

# Operation Pullman



## Sunderland West Area Command

Compiled by PC Mark Reynolds

**Tilley Awards 2003**

**Operation Pullman**

**Category**

*Crime and disorder reduction*

**Name of Police Force**

*Northumbria Police*

**Endorsing Chief Officer**

Assistant Chief Constable Mr. J D Scott

**Contact details**

<i>Name</i>	<i>PC Mark Reynolds</i>
<i>Position</i>	<i>Community Beat Manager (Thorney Close)</i>
<i>Address</i>	<i>Farringdon Hall Police Station Primate Road Farringdon Sunderland SR3 1TQ</i>
<i>Telephone numbers</i>	<i>(07881) 500271 or (0191) 4547555 ext 66226</i>
<i>Email address</i>	<i>mark.reynolds1093@northumbria.pnn.police.uk</i>

**Operation Pullman**  
**Force: Northumbria Police**  
**Contact: PC Mark Reynolds 07881 500271**

During Spring 2002 a problem was identified within the Thorney Close Area of Sunderland, concerning youths throwing missiles at Public Service Buses. The actions of those individuals concerned was causing a significant risk to road users and passengers alike, and so I sought to achieve a resolution.

I devised a strategy which set out to achieve numerous short term gains and a long term solution to the problem. In addition to working with current partners, I also actively sought to develop new partners relevant to the problem. The Problem Analysis Triangle was used to identify the victim as being the Bus Companies, the offender group to be youths aged between ten and sixteen years of age, and the location as being a small area of Thorney Close.

Closer analysis of the problem using the Crime Pattern Analysis System revealed days and times that the problem was most prevalent, and we also identified a target area where all of these incidents had taken place.

Having identified the age of the offenders, I educated Pupils in the Estate's Primary and Secondary Schools about the consequences of the problem .

In conjunction with Stagecoach Busways who operate most of the routes in the target area, we began a large scale enforcement Operation. During May 2002 a decoy bus was driven around the target area staffed by Officers in plain clothes, who were able to respond immediately to any incidents. The Operation yielded a total of five arrests, one person was reported for summons and nine disorder letters were sent out.

Utilising the Sunderland Housing Group, we took further action against their tenants who had come to our attention during the initiative. As a consequence of this five Appropriate Behaviour Agreements were later served, which will further restrict their behaviour in the future.

I set out to achieve a long term resolution to the problem by involving local Schools in an adopt a bus scheme. My aim was to instil a sense of pride and ownership amongst local School children, and thus make it less likely that they would try to damage such vehicles in the future.

Since the initiative the number of incidents whereby buses have been damaged have stopped completely. Public confidence has also been restored in the transport network, which was largely helped by the Operation's media strategy.

## **Tilley Awards 2003**

### **Operation Pullman**

#### *The area*

The Thorney Close Estate is a sprawling residential Housing Estate on the Western side of the City of Sunderland. It is home to approximately four thousand people with a diverse range of ages and backgrounds, including a number of Asylum Seekers. Thorney Close has two Primary Schools and one Secondary School, servicing the children on the Estate. The area suffers from a vast amount of social and economic problems including high levels of unemployment, and is third on the City's list of most deprived Areas. The Community has many deeply ingrained problems such as apathy and a lack of pride in the area in which they live. The Government has recognised some of the issues that the area has, as a result of which millions of Pounds have been ploughed into Thorney Close and the surrounding area via the Single Regeneration Budget. This money has gone some distance towards achieving its target, but many of the original problems remain

#### *The nature of the problem addressed*

During the first four Months of 2002 I identified a problem within the Sunderland West Area Command, namely that of youths damaging buses predominantly on the Thorney Close Estate. During this period there were sixteen separate incidents of this nature on the said Estate, whereby youths had thrown objects at Public Service Buses and caused damage. The effects of this problem were far reaching in that many Bus Drivers felt that their workplace was no longer a safe environment to be in, and news of these incidents were effecting consumer confidence amongst passengers. Further to this the damage caused to buses ran into thousands of pounds, and it became apparent that it would only be a matter of time before even more serious damage or injury was caused. What we set out to achieve was to improve Community safety by reducing incidents of this nature, and make the buses a safer place to travel.

#### *The evidence used to define the problem*

As part of my duties as the Community Beat Manager for the Thorney Close Estate, I check all incidents that get reported to Police on a daily basis. Whilst undertaking this task I observed a trend begin to emerge concerning youths throwing missiles at Public Service Buses.

Being concerned for the safety of Passengers and Residents I resolved to do something about it. The issue was subsequently raised at both Community and Practitioner Forums and I also received information from local bus companies.

The problem was also raised at a S.17 Meeting (Crime and Disorder Act 1998), between the Police and the Sunderland Housing Group as the main problem on the Estate at that time. It was thus agreed that any tenants coming to Police attention for damaging buses, would be subject to an (A)ppropriate (B)ehaviour (C)ontract.

Closer analysis of the problem using the CPAS (Crime Pattern Analysis System) revealed that these incidents were prevalent from a Thursday to Monday, and no incidents at all were

reported on a Tuesday or Wednesday. We also found out using CPAS that with the exception of one incident, all of these offences were committed between 1600hrs and 2200hrs. All 16 incidents were confined to a very small area namely that of Telford Road and Thorndale Road. Information received from all of these means identified that the target group of offenders were aged between ten and sixteen years of age.

### *The response to the problem*

It was clear that these incidents merited a problem solving approach, which was subsequently addressed by myself and my immediate supervisor at the time namely A/SGT Gary Query. Together we adopted a five phase problem solving approach which in brief consisted of the following,

- Phase 1 - Educate local youths between the ages of ten and sixteen about the problem
- Phase 2 - Develop a relationship with Stagecoach Busways, and implement a large scale enforcement Operation.
- Phase 3 - Take joint action with the Sunderland Housing Group against offenders
- Phase 4 - Develop and implement an adopt a bus scheme
- Phase 5 - Organise a media strategy designed to receive maximum coverage

### **Phase 1**

Identifying that the problem could be solved by way of speaking with the youngsters I decided to produce a lesson plan, and deliver a talk to the two Primary and one Secondary School on the Thorney Close Estate. I subsequently spoke at length with the children about the problem, and more importantly the consequences of engaging in such behaviour. The Education side underpinned the whole Operation, and this talk has since been expanded to encompass all School's in the Sunderland West area Command.

### **Phase 2**

Following talks with local Bus Company's, we developed a partner in Stagecoach Busways. Stagecoach operate the majority of routes in the target area, and it had been their buses that had been subject to the majority of attacks. Stagecoach quickly proved to be a most valuable partner, as they provided us with a Bus and a driver for the duration of the Operation. The idea behind the initiative was that the bus would be staffed by plain clothed Officers, and would drive around local hot-spots with a view to detecting offences. This stage of the Operation was highly successful with a total of five arrests, in addition to one person being reported for summons and 9 disorder letters been sent out. Of those people that were charged, all were subsequently convicted at Court.

### **Phase 3**

All persons arrested during phase two were then subject to further action by the Sunderland Housing Group. All five youths that were arrested were tenants of the above organisation, and so they and their Parents were asked to come down to the local Housing Office where (A)ppropriate (B)ehaviour (C)ontracts were served. The idea behind these contracts is that it is an agreement between the Housing Dept., the Police and the Occupier which is a way of regulating the behaviour of problem tenants. If any tenant breaches a condition included in this contract then they are liable to face eviction proceedings.

### **Phase 4**

Using a multi-agency approach a scheme was launched whereby local School's adopt a Service Bus, with a view to creating a sense of ownership and reducing incidents of damage. Hasting Hill Primary School were the first to adopt a bus, which again was covered by local TV, Radio and the Newspapers. As with the education aspect this scheme is hoped to be expanded throughout the Area Command

### **Phase 5**

We took a positive stance with the Media and publicity of the Operation was widespread, including coverage on the Television, Local Radio and Newspapers. For the launch of this phase of the Operation I took a party of School Children down to the Stagecoach bus depot., where we were greeted by the media. The idea behind using the press meant that a message was sent out to the whole region, that such criminal behaviour would not be tolerated.

### *The impact of the response and how this was measured*

As can be seen from the attached graphs the problem solving approach to this particular problem was a great success. From sixteen incidents of damage being caused to buses on Thorney Close during the first five Months of the year, following the success of Operation Pullman there were no further incidents at all during the remainder of 2002.

We have looked at the effectiveness of the project from various angles. In the first instance the statistics collated using the CPAS system, reveal that the problem would appear to have been completely solved.

I have actively sought feedback from Residents, Schools, Shopkeepers and also Stagecoach Busways, all of whom were extremely complimentary about the effectiveness of the initiative.

Speaking with Residents on patrol and at Residents Meetings/Community Forums, no further problems have been cited in relation to the public transport system in the area.

With regards to the Schools, Hasting Hill Primary School Children have developed a real sense of pride in the bus that they have adopted and constantly look out for it on the Estate. In respect of other School Children in the area, their enthusiasm for damaging buses has no doubt been dampened by both my talk and the high profile media campaign.

Working in conjunction with the Sunderland Housing Group also proved to be very fruitful as it made a lot of tenants think that if they get caught damaging a bus, then they may face eviction from their home.

*All in all Operation Pullman in my opinion epitomises everything that is positive about problem solving Policing, and has provided a long term sustainable solution to this particular problem. Furthermore as far as I am concerned it has acted as a bench mark against other initiatives that I have been involved in.*

## **Appendices**

- A) Repeat event map (Identifying the locations of the incidents)**
- B) High risk hot spot map**
- C) Graphical illustration of damage to PSV's in Thorney Close**
- D) A Newspaper article from the Sunderland Echo regarding the 'adopt a bus scheme'**
- E) Photographs of Hasting Hill Primary School adopting their bus**



Grid Ref 1 for Analysis  
Grid Ref 1 for Polygon Selection

POINT MAP (repeats)

Event count

Total, Time, E Desc, Screen

15, 15, 15, 13

Event type enabled

Earliest Date = 01/01/2002

Latest Date = 30/04/2002

KEY

Repeat threshold = 500

Single Event

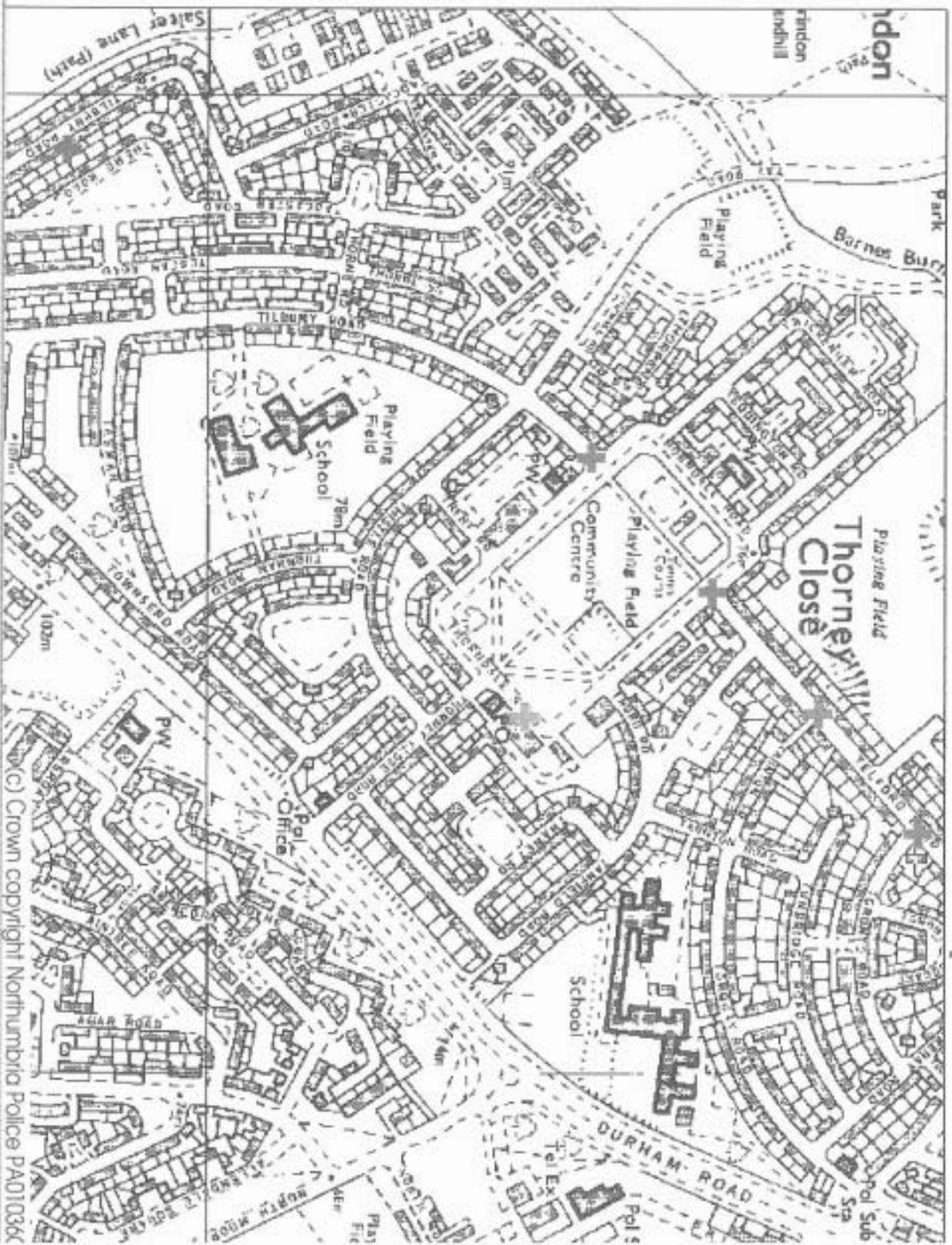
> 1 events

> 3 events

> 5 events

Event report displayed

KEY EVENT MAP



HIGH RISK MAP

Event count

Total, Time, E Desc, Screen

15, 15, 15, 13

Event hrs disabled

Earliest Date = 01/01/2002

Latest Date = 30/04/2002

KEY for weekly event rate

Less than 0.03

between 0.03 and 0.05

between 0.05 and 0.11

between 0.11 and 0.22

between 0.22 and 0.44

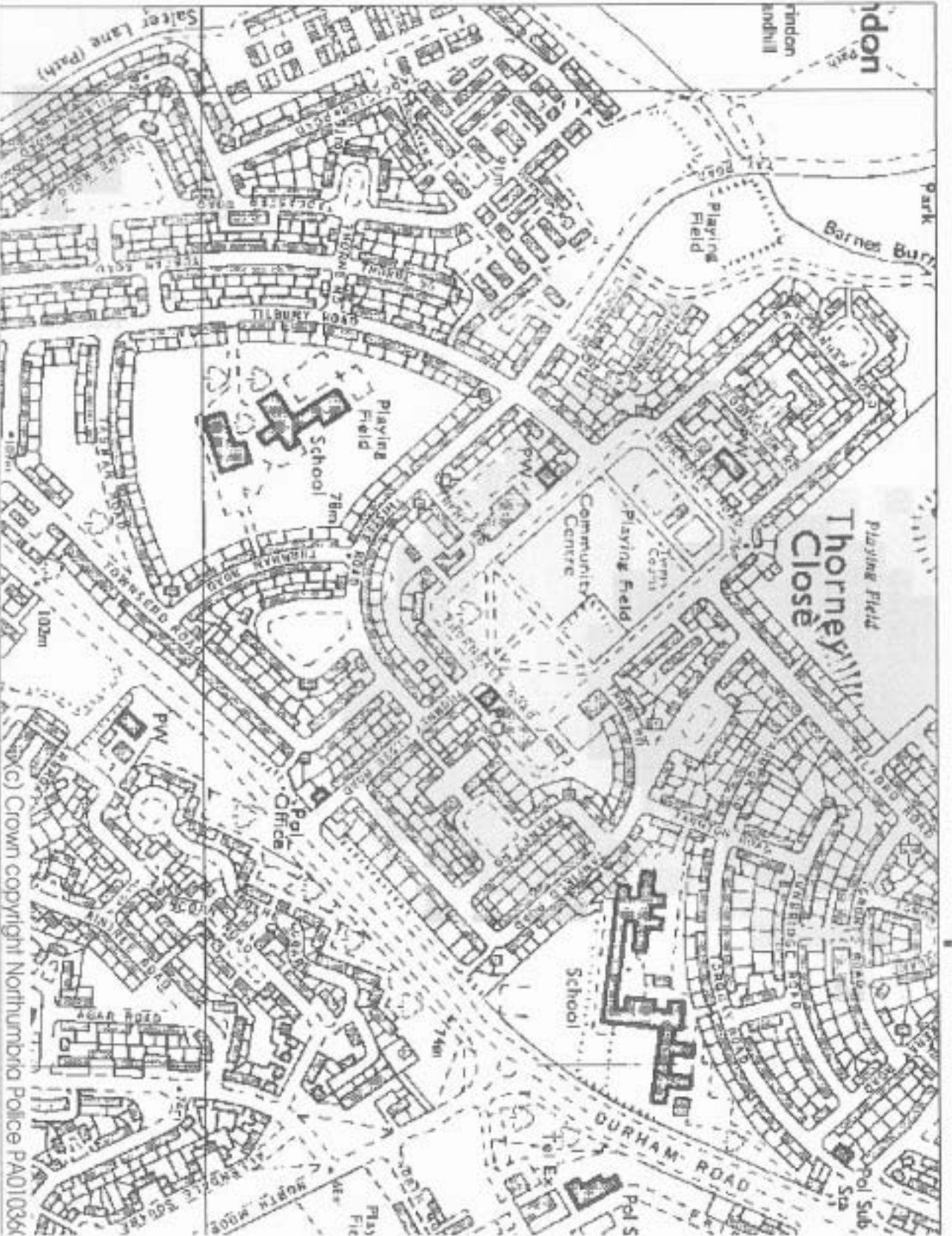
between 0.44 and 0.88

between 0.88 and 1.75

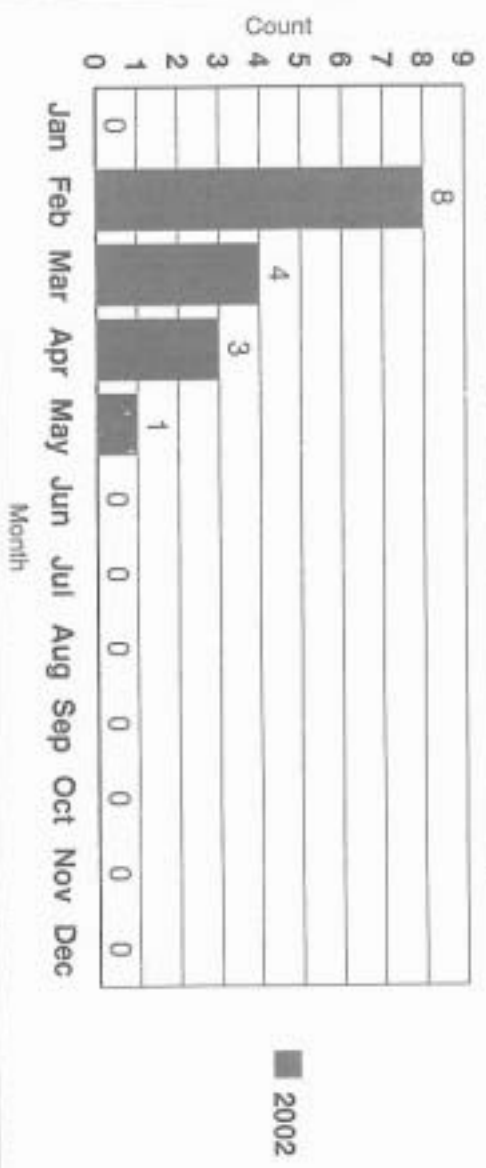
between 1.75 and 3.50

More than 3.50

High Risk  
Hotspot Map

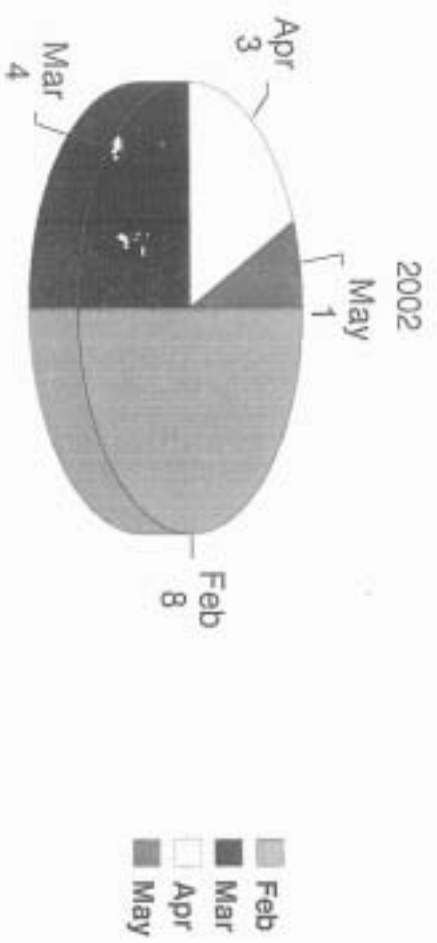


**Damage to P.S.V.'s in Thorney Close  
2002**



	2002
Jan	0
Feb	8
Mar	4
Apr	3
May	1
Jun	0
Jul	0
Aug	0
Sep	0
Oct	0
Nov	0
Dec	0

**Damage to P.S.V.'s in Thorney Close  
2002**



# Bus ride to better behaviour

15 JUL 2002

**SCHOOLCHILDREN** in Sunderland are the driving force behind a new scheme to help stamp out anti-social behaviour on the city's buses

Youngsters from schools in Sunderland West Area Command are to "adopt" their local buses in a bid to encourage pupils to look after them, after a spate of attacks

Youths in the area have endangered local bus users and drivers by regularly targeting them with missiles.

This behaviour not only puts the lives of passengers and bus drivers at risk, but also threatens the community bus service in certain areas, and has left some people afraid to travel on public transport.

Now, in an effort to educate youngsters, pupils have been given the opportunity to have their own bus.

The new scheme is part of a number of partnerships in the area to clamp down on criminal and disorderly behaviour.

Other measures included running decoy bus services, carrying police officers posing as passengers, in attack hot spots such as Doxford Park and Thorney Close, to catch youths who ambush buses.

Schoolchildren have also visited the Stagecoach bus depot and their local police station, to find out the dangers of attacks on buses.

Now, the adopt-a-bus scheme has

By **DAVID CROSBY** and **JULIE ARMSTRONG**

echo.news@northeast-press.co.uk

been launched, and the first school to take part was Hasting Hill Primary School in Thorney Close.

Pupils were picked up from school and taken to the Stagecoach Busways depot in North Bridge Street where their bus was unveiled.

Philip Curtis, headteacher at the school, said: "This is an excellent scheme, linked to our Citizenship curriculum. It can only bring benefit to everyone in the community."

"Hopefully, the sense of ownership and pride that our children already seem to have in the bus will bring increased respect to the service."

"Our children are already excited at the prospect of travelling in their own adopted bus and will be looking out for it in their neighbourhood."

Buses running between the schools, will display a message that the bus has been adopted by a school.

As part of continuing partnership, Northumbria Police officers will also visit the schools to talk about anti-social behaviour.

Pc Mark Reynolds at Sunderland West Area Command said: "By adopting a bus, we hope the children will learn to respect and have pride in their public transport."

"There have been problems with youths stoning buses, and we hope this campaign will help reduce this kind of behaviour."



**JUST THE TICKET:** Pc Mark Reynolds and pupils from Hasting Hill Primary School with their adopted bus. Pictured are (from left) Ashley Taylor, Kieran Richardson, Ethan Hanratty and Danielle Bainbridge



