

Tilley Award 2006

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 and within the word limit. Failure to do so could result in disqualification from the competition.

Completed application forms should be e-mailed to Tricia Perkins; patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on Friday 28th April 2006. No entries will be accepted after this time/date. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262. Any queries regarding other aspects of the awards should be directed to Michael Wilkinson on 0207 035 0247 or Lindsey Poole on 0207 035 0234.

Please tick box to indicate whether the entry should be considered for the main award, the criminal damage award or both;

Main award

Criminal Damage Award

Both Awards

1. Details of application

Title of the project **Leeds Weapons Awareness Programme**

Name of force/agency/CDRP: **'Safer Leeds' CDRP & West Yorkshire Police**

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

John Birkenshaw – Crime Reduction Manager

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Telephone number: **0113-39507830 or 07791-864260**

Fax number **0113-3950811**

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) **(1) Trevor Kerry
(2) Geoff Dodd, Chair of Leeds CDRP**

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) **(1) Police Superintendent (West Yorkshire Police)
& Chief Officer, Leeds City Council.
(2) Chief Superintendent (West Yorkshire Police)**

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s) **(1) Leeds Community Safety
Leeming House, Vicar Lane, Leeds LS2 7JF
(2) City & Holbeck Police Station.
10 Burton Road, Leeds, LS11 5EF**

2. Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project. Include details of the problem that was addressed a description of the initiative, the main intervention principles and what they were designed to achieve, the main outcomes of project particularly in relation to the problem, evidence was used in designing the programme and how the project is evaluated.

Home Office statistics show a growing trend of youths carrying and using weapons, particularly knives. There is also evidence to suggest there are large numbers of pupils taking weapons into schools. In recent years there have been a number of high profile cases where young people have been fatally stabbed.

A Home Office sponsored conference in Leeds in March 2004 discussed the issue of youth, guns and gangs.

The finding of the conference focused on four main areas:

1. Engaging Youth
2. Educating Youth
3. Diverting Youth from Crime
4. Victim Support (for victim and perpetrator families)

A steering group developed the Weapons Awareness Programme (WAP) for young people in Leeds. It has been designed to be informative and provides correct information and facts about weapons, including consequences of their use. It is graphic and impactful and discusses real case studies including explicit photographs of injuries and allows young people to make positive informed choices about the dangers of carrying weapons. The project is a true multi agency partnership which includes 130 volunteers who deliver the programme in schools and other youth organizations. The Youth Offending Service (YOS) refer young people it feels will benefit from it whilst Victim Support offer a specific programme of work by trained counsellors for both the victim and perpetrator families.

The aim of the project is to address the growing culture of young people carrying weapons and thus prevent fatalities or serious injuries.

From the outset the WAP was designed to be sustainable and has done so by becoming an integral part of curriculum in schools and training programmes in the YOS and youth organizations. The programme has the flexibility to respond to changing cultures and needs. It has the ability to train trainers and is now developing a response to the 'Respect Agenda' by offering parent education courses about the dangers of weapons.

Evaluation of the project indicates that schools are very satisfied with the WAP and that they really believe it is doing something constructive to address the growing problem of weapons not only within schools but society as a whole. Feedback from the programme participants shows that it has affected attitudes towards carrying weapons.

The key partners of the project are:

Leeds Community Safety, Community Action & Support Against Crime (CASAC), Leeds Youth Offending Service, Education Leeds, Leeds Youth Services & West Yorkshire Police.

3. Description of project

Describe the project following the guidance given in no more than 4000 words

The Problem

Knife crime in England and Wales has leapt by as much as 90% in two years in some areas, according to new police data. The steepest rises have been recorded by county forces outside the biggest cities. The figures, released under the Freedom of Information act and covering 2002-04, show a total of nearly 25,000 knife crimes last year logged by the 30 police forces that supplied the figures. Areas with the biggest rises include Devon and Cornwall, Lincolnshire and Bedfordshire, all of which also saw steep increases in overall violence.

The highest rise in knife crime was recorded by Nottinghamshire police. There, offences involving blades went up from 338 in 2002 to 650 last year, a rise of 92%. Last year there were 223 muggings using knives in the county, a rise of 43% since 2002.

Devon and Cornwall police saw knife-related incidents rise 41% from 108 in 2002 to 152 last year and Lincolnshire saw a 24% increase, including 16 incidents over the same period involving knives at schools.

Recent studies have shown that there has been an increase in the number of knives being taken to school. According to a study by the Youth Justice Board, 300,000 of the country's 10 million pupils regularly carry such weapons in school'.

"The figures give an indication of the reality of the situation we are facing. Lots and lots of people are carrying knives in public places," said Tony Melville, assistant chief constable of Devon and Cornwall and spokesman on knife crime for the Association of Chief Police Officers. "In many parts of society it now seems to be a credible and normal thing to carry a knife." (Source The Sunday Times October 23, 2005)

The use of weapons by young people is a growing concern within our society. There have been an increasing number of cases where fatal injuries have been caused by young people using knives and guns, some within the school environment. There seems to be a growing culture of acceptability among young people that carrying a weapon is somehow acceptable. Leeds is the fifth largest City in the UK and is currently the fastest growing and has seen a boom in both the daytime and night time economy. Leeds acknowledges that there are problems surrounding young people possessing of weapons and in an attempt to prevent the situation becoming a major issue, preventative action is being taken by way of an educational crime prevention initiative.

A few facts & figures

Extract from the summary of recorded crime statistics 1898 to 2005 - Recorded crime statistics England & Wales 1998 - 2004/05 (Source - Home Office)

YEAR	Possess Offensive Weapon	Wounding or other acts endangering life
1991		10,741
1992		10,701
1993		11,033
1994		10,445
1995		12,169
1996		12,531
1997		12,833
1997/98		13,960
1998/99	23,635	14,006
1999/2000	23,792	15,135
2000/01	24,552	15,662
2001/02	28,787	16,547
2002/03	32,097	17,875
2003/04	34,975	19,358
2004/05	35,727	19,425

Chart 1

Chart 1 above figures clearly show and increase in the number of offences for possessing offensive weapons and a more significant increase in the number of wounding or other acts endangering life. In 1991 the number of offences of wounding broke the 10,000 barrier and today they are set to double that figure. A significant proportion involves the use of some sort of weapon.

'Possession of weapons - Long-term national recorded crime trend

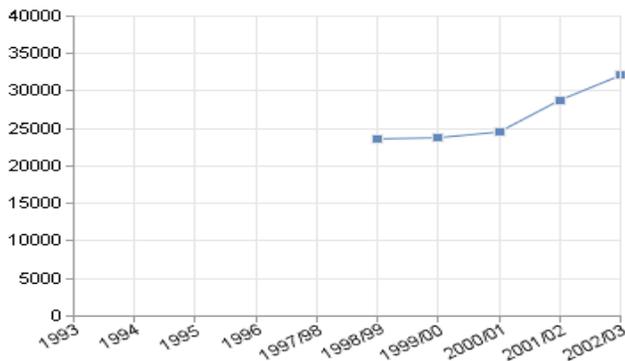


Chart 2 (Source: Research Development and Statistics (CRCSG) Home Office)

Chart 2 shows the number of offences of possessing offensive weapons has risen from 23,635 offences in 1998/99 to 34,975 offences in 2003/04. It should be noted that offences of possession of a weapon were introduced into the recorded crime series from 1 April 1998.

A few significant cases in recent years

- ❖ On April 22nd 1993 Stephen Lawrence was stabbed to death in Eltham, South-East London
- ❖ Police Constable Lewis Fulton was knifed through the heart in June 1994 in Glasgow by a teenager.
- ❖ Luke Walmsley, aged 14, was stabbed to death at Birkbeck School, in North Somercotes, Lincolnshire on Tuesday 4th November 2003 by another pupil at the school.
- ❖ Kieran Rodney-Davis aged 15 was fatally wounded in June 2004 in Fulham, west London.
- ❖ Robert Levy aged 16 was stabbed to death in Hackney, East London on 16th September 2004.
- ❖ Shanni Naylor, a 12 year old girl needed 30 stitches in her face after she was slashed across the face by another pupil at a school in Sheffield on Wednesday 19th October 2005.
- ❖ Mahir Osman aged 18-year was stabbed to death in Camden Town, London on 28th January 2006.

In London more than 12,000 knife related offences take place every year and knives are the most commonly used weapon by teen criminals. Half those accused of a knife robbery in London were 15 to 18. (Source: Metropolitan Police)

The Background

The initiative was developed in response to the findings of a Home Office sponsored conference held in Leeds in March 2004 which was organised by the 'Safer Leeds' Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership. The conference discussed issues of youth, guns and gangs and attracted over 120 people from various sections of city, including public and private sector organisations, community representatives and faith groups. Guest speakers from the Crown Prosecution Service, West Yorkshire Police, Leeds Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Mothers Against Guns gave short presentations that were followed by facilitated workshops.

The finding of the conference focused on four main areas:

1. Engaging Youth
2. Educating Youth
3. Diverting Youth from Crime
4. Victim Support (for both the victim and perpetrator families)

A steering group was formed to develop a strategy to progress the conference findings. The steering group consisted of members from West Yorkshire Police, Leeds Youth Offending Service, voluntary sector organizations and the Local Authority departments of Youth Services, Community Safety, Education and Learning & Leisure. The steering group held regular monthly meetings to discuss progress of the project and continued to do so.

At this time, the Youth Offending Service in Leeds was actively looking at various initiatives aimed at preventing weapons related crime. They found that Newham Borough in London had piloted the 'Be-Safe' weapons awareness programme and it was their intention to integrate the 'Be-Safe' programme into the Leeds Youth Offending Service training programme.

Home Office and Leeds Youth Offending Service funding enabled Leeds Community Safety (a section of Leeds City Council that works in partnership with West Yorkshire Police to support the 'Safer Leeds' Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership) to develop the intended Youth Offending Service 'Be-Safe' programme and expand it to include a wider section of the youth of the city. The intention was to create and deliver a sustainable weapons awareness programme in conjunction with partner agencies. The scheme would engage with young people across Leeds and include all high schools and youth organisations. In addition, victim support specifically for victims and families of weapons related crime was also being developed.

Leeds Community Safety joined forces with CASAC (Community Action and Support Against Crime - a voluntary sector project management organisation) to manage the project. They engaged with Leeds Youth Offending Service, Leeds Youth Services, Education Leeds, West Yorkshire Police and the voluntary sector to deliver a weapons awareness programme to the youth of Leeds. This project is believed to be largest social crime reduction initiative of its kind ever undertaken in the Country. The Weapons Awareness Programme is informative, hard-hitting and impactive. It discusses the risks and consequences associated with carrying or using weapons.

The Weapons Awareness Programme (WAP)

The programme initially involved recruiting and training volunteers from a cross section of statutory and voluntary organisations to deliver weapons awareness sessions to young people in Leeds. The project commenced with a recruiting drive to recruit and vet 100 trainers within the first year. The trainers were trained in groups of 15 by the 'Be-Safe' team and commenced in September 2004. They attend a two day course and are assessed on a pass or fail basis. It is important for the credibility of the scheme that high standards are required and maintained.

The initial feedback from the newly qualified trainers was excellent; indeed many said it was the best course they had ever attended. News of the programme quickly spread by word of mouth and by direct contact with organisations and agencies. The target of 100 trainers was achieved. There are currently 130 qualified trainers consisting of police officers (all Leeds youth & schools police officers), neighbourhood wardens, YOS officers, teachers, youth worker together with a variety of staff from within Leeds City Council and partner agencies.

The programme consists of a presentation that provides young people with correct information and facts about weapons, including consequences of their use. It is designed to be informative, graphic and impactive and discusses real case studies, including explicit photographs of injuries, and allows them to make positive informed choices. The training of trainers is undertaken by a company called 'Be Safe' which has delivered successful pilots in various London Boroughs, including Newham, where the feedback is rated as extremely positive.

CASAC employed a WAP co-coordinator to engage with schools in Leeds and co-ordinate the activities of the trainers and to ensure that relevant data is captured on a database. The first year focused on the preparation of the training staff, although many of the newly qualified trainers started delivering the programme immediately. This was seen as an opportunity to pilot the scheme and identify any problems that may arise.

The objectives of the project:

- ❖ To deliver a Weapons Awareness Programme in a way that fits the 'Be-Safe' ethos.
- ❖ To assist and contribute in the reduction of youth offending and youth re-offending.
- ❖ To assist in the reduction of the numbers of weapons being carried by young people.
- ❖ To promote a safer community
- ❖ To provide young people with the correct information and facts about weapons allowing them to make an informed choice as to whether they carry or not.

The training course focuses on the following:

- a. The law relating to possession & use of weapons
- b. Medical implications of gun/knife use
- c. Living with taking a life
- d. Arming your attacker
- e. Effects of clinical shock
- f. Consequences to families, friends & victims
- g. No safe targets
- h. Is a gun/knife ever a defensive weapon?
- i. Revenge, reprisals and your actions
- j. Making an informed choice

The course was developed specifically for young people in order for it to be effective. It has been designed to encompass the principles of sensitivity, discretion and confidentiality (subject to the limitations of group work and Child Protection Good Practice Guidelines) and enables young people to feel:

- ❖ Non-stigmatised
- ❖ Safe and supported
- ❖ Comfortable

It is committed to equal opportunities and is intended to safeguard them from any form of discrimination.

Education Element (Education Leeds & West Yorkshire Police)

A pool of 130 volunteer trainers are co-ordinated by CASAC and deliver the programme at:

All high schools in Leeds (particularly year 7 and all other years – if schools so wish).

All voluntary sector youth organisation in Leeds.

YOS have their own trainers and refer young people they feel will benefit from the scheme.

The main target group for the programme is all Year 7 (11-12 years), as research shows that this age group is deemed to be more susceptible to peer pressure, having recently made the transition from primary to higher education. Other target groups include young offenders; young people excluded from school, disaffected and disengaged young people (referral through outreach work).

There is separate work being progressed within primary schools by the Yorkshire Women's Theatre group which is seen as key to the initiative and complements the 'Be Safe' programme for older children. The work is focused on younger children (9-11 years) in primary schools around the consequences of carrying weapons in general. It is also designed to raise awareness of acquisitive crime, where violence and weapons are used, as a tactic to prevent young people from becoming victims of violent crime.

The intention is to try to adopt a long term proactive approach to tackling gun crime in Leeds by targeting not only those young people at risk today but also the 'next generation' of potential victims and perpetrators. Youth workers across Leeds have become trainers and are able to deliver the programme within their own organisational settings. The Cadet Force organisations have been keen to engage in the project and are actively seeking to train their instructors on a wide scale to enable them to deliver it within not only their own, but other youth organisations as part of a wider community partnership role.

Diverting Youth from Crime Element (Youth Offending Service)

The diversion element of the Initiative involves referrals to the programme of young people at risk. The trigger offences are those offences that involve aggression or violence. The definition has been kept fairly wide and is also open to the discretion of the officer referring the young offender, using the analogy 'from little acorns, oak trees grow' and the well used term 'nipping it in the bud' in an attempt to prevent progression to more serious offences.

Victim and Witness Care Element (Victim Support)

Leeds Victim Support is a key partner in the scheme and offer support to victim's families by specially trained counsellors. They carry out joint agency work and co-ordinate their activities from a newly opened 'Community Contact Point' in the Chapeltown area of Leeds. It is available for use by all partner agencies for meetings, counselling sessions and 'Police & Partner' "surgeries". It is designed to forge closer links between agencies and the community and to encourage local people to provide vital information and act as witnesses to crime, in particular those that involve weapons within the local community.

Launch of the project

The Weapons Awareness Programme was officially launched at a school in Leeds on Thursday 28th April 2005 by Jane Walmsley, the mother of Luke aged 14, who was tragically stabbed to death at Birkbeck School, in North Somercotes, Lincolnshire on Tuesday 4th November 2003.

The 'Be Safe' programme has already attracted a great deal of media attention whilst it has been developing. BBC Panorama has featured the scheme in a documentary programme and BBC Radio Leeds has featured a half hour show dedicated to the initiative. It has received recognition in various national and local newspapers also.

The Home Secretary Charles Clarke attended a presentation at a school in Leeds on Tuesday 7th February 2006 and concluded that he was pleased with what he had seen. He felt that the shocking images used in the session were very effective and that it is important to realise the horrendous impact weapons can have because injuries are very real.

Key Outputs

- ❖ 2,975 young people in Leeds have received WAP Training (aged 7-16)
- ❖ 2,888 young people have received WAP Training in schools
- ❖ 87 young people have received WAP training in Youth Organisations
- ❖ 30 schools across Leeds are currently engaged in WAP
- ❖ 65 sessions have been delivered in schools
- ❖ 12 youth organisations are currently engaged in WAP
- ❖ 36 Sessions have been delivered in Youth Organisations
- ❖ 130 trainers are currently trained to deliver the Weapons Awareness Programme

Monitoring and Feedback

Young People

- ❖ 991 questionnaires have been completed by young people = 33% response rate
- ❖ 33 Leeds High Schools out of a total of 60 have received the WAP. (55%)

(Part of questionnaire identifies if the young person has knowledge/experience of weapons and if WAP has made them more aware of the impact of carrying weapons)

How would you describe your knowledge of weapons - (particularly guns and knives)

Statement	Prior to the session		Following the session	
I have little or no knowledge of weapons	308	31%	89	9%
I have some knowledge of weapons	561	57%	625	63%
I know a lot about weapons	122	12%	277	28%

If appropriate please tick one of the following boxes

I know someone who carries a knife/gun	325	33%
I have/do carry a knife/gun	289	29%
I know someone who has used a knife/gun as a weapon	174	18%
I have used a knife/gun as a weapon	30	3%

Comments from Young People

- ❖ *'My final opinion about the presentation is that it made me think about the consequences of knives and guns. It was very visual and shocking but the shock factor is good as it sticks with you'.*
- ❖ *'My final opinion of the presentation is that it is very good and I learnt a lot. One way the presentation could have been improved would be by giving more information on the impact of guns'.*
- ❖ *'I found this interesting because it helped me understand in more depth the results of what can happen if a person carries a weapon for self defence. Also, as the girl was a similar age to me it enabled me to put myself in her position'.*
- ❖ *'The most thought provoking aspect was that I learnt that involving you in knife situations is best avoided'.*
- ❖ *'My opinion about that presentation is that it was really informative and that it really taught you about consequences. I am more aware about the dangers of carrying a weapon'.*
- ❖ *'Overall I would say that I have learnt that weapons are dangerous and I have now got more knowledge of what damage they can cause'.*
- ❖ *'The most thought provoking aspect was how dangerous carrying or possessing a knife can be. Knives are much more dangerous than I first thought. Dummy guns are dangerous too'.*
- ❖ *'The key points from the presentation were that knives kill and there is no safe place to stab someone. I found the stories interesting and the pictures thought provoking'.*
- ❖ *'The part of the presentation I found most thought provoking was the story of the young girl who was killed using her own knife. I learnt that knives cause a lot of damage'.*

WAP Trainers - Interview Responses

- ❖ 13 trainers were contacted (10% of total)
- ❖ 9 responded, giving a 70% response rate

Did you find the course informative?	YES 9	NO 0
Do you feel the young people benefited from the WAP sessions?	YES 9	NO 0
Types of comments received	Positive 9	Negative 0
Have you experienced any difficulties in delivering the sessions?	No 9	YES 0
Would you like to see WAP incorporated into the school curriculum?	YES 9	NO 0

Comments from trainers

- ❖ *"Brilliant and Educational"*
- ❖ *"In relation to Gun Crime this package educates and dispels myth and brings home the facts of gun crime"*
- ❖ *"This is a valuable project which save lives"*
- ❖ *"This is an excellent opportunity for the police to engage with young people about an important issue"*
- ❖ *"The training was informative and has changed my opinion on weapons and knife crime"*
- ❖ *"A hard hitting project which gives young people the opportunity to modify their behaviour and attitude"*

PC Bob Bowman (one of the most experienced WAP trainers) Chapeltown Police Division, Leeds:

- ❖ *"At the start of every session I ask the class who would inform on anyone carrying a weapons. The response is usually one or in most cases none. At the end of the session I ask the same question and response is the complete opposite, usually most of the class indicate they would inform on someone carrying a weapon"*

PC Bowman goes on to say:

- ❖ *"This programme is making a real difference, evidence of this is a couple of weeks ago I got information from one of my schools that there were a number of pupils in possession of offensive weapons. I and my colleagues went to the school and recovered 9 assorted weapons from the 9 pupils. This information originated from a pupil at the school."*

Response from schools

All the schools where the WAP has been introduced are totally in favour of the programme being continued and delivered across a wider range of years. One head teacher commented *"At first I was sceptical about the programme but now that I have seen it first hand and listened to the comments from my pupils, there is no doubt that it is an excellent idea and one that actually makes an impact on the minds of those that have listened to it"*

The data capturing has now been modified to include the number of weapons recovered from schools and youth organisations after the programme has been delivered to them.

Future of the Project

Sustained funding over a 2 year period has enabled a specific project manager to develop the WAP into becoming a sustainable project by becoming an integral part of the Youth Offending Service and education in Leeds. The WAP will continue to be delivered within the Youth Offending Service by YOS staff and within schools by the police schools liaison officers. The youth services within Leeds City Council are undergoing a review and restructure and they too will integrate the programme into their work, which will mean that the WAP will be delivered to youth organisations in a more structured and sustained way. West Yorkshire Police have now trained all their schools liaison officers to deliver the project force-wide, thus the programme is now spreading county wide.

Respect Agenda

The tremendous success of the WAP with young people has now steered the project to look at ways of expanding into the area of parent education courses. Further funding is being sought to deliver the programme to parent groups and especially to those families that are identified as being more at risk, in a more intensive way.

