

## 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](mailto: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: Operation Rush

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Fife Constabulary

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

PC 281 Claire Watson

Email address: Claire.Watson@fife.pnn.police.uk

Full postal address:

Fife Constabulary Station  
St. Brycedale Avenue  
Kirkcaldy  
Fife  
KY1 1EU

Telephone number: 01592 418700

Fax number: 01592 641134

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): Tom Ewing

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s): Superintendent

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s):

Community Team  
Fife Constabulary Station  
St. Brycedale Avenue  
Kirkcaldy  
Fife  
KY1 1EU

## 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.

Kirkcaldy, Fife has a population of around 300,000 people.

The Esplanade, Kirkcaldy forms a 1½ mile stretch of four-lane carriageway. 17000 vehicles per day pass along this stretch of sea-front road, which is the main access route to many of the villages along Fife's east coast. The road is subject to a 30 mph speed restriction.

Prior to September 2003, throughout the evening and early hours of the morning, numerous complaints were received by Fife Constabulary regarding this road being used by 'boy racers' to gather and race. Complaints, in the main, were received from those who live near to the area where noise and disruption of daily life had become the norm.

Numerous letters had been sent to Fife Constabulary asking that something be done to alleviate the nuisance factor suffered by those living near to the area. Local newspapers had picked up on the issue as dozens of letters were written by disgruntled residents who feared that it would only be a matter of time before a serious accident occurred.

Complaints were directed at the Police, as the issue was seen to be a 'traffic' problem, the usual response being to send a 'beat' vehicle into the area.

It soon became apparent to the Community Team at Kirkcaldy that a more co-ordinated approach was required. The problems were also identified and brought to Police attention through local elected officials and residents' forums.

The local Community Police and their partner agencies, using Problem Orientated Policing principles to address the issue, incorporated an approach which combined, enforcement, education, ASBO's, traffic calming/re-engineering and ultimately have been able to change the laws of the land.

The principle feature of this initiative was the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders to address the problems. There is no way of measuring how this has impacted upon driver behaviour or how many calls to the Police have been deterred by this action.

The successes of the initiative can be noted within the £400,000 worth of road calming implemented by Transportation Services and the amendment to the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2004 Section 126, Police Powers to Seize Vehicles.

The overall effect was a considerable saving in Police time and resources and a significant improvement in the quality of life experienced by local residents.

Comparative data for periods before and after implementation showed that the incidence of calls to Police has reduced by up to 60%.

### **3. Description of project**

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

#### **Background to the problem**

##### **Who are the offenders?**

The phenomena of the 'boy racer' has been identified as a country wide issue. Social changes over recent years have identified that many of those engaging in this type of behaviour form part of a social group which are presently unable to make the initial step onto the property ladder due to the current housing price boom. Disposable income is available to many of these 'teens' or 'twenty-something's' who still stay at home with parents.

##### **What are the problems?**

1. On occasion up to two hundred vehicle's gathered within the numerous car parks along the Esplanade Road, the gathering in itself invoking a sense of fear amongst members of the public. Often vehicle's engage in 'donut' competitions whilst parked up leaving burning rubber on the tarmac.
2. The loud music played by persons at said gatherings causes a nuisance to nearby residents. The litter left also becomes an annoyance to the local businesses who have to clear up every morning.
3. The noise from loud exhaust systems caused by vehicles revving at lights, accelerating away quickly, and driving in constant circuits of the town centre.
4. The noise from powerful in-car stereo's, again as vehicles are driven constantly around the town centre.
5. The improper use of car horns.
6. Vehicle's racing each other at high speed upon the Esplanade.
7. Vehicle's being dangerously driven at high speed.
8. The fear factor perceived by local residents of a serious accident occurring.

##### **Where do these problems occur?**

The Esplanade area of Kirkcaldy has been locally renowned as a meeting point for car enthusiasts for a period spanning the last three decades. The numerous car parks alongside allow opportunities to park up and congregate and for car enthusiasts to show off modified vehicles.

##### **Why do these problems occur?**

The architectural layout of the road is attractive in that it is a long-straight stretch of open carriageway conducive to racing behaviour and speeding. The aforementioned car parks allow for congregating and a start off point for racing behaviour.

The town centre, one-way system, adjacent to the Esplanade provides what is effectively a natural 'circuit' which these drivers use in convoy several times of an evening. The circuit passes many of the local pubs and clubs and is again an opportunity for individuals to show their vehicles. Nature refers to this phenomenon as the 'peacock effect'.



Map highlighting the Esplanade area.

Problems arise due to the fact that the Esplanade area and the 'circuit' referred to by- passes many residential properties. As well as this the Esplanade, given its 'sea-side' appeal, is home to many elderly people and a Sheltered Housing Complex. Many residents complain that they find it difficult to hear their televisions, hold a conversation or even get to sleep. The whole area is a natural sound tunnel due to the close proximity and height of the commercial and residential buildings.



Esplanade Road prior to road calming April 2004.

**When does the problem occur?**

Complaints are received on a nightly basis from 2100 hours until as late as 0300 hours. Weekend nights are markedly worse than Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Subsequent covert foot patrols conducted by officers found them in awe of the problems that confronted them. The Esplanade could be described at best as a 'race track', and at worst as a 'drag track' with as many as eight cars racing in a box formation at speeds in excess of 70mph. Car parks were being utilised for stunt driving, hand brake turns and 'donuts' and the noise pollution was astounding.

**Scanning**

It became apparent, in approaching this issue that we were faced with two distinct problems. Firstly, we were aware of the problems surrounding the dangerous / careless driving and the racing behaviour which could be effectively tackled by a series of action plans, enforcing Road Traffic Law. Secondly, we were facing those issues, which did not meet the criteria of 'criminal conduct' but amounted more suitably to 'anti-social behaviour'. The noise nuisance, constant circuiting and large amounts of persons gathering were issues that seriously affected the quality of life of many local residents. As Police officers, we realised at this point, how ill-equipped we were to offer any solution to these issues.

Having identified that there was quite a serious problem we carried out the scanning phase of POP and sought data from sources as follows in order to compile a Problem Profile;

Police Storm System – A system able to collate the number of calls received at Kirkcaldy Police Station complaining of the problems in and around the Esplanade area. A comparison was also made with other local towns. It appears that similar problems had been dealt with locally by restricting access to car parks used for congregating. This was something which we planned to incorporate into our approach, however, due to the nature and size of the Kirkcaldy issue we realised that this might only displace the gathering to another area rather than solve the problem.

Community Officers/ Community Intelligence - When visiting their local community groups officers were asked to ascertain as much information as possible about the problem in order that resources could be directed effectively to the right place at the right time. It appeared that although statistics confirmed that the problem was significant, many

local people had chosen to 'put up' with the issue rather than contacting Police, therefore the information available did not fully support the extent of the problem. The various Residents Associations were encouraged to feedback to Police, times, dates and details of the offending vehicles, effectively taking on the role of the evidence gathering eyes and ears of the Police.

Ethnographic study This involved employing a sociological method of research in order to carry out basic observations, effectively of people in their natural habitat. Plain clothes officers engaged in foot patrols of the problem area in order to ascertain the extent and nature of the problem first hand.

Force Internet A note was posted on the internet asking other forces across the U.K if they have been faced with similar issues and if so how they had approached the matter. Feedback was received from numerous forces and it appeared the problem was recognised country-wide An invaluable lesson learnt from researching how other forces have attempted to tackle similar issues was that various forms of media regularly consumed by 'boy racer' types are responsible for the close network approach to 'cruises' and 'meets' such as the bi-monthly 'Crail Thrash' held at a venue in the east of Fife.

Monitoring Websites Hence it appeared necessary to monitor official and unofficial web sites and magazines subscribed to by many of our local 'cruisers'. Magazines such as 'Fast and Modified' and 'Max Power' have previously been known to extol the virtues of the Esplanade as a great place to race.

Local Businesses There are several business firms with outlets along the Esplanade road which have reported damage and litter caused by 'boy racers' congregating in their car parks out of office hours. These include Hi-Q, Fife Mitsubishi, Stagecoach, Kwik Fit and Kwik Save. Stagecoach depot was contacted and reported vehicle's using their car park as a turning circle often causing danger to other vehicles. Kwik Save staff had received complaints from local residents regarding the loud music emanating from vehicle's gathered within their car park. These companies were contacted in order to ascertain whether they would be willing to come on board with the POP initiative.

Fife Council Housing Investigation Team – This team are a dedicated unit dealing with anti-social behaviour issues. The Police Community Team work closely on a daily basis to tackle problems, usually relating to housing matters. It was felt that considering a large bulk of the issue related to 'anti-social' behaviour the HIT team would be an invaluable addition to the POP initiative.

Transportation Services - \_ As it was recognised that the architectural lay-out of the road was fundamental to the speeding and racing behaviour, we spoke with Transportation Services at Fife Council in order to discuss the potential of altering the structure.

Local Elected Members – MSP Marilyn Livingstone and Councillor Alice Soper, both of whom were well aware of the problems faced by their constituents, were consulted and asked to come on board with the initiative. It was thought that their political weight could be an effective tool in tackling the problem, as well as making sure that the initiative kept a high profile status in the media.

Local Media – In conjunction with Fife Constabulary media department, in order to heighten public awareness of the local problem and encourage a consciousness within the local community we planned to consult and utilise the various forms of media available to us.

Work started towards the end of August 2003 to arrange the first meeting, in order to gather the right partners around the table in accordance with our aims. It was decided that the following parties would be invited to the initial meeting to allow as multi-faceted an approach as possible.

### **The Partnership**

The first meeting took place at Kirkcaldy Town House on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2003 involving the following agencies;

1. Fife Constabulary, Kirkcaldy Community Team
2. Fife Constabulary, Road Policing Department
3. Fife Council Transportation Services.
4. Fife Council Housing Investigation Team
5. Alice Soper, Councillor
6. Marilyn Livingstone, MSP
7. Fife Constabulary, CCTV Department
8. Forth View Residents Association

9. Whytehouse Mansions Residents Association
10. Kirkcaldy West Community Council
11. Fife Council Community Services
12. Fife Constabulary Media Department.

**Initial Aims of the Police Team**

1. To meet with partner agencies that have the ability to contribute to a long-term sustainable solution.
2. To interact with residents, tenants, Community Councils and any other parties affected by the problem.
3. To consult with local elected members on the subject.
4. To interacted with local businesses, particularly those situated on the Esplanade who have car-parking areas outside their premises.
5. Liaise with H.I.T regarding the use of anti-social behaviour orders towards addressing the problem.
6. Make use of a media strategy to heighten the profile of the problem both locally and nationally.
7. Prosecution phase in order to subdue the problem and allow interaction with suspected offenders to raise their awareness of the problem.
8. Specific mediation with the suspected offenders and 'victims', to establish all views and gain understanding of the problem from all parties. Ascertain any proposed solutions from these parties.
9. Deployment of the Ad trailer to raise awareness of speed limit at locus to all motorists utilising the Esplanade
10. Make better use of CCTV/ANPR coverage of the Esplanade to detect and deter offenders.
11. Liaise with the Road Policing department re prosecution of offenders.
12. Liaise with other Police forces who have experienced/ or are experiencing similar problems in their areas to identify efficient sustainable solutions.

Although these were the initial aims of the Police Team, the objectives of the multi-agency approach were determined as follows;

1. To eradicate the racing and stunt driving by drivers at Esplanade Kirkcaldy through an enforcement campaign and environmental change.
2. To remove the congregation of motor vehicles near to residential buildings and eradicate town centre circuit convoys.
3. Accept that the Esplanade is a natural gathering point for car enthusiasts and is the most appropriate site to allow them to gather in the Kirkcaldy area, but to have the ability to manage the area with minimal police resources.
4. To reduce noise pollution and anti-social driving through the use of anti-social behaviour orders.
5. To promote good driver behaviour via an educational package delivered to those congregating at locus.

**Analysis**

The initiative begun in September 2003 with several weekends of enforcement. It appeared that previous attempts to curb the racing behaviour on the Esplanade had included a high visibility approach to catching offenders speeding. The approach had to all intents and purposes failed to address the issue in any way. We, at the Community team intended to adopt a plain clothed approach geared towards identifying the most persistent offenders along with the help of the Housing Investigation Team at Fife Council. The onus behind this type of operation meant that we would be hoping to pursue anti-social behaviour orders in terms of these worst offenders whose behaviour although might not fall into the realms of criminal, amounted to that of anti-social. The boundaries of this were agreed with the Housing Investigation Team prior to any observations being commenced.

Plain clothes operations with the 'Speedar' speed detector device over the course of September and October and November 2003, totalled in 60 persons being reported to the Procurator fiscal for various driving offences, including careless and dangerous driving in regards to speeds of up to 75 miles per hour in a 30 mile per hour zone.

The intention was to run a series of action plans using the media to highlight the numbers of offenders reported in the hope that a high profile media campaign would take effect upon the numbers of 'racers' continuing to be present in the area.

It was our belief that the natural racetrack of the Esplanade was effectively one of the largest attractions to the area. In bringing Transportation Services on board, it was our hope that pressure brought to bear by the Residents Associations present might force the department to see that a change in the structure of the road was needed. It was also our belief that road calming measures around the town centre circuit would also contribute to making the area

less attractive to the use of modified cars with low body kits and expensive exhausts.

Area Councillors and MSP were invited along in order to add political weight to the initiative. Alice Soper, Councillor for the Links Area, was already highly involved due to the amount of complaints she herself had received in relation to the problems.

MSP Marilyn Livingstone was able to advise in regards to various pots of funding available for such a large venture as it soon became obvious we were involved in. It was apparent that these people were highly motivated and incredibly keen to offer their services to our initiative.

In September of 2003, 35 ASBO warning letters (see Appendix 1) were sent out to those persons who had been observed by Police and the Housing Investigation Team to be acting in an anti social manner. A meeting was arranged to address the 'racer' element later that month. This provided a double edged sword for those who had received letters to put their side of the issue to Police and also for police to meet and perhaps bring on-board some of these people and make them part of the solution. To this end the 'Prommies Sub-Group' was set up.

Meetings have been held bi-monthly in order to take stock and assess where we are in relation to the aims we set at the initial meeting.

Calls to Police in general dropped from an average of 60 per month in October 2003 to 12 within the first month of enforcement. A constant drop has been seen over the past 18 months, regulating at around 12 to 15 calls per month. A correlation is easily noticed to the periods relating to Police enforcement and the immediate period afterwards. It is notable that the number of calls slowly creeps back up prior to the next enforcement period.

The difference was noted in the type of calls now being received. Whereas previously many of the calls had been in relation to dangerous driving and speed, we were now noticing that the incidence of this has fallen significantly and in the main calls related to noise nuisance. Again the incidence of which has steadily dropped over the past 18 months as the message met its target audience.

A questionnaire handed to a group of 'cruisers' who frequent the Esplanade area by Police showed that they deemed themselves to be much more aware of what could be construed as anti-social driver behaviour.

### **Outcomes**

To date this multi agency approach has achieved the following;

1. £400,000 investment into traffic calming measures both on the Esplanade and town centre circuit which has taken the form of raised pedestrian crossings, re-engineering of the Esplanade from four lanes to two at strategic points to dissuade racing.
2. Several enforcement weekends undertaken by the Community Team have proven to have had a dual effect. Firstly, in excess of sixty persons have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for breaches of traffic law ranging from reckless driving to general speeding offences and several have been subject to driving bans. Secondly and perhaps more importantly many of these drivers have received the message that Fife Constabulary will no longer tolerate this type of driver behaviour. This sustained level of policing has had a positive impact in the short term in curbing this dangerous driving behaviour.
3. A combined effort by Fife Council Housing Investigation Team and the Police in evidence gathering in relation to anti-social behaviour; loud music, exhausts etc, has led to around 100 ASBO warning letters being sent out to drivers engaging in this type of behaviour and sustained work by these partners has identified recidivist drivers who are now subjects for full Anti-Social Behaviour orders. Again this sustained approach has impacted positively in relation to reducing the number of anti-social behaviour complaints from local residents and would appear to have been taken on board by the drivers.
4. Over the course of the initiative a number of press articles, radio and television interviews have been broadcast in order to raise local and national awareness of the issue. (See appendix 2)
5. In tandem with the partner agencies and in particular representatives of the housing associations covering these areas, through Marilyn Livingstone MSP, a meeting was arranged with Communities Minister Margaret Curran at the Scottish Parliament in an effort to consider an amendment to the new anti-social behaviour legislation to include specific legislation directed at the 'boy racer' issue. The Legislation currently in England can lead to



vehicles being seized from recidivist drivers.

It was felt that this legislation would go further to deterring such driver behaviour in Scotland. The benefit of the multi-agency approach became apparent at this point when the Minister took cognisance of the problem and committed herself to researching the English position on this matter and table an amendment at a subsequent reading of the bill.



Multi-agency visit to Parliament, March 2004. Meeting with Communities Minister Margaret Curran.

6. In March 2005 the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2004, Section 126 Police Powers to seize vehicles was indeed passed through Parliament. Fundamentally this gave power to the Police to impound any vehicles being driven in a manner that could be construed as anti-social.

7. To raise awareness of the new legislative powers, members of the Community Team carried out;

(a) A leaflet drop to all car enthusiasts found gathering at the Esplanade over the course of a four week period, which;

(1) Explained the new legislation and highlighted the risk of their vehicle being seized (see appendix 3)

(2) Invited respective drivers to an awareness seminar

(b) Held a seminar and informed drivers of the problems, the POP approach taken, their responsibilities in respect of congregation at locus and that a robust approach to prosecution would now be taken by Police in respect of the new legislation.

(c) Promoted the legislation via local media and National Television with the assistance of Chief Constable Peter Wilson and Deputy Justice Minister Hugh Henry.

8. Local business car parks and council car parks adjacent to residential areas were effectively closed during the evening to persuade enthusiasts to gather in the car parks that do not impinge on the quality of life of residents in the area.

9. Maintain the flow of information and progress of the project to local residents via regular POP meetings and Community forums.

### **Final Comment**

To date, this multi-agency approach has eradicated the racing and 'stunt' driving previously evidenced at locus and has curbed bad driver behaviour and general speeding upon Esplanade. This has been well documented through feedback from the public and the reduction in complaints being received at Kirkcaldy Police Station.

It has also eradicated completely the convoys of vehicles previously seen to continually circuit the town centre, which

has given back local residents a quality of life.

It has dramatically reduced the number of complaints received from the public at Fife Constabulary.

It has increased the belief by the public that public bodies do care and can make a difference by empowering the public to become involved in solving problems in their community.

This is an issue which can now be managed with periodic but minimal police resources.



Central Division Headquarters,  
St Brycedale Avenue,  
Kirkcaldy,  
KY1 1EU

Tel: +44 (0)1592 418700  
Fax: +44 (0)1592 641134

Email: central.division@fife.pnn.police.uk

*Peter M Wilson QPM LL.B*  
*Chief Constable*

Robert John Smith  
6 Kenilworth Terrace  
LOCHORE  
Fife

Your Ref:

Our Ref: WR/ER

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Dear Sir or Madam

**Esplanade and Town Centre Area Kirkcaldy**

I refer to the above and have to advise you that in recent months Fife Constabulary has received numerous complaints from the local community relative to driver conduct and anti-social behaviour as follows:

- (a) Vehicles being driven at the above locations in a reckless manner and at speeds far in excess of the speed limit i.e. 30 m.p.h.
- (b) Vehicles being driven in such a manner as to constitute anti-social behaviour i.e. causing the vehicle to emit excessive noise e.g. noisy exhaust systems, revving engines, play in-car stereo systems too loudly and by driving vehicles around continuous circuits of the Town Centre without due care and attention for other road users or local residents.

To address this unacceptable driver behaviour and in an effort to promote road safety, Fife Constabulary will seek to prosecute all drivers who breach Road Traffic legislation and any driver considered to be driving in such an anti-social manner.

At various times on 14 January, 2004 at Esplanade, Kirkcaldy motor vehicle Reg. No. X382RSD of which you are recorded as being the registered keeper was identified by Fife Constabulary as a vehicle being driven in a manner which could be construed as anti-social behaviour.

If your vehicle is observed being driven in such a manner in the future, it is the intention of Fife Constabulary to consult with Fife Council with a view to obtaining an anti-social behaviour order under the Provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988.

This order can give restrictions on the driver's behaviour or can be used to prohibit the driver from entering prescribed areas. If this order is obtained and breached, it carries a maximum penalty of 5 years imprisonment, or an unlimited fine or both.

If you are the registered keeper and the vehicle is used regularly by someone else can you please advise them of the contents of this letter.

If/...



If you wish to discuss this matter further please feel free to contact:

**Sergeant Michael Collins – Tel. No. 01592 418722**

or

**Inspector Bill Ritchie – Tel. No. 01592 418741**

at the Community Team, Kirkcaldy, who will be happy to address your concerns.

Yours faithfully

IAN BEASE  
Community Chief Inspector

Appendix 1 (cont.)

# Praise for efforts to drive out boy racers

## But motor menaces are still on our roads

**GAVIN GIBBON**  
Reporter

[g.gibbon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:g.gibbon@bbc.co.uk)

A SCHEME to put the brakes on Kirkcaldy's boy racers has finished second in a Fife Police awards ceremony. But leading police officers and local and national politicians have admitted there is a long way to go before the streets of the Lang Town are free from the motoring menaces.

Kirkcaldy's Esplanade Cruisers Initiative came runner up in the Problem Orientated Partnership (POP) Awards announced this week.

The boy racers and cruisers were targeted after complaints they were using Kirkcaldy's seafront as a race track and playing their music at all hours of the night.

And although the nuisance has reportedly decreased since the operation was launched, the screeching of tyres, loud racing engines and booming music can still be heard.

Local councillor Alice Soper was delighted the hard work had been recognised but stressed they were a long way from a permanent solution. She told *The Press*: "It's definitely not finished. There are still issues to resolve and there are still ele-



**Marilyn Livingstone and Alice Soper survey the troubled Esplanade (3404p15)**

The problem escalated when internet sites were set up and adverts placed in national magazines welcoming motorists to the Lang Town as the natural racetrack layout of the Esplanade attracted drivers from across the Kingdom and further afield.

In response, Anti-Social Behaviour Order warning letters were issued and other enforcement measures taken by Police. And a £400,000 investment in traffic calming measures was made on the Esplanade and

lowing complaints from constituents, which brought the issue to the attention of the Scottish Parliament.

As well as being tackled by road traffic legislation, elements can now also be addressed by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, which was passed by Ministers last month and will be phased in during late Autumn.

Mrs Livingstone added: "It has not been complete. We are trying to say is that Kirkcaldy is not to come and race." The POP awards have been running for years and involve a number of different initiatives, focusing on dealing with problems in the city. Deputy Justice Minister Hugh Henry presented the winning award to the Levenmouth Motor Initiative. He added: "What these awards demon-

# SEIZED!



## New Powers Mean Your Vehicle May be at Risk

From March 2005 new powers come into force which will enable Police Officers, in terms of the Anti Social Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004 to seize and retain, at a cost to the owner, any vehicle which is used or driven in a manner likely to cause alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public.

## What Will it Cost You?

Uplift and Removal of Vehicle - £105  
Storage of Vehicle - £12 Per Day

Subsequent failure to pay these charges can result in your vehicle being sold off to recoup the costs incurred.

