

Tilley Award 2005

Application form

The following form must be completed in full. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the competition.

Please send completed application forms to Tricia Perkins at patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on the 29 April 2005. Entries received after that date will not be accepted under any circumstances. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262.

1. Details of application

Title of the project; Derwentwater Road-Altgether now.

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Cumbria Constabulary/Copeland Homes

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

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Full postal address: Whitehaven Police Station, Scotch Street, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA287NN

Telephone number: 01900 602422

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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) Neil Rhodes

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) ACC

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s) Cumbria Constabulary, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith, Cumbria CA 10 2BA

2. Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project. Include details of the problem that was addressed a description of the initiative, the main intervention principles and what they were designed to achieve, the main outcomes of project particularly in relation to the problem, evidence was used in designing the programme and how the project is evaluated.

Whitehaven is a small market town on the West Coast of Cumbria. Derwentwater Road is situated on the western side of one of Whitehaven's housing estates.

There are approximately 2000 people who live on the estate and the majority of homes are owned by the Copeland Homes a Registered Social Landlord. Incidents of disorder on the estate where Derwentwater Road is situated steadily rose throughout 2003. Disorder was regarded as a police problem but with the launch of the Home Office action plan to deal with disorder it was realised that more could be achieved through partnership working.

Scanning an Analysis revealed that partnership working was poor despite the reduction of anti social behaviour featuring high in the Boroughs community safety strategy. A lack of positive action, by all partners, had left residents being unwilling to engage and tackle a problem, which was of great concern to them.

Although criminal matters were investigated thoroughly, incidents of anti-social behaviour weren't, this was a great cause of negativity amongst residents as it appeared to them that those who could help to deal with the problem weren't taking it seriously.

Partnership working had to be improved so that an effective response could be delivered when dealing with disorder and anti-social behaviour. With an improved response the attitude of residents was changed, from one where they were unwilling to take action to one where they were willing to stand up against the perpetrators of the anti-social behaviour.

By following a five-step plan, when dealing with individual cases of anti-social behaviour, the response has become far more effective and has seen the use of warnings, acceptable behaviour contracts, housing act injunctions and anti-social behaviour orders.

Through tackling the problems associated to one road, disorder on the whole estate is now showing a downward trend. Most importantly residents attitudes have changed, as they are willing to stand up to the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

3. Description of project

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

Scanning

2000 residents live on the estate of Mirehouse West in Whitehaven. The estate has housing stock, which is predominantly owned by the local authority Copeland Borough Council, then latterly by Copeland Homes.

Scanning of POLIS incident logs over a twelve-month period revealed that the estate suffered from the highest degrees of anti social behaviour within the town. Incidents relating to hoax calls, noise nuisance, rowdy behaviour, street drinking and substance misuse were used. It was felt that incidents could be attributed to one particular street and certain residents. This was confirmed by information provided by local beat officers and housing officers.

Anti Social Behaviour was regarded as a Police problem, by partners who were also capable of taking action.

When the Home Office launched the anti social behaviour action plan in the later part of 2003 it was realised that the Local Authority also had powers to deal with anti social behaviour, these powers had never used. Complaints of such behaviour to the Local Authority would normally be passed on to the Police, in serious cases.

In some cases of lower levels of anti social behaviour such as incidents involving nuisance neighbours, the Police powers were ineffective or no powers were available at all. This lack of action left residents unwilling to come forward to assist in tackling the perpetrators of anti social behaviour.

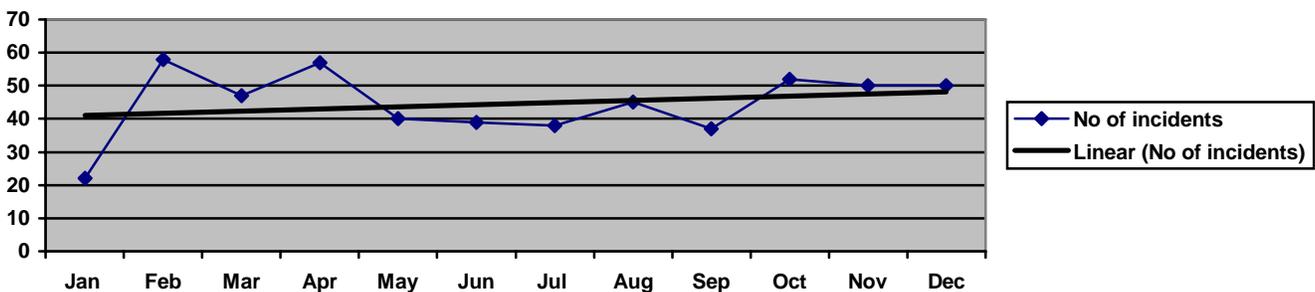
This left many residents with a low opinion of the local Police due to their inability when dealing with neighbour disputes.

The Police had contact with the Local Authority Housing Department Officers, although partnership working in an effective format didn't exist.

Some work to tackle anti social behaviour within the town had been carried out by the Police through the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti Social Behaviour Orders but this had tended to be targeted towards active criminals.

Analysis

It was widely accepted by residents, the Local Authority and the Police that a small number of residents caused a large proportion of problems in the estates where they lived.



The chart above indicates how incidents of disorder rose on the Mirehouse estate throughout 2003.

In consultation with Housing Officers it was found that the same persons and locations, which were problems to the Police were also problems for the Housing Officers. Through consultation it was also identified that much of the disorder was associated to Derwentwater Road either by it occurring on this road or by perpetrators from the road causing problems on other parts of the estate.

This was confirmed by the analysis as in the final quarter of 2003 over half of the incidents reported to the police either occurred on or were linked to Derwentwater Road.

Housing Officers highlighted that residents were more willing to pass on information about anti social behaviour to them rather than to the Police, therefore incidents reported to the police only scratched the surface of the anti-social behaviour, which was occurring. It was very rare that the Housing Officers would pass this information on to the Police except in the most extreme cases of anti social behaviour.

The scanning revealed that certain addresses generated a disproportionate amount of incidents.

In one case, one address generated 60 calls to the Police for incidents of anti social behaviour in a three-month period. Although the Police were able to deal with some of these calls, through the use of arrest policies, in most cases there was no power available to the Police to deal with the incidents.

When consultation took place with Housing Officers it was found that they also had numerous complaints about the same address.

This highlighted the fact that information sharing between both parties didn't occur, even through the provision for this was available. When this was discussed it was found that both Agencies were afraid of information sharing protocols.

Although the Local Authority had powers to deal with anti social behaviour, mainly under the Housing Act, these had never been utilised because the housing authority felt this was a Police problem, therefore the Local Authority had no facilities for evidence gathering or evidence presentation.

By applying the principles of the Problem Analysis Triangle it could be seen that the best solution was to deal with the offenders as they had the greatest negative impact on the victims and the location

Through scanning and analysis it was identified that:-

- A small number of individuals caused a disproportionate amount of problems.
- There was no effective response to dealing with these individuals.
- Partnership work could be effective in a structured format.

Response

Following the anti-social behaviour action a localised campaign was launched in January 2004, to tackle anti social behaviour.

Initially the cycle of negativity, which residents displayed had to be broken. Residents had to be shown that anti social behaviour could be tackled effectively with their help. It was therefore decided that incidents of disorder on or related to Derwentwater Road would be investigated more thoroughly and then the partners would decide on the best course of action.

This involved a complete rethink by the police who would normally respond to incidents of disorder, which could range from youth nuisance to serious harassment and only deal with the incident as it stood. If nothing was

happening when the police arrived then the police would not investigate the incident further.

The rethink resulted in beat officers beginning to re-contact residents who were reporting disorder, as when incident logs were completed as 'all quiet on arrival' a call to the resident revealed the true extent of the anti social behaviour which had generated the call to the police in the first instance. In other words we began to investigate disorder at the same level at which crime was investigated.

Regular meetings were established between the police and housing officers, this, ensured that information, which was being gathered was shared between both parties and then positive action was taken, to the benefit of the victims of anti social behaviour.

This action followed the five step plan;

Step 1; identify the type behaviour, offender and in the case of adults the type of tenancy.

Step 2; identify the options available to deal with the individual case.

Step 3; identify the impact, which is being sought.

Step 4; from steps two and three identify the appropriate intervention.

Step 5; identify the lead agency.

To make the approach used in the five step plan achievable two significant obstacles had to be overcome firstly information sharing and secondly the use of anti social behaviour powers. Both of these problems were overcome through joint training. Information sharing protocols existed but unfamiliarity with these had become an obstacle to their use.

The use Anti-Social Behaviour powers had been limited to the use of ASBO's. Joint training was able to highlight other powers, which were available such as Housing Act Injunctions.

When these two problems were addressed joint working to address the problems on the estate and in particular targeted towards Derwentwater Road began in January 2004.

Following the five step plan the following interventions were used;

Warnings

Used as an initial step when dealing with anti social behaviour. Warning visits would be carried out jointly by Housing Officers and the Police and were used as an initial approach to point out to an offender the range of other options, which could be used, should the anti social behaviour, continue.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

Where behaviour had passed the boundary for dealing with it by way of a warning tenants were given the opportunity to enter in to Acceptable behaviour contracts with the Housing provider and the police. At the same time as the Contract were signed the perpetrators were reminded of other actions which would be taken against them such as the use of ASBO, injunctions or if necessary repossession of the property.

Although the police had used contracts before these had mainly been targeted towards youths and had never been used against adults.

Housing Act Injunctions

These were used in cases of serious neighbour nuisance where immediate protection was required for the victim of

the anti-social behaviour.

Arrest Powers

By contacting witnesses and not dealing with incidents at face value incidents were uncovered which led to the arrest of certain offenders. Through the use of strict bail conditions protection was offered to the victims.

Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

Both civil ASBO and ASBO on conviction were used to deal with the more serious perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

These orders were used to exclude offenders from certain areas and offer long term protection to the victims through their preventative measures.

Publicity

The profile of the problem was raised with the local press, who were regularly invited to accompany police and housing officers when they carried out enforcement action, this was seen as a way of encouraging residents to come forward and get involved in taking positive action.

Assessment

Targeting one road, which was linked to disorder on other parts of the estate has made an impact on disorder over the whole estate as by the end of 2004 the trend in disorder was going down.

By investigating disorder at the same level as a crime would be investigated, positive action could be taken against the perpetrators of the anti-social behaviour. Positive action had the knock on effect of bringing the community on side and willing to stand up against the perpetrators of the anti-social behaviour.

The more action, which was taken saw more residents willing to come forward. Prior to the start of partnership working it was very difficult to get anyone to give evidence to any partner agency.

Although some of the legislation to deal with anti-social behaviour had not been used before, through training, problems relating to the this were overcome and an 'have a go' attitude was developed. This attitude assisted greatly when following the five-step plan as the emphasis shifted to partnership enforcement rather than just police enforcement.

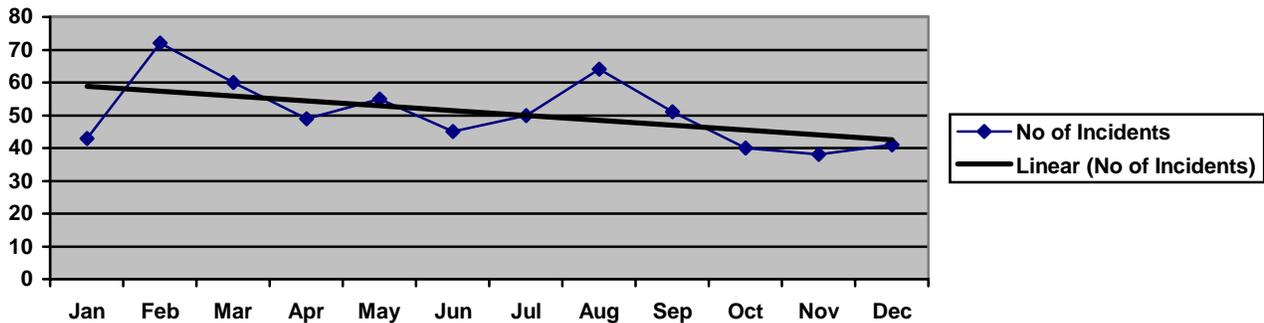
By following this plan it has been possible to take out;

- Fifteen Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Four Anti-Social Behaviour Orders
- Two Housing Act Injunctions.

Through initial joint visits two residents terminated their tenancies and left the area.

Partnership working has ensured that a far more positive approach has been adopted than had previously been used.

In terms of incidents the enforcement action carried out on Derwentwater Road has impacted on incidents throughout the rest of the estate as can be seen in the chart below.



Although incidents have been reduced more importantly the attitude of the public has been turned around as the majority are now willing to get involved in taking positive action.

One year on from launching our local 'Together' campaign we carried out a brief survey of some of the residents on the area where this campaign has been focused, to see if they have thought it has made any difference in the areas where they live.

We randomly surveyed 100 people on the Mirehouse west estate, including Derwentwater Road. Although the figure surveyed is small it does give an idea of what residents think.

62 of the residents surveyed had heard of the campaign most of the others were aware of it when prompted using articles published in the media.

55 residents had heard of the campaign as a result of the media attention it has received. 36 had heard of the campaign through contact with the Police, Copeland Homes or Copeland Borough Council.

When we've asked the residents what the current position was with ASB, 62 felt it had decreased, 15 felt it was the same and the remainder thought there was an increase.

94 residents said that as a result of the campaign and knowing that positive action could be taken they would report anti-social behaviour if subjected to it.

The best result comes from the 89 residents who think that partnership working between the Police, Council and Copeland Homes has made us more effective in dealing with anti social behaviour on the estate.

Partnership working has proved beneficial especially to the residents of Mirehouse and Derwentwater Road. This approach is now being implemented across the rest of West Cumbria.

