

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 Operation Reduction

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Brighton and Hove Police/ Brighton and Hove Drug and Alcohol Action Team/ Crime Reduction Initiatives/ South Downs Health Trust

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

DCI Graham Bartlett

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Full postal address:

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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) Nigel Yeo

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) Assistant Chief Constable

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s)

Sussex Police Headquarters
Malling House, Church Lane
Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2DZ

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.

Brighton and Hove had the highest drugs death rate in the country for a number of years. In 2001 this was 48 - 2% of injecting drugs users, higher than London and Liverpool. The wider drug problem meant an estimated 2% of 15- 44 year olds in Brighton was an injector of opiates compared to 1.5% in Liverpool and 1.7% in Inner London.

The city suffered comparably higher levels of acquisitive crime than the neighbouring towns in Sussex. For example 856 house burglaries, 1217 vehicle crimes, and 298 robbery offences in the year to 30/9/05 in the drugs hotspot area.

The partnership decided to instigate Op Reduction. Its objectives were to:

- Increase the number of drug users in treatment services.
- To reduce levels of crime within the hotspot area.
- Reduce fear of crime within the hotspot area.
- Reduce reports of anti-social behaviour in the hotspot area.
- Increase people's feeling of safety in the hotspot area.

The mechanism to achieve this was to undertake back to back test purchase operations complemented by high visibility patrols in hot spots. The police and CRI would then determine those users who were identified as creating the market during the test purchase operations or through other intelligence and whose offending was most problematic. The 51 users selected had 2019 previous convictions.

CRI and the Police carried out joint patrols and engaged those users offering them a fast track into treatment. This was provided by South Downs Health Trust. The alternative the users were presented with would be enforcement of any and all offences that came to light. The police would also ensure that any future plea for drug treatment made through the courts by a defendant was countered with evidence of them being offered and having turned down treatment through this initiative if that was the case.

This tactic was using evidence of good practice seen in West Yorkshire and in Brighton in respect of drug addicted offenders but developed the tactics further to prevent the re-emergence of the drug market after the operational phase.

For those who engaged a case work forum approach was taken with targeted care planned work.

3. Description of project

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

Operation REDUCTION was conceived in June 2005. Planning and a trial run during a separate but connected Operation was carried out through the summer of 2005 culminating in an arrest phase in October 2005. In November 2005 Operation REDUCTION went live and the project is explained below.

Since October 2004 Brighton and Hove Police have been carrying out back to back Test Purchase operations in tandem with overt high visibility work and timely execution of MDA warrants. These operations were always hugely successful resulting in large scale arrests for Supply of Class A drug offences. Equally the convictions at court as a result of these arrests were very high and the sentences received were lengthy due to the seriousness of the crimes committed. The drug seizures have grown as a result of this work throughout the year and the impact on acquisitive crime was always instant although never sustained. The time frames before reorganised drug dealers opened up the market fully again, fuelling the users demand activity and the crime required to be committed to fund their habits, was only short lived and ranged from 3 to 4 weeks .

In June 2005 the operational head decided to instigate Operation REDUCTION which was designed to change the thinking and practices around the police and treatment activity around drug dealers and users up to that date.

Operation REDUCTION has developed into a police and joint agency working practice that ties together the previous activity (overt and covert) from the police with Crime Reduction Initiative, outreach workers, specially trained police officers in a street intervention role, with treatment staff/places and prolific and priority offender schemes.

In principle the Police operation sets out to identify Class A drug dealers, locations for this activity, addresses, hot spots and identifying the movements of users, often in large numbers, responding to the demands of their dealers. During this part of REDUCTION the covert police officers, intelligence staff and Local Support Teams identify not only dealers but the users. Some of the users identified would appear at a location where covert police work was taking place around a particular dealer on a daily basis. Intelligence around those individuals then identified the level and consistency of their criminality both in street crime and other acquisitive crime. This allowed the teams involved at this point showing clear evidence of how drug use fuelled crime across the city and the need for virtually all of the users identified to commit large scale crime to fund their habits.

At this point during operations in the past dealers would be arrested and dealt with through the courts but rarely did the users come into contact with police or other agencies. This clearly had to be addressed as the demand in the City only existed because of the user population which if reduced through Operation REDUCTION would effect both the interest from travelling dealers looking for the most lucrative outlet, the crime figures in Brighton and Hove impacting on the police, the public reassured because of less crime and anti social behaviour, and the prison service with less numbers receiving custodial sentences.

Crime Reduction Initiative committed to changing the outreach service that existed from the cell block and court rooms only to proactive outreach teams responding to intelligence led referrals of the most prolific users and criminals,. This would be carried out with specially trained police officers working alongside the outreach staff. Equally additionally funded treatment places for priority treatment and care were supplied to allow a priority service for those identified and assessed and most needy both because of their individual habit and the impact on crime and society that their behaviour was having.

A structured working group at a strategic level was set up for all the services involved that separated the covert police activity and enforcement work from the outreach and treatment work but allowing them to work very much together neither being truly successful without the other. This process and the specially trained police officers working with CRI allowed a process to be in place to keep covert sensitive activity rightly separate but effectively fuelling the work carried out by the outreach teams on the correctly identified users. Some of these users were already in treatment but not engaging well, some had never been in treatment before and many not even known to treatment services.

Op Reduction undertook two cycles of Test purchase operation between June 2005 the preliminary operation and April 2006. This resulted in:

- 204 people arrested for supply offences
- 195 of those convicted for supplying/possession with intent to supply/ money laundering and conspiracy to supply offences

These arrests which were both large in number and effective in both the evidence obtained and convictions received resulted in a huge amount of drugs being seized which is continuing daily. So far those seizures amount to approx:

- Heroin – 7kg
- 95 wraps/rocks of crack cocaine
- Cocaine – 3kg
- Ecstasy – in excess of 5,000 tablets
- Amphetamine – 1.5 kg
- Cannabis – 23 kg plus in excess of 70 plants
- £50,000 in cash has been seized
- £500,000 in assets recovery is currently in the court process
- Weapons recovered including firearms, knives etc

Despite these outstanding results with the high arrests for serious offences and the recovery of large amounts of drugs this picture had been seen many times before. The importance of sustaining the results and creating a bigger impact on crime and reducing both the demand for drugs in the city and the effect of such behaviour on the community can now only be achieved by the newly developed part of the operation. Concentrating on the users identified during the above work was critical as well as using a carrot and stick approach to create two options for the users treatment and help to clear their habit and stop offending or continue to evidence their behaviour through the police activity and certain prison sentences.

The effect of this approach has seen the following results so far:

- 51 users referred to treatment
- 26 users case worked
- 22 Accessing structured treatment
- 5 in Residential rehab
- 10 Receiving substitute prescribing
- 7 Accessing treatment through CARAT service

The impact of such identified offenders and users being giving such effective and sustained help is clearly evident when you look at the 51 users so far referred and their offending history:

- Earliest conviction 1970
- Last conviction Jan 2006

- Total convictions **2019**
- 172 Burglary convictions = £446,340 (Social Cost)
- 185 Violence Convictions = £3,515,000 (Social Cost)
- 97 Vehicle Crime Convictions = £96,030 (Social Cost)

The convictions mentioned (2019) are only a reflection on those offences for which these individuals have been caught and convicted. It is accepted that this figure for the actual offending history of these 51 users is more likely to be many times that amount. This provides a clear picture of the benefits of Op REDUCTION in preventing this level of crime ever occurring through treatment because the only reason these people are committing this amount of crime is to fund huge drug habits.

As a combined operation of which now we are in our six month we have seen staggering results in both crime reduction, public reassurance, reduction in drug related deaths and increased users into structured treatment.

Those results have been sustained over this period and continue to drop. Additionally at the time of writing another 16 users have been identified by police into the referral team of both police and outreach staff for assessment and then proactive intervention on the street. This will culminate in two options for the identified offenders firstly treatment which will offer them a chance to leave their habit behind them and restructure their lives without drugs and crime removing them from the chaotic and destructive cycle they are in. Secondly because of the police operations evidence is obtained of offending giving those that choose not to be helped through treatment services and to change their ways no alternative but potential repeated prison sentences.

The results on crime have been:

- Burglary Dwelling reduced by 48%
- Vehicle Crime reduced by 45%
- Robbery reduced by 26%
- 70% drop in drug related calls from the public
- 32% drop in anti social behaviour

An example of the success of this initiative is the case of 'S'. Of all those mentioned he has the most convictions (120). He has been a prolific and priority offender for some years. He has realised that the opportunity OP REDUCTION has presented him provides him with a fast track into treatment or relentless enforcement for his acquisitive crime offending. He is now in detox and rehabilitation and is making excellent progress.

The outreach workers are now as a result of the last six months work on Op REDUCTION reporting a desire from those not on the referral programme to be offered the same service. This has meant that both the police operation and the Crime Reduction Initiative have had to expand the resources involved and increase the medical places available due to this extremely successful operation. More outreach workers are on the street interacting with those that want help rather than carrying out this role in custody blocks or court rooms where the audience is less likely to mean what they say when they commit to treatment.

Police officers in new roles working with outreach have demonstrated that barriers can be removed as far as interaction with users is concerned. This was demonstrated vividly by a rehabilitated user attending one of the operations meetings recently and clearly identifying how a sergeant on the street team and the outreach worker as a pair had saved him from what he referred to as a certain early death.

The Home Office have seen the impact of this operation and committed to support it with additional funding for a further year. REDUCTION has and continues to demonstrate how the joining of police and partner agencies to tackle street drug dealing, and the demand from users can reduce crime significantly,

sustain such reductions, place more people that need it into treatment, change lives, and reduce fear.

This operation is making a difference to many people and those involved are dedicated as a joint agency team to continuing with the already very successful work and to make this style of policing main stream business for tackling the huge problem area of drug abuse and related acquisitive crime.