



SAFER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP
Reducing Crime & Substance Misuse

Isle of Wight Crime and Drugs Strategy 2005-2008

Background

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a duty on local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP's) to conduct a community audit every three years. Its purpose is to establish a detailed picture of the nature and extent of crime and disorder and its impact on people living in the community. This information enables partnerships to form a three-year strategy to deal with the identified issues. On the Island the CDRP has joined with the Drugs Action Team to form the "Safer Communities Partnership", a multi-agency group now responsible for setting and delivering this strategy.

The Partnership commissioned Portsmouth University in December 2004 to undertake its audit. Research was completed and extensive surveys were conducted with members of our Island community, including 1170 responses from young people, 736 from adults and 84 from business.

The audit confirmed that while the Isle of Wight remains an attractive and relatively safe area with low (and falling) crime rates, there are issues that will remain a challenge to the Partnership e.g. some of the structural problems which confront the Island, and which ultimately have an impact on crime and disorder. These problems stem from the nature and extent of employment, education and training opportunities and the impact and nature of both people moving to the Island and the loss of young people moving to the mainland.

The audit, taken with other crime data, has resulted in the development of a three-year strategy designed to deliver tangible benefits to the community. This includes a framework of six themed areas for action:

- **Managing the night-time economy**
- **Violence**
- **Overall Crime**
- **Anti-Social Behaviour and Disorder**
- **Services for Young People**
- **Partnership working and communication**

1. Managing the "Night Time Economy"

The audit recognises the continuing problem surrounding the sale and use of alcohol on the Island. Frequent reference was made to the impact of themed pubs and bars within the evening license trade. Excessive use of alcohol was identified as being more of a significant problem than drug use on the Island, often resulting in violence and anti-social behaviour particularly amongst young people.

Plans are being developed to include a combination of long-term strategies to deal with these issues as well as short-term plans to provide protection to the community from abusive or threatening behaviour including anti-social behaviour orders, public order policing and alcohol exclusion zones.

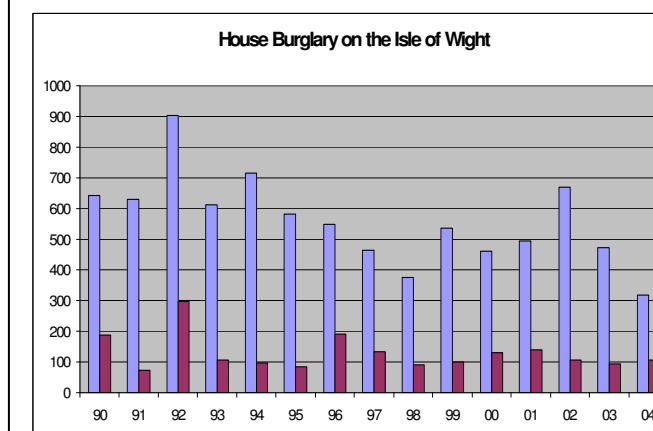
2. Violence

While the majority of violent offences stem from alcohol abuse, the survey also drew attention to the size and nature of hidden crime on the Island – relating to both domestic violence and drug use among adults.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Police continue to operate a zero tolerance approach to domestic violence and are introducing programmes to reduce repeated victimisation, in addition to addressing a need for greater collaboration between the police, social services and criminal justice system.

Initiatives such as the Lighthouse Project are also in place to deal with Class A drug abusers, ensuring they receive treatment to help them come off the drugs that fuel violence and crime.

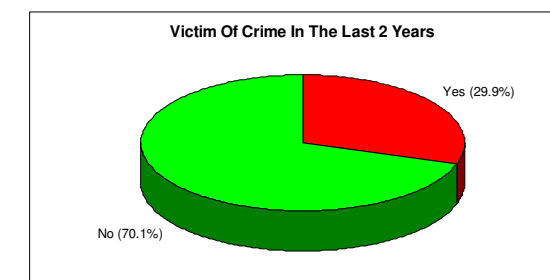
3. Overall Crime



The above diagram shows the level of house burglary over the last 14 years. The smaller columns indicate how many offences were solved.

Survey data shows that while adults on the Island are very concerned about crime, this does not reflect the reality of crime, where relatively low levels of e.g. recorded theft and burglary have continued to fall, particularly in the last 2 years.

Victim of crime



Similarly, the survey indicates how safe the island is with only 30% of residents having been a victim of crime in the last two years, with offences tending to be closely related to quality of life issues involving, most frequently, dog fouling, rubbish/litter and anti-social behaviour from drunk/rowdy youths.

However, our strategy will continue to take steps to reduce overall crime and target prolific offenders including; drug dealers, drugs-related theft, residential burglary, tourist and commercial crime.