

Crime Reduction, Community Safety and Drug & Alcohol Strategy 2014 - 2017

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Shropshire Safer Stronger Communities Partnership



Research and intelligence
Shropshire Council

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Foreword

Crime, disorder and substance and alcohol misuse have a direct impact on individuals and communities in Shropshire. The Safer Stronger Communities Partnership is responsible for the development and co-ordination of community safety and crime prevention programmes in Shropshire. Achieving successful results should mean that people feel safer which, in turn, should ensure that the Partnership makes a real difference to the quality of life for Shropshire residents during the next three years.

Shropshire Safer Stronger Communities Partnership

The Safer Stronger Communities Partnership is the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in Shropshire. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a statutory duty on a wide range of agencies to work together to tackle crime and improve community safety. Each Local Authority area was required to establish a CSP to promote the practice of partnership working to reduce crime and disorder. Each CSP is expected to develop and implement a three year strategy to tackle problems in its area. In doing so, the agencies represented on the CSP are required to work in partnership with a range of other local public, private, community and voluntary groups, and with the community itself. This approach recognises that both the causes of crime and disorder and the interventions required to deliver safe and secure communities' lies with a range of organisations, groups and individuals working in partnership. Crime reduction is not solely the responsibility of the police. Partners include:

Shropshire Council
Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group
Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
West Mercia Police
West Mercia Youth Offending Service
Probation Service
Criminal Justice Forum

Introduction

Why develop a Strategy?

Every three years the Safer Stronger Communities Partnership is required to produce a strategy which is based on a strategic assessment which identifies 'vulnerable' localities and those crime types which have increased or decreased. The assessment forms the basis of the strategy which sets out the priorities that the Partnership will focus on. The Strategy does not identify those activities which will be undertaken to deal with local problems as these will be set out in individual action plans.

A performance management system will continue to operate, and trends, local issues and performance will also be assessed using data provided by partners. The partnership will also seek to learn from good practice established elsewhere by liaising closely with other Community Safety Partnerships. The partnership recognises that during the lifetime of this Strategy issues might change and different community concerns could surface. The partnership will use data, information and community based reports to ensure it maintains a good understanding of the issues which need to be addressed within Shropshire. The Strategy will be reviewed annually as part of the Strategic Assessment and priorities will be revised to ensure the strategy remains flexible and adapts to local need.

Executive Summary

National Overview

The Coalition Government has made it clear on a number of occasions that it believes that "effective partnerships play a crucial role in helping to tackle crime and reduce re-offending". Since 2011 the crime and disorder and community safety 'landscape' has undergone a number of changes that have had an impact on how partnership working to address crime reduction, community safety and substance misuse is delivered.

In November 2012 Police Authorities in England and Wales were abolished and replaced with elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC). The Primary Care Trusts ceased to exist in 2013 with the public health function moving over to the local authority and the creation of Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Coalition Governments spending cuts have led to a change in both individual organisational structures and partnership arrangements. With a shrinking public sector, the Government has advocated a greater role for third sector organisations and business in service delivery. There is also an increased expectation that residents could play a more active role in tackling the issues within their communities.

The Government feels that the focus of Community Safety Partnerships should be on "taking actions and achieving outcomes not process and bureaucracy", so there has been a push for priorities to be agreed and delivered at a local level. The drive for local priorities however does not mean that the Government has not set national priorities that influence how partnerships deliver responses to local issues. National priorities include: new powers around anti social behaviour; reducing knife, gun and gang crime; controlling the sale and supply of alcohol; reducing reoffending and improving rehabilitation; ending violence against women and girls; and reducing drugs misuse and dependence. These priorities will be reflected in regional plans (Police and Crime Commissioners West Mercia Police and Crime Plan – see appendix 2) and the Partnerships strategy.

Shropshire Overview

Shropshire is a large county in the West Midlands, with a population of around 293,400 of mainly white British ethnicity and a high proportion of people aged over 50 years old. Like many rural areas, Shropshire is expecting an increase in the future population of people aged 65 years and over. Overall the county is fairly affluent – however there are areas of deprivation. Shropshire has low earnings, although it benefits from a low unemployment rate with the majority of employment in the public sector. The geography of Shropshire is diverse. The southern and western parts of the county are generally more remote and self-contained and have been identified as a rural regeneration zone. The landscape provides the backdrop for the market towns as key focal points for communities, businesses, leisure and tourism. Shropshire is entirely inland and its borders also have importance for the people living at the edges of the county – as people may have historic, family or work connections with the bordering areas of Mid Wales, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Telford and Wrekin, the West Midlands conurbation, Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

In respect of total recorded crime Shropshire has seen a decrease between 1st October 2012 and 30th September 2013 of 12.1%. This is part of a continuing trend in reductions in crime going back to 2004. Between 1st October 2012 and 30th September 2013 there has been a reduction in recorded Domestic Burglary of 30%. Anti-social behaviour is also down in Shropshire. Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) is sometimes referred to as 'nuisance', 'neighbour disputes' or 'disorder'. It can take many forms from graffiti and dog fouling to the more serious behaviour that can blight the lives of individuals. There has been a fall of 753 to 11,003 from 11,756 incidents in the previous 12 months (Sept. 11 - Oct. 12). This is a fall of 7%.

The West Mercia Police Crime and Safety Survey is a telephone survey whereby people living in the West Mercia area are selected at random and called using either a landline or mobile phone number. In total there were 1,341 respondents in Shropshire. The results from the West Mercia Police Crime and Safety Survey for Shropshire for the period October 2012 - September 2013 highlighted the following concerns.

1. Speeding / parking (18.1%)
2. Youth nuisance / loitering groups (9.1%)
3. Theft / shoplifting / burglary (7.8%)
4. Drug problems (7.2%)
5. Rowdy behaviour / drunkenness (6.5%)

When asked how much of a problem various issues are in their local area, the issues respondents most frequently state are a 'very' or 'fairly big problem' are as follows:

1. Speeding traffic (40%)
2. Cars parked inconveniently / dangerously or illegally (27.7%)
3. People using or dealing drugs (17.6%)
4. Under-age drinking (15.8%)
5. Groups of people loitering / hanging around on the streets (14.3%)

- 13.4% state that crime and ASB is a fairly or very big problem in their local area. This compares to a figure of 16.8% for West Mercia as a whole. There is a general downward trend with this figure having fallen from 18.9% (Q1-4 2011/12).

- 2.4% state that crime / ASB has a 'big impact' on the quality of the day to day life in their neighbourhood. This compares to a figure of 3.3% for the force and is the lowest figure in West Mercia. There is a clear downward trend with the figure having fallen from 4.9% (Q1-4 2011/12);

When those answering 'big impact' are asked what crime and anti-social behaviour issues most affect them (open question), the most frequent comments were:

1. Youths - groups loitering / hanging around (12.5%)
2. Youth nuisance (11.8%)
3. Neighbour disputes / nuisance neighbours (5.9%)

Analysis, using West Mercia data to identify what the key drivers of the harm measures 'impact' (impact of crime and ASB on someone's quality of life) and perceptions of crime / ASB' are (i.e. what issues cause harm) highlighted the following:

- Perceptions of harassment (i.e. extent that this is a local problem - this frequently relates to verbal abuse from loitering groups)
- Being a victim of harassment
- Perceptions of hate crime
- Being a victim of hate crime
- Perceptions of being mugged or robbed
- Perceptions of being verbally abused

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1 - Reducing Serious Harm

Reducing Offending and Re-offending:

Reducing re-offending is a statutory priority placed on Community Safety Partnerships to reduce re-offending in their local authority area. Shropshire offers a service, which targets those who are most at risk of re-offending. This is done through close working with partners in co-located premises. This is referred to as 'Integrated Offender Management' (IOM) which provides an overarching framework that brings together a range of statutory, non-statutory and third sector agencies to prioritise interventions with offenders who cause crime in their locality. IOM builds on other offender-focused programmes, such as Prolific and other Priority Offender (PPO), Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In targeting those offenders of most concern in every locality, regardless of whether they are under *statutory supervision or not*, IOM aims to manage them consistently to turn them away from crime. IOM brings together agencies involved in tackling the crimes of concern to local communities. It operates three key strands:

- § Prevention – identifying those not subject to statutory supervision but at risk of re-offending and engaging with them.
- § Promote compliance and reduce re-offending – identifying and targeting those offenders who cause the most harm within local communities; identifying those at highest risk of re-offending.
- § Enforcement – where support fails to reduce an individual's offending/re-offending enforcement action is swiftly taken to protect the public.

For further information on reducing re-offending please visit:

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/852081/Shropshire-s-Reducing-Re-offending-Strategy-2014-15.pdf>

Alcohol and Substance Misuse:

a) Substance Misuse:

The relationship between drug misuse and crime is complex. Problem drug users are responsible for at least half of acquisitive crimes, such as shop lifting and burglary. Engaging problem drug users in effective treatment has a number of benefits not only for the individual, but for their families and the wider community. It has been nationally estimated a typical drug user spends £1400 a month on drugs generally committing crime in order to fund their habit. According to national statistics any heroin or crack cocaine user not in treatment commits crime costing an average of £26,000 per year each. Drug misusing offenders in treatment use less illegal drugs, commit less crime, and generally improve their health and well-being. It has been projected nationally that engagement in drug treatment prevents 4.9m crimes a year saving an estimated £960m to individuals, business and public sector organisations.

In 2010 the coalition government launched its national drug strategy focused on reducing demand, restricting supply and building recovery. In the recent Police and Crime Plan 2013 -2017 for West Mercia one of the key objectives of the strategy is to reduce the harm caused by drugs with a focus on treatment targeting the most harm. To support delivery of the national and West Mercia wide strategies and to address local need the Drug and

Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) are working with partners to reduce demand, restrict supply and build a recovery orientated treatment system to support sustainable recovery for the future through a number of initiatives highlighted below.

Reduce Demand

- I. To ensure drug using offenders receive the intensive treatment they need there is a systematic approach to identification and referral through the Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) either through voluntary or proactive engagement. Referral pathways include the custody suite and through the courts either by a community sentence with a treatment order attached or voluntary engagement through the court outreach service. In 2012 -2013 a total of 267 offenders were referred into DIP through the custody suite; of these 42% engaged in treatment, a 197 offenders were identified through the court service of which 56% were already known to treatment, 22% entered treatment and 10% received advice and information.
- II. Supporting schools through PSHE programmes to provide good quality drug and alcohol education.
- III. To identify children and young people affected by parental drug and alcohol use to ensure they get the support they need and to reduce the trans-generational cycle of misuse.
- IV. To support identification within the criminal justice system, 'Test on Arrest' was introduced by West Mercia Police in July 2012. This involves drug testing offenders arrested for burglary, theft, robbery, begging or one of the trigger offences and if positive, applying the powers available to ensure engagement in structured treatment.

Restrict supply

- I. Work with police colleagues and ensure treatment resources are available to support any proactive dismantling of local markets.
- II. Develop a local drugs problem profile to support commissioning and co-ordination of services.

Building Recovery

Ensure commissioned services are recovery focused and that people within the criminal justice service have access to a range of services to include mutual aid and peer support to promote sustainable recovery.

b) Alcohol:

Alcohol plays a significant role in our society with many positive aspects including providing employment and community cohesion. The Beer & Pub Associations Regional Impact Study shows that in 2010/2011 Shropshire had 461pubs which employed 3,357 people (1,091 full time and 2,266 part time), as well as 15 breweries based in the county. However, it is also evident that the misuse of alcohol can have a detrimental impact, contributing to individual, social and economic harm. Alcohol is one of the biggest lifestyle risk factors for disease and death in the UK after smoking and obesity. It impacts on individuals, families and communities across Shropshire in a range of ways including economic performance, worklessness, health inequalities, poor outcomes for children and families, reduced quality of life, anti- social behaviour and crime and disorder. The problems related to alcohol misuse can be complex and may involve a range of

organisations from police and fire, to health and local authority services having to manage and provide interventions to tackle the issues associated with misuse.

The DAAT has produced an alcohol strategy for Shropshire which sets out a series of actions to tackle alcohol misuse over the next 3 years and will contribute to the delivery of Objective 2 of the Police and Crime Plan to reduce the volume of violent crime with an emphasis on addressing the harm caused by alcohol.

For more information on Alcohol and Substance Misuse please go to:

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/drugs-and-alcohol/shropshire-drug-and-alcohol-action-team/>

Domestic Abuse:

Domestic abuse is a hidden issue. It is a problem that occurs within the home, often without witnesses. Yet it is a crime that has tremendous costs to family and community life and to national and local services. Research shows that children who have been exposed to domestic violence are more likely than their peers to experience a wide range of difficulties. This can include behavioural, social, and emotional problems such as aggression. Children exposed to domestic violence are more likely to experience difficulties in school. Research also indicates that males exposed to domestic violence as children are more likely to engage in domestic violence as adults; similarly, females are more likely to be victims. National statistics estimate that 1 in 4 women experience abuse or violence from a partner at some time within their adult lives. Shropshire has a County Domestic Abuse Forum that consists of a wide range of agencies and organisations that are in a position to influence decision making and/or have access to local resources. The Forum has a dedicated website which gives information and advice to those who may be victims of domestic abuse.

For more information on the approach to Domestic Abuse go to: Shropshire County Domestic Abuse Forum – Freedom Shropshire website:

<http://www.freedomshropshire.org.uk>

Arson:

Arson is the number one cause of fire in Shropshire. Deliberate fires can be started to conceal another crime, such as theft, murder etc. and those where the perpetrator stands to gain financially, such as cases of insurance fraud. In Shropshire there have been 112 deliberate primary fires in the period 1st October 2012 to 30th September 2013. In the same period there were 443 deliberate secondary fires. There were 37 injuries from accidental fires and 2 fatalities from accidental fires in dwellings. SFRS is working with partners in a proactive way in order to reduce the number of fire crimes committed and has worked with the Police and justice services in particular to ensure that those committing fire crimes are brought to justice. Partnership working is key in tackling the problem of fire crime in Shropshire and a number of highly successful schemes have resulted in dramatic reduction in the incidence of fires.

For more information on Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and its service plan:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/managing-the-service/planning-and-performance/annual-service-plan>

Priority 2 - Supporting Vulnerable People

Anti-Social Behaviour:

Safer Stronger Communities Partnership aims to reduce crime and disorder and substance misuse. It also aims to address anti social behaviour. The Partnership recognises that anti-social behaviour can blight the lives of communities and effect perceptions of safety and security within individual's own homes as well as on the street. The image of any area can have a significant impact on crime. If an area is allowed to deteriorate community respect and care can be lost and result in an increase in crime and disorder. The term 'anti-social behaviour' acts as an umbrella description for a variety of disruptive and unacceptable behaviour that can have a detrimental impact on the quality of life within communities. Anti-social behaviour is sometimes referred to as 'nuisance', 'neighbour disputes' or 'disorder'. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 definition is:

“Acting in a manner that caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself”

In order to address anti-social behaviour and make the reporting of ASB easier, the Partnership has established a single reporting number. To support the reporting number a small, Co-located Team has been established which consists of officers from the Council and Police, that will co-ordinate multi agency responses to ASB, deal with perpetrators and support victims. The single ASB reporting number is: 0345 678 9020.

The Coalition Governments Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act aims to introduce simpler, more effective powers to tackle anti-social behaviour that provide better protection for victims and communities. The Act will tackle irresponsible dog ownership and the use of illegal firearms by gangs and organised criminal groups, and strengthen the protection afforded to the victims of forced marriage and those at risk of sexual harm.

Hate Crime:

Hate crime is commonly associated with prejudice against particular individuals such as those from minority ethnic groups or hatred based on homophobia. A more accurate definition of hate crime is any crime where prejudice against an identifiable group is a factor in determining who is victimised. In the period Oct. 2011 – Sept. 2012 there were 170 incidents recorded as hate crime, in the same period for 2012 – 13 there were 153. As with both Anti- social Behaviour and Domestic Abuse the simplistic use of quantitative targets based on incident data does not give a true picture of the level of the problem or the work taking place to address it. The number of incidents reported and recorded might rise due to initiatives undertaken by partners or improved engagement with the public. In such cases an increase in incident numbers should not be used solely to indicate deterioration or improvement in performance.

Priority 3 - Public Reassurance and Community Engagement

Tackling Crime:

Domestic burglary, vehicle crime and robbery are crimes that can be disruptive and potentially very distressing and are often the result of opportunist criminal behaviour. Between October 2012 and September 2013 total crime in Shropshire was down by 12.1% compared with the same period in 2011 – 12. This is part of a continuing trend of reductions in crime going back to 2004. Domestic Burglary saw a reduction of 30% over the same period. However, there has been a small increase in theft from motor vehicles

which can be explained by people leaving valuable items such as Satellite Navigation Equipment. Despite numerous campaigns advising people to remove valuables from their vehicles, or to put them out of sight, theft from motor vehicles is still occurring.

Shoplifting has increased by 3.6% in the period October 2012 to September 2013. In the West Mercia Police and Crime Plan it states that across West Mercia during 2011/12 there were 5,682 recorded offences of shoplifting, and businesses also suffered from a range of other crimes including burglary and criminal damage. The Police and Crime Commissioner has developed a business crime strategy for West Mercia which includes tackling shoplifting.

For more information on the Business Crime Strategy: <http://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/Document-Library/Publications/Business-Crime-Strategy-2014-16.pdf>

Increasing Public Confidence:

National research undertaken by Ipsos Mori lists a number of misconceptions held by the British public, one of which is that crime is not falling when the Crime Survey for England and Wales shows that incidents of crime were 19 per cent lower in 2012 than in 2006/07 and 53 per cent lower than in 1995. In the national and regional context, Shropshire is one of the safest places to live, work and visit. Crime has been falling in all areas of Shropshire since 2004.

A key challenge for the Partnership is to ensure that the reductions seen in crime and disorder are translated into feelings of safety and confidence in towns, villages and communities across the County. The Safer Stronger Communities Partnership recognises that there is a need to tell local communities what is being done and why. Local residents will develop views based on national news stories and the occasional local news story so they need to be given the full picture so that they understand what local partnerships are aiming to do, and that the actions put in place to reduce crime and disorder are part of a long-term solution to long-term complex problems.

Shropshire is a large rural county in West Mercia and many communities are isolated and remote. In order to address this West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police are developing a strategy that covers a wide range of activities aimed at tackling the impact of Rural Crime on individuals and communities, reducing the harm caused by Rural Crime and making communities feel safer.

For more information on the Rural Crime Strategy: <http://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/Document-Library/Publications/Rural-Crime-Strategy-2014-16.pdf>

Delivery Plan 2014 - 2017

	ACTION	OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES	OWNERS	ANNUAL UPDATE	LINKS TO OTHER PLANS
Priority 1 : Reducing Serious Harm					
1A	Partnership working to tackle offending and reduce re-offending	A reduction in the rate of Adult re-offending (measured using NOMS and CRC Data)	Shropshire IOM Steering Group		Shropshire Reducing Offending Strategy / Police and Crime Plan
1B	Partners to deliver prevention, early intervention, enforcement and recovery approaches	To reduce the harm caused by drugs with a focus on treatment, and targeting those that cause the most harm	Shropshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team		Police and Crime Plan / National Drugs Strategy / West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Drug Strategy
1C	To reduce the harmful effects of alcohol experienced by individuals, families and local communities	Reduce the incidence of alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour	Alcohol Strategy Steering Group		Shropshire Alcohol Strategy / Police and Crime Plan
1D	To work in partnership to protect the most vulnerable people in our society	Increase the reporting of domestic abuse incidents.	Shropshire County Domestic Abuse Forum		Shropshire Domestic Abuse Strategy / Police and Crime Plan / Shropshire Children, Young People, and Families Plan 2014 Refresh / West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Domestic Abuse Strategy

	ACTION	OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES	OWNERS	ANNUAL UPDATE	LINKS TO OTHER PLANS
1E	To work in partnership to protect the most vulnerable people in our society	A reduction in the rate of proven re-offending”	West Mercia Youth Offending Service		Police and Crime Plan / Youth Justice Plan
1F	To work in partnership to tackle arson and reduce the number of people seriously injured or killed by fires.	A reduction in deliberate fires.	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service		Police and Crime Plan
Priority 2: Supporting Vulnerable People					
2A	To reduce the volume of incidents of anti-social behaviour	A reduction in the number of reports made to the Police or Shropshire Council which sight ASB as a concern.	ASB Co-located Team / Shropshire Council / West Mercia Police		Police and Crime Plan
2B	To work in partnership to protect the most vulnerable people in our society	Increase in the number of reported hate crime	Hate Crime Steering Group		Police and Crime Plan / West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Hate Crime Strategy
Priority 3 : Public Reassurance and Community Engagement					
3A	Tackling Crime	Reduction in the overall crime rate	West Mercia Police		Police and Crime Plan

The West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia is required to publish a Police and Crime Plan which sets out a range of activities which aim to tackle crime and improve community safety in an efficient and effective way. This includes 'protective services' areas such as organised crime, counter terrorism and managing dangerous offenders, as well as wider community safety issues such as crime prevention, road safety and the reduction of anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol-related harm.

For more information on the West Mercia Police and Crime Plan: <http://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/Document-Library/Publications/P&CPlanvariedFeb2014-FINAL.pdf>

Shropshire SSCP Structure

