



Crime Reduction & Community Safety Group

Tilley Awards 2007

Application form

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

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

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

Section 1: Details of application

Title of the project: **Operation 'Elmswood ', Wirral BCU**

Name of force/agency/CDRP/**CSP**: **Merseyside Police**

Name of one contact person with position and/or rank (this should be one of the authors):
Chief Inspector John Holmes, Wirral BCU

Email address: **john.a.holmes@merseyside.police.uk**

Full postal address: **Wirral Joint Community Safety Team
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Manor Road
Wallasey
Wirral
CH44 1BU**

Telephone number: **0151 606 5488**

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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 North West**

Name of endorsing senior representatives(s): **Superintendent Darren Martland**

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

Superintendent (Operations Support), Wirral BCU, Merseyside Police

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s):

Wallasey Police Station

Manor Road

Wallasey

Wirral

CH44 1DA

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).

Borough Road, Birkenhead, has for many years suffered high levels of crime, disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour, resulting in numerous Calls for Service from residents and local businesses. The level of crime and disorder escalated to a point that residents expressed the view that that groups of local youths had 'taken control' of the area, committing criminal offences and intimidating local residents and businesses.

Recorded crime and reported Anti-Social Behaviour tended to echo this view, albeit the levels of violent crime and disorder suggested at local Forums and in other verbal and written feedback to the Police, did not indicate the true weight of the situation.

Operation 'Elmswood' is a multi-agency approach, which was introduced in September 2006, in order to take positive action to address crime, disorder and Anti Social Behaviour that is affecting the area, known as the Borough Road 'corridor'. This approach includes proactive enforcement tactics from the Police and Wirral's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, combined with youth intervention and diversionary activities, championed by Wirral's Youth Outreach Service. A Community Mobile Police Station has been sited within the 'corridor' and a Community Development Worker, attached to this facility has built vital and productive community links between local residents and businesses and local agencies, including the police.

Since 26 September 2006, when the initiative commenced, **179** arrests have been made, for a wide variety of offences, including Robbery, Theft of and Theft from Motor Vehicle, Criminal Damage, Supplying Controlled Drugs, Threatening and Disorderly Behaviour and Breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order. **284** stop/searches have been conducted, many leading to arrests for Possession of Controlled Drugs and Offensive Weapons. **178** separate seizures of alcohol from young people have been made, including 23 bottles of Vodka.

The 'corridor' is now far quieter, calls for service have significantly reduced as has recorded crime and reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour in the area. Very positive feedback for the police and other agencies action has been forthcoming from the local communities along the 'corridor' and local youth clubs and other available youth activity providers have reported increased attendance numbers and requests for membership.

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*).

Historical Perspective:

The Borough Road 'corridor' in Birkenhead, Wirral, is a long stretch of road running from Argyle Street in Birkenhead's town centre, to Mount Road in Lower Bebington. It is one of the main arterial routes in and out of Birkenhead's town centre, carrying heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic during the day, when the large retail outlets in the town centre are open for business. During the evening and early hours of the morning Birkenhead's 'Night-Time Economy' attracts visitors from across Wirral and Liverpool. Borough Road passes through different thriving communities, each with their own identity and demographic characteristics.

The 'corridor' has traditionally suffered from high levels of crime, disorder and other Anti-Social Behaviour, resulting in a high volume of Calls for Service and complaints to the Police and other agencies, from residents, local businesses, Ward Councillors and the Member of Parliament. Traditionally, there was a general feeling that the Police and other agencies didn't care about the problems and concerns that residents and businesses were raising and that groups of local youths had 'taken control' of the area and were regularly acting how they pleased, committing criminal offences and intimidating local residents and businesses.

Recorded crime and Anti-Social Behaviour statistics tended to echo this view and, of greater concern, it was reported that a 'gang culture' had developed in the 'corridor route'. It became apparent that three distinct groups of youths, aged 14 to 19 years of age, with their own identity, challenged each other to large-scale fights, intimidating local residents and businesses. The three gangs were known as 'The Borough Road Crew', 'The Library Gang' and 'The Tranmere Boys Elite'. The groups gathered in large numbers, which was threatening and intimidating to local communities, to the point that people were afraid of reporting crime and disorder, due to the fear of repercussions.

Borough Road traverses through 3 of the 8 Neighbourhoods within Wirral BCU; Upton (A4), Laird Street (A5) and Well Lane (A6) Neighbourhoods and encompasses 11 police 'beats'. This in itself has caused 'blockages' in the past, with the Well Lane (A6) Neighbourhood, which accounts for the majority of the 'corridor', taking ownership of the whole problem, despite there being conflicting demands and separate 'pockets' of crime, disorder and other Anti-Social Behaviour along the full length of Borough Road, for example, Criminal Damage and Anti-Social Behaviour at Birkenhead Central Library (near to Birkenhead town centre) and regular vandalism to the Cricket Pavilion within Mount Road Playing Fields (approximately 2 miles away in Lower Bebington).

Operation 'Elmswood':

In response to the issues described above, Chief Inspector John Holmes, Partnership Development Officer for Wirral BCU, was given strategic responsibility to resolve the issues and concerns within the Borough Road 'corridor', utilising relevant partner agencies to launch Operation 'Elmswood' on 26 September 2006. Instead of leaving the ownership of the whole problem to just one Neighbourhood, all 3 Neighbourhoods that have a portion of Borough Road within their area would take responsibility to resolve the particular issues within their respective area, using their own resources and a Tactical Plan, owned by the respective Neighbourhood Inspector. The Strategic Delivery Plan coordinates and drives these 3 Tactical Plans and associated activity to achieve the common Aim of reducing crime, disorder, Anti-Social Behaviour and the fear of becoming a victim for the whole 'corridor route'.

BCU resources are utilised to reinforce the numbers of police officers engaged in high-visibility patrolling at identified 'key' times. Often, police officers in 'plain' vehicles also patrol the 'flashpoint' areas, directing their uniformed colleagues to emerging issues, for example, groups of youths gathering and acting as covert intelligence and evidence gathering sources.

The operation is intelligence-led, with the vast majority of this information emerging as Community

Intelligence from residents and businesses within the 'corridor' being targeted, provided either directly to the police officers patrolling in the area, to the 3 Neighbourhood Police Stations involved, via the local Ward Councillors and Member of Parliament or anonymously through 'CrimeStoppers'.

In addition to the heavy police presence within the locational 'hotspots' along the 'corridor', specific individuals are also been targeted, primarily the 'ringleaders' of the 3 gangs referred to earlier; 'The Borough Road Crew', 'The Library Gang' and 'The Tranmere Boys Elite'. Intelligence Profiles have been prepared on each of the members of these groups, where known, identifying the links between the individuals concerned and groups. Detailed intelligence analysis, has led to a coordinated enforcement action, which has resulted in individuals being remanded in custody while awaiting court hearings and subsequently receiving custodial sentences. This, in turn, has led to the 'infrastructure' within these groups breaking down, with no clear leadership remaining and young people on the 'periphery' of these groups moving away from the group, often looking for something more productive to do with their spare time.

Multi-Agency Approach:

Operation 'Elmswood' is a truly multi-agency operation, with many partners playing their part in the initiative:

Wirral BCU – responsible for the enforcement tactics detailed previously and analysing the Community Intelligence being generated. Our Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) also play their part, patrolling the 'corridor' areas during the day and early evening, reassuring residents and local businesses of the action being taken and the results being achieved. Many of our PCSOs sit on local resident's and community groups and are accepted as being trusted and valued members of these communities and through this, even more Community Intelligence is being generated.

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team (WASBT) – as the ringleaders of each gang and other key individuals are being targeted and arrested, WASBT are preparing Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and assisting the Police to prepare Anti-Social Behaviour Orders on Conviction (CRASBOs) and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), to provide further Powers to minimise future unacceptable conduct from these individuals. Indeed, during the operation to date, arrests have been made within the 'corridor' area for persons breaching existing ASBOs and CRASBOs.

Wirral Youth Offending Service (YOS) – actively involved in the monitoring of young people who are already subject to YOS Orders and initiatives, who are members of the highlighted gangs, with a view to removing them from these initiatives and 'returning them back' into the Criminal Justice System, when their continuing criminality or Anti-Social Behaviour dictates this.

Wirral Youth Outreach Service – now that the size of the 3 gangs has significantly diminished and the ringleaders removed and remanded in custody, the regular intimidation of Youth Outreach Workers in the area has also significantly reduced. This has meant that these Outreach Workers have been able to interact with the remaining young people and positively work with them, at every available opportunity, to encourage them to see the effect that their behaviour is having on the local community and encourage them to look at alternative uses of their spare time, and the many and varied intervention programmes and activities available within the area.

Wirral Community Patrols – employed by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC) and an integral part of Wirral Joint Community Safety Team. The Community Patrols have primary responsibility for ensuring the security at buildings and facilities owned by WMBC, for example, Council buildings, parks, schools, libraries, cemeteries, etc. The Community Patrols report to the police, via their own Control Room, groups of youths gathering at these establishments, 'fresh' graffiti, automatic alarm activations and also immediately respond to Calls for Service at these premises and facilities, minimising the need for the police officers engaged in the enforcement activity in the 'corridor' area to have to leave the 'core' role they are engaged in.

Wirral CCTV Unit – again, employed and maintained by WMBC. The Borough Road 'corridor' has

several CCTV cameras along its length and the operators within the Council's CCTV Control Room monitor these cameras 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, particularly concentrating on Borough Road and its adjacent streets, to give early warning of groups of youths gathering or carrying out criminal activities, for example, Criminal Damage or Assaults. The recorded CCTV images are of an evidential quality and have been used in the successful prosecution of members of the 3 gangs referred to earlier.

Wirral Partnership Homes – the largest Registered Social Landlord (RSL) in Wirral, owning 14,000 properties primarily in East Wirral and the vast majority of the housing stock within the Borough Road 'corridor'. Working with the Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, using the information and evidence generated by the Police through this operation, Wirral Partnership Homes will seek Possession and Eviction Orders on their Tenants, following acts of criminality by a member of the Tenant's family. This has been very effective as many of the youths involved in the 3 gangs, particularly the ringleaders, live in properties rented by their Parents from Wirral Partnership Homes.

Wirral Community Mobile Police Station:

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council made provision, through the Council Budget 2005/06, for the costs of procuring a Community Mobile Police Station, together with a revenue contribution of £20,000 per annum to the running costs of the facility. The Community Mobile Police Station was delivered in January 2006 and is sited for a minimum period of two months within a community, providing improved access to services for the local community and a fully equipped base for staff involved in joint operations within the area.

In October 2006, the facility was located at the junction of Borough Road and Kingsland Road, in the centre of the 'corridor' and remained there until mid-January 2007. The Mobile Police Station plays a critical role in helping to encourage local people to become involved in taking solving the problems, hence leading to sustained, longer term improvements in crime and disorder. The siting of the facility in Borough Road was mutually agreed by all members of Wirral's Joint Agency Group (JAG), which is fully representative of all partner agencies within Wirral's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

Prior to the siting of the facility in Borough Road, the local communities and Ward Councillors were advised of the forthcoming location and available facilities and support that the Unit can offer, through 'leaflet dropping' in the immediate vicinity.

The Community Mobile Police Station is staffed by a core police team, consisting of local Neighbourhood police officers and Police Community Support Officers and is open for public enquiries at 'peak times' for Anti-Social Behaviour within that community, determined through the analysis of all available partner information, including Police Crime and Incident Data and utilising 'mapping' software to identify 'key' times during each week.

Youth Outreach Workers (Wirral Children and Young People's Department) also work out of the facility, using it as a base for engagement with young people and as a 'drop in' facility. The Outreach Workers co-ordinate their attendance with the 'peak times' for demand generated by the 'mapping process' previously described.

A Community Development Worker, employed by Wirral Joint Community Safety Team is permanently attached to the Community Mobile Police Station and works out of the facility, to provide assistance and act as a 'single point of contact' for residents and businesses. This has worked to great effect in Borough Road, so much so that the viability, funding and location for a 'Community House' is currently being considered. The Community Development Worker has built strong relationships with residents, local businesses, faith groups, young people and more elderly people within all of the communities along the Borough Road 'corridor', significantly enhancing the availability of Community Intelligence which drives the enforcement tactics of Operation 'Elmswood'.

The key purpose of the deployment of the Community Mobile Police Station to Borough Road is to assist

the local community to develop skills and knowledge to sustain any gains made during the intervention in reducing crime, disorder and other Anti-Social Behaviour.

Results:

Quantitative feedback (since 26 September 2006):

179 arrests for offences including Robbery, Theft of/Unauthorised Taking of a Motor Vehicle, Theft from Motor Vehicle, Criminal Damage, Supplying Controlled Drugs, Threatening Behaviour, Disorderly Behaviour, Drunk & Disorderly, Breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order.

284 stop/searches, many resulting in arrests for Possessing Controlled Drugs and Offensive Weapons.

178 separate seizures of alcohol from young people, including 23 bottles of vodka (including several litre bottles), 13 bottles of cider (2 litre bottles), 16 bottles of wine, over 100 cans of lager and numerous 'alcopops'.

Numerous motor vehicles seized for using with No Insurance.

Monthly average number of crimes (June to September 2006) – 46.

Monthly average number of crimes (October 2006 to January 2007) – **35**.

These figures represent the total number of recorded crimes within the 11 police 'beats' (3 Neighbourhoods) covered by Operation 'Elmswood' in the 4 month timeframes highlighted. The majority of the crimes recorded in November and December 2006 and in January 2007 relate to persons arrested for Theft (Shoplifting) within Birkenhead town centre, part of which is covered by police 'beats' included in this initiative.

Reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour:

Since the commencement of the operation in late September 2006, Calls for Service/complaints from residents and local businesses have significantly reduced in all 3 Neighbourhoods, despite several 'key' periods where traditionally Anti-Social Behaviour would 'spike' - Mischief Night, Halloween, Bonfire Night, school half-term holiday (October) and New Year's Eve.

The Borough Road 'corridor' is now noticeably quieter, with far fewer young people gathering and remaining in previous problem 'hotspots'.

Several 'mini motos' have been seized and crushed.

When the monthly average reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (June to September 2006) is compared with the 4 month period (October 2006 to January 2007) a **21.67%** reduction in reported incidents is evident.

If this information is further drilled down, the following positive reduction figures are also evident:

21.51% reduction in reported incidents of Rowdy and Inappropriate Gatherings.

21.62% reduction in reported incidents involving vehicle misuse.

These figures represent the total number of reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour within the 11 police 'beats' (3 Neighbourhoods) covered by Operation 'Elmswood' in the 4 month timeframes highlighted.

Qualitative feedback (since 26 September 2006):

All 3 Neighbourhood Inspectors and particularly Inspector Mick Blease at Well Lane (A6) Neighbourhood, have received many positive comments from residents, local businesses, local faith groups, the Imam at Birkenhead Mosque, the librarians at Birkenhead Central Library and the Youth Outreach Workers.

Anecdotal evidence from the Youth Outreach Workers suggests that the 3 gangs have now fragmented, due to the 'lack of leadership' and that smaller, more manageable groups of youths are tending to meet in each other's houses and in local youth clubs, rather than gathering in the previous Anti-Social Behaviour 'hotspots'.

Very positive feedback for the police and other agencies action has been forthcoming from the local communities along the 'corridor' and 3 local youth clubs and other available youth activity providers have reported increased attendance numbers and requests for membership.

Marketing:

The positive effects of Operation 'Elmswood' have been marketed through all available mediums, at every opportunity, as a means of generating positive community spirit and encouragement to the public to report all crimes and incidents of disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour to the Police. This marketing has taken the following forms:

- Regular press releases in the local free newspapers and in the Daily Post and Liverpool Echo (Merseyside-wide), providing the results of the operation to date.
- Interviews with Buzz FM, Birkenhead's local radio station and Radio Merseyside and Radio City (Liverpool-based radio stations), providing the aims of the operation and the success generated.
- Inclusion of film footage of a seized 'Mini Moto' being crushed and the alcohol that has been seized on the Merseyside Police's Internet website and the websites of the newspapers and radio stations already mentioned.
- Presentations given to resident's groups and at the Neighbourhood Action Groups of the 3 Neighbourhoods involved.
- Presentation given to the Management Board of the Tranmere Together Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder
- Presentation given at Wirral's Community Consultation and Engagement Group (wirral-wide representation present)
- Presentation given at Wirral's Community Relations Group (wirral-wide representation, including representatives from the Black and Racial Minority Communities, Wirral's Asian Business Forum, Wirral's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Group and Wirral's Traveller's Forum, many of whom know of members of their groups who have been victims of crime within the Borough Road 'corridor'.
- Various presentations given at Primary and Secondary Schools, within the Borough Road 'corridor', by local police officers and Police Community Support Officers, outlining the aims of the operation, the tactics being used and providing details of youth diversionary activities and opportunities available at various locations within the 'corridor'.

Section 4: Endorsement by Senior Representative

Operation Elmswood is a truly impressive example of the success that can be achieved by agencies engaging with local communities and working together to tackle crime and disorder.

Analytical data was used, in conjunction with information obtained from local communities and partner

agencies, to help develop a detailed understanding of the cause and extent of the problems.

Community disengagement was an underlying reason that local youths felt that they could engage in anti-social and unlawful behaviour with impunity. It was established that the problem was complex and required a comprehensive and structured approach, which could only be offered by a number of agencies working together to address the underlying problems, which had become manifested as an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour.

The operation was given simple, clear and realistic objective to work in conjunction with local communities to tackle reduce crime and disorder and increase confidence.

Initially, a high profile policing activity was launched to pro-actively target the three 'gangs', believed to be responsible for intimidating behaviour, which blighted the community and led to disengagement and mistrust. Intense enforcement activity led to a number of arrests, which received extensive publicity and served to reassure communities that positive action was being taken.

Members of the community and 'opinion formers' were then invited to forums to discuss the problem and encouraged to become actively involved. Despite initial reluctance, a number of people completed questionnaires and participated in an Environmental Audit, known as a CAT Walk, which identified factors that were considered to contribute to the fear of crime. The Local Authority 'Streetscene' agreed to address each issue within 3 weeks, which gave local people a visible indication that action had been taken. In the following months, although a high profile policing presence was maintained, equal emphasis was placed on community engagement and encouraging youths to become involved diversionary activities.

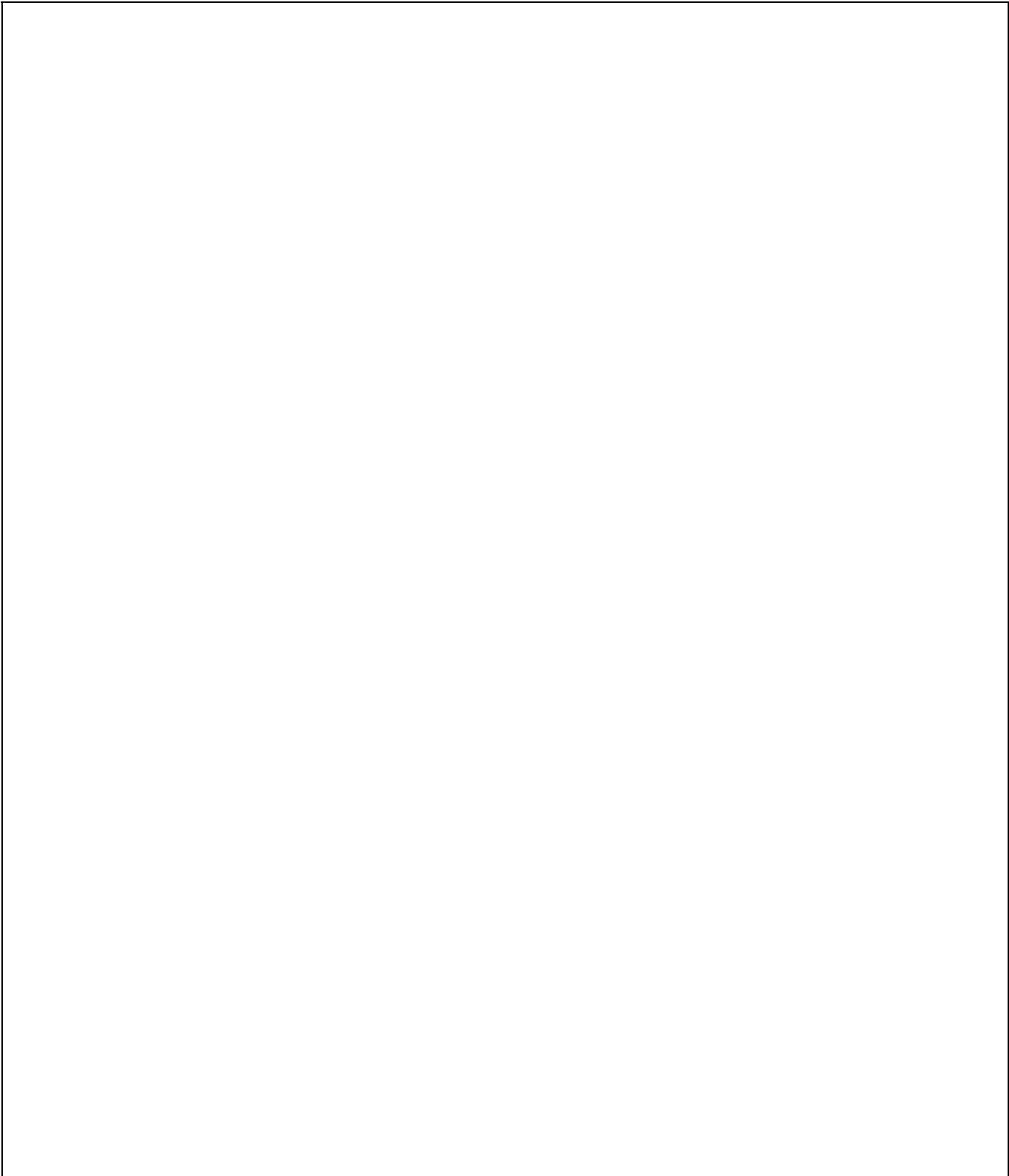
The Mobile Police station became the 'hub' of the local community and was used, not only as a point of contact, but a meeting place for various groups in the area. A Community Development Worker who worked from the facility built strong relationships with residents, businesses, faith groups, young people and elderly people from communities in Borough Road. The purpose of the deployment was is to assist the local community to develop skills and confidence to continue to work together and sustain long term reductions in crime, disorder and other Anti-Social Behaviour.

The multi-agency approach has proven to be invaluable in developing community engagement and encouraging local people to work together to tackle local problems. However, at the heart of the initiative was a clear and unequivocal message that prompt enforcement action would be taken against those who continued to engage in anti-social behaviour.

The success of Operation Elmswood is quite remarkable and attributable to the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of members of each organization and local people who worked together to take a stand against anti-social behaviour.

We are very proud of the achievements of Operation Elmswood and believe that everyone involved deserve the acknowledgement and recognition that would be gained by nomination for the prestigious Tilley Award.

Darren Martland
Superintendent



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.