

Helping to create a safer Forest Heath...



Autumn 2004

Have your say on tackling crime and disorder and drug misuse in Forest Heath.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002 places a duty on specific agencies (Forest Heath 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, including the Suffolk Drug Action Team to tackle crime and disorder and the misuse of drugs. This body is known as the Forest Heath 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?

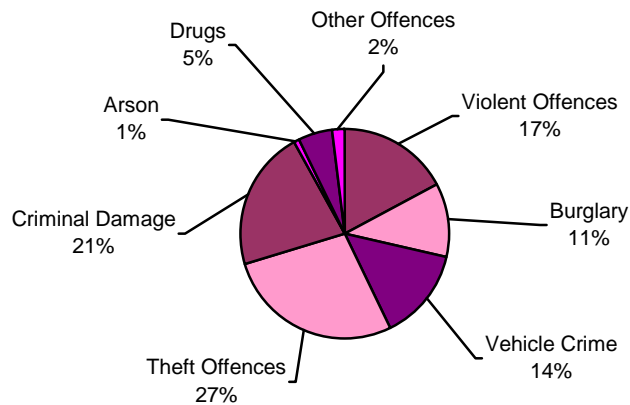
The questionnaire on the back page of this leaflet is your opportunity to have your say. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purpose of this exercise.

Forest Heath 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 Forest Heath District Council.

What the audit tells us...

Breakdown of Recorded Crime in Forest Heath 2003/04



OVERVIEW

In 2002 the population in Forest Heath was 55,505, which accounted for 8% of the total population of Suffolk. These population figures do not include USAF personnel who live in the Forest Heath community. It is estimated that there are around 10,000 American civilians living in Forest Heath who are not recorded in the census population figures.

The 2001 Census showed that 51% of the population of Forest Heath were employed. In January 2004, there were 368 people registered as unemployed in Forest Heath.

A postal survey carried out by Suffolk County Council in March 2004 showed that 55% of Forest Heath residents felt 'fairly safe' in the area where they lived, and 28% felt 'very safe'.

The annual cost of crime in Forest Heath for 2003/04 was estimated to be in the region of £12,814,808. 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 Forest Heath are slightly above the county average at 85.4 offences per 1000 population compared to 77.8 offences per 1000 population for Suffolk as a whole. Between April 2003 and March 2004, 4740 offences were recorded by Suffolk Constabulary in the Forest Heath District Council area.

Patterns of offending across Forest Heath are fairly typical with incidents of violence and disorder occurring mostly in urban areas and opportunistic offences such as vehicle crime and burglary occurring in more rural locations.

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

ARSON (64)

The rate of arson in Forest Heath was slightly above the Suffolk average of 1.0 offences per 1000 population. Last year there were 64 arson offences reported to the police. 21 of these offences took place in Mildenhall, and 16 in Newmarket.

BURGLARY (528)

Of Peoples Homes: Forest Heath had a burglary rate just below the Suffolk average (3.6) at 3.5 offences per 1000 population. Four wards in Forest Heath had rates much higher than average.

These were: Gt. Heath (M'hall) at 6.8 (32), Market (M'hall) at 6.6 (24), Manor at 5.3 (9), and St Marys (N'mkt) at 5.0 (28).

Of Sheds, Garages and Other Buildings:

There were 332 'other' burglaries in Forest Heath last year. These included sheds, garages, outbuildings, and business premises. 33% of these offences took place in the following 3 wards which all had burglary rates well above the Suffolk average: Brandon East (11.6, 60), Manor (17.5, 30), and South (11.1, 18).

CRIMINAL DAMAGE (1017)

The rate of criminal damage in Forest Heath was equal to the Suffolk average (18.3 offences per 1000 population). However, there were some wards where the rate of offences was significantly higher. These wards were Market Mildenhall (39.7, 145), Gt. Heath Mildenhall (28.0, 132), Brandon East (26.7, 138) and All Saints Newmarket (26.7, 87).

DISORDER (1299)

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 Forest Heath was 'Disturbance in a Public Place'. The district average for this type of incident was 9.8 offences per 1000 population. Wards with higher than average rates were Market Mildenhall (21.9, 81), St Marys Newmarket (19.3, 107), Gt. Heath Mildenhall (17.2, 81), Severals Newmarket (16.5, 102) and All Saints Newmarket (10.4, 34).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (480)

Of the total number of domestic violence incidents reported to Suffolk Police during 2003/2004, 10% were in Forest Heath. This equated to 480 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 increase in the number of incidents reported to the police. Countywide the reporting rate doubled during 2003/2004.

DRUGS (221)

There were 221 drugs offences recorded in Forest Heath by Suffolk Police during 2003/2004. Of these offences 36 were classed as 'serious drugs offences' and the remaining 185 offences were recorded as 'other drug offences'.

Of all drugs offences 114 were recorded in Newmarket, 44 in Mildenhall and 29 were recorded in Brandon.

FRAUD & FORGERY (268)

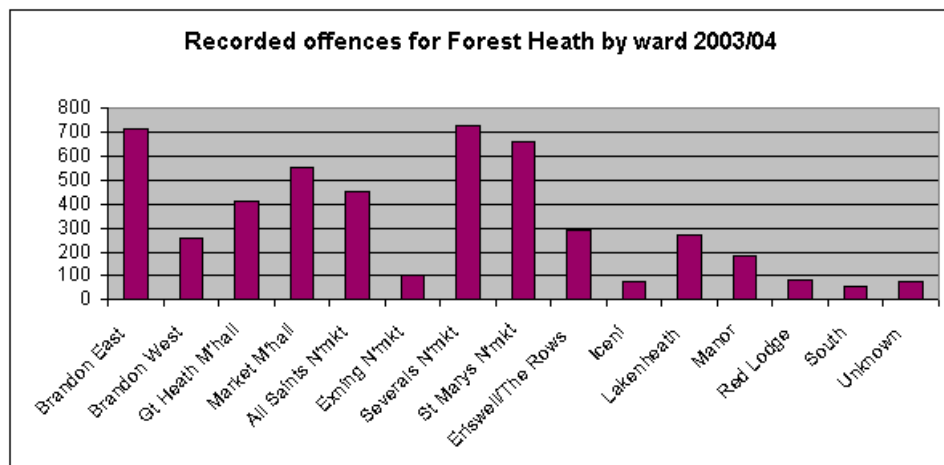
Between 2003/04 there were 268 'Fraud and Forgery' offences recorded in Forest Heath. The rate for these offences exceeded the Suffolk average (3.3) at 4.8 offences per 1000 population.

Three wards in Forest Heath had rates which were more than twice the county average. These were: Manor (31.0, 53), All Saints Newmarket (14.7, 48) and Severals Newmarket (9.5, 59).

OTHER THEFTS & HANDLING (680)

Between 2003/04 there were 680 'Other Theft & Handling' offences in Forest Heath.

The rate for 'Other Thefts and Handling' in Forest Heath exceeded the Suffolk average (11.6) at 12.3 offences per 1000 population. The following wards had rates in excess of one and half times the county average: St Marys Newmarket (21.5, 119), Brandon East (19.5, 101) and Severals Newmarket (19.0, 118).



RACIAL HARASSMENT (948)

There were 48 racist incidents recorded in Forest Heath during 2003/04. This equated to approximately 10% of all racist incidents countywide.

The 2001 Census showed that the proportion of people from black and minority ethnic groups living in Forest Heath was above the county rate (2.8%) at 6.1%.

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 Forest Heath has risen from 14.4 offences per 100,000 population in 1998/99 to 86.5 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 (670)

Forest Heath had the second highest rate of vehicle crime in the county.

Theft of Motor Vehicle

Last year in Forest Heath 172 vehicles were stolen. Wards with the highest rates were: Severals Newmarket (6.0, 37), Manor (5.8, 10), All Saints Newmarket (4.3, 14), Red Lodge (3.9, 7), and St Marys Newmarket (3.6, 20).

Theft from Motor Vehicle

During 2003/2004 there were 498 thefts from motor vehicles in Forest Heath. The average rate for 'thefts from motor vehicle' across Suffolk was 6.5 offences per 1000 population. Five wards in Forest Heath had much higher rates: Brandon East (17.6, 91), Market Mildenhall (16.2, 59), Brandon West (12.3, 44), Red Lodge (13.3, 24) and Gt Heath Mildenhall (12.3, 58).

VIOLENT CRIME (828)

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 828 violent offences in Forest Heath last year. These included 19 robberies and 47 sexual offences.

The violent crime rate in Forest Heath was slightly above the Suffolk average (14.0 offences per 1000 population) at 14.8. Four wards had rates over one and a half times the county average. These were: Brandon East (26.8, 139), All Saints Newmarket (26.7, 87), St Marys Newmarket (26.5, 147) and Market Mildenhall (23.3, 85).

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 Forest Heath. Please prioritise them in order of importance to you, between 1 and 12, with 1 being the MOST IMPORTANT and 12 being the LEAST IMPORTANT.

- ARSON
- BURGLARY OF PEOPLES HOMES
- BURGLARY OF OTHER BUILDINGS
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE
- PUBLIC DISORDER / NUISANCE (non-criminal)
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- DRUG OFFENCES
- FRAUD AND FORGERY
- OTHER THEFT AND HANDLING
- 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 Forest Heath 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:

Lesley-Ann Gyte, Community Safety Co-ordinator, Forest Heath District Council, District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk IP28 7EY
Or email lesley-ann.gyte@forest-heath.gov.uk