



**Essex Local Area Agreement**

# **Safer Essex Thematic Partnership**

**Annual Report 2009/10**

## Summary of overall progress

This has been the second year of activity for Safer Essex during which there were 8000 fewer crimes and this has made a positive contribution towards making Essex safer for all residents. Essex is in the top 10 of safest areas to live in England with the number of crimes falling from 67 per 1000 residents in 2008/09 to 61 in 2009/10.

In terms of areas of activity Safer Essex has responsibility for 7 of the 35 LAA indicators included within the overarching Priority 7: "Essex is a safe place to live". In addition it has an overview of NI 147 within Priority 5 "Essex Roads are Safer", although this particular indicator is directly managed by the Essex Casualty Reduction Board

Specific indicators are the following:

- NI 17 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- NI 18 – Adult re-offending for those under probation supervision
- NI 20 – Assaults with less serious injury crime rate
- NI 39 - Rate of Hospital Admissions for Alcohol Related Harm per 100,000 pop.
- NI 115 – Substance misuse by young people
- Local Indicator 7.1(Now recorded as NI 32) – Repeat Incidents of domestic abuse where referred to a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
- Local Indicator 7.2 – Feeling Safe
- NI 147 – People Killed or seriously Injured in road traffic accidents

### **Anti Social Behaviour Minimum Standards (ASB)**

Safer Essex through Essex Police and the Community Safety Partnerships has successfully introduced a common set of minimum standards for responding to and dealing with ASB.

### **System Change Pilot**

In April 2009 Essex was awarded Drugs System Change Pilot in Essex, an achievement that placed Safer Essex amongst a handful of partnerships who will lead the way nationally to develop a system to tackle the problems caused by drugs misuse. Within the two year pilot freedoms and flexibilities can be requested such as changes to targets, budgets and guidance that will allow innovative approaches to be tested that if successful will inform national strategy from 2012 onwards.

In its first year of implementation the Essex Drug & Alcohol Partnership have reshaped the way that intelligence based needs assessment for drug misuse is undertaken. New analyses have been used to identify a clear overview of the wider impact of drug misuse on communities enabling partners to prioritise appropriately and target resources in the most effective way. A practical example is that the assessment has highlighted a previously unidentified cohort of 15 – 24 year olds that are committing drug related acquisitive crime but not entering the commissioned treatment system, and this will enable interventions to be tailored over the coming year to meet their needs.

Following the granting of a requested freedoms and flexibilities the Essex Drug & Alcohol Partnership has created a new and innovative engagement service within the whole criminal justice system. Bringing together two separately commissioned services from the community and HMP Prison; the new service will deliver targeted and quality interventions to drug related offenders. The new service commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 and is the first of its kind in the country. It will focus on breaking the cycle of crime and ultimately seeks to reduce the harm caused to our communities by tackling the causes of drugs misuse, offending and reoffending whilst increasing reintegration.

### **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**

Safer Essex has supported the development of a SARC in terms of strategic commitment and financial contribution. This facility is now scheduled for completion in the summer of 2010.

## Partnership development

Safer Essex undertook a Partnership Review in the year and agreed a number of actions for the coming year (2010/11) to improve the performance of the partnership including:

- Governance
- Risk assessment
- Sharing Good Practice
- Partnership Commitment

Resources available to Safer Essex are limited but where identified these have been aligned accordingly against the agreed high level priorities:

- Domestic Violence : £315k: £170k PRG funding
- Reduction of Adult Re-offending : £60,000; £150k PRG
- Reducing Violent Crime : £105k PRG
- Reducing Fear of Crime : £130k PRG

Aggregates Levy Sustainability Grant was also made available to Safer Essex in 2009/10 and this was used to part fund the Safer Colchester Project £98,000 and as a contribution to the development of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre £13,000 (referred to above).

Voluntary Sector partners are not formally members of Safer Essex but where this is appropriate, for example Domestic Abuse, Drugs and Alcohol and victims work, then there is representation on various sub groups which ultimately feedback up to the main Safer Essex meeting.

## Impact of economic situation/revised priorities

No significant impacts as a result of the recession have been evident. Issues relating to increases in crime anticipated have not materialised to any great extent and where this has occurred, for example with domestic burglary then this has been handled at a local level through the individual Community Safety Partnerships. As a result there were no significant changes to be fed into the LAA refresh

## Delivery planning and cross-partner challenge

Each Target Lead reports to Safer Essex on progress against the action plans identifying issues of success and where appropriate problems that have been encountered in delivering the desired outcomes.

As part of the Partnership review future reports will identify Risk Factors in the action plans with proposals to mitigate risk where required.

## Improved outcomes

- **Adult Re-offending (NI 18)**

In Essex the re-offending rate is comparatively low compared to the national average. Progress against the final year target is not as advanced as originally envisaged but this is difficult to predict given the way it is measured. From April 2010 individual CSPs will also have a statutory duty address Re-offending and this should add extra emphasis and local intervention in achieving the target. In addition the development of an Integrated Offender Management approach in Essex should provide added focus.

- **Assaults causing less serious injury (NI 20)**

The 2009/10 interim target has been missed but in the areas where a programme of activity targeting the Night Time Economy in selected hot spot areas in the County has been implemented performance has been good. These actions in Chelmsford and Colchester have yielded significantly improved performances in respect of the national Indicator NI20 and the lessons learned are being transferred to Basildon and Harlow.

- **Domestic Abuse repeat Incidents (LI 7.1)**

The LAA target was updated in 2009/10 to reflect NI 32 'Percentage reduction in repeat victimisation for those domestic abuse cases being managed by a MARAC'. Although MARACs have been established across Essex since January 2009, it is not yet possible to set targets in Essex as nationally it is suggested that the levels of repeat victimisation are not stable until MARACs have been established for 24 months. However, performance of the MARACs is being closely monitored and are seen to be performing well, with national figures currently being used as a benchmark of performance (currently 12% in Essex compared to national benchmark of 23% as at July 2009).

Domestic Abuse has previously been highlighted as an area of concern based on our previous local indicator measuring repeat incidents of domestic abuse. This indicator continued to be monitored throughout 2009/10 alongside NI 32, and although there remained an increase in the number of repeats this appears to have been levelling out.

Establishing initiatives such as the MARACs and the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) have been a priority for the Essex Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (EDASG) to support the most high risk victims.

Safer Essex recommended additional funding of £170,000 be secured from the remaining PRG funds in 2010/11 to develop the MARAC administration arrangements and this has been accepted by the Essex Partnership Forum.

- **Alcohol admission rates (NI 39)**

Performance is improving well against the indicator showing a slower rate of increase in hospital admission against target. During year 3 significant developments have been made which should see the improvement continuing into 2010/11.

These include:

- Establishment of a Countywide Alcohol Commissioning Group in order to have a coordinated partnership commissioning response in Essex.
- Appointment of a Strategic Alcohol Lead on a one year fixed term contract who will establish a County wide coordinated approach to the issue of alcohol misuse in relation to, crime and disorder, harm reduction, treatment and public health.
- The Commissioning of a Brief Interventions Training programme which consisted of 19 training sessions.

- **Feeling Safe (LI 7.2)**

This is a perception target measured through the Place Survey. Although not formally released, data from the most recent Tracker survey indicates that significant progress has been made against this indicator

The feelings of local residents are of paramount importance in reviewing safety in Essex. A number of national and local indicators are monitored regularly including how safe residents feel where they live (LI29) and residents' perceptions of how problematic anti-social behaviour (ASB) is in their area (NI 17).

For both of these measures, Essex has seen consistent and gradual improvements with more people feeling safe now than ever before (59% according to Tracker 8 results).

These indicators along with a range of others including the single Police target to improve public confidence in policing continue to be monitored. All Police Forces are now judged on this "single confidence indicator". This is "the percentage of people who agree with the statement that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in this area". The latest results based on a quarterly update to December 2009 show that Essex, along with Surrey, has achieved the best results in England and Wales with 58% of people saying they strongly agree or tend to agree with the statement.<sup>1</sup> Various communication plans are in place to reassure communities in Essex and further improve their feelings of safety.

- **Perceptions of Anti Social behaviour (NI 17)**

Again this is a perception target measured through the Place Survey. Data from the survey indicates that significant progress has been made against this indicator with only 15% of residents feeling that ASB is a problem in their area against a target of 16.9% for the year. The 2010/11 target is 14.7%.

A key project part funded through Safer Essex that has impacted on a number of the target areas above has been the Safer Colchester programme of targeted action in rural and town centre locations. This commenced in summer and has now rolled on to a third area in the borough. It is intended to consider new ways of working in order to achieve the overall objectives of:

- Reducing crime
- Reducing the fear of crime
- Improving perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- Increasing community confidence

This work is expected to meet multi-agency objectives - for the wider Essex Partnership Community Strategy priority to 'make Essex a safe place to live'.

In developing the 'Colchester Community Safety Programme' to date it is recognised that success lies in adding value to existing work, including the Local Area Agreement (LAA2) action plans (as part of the work of the Safer Essex partnership). It should also be recognised that the 'community safety programme' is about impacting on service delivery in the long term through the trialling of a different way of working. While the work is linked to the LAA2 action plans relating to crime/disorder for delivery across 2009/10 – 2011, it is focussed on a wider approach to addressing broader issues related to community safety. The Pilot is intended to benefit the whole of the county, in terms of sharing the lessons learnt through the Pilot period as well as ensuring that any future roll out of the Pilot is of benefit across Essex.

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<sup>1</sup> Home Office Statistical Bulletin Crime in England and Wales: Quarterly Update to December 2009 published in April 2010

The model is designed to impact on actual crime levels, fear of crime as well as confidence in local services. The proposed approach addresses issues which have been highlighted through a range of consultations. These include being more responsive to residents, quick time responses to issues raised, a highly visible uniformed presence and addressing a range of what could be considered as 'lower level' anti-social behaviour / environmental crimes. What is currently known about the key drivers / influences on key crime / disorder indicators has been used to inform the model.

The model is based on a joint multi-agency team undertaking a rolling programme of work that focuses on three designated areas in succession, designed to address issues of high priority in each area over a set period. The model has been built on a successful local initiative in Colchester known as the 'Days of Action'.

Initial results have demonstrated Anti-Social Behaviour reduced by 24% with an overall crime reduction of 16% compared to the same period in the previous year. The lessons learned from this programme are being fully evaluated for a wider dissemination across the County.

- **Killed or Seriously Injured in road traffic accidents (NI 47)**

The Essex Casualty Reduction Board continues to see an overall reduction in the number of individuals killed or seriously injured on Essex roads. The total number of people killed or seriously injured in Essex in 2009 was 658; this builds upon the excellent reduction seen in 2008 and has resulted in Essex recording nearly 100 KSI casualties fewer than the target figure of 755. From the exceptional progress that has been made this far, we are confident of remaining well under target for 2010.

## Delivering value for money

Each Community Safety Partnership (formerly Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships) received an allocation of Area Based Grant based on formula previously used by the Home Office before the LAA was introduced. This arrangement was fixed for the 3 years of the LAA to enable better financial planning at a local level and 2009/10 was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of this agreement. In addition each CSP received a capital allocation. One of the key activities of Safer Essex was to agree with ECC that a swap of capital for revenue could be facilitated within the overall capital envelope for Essex thereby giving more flexibility to CSPs in managing their overall funding plans.

At the end of 2009/10 each CSP has been asked to confirm to the Chair of Safer Essex that the partnership plan have been effectively and efficiently allocated in line with agreed strategic objectives.

## Sharing and using information about performance

Each meeting of Safer Essex receives a performance report setting out data from national and local sources relating to the key Safer Essex objectives and performance indicators. This is in addition to the individual progress reports from the Target Leads which can provide a more up to date commentary on trends or actions undertaken to address poor performance identified in the more formal Performance Report. Detailed performance issues are also discussed at the regular Crime and Disorder Network Executive meetings on behalf of Safer Essex.

Information Sharing protocols are in place across the partner agencies that make up Safer Essex and these will be refreshed within the development of the Essex Neighbourhood Information System (ENIMS).

As previously considered Risk has not been an element in the Target lead reports but this is now agreed as part of the Partnership Review Action Plan. During 2010/11 these Risk elements will be more specifically highlighted.

## Key issues/risks to delivery

Issues identified in the Partnership Review represent opportunities for improving the work of the Partnership and these are being taken up within the action plan identified. Specifically these issues include:

- Communication and raising the profile of Safer Essex
- Partnership Risk and the adoption of a management process for this
- Learning and development through information and good practice exchange
- Engagement and Commitment to encourage more direct partner involvement in preparation and presentation of agenda items
- Reviewing Terms of Reference to ensure greater clarity around governance

In terms of targets potentially at risk, three have been identified:

### **1. NI 18 Reduction of Adult Re-offending**

- a. Although relatively low compared to the rest of England it is not clear at this stage whether or not the target set of a 5.52% reduction by the end of 2010/11 will be achieved. As this is a final year target year on year improvements whilst useful information will not necessarily determine the final measurement.
- b. Safer Essex has identified the risks associated with this target and recommended that additional resource, through PRG, be awarded for 2010/11. This recommendation has been accepted by the Essex Partnership Forum and an action plan is being developed accordingly.

### **2. NI115 Substance Misuse by Young People**

- a. The TellUs4 Survey, which is optional for schools to complete, was managed differently this year, The Department of Children, Schools and Families have taken over from Ofsted the direct management of the survey, given this there needed to be a number of changes made to the weighting, timing and questions. The 2008/09 baseline used for the LAA2 target has been revised from 10.9% to 9.7%. Whilst the 2009/10 data is better than initial target at 10.3%, it does however suggest a 0.6% point increase in the proportion of young people saying that they frequently use drugs, alcohol or volatile substances. NI 115 will continue to be monitored by Safer Essex and the Children's Trust through the Be Healthy Implementation group.

### **3. NI20 Assault with LESS Serious Injury**

- a. Although identified as an improved outcome for 2009/10 the revised interim target was missed and this will require increased effort in 2010 to recover the ground lost.

## Next steps

### **Domestic Abuse (NI 32)**

Building on the priority for responding to Domestic Abuse a review carried out externally in April 2010 by "Standing Together", commissioned by the Home Office has highlighted a number of strengths and weaknesses in current arrangements. This work will now be referred to the Essex Domestic Abuse Strategic Group with a view to developing an action plan that addresses the issues identified.

In addition a new and enhanced Independent Domestic Violence Advisers Service has now been commissioned which should assist with the continuing improvement on this indicator. This is being funded through PRG resources and will be managed by the voluntary sector.

### **Adult Re-offending (NI 18)**

An Integrated Offender Management approach will be developed for Essex being led by the key partner agencies. A conference will be held early in 2010/11 where this approach will be worked through in detail ready for full implementation by April 2011.

Work will be undertaken with Health Services to establish clearer pathways to health services for those offenders particularly with mental health problems.

The development of Community payback schemes will continue particularly engaging with the local communities and through the Community Safety Partnerships.

### **Substance Misuse by Young People (NI 115)**

Work is being undertaken to improve the uptake of the TellUs survey across the County. A new "Be Healthy Implementation Plan" is currently being developed re-focusing on actions that can directly impact on this indicator.

Work streams that contribute to this target include:

- It has been recognised that a review and re-write of the schools drug and alcohol policy is essential and has been commissioned. This aims to assist schools in providing appropriate responses to individuals or groups of young people when substance misuse is suspected or identified.
- Young people need access to good quality drug and alcohol information and the Essex Drug & Alcohol Partnership have significantly improved ease and accessibility to good quality drug and alcohol information in Essex and have put significant efforts into improving our online offerings while embracing new technologies such as mobile technology and social media. These platforms provide the opportunity for young people to join in discussions, ask questions and tell us what they think of the drug and alcohol information education and services they receive, with the overarching aim of delivering a positive TellUs 5 outcome.
- 10,000 family/parent guides have been commissioned to be distributed to targeted vulnerable areas via police stations, A&E, GP surgeries and targeted education sites and these will be ready by July 2010. The Guides will provide parents with facts about drugs and alcohol use and misuse and its related issues and how this can impact on education and future outcomes. It will provide advice on talking to Children and Young People about difficult subjects and where to get further support or make a referral when appropriate.

### **Assault with Less Serious Injury (NI 20)**

Work is ongoing with developing a range of responses to address the incidents of assault. These responses are being targeted on Basildon and Harlow as a development of the work undertaken in Colchester and Chelmsford. Specific developments will include :

- Launch of the SOS Bus in Basildon Festival Leisure Park
- Multi-agency nights of Action
- Deployments of ION Track and Knife arches
- Enhancement of the BOBB Scheme (Behave or be Banned)
- Investigation into use of Closure Orders where appropriate

### **Funding**

In recognition of the public sector funding difficulties and the fact that the current 3 year Area Based Grant ends this year Safer Essex is proposing a specially focused meeting in the Autumn where these issues can be addressed.