

# Helping to create a safer St Edmundsbury...



Autumn 2004

## Have your say on tackling crime and disorder and drug misuse in the Borough.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002 places a duty on specific agencies (St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Constabulary, the Primary Care Trust, and the Suffolk Fire Service) to work together and with other agencies, including the Suffolk Drug Action Team, in the community to tackle crime and disorder and the misuse of drugs. This body is known as the St Edmundsbury 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 Borough 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 borough.

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.

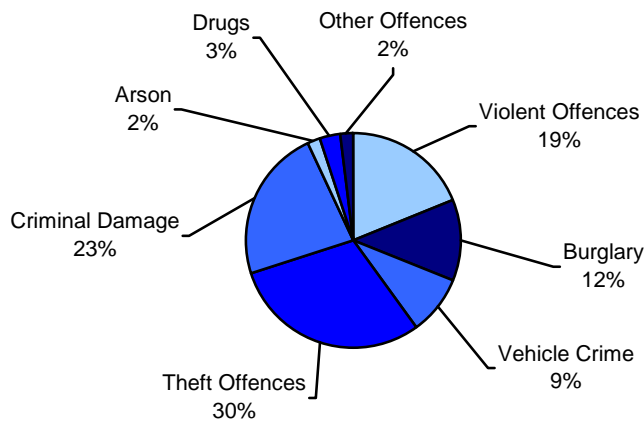
St Edmundsbury enjoys relatively low crime rates in the county and a high quality of life, but the Partnership acknowledges that there is still work to be done to reduce crime and disorder and drug misuse and help local people feel very safe where they live.

To learn more about the work of the Partnership contact St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

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# What the audit tells us...

**Breakdown of Recorded Crime in St Edmundsbury 2003/04**



## OVERVIEW

In 2002 the population of St Edmundsbury was 98,459 which accounted for 15% of the total population of Suffolk.

The 2001 Census showed that 51% of the population of St Edmundsbury were employed. In January 2004, there were 734 people registered as unemployed in St Edmundsbury.

A postal survey carried out by Suffolk County Council in March 2004 showed that 59% of St Edmundsbury residents felt 'fairly safe' in the area where they lived, and 34% felt 'very safe'.

The annual cost of crime in St Edmundsbury for 2003/04 was estimated to be in the region of £20,112,956. 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 St Edmundsbury remain below the county average at 69.6 offences per 1000 population compared to 77.8 offences per 1000 population for Suffolk as a whole. Between April 2003 and March 2004, 6830

offences were recorded by Suffolk Constabulary in the St Edmundsbury Borough Council area.

Patterns of offending across St Edmundsbury are fairly typical with incidents of violence and disorder occurring mostly in urban areas.

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

## ARSON (115)

The rate of arson in St Edmundsbury was just above the Suffolk average of 1.0 offences per 1000 population at 1.2. Last year there were 115 arson offences reported to the police. 33 of these offences took place in Haverhill, 49 in Bury St Edmunds, and the remaining 33 offences in rural wards.

## BURGLARY (828)

### Of Peoples Homes:

St Edmundsbury had a dwelling burglary rate which was lower than the county average. The rate in St Edmundsbury was 2.6 offences per 1000 population compared to the Suffolk average of 3.6. Wards with rates above the county average were: Haverhill South (6.9, 31), BSE Risbygate (5.7, 21), Haverhill North (4.2, 26), Haverhill East (4.0, 27) and BSE Eastgate (4.0, 8)

## Of Sheds, Garages and Other Buildings:

There were 573 'other' burglaries in St Edmundsbury last year. These included sheds, garages, outbuildings, and business premises. The following 9 wards had 'other burglary' rates over one and a half times the county average: Chedburgh (15.5, 34), Barrow (11.4, 24), Risbygate (11.1, 41), Wickhambrook (11.0, 22), BSE Eastgate (11.0, 22), Bardwell (9.6, 23), Risby (9.6, 25), Rougham (9.5, 21), and BSE Abbeygate (9.3, 40).

## CRIMINAL DAMAGE (1573)

The rate of criminal damage in St Edmundsbury was generally lower than the Suffolk average (18.3 offences per 1000 population). However, many of the urban wards had rates which were significantly higher. The following wards had rates in excess of one and a half times the Suffolk average: BSE Abbeygate (43.8, 188), Haverhill South (39.3, 177), BSE Risbygate (37.8, 140), BSE Eastgate (33.0, 66) and BSE St Olaves (28.7, 135).

## DISORDER (2230)

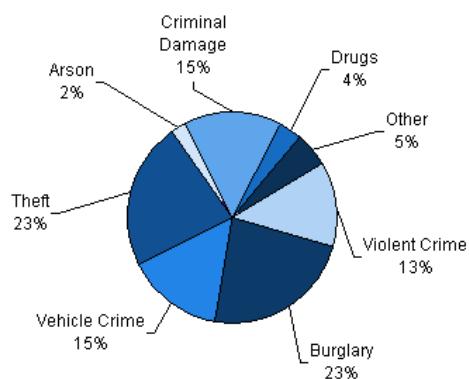
Public disorder events tend to peak in line with periods of activity associated with the nighttime economy (e.g. pub/nightclub closing times). Unsurprisingly, most events are recorded in urban areas, and more events are recorded during the evening and at weekends.

Within the disorder category the most commonly recorded incident in St Edmundsbury was 'Disturbance in a Public Place'. The borough average for this type of incident was 9.5 offences per 1000 population. Wards with one and a half times higher than average were BSE Risbygate (35.7, 132), BSE Abbeygate (29.3, 126), Haverhill South (26.2, 118), BSE Eastgate (18.5, 37) and BSE St Olaves (15.3, 72).

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (528)

Of the total number of domestic violence incidents reported to Suffolk Police during 2003/2004, 11% were in St Edmundsbury. This equates to 528 incidents.

**Breakdown of crime in rural areas 2003/04**



Although St Edmundsbury appears to have a lower than average rate of victimisation it is important to remember that victims living in rural areas face additional barriers to reporting.

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 (216)**

There were 216 drugs offences recorded in St Edmundsbury by Suffolk Police during 2003/2004. Of these offences 42 were classed as 'serious drugs offences' and the remaining 174 offences were recorded as 'other drug offences'.

Of these offences 124 were recorded in Bury St Edmunds and 39 were recorded in Haverhill.

It is difficult to determine an accurate level of drug misuse in an area, relying heavily on police intelligence and proactive police operations. Whilst, there is no evidence to suggest that there is a major drugs problem in St Edmundsbury, it is important to make treatment services available to drug misusers, and to continue to make educational material available to the community.

**RACIAL HARASSMENT (56)**

There were 56 racist incidents recorded in St Edmundsbury during 2003/04. This equated to approximately 11% of all racist incidents countywide.

The 2001 Census showed that the proportion of people from black and minority ethnic groups living in St Edmundsbury was below the county rate (2.8%) at 2.0%.

The incident rate in St Edmundsbury has risen from 5.1 offences per 100,000 population in 1998/99 to 57.0 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.

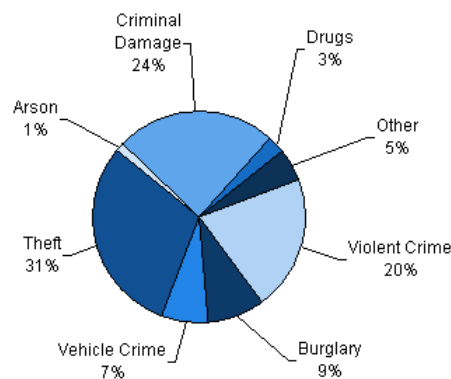
**SHOPLIFTING (513)**

St Edmundsbury has a shoplifting rate above the county average of 4.7 offences per 1000 population at 5.2. 85% of all offences took place in the following 4 wards: BSE Abbeygate (64.6, 278), BSE Risbygate (21.1, 78), Haverhill South (12.9, 51), and BSE Eastgate (14.0, 28).

**VEHICLE CRIME (613)**

**Theft of Motor Vehicle**  
Last year in St Edmundsbury 207 vehicles were stolen. Overall the rate of vehicle thefts in the borough was below the Suffolk average of 2.3 offences per 1000 population, but there were some wards which had

**Breakdown of crime in urban areas 2003-04**



rates one and a half times higher than the county average. These were: BSE Risbygate (6.5, 24), BSE Eastgate (4.5, 9) and BSE Abbeygate (3.5, 15).

**Theft from Motor Vehicle**

During 2003/2004 there were 406 thefts from motor vehicles in St Edmundsbury. The average rate for 'thefts from motor vehicle' across Suffolk was 6.5 offences per 1000 population. The wards in St Edmundsbury which exceeded this rate were: BSE Risbygate (14.6, 54), BSE Eastgate (8.0, 16), Risby (7.3, 19), Bardwell (6.7, 16), Barrow (6.7, 14) and Haverhill South (6.6, 30),

**VIOLENT CRIME (1325)**

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 1325 violent offences in the borough last year. These included 31 robberies and 64 sexual offences.

The violent crime rate in St Edmundsbury was below the Suffolk average (14.0 offences per 1000 population) at 13.5. However, there were 4 wards with rates over one and a half times the Suffolk average. These were BSE Risbygate (55.9, 207), BSE Abbeygate (46, 201), BSE Northgate (29.6, 71) and Haverhill South (27.3, 123).

**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 St Edmundsbury. 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
- RACIAL HARASSMENT
- SHOPLIFTING
- THEFT
- 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 St Edmundsbury 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:**

**Helen Lindfield, Community Safety Officer, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1XB or email [helen.lindfield@stedsbc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.lindfield@stedsbc.gov.uk)**