

# Helping to create a safer Mid-Suffolk...



Autumn 2004

## Have your say on tackling crime and disorder and drug misuse in Mid-Suffolk.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002 places a duty on specific agencies (Mid Suffolk District Council, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Constabulary, the Primary Care Trust, and the Suffolk Fire Service) to work together and with other agencies in the community to tackle crime and disorder and the misuse of drugs. This body is known as the Mid Suffolk Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership ('the Partnership').

Every three years the Partnership is required to carry out an audit to identify the extent of the problems in the district and develop a strategy to deal with them.

The following document summarises the findings of the audit which has been carried out using data from 2001-2004.

It is now time to produce a new strategy for 2005-2008, and the Partnership would like to hear your views on crime and disorder within the district.

They would also like to hear your opinion on the incident types which have been short-listed for consideration for inclusion in the forthcoming strategy.

Are these issues important to you? Has the Partnership missed something equally as important?

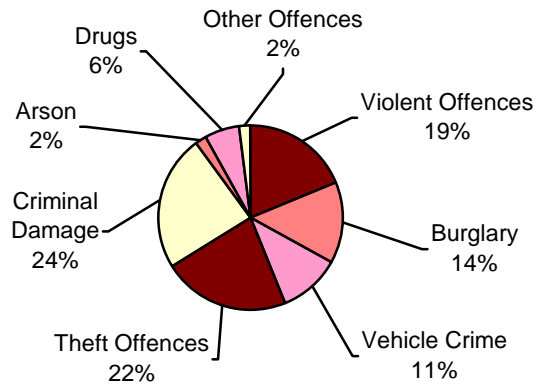
The questionnaire on the back page of this leaflet is your opportunity to have your say. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purpose of this exercise.

Mid Suffolk enjoys relatively low crime rates in the county and a high quality of life, but the Partnership acknowledges that there is still work to be done to reduce crime and disorder and drug misuse and help local people feel very safe where they live.

To learn more about the work of the Partnership please contact Mid Suffolk District Council.

# What the audit tells us...

**Breakdown of Recorded Crime in Mid Suffolk 2003/04**



## OVERVIEW

In 2002 the population in Mid Suffolk was 87,647, which accounted for 13% of the total population of Suffolk.

The 2001 Census showed that 49% of the population of Mid Suffolk were employed. In January 2004, there were 627 people registered as unemployed in Mid Suffolk.

A postal survey carried out by Suffolk County Council in March 2004 showed that 50% of Mid Suffolk residents felt 'fairly safe' in the area where they lived, and 42% felt 'very safe'.

The annual cost of crime in Mid Suffolk for 2003/04 was estimated to be in the region of £10,535,529. These costs include lost or damaged property, time spent, emotional or physical impact, security, insurance premiums, and employer costs. Public sector costs account for about 30% of the overall total cost and include government crime prevention spending, criminal justice system costs, victim services and health services.

Overall, crime rates in Mid Suffolk were well below the county average at 41.6 offences per 1000 population compared to 77.8 offences per 1000 population for Suffolk as a whole.

Between April 2003 and March 2004, 3610 offences were recorded by Suffolk Constabulary in the Mid Suffolk District Council area.

Patterns of offending across Mid Suffolk are fairly typical with incidents of violence and disorder occurring more frequently in urban areas.

The district continues to experience crime rates well below the county average in the following areas: Arson, Shoplifting, Cycle Theft, Other Theft and Fraud and Forgery.

In the following sections numbers shown in *italics* relate to actual numbers of recorded offences.

## BURGLARY (512)

### Of Peoples Homes:

Mid Suffolk had the joint lowest burglary rate in Suffolk. The dwelling burglary rate was well below the Suffolk average (3.6) at 1.9 offences per 1000 population. Three wards in Mid Suffolk had higher than average rates. These were: Stowmarket Central at 4.0 (17), Stowmarket North at 3.9 (23), and Needham Market at 3.7 (17).

### Of Sheds, Garages and Other Buildings:

There were 348 'other burglaries' in Mid Suffolk last year. These

included sheds, garages, outbuildings, and business premises. 29% of these offences took place in the following 5 wards which all had other burglary rates above the Suffolk average. Barking & Somersham (9.0, 19), The Stonhams (8.6, 19), Claydon and Barham (7.6, 32), Palgrave (6.1, 14), and Bacton & Old Newton (7.0, 16).

## CRIMINAL DAMAGE (860)

The rate of criminal damage in Mid Suffolk was generally well below the Suffolk average (18.3 offences per 1000 population). However, there are some wards where the rate of offences was significantly higher. These wards were Eye (29.0, 58), Stowmarket Central (27.7, 119), and Stowmarket North (20.2, 119).

## DISORDER (1023)

Public disorder events tend to peak in line with periods of activity associated with the nighttime economy (e.g. pub/nightclub closing times). Unsurprisingly, most events are recorded in urban areas, and more events are recorded during the evening and at weekends.

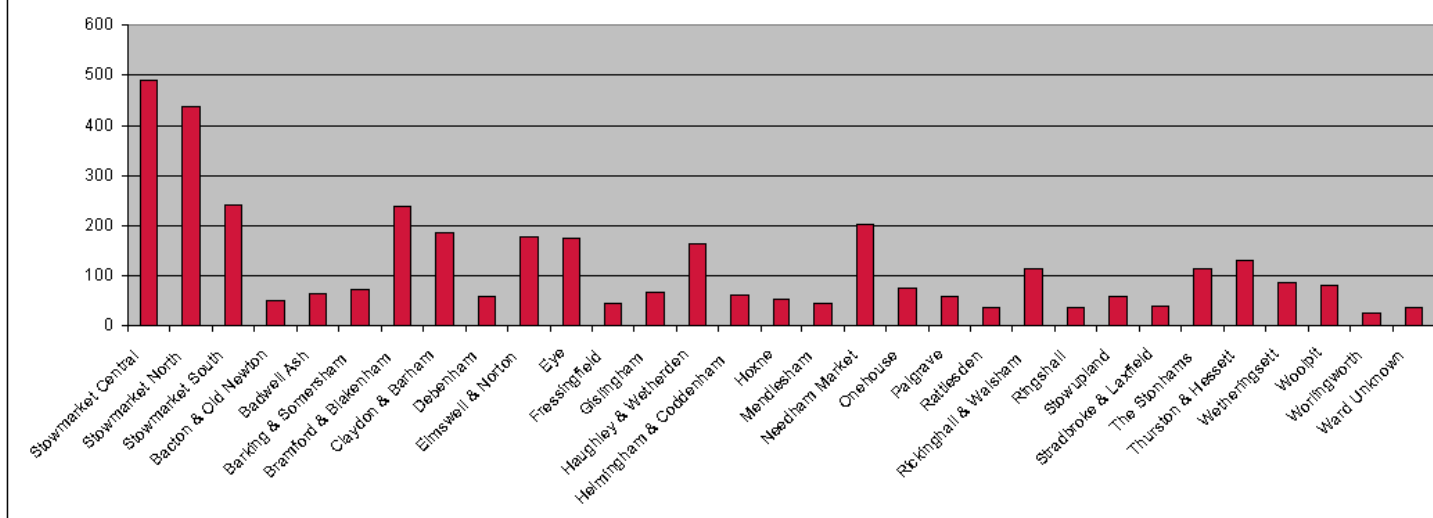
Within the disorder category the most commonly recorded incident in Mid Suffolk was 'Disturbance in a Public Place'. The district average for this type of incident was 4.4 offences per 1000 population. Wards with rates one and a half times the average were: Stowmarket Central (15.6, 67), Woolpit (10.5, 21), Needham Market (9.6, 44), Stowmarket North (9.5, 56), Eye (7.0, 14), and Stowmarket South (6.8, 34).

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (288)

Of the total number of domestic violence incidents reported to Suffolk Police during 2003/2004, 6% were in Mid Suffolk. This equated to 288 incidents.

Domestic violence is a serious and complex crime whose victims are reluctant to come forward to report what has happened to them or seek support. Since the launch of the countywide 'Break the Pattern: STOP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE' campaign there has been an

Recorded offences for Mid Suffolk, by ward, 2003/04



increase in the number of incidents reported to the police. Countywide the reporting rate doubled during 2003/2004.

**DRUGS (207)**

There were 207 drugs offences recorded in Mid Suffolk by Suffolk Police during 2003/2004. Of these offences 18 were classed as ‘serious drugs offences’ and the remaining 189 offences were recorded as ‘other drug offences’.

Of all drugs offences 41 were recorded in Stowmarket, 31 in Thurston & Hessett and 21 were recorded in Elmswell & Norton.

**RACIAL HARASSMENT (29)**

There were 29 racist incidents recorded in Mid Suffolk during 2003/04. This equated to approximately 6% of all racist incidents countywide.

The 2001 Census showed that the proportion of people from black and minority ethnic groups living in Mid Suffolk was equal to the county rate at 2.8%.

A county breakdown of racist incidents for 2003/04 showed that 32% were harassment, 26% abuse, 22% assault, 10% criminal damage and 10% were other types of offences.

The incident rate in Mid Suffolk has risen from 4.6 offences per 100, 000 population in 1998/99 to 33.4 offences per 100,000 population in 2003/04.

The Suffolk Racial Harassment Initiative (RHI) encourages the reporting of incidents which may account for the significant increase in incidents over recent years.

**VEHICLE CRIME (401)**

Mid Suffolk had the lowest rate of vehicle crime in the county. However there were still areas across the district which were experiencing higher than average victimisation rates.

**Theft of Motor Vehicle**

Last year in Mid Suffolk 102 vehicles were stolen. Wards with rates above the county average of 2.3 offences per 1000 population were: Bramford & Blakenham (3.6, 14), Haughley & Wetherden (3.3, 7), and Barking & Somersham (2.9, 6).

**Theft from Motor Vehicle**

During 2003/2004 there were 299 thefts from motor vehicles in Mid Suffolk. The average rate for ‘thefts from motor vehicle’ across Suffolk was 6.5 offences per 1000 population. Four wards in Mid Suffolk had much higher rates: Bramford & Blakenham (15.6, 61), Claydon & Barham (8.1, 34), Haughley & Wetherden (8.1, 17), and Stowmarket Central (7.2, 31).

**VIOLENT CRIME (696)**

Violent crime can involve actual violence, the threat of violence or harassment. According to the Home Office Publication, ‘Crime in England and Wales 2002/03’ half of all violent

crime does not result in any injury to the victim.

There were 696 violent offences in Mid Suffolk last year. These included 9 robberies and 55 sexual offences.

The violent crime rate in Mid Suffolk was well below the Suffolk average (14.0 offences per 1000 population) at 8.0. Four wards had rates above the county average. These were: Stowmarket Central (27.7, 119), Eye (22.0, 44), Stowmarket North (21.0, 124), and The Stonhams (15.9, 35).

**YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT.**  
**PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. The following crime and disorder types have been identified as possible issues in Mid Suffolk. Please prioritise them in order of importance to you, between 1 and 9, with 1 being the MOST IMPORTANT and 9 being the LEAST IMPORTANT.

- BURGLARY OF PEOPLES HOMES
- BURGLARY OF OTHER BUILDINGS
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE
- PUBLIC DISORDER / NUISANCE (non-criminal)
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- DRUG OFFENCES
- RACIAL HARASSMENT
- VEHICLE CRIME
- VIOLENT OFFENCES

2. How safe or unsafe do you feel in the area where you live? (Please tick the most appropriate answer)

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- A bit safe
- Very unsafe
- Not stated

3. How safe or unsafe do you feel in an area where there are CCTV cameras? (Please tick the most appropriate answer.)

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- A bit safe
- Very unsafe
- Not stated

4. Overall, how safe do you think Waveney is as a whole? (Please tick the most appropriate answer)

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- A bit safe
- Very unsafe
- Not stated

5. Please list two types of behaviour that you consider to be anti-social:

6. Have you ever been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour in the past 12 months? (Please tick.)

YES  NO

If you have answered YES to question 6, what type of incident was it? (E.g. criminal damage, burglary.)

7. Did you report this incident to the police? (Please tick.)

YES  NO

**ABOUT YOU**

Please note that the following personal questions are optional and you don't have to provide this information if you don't want to. However, by answering the following questions it helps the Partnership to ensure that it collects views from as wide a selection of the population as possible.

Thank you.

**Postcode of home address:**

**Gender** Male  Female

**Age Group**

- |          |                          |         |                          |
|----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46-55   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16-25    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 56-65   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26-35    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 66-75   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36-45    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 75 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Ethnicity** (Please circle one of the following.)

**White:** British Irish Any other white background

**Mixed:** White & Black Caribbean White & Black African White & Asian Any other mixed background

**Asian or Asian British:** Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Any other Asian background

**Black or Black British:** Caribbean African Any other black background

**Chinese** **Refugee**

**Traveller** **Asylum Seeker**

**Other (please specify)**

**Please return completed questionnaires to:**

**Ms Joanne Rogers, Mid Suffolk District Council, Council Offices, High Street, Needham Market, Suffolk IP6 8DL**  
**Or email [joanne.rogers@midsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.rogers@midsuffolk.gov.uk)**