



SAFER ST HELENS

EXECUTIVE ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2021 - MARCH 2022



FOREWORD

I am proud to present this Annual Report for 2021/2022 to you on behalf of the Safer St Helens Executive.

The Executive, formed in July 2020, has grown in strength and partnership since this time and the activity delivered within this report demonstrates how we are more effective working together to prevent crime and tackle disorder in the borough.

From our work in providing visible and accessible outreach services to co-ordinating our response to domestic abuse – this partnership has demonstrated a commitment to tackling the key harms that impact our communities.

Significant challenges remain in addressing violence against women and girls, making our night-time economy a safer place to be and in responding to the concerns that our residents highlighted in our recent Safer St Helens Survey.



Councillor Jeanie Bell

Chair of the Safer St Helens Executive and Cabinet Member, Safer, Stronger Communities

We have commitment from not only our statutory agencies and partners, but from local community groups that share the same vision and commitment to work with young people, support victim / survivors and improve our borough together.

Where possible, we have secured additional funding to improve the services we provide and I would like to thank the Merseyside Police & Crime Commissioner, Emily Spurrell, for her support during this period as well as welcoming the additional initiatives that the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership has also funded in the borough.

I hope that this report highlights the range of work that we deliver, both individually and through the Executive and I look forward to another successful year in building safer, stronger communities together.



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THE SAFER ST HELENS EXECUTIVE

The Safer St Helens Executive was formed in July 2021, with the endorsement of the St Helens People's Board. The Executive provides the multi-agency forum for all community safety agencies to deliver the priorities that will prevent and reduce crime and disorder in our neighbourhoods.

WHILST THE ST HELENS PEOPLE'S BOARD RETAINS OVERALL STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITY, THE EXECUTIVE IS THE OPERATIONAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP FOR THE BOROUGH.

The Safer St Helens Executive consists of senior representatives from the following organisations:

- St Helens Borough Council (including Community Safety, Public Health, Licensing, Youth Justice and Children's Social Care)
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
- Cheshire and Merseyside Health Care Partnership
- The Probation Service
- Torus
- Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
- Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action

The Executive is Chaired by Cllr Jeanie Bell, Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities with officer support from the St Helens Borough Council Community Safety Team.



OVERVIEW OF CRIME AND DISORDER IN ST HELENS

THE INFORMATION OPPOSITE PROVIDES A SNAPSHOT OF CRIME DATA FOR THE ST HELENS BOROUGH DURING 2021/22.

Victim Based Crime had the highest crime rate standing at 160.4 per 1000 population, accounting for 45% of total crimes. This crime type is inclusive of other crimes such as sexual offences, robbery, theft, and criminal damage to name a few.

Domestic Abuse rates was the highest single crime rate at 47.4 per 1000 population, accounting for 13% of the total crime rate. This is not dissimilar to rates released by the Office for National Statistics which showed the domestic abuse rates for England and Wales in the year ending March 2021 to represent 18% of all offences recorded by the police (figures for year ending March 2022 have not yet been released).

Violence Without Injury represented 11% of the total crimes with a rate of 37.4 per 1000 population, this crime type is also inclusive of some other crime types such as domestic violence, robbery, and theft to name a few.

Cyber Crimes are rising nationally, this is reflected in the figures for St Helens as data shows that it accounts for 8% of all crime types listed and stands at a rate of 28.6 per 1000 population.

Robbery Business, Gun Crime and Robbery Personal were amongst the lowest crime rates in St Helens, each accounting for less than 1% of all crimes, and rates were 0.1, 0.3 and 0.9 per 1000 population, respectively.

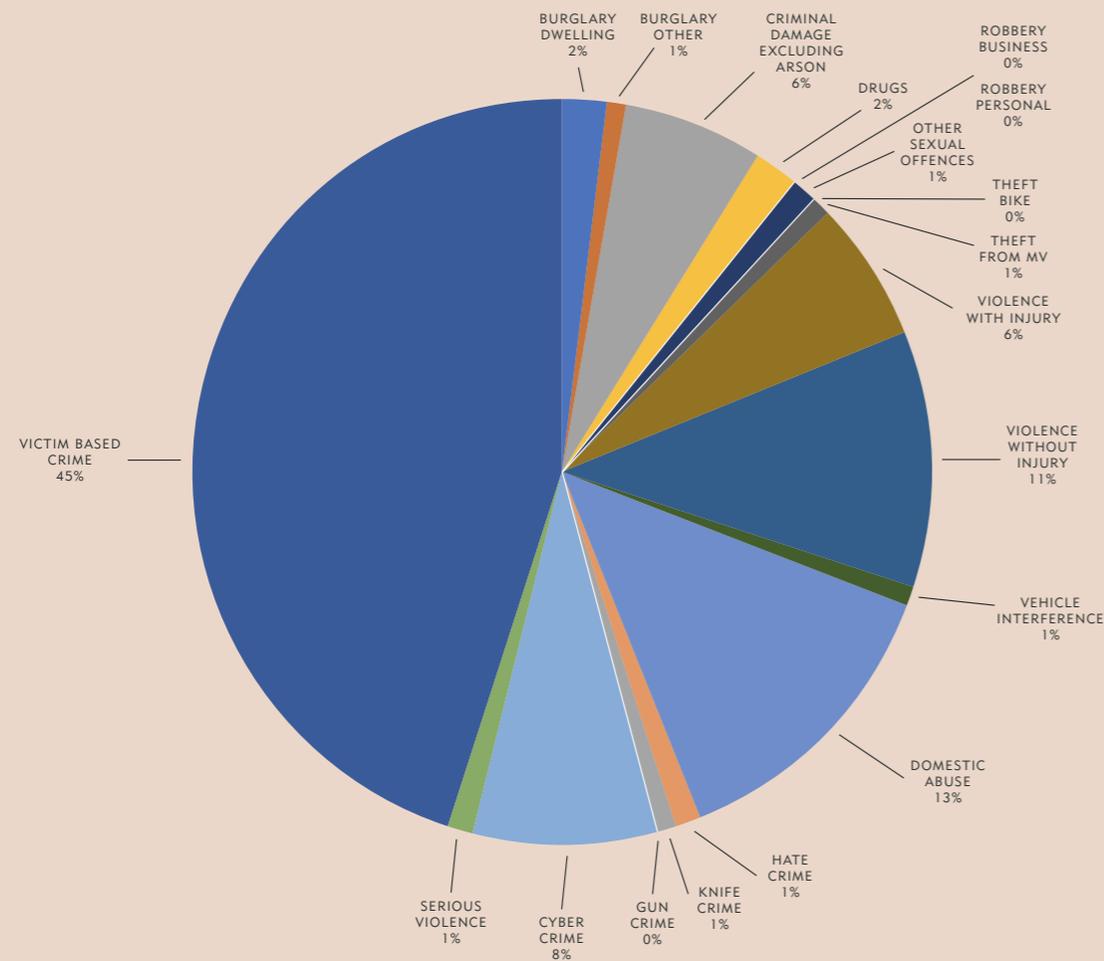
Many crime types decreased during periods of national lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however the Office for National Statistics claim that data recorded by the police for England and Wales from April 2021 to September 2021 showed that certain offence types are returning to or exceeding the levels seen before the pandemic.

Crime In St. Helens Over 12 Month Period April - March

Crime	2021/22	Rate Per 1000 Population	% Of Crime
Burglary Dwelling	656	6.4	2
Burglary Other	210	2.0	1
Criminal Damage excluding Arson	2070	20.1	6
Cyber Crime	2946	28.6	8
Domestic Abuse	4886	47.4	13
Drugs	775	7.5	2
Gun Crime	35	0.3	0
Hate Crime	509	4.9	1
Knife Crime	313	3.0	1
Other Sexual Offences	360	3.5	1
Robbery Business	13	0.1	0
Robbery Personal	96	0.9	0
Serious Violence	260	2.5	1
Theft Bike	146	1.4	0
Theft from MV	472	4.6	1
Vehicle Interference	192	1.9	1
Victim Based Crime	16525	160.4	45
Violence With Injury	2061	20.0	6
Violence Without Injury	3853	37.4	11

*Crime rate was calculated based on the 2021 census which showed the population in St. Helens to be 102,629.

PROPORTION OF CRIME BY TYPE (APRIL 2021 - APRIL 2022)



“During Covid crime rates decreased due to the national lockdowns, however those rates are now returning to pre pandemic levels. Recent changes to crime recording standards have seen some crime types increase significantly as we record more accurately the victim’s perception of any offences committed. Clearly the police need the support of our local communities to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and we remain committed to working closely with our partners and local communities in St Helens to agree collective priorities, maximise our resources and target our efforts for maximum impact.”

**- Supt Steve Brizell
Area Commander, Merseyside Police**

SAFER ST HELENS SURVEY

Whilst the strategic priorities of the Executive have been data led and informed by crime and disorder statistics. The Executive also commissioned the Safer St Helens Survey to ensure that future priorities are also shaped by residents' feedback

The Survey was available online for residents to complete during January 2022.

In total 693 surveys were completed, providing direct feedback from our residents on the key issues regarding crime and disorder in the borough.

The key findings of the Survey included:

Perceptions of Safety

- 90% of people felt safe or fairly safe in the area where they live during the daytime
- 54% of people felt safe or fairly safe in the area where they live at night-time
- 10% of people felt unsafe during the daytime
- 46% of people felt unsafe at night-time.

Community Concerns

- 51% of respondents reported that they are very concerned about people using / dealing drugs in their area
- Respondents also reported they were very concerned about Littering (41%) Dog Fouling (39%) Groups Gathering (35%) and Fly Tipping (35%).

- Respondents were least concerned about begging with 52% of people reporting they are not concerned about this issue.
- Most people were not as concerned about noise nuisance (26%), street drinking (25%), and vandalism and graffiti (22%).

Hate Crime

- 55% of respondents reported that they did not know if hate crime was an issue in their area.
- 36% said hate crime was not a problem in their area.
- 9% said hate crime was a problem in their area.

Of those who recognised this as an issue:

- Racial hate crime was reported to be the biggest issue with 38% of people reporting this to be an issue in their area.
- Disability related hate crime accounted for 26% of people responding reporting this to be an issue in their area.
- Sexual Orientation hate crime accounted for 19% of people responding reporting this to be an issue in their area.
- Gender Identity accounted for 9% of people responding reporting this to be an issue in their area.
- Religion accounted for 8% of people responding reporting this be an issue in their area.

Crime Prevention Measures

- 34% of respondents said they had an alarm system.
- 25% of respondents said they had CCTV.
- 17% of respondents said they had Home / Outbuilding security.
- 12% of respondents said they had online community group membership.
- 8% of respondents said they had personal property marking.
- 5% of respondents said they had neighbourhood watch membership.

CCTV

- 70% of respondents agreed that CCTV reduces crime
- 73% agreed that CCTV makes them feel safer
- 87% agreed that CCTV should be used to reduce, deter and detect crime
- 59% disagreed that CCTV impacts on their privacy

Priority Actions

Respondents selected the following areas as the top three priorities for future action:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Knife Crime
- Burglary / Theft

Whilst the above priority actions are what survey respondents suggested as their priorities, this does differ to what the data evidence suggests, which is that Robbery Business and Robbery Personal were amongst the lowest crime rates in St Helens, each accounting for less than 1% of all crimes. The data evidence highlights that victim based crimes including Domestic Abuse, Criminal damage, Sexual Offences and Theft are the highest reported crimes in the borough, alongside the growing incidents of Cyber Crime.

The feedback from residents alongside the data from reported crimes, will help to determine the future priorities of the Safer St Helens Executive. A further Survey will be completed in January 2023, which will be used alongside the data to inform the priority actions for the next three-year period – this will be strengthened by further in-depth work at a locality level to ensure that services are targeted to respond to the different challenges in our localities.

TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti-social behaviour has a significant effect on the quality of life of residents within our neighbourhoods and can impact on communities.

Tackling anti-social behaviour has been a priority of the Partnership during 2021/22.

Together we have worked collaboratively to address the complex issues around anti-social behaviour using a range of tools including prevention, support and enforcement.

During 2021/22 this activity included:

Outreach Services

The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Outreach Team, based within the Council's Community Safety Team, have continued to provide a presence across parks, open spaces, neighbourhoods and communities. Engaging with young people, providing advice, guidance and signposting to appropriate services, including Young Peoples Drug and Alcohol Team, and Careers Connect.

CASE STUDY

In January 2022, the ASB Outreach team identified a young person who was under the influence and not feeling well. Staff contacted the young person's parents and called an ambulance. The young person was then taken to hospital and later discharged.

In addition, their continued presence has assisted in the prevention of anti-social behaviour, offering reassurance to vulnerable residents and communities, as well as providing a valuable insight into the patterns and trends in respect of anti-social behaviour across the borough.

During 2021/22, the ASB Outreach Team completed over 500 of hours of detached work across the borough, with an average of 3 sessions per week being undertaken. These were focused on locations identified by direct complaints into the council, requests from Elected Members and partner agencies regarding locations of concern around vulnerability, welfare and Hate Crime in addition to known seasonal ASB hotspots.

In 2021/22 as a key partner and the largest landlord in the borough, Torus, increased its engagement and support in neighbourhoods, with 18 Environmental Impact Days delivered in communities across St Helens during this period.

The outreach team completed a referral to the Young People's Drug & Alcohol Team so services could then provide intervention to the young person in order to educate, increase awareness and prevent any further use.



National ASB Awareness Week

During July 2021, the Executive partners supported the ASB Awareness Week 2021 which ran from 19th July to 25th July, this was a national campaign that aimed at bringing together communities and organisations from across the country to take a stand against ASB and make communities feel safer - the focus for St Helens during this period was around community engagement, awareness raising and promotion of 'keep safe' messages.

Services supported several community engagement events across the Borough, including Newton Town Show and events in Church Square, providing an ASB outreach presence and utilising the occasions as an opportunity to distribute items such as Safer Shopper Packs, Faraday Bags and property marking items.

Environmental Visual Audits (EVA) in response to reports of fly tipping, littering and 'grot spot' locations were also completed. In addition, following reports of drug paraphernalia, clean ups were completed in conjunction with colleagues from Change, Grow, Live (CGL).

ASB outreach staff engaged with members of the public visiting the open water locations in the borough, promoting keep safe and community awareness messages around subjects such as swimming, use of outdoor BBQs, substance use and littering.

Responding in our Localities

The Partnership has utilised all the tools available to respond to anti-social behaviour across the borough. The Case Study below demonstrates

the joint working that has taken place in response to a specific challenge in St Helens Town Centre during 2021/22. In addition, Dispersal Zones powers were also utilized in response to increased reports of anti-social behaviour in the following areas during 2021/22:

- Laffak
- Rainhill
- Parr

Following a comprehensive multi agency response, including use of ASB warning letters, increased police presence and additional outreach sessions all contributed to a significant reduction in calls to service in these locations.

Listening to Young People

Whilst the Partnership has responded to reports of anti-social behaviour involving young people, services continue to build positive relationships, including listening to the views of young people across our localities. A Youth Survey was undertaken to capture the voice of young people and around how safe they felt around our town centre areas, to identify how agencies can further engage with young people across the borough. In addition, discussions were also undertaken around the types of activities young people would like the opportunity to engage in, as a result and in conjunction with the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (2022) sessions including cycling, fishing and martial arts, were offered as well as promoting healthy lifestyles.



"We want our neighbourhoods to be safe, thriving places, a community that people are proud to call home. The key to tackling ASB is by building good working relationships with partners, by working together we can support each other to get the best the results for tenants and those suffering as a result of ASB."

Jan Calland, Regional Director - Torus

CASE STUDY:

ST HELENS TOWN CENTRE

During 2021/22, there was a reported growth in the number of ASB related incidents involving young people in and around the St Helens Town Centre area, with high numbers of young people gathering in a number of locations across the town.

Whilst in general the groups behaviour did not present a concern, the sheer numbers and actions of a small minority in causing anti-social behaviour did have a negative impact on members of the public, businesses and transport networks and presented a number of challenges to agencies to manage and address the concerns.

In response to this challenge a co-ordinated approach was adopted including use of the following:

- Dispersal Orders - Use of the Dispersal Order powers allowed the local Police Officers to highlight the town centre area and request that groups of two or more leave the area and not return for a 24hr period. These powers were utilised on a number of occasions and were promoted via social media and were supported by the ASB Outreach Team who provided a presence around the locations.

- Operation Stay Safe - Joint operations between the Police, Community Safety and Children's Social Care teams were conducted to safeguard young people. A safe location was identified where Children's Social Care would speak with the parents/guardians of young people who had been brought to the location by dedicated Police officers after being identified as being vulnerable in the community.
- ASB Warning Letters - sent out to the parents/carers of over 50 young people who had been present when anti-social behaviour was occurring in the area.
- Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) - applications were also successfully progressed against 3 young people who had been directly involved in both criminal and anti-social behaviour in the area.
- Additional ASB Outreach Sessions - undertaken to engage dispersal of the groups, promote engagement in positive activities, offer support and reassurance to members of the public and local business. In addition, support was also provided to vulnerable members of the groups who found themselves caught up in situations presenting risks.

- Reassurance Visits - undertaken on a regular basis to businesses affected by the ASB issues with support and advice from additional services, including CCTV, Trading Standards and the Town Centre Manager.

The impact of this activity across the Partnership resulted in a significant decrease in reported anti-social behaviour in the area.

The learning across the partnership also informed the creation of a dedicated Town Centre Engagement Officer to engage young people using positive and preventative methods, offer support around local transport networks, (bus and rail stations), town centre based alternative education premises and engage businesses.

The feedback on this post, including from the parents of young people and local businesses has been very positive.

“HE’S AN ABSOLUTE ASSET
AND HELP TO THE YOUNG
PEOPLE OF ST HELENS”

- (PARENT)

BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

The Partnership recognises that it takes a whole community response to tackle crime and disorder and during 2021/22, key actions were taken to support local communities and to build resilience.

Parr-ticipate

The largest activity during this period related to the delivery of the 'Parr-ticipate' programme in the Parr neighbourhood. Parr-ticipate, led by Merseyside Police and supported by the wider Executive, including financial support from Torus and the Merseyside Police & Crime Commissioner, as well as Community Cashback funding, provided an illustration of the strength of the community response to tackle ASB.

Parr-ticipate offered local community groups funding to deliver targeted programmes in the Parr neighbourhood that would have a direct impact on reducing ASB. In total £38,000 of funding was allocated.

The impact of this programme has been to create an opportunity for collaborative working, to build resilience and to see significant delivery of interventions and opportunities to engage young people in this neighbourhood.

The video (Parr-Ticipate 2021 - YouTube) demonstrates the value of such programmes.

The Executive has approved the delivery of two further initiatives in two localities during 2022, to continue this programme of positive collaboration.

Home Watch

In response to community based anti-social behaviour, advice and guidance was provided in establishing and sustaining local Home Watch groups to residents who wanted to take an active role in preventing further problematic behaviour in and around their communities.

Grant Advice / Support

The Partnership has continued to provide practical support to local groups to access funding to kick-start or sustain local projects. An example was the support provided to a local allotment group with the completion of a successful grant application to the Merseyside Police Community Cashback Grant Fund. The funding was to finance CCTV cameras, solar floodlights and to facilitate gardening tutorials over an eight-week period, to encourage women and girls into positive engagement, increasing confidence and self-esteem.

Community Safety also provided an assessment role in the applications from local community groups to the PCC Youth Diversionary Fund, to support the delivery of a range of diversionary activities across the Borough.



DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic Abuse remains a key challenge for the borough, with over 4859 recorded incidents of domestic abuse in 2021/22 and 1650 referrals into the Safe2Speak service for Independent Domestic Violence Advocate support (IDVA) during the same period. Domestic Abuse also remains one of the main reasons for referrals into Children's Social Care services.

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act was introduced, providing a new definition of domestic abuse and placing new duties and responsibilities on organisations to improve the service response to victim /survivors of abuse and their families.

In May 2021, the St Helens Domestic Abuse Partnership Board was formed - led by the Director of Communities and supported by both statutory agencies and specialist services. The Board commissioned a Needs Assessment in July 2021 to understand the current gaps in service provision and to recommend a future commissioning strategy. The outcome of this commission was the delivery of a Support into Safe Accommodation addendum to the Domestic Abuse Strategy in January 2022. This Strategy outlines the future commissioning priorities for the borough - including providing additional Refuge capacity, providing further counselling support and continuing support for survivors when they leave safe accommodation.

The Executive has worked with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to secure additional funding from the Ministry of Justice

to support victim / survivors of abuse including securing additional funding capacity for both Safe2Speak - the service provider of IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) and Outreach Services - including investing in a new role of a Primary Care IDVA, working to improve referrals from GP Practices when disclosures of abuse are made.

PARTNERS HAVE DELIVERED ACTIONS CONTAINED WITHIN THE DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY, INCLUDING SEVERAL TARGETED WEEKS OF ACTION TO THE PERPETRATORS OF ABUSE BY MERSEYSIDE POLICE.

Two Domestic Homicide Reviews have been published during 2021/22 and to ensure that the learning and recommendations from these Reviews are taken forward, a Learning Event was held in February 2022, in which the Independent Chair delivered his findings to the partnership. A further Domestic Homicide Review report is due for publication during 2022.

The Domestic Abuse Prevention Officer for the Council continued to deliver the 'Voices Against Domestic Abuse' campaign - raising community awareness, engaging young people in discussions regarding healthy relationships and offering training across the partnership to ensure that there is a community awareness and commitment to tackle this harmful behaviour.



Domestic Abuse Survivors Forum

**Real Voices.
Real Change.**



To March 2022, 931 people have received this training in domestic abuse and relationship awareness training. Since the campaign launch in 2020 to March 2022, 931 people have received the training in domestic abuse and healthy relationships. The social media campaigns and core messages, using social media platforms have also been successful, with over 5000 views of social media videos and 2000+ engagements via social media.

“ I FOUND SAFE2SPEAK WERE AMAZING AND EXTREMELY COMPASSIONATE AND UNDERSTANDING. I CAN'T RECOMMEND THIS SERVICE ENOUGH TO ANYONE WHOM IS THINKING OF/LEAVING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP. I FELT THAT ONCE SAFE2SPEAK WERE INVOLVED, EVERYTHING ELSE WAS MUCH EASIER TO ACCESS AS THEY WERE VERY FORTHCOMING WITH INFORMATION”

**- VOICES OF SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE -
SAFE2SPEAK IS FUNDED BY THE COUNCIL AND
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

During 2021/22, funding was also secured to deliver a programme aimed at changing behaviours of domestic abuse perpetrators - the 'Males Actively Seeking Change' (MASC) programme was delivered by Merseyside Domestic Violence Services and Change Grow Live and the impact of this programme on tackling this harmful behaviour will be evaluated by Liverpool John Moores University.

“ THEY LISTENED, VALIDATED WHAT I SAID, RISK ASSESSED, REPRESENTED ME AT MARAC. THEY WERE VERY SUPPORTIVE. STAYED IN TOUCH. GAVE ME ADVICE WHEN NEEDED. REFERRED ME TO SUPPORTIVE AGENCIES”



HATE CRIME

The Community Safety Partnership continues to work together to tackle incidents of hate crime in the borough and to build the confidence of residents to report hate crime incidents.

From 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 there were 472 reports of hate crime recorded by Police in St Helens. Racial Hate crime had the most reports accounting for 43% (205) of the total number of reports. Hate crimes relating to sexual orientation was the second most reported crime type during this period, accounting for 33% (161) of the total number of hate crimes. Religious and transgender related hate crimes each accounted for 4% of the total number of hate crimes and there were two counts of gender related hate crime, which accounts for just under 1% of the total number of hate crimes during this period.

Depending on the nature of the crime, one incident of hate crime can account for multiple motivations of hate crime, for example if someone is verbally abusive using homophobic and racial hate language, this would count as one crime with dual motivation. During 2021/22 the following activity was delivered:

- Community Awareness events were undertaken led by colleagues from the office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, in identified locations of concern, these events were supported by colleagues from Merseyside Police, Fire Service, Torus and other council departments and promoted the reporting mechanism and support networks available to those affected by Hate Crime concerns.

St Helens Pride during 2021 was impacted by the pandemic and was moved onto digital platforms. 'Join Hands Be Proud' was launched on IDAHOT day (17th May) and ran throughout Pride Month. This campaign was a call to action asking the public to make a short video holding out hands to join our virtual circle/holding of hands. This campaign aimed to demonstrate that we stand together as a town, where people are welcome. During Pride Month, the Community Safety Team developed an informative social media campaign, educating about the origins of Pride.

- Supported by the Hate Crime Co-ordinator within Merseyside Police, the Partnership continues to promote STOPHATE UK and is working to establish third party reporting centres to enable victims of hate crime to seek support across the network of agencies in the borough.
- The Partnership continues to support the council's Refugee Resettlement Service and the wider network of agencies to deliver hate crime awareness training with groups

In April 2021, the partnership supported the #BetterThanThat Crew campaign to explore culture and diversity from an early age and celebrate our differences, with a mission to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging. This included a competition for local schools for pupils to engage with this campaign.

CELEBRATE GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION DIVERSITY

Join hands,
be proud



CASE STUDY:

HATE CRIME

A long-standing neighbour dispute which had homophobic hate motivation. The victim subjected to the homophobic hate was a 50-year-old male who lives alone in the family home for the last 40 years. The offender moved into the address about 16 years ago and lives there with his wife.

The issues started with a minor dispute over a delivery van 6 years ago and the relationship steadily worsened, which then resulted in a number of incidents involving, criminal damage, ASB, verbal homophobic abuse, general harassment and assault. The victim reported over 20 crimes in an 18-month period. The incidents consisted mainly of damage to the victim's home and property including his CCTV system, his garden fence and his vehicle (tyres slashed). The incidents were mostly unwitnessed but did in some cases include face to face homophobic verbal abuse and general abuse.

The investigation of the incidents was hampered by the lack of any witnesses and CCTV as the offender had smashed the outside cameras on several occasions before they managed to capture any footage. The other residents did not witness anything whilst others did not want to get involved through fear of the suspect. This was obviously very frustrating for the victim, but he remained

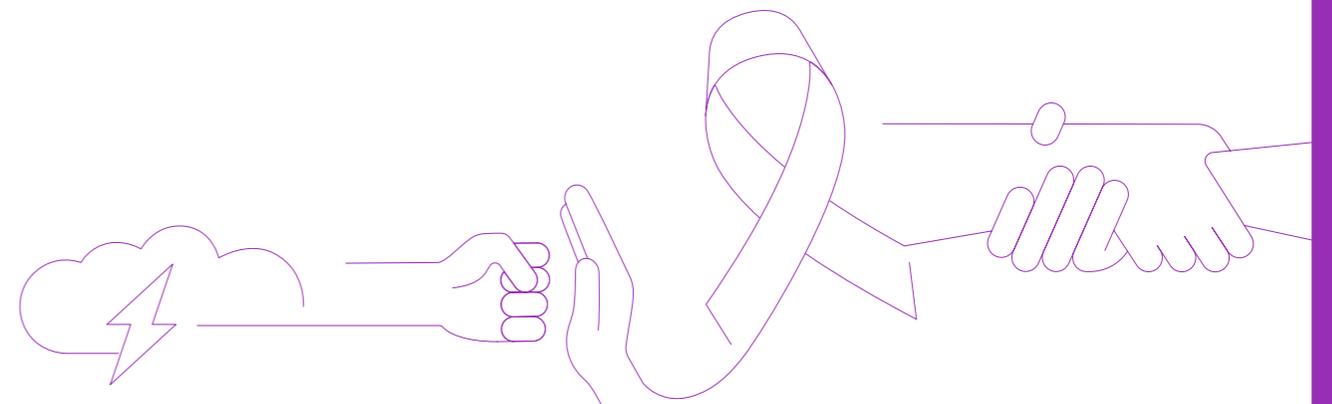
optimistic and followed the Police advice. The victim was fully supported by the Police and specialist partner support agencies throughout this traumatic period.

An incident was witnessed by another person and also was captured on video. The neighbour threw a rock at the victim which struck him on the leg and caused a slight injury. The neighbour was making threats. The victim's gardener was also confronted and threatened by the neighbour who admitted to him that he had smashed the victim's CCTV cameras. The witness and the gardener both provided a statement, and a charge of Harassment has been brought against the neighbour. The case is now awaiting a court date.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner was supported by partners in delivering community events in response to reported Hate Crime issues in the following areas:

- Thatto Heath
- Earlestown
- Earlestown Market - during Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Parr

“THE VICTIM WAS FULLY SUPPORTED BY THE POLICE AND SPECIALIST PARTNER SUPPORT AGENCIES THROUGHOUT THIS TRAUMATIC PERIOD.”



“ST HELENS CELEBRATES AND WELCOMES ITS DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY FORMS OF HATE CRIME. THIS PARTNERSHIP STANDS TOGETHER WITH OUR COMMUNITIES TO REAFFIRM AND RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO CHALLENGE AND TACKLE ALL FORMS OF HATRED AND PREJUDICE IN THE BOROUGH AND MAKE IT A SAFE PLACE FOR ALL.”

- MIKE BERRY
HATE CRIME LEAD, POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONERS OFFICE



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

During 2021/22, the need for a co-ordinated response to tackle violence against women and girls emerged as both a national and local priority.

St Helens Borough Council also supported the development of a leaflet explaining the risks of spiking to women and girls in partnership with St Helens Soroptimists.

Services assisted the Soroptimists in the delivery of this leaflet across the night time economy during Winter 2021.

Further action is planned to raise awareness of the issue of spiking during 2022.

During 2021/22, the Rape and Sexual Assault Services Centre for Merseyside (RASASC) were commissioned via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, with St Helens Borough Council providing financial support as a key partner in the delivery of this service.

The RASASC service continues to deliver support for the victim / survivors of rape and sexual assault in the borough.

The Partnership submitted an application to the 'Safety of Women at Night' fund during 2021/22 - shaped by direct feedback from surveys undertaken by the Community Safety Team with women who visited and worked in the night-time economy and from women who work in this sector. Whilst this was unfortunately unsuccessful - this has assisted in the development of our plans as a partnership on how we can improve the night-time economy - both for women who visit the sector and for those employed in this area.

Further work is planned for 2022, including an online survey via social media of women and girls to understand their experiences of the night-time economy and to improve the service response to increase confidence and safety in this key location. Further work is also planned to respond to the emerging national increase in reporting of the issue of 'spiking' in the night-time economy.



“ Women who experience domestic abuse are **twice as likely to experience depression ”**

(World Health Organisation)



NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Ensuring that the local night-time economy is safe has been a key priority for the Executive during 2021/22. The partners worked to support this sector to re-open safely following periods of closure due to the COVID pandemic and worked collaboratively to take action, when required where operating standards did not meet expectations.

During 2021/22, this included the following:

- Joint enforcement action between Merseyside Police and Licensing Services to check compliance standards in the taxi sector
- Joint enforcement action between Merseyside Police and the Licensing Services to visit premises to address reports of underage drinking in the Town Centre
- Two prosecutions under the Licensing Act 2003
- One town centre premises licence revoked and closed due to crime and disorder
- Targeted visits to over 40 premises and 500 wider premises visits by Licensing Services

In November 2021, St Helens Borough Council introduced Night-time Economy Wardens as a pilot programme to improve the customer experience during the period of re-opening following the lockdowns periods of 2020/21.

During 2021/22, St Helens Borough Council has also committed funding to upgrade the existing CCTV infrastructure in the Town Centres in the borough, with over £700,000 of funding secured for this project. This will ensure that the key areas in the town centre and locality districts remain monitored by CCTV and that the image quality is improved.

During 2022, a new night-time economy survey will launch to take forward the actions to improve the visitor experience in this sector. This will be supported by the Community Safety Partnership. St Helens Borough Council will also take forward an application for Purple Flag status, with the support of our partners. The outcome of this will be announced in September 2022.



SEASONAL ACTIVITY

The annual Spring Watch campaign started the seasonal campaigns for 2021/22 with a focus on the key locations of concern – parks and open spaces – and of behaviours that cause community concern, such as off-road motorbikes and noise nuisance.

Ready2Respect launched in April 2021 aimed to highlight the then guidelines on the roadmap out of lockdown during the pandemic. This campaign provided guidance on the different strands of anti-social behaviour (dog fouling, ASB fires, off-road nuisance, vandalism, general ASB) and how and to whom to report.

During the Summer, the ASB Outreach Team supported several festivals and outdoor events, including providing a response both in and around the perimeter of the Reminisce Festival, to engage with young people and to promote key safety messages. Campaigns reminding residents of the dangers of open water were also delivered, with representation via the Merseyside Open Water Safety Forum.

During Autumn of 2021/22 - 'Operation Good Guy' - a joint initiative involving St Helens Borough Council, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Merseyside Police, Torus and local organisations - collaborated on a co-ordinated response to combat illegal bonfires, prevent escalations in ASB and promote safe celebrations ahead of Bonfire Night and Halloween. This included:

- Several social media campaigns that advised how to report information and conduct respectful trick or treating.
- Diversionary activities for young people during 30th October 2021.
- Delivery of Stay Safe operations with Merseyside Police in which 10 young people were removed from the streets to a place of safety due to the risks of either harm or engaging in anti-social behaviour.
- Outreach services operating in the main parks and open spaces in the borough during this period.
- Cinema Event at Cineworld - 100 young people attended a free event to watch an exclusive showing of a film with snack boxes provided for all attendees.

With the support of HMS and Torus, the Torus Foundation filled multiple skips, removed illegal fly-tipping, refreshed green spaces, tidied gardens, completed feedback surveys and removed asbestos safely. Support from Council Operations Services to remove rubbish from key locations assisted and there were also proactive rubbish removal / on-site visits from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

The impact of this joint working was clear - reporting of anti-social behaviour during this period had decreased from 335 reports in 2020 to 107 in 2021 - a reduction of 68% and MFRS confirmed no incidents of note during this period in St Helens.

During the Christmas and New Year period of 2021/22, agencies again collaborated to reduce the likelihood of Christmas crime across the borough.

'Safer Shopping' events took place in the main two shopping areas of the borough and Merseyside Police's Operation Shepherd campaign, which is an annual campaign to reduce crime and keep communities safe during the festive period - including enhanced patrols at key periods.

The 'Safer in Town' scheme was developed by the St Helens Coalition of Disabled People (CDP) in partnership with St Helens Borough

Council, the St Helens Hate Crime Partnership and Merseyside Police. The purpose is to help vulnerable people in St. Helens feel safe, confident, and reassured when visiting and using the facilities with St Helens Town Centre. This included distribution of Safer Shopper packs throughout various retail outlets within the borough that included purse chains, purse bells and card protective card wallets.

Partners used their social media accounts, asking residents to consider their personal and home security, raising awareness of property marking, storing Christmas presents safely and actions we can all take to prevent burglary.

Tackling nuisance behaviour this spring.

Report off-road vehicle nuisance and other criminal anti-social behaviour to Merseyside Police on 101, or on social media @MerPolICC

COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM
#Springwatch
www.safersthelens.org.uk

Safer! sthelens

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

MERSEYSIDE POLICE

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

#READY2 RESPECT?

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER - SUPPORT FOR ST HELENS

The Safer St Helens Executive is supported by the Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner and during 2021/22 received two grants from the Commissioner to assist in the delivery of the Commissioner's wider Plan for Merseyside. This funding was:

- £175,000 from the Crime & Disorder Grant
- £45,000 from the Victim Services Grant

The Executive agrees the priorities for this, aligned to the PCC Plan, and can report the following outcomes for 2021/22:

In St Helens, the Crime and Disorder Grant has enabled the following delivery:

- £10,000 invested to support Merseyside Police in the first Community Participatory Budgeting event with the creation of the 'Parr-ticipate' engagement event. The funding from the Crime and Disorder Grant alongside funding from Torus and Proceeds of Crime funding from Merseyside Police enabled community groups to bid and vote for proposals focused in the Parr area to tackle anti-social behaviour. The final event, attended by the Commissioner, was successful with £38,000 in total being awarded to 20 community groups. Due to the success of this initiative, there are further events planned, again supported by the PCC, during 2022/23 in other localities in the borough.

- The Crime and Disorder Grant has also supported the delivery of over 150 sessions/ 500 hours delivered of outreach services throughout 2021/22, supporting the Council's Community Safety Team to engage with young people, prevent anti-social behaviour in the Town Centres and parks and open spaces in the borough and to safeguard young people at risk of harm. In response to growing reports of ASB in St Helens Town Centre, the funding assisted in enabling fast mobilisation of an effective presence in this area as part of a wider partnership approach to address unacceptable behaviour and to support residents and businesses during Autumn and Winter 2021/2. This included 100 letters to parents of young people, 10 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts signed and 10 Stay Safe operations completed which identified and protected 10 young people at risk of harm.
- St Helens Community Safety Partnership also invested the Crime and Disorder Grant into the St Helens Youth Justice Service, providing ongoing support to the service to engage young people to reduce the overall number of first-time entrants into the criminal justice system. This funding has enabled the service to reduce re-offending by young people and to deliver interventions to support young people in the community.

- The CSP in St Helens has worked closely with the OPCC to tackle hate crime in St Helens, with the Crime and Disorder Grant utilised to fund five local campaigns to raise awareness of the #BetterThanThat campaign established in the borough. This included a competition for primary school children to launch the #BetterThanThat crew - designed for young people and several online campaigns recognising specific dates across the year in which the messages of hate crime awareness are highlighted. The Community Safety Team attended several events and distributed materials, including at St Helens College.
- The funding also enabled the delivery of the Be Bright, Be Seen campaign, promoting road safety with a focus on children and young people. This included distribution of hi-visibility stickers/reflecting pendants by the ASB Outreach Team in locations of concern. Funding also supported the Road Safety Team led, school drawing competition, with the funding to purchase/ install winning entries as signage on street columns outside participating primary schools.
- In relation to preventing re-offending, the PCC funding also enabled additional support to a local charity dedicated to assisting ex-offenders to access employment and training, with a specific focus on supporting female



EMILY SPURRELL
MERSEYSIDE POLICE
& CRIME COMMISSIONER

ex-offenders. The grant provided to the Apex Trust enables the support provided to 20 individuals referred into the service to access training in areas such as catering, food safety, training support from St Helens Chamber and introductions into volunteering.

- The Crime and Disorder Grant also enabled ongoing support to the Safe2Speak service in St Helens, providing support to victim / survivors of domestic abuse. This funding enables the service to maintain IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) services to assist victim / survivors in the provision of advice, signposting and safety planning. Demand for this service remains high, with over 1600 referrals into the service during 2021/22 and this funding enables caseloads to be manageable and referrals to be responded to in a timely manner. For victim / survivors, this service is essential and continues to be a frontline response to protect residents impacted by domestic abuse.
- The Victim Services Grant for 2021/22 was allocated to Safe2Speak (£30,000) for a dedicated IDVA post to manage caseloads and to respond to the growing demand for this service and to Listening Ear (£15,000) to provide counselling support for children who have been impacted by domestic abuse.

MERSEYSIDE VIOLENCE REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP - SUPPORT FOR ST HELENS

The Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership (MVRP) continues to deliver targeted programmes of support to tackle and prevent serious violence across Merseyside.

During 2021/22, the MVRP invested £30,000 into a programme of Early Years investment in the borough - enabling 37 professionals to be trained in the 'Incredible Years' programme and a further 46 parents/ carers have attended and completed the group delivery, with a total of 70 children within the households.

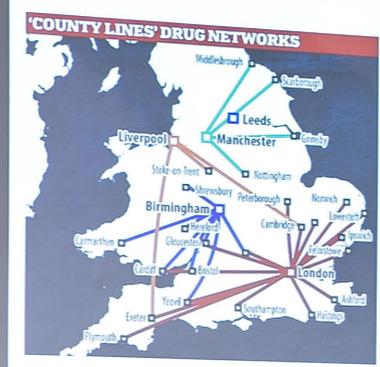
In addition to this specific programme, the MVRP also commissioned the following activity in St Helens, working alongside the wider community safety partnership:

- **Mentors in Violence Prevention** - working alongside Secondary Schools in St Helens including Haydock High, Hope Academy and De La Salle to support schools to have a 'whole school' approach to early intervention and prevention of bullying, harassment and risky behaviours via a peer mentoring programme.
- **'Grassing or Grooming'** - training delivered by the Ariel Trust to primary schools in St Helens on the issues associated with gangs and violent crime
- **'Look Say Sing and Play'** - universal service offers for young children as part of the early years priority for the programme
- **Operation Inclusion** - working with St Helens Youth Justice Service to deliver a diversionary project to prevent escalations in offending behaviour.

DURING 2022/23, THE PARTNERSHIP IN ST HELENS WILL CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE WITH THE MVRP TO DELIVER THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF REDUCING SERIOUS AND VIOLENT CRIME ACROSS THE BOROUGH AND MERSEYSIDE.



County Lines



- Does anyone know what County Lines are?
- Drug gangs expand operations from BIG CITIES > smaller towns
- Violence used to drive out local dealers and **exploit or coerce** children and vulnerable people to sell drugs
- Take over property from a vulnerable person- **cuckooing**
- Dedicated mobile phone lines used, known as 'deal lines' to supply drugs.
- Children are victims... **THEY HAVE BEEN GROOMED TO GET INVOLVED IN CRIMINALITY**
- Once involved... it is extremely difficult to escape!

SAFER ST HELENS SUMMIT

In March 2022, the Executive met for the first time in a face-to-face Summit to review the current position regarding crime and disorder in the borough, receive the findings of the Safer St Helens Survey, the data on recorded crime levels and to discuss the priorities for the coming period. The Summit expanded the membership to invite representatives from wider agencies that work alongside the partnership in the delivery of community safety services in the borough.

During 2022, a new three-year Community Safety Plan will be produced by the Partnership, setting out the priorities for action and how collaboration between the agencies and our community will take this agenda forward.

The three emerging themes for this new Plan are based on the feedback from the resident survey, a data led approach to the reported crimes in the borough and the need to respond to national and local priorities for tackling harmful behaviours in our communities.

The new Community Safety Plan will focus on the following themes:

- Building Resilient Communities
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour including Criminal Damage
- Tackling Victim Based Crime including Domestic Abuse & Violence Prevention



CONCLUSION

THIS REPORT HAS PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON 2021/22 - DEMONSTRATING THE WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND THE IMPACT OF THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THIS PERIOD AND EVIDENCES THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE A SAFER BOROUGH - IT IS CLEAR THAT NO SINGLE AGENCY CAN RESPOND ALONE TO THE CHALLENGES WE FACE.

ACROSS THE PARTNERSHIP, FROM STATUTORY AGENCIES AND THE ORGANISATIONS THAT WORK IN THIS SECTOR THERE REMAINS A SHARED GOAL -

A SAFER ST HELENS.



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL





#STHELENSTOGETHER



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