



ELMBRIDGE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2005-8

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE AREA) 23 MARCH 2005

KEY ISSUE:

To comment on the final draft of the next three-year Elmbridge Community Safety Strategy.

SUMMARY:

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002, requires responsible authorities to work with other local agencies and organisations to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder and the misuse of drugs. The seven responsible authorities locally form the Elmbridge Community Safety Partnership.

Last summer the Partnership carried out an extensive audit of crime and anti-social behaviour over the three years to March 2004. Key stakeholders were then consulted on the results of this audit, before they were used to inform the development of the three-year Community Safety Strategy for 2005-08. The strategy has also been developed so that it complements the priorities and targets of partner agencies (e.g Surrey County Council's Community Safety Strategy 2005-08, the Elmbridge Community Strategy 2003-6, National and Local Policing Plans and the National Drugs Strategy).

The draft Elmbridge Community Safety Strategy for 2005-8 is attached for the Committee to consider.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee is asked to comment on the draft Elmbridge Community Safety Strategy 2005-8.

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Elmbridge Community Safety Strategy 2005-8

Introduction

With your help Elmbridge continues to be a safe place to live, work and visit. Last year there were 8317 recorded crimes in Elmbridge, which is lower than the Surrey average and significantly lower than the national average. We are also the second best performing area within our family group. Our family group consists of 15 areas with similar socio-demographic profiles to Elmbridge to allow like-with-like comparisons to be made.

This does not mean that in Elmbridge we are complacent about crime and disorder. Both crime and fear of crime can reduce someone's quality of life. Becoming a victim of crime is often a traumatic and distressing experience. Equally, fear of crime can cause real anxiety in people's lives, as people become reluctant to go out or use public transport after dark. Despite the low crime levels in Elmbridge we know that crime and the fear of crime remain a top concern of local residents. Therefore we intend to reduce crime by a further 13% and fear of crime by a further 10% by 2008.

A wide range of organisations work together to reduce crime and the fear of crime. The agencies named as 'responsible authorities' set out in legislation are listed below and form the local Community Safety Partnership.

- Surrey Police
- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
- North Surrey Primary Care Trust
- East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey Primary Care Trust
- Surrey Police Authority

A wealth of operational officers and staff from a wide range of agencies work hard to deliver improvements in community safety within Elmbridge. The Partnership works closely with Registered Social Landlords, the Probation Service, the Youth Offending Team, the Drug Action Team and voluntary and community organisations. As well as individual projects, there are a number of multi-agency meetings to tackle issues relating to crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour. The Joint Action Group identifies and responds to crime trends in the borough on a monthly basis and the Community Incident Action Group develops multi-agency responses to reduce and prevent further criminal or anti social behaviour by identified individuals. The meetings are based on effective and appropriate information sharing between agencies.

A wide range of data is objectively reviewed through a comprehensive audit of crime, drugs and anti social behaviour and forms the basis of the 3-year Community Safety Strategy. The strategy has been developed so that it complements the priorities and targets of our partner agencies.

What have we already achieved?

During the course of the previous strategy, the Partnership has successfully implemented a range of projects, which have made a significant contribution to the low crime levels in the borough.

- We launched a new state of the art CCTV centre operating around the clock. Operators have tracked a high number of community safety incidents and have contributed to a significant number of arrests, some of which have been directly attributable to the scheme.
- We have introduced the second highest number of Police Community Support Officers in Surrey (11) covering all the major communities. We have also introduced two Community Wardens who have improved the standard of life for local communities by improving both the environmental and social elements of five key estates.
- Working closely with the community we have successfully implemented a 'national reassurance pilot project' in North Walton. This had led to a significant reduction in crime and the fear of crime.
- We contributed funding towards the setting up of the North Surrey Domestic Violence Outreach Service. As well as providing a very valuable service to the victims of Domestic Violence, it has also been a major contributor to the better co-ordination of domestic violence services in the area.
- We have successfully tackled environmental crime by reducing the average number of days taken to remove an abandoned vehicle (5 days in 2002/3 to 3.3 days in 2003/4), by proactively removing graffiti and by introducing an Environmental Enforcement Officer.
- We have obtained a range of successful interventions to deal with prolific offenders and problematic individuals including Anti Social Behaviour Orders and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.
- We contributed funding towards drugs education in our schools and produced a Drugs Awareness CD for parents.
- We have co-located a team of staff from different agencies based at Walton Police Station. This project has brought a range of benefits, including the ability to respond more quickly and effectively to the concerns of the community and to ensure that community safety is a real priority for everyone.

What we want to achieve for our community in the next three years?

Based on a comprehensive audit of crime trends and feedback from public consultation exercises, the Elmbridge Community Safety Partnership has agreed five key priorities to focus on over the next three years. The priorities are listed below and are supported by detailed action plans which will be monitored by the nominated lead agency on a regular basis.

- Violence (including domestic violence)
- Theft (particularly burglary and vehicle crime)

- Alcohol and Drug Misuse
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Arson

1) Violence

Audit findings:

The number of violent crime reports since 2001 has increased by 26%, although this figure is still relatively low compared to other areas similar to Elmbridge.

Elmbridge had a high number of domestic violence reports compared to the other ten boroughs and districts in the county. Just under a quarter of domestic violence reports were for repeat offences.

Objectives:

- Increase the level of reporting of domestic abuse incidents to police
- Reduce incidences of domestic violence and the number of reports from repeat victims
- Increase support for victims and their satisfaction with the criminal justice system
- Reduce the level of violence on the streets of Elmbridge, in particular the town centres, so that they may be well used by the whole community day and night.

Targets:

- Increase reporting of domestic abuse to police by 10% by 2008
(*To be aligned with forthcoming Surrey PSA target*)
- Decrease number of repeat victims of domestic abuse by 10% by 2008
(*To be aligned with forthcoming Surrey PSA target*)
- Reduce woundings by 12% by 2008

Key Projects and Activities:

- Fund Domestic Violence Outreach Service and support role, managed through the North Surrey Domestic Violence Forum
- Staff training on how to identify domestic abuse and how to respond appropriately
- Support the overarching county domestic violence strategy and any targets developed
- Support the Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre
- Work with licensed premises to reduce levels of alcohol related crime and disorder, particularly violence, in and around licensed premises and town centres (through the Pub Watch Scheme and the Borough Council's Licensing Policy)

2) Theft

Audit findings:

- From 2001/02 to 2003/04 domestic burglaries have increased by 17% (although there was a drop in 2003/04).

- Theft of motor vehicle offences has remained fairly consistent in number, whereas theft from motor vehicles has significantly increased in the three years (2001/02 – 2003/04)
- From 2002/03 to 2003/04 theft from the person increased by 44% (54 to 78 offences)

Objectives:

- Protect the community from victimisation through education and promoting personal responsibility.
- Create a safer environment for our communities.
- Focus our resources on prolific offenders to maximise detections and provide a partnership rehabilitation programme to prevent re-offending.

Targets:

- Reduce domestic burglary by 15% by 2008
- Reduce theft from vehicle by 15% by 2008
- Reduce theft of vehicle by 12% by 2008
- Reduce vehicle interference by 12% by 2008
- Reduce theft or unauthorised taking of a cycle by 5% by 2008
- Reduce theft from person by 5%
- Reduce robbery of personal property by 5% by 2008 (2% in 2005/06)

Key Projects and Activities:

- Joint Action Group to prioritise theft 'hotspots'
- Neighbourhood Watch schemes play an important role in preventing crime
- Community Safety Exhibitions in shopping centres around the Borough to promote the personal safety message
- Work in schools to educate children and adults about personal safety, particularly around mobile phones.

3) Alcohol and Drug Misuse

Audit findings:

- Elmbridge has below the national average number of drug offences for its population. The age group 25-34 represent the greatest number of people receiving treatment. Of those in treatment, most have indicated heroin as the first drug of choice.
- The number of alcohol-related violent crime reports to police has increased by 22% over three years (2001/02 – 2003/04).
- 83% of schools have a drug policy and 77% have drug education programmes.

Objectives:

- Reduce the supply of illegal drugs on our streets
- Support youth diversion projects to divert young people from abusing alcohol and drugs.
- Continue and develop the drugs and alcohol education programmes for young people and their parents in Elmbridge
- Tackle alcohol and drug related crime and disorder within our town centres and on our streets.

- Identify those within our community with drug and alcohol problems and facilitate where possible appropriate treatment and support.

Targets:

- To reduce alcohol-related violent crime by 15% by 2008
- To reduce drug-related crime by 15% by 2008
- Increase the number of drug-related community intelligence reports received by the police (24 reports for 2005/06)

Key Projects and Activities:

- Fund a Divisional Drugs Liaison Officer to increase intelligence and bring more drug dealers to justice
- Set up a drugs education bursary for schools to access directly
- Continue to fund the RIDE education programme for schools
- Provide support to adults and young people through the Drug and Alcohol Outreach Worker.
- Provide additional support to young people at risk of school exclusion because of drugs misuse through the Drug Intervention Programme Supporting Youth.
- Extend the Pub Watch Scheme to reduce the opportunity for drug dealing/taking
- Set up procedures and protocols to deal effectively with and record drug related litter

4) Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Audit Evidence:

- The highest number of disorder incidents recorded in 2003/04 relate to domestic incidents followed closely by disturbances in a public place
- The Community Wardens recorded high numbers of abandoned vehicles and fly tipping compared to other types of ASB
- Borough Council records show a 27% increase in the number of abandoned vehicles reports over the three-year period.
- Graffiti reports to the Borough Council (the organisation responsible for removing the graffiti) decreased by 8% from 2002/3 to 2003/04
- Over the 3-year period total noise reports to the Borough Council increased by 13%
- Youth Offending Team data suggests that the age of offending is getting younger
- The most frequent reasons for school exclusion were for rudeness/disobedience followed by threatening/aggressive behaviour.
- The most common age of excluded pupils is thirteen

Objectives:

- Provide a clear definition of anti social behaviour specific to the needs of Elmbridge and develop a robust data collation and reporting system.
- Improve the visible environment for our community.
- Tackle nuisance behaviour
- Address the 'reassurance gap' by reducing the fear of crime.

- Give our communities a sense of ownership by increasing the level of community reporting and involvement.

Targets:

- Reduce the amount of criminal damage by 16% by 2008
- Reduce fear of crime by 10% by 2008
- Increase the number of Neighbourhood Watch schemes by 15% by 2008
- To aim to remove all abandoned vehicles within 48 hours

Key Projects and Activities:

- Organise Community Clear Up Days to foster community engagement and ownership
- Work more closely with each other to ensure we give you good and honest feedback about how we are doing in a co-ordinated way.
- Community Wardens and Police Community Support Officers to work in our communities to reduce anti social behaviour and to provide reassurance
- Neighbourhood Watch schemes to strengthen community cohesion and help people feel more secure in their community
- Youth Diversion Programmes such as Positive Futures, Junior Citizen, Positive Activities for Young People and many more
- Truancy Patrols help to stop crime and truancy.

5) Arson

Audit findings:

Elmbridge had the second lowest number of fires per 1000 population in Surrey in 2003/04. There has been a dramatic increase in fires where the cause is unknown (potentially arson fires).

Objectives

- Provide clear direction on how arson and associated crime types are to be tackled in Elmbridge (including school, vehicle, business and countryside arson)
- Develop a robust data collation and reporting system

Target:

- An overall 10% reduction in arson by 2008

Key Projects and Activities:

- Support service initiative to appoint 'fire wardens' in all schools
- Offer diversionary activities such as Fire Fighter for a Day and the Firewise Scheme
- Work to further reduce the time taken to remove abandoned vehicles thereby reducing the opportunity for vehicle arson offences
- Press campaign to improve waste management at business premises

Resources

The Partnership obtains funding from the Government to support the delivery of the Community Safety Strategy and key partners also contribute to a local pooled

budget. The Partnership has also been very successful at attracting additional external funding for projects such as Co-location (explain), CCTV and Reassurance Pilot.

Performance Management

The Partnership has a responsibility to report to the Home Office on key projects and performance against targets. We will also provide updates to the community through the websites of the partner organisations and by making use of local publications.

What can you do?

There is one important partner which has not been mentioned, however they are crucial to our success – and that is you, the community!

Without the support and involvement of the community, any success the partnership may achieve is likely to be short term. If we truly want to make our Borough a safer, cleaner and a more welcoming place to live and work, we need EVERYONE working together.

So what can you do to help?

- Report crime and disorder incidents to the police on 0845 125 2222. Alternatively to provide information anonymously please call Crimestoppers on 0845 555 111. If we don't know about it, we can't help to resolve the problem!
- Report hate crime on XXXX (you may choose to remain anonymous). We believe that domestic violence, racial harassment, homophobic abuse/crime and elder abuse are all hate crimes and should not be tolerated.
- Help keep our streets clean by reporting graffiti, littering, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles to Elmbridge Borough Council for removal on 01372 474474
- Participate in local community groups (for example, Neighbourhood Watch). If you don't have one, start one!
- Give us your views at Neighbourhood Panels to help us identify priorities for your area
- If you have information about a problem in your area, share it with one of the partnership officers or your local Councillor.

How can you contact us?

Via email	communitysafety@elmbridge.gov.uk
By phone	01932 205533
By post	Community Safety Team, Walton Police Station, New Zealand Ave, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 1PP