

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

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**Purpose of Report**

1. The following were the main areas of work under The Portfolio Holder for Community and Public Protection.

**Darlington Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership**

2. The DAAT is currently undertaking a full refresh of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy on behalf of the LSP. Safer Drinking, Safer Darlington 2008/2011 will be launched on 29 September 2008. Also, the expansion of existing alcohol service provision to create an integrated Community Alcohol Service for Darlington – also to be launched on 29 September. DBC were successful in a bid to host the country's first alcohol office. The North East Alcohol Office will be launched later this year and will provide a lead on social marketing, consistency of service provision and practice across the region and a focus for lobbying government on alcohol related issues.
3. For the rolling 12 months up to 30 June 2008 crime reduced by 14% compared to the same period in 2007. There were 10,829 recorded crimes in Darlington between July 2006 and June 2007. For the same months in 2007/08 this fell to 9,308, a reduction of 1,521 crimes (14%).
4. Between April and June 2008 there were 2,247 crimes recorded by the Police in Darlington, which is a 10% reduction on the previous quarter (January to March 2008 - 2,489 crimes).
5. On 16 September the Home Office announced a grant of £700k to the YOS and the Children's Trust. Further details are awaited and will be forwarded to members as appropriate.

**Community Safety Plan 2008-2011**

6. 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
7. Reducing the harm caused by Drugs and Alcohol forms a cross cutting theme across all priorities. For each of the priority themes specific delivery plans have been developed, each plan being progressed through an identified plan owner.

Description	Ref	Comment
Serious Acquisitive Crime	NI 16	Collected via monthly iquanta data
Perceptions of ASB	NI 17	Collected via Place Survey
Assault with Injury	NI 20	Collected via monthly iquanta data.
Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse	NI 32	Live 2009/10
Alcohol Related Hospital Admission Rates	NI 39	Collection issues to resolve
Drug Users in Effective Treatment	NI 40	Collected quarterly in arrears

8. There are a number of data collection issues that are currently being progressed locally and nationally. In addition, some indicators will not be in place until 2009/10.

### Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)

9. Serious Acquisitive Crime includes Burglary Dwelling, Robbery, Theft of Motor Vehicle and Theft from Motor Vehicle. The CDRP target is to reduce SAC by 8.2% by 2010/11.
10. The table below shows overall performance based on the **last rolling 12 months**:

2008 Baseline	2010/11 Target	12 Months to June 2008	% Change
1933	1766	1729	- 11%

11. The table below shows current performance against **quarterly targets**:

Components	Quarter Target	Quarter Actual	+/-%
Burglary Dwelling	114	129	13%
Robbery	15	17	13%
Theft of Motor Vehicle	100	60	-40%
Theft from Motor Vehicle	245	198	-19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>-14%</b>

12. There are no significant issues in regards to NI 16 although burglary dwelling is being closely monitored and offenders targeted to mitigate any potential risks to performance.

### Perceptions of ASB - NI 17

13. This is currently measured through the General Survey and will form part of the new Place Survey. The indicator relates to people's perceived level of ASB in the area in which they live. The 2007/08 baseline is 23% with a target of 19.5% for 2010/11.
14. Between April and June 2008 there were 2,814 complaints made to police, which is 58 up on the previous quarter (January to March 2008).

### Assault with Injury (AWI) - NI 20

15. This includes Actual Bodily Harm and Other Injury and racially/religiously aggravated actual bodily harm. The CDRP have set a target to reduce AWI by 10% by 2010/11.

16. For the quarter April to June there were 130 assaults that fall within this indicator compared to 164 in the previous quarter, a reduction of 21%.

### **Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse - NI 32**

17. This measure comes into place in 2009/10 and relates to the repeat victimisation rate of those individuals supported through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
18. Between April and June 2008 there were 529 complaints made to the Police which is 97 more than the previous quarter (January to March 2008). For the 12 months to June 2008 the repeat victimisation rate was 47.1%.

### **Alcohol Related Admission Rates**

19. This data is provided in arrears and was not available for inclusion in this report.

### **Darlington Local Area Agreement 2006/2009**

20. Within Darlington's first LAA there are two community safety performance measures with reward element targets, these are:
  - (a) *Percentage of people who say they feel safe walking outside in their alone in the dark*  
The baseline for this target is 48.3%, current performance is 48.7% (Community Survey August 2007) against a stretched target of 60% for September 2009. This target has been revised in Darlington's second LAA to 50.7% for 2009/10.
  - (b) *Number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice System*  
The baseline in 2004/05 was 311. In 2007/08 there were 211 first time entrants which was well ahead of the 287 target for 2007/08. The target for 2008/09 is <275 first time entrants, to date there have been 51 number of first time entrants. It is anticipated that this target will be achieved.

### **Snapshot of Activity**

#### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

21. In order to address alcohol related anti-social behaviour during the summer months Darlington Drug and Alcohol Team have led on the development of a multi-agency action plan. The plan is known as "*Summer Nights*" and includes a range of measures from the provision of activities to try and prevent disorder through to targeted Police and Council enforcement operations.
22. The Fire and Rescue Service have developed a Fire Break course involving pupils from Eastbourne Academy. The course provides intensive support and interventions for pupils.
23. The Council's Environmental Crime Team continues to target problematic areas for dog fouling, littering etc.

#### **Reducing Offending**

24. The Offender Management Unit within Darlington Police Station has been strengthened. A dedicated Probation Support Officer now works as part of the Team and funding has recently been secured to appoint a dedicated Youth Offending Officer. The Team is targeting those individuals who pose the greatest risk to communities.
25. To support the work of the Offender Management Unit, Police Officers have been assigned to a medium term Crime Team, which consists of a Police Sergeant, four Police Officers and one PCSO who are targeting volume crime issues in the borough.
26. The Fire Service have developed “Archon”, which is a course aimed at reducing offending by young people through intensive support and awareness raising.
27. A mentoring programme, “*U Choose*”, has been commissioned to work with substance misusing offenders.

### **Violent Crime and Disorder in the Night Time Economy**

28. Activity has been primarily based on supporting the “*Summer Nights*” campaign. In addition, bottle and weapon bins have been placed in venues around the Town Centre.

### **Domestic Abuse**

29. A new Domestic Abuse delivery framework has been developed, which includes a Steering Group and a Network Group, which builds upon the former Domestic Abuse Forum.
30. A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference has been developed and is due to go live in September 2008, providing support to those victims most at risk.
31. The Domestic Abuse Service continues to provide support to victims of abuse throughout the Borough. Work is ongoing to address sustainability issues once LAA funding ceases this year.

### **Public Reassurance**

32. Intelligence-led high visibility patrols continue to be undertaken by the Council’s Uniformed Warden Service.
33. A crime reduction media campaign has been run throughout the bus network, advertising the reduction in crime in the borough.
34. A range of articles have been published in the Town Crier raising awareness of a number of issues.
35. Partners have continued to engage in Talking Together, identifying and responding to key issues raised by residents.
36. CDRP have funded a dedicated Victim Support Outreach Worker for the borough.

### **Linden Court Sheltered Housing Scheme**

37. The Council's first new build housing scheme at Linden Court, Hurworth Place is now fully completed. Twenty flats have been created, along with community facilities including a lounge, café area and laundry facilities. Attractive external areas will enable a wide range of outdoor activities to take place also. An open day was held on 1 August 2008 prior to residents moving in, on a phased basis, throughout August. Over 100 people visited the scheme and feedback was very positive with people commenting in particular on the high quality finish.
38. A display of the Lifeline Service and Assistive Technology generated considerable interest and provided an opportunity to promote the service to people who may otherwise not have found it easy to access the service.

### **Association of Public Excellence Awards (APSE)**

39. Linden Court has also been successfully shortlisted for an APSE Award in the category of Best Housing and Regeneration Initiative, achieving second place.

### **Customer Service Excellence Award**

40. The entire Housing Service including Housing Benefits and the Private Sector Housing Renewal Team has received the Government's Customer Service Excellence Award (formerly Charter Mark). This is a prestigious National Award that recognises the Housing Services' commitment to providing a top class customer focused service. We are one of the first organisations in the country to receive this award. The assessment criteria covered, customer insight, culture of the organisation, information and access, service delivery and timeliness and quality of information. The evidence matrix produced to support the application was highly commended and is to be used as national best practice.

### **Street Scene**

41. A review of Street Scene is ongoing, with a number of the initial proposals being implemented following consultation with staff. A new management structure will be introduced from 15 September 2008.
42. The provision of a dedicated crematorium and cemetery service is also to be established. Due to a slightly longer consultation period, commencement of this team is to be on 6 October 2008.
43. In relation to operational duties, significant disruption has been experienced due to the extreme weather conditions experienced throughout the summer. In this regard grounds maintenance services have suffered greatly, particularly in relation to grass cutting. Large numbers of open spaces have standing water upon them, which has made it impossible for heavy plant and equipment to move across the land and cut grass to the required standard. As a result, the length of grass throughout the borough during part of the summer was longer than we expected. However, when opportunity existed to return to grass cutting all available resources were allocated to this service to ensure that grass was brought back to a satisfactory standard.
44. At the inception of Street Scene refuse collection rounds remained in the same format, due to the level of other changes being experienced. As part of the mid term review, it was highlighted that, for the service to progress, refuse collection rounds require redesigning to

mirror the five geographical areas. Work is presently being undertaken in relation to rebalancing of refuse collection rounds to reflect Street Scene areas and it is anticipated that these changes will be implemented mid/late October 2008.

### **Stray Dogs**

45. In July this year the Council assumed responsibility for the collection and housing of all stray dogs found within the Darlington area. Where previously an out of hours service was provided by the Police, from July the responsibility for strays dogs must be provided by the Council 24 hours a day.
46. With the exception of dangerous dogs or dogs worrying livestock, all strays in Darlington will be collected by the Council's Dog Wardens between 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. From 6.00 p.m. until the start of the next working day, an 'Acceptance Point' for the reception of any strays handed to the authority is available at the Vicarage Road depot for those who are not able to retain the dog until the next working day.
47. Information regarding the out of hours Stray Dog Service is available via a recorded message at the Customer Contact Service on (01325) 388777.
48. All attempts to reunite a stray dog with its owner are made. However where information is unavailable, all strays collected by the Council are taken to temporary accommodation at Deerness Kennels in Durham. If an animal's owner has not been found within seven days and a suitable alternative home is not found, all dogs are vaccinated and transferred to an animal re-homing centre until a suitable home can be found.

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