

Annual Community Safety Report – 2023 – (January to December)

SCOPE

Research and analysis for this document has been focused on the local priority areas and significant threats. Data has been obtained from Lancashire Constabulary systems from the period 00:00 hrs 1st January 2023 through 23:59 hrs 31st December 2023. Data is as at 8th January 2024.

Analysis is focused on the Wyre CSP Priorities, which are:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Violence against the person
- Domestic Abuse
- Substance Misuse – Alcohol
- Road Safety

FINDINGS/SUMMARY

- Overall crime volumes have been stable, decreasing by 0.22%.
- Violence against the person volumes have been stable, decreased by 3.37%.
- Domestic abuse has fallen by 3%.
- Alcohol related crime and incidents has fallen by 11.5%.
- ASB incidents have fallen by 2.7%.

Performance update

A COMPARISON OF 2022 AND 2023 REPORTED INCIDENTS/CRIMES

CRIMES	JAN 2022-DEC 2022	JAN 2023 - DEC 2023	DIFFERENCE	
			NUMERIC	PERCENTAGE
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	3206	3098	-108	-3.37%
THEFT	1311	1372	61	4.65%
ARSON AND CRIMINAL DAMAGE	789	855	66	8.37%
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	467	424	-43	-9.21%
VEHICLE OFFENCES	282	340	58	20.57%
BURGLARY	358	327	-31	-8.66%
SEXUAL OFFENCES	274	262	-12	-4.38%
DRUG OFFENCES	155	162	7	4.52%
MISC CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	171	161	-10	-5.85%
FRAUD AND FORGERY	98	86	-12	-12.24%
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS	83	78	-5	-6.02%
ROBBERY	24	37	13	54.17%
ALL CRIMES	7218	7202	-16	-0.22%
NON-CRIME INCIDENT OR CRIME INDICATOR	JAN 2022-DEC 2022	JAN 2023 - DEC 2023	DIFFERENCE	
			NUMERIC	PERCENTAGE
NON-CRIME	2614	2777	163	6.24%
DOMESTIC ABUSE INCIDENTS	1353	1306	-47	-3.47%
ALCOHOL RELATED (CRIME & INCIDENTS)	1087	962	-125	-11.50%
HATE CRIME	98	79	-19	-19.39%
ASB	2945	2863	-82	-2.78%

Data has been obtained from Lancashire Constabulary's investigation and incident recording systems.

In terms of overall crime levels they have increased by 0.22%, indicating that the crime levels have stabilised at pre pandemic levels as reported last year.

In terms of violence against the person there has been 3.37% decrease, of these offences, within this category there has been a 4% increase in assaults with injury although assaults without injury have reduced by 3%.

There has been a 3% reduction in Domestic Abuse related crime over the course of the year, as a percentage of all crime 18.1% of all crime were domestic abuse related, with assault without injury, assault with injury and stalking representing 62.5% of the crimes in this category.

8.9% of all crime was alcohol related with peak months occurring in June and December and again assault without injury and assault with injury represented 66% of the crimes in this category. Pharos, Mount and Tithebarn wards contributed to 27% of all the alcohol related crime.

Anti-Social Behaviour incidents decreased by 2.7%, compared to the previous year. The Peak wards included Pharos, Mount, Rossall and Park wards which when combined accounted for 40.4% of all the ASB in Wyre. Approximately 19.7% of ASB incidents were youth related representing a 2.3% decrease on 2022 when 22% of ASB was youth related.

Wyre Council - Community Safety Partnership Work 2022

Anti Social Behaviour

1. As reported in 2023 Wyre Council continues to hold and co-ordinate regular ASB meetings where partners from across the community safety sector meet to discuss individuals and locations involved in anti-social behaviour.
 - Youth ASB –
 - Location Based ASB –
 - Adult ASB

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide realm of behaviours and a number of different agencies have an input into this area of work. The multi-agency meetings allow partners to discuss cases causing issues in our community which an individual agency is struggling to resolve. Often the individuals concerned are already being dealt with by other agencies. The meetings allow for a joined up approach to resolving the issue making use of all the public sectors resources. The operation of the various multi agency groups remains as reported in the previous year and is still seen as important control mechanism.

In the case of Youth ASB, during 2022 the Councils Overview and Scrutiny committee undertook a deep delve into how the community safety partnership works together to address Youth Anti-Social behaviour. A recommendation from that report was to co-ordinate a school competition to high-light community safety issues and in June 2023 the inaugural Wyre Beat competition was held with anti-social behaviour and its impacts being the theme.

In last year's report we highlighted the work of the Multi-Agency Support Partnership (MASP) which was set up in Fleetwood as a pilot. Lancashire Violence reduction network and the office of Police and crime commissioner have recognised the value of such panels and have employed a MASP co-ordinator to start similar panels across the County of Lancashire. It should however be noted that the funding for the Lancashire violence reduction network and the work they have been doing in Lancashire only have funding until the end of March 2025 and there has been no guarantee that the funding will be extended beyond this date.

As stated last year one of the major findings of the pilot here in Fleetwood was the value of youth champions program which had been commissioned by the Violence reduction network. The Youth Champions program provide ongoing mentoring to children identified by the MASP or the youth ASB group.

On a more positive note during 2023 the Police and Crime commissioner's office launched operation centurion, which aimed to increase police presence in ASB hot spot areas. The increased presence in these hot spot areas, anecdotally seems to have had a significant impact on anti-social behaviour in these locations. It is our understanding that the project will be evaluated and we will wait the police and crime commissioner's findings.

As reported last year when considering anti-social behaviour there is always a tendency to focus on youth related anti-social behaviour, but of the 2863 anti-social behaviour incidents reported this year only 566 were youth related representing only 19.7% of the

total reports. Therefore the vast majority of anti-social behaviour is committed by adults and a significant proportion of those will be the result of inter neighbour disputes. Where an inter neighbour dispute occurs they tend to be long running lasting a long periods of time, and are often never fully resolved. They often result in both parties complaining about the behaviour of the other and therefore each dispute can result in numerous reports. As a result inter neighbour disputes are very time consuming for both the police and Wyre Council and they can easily escalate into more serious offences.

These disputes are also very damaging to the mental health of the individuals involved and last year we reported that we were utilising Covid 19 funding to assist with mediation in complex cases. This is set to continue during 2024 and then the service will be reviewed. In addition during 2024 we will be exploring options to improve how Wyre Council collect evidence of alleged anti-social behaviour in these cases.

2. Domestic Violence –

Last year we reported that there has been a domestic homicide which the Community Safety Partnership have agreed to review. In this case the review had been paused whilst criminal proceedings were investigated. The case at present is still paused awaiting the outcome of the criminal investigation.

During the course of the year there have been discussions at County level on how to improve the learning from Domestic Homicide reviews. It is hoped that this work will result in recommendations in any part of the County being circulated to all relevant parties. In addition this group has also been looking at how independent chairs and authors of Domestic Homicide reviews will be funded. Those discussions are ongoing, but it is hoped the costs can be Borne by all Statutory Community Safety partners based on population covered by the organisation and the level of domestic abuse activity within their geographical area.

In Wyre Domestic violence has reduced over the last 12 months by 3% however there was still 1307 offences representing 18.1% of all crime, therefore we will continue utilising the no excuse for abuse campaign material to raise awareness of the crime. Wyre Council along with other local authorities continue to make an annual financial contribution towards Victim Support.

Between the 1/4/23 to 31/12/23 Victim support received 971 referrals for Wyre and supported 323 victims – this includes 212 assessed as being high risk of serious harm/homicide which represents a 70% engagement rate. The service are on target for around 1,300 referrals by the end of the year (31/3/24) and estimate around 450 victims will be supported. If you compare this with last year 1/4/22 – 31/3/23 they received 1,055 referrals and supported 380 victims in the full year, so they have seen an increase of around 23% on referrals and 18% of victims supported.

During the Course of the year a program (Drive) has been developed to provide support to perpetrators to try and change their behaviours towards partners. The program is in its very early stages and is being run alongside MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) to identify individuals where the program may work. This program is in recognition that we can help victims escape from perpetrators, but unless the perpetrators behaviour changes they are likely to find another victim at some point in the future.

3. Violence Reduction / Alcohol related crime

Last year we reported that Wyre Community Safety partnership will be required to produce an action plan on how it intends to contribute to the new statutory duty to reduce violence within their area. I can confirm that with the assistance of partners a Wyre Community Safety Action Plan has been produced. The aim is for this action plan to be regularly updated with new initiatives added, but also help partners identify gaps and not duplicate work.

There is an argument for saying that every community safety priority if left unchallenged can lead to serious violence, and many of the actions overlap and our challenge in Wyre is to make all those actions work cohesively, as if we were a single agency when required.

In identifying actions we have identified the following categories with actions being identified against each category.

1. Anti-social behaviour
2. Vulnerability
3. Knife crime
4. Domestic abuse
5. Organised crime
6. Substance misuse

Some of the actions, have already been mentioned in this report, for example the work of MASP fits with the category vulnerability, the work of the Drive Domestic abuse perpetrator program fits within the Domestic abuse category..

A key action identified within the plan is to develop operation Prosper - known as Clear, Hold, Build. In the last 18 months the Police have been targeting organised crime in an area identified as having a disproportionately high organised crime activity. This work has had an impact on organised crime groups within the area and is extremely welcomed. As the project develops we hope the actions identified within the violence reduction action plan can also work specifically within this small area geographical area and help this community in particular build resilience towards preventing criminal activity.

The Community Alcohol Partnership in Fleetwood reported last year fits with both anti-social behaviour and organised crime. This partnership has grown during the course of the year and delivered many actions particularly during Alcohol Awareness Week. Work is currently being done to extend the Community Alcohol Partnership to other areas of the borough. There has been a reduction of 11.5% in alcohol related crime and this partnership is a key community intervention in trying to tackle such crime.

4 Road Safety

During the course of 2023 Fire and Rescue, Wyre Council and the police delivered LFRS didn't delivered a project to take a Wasted Lives Vehicle to areas of the borough where we were receiving reports of regular vehicle nuisance. The intention was to try to engage with young drivers and educate on the risks associated with driving at speed, without due care and attention,

etc. They did this in both Knott End and Preesall, and also to a larger audience during Cleveleys Car Show, in which they also used a wrecked car to provide a demonstration of how they respond to Road Traffic Accidents and safely extract vehicle occupants for treatment.

As part of this project we tasked some of the Media Degree students within Blackpool & Fylde College with modernising the messages around the Fatal 5 (ie: speeding, using a mobile phone, drink and drug driving, not wearing a seatbelt, and careless driving), with the intent of them targeting the interest of a younger audience through apps such as Snap Chat and Tik Tok, etc. To date we have not received material of suitable quality to be used in this way. We are still trying to encourage this work to be completed, but there is no guarantee of completion.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service also held a Generation Day aimed at older members of the community and within that offered free eye tests to encourage older drivers to ensure that they are still safe to drive and this is something we hope to repeat this year.

This month the Community Safety Partnership held its first E-Scooter Event. This was a combined effort between the Council's Community Safety Team, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Wyre Neighbourhood Policing team, and Lancashire County Council's Road Safety Team. The event has been organised in response to the number of complaints being received and accidents occurring involving E-Scooters, and is intended to raise awareness of the legalities of E-Scooters and the current fire risks around the use and storage of the lithium batteries used to power them. The event took place in the car park of Fleetwood's ASDA on Saturday 10th February. It is hoped that the event could be repeated in the summer on Rossall Promenade which is another hot spot area for this type of activity.

- 5. CCTV** – Last year I reported that a business case had been made to upgrade the Wyre & Fylde analogue cameras to digital and in preparation the project has been included in the UK SPF fund, which provided significant funding to help enable the project to go ahead.

During the course of the year a successful procurement was undertaken using a framework agreement, and BT were appointed as our contractor to upgrade the infrastructure, cameras and control room.

Work started on the project just before Christmas 2023 and is due to be completed by the 1 April 2024.

The upgrade will increase the quality of CCTV picture especially at night time and consequently the evidence available to the police. CCTV is also seen as a vital tool to improve feelings of safety and increase the confidence of the general public to use our town centres, which are vital to the local economy.

- 6. New Statutory duties** – As reported previously a new statutory duty will be introduced during the course of the Parliament placing an explicit duty on Public Bodies to protect the public from Terrorist attack known as Martins Law following the Manchester Arena attack.

At present there is no new update as it is still working its way through parliament.

Other Community Safety Work awareness raising Communication campaigns

- 7.** In the run up to Christmas the team engaged with the Councils Communications team to develop a social media campaign around, “Have you forgotten something.” Which was aimed at reminding people to lock up their belongings, with the aim of discouraging opportunistic burglaries.

At the same time Wyre Council Licensing team paid for a trained drug detector dog to visit with the assistance of police colleagues all licensed premises in Poulton. This action received support from the licensing trade and members of the public alike and is something that the partnership will endeavour to repeat.

In addition the licensing team also paid for Taxi Marshalls to cover the Christmas period to try and prevent incidents as people wait for taxis to take them home. We will be exploring whether this can be done for busy periods to support the night time economy.

- 8.** During the course of the year we have worked with Child Safety Media and various partners within the CSP who have all signed up to support crucial crew initiative this year. The event planned for the 19th – 23rd February at the loft house buildings will deliver key community safety messages via a number of interactive presentations to year 6 children from a number of primary schools across the Wyre District. The presentations and partners involved include:

- ASB – Wyre neighbourhood Policing Team + Wyre Community Safety Department
- Road Safety / E-Scooters – LFRS
- Internet Safety – Police Head Quarters Cyber Security Team
- Drugs / Alcohol / Vaping – We Are With You
- Basic First Aid – North West Ambulance
- Water / Safety – National Coast Guard Agency
- Community / Railway Safety - British Transport Police

