

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 THURSDEN VALLEY**

Name of force/agency/CDRP: **Lancashire Constabulary, Pennine Division, Burnley Rural**

Name of one contact person with position/rank (this should be one of the authors): **David Johnson, PCSO 7017**

Email address: **dave7017.Johnson@lancashire.pnn.police.uk**

Full postal address: **Burnley Police Station, Parker Lane, Burnley, Lancs BB11 2BT**

Telephone number: **01282 472912 Mobile 07984 316821**

Fax number

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) **Acting Deputy Chief Constable Mr Adrian Mc Allister**

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) **Acting Deputy Chief Constable - HQ Corporate Services Directorate.**

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s) **Lancashire Constabulary Headquarters, PO Box 77 Hutton, Preston, PR4 5SB**

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.

The picturesque Thursden Valley has been the dumping ground for vehicles that have either been stolen, used in crime or for bogus insurance claims for a number of years. The country road drops off steeply to one side to the stream below and has also been used for large scale fly tipping and has had a pollutant affect on local wildlife and resulted in injuries to farmer's livestock. The obvious dangers in winter have resulted in numerous reports of accidents and near misses. The figures from Lancashire police show that on average one vehicle a month is dumped over the edge resulting in expensive recovery problems. Reports to the countryside rangers and local farmers about fly tipping and various animal related problems were also evident. The local PC and PCSO decided to intervene and gather together all interested parties to find a solution to all the problems not just those that were reported to the police. The placing of a barrier along the full length by the highways department would have cost in the region of £250,000. The local farmer offered to use boulders from his own moor land to be erected along the edge of the road at regular intervals so that vehicles would not be able to be pushed over the edge and would also act as a safety barrier. The sheer size of the boulders would also deter fly tipping from larger vehicles. Funding was obtained from a number of sources to cover the farmer's costs. The plan aimed to stop altogether the dumping of vehicles over the edge, improve safety, deter large scale fly tipping, improve the environment, and cut out pollution and its affects on wildlife. The outcome is that we now have a barrier of large boulders along a half-mile stretch of road that is in keeping with the area. The countryside rangers and local farmers are very happy with the outcome as are the local community who were fed up with the state of the area. The valley is clear of vehicles and the flora and wildlife are recovering to their former state. Reports of vehicle fires, joy riders and accidents have been zero since the project was completed. Further evaluation over the next six months should confirm the dramatic affect this project has achieved at minimal cost.

3. Description of project

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

Objectives

Improve Road Safety

Reduce Car crime

Improve environment

Reduce Fly tipping

Improve Public Satisfaction

Categories

Road Safety, Public Satisfaction, Targeted Policing, Fly Tipping, Car Crime

Scanning

The Thursden valley is an isolated minor road between the Eastern edge of Burnley in Lancashire and the West Yorkshire border. The road traverses a steep valley and has many sharp inclines and bends. The road drops away sharply at one side into the valley below. There are no traffic barriers and the road is not only dangerous, especially in winter, but is the dumping ground for stolen and "insurance claim" vehicles either by people using such vehicles for crime or youths joy riding. The valley averages almost a vehicle a month being pushed over the edge resulting in an eyesore for the passing public and a high cost of recovery of the abandoned vehicles. Pollution of the stream is having an adverse affect on the local fauna and wildlife and farmers sheep are being injured by debris from the vehicles. The lack of any barrier leads to fly tipping by larger vehicles that find it relatively easy to reverse to the edge and tip their loads over.

The problem affects:

The general public as up to as many as 10 vehicles are dumped in the valley each year causing an eyesore in a tourist area.

The local community have voiced their concerns via both the police and the Parish Council over the number of vehicles being abandoned and the eyesore it causes to the area. They also mention the dangers of the road in bad weather conditions and the mess left by fly tipping. **Some 30+ telephone calls and letters from concerned residents regarding the state of the road and its' dangers over the last 4 years to members of the Parish council.**

The Countryside Rangers who patrol the area are concerned over pollution of the stream at the foot of the valley and the threat to local wildlife. **Average 5 reports of problems per year.**

Lancashire Highways have a problem with improving safety in the area as the road is not only steep and narrow but would cost over £250,000 to place crash barriers for the full length and mean closure of the road for months. **No figures available.**

The police are concerned that joy riders and car thieves are using the area to abandon and destroy vehicles after committing crimes in the adjacent towns of Burnley, Nelson and Hebden Bridge. **Average 10 per year.**

The cost of removal of vehicles by insurance companies is extremely high due to the location. **No details available as there are many companies involved.**

The cost of removal of rubbish left by the council is also extremely high. **Average 4 reports per year.**

The local farmer is concerned over losing sheep that graze on the moor land to intoxicants leaked from

the vehicles and from physical damage from burnt out wrecks. **Average 5 injured sheep per year.**

All partners were contacted to provide statistics regarding problems highlighted to themselves. However despite exhaustive enquiries these were not available from all partners involved. Those that were available are shown in Appendices 2 and 3 as a table and bar chart. For simplification for the bar chart the incidents from all agencies have been added together under the headings of: Vehicles, Fly tipping, Animal and Other. Incidents from each partner are listed above.

The project will be viewed as a success if:

We can eliminate the possibility of cars being dumped and burnt out in the area.

Large scale fly tipping to be eliminated.

Pollution to be minimised.

Safety of motorists to be improved and the number of reported accidents reduced.

Local wildlife to return to the area.

Injury to livestock to be minimised.

Restoration of a beautiful valley to its' former glory.

Analysis

Location

The location is approx a half mile stretch of Halifax rd from the Harle Syke area of Burnley from the junction with Ridehalgh Lane to the summit just before the Yorkshire border. The road travels through the Thursden Valley, an area of outstanding natural beauty. The area is remote and rarely used during the night making it an ideal place to dispose of vehicles. The edge of the road for this half mile stretch drops away steeply to the stream below and is unprotected for the majority of its length.

Statistics

Police incident logs from the last 5 years were used to determine the number of reports from the area. The Countryside Rangers were also consulted for information reported to themselves from concerned members of the public. Local farmers were asked for numbers of animals injured as a result of vehicles being left abandoned for weeks on end whilst insurance companies determined whether recovery was worthwhile. Lancashire Highways were consulted about the logistics of improving the road and Burnley Borough Council were asked to determine the annual cost of recovery of those vehicles not recovered by the owners or insurance companies. Some results from the last five years were:

Average 10 cars abandoned annually reported to the police.

Average 8 reports of dangerous conditions annually via the Parish Council.

Average 4 reports of large scale fly tipping annually to Burnley Borough council

Average 5 reports annually to the Countryside Rangers

Average 5 sheep injured annually attributed to abandoned cars or fly tipping.

Cost of recovery by local recovery services requested by the police in the region of £2000 annually.

It was therefore apparent that any solution needed to tackle all the problems highlighted above to ensure a satisfactory outcome. The most obvious answer seemed to be the erection of a barrier of some kind to solve the main areas of concern. Any such barrier would need to reflect the areas location and be acceptable to the local community.

Response

The police response was to co-ordinate the efforts of our partners to achieve not only the clearance of those vehicles currently abandoned in the valley but to come up with and implement a long term solution for the area. This would hopefully stop any future dumping of vehicles and make the road safer for motorists to use, help stop pollution, fly tipping and protect livestock and wildlife. A meeting was held at the site that included all partners listed above. A way forward was determined that the local farmer would recover boulders from his own moor land and erect them along the length of the road. This solution was agreed upon by all partners as the visible erection of these boulders would be more in keeping with the area than shiny steel barriers. The farmer would not only reclaim some valuable farming land but also help complete the project at a projected cost of £2500, some 1% of the cost of erecting steel barriers by the highways department. The Highways department were more than happy to part fund £1000 for the project. Agreement was reached that the local police would explore funding avenues to cover the farmers' costs.

Graham Ward's recovery services removed 9 vehicles currently in the valley and cleared the area before any further action was taken. LCC highways dept checked the area to determine where we could place large boulders to not only make it impossible for people to push vehicles over but make the road safer for the majority of road users. A scale map of the length needing attention with detailed locations for the boulders and/or wooden barriers was produced by the highways department for use in the project. This was completed on 31/08/05. A further meeting was held with the local farmer to discuss plant hire and time scales. This meeting was held on 27/09/05. Dave Johnson would contact his old colleagues at BT to purchase some wooden telegraph poles to use as barriers. Burnley Borough Council agreed to cover the cost of Wards for their services and to support the local farmer financially if needed.

The vehicles were removed on 10th September 2005. A plan of action was in place by end of September. Funding was completed by the end of November 2005. Following the meeting on 27/9/05 the farmer agreed to make a start by mid January. The delay would be due to his own farming commitments before that time and the need for funding to be in place. He estimated it would take about a week to complete and asked for £2500 to cover costs of digger, trailer hire and cost of someone to help him. Funding was raised from LANPAC, LCC Highways, Countryside Rangers and the local Parish Council.

The only problem envisaged was the safety of passing traffic whilst large boulders were swung into place and the control of traffic along the location. The highways department worked very closely with the farmer whilst the boulders were placed and supplied warning signs and traffic control for the duration of the work. The farmer confirmed that he and his co-workers were covered by insurance for any injuries either to themselves or any third party.

The project was successfully co-ordinated by the local police beat team of CBM and PCSO and explored new grounds in partnership working in that not only were there a large number of partners involved but all contributed help and financial input to ensure a satisfactory outcome.

All agencies were passed contact details for the local CBM and PCSO to report any future problems in the area that may be reported to themselves but not necessarily to the police. This would help in ensuring that any problems could be dealt with quickly and help in future assessment of the project.

We were also aware of the fact that the problem could possibly be transferred to other areas of the town if we succeeded in eliminating this area from being one that was used for the offences and problems we overcame. This is, as yet, difficult to assess only some 6 months since the plan was developed but having looked at the police incident logs since the turn of the year there have only been 3 cases of burnt out vehicles in the Burnley area and these have been randomly spaced. The nature of the offences and the rural location of the area have made detection of those responsible difficult and so involvement of offenders in any solution was not considered in this case.

Assessment

The local police beat team agreed to monitor reports from the police, countryside rangers, local farmers and the community over the project period and for a period of six months afterwards. Any problems could be overcome quickly and we would be able to ensure the project had had an affect once completed. The local PCSO was the point of contact for all partners to report any problems that may arise.

By keeping accurate records of problems from all partners at a central point the project could be monitored to ensure satisfactory completion. Those responsible for the different aspects were:

Wards recovery services to report any call outs to the area NOT reported via the police.

Local PCSO to record any incident logs via the police

Countryside Rangers to log any reports to their department.

LCC Highways to report if any problems with road closure and traffic problems during implementation and once the project completed.

Parish Council to report any comments from the local community.

Burnley Borough Council to inform the local PCSO of any reports of fly tipping.

By keeping the recording of any reports during and after completion at a central point all agencies could be made aware of the differing impact the project was having on all aspects of the problem.

From 1st January since the above practice was put into place PCSO Johnson has only been made aware of one report appertaining to an animal problem. Zero reports of fly tipping and abandoned cars have been received. The local farmer is happy that it will now be extremely difficult for cars to be pushed over the edge of the road and also to deposit large amounts of rubbish. Reports from the local community via monthly PACT meetings at the Parish Council are very encouraging especially with regard to the materials being used as they are felt to be more in keeping with the area than normal crash barriers. The countryside rangers are more than happy with the results as, with spring approaching, local wildlife and fauna are already showing signs of improvement.

Appendix 1

Partners consulted for project design

Peter Finch LCC Highways dept 01254 823831

Dave Bloomer LCC Highways dept 01772 534510

Tony Lund LCC Countryside officer 01772 533439

Duncan Thomas Lancs Police Wildlife officer 01772 413667

Brent Holden Burnley Boro Council Environmental Health 01282 664526

Paul Green all Park Ranger 01282 870253

Steve Large Burnley Boro Council Planning dept. 07970 387112

Roger Frost Briercliffe Parish Council 01282 435863

Richard Westall Farmer and land owner 01282 426185

Graham Ward Wards recovery services 01282 434923

Appendix 2

Table of Incidents Reported

Year		Incidents		
	Vehicles	Fly Tipping	Animals	Other
10/01 to 10/02	10	6	7	8
10/02 to 10/03	10	6	7	10
10/03 to 10/04	11	7	5	9
10/04 to 10/05	12	0	8	10
10/05 to 04/06	0	0	1	0

The figure of no fly tipping reports since October 2004 could be due to the implementation of a previous POP to implement a Rural Watch in the area.

These figures include reports from each partner as listed above added to those reported via the police.

Appendix 3

Graph of Incidents

