



SAFE AND STRONGER NORTH SOMERSET PLAN



Joint Introduction

Chair of the People and Communities Board & Avon & Somerset PCC

Councillor Nigel Ashton – Leader of North Somerset Council and Chair of the People and Communities Board

Sue Mountstevens (Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset)

North Somerset is a predominantly safe place to live and crime per 1000 population remains significantly lower than the average for England and Wales. In North Somerset, dedicated and hard-working emergency service, council staff and people working for partner agencies do an incredible job – 24 hours a day, every day of the year – to keep you safe, support victims of crime and to bring those that cause us harm to justice.

But there is still more that we can do.

This Plan identifies priorities to build strong, resilient communities, to tackle crime, and to protect vulnerable people. It does not seek to cover everything that impacts on community safety and cohesion and will not capture a range of current activities, which already bring about such benefits. It focuses on collective priorities, which need a shared vision, and actions that we feel by agencies working together will achieve the best outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

We want all local people to be safe and feel safe; to be able to contribute to community life and take responsibility for their actions. Whilst this plan aims to improve the safety and well-being of everyone in the area, it will focus particular attention on making faster improvements for those experiencing the greatest risk from crime and disorder.

This plan asks for your support because together we can make North Somerset an even safer place to live and work.

What is it like in North Somerset?

The population of North Somerset is 209,944 people. By 2030 this is predicted to increase to 250,000. The age profile of the population differs from the national average with an increased ageing population that is growing faster than the younger population.

North Somerset has a large rural population with a third of residents living outside of the main towns and settlements. North Somerset is classified as 'urban with significant rural' by the ONS, with almost 40% of residents living in rural communities or 'rural hub towns' which include Clevedon and Nailsea. Weston-super-Mare is already the third largest settlement in the West of England with significant expansion planned. It has been a tourist destination for 200 years, has a plethora of hotels/guesthouses and visitor attractions as well as a vibrant night-time economy, and in 2015 received in excess of 8 million visitors.

North Somerset is diverse, with areas in both the most and least deprived 1% in England (over 27,100 residents live in one of the most deprived LSOAs in England). This is the third widest range in deprivation scores in the country.

Over 97% of North Somerset residents stated that their ethnic group was 'white' in the 2011 census. This is a larger proportion than that for the South West and England (95% and 85% respectively).

North Somerset has a lower than average unemployment rate and a lower than average rate of overall crime, though several crime types have seen an increase in 2016 including violent crime and sexual offences.

Partnership working in North Somerset

The People and Communities Board is North Somerset's combined Community Safety Partnership and Health and Well-Being Board. The People and Communities Board has a wide remit which includes Crime, Disorder & Drug and Alcohol Misuse as well as safeguarding, housing and health.

Membership: People and Communities Board member organisations include: North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Police, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, Avon Fire and Rescue Service, North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, the local Community Rehabilitation Company, National Probation Service, Alliance Homes, Avon Local Council's Association, Healthwatch, NHS England and Voluntary Action North Somerset.

There are also other key strategic boards in North Somerset which are accountable to the People and Communities Board and which have a community safety remit. These include the Safeguarding Boards for Children and Adults, Youth Offending Service Management Board, Prevent Group, High Impact Families Programme Board and the Joint Commissioning Groups which oversee the commissioning of key services in North Somerset. There is also an Avon & Somerset-wide Reducing Re-offending Board, which includes representatives from the People and Communities Board.

The People and Communities Board has a number of statutory functions in its role as Community Safety Partnership. This includes developing a Community Safety Plan setting out the local approach to dealing with issues including anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and re-offending and the effective delivery of, and applying learning from, *Domestic Homicide Reviews*. The People and Communities Board's priorities are set out in the People and Communities Strategy which sets out four strategic priority themes: *Ensuring the best start in life, Adding life to years and years to life, Ageing well and Enabling Communities to thrive*.

This joint Community Safety Plan builds on the People and Communities Strategy and provides an opportunity to set out in more detail the Partnership's Community Safety objectives and planned activity. It demonstrates the shared priorities which exist within the North Somerset People and Communities Strategy and the Police & Crime Commissioner's Police & Crime Plan for Avon & Somerset.

Ways of working

The North Somerset People and Communities Strategy sets out four principles which guide the Board's work:

- **Prevention, Self-Care and Promoting Safe Independence** – focusing on prevention to reduce unwanted outcomes, empowering individuals and communities and maximising opportunities for digital communications.
- **Reducing Inequalities** - where appropriate tailoring services to the areas, groups or individuals that need them most
- **Working Together** – collaborative working to improve outcomes and make efficient use of resources (the Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Plan sets out

a similar priority to 'work together effectively with other Police forces and key partners to provide better services to local people')

- **Effectiveness and Evaluation** - a balance of evidence-based approaches and innovation which we will evaluate

The Board recognises that partner agencies will continue to experience reduced funding and increased pressure on services. The People and Communities Board is committed to working collaboratively to meet the objectives set out on this plan. This plan serves as the local Police and Crime Plan for North Somerset.

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Priority 1 – Building strong resilient communities

Key Objectives – What we would like to achieve by 2021

- **Build safer, stronger and more cohesive communities**
- **Ensure services are accessible to all, and responsive when needed**
- **To increase community involvement in improving safety in their community**
- **To ensure that diverse communities will be engaged and understood**
- **Improve wellbeing for residents and communities**
- **To focus particular attention on localities experiencing poorer outcomes and higher crime rates**

Why is this a priority?

North Somerset Community Safety partnership prioritises enabling people to live safe, healthy and independent lives. We value the knowledge and skills of local residents and will encourage community and person-led solutions to tackle local issues whilst providing support where it is needed. We will particularly focus on areas of greatest need, including growing communities and those experiencing poorer outcomes, in order to increase resilience and reduce social isolation.

North Somerset has relatively low deprivation, with almost three quarters of LSOAs less deprived than average. However, population estimates show that over 27,100 North Somerset residents live in one of the 25% most deprived LSOAs in England, including over 4,770 children aged between 0-15 years. Inequalities exist for differing communities, with poorer health outcomes in Weston-super-Mare and amongst some population groups. Areas of higher deprivation are also associated with above average crime rates.

North Somerset's population is expected to grow faster than the national or regional average (from around 210,000 people in 2015 to 243,000 by 2031) with older people and children than at present. Increasing population puts pressure on infrastructure including roads and school places and demand for services, such as social care for both older people and children.

In a diverse society efforts must be made to encourage community cohesion, a shared sense of identity and to ensure that all parts of the community have a stake in local amenities. Such communities are more resilient when incidents occur which might cause tension and threaten division along perceived fault lines of difference.

Around 332 hate incidents were recorded by police in North Somerset 2016/17, an increase compared to the previous years but linked to efforts by police and partner agencies to increase confidence in reporting and the improvements made to police recording practices. Across the past three years Weston-super-Mare central ward was inside the top ten wards across Avon and Somerset for volume of police recorded hate incidents and was one of only three wards outside of Bristol in the top twenty. Race is recorded as the motivating factor in a high number of offences, though proportionally

there have been large increases in disability hate crime reports. It is widely accepted that under-reporting is an issue in hate crime offences and police recorded crime statistics are not an accurate reflection of the true extent of offending. Hate crime will not be tolerated in North Somerset and we will continue to work with communities and across the partnership to raise awareness, promote reporting, support victims and bring perpetrators to justice.

The threat of extremism remains significant with a range of factors creating the potential for extremist activity some specific to North Somerset other general threats that impact all areas. The threat of spontaneous volatile extremism from 'lone actors' remains high as does the risk of radicalisation amongst vulnerable individuals and marginalised groups, such as those in prison and disengaged young people. Strong cohesive communities working with local agencies beat terrorism not just by being the eyes and ears in spotting suspicious activity but by bringing people together to develop counter narrative projects and supporting community voices in challenging extremism.

Anti-social behaviour remains the most common community safety issue faced by residents of North Somerset with up to 46,087 (22%) estimated to experience ASB in some form each year. By contrast, around 4000 incidents were recorded by police in North Somerset in 2016 – a figure which has fallen steadily over the last 7 years in line with regional and national trends. It is recognised by the partnership that police figures in isolation do not represent the whole picture of anti-social behaviour across North Somerset, as members of the public are encouraged to report such incidents to local authority and housing associations, for example.

In the past 12-18 months there has been an increase in the street community in North Somerset and associated anti-social behaviour. We have worked hard to identify those individuals without accommodation in need of support and those that have accommodation but are choosing to commit anti-social behaviour and persistently come to the notice of local agencies.

What will we do?

Actions 2017-2021

- Continue the 'One Team' approach. To work in the most vulnerable communities and provide co-ordinated front-line multi-agency working to efficiently provide sustainable solutions for families and individuals that prevent problems escalating and costs increasing to the public sector.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated programme to improve community cohesion
- Review the operation and impact of Community Engagement Forums
- Use new ASB Tools and Powers to tackle a range of issues of community nuisance
- We will continue to strengthen a zero tolerance approach to hate crime in North Somerset - including awareness raising, identifying local need and ensuring adequate provision of victim support services.
- North Somerset will continue to work with the street community and those facing homelessness to ensure they have access to safe, alternative pathways and can access appropriate, well-resourced support when it is needed.
- Ensure those individuals at risk of radicalisation and involvement in extremist activity are effectively supported

Priority 2 – Tackling crime types and locations where there are particular concerns (and opportunities)

Key Objectives – What we would like to achieve by 2021

- **Reduce crime and disorder and fear of crime and disorder**
- **Improve crime prevention and reduce reoffending**
- **Bring offenders to justice**
- **Reduction in substance misuse related offending**
- **Reduction in pressure on services e.g. fewer ambulance call-outs and A&E attendances, fewer arrests**

Why is this a priority?

This priority reflects the necessity to focus our resources in the right places at the right time. We will support those communities in most need as well as ensure all citizens are empowered to help themselves.

Those areas of North Somerset which suffer from higher levels of deprivation also record above average crime rates. During 2016/17 in Weston Town Centre this equated to a recorded crime rate of 313 per 1,000 population and in Bournville and Old Mixon 196 per 1,000 population, compared to 54 per 1000 population for North Somerset as a whole. The links between deprivation and higher crime rates and fear of crime are well documented. Similarly the links between deprivation and poor health outcomes. Higher crime rates are likely to compound these problems further as becoming a victim of crime adversely affects health and increases the need to access services.

Violent crime is the highest volume crime recorded by police in North Somerset with a 16% increase in the past 10 years (although changes in police recording practices nationwide have impacted these figures). Around a third of 'violence against the person' crimes in North Somerset occur within Weston-super-Mare town centre and are generally associated with the evening and night-time economy. However, the overall long-term trend in crimes of this type is downward and in the last 12 months associated service pressures have reduced. There are fewer arrests and less demand on health services including the Ambulance Service. The most recent council resident's survey indicated that there was no change in how safe people in North Somerset felt about visiting Portishead, Clevedon or Nailsea after dark. The percentage of people visiting Weston-super-Mare who felt unsafe after dark increased in the same period. Improving perception of safety in Weston-super-Mare after dark is a priority. Significantly, there are huge opportunities to build on – arising from the regeneration of Weston-super-Mare town centre to establish an even more diverse evening and night-time economy.

Despite a long-term downward trend in burglary there has been an increase in police recorded offences in the past two years and nearly 1 in 10 of all crimes recorded by police in North Somerset are burglaries. The road networks and good transport are believed to allow offenders to target specific locations before moving elsewhere in the country. Worle and Villages is a particular hotspot across the past two years with a significant increase in offences. Burglary remains an important priority not least due to

the high impact it can have on the households, communities and businesses that are vulnerable to victimisation. A sustained focus on addressing the complex needs of our most persistent burglary offenders through partnership working to tackle the lifestyle, substance misuse and attainment issues has been instrumental in achieving long term reductions in burglary and must continue.

What will we do?

Actions 2017-2021

- Continue to implement a multi-agency night time economy project aimed at reducing crime and disorder and improving the experience for visitors to Weston-super-Mare town centre after dark.
- Retain Purple Flag status in Weston-super-Mare. (Purple Flag is awarded to towns & cities which meet or surpass standards of excellence in managing the evening & NTE. It is an indication of an entertaining, diverse, safe & enjoyable evening & NTE where people feel safe).
- We will continue to develop our safer stronger communities bus (MAVIS) as both a safe space/multi-agency hub in the Evening and Night Time Economy and as a partnership resource for community safety awareness across the district.
- We will listen to and support local communities to ensure the community safety and crime priorities they identify are addressed.
- We will work together to identify emerging crime and disorder problems and implement problem solving plans to reduce their impact.
- We will work together to identify those issues having the most serious impact on the daily lives of local people as well as come up with solutions for how problems can be solved.
- We will support local decision makers in setting and resourcing emerging crime and community safety priorities and, where possible, provide the appropriate support to enable communities to help themselves.
- We will work with communities to combine education, enforcement and treatment to give us the best possible opportunity of diverting offenders away from crime and anti-social behaviour.
- We will work with communities and partner agencies to prevent burglary, tackle long term priority locations and protect vulnerable people and property from victimisation

Priority 3 - Supporting vulnerable victims

Key Objectives – What we would like to achieve by 2021

- **Raise awareness of hidden harm crimes giving victims the confidence to report and agencies the ability to respond appropriately**
- **Ensure the provision of services to enable victims and their families to cope and recover**
- **Protect residents of North Somerset from harm and long term impact of crime**
- **Deliver high quality effective services that are well informed, victim-centred where appropriate, with a focus on early intervention as well as reducing risk**
- **Reduce the likelihood of repeat victimisation**
- **Tackle offenders that commit crimes against vulnerable people**
- **Improve joint-working in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults**

Why is this an issue?

Crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour) can have a significant impact upon physical health and mental wellbeing and these effects can be long term. As well as the physical and mental effects of actual crime, fear of crime can have a substantial impact on mental health and quality of life. Repeat victimisation will deepen these negative impacts.

The risk of becoming a victim of crime is not distributed evenly across the population. Young people, people from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and people with complex needs remain the groups at most disproportionate risk of victimisation. These groups are also least likely to report their victimisation to the police. Personally targeted offences such as domestic and sexual abuse, exploitation and hate crime remain substantially under-reported and as such, the true extent of victimisation remains unknown. It is these areas of 'hidden harm' that present the greatest safeguarding risks to vulnerable victims.

It is well known that under-reporting is an issue in a range of personally targeted offences such as domestic and sexual abuse, exploitation such as modern slavery/human trafficking and hate crime which all remain substantially under-reported. Victims of these crimes can face a range of barriers in coming forward to report what is happening and seek support.

Data also shows that women, and especially younger women, were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than any other demographic. Based on estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales 6,732 women aged 16 to 59 in North Somerset are likely to have been victims of domestic abuse (including attempted offences) in the year ending March 2016. Although work to improve reporting has been successful, this is still much higher than the 3614 incidents that took place and were recorded by the Police in 2016/17. This indicates that a lot of domestic abuse does not get reported.

Awareness raising campaigns and training to help identify and support victims of domestic abuse have seen some success, with an increase in domestic abuse reports and referrals to the Police and other support agencies.

In 2017, an average of 10 domestic abuse incidents were recorded by the police each day, compared to 9 in 2016 and 8 in 2015

The Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) service which aims to increase the safety of high risk survivors of domestic violence and their children saw referrals increase by 85% from 2014/15 (n=244) to 2016/17 (n = 452)

The Police and other agencies also report increased service pressures from complex cases - including victims with a combination of vulnerabilities including domestic abuse, substance misuse and poor mental health.

Whilst reports of domestic abuse, and therefore the pressure on services, has increased, the availability and quality of services in North Somerset has been maintained. For example, whilst the number of cases reviewed at Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) has increased, with 285 cases reviewed in 2014/15 and 301 in 2016/17, the proportion of repeat cases has decreased from 28% to 26%.

Evaluation from people using domestic abuse services and from partner agencies is largely positive and there is a real local commitment to deliver these services. However, the funding for most is short-term. In addition, the current increase in referrals although welcome, is putting additional pressure on already overstretched services and a continued increase will inevitably add to this.

The partnership focus has been upon domestic abuse and outcomes for this priority have been good. However, there is now a need to address sexual abuse, including identifying need, gaps in support and opportunities to work together more effectively to address this issue

Across Avon and Somerset, including North Somerset, increasing numbers of businesses have been identified in the last 12-18 months as being involved in Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking. Despite an increase North Somerset specifically still has a relatively low number of incidents reported. This is not thought to represent the true number with under reporting by victims and still a need to build awareness amongst all front line practitioners for how to spot the signs of potential exploitation.

What will we do?

Actions 2017-2021

- Continue to raise awareness of 'hidden crimes' – what they are, how to identify them and what to do if concerned (e.g. domestic abuse, hate crime, modern slavery)
- Give victims the confidence to report
- Train staff and the public in how to identify and report cases of modern slavery, and carry out multi-agency operations in response to reported cases
- Provide children and young people with information on healthy relationships
- Gather additional data and use it to plan for the increasing workload already being experienced by support services
- We need to ensure that health services provide a point of referral and support for anyone affected by domestic abuse
- Review support for children affected by domestic abuse including establishing an Operation Encompass pilot
- Develop informal support for survivors of domestic abuse, including peer support and community confidence in how to support someone
- Enable practitioners to have the confidence, skills and agency awareness to respond appropriately to anyone experiencing domestic abuse
- Develop a multi-agency strategy to co-ordinate and develop work to support victims of sexual abuse

Projects and Initiatives

Indicators will be regularly reviewed in order to understand the impact of the Plan's activities, noting the challenges that present in interpreting these as measures of performance

Building strong resilient communities

- Continue the 'One Team' approach. To work in the most vulnerable communities and provide co-ordinated front-line multi-agency working to efficiently provide sustainable solutions for families and individuals that prevent problems escalating and costs increasing to the public sector.
- Use new ASB Tools and Powers to tackle a range of issues of community nuisance
- We will continue to strengthen a zero tolerance approach to all hate crime in North Somerset - including awareness raising, identifying local need and ensuring adequate provision of victim support services.
- North Somerset will continue to work with the street community and those facing homelessness to ensure they have access to safe, alternative pathways and can access appropriate, well-resourced support when it is needed.
- Ensure those individuals at risk of radicalisation and becoming involved in extremist activity are effectively supported through the channel process

Tackling crime types and locations where there are particular concerns (and opportunities)

- Continue to implement a multi-agency night time economy project aimed at reducing crime and disorder and improving the experience for visitors to Weston-super-Mare town centre after dark.
- Retain Purple Flag status in Weston-super-Mare. (Purple Flag is awarded to towns & cities which meet or surpass standards of excellence in managing the evening & NTE. It is an indication of an entertaining, diverse, safe & enjoyable evening & NTE where people feel safe
- Agencies will continue to work together both with themselves and the community to identify emerging crime and disorder issues and implement problem solving plans to protect vulnerable people and property from victimisation
- We will continue to support local decision makers in setting and resourcing emerging crime and community safety priorities and, where possible, provide the appropriate support to enable communities to help themselves
- We will continue to work with communities to combine education, enforcement and treatment to give us the best possible opportunity of diverting offenders away from crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Review 'IMPACT' integrated offender management approach to tackling the complex needs of prolific offenders and explore development opportunities including re-engagement of partners

Supporting vulnerable victims

- Continue to support vulnerable victims to have the confidence to report crime and disorder

- Train staff and the public in how to identify and report cases of modern slavery, and carry out multi-agency operations in response to reported cases
- Continue to raise awareness on healthy relationships especially amongst children and young people
- We need to ensure that health services provide a point of referral and support for anyone affected by domestic abuse
- Review support for children affected by domestic abuse including establishing an Operation Encompass pilot
- Develop a multi-agency strategy to co-ordinate and develop work to support victims of sexual abuse
- Develop an informal support network for survivors of domestic abuse - including peer support and community confidence in how to support someone

Performance Indicators

Tackling Crime and Disorder

Police recorded total crime per 1000 population

Police recorded serious acquisitive crimes per 1,000 population

Police recorded Violence with injury per 1,000 population

Police recorded Violence without injury per 1,000 population

Achievement / retention of the purple flag

Reducing re-offending – Offenders per 1000 Residents

*Adult & Youth	% of Offenders who Reoffend
	Reoffences per Reoffender

Engagement in Education, Training and Employment (YOS)

First time entrants into youth justice system (YOS)

Qualitative/associated commentary

Supporting Vulnerable Victims

The number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the Police

The number of domestic abuse referrals from agencies other than the Police to specialist services and MARAC

The number of domestic abuse prosecutions

The percentage of successful domestic abuse prosecutions

The percentage of the partnership workforce who have attended domestic abuse courses

The number of hate crimes reported to the Police

Qualitative/associated commentary

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