

Safer Communities Strategy

2011 – 2014



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Foreword

Barnet is an excellent place to live and work. The quality of life Barnet offers includes a safe, pleasant environment without fear of crime.

Our Borough has some of the highest levels of community cohesion in the country, whilst at the same time experiencing considerable and ever growing diversity. Overall the level of crime in the borough is low. Our residents, however, are always mindful of crime and consistently place burglary and Anti-Social Behaviour at the top of their list of concerns. We can achieve reductions in crime through working more closely with each other and with the community to address the causes of crime and respond collectively to the consequences of criminal activity.

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership brings together the Metropolitan Police, Barnet Council, London Fire Brigade, Probation Service, Magistrates Court, Crown Prosecution Service, National Health Service and the voluntary and community sector.

Barnet faces the challenge of improving public services in the face of demographic pressures and substantially less money. All the partners have collectively identified the priorities in this strategy. We will deliver them through the sharing of information and intelligence. Increasingly we are sharing public sector assets; working and training together to understand common problems.

Our services must be geared towards a seamless customer experience. By sharing services and processes residents need only report a problem once; and can have confidence that all agencies will work together and provide a single solution. The Family Intervention Project and Integrated Offender Management are examples of such work and we will be looking to partners to contribute resources to this work.

We need to support residents in changing behaviours that impact on crime in areas such as drug and alcohol abuse or domestic violence.

We will encourage residents to help themselves by protecting their personal safety, property and taking responsibility for their own behaviour. We will support them to do this and get involved with their community, for example through our local Police Safer Neighbourhood teams, joining neighbourhood watches, looking out for vulnerable people or making a pledge on the Council's pledge bank site.

The Safer Communities Partnership Board, after an assessment of the evidence of patterns of crime, and feedback from the community, has decided to focus on the priorities set out in this document. We believe through working together we can all contribute to making Barnet a better and safer place to live and work.

Councillor David Longstaff

Cabinet Member, Safety and Resident Engagement and
Chairman, Safer Communities Partnership Board

On behalf of Partnership Board Members:

Neil Basu

Chief Superintendent, Barnet Borough Police Commander, Metropolitan Police

Tom George

Barnet Borough Fire Commander, London Fire Brigade

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What do our residents think of crime and community safety in barnet?¹

Reducing crime and making Barnet safer has long been a major concern of our residents.

29 per cent list crime as one of their top three concerns, second only to the condition of roads and pavements. In the crime survey*, from a list of priorities for crime reduction, reducing anti-social behaviour and disorder was the issue most cited. When asked about local anti-social behaviour problems, the most commonly cited was rubbish and litter lying around.

The residents feel Barnet is a safe place. 95 per cent felt very or fairly safe in their local area during the day and 76 per cent likewise after dark, with 19 per cent feeling very or fairly unsafe. 89 per cent agreed that residents from different backgrounds got on well together.

74 per cent of residents were satisfied that the Police and Council were dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour and crime in their local area and 11 per cent not. While a good result our challenge is to continue improve the level of satisfaction.

The crime survey* also asked residents how worried they were about being victims of specific crimes. They were most concerned about being a victim of domestic burglary, with 70 per cent very or fairly worried. In general, those from BME communities and social housing tenants held the largest fear about being victims of crime.

¹ All of this information is taken from the Residents Perception Survey commissioned by Barnet Council and published in May 2011, except data marked *, which is taken from the Barnet Crime Survey (March 2011)

Strategic context and challenges

It is important to note that Barnet is a safe Borough. Total crime has fallen by 22 per cent since 2000/2001. Many crimes, such as vehicle crime and serious violence, have shown sharp falls recently.

Barnet is the ninth safest Borough in London, with 0.07 crimes per head of population. Domestic burglary, the crime that residents are most concerned about, has risen in the last couple of years.

We face important strategic challenges in the medium-term to reduce all crime, specifically the declining level of resources available and changes to the make-up of the Borough.

Resourcing

The 2010/11 – 2014/15 Comprehensive Spending Review is resulting in substantial funding reductions for all partners. The Home Office and the Ministry of Justice are to lose 23 per cent of their budget over this period and the Department for Communities and Local Government 27 per cent.

This presents a number of challenges: for example the Metropolitan Police have instituted a review of Territorial Policing to protect their operational capability. This involves reviewing the entire policing model, including the response to 999 calls, the role of Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the way they investigate crime to ensure they can continue to deliver both an effective service and better value for money for the taxpayer.

At the same time, spending reductions in the Ministry of Justice have potential implications for the probation service in managing criminals, which could face further pressure from a reduction in available prison places and a need to manage these offenders in the community.

Population Change

The Borough's population will increase. Barnet is expected to attract an additional 33,200 residents over the next ten years – a 9 per cent increase on the 2010 population. Much of this is accounted for by large scale regeneration activity, particularly in the west of the Borough with the redevelopment of social housing estates and major new developments at Brent Cross/Cricklewood and Colindale. The current population in Colindale and Golders Green wards is expected to double over the next decade.

Growth will bring new communities. The challenge will be to ensure that the supporting infrastructure is in place, including community safety. The arrival of new communities, allied to the Borough's ever increasing faith and ethnic diversity, makes it important to ensure that community relations are good and community tensions minimised to maintain the Borough's cohesion.

The number of young residents will increase, which potentially brings challenges as they are the comparatively largest group of both victims and offenders. The peak victim age is between 13 and 18, where the risk of a young person being a victim of crime is over twice that of people in their 30s. The peak age for offenders is between 16 and 22, but many of these repeat offenders are drawn into low level crime and anti-social behaviour from an early age.

The number of elderly residents will also increase, most notably those over 85. Fear of crime increases with age. That fear is often much greater than the probability, but feeling safe is as important as actually being safe. We have to recognise this age group's vulnerability to that fear and to specific types of crime such as rogue traders and burglars, who use deception to enter into a property.

Social and economic trends

The recent increase in worklessness and financial hardship is expected to continue, and historically there has been a correlation with this and increased crime levels, particularly theft. Youth unemployment is a particular current problem nationally. The economic climate with further anticipated student and industrial unrest may increase the demands on community safety partners policing events, marches and demonstrations. These demands could coincide in 2012 with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and Olympics. These are significant challenges we are all committed to overcoming.

Our strategic objective and how we achieve it

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership is responsible for delivering the strategic objective in Barnet's Sustainable Community Strategy of Strong Safe Communities for Everyone and the specific aim to Reduce crime and Anti-Social Behaviour: and ensure residents feel safe.

This will be measured through:

- reduction of total crime per 1000 population
- reduction in perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour in communities
- improvement in how safe residents feel².

Our aim is to address all crimes, while focusing the greatest resources on those that cause the most harm or risk to individuals or communities, which can be solved. In doing so, we fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities to protect vulnerable people and prevent them from harm.

Safeguarding

The council has a statutory duty to promote safeguarding, ensuring that risks of harm to both children and vulnerable adults are minimised. The Cabinet member for Safety and Resident Engagement will promote the safeguarding of adults and children.

The Safer Communities Board recognise safeguarding as a priority and support it through their work on domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse, hate crime, distraction burglary and encouraging the community to look out for and report crime. The Board receives a standing report from both Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards.

² Met Police Public Attitude Survey – 'how safe do you feel – in own home; walking alone during day; walking alone after dark'

Taking into account our latest strategic assessment of Crime and Disorder, we will focus our efforts on achieving reductions in the following ways:

Priority areas:

1. Property crime (theft) with special focus on burglary
2. Anti-Social Behaviour
3. Violent Crime with special focus on Domestic Violence

We will focus on tackling these through:

4. Improving offender management (especially repeat offenders and prolific priority offenders) through an integrated offender management programme which brings different agencies together to tackle the offender and avoid re-offending
5. Broader, cost-effective early intervention to prevent crime happening in the first place or to change behaviour and divert potential offenders
6. Focusing our joint resources on the places where the most harmful offending takes place
7. Concentrating on supporting those who suffer repeat victimisation through crime or ASB

And we recognise the need to:

8. Reduce the fear of crime through building public confidence and reassurance

Each of these elements are analysed in more detail, highlighting why they are priorities, what we will do to tackle the issues and how results will be identified and measured.

This strategy addresses the four principal factors in analysing every crime as follows:

1. Victims: Through working with the community and supporting victims to reduce the risk of repeated offences
2. Offenders: Through integrated offender management and broader, cost-effective family intervention
3. Location: Through focusing on the places where offences take place
4. Time: Through making sure our staff are on duty and available when the public most need them

A mixture of intelligence, prevention and enforcement tools will be used, based on the strategic assessment of crime and disorder patterns in Barnet and its suggested actions or control measures.

Engaging the community

Engaging the community in helping to make Barnet a safer place is a theme which runs through all our priorities.

The community has an important part to play in delivering these priorities. As part of our new relationship with citizens, we need the community to work with us. This can be on an individual basis from simply making their property safe to checking on vulnerable families and neighbours, ensuring all crime, particularly hate crime, is reported and simply acting as a responsible law abiding citizen. We also need residents to engage in their communities, such as joining or forming neighbourhood watch or other resident groups and participating in their local Safer Neighbourhood panels. Whichever way our residents choose to engage, we commit to providing practical advice and support.

We will listen to residents through our Safer Neighbourhood team networks, Borough Watch, the Barnet Community Safety Engagement Group and voluntary, community and faith networks, among others. We will capture this information to influence the development of future strategies and tactics. We will use Barnet Online and Barnet First to be transparent about what we are achieving and what we have done in response to your needs.

Priority 1

Property crime with special focus on burglary

Lead agency – Metropolitan Police

Why a priority?

Property crime, for example crimes committed to gain possessions or money, is the most common and visible form of crime that will affect most of our residents. Only a small percentage of residents will be victims, but experience of these crimes will therefore influence their views on community safety.

In the recent crime survey, domestic burglary was the crime that residents were most worried about falling victim to.

For the past few years the level of burglary has increased, going against the general downward crime trend. Our otherwise safe Borough has a higher volume of burglary offences than any borough in London and is now the fifth highest in London for burglaries per household (based on 2010/11 data). 8 out of the 21 wards in Barnet are in the top 20 wards in the whole of London for volume of domestic burglary. In 2010/11 Childs Hill ward had more burglary offences than any other in London and 25 per cent more offences than the next highest. In 2009/10 burglary rose by 17 per cent, and in 2010/11 it increased by a further 10 per cent. Burglary is now the single biggest contributor to the total volume of offences in Barnet. Reversing this trend will be our top priority.

What will we do to achieve this?

- develop a strategy which incorporates the following operations and tactics
- disrupt organised criminal networks
- targeted crime prevention campaigns
- intelligence led approach to targeting burglary hotspots both covertly and by visible presence
- individual tailored Crime prevention advice to victims and surrounding householders
- ensuring repeated offenders are brought to justice
- co-ordinating the range of powers available to agencies such as Fire and Environmental health to best solve the problem.

How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Reduction in total crime	27705 (74.922 Per 1000 population)
Reduction in total serious property crime	8192 (23.877 Per 1000 population)
Reduction in residential burglary	3362 (24.841 Per 1000 population)

Priority 2

Anti-Social Behaviour

Lead agency – London Borough of Barnet

Why a priority?

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) has a corrosive effect on residents' daily lives. It involves incidents, including minor crimes, that affect their quality of life but may not be seen as high risk or high harm when taken individually. Collectively, there is a real effect on their overall fear of crime and more broadly their satisfaction with the quality of their life and the local area. If not checked, it can lead to a spiral of decline in the vitality of an area.

In the 2011 Crime Survey, reducing ASB and Disorder was seen by residents as the top priority of all the possible crime priorities.

A proactive and visible approach to tackling all the aspects of ASB, ranging from graffiti, litter and vandalism to street drinking, rowdy behaviour, and disruptive neighbours. It is therefore an essential cornerstone of how we gain public confidence and reclaim the streets, public transport and open spaces as safe places for all members of the community to use.

ASB can also have a particularly harmful effect on community cohesion if particular groups are targeted. For example it is important to raise awareness of abuse against people with disabilities, including learning disabilities, and particular ethnic or religious groups, in order to be able to identify and tackle it.

What will we do to achieve this?

- take a proactive approach to issues such as graffiti, fly-tipping and fly-posting through the Council's Priority Intervention Team
- ensure through council services that the Borough is kept clean and attractive as a deterrent to ASB
- ensure through activities such as CCTV and licensing that street drinking and other rowdy behaviour is tackled effectively
- ensure incidents are effectively recorded, information is shared and data reviewed leading to an agreed set of measures with clear outcomes for residents
- improve governance arrangements for bringing agencies together to co-ordinate a strategic approach to ASB
- correctly task Police Safer Neighbourhood teams to work in effective partnership to ensure that every report of ASB is followed up by the Police or the relevant agency, that problems are resolved and that the person reporting is personally kept informed of the outcome
- identify repeat victims of ASB at the earliest possible opportunity and intervene using a multi-agency problem-solving approach
- Fire Brigade contribution through arson reduction liaison, youth engagement activities and reduction of hoax calls in the Borough

- Police and Fire both working with LBB Planning to ‘design out’ opportunities for arson and Anti-Social Behaviour when planning new developments and regeneration.

How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Reduction in per cent reporting the extent they are very/fairly worried about ASB in this area	24%
Reduction in per cent reporting the different strands of ASB Survey as a big problem – Metropolitan Police Survey ³	
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	21%
Rubbish or litter lying around	21%
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage	19%
People being drunk or rowdy in a public place	9%
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	10%
Perceptions of local drug use or dealing	13%
Abandoned or burnt out cars	5%
Gangs	9%

³ These are – noisy neighbours and loud parties; teenagers hanging around; rubbish or litter lying around; vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property or vehicles; people using or dealing drugs; people drunk or rowdy in public places; abandoned or burnt out cars.

Priority 3

Violent crime with specific focus on domestic violence

Lead agency – Metropolitan Police

Why a priority?

Fortunately levels of violent crime are lower in Barnet than many other Boroughs, but the severity of these crimes makes it essential that they are tackled robustly.

Domestic violence (DV) is a high priority. As the most populous borough in London, with a large number of children and young people, the potential impact of domestic violence on our communities is huge. We estimate at least a quarter of reported violent crimes are related to domestic violence (for example threatening behaviour, violence or abuse against adults who are or have been in intimate relationships or family members, old and young). We know this crime is vastly underreported and exists in a myriad of relationships. While primarily perpetrated by men on women, those in same sex relationships are also victims.

We need to encourage residents to report domestic violence incidents to the police and/or to other agencies who can support victims and survivors. Our new campaign 'Taking the First Step' will start to address this.

Barnet's Domestic Violence Strategy Board ensures all agencies respond to and tackle domestic violence in a joined up way. It is co-chaired by the Director of Children's Service and the Police Borough Commander and reports directly to the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

The Strategic Assessment highlights the importance of focusing on repeat offending

as a control strategy for reducing crime. This is particularly relevant to domestic violence offences.

What will we do to achieve this?

- increase awareness of DV among agencies and residents through media activity
- implement the North London Rape Crisis Centre Service
- develop and implement effective perpetrator services
- ensure safe and effective interventions at the earliest opportunity so survivors can continue with their lives
- safeguard the needs of young people and vulnerable adults whose lives are affected by DV
- deliver an effective criminal justice system to punish, deter and reduce repeat DV victimisation
- ensure integration with the Family Intervention project 'family focus'
- promote the use of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

In addition we will continue to:

- ensure effective inter agency co-ordination against all forms of violence
- be robust in tackling problem licensed premises and in the prosecution of alcohol related violence

- ## How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Total violence against the person crime rates per 1000 population	12.935 (4438 people)
Increase DV:	
(a) offences	(a) 10.29 (3529 people)
(b) incidents reported per 1000 population	(b) 3.55 (1218 people)
Reduction in per cent of repeat incidents of DV	21%

Priority 4

Improving integrated offender management

Lead agency – Probation

Why a priority?

The Strategic Assessment highlights how a number of older prolific offenders are trapped in a repeat cycle of offending which can go on for years and is often driven by their need to feed Class A drug habits. They have a particularly significant impact on burglary levels but this pattern is relevant to all our priorities including anti-social behaviour and domestic violence.

The principles of Integrated Offender Management are that all agencies involved in criminal justice, drug and alcohol and family intervention work together in a single coherent structure for case management of repeat offenders. A number of programmes, including the Drug Intervention Programme, Priority and Prolific Offenders scheme, and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements are managed through this multi-agency approach to reduce duplication of work in tackling offenders and close gaps in service provision or enforcement that can cause harm and risk to individuals or communities.

In doing so all elements of offender management are co-ordinated: preventing and deterring offending, catching and convicting offenders, and rehabilitating them and resettling them in the community.

This system of working is already well established in the Youth Offending service, which brings a multi disciplinary approach to working with young offenders to manage their circumstances and reduce the opportunities for

re-offending, including diverting first time entrants from the criminal justice system instead of criminalising them.

What will we do to achieve this?

- establish an effective IoM structure for Barnet
- improve and better integrate Drug and Alcohol Services
- implement the Supported Compliance scheme to improve multi-agency working to ensure offenders comply with the terms of their community order or license
- improve the sharing of data and information across agencies where it can lead to the prevention or detection of crime or safeguard children and vulnerable groups
- tackle youth offenders in an integrated way through the Youth Offending Service.

How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Reduction in repeat youth offending	0.80 re-offences per 100 young people after 12 months
Reduction in repeat offending (probation) offences	Cohort size = 2999 Actual rate of re-offending = 7.80%
incidents reported per 1000 population	Predicted rate of re-offending = 7.72% Difference from baseline (2007/08) = 1.12%
Increase in offenders successfully completing the Drug Intervention programme (DIP) in care planned way (agreed exit either abstinent or occasional user (not opiates/crack)	18%
Increase in offenders classed as problematic users (heroin/other opiates/crack) who are successfully engaging in 'effective DIP treatment'	83%

Priority 5

Broader cost effective early intervention

Lead agency –

London Borough of Barnet Children's Service

Why a priority?

Many people who cause harm to themselves, others or society, can be predicted to do so from an early age owing to the chaotic lifestyles surrounding them and their families. Factors affecting their development include drug misuse, poor attendance and attainment at school, a family history of offending, mental health issues, worklessness, or family breakdown.

Many offenders are drawn into relatively low level crime and anti-social behaviour from an early age. If their offending is not checked there is a risk they progress into being more serious offenders who are part of organised criminal networks. The Strategic Assessment has highlighted the current danger presented by the activities of established gangs, emerging gangs and youth peer groups involved in robbery and violence.

By working together to intensively support families at risk of these factors from an early stage, we can reduce the costs that the public sector incur in dealing with the consequences of offending and other social ills, and resolve problems that lead to offending in later life.

Programmes such as Family Focus, our Family Intervention programme which is the subject of Barnet's first Community Budget, pool the resources of all public services who can address families complex needs by working closer together – reducing both harm and the long term cost to the taxpayer.

What will we do to achieve this?

- pool data and resources to deliver expanded Family Focus programme, with referrals collectively identified by partners
- share information under legal safeguards to prevent and detect crime or safeguard children, which highlight those individuals, families or groups causing most harm to communities across the public service
- work with the people identified and known to be at risk of offending to resolve the issues at the earliest opportunity
- develop a model so that by 2012/13 we can measure and track the costs of crime and ASB to the criminal justice system. Measure re-offending rates for young people and adults against cohort that receive early intervention.

How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Number of families covered by expanded Family Focus programme	9

Priority 7

Tackle repeat victimisation

Lead agency –

Metropolitan Police and Criminal Justice Agencies

Why is this a priority?

The Strategic Assessment highlights that many residents are repeat victims of the same crime, particularly some of the most high harm offences such as domestic violence. There is much we can do to ensure that the circumstances that enabled the crime to take place are addressed to minimise the opportunity of a repeat, and we need to support victims to ensure that available remedies are seen through and that they can have confidence in community safety agencies and in the criminal justice system.

What will we do to achieve this?

- more integrated and consistent support to victims of Anti-Social Behaviour and tracking their cases
- Crime prevention advice to prevent repeat property crimes
- commissioning effective DV support services including funding a DV perpetrators programme
- better management of offenders to stop them re-offending
- bringing offences to justice swiftly and ensuring victims are supported through the process
- counselling and support.

How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Reduce repeat victimisation – domestic burglary	5.25%
Reduce repeat victimisation – ASB	To be established 2011/12
Reduce repeat victimisation for those domestic violence cases managed by a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	8%

Priority 8

Building Reassurance and Confidence

Lead agency –

Metropolitan Police and London Borough of Barnet

Why a priority?

The relationship between fear of crime and crime is complex and the former can be present even in low crime areas. Sometimes a fear is well founded on actual crime statistics, at other times it may be influenced by the quality of our surroundings or media perceptions of crime.

Our communications activity will seek to reassure and present the facts in a rational way that does not unduly raise perceptions of crime and emphasises that the chances of being a victim of crime are low.

We aim to increase public confidence that partners are working together to tackle the things in the public realm that make residents feel unsafe, such as street lighting and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Our general approach will be to reassure residents, but there are specific times when we might need to ensure they are not complacent about real threats that exist, and to encourage them to take precautions. For example, in a recent crime prevention awareness campaign for burglary it was apparent that many residents were unaware of the scale of the problem.

We are proud of Barnet's community cohesion and will make it a priority to retain the confidence of the Borough's diverse faith and ethnic communities, that their safety is being taken seriously and good community relations are maintained.

What will we do to achieve this?

- publish a communications strategy that informs residents of Barnet's partnership approach to community safety issues
- inform residents when we have done what they ask ('you said, we did' type campaigns)
- use Police Safer Neighbourhood teams to provide visible reassurance engagement and better public access to the Police
- develop a programme for all agencies who visit the public to help them understand how to spot vulnerable people and premises and give sound security advice
- tie in Neighbourhood Watch and Community Action (CAP) panels with the Barnet Community Safety Engagement Group to ensure the widest possible access to police and council to discuss community safety
- encourage Neighbourhood Watch champions to patrol the streets with Police Community Support Officers
- improve the public realm of the Borough as a clean and green place in which residents feel secure
- work in partnership to make our Town centres safe and attractive
- encourage a 'Big Society' approach to enviro-crime and quality of life, for example through adopt a street and resident nominated 'street champions'

- use Home Fire Safety Visits to identify areas where vulnerable people would benefit from additional support and refer that information to the appropriate agency with their consent
- promote successful examples of crimes detected and offenders prosecuted as a result of CCTV
- nurture and improve police and partner key individual networks in all our diverse communities to promote wider access to the Partnership.

How will we know if we are succeeding?⁴

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Increased confidence (measure – police and council dealing with ASB and crime issues that matter in the area)	31%
Increased feeling of safety; how safe do you feel walking alone in this area during the day? (Very/fairly safe)	99%
Increased feeling of safety; to what extent are you worried about crime in this area (very/fairly worried)	88%
Increased feeling of safety; to what extent are you worried about crime in this area (very/fairly worried)	25%

⁴ These figures are all measured from the Met Police Public Attitudes Survey

Target setting and refreshing the strategy

The targets chosen are considered most relevant to the strategic priorities. Each of them is already being collected by one or more of the agencies in the Partnership, which avoids duplication.

The targets will be regularly monitored and reported to the Safer Communities Board to assess progress.

Although this is a three year strategy, the targets will be reviewed annually; taking on board the latest intelligence and recommendations as shown in the Strategic Assessment of Crime and Disorder. The results will be published so the public can hold the Safer Communities Partnership to account.