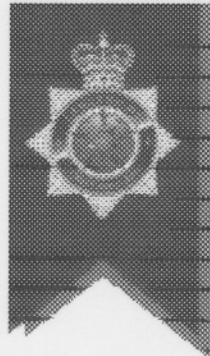


LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY
EASTERN DIVISION AREA 2 – ACCRINGTON SOUTH

OPERATION EXODUS



BY
PC 2798 CROWE

A S.A.R.A submission to tackle the Juvenile Nuisance
Problems experienced in the 2K area of Accrington, in particular
Richmond Street

Submitted to fulfill the S.A.R.A. requirements

© By Lancashire Constabulary 1998

LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY

EASTERN DIVISION

AREA 2 – ACCRINGTON SOUTH

A S.A.R.A submission to tackle the Juvenile Nuisance Problems experienced in the 2K area of Accrington, in particular Richmond Street.

Index to Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	3
Scanning - What is the problem?	5
- With whom have we enquired to confirm it is a problem?	7
- Which other people/agencies would have an interest in it?	9
Analysis - In which core service areas does the problem fall?	10
- The Problem Analysis Triangle	11
Response - What are the possible responses?	14
- The agreed action	17
- Time scale and desired result	20
Assessment - Results of operation	21
Appendix I - Useful Contact Numbers	22
Appendix 2 - Incident Logs for 2K Juvenile Nuisance	23

INTRODUCTION

A S.A.R.A submission to tackle the Juvenile Nuisance Problems experienced in the 2K area of Accrington, in particular Richmond Street.

Richmond Street Accrington is a terraced residential street just outside Accrington town centre. It is made up mainly of terraced homes but also includes a Church and its grounds, a small off-licence and two telephone boxes. It is bordered at one end by Willows Lane which leads up to the Ferngore Council Estate, and at the other end by Richmond Hill Street, which also consists of terraced dwellings.

The residents of Richmond Street are mainly respectable Asian families, with a few white families toward the Willows Lane end of the Street.

Across Willows Lane, opposite the end of Richmond Street lies Richmond Road, which borders the Ferngore estate. Richmond Road is made up mainly of semi-detached properties housing white families with children. It is believed that due to a lack of facilities to keep these youths occupied in the evenings, they and other youths from the Ferngore estate tend to congregate on the corner of Willows Lane and Richmond Street outside the telephone boxes and the off-licence. These youths then move down the street in numbers and congregate anywhere they can, which includes in front yards of both occupied and empty premises, and in the rear alleys between Richmond Street and Perth Street and Richmond Street and Willows Lane.

These youths are in turn causing a constant nuisance to the residents of Richmond Street by their rowdy behaviour, shouting, swearing, use of obscene language, sitting on parked cars and underage drinking. This is done both on the main street and in the back alleys.

This proposal aims to look at possible alternatives to reduce the nuisance caused to the residents and to reduce the number of Police deployments to the area, not just by our own actions, but by adopting a multi-agency approach.

SCANNING

What is the problem?

Juvenile Nuisance is the Police term that covers the multitude of problems that the youths are causing to the residents. Incidents that residents have contacted the Police for in just the past four months have included-

- Youths playing in empty building
- Youths throwing stones at cars
- Youths playing football on street
- Youths playing in rear yards
- Youths knocking on doors
- Youths sitting on cars
- Youths drinking in rear alleys
- Youths throwing fireworks
- Youths verbally abusing residents
- Youths causing general nuisance

Appendix 1 shows month by month since the end of July 1998 every Police deployment to a Juvenile Nuisance incident to the 2K area in which Richmond Street lies. Out of the total of 77 Police Deployments to this area, a total of 29 were to Richmond Street.

All of these problems seem to occur daily, starting from around 6.30pm when it gets dark to about 11.00pm when it seems the youths decide to go home.

The problem that we as the Police encounter is that on our arrival the youths have either already gone or are still there but not causing any problems. Generally no offences are disclosed by the complainant, they just want the children moved away from their houses to give them some peace. This leaves us with the difficult situation where if they are not doing anything wrong do we have the right to move them. Usually after a stern warning about their conduct the youths do move, but only to a neighbouring street where they are causing the same problems, and as soon as the Police patrol leaves they assume their original position on Richmond Street.

In the more troublesome cases the offending youths details are taken with a view to a warning letter being sent to their parents, and if the offender continues to cause problems they are escorted back to their home address immediately and formally warned in front of their parents. All of these approaches leave the punishment of the youth at the parents discretion, and rarely discourages repeat problems.

SCANNING

With whom have we enquired to confirm it is a problem?

It is mainly through contact with local residents that the Police have been made aware of the seriousness of this problem. Area officers have kept a log of contact with local residents and noted their feelings. On visits to the area they have been able to see the problem for themselves and pass this intelligence on to other officers in the Area 2 teams.

To confirm the extent of the problem the LCTP computer incident logging system was utilised. This allowed the exact number of deployments to the 2K area to be tabulated and give some idea as to how 2K compared to other areas. The number of juvenile nuisance calls from the area in the months of August, September, October and November were acquired, and then from these figures the number of calls specifically from Richmond Street were noted.

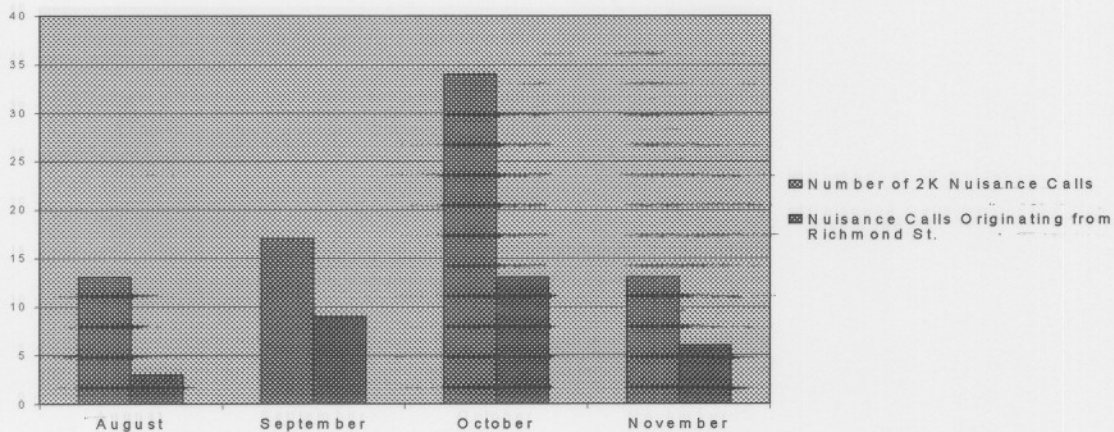


Figure 1: Graph showing total juvenile nuisance deployments over a 4 month period on the 2K area, and how many of those were specifically to Richmond Street.
(Source: LCTP Incident Log)

The graph shown in Figure 1 shows the findings of these investigations, and these figures for the total area did not compare favourably with other areas. The 'spike' in deployments seen in October is due to the Halloween and Bonfire Night period, in which a large number of calls were received for what was termed 'Firework Nuisance' caused by the inappropriate use of fireworks by local youths. A separate operation, Operation Euphoria, was set up to tackle this problem across Areas 1 & 2.

From analysing these figures we were able to notice a pattern as to who were making the most calls with regard to the juvenile problems on Richmond Street. Three dwellings were seen to make up approximately half of all juvenile nuisance calls from Richmond Street. These were numbers 78, 103 and 107 Richmond Street.

As these were the most frequent callers these residents were contacted to give a better insight into what problems were being experienced. Mr. Azam, Mr. Ulhaq and Mr. Ali own these houses respectively. All three were spoken to in person and their thoughts were taken on board. The consensus of opinion was that there was not a satisfactory Police presence in the area, and that there was nothing for the youths to do as an alternative, thus even when moved on they just cause problems elsewhere, and once the Police patrol has left the area they return to their original position on Richmond Street.

SCANNING

Which people/agencies does the problem affect, and who would have an interest in it?

It is not just we as the Police that have decided Juvenile Nuisance is a Problem in the Area. We have been engaged in correspondence with a number of other sources which include-

- Local Member of Parliament Greg Pope, who has taken up the issue of the juvenile nuisance problems on behalf of the Richmond Street residents.
- The Racial Equality Commission, who wish to oversee that the problems encountered by the Asian residents of Richmond Street do not have any roots in Racial prejudice or discrimination.
- The Higher Antley Street Mosque, which is the cultural and social centre for the area has helped the area officers to understand the needs of the community, and has acted as a platform to make the Police more accessible to the residents.
- There are four area officers allocated to the welfare of the 2K area, who have all seen the same problems occurring and have acted as intelligence gatherers with a view to taking remedial action-

PC 174	DAVE CLARKE
PC 1124	ALAN CULSHAW
PC 1151	ANDY RILEY
PC 2798	GARY CROWE

- Local Residents have been contacted and have made it clear to the Police what sort of problems they have encountered and what they want to have done about it.

ANALYSIS

Within which core service area does the problem fall?

The Core Service areas which are applicable to this problem are-

Public Tranquillity

The maintenance of public order so that the community's confidence is increased.

Prevention of Crime

Reducing criminal activity through a diverse approach which seeks not only to prevent, but also to detect crime and bring to justice those who commit it.

Meeting Demand

Working towards the provision of a high quality service in which we use our professional judgment to meet demand in the most appropriate way.

Partnerships

In order to achieve our core service aims we will participate in and develop a range of partnerships internally, and with other organisations and agencies.

ANALYSIS

The Problem Analysis Triangle (P.A.T.)

The Problem Analysis Triangle is a method of breaking down any problem into its component parts, namely the Location of the problem, the Victim of the problem and the Offender causing the problem.

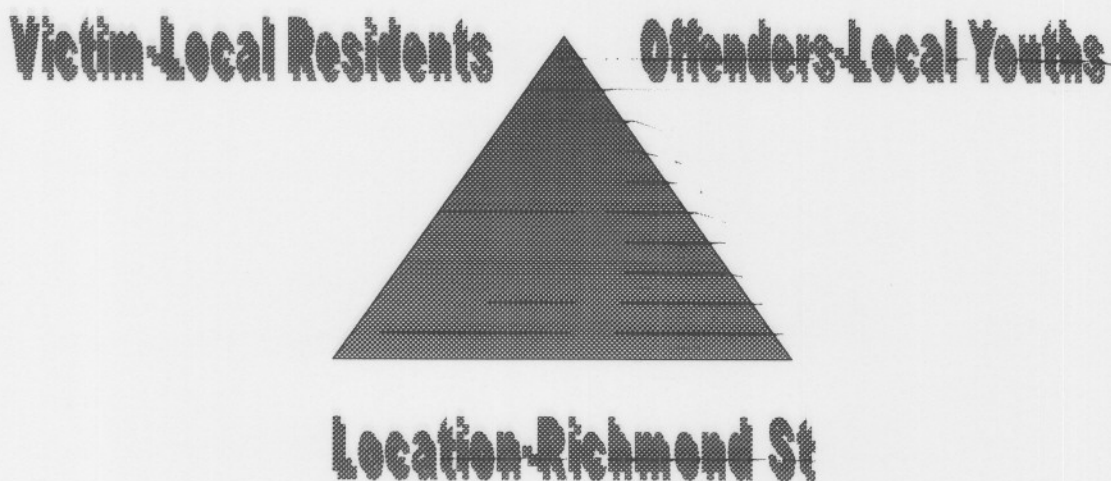


Figure 2: The Problem Analysis Triangle

As can be seen from Figure 2, the problem analysis triangle can be illustrated with a simple diagram that represents each part of the problem.

The principle behind this idea is that if any one part of the triangle is removed then it all collapses and the problem is solved. Thus in order to solve this problem, either the

location, the victim or the offender must be removed. We must now look at what we know about the 3 areas.

- ***The Location*** – As stated, Richmond Street consists of terraced dwellings with a small front yard with enclosed by a stone wall around 12 inches high. This is often used as seating by the youths. The grass churchyard is enclosed by iron railings but is occasionally used as a playground. Number 76 Richmond Street is currently unoccupied and it's front and rear yards are used as social gathering places. The back in particular as it is completely enclosed and backs onto an unlit and seldom used rear alley that is used for underage drinking and smoking. The off-licence on the corner of Richmond Street and Willows Lane is suspected of supplying the alcohol and cigarettes to the under-aged youths, and consequently it acts as a rendezvous point for them. While here they often use the phone boxes outside the shop as shelter in bad weather, and from this the boxes suffer at the hands of graffiti and vandalism, and on a number of occasions hoax 999 calls have been made from these boxes. The street itself does have street lighting, but it's rear alleys do not.
- ***The Victims*** – At some stage or another most of the residents of Richmond Street have reported incidents of juvenile nuisance over the past four months, but there seems to be a core element of three or four repeat callers who make up around half of the calls received. The question to be asked is why are they making so many calls in comparison to other residents? They all live some distance apart on the street so why are the people in between these individuals not reporting as many problems? Perhaps the tolerance levels of some of the residents is greater than others, or do they have higher expectations of what the Police Service can do about these youths.
- ***The Offenders*** – It appears that the offenders are mainly white youths from outside the predominantly Asian community of Richmond Street and the surrounding area. There have been few complaints of racial abuse, so this does not seem to be their motivation. In the opinion of the victims and the offenders it is that they are bored because there is nothing to do in the area. Most of the offenders are from the other

side of Willows Lane on Richmond Road and from the Ferngore Estate, so if they want to head into or across town to find something to do then Richmond Street is the most direct route.

To summarise, it seems that the root cause of the problem can be broken down into 3 parts-

1. Lack of facilities for the local youths to keep them occupied and off the streets.
2. Lack of respect from the youths for the property and peace of mind of the residents of Richmond Street.
3. Lack of tolerance for the youths by the residents of Richmond Street.

RESPONSE

What are the possible responses?

As previously mentioned there are a number of techniques already adopted by patrol officers to deal with juvenile problems. It is generally a 3-stage procedure. On the first occasion the youths are verbally warned and moved away from the area. On the second occasion the youths are verbally warned and moved away from the area, their details obtained and a letter sent to their parents outlining the circumstances in which their child was warned. If the youths persist then they are conveyed immediately to their home address and formally warned in front of their parents.

If any offences are disclosed the youths are dealt with accordingly.

This action is limited to only being of any use when officers are present, and local residents state that as soon as the Police patrol leaves the area the youths return. They also state that minor damage offences are being committed to vehicles and property, and that they are being verbally abused. By the time the Police patrol has attended the youths have generally gone, and the aggrieved are seldom able to identify the offender. This leaves us unable to pursue criminal proceedings.

To combat this a number of pro-active Responses are proposed. They have been split into two categories, those which are to be implemented by the Police and those to be initiated by the Police.

POLICE INITIATED RESPONSES

- To initiate action in conjunction with Hyndburn Borough Council Youth and Community Service. A number of 'Outreach' Workers operate from the New Era Youth and Community centre in Accrington who aim to provide leisure and recreation facilities for local youths which in the long term will give them somewhere to go other than on the streets.
- In conjunction with the same organisation, look at encouraging local youths to use existing recreational facilities such as the playing fields on Bullough Park or the organised sporting activities available at Hyndburn Leisure centre.
- To contact The Hyndburn Borough Council Works department with a view to improving the street lighting on Richmond Street, making it into a less secluded meeting place.
- Contact Mortimer Gorse and Ross Estate Agents, the current holders of 76 Richmond Street outside which a number of the juveniles tend to congregate. This will be done in the hope that the property will be made more secure, or that they will get it renovated so that an occupant can be put into it as soon as possible.

POLICE IMPLEMENTED RESPONSES

- Increased high visibility policing in the area. This is a simple solution that is easily achieved. It is not necessary to allocate additional patrols, just ensure that area officers use time on the area more effectively and make a visible presence to local youths. Also mobile patrols could be directed to divert through Richmond Street when in the area, i.e. use Richmond Street as a thoroughfare for patrols going from one end of the area to the other.
- Begin an area log to record the amount of time spent by patrols in the 2K area. This will act as an effective assessment tool and will highlight the times at which the 2K area is at it's most vulnerable.

- Use of video recording equipment. This can be done using hand held video equipment which is already available, and footage of the Richmond Street area could be recorded either from an unmarked vehicle or from a room overlooking the street with the occupants permission.
- Test purchases could be made from the off-licence at the end of Richmond Street in an attempt to find out where the youths are buying their alcohol and cigarettes. A number of them have already disclosed to officers that this is the case, but as yet no operation has been formulated to gather the necessary evidence.
- Residents of Richmond Street could be contacted to investigate the extent of the problems they are experiencing. It may be the case that in circumstances the Police are being contacted purely because the youths are just stood on the street and the residents are being intimidated. If so, and there is no malicious intent by the youths, then the more persistent callers must be educated that the youths are committing no offences, and that there are no grounds for the police to be involved. This would have to be handled delicately, as it could give the impression to the residents that we as the Police do not care.

RESPONSE

The Agreed Action.

A multi-agency approach is to be adopted to deal with this problem, and it is to be tackled in three stages. All three will overlap and work in conjunction with each other

STAGE 1 - BRING IN OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The Police cannot tackle this problem alone. One body that can help us deal with this problem is Lancashire County Council. They have a department that deals with Youth and Community services in Hyndburn. A number of 'Outreach' workers operate from here and have experience working with youths and dealing with their welfare matters. Also to be contacted about improving the lighting in the area is Hyndburn Borough Council Works department. See Appendix 1 for points of contact.

STAGE 2 - ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE GATHERING

This stage of the operation relates to gathering video footage of the youths. This is to be done for three reasons-

- To be used as evidence against youths found committing offences
- To show to the disbelieving parents of youths found causing general nuisance
- To form part of the 2K beat profile which will help to identify local prolific troublemakers

To achieve this the aim is to carry out the video recording both covertly and overtly. Two methods of acquiring this footage are to be used:

Having gained clearance from the Divisional Commander the youths will be filmed overtly using existing video surveillance equipment used by operational officers. While one officer speaks to the youths, another will record them and invite them to introduce themselves to the camera. Officers using the equipment can still operate on section whilst having the equipment in the car, or depending on resources, specific officers can be tasked to remain in the area with the equipment. The officers will be fully trained on use of the equipment and the protocols that must be adhered to for the videos to be used in evidence. Liaison is already in progress with Burnley and Preston Intelligence units who already use such equipment, and who will advise officers in its use.

The proposed method of acquiring the covert footage is by the use of PAIR cars. These are a resource available from Regional Technical Support Unit. PAIR cars are, as the name suggests, two vehicles used in tandem to carry out covert observations. The first vehicle is an unmanned panel van containing the necessary video surveillance equipment. This is connected by a microwave uplink to a second vehicle which contains the receiving equipment where the footage can be viewed. The vehicles are available at no divisional cost for a 5-day period (Mon-Fri) which must be pre-booked with the regional Technical Support Unit. To use the vehicles a G43 report must be submitted to the force Technical Support Unit outlining the nature of the operation, and again the Divisional Commander's authority must be sought.

STAGE 3 - HIGH VISIBILITY PATROL

This is a simple matter of patrols making sure that they are seen in the area. Area officers have already made contact with residents and introduced themselves at the local Mosque, so some progress has been made in reassuring the public. It is important that officers make their presence felt to the local youths and spend time talking to them. If an attempt is made to communicate with them they may be sympathetic and agree to moderate their behaviour. If this is not the case then it must be explained to them in no uncertain terms that definite action will be taken against them if they persist. Details will be obtained and contact made with parents/guardians.

A draught letter will be made available to all officers and each team will be briefed by their own 2K area officer of the fact that high visibility patrols will be required, and these area officers will be responsible for the patrolling of 2K whilst their team is on duty. Mobile patrols will also be asked to divert through Richmond Street as often as possible, using it as a sort of thoroughfare for getting from one end of the area to the other. This will increase apparent Police patrols without using any extra resources.

All of these three stages can be implemented using existing resources without incurring any extra divisional cost.

RESPONSE

Time Scale and Desired Result

The time scale for this operation will be over the two month period from the 1st December 1998 to 1st February 1999. This will give a two month period after which an assessment can be made of the operations success.

Incident logs for this period can be compared with the two month period before the operation, and a judgment can be made as to whether incidents reported have fallen. Crime figures over this period can also be compared with the previous two months and a drop should also be seen here.

The aims if this operation are to:

- **Reduce juvenile nuisance incidents in the 2K area**
- **Reduce crime in the 2K area**
- **Meet the demands of the public and improve relations**
- **To form partnerships with other organisations and agencies to help achieve core service aims**

ASSESSMENT

How successful has the operation been?

Details to follow in a later report to be compiled in February 1999.

LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY

EASTERN DIVISION

AREA 2 – ACCRINGTON SOUTH

A S.A.R.A submission to tackle the Juvenile Nuisance Problems experienced in the 2K area of Accrington, in particular Richmond Street.

APPENDIX I – USEFUL CONTACT POINTS

Parvinder SOHAL
New Era Youth and Community Centre
Accrington
Tel. 01254 237690

Hyndburn Borough Council Works Department
Operational Services
Willows Lane Depot
Accrington
Tel. 01254 385021

Mick DOVER
Force Surveillance Unit - Ext. 2744

Neil TIMPSON / Phil TALBOT
Force Technical Support Unit - Ext. 2744

Andrew NEIL
Regional Technical Support Unit - Tel. 0161 7461223 / 7461225

Gordon EDMONDSON
Burnley Intelligence Unit - Ext. 8269

PS 1477 HARDACRE
Preston Intelligence Unit - Ext. 5161

LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY

EASTERN DIVISION

AREA 2 – ACCRINGTON SOUTH

A S.A.R.A submission to tackle the Juvenile Nuisance Problems experienced in the 2K area of Accrington, in particular Richmond Street.

APPENDIX II – INCIDENT LOGS FOR 2K AREA JUVENILE NUISANCE
1ST AUGUST 1998 – 17TH NOVEMBER 1998

SEE FOLLOWING PAGES