

March 2007

Contents

	Click on the hyperlink to go straight to an article:
1	Editorial
1	Up-date – community safety reassurance work in December
2	Prostitution strategy
3	Home Shield official launch
3	Police Direct – Join up and get the message
5	West Suffolk - substance misuse update
5	Passing out ceremony for Firebreak students
6	Keeping safe
6	Consider the facts!
6	Community Safety Forums – focus on anti-social behaviour
7	‘No secrets’ to safeguard adults in Suffolk
8	How to contact Link On!

Editorial

Welcome to the latest Link On! Magazine. Since the last Link On! in October, Suffolk has been the centre of media attention, following the murders of five women in December, and a fatal shooting at an Ipswich nightclub.

Although the national and international journalists have left now, the issues that they were interested in remain. This edition of Link On! explains more about some of the work being carried out as a result of these murders, to make sure that that Suffolk maintains its position as one of the safest counties in England.

[Back to top](#)

Up-date – community safety reassurance work in December

The three Nightsafe messages: friends stick together, get home safe and don't overdo it, were the key themes of the community reassurance work that was carried out in December while the murder investigations were on going.

During this time, 11,000 personal attack alarms were given away in the Ipswich area in just 7 days – through local employers, councils and the Police Pod in the town centre

As well as an English version, personal safety leaflets were produced in Polish, Portuguese, Bengali, Sorani, Mandarin, Farsi and Russian.

A Community Impact Assessment was also carried out, to judge how communities felt, what this meant, and what might happen. Some actions were carried out, to reduce the impact of the murders, and others have been passed to the Ipswich CDRP to deal with over the next few months.

[Back to top](#)

Prostitution strategy

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The vulnerability of street prostitutes has been brought sharply into focus following the recent murders in the town and surrounding area.

Although we already had a strategy to deal with the issue, the events of December brought a new dimension to our work. As a result a new strategy has been commissioned - the draft Street Prostitution Strategy 2007-2012.

This strategy has a clear aim to remove street prostitution from all areas in Ipswich. We accept that this is a very tough target, but we are convinced that as a community we can make a real difference to the lives of the individuals involved, and reduce the disruption to the local community. There is a real opportunity now to resolve some of the long-standing problems that have been associated with prostitution, its causes and its consequences.

The strategy seeks to address the concerns of local residents affected by street prostitution, particularly regarding nuisance, disruption, anti-social behaviour and safety concerns. It also proposes to adopt a policy of zero tolerance against kerb-crawlers and men who approach the women on foot.

The key objective must be to ensure that women do not become involved in street prostitution in the first place. If they do, opportunities must be created for them to leave and engage in less harmful lifestyles.

The strategy contains five main themes and action plans:

1. Improving our understanding of the extent of the problem, the impact on the local community and the motives behind those involved in prostitution. This will help us to allocate resources where they are needed most and ensure the situation is continually monitored. ACTION: review press coverage and academic reports, analyse intelligence, and work with the community to develop ways to reduce the impact of this activity.
2. Developing routes out - offering individual attention to each woman involved in street prostitution. We would ensure that drug treatment programmes, health services, accommodation and other support are available to those people who want to change their lifestyles and leave street prostitution. ACTION: engage with casework teams, provide basic health treatment via outreach and develop drug treatment programmes and accommodation support.

3. Tackling demand - responding to community concerns by deterring those who create the demand and removing the opportunity for street prostitution to take place. ACTION: Using closed circuit television (CCTV) and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) to deter kerb-crawlers. High-visibility police patrols will bring reassurance to the streets and anti-social behaviour legislation will be employed.
4. Prevention - using early intervention measures to stop individuals, particularly children and young people, from becoming involved in prostitution. ACTION: Work with domestic violence teams, develop protocols with housing providers and establish casework teams. Work with education services to continue work on healthy relationships in the curriculum.
5. Community intelligence - responding to the needs of the communities affected and keeping them informed of our progress. ACTION: regular media and community reports and updates, feedback from community wardens, set up an advisory group with community members.

This long-term strategy has been made possible by the close co-operation of our partners on the new Joint Strategic Group, which is made up of: Suffolk Constabulary (Southern Area), Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Suffolk Primary Care Trust, Suffolk Mental Health Partnership Trust and National Probation Service (Suffolk).

Councillors at both Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council will be discussing this draft strategy at council meetings at the beginning of April. If you would like to find out more about these meetings, and the strategy, please look at the council papers that will be published on the council's websites: www.ipswich.gov.uk and www.suffolk.gov.uk.

[Back to top](#)

Home Shield official launch



Home Shield is a way of providing easy access to services for vulnerable members of the community aged 60 and over. A single home visit from one organisation can address other issues of concern such as health, welfare and safety by making a referral to other organisations.

Since 17th October 2005, when the pilot exercise was launched across Suffolk, 1124 referrals have been received and 1756 onward referrals have been made.

We can train front line officers to use the Home Shield referral forms and these referrals can now be fast tracked by being passed on to one of 25 different partners.

For training and further information, please contact Tony Fuller.
Email: tony.fuller@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk
Tel: 07919 165092

Diary Date:

There will be a formal launch of the Home Shield scheme, following the successful one year pilot, in April.

The aim of this launch is to allow delegates to see first hand the simplicity and effectiveness of Home Shield and the benefits it can bring to the multi-agency partners as they undertake to improve the quality of life for vulnerable adults. A number of partners will have stalls in the Atrium at Endeavour House, to tell people more about the services they offer as part of the Homeshield Scheme.

The event will be taking place on Thursday 5 April 2007, 2 – 4 pm, at Endeavour House, Ipswich.

For more information about the event, contact Tony Fuller at Suffolk County Council on 07919 165092.

[Back to top](#)

Police Direct – Join up and get the message

The innovative scheme provided by Suffolk Constabulary, which provides the latest information on crime and policing, is due to be officially launched to the public later this month.

Already nearly 13,000 people are registered to the system – but we want that number to increase to 50,000 by the end of the year. Feedback shows that people using the service feel safer in their homes and workplaces whilst at the same time are more aware of what is happening in areas important to them.

It's free to join Police Direct. And people can choose how they want to receive the information – on their mobile, landline or computer. People can also register up to three different locations they want information about, such as where they live or work or where a relative lives.

The scheme isn't just about sending crime information. It's also used to circulate details of missing persons, provide crime reduction advice and reassurance. More recently alerts were issued to advise about major road disruptions due to the closure of the Orwell Bridge caused by the severe gales affecting the whole of the country.

The service is being heavily promoted across the county in various district newsletters, local publications and via perimeter advertising at ITFC at Portman Road. We are also working with various partner agencies to encourage employees, councillors and the public to benefit from this service.

People can join free by visiting www.suffolk.police.uk and follow the link for Police Direct or text **POLICE** and their postcode to **88588**.

[Back to top](#)

For further information contact Sgt Bob Chapman, Sandra Leigh or any member of the Police Direct Team on 01473 613997 or via email at policedirect@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

West Suffolk - substance misuse update

The West Suffolk Implementation Team has organised and funded a wide range of successful projects. These have been aimed at raising awareness, helping those with problems and reducing the impact that drugs and alcohol have on communities.

We organised a sailing trip for people who had been engaged with drug agencies. The aim was to build confidence and esteem, teamwork and communication in those who took part. It was a huge success and the feedback from those who went was that it had been a very positive experience and had been invaluable in teaching important life skills.

Another project that worked well was the alcohol campaign aimed at raising public awareness of binge drinking. We used startling images of how someone might look after an evening of binge drinking. We produced leaflets and also put the image on a 20ft by 10ft van, which was driven around Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket and Stowmarket. It caused quite a stir and got a lot of media attention, achieving the objective of provoking conversation and raising awareness.

One of our most recent projects was with a group of teenagers from Newmarket, who had had problems with substance misuse, crime and anti-social behaviour. We took them to Ipswich, where they were trained by 'Frank' – the national drugs campaign. Following this, they went out onto Newmarket high street on a Friday night to deliver the campaign - along with their youth worker and two support workers from the Norcas Youth Team. The outcome was very positive for the group involved. They gained social skills, self-esteem and confidence from the social interaction, as well as doing something.

The final project was 'A right bunch of Art Heads'. This was an art exhibition for anyone who has been touched by substance misuse, which was on display at the Athenaeum in January.

[Back to top](#)

Passing out ceremony for Firebreak students

The first Firebreak students in Suffolk took part in a passing out ceremony at Woodbridge fire station, celebrating their successful completion of the Firebreak course.

Eight students successfully completed five days of intensive training, which included practical exercises, as well as some theory based work. In recognition of their hard work, the students, aged between 13 and 17, were presented with certificates by local councillor Ben Redsell. As part of the ceremony students showcased some of the skills they had learnt as part of the course.

Firebreak is designed to help young people who have been in trouble with the Police improve their self-esteem, self-discipline and responsibility. Following the success of the course there are plans to run others across the county over the coming months.

[Back to top](#)

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Keeping safe

The second 'Safe' magazine was launched at the end of last year, aimed at young men. It includes advice on how to steer clear of crime when enjoying a night out, tips on personal safety, and encourages more victims of domestic violence to seek help.

60,000 copies of the magazine, which is written in a light hearted lads mag style, but with hard-hitting messages, were distributed around the county via pubs, clubs, licensed premises, school & colleges, local businesses, taxi firms, newsagents and supermarkets.

It was funded by CDRPs (including Nightsafe and the county DV forum) and the police, as part of the annual Christmas/New Year Stay Safe campaign.

Nightsafe also produced a series of adverts and posters reminding people to drink sensibly. Showing the after-effects of a drunken night out, the hard-hitting posters were displayed in pubs and clubs and also on the sides of 21 buses around the county.

Police statistics show that crime dropped by 586 offences during December 2006 compared with same month in 2005. The number of alcohol related arrests during December also fell when compared with the previous year - by 86 from 396 to 310.

[Back to top](#)

Consider the facts!

This powerful short film was made by young people who attend the Metro in Lowestoft to help raise awareness of the associated risks when alcohol is consumed by underage drinkers.

The film was supported by Suffolk police, Suffolk County Council, Lowbiza partnership, Waveney CDRP and Nightsafe, and it will be available to youth workers to assist in raising awareness through engagement and discussion with young people.

The film, which features a group of young people drinking and partying, touches on key areas and highlights a variety of risky situations. Facts about underage drinking, drink driving, personal safety and licensing are also included in a clever and thought provoking way.

[Back to top](#)

Community Safety Forums – focus on anti-social behaviour

Over 145 people attended the community safety forums in October, enabling them to see first hand the key projects and initiatives that are currently taking place across Suffolk to reduce anti-social behaviour.

The events, at the Athenaeum in Bury St Edmunds and at High Lodge near Darsham, were organised by Suffolk County Council's Community

Safety Unit, in conjunction with Suffolk's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs).

Community groups, voluntary groups, parish and town councils, neighbourhood watch groups, criminal justice board members and councillors from across the county were all represented at the forum. The events took place in the style of "speed dating", which gave full opportunity for delegates to speak to all project leads.

The following stalls attended the events:

- 5 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership/Anti-social Behaviour Reduction Groups, (Ipswich, Babergh, Suffolk Coastal, Waveney and Western Area) showcased projects such as youth prevention work, projects to reduce street drinking and prostitution, and the crucial crew events.
- Suffolk County Council Environment and Transport: spoke about the road safety courses they run which aim to re-educate drivers from driving irresponsibly.
- Suffolk Fire and Rescue: showcased their Firebreak project which uses practical drill ground and scenario based training to promote self esteem and self discipline amongst young people who have been referred to the scheme by the partner agencies.
- Suffolk County Council Trading Standards: spoke about the work they do to tackle doorstep sellers and under age sales.
- Extended Schools: showcased the Waveney summer activity project, which was rolled out last summer across the Waveney area to give opportunities for young people to take part in activities during the summer months.
- Youth Offending Service: spoke about the Youth Inclusion Support Panels (YISPs) that are in progress across the county. YISPs work with children aged 8-13 years old that have either started to offend or are at risk of offending. The panels will identify intervention, which can include mentoring, positive activities, and parenting skills.
- Suffolk County Council Community Safety Unit: spoke about the developments around the community warden scheme, and the Suffolk Community Mediation Project which helps tackle low level anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes.
- Probation Service: spoke about their Community Payback scheme where offenders are asked to do un-paid work in the community.
- Substance Misuse Team: showcased their work, and gave delegates an opportunity to meet with young people who have benefited from the scheme.

During the lunch there was an opportunity for delegates to speak with the Local Criminal Justice Board.

[Back to top](#)

For more information about these events, call Charlotte Foster on 01473 265159

'No secrets' to safeguard adults in Suffolk

It's not just vulnerable children that we have a duty to safeguard from harm. We also have to protect vulnerable adults from abuse. The government guidance on this subject was called "No Secrets" - a very apt title, since abuse thrives upon secrecy.

Our adult safeguarding services aim to ensure a consistent response to abuse allegations by:

- developing an inter-agency response to protect vulnerable adults from abusive behaviour and practice
- devising and implementing systems that improve both practice and service delivery.

In Suffolk we have made every effort to promote a culture of information sharing and effective communication within, and across all partner agencies. We have been raising awareness across care providers about what constitutes adult abuse, how abuse can be identified and investigated, and what strategies can be used to prevent it occurring.

There are around 27,000 staff in Suffolk that have a formal responsibility for the care and protection of vulnerable adults. An extensive staff development programme has been developed, including regular courses supplemented by workplace briefing sessions, with a consistent message delivered across all organisations. Some 21,000 staff have now attended this programme over the last three years. Operational policy and staff guidance booklets have also been made available to organisations.

The effectiveness of our work over the last 3 years can arguably be evidenced by the marked increase in adult abuse referrals made to Suffolk Social Care Services, from 8 in 2001 to 612 in 2005.

Strategic links have been strengthened across all care sectors, and partnerships are being developed with other community safety initiatives including the police, domestic violence, and trading standards.

Suffolk Police have recently opened three Victim Care Centres. This means that specialist officers are now able to support vulnerable witnesses through the criminal investigation process. This will undoubtedly improve access to the justice system and enable more positive outcomes for vulnerable people.

Another exciting development has been the commissioning of three new Adult Safeguarding Managers. They will provide a consultancy service for practitioners whilst also assisting the county council in ensuring that adult safeguarding meets the changes and challenges that lie ahead.

Recently our emphasis has shifted in order to identify practice models that enhance customer participation. An adult safety video, information pack, and an associated information campaign, aimed explicitly at customers and family carers, are in production. The aim is once again to raise awareness levels, and, as a direct consequence, attempt to reduce levels of vulnerability and associated risk.

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[Back to top](#)

How to contact Link On!

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The next edition of Link On! is due out in June.

[Back to top](#)