Tilley Awards 2007

Section 1: Details of application

Title of the project: The Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. Project

Name of force: Staffordshire Police.

Name of contact person; Sgt 4574 Maurice Annett. Project Manager. South Staffs Community Safety Team.

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State in which Government Office area you are located:

Government Office for the West Midlands

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): Chief Constable David Swift

Full address of endorsing senior representatives;

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Please tick box to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry



Section 2: Summary of application

The Quinton Project

The Quinton area of Great Wyrley suffers from elevated levels of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour to an extent that it has become the district 'hot-spot' environment, acting as both a crime attractor and generator.

Business in the area was in decline with instances of shopkeepers being attacked and their premises damaged. Local youth 13–19yrs were responsible for the majority of the crime which was growing in seriousness towards arson, racism and violence.

The Quinton project was developed from the S.A.R.A. problem solving model and culminated in a 100 point action plan being designed, funded [£30,000.00] and delivered by over 24 stakeholder agencies and voluntary bodies led by the Police Community Safety Team over a 12 Month period starting in October 2005. The project was managed against bench marked aims and objectives, developed from multi agency information and then robustly evaluated against similar criteria up to and including Feb 07.

The main interventions and mechanisms were designed to reduce crime and disorder and make the area cleaner, greener and safer for business, young people and the community at large. These were;

Senior Youth Inclusion Program. To educate the worst/most at risk young people away from drugs, alcohol and nuisance behaviour.

Law enforcement. To bring those to justice who continued to offend.

Youth Diversion. A series of sporting, music and video initiatives to attract the youth of the area into Youth Service's programs and onto the playing areas.

Increased Local Guardianship. New benches and play areas designed to increase natural surveillance and promote community pride and guardianship.

Community Cohesion. Uniting businesses and neighbourhoods and increasing local confidence.

Community Communications. Keeping everyone informed and involved.

BMX track. Designed and built by young people to instil ownership and involve young people fully.

Restorative Justice. Offenders on community service orders working in the community, removing graffiti etc.

Key Outcomes.

Local Business improved and 8 new jobs were created.

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and other interventions brought the community closer together.

The area is safer, cleaner and greener.

The area as a whole is more widely used and frequented increasing guardianship and aiding community cohesive community.

All Crime/incidents effectively decreased by 9.7%

Antisocial Behaviour effectively decreased by 9.5%

Violence decreased effectively by 34.8%.

Theft increased by 3.3% (set against an increase in retail premises of 30%).

Criminal Damage effectively decreased by 23.2%

BACKGROUND

The Quinton 'E.S.C.A.P.E.' project is located at the 'Quinton' shopping precinct, Great Wyrley, South Staffordshire. The 'Neighbourhood' which includes the Quinton has 11,110 residents and is the most densely populated in the Watling Neighbourhood Policing Unit.

The project area covers 38 small and medium size shop premises in a 1960's style precinct which is privately owned but has lacked modernisation and investment for many years. A community pub, Supermarket, disused car repair centre and a large area of parish land with skate board facility, a run down toddlers play area and a football pitch. The shopping area has flats above and is surrounded by privately owned and Housing Association stock.

The shop front facia throughout the complex were rotten and falling apart. Rubbish and rubble littered the area creating a text book 'Broken Windows' syndrome. As rubbish increased, so did reports of vermin around the void premises, creating risks to health and making the area seriously distasteful to live in or visit.

The service roads are private therefore the Council wouldn't sweep them and as the privately owned street lighting failed to the point of being condemned, the CCTV which the Local Authority had installed was useless after dark. This situation led to young people congregating and marauding through the precinct day and night causing damage, graffiti and intimidating both shopkeepers and public.

Business was in decline with around 30% of the shop premises being void. The local youths were stereotyped by the community as being 'Hoodies' and 'Yobs' and the overall reputation of the area fell to the point where it was considered by the local CDRP, to be the worst neighbourhood for Crime and Disorder in South Staffordshire.

The youths lived up to their image and began creating problems in order to confront authority. An example was when local youths set fire to wheelie bins then attacked Fire Officers who attended with bottles and stones, and climbed onto the roof of a police car chanting abuse and damaging the vehicle.

At the time of the Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. project's inception in October 2005 Anti Social Behaviour, Violent Crime, Theft and Damage had risen in the area and an alarming trend began to emerge with 'racist' symbols appearing in graffiti. The Police respond to an average of 364 calls a year in this relatively small area which was hugely disproportionate to adjoining neighbourhoods.

Various attempts had been made over the previous 20 years by the Police and other local groups to tackle the problems with limited result.

A totally fresh approach was needed to identify the core problems, motivate and engage interested partners and stakeholders and to obtain funding to 'Programme Manage' and deliver a series of short, medium and long term interventions that had a realistic chance of reducing, removing or ameliorating the identified problems.

The South Staffordshire Police Community Safety Team assumed responsibility to lead the project and convened a meeting with potential partners who could provide information about the area and its problems and who could help to deliver interventions.

This group included a wide representation of partners including the Neighbourhood Policing Team, Shopkeepers, Youth, Leisure and Probation Services, Highways, Rail track, Parish and District Council, Fire Service, The Local Vicar, and Local Businesses.

This group was tasked with identifying the problems, gathering data and information about them, and to highlight the abilities of their organisations to deliver the projects success. To get a real feel for the issues this group conducted 'walk-throughs' allowing the Group to see the problems first hand, which stimulated innovative discussions about possible solutions.

The project was named the Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. Project as the area badly need to escape from its poor reputation, downward spiralling condition and emerging division between young and older people.

E.S.C.A.P.E. also reflected the spirit and style of the project as below:

Economic Regeneration. [National Priority]

Safer for Everyone. [HO Priority]

Cleaner and Greener. [HO Priority]

Active and Sporting. [National, County Priorities]

Partnership delivered. [HO Recommended format]

Educational [National Priority]

The project additionally incorporated restorative justice so that local young people could see offenders on Community Service Orders working in their area thus providing them with a real live example of why they should behave!

Based on the problems identified by this group the objectives of the project were identified as follows,

Objectives.

- 1. To make the Quinton area Safer, Cleaner and Greener for Residents, Visitors, Local Business and Young People.
- 2. To create a sense and feeling of Community pride and understanding between all sections of the community.

Aims.

[Quality of life and Community Cohesion aims]

- 1. To reduce the fear of Crime and increase public confidence in the Police and Local Services particularly amongst older and vulnerable persons.
- 2. To target prolific offending young people through enforcement, diversion or engagement with services.
- 3. To facilitate an event where the whole community could come together and interact positively thereby creating an environment where preconceptions and stereotypes between younger and older groups could be broken down.

[Police and Community Safety Aims]

- 1. To reduce the number of incidents reported to the police by 10% in a 12 month period.
- 2. To reduce Antisocial Behaviour in the Quinton area by 10% in the first 12 Months
- 3. To reduce violence in the area by 25% in the first year
- 4. To reduce Theft / Shoplifting in the area by 10% in the first 12 Months
- 5. To reduce criminal damage in the area by 10% in a 12 month period.

(Aims 2. to 5. above are stretch target above the CDRP reduction target of 5%]

To identify the core problems a break down of historic Parish, Police and Multi-agency information was carried out and the Quinton project group agreed the fundamental issues as follows utilising the Problem Analysis Triangle.

Victim characteristics.

Local Business People

Elderly.

Young people

Fearful of young people/lack of empathy.

Poor opinions of area.

Little faith in Authorities.

Siege mentality.

No community participation.

Feeling vulnerable at home and in their Neighborhood.

(Details obtained from letters and phone calls of complaint to the Police and Local Authority, complaints made to housing officers and raised at the Local Parish Council)

Offender Characteristics

Aged between 10 yrs and 19yrs.

Exclusion from school.

Lacking parental direction.

Distrust the Police.

Marginalised by older people.

Banned from shops.

Little or no money for entertainment.

Young people forming and socialising in 3 separate groups, Bikers [BMX bikers and Skaters], Chavs [Teenagers into Drinking, smoking and Graffiti] and youngsters [9-12 years intimidated by the older groups].

(The local young people were brought together and consulted with by the Community Safety Team and Local Youth workers to obtain this information)

Location characteristics.

Run down buildings.

Void properties.

Graffiti.

Litter / Fly Tipping.

Unused open spaces.

Rat-run type cut-throughs.

Dangerous play areas.

Little or no sports facilities.

No sports equipment.

No disabled access.

No Lighting.

Vermin.

(This information was obtained from the Local Parish Council, Council Health and Safety unit and Environmental Services and local business)

Findings from the Analysis

The findings revealed that the problems were not solely driven by trends around acquisitive crime or drugs and alcohol. The problems of the Quinton were almost all to do with behaviour and image.

The whole community viewed the area as being 'run down and rough' and therefore treated it as such. The community saw the local young people as 'yobs' and in response, the youths actively entered into confrontation with shopkeepers and older people.

The young people formed two groups, the 'Bikers' and the 'Chavs' and those groups were hostile to each other. The area needed to be respected and it was clear that the views held by the different groups within the community about each other were unhealthy.

Education was a fundamental problem with people being unaware of the implications of their behaviour. Shopkeepers did not want to invest in improving their premises just to have the improvements damaged. The area was therefore unattractive to new business.

Analysis pointed toward the solution being the re-invention of the community as a whole and the re-engagement of young people with the wider community.

Project Finance

The project was costed and funded from a variety of sources. The funding took the form of donations of cash for paint and equipment, donations of goods, e.g. 2 x BMX Bikes for the Bike competitions, investment by the property owner, e.g. Disabled Ramp. Parish, CDRP and Youth Services funding totalling £30,080.00. Further funding in terms of staff time was provided by all organisations concerned. The BMX track was funded from the local Joint Operations Group and all the builders work was donated free of charge.

The Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. Project - 'The First Evolution'

The ESCAPE project was created from the features of the Problem Analysis Triangle and all features identified have had situational intervention techniques developed to deal with them.

It was recognised that this project would be ongoing and need to evolve with the area in order to ensure long-term sustainable improvements and to prevent the good work from being undone. This report covers the first year project and was named 'The First Evolution'. Further evolutions are more about maintenance than change.

The project group used the information gained from the analysis phase together with expert advice around Crime Reduction and Youth Engagement to develop a tailored 100 point action plan.

To summarise these the interventions have been grouped into the following,

The shops.

The shops were surveyed by the Local Crime Reduction Officer resulting in shutters being fitted to protect front windows and the 'cut through' next to one of the worst effected premises was closed off with security gates.

The Crime Reduction Officer gained funding from the Joint Operations Group to obtain an 'Alert Box' system for all the small shops. This allows staff to call for help from their neighbours when in need and engaged the shops as a 'Business Watch'

A new street lighting system was installed to illuminate the precinct at night to allow the CCTV System to enhance security and catch offenders.

The shop proprietors were kept informed by the local PCSO as to progress and the shopkeepers maintained their representation on the project group at meetings.

The precinct's owner allowed the shopkeepers to invest money in shop improvements by allowing them to pay 'Peppercorn' rent if they did so. This resulted in shop refits and improved security.

Void premises were let out rent free for 12 Months thus all the available premises are now occupied bar one (this should be occupied by summer 2007).

Street cleaning and road repairs were carried out in the shopping precinct making it more attractive for shoppers and attracting business.

Graffiti was removed making the area less intimidating.

Fly Tipping, Litter and Vermin.

The Local Authority Health and Safety Officer investigated the sources of the tipping and found those responsible. Piles of rubbish were removed.

The premises attracting the rats was leased out and secured by new tenants. This got rid of the vermin and eliminated vandalism.

The shops were reminded about waste litter discipline and became more aware of keeping the rear of their premises clear.

The Parish Council increased litter collection by their staff to daily clearance including all public bins thereby reducing the fire hazards.

The 'Friends of Essington' volunteers conducted a 'Litter Pick Day' and cleared litter from hedges/play areas.

The Sports grounds.

Local young people were consulted with via Youth Services and they asked for a BMX facility to be built on the sports area. The young people designed the track and a local builder volunteered to oversee the youths building the track and to do the more complicated work. The materials for the track were paid for by the Joint Operations Group.

Graffiti was removed by those on Community Service Orders and all painted equipment such as the youth shelter and basket ball area were repainted.

Benches were installed to encourage members of the community to sit and enjoy the facilities and to promote 'Guardianship'

A 40ft container was donated by a local business for use as a sports equipment store.

Footballs, Goalposts, Basketballs and training equipment were purchased and made available for use.

DJ music mixing sessions were held in the youth shelter to attract the young people to the playing fields.

The football pitch was remarked and the grass cut weekly to encourage use.

The Young People.

Youth Services ran a Senior Youth Inclusion Program targetting the 10 most 'at risk' [excluded from school /subject to ASBO etc] young people impacting on the area. These young people are still involved with the program and are educated about behaviour, respect, health, drugs and alcohol.

Young people are now engaging via Youth Services with the project and have made a DVD film of the project focusing on the Summer Community Fun Day. The DVD has been distributed across Staffordshire and represents best practice for youth engagement.

Offenders are targeted by the ASB Officer who engages them with the divisions 7-stage intervention program to tackle their behaviour before it gets to ASBO levels.

The Wider Community

New Neighbourhood Watches were created in the area.

Crime Stoppers leaflet drops were carried out in the target area to encourage reporting of information and intelligence.

The PCSO publicised activities locally to keep abreast of public feeling

The Family Fun day

The Fun Day was designed to be a celebration of the project and an event to enhance community cohesion. The day focussed on showing the wider community that the local young people were skilful, enthusiastic and positive when inspired and directed.

The day was organised by the Community Safety Team and it was an additional measure of how young people's perspective of the Police had changed during the project in the way they turned up and joined in.

To attract lots of people a local football legend, Steve Bull of Wolverhampton Wanderers [and England] opened the day and activities included,

'Urban Wild', a BMX bike stunt competition utilising the concrete skate park.

'Dirt Extreme' BMX bike competitions on the new dirt track.

Skate Board competitions on the concrete track.

In-line competition. In-line skaters performing stunts and tricks on the concrete track.

Football. Wyrley Juniors organised a football marathon for kids ranging from under 9 to 18yrs [this was particularly note worthy as the more hard core, hard to reach youths joined in the football]

St Johns Ambulance stand with vintage ambulance display.

DJ music all day from the youth shelter.

Martial Arts display from the local club.

Food stalls.

Free food for competitors [provided by the Local Church].

Bouncy Castles for toddlers.

Youth Services display bus.

Several hundred local people attended the day and saw the youths enjoying themselves. The day was deemed a great success and the young people, assisted by Youth Services made a DVD of the events set to music, 'mixed' by themselves as part of the summer activities scheme. The competition was so popular that the youths publicised it through an internet site midbmx.com and asked the Police Community Safety Department to hold another event. The Parish Council supported this and another fun day is planned for August 2007.

EVALUATION

Objectives.

1. To make the Quinton area a <u>Safer</u>, <u>Cleaner</u> and <u>Greener</u> place for Residents, Visitors and Local Business and young People.

Safer?

The 'Fly Tipped' rubbish is gone.

New disabled and pram access replaced the dangerous dirt ramp.

New street lighting is in place.

New fencing keeps pedestrians in view of the CCTV safety cameras.

The fire hazard premises have been secured.

The vermin issue has been addressed.

New Neighbourhood Watch exists within the area.

New Business Watch exists with an 'Alert Box' panic attack system.

The car park has been repaired of tripping hazard and pot holes.

The Parish has found funding to double its PCSO strength to two Officers.

The local kids have been engaged with and the gangs previously seen are no longer evident on the precinct. Graffiti has reduced and 21 offences of graffiti have been detected with offenders caught and brought to justice.

Cleaner?

The site owner has employed a company to street clean and empty bins in the precinct area.

New shop facia is currently being fitted.

Shops have been renovated and look smart and inviting.

The sports fields have new bins and get regularly cleared of litter.

Greener?

The playing field has a new sports store full of sports kit which keeps the local young people busy. The new BMX track is in constant use and is getting so worn it will need another re-build this summer

[funding already secured for the young people to rebuild it themselves]

New seating is in place for parent and toddler use with a fully renovated toddler play area increasing natural surveillance and Guardianship.

Supporting Comments.

Comments made by Mr David Pearsall, Staffordshire Police Authority following a site visit 6 months into the project 'The work you have done here is fantastic, I'd go as far as to say you would barely recognise the area'

Comments made by the shop keeper who had suffered the assaults and Graffiti damage. 'I have not had any problems from the Kids in the last five months, I was ready to pack up business before and now things are much better'

Spontaneous comments made by a member of the public to the NPU Commander on a walk around review of the site Sept 2006,

'Since the PCSO arrived and all this work has been done, you lot have made this place a far nicer place to live, THANK YOU!!'

Comments made in March 07 by 3 traders' - 'It's loads safer''. 'Business could be better but its pretty ok, getting better'. 'The kids are ok now, and only do minor stuff'. 'You see the kids come in after School to buy sweets then you don't see them again, they all go over and hang out in the Skate Park and on the fields!

2. To create a sense and feeling of <u>Community</u> pride and understanding between all sections of the community.

What relationships now exist, that demonstrate Community Membership/Pride/Engagement?

New Neighbourhood Watch groups have formed, introducing a sense of community cohesion. A good example is the newly formed Dunstone Close Watch adjacent to the Quinton who are now organising street parties for residents and kids to meet and make friends this summer.

The local youths have been organised by Youth Services and have given presentations to the Parish Council, thereby obtaining funds and assistance for local youth projects such as the DVD film.

Mr Brett Wallbank, a local Builder, volunteered his services free of charge and got the local teenagers involved in building their own track; he was subsequently given a Divisional Commanders Commendation for outstanding community contribution and remains a friend of the project helping when needed to repair the track free of charge.

The pensioners group who meet in the parish building have enhanced contact with the local PCSOs and Police Community Safety Team. They have talks on home and community safety and their Christmas dinner was served by local young people, Police Officers and Support Officers. This event acted as an intergenerational project and allowed the young people from the local high school to demonstrate their wish to help the older community and helped show the youth of the area in a different light.

The Quinton Senior Youth Inclusion Program is a 'course' held over 12 weeks on Thursday nights and Weekends to target young people 13 – 17 yrs who are at risk of exclusion from school and who are believed to be involved in problems associated with the Quinton. It unites these 'at risk' youngsters with police, drugs and alcohol education, Youth Services and other interested agencies to reduce offending behaviour and re-integrate the young people back into their community.

CRIME REDUCTION AIMS / OUTCOMES

As a result of this project the Quinton 'model' has been identified as a 'best practice' Youth Engagement Project. The Parish has asked to hold an annual community fun day and the area really is a better place to live, visit and shop. More people using the facilities from all age groups demonstrate less fear of crime. The senior YISP demonstrates youth engagement and the fun day has and will continue to bring the Quinton community together to celebrate their young people through sport and other activities.

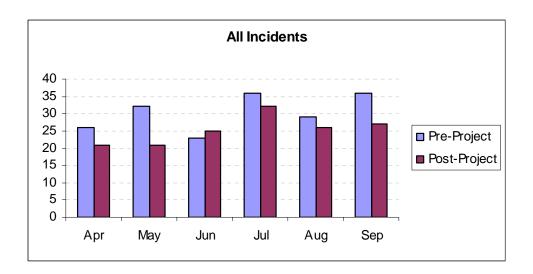
The future of the project is secure with the local PCSO's taking long-term ownership and multi-agency 'buy in' will continue to be driven through the 'Quinton Group' who meet Bi-monthly.

Crime and Incident Evaluation.

Short Term Evaluation. (Quick Wins)

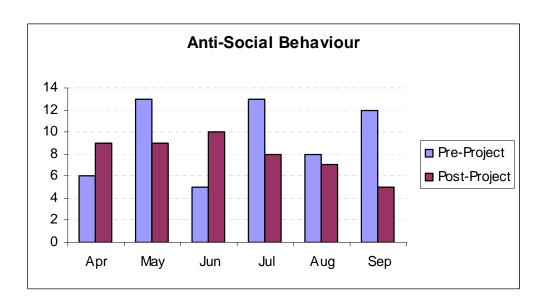
All Crime / Incidents.

In the comparison period (April – Sept05) the Quinton experienced 177 incidents. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 152, a reduction of 16.5%. During this time the NPU average saw a 2% rise, giving the project a performance outcome of 18.5% reduction against average.



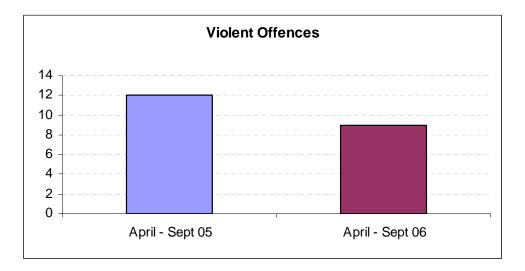
Anti Social Behaviour.

In the comparison period [April -Sept 2005] the Quinton experienced 57 incidents. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 48, a reduction of 15.8%. In comparison, the NPU average increased by 5.5% giving the Quinton a performance outcome of 21.3% reduction against average.



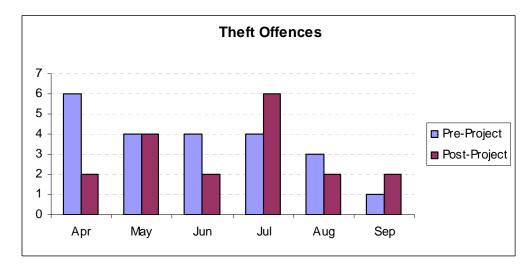
Violent Crime.

In the 6 months before the project the Quinton experienced 12 Violent Crimes. In the same period after the project started this fell to 9 offences, a reduction of 25% which measured against the district trend of a 3.2% rise represents an overall reduction of 28.2%.



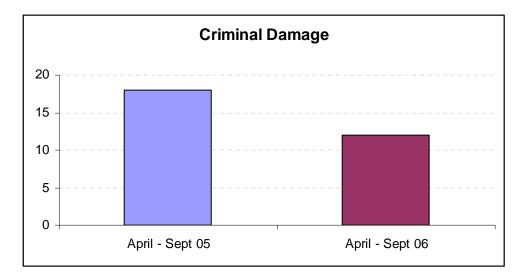
Theft.

In the comparison period [April -Sept 2005] the Quinton experienced 22 theft offences. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 18, a reduction of 18%. In comparison, the NPU average increased by 4% giving the Quinton a performance outcome of <u>22%</u> reduction against average.



Criminal Damage.

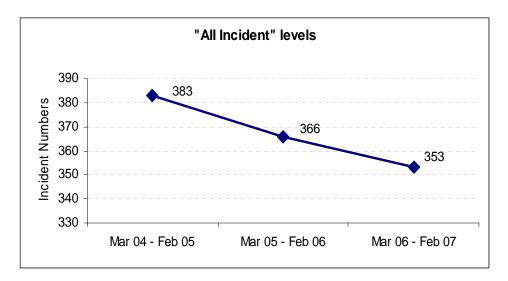
In the comparison period [April -Sept 2005] the Quinton experienced 18 reports of Criminal damage. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 12, a reduction of 33%.



Long Range Evaluation. (Sustainable Reduction)

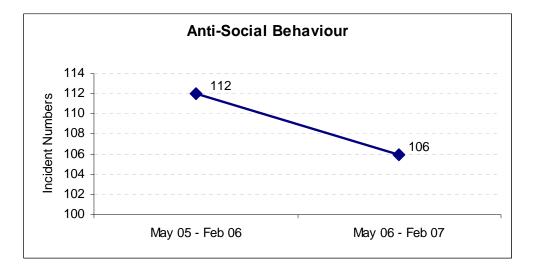
All Incidents.

The Quinton saw a reduction of 4.4% in incidents between 04-05 and 05-06 and a further 3.6% reduction 05-06 to 06-07 totalling a 7.8% reduction. Over the same period the district average saw a 6.1% rise.



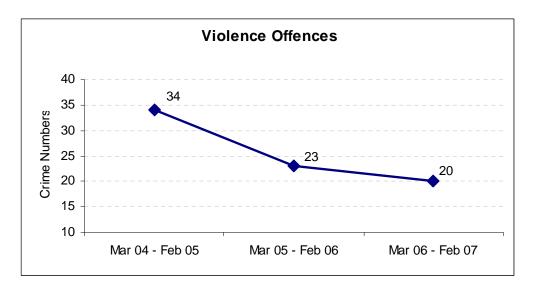
Anti-Social Behaviour.

ASB reduced in the area by 5.4% whilst the district average rose by 4.1% during the same period of time.



Violent Crime.

A reduction of 32.4% can be seen in Violence between 04-05 and 05-06 and a further reduction of 13% between 05-06 and 06-07 giving an overall reduction of 41.2%. In comparison the district average experienced a 21.8% rise over the same period.



Theft.

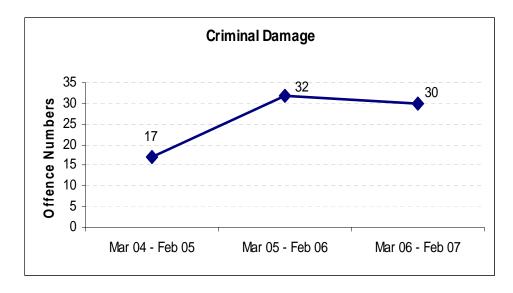
The area experienced a sharp rise in the number of theft offences between Mar 04 - Feb 06, jumping from 15 to 40 thefts (75% were shoplifting). In the following year however (during and after the project) this rise was significantly lowered and in particular there was only one additional shoplifting offence.

This increase however should be seen against a backdrop that there are now 10 more shops open than pre project. Whilst we have a 3.3% increase in crimes, the average crimes per premises have reduced by 25% from 1.1 to 0.83. We now expect to see a real reduction in year 2 post project implementation.



Criminal Damage.

During 2004/5 a increase of 88.2% was experienced, however following implementation a down turn was seen equating to 6.3% whereas the NPU as a whole saw a further increase of 16.9%.



LIST of APPENDIX

Photographs

- 1a. Disused garage and forecourt.
- 1b. Regenerated garage forecourt with vehicle valet business.
- 2a. Uninviting view of shop and walkway.
- 2b. Improved shop fronts and walkway.
- 3a. Siege mentality barred-up / boarded-up shop frontages.
- 3b. Regenerated shop fronts including appropriate security grills and new shop premises.
- 4a. Boarded up void shop and uninviting alley.
- 4b. New shop premises and gated alley.
- 5a. Poor/unkempt access to play facilities/shops and local housing.
- 5b. Redeveloped disabled friendly access to all facilities.
- 6a. Nearby railway underpass adjacent to playing fields.
- 6b. Underpass cleaned up making it less threatening.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Staffordshire Police is fully committed to continuing to reduce crime and disorder and improving the quality of life of it residents, visitors and business communities through neighbourhood and problem orientated policing.

The Quinton area of Great Wyrley in South Staffordshire has suffered for a number of years from relatively high levels of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour which has caused it to be classified as a policing hotspot environment. The inappropriate behaviour of some local young people appeared to be the main cause of the problems which has significantly impacted upon the broader local community.

Previous interventions made by the police, partners and local groups to tackle the problems have had limited results. Therefore a fresh approach was needed to identify the core problems, motivate and engage all appropriate partners and stakeholders, and obtain necessary funding to programme manage and deliver sustainable solutions. As a consequence the 'Quinton Escape Project' was developed during the later part of 2005.

A significant number of statutory agencies, local voluntary groups and individuals led by the South Staffs Police Community Safety Team have worked tirelessly on a 100 point action plan to make the area Safer, Cleaner and Greener for all, and to create a sense of community pride and understanding between all sections of the community.

18 months after the projects inception there is clear evidence that regeneration has taken place, the area is significantly safer and there is a much improved sense of community spirit. The play and recreational facilities have been developed and are now much more widely used by all age groups. Improved access to the various facilities has also made it much more appropriate to service the needs of the diverse community.

This project entry for the Tilley Awards 2007 evidences the success of a methodical partnership problem solving approach and as such I endorse it with my full support.

David Swift
Chief Constable
Staffordshire Police

The Quinton ESCAPE Project



Staffordshire Police Chase Division BCU

Tilley Awards 2007

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Name of force: Staffordshire Police.

Name of contact person; Sgt 4574 Maurice Annett. Project Manager. South Staffs Community Safety Team.

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Full address of endorsing senior representatives;

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Please tick box to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry



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- Youth Diversion. A series of sporting, music and video initiatives to attract the youth of the area into Youth Service's programs and onto the playing areas.
- Increased Local Guardianship. New benches and play areas designed to increase natural surveillance and promote community pride and guardianship.
- Community Cohesion. Uniting businesses and neighbourhoods and increasing local confidence.
- Community Communications. Keeping everyone informed and involved.
- BMX track. Designed and built by young people to instil ownership and involve young people fully.
- Restorative Justice. Offenders on community service orders working in the community, removing graffiti etc.

Key Outcomes.

- Local Business improved and 8 new jobs were created.
- Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and other interventions brought the community closer together.
- The area is safer, cleaner and greener.
- The area as a whole is more widely used and frequented increasing guardianship and aiding community cohesive community.
- All Crime / incidents effectively decreased by 9.7%
- Antisocial Behaviour effectively decreased by 9.5%
- Violence decreased effectively by 34.8%.
- Theft increased by 3.3% (set against an increase in retail premises of 30%).
- Criminal Damage effectively decreased by 23.2%

BACKGROUND

The Quinton 'E.S.C.A.P.E.' project is located at the 'Quinton' shopping precinct, Great Wyrley, South Staffordshire. The 'Neighbourhood' which includes the Quinton has 11,110 residents and is the most densely populated in the Watling Neighbourhood Policing Unit.

The project area covers 38 small and medium size shop premises in a 1960's style precinct which is privately owned and has lacked modernisation and investment for many years. A community pub, Supermarket, disused car repair centre and a large area of parish land with skate board facility, a run down toddlers play area and a football pitch. The shopping area has flats above and is surrounded by privately owned and Housing Association stock.

The shop front facia throughout the complex were rotten and falling apart. Rubbish and rubble littered the area creating a text book 'Broken Windows' syndrome. As rubbish increased, so did reports of vermin around the void premises, creating risks to health and making the area seriously distasteful to live in or visit. The service roads are private so the Council wouldn't sweep them and as the privately owned street lighting failed to the point of being condemned, the CCTV which the Local Authority had installed was useless after dark. This situation led to young people congregating and marauding through the precinct day and night causing damage, graffiti and intimidating both shopkeepers and public.

Business was in decline with around 30% of the shop premises being void. The local youths were stereotyped by the community as being 'Hoodies' and 'Yobs' and the overall reputation of the area fell to the point where it was considered by the local CDRP, to be the worst neighbourhood for Crime and Disorder in South Staffordshire.

The youths lived up to their image and began creating problems in order to confront the Police. An example was when local youths set fire to wheelie bins then attacked Fire Officers who attended with bottles and stones, and climbed onto the roof of a police car chanting abuse and damaging the vehicle.

At the time of the Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. project's inception in October 2005 Anti Social Behaviour, Violent Crime, Theft and Damage had risen in the area and an alarming trend began to emerge with 'racist' symbols appearing in graffiti. The Police respond to an average of 364 calls a year in this relatively small area which was hugely disproportionate to adjoining neighbourhoods.

Various attempts had been made over the previous 20 years by the Police and other local groups to tackle the problems with limited result.

A totally fresh approach was needed to identify the core problems, motivate and engage interested partners and stakeholders and to obtain funding to 'Programme Manage' and deliver a series of short, medium and long term interventions that had a realistic chance of reducing, removing or ameliorating the identified problems.

The South Staffordshire Police Community Safety Team assumed responsibility to lead the project and convened a meeting with potential partners who could provide information about the area and its problems and who could help to deliver future interventions.

This group included a wide representation of partners including the Neighbourhood Policing Team, PCSO's, Shopkeepers, Youth Services, Leisure Services, Probation Services, Highways, Rail track, Parish and District Council, Fire Service, The Local Vicar, and Local Businesses.

This group was tasked with identifying the problems, gathering data and information about them and to highlight the abilities of their organisations to deliver the projects success. To get a real feel for the issues this group conducted 'walk-throughs' allowing the Group to see the problems first hand, which stimulated innovative discussions about possible solutions.

The project was named the Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. Project as the area badly need to escape from its poor reputation, downward spiralling condition and emerging division between young and older people.

E.S.C.A.P.E. also reflected the spirit and style of the project as below:

Economic Regeneration. [National Priority]

Safer for Everyone. [HO Priority]

Cleaner and Greener. [HO Priority]

Active and Sporting. [National, County Priorities]

Partnership delivered. [HO Recommended format]

Educational [National Priority]

The project additionally incorporated restorative justice so that local young people could see offenders on Community Service Orders working in their area thus providing them with a real live example of why they should behave!

Based on the problems identified by this group the objectives of the project were identified as follows,

Objectives.

- 1. To make the Quinton area Safer, Cleaner and Greener for Residents, Visitors, Local Business and Young People.
- 2. To create a sense and feeling of Community pride and understanding between all sections of the community.

Aims.

[Quality of life and Community Cohesion aims]

- 1. To reduce the fear of Crime and increase public confidence in the Police and Local Services particularly amongst older and vulnerable persons.
- 2. To target prolific offending young people through enforcement, diversion or engagement with services.
- 3. To facilitate an event where the whole community could come together and interact positively thereby creating an environment where preconceptions and stereotypes between younger and older groups could be broken down.

[Police and Community Safety Aims]

- 1. To reduce the number of incidents reported to the police by 10% in a 12 month period.
- 2. To reduce Antisocial Behaviour in the Quinton area by 10% in the first 12 Months
- 3. To reduce violence in the area by 25% in the first year
- 4. To reduce Theft / Shoplifting in the area by 10% in the first 12 Months
- 5. To reduce criminal damage in the area by 10% in a 12 month period.

(Aims 2. to 5. above are stretch target above the CDRP reduction target of 5%]

To identify the core problems a break down of historic Parish, Police and Multi-agency information was carried out and the Quinton project group agreed the fundamental issues as follows utilising the Problem Analysis Triangle,

Victim characteristics.

- Local Business People
- > Elderly.
- Young people
- Fearful of young people / lack of empathy.
- Poor opinions of area.
- Little faith in Authorities.
- Siege mentality.
- No community participation.
- Feeling vulnerable at home and in their Neighborhood.

(Details obtained from letters and phone calls of complaint to the Police and Local Authority, complaints made to housing officers and complaints raised to the Local Parish council)

Offender Characteristics

- Aged between 10 yrs and 19yrs.
- > Exclusion from school.
- Lacking parental direction.
- Distrust the Police.
- Marginalised by older people.
- Banned from shops.
- > Little or no money for entertainment.
- Young people forming and socialising in 3 separate groups, Bikers [BMX bikers and Skaters], Chavs [Teenagers into Drinking, smoking and Graffiti] and youngsters [9-12 years intimidated by the older groups].

(The local young people were brought together and consulted with by the Community Safety Team and Local Youth workers to obtain this information)

Location characteristics.

- Run down buildings.
- Void properties.
- Graffiti.
- Litter / Fly Tipping.
- Unused open spaces.
- > Rat-run type cut-throughs.
- Dangerous play areas.
- Little or no sports facilities.
- No sports equipment.
- No disabled access.
- No Lighting.
- Vermin.

(This information was obtained from the Local Parish Council, Council Health and Safety unit and environmental services and local business)

Findings from the Analysis

The findings revealed that the problems were not solely driven by trends around acquisitive crime or drugs and alcohol. The problems of the Quinton were almost all to do with behaviour and image.

The whole community viewed the area as being 'run down and rough' and therefore treated it as such. The community saw the local young people as 'yobs' and in response, the youths actively entered into confrontation with shopkeepers and older people.

The young people formed two groups, the 'Bikers' and the 'Chavs' and those groups were hostile to each other. The area needed to be respected and it was clear that the views held by the different groups within the community about each other were unhealthy.

Education was a fundamental problem with people being unaware of the implications of their behaviour. Shopkeepers did not want to invest in improving their premises just to have the improvements damaged. The area was therefore unattractive to new business.

Analysis pointed toward the solution being the re-invention of the community as a whole and the re-engagement of young people with the wider community.

Project Finance

The project was costed and funded from a variety of sources. The funding took the form of donations of cash for paint and equipment, donations of goods, e.g. 2 x BMX Bikes for the Bike competitions, investment by the property owner, e.g. Disabled Ramp, Parish, CDRP and Youth Services funding totalling £30,080.00. Further funding in terms of staff time was provided by all organisations concerned. The BMX track was funded from the local Joint Operations Group and all the builders work was donated free of charge.

The Quinton E.S.C.A.P.E. Project - 'The First Evolution'

The ESCAPE project was created from the features of the Problem Analysis Triangle and all features identified have had situational intervention techniques developed to deal with them.

It was recognised that this project would be ongoing and need to evolve with the area in order to ensure long term sustainable improvements and to prevent the good work from being undone. This report covers the first Year project and was named 'The First Evolution'. Further evolutions are more about maintenance than change.

The project group used the information gained from the analysis phase together with expert advice around Crime Reduction and Youth Engagement to develop a tailored 100 point action plan.

To summarise these the interventions have been grouped into the following,

The shops.

- The shops were surveyed by the Local Crime Reduction Officer resulting in shutters being fitted to protect
 front windows and the 'cut through' next to one of the worst effected premises was closed off with security
 gates.
- The Crime Reduction Officer gained funding from the Joint Operations Group to obtain an 'Alert Box' system for all the small shops. This allows staff to call for help from their neighbours when in need and engaged the shops as a 'Business Watch'
- A new street lighting system was installed to illuminate the precinct at night to allow the CCTV System to enhance security and catch offenders.
- The Shop proprietors were kept informed by the local PCSO as to work and progress and the shopkeepers maintained their representation on the project group at meetings.
- The precinct's owner allowed the shopkeepers to invest money in shop improvements by allowing them to pay 'Peppercorn' rent if they did so. This resulted in shop refits and improved security.
- Void premises were let out rent free for 12 Months thus all the available premises are now occupied bar one (this should be occupied by summer 2007).
- Street cleaning and road repairs were carried out in the shopping precinct making it more attractive for shoppers and attracting business.
- Graffiti was removed making the area less intimidating.

Fly Tipping, Litter and Vermin.

- The Local Authority Health and Safety Officer investigated the sources of the tipping and found those responsible. Piles of rubbish were removed.
- The premises attracting the rats was leased out and secured by new tenants. This got rid of the vermin and eliminated vandalism.
- The shops were reminded about waste litter discipline and became more aware of keeping the rear of their premises clear.
- The Parish Council increased litter collection by their staff to daily clearance including all public bins thereby reducing the fire hazards.
- The 'Friends of Essington' volunteers conducted a 'Litter Pick Day' and cleared litter from hedges/play areas.

The Sports grounds.

- Local young people were consulted with via Youth Services and they asked for a BMX facility to be built on
 the sports area. The young people designed the track and a local builder volunteered to oversee the youths
 building the track and to do the more complicated work. The materials for the track were paid for by the Joint
 Operations Group.
- Graffiti was removed by those on Community Service Orders and all painted equipment such as the youth shelter and basket ball area were repainted.
- Benches were installed to encourage members of the community to sit and enjoy the facilities and to promote 'Guardianship'
- A 40ft container was donated by a local business for use as a sports equipment store.
- Footballs, Goalposts, Basketballs and training equipment were purchased and made available for use.
- DJ music mixing sessions were held in the youth shelter to attract the young people to the playing fields.
- The football pitch was remarked and the grass cut weekly to encourage use.

The Young People.

- Youth Services ran a Senior Youth Inclusion Program which targeted the 10 most 'at risk' [excluded from school / subject to ASBO etc] young people impacting on the area. These young people are still involved with the program and are educated about behaviour, respect, health, drugs and alcohol.
- Young people are now engaging via Youth Services with the project and have made a DVD film of the project focusing on the Summer Community Fun day. The DVD has been distributed across Staffordshire and represents best practice for youth engagement.
- Offenders are targeted by the ASB Officer who engages them with the divisions 7 stage intervention program to tackle their behaviour before it gets to ASBO levels.

The Wider Community

- New Neighbourhood Watches were created in the area.
- Crime Stoppers leaflet drops were carried out in the target area to encourage reporting of information and intelligence.
- The PCSO publicised activities locally to keep abreast of public feeling

The Family Fun day

The Fun Day was designed to be a celebration of the project and an event to enhance community cohesion. The day focussed on showing the wider community that the local young people were skilful, enthusiastic and positive when inspired and directed.

The day was organised by the Community Safety Team and it was an additional measure of how young people's perspective of the Police had changed during the project in the way they turned up and joined in.

To attract lots of people a local football legend, Mr Steve Bull of Wolverhampton Wanderers [and England] opened the day and activities included,

- 'Urban Wild', a BMX bike stunt competition utilising the concrete skate park.
- 'Dirt Extreme' BMX bike competitions on the new dirt track.
- Skate Board competitions on the concrete track.
- In-line competition. In-line skaters performing stunts and tricks on the concrete track.
- Football. Wyrley Juniors organised a football marathon for kids ranging from under 9 to 18yrs [this was particularly note worthy as the more hard core, hard to reach youths joined in the football]
- St Johns Ambulance stand with vintage ambulance display.
- DJ music all day from the youth shelter.
- Martial Arts display from the local club.
- Food stalls.
- Free food for competitors [provided by the Local Church].
- Bouncy Castles for toddlers.
- Youth Services display bus.

Several hundred local people attended the day and saw the youths enjoying themselves. The day was deemed a great success and the young people, assisted by youth services made a DVD of the events set to music, 'mixed' by themselves as part of the summer activities scheme. The competition was so popular that the youths publicised it through an internet site midbmx.com and asked the Police Community Safety Department to hold another event. The Parish Council supported this and another fun day is planned for August 2007.

EVALUATION

Objectives.

1. To make the Quinton area a <u>Safer</u>, <u>Cleaner</u> and <u>Greener</u> place for Residents, Visitors and Local Business and young People.

Safer?

- ✓ The 'Fly Tipped' rubbish is gone.
- New disabled and pram access replaced the dangerous dirt ramp.
- ✓ New street lighting is in place.
- New fencing keeps pedestrians in view of the CCTV safety cameras.
- ✓ The fire hazard premises have been secured.
- The vermin issue has been addressed.
- ✓ New Neighbourhood Watch exists within the area.
- ✓ New Business Watch exists with an 'Alert Box' panic attack system.
- ✓ The car park has been repaired of tripping hazard and pot holes.
- ✓ The Parish has found funding to double its PCSO strength to two Officers.
- ✓ The local kids have been engaged with and the gangs previously seen are no longer evident on the precinct.
- ✓ Graffiti has reduced and 21 offences of graffiti have been detected with offenders caught and brought to justice.

Cleaner?

- The site owner has employed a company to street clean and empty bins in the precinct area.
- ✓ New shop facia is currently being fitted.
- ✓ Shops have been renovated and look smart and inviting.
- ✓ The sports fields have new bins and get regularly cleared of litter.

Greener?

- ✓ The playing field has a new sports store full of sports kit which keeps the local young people busy.
- The new BMX track is in constant use and is getting so worn it will need another re-build this summer [funding already secured for the young people to rebuild it themselves]
- New seating is in place for parent and toddler use with a fully renovated toddler play area increasing natural surveillance and Guardianship.

Supporting Comments.

Comments made by Mr David Pearsall, Staffordshire Police Authority following a site visit 6 months into the project 'The work you have done here is fantastic, I'd go as far as to say you would barely recognise the area'

Comments made by the shop keeper who had suffered the assaults and Graffiti damage. 'I have not had any problems from the Kids in the last five months, I was ready to pack up business before and now things are much better'

Spontaneous comments made by a member of the public to the NPU Commander on a walk around review of the site Sept 2006,

'Since the PCSO arrived and all this work has been done, you lot have made this place a far nicer place to live, THANK YOU!!'

Comments made in March 07 by 3 traders' - 'It's loads safer". 'Business could be better but its pretty ok, getting better'. 'The kids are ok now, and only do minor stuff'. 'You see the kids come in after School to buy sweets then you don't see them again, they all go over and hang out in the Skate park and on the fields!

2. To create a sense and feeling of <u>Community</u> pride and understanding between all sections of the community.

What relationships now exist, that demonstrate Community membership / Pride / Engagement?

New Neighbourhood Watch groups have formed, introducing a sense of community cohesion. A good example is the newly formed Dunstone Close Watch adjacent to the Quinton who are now organising street parties for residents and kids to meet and make friends this summer.

The local youths have been organised by Youth Services and have given presentations to the Parish Council, thereby obtaining funds and assistance for local youth projects such as the DVD film.

Mr Brett Wallbank, a local Builder, volunteered his services free of charge and got the local teenagers involved in building their own track; he was subsequently given a Divisional Commanders Commendation for outstanding community contribution and remains a friend of the project helping when needed to repair the track free of charge.

The pensioners group who meet in the parish building have enhanced contact with the local PCSOs and Police Community Safety Team. They have talks on home and community safety and their Christmas dinner was served up by local young people, Police Officers and Support Officers. This event acted as an intergenerational project and allowed the young people from the local high school to demonstrate their wish to help the older community and helped show the youth of the area in a different light.

The Quinton Senior Youth Inclusion Program is a 'course' held over 12 weeks on Thursday nights and Weekends to target young people 13 – 17 yrs who are at risk of exclusion from school and who are believed to be involved in problems associated with the Quinton. It unites these 'at risk' youngsters with police, drugs, alcohol and education and youth services and other interested agencies to reduce offending behaviour and re-integrate the young people back into their Community.

CRIME REDUCTION AIMS / OUTCOMES

As a result of this project the Quinton 'model' has been identified as a 'best practice' Youth Engagement Project. The Parish has asked to hold an annual community fun day and the area really is a better place to live in, visit and shop. More people using the facilities from all age groups demonstrate less fear of crime. The senior YISP demonstrates youth engagement and the fun day has and will continue to bring the Quinton community together to celebrate their young people through sport and other activities.

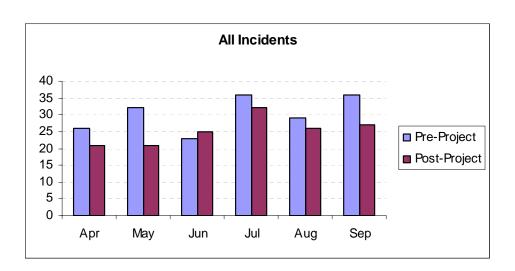
The future of the project is secure with the local PCSO's taking long term ownership and multi-agency 'buy in' will continue to be driven through the 'Quinton Group' who meet Bi-monthly.

Crime and Incident Evaluation.

Short Term Evaluation. (Quick Wins)

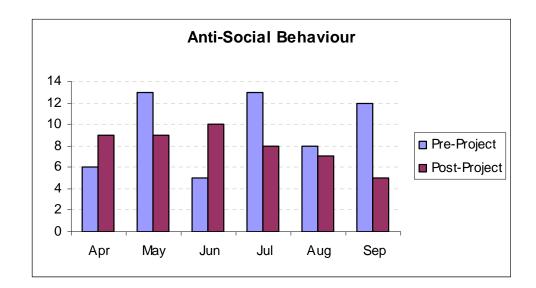
All Crime / Incidents.

In the comparison period (April – Sept05) the Quinton experienced 177 incidents. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 152, a reduction of 16.5%. During this time the NPU average saw a 2% rise, giving the project a performance outcome of 18.5% reduction against average.



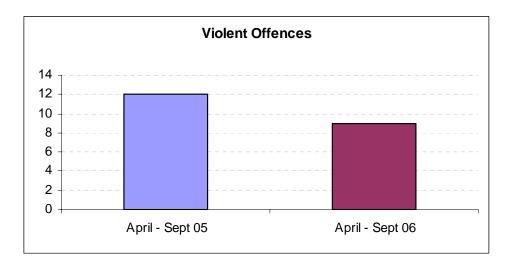
Anti Social Behaviour.

In the comparison period [April -Sept 2005] the Quinton experienced 57 incidents. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 48, a reduction of 15.8%. In comparison, the NPU average increased by 5.5% giving the Quinton a performance outcome of 21.3% reduction against average.



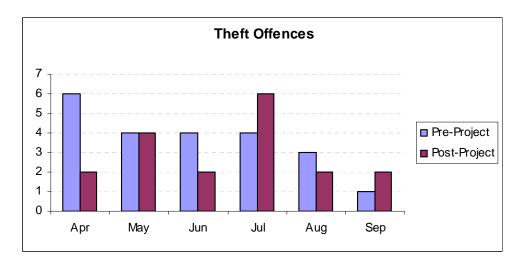
Violent Crime.

In the 6 months before the project the Quinton experienced 12 Violent Crimes. In the same period after the project started this fell to 9 offences, a reduction of 25% which measured against the district trend of a 3.2% rise represents an overall reduction of 28.2%.



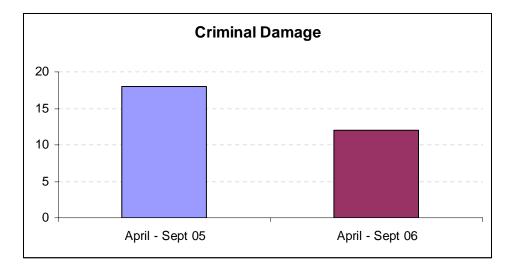
Theft.

In the comparison period [April -Sept 2005] the Quinton experienced 22 theft offences. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 18, a reduction of 18%. In comparison, the NPU average increased by 4% giving the Quinton a performance outcome of <u>22%</u> reduction against average.



Criminal Damage.

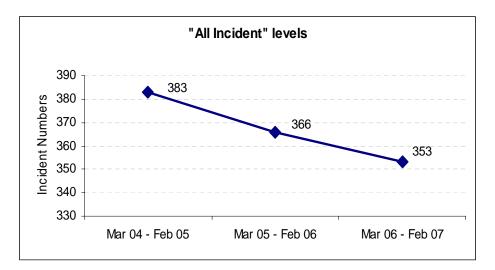
In the comparison period [April -Sept 2005] the Quinton experienced 18 reports of Criminal damage. In the same period during 2006, this dropped to 12, a reduction of 33%.



Long Range Evaluation. (Sustainable Reduction)

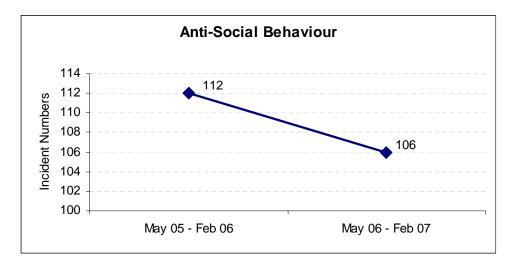
All Incidents.

The Quinton saw a reduction of 4.4% in incidents between 04-05 and 05-06 and a further 3.6% reduction 05-06 to 06-07 totalling a 7.8% reduction. Over the same period the district average saw a 6.1% rise.



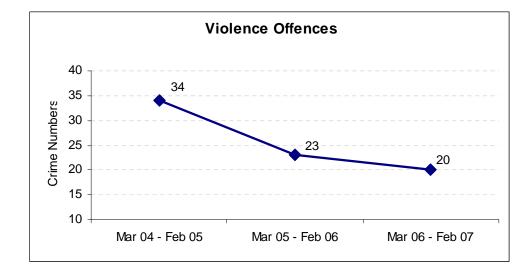
Anti-Social Behaviour.

ASB reduced in the area by 5.4% whilst the district average rose by 4.1% during the same period of time.



Violent Crime.

A reduction of 32.4% can be seen in Violence between 04-05 and 05-06 and a further reduction of 13% between 05-06 and 06-07 giving an overall reduction of 41.2%. In comparison the district average experienced a 21.8% rise over the same period.



Theft.

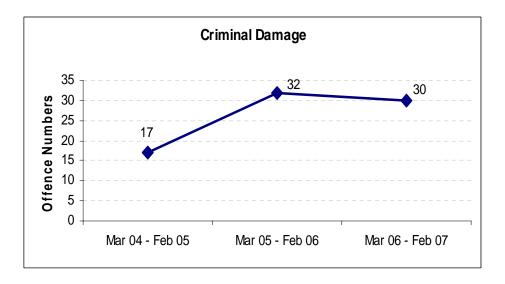
The area experienced a sharp rise in the number of theft offences between Mar 04 - Feb 06, jumping from 15 to 40 thefts (75% were shoplifting). In the following year however (during and after the project) this rise was significantly lowered and in particular there was only one additional shoplifting offence.

This increase however should be seen against a backdrop that there are now 10 more shops open than pre project. Whilst we have a 3.3% increase in crimes, the average crimes per premises have reduced by 25% from 1.1 to 0.83. We now expect to see a real reduction in year 2 post project implementation.



Criminal Damage.

During 2004/5 a increase of 88.2% was experienced, however following implementation a down turn was seen equating to 6.3% whereas the NPU as a whole saw a further increase of 16.9%.



LIST of APPENDIX

Photographs

- 1a. Disused garage and forecourt.
- 1b. Regenerated garage forecourt with vehicle valet business.
- 2a. Uninviting view of shop and walkway.
- 2b. Improved shop fronts and walkway.
- 3a. Siege mentality barred-up / boarded-up shop frontages.
- 3b. Regenerated shop fronts including appropriate security grills and new shop premises.
- 4a. Boarded up void shop and uninviting alley.
- 4b. New shop premises and gated alley.
- 5a. Poor/unkempt access to play facilities/shops and local housing.
- 5b. Redeveloped disabled friendly access to all facilities.
- 6a. Nearby railway underpass adjacent to playing fields.
- 6b. Underpass cleaned up making it less threatening.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Staffordshire Police is fully committed to continuing to reduce crime and disorder and improving the quality of life of it residents, visitors and business communities through neighbourhood and problem orientated policing.

The Quinton area of Great Wyrley in South Staffordshire has suffered for a number of years from relatively high levels of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour which has caused it to be classified as a policing hotspot environment. The inappropriate behaviour of some local young people appeared to be the main cause of the problems which has significantly impacted upon the broader local community.

Previous interventions made by the police, partners and local groups to tackle the problems have had limited results. Therefore a fresh approach was needed to identify the core problems, motivate and engage all appropriate partners and stakeholders, and obtain necessary funding to programme manage and deliver sustainable solutions. As a consequence the 'Quinton Escape Project' was developed during the later part of 2005.

A significant number of statutory agencies, local voluntary groups and individuals led by the South Staffs Police Community Safety Team have worked tirelessly on a 100 point action plan to make the area Safer, Cleaner and Greener for all, and to create a sense of community pride and understanding between all sections of the community.

18 months after the projects inception there is clear evidence that regeneration has taken place, the area is significantly safer and there is a much improved sense of community spirit. The play and recreational facilities have been developed and are now much more widely used by all age groups. Improved access to the various facilities has also made it much more appropriate to service the needs of the diverse community.

This project entry for the Tilley Awards 2007 evidences the success of a methodical partnership problem solving approach and as such I endorse it with my full support.

David Swift Chief Constable Staffordshire Police		























