



Crime Reduction & Community Safety Group

Tilley Awards 2007

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; **within the stated word limit and ensuring the file size is no more than 1MB.** Failure to do so will result in your entry being rejected from the competition.

Completed application forms should **be e-mailed to tilleyawards07@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk**

All entries must be received by noon on **Friday 27th April 2007**. No entries will be accepted after this time/date. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Alex Blackwell on 0207 035 4811. Any queries regarding publicity of the awards should be directed to Chaz Akoshile on 0207 035 1589.

Section 1: Details of application

Title of the project: Operation Flood – Student Burglary Reduction Initiative

Name of force: Greater Manchester Police

Name of one contact person with position and/or rank : Superintendent Warren McGuire

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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): David Whatton

Name of organisation, position and/or rank of endorsing senior representatives(s):

Deputy Chief Constable
Greater Manchester Police

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s):

Greater Manchester Police
Force HQ
Chester House
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Please tick box to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry (this is to prevent duplicate entries of the same project):

Section 2: Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project (see guidance for more information).

Operation Flood

The South Manchester Division experienced a significant increase in burglary dwelling offences during 2005/2006. Over half of the burglaries occurred within a hotspot located in Withington. Scanning of 3 years data identified a chronic burglary problem with a distinct seasonal pattern, which was largely attributable to the university student community. This historical annual burglary increase mirrored the start of the academic year in September with many students falling victim to burglary and repeat victimisation.

An extensive problem profile was produced and revealed several key factors that contributed to the burglary problem in this area:

- Multi-occupancy housing and private rented accommodation with poor security
- An environmental design that facilitated the opportunity for crime
- An area with a high population density of young people
- Inexperienced tenants with a basic disregard or lack of awareness towards security issues
- Offenders motivated by the presence of easily obtainable CRAVED items e.g. laptop computers
- A lack of capable guardians, and properties left empty for long periods of time

The interaction of these factors in combination with the transient nature of the student population and an annual change of resident consequentially resulted in a consistent and problematic area requiring serious attention and investment.

Guided by the SARA process a co-ordinated response involving both the police and partner agencies was developed with three main objectives

1. Prevent and disrupt crime
2. Reduce and remove targets and opportunity
3. Target persistent offenders

Operation Flood commenced on the 1st September 2006 utilising a combination of tried and tested techniques together with more innovative tactics. These were designed to:

- provide capable guardians through deployment of active and focused uniformed presence
- increase awareness and educate victims through delivery of crime prevention advice
- reduce the opportunity for crime by improving the environment and addressing security issues

Upon evaluation it was concluded that the operation had achieved the desired objectives, and had a significant impact upon the problem, reducing the volume of burglaries by 58% within the 7-month period of the operation.

Through successful planning, coordination and implementation the Police, together with other agencies that make up the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), developed and delivered a tactical and strategic response that was sustainable, cost-effective and transferable, that can be easily adapted and applied to tackle the problem of student burglaries within other areas.

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Section 3: Description of project

Describe the project in no more than 4000 words (see guidance for more information in particular Section 7 - judging criteria).

OPERATION FLOOD

Definition of the problem

Scanning

The South Manchester Division experienced a significant increase in burglary dwelling during 2005/2006. Scanning and research highlighted that the Division suffered a disproportionate number of burglaries in relation to other crime types, with burglary dwelling accounting for 25% of total acquisitive crime.

The South Manchester Division is divided into four neighbourhood areas, C1 – C4. Area comparisons indicated that during 2005/2006, the C3 Area suffered the greatest increase in burglary, recording a total of 1593 offences between May 2005 and April 2006 (a 31% rise compared with the same period in 2004/2005.) The C3 was the only area on the Division where burglary offences had increased over a three-year period and was responsible for 51% of burglaries that occurred across the whole of the Division during the 12-month period.

Additional analysis identified that three police beats in Withington, within the C3 Area, accounted for a quarter of the burglaries across the entire Division during the period examined.

Assessing the C3 burglary levels by month identified a seasonal burglary cycle within the hotspot area, showing a focused temporal pattern, where the number of offences increased from September through to December, year after year.

Analysis

An extensive problem profile and SARA package was used to action and co-ordinate the response.

Analysis of three years GMP crime data concluded that the main victims of burglary in the hotspot area were university students. The most common Modus Operandi was to gain entry through insecurity or by smashing windows, reaching through and snatching property. The main hot product targeted was laptop computers. During the peak months of September to December 2005 there were a total of 279 computers stolen by means of burglary within the hotspot area, averaging two per day for a period of 4 months.

Offender analysis revealed that burglary in this area is a male dominated offence by youths aged between 14 and 18. Offenders are generally unidentifiable due to wearing dark sports clothing and “hoodies”, which conceal their descriptive characteristics. Examination of offender addresses from a 4-month sample of detected burglaries revealed that offenders travelled from 6 different divisions to commit burglary in the Withington area.

Temporal analysis highlighted how the time of offences was seasonally influenced, with autumn and winter months showing an increased risk for burglaries in the late afternoon and early evening, and how the annual rise in September is mirrored by the start of a new academic year.

Further examination of the addresses revealed that the C3 area suffers a high rate of repeat victimisation. Between January 2003 and December 2005, a total of 242 addresses within the C3 area were subject to repeat burglary. In some cases the addresses had been victimised up to four times within this period. ‘Repeat streets’ were also evident.

Why this area?

Statistics from the Manchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Audit (2004) stated that the Manchester area is host to around 70,000 students, many of whom live in residential areas close to the University. These areas give rise to a population profile containing high numbers of young people who are more likely to become victims of

crime than any other age group. Furthermore, the 2004 audit noted how the high population density in Withington is a further risk factor for crime, with an average of 60 persons per hectare, which is almost twice the average for the whole of Manchester.

For many students, attendance at university is their first time away from home. Inexperience as tenants places security issues firmly at the bottom of the list. Windows are left open, doors are left insecure, laptops and other valuable items are visible through ground floor windows and properties are left empty for long periods of time due to lectures and socialising. The unkempt exterior, window posters, rubbish left outside and 'To-Let' signs are indicative of student residence, easily identifiable targets for predatory burglars.

For a rapid escape route, offenders, usually on mountain bikes, take advantage of the labyrinth of unlit alleyways that provide immediate access and egress routes through the area, or use the old railway line situated directly behind the hotspot area, which has been regenerated as a cycle path and extends to neighbouring divisions

Objectives

Analysis of the underlying factors that contribute to the burglary problem provided an excellent opportunity for the Police and other agencies within the CDRP to work together effectively. The virtual community of students in Withington display mass behaviour patterns, most of which are dictated by the semester timetable, and so the heightened risk of burglary could be partly predicted e.g. new semesters, the receipt of loans, evening socialisation and holiday periods.

Operation Flood had three main objectives:

1. Prevent and disrupt Crime

To significantly reduce the number of domestic burglary offences recorded within the operational area during the peak months.

2. Reduce and remove targets and opportunity

To effectively deliver a clear crime prevention message to the student community, improve security in the area and reduce repeat victimization.

3. Target persistent offenders

To maximise opportunities for intelligence gathering and the identification of active offenders and suspects and handlers.

Response

A number of strategies were used to tackle the problem and achieve the operational objectives. Solutions to the problems were generated through developing strong partnerships with key players to tackle the underlying problems of student victimisation within the hotspot area. The SARA model was used to guide the initial response.

The target spend for the period September to March was £250,000. Funding was derived from both Divisional and Force resources.

To ensure maximum effect, a number of design issues were considered, in that the operational response needed to be practical, focused, cost effective and sustainable. To be successful it also required flexibility, monitoring to identify problems and opportunities, evaluation to assess the impact, and also able to be replicated if success was achieved.

In considering the above, a response was developed addressing the specific issues within each factor that cause, contribute and perpetuate the problem.

This offered the direction and focus required, affording a response to be considered from both a strategic and tactical perspective.

In relation to the objectives a combination of techniques were used involving both the police and partnership agencies, focusing on providing capable guardians for the area, increasing the risk to offenders, educating the victims in crime prevention and addressing environmental and security issues. Operation Flood commenced on the 1st September 2006 aimed at significantly reducing burglary dwelling within the student hotspot of Withington.

Tactical response

1. Prevent and disrupt crime

The initial response was to prioritise the focus area. Further rigorous analysis of the hotspot area was conducted and by utilising the functionality of Map-info, micro-beats were identified and an operational area was created.

This area was segmented into ten zones suitable for patrol. Consideration was given to the perimeter distance, and the total area covered in the zone categorisation. Main roads and environmental factors were used as natural zone boundaries to maximise the potential for active patrolling. Ten zones were prioritised based on previous historical burglary rates, crime levels, predicted displacement, seasonal variation and analytical knowledge from both the Burglary Analyst and the Burglary Project Officer (a Local Authority funded crime prevention advisor). High priority areas at maximum risk from burglary were prioritised as 'Red Zones'; medium risk areas were orange and minimum risk areas designated yellow.

To provide an area profile, crime data from burglaries committed in September, October and November 2005 was analysed, and for each zone the following information was provided:

- Zone boundaries – streets which border the zones
- Vulnerable properties- List of addresses previously burgled
- Repeat Victims identified
- Common entry points for burglars
- Prime day and Peak time analysis for Burglaries
- Victim profile and the Hot products at risk
- Prevention point – a map locating a suitable point where a high profile police vehicle could be parked to act as a deterrent
- Offender descriptions / known offender addresses
- Previous Burglary offenders
- Patrol Requirement - leaflet drops, window stickers, visits to repeat victims

Patrol Deployment

The chosen tactical options included:

- High profile uniformed police presence on foot /on pedal cycles / in a marked vehicle. As part of the deployment these patrols were tasked to identify any insecurities and give immediate advice to occupiers
- Non-uniformed covert presence on foot / in an unmarked vehicle
- Strategic positioning of a Police liveried vehicle and a Police pod
- Utilisation of the mounted Police, and police helicopter at the start of the operation

The methodology was to deploy patrols primarily to the red zones as a matter of priority, followed by the orange zones and finally the yellow zones.

Each patrol team were directed, briefed and deployed by the Burglary Unit Sergeant, as directed by timely crime pattern analysis provided by the Burglary Intelligence Analyst. Current intelligence and information was updated daily by the dedicated Intelligence Officer, and was relayed to the patrols via an Electronic Briefing Site.

In-progress Monitoring

Monitoring was a key factor throughout the operation, designed to minimise loss of focus, preserve motivation and

enable valuable post-operative evaluation and analysis. Daily meetings chaired by the Divisional Commander prevented 'mission creep' and ensured the effective progression of positive lines of enquiry, forensic capture and allocated actions. Meetings were minuted, actioned and circulated by email on a daily basis.

Daily attendees included:

- Divisional Command Team
- Area Policing Team Inspectors
- Crime Scene Investigator
- Robbery and Burglary Unit Sergeants
- Field Intelligence Officer (FIO)
- Burglary Analyst
- Burglary Project Officer (BPO)
- Local Intelligence officer
- Police community support officers

A weekly update was produced by the Burglary Analyst and delivered to the Command Team to provide operational performance data, offer weekly crime pattern analysis relating to zone burglaries, monitor potential displacement activity, identify repeat-victims and locate high risk zones for effective patrol deployment.

Effective communication was maintained via a feedback form, completed by the supervisor at the end of each shift. This information was collated and recorded daily onto a database by the analyst and further actioned by the Chief Inspector to the relevant department. Operational feedback from patrols was also received via the feedback forms so that problems and comments could be considered

The addresses that had been advised of insecurity issues, or where laptops were seen on display by Flood patrols were also highlighted on the feedback sheets. These addresses received a letter containing crime prevention advice from the Watch Scheme Administrator, supplementing the previously given oral advice. Details of the locations where there was reported to be existing rubbish or rubble were passed to the BPO to instigate removal by the Street Environmental Managers.

Stops checks conducted within the zones were recorded onto a database, and scrutinised daily in relation to burglary locations and intelligence, which increased the potential identification of active zone burglars and suspects. The Burglary Unit further researched individuals who were repeatedly stopped and briefing items were produced by the FIO. Extensive analysis of the stop check data was conducted to ensure that the stop-search activity was justified, proportionate and lawful. This analysis was then volunteered to the Divisional Independent Advisory Group. This group consists of a number of individuals who give advice on issues that affect the local community.

Strategic Response

Hotspot patrolling has sometimes been criticised for being costly and only providing a short-term solution. A Home Office report (2005) stresses, "...any crime prevention work aimed at students requires a committed and repeated approach at the start of every academic year". With an intense awareness of the annual cycle and repeat victimisation within the area, Operation Flood was aimed at developing not only an immediate response, but also addressing the problem from a long-term strategic perspective through working effectively with partnership agencies.

2. Reduce and remove targets and opportunity

In relation to the objectives; to "*effectively develop and deliver a clear crime prevention message to the student community, improve security in the area and reduce repeat victimisation*" the CDRP, Watch Scheme Administrator, Burglary Project Officer and the Police worked together to target the student community with Crime Prevention and Reduction tactics and initiatives.

A range of literature was utilised to increase awareness of the risk of burglary, particularly through insecurity, and encourage students to take responsibility for their own community. This was accomplished and delivered through the following strategies:

- Crime reduction leaflets were delivered by PCSO's and Specials, and letters were sent to student households that had previously been burgled.
- Footprint shaped leaflets, which carried a crime prevention message, were posted through insecure windows
- Working in partnership with Manchester City Council led to the production of a large banner that was displayed and moved between the zones.
- A transparent window sticker was designed and stuck onto the outside of insecure windows, looking in. On opening the curtains students were faced with a personal crime prevention message.
- An electronic dot matrix board was used to provide highly visible crime prevention messages, and a van was fitted with a public address system to deliver audible crime prevention messages to student residents within the zones.
- Links were established and maintained with Manchester University and the student union. Crime prevention advice was delivered to students between lectures. Meetings with the university based Local Action Partnership (LAP) group also provided the opportunities to discuss student crime issues and provided additional funding for initiatives to be progressed and delivered e.g., computrace (a tracker based system) installation onto laptops.
- Successful delivery of the crime prevention advice was dependent on gaining sufficient interest and attention from the students. An independent vantage point frequented by student residents, which was also central to the hot spot area, was identified.
- A local Sainsbury's superstore was established as a base for PCSO's. Crime prevention days were held and prevention packs containing personal attack alarms and light timers were issued to students.
- The success of the crime prevention days at Sainsbury's was also signified by the recruitment of 10 student crime reduction co-ordinators. This was the first scheme of its kind in the country, and a £300 cash incentive created the vital link required between students and authorities. Working with the Watch Scheme Administrator and the CDRP, students delivered crime prevention messages to their peers, distributed leaflets and promoted the use 'immobilise.com' to register valuable property.
- Initially there was a limited reply to the letters sent out to arrange the initial student co-ordinators meeting. In response, the Watch Scheme Administrator contacted them via text messages and secured a response from which training days were arranged and delivered.
- The idea of communicating by text messages to the students was further developed and use of "Blue Tooth" equipment proved a worthwhile investment. Utilising blue tooth technology, text messages warning of the risks of insecurity were sent out within the Sainsbury's store targeting the student shoppers.
- A DVD was produced utilising an incident at a fancy dress party where 4 students dressed as sheep caught fire in a bar (fortunately sustaining no injury). CCTV footage of the incident was used and developed into a sheep and wolves theme to deliver crime prevention advice, narrated by local based celebrity John Thompson. The DVD offered a change from usual crime prevention advice and was distributed amongst the student community, played at student talks, put on the You-Tube website and broadcast for 2 weeks as part of the education programme for Freshers on the BBC "Big Screen" in Manchester City Centre, It was also shown in pubs as a commitment from the local Pub Watch scheme and made available to download from numerous websites such as www.crimereduction.gov.uk

Secure and improve the environment

In response to the security issues identified and to minimise the risk of repeat victimisation of student properties within the zoned areas, prevention measures proven to be successful were utilised. Comprehensive analysis was used to accurately identify areas at high risk of burglary that would benefit from environmental improvements such as

fencing, lighting, alley-gating and improved security. The joint response between the Police and other CDRP agencies included:

- Upgrading security at properties that had been burgled
- Pro active target hardening of vulnerable premises
- Successful partnership co-ordination between the YOT team, Manchester City Council, NHS, PCT's, Greater Manchester Probation Service and Greater Manchester Police utilised young offenders in the construction of a fence to restrict egress to the cycle path as part of community service orders.
- Funding for an alley-gating scheme, to restrict offenders movements, was granted and has been installed.

To reduce offender motivation and remove the factors that facilitate burglaries within the zones, feedback from the flood patrols enabled partnership co-ordination and accurate deployment of Street Environmental Managers to the area.

- Rubbish and boxes indicating the purchase of new equipment (hot products) were removed from alleyways and outside houses
- Rubble and bricks, which could be used to smash windows and assist entry, were also removed.
- Defective lighting was repaired on request
- In partnership with the CDRP and letting agencies, 'to let' signs were removed from outside student properties.
- The Top 50 vulnerable/repeat properties identified through analysis were visited by PCSO's to obtain the owner/landlord details. These were forwarded to the Burglary Project Officer for pro-active target hardening.

Media and communications strategy

Research has highlighted that effective communication is vital to the success of Crime and Disorder Partnerships. A pro-active media strategy was developed in order to raise the profile of the operation, gain community support, reduce the fear of crime and change attitudes towards crime and crime reduction.

- Weekly updates and press releases were provided to the local newspaper and press releases were issued weekly highlighting reductions and effective aspects of the operation.
- Regular interviews were broadcast on local media.
- The division linked in with a force-wide student marketing campaign, involving 15 bus shelter adverts sites, radio advertisements, advertisements in student publications, A1 poster sites within university campuses and pre-negotiated features with radio and TV.

3. Target persistent offenders

To maximise opportunities for intelligence gathering and the identification of active offenders and suspects and handlers a number of tactics were used:

- At the pre-operational planning stage, outstanding suspects were arrested with active targeting of persons currently on bail
- Stringent bail conditions were imposed on offenders arrested
- Burglary intelligence was prioritised and actioned and the Divisional Source Handling Unit was tasked.
- In partnership with trading standards, two warrants were enforced at off-licences to disrupt the local stolen

property market

- Offender target packs were produced and patrols and PCSO's were given a photograph booklet of prolific offenders
- Intelligence interviews were conducted with prisoners
- Weekly intelligence updates, analysis and progress reports were produced to identify suspects and current offenders.
- Suspect information was shared with key partners at the CCTV control room
- Existing Home Watch schemes were utilised to alert the community to local offenders
- Extensive stop searches were conducted within the zoned areas, suspects were photographed and analysis was conducted to highlight repeat 'stops' and monitor prolific offenders
- Forensics recovered from zone burglaries were prioritised and fast tracked, and "suspect to scene" comparisons were made for suspected offenders.
- Positive lines of enquiry were progressed and prisoners processed by the dedicated Burglary team
- 100 'Computrace units' were fitted to student laptops for potential tracking and identification if stolen
- Letters were sent to known offenders warning them of the operation
- The existing strategy in place regarding the 'Tough Choices' legislation (2005) and the test on arrest procedure was applied to all divisional arrests. Where drug misuse was identified offenders were referred for treatment. Working in partnership with Manchester drugs service, a generic care package was then offered that addressed housing, education, employment, re-skilling and resettlement.

Assessment

The post-operative evaluation assessment concluded that the operation had successfully met the defined objectives.

1. To prevent and disrupt crime

Analysis indicated that there had been significant reduction in the number of domestic burglary offences within the operational area during the peak months compared with the same period last year.

Monitoring of burglaries within the Flood zones indicated a 58% reduction in offences within the zoned area, and a further reduction of 46% across the entire C3 area compared with the same period last year.

Within Zoned Area			Total C3 Area		
Burglaries	Same period last	% Comparison	Burglaries	Same period	% Comparison
196	471	-58	600	1118	-46

Cost-benefit evaluation

This year there were a total of 196 burglaries within the zoned area during the operational period, compared with 471 burglaries in the same period last year, i.e. a reduction of 275 offences. According to "The economic and social costs of crime", (Home office research study 217) the average cost of a burglary is £2,300.

Based on these figures, calculations show that the total cost of burglaries prevented (**a**) is higher than the total expenditure (**b**), and that in relation to cost/benefit, Operation Flood has reduced hotspot burglaries by 58% at a cost of £250,000.

Calculations show that this initial outlay has saved the local community a cost of over £632,500, which is a benefit of £382,500 (**c**), considering the absence of Geographical and Crime type displacement into other areas of the South Manchester Division. With a total budget target of £250,000, the operation also remained within the budget, and therefore it can be concluded that Operation Flood has been cost effective.

		Calculation	£
a	Total cost of burglaries prevented	275 x 2,300	632,500
b	Total Operational Expenditure	250,000	250,000
c	Cost in relation to benefit	a-b	382,500

2. To reduce and remove targets and opportunity

An effective crime prevention message was delivered to the student community. This was demonstrated by the reduction in the number of students burgled within the zoned area. Security was improved in the area with the prioritisation of target hardening and environmental improvements such as fencing and alley-gating being installed and funded.

Figures also indicated a significant reduction in burglaries through insecurity compared with the same period last year.

The student Home Watch group was successfully recruited within the hotspot area with an initial incentive outlay of £3000. This outlay was considered cost effective in terms of crime prevention impact and will be repeated in future years.

3. To target persistent offenders

Daily meetings were held, and burglaries were scrutinised to prevent forensic opportunity loss. Fingerprints of suspected offenders based on stop checks, descriptions and intelligence were launched and sent for 'suspect to scene' comparisons. The prioritisation of burglary intelligence led to the arrest of a number of prolific hot spot burglars.

Target profiles and offender packages informed patrols of local offenders, and warrants were executed at the premises of handlers of stolen property.

Exit strategy

Whilst the Operation was initially aimed at providing an immediate impact upon the seasonal divisional increase, strategic planning developed further additional effects that will produce a more permanent solution, e.g. fencing and alley-gating. Furthermore, stronger links have been forged with the university based LAP and a template for effective partnership working has been established.

An operational intention is to promote 'safer storage' for empty properties through tasking the student crime reduction co-ordinators. Furthermore, work towards target hardening, monitoring prolific offenders and progressing positive lines of enquiry will continue to be implemented within this area. In April 2007 as part of the safer neighbourhoods project, the division will benefit from an additional thirty-eight PCSO's. This will provide the division with a pool of transient PCSO's that will be deployed to vulnerable areas as required in response to seasonal trends.

Through successful planning, coordination and implementation, the Police together with other agencies that make up the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, developed and delivered a tactical and strategic response that was sustainable, cost-effective and transferable, that can be easily adapted and applied to tackle the problem of student burglaries within other areas.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Please insert letter from endorsing representative:

The Tilley Awards set out to recognise the best approaches to dealing with problems that police officers and communities face.

It is my professional opinion, as an experienced police officer with over 24 years experience, that this is the best problem solving initiative, delivering real results, that I have seen.

I had the pleasure of seeing a detailed presentation at the Greater Manchester Police Annual Problem Solving Awards when Operation Flood won our internal force competition.

Operation Floor presents a well researched holistic approach that has my full endorsement.

Dave Whatton
Deputy Chief Constable

Checklist for Applicants:

1. Have you read the process and application form guidance?
2. Have you completed all four sections of the application form in full including the endorsement from a senior representative?
3. Have you checked that your entry addresses all aspects of the judging criteria?
4. Have you advised all partner agencies that you are submitting an entry for your project?
5. Have you adhered to the formatting requirements within the guidance?
6. Have you checked whether there are any reasons why your project should **not** be publicised to other police forces, partner agencies and the general public?
7. Have you saved you application form as a PDF attachment and entitled your message 'Entry for Tilley Awards 2007' before emailing it?

Once you are satisfied that you have completed your application form in full please **email it to Tilleyawards07@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk**. Two hard copies must also be posted to Alex Blackwell at Home Office, Effective Practice, Support & Communications Team, 6th Floor, Peel Building (SE Quarter), 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.