

Topic area: Crime and Safety

Strategic Context

The current countywide situation is summarised in the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment 2012/13:

“Overall Cornwall is a low crime area compared with similar areas elsewhere in the country.

Having seen year on year reductions in crime for some time, recent trends show that crime levels in Cornwall are on the rise, particularly violence against the person, acquisitive crime (such as thefts and dwelling burglary), domestic abuse and sexual violence. This could be influenced by a range of factors including the social and economic impacts of the ongoing recession, improvements to the recording of crime and restructuring in public sector agencies, such as Police, Probation, Health and Local Authorities. Conversely, reports of anti-social behaviour to the police have dropped significantly. It remains the most numerous type of incident dealt with by partners, however, and is the top concern of local residents. Crime follows a pronounced seasonal pattern that is predictable and can be planned for but nonetheless places significant pressure on local communities and partner resources, particularly in popular tourist destinations like Newquay.

There has been a significant increase in deliberate primary fires over the last 12 months and a slight increase in accidental dwelling fires.

Overall road traffic collisions have reduced in Cornwall but collisions involving death or serious injury have increased.”¹

Cornwall Community Safety Partnership Priorities and Objectives

Domestic abuse & sexual violence

Aim: To reduce the risk of serious harm and to provide the right response to safeguard individuals and their families from violence and abuse

Objectives:

- *To provide equal access and service provision to every victim of domestic abuse and sexual violence, whether child, young person or adult, male or female*
- *To provide a continuum of support from early identification, crisis intervention and support to independent living through integrated specialist services*
- *To provide services that work with perpetrators*
- *To challenge attitudes and behaviours which foster domestic abuse and sexual violence and to educate the next generation to break the cycle of abuse*
- *To undertake comprehensive reviews of domestic homicides and take fast and positive action to implement change based on the findings, facilitating early identification across agencies and protecting others from future harm*
- *To build better understanding of the experience of domestic abuse and sexual violence in minority groups; increase confidence in reporting and address specific support needs*

Alcohol, Violence & the Night time Economy

Aim: To reduce the harms of alcohol on individuals, their families and the community and reduce the risks of violent crime

Objectives:

- *To improve opportunities for early identification and intervention with problem alcohol users to enable them to reduce their drinking risk*
- *To reduce the rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions by developing a range of approaches in hospital Emergency Departments and in the community*

¹ Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment, Cornwall Council, 2012/13

- *To reduce alcohol-related crime and work with partners to provide a vibrant, safe night time economy*
- *To understand and address the drivers of crime outside of the night time economy; including safeguarding young people from involvement in crime (as victims or offenders)*
- *To work collaboratively to identify and address key locations, licensed premises and individuals that present the greatest risk of harm*

Anti-social behaviour

Aim: To ensure effective resolution to anti-social behaviour, divert perpetrators and to identify and support vulnerable individuals in our communities

Objectives:

- *To engage effectively with local communities to reduce fear of crime, break down intergenerational barriers and improve satisfaction in local services*
- *To work with partners and the community to identify local priorities and implement effective and sustainable solutions*
- *To work with partners to divert children and young people from anti-social behaviour, including making effective use of existing engagement mechanisms*
- *To identify persistent offenders; make effective use of enforcement tools to protect the community and provide support to help offenders change their behaviour*
- *To identify and protect those that are at greatest risk of harm from anti-social behaviour*

Reducing reoffending

Aim: To reduce crime by tackling the underlying causes of offending and reintegrate offenders into their communities

Objectives:

- *To identify, target and work proactively with the offenders that present the highest risk of harm to their communities*
- *To work with partners to address substance use in offenders, tackling dependency and problem use of drugs and alcohol, improve health outcomes, aid recovery and reduce the risk of reoffending*
- *To work with partners to provide stable accommodation and opportunities for training and sustainable employment for offenders*
- *To provide a “whole family” approach to tackling reoffending, including addressing issues such as domestic abuse, parenting and breaking the intergenerational cycle of criminal behaviour*
- *To support young people at risk of or engaged in offending through positive early intervention and divert them from future criminal careers*
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Building knowledge: Hate crime and hidden harm

Hate crime remains on the partnership agenda whilst work is undertaken to better evaluate the true impact of hate crime in our communities, improve our understanding of issues for vulnerable groups and improve reporting.

Objectives:

- *To improve access to reporting options and promote them effectively;*
- *To develop and promote local support and referral pathways for victims;*
- *To raise awareness – confirm a zero tolerance message and provide training on when and how to report, both with frontline staff and people in the community who may be victimised or at risk*
- *To improve data and intelligence – work with partners (from the public, voluntary and community sectors) to improve data collection, collation and interpretation and to find ways to use this information more effectively in local profiling.*

From the Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall

We have the benefit of a Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall. The current police and crime plan² published by the Commissioner has the following aims and objectives:

My Vision:

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as the safest area of the country, served by the best police force

My Mission:

To cut crime and the fear of crime by bringing policing closer to the public

My Objectives:

- *Reducing crime and bringing offenders to justice*
- *Reducing crime by finding lasting solutions*
- *Reducing re-offending and bringing offenders to justice*
- *Focusing on alcohol related violence*
- *Protecting the most vulnerable with a focus on domestic, family and sexual abuse and better awareness and response to so called hidden crimes*
- *Working to better understand and respond to crimes motivated by prejudice against someone's beliefs or circumstances, such as 'hate and mate' crime*
- *Improving road safety through education and enforcement*
- *Reducing anti social behaviour*
- *serious harm*
- *Supporting early intervention programmes that address drug and alcohol misuse, mental health issues and young offenders*

Cornwall Local Plan

The Local Plan does recognise that there is a contribution to be made to improving the general sense of safety and reducing the fear of crime through planning and design. The Local Plan states that: *"Good quality design is about more than just how an individual building may look. It helps shape the way places work. It can improve: social wellbeing and quality of life by increasing opportunities for exercise; reduce crime; help in finding solutions to public health and transport issues, and can improve local environments."* There is one general policy statement in the Local Plan that refers to safety.

*"Design b. layout – provide continuity with the existing built form; good quality private and public spaces; and improve perceptions of safety by overlooking of public space."*³

Report

"Wadebridge is Cornwall's safest town to live in, according to the latest crime statistics. The figures show that between May and September this year [2013] Wadebridge had the fewest recorded crimes of the 18 towns in the county with a population over 6,000.

A total of 168 crimes were recorded in the Wadebridge ward during the five month period.....

Sergeant Robin Moorcroft singled out crime prevention as the most significant factor in keeping crime rates low in the Wadebridge area.....

*The statistics take into account 14 different types of crime, with antisocial behaviour accounting for 41% of crimes in the town. Mr Moorcroft said this category was mainly down to bored teenagers. He hoped that a planned skate-park will help cut the number of reported antisocial behaviour issues. "The problem for Wadebridge is that it is a great sporting town which is phenomenal for rugby, football and tennis but not everybody is interested in that and the town needs a skate-park", Mr Moorcroft says....."There are many holiday homes in the area and we are working with partner agencies to prevent burglaries....It is down to the dedication of local officers who are committed to making Wadebridge, Padstow and surrounding area a safe place to live and work."*⁴

² Safer Together, Police and Crime Plan for Devon and Cornwall, 2013

³ Cornwall Local Plan, pre-submission, Cornwall Council, Mar 2013

⁴ Cornish Guardian, Wednesday 20th November 2013

Crimes recorded in Wadebridge, St Breock & Egloshayle, Jan 2008-Oct 2013								
Offence group:	5 year change	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (9 months)	5 year total
Burglary dwelling	-20.0%	5	6	6	3	4	7	31
Burglary non-dwelling	344.4%	9	14	10	15	40	17	105
Criminal damage	-25.4%	78	76	67	51	59	34	365
Other offences	-11.1%	9	12	6	6	8	5	46
Other sexual offences	0.0	3	3	3	5	3	1	18
Other theft	40.0%	40	51	43	45	56	33	268
Possession of drugs	0.0	7	6	8	6	7	15	49
Possession of weapons	0.0	1	4	2	1	1	1	10
Public order offences	-14.3%	7	8	12	6	6	7	46
Rape	-	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Robbery	-	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Shoplifting	-16.7%	24	30	12	29	20	34	149
Trafficking of drugs	0.0	1	1	0	2	1	3	8
Vehicle offences	-5.0%	20	20	26	16	19	10	111
Violence with injury	20.5%	39	34	28	26	47	38	212
Violence without injury	-24.0%	25	19	11	22	19	16	112
Total	8.6%	268	284	235	233	291	222	1,533

- "When comparing 2012 to 2008 there is an overall increase in the number of crimes up by 23 or 8.6%
- There are seven crime groups which recorded falls
- There are two groups recording increases"⁵

Wadebridge Crime Types May – October 2013 ⁶		
Type of Crime	Number	% of crimes recorded
Anti-social behaviour	80	41.24%
Criminal damage and arson	22	11.34%
Other theft	14	7.22%
Drugs	11	5.67%
Burglary	9	4.64%
Other crime	3	1.55%
Bicycle theft	2	1.03%

The anti social behaviour statistics may look substantial but need to be kept in proportion. In 2011-12 for instance the Wadebridge area does compare very favourably with much of the UK.

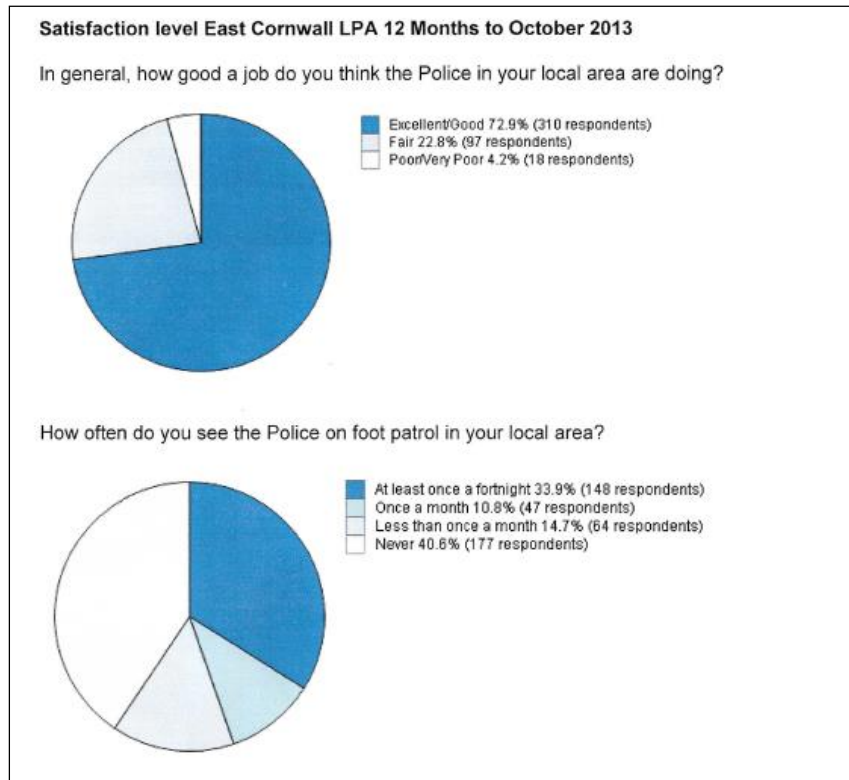
Wadebridge Crimes per 1000 residents Jan2011-Jan2012 ⁷		
	Wadebridge	Rest of England
All Crimes	27	118
Anti Social Behaviour	13	49
Robbery, Burglary, Vehicle Crime	2	17
Drugs, Public Disorder, Weapons, Violent Crime	4	13
Criminal Damage, Arson, Shoplifting, Other Theft, Other Crime	8	38

⁵ Crimes within Wadebridge, Performance & Analysis Dept, Devon & Cornwall Police, Nov 2013

⁶ In police website

⁷ Pure Location website

The police carry out regular 'Public Confidence' Surveys. The satisfaction levels in the East Cornwall area over the 12 months to October 2013 were as follows:



Summary Conclusions

Clear facts (from the Evidence):

- Crime levels in Cornwall are low and the Wadebridge area is a relatively safe place to live
- There is a county-wide focus on reducing anti-social behaviour
- Crime prevention policies are working
- The crime rate rises during the 'tourist season'
- The social and economic situation affects crime levels

Main problems/issues (from the Evidence):

- Anti-social behaviour is regularly the highest recorded crime incident in the area
- 'Young people' are a perceived nuisance
- We should not become complacent or blasé

Trends - What has changed significantly over the past 10 years?

- Policing methods and practices have changed
- Crime rates are reducing in many categories
- Acceptance/tolerance of anti-social behaviour is lessening

What is most needed?

- Facilities and positive activities for young people

What messages have local people sent?

- Crime and the fear of crime is not high on the agenda

What are the obvious 'development' opportunities?

- Skate park

What is the most interesting/pleasing finding?

- Wadebridge area is a safe and relatively low-crime place to live – and long may it be so

Key Neighbourhood Planning Questions Going Forward:

- Can we introduce neighbourhood plan policies that will help discourage crime?
- How can we improve our public realm to help reduce the fear of crime?
- Where and how can we provide additional facilities for young people?

What must we try to find more out?

- What we can do as a community to keep the area a safe and crime free one
- What planning policies the emergency services might like to see at a neighbourhood level