

**8 June 2004**

**Press Release from Cognitive Applications**

For Immediate Release

**Users come *Together* to drive new Home Office Web site**

The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU) of the Home Office has launched an adaptive and user-driven web site (<http://www.together.gov.uk>) to provide support for practitioners, including social workers, housing officers and the police, working in this increasingly high profile field.

As anti-social behaviour is dealt with by a wide number of professions, the Home Office needed a central repository for information that could develop and grow as practice evolves. The innovative online system, developed for the Home Office by Cognitive Applications Limited, has been initialised with information for both new and more experienced practitioners, and encourages the practitioners themselves to contribute to the growing body of knowledge.

The online system, based on knowledge management software, responds to the needs of its user community and will evolve as they contribute content and submit direct and indirect feedback. System administrators, using a separate interface, can observe queries and follow-up on unanswered enquiries by developing further content. Along with steering existing content prioritisation and development, users can contribute to the site by uploading case studies and emailing queries directly to a team of advisors, ensuring that its content, and the experience of the user community, are continually enriched and enhanced.

User research and testing for the site was undertaken with Aaron Deveareux, Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator for trailblazer area, Brighton and Hove. He said of the site, "the 'Together' web site is an extremely useful interactive tool in tackling anti-social behaviour and learning from others experiences."

The Home Office, with whom Cognitive Applications also worked on the Bichard inquiry website (<http://www.bichardinquiry.org.uk>) said of the Together Web site, "Providing the best possible support for practitioners in the field is a key element of the government's response to anti-social behaviour. Cognitive Applications have worked with a range of stakeholders to produce [www.together.gov.uk](http://www.together.gov.uk) – which is much more than a typical government website. We hope that the website will be the first port of call for front line workers - and that we develop a real online community. Cognitive Applications have helped us deliver on a vital part of our aim which is to develop a culture in which anti-social behaviour is tackled not tolerated".

Alex Morrison, Managing Director of Cognitive Applications Limited, commented, "The *Together* web site was put together to a tight timetable and a demanding specification. The Home Office's experience should be keenly observed by any organisation that wants to provide support to workers dealing with change. A few years ago, this would have required a long-term project – now we can deliver practical solutions at a speed dictated by the organisation's needs"

## **Notes for Editors:**

### **Cognitive Applications:**

Cognitive Applications ([www.cogapp.com](http://www.cogapp.com)) is an international new media consultancy founded in 1985. Originally working in artificial intelligence the company started using digital multimedia in the late 1980s and is now one of the most experienced of its kind in the world. Cognitive Applications helps clients plan and deliver web sites, touchscreen systems, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMS, online publishing systems and other forms of innovative online and interactive software. Current clients include Manchester United, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Home Office. The company's aim is to produce well conceived and beautifully executed projects that will provide lasting value for client organisations and enrich the lives of the people who use them. The company has offices in Brighton, England and Washington DC.

### **The Home Office Together Project**

1. The Home Office established the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit in January 2003 to lead the drive to tackle anti-social behaviour. The Unit works across Government to co-ordinate and develop a new approach to tackling anti-social behaviour.
2. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act received Royal Assent on November 21 2003 [Home Office press notice 317/2003].
3. On October 14, the Government launched the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan and the Together campaign. These set out what practical help the Government is giving to councils and other local agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour [Home Office press office 278/2003].

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