

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

COMMUNITY SAFETY ROLLING PLAN 2008-2011

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership Rolling Plan for 2008-2011. The Plan outlines our priorities over the next three years and the actions we will take in the year ahead to address those priorities.

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership has played a significant role in reducing crime in Stevenage, and we intend to build on our successes. For example between January and December 2007 crime in Stevenage fell by 13 per cent and people continue to feel safe living and working in the town. However, we are not complacent and know there is still much more to do to tackle the problems of greatest concern to Stevenage residents in an effective and responsible manner.

The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and renewed to recognise emerging areas of concern and new priorities within the town.

I hope by reading it that you will see how the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership is working to make Stevenage an even safer environment for all those who live, shop and work in the town, and for those who are just visiting or passing through.

Peter Ollis
Chair, Stevenage Responsible Authorities Group

Contents page

	Page
Introduction to Stevenage	4
Stevenage Community Safety Partnership	5
Preparing the Stevenage Community Safety Plan 2008-2011	9
Action to address priorities:	
• Reduce violent crime and serious violent crime	12
• Reduce robbery, burglary, motor vehicle crime and theft	15
• Reduce criminal damage, including arson	17
• Tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour	19
• Reduce re-offending	21
• Improve feelings of safety, particularly at night	23
• Tackle drug and alcohol related crime and its impact on communities	25
Measuring our performance	27
Engaging with the community	30
Contact details	32

Introduction to Stevenage

Located in the North of Hertfordshire, Stevenage is home to more than 80,000 people. It is predominantly an urban district although it benefits from a number of large open areas for people to enjoy. It is one of the safest places in the country.

Although crime is down by 13 per cent from the previous year various surveys reveal that fear of crime continues to be a concern for local people.

In terms of deprivation, Stevenage is ranked 191 out of 354 English council areas. Of the 13 wards in Stevenage, three are in the 50 percent most deprived wards in England.

Because of the town's excellent transport links and close proximity to London lots of people come into Stevenage. As well as commuters, every year more than two million people use the town centre and two million people go to the leisure park.

Our Community Safety Partnership works closely with local people. Consultation has been carried out to understand their community safety priorities. The number of Neighbourhood Watch schemes is increasing, bringing the total to 280. And we're more visible in the community resolving issues at a neighbourhood level. Working in partnership is helping to keep the town safe.

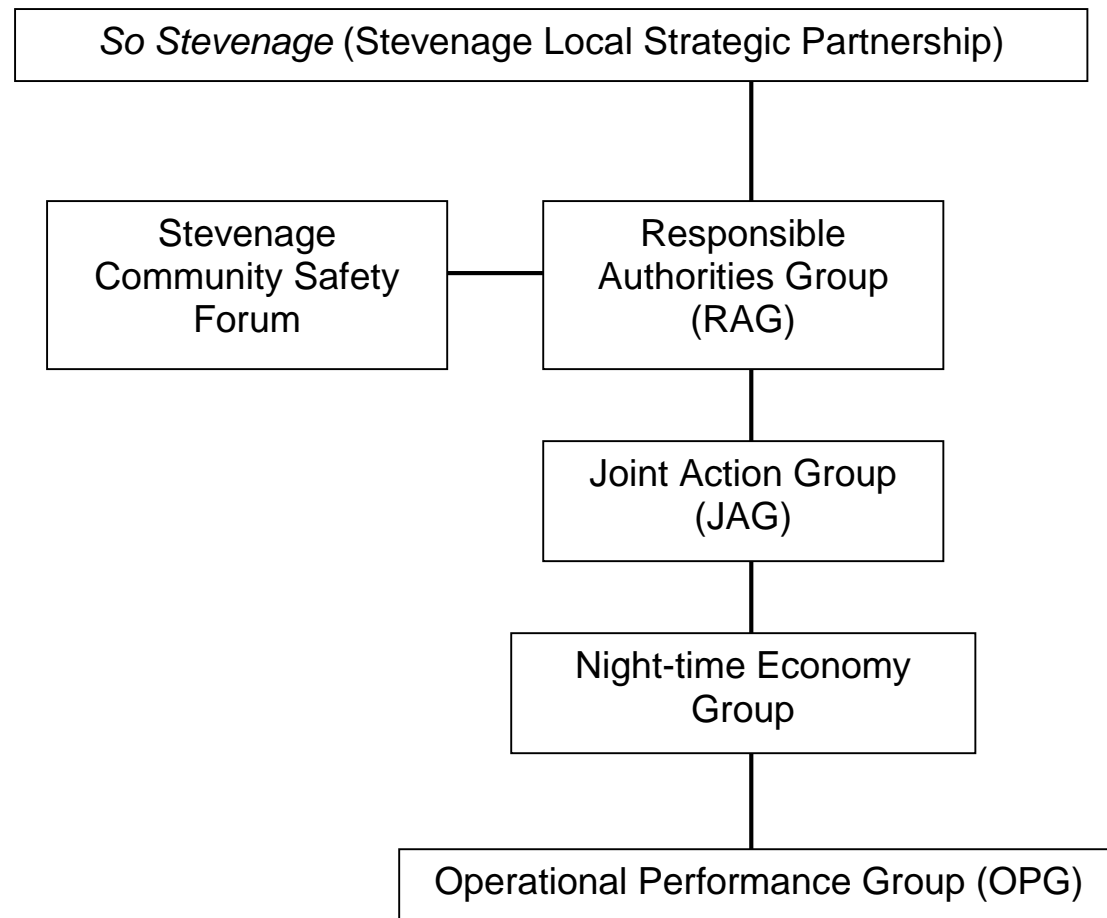
Stevenage Community Safety Partnership

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 made it a statutory requirement for a number of public sector organisations to work together in partnership to tackle crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour. In Stevenage, this is called the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership.

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership's vision is:

“To work together with the community to reduce the fear and levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. We will create a safer environment for all those who live shop, travel and work in Stevenage.”

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership is structured as follows:



The current structure came into being in September 2007 following a comprehensive review. The review was instigated to sharpen the effectiveness and focus of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership and to ensure that we were well placed to meet the six Hallmarks of Effective Partnership Working, which came into force on 1 August 2007.

So Stevenage

So Stevenage is the name given to Stevenage's local strategic partnership. So Stevenage consists of a wide range of public, private and voluntary and community organisation and is responsible for achieving a vision for Stevenage, which is to:

“Create a town that is prosperous, healthy, clean, green and safe. We want Stevenage to be a town with a strong sense of community in which people are proud to live, work, visit and do business. We want Stevenage to grow in a sustainable way and to be an important regional centre looking ahead and building on its new town heritage.”

So Stevenage has a number of sub-partnerships to help deliver Stevenage 2021 – the town's Community Strategy. One of these is the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership.

Stevenage Responsible Authorities Group (RAG)

The Stevenage Responsible Authorities Group is made up of senior officers from the 'responsible authorities'. These are:

- Stevenage Borough Council
- East and North Hertfordshire Primary Care Trust
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Hertfordshire Police
- Hertfordshire Police Authority

Senior officers from other partners also attend the Responsible Authorities Group including Stevenage Homes and Hertfordshire County Council's Crime and Drugs Strategy Unit and the Youth Service. The Responsible Authorities Group sets the strategic direction for the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership and is responsible for delivering this Plan by making decisions about activity, resource allocation and problem solving. The Group meets on a quarterly basis.

Stevenage Community Safety Forum

The Stevenage Community Safety Forum's role is to receive progress reports on the performance of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership and the delivery of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership Plan. The Forum is attended by the responsible authorities listed above, as well as a wide range of other local agencies. Members of the public can also attend and raise issues of concern. The Forum meets three times a year.

Joint Action Group (JAG)

The Joint Action Group's role is to share information and intelligence, react to emerging issues and to monitor performance across the range of priorities within the Partnership Plan. It is responsible for advising the RAG where targets are not being met and where resources need to be prioritised. The Joint Action Group has representation from each of the responsible authorities listed above as well as from a number of other public, private and voluntary sector partners, such as Stevenage Homes, the Youth Offending Team, the Youth Service and the Probation Service. The group meets every two months.

Night-time Economy Group

The Night-time Economy Group brings together all agencies and local business involved in running or shaping the night-time economy in Stevenage. Specific attention is focused on the Town Centre and on the Leisure Park given that this is where much of Stevenage's night-time economy takes place. The role of the group is to achieve a coordinated response to tackling crime and fear of crime so that evening visitors can enjoy safe evening out. The group meets every two months and membership includes Stevenage Borough Council, Stevenage Police, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Pubwatch, Trading Standards and Leisure Park Management.

Operational Performance Group (OPG)

The Operational Performance Group is a multi-agency tasking, coordination and delivery group. By sharing information and using the process of intelligence led problem solving; its remit is to identify emerging crime and disorder trends and issues. Once identified, the OPG formulates and implements a rapid response, which is practical and sustainable. The group meets fortnightly and membership includes Stevenage Borough Council, Stevenage Police, Stevenage Homes and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Preparing the Stevenage Community Safety Plan 2008-2011

Setting our priorities

In line with statutory requirements, the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership has prepared a strategic assessment. The strategic assessment was produced by analysing patterns, trends and shifts relating to crime and disorder, and substance misuse in Stevenage. The purpose of the strategic assessment is to set clear and robust priorities for the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership; and to develop activity that is driven by reliable intelligence and that meets the needs of the local community.

The strategic assessment identified seven priorities for Stevenage:

- Reduce violent crime and serious violent crime
- Reduce robbery, burglary, motor vehicle crime and theft
- Reduce criminal damage, including arson
- Tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour
- Reduce re-offending
- Improve feelings of safety, particularly at night
- Tackle drug and alcohol related crime and its impact on communities

Consultation on identified priorities

To ensure that the strategic assessment identified the right priorities for the Partnership Plan consultation with relevant stakeholders and Stevenage residents took place between January and February 2008. This included:

- An insert in Chronicle – the Council’s magazine – which is distributed to every household
- Specific consultation with young people; and hard to reach groups through Stevenage Borough Council’s Community Development Team
- A dedicated page on the Stevenage Borough Council website which allowed people to submit a response electronically
- Feedback at a Community Safety Forum meeting held during January 2008

A total of 195 responses were received confirming that the Strategic Assessment had identified the right community safety priorities for the town. A number of responses pointed to the need to tackle lower level crime, such as criminal damage and anti-social

behaviour, as if left unchecked could lead to more serious crime. Similarly, a number of responses suggested that drug and alcohol related crime be tackled due to its impact on other crimes. Finally, a large number of responses focused on the need to keep local neighbourhoods clean and safe. Examples of specific feedback received during the consultation are provided below:

- “I feel that serious crimes start when anti-social behaviour is allowed to go unchecked”
- “All these things really are of the same importance, one thing leads to another”
- “More police to patrol neighbourhood areas”
- “By tackling the seemingly less serious issues first, a greater impact could be had on the serious violence and violent crime, particularly if drug and/or alcohol related”
- “Local shopping areas must be kept clean and tidy. Untidy residential areas must also be kept clean and tidy”
- “If the environment was improved in certain areas I am sure certain crimes would fall”

Links with other strategies

The Community Safety Partnership Plan has not been developed in isolation and links directly to related national and county-wide strategies and plans. Nationally, it takes account of the Government’s three year crime strategy – ‘Cutting Crime: a New Partnership’ and related service delivery agreements; and the Government’s alcohol and drugs strategies.

At a county-wide level, the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership Plan fits within the strategic context of the Hertfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy and the current and new Local Area Agreements for Hertfordshire. In addition, the Plan complements the Hertfordshire Community Safety Agreement, ensuring that local priorities can be coordinated across the county through appropriate delivery structures. Other plans that this document takes into account are the Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2008-2011, and the County Council’s alcohol and domestic violence strategies.

Locally, this Plan complements the Stevenage 2021 – the Stevenage Community Strategy and the Stevenage Children and Young People’s Plan.

Action to address priorities

An overview of the actions to be delivered by the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership in 2008-09 against each priority is outlined below. Each priority will also be supported by a more detailed action plan, for which a lead agency responsible for coordinating delivery has been identified. These action plans will be monitored as part of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership's performance management arrangements.

Priority 1 – Reduce violent crime and serious violent crime

Lead Agency – Stevenage Police

Why is this a priority?

The most harmful crimes are undeniably those in which people are killed or seriously injured. Protecting the public begins with tackling these most serious of offences. Violent crime can also be a major cause of inequality, for example domestic violence is primarily committed against women by men, and hate crime has a disproportionate impact on minority groups.

Thankfully, levels of violent crime and serious violent crime in Stevenage are low and declining. Between January and December 2007 levels of violent crime in Stevenage fell by 13.7 per cent - with serious violent crime, that is woundings, murders and attempted murders, falling by 22.7 per cent. However, given the nature of these crimes, the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will be prioritising efforts to tackle violent crime and serious violent crime. There will be a particular focus on effective enforcement and early intervention to prevent violence occurring in the first place.

Stevenage faces particular problems in relation to alcohol related violent crime. Although violent crime as a whole is falling, levels of alcohol related violence continue to increase steadily, accounting for around 36 per cent of all violent crime in Stevenage. This is significantly higher than the national average. Alcohol related violent crime tends to be concentrated in the town centre, on the Leisure Park and on the Old Town High Street. Particular attention will be given to these areas of the town.

Levels of domestic violence are also disproportionately high in Stevenage accounting for just under a quarter of all violent crime. Because it takes place in the home, where individuals and families should feel safe, it often goes unseen and unnoticed by others. All too often the effects are felt not just by the abused partner but the whole family, especially young children, and early intervention with victims and perpetrators is crucial to prevent escalation.

Hate crime is any criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated by a perpetrator's hatred of someone because of their: race, colour, ethnic origin or nationality; religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. It is an insidious crime often targeted at the most vulnerable people within the communities. If not addressed it can rapidly spread and become entrenched, breaking down social cohesion in communities and leading to discontent from those who are victimised. Hate crime is

traditionally under-reported, but can have a big impact on wider society. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership recognises the need to do more work to tackle hate crime, improve community cohesion and encourage tolerance.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities	Actions (2008/09)
Violent crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further promote and expand the Stevenage PubWatch schemes ‘Banned from one, banned from all’ policy to reduce the incidents of violent behaviour in licensed premises and clubs. • Develop and strengthen the management of the Night Time Economy especially in respect of the Leisure Park, with greater interaction between the park stakeholder group, the Police, and Stevenage Borough Council Licensing and Community Safety teams. • Use intelligence led Policing to quickly identify emerging violent crime ‘hotspots’ and facilitate a coordinated and sustainable response to combat identified issues • Enhance CCTV and mobile camera use to cover identified blind spots and to support the targeting of hotspot areas
Domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather intelligence on the scale of domestic violence in Stevenage so that an assessment on the sufficiency of existing provision • Encourage reporting of all types of domestic violence • Improve information for victims of domestic violence on where to seek help, support and advice • Coordinate domestic violence activities through the Stevenage and North Herts. Domestic Violence Forum
Hate Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness across the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership of hate crime so that the issue is widely understood and effective responses provided • Encourage reporting of all types of hate crime, including the development of an effective approach to third party reporting. • Forge stronger links with vulnerable groups such as Gypsies and Travellers, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-gender (LGBTG) community and others who experience hate crime, and in doing so build the required thrust required to continue the present increase in direct and third

	<p>party reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish a comprehensive help guide for the victims of hate crime
--	---

Priority 2 – Reduce robbery, burglary, motor vehicle crime and theft

Lead agency – Stevenage Police

Why is this a priority?

Levels of harmful acquisitive crime – burglary, vehicle crime and robbery – in Stevenage are generally low and continue to decline. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership knows that acquisitive crime is often linked to other problems, particularly drug use and that the impact of these offences on the victim can have lasting consequences. Despite the reduction, we are not complacent and know that more can be done. In particular, the general decline in levels of acquisitive crime hides some important areas where attention needs to be focused.

Robbery fell by 22.7 per cent between January and December 2007. The strategic assessment revealed that the majority of offences took place in isolated areas with minimal lighting and no CCTV and were often linked to the night time economy. Furthermore, intelligence from the OPG suggests that there is an increasing trend of robberies against young people by young people, which can be linked to bullying. Although, peaks and troughs occur throughout the year, there is an obvious peak over the Christmas and New Year period.

Burglary fell by 12.7 per cent between January and December 2007 and the strategic assessment revealed no particular hotspot locations. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will seek to sustain these reductions through targeted work with offenders, victims and at hotspot locations, where they may arise.

Theft of motor vehicles fell by 24.7 per cent between January and December 2007. Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will seek to sustain this reduction through targeted work with offenders, victims and at hotspot locations. The strategic assessment revealed that theft from vehicles continues to be a problem, having risen by 21.7 per cent over the same period, with car stereos, satellite navigation systems and valuables on open display tending to be targeted. However, this increase is largely due to the actions of two or three prolific offenders. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will continue to target offenders committing this type of crime.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities	Our Actions (2008/09)
Robbery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount anti-robbery patrols at targeted hotspot and seasonally-affected areas • Work with key agencies such as schools and colleges to reduce crime where young people are victims • Enhance CCTV and mobile camera use to cover identified blind spots and to support the targeting of hotspot areas
Burglary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and target offenders committing burglary • Deliver a range of targeted crime prevention campaigns to increased potential victims' awareness, prompt action and prevent opportunities taking place • Provide additional security and patrolling of identified hotspot areas
Vehicle crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a range of targeted communication campaigns to increase potential victims' awareness, prompt action and prevent opportunities taking place • Identify and target offenders committing vehicle crimes • Identify and deploy suitable crime prevention measures in key locations using a targeted approach

Priority 3 – Reduce Criminal Damage, including arson

Lead Agency – Stevenage Borough Council

Why is this a priority?

Criminal damage, often referred to as vandalism, includes graffiti, arson and other forms of damage to property, particularly vehicles which accounts for 45 per cent of all criminal damage. Although levels of criminal damage fell by 17.4 per cent between January and December 2007 it continues to be a high volume crime in Stevenage accounting for around 25 per cent of all crimes. In addition, there were 256 incidents of arson during the same period.

Criminal damage is frequently seen as a minor crime, but it is costly and can have a negative effect on local communities. Neglected physical environments are unsafe, cause fear and undermine pride in a local community. Criminal damage can also be seen as a catalyst to other forms of anti-social behaviour and crime.

The strategic assessment revealed that criminal damage in Stevenage tends to occur in and around the fringes of the town centre and Leisure Park. There is a clear link to the night-time economy. Hotspots are also experienced in other parts of the town, particularly in and around the neighbourhood centres. However, hotspots tend to be transient suggesting that they move from one area to another month to month. Levels of criminal damage also tend to increase in school holiday periods and has seasonal trends, with an increase in offences experienced around the end of October and beginning of November. Often this damage is caused by young people deliberately setting fires.

Arson is a destructive crime, but that destruction often goes far beyond causing wilful damaging of property. For example, over 80 per cent of businesses which have a serious fire never resume trading and nearly all motor vehicles which are subject to arson attacks are damaged beyond repair and written off by the insurers. In addition, when a home is subject to an arson attack, the victims will often either feel very unsafe if they remain there or will actively seek to relocate. This feeling of insecurity is frequently felt by neighbours, streets and sometimes whole communities.

The cost of investigating arson in Stevenage runs into thousands of pounds a year with all suspicious fires being investigated by both the Fire and Rescue Service and the Police, and if identified as arson, made subject to a full criminal investigation. Arson

reduction and education, especially involving young people, will therefore remain amongst the priorities of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities	Our Actions (2008/09)
Reduce criminal damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue high visibility criminal damage patrols targeted on hotspot areas and at times of year when levels are highest • Enhance CCTV and mobile camera use to cover identified blind spots and to support the targeting of hotspot areas • Develop opportunities to engage with young people to promote the impact and consequences of criminal damage
Reduce arson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support arson education for young people and in particular the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service 'Firesetters' scheme which identifies and supports young people who pose a high risk of committing arson offences • Fully support the national 'Arson Awareness Week' taking place in June 2008 and actively assist the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service in activities taking place in Stevenage • Reduce the risk of arson in schools and businesses by the continued use of the proactive arson audit scheme, and to use intelligence and reactive measures to target and deal with arson 'hot spot' areas • Continue Environmental Action Days, held at least five times each year in different town locations

Priority 4 – Tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour

Lead Agency – Stevenage Borough Council

Why is this a priority?

Anti-social behaviour covers a whole range of complex of selfish and unacceptable activity that can blight the quality of community life. Examples include nuisance neighbours; noise; rowdy and nuisance behaviour; yobbish behaviour and intimidating groups taking over public spaces; vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting; people dealing and buying drugs on the street, and people fly-tipping rubbish and abandoning cars.

Anti-social behaviour doesn't just make life unpleasant. It holds back the improvement of disadvantaged areas and creates an environment where more serious crime can take hold. Furthermore, anti-social behaviour matters to Stevenage residents - it has a negative effect on far too many people's quality of life. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership is committed to tackling this problem.

The strategic assessment revealed that anti-social behaviour in Stevenage tends to be concentrated in and around the town centre, local neighbourhood shopping centres, close to drinking establishments and parks. Much anti-social behaviour is alcohol related and is linked to the night-time economy. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will continue to work through the Night Time Economy group to tackle this issue.

When anti-social behaviour occurs we will take enforcement through the use of appropriate anti-social behaviour tools such as Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, dispersal powers and injunctions.

Stevenage has a disproportionately high number of young people compared to surrounding areas. Consequently, a high proportion of anti-social behaviour is caused by young people, who often comment that they have nothing else to do. This is supported by local surveys which suggest that 'young people hanging around' is a problem. As well as taking appropriate enforcement action, more informal interventions will be used that may be identified through a Common Assessment Framework assessment.

In this respect, it is recognised that diversionary activities can have a major impact in tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will continue to identify and provide a wide range of opportunities for young people. However, the vast majority of young people remain law abiding citizens and make an important contribution to wider society. Negative perceptions of young people need to be tackled by promoting positive images of young people, ensuring that any activity in this area complements the work being done by the Stevenage District Children’s Trust Partnership.

Residents also tell us that it is important for them to have a clean, green and tidy environment, free from graffiti, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and litter. We will focus on responding swiftly to environmental anti-social behaviour paying particular attention to those areas of the town identified as hotspots.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities	Our Actions (2008/09)
Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to utilise a range of tools for tackling anti-social behaviour as part of a package of responses to local issues • Encourage reporting of anti-social behaviour and work with local people to put in place sustainable solutions • Provide programmes to support young people who are involved or at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour activity through a targeted diversionary programme • Continue to provide a range of activities for young people to prevent anti-social behaviour, particularly in hotspot locations • Promote positive images of young people
Environmental anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a rapid response service to respond swiftly to reported cases of environmental anti-social behaviour, such as fly-tipping, litter and graffiti • Deliver targeted enforcement actions in areas of the town identified as hotspots

Priority 5 – Reduce re-offending

Lead Agency – Probation Service and Youth Offending Team

Why is this a priority?

In Stevenage, a small proportion of offenders commit a high proportion of our crime. We know that by placing increasing emphasis on managing or modifying the behaviour of offenders who create the most harm in our communities, we will reduce the risk of them offending again and also reduce crime.

In common with other Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership is responsible for the reducing re-offending and for delivering the Prolific and Priority Offender scheme. The aim of this scheme is to reduce crime by targeting those who offend or otherwise cause most harm to their communities. It has three complementary parts: prevent and deter to stop predominantly young people engaging in offending behaviour; catch and convict to tackle those who are already prolific offenders; and rehabilitate and resettle to work with identified prolific offenders to stop their offending by offering a range of supportive interventions.

We recognise that offenders are one of the most socially excluded groups in society often experiencing a range of social issues, such as poor access to health services, mental health issues, lower educational attainment and the low possibility of sustainable employments. We need to ensure that any interventions recognise and respond to the needs of people at risk of re-offending.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities	Our Actions (2008/09)
Reduce re-offending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with programmes for tackling prolific and drug misusing offenders, in particular the Prolific and Priority Offender (PPO) Programme and the Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) • Work with all agencies involved in managing PPOs to ensure that appropriate interventions are being delivered

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to improve information sharing between partners about offenders, particularly in relation to their identification• Join up the support provided to offenders and seek to fill gaps to prevent them from re-offending• Raise the profile of the Countywide Employment, Education and Training scheme in Stevenage and ensure all agencies are referring clients to the scheme• Identify a number of unpaid work schemes across Stevenage to benefit communities which may have suffered as a result of an offender's behaviour
--	---

Priority 6 – Improve feelings of safety, particularly at night

Lead Agency – Stevenage Borough Council

Why is this a priority?

Although overall levels of crime in Stevenage are declining people's feelings of safety do not reflect this, remaining largely static over recent years. A MORI survey carried out in 2007 identified that 92 per cent of Stevenage residents feel safe or fairly safe during the day, but only 49 per cent of Stevenage residents feel safe or fairly safe at night. This 'perception gap' highlights the difference between what is actually happening and how the public perceive crime to be.

In many cases, fear of crime is affected by a large range of different factors, many that cannot be controlled by the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership, such as national media stories which tend to focus on serious crime and violent crime. In addition, fear of being a victim of crime can have a significant negative affect on quality of life.

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will continue to provide clear and factual information about levels of crime in Stevenage and the efforts being made to reduce levels further. In addition, the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership believes that engaging and involving local people in the issues most important to them is a vital component to providing public reassurance and reducing the fear of crime.

It is not just the fact that an actual crime has taken place in an area that gives rise to fear of crime. It is also the way a place looks and feels. When streets and other environments become dirty, litter strewn and covered in graffiti this gives rise to the perception that no one cares about the area. In turn this can encourage minor anti social behaviour, leading to gradual deterioration of the area and a spiral of decline. By responding promptly and by making positive changes a climate where people feel safer and more confident can be maintained.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities (2008/09)	Our Actions (2008/09)
<p>Improve feelings of safety, particularly at night</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communications plan to coordinate the flow of information to Stevenage residents, to encourage reassurance and promote 'good news' messages • Give people regular opportunities to have their say on community safety issues • Work with communities to deliver sustainable solutions to local problems • Ensure a high visible uniformed presence • Ensure that local environments remain safe, clean and tidy by removing graffiti, litter, fly-tipping promptly and arranging for street lighting to be installed in areas which are poorly lit

Priority 7 – Tackle drug and alcohol related crime and its impact on communities

Lead Agency – Stevenage Police

Why is this a priority?

As well as being a major issue of public concern, substance misuse affects the well being of individuals, families and neighbourhoods; it damages the health of individuals and undermines family life as well as having huge social and economic costs.

Drug related crime impacts on Stevenage's communities in a number of different ways – they are affected by drug related acquisitive crimes such as burglary, car theft, shoplifting and robbery; and by anti-social behaviour and fear of crime often associated with the use and supply of Class A drugs.

Individuals who use Class A drugs often cause significant damage to their health, and their behaviour often has a considerable impact on parents, carers, children and the wider community. Whilst problem drug use affects society as a whole, it has a disproportionate affect on the most deprived communities, disadvantaged families and vulnerable people.

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will continue to focus on preventing the distribution and use of drugs. This will be accompanied by strong messages spelling out the danger, harm and consequences of illegal drugs.

Alcohol related crime is also a major issue which we will continue to address. The link between alcohol and violent crime, domestic violence, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage is clearly established in Stevenage with alcohol related crime well above the national average. Stevenage has an established 'drinking circuit' which incorporates the Leisure Park, the Town Centre and the pedestrian walkway between the two locations. We will continue to run a coordinated range of initiatives to promote responsible drinking through the Night Time Economy group and the 'Pubwatch' group.

The strategic assessment also identified drinking by young people as a particular problem driven by availability, and the illegal selling of alcohol to under-age drinkers. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will continue to develop its approach to this by providing support, education and advice to young people and by working with licensees to promote responsible drinking.

We will address this priority through the following actions

Our priorities (2008/09)	Our Actions (2008/09)
Drug related crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop the quality of data and intelligence on the supply and misuse of drugs, including information from local communities • Identify and target drug suppliers and dealers • Promote education, support and advice to young people through the Young People's Substance Misuse Service • Provide a package of support to help drug-using offenders, particularly those causing the most harm to themselves or others, through the Drug Intervention Programme
Tackling alcohol related crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with licensed premises to improve and maintain high standards of management, using licensing conditions and reviews when necessary • Continue a rolling campaign of education to young people, and the responsible use of alcohol by those who are older, to prevent excessive alcohol consumption or binge drinking, a leading causation factor in violent crime • Support service providers in Stevenage who offer counselling, support and treatment to those with alcohol misuse problems • Increase the flow of intelligence between PubWatch, Stevenage Borough Council's Licensing Team to ensure that those responsible for alcohol related crime are readily identified.

Measuring our performance

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership is committed to performance managing this partnership plan. Our priorities will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

During 2008/09 we will:

- Produce detailed action plans for each priority
- Allocate and target funding resources to help deliver the action plans
- Regularly monitor and review the action plans
- Regularly monitor a series of targets to measure performance against our priorities
- Take action where targets may be underperforming
- Publish a summary report on our progress in delivering the strategy

Measuring progress

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership will measure progress for the 2008-2011 rolling plan using the following national and local indicators:

Priority	Indicators
Reduce violent and serious violent crime	<p><i>National Indicator</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of assaults with less serious injury offences per 1,000 population as a proxy for alcohol related violent offences <p><i>Local Indicator</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of violent crimes per 1,000
Reduce robbery, burglary, motor vehicle crime and theft	<p><i>National Indicator</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of serious acquisitive crimes per 1,000 population

	<p><i>Local Indicators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of domestic burglaries per 1,000 population • Number of robberies per 1,000 population • Number of vehicle crimes per 1,000
Reduce criminal damage, including arson	<p><i>National Indicators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of deliberate (i) primary and (ii) secondary fires per 10,000 population <p><i>Local indicator</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal damage per 1,000 population
Tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour	<p><i>National Indicators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of anti-social behaviour • Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police <p><i>Local Indicators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population
Reduce re-offending	<p><i>National Indicators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-offending rates of prolific and priority offenders • Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision • Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders aged 10-17
Improve feelings of safety, particularly at night	<p><i>Local Indicator</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of residents surveyed who say they feel fairly safe or very safe outside in their local area after dark
Tackle drug and alcohol related crime and its impact on communities	<p><i>National Indicator</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem • Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem • Rate of hospital admissions per 100,000 people for alcohol related harm • Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment

Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships

In order to deliver the Plan and achieve the associated targets it is vital that the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership functions to a high level of performance and that it remains accountable to Stevenage residents for addressing crime and disorder; substance misuse; and anti-social behaviour.

Following a review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, changes have been reflected in the Police and Justice Act 2006 and in subsequent regulations, which came into force on 1 August 2007.

As part of this, six Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships have been identified which represent the key aspects of partnership working that underpin effective delivery through partnerships. The six Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships are:

- Empowered and Effective Leadership
- Visible and Constructive Accountability
- Intelligence-led Business Processes
- Effective and Responsive Delivery Structures
- Engaged Communities
- Appropriate Skills and Knowledge

The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership is required to work within this framework to deliver improvements and change at local level. We have already reviewed our position in relation to the six Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships. Whilst the Partnership already matches up to most of the Hallmarks, there is further work to do to ensure we are wholly compliant. A number of actions have been put in place to achieve this, and we will continue to work towards achieving the Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships during 2008/09.

Engaging with the community

No community safety partnership can succeed (or hope to deliver its aims and objectives) without the help, support and involvement of the community it is working for. This is known as 'community engagement' and is one of the most important parts of partnership working.

Members of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership regularly conduct research to gauge public opinion on various issues concerning how safe people feel and what concerns them about their neighbourhoods. This feedback is listened to and taken very seriously as it forms one of the core strands of how aims, objectives and targets for the future are set. We also endeavour to make sure that partnership working reaches out to every area, street and house in Stevenage.

The most visible face of the partnership are the Police and the Police Community Support Officers. Every area of Stevenage now has a dedicated Ward Constable and a number of Police Community Support Officers to provide visible patrols, both during the day and after dark. Although the Government has recently said it wants all community officers to be more readily contactable, this has been happening in Stevenage for many years, with the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team having contact numbers which are readily accessible and frequently published.

As referred to elsewhere the Community Safety Partnership Forum meets three times a year and these meetings are open to the public. Those attending are encouraged to voice their opinions and ask any questions.

On a more local level, the town has six 'area committees' covering the following areas:

- Bedwell, covering Bedwell & Pin Green wards
- Chells & Manor, covering Chells and Chells Manor wards
- Broadwater, covering Longmeadow and Roebuck ward
- Old Stevenage, covering Old Town, Symonds Green and Woodfield wards.
- St Nicholas, covering St Nicholas & Martins Wood wards
- Shephall, cover Shephall, Bandle Hill and Poplars wards

Area committees meet four times a year and provide an opportunity for the local community to raise and discuss any issues of concern to them and have their views heard. Any issue reported at an area committee is acted upon and feedback on progress given at future meetings.

'Street Meets' are another good way for the public to be heard. As the name suggests, they are meetings held at 'street level' and cover the entire town. Led by the Police's Safer neighbourhood Team, they provide residents with the opportunity to meet Councillors, Council Community Development Officers and the Police and discuss any issues which concern them. The aim of street meets is to encourage residents to report crime and anti-social behaviour directly to those who can help address it.

There is also a positive relationship with the town's Neighbourhood Watch schemes. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership actively works with residents to promote the benefits of Neighbourhood Watch and encourage new schemes to be set up. Stevenage has over 280 active Neighbourhood Watch schemes with each having a coordinator. All the coordinators meet regularly and community issues which are raised are reported back to either area committees or direct to the Community Safety Partnership.

Finally, we realise the importance of communication. The Stevenage Community Safety Partnership aims to ensure that the public in Stevenage have all the information they need to enable them to know what the partnership is doing. We also aim to make it an easy process for Stevenage people to contact us with their comments and suggestions.

All Ward Constables produce regular informative newsletters for their beat areas and every household in Stevenage receives the 'Chronicle' magazine five times a year. This publication, produced by the Council regularly features the work of the Stevenage Community Safety Partnership.

Contact Details

Stevenage Community Safety Partnership

c/o Stevenage Borough Council
Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
SG1 1HN

E-mail: communitysafety@stevenage.gov.uk

Tel: 01438 242943

www.stevenage.gov.uk

Stevenage Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team

www.herts.police.uk/neighbourhood_policing/stevenagediary.php

Stevenage Neighbourhood Watch

<http://www.stevenageneighbourhoodwatch.org>