

# Public Safety

**Guildford is already a safe place to live, work and raise a family. It is the ninth safest borough in the country and Surrey is the safest county. There is always room for improvement, however, and making the borough even safer is the core priority of the Safer Guildford Partnership.**

## What you told us

The public would ideally like more visible, accessible and responsive police officers and an easier method of reporting crime. There was concern over loutish behaviour and crime, a feeling that the town centre was dangerous at night with too many pubs and clubs and a desire for more closed circuit television (CCTV). It was suggested Community Safety Wardens should have more power to help the police and that pubs and clubs should contribute towards safety initiatives.

Issues raised were:

- Burglary.
- Safety in public places.

- Street drinking.
- Drug abuse.
- Vehicle crime.
- Young people as offenders and victims.
- Truancy.
- Safe places for young people.
- Speeding traffic.
- Public Transport.
- The Environment.
- Community Spirit.
- Domestic Violence.
- Hate crime.



## Initiatives being developed

- The Strategy's Environment Group to assess town areas thought unsafe and initiate improvements.
- Take an holistic approach towards street drinking, working with housing and support agencies.
- Develop drug-free environments for young people such as SNAP (Say No And Phone) dances.
- Target vehicle crime hotspots and launch public awareness campaign.
- Develop contact between youth workers and young people in the town.
- Promote cooperation between shops, schools, police and education services to tackle truancy.
- Establish a safe town centre base for young people and appoint a Rural Youth Worker.
- Develop traffic calming initiatives and introduce "decriminalised parking enforcement" enabling GBC to police parking controls borough-wide.
- Promote the Bobby on the Bus scheme.
- Continue quick response to graffiti, vandalism and dumped cars. Pilot a 24 hour removal of abandoned cars scheme.
- Promote cooperation between borough housing officers and police to nip problems in the bud.
- Develop a Domestic Violence Outreach Scheme.
- Conduct more high visibility public reassurance patrols by Police Community Support Officers providing a uniformed presence on the streets and in the communities.



## The action plan

The **Guildford Community Safety Strategy**, which is a partnership between Guildford Borough Council (GBC), Surrey County Council (SCC), Surrey Police, Guildford and Waverley Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Surrey Probation Service with extra input from parish councils, NHS trusts and schools, has been set up specifically to deal with these issues of public safety. Published in 2002, it lists clearly the strategy and plan of action for each area of concern which will be built on over the next three years.

The **Community Incident Action Group** is a partnership of front-line professionals which meets regularly to discuss joint action in relation to individuals, families and neighbourhoods where there are particular community safety difficulties. The group considers the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) but prefers to find preventive and long-term solutions.

As well as responding to public safety emergencies such as fires and road traffic accidents, the **Surrey Fire and Rescue Service** plays a strong role in public

safety education and prevention. This includes projects such as 'Firewise' in which trained advisors are available to give individuals personal counselling and tuition in an effort to reduce arson and other fire related crime. This is quite often carried out with juveniles at the request of the Police. Surrey Fire and Rescue crews from Guildford also carry out 'Home Fire Risk Assessments'.

The **Safer Guildford Partnership** is already promoting Community Wardens and CCTV and is introducing mobile cameras. Car park improvements have generated awards from the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Measures include:

- Successfully targeting repeat burglars.
- Tackling disruptive behaviour via the Town Centre Violence Strategy.
- A multi-agency approach towards helping homeless people.
- Successfully tackling suppliers of Class A (Crack and heroin) drugs in Operation Zoom.
- Successfully targeting town centre vehicle crime.

- Introduction of a Crime Notification System enabling relevant agencies to support a juvenile brought to the notice of police.
- Provision of a skate-board park.
- Development of a policy to tackle bullying.
- Introduction of FISH (Fun in the Summer Holidays) activity scheme.
- Traffic calming schemes in Stoughton and Bellfields.
- Environmental improvements to the North Street Stone Circle (at the bottom of North Street).
- Introduction of Community Wardens scheme.
- Cooperation between agencies so the police are informed when criminals are released from prison.
- Offering fast track detoxification and rehabilitation to some persistent drug and alcohol users
- New Police community support officers to work alongside the neighbourhood specialist police officers and community safety wardens on community projects and to reassure the public.
- Developing arts and sports activities as a known mechanism for the reduction of crime in respect of young people.