

Tilley Award 2005

Application form

The following form must be completed in full. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the competition.

Please send completed application forms to Tricia Perkins at patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on the 29 April 2005. Entries received after that date will not be accepted under any circumstances. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262.

1. Details of application

Title of the project:

Operation Abstract

Name of force/agency/CDRP:

Lancashire Constabulary

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

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Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s)

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2. Summary of application

The Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) at 255-257 Talbot Road, Blackpool was constantly being targeted by local youths. These youths harasses and disrupted the local community, staff and customers.

Acts of anti social behaviour including criminal damage, under age drinking and intimidation occurred on a regular

basis both inside and outside the premises. This in turn had a dramatic effect on quality of life for those who lived in the area and has had a negative impact on the KFC as a business.

Devonshire Road Hospital located nearby was also targeted by the same youths. On occasions their activities had disrupted the hospital environment so much that patients had to be moved from their wards.

These youths were predominantly congregating around the KFC take away and the telephone kiosks outside, they also frequented the roof of Devonshire Road Hospital which has several points of entry allowing easy access to the grounds.

The victims are the KFC, local residents, hospital staff and patients.

There are three main offenders all of which are teenage males under 16 years of age who attract other younger children to join in their acts of anti social behaviour.

Aims and objectives

- Reduce the number of incidents at all locations
- Increase confidence in the Police
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Improve relations with community contacts

Interventions

- High visibility police patrols were tasked to gather evidence for proposed Anti Social Behaviour Order proceedings and also to reassure the victims
- CCTV camera installed outside the KFC
- Letter drop together with nuisance diary's delivered to local residents
- Regular meetings were held with Hospital and KFC staff
- Alcohol was seized whenever possible
- Off licences were visited
- A test purchase operation was conducted at Boozebusters (nearby off license) in partnership with trading standards
- Regular contacts were made with the Alley Gate Co-ordinator to react to any issues encountered with the alley gates
- Anti Social Behaviour Order statements obtained from the franchisee and manager of the KFC.

Evaluation

- Compared incidents 6 months before and after the operation resulting in incidents down at the KFC by 66% and crime by 86%
- Reducing access points to the hospital increased natural surveillance and deterred youth incursions. This led to 33% reduction in incidents at the hospital and an 80% reduction in crime.
- Community feedback following completion of operation

3. Description of project

SCANNING

The nature of the problem was that the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) on Talbot Road, Blackpool was being subject to anti social behavior and criminal damage which was being committed by a group of youths who lived within the surrounding area and local vicinity. The incidents that were taking place left the local community and KFC staff feeling vulnerable and intimidated and on occasions, they all feared for their own personal safety.

This particular outlet of KFC use to be very busy with customers but the youths who were causing problems in that location were preventing customers from entering the store as they were being subject to verbal abuse and intimidation.

Another factor of concern was that the group of youths were playing "chicken" across the road which comprised of group members dodging traffic on Talbot Road. This is one of the main arterial routes into Blackpool Town Centre that has a constant stream of heavy traffic. The implications of the potential road casualties were phenomenal.

The problem was identified by Police when they attended the KFC in relation to a report of ongoing youth nuisance at that location. Police were requested to attend the KFC and speak with the Franchisee with regards to his concerns and issues in that area. On speaking with the Franchisee it became very clear that these issues were not only recent they had been going for approximately 3 years.

The problem was identified by the Community Beat Manager for the Claremont Ward of which the KFC falls within.

Police were concerned and amazed at the level of anger both the KFC staff and the local community were feeling towards police. When Police first spoke with the Franchisee, Andrew Atkinson he told Police that, "THE POLICE ARE A WASTE OF TIME" and he was angry that the problem have been allowed to escalate out of control. On speaking with the local community, they stated, "WE ARE AT THE END OF OUR TETHER". Police felt that this problem had gone on for far to long and needed resolving as a matter of urgency.

The type of crime that was being committed was criminal damage. The exterior building of the KFC was damaged as well as inside the store. Youths damaged the promotional mobile displays, blocked the sinks in the public toilets within the store which caused flooding and acted in an anti social manner when they smeared tomato ketchup over the stores CCTV cameras. The group were also participating in under age consumption of alcohol in the street. There are also two public telephone kiosks positioned outside the KFC which were damaged and smashed on an almost daily basis. Staff vehicles were also subject to damage. The staff inside the store were also being verbally abused as where prospective customers on entering the store.

It became apparent during the scanning stage of Operation Abstract that there were three specific premises being targeted. They were the KFC, Talbot Road, the local residents of Foxdale Avenue and The Devonshire Rd Hospital, Devonshire Road.

ANALYSIS

Incidents were dealt with by section patrol officers as and when they were reported to police. This was a reactive approach rather than proactive and resulted in temporary disruption of the youths but was not tackling the root cause of the problems.

The victims did not have a regular point of contact with the Police Service and there was no sense of ownership and accountability of the problem.

The main cause of the problems were youth related and the fact that the location of the KFC is like a 'honey pot' as it provided light & shelter until the early hours and was a known meeting spot near to other shops and off licences.



Claremont Ward's boundary is adjacent to the Brunswick Ward which is part of the National Reassurance Policing Project and was funded by the Home Office. Brunswick is therefore subjected to a higher Police presence and due to the very nature of the project, Claremont has taken some of the displacement by way of youth nuisance.

It was established that the youths congregating at the KFC, Devonshire Road Hospital and Foxdale Ave were also associating around the Queens Town Flats which you can see is clearly identified on the above map.

Police identified that there was also a lack of youth facilities in the area and the three main offenders lived within close proximities of the stated location. When engaging with the youths it seemed that they gained pleasure from causing disorder.

The other underlying factor was that Police were responding to incidents as they were being reported which was not an effective form of policing. It was also established that the KFC staff, the Devonshire Road Hospital and also members of the community, were not ringing the Police when every incident occurred. Police had to spend time with all parties and re-educate them and explain they could log incidents for the attention of the Community Beat Manager even if it was just for information purposes only. It transpired that people did not want to report incidents to the police as they were mind-full of the offenders observing them assisting the Police which made the reluctant to assist for fear of becoming a victim of crime.

It became very apparent that there was a massive lack of faith in the Police service and no one felt that the Police had dealt with the issues or even had the time to listen to them. With regards to the Hospital, on one occasion, the youths through a brick through a ward window and the patients had to be moved to another ward for their own safety and well-being. All parties who were victims needed to be reassured and positively encouraged to engage with the Police in a bid to resolve the issues.

Police also realised that the problem couldn't be resolved by Police alone. The problem was so very well established and had been in the area for such a long period of time a multi agency response was needed to maximise effectiveness.

An initial meeting was held with the franchisees to discuss their concerns and incidents that had occurred within the

location. Visits to surrounding residential homes were also conducted to try to get a true understanding of the effects on quality of life it was having. The police incident logging system and crime system was checked for a period of six months prior to Operation Abstract being implemented which revealed that there had been 35 incidents and 7 crimes in that location.

Police designed Nuisance Diary Sheets that were sent out with letters informing residents of the issues and requested their assistance in providing information about any incidents seen by them

Police needed to be establish what times the offences were being committed and by whom. This was achieved by regular daily contact with staff at the KFC and Devonshire Rd Hospital and also by the victims logging incidents with the Police. This was further assisted by the Community Beat Managers' local knowledge of the area and ability identifying hot spot zones. By taking this cause of action it helped Police understand and establish a pattern of events in order for Operation Abstract to be implemented.

There was an open discussion with the community about the problem not only by way of letter and nuisance diary sheets but also by way of a public meeting with the "Time to Care" residence group. The group comprises of members of community who live within the identified locations.

VICTIM

Devonshire Road Hospital and its patients were being subject to criminal damage to wards which contained sick and recently operated on patients. The youths were using the entrance and exit to the grounds as a thoroughfare and were acting in an anti social manner which was hindering the recovery of patients.

The second victim identified was the KFC and staff. When Police made enquiries with the Manager of the store it transpired that he was suffering severe ill health due to incidents that had occurred over the three year period. He was diagnosed with stress, high blood pressure and anxiety. He developed a reluctance to attend work due to fear of what may occur with regards to the youths antics. This affected morale in the work place for all staff at all levels. The KFC, the hospital staff and the community had low confidence levels in the Police and there was a poor community spirit.

The third victim was the local community who were living in fear of crime and the fear of becoming victims of crime should they report incidents to the police.



Devonshire Rd Hospital and gates

OFFENDER

It was identified that there were three main offenders who were all male and under 16 years of age. None of them were in full time mainstream education. It was apparent that there was one main ring leader/offender who was identified as the main trouble causer. He encouraged other younger youths within the area to engaged in acts of criminal and anti social behaviour.

LOCATION

The location comprises of mainly residential terraced properties. There are alleyways running behind them and there is a busy main road which is one of Blackpool's main arterial route. Situated directly outside the KFC are two telephone kiosks which provide shelter for the youths.

RESPONSE

Before Operation Abstract was implemented the following alternatives and possibilities were considered:

- Profiling identified offenders
- High visibility policing
- The use of police personnel carrier
- The use of partnership CCTV van
- The use of a plain car
- Installation of CCTV camera
- Removal of telephone kiosks
- Obtaining ASBO's
- The use of Dream Policing – an outside agency of retired Police to assist with the collation of Anti Social Behaviour Order statements
- Police contact details given out to all victims



Telephone Kiosk

The response was developed by way of concern and empathy that all of the victims were at the end of the tether and did not know what to do or to turn to in order to resolve this well established problem. A common sense approach was applied by using every day high visibility policing and a zero tolerance to maximise effectiveness. A large proportion of what was done, was achievable and could be carried out by the Police Community Support Officers, Claremont Community Beat Managers and other assisting officers.

The aims were to accomplish the following:

- To reduce the number of incidents at all identified locations;
- To increase confidence in the Police;
- To reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- And to improve relations with community contacts.

Operation Abstract was implemented by the wards two designated Police Community Support offices and two Community Beat Managers. The operation ran along side a juvenile nuisance operation during the summer months where Community Beat Managers identified the hotspot locations. This was to assist other Community Beat Managers assisting in the implementation of Operation Abstract so they too could assist in proactive policing. By doing this, all identified locations received an increased police presence.

Before the operation was implemented, enquiries were conducted with the local community, KFC staff/management as well as the Management Team of the Primary Care Trust, Devonshire Road Hospital to establish a true reflection of how this problem was affecting them. It became very apparent very quickly that the main issue was the impact the incidents were having on their quality of life.

It was also imperative that all persons involved in the operation knew who the main offenders were to enable us to build profiles of them on the police intelligence system. It was also important to have a system in place for all other geographical patrol officers to make them aware of those persons so they could update the system as and when they had any dealings with them. By doing this, this would assist Police and provide evidence should they decide to take out Anti Social Behaviour Orders on the offending youths.

Enquiries were also made with the Police Community Safety Department to establish what could be done to obtain a CCTV camera and what procedures we would need to adhere with regards to installation or indeed whether or not this had already been looked into.

Enquiries were also made into what other agencies would need to be consulted should Police decide to take out Anti Social Behaviour Orders on any identified offenders and what their knowledge and involvement was with the identified offenders.

During the response stage, a large proportion of what Police hoped to achieve was achieved. All of the identified victims were re-educated with regards to reporting incidents to the police and all parties were actively encouraged to engage with the police and also to work together as a community.

Difficulties were encountered during the implementation of Operation Abstract. As previously mentioned above, there were 60 letters enclosed with nuisance diary sheets sent out to the local community residing within the location of the KFC. Unfortunately, only 4 households returned the nuisance diary sheets to Police. This was an area of concern as the amount of nuisance sheets returned was not a true reflection of the enormity of this problem.

The nuisance sheets were used as a tool to gather intelligence should Anti Social Behaviour Orders be obtained. Although only a fraction of the community returned the sheets, they were still retained by Police.

Enquiries were made with the community to try to establish the reason behind the reluctance to become involved in relation to the problem. It was established that this was because the community were living in fear of retributions and did not want to be seen by the offenders to be assisting police with their enquiries. It was challenging by the virtue that the victims needed reassurance, motivating and encouraging to participate in working together to eradicate this lengthy on going problem.

an outside agency called "Dream Policing" employs retired Police Officers up to ACPO rank who then assist Constabularies in obtaining evidence and statements for Anti Social Behaviour Orders. They were contacted and discussions took place to establish fees and availability. Having discussed this with the Community Beat Manager Inspector, it was decided that it would not be appropriate to use this facility due to the cost implications involved.

Operation Abstract was implemented by using a multi agency approach. The partners who were involved are as follows:

- Lancashire Constabulary
- Blackpool Community Safety & Drugs Partnership
- Franchisees of the KFC
- Primary Care Trust
- Devonshire Road Hospital
- The Time to Care Residential Group.

ASSESSMENT

By implementing a proactive enforcement throughout this operation, Police were present before any incidents had occurred. This had a dramatic impact in the reduction of incidents and crime within the identified locations.

Police regularly monitored all reported crimes and police incident logs were assessed for a period of six months prior to Operation Abstract being implemented. During this time period, looking at the KFC alone, there were 35 reported incidents and 7 crimes. Crimes and police incident logs were then assessed for a period of three months after Operation Abstract was implemented. Incident logs reported have been reduced 12 – a reduction of 66% and crime was reduced to 1 – a reduction of 86%.

Police then assessed crime and reported incidents at the Devonshire Road Hospital. Six months prior to Operation Abstract there were 3 reported incidents and 10 crimes at that location. Three months after implementation of Abstract there were 2 reported incidents to police, a reduction of 33% and 2 crimes, a reduction of 80%.

The impact of Operation Abstract had a dramatic reduction of both reported incidents and crime within the identified localities.

Operation Abstract also had a dramatic impact on all of the victims as they now had an increased confidence in the Police force, community links were formed and community spirit was rekindled.

Anti Social Behaviour Order proceedings were instigated against the main offender and were taken to consultation stage with outside agencies. However, the offender was made aware of these proceeding were his behaviour ceased altogether. Naturally, the youths who congregated together were aware of the very high and real possibility that they too could be subject to an Anti Social Behaviour Order which provided a deterrent and prevented them from committing further offences. Apart from the difficulties already outlined, there were no problems implementing the response plan for Operation Abstract.

A rapid deployment CCTC camera and pole was installed opposite the KFC which provided reassured and also acts as a visible deterrent. The camera was also there to gather evidence of any incidents which occurred at that location.

Police were very conscious of the possibility of Operation Abstract causing displacement within the neighbouring wards of which there are two. However, by working closely with the Police Intelligence Unit and other Community Beat Managers, this was regularly monitored and it was established that displacement was not caused. Two of the main offenders moved out of the locality altogether and now reside in a different area of Blackpool. This assisted the fact that they now had no viable reason to be in that area at any given time. The operation had assisted in preventing and deterring youths from committing offences of any kind all together.

Although Operation Abstract has been successful and it has had a dramatic effect on the decrease of crime and incidents, the very nature of the identified locations means they will require continual monitoring to maintain these results as the location is a factor that we cannot remove.

There is an intention to continue with the operation and regard it as a "living POP". Targeted Policing plans are already in place in anticipation of any potential disorder which may be caused in the school holidays. Regular contact is maintained with the all of the identified victims and support is given when required.

Further proactive tools have been suggested to the KFC Management and the possibility of them installing a sound system to play Country and Western Music, which will be played outside the store. This would act as an audible deterrent should youths congregate outside the store. Police have also suggested a KFC Code of Conduct poster be drawn up in relation to the type of behaviour that will and will not be tolerated within the store.

These are b



