

SAFER AND STRONGER SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE PLAN

“We are working hard to ensure you; your family and your community are safe and feel safe in your home and neighbourhood.”

Introduction

South Gloucestershire is a safe place to live and work. Dedicated and hard-working emergency service, council staff and people working for partner agencies do an incredible job – 24 hours a day, every day of the year – to keep you safe, support victims of crime and to bring those that cause us harm to justice.

But there is still more that we can do.

We have listened to your views, your priorities and those of our key partners to ensure that this Plan seeks to address the issues that most affect you and your community.

Strong communities are weakened by inequality but strengthened by tolerance and understanding. There can never be any excuse for hate crime in any shape or form and this criminality will not be tolerated in South Gloucestershire. We need to be an inclusive area, accepting and welcoming and to celebrate the difference that makes our communities so rich, rather than letting it divide us.

By working together towards one single plan, complex community safety and crime issues which require an agreed multi-agency approach to resolve can be tackled more effectively.

The Plan identifies a series of priorities where we feel collectively, that we can make the most difference to achieve the best outcomes for individuals, families and communities. We want all local people to be safe and feel safe; to be able to contribute to community life and take responsibility for their actions.

This plan asks for your support because together we can make South Gloucestershire an even safer place to live and work.

Sue Mountstevens

Police and Crime Commissioner

Councillor Heather Goddard

Chair, Safer and Stronger Communities

Strategic Partnership

General approach of the Partnership and its Plan

Our general approach to making South Gloucestershire safer and stronger is very pragmatic:

1. We intend to concentrate on a few key priorities where we believe we can make a real impact in the next few years, rather than trying to list every possible area of activity.
2. We acknowledge that other strategic bodies lead on the delivery of some services that impact on residents. For example the Local Safeguarding Children Board leads on work in response to Child Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation; the Health and Wellbeing Board leads on mental health issues; and the Safeguarding Adults Board co-ordinates work in response to adult sex abuse. In such areas these bodies will continue to have the lead responsibility. However during the lifespan of this plan we will strengthen links and operational relationships to them in order both to improve our understanding and to co-ordinate service delivery.

During the four years of this plan we will create a more victim focused approach to vulnerability and victimisation, prioritise children as a focus for safeguarding, and aim to create a society free from violence and abuse.

The proposed refreshed strategy lays out three priorities until 2021. These have been established taking into account an assessment of crime and disorder in the local area; the results of public consultation locally; and through the consultation carried out by the Police & Crime Commissioner in developing the Police and Crime Plan for Avon and Somerset. For each priority the strategy includes:

- Key objectives to achieve by 2021
- A summary of key issues
- Actions planned 2017-2021
- Performance Measures where we will regularly review results in order to evaluate the extent to which our actions are improving outcomes for residents of South Gloucestershire. In assessing these results we will be mindful that performance measures should not be used to drive behaviour which is not in the best interest of our residents.

Progress towards achieving the aims laid out in this plan will be considered by the Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership twice a year. We will also monitor the wider strategic impacts through other meetings on a regular basis.

A Strategic Assessment of Crime and Disorder will be carried out each year and the results of this used to prioritise work to achieve the objectives set out in the Safer and Stronger South Gloucestershire Plan; and to assess whether our priorities are still relevant.

The results of this assessment, and of the work planned for the next twelve months, will be published in April each year.

Priority 1: Protecting people from harm

Key Objectives – What do we plan to achieve by 2021

- **Protect residents of South Gloucestershire from harm**
- **Reduce deprivation and inequality between different communities in South Gloucestershire**
- **Ensure the provision of services to enable victims to cope and recover**
- **Deliver high quality effective services that are well informed, victim-centred where appropriate, with a focus on early intervention**
- **Reduce the likelihood of repeat victimisation**
- **Tackle offenders that commit crimes against vulnerable people**
- **Raise awareness of hidden harm crimes**
- **Give victims confidence to report**
- **Improve joint working in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults**

The purpose of the Partnership is to help protect residents of South Gloucestershire from harm, including that caused by crime, and to build strong communities. Strong communities are those where residents are able to help prevent or respond to problems themselves – both individually and in groups.

The best way to protect people from harm is to prevent hurt to them in the first place, and we will be continuing previously successful work to achieve this, for example by seeking to reduce crime levels. But we cannot prevent all damage and so will also work to help and support those who have been harmed, in order to reduce its longer term impact on them. We will also work together to try to reduce the likelihood of repeat victimisation.

In an ideal world we would be able to provide all the help or support that everyone needs. However in a period of national austerity and shrinking local funding, we have to focus our efforts and resources at individuals who are more vulnerable to harm. Vulnerability may be linked to a person's ethnicity; gender, age; sexuality; physical or mental condition, or location.

Some people find it particularly difficult to engage with formal support structures or even to report some of the harm they experience to bodies like the Police or the Council. We need to work together to build their confidence and ability to do so. This can be achieved by providing simple, clear, and comprehensive ways for them to communicate with people who can provide support, and by actively dealing with the perpetrators of such issues when they are reported.

As well as some people being vulnerable as individuals, some communities – of geography and of interest - experience more tension and hatred than others. Cohesiveness - the extent to which different communities live in harmony and with a shared perception of fairness - is critical in building and maintaining strong communities. In 2016 a survey found that only 8.5% of South Gloucestershire residents believe people from different backgrounds do not get on well together in their local area. However, there are some communities in the area experiencing levels of tension between different groups, and we will concentrate on these more difficult areas to encourage positive relationships between different groups where we can.

We have identified 5 Priority Neighbourhoods which are categorised by the national Indices of Deprivation as amongst the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England and Wales. These are Cadbury Heath, Kingswood, Patchway, Staple Hill, and west and south Yate/Dodington. In each of these areas a local Partnership Network is co-ordinating work to ensure local input, and in many areas they are delivering excellent work on the ground. Now we need to match that local leadership with more a strategic focus to address the factors which can help lift areas out of multiple deprivation

Actions 2017-2021

- Support vulnerable people and ensure that victims have access to services that will enable them to cope and recover
- Improve the services provided to victims of crime
- Extend support for victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse to provide specialist provision for male and LGBTQ victims.
- Support the introduction of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in South Gloucestershire
- Implement plans to improve effectiveness of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference for vulnerable victims of domestic abuse
- Give victims confidence to report
- Raise awareness of 'hidden harm' crimes such as hate crime, modern slavery and domestic abuse
- Train staff and the public in how to identify and report cases of modern slavery, and carry out multi-agency operations in response to reported cases
- Tackle offenders that commit crimes against vulnerable people
- Identify areas that require additional resources to address deprivation and develop and implement targeted plans to reduce inequalities
- Review and improve communication of how to access support, or report incidents, related to our work
- Implement agreed outcomes from the review of the response to mental health crises.
- Support the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in developing and improving provision to safeguard children

Performance Measures

- Satisfaction of vulnerable victims with the handling of their cases
- Repeat victimisation rate following a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference for vulnerable victims of domestic abuse
- Number of Neighbourhoods in the worst 20% nationally as measured through the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.
- Number of instances where LSOAs in priority neighbourhoods score in the worst 20% nationally in deprivation indices.

Priority 2 – Strengthen and improve your local community

Key Objectives – What do we plan to achieve by 2021

- **Build safer, stronger and more cohesive communities**
- **Diverse communities will be engaged and well understood**
- **Improve wellbeing for residents and communities**
- **Ensure services are accessible to all, and responsive when needed**
- **People are satisfied with the service they have received**
- **Local Priorities are addressed**
- **Reduce crime and fear of crime**
- **Improve crime prevention and reduce reoffending**
- **Bring offenders to justice**
- **Increase community involvement in civic life**

South Gloucestershire has a proven track record of effective partnership working to reduce crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and improve wellbeing for residents and communities.

Efforts to build and enhance community cohesion are critical in building and maintaining strong communities, and ones with a shared sense of fairness and representation. No one knows an area better than the people who live there and it is essential that they have an influence over how areas move forward in the future.

Confidence in partner agency's efforts to build this sense of equal representation is dependent on services being accessible to all. This includes our commitment to disability access and engaging with those harder to reach in the community whether that be because of language barriers, cultural differences or other reasons. It depends upon being able to provide a timely response when critical matters arise, and maintaining a variety of methods of contact.

An engaged community is a resilient one. A key aim of partner agencies must be to achieve the highest levels of community involvement in civic life, whether via community events and participation or by use and uptake of provided facilities and services. The benefits include information sharing, building trust and confidence in local services, and providing good value services that are matched to demand.

In a diverse society efforts must be made to encourage community cohesion, a shared sense of identity and to ensure that all parts of the community have a stake in local amenities. Such communities are more resilient when incidents occur which might cause tension and threaten division along perceived fault lines of difference.

Pivotal to this is the engagement of communities in decisions which affect them. This can be achieved through effective consultation, whether online, through surveys or by engagement through community groups. We will work with our local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners to create opportunities for people from different cultures, age groups and experience to get together over the issues that matter to them as they are often well placed to create relationships and partnerships based on trust and respect.

Above all our residents need to be safe. Reducing crime, bringing offenders to justice and reducing fear of crime are all important metrics. Whilst recorded crime may rise due to increased confidence in reporting, ultimately the aim has to be to achieve lower recorded crime long term. An effective suite of crime prevention strategies compliments this, and there's an opportunity to increase community participation with effective Neighbourhood Watch schemes. These can improve crime intelligence and foster community engagement in problem solving and crime reduction.

Initiatives to reduce reoffending present opportunities, whether through established Impact and multi-agency interventions targeting offenders and ex-offenders or new schemes such as 'West of England Works'. This is part of the Building Better Opportunities programme and involves a range of VCSE organisations based in South Gloucestershire and elsewhere. This is an example of the VCSE sector getting involved in exciting work to reduce re-offending and make our communities safer for all our residents.

Actions 2017-2021

- Develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated programme to improve community cohesion
- Review the operation and impact of Community Engagement Forums
- Work to improve the effectiveness of the IMPACT service which works with repeat offenders
- Complete an assessment of the behavioural drivers of offending, and support implementation of a revised strategy to reduce re-offending
- Improve the effectiveness of taxi marshalls in responding to late night trouble in Kingswood and Chipping Sodbury.
- Develop and implement plans for our key hot spot areas
- Implement a multi-agency night time economy project to target problem locations associated with licensed premises
- Conduct targeted operations to utilise the surveillance ability of the council's community safety CCTV network to tackle ASB hotspots
- Use new ASB Tools and Powers to tackle a range of issues of community nuisance
- Agree and implement a multi-agency response to the issue of flygrazing

Performance Measures:

- % residents who think there is a problem with people not treating each other with respect and consideration in their local area.
- % residents who feel their area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.
- Total recorded crimes per 1,000 population
- % residents who agree Police and other public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour in the local area
- % residents feeling safe outside in the local area
- Victim satisfaction with the handling of cases
- % residents who feel anti-social behaviour is a problem in their area
- Victim satisfaction with handling of ASB cases
- % cases where positive outcomes are achieved for victims
- Recorded incidents of criminal damage per 1,000 population
- Serious acquisitive crimes per 1,000 population
- Reoffending rate

- Violence with injury per 1,000 population
- People contributing time to their community as volunteers through the local VCSE sector
- Proportion of residents who report they are happy with aspects of community participation in their local area
- Proportion of residents who report they are happy with aspects of health and wellbeing in their local area

Priority 3 – Working together effectively

Key Objectives – What do we plan to achieve by 2021

- To provide effective leadership to strengthen relationships between sectors, for the benefit of residents and communities
- To link and shape multi-agency efforts to reduce crime, and to strengthen local communities
- To influence organisations to work together, providing integrated services and sharing information and intelligence, to provide an effective victim-centred response
- To effectively co-ordinate and support delivery of work that results in safer and stronger South Gloucestershire communities
- To respond appropriately to change and arising issues
- The Partnership will be representative of the communities it serves
- To continuously improve our effectiveness

If asked who is responsible for preventing, or dealing with the impacts of crime and disorder, most people would name the Police. But there are many organisations which also play an important role.

This partnership brings together a range of these organisations to co-ordinate and help deliver actions which support the development of safer and stronger communities in South Gloucestershire. These include South Gloucestershire Council, the Police and the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC), Fire and Rescue Service, Clinical Commissioning Group, Probation services, Social Landlords, and the VCSE sector.

The Partnership believes that strong communities are safe communities, hence it works to strengthen communities as well as to address crime.

The primary purpose of the Partnership, in sharing a common vision, is to co-ordinate and help deliver actions that support the development of safer and stronger communities within South Gloucestershire. The Partnership will aim to effectively link and shape work carried out by a significant number of organisations in order not only to reduce crime, but also to strengthen local communities and cohesion.

As we look forward we face many opportunities as well as finding challenges to overcome. We need to balance the demands placed on us while maintaining a high level focus on achieving the continuing results that are so important to our local residents, this can only be achieved by working effectively in partnership.

By working together, in common leadership and on an equal footing, we agree to develop a way of working to provide leadership to strengthen the relationship between the sectors, for the benefit of residents and communities.

By considering changes and issues that are likely to impact on its future work, the Partnership can ensure these are appropriately responded to. The most significant change remains the continued pressure on public sector funding, and the changes that will have to be made by public sector organisations in order to meet future savings targets.

The Strategic Partnership has made some changes to its own operation in order to continue being effective within the reduced capacity of many of its constituent organisations. These include reducing the number of meetings, while acknowledging more work will need to be done electronically. A close eye will be kept on whether these changes achieve the desired results.

One of the ways of achieving this is to use a 'maturity' model to assess the partnership and this will be implemented for the first time in 2017-18. The findings will be a benchmark against which progress will be able to be monitored.

In addition it is proposed to concentrate on two aspects of our approach in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency. These are both related and are:

- Data (sharing and using)
- Shifting to a more operational partnership approach

Actions 2017-2021

- Work to link data held by individual organisations so this can more easily be used to greater effect
- Increase insight of the SSCSP and other agencies into work that contributes to the safety and strength of local communities such as Safeguarding, Youth Offending Management, and areas of work around Child Exploitation, and Mental health
- Improve practical and working links with other partnerships leading work in areas such as Safeguarding, Youth Offending management, Child Sexual Exploitation, and modern slavery in order to improve the effectiveness of our joint response to both victims and perpetrators
- Refine routes for reporting crimes and ASB so they are clear, simple, and readily understood by the public.
- Refine routes for victims to access support so they are clear, simple, and readily understood by the victims.
- Map and understand the role and responsibilities of different bodies which deliver work that results in safer and stronger South Gloucestershire communities.
- Undertake a benchmark assessment of partnership maturity in the first six months of 2017-18 using a proven maturity method then develop and implement plans to improve effectiveness in response to the results of this assessment.
- Make the Partnership representative of the community it serves
- Introduce Risk Management processes to more objectively direct prioritisation and the allocation of resources and effort
- Secure external funding to improve outcomes for South Gloucestershire residents.

Key measures of success

- Amount bought in from external sources to deliver SSCSP objectives

Introduction to South Gloucestershire

Geographically, at 53,665 hectares, South Gloucestershire is one of the largest unified local authorities. The population is estimated to be 274,661 at the mid-year point of 2015. South Gloucestershire has one of the fastest growing population levels in the United Kingdom. Significant levels of new housing are expected to be built during the lifetime of this strategy.

The age structure of the district's population is closely aligned with the national (England) average, with a slightly lower proportion of residents in the 20-39 age group and a slightly higher proportion in the 40-54 and 70-84 age groups. According to the last Census 5% of the population were of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) origin.

Crime levels are low – 56 recorded crime incidents per 1,000 residents in the year to September 2016. This is below the averages for Avon & Somerset, and for England as a whole. South Gloucestershire has the third lowest crime rate in the most similar family group.

There is a thriving VCSE sector and an active elderly population who help strengthen community cohesion. More people, especially from equalities groups, have taken on decision-making roles which has helped create a fairer and more inclusive place to live.

In the main South Gloucestershire is an area dominated by middle-income families with areas of relative affluence and low levels of deprivation, with vibrant towns and parishes and a good range of community infrastructure in place. Sixty percent of residents live in urban fringe suburbs, the remainder either in rural villages or small market towns.

Some communities have higher proportions than others of people who suffer from low income, unemployment, social isolation, poor housing, low educational achievement, degraded environment, access to health services, or higher levels of crime than other neighbourhoods.

Identifying with the community is high on the list of what matters to people, and local people do feel part of their neighbourhood, though they have less affinity with South Gloucestershire as a whole.

Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership

Our partnership is known as the Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership (SSCSP) and comprises of representatives from the following agencies:

- Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire Community Rehabilitation Company
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Community Engagement Forums
- CVS South Gloucestershire
- Fire and Rescue Service
- National Probation Service
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Over 50s Forum
- Partnership Networks in Priority Neighbourhoods
- Police
- Public Health
- Social Landlords
- South Gloucestershire Council
- South Gloucestershire Equalities Forum / Race Equality Network
- Town and Parish Councils Forum

Links to other plans

This strategy sets out our plans for safer and stronger communities in South Gloucestershire. Every effort has been made to ensure that the priorities are linked to those set out in overarching plans for the area.

It aligns with the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Plan (2016–2021) and ensures a collective approach to work together, strengthen partnerships, to intervene earlier and to build safer, stronger and more cohesive communities within South Gloucestershire.

This Plan replaces the ‘South Gloucestershire Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Strategy’ and the ‘Local Police and Crime Plan for South Gloucestershire.’

The Safer and Stronger Communities partnership Strategy also seeks to be consistent with the many other related strategies which shape delivery of particular aspects of the overarching plans.

This relationship is shown in the diagram below. This does not seek to comprehensively list the plans being delivered within South Gloucestershire, but rather to illustrate their links

