

Equalities Monitoring – Services

Appendix C – Community Safety

Annual Report - 2014-15



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1. Introduction

The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act set up Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) throughout England and Wales to make key agencies work together to reduce crime and disorder. These partner agencies are the Local Authority, Police, Fire Service, the Health Service (Clinical Commissioning Group), the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company. The Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership has worked hard for the past ten years to make Bracknell Forest a safer place.

The purpose of equalities monitoring is to ensure the Council is providing a fair and equitable service to all residents. Although the Community Safety Team does not provide a service directly to the public, it has an impact in improving the health and wellbeing of the community by working with partners to eliminate victimisation, discrimination and harassment. These are crucial elements in terms of equalities.

To ensure the service is having an impact in terms of equalities, monitoring has been undertaken in terms of:

- Performance/Outcomes

The monitoring in this report is an assessment of how successful the team is in working with partners to reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the following areas:

- Reducing hate crime
- Reducing racist incidents
- Reducing domestic violence
- Reducing repeat incidents of domestic violence
- Reducing homophobic incidents

The areas to be monitored above affect all residents but have particular relevance to the following protected characteristics:

- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Disability
- Gender reassignment

The data below has been taken from:

- Thames Valley Police performance team

2. Outcomes/Performance

Hate crime is any criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated by hostility towards someone based on their disability, race, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation. Hate crimes are taken to mean any crime where the perpetrator's hostility or prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a factor in determining who is victimised.

Hate Crime includes transphobic, homophobic, racist, disablist and faith related crimes. The table below shows the trend over the last three to five years (where available).

| Trends in Hate Crime - 2009 to 2014 | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
| April - March | 73 | 74 | 46 | 33 | 54 | 31 |
| <i>Source: Thames Valley Police Crime Recording System – Niche RMS</i> | | | | | | |

The 2014/15 level of hate crime is down quite considerably when compared with last year, although is more aligned to numbers in the previous two years. Whilst this is a positive sign and there are no indications that this is not reflective of the experience of minority communities living within Bracknell Forest, the partnership remain aware that there could be issues with under-reporting and as such are working with the Milton Keynes Equality Council to raise awareness of hate crime both amongst professionals and community members.

During the year 2014/15 Bracknell Forest had the lowest number of reported hate crimes of the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities.

| Reports of Hate Crime from Berkshire Unitary Authorities 2014/15 | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---------|-----------|----------------------|--------|
| Bracknell Forest | West Berkshire | Reading | Wokingham | Windsor & Maidenhead | Slough |
| 31 | 68 | 170 | 53 | 102 | 156 |
| <i>Source: Thames Valley Police Crime Recording System – Niche RMS</i> | | | | | |

| Racist Incidents (Recorded Crime) in Bracknell Forest - 2009 to 2014 | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
| April - March | 65 | 64 | 39 | 28 | 46 | 28 |
| <i>Source: Thames Valley Police Crime Recording System – Niche RMS</i> | | | | | | |

| Racist Incidents (Non-Recorded Crime) in Bracknell Forest - 2009 to 2014 | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
| April - March | 33 | 38 | 27 | 21 | 24 |
| <i>Source: Thames Valley Police Crime Recording System – Niche RMS</i> | | | | | |

The above table shows the last 5 years data for non-recordable racist incidents (i.e. racist incidents where there was no crime committed). This figure has remained stable despite significant new communities in the Borough, which includes Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) communities, as well as new housing developments.

Comments

The hate crimes in Bracknell Forest are predominantly racist incidents. Bracknell Forest has the lowest number of racist incidents within the Thames Valley area by some considerable margin despite a growing population and an increasingly diverse community. The partnership recognise that this may reflect an issue with under-reporting and work is underway to raise awareness amongst professionals and local communities about how to report hate crime and the support that is available.

Work continues to be done to reduce hate crime. Throughout the year the Council, Police and Voluntary Sector have supported the 'One Community: Stop hate crime now', campaign. This is the strap line for a variety of projects intended to raise awareness of all hate crime. The Community Cohesion & Engagement Partnership which is made up of representatives from partnership statutory organisations has regularly monitored hate crime incidents and has been consulted and involved in the delivery of the One Community: Stop Hate Crime Now campaign.

The Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned the Milton Keynes Equality Council to work on improving third party hate crime reporting across the Thames Valley. They will offer support to victims of hate crime, investigate cases and refer to the police or local authority for further action where necessary and ensure victims are referred into local support services where ongoing support is required. They will also provide free training to professionals in the borough, look to establish a network of community champions, establish third party reporting sites within the borough and carry out awareness raising activities within the local community.

3. Local Views

General Fear of Crime

Fear of crime in Bracknell Forest is also very low. The results from the online survey that informed the Strategic Assessment demonstrate that the majority of respondents felt that Bracknell Forest has either become a better place to live or there has been no change over the last year. The perception from the vast majority of people is that levels of crime and anti-social behaviour have either gone down or stayed the same. The 2014 Bracknell Forest Residents' Survey asked respondents to indicate the

three things they liked best about living in the borough. This was an entirely spontaneous question and respondents were not prompted with answers. The low level of crime in the borough was one of the top 5 responses given. Every opportunity is taken to inform the community of the low level of crime and disorder within the borough and various media outlets are used to convey falling numbers of recorded crime throughout the year.

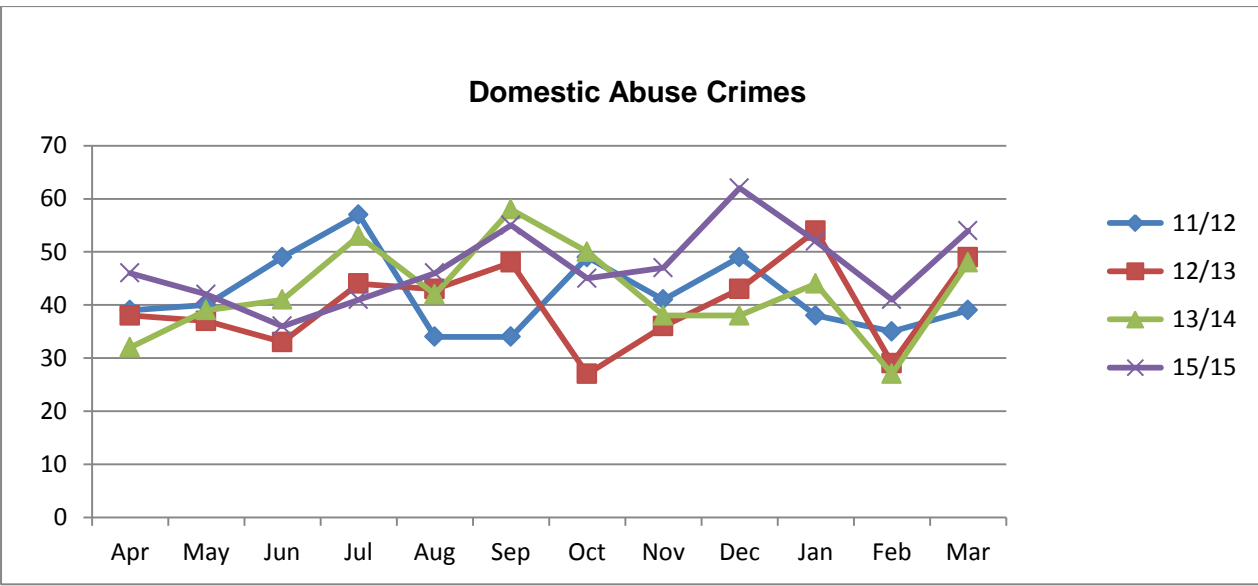
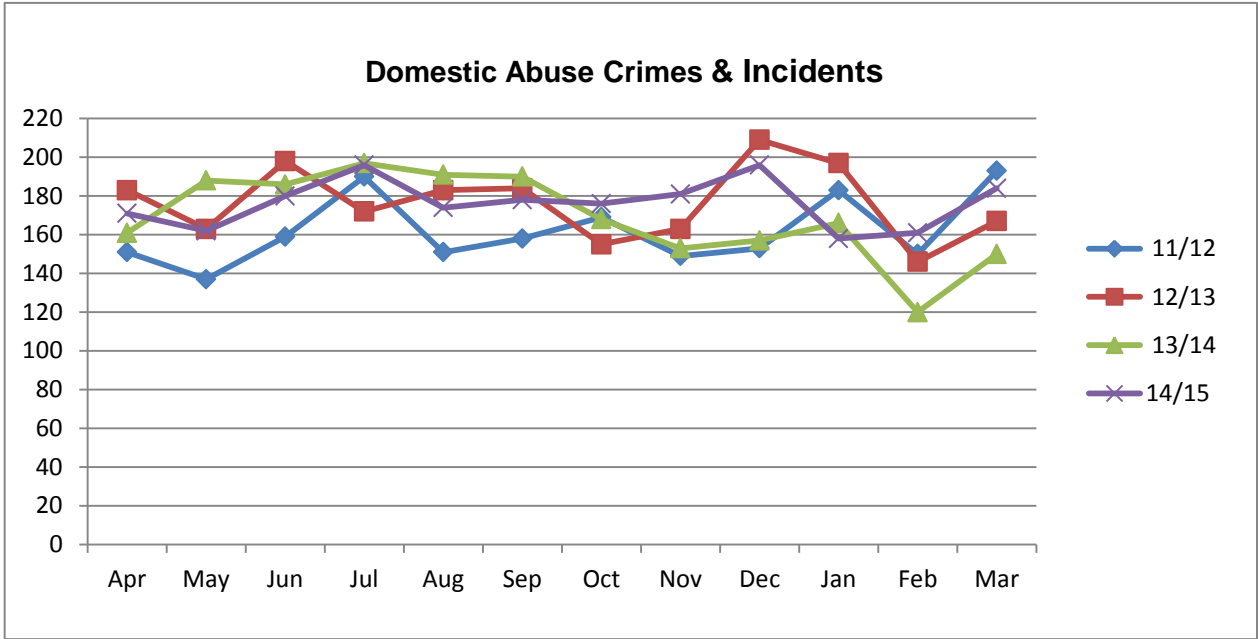
4. Actions from last year's equalities monitoring

- £100k was made available to address domestic abuse in 2014/15. The intention was to achieve 3 targets agreed by the Bracknell Forest Domestic Abuse Forum (DAF):
 - Reduce the number of reported criminal offences committed by the Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) cohorts
 - Reduce the number of children on Child Protection Plans (CPPs) where domestic abuse (DA) is a factor and the perpetrator has participated in the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Service (DAPS) programme
 - Achieve the detection rate for domestic abuse assaults with injury.
- Following consultation, it was decided by the Community Safety Partnership that the targets should reflect the cohorts that we are working directly with, as opposed to aiming to achieve widespread overall reductions. This approach to reducing the harm caused by domestic abuse is the subject of an evaluation by Cambridge University who presented their initial evaluation findings in January 2015.

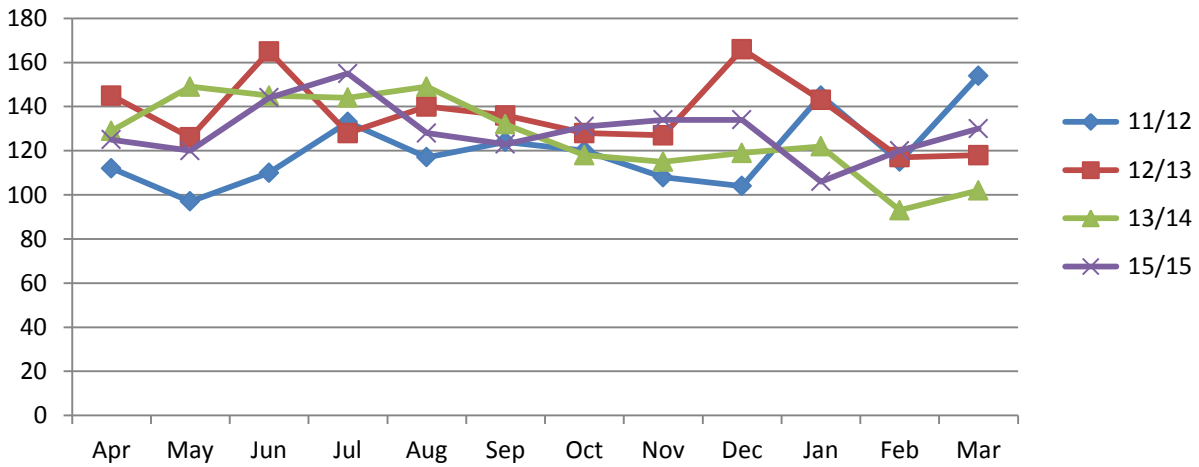
5. Domestic Abuse

The graphs below show the trend in reporting both DA crimes and non-crimes (incidents e.g. verbal assault) between 2012 and 2015. As the graphs show, the levels of crime and non-crime incidents have increased slightly across all three categories as compared to the last financial year. The increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents is believed to be due, in part, to increased confidence on the part of victims to report and increased awareness on the part of professionals. The graphs below compares the numbers of crime and non-crime incidents recorded by Thames Valley Police during the years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. There are no clear trends but it would appear reporting is highest in the summer months and around the Christmas period and lowest each February. The Domestic Abuse Forum are planning a Christmas campaign promoting the newly refreshed 'It's Never Ok' website.

The majority of the reports of DA show women as victims, particularly in cases of repeat victimisation. Where men are recorded as victims these cases can involve counter-allegations of abuse. DA can also involve same sex relationships. The last domestic homicide in Bracknell Forest (Sept 2012) was between two men.



Domestic Abuse Non Crime Occurrence



The table below shows the repeat rate for reported domestic abuse incidents across the Thames Valley. It should be noted that this data has been taken from the Domestic Abuse Information Management System and data is only available from May 2014. This is the only format that domestic repeat information is captured now and therefore comparative data from previous years is not available. The relatively high level of repeat victims of domestic abuse in Bracknell Forest may be attributable to awareness raising campaigns carried out by the Domestic Abuse Forum such as the 'It's Never Ok' campaign. It also demonstrates a trust in police to report repeat incidents of violence and projects such as the DASC encourage victims to report all further incidents of violence.

| Crime Type: | | All domestic crimes | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Months: | | May 2014 | | to | | March 2015 | | |
| Hub | | Total Unique Victims | Number of times a victim | | | | % victims more than one occurrence | % crimes against repeat victims |
| | | | 1 | 2 to 3 | 4 to 6 | 7+ | | |
| Berkshire Hub | Bracknell Forest | 459 | 369 | 84 | 6 | | 19.6% | 37.1% |
| | Reading | 995 | 799 | 177 | 18 | 1 | 19.7% | 37.9% |
| | Slough | 921 | 767 | 144 | 10 | | 16.7% | 32.0% |
| | West Berkshire | 586 | 483 | 87 | 15 | 1 | 17.6% | 36.6% |
| | Windsor And Maidenhead | 426 | 371 | 51 | 3 | 1 | 12.9% | 26.8% |
| | Wokingham | 399 | 334 | 56 | 8 | 1 | 16.3% | 33.3% |
| Buckinghamshire Hub | Aylesbury Vale | 564 | 486 | 74 | 4 | | 13.8% | 27.6% |
| | Chiltern and South Bucks | 395 | 341 | 49 | 5 | | 13.7% | 27.9% |
| | Milton Keynes | 1,326 | 1,152 | 153 | 18 | 3 | 13.1% | 27.7% |
| | Wycombe | 556 | 474 | 77 | 5 | | 14.7% | 28.8% |
| Oxfordshire Hub | Cherwell & West Oxfordshire | 699 | 610 | 83 | 6 | | 12.7% | 25.7% |
| | Oxford | 593 | 492 | 92 | 9 | | 17.0% | 32.5% |
| | South and Vale | 622 | 544 | 71 | 3 | 4 | 12.5% | 26.8% |
| Thames Valley | | 8,650 | 7,317 | 1,209 | 113 | 11 | 15.4% | 31.0% |

Annual DA Action Plans for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are available which show the projects funded by the £100,000 and the year-end progress in each area. This is available on request from community.safety@bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

The initial phase of the Domestic Abuse Service Coordination (DASC) project has been evaluated by Cambridge University, with their findings published in January 2015. This project provides enhanced support to a cohort of both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse whilst a 'control' cohort receives the standard level of service. The report from Cambridge University shows encouraging results for the programme in terms of reducing levels of harm to victims of domestic abuse. Recommendations are to increase the cohort size and monitor the long term impact of the programme over a 2 year period, both of which have been accepted by the Community Safety Partnership.

6. Conclusion

Crime continues to fall in Bracknell Forest and despite local campaigns to raise awareness of hate crime and domestic abuse in particular; the number of reports remains low compared with other CSPs and local authority areas within the Thames Valley. The annual strategic assessment of the CSP has not found any evidence to contradict the low numbers of reported incidents.