

Community Safety Plan 2023-2026

2024/25 Refresh

Dorset Community Safety Partnership



Introduction

The Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) aims to:

- Reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- Address risk, threat and harm to victims and local communities; and
- Facilitate the strengthening of Dorset's communities in the delivery of local initiatives.

It also acts as Dorset's Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board required under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and leads partners' response to meeting their duties relating to serious violence under the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act 2022.

Find out more about the CSP here: [Dorset Community Safety Partnership](#)

CSPs are required to have three-year Community Safety Plans that are refreshed annually. This is the latest refresh of the 2023-26 Plan and sets out partners' priorities based on the most recent assessment of community safety issues. The Plan is complimented by the [Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy](#) and [Dorset Serious Violence Strategy](#).

The Plan sets out activity to address priorities in broad terms. Further details regarding delivery and performance are contained in partners' various work plans which are developed, assessed and revised over the course of each year.

Crime in the Dorset Community Safety Partnership Area

Crime in the Dorset CSP area is low compared to many other places in the Country. During the five years from 2018, the crime rate for Dorset (per 1,000 population) was approximately half that seen nationally. The number of recorded crimes in Dorset has also steadily decreased since 2018 by 6%.

Crime in Dorset follows an annual cycle, which peaks each year in July/August and reaches its lowest in January/February, though exceptions were seen during 2020 when the Covid-19 related lockdowns were in place. Crime levels in Dorset vary according to location.

Consultation and Engagement

Partners use the findings of consultation and engagement exercises to help inform their understanding and work to tackle community safety issues.

A public consultation was undertaken with residents specifically for the CSP in early 2023. This included members of the Council's People Panel (a group of residents who volunteered to give responses on a range of questions relating to living in Dorset) who were asked a series of questions on what they thought about crime in their local community.

90 surveys were completed. However, the majority of these (94%) were submitted by Dorset residents aged 55 or over, a factor which should be considered when interpreting the data.

Consultees were asked which crime categories they thought were a problem where they live. The four categories which registered the highest concern were:

1. **Anti-social Behaviour** (46% of respondents). This was especially noted among Dorchester-based respondents (7 of 9) and those from Wareham (3 of 4) and Verwood (4 of 4).
2. **Rural Crime** (39% of respondents). Concern over rural crime was expressed by many respondents who lived in the countryside, but also by some town dwellers (Blandford, Dorchester and Ferndown).
3. **Vehicle Crime** (38% of respondents). Vehicle crime was seen as locally problematic among respondents throughout Dorset, with widespread concern expressed in both Dorchester (5 of 9 respondents) and Ferndown/West Moors (4 of 7).

4. **Drug Dealing** (37% of respondents). Respondents from throughout the county expressed concern over local drug dealing, but in particular in Weymouth, Bridport and Blandford.

The 3 categories of least concern were Slavery/Human Trafficking, Hate Crime and Knife Crime.

Panel members were also asked if crime was an issue where they live and if they had been a victim of crime and / or anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months.

The data illustrated slightly increasing concern with crime in their areas during the previous three years and 3% of the Peoples' Panel respondents stated that crime is a big issue in their lives.

The proportion of respondents who had experienced crime in the past year had almost doubled since the last survey (up from 8.5% to 14.8%). In contrast to crime, the proportion of respondents stating that they had had experience of anti-social behaviour during the past twelve months had declined. This trend was a continuation of that seen between 2021 and 2022.

The resident survey conducted by Dorset Council in the winter of 2021/22 included questions on how safe residents felt in their local area. 2,659 surveys were completed. Perceptions regarding community safety were:

- 13% felt unsafe when outside after dark in their local area. This was slightly higher than the 10% in 2020.
- 71% felt either fairly or very safe, down from 76% the previous year.
- 2% felt fairly or very unsafe when outside during the day in their local area. This was a slight rise from 1% in 2020.
- 91% felt either very or fairly safe a drop of 5% from the previous year.
- Just over 84% did not feel that crime had any or much impact on their daily lives with just over 15% believing it was either a problem or a serious problem.
- Just over 81% did not feel that anti-social behaviour had any or much impact on their daily lives with just over 18% believing it was either a problem or a serious problem.

Further research and consultation exercises, including with children and young people, will be undertaken over the course of the next few years, the outcomes of which will be used to inform future revisions of this plan. In advance of this work, an audit of existing consultation processes and data will be conducted across partner agencies, followed by a gap analysis of its findings. The results of this will be used to determine a partnership-wide consultation and engagement programme which will be delivered through subsequent partnership plans.

Community Safety Priorities

Partners carry out an annual Partnership Strategic Assessment (PSA) using information and data from a variety of sources to assess crime and disorder issues in the area. The assessment is used to set and review partners' priorities. When setting and reviewing priorities consideration is also given to the local Policing objectives in the area. Priorities are reviewed regularly.

The following priorities were agreed by partners for the 2023-26 Plan and remain in place during 2024/25:

- Domestic Abuse and Stalking
- Sexual Offences
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Rural Crime
- Fraud
- Serious Violence

They are complimented by the following cross cutting issues:

- Mental health
- Substance misuse

- Complex cases / multiple need
- Violence against women and girls

There is a strong correlation between the CSP’s priorities and those set out in the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner’s (PCC’s) Police and Crime Plan 2021/29 which commits to tackling, amongst other issues, rural crime, violent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Reducing re-offending remains a cross cutting area of work for partners. Details are set out in the [Pan-Dorset Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2024 to 2027](#).

In accordance with recent legislation, there are separate partnership arrangements, plans and strategies for dealing with substance misuse through the pan-Dorset Combating Drugs Partnership.

Although CSP’s are legally required to undertake annual needs assessments to set their priorities, in recent years new legislation has been placed on specific partners directing them to tackle domestic abuse and serious violence. In Dorset, partners have chosen to use the CSP as their partnership mechanism to meet these duties and ensured their [Domestic Abuse](#) and [Serious Violence](#) Strategies compliment this Plan.

Partnership work to tackle community safety issues takes many forms. Some partnership activities and service arrangements have been in place for several years and have become business as usual. Well established multi-agency partnership arrangements, including local Partnership Co-ordinating Groups, are in place to tackle shorter term, area specific issues.

Below is a description of broad partnership activity against priorities. This is supported by partners’ various work plans which are developed, assessed and revised over the course of each year.

Domestic Abuse and Stalking	
Activities	Broad Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop initiatives that focus on prevention, early help and education including working with children and young people (for example on healthy relationships). • Develop interventions for perpetrators to reduce offending and prevent risk and harm. • Further develop the whole systems approach to domestic abuse to ensure services are working together effectively based on evidence, informed by research and the views of the community. • Continue to develop partners’ response for high risk victims including implementing learning from the High Risk Domestic Abuse (HRDA). • Implement learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews. • Undertake regular communication campaigns to raise awareness of issues and support services. • Ensure training is available for staff and professionals to help them identify and respond to issues. • Continue to implement the recommendations of the Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024, including 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the annual proportion of all domestic abuse events which have identifiable ‘repeat’ victims. • A reduction in the number of domestic abuse related stalking crimes reported annually. • A reduction in the percentage of domestic abuse events committed annually by ‘repeat’ perpetrators. • The proportion of people who commit further domestic abuse within twelve months of starting a local domestic abuse perpetrator programme is decreased annually.

<p>those relating to children and young people, and carry out a review of the Strategy for 2025-2028.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake research to better understand the needs of our diverse communities, including LGBTQ+ people and those with protective characteristics, and how we can ensure those needs are best met. 	
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Sexual Offences	
Activities	Broad Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners in the criminal justice system and at the regional and national levels to take action to increase the positive outcome rate for sexual offences. • Continue awareness raising campaigns including in schools. • Undertake regular, targeted communications campaigns to raise awareness and understanding of the support available. • Ensure the information and advice being provided to children and young people is fit for purpose and meets their needs. • Continue to support projects and initiatives that aim to address issues of sexual offences related to the night time economy. • Conduct work to understand why victims drop out of the criminal justice process at the early stages. • Ensure strong links between the CSP and local Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual reduction in the number of sexual offence crimes recorded by the Police. • An annual reduction in the percentage of sexual offence crimes recorded by the Police in which alcohol was identified as a factor. • An annual reduction in the proportion of sexual offence victims who enter criminal justice proceedings and withdraw from the process.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	
Activities	Broad Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of issues and support targeting priority localities at peak times. • Develop effective working arrangements with housing associations to help understand and tackle ASB issues. • Assess and address the impact of repeat ASB cases / callers including where mental health is a key factor. • Work closely and share data / information with youth outreach services to help direct provision. • Work with local businesses to address shoplifting that impacts directly on ASB including ‘designing out crime’. • Work with Trading Standards to help direct test purchasing work in areas where ASB is an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual reduction in the number of antisocial behaviour crimes recorded by the police. • An annual reduction in the number of antisocial behaviour crimes recorded by the police in priority locations. • A reduction in the proportion of victims of ‘personal’ antisocial behaviour that are identified as ‘repeat’ victims. • A reduction in the proportion of antisocial behaviour perpetrators that are identified as ‘repeat’ offenders. • A reduction in the percentage of all ASB crimes which are linked to alcohol.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop close working relationships with partners in the Voluntary and Community Sector including youth centres, to develop joint approaches to tackle ASB. • Work with young people’s forums and groups to better understand issues and inform effective interventions, including the Dorset Youth Association and 0-19 Youth Forum. • Support the work of the Dorset Combating Drugs Partnership’s Prevention sub-group including around education in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the percentage of all ASB crimes which are linked to drugs. • A reduction in the percentage of all ASB crimes which are linked to mental health.
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Rural Crime	
Activities	Broad Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with communities on rural crime and improve trust in partners’ response to issues. • Identify repeat offenders and work together to disrupt and reduce offending. • Tackle cross border organised crime affecting rural communities. • Work to better understand the relationship between organised rural crime and other crimes. • Work with rural businesses to prevent crime, develop innovative crime prevention tactics and ensure agencies understand the unique impact that crime can have on rural victims. • Work together to prevent and detect fly-tipping issues. • Support the introduction of new approaches to dealing with fly-tipping in hotspot locations. • Increase awareness of wildlife offences and support schemes that are proven to reduce incidents. • Work together to identify and reduce crime affecting our heritage assets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction each year in the total number of rural crimes, as defined by Dorset’s Rural Crime Unit. • A reduction each year in the total number of rural crimes, as defined by Dorset’s Rural Crime Unit, in hotspot locations. • An annual reduction in the volume of reported incidents of fly tipping.

Fraud	
Activities	Broad Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support awareness raising activities to ensure people understand how to spot potential fraud. • Support and promote ‘Friends Against Scams’ including dissemination of advice and information across organisations. • Incorporate scams advice into Safe & Well visits by the Fire & Rescue Service. • Focus on actions and initiatives that aim to protect the most vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of the Friends Against Scams initiative. • Financial savings realised through prevention work.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion the Trading Standards Trader Approved Scheme 'Buy With Confidence'. 	
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Serious Violence	
Activities	Broad Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver approaches to tackle high-harm offending. Develop and champion activity that supports victims of serious violence. Ensure children and young people better understand the risks and drivers for serious violence to prevent them from becoming drawn into crime. Take action that tackles serious violence in the community, to improve the safety of our streets. Robustly tackle organised crime, including county lines and rural organised crime. Undertake work to further develop our understanding of serious violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An annual reduction in the number of recorded violent crimes throughout the Dorset Council area. An annual reduction in the number of recorded violent crimes in hot spot areas. A reduction in the proportion of victims of serious violence that are identified as 'repeat' victims. A reduction in the proportion of perpetrators of serious violence that are identified as 'repeat' offenders.

Performance Management

Partners use performance information and data coupled with an assessment of progress against their agreed actions at each meeting, to determine whether they are delivering against their priorities.

Partners intend to gather a wide range of information and data to complement Police statistics and develop a comprehensive understanding of community safety issues.

Governance

The Dorset CSP is the statutory Community Safety Partnership for the local area. In addition, the CSP fulfils the functions of the Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board as required under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and coordinates partners' response to meeting their statutory duties relating to serious violence under the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act 2022. It brings together senior officers and elected members from:

- Dorset Police
- Dorset Council
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority
- Probation Service (Dorset)
- NHS Dorset

Many other partners such as the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, the Dorset Domestic Abuse Forum and the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service are also members of the CSP.

At a local level, there are locality based community safety groups that come together to identify solutions to local issues. These groups feed into the Dorset CSP.