



Crime Reduction & Community Safety Group

Tilley Awards 2007

Application form

Please ensure that you have read the guidance before completing this form. ***By making an application to the awards, entrants are agreeing to abide by the conditions laid out in the guidance.*** Please complete the following form in full, within the stated word limit and ensuring the file size is no more than 1MB. Failure to do so will result in your entry being rejected from the competition.

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

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

Section 1: Details of application

Title of the project: The impact of the Seaford Youth Task Group on reducing crime and disorder and improving the provision of activities for young people

Name of force/agency/CDRP/CSP: Sussex Police

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

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If known please state in which Government Office area you are located e.g. Government Office North West, Government Office London etc:

Government Office of the South East (GOSE)

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): Joe Edwards

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

Chief Constable, Sussex Police

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s):

Malling House
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Please tick box to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry (this is to prevent duplicate entries of the same project):



Section 2: Summary of application

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

Seaford is a coastal town of 25,000 people. In the past it has traditionally suffered from a higher than average incidence of youth disorder that has been linked to lack of facilities for young people.

Police have used a number of initiatives previously in an effort to tackle the youth problems with some success including, in May 2004, instigating a Dispersal Order.

Whilst the enforcement of the Order significantly reduced the incidence of disorder it had the effect of demonising young people in the eyes of the public, with law-abiding youths feeling the police tactics were heavy handed.

The need for a long term solution to the youth problem was identified and in 2004 the Seaford Partnership created a sub-group, the Youth Task Group which consisted of police, local action team members and youth workers who sought to work with young people to address the causes of youth disorder.

Young people were widely consulted and one suggestion was the provision of a youth disco. There is an adult only nightclub in Seaford within the town centre and the group felt that this would be the ideal venue. The owner was approached and she agreed to open the club early in order to hold a disco on a trial basis.

The first youth disco was held in March 2006. Youths arrived to find that the event was being run along similar lines to an adult event, the only difference being that no alcohol was on sale. The club's owner, door staff, members of the Youth Task Group, and uniformed police staff greeted and intermingled with the 150 young people that attended.

The success of the event was immediately realised. Young people who attended included many of those who had previously been in trouble with the police. There were no reports of any incidents of youth disorder in the town on that Friday evening.

Further events have been held, the last one being attended by 360 young people.

The positive message of the success was actively promoted to the local press, who published the story alongside photographs of young people enjoying themselves.

The town youth now work with the Partnership (via the Youth Forum) and relationships with the police are very good. The young people have benefited from the positive effects of this project, with crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime much reduced, as evidenced by reports from the crime analysts.

Section 3: Description of project

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

Sussex is a very safe place to live and work. This is especially true of Seaford, which enjoys lower than average crime. Anti-social behaviour in Seaford has varied over the years but has tended to be confined to a small nucleus of teenagers from differing backgrounds who feel there is nothing to do.

Anti-social behaviour has tended to be in the town centre and is therefore the most visible to the general public. The main complaints relating to groups of youths hanging about, rowdiness, general noise, drinking alcohol and acts of minor criminal damage.

Seaford already had an effective partnership encompassing representatives from both the Town and District Council, church groups, the Community College, Southdown Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS), Youth Development, local businesses, the local Leisure Trust and the police. They set up a working group to resolve problems associated with young people. This group supported the CDRP strategy, and consulted with them throughout their deliberations.

One of the first significant initiatives by the partners to provide a sustained and lasting solution to the problems of youth disorder was the instigation of a Dispersal Order in Seaford from May 2004 to November 2004. This was the first of such orders on the District and was robustly enforced, resulting in a significant reduction in youth crime within the specified area. After the Order one report of youth disorder was received every ten days, whereas before the Order it was closer to four incidents reported over the same period.

The Dispersal Order was in place in Seaford from 28/05/2004 to 28/11/2004. This amounted to 185 days. ASB incident data is available from December 2003 to March 2005. Although it is not possible to compare exactly the same number of days over the same period in different years, comparing the data available still gives a usual indication as to the impact of the Order.

The table below shows the rate of incidents per day for the period leading up to the Dispersal Order (179 days from 01/12/03 to 27/05/04), the Dispersal Order period itself and the period after the Dispersal Order (29/11/2004 to 31/03/05 - a total of 123 days).

The table shows a decrease in the rate of "Nuisance Youth" incidents during the Dispersal Order with this decrease continuing after the Order expired. The rate of all Nuisance Incidents actually increased during the Dispersal Order period but declined in the immediate period afterwards. The increase in nuisance youth calls during the duration of the Order can be attributed to a higher expectation of police intervention from the public as a result of the high profile of the Dispersal Order, as well as more nuisance behaviour being encountered by police patrols who were specifically tasked to confront it.

Table 1: Rate of ASB Incidents around Seaford Dispersal Order Period

Incidents per day	All Nuisance Calls	Nuisance Youths
Pre Dispersal Order	2.74	0.42
During Dispersal Order	2.90	0.29
Post Dispersal Order	1.96	0.09

Whilst the Order successfully tackled the anti-social behaviour in the town centre, some of the young people felt they were being unfairly targeted. In addition the public perception of the activity was that young people were under some kind of police 'curfew'. There was a popular feeling that because there was a 'curfew' in place, all young people had to be controlled. People's perceptions fuelled by national media reports from across the country heightened the fear of crime for some residents and young people felt they were being demonised. Therefore a further aspect of the new approach had to be to improve relationships between police, partners and young people through engagement.

At the conclusion of the Dispersal Order, police again noticed a steady rise in youth disorder and the police were keen to explore additional long term solutions that involved community engagement, including the youths.

The Seaford Partnership had established a Youth Task Group after realising that more needed to be done in the aftermath of the Dispersal Order. Their remit was to specifically look at the issues of youth disorder, with an objective to reduce the number of such incidents using innovative means.

Therefore the size of the Group was reduced and it was re-structured, with the emphasis now on looking at young people in a more positive light and finding better ways to engage with them.

The Youth Task Group met regularly to look at the issues involving young people in the town from the aspect of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, as well as areas to be developed within the town in terms of infrastructure and facilities.

Response to the problem

Any attempt to change the relationship between the authorities and young people required a sustained and dedicated effort. Local police officers and Youth Services identified this as vital and established a dialogue to ensure a focused and harmonious working practice. It was also recognised that local people had to be included in order to ensure that decisions made took account of the wider context.

The Task Group wanted to hear the views of young people, which would form a significant part of the response to the problem. There was already plenty of information available about the impact of poor behaviour in the town, available from crime figures, feedback from local people and informal feedback from young people. A consultation was carried out by the Youth Development Service in late 2005, when they questioned a range of 16 year olds (chosen as the age group both at risk and able to speak their minds). This provided hard evidence of young people's fears and wishes and this could then be reflected upon once any project undertaken was evaluated. The SARA model (scanning, analysis, response & assessment) was used to structure the process.

It was recognised that in order to fully engage them, the views of the town's young people had to be taken into consideration. A consultation of young people was organised by the youth service and was carried out by students from year 11. The consultation included respondents aged from 10 to 16 years old and highlighted a number of areas that they felt were essential to be addressed.

Young people generally felt that they did not have a voice. They were regularly berated in the press for the misdeeds of a handful of youngsters and felt they had been missed out in the general planning for the town.

Following consultation a Youth Forum was established to include young people within the age group of 10 to 19. The forum was established in 2005 and consisted of 10 young people. They were provided with a facilitator to assist them and the Task Group agreed to fund the post.

The young people drafted an advert and vetted the applications. Interviews were held and successful candidate was a youth worker who later described the process as 'extremely demanding'.

Young people felt that they not well catered for by the current facilities in the town. One of the major youth club buildings in the town had closed due to the dilapidated state of the building and this added to the number of young people who were forced to spend time in the town centre.

The Task Group identified a semi-derelict outbuilding owned by the Town Council that was situated in the Salts recreation ground in an area where the young people often spent time. The Council agreed to renovate it and give the young people priority use. In addition to the renovation the building also required substantial additional work and the young people themselves raised a considerable amount of money through fund raising and charity applications, in addition to the funds set aside by the Council.

Young people expressed a desire to have youth workers supervise the building and welcomed the police to patrol the area. The building, now known as The Base, was opened in November 2006.

The consultation also highlighted young people's concerns about the amount of anti-social behaviour caused by a small proportion of their age group in the town. The Task Group considered all of the suggestions made in the consultation and met specifically to consider the provision of a number of initiatives including a youth festival, a band night and a youth disco.

A youth festival was held in 2005 at the Salts recreation ground in the town. The All Salts Festival drew hundreds of young people from across the area with live bands, DJ workshops, art and film-making. This was a key success for the Task Group and indicated that they were going in the right direction in tackling youth disorder and that the problem solving model was being used effectively.

The next step was to undertake an even more ambitious project to tackle the problems in the town, and the Youth Panel chose a youth disco.

The Trek nightclub is the ideal venue for the youth disco. Firstly because it is set up to run this type of event with licensed door staff, CCTV and a secure perimeter, and secondly young people associate the premises with adult entertainment and see it is somewhere they would like to be.

It was accepted at the outset that the management of the young people within the venue should be the responsibility of youth workers because of their specialist skills in dealing with young people. It was considered important not to blur the lines between police and youth workers, each has a unique but complementary roll in dealing with young people. Therefore the youth workers concentrated on engaging with the young people inside the disco and the police remained on hand to be both approachable and capable of reacting to any problems that may arise. The Youth Manager ensured that all her 10 staff would be available for each event. The additional staffing costs were initially met by the Town Council.

Police involvement was essential but it was recognised that sensitivity and empathy would be required to ensure that the young people who ordinarily consider themselves to be at odds with the police would not feel alienated and therefore fail to engage in the event.

The policing strategy was established following discussion with all partners as it was seen as key to success. Local officers were used where possible to ensure familiarity with the young people and maintain a rapport that would continue over time. The officers were aware of the individuals who could be described as troubled, as well as those who were troublesome and understood that the idea of the event was to include them as much as was possible, within certain parameters.

Officers were briefed prior to the disco and patrolled the town approximately 2 hours before the event started in order to check the areas known to be used by young people for drinking alcohol. All alcohol was seized and disposed of. Anyone found to be drunk was either taken home or parents called to collect them. At approximately 7pm officers relocated to the venue to support youth workers at the perimeter gate and at the door. Other officers would remain in the town itself.

The officers on the perimeter gate assisted the youth workers to ensure the overexcited youngsters did not cause any trouble in the town, to ensure that alcohol was not taken in and to prevent individuals who were not eligible to enter from getting inside.

A uniformed presence was provided, with youth workers and local Councillors assisting with collecting the money and ensuring the disco ran smoothly.

Youth workers provided a continual presence and made regular checks of the toilet and patio areas of the club.

Police staff remained at the venue for the duration of the event and would be highly visible, spending the evening talking with young people and dealing with any issues that occasionally arose that could not be resolved by youth workers.

The event concluded at 10pm at which point the police staff would relocate onto the street outside to assist as the young people left the premises. Other officers would be on duty in the town centre to provide a highly visible presence as the young people went home. The presence was as much to reassure the public who would see dozens, if not hundreds, of young people in the town, as well as the young people themselves. Officers always found the mood of the young people to be jovial, as the majority of them were still excited by the event.

The event provided opportunities for young people to experience different aspects of organisation:

- Young people learnt how to respect and engage with people from other groups. Members of the Forum attend the Task Group meetings and work closely with local Councillors, church group members, representatives from the college and the local police. In addition the Trek events meant that they were dealing with the manager of the nightclub as well as the door staff.
- Young people were involved in arranging the DJ and the music. This appealed to those who wanted to branch out in this direction and gave them experience they could fall back on.
- The disco was originally advertised within the college after a group of young people designed and created a poster that was widely distributed in the town. The preparation provided the opportunity to practice skills in design and layout.

The Task Group and Youth Forum realised that a positive image in the press was essential to help dispel the opinion

of many that young people were always troublesome. From the outset photographs of the event and a press release were given to the press after each event. At the most recent disco a local journalist joined the police to witness the event and her subsequent report was very supportive of the way the event was run and complimentary about the enthusiasm and commitment given by the young people themselves.

One further outcome has been a noticeable reduction in the amount of alcohol that some young people drink before the event. When the doors opened for the first disco a substantial number of young people had been drinking. As the events have passed, there has been a significant drop in the number of young people who arrive clearly having consumed alcohol. This indicates that an increasing proportion of young people have accepted that drinking prior to the event is not a good idea and has, therefore, led to a moderation of their drinking behaviour.

The positive action of the police in dealing with youngsters under the influence of alcohol has highlighted the drinking issue to some parents who were either unaware that their children were drinking, or simply had not seen it as a problem until then. The police policy of phoning parents to collect drunken youngsters ensured they became well aware of the implications of alcohol consumption. Other young people witnessing parents collecting their offspring also started to moderate their own drinking behaviour. Evidence of this effect has come from the youth workers themselves, following feedback to them from the young people, as well as a noticeable drop in the numbers of young people turned away from each subsequent disco for arriving under the influence of alcohol.

Evaluation of the intervention

The youth disco project has proved to be a positive move for Seaford, both in terms of the reduction in crime and disorder associated with young people, and the general perception of young people by certain groups of the general public, most notably the elderly. Anecdotal evidence of this perception of young people was given during police meetings with residents groups and from key members of the Seniors' Forum. Police now positively engage with the youth and have addressed some of their fears of crime that the youths themselves have.

Again data from Sussex Police supported the pattern of crime and disorder noticed by local police and the general public.

Youth discos took place in Seaford on 5 Fridays from March 2006 to February 2007, on the following dates:

- 03/03/2006
- 28/04/2006
- 30/06/2006
- 08/12/2006
- 23/02/2007

The table below shows the average number of incidents on Fridays when Youth Discos took place and on all Fridays in the calendar year 2006 and the first two months of 2007. Due to the fact that there are different numbers of days, rates of incidents have been used in order to compare the levels of incidents. The three columns show the rates of all anti-social behaviour incidents, those related to youth matters and those relating to youth matters that occurred between the hours of 5pm and 10pm.

Table 2: Rate of ASB Incidents in Seaford on Fridays

Incidents per day	Youth Related 5 to 10pm
All Fridays	1.7
Disco Days	1.25
% Change in Rate	-25%

As can be seen from the table the rates of all anti-social behaviour incidents, those related to youth matters and those relating to youth matters that occurred between the hours of 5pm and 10pm were all lower during Fridays when Youth Discos took place. The greatest difference was in youth related incidents between the hours of 5pm and 10pm, which was 25% lower on days when Youth Discos took place.

Offences per day	Criminal Damage
All Fridays	1.60
Disco Days	0.60

As can be seen from the table the rates of Criminal Damage offences were considerably lower during Fridays when Youth Discos took place than the average for all Fridays (62% lower). Although it is impossible to demonstrate that this drop is entirely due to the presence of the disco, we are confident that it has been an influential factor.

Conclusion

It was clear from the outset that the police could not deal with the problems alone and that partnership and problem solving were going to be key. The problems associated with young people were already known and the partners sought to provide an appropriate package of responses which allowed for the longer term issues to be resolved. Analysis of both the data and anecdotal feedback from those involved with the young people, the young people themselves and the local community has indicated that this has been a great success.

Fundamental to the success of the whole project has been the willingness of the Seaford Youth Task Group to engage creatively with the young people of Seaford and for their views to be incorporated. Without the enthusiasm and commitment of the young people, and in particular the support of local businesses local people would still be reporting unreasonably high levels of anti-social behaviour and young people would feel disenfranchised with and excluded from the Seaford community.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Please insert letter from endorsing representative:

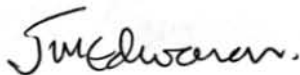
Dear Panel Members,

Tilley Award 2006: Sussex Police - Seaford Youth Task Group

I fully endorse this application for the 2007 Tilley Award competition. The material facts in the application are accurate and it meets the criteria for the award.

This piece of work is an excellent example of neighbourhood policing working in practice, and making a real difference to the quality of life for people in Seaford, both young and old. Using problem solving techniques and working in partnership with a number of agencies some innovative solutions have been found to reducing crime and disorder and providing enjoyable activities for young people.

Yours sincerely



Joe Edwards
Chief Constable

Checklist for Applicants:

1. Have you read the process and application form guidance?

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

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