

EXETER COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY



ANNUAL REVIEW 2003 - 2004

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INTRODUCTION

This is the second Annual Report covering the work of the Exeter Community Safety Partnership in delivering the Community Safety Strategy for 2002 – 2005.

The report contains the crime figures for the year 2003/04, and some details about the work which has been done during the year by the various Action Teams of the Strategy.

The year has seen the introduction of new Responsible Authorities (following the Police Reform Act 2002) – the Police Authority and the Fire Authority (though the Fire Service were already represented on the Strategy Group) – with Exeter Primary Care Trust also becoming a Responsible Authority from April 2004.

The full list of membership is now as follows :

Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Devon and Cornwall Police Authority
Devon County Council
Devon Fire and Rescue Authority
Exeter City Council
Exeter Primary Care Trust

Academic Council
Devon and Cornwall Probation Area
Devon Partnership NHS Trust
Exeter Business Forum
Exeter Council for Voluntary Services
Exeter Drug and Alcohol District Implementation Group
H M Prison Exeter
Youth Offending Service

CRIME STATISTICS

The figures on the following pages for crime and disorder in Exeter for 2003/4 show an overall increase of 1.4% - an extra 197 crimes. Increases can be seen in 4 main areas – violent crime (particularly common assault), theft of pedal cycles, cheque/credit card fraud and criminal damage. However, there have also been substantial reductions in some types of crime, notably in house burglary (down by 198 offences) and theft from vehicles (down by 158 offences).

Some of the increase in violent crime can still be attributed to the new recording system, which is being rigorously applied by Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. Also, the increase in common assault partly reflects a change in the handling of domestic violence cases, whereby common assault is now a chargeable offence in these circumstances.

The reduction in burglary and vehicle crimes (the “acquisitive crimes”) may be a reflection of the success of the efforts to tackle drugs and drug-related crime. The fact that burglary and vehicle theft have become more difficult may also explain the increase in thefts of pedal cycles – a much easier target.

Comparative data from other agencies does tend to be inconclusive. Data from the ambulance service does indicate a marked increase in call-outs for assaults, which is apparent across the region. Domestic violence call-outs also show a significant increase, though the largest single cause of call-out is overdose. However, the data from the hospital Accident and Emergency Department shows no real change from last year.

Data from the City Council Community Patrollers shows 1850 call-outs for a wide variety of reasons, a reduction of 14% from last year.

The shaded areas of the table cover targets which can only be assessed over the full 3-year period of the strategy.

Figures for Exeter Community Safety Strategy Targets

April 2003 to March 2004		Target	Recorded 03 - 04	Recorded 02-03	%age Change
Alcohol	Alcohol Related Crime	reduce by 5%	635	616	3.1%
	Alcohol Related Violence	reduce by 5%	1022	904	13.1%
Violence	Violent Crime		2747	2571	6.8%
	Robbery		83	85	-2.4%
Diversity	Diversity Crime : Racially aggravated	increase reporting by 50%	84	116	-4.5%
	Diversity Crime : Homophobic	increase reporting by 25%	10	21	-52.4%
	Repeat Victims Diversity : Racially aggravated	reduce by 10%	18	23	-21.7%
	Repeat Victims Diversity : Homophobic	reduce by 10%	4	2	100.0%
Domestic Violence	Domestic Violence	increase reporting by 10%	2493	2060	21.0%
	Domestic Violence under the Influence		907	832	17.3%
	Repeat Victims Domestic Violence	reduce by 5%	405	684	19.8%
	Use of Domestic Violence Services	increase by 10%	0	0	
Drugs	Drugs Class A Offences	increase by 5%	86	110	-21.8%
	Seizures Of Class A	increase by 5%	88	124	-19.3%
Prolific Offenders	Prolific Offenders risk of re-offending	reduce by 5%			
	Successful completion of order	50%			
	Shift of Attitude	80%			
	Resettlement of Persons out of Hostels	3 persons			
Young Persons	Youth Crime	reduce by 2%	667	545	22.2%
	Youth Crime risk of re-offending	reduce by 5%			
	Young Persons as Victims of Crime	reduce by 10%	812	816	-0.5%
General	Vehicle Crime	reduce by 8%	2081	2321	-10.3%
	Theft from motor vehicle	reduce by 8%	1598	1756	-9.0%
	Domestic Burglaries	reduce by 15%	565	763	-26.0%

Police Crime Figures

April 2003 to March 2004	Recorded 03-04	Recorded 02-03	%age Change
Homicide	1	1	0.0
Other violence	1899	1854	2.4
Common assault	661	542	22.0
Sexual offences	103	89	15.7
Robbery	83	85	-2.4
House burglary	565	763	-26.0
Other burglary	855	845	1.2
Theft of vehicle	143	149	-4.0
TWOC	221	233	-5.2
Theft from vehicle	1598	1756	-9.0
Vehicle interference	119	183	-35.0
Theft of cycle	408	308	32.5
Theft from shops	1108	1069	3.6
Other theft	2376	2328	2.1
Handling	87	70	24.3
Cheque/credit card fraud	799	649	23.1
Forgery & other fraud	254	257	-1.2
Criminal damage to vehicle	1049	994	5.5
Other criminal damage	1483	1348	10.0
Drug offences	391	418	-6.5
Other offences	129	194	-33.5
TOTAL	14332	14135	1.4

ALCOHOL and ALCOHOL-RELATED CRIME

Much of the violent crime in Exeter (and throughout the country) is alcohol-related. This is borne out by the figures maintained by the police under the new Home Office counting rules. The police were required to record separately the type of violent crime and the circumstances under which it occurred. The figures show actual numbers, as well as the relation to the total population.

The crime figures for the categories of violent crime for the 2 years when figures were collected in this way are –

Type	2002/03		2003/04	
	Number	per 1,000 population	Number	per 1,000 population
Committed by a stranger	743	6.6	888	8.0
Committed in a public place	1213	10.8	1397	12.6
Committed in connection to licensed premises	261	2.3	323	2.9
Committed under influence of intoxicating substance	826	7.4	900	8.1

As mentioned earlier, the data from the A&E services do not show a marked increase in violent activity.

Key developments during the year have been :

- Alcohol Strategy published
- Support for young people and families dealing with alcohol misuse
- Police Operations Sonnet, Trinket to tackle high street crime
- Test purchasing
- Improving links with licensed trade
- Campaign to target selling of alcohol to under-age drinkers
- Exploration of possible venues for non-alcoholic cafes

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Anti-social Behaviour Action Team has undertaken several initiatives throughout the year

- Work with Environment Agency to tackle fly-tipping 'hot spots'.
- Work with Fire Brigade / Arson Task Force, City Council, police, businesses to deal with rubbish / litter that is a fire risk.
- Tackle problems of 'persons on the street' on a multi-agency basis (eg 24 hour shops, people in street after pubs/clubs shut).
- Set up specialist multi-agency operation to deal more effectively with abandoned vehicles / stolen vehicles.
- Evaluation of introductory tenancies / acceptable behaviour contracts / anti-social behaviour orders.
- Establish multi-agency forum for dealing with problem tenants.
- Operation 'Trinket' is a police initiative, targeting crime and antisocial behaviour. In partnership with the Council's CCTV control centre, police conduct monthly sweeps of known and suspected offenders.
- A partnership between the Control Centre, the Council's Community Patrol, the Police, the Probation Service, the Highways agency and the Engineers department is having an impact upon Graffiti.
- The Council's Environmental Protection team is engaged in several 'litter' initiatives across the city.
- Targeted 'Dog fouling' patrols are regularly undertaken and offenders receive a fixed penalty ticket.
- Fixed penalties are being used to address domestic refuse being left on residential streets as well as city centre littering and commercial waste dumping.
- Issues of ASB outside the city centre are being addressed directly with residents and resident groups.

DIVERSITY

The reporting of racist and homophobic crime has reduced during the past year, following a significant increase in the previous year. However, there are some concerns over the comparability of the figures for the last two years.

Racist Incidents				Homophobic Incidents			
	2003/4	2002/3	2001/2		2003/4	2002/3	2001/2
Offences	96	116	80	Offences	10	20	5
Incidents	27	29	55	Incidents	2	8	2
Repeat Victims		28	27	Repeat Victims		6	3
Total Racist Incidents	123	145	135	Total Homophobic Incidents	12	28	7

Achievements in 2003/4

- Support to Refugee Week
- Support to Kick Out Racism football campaign
- Research project about young people's views about racism and homophobia
- Support for campaign to raise awareness of learning disability issues
- Police and Crown Prosecution Service working together to set up monitoring system to improve tracking of cases

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Reporting of domestic violence in Exeter has increased considerably – by some 89% since 2001/02.

The Exeter Domestic Violence Forum has a new Chair, and a new focus for working. A core group looks at the work to be done, how it is to be done, and discusses the issues affecting domestic violence in the city. The wider membership then attends the Forum meetings for information sharing and networking.

Much of the impetus for the extra work being done has come from the funding received by Devon County as a result of domestic violence being selected as a PSA target. This has enabled the appointment of a co-ordinator who has been able to focus on the single issue agenda, and indeed has received international recognition for the work being done across Devon.

Exeter has benefited from the developing Outreach Service through Women's Aid. There has been a pilot project within the police service – "Enhanced Evidence Gathering" – which is now being rolled out across the county. There are further developments in planning, following on from this pilot project and using the new initiatives around supporting vulnerable victims and witnesses.

The Forum co-ordinated a publicity campaign with posters giving details of support services for those affected by domestic violence. The services featured were :

- Women's Aid 24-hour crisis line
- Women's Aid Outreach
- Sexual Abuse Helpline
- Devon M.A.L.E.
- Legal Advice helpline
- Victim Support
- Police domestic violence officers

DRUGS and DRUG-RELATED CRIME

The work in tackling this issue has been largely done by the Exeter Drug and Alcohol District Implementation Group (DIG). Much of the Government focus has been on the merger or closer working of CDRPs and Drug Action Teams (DATs). Exeter has been extremely well served by the close working of the CDRP and DAT through the Exeter DIG.

The DIG has agreed priorities for action

- Treatment
- Education/Prevention/Young people
- Reducing Supply
- Alcohol
- Social Inclusion

Key developments for the Exeter DIG during the year have been :

- Presentation to Local Strategic Partnership
- Securing continuing funding for projects through Building Safer Communities fund
- Mapping exercise of markets when new drugs suspected in area (unfounded)
- Secured Assertive Outreach & CPN Clocktower post.
- Progressed idea of Gabriel House as a therapeutic centre with detox available
- Engagement with homeless strategy work
- Engagement with employment services

PROLIFIC OFFENDERS

The aim of the Prolific Offender Unit was to establish an inter-agency team to identify and work with the relatively small group of offenders known to be responsible for committing a high percentage of the offences in the city, and thereby contribute to the overall targets of reducing crime.

Key developments in 2003/4

- Additional staffing agreed with funding from police Basic Command Unit (BCU)
- Staffing changes have been handled and difficulties overcome
- Change of office location has improved service delivery
- 15% of offenders completed programme
- Work was undertaken with those who did not complete
- Indications are that offending is substantially reduced by these interventions, and burglary and vehicle crime figures have reduced
- Improved links with Prison Service
- Links established with local housing providers

Further changes are anticipated with the new central strategy on Priority and Other Prolific Offenders. Guidance is awaited on this new strategy.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Achievements in 2003/4

- Kaleidoscope peer research project established
- Youth Action facilitators trained
- Chatterbox consultation mechanism established
- Operation Drumbeat – tackling young people out of school
- SPLASH ABOUT – holiday activity schemes for young people
- Truancy sweeps
- Support for young people dealing with alcohol misuse
- Campaign to target selling of alcohol to under-age drinkers, test purchasing
- Exeter East & Mid Devon YOT on league table of performance indicators was in the top ten out of 155 YOTs in each quarter
- Together with Headway (national organisation for those with brain injuries) YOT won a national community care award for the joint work of putting young people whose offending could have resulted in brain injury (assaults, reckless driving) to meet victims of brain injuries who tell their own story
- Reduction in risk of re-offending by 20/25 % using ASSET data as compared with 2001
- Training and using Restorative Justice Processes that include seeking to involve victims in all work with young people who offend
- Setting up a Children's Fund programme to work with parents and siblings of the highest risk offenders
- A reduction in young people going to prison (32 in 2000, 5 in 2004) without an increase in offending.

USE of FUNDS

Funding streams were streamlined for 2003/4 and the following streams were available.

- **Building Safer Communities (BSC)**
- **Small Retailers in Deprived Areas (SRDA)**
- **Excellence and Innovation (E&I)**
- **Partnership's own funds (ECSP)**

The funds were used to fund projects as follows

<p>BSC (to tackle any problem identified in the community safety strategy, but with an expectation of a continuation of the focus to tackle availability of drugs, to strengthen communities to withstand drugs, and to reduce numbers of young people taking drugs)</p>	<p>Prolific Offender Unit Exwick Community Project Work with young people with drug and alcohol issues Training for housing providers around drug policies School-based drug education work Youth Action project</p> <p>Continuation of pilot project, linking agencies in a problem-solving approach to tackling the issue of families in need. Families at risk of slipping into anti-social behaviour and crime are being identified at the earliest possible stage, and agencies are agreeing an overall approach to tackle and support those families.</p> <p>Capital projects – video viewing equipment, CCTV, office equipment for CARD project, equipment for young people's summer activity diversion schemes, refurbishment of buildings and office equipment for Global Centre project</p>
<p>SRDA (to improve security for small retail premises)</p>	<p>Security improvements for several small retailers around the city</p>
<p>E&I</p>	<p>Funding for CARD project</p>
<p>ECSP</p>	<p>Publicity and awareness-raising material Diversity work – research, support for Refugee Week Youth peer consultation project Youth diversionary activity Target hardening / security improvements for vulnerable people</p>

CONCLUSION

Exeter is a safe place to live, work and visit. In spite of the apparent rise in crime and disorder, Exeter remains, by comparison to many other places in the country and even in the South West, a safe city.

We are continuing to work to maintain that position, and to address those particular issues which detract from it. There are challenges remaining to be overcome, and the pages of this report detail the work being taken forward by the Action Teams.

The work to reduce crime and disorder is not about one year's effort, or even one three-year strategy's effort. It is about long-term sustained work to tackle crime, the opportunity for crime and those things which make people commit crime.

For more information about the work of
Exeter Community Safety Partnership
please contact
Michael Miller, Partnership Co-ordinator
on 01392 265330
or 07834 332985
or email michael.miller@exeter.gov.uk
or visit the website exeter.gov.uk/commsaf

