

## **Colchester Public Meeting**

**June 25, 2014**

### **District Profile**

Colchester district is part of the North Local Policing Area (LPA) covering an area of 125 square miles and including a diverse mix of rural and urban communities from Dedham Vale and Constable Country in the north to the oyster beds of Mersea Island in the south. Colchester is the oldest recorded town in Britain and attracts around 4.5 million visitors a year. The town centre has a vibrant economy with retail, cultural and evening entertainment facilities attracting a diverse mix of people.

Colchester Football Club plays in the national first division and has a new stadium and conference complex to the north of the town. This is adjacent to the new junction on the A12, developing industrial areas and a new park and ride facility.

In recent years, successive house building programmes have seen the expansion of the historic main town of Colchester and fast developing satellite towns such as Tiptree on the southern border of the district.

The local resident population of Colchester is the second largest of any district in Essex. The 2011 census recorded a total of 173,100 residents although in 2012 Essex County Council estimated the population to be over 180,000 and the largest district in the county.

Colchester has 47.1% of all recorded short-term residents in Essex. This influence is illustrated by two significant community groups. Firstly, there are over 11,000 students at Essex University that opened in 1964. These include over 3,000 post graduates from 140 different countries which is instrumental in supporting the university's excellent globally recognised reputation. Secondly, there are over 11,500 military personnel living and working in the town.

These short-term residents provide a significant boost to the local economy. The soldiers and students help provide a cultural mix not seen anywhere else in the county of Essex.

### **Policing Structure and Resources**

A new local policing model is being introduced in the autumn of 2014, and details can be seen on the [Essex Police website](#) and [PCC website](#). The model described below is the one currently operating within Colchester district.

### **Neighbourhood Policing Team**

The Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) is managed by a Neighbourhood Policing Inspector based at Colchester Police Station and supervised by two Neighbourhood

Policing Sergeants - one based at Ipswich Road Police Station covering the north and the other at The Garrison Police Station covering the south of the district.

The neighbourhood team consists of Neighbourhood Constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). These officers' responsibilities include long-term problem solving, community reassurance, offender targeting and proactive enforcement operations. In addition, there are PCSOs and a Constable dedicated to the town centre, overseen by one Sergeant.

### **Neighbourhood Crime Teams**

There are five Neighbourhood Crime Teams (NCT) providing a 24/7 policing service. These teams are based at Colchester Police Station and are managed by the NCT Inspector. The NCT deal with a range of policing issues including incident demand, the majority of crime investigations, appointments, missing persons, town centre retail, community safety and evening entertainment related incidents.

### **Operating Bases**

There are six police operating bases within the 17 neighbourhood policing areas of Colchester District:

### **Colchester Police Station**

Colchester Police Station is the main operating base for policing the district, with a 24 hour Neighbourhood Crime Team and custody suite to cover the entire district and officers dedicated to policing the town centre communities. The following resources are based at Colchester Police Station:

- 24/7 Neighbourhood Crime Team
- Prisoner Process Team
- NCT Inspector
- NPT Inspector
- Front Office
- Special Constabulary

Colchester police station is open to the public daily from 08:00hrs to midnight.

### **Ipswich Road Police Station**

This police-owned property accommodates all Neighbourhood Policing Team officers (Neighbourhood Constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)) for areas north of Colchester town, with the exception of one Neighbourhood Constable and two PCSOs based at Wivenhoe Fire Station.

### **The Garrison Police Station**

This is a shared premises owned and operated by the armed forces where Essex Police officers work in partnership with the Royal Military Police and Ministry of Defence Police as a joint operating base. The Neighbourhood Policing Team officers cover areas to the south of Colchester town with the exception of one

Neighbourhood Constable and two PCSOs based at each of the fire stations in West Mersea and Tiptree.

### **Fire Station Premises**

The Neighbourhood Policing Team also has accommodation within three fire stations in the district which are used as shared operating bases with the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. These are located at Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea.

### **Youth Officers**

There are currently three dedicated youth officers within the district. Their role is to reduce youth related crime and anti-social behaviour. They are closely involved with local schools and other partners to divert young people, wherever possible, out of the criminal justice system.

### **CID**

Colchester district is covered by Criminal Investigations Department officers that are stationed at Colchester Police Station. They investigate the more serious crimes such as high-risk domestic abuse incidents, serious assaults such as GBH, fraud, robbery and dwelling burglary.

### **Response and Patrol**

Response and Patrol Officers are based at Stanway police station and include officers with road policing skills and dog handlers. Response and Patrol officers attend emergency and high priority calls to provide a swift response to the most urgent needs of the community.

### **Specialist Departments**

Specialist police departments that cover the entire county are also available to Colchester District to support delivery in areas such as firearms, special operations and specialist investigations.

### **Crime Data for Colchester district**

At the meeting on June 25, 2014, there will be detailed discussion about the crime trends and the facts which lie underneath the statistics.

The headline figure is that there has been a small increase in all crime in Colchester district of 0.7%, equating to 73 more offences.

Comparing reports for 1st May 2013 to 30th April 2014 with 1st May 2012 to 30th April 2013, areas of note include:

- All Crime has increased by 0.7% (73 more offences);
- House burglary (incl attempts) has decreased by 16.2% (102 fewer burglaries);
- Theft from vehicles has decreased by 7.6% (47 fewer offences);

- Criminal Damage has decreased by 2.4% (40 fewer offences);
- Anti-Social Behaviour has decreased by 4.4% (270 fewer incidents);
- Serious Sexual Crime has increased by 43.9% (61 more offences);
- Serious Violent Crime has increased by 14.8% (12 more offences);
- Burglary Other (such as burglary of sheds, garages and commercial premises) has increased by 15.7% (86 more offences);
- Shoplifting has increased by 8.2% (82 more offences);
- Robbery has decreased by 3.6% (3 fewer offences)

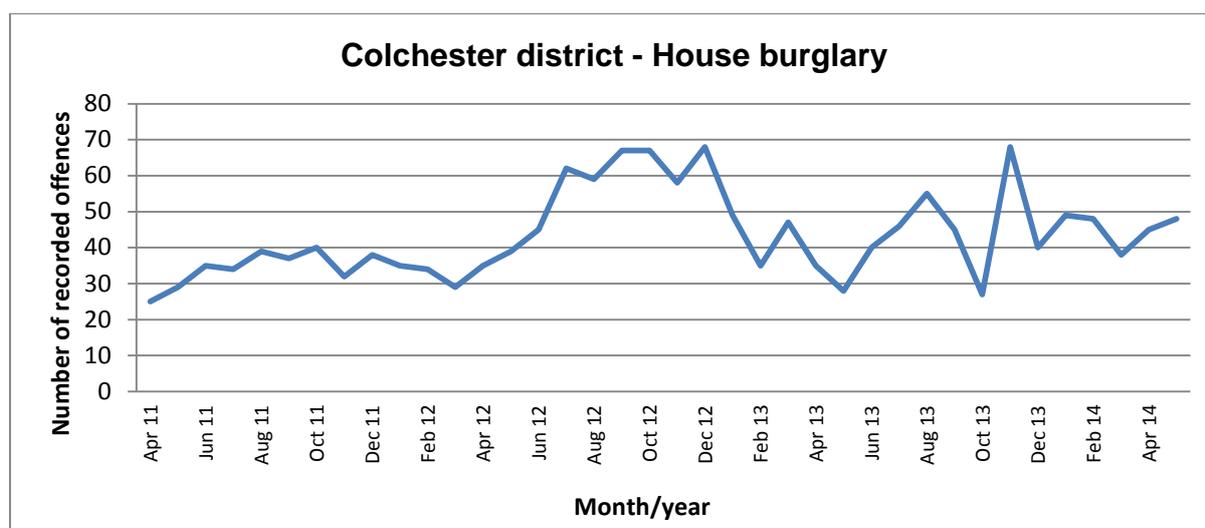
The graphs below showing specific crime trends provide data for Colchester district back to April 2011.

### Overview of all crime

Very sadly, there have been two recent murders in Colchester. District Commander Chief Insp Phillibrown will be able to provide people attending the meeting on June 25, with an update on the investigations and address any concerns they may have.

Colchester district has seen a small 0.7% increase in all crime (73 more offences) during the above reporting period. The district command has identified areas with increases and implemented actions plans around these crimes. These plans include partnership working with other agencies, including campaigns such as 'Reduce the Strength' and operations such as 'Ragwort' to target burglaries of sheds, garages and commercial premises. The council and police listen to the concerns of the community and have obtained a section 222 civil order that provides additional tools to tackle issues such as begging in the town centre.

### House Burglary



There was a significant decrease in house burglary of 16.2% (102 fewer offences) during the reporting period. Essex Police continues to deploy tactics using improved techniques in predictive crime mapping, as well as targeting the subjects that are believed to be committing offences.

Operation Homeguard currently has 15 accredited volunteers – this figure has increased from 4 volunteers in September 2013. Operation Homeguard is being deployed against developing crime series, hotspots and patterns to help prevent and deter criminal behaviour.

### Theft From Motor Vehicles

During the reporting period, offences of theft from motor vehicles decreased by 7.6% (47 fewer offences). It is believed that the work that has been completed to target those offenders committing house burglaries may have had a direct effect on the offences of vehicle crime, as some of the individuals that commit house burglaries are also connected to those committing vehicle offences.

### Criminal Damage

Offences of criminal damage decreased by 2.4% (40 fewer offences) during the reporting period. Police have conducted extensive work to develop their knowledge of those that are committing offences of criminal damage. Working with Colchester Borough Council, officers have catalogued offences and ensured that offenders are held to account for all historical offences. This has been successful in effectively targeting and bringing to justice a small number of individuals that have committed a large number of offences of criminal damage and a number of these offenders have received custodial sentences. As part of this work, Essex Police has developed excellent data sharing with the council graffiti team, as well as using schools officers to provide educational support to students.

### Burglary of sheds, garages, commercial premises

During the reporting period, offences of “Burglary Other” increased by 15.7% (86 more offences) across the district. A wide range of building types have been targeted - especially sheds and garages. Operation Ragwort is funded by the Community Safety Partnership and has been developed to provide support to identified vulnerable premises, locations and victims. This operation involves the police strategically placing alarms in identified locations, on behalf of the partnership.

The Crime Reduction Tactical Advisor for Colchester has also attended rural events to promote crime awareness around sheds, barns and other premises as well as meeting the farmers locally in the district. A publicity campaign has been maintained to raise awareness of this offence.

## **Late night crime and Licensing**

In Colchester town, the resident population includes soldiers and students who provide significant support to the local retail economy both during the day and at night. The vibrant cosmopolitan mix of entertainment and licensed premises make Colchester a location of choice for many evening visitors supporting its position as one of the busiest night-time venues in the county, with nearly 100 registered licensed premises.

Joint partnership work has recently resulted in Colchester achieving 'Purple Flag' accreditation; which recognises that the district has a varied, safe and enjoyable night-time economy and also has good transport links. The committee were impressed with the multi-agency approach within the district, the Street Pastors, the SOS Bus, the local council Zone Managers and the use of doormen from a local nightclub monitoring the taxi ranks. Other work within the district, such as regular premises checks undertaken by Essex Police, the regular joint patrols with the Royal Military Police and the strong interaction that the police and the council licensing teams have with the licensees also impressed the committee.

All door staff in the town are Security Industry Authority accredited and licenses are regularly scrutinised, as are any applications to extend hours. The police play an active part in providing information to support or oppose applications and have successfully opposed extended hours drinking applications at Licensing Committee hearings.

The police licensing officer views every Temporary Event Notice and if there is no more of a reason than extending premises' hours then he will object with evidence to support maintenance of regulated permissions. This ensures a degree of control of drunkenness in the town and premises that hold events are aware that to make an application they must provide evidence such as holding charity or private ticketed events. Licensed premises managers know that if their business is not run 'in good order' then the police will have the evidence to support objections to license applications.

Essex Police also works in partnership with the Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE), who provides sexual health awareness to young people enjoying the entertainment the town offers and run an anti-drink spiking campaign supported by the police. Staff from ACE attend premises and speak to customers. If agreeable, they test their drinks for known chemicals and place cocktail umbrellas in unattended glasses with a message that the drink could be spiked. The umbrellas feature partnership logos such as Essex Police and the Safer Colchester Partnership.

Colchester has some of the best support services in the county for people who may become vulnerable from drinking alcohol and those who are homeless. It also has a working group to which the police belong to tackle the problem of alcoholics gathering in public places and causing a nuisance. Police powers are exercised to prevent drinking in public places and the majority of Colchester town is now covered by a Designated Public Place Order. This empowers officers and PCSOs to seize alcohol and dispose of it, and enables police officers to disperse people they believe will engage in alcohol-related crime and disorder from the town.

Colchester town centre also runs operations supporting early officer intervention with people who, through alcohol, may become involved in crime and disorder. For example, a person found urinating will be dispersed and this is then followed up with a ticket for the offence or reporting for summons to court. This diverts offenders from custody for minor offences and maintains officer presence in the town centre.

Central to all of this is the ability to work with the licensees and to visit premises whilst they are open and in full use, without prior notice that the police will visit. These visits are conducted every weekend at licensed premises across the town centre and the district as required and will involve the officers meeting with the licensee or bar manager and walking through the venue to observe that there is no disorderly behaviour or unacceptable business practices. The results of these visits are returned to the licensing officer and logged on the Essex Police licensing system so that there is a record that can be used if required in the future to discuss with the licensee any areas that they are falling short of the standard that is acceptable to operate a licensed premises in Colchester. In addition, on a daily basis the licensing officer will review the incidents being reported concerning any licensing activity and liaise with the officers at the council licensing department to share information and develop a plan of action to resolve any issues identified.

If it is identified that there is a premises that requires additional police involvement then an action will be developed to firstly work with the licensee and our partners to improve the standard of the premises and if this is not successful then this could ultimately lead to a review of the premises and licensee to ascertain if further restrictions need to be placed on the premises licensee or even the closure of the premises. Essex Police and Colchester borough council have been successful with two recent enforcement plans around licensed premises in the town centre.

For many years there has been a cumulative impact area in the town centre that was introduced due to the high number of premises and incidents in a particular area of the town centre. This area has restrictions that allows the police and council to more effectively monitor the times that premises are open in that area in order to reduce the number of incidents that occur in the early hours of the morning.

Police in Colchester are continuing to work with partners to improve Colchester town centre further and ensure that all premises that operate in the town centre and the district are being operated to an acceptable level.

### **Partnership Working and Reduce The Strength campaign**

Colchester has a very strong tradition of partnership working. Over the past year, this work has included a flagship project called the Safer Colchester Project, involving police officers and PCSOs working with partners in local communities to address issues such as nuisance and anti-social behaviour and support engagement with local youths. As part of this work, the Safer Colchester Project attend regular meetings with the council community safety teams ensuring a partnership approach to identified issues.

Through the community safety team at Colchester the police continue to support the council days of action that see a large number of resources from all partner agencies, both based in Colchester and across Essex come together for a day to

tackle issues that have been identified through consultation with the communities of the area.

An operation called 'Night of Action' is also run periodically that involves an influx of large numbers of officers to the town. The town centre is split into sectors and officers operate within each area. Essex Police officers deploy to train stations with British Transport Police who then assist Essex officers in the town centre. All agencies come together in a co-ordinated and concentrated delivery of service which includes the Royal Military Police, the SOS Bus, Street Wardens, Street Pastors, PCSOs, and the use of CCTV. Licensing officers from the police and council check premises and taxis.

Colchester borough council employs Anti-Social Behaviour Officers and the police work closely with these officers. Where appropriate, civil litigation is used to take out injunctions, orders, ASBOs and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), providing solutions to problems that fall short of criminal intervention measures. Over the past year this has resulted in problematic individuals being banned from the town centre for indefinite periods, banned from shops, evicted from housing and prevented from behaving in certain ways. These matters can have a significant impact on local communities and the police will continue to work with partners pursuing all available means to ensure Colchester remains a safe place to live, work and visit.

Police in Colchester, working with partners from the council, rehabilitation services, homeless services and other partners, have introduced a Reduce the Strength campaign that has been running since August 2013 and has seen 40% of the off licensed premises in Colchester agree to stop selling high strength low cost drinks. This is a work in progress with an event planned for July that will hopefully see an increase in the number of premises signing up to the campaign. The success of this campaign should see a decrease in the anti-social behaviour and crime committed by people that are intoxicated from this type of alcoholic drink.

Colchester police station has recently become the permanent working base for four of Colchester Council's Street Wardens. These Wardens are located in the Community Safety Partnership hub at Colchester police station and work from this location for directed patrols and visiting specific locations across the town. This allows direct communication between the Safer Colchester Project officers and the council Street Wardens. The hub provides the council licensing officers with a hot desk location to enable them to work with the police licensing team. It also provides a mobile location for the Colchester Council Community Safety officers to work from, increasing the partnership working. The future continued development of this hub will see more partners using the facility as a hot desk facility, allowing direct and effective communication in one location, to maximise the effectiveness of the work conducted by all partners.

### **Serious Sexual Crime**

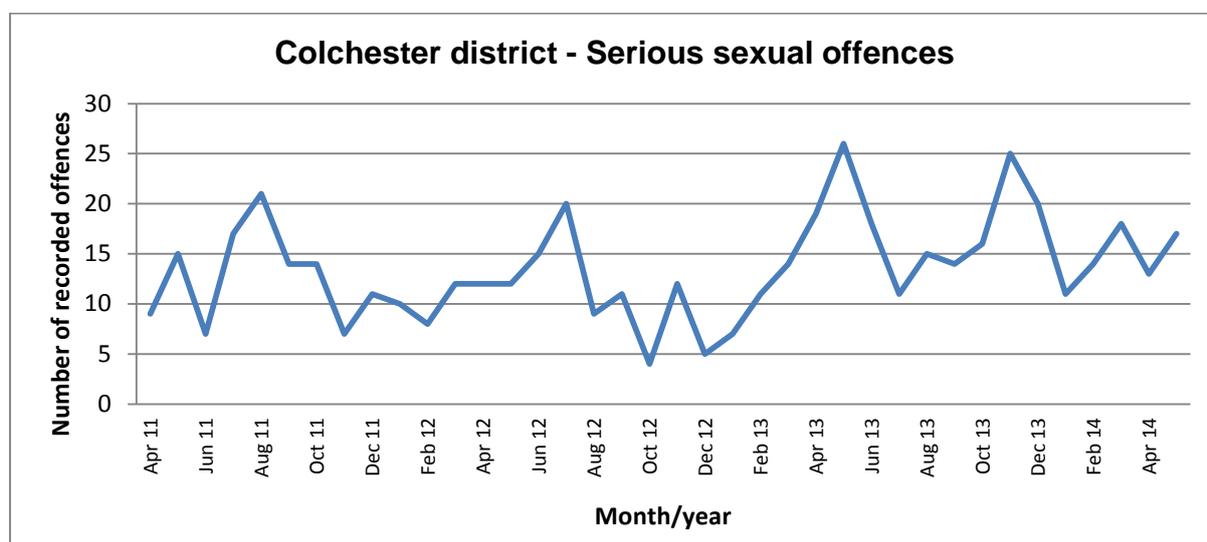
Serious sexual crime in Colchester district increased by over 43% during 1<sup>st</sup> May 2013 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 (61 offences) when compared with the same period in 2012/13.

In the majority of serious sexual offences, the perpetrator is known to the victim. Essex Police continues to adapt operational activity to target both the identified offenders and the locations of highest incidence.

Officers will engage in communication with identified individuals, often calling on them to remind them that they are of interest to the police who are monitoring their movements. The Essex Police Public Protection Unit also works with partners such as probation to continue to manage offenders whilst in prison, and on their release, with the aim of preventing re-offending.

There has been a rise in reports of serious sexual assault since the investigation into Jimmy Savile, as has been the case across the country. It is believed that people have more confidence in the reporting of these offences since the Savile investigation. Of all the offences reported for serious sexual assault, only a small number of offences are committed by strangers to the victim. Essex Police has taken proactive steps to ensure the processes governing the recording of sexual abuse are robust. Both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the force have encouraged the reporting of crime, and teams have made access to services for victims easier. Working closely with partner agencies, the force adopts a positive approach that encourages victims to report crime. Crimes recorded as serious sexual assault include a number of different offences that are all of a serious sexual nature - there are 20 different offences in this category of crime.

If you are a victim of domestic abuse, or know someone who you believe is suffering from domestic abuse, details of support services can be found as part of the countywide [Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse](#) campaign.



## **The Colchester Community Safety Partnership**

The Colchester Community Safety Partnership (CSP) consists of representatives from all relevant local partner organisations, such as:

- Colchester Borough Council
- Essex County Council
- Essex Police
- Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
- Essex Probation
- Other organisations, including Victim Support

Colchester CSP's role is to combine the experience and resources of all partners and work together with the local community to fulfil its key priorities.

For 2014/15 the CSP's key priorities are:

1. **Protecting Vulnerable People**  
Raise awareness and support victims of Domestic Abuse  
Increase awareness of Domestic Abuse reporting mechanisms amongst those living in CBH homes.  
Engage with families with chaotic lifestyles  
Engage with older people on issues of community safety  
Provide places of safety for vulnerable people in Colchester
2. **To Reduce Reoffending through Integrated Offender Management**  
Reduce adult re-offending rates by working more effectively in partnership.  
Keep the CSP updated on the changes to Essex Probation
3. **Address Alcohol Misuse**  
Reduce crime & offending caused by alcohol misuse
4. **Reduce Crime and the fear of Crime**  
Reduce crime in Colchester  
Local residents in the Borough have the opportunity to report concerns to their Neighbourhood Action Panels.  
Engage local residents & agencies in 3 Community Days of Action and Safer Colchester projects  
Delivery of 'Night of Action' in the Town Centre  
Engage with Young People on issues of community safety  
Engage and work with young people (13 -18yrs) to minimise ASB  
Set up Quarterly ASB Working Group  
Work with young people to tackle ASB

**Your feedback is most welcome.**

Should you wish to contact the PCC about this meeting or any other matter please e-mail:

[pcc@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:pcc@essex.pnn.police.uk)

or write to:

Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex  
3 Hoffmanns Way  
Chelmsford, CM1 1GU

News alerts will usually be tweeted via the Essex PCC Twitter account:  
<https://twitter.com/essexpcc>

You can learn more about the PCC's work at:  
[www.essex.pcc.police.uk](http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk)

The neighbourhood policing teams will always act on intelligence received from the community. If you have information regarding any criminal activity please either call your local team or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Crimestoppers is an anonymous line where you can report any criminal activity.