

Safer and Stronger Communities

Safer Communities Strategy 2005-2008

In 2004, the Bradford District Safer Communities Partnership carried out an audit into community safety issues in the District. A three-year strategy for building safer communities was published in 2005. The four priorities for 2005-2008 are:

1. Visible responses – improving local neighbourhoods
2. Support for vulnerable people
3. Preventing offending
4. Law enforcement

• Local and National targets

Bradford is in the second year of its Local Area Agreement (LAA). LAAs set out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government and a local area (the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership) and other key partners at the local level. LAAs simplify some central funding, help join up public services more effectively and allow greater flexibility for local solutions to local issues. Through these means, LAAs are helping to devolve decision making and reduce bureaucracy.

Bradford has a national target for Drug Treatment Programmes: Increase the participation of problem drug users in drug treatment programmes; increase the number of users successfully completing treatment programmes; and increase local community capacity to tackle the supply of class A drugs in the Bradford District.

Bradford has a national target to reduce the rate of re-offending by young offenders.

The Safer Communities Strategy 2005-2008 identifies targets for reducing overall crime in the District and reducing offences recorded under each of the main crime types.

• Changes in crime levels

In the 12 months to March 2006 58,897 crimes were recorded in Bradford District. This is a 0.2% decrease compared to the previous year, the Yorkshire and Humberside region experienced a 1% increase; and England and Wales experienced a 1% decrease over the same period.

Over the past four years, the total number of offences recorded has generally followed a downward trend. Although the figures show an increase in 2002/3 this reflects changes in recording practices. Had these changes not been introduced, there would have been a fall in crime in 2002/3. It appears that overall crime reduction reached a plateau in 2004/5 and has remained stable throughout the 2005/6 period.

Number of offences recorded in Bradford District 2001/2 – 2005/6					
By Quarter and Year					
	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	Total
2001/2	16,392	18,019	19,286	19,790	73,487
2002/3	20,431	19,276	18,786	18,205	76,698
2003/4	19,339	18,918	17,868	16,564	72,689
2004/5	15,392	14,635	14,485	14,519	59,031
2005/6	15,011	15,202	14,522	14,162	58,897

Source: Research and Consultation Service

The types of crime most commonly recorded in the District are Criminal Damage, and Violent Crime, which reflect national trends. There was a significant increase in theft from a vehicle in 2005/6, this is due to a spate of thefts of number plates in the district; work is currently ongoing to combat this.

Crimes committed 2005/6			
Type of Crime	Number of offences 2005/06	Percentage change 2004/5 - 2005/6	Offence Rate 2005/6
Domestic Burglary	3,597	- 10.2%	18.7
Other Burglary	4,823	+ 9.9%	10.0
Criminal Damage	13,278	- 6.6%	27.6
Drugs Offences			
Robbery	570	+7.9%	1.18
Violent Crime (excluding robbery)	10,976	+20.7%	22.81
Contact Violence (ABH & GBH)	6,542	+15%	13.6
Vehicle Crime (theft from and taking a vehicle)	8,074	-9.6	16.8
BCS Comparator Crime	35,812	-4%	74.43
Total Crime	58,897	-0.2	122.4

Source: Research and Consultation Service

Of the ten local government regions in England and Wales, the Yorkshire and Humberside region had the second highest rate of police recorded crime in 2005/6, with 118 offences per 1,000 population. The region recorded the highest rate of burglary and the second highest rate of theft and handling stolen goods, theft of and from vehicles, and criminal damage offences. The regional position remains unchanged from 2004/05.

The Safer Communities Strategy 2005-2008 and Public Service Agreement 2004-2007 identifies targets for reducing overall crime (BCS Comparator Crime) in the District and each of the main crime types. BCS Comparator Crime in Bradford fell by 4% between 2004/5 and 2005/06, and has met and exceeded the strategy target of a 21.1% reduction by 2005/6, and appears to be on track to meet the 2007/08 PSA target.

Rate of Crime per 1000 population (domestic burglary per 1,000 households) 2005/6 in West Yorkshire Authorities

West Yorkshire Authority	Violent Crime	Domestic Burglary	Vehicle Crime	Robbery	Total Crime
Bradford	26.1	18.7	16.8	1.2	122.4
Calderdale	29	11.5	12.7	0.5	113.8
Kirklees	23.4	14.0	14.1	0.8	106.8
Leeds	25.1	24.9	17.2	1.8	136.2
Wakefield	26.6	15.6	14.2	0.7	118.4
West Yorkshire	25.6	18.8	15.7	1.2	122.8

Source: West Yorkshire Police Annual Report 2005/2006

The level of overall crime in Bradford is slightly below the average for West Yorkshire. The rate in Bradford was above the regional average for Violent Crime and Domestic Burglary.

- **Youth Offending**

The number of first time youth offenders in the District shows a rising trend, increasing from 1,269 in 2004 to 1,480 in 2005. This increase is heavily influenced by improvements in local crime detection rates and the impact of the Government's recorded crime initiative 'Narrowing the Justice Gap'.

There was a downward trend in re-offending rates for young offenders. 47.1% of the 2001 cohort of youth offenders re-offended, compared to 33.4% of the 2004 cohort, however 43.3% of the 2005 cohort re-offended within 12 months. The 'Narrowing the Justice Gap' initiative from the Home Office directed at the police has significantly changed the way police record and process young offenders resulting in a 25% increase this year in the number of young offenders entering the criminal justice system. A breach of supervision is counted as an offence. Bradford Youth Offending Team has a policy of rigorous enforcement necessary to maintain the confidence of the police and the courts. As such, its rate of breach is higher than the national average but it has an excellent relationship with the local court, despite this Bradford YOT has a lower rate of re-offending than other major cities. The YOT is currently ranked 56 out of 155 YOTs in the country.

53% of the young people supervised by the Youth Offending Team, during 2005 were accessing full-time education, training and employment.

- **Locations**

Crime rates in the District vary substantially between different areas. In general the south and east of the District experience higher levels of crime than the north and west. The area with the highest level of recorded crime within Bradford District during 2005/06 was Bradford City Centre. The crime recorded within the city and town centres relate both to crimes against businesses and crimes against individuals.

Other areas of the District with high rates of crime include many of the District's large outlying estates and some of the inner urban areas of Bradford.

- **Detection Rates**

There have been a variety of changes to the count of detections over recent years. Detection rates can vary considerably depending on the type of crime and the manner in which it is brought to police attention. Not all crimes in which a suspect is identified will necessarily be reflected in the count of detected crimes; and not all detections result in a charge/summons and a court appearance, although evidence to support a case must still be collected. The sanctioned detection rate of offences within the District rose from 23.8% in 2004/5 to 27% in 2005/6. The detection rate for Bradford was above the rate for England and Wales and the Yorkshire and Humberside Average (both 24%) during the same period.

- **Unreported Crime**

The estimated recording rate of comparable reported offences decreased from 75% in the year ending September 2004 to 70% for the year ending September 2005. Public reporting of crime varies considerably by type of offence. Thefts of vehicles are most likely to be reported (94%), followed by burglaries in which something was stolen (81%). Reporting rates are relatively low for crimes such as common assault, theft from the person and vandalism (35%, 33% and 31% in 2005/06). Research commissioned as part of the 2004 Crime Audit found that some of the reasons why crime was not reported were the respondent's belief that the police were unable or unwilling to help, or that it was unlikely that the offenders would be found. The administrative procedure for making insurance claims where a crime number is needed may account for the high levels of recording of vehicle crime and burglaries. The British Crime Survey found that the risk of household crime in the Yorkshire and Humber region was significantly higher than the national average, whilst the risk of personal crime was significantly lower.

- **Drugs and Drug Related Crime**

It is difficult to accurately estimate the total scale of drug use in the Bradford District but it is thought that there may be in the region of 5,000 "problematic" heroin users, and that around half of heroin users are likely to be injecting the drug.

In 2005/06, the number of drug users in treatment was 3,533; a 10% increase compared to the previous year (3,202). 1,966 of those were new presentations to treatment.

Bradford police now test all offenders arrested for acquisitive crimes (e.g. shop lifting) for heroin and cocaine. On average around 50% test positive, and most of these do so for heroin and cocaine use. During 2005/06 the police recorded 325 arrests and disposals for dealing Class A. This figure is also well in excess of the target set in the Safer Communities Strategy for 2005/6 of 197.

Fear of drug users and drug dealers are still major factors in making people feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods.

- **Anti-social Behaviour**

Anti-social behaviour is difficult to define and can include serious incidents of harassment to lower level incidents of littering, graffiti and illegal parking. The way in which the police records incidents of anti-social behaviour changed in April 2005 and it is therefore not possible to compare data since that date with previous years. Perceptions of and tolerance toward anti-social behaviour is also varied due to its subjective nature. In 2005/6, the police recorded 26,408 incidents of anti-social behaviour; the most common type was loutish behaviour (almost a third of all incidents). Other types recorded were hoax calls, general nuisance and vehicle related nuisance (e.g. illegal parking and motorcycle nuisance).

Anti-social behaviour is not evenly distributed across the District. The highest number of incidents was recorded in Bradford City Centre. ASB tends to be particularly problematic in some of the District's outlying estates.

Stronger Communities

There are many facets to Stronger Communities: covering a wide range of issues that include the local environment, community safety and health. Recent work on stronger communities – as part of Bradford's Local Area Agreement (LAA) - recognises the interconnections with all facets of community life whilst identifying the particularly significant role that the voluntary and community sector plays within communities. Currently the stronger communities agenda is particularly concerned with the following two outcomes within Bradford's LAA.

- A district where active individuals, communities and voluntary organisations play a full part in the affairs of the district.
- A district where strong, diverse communities live, learn, work and play together.

- **Increasing the strength of the voluntary and community sector**

Voluntary and community sector groups and organisations can be used to develop well-run services through a combination of strengths –

- Close to local communities, which means they are flexible, responsive to need and able to identify gaps and solutions
- Able to provide specialised services and projects to meet complex needs
- Trusted and valued by local communities, able to engage hard-to-reach groups

The Stronger Communities Action Plan identifies the need to develop existing groups and also to encourage the establishment of new groups in response to issues of concern and interest to local communities. The relative size of the VCS within the District can be gauged by Diva, the voluntary organisations database for Bradford District includes contact details of nearly 1600 local voluntary and community groups.

- **Increasing community and voluntary and community sector involvement in the governance of the District**

The Stronger Communities Action Plan identifies the need to continue the work of community empowerment within the District through the work of Cnet, the Community Network for Bradford and District, to ensure full, active and meaningful representation of communities and the voluntary and community sector within the strategic partnerships.

Bradford's Public Service Agreement measures community cohesion within the District and includes an index to measure the extent to which the ethnic and gender composition of the District's key decision-making bodies reflects the ethnic and gender composition of the District's adult population. In 2002/3 the index was 77%, the index rose to 80.5% in 2003/4, fell to 79.3% in 2004/5, but increased to 80.0 in 2005/6.

- **Cohesion/inclusion**

Communities that are strong and inclusive lead to a better quality of life, a stronger sense of identity and belonging and mutual respect and equality.

Bradford's Public Service Agreement measures the percentage of local residents who feel that residents from different ethnic backgrounds mix well or generally mix okay (this is measured annually by the Council's Speak Out! Survey).

The percentage of people who feel that the District's residents mix reasonably well has increased since 2002, although the percentage of people who feel that people in the neighbourhoods can be trusted saw a decrease in 2006. The net percentage of people who think that relationships between ethnic groups in the District has improved over the previous 12 months, and those who think that the increase in the number of people with diverse lifestyle and

cultures has made the District a better place to live has also shown some improvement since 2002.

The percentage of residents who feel that they have at least some influence over Council decisions has also increased since 2002.

Community Cohesion Perception Indicators					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
% of people who agree or strongly agree that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted	58%	65%	63%	61.7%	52.3%
% who think residents mix well or generally mix ok in the District	37%	44%	45.2%	45.7%	46.1%
Net % of people who think that relationships between ethnic groups in the District have improved over the last 12 months (i.e. % who think it is better MINUS % who think it is worse)	- 50%	- 35%	-21.3%	- 9.2%	- 19.0%
Net % who think the increase in the number of people with diverse lifestyle and cultures has made the Bradford District a better place to live (i.e. % who think it is better MINUS % who think it is worse)	- 32%	- 31%	-27.2%	-16.3%	-19.6%
% of residents who feel that they have at least some influence over Council decisions	28%	35%	36.3%	37.1%	33.9%
<i>Source: Speak Out!</i>					

- **Volunteering**

A survey of 200 UK businesses by national volunteering charity 'TimeBank' in 2004 found that 81% of employers surveyed view employees who do voluntary work positively; 68% thought that volunteering adds to the skills of their workforce, and 43% think that employees who undertake voluntary work and learn new skills have a better chance of promotion and earning a higher salary.

Bradford's Public Service Agreement measures the percentage of local residents who have been involved in one or more community activities in the last 12 months (this is measured annually by the Council's Speak Out! Survey). From 2002 to 2006 this increased by 3.2%.

Volunteering					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
% of residents who have been involved in 1 or more community activities in the last 12 months	55%	59%	56.1%	56.3%	58.2%
<i>Source: Speak Out!</i>					

More information

Community safety in Bradford
<http://www.saferBradfordinfo.org.uk>

Crime in your area:
<http://www.beatcrime.info>

West Yorkshire Police:
<http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk>

Voluntary and Community Groups
<http://www.divabradford.org.uk>

Cnet
<http://www.cnet.org.uk>

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