 2 years. There was a history of domestic abuse, mental illness and alcohol abuse. Both parents were unemployed; the house kept in very poor order and the lifestyle chaotic. Dean and Jake appeared outcasts with poor hygiene and appearance, no genuine circle of friends, positive interests/role models. Dean left school in summer 2007 remaining unemployed making little effort to find work/training. Jake attended school. Neither Dean nor Jake were well known to the Police or authorities.

- Founded by McLaughlin brothers
- Six key members
- Territorial graffiti tagging
- Aggressive recruitment of members
- Ambition to create MLM gang

Delinquent Peer Group

Focused attention on MLM quickly enhanced further understanding. Offending behaviour started to spread out of its University base into neighbouring wards and city centre. As awareness of the group grew and activity more closely monitored it became clear that they were far more actively involved in other crime in addition to damage.

Criminal damage in the University ward increased an unprecedented 140% in 2007/8 and evidence of escalated offending started to emerge.

- Theft
- Burglary
- Assault
- Robbery
- Weapons
- Vehicle theft
- Binge drinking
- Anti-social behaviour

Internet Activity

References to the internet were uncovered. MLM were using the internet to conduct a recruitment campaign. *Myspace* hosted their home page and they uploaded videos on-line recorded on mobile phones. The shocking videos revealed a level of crime and offending that was truly unexpected and it demonstrated MLM were intent on creating a far bigger impact than the graffiti signal crime had indicated.

- Increasingly violent
- Evidence of significant cash-flow

DIRECT QUOTE FROM MYSPACE
'MLM is growing rapidly and has been a gang since November 2006'

Organised-Crime-Groups (OCG)

Organised-Crime-Groups or gangs were a recent phenomenon to Lancashire, focused in Preston they had become a serious crime threat linked to the drugs trade with the use of violence, weapons and firearms increasingly frequent.

Origins

Originating in a number of neighbourhoods around the city subsequent research has highlighted early indications of activity which can now be seen to be of significance but were not appropriately addressed at the time of their emergence.

- Focused on identifiable neighbourhoods
- Displays of territorial ownership
- Established friendships/associations
- Emerging low-level crime threat
- Aged 12-17 years
- Graffiti tagging to mark territory

Such activity and groups can be regarded as Delinquent Peer Groups. In the case of each of the serious Organised-Crime-Groups their origins can be traced back to neighbourhood activity as Delinquent Peer Groups who first came to notice through graffiti tagging in their neighbourhoods.

| Moor Lane Rude Boyz | Broadgate Riot Squad | Deep Twisted Youngaz | Deepdale Youth | Holme Slack Youth | Bad Newz |

| Moor Nook Crew | | | | | Callon Young Gangsters |

Avenham Youth Defence **AYD**   Farringdon Park Original Gangsters **FPOG**   Callon Youth Defence **CYD**

| Farringdon Young Defenders | | | | | STR8 Otta Preston |

| | Ruthless Assassins | Halton Place Mafia | Sulby Soldiers | Clean Cut Connections | |

| Grange Young Army | | | | | Longridge Boyz |

All 'Bout Money **ABM**   Savick Mad Dogs **SMD**   Fuck The Law. **FTL**

| True Crime Taggers | | | | | Grid Lock Division |

| Reppin Preston City | Clean Cut Youngers | Howarth Road Crew | Savick Youth Defence | Blackpool Road Boyz | Larches Youth Defence |

The bonds/associations/friendships formed as youths endeavour and result in trust and fierce loyalty amongst gang (OCG) members.

- All known Organised-Crime-Groups started out as Delinquent-Peer-Groups
- All used identifiable graffiti tags to
    - Identify the gang
    - Mark territory
- Graffiti tagging was a signal crime
- Significant escalation of offending occurred

Failure to identify, target and disrupt a number of Delinquent Peer Groups in their infancy has meant that serious Organised Crime Groups emerged with serious consequences.

Savick Mad Dogs
SMD

Currently serving 8 years for Manslaughter

Sentenced to 13 years for murder

On remand for robbery

Serving 3 years for drug supply

Recently released following a sentence for robbery

Avenham Youth Defence
AYD

Recently released following a 10 year sentence for manslaughter

Currently serving a life sentence for murder

Currently serving a 4 year sentence for ABH, GBH and threats to kill after threatening the aggrieved with a firearm.

Currently on remand for wounding

MLM Delinquent-Peer-Group

Analysis confirmed that MLM regarded themselves as a gang with an aggressive recruitment campaign. The massive rise in graffiti and damage was the signal crime at the tip of the offending iceberg.

The gang (Delinquent-Peer-Group) had quickly grown to 30 members within months with six core members and initially less problematic youths increasingly drawn in and engaging in problematic and offending behaviour.

The POP initiative clearly had the prime-focus of reducing damage which was damaging BCSCC performance and which was now so widespread there were comfortably in excess of 1,000 graffiti-tags alone.

A unique opportunity also existed to disrupt the MLM gang and re-engage the young people to prevent the possible emergence of an Organised Crime Group, an opportunity missed at significant cost with Organised Crime Groups AYD and SMD.

- *Graffiti image posted on Internet by MLM*

RESPONSE

Summary of Responses

Responses were developed and implemented in close partnership with agencies and local businesses. Recognising shared areas of mutual concern and responsibility; key interventions were reliant on a consistent message delivered by all partners.

Offender Management

Analysis firmly identified the delinquent peer group MLM as responsible for the huge increase in damage offending. Analysis had provided detailed understanding of all individuals associating with the gang. The challenge now was to manage the group to reduce offending.

Using the Offender Management model

A detailed risk assessment was carried out on each offender to establish the risk level. Risk level determined the level/nature of appropriate interventions. The ownership for each offender was given to designated offender managers from the Police and partner agencies in order to ensure an appropriate range of interventions and targeting options were considered and implemented.

Threat Level Assessment
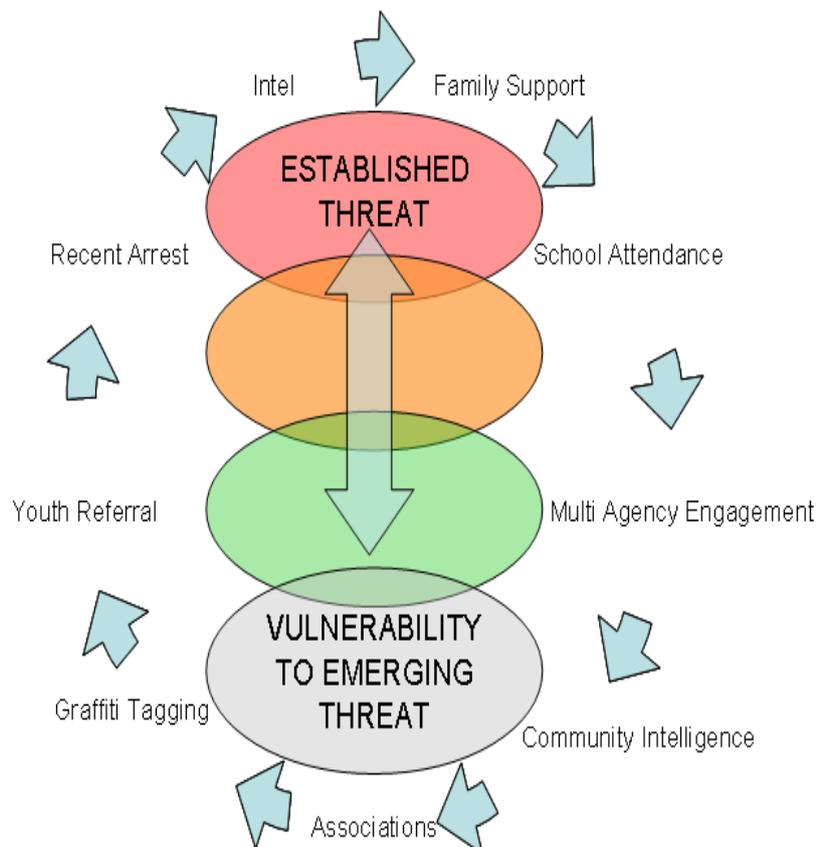
Early Interventions

Early interventions with all youth MLM members focused on appraising key support networks in the young people's lives of their involvement with MLM. Highlighting all potential harms/risks the aim was to encourage positive behaviour and disengagement with gang activity.

- Home Visits
- Family Support
- School Liaison
- Education Welfare
- Youth Involvement

Intensive work was required on certain individuals and tailored management plans developed.

	RISK	MANAGEMENT
🔴	HIGH RISK	▪ Targetted Interventions ▪ Adoption as Target ▪ Consideration of ASBO's / ASBI's ▪ Intelligence / Evidence Gathering ▪ Youth Offending Team ▪ Owned by Offender Management Unit
🟠	MEDIUM RISK	▪ Owned by Neighbourhood Policing Team ▪ Youth Offending Team ▪ Home Visits ▪ Intelligence Gathering ▪ Multi-Agency Interventions
🟢	LOW RISK	▪ School Liaison ▪ Home Visits ▪ GRIP Referrals ▪ Education Welfare ▪ Family Interventions ▪ Youth Involvement
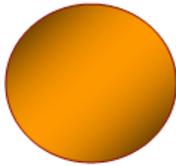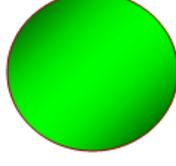
Police Enforcement

Targeting Offenders

It became quickly apparent the leaders of the MLM group the McLaughlin Brothers were not responding to early interventions. Offending escalated, necessitating a more robust criminal justice approach. Threat level was set at RED. Management undertaken by the dedicated Integrated Offender Management Unit (I.O.M.U.)

A specialist multi agency team the Integrated Offender Management Unit brings together a premium service to deliver bespoke solutions and management service for offenders. The unit provides support and opportunities to those wishing to address their offending behaviour. However where there is no commitment to change it brings together the most focused attention of all criminal justice bodies including Police, Prison, Probation and Crown Prosecution service amongst others. Maximising investigation and detection opportunities through intelligence and targeting, it co-ordinates a dedicated service to effectively manage offenders. Dedicated to the management of the most problematic and prolific offenders its expertise was pivotal in managing the McLaughlins. Supporting activity included

- Targeted enforcement
- Search warrants
- Property/clothing seizure
- C.S.I. support

McLaughlin Family

Emphasis was placed on securing parental support of Police and partner activity to reduce harm/offending.

- Initially unsupportive of police
- Refused to believe sons were problematic
- Little ability to set appropriate boundaries

Continued determined intervention using a range of tactics including threat of civil legal proceedings and numerous arrests of sons brought about co-operation.

- Encouraged sons to sign ABCs
- Allowed access to house on tasking visits
- Disclaimed numerous 'unidentified' unaccounted pedal cycles/motorcycles
- Agreed to 'suggestion' to relocate to allow fresh start out of area
- Put house up for sale
  - Disclosed address of new property
  - Agreed to continued Police support post-move

Other interventions

Target Profiles

Target profiles and tasking briefings were created on the *SLEUTH* intranet computer system. At the heart of police briefings and patrol activity, accessed daily by all staff it informed and updated activity for Neighbourhood teams and geographic response officers. Officers were made aware of damage in the ward and specific targeting tactics for MLM. All activity was co-ordinated and documented. Tactics include.

- MLM disruption
- Stop check/search
- Home visits
- Intelligence & evidence gathering
- Incident reporting
- Identified hotspot patrol
- Patrol at peak offending times
  .

ABC's

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts were drafted and offered to key individuals. Contracts between Police, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and offenders they were designed to provide a framework to reduce anti-social behaviour and encourage responsible thinking.

ASBO's

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were pursued. Civil court orders; they place restrictions on specified problematic behaviour. Breaches result in arrest. A range of sentencing options including up to five years imprisonment. Vulnerable residents were being targeted. In order to keep individuals out of the evidence gathering process, protect and reassure them local businesses that had also been victimised were identified as the evidential lead.

Business Community Engagement

Robust supportive working relationships were developed and maintained with repeat victims from the business community.

- Tom Parker Ltd
- The Store Room
- Preston Community Transport
- Preston City Museum
- The Mall Shopping Centre

Staff briefed on MLM activity. Health checks carried out on CCTV systems. Guidance offered on camera placement and retention of evidence. Statements of evidence obtained. Tom Parker invested $10,000 in additional cameras/hard-drive recording to support the initiative.

University of Central Lancashire

Support was given by the University in a number of key areas.

- Briefing of security staff

  - Patrol plans
  - Hotspots
  - Peak offending times
  - Positioning of CCTV
  - Evidence retention

- Multi agency Community respect agenda input for all new students

- Attendance at PACT meetings by Discipline Dept and Student Union

  - Commitment to deal with any student offenders
  - Invite reporting of problematic student behaviour

- Use of internal communication systems and media to raise damage awareness

  - Radio
  - Plasma screens
  - Pluto newspaper
  - Posters

Police Community Support

Focused reassurance patrol. Police, Support Officers and Council Wardens

- Neighbourhood teams visit all complainants.
- Revisits to victims
- Regular community updates/feedback
  - PACT meetings
  - Surgeries

- Reassurance Patrol
  - Hot spots
  - Peak offending times

Environmental Visual Audit

- Continued commitment
- New graffiti documented
- Prompt removal by City Council

Media

Local media used throughout the initiative.

- Raise awareness
- Report offending activity
- Appeal for witnesses
- Facilitate feedback and reassurance

Crime Prevention Surveys

- Repeat Victim Identification, Intervention & Support
- Target hardening
- Use of Neighbourhood Watch schemes

ASSESSMENT

Criminal Damage

Assessment for this initiative focuses on the crime counting year April 2008 to March 2009, the first full opportunity to reflect on results and interventions commenced in 2007/8.

The dramatic raise in damage offending in 2007/8 recording a 71% increase in reported damage in the University Ward was totally reversed during 2008/9.

University Ward Criminal Damage
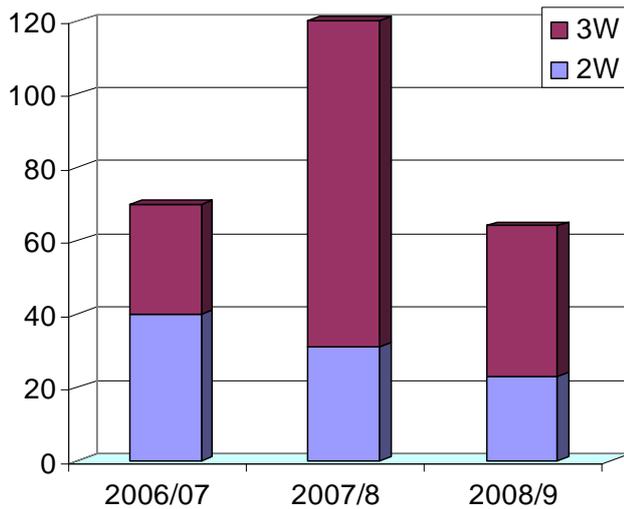
Of greater significance are British Crime Survey Crime Comparator figures which record damage together with more serious offences such as assault, burglary, robbery and vehicle crime. The impact of interventions becomes clearer still recording a remarkable 51% reduction in these key crime classifications over the entire ward.

British Crime Survey Comparator Crime
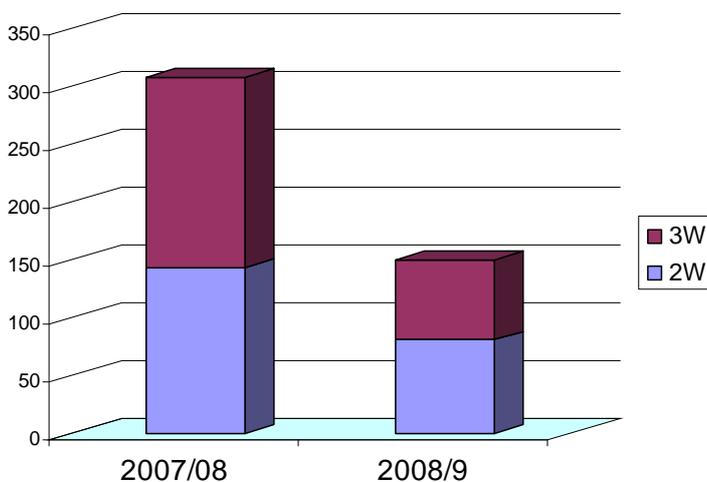
Jake and Dean McLaughlin

Following prolonged targeting, leverage and promoting a 'fresh start' the McLaughlin family moved out of Preston relocating to Blackpool in February 2008. To coincide with this an ASBO application was heard at Preston Magistrates Court and an interim order granted against Dean and Jake. There were a number of initial breaches and arrests as they both seemed determined to return to Preston and test the resolve of the Police. This however played directly into the hands of the Police and in April 2008 a full order was imposed.

- Not to enter Preston
- Not to possess paint, markers or aerosols in England and Wales
- Not to act in an Anti-Social manner in England or Wales

Widely reported and making front page news to reassure the public and demonstrate Police and partner commitment to the initiative, the move out of area and ASBO were the culmination of focused activity against MLM and the McLaughlins.

The Integrated Offender Management Unit and Neighbourhood Policing teams in Blackpool were provided with a thorough briefing and handover package to ensure they were sighted on the potential offending threat of the brothers if they failed to reform following relocation.

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Lancashire Constabulary
police and communities together

Two brothers believed to be Preston's worst graffiti vandals have been banned from the city until they are 18.

Jake McLaughlin, 15 and brother Dean, 16, formerly of Wellfield Road, off Marsh Lane, were in a gang responsible for a wave of violence, intimidation and Preston's worst-ever graffiti spate which left a £100,000 trail of destruction.

Now, Preston Magistrates have banned them from the city permanently until they reach 18. The brothers face up to five years in custody if they breach their ASBOs which also ban them from possessing marker pens and spray paint and from using threatening behaviour.

The pair had boasted about receiving interim ASBOs on a web page and one of them sniggered throughout his court hearing.

One police officer, who welcomed the ASBOs, said the graffiti caused by the brothers was the "worst ever seen" in Preston.

The duo were a major catalyst in the aggravation caused by Marsh Lane Massive – a group of yobs who have left a trail of more than 1,000 graffiti tags across the city and claim on a website to have been a gang since November 2006.

The duo were moved by their parents to Blackpool to start a new life after the courts imposed their interim ASBOs, but Preston Magistrates Court heard there had already been several breaches – and that new graffiti reading "MLM 2008" had appeared in parts of the city.

District Judge Peter Ward, presiding over Jake's case, condemned the display of their behaviour on the Internet.

A web page for MLM lists a catalogue of crime including assaulting people, rampaging through a shopping centre and defacing buildings.

District Judge Ward said: "There has been a serious problem with your behaviour. Your parents have taken a responsible approach and moved you away from the area but you still came back when you shoudn't have."

Jake's solicitor Michael Leach said the boys needed to come to Preston to see their grandmother and that Jake had breached his order to see his 15-year-old girlfriend.

But David Sandiford who represented the police in both cases, said: "In a previous breach there was evidence Jake had sought out another member of MLM, though he was turned away from the house."

Jake's order will last for three years until his 18th birthday. Dean's case, heard on Monday, resulted in a two-year order with the same prohibitions.

As the threat of MLM was identified early in the process, vigorous and varied early interventions commenced well before Jake and Dean were irretrievably committed to a life of offending behaviour.

Despite repeated attempts at engagement there was no reduction in offending behaviour or commitment to change.

- Acceptable-Behaviour-Contracts declined
- Prince's Trust declined
- Restorative Justice declined

Regrettably it seemed that targeted Policing and use of the Criminal Justice system was inevitable. Intelligence lead targeting, investigation and disruption commenced with hugely successful results.

Arrests
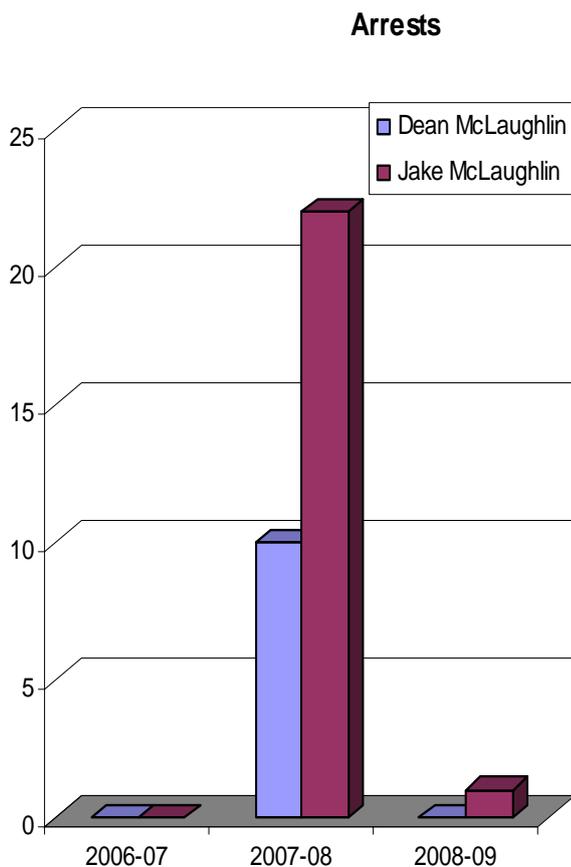
Detection opportunities were maximised and although the brothers never readily admitted responsibility for offences during investigations, a significant number of crimes were detected. Sentencing included licensed supervision by the statutory Youth Offending Team but no impact was made on reoffending.

Of particular note were comments made by Dean during police interviews. In relation to MLM activity he said *'Its about so much more than graffiti its about making a name for yourself'* Offered Restorative Justice and favourable publicity in exchange for helping clean up graffiti damage to make a positive 'name for himself' he declined saying '*Its about the recognition, making your name'*

Offending

Identified during Analysis graffiti damage was simply the signal crime and intelligence and investigations revealed a truly shocking escalation of offending behaviour. Assessment now confirmed offences committed by the McLaughlins:
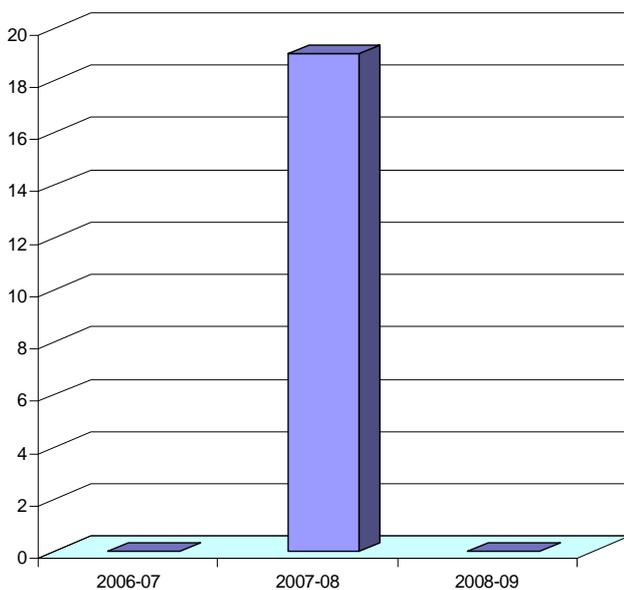
- Damage
- Robbery
- Vehicle crime
- Burglary
- Assault

Detected Crime
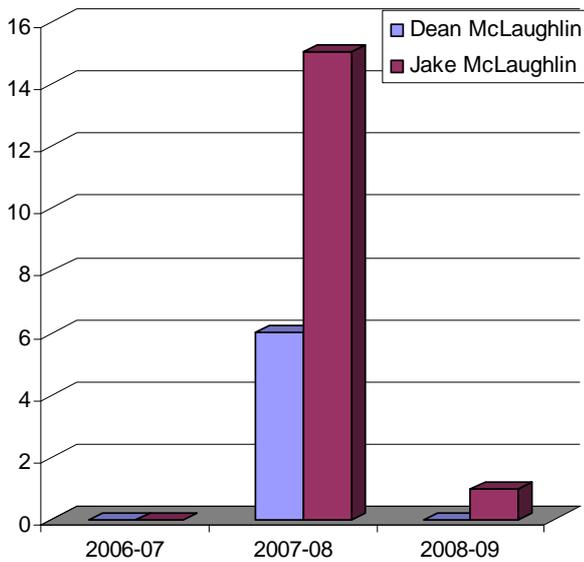
Offending in Preston linked to MLM ceased after imposition of the ASBO and the McLaughlin's no longer frequented the city or reoffended in Preston.

MLM Modus Operandii

MLM Activity

Although both Dean and Jake McLaughlin have reoffended in Blackpool, the MLM Delinquent Peer Group no longer exists or offends in Preston. Dedicated offender management proved decisive in reducing the threat of offending and harm posed by/to the wider gang membership. The majority of young people were found to be vulnerable to the dominant influence of gang leaders but responded well to positive early interventions. With family, school and agency support, associations were broken and lives were put back on track without the need to resort to the criminal justice system.

Other more senior figures in the Peer Group were criminally active and needed far more robust management in addition to early partner interventions. However as management activity intensified and the influence of the gang diminished the MLM ceased to exist. With the collective protection and power of the group dynamic smashed significant reductions in offending were achieved and intelligence activity diminished. Remaining criminal and anti-social activity was no longer centred on the University ward. *(Appendix A)*

Community Reassurance

Achievements and results were regularly fed-back through to the community resulting in increased reassurance and community confidence. Confirmed through all indicators.

- PACT
- Surgeries
- University communication networks

Cost Benefit Analysis

Interventions were delivered within existing Police and partner agency budgets and required no additional funding applications or overtime provision. There was no capital funding requirements in this initiative.

Whilst it is impossible to make definitive claims about cost savings made through crime reduction Home Office calculations give indications well in excess of $300,000.

HOME OFFICE Economic & Social Costs of Crime	
Robbery	£7,282
Damage	£866
Theft	£844
Common Assault	£1,440
Burglary	£3,268
With a reduction of 158 offences in 2008/9 in British Crime Survey Comparator Crime (*comprising the above crime classifications- cost per crime 2003*). Significant costs savings were achieved	

Summary of Key Results/findings

Damage

- Criminal Damage offences in University Ward significantly reduced
- 51% reduction in BCSC Crime
- Significant cost savings

MLM Delinquent Peer Group

- MLM group dynamic smashed
- MLM youth gang (DPG) no longer exists
- No recent MLM graffiti
- Recorded crime lower than before MLM threat identified
- No offending in Preston by Dean & Jake McLaughlin since April 2008
- Offending across entire peer group reduced and managed

Best Practice

- Established link with graffiti tagging to Anti-social behaviour, damage and crime

- Tag identification process adopted by Crime Reduction Partnership (City Council)

- Established link between graffiti tagging (Territorial Marking) and emerging youth gang threat

- Established best practice of early identification & intervention with youth gangs (Delinquent Peer Groups)

- Early intervention with youth gangs (DPGs) preventing emergence of future Organised Crime Gangs.

**MLM Criminal Associates
Offending/Intelligence Comparison**

Appendix A
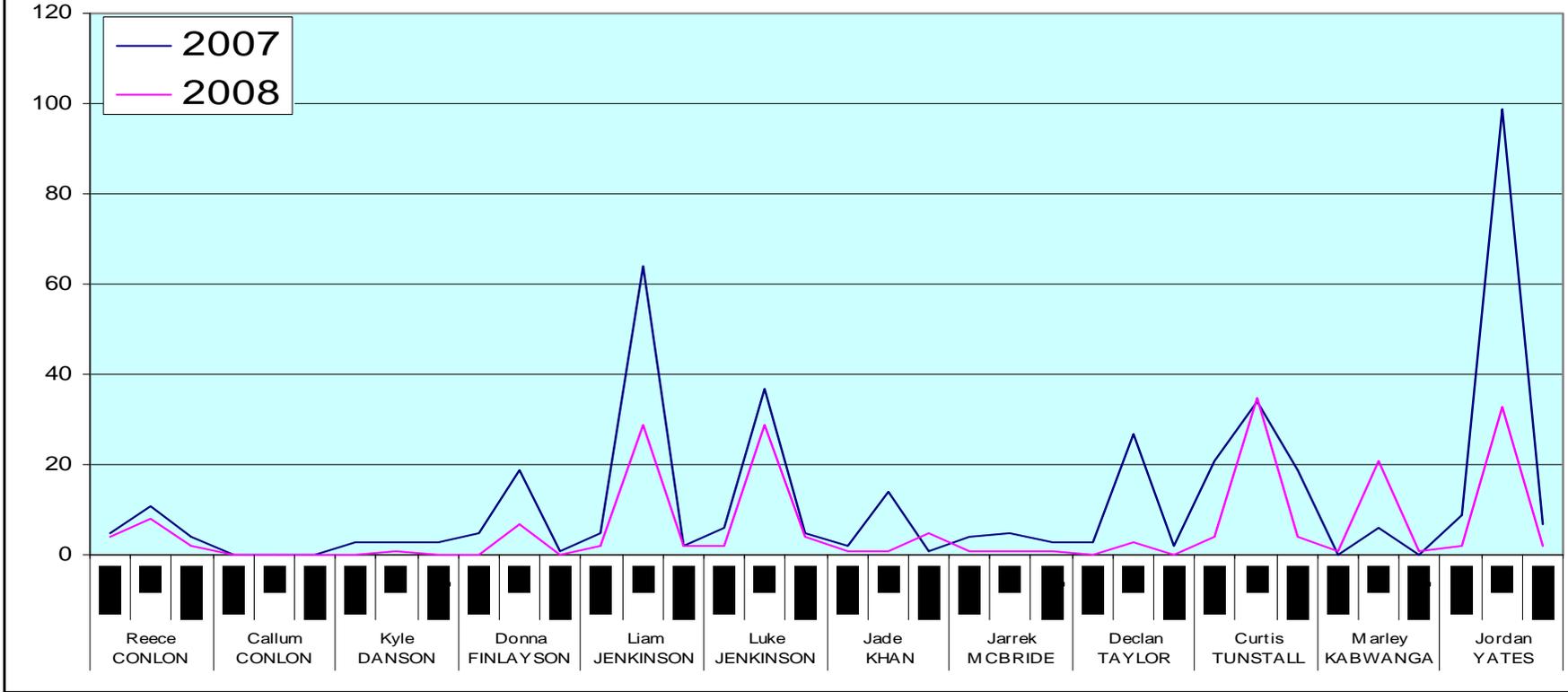
AGENCY & OFFICER INFORMATION

- Commissioned by Regional Government to drive damage crime reduction and implemented locally by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in the City of Preston this problem solving initiative was initially developed by a Community Beat Manager and Intelligence Sergeant. As the initiative progressed officers from other departments became involved in certain aspects of the project with particular emphasis on the Integrated Offender Management Unit.

- During the lifetime of the initiative the Community Beat Manager responsible for the project Gareth Pearson took up a post in the Integrated Management Unit (I.O.M.U.) and recognised the unique contribution to managing offenders in this initiative that the Unit could deliver.

- Gareth's position in the I.O.M.U. is within the Tower Project (developed from a project which was a Goldstein finalist in 2003) which has been adopted as a main stream department throughout the Constabulary. Gareth is a passionate POP practitioner and has considerable problem oriented policing experience and has previously been a Goldstein finalist.

- Iain Mellis is new to the world of POP and offender management and his involvement was a revelation to him.

- Lancashire Constabulary provides support and guidance in all problem-solving initiatives and is committed to Problem Oriented Policing.

- Lancashire Constabulary Officers are actively encouraged to undertake problem-solving initiatives to tackle medium to long-term problems. In 2006 Preston (Central Division) introduced its own POP awards to celebrate the many examples of good practice.

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