

East Devon's Community Safety Officer's Report

December 2009

Exmouth Local Action Group met on 28th October 2009

Total crime in the sector has decreased over the last 12 months compared to the previous 12 months by 3.5%. This is a fall in crimes reported, from 2717 to 2623.

Violent Crime

- As reported at the last meeting, the Police and District Council Licensing staff, together with the District Council solicitor, have had positive talks re the setting up of a 'Cumulative Impact Zone' for Exmouth. The Town Council together with the Chamber of Commerce and Licensees Association are all supportive of the initiative. The Police will therefore be making a formal application to the Licensing Committee in early January.

Acquisitive Crime

- Both burglary categories are down, particularly burglary dwellings from 145 offences to 84, representing a decrease of 42%.
- An offender was arrested recently for a spate of dwelling burglaries.

Anti Social Behaviour

- The Section 30 Dispersal Order in Littleham continues to work well. This, together with the Interim ASBO imposed on one of the main offenders, has meant that the area is a lot quieter with fewer complaints of anti social behaviour.
- An initiative is being implemented to tackle under age drinking. This involves getting parents to collect their children from the Police Station when the children have been found in possession of alcohol or are the worse for wear. All parties have to return to the Police Station at a later date when the restorative justice model will be used to deal with the behaviour. Other agencies are also being invited to take part.

Public Confidence

- No issues have been referred to the LAG from the local P.A.C.T. panels and this should be viewed as positive in that localities are dealing with their own low level type issues.

The Sidmouth and Ottery St Mary Local Action Group met on 3rd November

Total crime in both areas has decreased over the last 12 months. In Ottery St Mary from 711 to 633 which represents a fall of 11% and in Sidmouth from 705 to 537 which is a decrease of 24%.

Violent Crime

- This remains low in both areas and there are no specific initiatives to report on.

Acquisitive Crime

- The theft of power tools from rural areas is currently being investigated.
- With regard to burglary dwelling offences which are low, the recent arrest of a man for such offences in the Avon and Somerset area is under consideration in case he committed offences in the Sidmouth area.
- Thefts from unattended motor vehicles at local beauty spots is also causing some concern.

Anti Social Behaviour

- Funding has been obtained from the Safer Devon Partnership ASB fund for Otter Valley Boxing club to encourage more young people to take up the sport.

Public Confidence

- Sergeant Andy Turner recently had a newspaper article published in the local paper which made headlines on the front page, highlighting the fact that Sidmouth has seen a decrease in crime reports.

Other Community Safety Issues

- Cannabis use amongst young people in Sidmouth is causing more concern than the use of alcohol. The Youth Service staff are aware and both Police and the Youth Service have links with YSmart to tackle the problem.

Honiton Local Action Group met on 3rd December

Total crime for this sector has decreased over the last 12 months from 929 to 819 offences which is an 11.8% reduction.

Violent Crime

- Violent crime is down by over 10%.
- Consideration is being given to setting up a Street Pastor scheme in the town.

Acquisitive Crime

- Other than initiatives already reported on there are no new ones to tackle acquisitive crime. Burglary dwelling, burglary other and theft from vehicle categories are showing significant reductions.

Anti Social Behaviour

- The increased Police patrols on both Halloween and November 5th have impacted on this category.

- At the last Youth Decision meeting in November no persons from the Honiton area were put forward for discussion. This is the first time that this has been the case since the introduction of Youth Decision meetings some 3 years ago.

Public Confidence

- Police are actively targeting red zone times and areas in order to be seen by a large number of persons at peak times.

Other Community Safety Issues

- On Halloween, a Pubs against Drugs operation was mounted in the town. A drug detection machine was also used at the local night club as a result of which some persons were warned for small possessions of controlled drugs.
- Several speed checks have been carried by officers out in several villages around Honiton. The intention is to concentrate similar checks on the town itself. Speeding traffic continues to remain a P.A.C.T. priority across East Devon.

The Axe Valley Local Action Group met on 3rd December

In both areas crime reported crimes have decreased over the last 12 months. In Axminster from 273 to 272 and in Seaton from 541 to 500 representing a fall of 7.6%.

Violent Crime

- It is hoped that the march in Axminster during the recent Domestic Violence Awareness Week will impact on this category.

Acquisitive Crime

- Cross border operations are continuing to tackle this type of crime. In Seaton there was a sudden rise in burglary dwelling offences but an offender was caught and given a substantial prison sentence.
- Farmers have offered assistance in going out with Police patrols in order to deal with rural crime.

Anti Social Behaviour

- Monies obtained from the Safer Devon Partnership ASB fund earlier in the year to fund the Police Cadets at Seaton and the Commando Challenge at Axminster, is believed to have contributed to falling reports of anti social behaviour.
- Police are dealing with an increased number of reports of under age drinking in Colyton.

Other Community Safety Issues

- A P.A.C.T. meeting is being organised at Axminster Town Hall in the new year. This is intended to be a multi agency event chaired by a local councillor and members of the public will be invited to highlight any problems or issues for discussion.

The East and Mid Devon Drug and Alcohol Group meets on Thursday 10th December while the East and Mid Devon Domestic Violence Forum meets on Wednesday 16th December.

Other General Anti Social Behaviour Work

- Reports to the Police of Anti Social Behaviour in the rowdy, nuisance and inconsiderate categories are down across the entire county. East Devon is on course to see a fall in the number of ASB RNI logs in 2009/10. A conservative estimate based on the four year average is 4%. Mid Devon is on course to see a fall of 10% based on the previous 4 year average.
- The number of incidents of anti social behaviour reported to the Police on Halloween continues to be low. Last year there were a total of 19 incidents across East Devon while this year there were 17, of which 10 were in the Exmouth area. This indicates that rural areas appear not to be suffering from such issues.
- Consideration is being given by Police and CPS to applying for ASBO's in respect of three youths who caused irreparable damage to many shop windows in Exmouth in August. It is believed that this is not the first time that these individuals have engaged in such behaviour. On previous occasions one or two of them have used graffiti to deface business premises.
- Gerry and a PCSO from Sidmouth carried out some public consultation in a road in Sidmouth which has been experiencing some anti social behaviour. It appears that things have quietened down. Police and EDDC Housing officers are aware of the issues and are dealing with them.
- £1000 has been obtained from the Safer Devon Partnership Anti Social Behaviour Fund to assist in hiring a dance group to do some work at Exmouth Community College in the new year. The Police are also providing a similar amount and the college itself will assist with other monies.

Other General Community Safety Work

- The Domestic Violence Awareness Week march in Axminster recently was well attended and there was good coverage in local newspapers. The march was followed by a series of speeches at the Young People's Centre in the town. Councillor Roger Giles from Ottery St Mary accompanied us on the march.
- Gerry attended a gipsy/ traveller conference organised by the Police near Exeter. This was an interesting day with a positive exchange of views.

- There is a drive across the entire district to get as many people as possible signed up to receive community messages from the Police.

Gerry Moore
Community Safety Officer East Devon.