

St Albans District Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2021/2022



Introduction

This Community Safety Partnership strategy outlines the Partnership's priorities for 2021/22. It is based on a local Strategic Assessment of crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, and other data. It is informed by national and local policies including: *Modern Crime Prevention Strategy (Home Office, 2016)* and *Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plans: Everybody's Business (Hertfordshire Crime and Police Commissioner)*.

The St Albans Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of the following partner agencies:

St Albans City & District Council	Bench Community Rehabilitation Company
Hertfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner	Hertfordshire Constabulary
Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service	National Probation Service
Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group	Hertfordshire County Council
YCH Services for Young People	

In addition, the Partnership works with other agencies such as British Transport Police, Govia Thameslink, Central Herts Magistrates Bench, Crown Prosecution Service, Hertfordshire County Council's Trading Standards team, housing associations, and third sector agencies including CGL (Change, Grow, Live) and Safer Places.

Our mission statement this year is **Working for a safer St Albans** and our priorities are focused on achieving this for the District.

The Partnership consider the impact of Covid-19 and take steps to reduce its effect on crime and the causes of crime. The priorities are reviewed every year and the Partnership will consult with residents before finalising the document. The focus continues to be on those crimes with the highest risk of harm. We will learn from local and national experience and will follow examples of best practice.

Priorities

1. To work together to prevent violent crime including knife crime, gangs, drug dealing, robbery and criminal exploitation by tackling the causes and minimising the consequences.
2. To focus on those who are the victims of burglary, motor vehicle crime, cyber crime, scams and rogue trading, and addressing the outcomes.
3. To work with landowners, businesses and the community to take action against fly tipping, anti-social behavior, rural crime and road safety concerns
4. To support victims of domestic abuse, tackling perpetrators, raising awareness and educating people about healthy relationships and personal safety.
5. To provide help and support for those who need it by addressing alcohol and drug misuse, homelessness and street drinking issues, and challenging hate crime.
6. To promote physical and mental wellbeing for all by assisting vulnerable people, both at home and in the community.

Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Performance Summary: April 2020 to December 2020

	Deliberate Fires	Primary Fires	Fire Injuries
Hertfordshire	-10% (955 to 859)	-16% (1067 to 895)	-41% (56 to 33)
St Albans	+9% (82 to 89)	-10% (123 to 111)	Risen 3 to 4

The table below shows a summary of the Partnership's performance against crime types in the first 3 quarters of the year and compares it to the same period last year.

Comparison Sheet - ST ALBANS (Between 01/04 and 05/01)

CRIMES - <i>Year To Date</i>	CRIME			
	This Year	Last Year	Change	% Change
ALL CRIME	6198	6943	-745	-10.7%
ARSON AND CRIMINAL DAMAGE	625	737	-112	-15.2%
• ARSON	20	16	4	25.0%
• CRIMINAL DAMAGE	605	721	-116	-16.1%
BURGLARY	327	530	-203	-38.3%
• BURGLARY - BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY	109	165	-56	-33.9%
• BURGLARY - RESIDENTIAL	218	365	-147	-40.3%
VEHICLE OFFENCES	662	808	-146	-18.1%
• AGGRAVATED VEHICLE TAKING	11	3	8	266.7%
• INTERFERING WITH A MOTOR VEHICLE	137	140	-3	-2.1%
• THEFT FROM A VEHICLE	391	456	-65	-14.3%
• THEFT OR UNAUTH TAKING OF A MOTOR VEH	123	209	-86	-41.1%
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS	43	63	-20	-31.7%
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○ POSSESS OF ARTICLE WITH BLADE OR POINT	19	26	-7	-26.9%
○ POSSESSION OF FIREARMS OFFENCES	6	9	-3	-33.3%
○ POSSESSION OF FIREARMS WITH INTENT	1	1	0	0.0%
○ POSSESSION OF OTHER WEAPONS	17	27	-10	-37.0%
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	2053	2028	25	1.2%
• STALKING AND HARASSMENT	516	399	117	29.3%
• VIOLENCE WITH INJURY	599	656	-57	-8.7%
• VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY	938	973	-35	-3.6%
DOMESTIC ABUSE (Crimes With DA Flag Attached)	941	858	83	9.7%
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	474	444	30	6.8%
• OTHER OFFENCES PUBLIC ORDER	71	80	-9	-11.3%
• PUBLIC FEAR, ALARM OR DISTRESS	351	312	39	12.5%
• RACE OR RELIGIOUS AGG PUBLIC FEAR	51	51	0	0.0%
• VIOLENT DISORDER	1	1	0	0.0%
DRUG OFFENCES	254	179	75	41.9%
• POSSESSION OF DRUGS	228	159	69	43.4%
• TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS	26	20	6	30.0%

How the Partnership plans to deliver the 2021/22 priorities.

Priorities	
The partnership has used all available information and data available to its members, including a detailed risk matrix system to inform and set its priorities for 2021/22.	
1	<p>To work together to prevent violent crime including knife crime, gangs, drug dealing, robbery and criminal exploitation by tackling the causes and minimising the consequences.</p> <p>All crime in the District, like the country, has seen a decrease of around 10% year on year. This is largely attributable to the lockdown restrictions in the spring and autumn when people were unable to go out. Offences within “the possession of a weapon” category are significantly down on the previous year, and the CSP wants to continue the work started in 2020. The biannual focus on knife crime via Operation Sceptre will go ahead in March and September 2021 and the Police will be working with Trading Standards to carry out more test purchasing on knives and giving improved guidance to those businesses which fail the test.</p> <p>Growing Against Violence sessions and specific knife crime programmes will be targeted to those pupils most at risk of becoming involved in violent crime. The Partnership supports Hertfordshire’s Serious Violent Crime Strategy the aims of which include the reduction of the number of people carrying and using knives, early intervention to stop people becoming involved in gangs, support for those already involved in serious violence and robust enforcement where necessary. The Partnership will raise awareness of all the initiatives around violent crime.</p> <p>The new No More project, which is a replacement for the St Giles SOS project, will work with young people who have been identified by professionals as needing specific intense support to stop them becoming involved in knife crime and other serious criminality.</p> <p>The Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) will concentrate on tackling the supply of illegal drugs in the District and will work with Operation Scorpion to execute warrants at properties where intelligence indicates dealing is taking place. The Community Protection team will collaborate with the Police to serve closure orders on premises associated with drugs misuse.</p> <p>Working with cross border partners, the Police will persist in disrupting drugs supply and in pursuing those involved in County Lines to keep children and vulnerable adults safe.</p> <p>Proactive policing will continue with plain clothes, as well as uniformed officers, regularly patrolling public areas to prevent robberies and pick pocketing and officers will investigate any such offences promptly and robustly.</p>
2	<p>To focus on those who are the victims of burglary, motor vehicle crime, cyber crime, scams and rogue trading and addressing the outcomes.</p> <p>The Partnership will reinstate community engagement events when it is safe to do so – this is an effective way to disseminate crime prevention advice. The Police will</p>

also encourage residents to sign up for the Online Watch Link (OWL) messaging service which keeps people informed of what's going on locally. Operation Scorpion concentrates on burglary and involves police officers undertaking proactive patrols throughout the District to disrupt potential break ins. Burglary will remain a key focus area for the Police because of the impact it can have on the victim.

Thefts **from** motor vehicle have declined this year. The Partnership will promote the "if you leave something on show, expect it go" message throughout the year and continue to remind residents to ensure that unattended vehicles are always locked and keys are kept securely away from the vehicle.

The Partnership will investigate new ways of ensuring that older people are educated about scams and cyber crime – if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is. New leaflets are available from partners and banks which help people to guard against scams and fraud. The very popular free digital courses run in conjunction with Oaklands will resume, giving people the opportunity to learn how to keep safe online.

The Priority Setting Forums held quarterly in London Colney, Harpenden and St Albans, determine the main local issues. Ward Councillors, Neighbourhood Watch members and residents meet to discuss and set the priorities for each area for the next 4 months. The priorities must be evidence based.

3 To work with landowners, businesses and the community to take action against fly tipping, anti-social behavior, rural crime and road safety concerns.

The Fire Service will actively target areas of St Albans District to carry out regular vigilance checks to identify possible fire risks and areas targeted by arson. The CSP will continue to raise awareness of flytipping in the District and remind householders of their duty of care to dispose of waste responsibly. The Council's Enforcement Officers are committed to investigating fly tipping offences and to prosecuting where necessary. The Partnership liaises closely with the Herts Flytipping Group and has agreed to share intelligence with the Environment Agency. Road stops will be conducted with the Police and Trading Standards to ensure that waste is not dumped illegally and ensure traders have the correct waste carriers' licences. The Council's waste management team coordinates with the contractor to minimise graffiti and littering in the District

The Partnership will work to reduce anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods using all powers at its disposal. This includes warning letters, mediation, injunctions, closure orders and ultimately possession proceedings.

Herts Constabulary has a policing drone team and St Albans is the county lead in this area. Local officers have been trained to deploy drones in order to detect and deter rural crime, environmental and wildlife crime.

Working alongside the road safety and sustainable travel team at Hertfordshire County Council, the Partnership will support the road safety and walking to school weeks during the year and promote healthier, safer and greener journeys. The CSP will promote cycle marking events and will liaise with British Transport Police to reduce cycle thefts at stations. The Fire Service will collaborate with local colleges to provide virtual educational safety talks around arson and driver safety.

	<p>The Drive Home Safely for Christmas campaign will remind drivers of the dangers of drink/drug driving, the use of mobile phones when driving as well as speeding. The Partnership recognises that speeding on “rat runs” is of great concern to residents and will monitor the Speed Indicator Devices throughout the District.</p>
4	<p>To support victims of domestic abuse, tackling perpetrators, raising awareness and educating people around healthy relationships and personal safety.</p>
	<p>The Partnership will continue to prioritise Domestic Abuse (DA) as St Albans District still reports a large number of incidents. The Community Protection Team will attend the bi monthly Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meetings to review serious cases. Medium risk cases will be referred to Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) for guidance and support. The Council’s team will work with the Police and the Fire Service to protect those at risk by installing fire proof letterboxes, additional lighting and other security measures.</p> <p>The Council will tackle perpetrators by taking possession action against Council tenancies and will liaise with the Police to prosecute offenders in order to keep families safe.</p> <p>The Partnership will examine domestic homicide reviews (DHR) from other areas of the County and will implement the recommendations to ensure that lessons are learnt.</p> <p>The Council has appointed a lead champion on domestic abuse who is trained to advise Council staff on all DA issues. Training will be regularly reviewed for front line staff and council contractors who deal with council tenancies. Domestic abuse literature will be available in our communities through leaflets and posters in places of high visibility and at a variety of events throughout the year. Additional training will be given to local GP surgeries and other professionals who request it. The Partnership will promote DA awareness week in November 2021 and will continue to support the Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline wherever possible.</p> <p>The Council will fund Herts Young Homeless to provide a ‘Healthy Relationships’ course, “Your Voice Your Choice” to Y8 and Y9 pupils for those schools who have requested it. The course teaches young people the key elements of a healthy relationship, how to recognise a toxic relationship, and about giving consent.</p> <p>The Council will fund the popular drama production on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) called ‘Chelsea’s Choice’ to Year 9 students in 10 secondary schools in St Albans and Harpenden. The productions are being supported by YCH Services for Young People which will give students the opportunity to disclose, share and discuss information, following the production.</p> <p>The Council operates a CCTV system in the city centre to enhance public safety. It also has a number of mobile cameras which can be moved around the District to monitor areas of crime or anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The CSP will work together to support victims of sexual assault, modern slavery and human trafficking so that they can get the help they need to restart their lives. The Council is piloting a process whereby designated Officers make National Referral Mechanism referrals on behalf of non statutory agencies.</p>

5	To provide help and support for those who need it by addressing alcohol and drug misuse, homelessness and street drinking issues, and challenging hate crime.
	<p>The Partnership recognises that individuals who commit crime and anti-social behaviour often have mental health issues which need to be addressed. Therefore, the team will work with different agencies including mental health, drug/alcohol and floating support services, to help people keep their accommodation and encourage them to lead healthier lifestyles.</p> <p>Street drinking and begging in the city centre will be tackled by joint working between enforcement and treatment outreach services. The Council works with the Police to try to stop begging in the high street and to signpost homeless people to Open Door and other charitable organisations that can assist them. Both the Police and the Council can issue Community Protection Warnings (CPW) to make individuals aware of the consequences of aggressive begging.</p> <p>The Police will issue Dispersal Notices if certain areas of the city experience high levels of anti-social behaviour. The partnership will organise walkabouts in the city centre to identify street drinkers and give them advice about how and where to seek help.</p> <p>There has been considerable focus on the rough sleepers in St Albans city centre. The CSP is working with Hightown Praetorian which provides support to rough sleepers via the Open Door night shelter in Bricket Road, St Albans. There is a dedicated street and recovery worker to assist the rough sleepers with finding suitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Partnership works with Herts County Council (HCC) on the support that is given to people with drug and alcohol issues. This is currently provided by the contractor Change Grow Live (CGL). The Council will publicise CGL drop in sessions held at Open Door. This contract is due to be reviewed and the Partnership has requested a higher level of local provision in the future.</p> <p>The Partnership will continue to build links with specialist services to deal with underlying mental health issues and substance misuse.</p>
6	To promote physical and mental wellbeing for all by assisting vulnerable people, both at home and in the community.
	<p>The Partnership will make full use of the 'Safe and Well' service provided by Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service targeting the most vulnerable in the community and make referrals to support agencies.</p> <p>The Council endorses the work undertaken by Communities First to make a positive impact on the wellbeing of local people. The Partnership will recommend these services to residents where possible.</p> <p>The Partnership will continue to attend meetings with the Community Mental Health Team to share information and plan action for high risk cases. In particular, relevant agencies have been asked to develop a more effective route into treatment for people with drug/alcohol and mental health problems, known as dual diagnosis.</p>

The team will support vulnerable people who are either victims, or those causing anti-social behaviour. This may involve directing them to support services such as counselling, mental health support, and substance misuse treatment. It may also include safeguarding or protecting individuals and children where it is appropriate.

The Partnership will liaise with local GPs to raise awareness and share material so that they are able to signpost service users to the multitude of support services available in the District, including raising awareness about domestic abuse and the resources available to support victims.

This strategy feeds into local and countywide strategies and contributes to, and reflects, the priorities of St Albans District's Strategic Partnership. The strategy also reflects the priorities of Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Plan. Full details of these plans are available on request from the Council's Community Protection Team (see <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/community-and-living/community-safety/>).