

St Albans District Community Safety Partnership

Annual Report 2020 - 2021



Contents

Summary

This report provides details of Community Safety Partnership activity, performance against priorities and the use of the Police and Crime Commissioner's community safety grant.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. The Partnership - Background | 3 |
| 2. Meeting strategic objectives | 3 |
| Priorities for 2020 - 21 | 3 |
| 3. Partnership projects | 4 |
| Premier League Kicks Programme | 4 |
| Crucial Crew, Chelsea's Story and Lean2Live | 4 |
| Herts Young Homeless (HYH) | 4 |
| 4. Police recorded crime | 5 |
| Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) | 6 |
| The Police Cadets | 6 |
| OP Tango | 6 |
| 5. St Albans District Council Community Protection Team | 7 |
| 6. CCTV | 8 |
| 7. Fly – tipping | 8 |
| 8. National Probation Service (NPS) | 8 |
| 9. Trading Standards | 9 |
| 10. Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service | 9 |
| Primary Fires | 10 |
| Pandemic Community Support | 10 |
| 11. HCC Services for Young People | 11 |
| 12. Health Update | 12 |

1. The Partnership – Background

The Community Safety Partnership is made up of the following partner agencies:

- St Albans City & District Council
Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner
- HCC Services for Young People
- Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group
- Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company Limited (BeNCH)
- National Probation Service.

In addition, the Partnership works with other agencies such as British Transport Police; Govia Thameslink; Central Herts Magistrates Bench; Crown Prosecution Service; Trading Standards; SASH (Specialist Adolescent Service Hertfordshire) Housing Associations and voluntary sector organisations including CGL (Change, Grow, Live) and SAHWR (St Albans and Hertsmeres Woman's Refuge).

The Partnership is chaired by the Chief Executive of the District Council, supported by the Chief Inspector of Police. The Partnership meets quarterly and holds an annual review meeting where the Partnership's performance is assessed, and priorities are set for the coming year. The Joint Action Group (JAG) is made up of operational officers who meet every four weeks to identify emerging and current issues and discuss how these can be tackled.

2. Meeting Strategic Objectives

The Partnership developed mission statement for the year - **Working for a safer St Albans** and the priorities are focused on achieving this. Following a county assessment of crime and disorder and a consultation with various agencies and the public five specific priorities were identified for the year. These are listed below and were all accorded the same priority.

Priorities for 2020 - 21

- To deliver an effective response to violent crime including knife crime, gangs, drug dealing, robbery and criminal exploitation engaging with cross border parties.
- To focus on crime that acquires possessions, including burglary, motor vehicle crime, cyber crime, scams and rogue trading.
- To assist landowners, businesses and the community by tackling rural and heritage issues such as fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour, road safety concerns and specific wildlife crime.
- To support victims of domestic abuse, tackling perpetrators, raising awareness and educating people around healthy relationships and personal safety.
- To promote health and physical and mental wellbeing for all by tackling hate crime, alcohol and drug misuse, homelessness, street drinking and by assisting vulnerable people, both at home and in the community.

These priorities formed the basis of the Community Safety Partnership action plan and other activities during the year.

3. Partnership Projects

Premier League Kicks Programme



Following the success of 'Onside', a youth football programme, the PCC provided a grant to enable the Council to continue running a social inclusion programme in the St Albans area. Watford FC Community Sports & Education Trust began delivering their successful Premier League Kicks project in London Colney and Wheathampstead in September. 'Kicks' aims to inspire children and young people to achieve their potential and improve their well-being; working together to build stronger, safer and more inclusive communities. The project is designed to engage young people aged 8 - 18, of all backgrounds and abilities, through football, sport and personal development activities. The Community Trust continued to engage young people in online football, youth club and dance sessions. Face-to-face delivery restarted in April, and the Trust will work with local youth organisations and grassroots football clubs to increase engagement. Incentives for the young people will include participating in tournaments and matchday packages, opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications and volunteering placements, as well as receive additional support, advice and guidance from qualified staff and workshop providers.

Crucial Crew, Chelsea's Choice and Learn2Live

These events for Y6, Y9 and Y12 pupils had to be cancelled due to the pandemic but the Partnership will reinstate these important trips for young people as soon as restrictions allow. We recognise that they play a vital part in a child's education.

Herts Young Homeless (HYH)

St Albans District Council funded 'Your Voice Your Choice' healthy relationships learning packs for three schools, which students could complete at home or in the classroom depending on their circumstance. These focussed on identifying abusive behaviours, coercive control and sexting.



Total spending during the year 2020-21

| Funding | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Kicks programme | £15,940 |
| Your Voice Your Choice | £ 500 |
| Total | £16,440 |

4. Police Recorded Crime

| | April 2020 – March 2021 | April 2019 – March 2020 | % Change | Numerical Change |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------|------------------|
| All Crime | 7846 | 8876 | -11.6% | -1030 |
| Violence Against Person | 2583 | 2597 | 0.5 | -14 |
| Domestic Abuse Crime | 1182 | 1184 | - 0.2% | - 2 |
| Burglary Residential | 281 | 462 | - 39.2% | - 181 |
| Burglary Business & Community | 135 | 206 | - 34.5% | - 71 |
| Vehicle Offences | 851 | 1040 | - 18.2% | - 189 |
| Theft From Person | 64 | 134 | - 52.2% | - 70 |
| Robbery | 51 | 86 | - 40.7% | - 35 |
| Criminal Damage | 758 | 932 | - 18.7% | - 174 |
| Drug Offences | 331 | 236 | + 40.3% | + 95 |
| Theft From Shop | 916 | 997 | - 8.1% | - 81 |
| Possession of weapons | 48 | 76 | - 36.8% | - 28 |

The above table shows that St Albans has seen significantly fewer crimes committed than in previous years with a reduction in all crime of over 11%. This is undoubtedly attributable in the main to the pandemic and the restrictions on movement, which have curtailed opportunities for many traditional crime types. There has been a substantial reduction in the number of residential burglaries, no doubt due to homes being occupied throughout the day. Similarly, crime associated with the District's night-time economy has fallen sharply.

There has been an increase in drugs offences which is due to proactive work from the Op Scorpion team in uncovering drug dealing in the District. Despite the volume of crimes dropping significantly, the demand on the Police Service over the past year has been considerable. However, the vast majority of people across the District did abide by the national lockdown measures and the Police applied the stepped approach of 'engaging', 'explaining' and 'encouraging' and treating 'enforcement' through the issuing of fines, as a last resort.

Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

The District's Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), headed by Inspector Andy Wiseman, consists of forty Police Constables and Police Community Support Officers. They are your local officers who solve problems and lead on community engagement.

The SNT and the Community Safety Unit work with St Albans District Council's Community Protection Team to tackle cases of anti-social behaviour. This combined effort has led to a number of successful applications for Closure Orders, which if granted by a court, prohibit access to an address where there has been or is likely to be serious nuisance or disorder.

Due to the reduced opportunity to conduct face to face engagement, the District's Safer Neighbourhood Teams have been using their social media platforms to stay in touch with communities and share key messages. The SNT currently has over 25,000 followers across its Facebook (St Albans Police), Twitter @StAlbansPolice and the on-line neighbourhood watch scheme, OWL www.owl.co.uk The SNT has also been using the feedback portal 'Echo' to shape its targeted activities and local priorities and has already received over 1,100 pieces of feedback from communities to date. You can tell us what matters most to you about policing in your area, by visiting bit.ly/police-stalbans for St Albans, bit.ly/police-harpenden for Harpenden and bit.ly/police-lncol for London Colney. All feedback in anonymous.



The Police Cadets

The St Albans & Harpenden Volunteer Police Cadets are a uniformed youth organization supported by Herts Constabulary. They currently have 30 Cadets, all young people aged from 13 - 18 years old who live within the St Albans District. Sessions are organized during term time every other Tuesday. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the Police Cadets have been unable to operate this year but in April they made. The group will start to operate full time again from 20th April 2021. In 2020 the Cadets supported the NHS by standing at their front doors with posters they made.



Op Tango

This is a joint Police and Council funded operation to deal with rough sleeping and street drinking in the city centre. Officers regularly patrol the streets, give out information and advice about where to get additional help and support. Beds are available at Open Door if a set of criteria is met. During the national lockdowns every effort was made to ensure that all those who needed accommodation were suitably housed.



5. St Albans District Council Community Protection Team

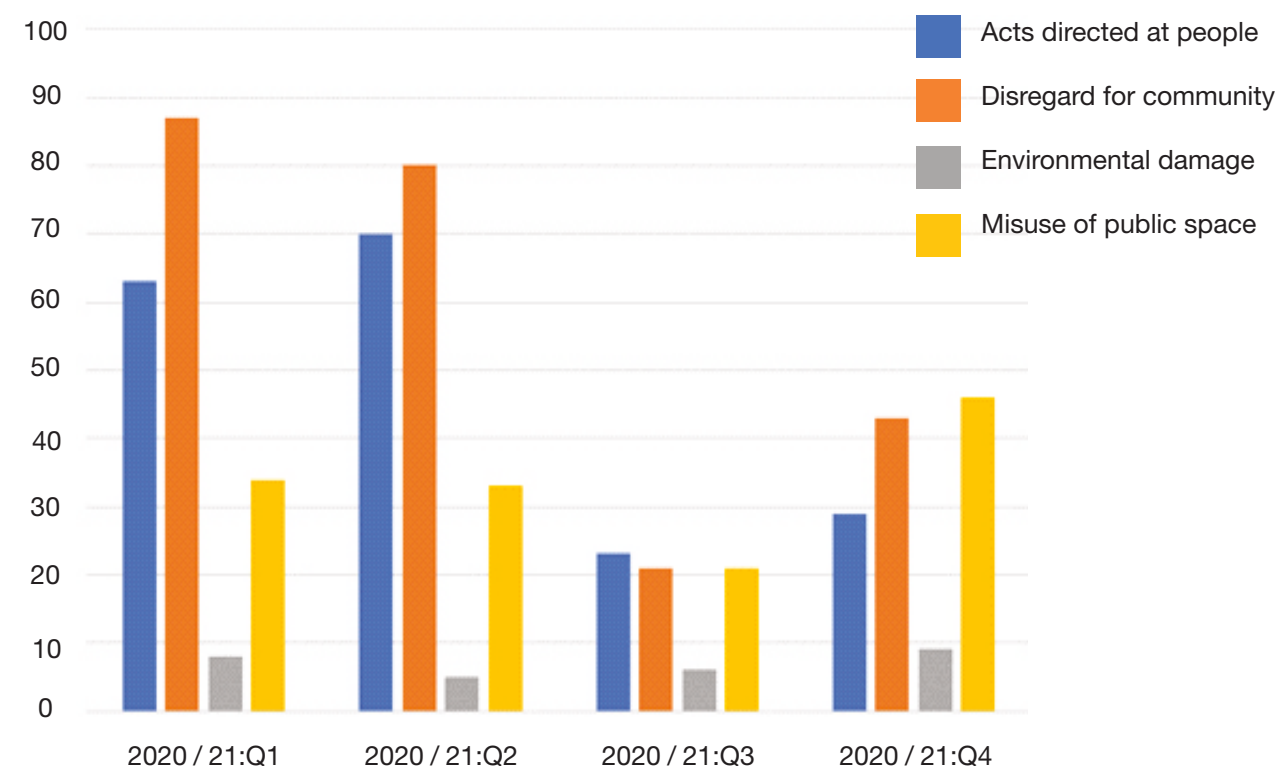
The Community Protection Team uses a range of methods to deal anti-social behaviour within the District. Last year saw a rise of 26% in the number of cases being reported to the team particularly in the first six months of the year up from 458 to 578 incidents. There were significant increases in reports of "acts directed at people" and "disregard for community" which may be in relation to the first national lockdown. The team undertakes investigative activity when dealing with difficult cases – this comprises calls to tenants, interviews with tenants and visits to properties. Last year 1508 investigation actions carried out. The team served 34 perpetrator warnings, 10 tenancy actions which include Notices of Seeking Possessions, 4 Closure orders, and 6 injunctions. Due to Covid-19 regulations there were no evictions and no cases went to trial.

In total the Community Protection Team completed 1571 actions compared to 907 in the previous year which is an increase of 73%.

The Community Protection Team also attends the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) twice a month on behalf of the Council where local domestic abuse cases are reviewed and actions plans implemented.

The team also refers and discusses safeguarding cases with Children's Services and Adult Care Services.

In 2020 - 21 371 contacts were made to refer or discuss cases.



6. CCTV



The Council's Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) operation provides excellent support for the work of the CSP, with systems at 99 separate locations across the District. These systems include cameras where footage is relayed to the Council's control room, and a number that record on site to hard drives. In the year 2020 - 21, the control room dealt with a total of 2601 incidents, a decrease of nearly 30% on the previous year. This is largely attributable to the lack of activity in the city centre, throughout much of the last year. Proactive use of these cameras has enabled police to actively intervene and stop a number of crimes. The Council has downloaded 310 dvds of footage which has been given to the Police. The Council's CCTV cameras were used to track down a stolen car from Harpenden. The vehicle was found, the occupants arrested and the car was returned to its owner. In another incident an intruder alarm at a local pub in the city centre was activated. CCTV operators monitored the area and found a male with a large bag in the vicinity. They guided police officers to the site and found that the male had several bottles of alcohol which had been stolen from the premises. The Council also has four camera systems which can be moved around 'hot spots' in the District to assist in tackling crime and / or anti-social behaviour. Sites for the cameras are agreed with the Police and are monitored for three months. After this time the camera may be moved to a different location.

7. Fly-Tipping

The District Council worked with Herts County Council to improve residents' knowledge around fly-tipping and supported the Let's SCRAP campaign to dispose of waste responsibly. Recycling centres were reopened promptly after the national lockdowns to reduce illegal fly-tipping, however due to the pandemic the Council did not prosecute anyone for fly-tipping offences. During the year 2020 - 21, 25 fixed penalty notices were issued for fly-tipping in the District and there are currently 120 fly-tips being investigated. In addition, 6 Community Protection Warnings were issued for waste related offences.



8. National Probation Service (NPS)

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the NPS and the service has had to use technologies to support the completion of accredited programmes. Responding to social distancing and stay at home directions, officers had to work remotely with service users and partnership agencies. However, service users considered very high and high risk with complex needs continued to be offered face to face appointments. The NPS attended court and ensured (where possible and safe) that orders and sentences were carried out.

The service has worked closely with housing providers to try secure accommodation for prisoners on their release. This has helped more than 500 people in the East of England area. For most of this year, unpaid work has involved service users working remotely on projects that have included manufacturing masks but physical community work restarted towards the end of the year.



9.Trading Standards

Hertfordshire Trading Standards has continued to work with St Albans District Council throughout the year supporting the community, by giving talks and presentations on rogue trading, doorstep crime and scams. Trading Standards have presented to groups who have requested a specific talk and have done training sessions with local police officers.

This has been particularly challenging over the past year and in many cases, training has been carried out virtually. Trading Standards continue to install call blockers to vulnerable residents in Hertfordshire and 34 have been installed throughout the County. During the year 2020 - 21, through intervention by Trading Standards more than £85,500 has been stopped going to rogue traders. Trading Standards work is supported by intelligence reports from other agencies such as the Police and last year 5 successful interventions were carried out. Working in a multi-agency capacity is the best approach to keep the residents and communities of St Albans safe. Trading Standards look forward to continuing their work with the partnership.



10. Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

| | Deliberate Fires April 2020 - March 2021 | Primary Fires April 2020 - March 2021 | Fire Injuries April 2019 - March 2020 |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| Hertfordshire | - 6% (1103 to 1032) | - 15 (1328 to 1130) | - 51% (83 to 41) |
| St Albans | - 1% (99 to 98) | - 13% (157 to 137) | Fallen (6 to 4) |

Primary Fires



A number of initiatives to reduce these property fires took place during 2020 - 21 which will continue during 2021 - 22, these include:

Pandemic Community Support, following the announcement of the National Pandemic caused by Covid-19 crews reduced non-essential work in the community. To support Public Health England crews carried out a door knocking exercise to all properties of those requested to shield who had not contacted NHS in reply to their communication. All information was gathered, advice given to residents and the NHS were able to update data on those shielding and their conditions. Crews have offered further support in sharing Covid-19 safety messages and offering lateral flow tests to the community to take home and help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Safe & Well Service targets the most vulnerable in the community to gain information and make referrals to support



agencies. As part of this service residents can receive specialist equipment depending on their needs, such as: hard of hearing alarms, fireproof bedding and other materials. From April 2020 to March 2021 fire crews carried out 294 **urgent** safe and well visits and 97 visits to those shielding, to support Public Health England. Due to Government restrictions figures were lower than previous years. Crews respond to requests from Police, Domestic Abuse teams and housing officers to fit fireproof letter boxes to those who are targets of crime.

HFRS Volunteers Vigilance Checks

are carried out by fire service volunteers who actively target areas of St Albans to carry out regular vigilance patrols. They identify possible fire risks, areas targeted by arson and they report fly-tipping.

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service working in partnership to **stamp out arson**

FIRE IN THIS AREA

Did you see anything?
Can you help?

CrimeStoppers.
0800 555 111
100% anonymous. Always.
crimestoppers-uk.org

FREE Safe & Well visit
incorporating **HOME FIRE SAFETY**

• Only uniformed staff will visit you and they will always use an agreed password and show an official ID card.
• We will supply and fit free smoke detectors where necessary.

Book online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/fire or call 0300 123 4064 • Providing the opportunity to be healthy and safe.

The volunteers also offer **VIST** an emergency support unit to deliver fire safety equipment to those who suffer a fire in their home. They take part in regular training and familiarise themselves with their local area during weekly patrols and attending community meetings.

Safety Patrols are carried out by crews supporting Police in identifying areas of anti-social behaviour by carrying out vigilance patrols, which also gives crews the opportunity to identify and report rough sleepers, targeted areas of arson and fly-tipping.

Re-actively and proactively targeting of schools

to deliver key safety messages in an interactive and engaging manner. Educating teachers to identify and report fire setters for further intervention work. Safety advice given to primary school pupils focusing on pedestrian safety and awareness had to be adapted during 2020, utilising online tools and video calling to educate school children on these key issues.

Driving Home for Christmas Campaign

which delivered Road Traffic Collision awareness to communities through social media, OWL messaging and online engagement throughout November and December.



Motorcyclists receive road safety awareness through the Biker Down programme that promotes safe riding and gives first aid training.

11. HCC Services for Young People

Services for Young People provides targeted prevention and early intervention

through youth work, information, advice, guidance and support into employment, education and training. The service is committed to giving young people high quality opportunities to learn life skills and excel in their personal and social development.

It aims to address issues at the earliest opportunity to give young people the best chance to succeed, have a place in their community, to reach their potential and make a successful transition to adulthood. The Youth Work Team supported young people throughout last year with programmes which have been a combination of blended, virtual and face to face work as required by the individual. Youth Workers attended areas where young people continued to meet, enabling them to advise young people on Covid-19 rules alongside detached youth work programmes. They worked with the Police to ensure that they attended the areas most affected by ASB and low-level risky behaviour.

The Information, Advice and Guidance / Work Related Learning Team provided support to young people virtually and face to face through one to one support and the Pathways to Success Programme. The team offered virtual advice and guidance to young people through referrals and school guidance sessions. The team further developed their social media platform during the pandemic to ensure that young people were aware of the wide support and services available to them. Further details of the youth work projects delivered in St Albans can be found at www.servicesforyoungpeople.org



12. Health Update

GP surgeries have remained open for business throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, with a move to remote consulting to limit the risk to patients and staff. GPs have been seeing increasing numbers of patients with mental health issues, especially in the younger population. In particular, there has been a significant rise in young patients with eating disorders leading to a big increase in the number of referrals to the Community Eating Disorder Service (CEDS), part of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The locality's GP Thrive Young Person's Service has also continued to run weekly throughout the pandemic and has seen a total of 241 young patients in the year ending March 2021. 96% of presentations have involved issues relating to mental health, and especially eating disorders. The service has run at capacity with very few unfilled or missed appointments. A Mind in Mid Herts support worker has also been working alongside GPs to further support young people presenting with emotional or mental health issues.



In response to the pandemic specifically, Herts Valleys CCG commissioned 4 respiratory hot hubs across the county to support general practice in managing patients with respiratory and / or fever symptoms.

As infection rates reduced, the number of hot hubs in the county was reduced from 4 to 2, with the district's closest hub now being in Hemel Hempstead. This respiratory hub has been able to meet the increased demand of the second wave within the District and continues to provide a service to patients. At the height of the pandemic, GPs also stepped forward to help support the [NHS 111](#) triage lines to deal with patients affected by COVID-19. In addition, GP surgeries in St Albans and Harpenden have worked collaboratively to set up and staff the vaccination centres at Batchwood Hall and Harpenden Public Halls. This project is ongoing and has been highly successful, with a personal acknowledgement of their hard work from Matt Hancock.

