

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 Tackling Vehicle Crime at the Odyssey – A Partnership Approach

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Police Service of Northern Ireland

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

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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) ACC Drew Harris

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

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s) PSNI Knocknagoney, 29 Knocknagoney Road,
Belfast, BT4 2PP

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.

Odyssey is the Landmark Millennium Project for Northern Ireland and is comprised of W5, an interactive Science Centre for children and adults, Odyssey Arena, a 9,000 seat venue, Odyssey Pavilion, a bowling alley, cinema and restaurants and an IMAX Cinema, The Venue currently receives around 4.2 million visitors a year and the car park over 600k vehicles per year. It is situated within the Belfast Harbour Complex convenient to the M3 and other main arterial routes. Belfast City Centre is 2 minutes away.

The Odyssey Trust Company Ltd (OTC) and PSNI began their partnership in 2000 in anticipation of the public attendance at the venue and the potential for crime levels to increase as the area moved from traditional cargo and portage to retail, entertainment and leisure. The Odyssey Centre is open 7 days a week from 10.00 am to 1.30 am.

- Initial meetings involved a wider consultative group, including Roads Service and Belfast Harbour Police.
- Despite the introduction of Police CCTV cameras in 2000, the car park and surrounding area were targeted by car criminals at levels commensurate with the opening and expansion of attractions at the Odyssey Pavilion.
- Vehicle theft levels that were nil in 1999/2000, rose to 58 in 2001/2002 and 156 in 2002/2003 by which time the venue was almost fully open.
- The scale of car crime over Christmas 2002/ New Year concentrated the partnership between OTC and PSNI on the need to re-examine existing control measures.

ANALYSIS

The Operations Director and Car Park Manager from OTC along with Community Safety Sergeant and Crime Prevention Officer from East Belfast DCU initiated a review of car park security at the Odyssey site. Measures introduced through a new regime of bi-weekly meetings, included:

1. Additional Odyssey Car Park CCTV cameras.
2. Pruning of trees and vegetation.
3. Additional private security patrols (Hi-visibility).
4. Improved fencing at identified escape points.
5. Improved Police CCTV monitoring facilities at Strandtown PSNI.
6. Introduction of a Radiolink Service between Police and OTC Security.
7. Analysis of incident data from OTC Car Park Security and PSNI.
8. Improved liaison with adjoining DCUs regarding anti-car crime operations.
9. Police operations using surveillance and OCU resources.

The Police side of the partnership also considered the car crime problem in streets abutting the OTC Car Park and many of the measures introduced directly addressed the activity of criminals moving to and from the Odyssey area.

RESULTS

- The result of the partnership effort has been a year-by-year decrease in vehicle and associated crime.
- Levels of vehicle theft decreased by 72% in 2003/2004 and car crime now stands at 90% below the high level reached in 2002/2003 when the Partnership first addressed the issue.
- Associated crimes such as theft from vehicles and criminal damage have also decreased by 64% and 76% respectively.
- The OTC Car Park was awarded the Secured Car Park Awards in 2003, 2004 and 2005, and in February 2006 they were awarded the Park Mark Award, which is a Charter Mark endorsed by ACPO. These awards were in recognition of the work done by OTC and were progressed through PSNI Crime Prevention in East Belfast and Headquarters.
- The OTC/PSNI Partnership continues to meet bi-weekly and making full use of the NIM process, strive to maintain public safety and reduce crime levels in and around the Odyssey area.

3. Description of project - Describe the project following the guidance given in more more than 4000 words -

Introduction and Background

The Odyssey Complex is a short distance from Belfast City Centre which opened its doors in November 2000. Since then it has become Northern Ireland's leading leisure and entertainment attraction. The Arena draws crowds in excess of 9000 to ice hockey and concert events on a weekly basis however with the opening of the Odyssey Pavilion in 2001 the number of entertainment venues increased, as did the footfall and car park usage (632,000 vehicles on average each year 2003 to 2005). The Odyssey is now fully open and an estimated 4.2 million people use the complex annually.

A partnership approach between the Odyssey Trust Company Limited (OTC) and Police was initiated in 2000 with an extension of Police CCTV to the Queens Quay area. This was a predictive measure, as crime in the area was clearly very low at that time but was one that provided a practical approach and a clear statement of partnership intent.

The Odyssey Car Park can accommodate 1500 vehicles and is attributed as one of the largest managed surface car park spaces in Belfast. It has two exit and entrance points, and on large audience nights the car park is filled to capacity with use being made of an overflow on site as well as adjacent roads and open spaces around the complex

As Odyssey continued to develop and open new venues, the level of public usage and vehicle traffic increased through 2001 and 2002. Attendant on this increase came a commensurate increase in car crime with thieves being attracted by the sheer volume of parked vehicles surrounding the venue. Statistics show that in 2001/2002 58 vehicles were stolen from the area around the complex. In 2002/2003 156 vehicle thefts occurred in the areas proximate to the complex, which included the designated car parking areas. 200 associated vehicle crimes also occurred.

The Partnership followed the SARA Problem Solving Model and references to the applicable action; SCAN; Acquire/Analyse; Response and Assessment are italicised and included in this document.

Objectives of the Partnership

The objectives of the Partnership were drawn up in accordance with the Odyssey Trust Company mission statement, which is:

To establish, hold, manage and safeguard the investment in the Odyssey Project for the benefit of all of the people of Northern Ireland.

The Police Service aim, in conjunction with our local Policing Plan is:

To work with our partner agencies to reduce and prevent vehicle crime and the fear of crime in the area of the Odyssey, the associated car parks and roadways surrounding the complex.

In drawing together these aims the following objectives were set.

To reduce vehicle crime in the area in accordance with the Local Policing Plan.

To provide a safe environment for the Public at Odyssey.

To increase Public Confidence in use of Odyssey Car Parks.

To work in partnership with Odyssey on matters of Community Safety.

To encourage and promote a thriving Business and Entertainment Centre in East Belfast and Northern Ireland.

Success would be measured in the following terms:-

Levels of recorded crime.

Usage of Odyssey Complex.

Usage of Car Park area.

Definition of the Problem - Analysis

Background to the theft of and from vehicles:

Everyone has the right to live their lives without fear for their own or others safety in the places they live, work or visit. "Crime and the fear of crime can destroy the lives of innocent victims" Paul Murphy Secretary of State 2003.

While victims of vehicle crime may not be considered to suffer the same trauma as victims of violent crimes against the person, over 80% of people are emotionally affected when their vehicle is broken into or stolen.

In the NI Crime survey 2002, revealed that over a quarter of respondents believed it would be likely to be a victim of theft from their car within the following year.

Aside from the emotional distress suffered by victims of this crime, there is also financial trauma with an estimate that it costs on average £350 through loss of items, damage repair to the vehicle and an increase in Insurance premiums, and add to this the overall impact on Public resources and this shows that the overall impact of this type of crime is significant.

In February 2003 the issue of car crime at the Odyssey was subjected to crime analysis in the DCU, in the lead up to the implementation of the National Intelligence Model in East Belfast in April 2003.

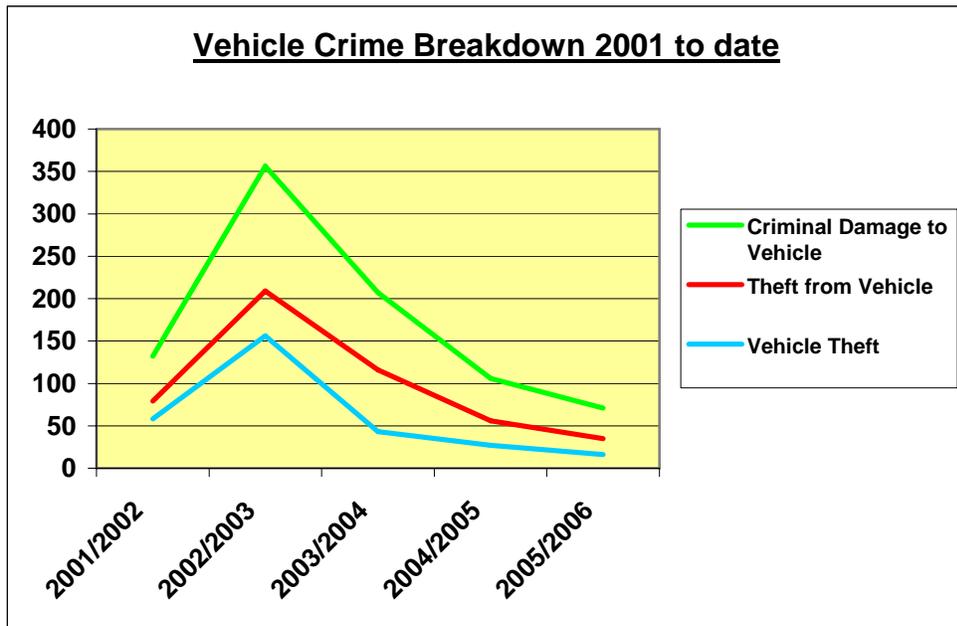
Analysis from OTC, derived from car park security staff, also indicated a steady increase in crime through 2002. (sAra)

It was felt that an element of displacement from adjoining Police Districts could also be contributing to the surges in crime.

It was apparent that the level of CCTV surveillance, security and Police patrolling was an insufficient deterrent to criminals. This situation was beginning to receive media coverage and it was felt that this could lead to a loss of confidence by the Public, affecting business at the complex as well as a failure by Police to meet the local Policing priorities being set by the nascent DPPs. (sAra)

CRIME BREAKDOWN

	2001 / 2002	2002 / 2003	2003 / 2004	2004 / 2005	2005 / 2006	% change since 2002/20 03
Vehicle Theft	58	156	43	27	16	- 89.7%
Theft from Vehicle	21	53	73	29	19	-64.2%
Criminal Damage to Vehicle *	53	147	91	50	36	- 75.5%



Response to the Problem

Since the inception of the Odyssey Complex; Police, Odyssey Trust Company, Odyssey Arena, Belfast Harbour Police and the Road Services have met regularly to discuss traffic issues and resolve problems on a partnership footing.

The escalating car crime concentrated the efforts of Police and OTC on this issue in particular and led to a series of practical measures designed to deter and prevent car crime as well as the implementation of procedures to improve our respective professional capacities to deal with the problem.

In the face of diminishing Police resources in the early stages of the Patten Implementation Plan, which was the restructuring in 2002 of the Royal Ulster Constabulary into PSNI and realignment of local District Command Units, it was not feasible to saturate the area with Police resources to the detriment of the greater public in East Belfast District. The population of the District at last census was 67,000.

The partnership in 2003 resolved to tackle the problem and it was felt that the following measures (*saRa*) would make a significant impact on crime:

Stakeholders Inputs

Physical measures were introduced to the car park area by OTC, which included the installation of a security kiosk; improved and in places, additional fencing, near the outer perimeter; additional security hi-visibility guards at peak times; cone systems designed to gather cars into one 'watchable' area at low peak usage times; blocked egress at Station Street exit/entrance to restrict opportunities for stolen cars thieves to evade Security Personnel.

Improved CCTV surveillance at OTC Control room, by the purchase of 9 additional CCTV cameras to cover car park areas and hotspots identified. Also an internal 'identification grid' was devised and sent to all staff. This assisted the CCTV operators to quickly identify areas within the car park, aiding the reaction to and recording of any incidents.

New cameras were also fitted at the exit barriers to capture the images of drivers leaving the car park.

Trees and vegetation were pruned in and around the car parks to enhance CCTV coverage. This action was balanced against the diminishing of aesthetic standards on the site but set against the enhanced security offered by pruning it was thought to be more prudent to assist with the overall security of the site.

Police Service Inputs

Incorporation of the three existing PSNI CCTV cameras into a new suite at Strandtown that would be monitored 24/7. Measures were introduced to improve the sharing of information, on 24/7 basis, between CCTV operators in Strandtown Police CCTV Suite and the OTC Control room at the Odyssey. This resulted in a very effective and speedy information exchange at crucial times.

Combined anti-car crime operations with adjoining DCUs and the sharing of information in advance of planned operations. These included both covert and overt operations and on some occasions also relied on assistance of the Air Support Unit by utilising the Police helicopter.

Improved signage as part of the 'Look, Lock and Leave' initiative was used around the car park areas, as were posters from the NIO Initiative, "If they see it they'll steal it" in 2004/2005.

An additional Police CCTV camera at Station Street/Middlepath Street. In partnership with Laganside Corporation and a Local Business an additional CCTV camera was placed in the Station Street area that could monitor the movement of car thieves and provide reassurance to the Public moving in and out of the Odyssey site.

Radiolink to OTC, security and CCTV at Strandtown. The implementation of this communication initiative permitted the rapid 'turnaround' of information between Car Park Security, OTC Control Room, PSNI CCTV operators and PSNI patrolling the Odyssey area.

Traffic Forum

Bi-monthly Traffic and Security meetings continue to be held with emphasis on planning in the lead up to major events which were likely to draw increased public attendance and vehicular traffic. This forum although primarily dealing with associated public safety issues on site, has a remit to discuss major events and the accumulation of large volumes of traffic on site at any given time particularly between 7.00 pm and 11.00pm on event nights. The Forum included representatives from Road Service, Harbour Police, OTC, Roads Policing and Sector Police. The accumulation of concert traffic when added to normal traffic visiting the other venues ie Cinema, restaurant Bars and Clubs, adds significantly to the numbers of vehicles on site posing both traffic movement and crime prevention challenges.

Media – Public Awareness

Media strategy adopted between PSNI Press Office and local district resources and Odyssey Trust Company, to inform members of the public to travel early to attend big events and thus they were able to park securely in the car parks by not arriving late for events. DRD messaging systems on the M2 and at Sandyknowes were used to inform travelling attendees if the car parks were available in order to encourage them into such secure sites. This also advised travelling motorists on which arterial route to travel to the site, to improve speedy access and parking capabilities.

Protocols

Furthermore, in endeavouring to pursue good practice, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2003 between the PSNI, the Harbour Commissioners and the Harbour Police. The MoU was drawn up to improve the protocols and demarcation of responsibility for matters such as car crime, traffic issues and public order in the Belfast Harbour Estate, which though legally private, was becoming, de facto, a public area. (sara)

Monitoring and Review Processes

The TCG process has been the basis of monitoring activities, providing crime statistics and analysis of trends and hotspots. (sara)

Local Police meet OTC on a bi-weekly basis to discuss crime and our working practices as a partnership, effecting changes and sharing analysis data from each organisation.

Evaluation of the Partnership

ASSESSMENT

Evaluation has not been conducted by an independent party but is based on the following data and outcomes against each objective.

Level of Vehicle Crime

Since the peak for car crime in 2002/2003, crime figures have decreased markedly on a yearly basis.

For the financial year 2005/2006 to date the figure for car theft is 15, a decrease of 90% from the 156 cars taken in 2002/2003.

Theft from vehicles has decreased by 74% to 13 in 2005/2006 and criminal damage to vehicles by 78% to 31 vehicles in 2005/2006.

Car crime within the designated car park areas has decreased even more significantly in the same period. 10 vehicles were stolen from the car park in January 2003 and none in January 2005.

Nine arrests were made for car crime in the period 1/4/03 to 31/3/04. Maybe provide date from OTC as an appendix here?

Usage of Odyssey complex

Footfall to the Odyssey has increased commensurate with the opening of the Arena, then W5 and finally the Pavilion to a level of an estimated 4.2 million people per annum.

Usage of Car Park Areas

Car park statistics provided have shown that on an average month there are approximately 64,000 vehicles using the site and this has remained as a constant from 2003 to 2005 and in fact displayed a marked increase of 3% between 2003 and 2004.

Having implemented the measures outlined above, the OTC applied for Charter Marks for its car park in 2003. The car park achieved the Secured Car Park Award, endorsed by ACPO, in both 2003 and 2004.

In 2005, as a result of a continued reduction in car crime, the OTC applied for the Park Mark safer parking award. This award was also endorsed by the Association of Chief Police Officers and was presented to the OTC by Assistant Chief Constable Duncan McCausland on 1/02/06. This award was the first of its kind to be awarded anywhere in Northern Ireland.

Conclusion

Our primary objective as a partnership was to reduce crime and the fear of crime and to create a safe environment for the Public at the Odyssey Complex without the fear of having your vehicle stolen or damaged. The Partnership also tried to influence people's attitudes towards this type of crime in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Office Campaign "If they see it they'll steal it campaign" running throughout the Christmas periods 2004 and 2005.

Benefits of this initiative are many, but can be summarised as follows. Reduction in damage to Odyssey Trust car park barriers from vehicles being stolen and crashed out of the car parks with an estimated saving £5,000.

Policing Benefits

A significant contribution towards the targets for reducing vehicle crime within the DCU particularly the Mountpottinger Sector where the Odyssey complex is situated.

Fewer people had suffered the distress and trauma of being victims to this crime.

Police resources being allocated to other tasks via MIM process.

Reassurance Strategies

An enhanced and positive feeling for patrons attending the venue and being able to park there without the fear of crime.

Value for money and a safe and secure car-parking environment.

Encouraged persons to think about removing valuables from vehicles as part of the Look Lock Leave campaign and latterly the NIO Vehicle theft campaign "If they see it they'll steal it".

Learning from Partnership

Enhanced partnership and communication between all of the stakeholders involved. Our partnership with Harbour Police was given a formal footing by a Memorandum of Understanding, which gave clear demarcations regarding which Service Police dealt with crime and white with Traffic issues.

Preventative measures were put in place to reduce crime through designing out the crime and physical measures such as, fences and barriers, were put in place to reduce drive offs from the car parks.

All of the above initiatives contributed towards creating a safer and more secure area by working in partnership and

outlining a commitment to lessening the impact of crime by working with other partners and agencies, in observance of the NIO Community Safety Strategy Report 2002. (Sara)

Furthermore there was a substantial reduction in the numbers of persons who had been victimised and traumatised as a result of car crime. We believe that this ongoing initiative has positively influenced behavioural and attitudinal changes towards this type of crime, now and into the future.

Working in partnership has required a commitment from all involved and by adopting closer working practices a trust developed between all Agencies. This inculcated an ethos of "Risking on Purpose" which manifested itself through the purchasing of additional CCTV, trimming of vegetation, designing out crime and trying alternatives in relation to policing of vehicles on site.

Odyssey remains a landmark Millennium project for Northern Ireland and the partnership continues to strive towards continued public safety and the reduction of car crime for the benefit of Odyssey staff and for people from across Ireland and the UK who enjoy entertainment at this major venue. This partnership has focused all stakeholders on the value of ensuring that everyone has the "right to feel safe" whilst attending the venue and surroundings.