

Community Safety Action Plan

2024-2025

Epsom and Ewell has long been a safe place compared with neighbouring areas, a place where residents, workers, students and visitors can feel confident in going about their daily lives and enjoy all that the borough has to offer.

However, when issues do occur, they create significant public concern and if not addressed at an early stage, can escalate quickly and attract further, more serious problems. There is also the aspect of hidden crime where the victim may not have a voice and where vulnerable people are subject to coercion, exploitation and abuse. The pattern of crime and anti-social behaviour across the country is changing, and Epsom and Ewell's proximity to London as well as its excellent transport links means that community safety is a high priority for the Borough Council and is seen as central to the borough's future success.

As part of the Epsom & Ewell Community Safety Partnership, we have already committed to playing our part in the following themes:

1. Focus on the most vulnerable or those at risk of harm
2. Serious organised crime and PREVENT
3. Identify and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
4. Improve Community Engagement

This action plan sets out what we intend to do to deliver improvements within our resource for the benefit of the community.

Focus on the most vulnerable or those at risk of harm

Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings

Focussing on both victims and perpetrators, the Community Harm and Risk Reduction Meetings (CHaRMM), are regular multiagency meetings aimed at planning interventions with perpetrators and supporting victims.

For example:

Over the course of a year, in the region of 65 victims and perpetrators are case managed with actions being assigned to appropriate agencies.

We will:

Aim to attend all monthly CHaRMM meetings for the purposes of recording action plans per individual and contribute to joint problem solving with both our community safety and housing teams.

As part of our wider CSP responsibilities, we will maintain the administrative duties associated with CHaRMM.

Ensure Domestic Homicide Reviews are implemented

In circumstances where someone over 16 dies as a result of violence, abuse or neglect by someone they are related to, or in the same household the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), is required to hold a review known as a Domestic Homicide Review Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is responsible for resourcing the review and appointing the Chair.

For example:

The first ever DHR held in the borough reached conclusions of national significance around cyber stalking and these findings were sent to the Home Office for consideration.

We will:

Ensure the current DHR, established in 2023 following an incident in the borough, and any future DHRs, are properly resourced to give the CSP the necessary space to examine any of the learning and conclude where recommendations for improvement ought to be made. This will include making sufficient officer time available to operate the formalised panel meetings and funding the costs of the independent Chair.

Carry out Antisocial Behaviour Case Reviews

ASB case reviews, previously known as the Community Trigger are a formalised way for a victim of ASB to request a review of their case and for the main responsible agencies (police, housing, local authority etc), to undertake an evaluation of the case to determine whether any further action is required.

For example:

We have processed 7 reviews in three years all of which have resulted in recommendations to progress cases of ASB.

We will:

Continue to operate the ASB case review process on behalf of the CSP raising the support for victims and ensuring no one falls between the cracks. We will provide the necessary officer time to administer the process and use our network of contacts to locate an independent chair where appropriate so as to be able to challenge the responsible agencies, including the Council in their assumptions and case handling.

Revise our Joint Action Group process

A Joint Action Group is an area based intervention approach looking at locations such as an individual property, road, estate or other definable geographic location and problem solving viable solutions using targeted interventions. A JAG will normally involve the main agencies for the area such as Council, Landlord, Police, Childrens or Adult Services and utilise available assets such as police Design out Crime Officer or joint Environmental Visual Audits

For example:

The Joint Action Group project to address scrambler bikes in the Hook Road Arena identified physical measures which were deployed to reduce the occurrence of this type of behaviour in this open space.

We will:

Move to a standing JAG arrangement away from an ad-hoc approach to ensure there is always a forum for partner agencies to ask for help with a joint approach to area based issues. We will hold these meetings once every 8 weeks and ensure that each part of the JAG is followed through with agencies being held to account for their actions.

Serious Organised Crime and PREVENT

Ensure our intelligence is reported via appropriate routes

Our staff are in a strong position to be able to detect the hidden signs of crime. For example our Environmental Enforcement team are out and about daily, our Environmental Health Team are visiting homes and businesses in the borough, often without warning, and our street cleansing and refuse collection staff are in the community at times of day many others are still in bed.

For example:

Our reporting of suspicious circumstances in commercial and residential properties, detected by our staff during the course of their work have led directly to police interventions around modern day slavery.

We will:

Provide our staff with Serious Organised Crime awareness sessions and invite our partners to participate. We will use appropriate intelligence submission methods such as the agreed partnership intelligence form or the national intelligence model process to record and submit suspicious behaviour and observations to police.

Deliver ACT Awareness training to key members of staff and ensure major events benefit from formal counter terrorism considerations.

Our role both as landowners, events organisers and chairing of Safety Advisory Groups puts us in a strong position to effect change in considering counter terrorism where it can be achieved simply, safely and pragmatically.

For example:

The Christmas light switch on in 2022 was the first event, planned and organised by the Business Improvement District and the Council where direct input from a Counter Terrorism Security Advisor was sought and event staff received awareness training.

We will:

Roll out more wider training to relevant staff and promote the same to the organisers of larger events.

Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Groups

These police briefings advise partners on the current investigations into organised crime gangs, the identity of persons of interest and the contribution sought from other agencies.

For example:

The county line drug operation leading to an estate in the Borough was traced back to a London based dealer using information from the SOC JAG process.

We will:

Distil the SOC JAG information and ensure key members of staff have access to appropriately screened material to allow their teams to make a contribution to the fight against organised crime.

Identify and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour

In consideration of the cross over between this priority and supporting the vulnerable, our actions around CHaRMM and JAGS also apply here. In addition :

Review of Town Centre Data

Owing to its density and popularity as a destination, Epsom Town Centre does feature as one of the borough locations which experience higher than average reports of ASB and other activity.

For Example:

Our work with partners identified a hot spot for ASB within the town centre associated with a particular locality which brought focus around appropriate actions.

We will:

Although we do not employ data analysts, we will continue to use tools such as the Police D10 Partnership Product and other available techniques to identify trends and behaviours that ought to be tackled. Where possible we will draw upon the data analysis carried out by partner agencies to further the targeting of measures.

Improve Community Engagement

Joint initiatives to engage with the public

We have relationships with a variety of other enforcement agencies which allows each to support joint action days and joint initiatives including "Meet the Beat", Violence Against Women And Girls day of action and Roadside Education and Enforcement (REED), events.

For example:

During ASB Awareness week in 2023, we helped organise and participated in outreach events spread over three days at three separate locations in the borough.

We will:

Continue to seek opportunities to work with partners in the promotion of community safety priorities including further REED days, ASB Awareness Week, County Lines Intensification week and Safeguarding Adults Week.

Social Media Messaging

The Council has a variety of social media accounts with many borough residents following and using social media to engage with us.

For example:

Our outreach events during ASB Awareness Week in 2023 were covered by the social media accounts of the Council and our partners attracting engagement from members of the public who were not able to visit the physical event.

We will:

Ensure that our partners messages are amplified and that our own social media messaging is targeted and informative to allow members of the community to see what we do and the results we are delivering.