
**OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND
COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO**

Purpose of the Report

1. The following were the main areas of work under my Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio.

Environmental Services

Anti Social Behaviour

2. As well as pursuing enforcement measures, the Anti Social Behaviour Team also tries where possible to divert young people into positive activities, which will enable them to develop new interests and skills. Seven young people from Darlington have been given the chance to improve their motorcycle skills and knowledge in a new scheme aimed at preventing anti social behaviour in the Borough.
3. Funded by Positive Activities for Young People, the scheme aims to promote responsible motor cycling by teaching young people that it is not acceptable to ride their bike anywhere they want in the Borough and how and where to ride in an appropriate manner.
4. The scheme has been organised through the Anti Social Behaviour Team, the Council's Youth Service and the CDRP to tackle the problem of motor cycle nuisance in a more proactive way through delivery of the course by Right Trax, who specialise in practical and theoretical motorcycle courses for young people aged from 10-19 years of age.
5. The course covers basic motorcycle riding skills, motorcycle safety, maintenance and safe handling skills. On completion of the twelve week programme, pupils will obtain a Key Skills Level 1 and 2 qualification, equivalent to a GCSE grade D-G.
6. Pupils have been selected from schools across Darlington, who are involved with the Anti Social Behaviour Team. The process can involve them agreeing to adhere to an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement relating to motorcycle use in Darlington. The scheme has been running for five weeks and participants are responding well to the idea of putting their interest in bikes to more positive use and to understanding the effects of their unsafe bike riding on the community.

Housing

Key Point of Access Update (KPA)

7. The formal launch of the KPA took place at the Arts Centre on Wednesday, 4 November. A joint presentation was made by the Housing Options Service and First Stop Darlington and information given about the progress of the project since it became operational on 10th August 2009. In the first three months of operation the KPA has seen 101 applications for accommodation and support. Sixty-four came from Darlington residents and 37 from surrounding local authority areas. Forty-five people from Darlington were accommodated in hostels and 17 places were given to applicants from outside the Borough who had reason to locate to Darlington, eg taking up a college place or with significant family support here. Overall 62 people were placed in hostels, 4 refused a hostel place, 15 were found alternative accommodation and 20 are on waiting lists and accommodated elsewhere.
8. All Supporting People funded homelessness services will be allocated through the KPA from 1 April 2010. Consideration will be given to including services for clients with other needs as part of the strategic reviews for those groups over the next couple of years.

Tenants Board Information 2009

9. It has been a busy for the members of the Tenants Board. Three new members have joined the Board and there are now 11 Task and Finish groups dealing with a variety of topics. Where an issue is identified a Task and Finish group is set up and meet to discuss the issue with Officers and look for solutions. This year they have been involved in rewriting the new Grounds Maintenance specification through the meetings of the Street Scene Task and Finish group and following the visit of the Member of the Youth Parliament a new Youth Task and Finish group has been set up to look at working more closely with young people by doing some intergenerational work. The Tenants Board has recently discussed and agreed the new Pets Policy for Housing and members are involved in the new Mystery Shopping training and initiative. In July members of the Board visited the Councils housing estates and identified some areas of concern that need to be addressed and these have been passed to the relevant departments for action. Board members are conscious of the need to update their skills and knowledge and following a skills audit they have produced a training plan for the year which includes Equal Opportunities, Performance Management and Housing Finance.

Enforcement Actions Taken

10. Tenancy Enforcement Officers at Darlington Council are working with the police to help remove drug dealers and tackle anti-social behaviour in the Borough's neighbourhoods. The work is part of Operation Belgowin – which aims to take drugs and drug dealers off Darlington's streets. Work so far has seen the Housing Teams working with police officers to evict three tenants from council-owned properties, 25 of the Council's properties were served with legal papers warning them about their behaviour, one tenant signed a voluntary agreement to amend their behaviour, and two court orders were obtained to ensure tenants' behaviour improves. Two families were referred to the family intervention project aimed at supporting problem families involved in anti-social behaviour. Other work has also been undertaken with the youth offending service, drug and alcohol prevention team and restorative justice.

New Building – Sheltered Housing Complex – Dinsdale Court, Middleton St George

11. Dinsdale Court in Middleton St George was an outdated Sheltered Housing Complex which lacked demand and required updating. Following consultation with the existing residents the complex was demolished and has now been rebuilt. The new modern and up to date building boasts high quality, suitable housing for today's current climate offering sustainability and independent living for the elderly and disabled. The complex comprises of 22 purpose built flats, all with level access bathing and wheelchair accessibility. Within the building is a lift, communal laundry, function room and separate coffee bar, guest room for relatives to use and a games room.
12. Housing held an open day prior to the allocations of flats to allow local residents, councillors and other interested parties to view the facilities the building held. Feedback from this day was all positive and complimentary.
13. None of our original tenants returned to Dinsdale and that allowed us to allocate 13 flats to new applicants on the waiting list.
14. The building work has proved successful and created demand within a growing and very popular rural village.

Successful Homes and Communities Bid for the Pastures

15. The Homes and Communities Agency have confirmed £1.1M worth of grant funding support for 20 additional rental units at The Pastures. Work will commence in February 2010 with the new dwellings being available for new tenants in January 2011. This latest investment represents a continuation of the successful development of mixed tenure dwellings on the old Snipe House Farm site with Miller Homes and Northstar Housing Group.

Improving Services for Private Sector Housing Customers

16. The Private Sector Housing Team introduced a new e-enquiry form for Customers to access information or advice via the website. Enquiries will be dealt with within new agreed service standards (also now published on the website) within two working days. The private landlord accreditation procedures have been reviewed and they too are now available electronically. The new services are all about improving services and response times for Customers, gathering Customer profile information to better tailor services to meet Customer requirements, and providing ease of access to appropriate information without necessarily the need to make direct contact with Private Sector Housing Officers.

Local Authority New Build Programme

17. The Authority have successfully secured £3M worth of Homes and Communities grant funding to support the delivery of 65 new affordable properties for rent. The scheme represents a total of investment of £6M over the next 18 months. The properties will remain in the ownership and management of the Council and are earmarked for four sites, adjacent to Linden and Dinsdale Courts, Richmond Close and the former Springfield School. The Linden and Dinsdale sites will be the first to progress providing 18 x 2 bed apartments to mature new tenants aged 55 years or over with expected completion in the Summer of 2010. The Richmond and Springfield sites will deliver 2 and 3 bed family

homes due for completion in the final quarter of 2010-11. A further Round 2 bid has been submitted to the Homes AND Communities Agency which, if successful will deliver a further 14 units of affordable housing for rent by March 2012.

Darlington Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Durham Police Authority

18. The North East Alcohol Office, now branded 'Balance', was launched in February 2009, providing a lead on social marketing, consistency of service provision and practice across the region and a focus for lobbying government on alcohol related issues. The Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) has been successful in a bid to become an Early Implementation site around NI39 (reducing alcohol related admissions to hospital), drawing an additional £150k into Darlington for 2008/09 and a further £200k for 2009/10 and 2010/11. This will fund:-
 - (a) A pilot project to put a paramedic on the streets at key times with the Police and other agencies;
 - (b) A Matron Management post to co-ordinate and implement an alcohol action plan in hospital settings;
 - (c) Large scale training of GPs and other generic staff in adult services to screen, assess and deliver Alcohol Brief Interventions at Tiers 1 & 2; homelessness and housing support for adults and young people;
 - (d) Alcohol Arrest Referral;
 - (e) Education and awareness raising projects and a thorough, independent evaluation of the above projects and implementation of the Community Alcohol Service.
19. Additional PCT AOP funding of £200k was secured for 2009-10 for further alcohol services to address the high rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions in Darlington. These services include the roll-out of Alcohol Treatment Requirements for adult offenders with alcohol issues and the introduction of a 16-week rolling alcohol programme for both offenders and non-offenders to run alongside. Also, for additional nursing capacity in the Community Alcohol Service and training and performance support within the DAAT.
20. The latest Performance Report on how the Darlington Partnership is performing against the nine Indicators in the Safer Drinking: Safer Darlington Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy indicates a positive position with 6/9 at Green or Amber and 3 reds. The red areas, as predicted, are around NI39, drunk and rowdy behaviour and a downturn in the sign up to the Responsible Sales Code – following issues in Europe re free trade.
21. Darlington DAAT worked in partnership with the Police over a period of time before, during and after the recent drugs raids, to ensure that anyone affected by the raids requiring support, advice and/or treatment for substance misuse issues received the services they required. Working in this joined up way enabled services to be put in place in a timely and effective manner and displayed high degrees of organisational trust between police and provider agencies.
22. For the rolling 12 months up to 31 August crime reduced by 2% compared to the same period in 2007/08. There were 9,335 recorded crimes in Darlington between September 2007 and August 2008. For the same months in 2008/09 this fell to 9,114, a reduction of 221 crimes (2%).

Community Safety Plan 2008/2011

23. The priorities identified within the plan are:-

- (a) Anti-Social Behaviour
- (b) Reducing Offending
- (c) Violent Crime and Disorder in the Night Time Economy
- (d) Domestic Abuse
- (e) Public Reassurance

24. Reducing the harm caused by Drugs and Alcohol forms a cross cutting theme across all priorities.

Crime and Disorder Performance against Targets

Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)

25. Serious Acquisitive Crime includes Domestic Burglary, Robbery, Theft of Motor Vehicle and Theft from Motor Vehicle. The CDRP target is to reduce SAC by 8.2% by 2010/11.

26. The table below shows overall performance based on the **last rolling 12 months**:

2008 Baseline	2009/10 Target	12 Months to 31/08/09	% Change
1933	1833	1742	- 5%

Theft of Motor Vehicle (TOMV)

27. For the rolling 12 months to August 2009 there was a 22% reduction in TOMV with 81 fewer crimes being recorded between September 2008 and August 2009 (294 crimes) compared to 375 crimes between September 2007 and August 2008.

28. Comparative quarterly data also shows an improving trend with 61 crimes being recorded between June and September 2009, representing a reduction of 12% or 8 crimes compared to the previous quarter.

Theft from Motor Vehicles (TFMV)

29. For the rolling 12 months to August 2009 there was a 15% increase in TFMV with 112 more crimes being recorded between September 2008 and August 2009 (871 crimes) compared to 759 crimes between September 2007 and August 2008.

30. During the last quarter (June-August 2009) there were 226 recorded crimes equating to a 3% decrease (6 crimes) compared to the previous quarter (232 crimes).

Robbery

31. For the rolling 12 months to August 2009 there were 59 recorded crimes which is 2 more offences compared to the same period in 2007/08.

Domestic Burglary

32. For the rolling 12 months to August 2009 there was a 1% increase in domestic burglary with 6 more crimes being recorded between September 2008 and August 2009 (518 crimes) compared to 512 crimes between September 2007 and August 2008.
33. During the last quarter (June-August 2009) 127 crimes were recorded, an increase of 10% (12 offences) against the previous quarter.

Perceptions of ASB – NI 17

34. This indicator measures the percentage of people with high levels of perceived anti-social behaviour within the Borough.
35. The Place Survey 2008 indicated that 17.1% of people perceive there to be a high level of anti-social behaviour in their area, which is an improvement on previous general survey results.
36. The CDRP have set a target to reduce this to 14.1% by 2011.
37. Between June and August 2009 there were 3,226 incidents recorded by police compared to 2,687 over the same period in the previous year, an increase of 20% (539 incidents).
38. The number of recorded alcohol related ASB incidents has decreased with 571 incidents being recorded between June and August 2009 compared to 630 over the same period in the previous year, a 9% reduction.

Assault with Less Serious Injury (AWLSI) – NI 20

39. This includes actual bodily harm and other injury and racially/religiously aggravated actual bodily harm.
40. For the rolling 12 months to August 2009 there were 606 incidents recorded by police which equates to 118 fewer crimes (16%) than recorded in the previous 12 months.
41. As part of the refresh of the Local Area Agreement the target for AWLSI has been reset to a 4% reduction by 2011 based on a proxy April 2009 baseline of 593 crimes. The target to March 2010 is therefore 581 crimes.
42. Between April and August 2009, 256 offences were recorded against a target of 243, therefore performance is currently above target by 5%.

Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse – NI 32

43. This measure came into place in 2009/10 and relates to the repeat victimisation rate of those individuals supported through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
44. During April and August 2009 eight MARAC meetings were held, and 29 cases were heard, 4 of which pertained to repeat incidents (14%).
45. Between April 2008 and February 2009 there were 1855 domestic abuse incidents recorded by Police compared to 1482 in the same period for the previous year, an increase of 25.1%. This should be viewed as a positive result, with more people coming forward to report incidents. Data from February to date is being provided in arrears and was not available for inclusion in this report.

Alcohol Related Admission Rates – NI 39

46. This data is provided in arrears and the way in the indicator is calculated has also been changed for 2008-09 therefore performance is not measured against a target for this period. Only provisional data is available at this stage. Future targets have been set, with the numbers predicted to continue to rise during an initial period, as interventions are rolled out. However, it is hoped that the rate of increase will decline.

Drug Users in Effective Treatment – NI 40

47. Provisional outturn for 08/09 indicates that there were 428 problem drug users in effective treatment against a target to March 2009 of 441. This dip in performance can be attributed to a number of factors and is central to improvement plans with providers that have been approved by the National Treatment Agency.

Prolific and Other Priority Offending Rate – NI 30

48. In 2007/08, 23 PPO's committed 134 offences. The CDRP target was to reduce this to 94 offences by March 2009. The provisional outturn for 2008/09 indicates that the 23 PPOs were convicted of 61 offences.
49. A new PPO cohort has been selected for 2009/10, with a reduction target of 23% against a baseline of 121 convictions.

CDRP Delivery Plans

50. The majority of actions with the CDRP delivery plans are currently ahead of or on target. However, a risk has been identified with the actions contained in the Domestic Abuse delivery plan, due to the long-term absence of the plan owner. Pending her return, a decision has been made to place a moratorium on all actions within this plan. Furthermore, the implementation of an offender management programme for domestic abuse perpetrators in Darlington has been postponed, at least until the next financial year, and the funds allocated to this project have been diverted to other CDRP initiatives.
51. In respect of the Public Reassurance delivery plan, although all actions are currently at or above target, a risk has been identified around the development of the use of MOSAIC as a tool for mapping and marketing public confidence, as this depends on successful recruitment into two posts (a CDRP analyst and a community cohesion worker). The mapping of Key Individual Networks (KINS) also relies on the successful recruitment of a

community cohesion worker.

52. In respect of the Reducing Offending delivery plan, again all actions are currently at or above target. However, a risk has been identified in respect of the implementation of Prolific Offender Management Information Evaluation System (POMIES) which a number of the actions within the plan depend. Work is currently under way to address the issues, and the CDRP should have more information on likely lead times by the end of October.
53. In respect of the Tackling Violent Crime delivery plan, again all actions are at or above target, with the exception of those which depend on the appointment of a paramedic. Negotiations are ongoing with the NEAS to progress these issues.

Not in my Neighbourhood Week

54. Not in my Neighbourhood Week is an annual Government Initiative. It will commence on Monday, 2nd November 2009 and finish Friday, 6th November 2009. The key objective is to inform local people of action taking place in their area to tackle crime and anti social behaviour and to make communities safer.
55. The aims of the week are to:
 - (a) Increase awareness among the local community of what the police and local agencies do to tackle crime and anti social behaviour.
 - (b) Increase public confidence in the work the police and local agencies are doing to tackle crime and anti social behaviour and make communities safer.
 - (c) Encourage the public to engage with the police and local agencies and play their part in tackling crime and anti social behaviour.
 - (d) Engage local and regional media and encourage them to support the work the partnership is doing locally.
56. The Partnership have analysed a range of partner agencies data and community intelligence and agreed that this year's Not in my Neighbourhood Week will take place in the Northgate Ward. A multi agency action plan has been pulled together which incorporates a range of intelligence, prevention and enforcement measures.

Winter Nights

57. Winter Nights is a community safety and crime prevention campaign led by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The Winter Nights campaign began on 5th October 09 prior to the clocks going back on 25th October 09 and will continue to run throughout the winter period. Its aim will be to reduce and remove targets and opportunities for dwelling burglaries and to disrupt criminal activity by targeting known offenders.
58. The campaign will target householders by aiming to increase awareness of simple measures that members of the public can put in place to reduce the number of dwelling burglaries over the winter months.

59. The preventative measures that will be promoted are:-

- (a) Reminding householders to lock windows and doors when they leave their property.
- (b) Considering leaving a light on inside the property to deter offenders.
- (c) Reassuring the public during the darker winter months regarding dwelling burglaries and home security.

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Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio