

Harlow Public Meeting – Wednesday 21st September, 2016

District Profile

Harlow is a new town that is located in the west of the county on the border with Hertfordshire, on the Stort Valley. It is one of three districts that make up the West Local Policing Area alongside Epping Forest/Brentwood and Thurrock districts.

Harlow new town was built after World War II to ease overcrowding in London. It is one of a number of so called 'London overspill' towns which include Basildon and Stevenage. The development incorporated the market town of Harlow, now a neighbourhood known as Old Harlow, and the villages of Great Parndon, Latton, Tye Green, Potter Street, Churchgate Street, Little Parndon, and Netteswell. The roads that once joined the original villages now form a network of cycle paths.

The town is divided into neighbourhoods, each self-supporting with their own shopping precincts, community facilities and pub(s). There are several night-time venues within the town centre, although these are less busy than in previous years due to the economic climate.

Over a third of the town is parkland or greensward and each estate is separated by open space. Harlow Town Park is one of the largest urban parks in Britain, and occupies a considerable part of the town.

Harlow District has a population of 81,944 (2011 census) with an employment rate of 72.2%; this is above the national average of 70.5%.

Policing Structure and Resources

Harlow is policed from one centrally located police station in the town, which affords easy access for the public and good tactical opportunities to respond to calls for service. The station houses the Community Policing Team (CPT) and the Local Policing Team (LPT), as well as Custody, Scenes of Crime and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) staff. Harlow is also the base for one of the force's domestic abuse investigation teams (Operation Juno). Other Public Protection Teams are due to be relocated into Harlow in September.

The front desk is open from 9am to 5pm, seven days a week. Whilst there is a Magistrates' Court co-located with the police station, this is now only open for specialist hearings.

Community Policing Team

The Harlow Community Policing Team (CPT) is led by an Inspector, with two Community Sergeants supervising six Police Constables, thirteen Special Constables, and seven Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). The officers attend regularly advertised Local Community Meetings (monthly LCMs) and work with the community to seek long-term solutions to local problems.

Local Policing Teams

There are six Local Policing Teams (LPTs) each led by an LPT Inspector based at Harlow Police Station. The LPTs work shifts to provide 24 hour cover for the district. Each team deals with a range of policing duties, including responding to emergency and priority incidents, critical incidents, other incident demand, appointments, missing persons and the investigation of volume crime.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID)

Based at Harlow, the CID has three teams of detectives led by a Detective Inspector, which investigate crimes such as serious assaults and burglary.

Operation Juno Team

The Operation Juno (domestic abuse investigation team) is based at Harlow Police Station and the team is responsible for investigating all high and medium risk domestic abuse cases. The team provides a service for the district seven days a week; it is led by a Detective Inspector and comprises Detective Sergeants and investigators.

The Safer Harlow Partnership

The Safer Harlow Partnership, managed by Community Safety Team Manager Marysia Rudgey, works closely with the local Community Policing Team. The Partnership will be working to the following priorities in 2016-17.

Antisocial behaviour (ASB)
Assault with and without injury
Domestic abuse
Hate crime
Hidden Harm

The Safer Harlow Partnership has extensive action plans for addressing these priorities in a range of ways, including awareness raising and education through workshops such as Crucial Crew in schools, a Community Payback scheme for those responsible for violent crime, the re-launch of Harlow Businesses Against Crime (HARBAC), and the introduction of a Youth Engagement Officer working alongside the Community Policing Team.

There is on-going and extensive work with all communities to raise awareness of how to report hate crime, and the importance of reporting it. Through the Community Safety hub, the Safer Harlow Partnership works closely with the Essex Police Raptor team, to share information about gang activity and ensure prevention work takes place along with police disruption.

An Essex Police Missing Person Liaison Officer is part of the Community Safety hub, to ensure that any concerns about vulnerability or the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation of a young person who goes missing are considered, and that steps are taken to ensure their safety and welfare.

Community Concerns

For most of the past year, the main concerns raised through community meetings and complaints revolve around the following three areas:

- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) - off road motorbikes, youths congregating;
- Street drinkers - mainly in the town;
- Unauthorised encampments.

Operation Flight Path was introduced to combat these concerns and has made a considerable difference to the feeling within communities. Related crime and ASB have improved and complaints have dwindled from previous high levels.

Unauthorised encampments

There is currently a temporary High Court Civil Injunction in place against unauthorised encampments on any land in the Harlow district. This was obtained by Harlow District Council in 2015 and is upheld by a joint approach between the local CPT and council. It is the only 'town wide' injunction in the country and has proved to be effective. Since the injunctions, there have been very few unauthorised encampments in Harlow. A group of French travellers attempted to settle in 2015, but they moved upon being informed of the injunction. This is a temporary injunction and Harlow District Council will need to seek further authorisation for it to be made permanent by the end of the current year.

Information from the Serious Crime Directorate on Harlow District

Major Crime

In March 2016, a young girl tragically died using a bouncy castle at Harlow Park Fair. The weather had deteriorated during the day and it is believed that a large gust of wind caused the bouncy castle to become loose and blow away, eventually colliding with a tree. Two operators were arrested on suspicion of gross negligence and manslaughter. The Major Crime team are working with the Health and Safety Executive. Two people remain on police bail whilst the investigation continues.

Serious Economic Crime

Over the last three years, a vulnerable couple in Harlow were scammed of approximately £250,000 through an investment fraud. The elaborate scam involved the fraudsters posing as rare metal traders. The investigation highlighted other victims. Seven suspects were arrested and currently remain on bail.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Data

The table below sets out the crime figures for Harlow, comparing reports for 1st August 2015 to 31st July 2016 with 1st August 2014 to 31st July 2015.

Crime/Incident Type	# offences		# diff	% diff
	2015	2016		
ALL CRIME	6894	7214	320	4.6
Violence with Injury	667	738	71	10.6
Violence without Injury	939	1159	220	23.4
Sexual Offences	174	210	36	20.7
Robbery	91	52	-39	-42.9
Dwelling Burglary	297	286	-11	-3.7
Other Burglary	361	361	0	0.0
Theft from Vehicle	631	433	-198	-31.4
Theft of Motor Vehicle	199	225	26	13.1
Theft from the Person	79	131	52	65.8
Theft of Pedal Cycles	120	161	41	34.2
Shoplifting	977	942	-35	-3.6
Other Theft	699	683	-16	-2.3
Criminal Damage (incl. arson)	883	919	36	4.1
Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents	4231	3771	-460	-10.9

Areas of note:

- All Crime has increased by 4.6% (320 more offences);
- Robbery has decreased by 42.9% (39 fewer offences);
- Theft from Vehicle has decreased by 31.4% (198 fewer offences);

- Violence without Injury has increased by 23.4% (220 more offences);
- Violence with Injury has increased by 10.6% (71 more offences);
- House burglary has decreased by 3.7% (11 fewer offences);
- Sexual Offences have increased by 20.7% (36 more offences);
- Theft from the Person has increased by 65.8% (52 more offences);
- Anti-Social Behaviour has decreased by 10.9% (460 fewer incidents).

All Crime

Whilst all crime shows a 4.6% increase over the period shown, more recent comparative data April to August 2016 versus April to August 2015 shows a 0.9% increase.

Theft from and of Motor Vehicles

Numerous power tools, which were stolen from vehicles, have been recovered from sites as far afield as Slough. Protracted efforts under Operation Flight Path have linked many of these offences to one organised crime group and have resulted in a number of arrests and the recovery of stolen items and drugs.

With support from CID and other internal and external partners, Essex Police has secured the conviction of a principal offender in relation to these offences. A further number of repeat offenders have been imprisoned for considerable periods, resulting in a drop in crime.

Violence and Sexual Offences

The increase in violence and sexual offences in Harlow during the above reporting period was mirrored by an increase in such offences across Essex. It is believed that some of the increase may be attributed to factors such as the publicity around high-profile investigations may have increased public confidence to come forward and report sexual offences. In addition, officers routinely ask victims of domestic abuse a set of questions which includes specific questions about whether they have been a victim of sexual assault. It is important that victims of sexual offences report crimes to Essex Police so that they can be investigated and perpetrators can be brought to justice.

Essex Police's judgement is that in Harlow the increases in crimes of a violent or sexual nature appear to have no link to the night-time economy.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Harlow Community Policing Team works closely with Harlow Council's Community Safety Team to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in partnership. The close working enables the rapid sharing of information to identify emerging issues and the identification of partnership responses.

Following the tragic incident resulting in the death of Arek Jozwik in the Stow shopping centre, the partnership has drawn up a 12 week action plan.

This will include working to engage with the community and deliver high visibility public reassurance patrols. Local retailers have been visited and a questionnaire completed with them to establish their concerns and expectations with a view to supporting the area to reduce anti-social behaviour. This process will be continued and completed with the local residents.

Essex Police and the Community Safety Team have completed a survey of the area to identify areas that need improvement and this process includes replacing damaged property and tidying up the area in general. Photographs have been taken to produce a before and after scene.

There will be further engagement and patrols in the area and enforcement action taken against criminal activity and anti-social behaviour throughout the 12 week period.

Following a recent meeting at the Safer Harlow Partnership, the Harlow Street Pastors have agreed to patrol the Stow between the hours of 8pm to midnight. This is an extension of their current work policing the town centre, and a welcome development. The hope is that this work will be extended to other shopping areas in Harlow. Local churches will also remain open during these patrolling periods.

There are also plans to establish a retail association and a residents' association to ensure early identification and action to resolve any concerns that arise.

Off road motorbikes

Harlow Community Policing team and the Harlow District Council Community Safety team began working together at the start of the summer to deal with reported issues of nuisance caused by off road motorbikes. The problem of nuisance motorbikes was identified as being a town wide issue.

To provide a consistent approach and ownership of areas the local beat officers and PCSOs were allocated ward specific areas to patrol alongside ASB Officers and community rangers.

The local authority supported by Essex Police also successfully obtained a town wide injunction preventing two or more persons riding in an anti-social manner. This injunction was obtained specifically with regards to large groups of youths that had taken to the highways in remembrance for a friend that had sadly taken his life. Whilst the injunction was to prevent any large scale issues it was also used as a tool to prevent general nuisance.

As a result of this targeted operation Essex Police was able to use section 59 powers (section 3 of the RTA 1988 to serve notices on youths seen and identified riding in an anti-social manner). A total of three notices were served on individual riders, and three motorbikes were also seized having been abandoned by the riders.

Recent critical incidents in Harlow

The murder of Arek Jozwik on August 27

Arkadiusz Jozwik, 40, was assaulted at about 11.35pm on Saturday, August 27 outside the TGF Pizza and Mr Luigi's takeaway shops in The Stow.

He suffered head injuries and was taken to the Princess Alexandra Hospital. He was later transferred to Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, where he died on Monday evening, August 29.

A 43-year-old man from Harlow was taken to the Princess Alexandra Hospital with suspected fractures to his hands and bruising to his stomach. He has since been discharged from hospital.

During the course of police enquiries, a third man, aged 40, was also found to have been assaulted.

Detective Chief Inspector Martin Pasmore, of Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate, said: "Arek Jozwik was a hard working family man who lost his life in a most tragic and brutal way, and my thoughts are very much with his family and friends as they grieve his loss.

"My team and I are doing everything we can to establish exactly what happened and bring those responsible to justice

"We are investigating his murder as a hate crime but there are other lines of enquiry that we need to look at and the information you can give us could be vital.

"From viewing CCTV we know that Arek and two friends went to TGF Pizza takeaway in The Stow, Harlow, at about 11.10pm on Saturday August 27 and ordered a pizza.

"They then went outside and spoke with a group of youths as well as other passers-by for up to about twenty minutes.

"However it can be seen that the atmosphere then changed and there was a verbal argument.

"It is during this altercation that Arek receives a single punch to the face, causing him to fall backwards and bang his head on the ground.

"There followed a short scuffle between Arek's friends and a few other people, before the suspects leave the scene.

"Arek died the following Monday and a post mortem examination has established a provisional cause of death as a head injury.

"I know there were numerous people in The Stow, many of whom will have witnessed the incident and would have been shocked by what they saw.

"I am appealing for anyone who was in the area between 10pm and midnight that Saturday to please come forward. In particular, I would like to speak to a man wearing shorts who was talking to the victims beside a large flower bed before the incident.

"I am also appealing for the members of the group present at the time of the incident to come forward and give me their account of what happened.

"I believe they and others could hold vital evidence that will help establish what it was that led to Arek's tragic death."

Chief Superintendent Sean O'Callaghan said: "We fully understand that residents in Harlow have been left deeply shocked by the murder of Arek Jozwik, and the assault of two Polish men in Kitson Way on Sunday September 4.

“We are investigating both incidents as separate hate crimes. I want to reassure the Polish community in Harlow, across Essex and other minority communities that we are treating these very seriously.

“Harlow is a strong and resilient community and we are working with residents, the Polish community and community leaders to listen to, and address, your concerns.

“We do not tolerate hate crime. Whether it’s an incident that takes place online or in the street, it’s important to let us know about hate crime to give us a chance to investigate and prosecute offenders and to ensure that victims and the wider community are protected.

“We can’t deal with the problem unless it is reported to us so we need anyone experiencing hate crime or knows someone who is to tell us about it. We will take action and we will do our best to help you.

“We also know that local people have expressed concerns about anti-social behaviour in The Stow.

“Over the last few months we have responded to those concerns by increasing patrols and gathering information and evidence. Local patrols have been increased again in light of these recent events, and we have also put in place a dispersal order giving us further powers to make people leave The Stow if they are causing harassment, alarm or distress.

“We have also been working with Harlow Council to address wider issues of anti-social behaviour including talking with residents and young people congregating in the area and gathering intelligence to identify the culprits.

“You have recently been telling us about further incidents and I continue to urge people who are experiencing these issues to please continue to report them to us or Harlow Council.”

- Anyone with information about the murder investigation is asked to contact the Harlow Major Investigation Team on 101. Alternatively, they can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111 or www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Anyone who wishes to report a hate crime:

- Call 101 to report all non-urgent cases or report them online at

- www.essex.police.uk

- Always dial 999 if you or someone else is in immediate danger.

- Alternatively, contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111 or

- www.crimestoppers-uk.org

The assault on two Polish men on September 4

Police are investigating after two men were assaulted in Harlow.

Officers were called at around 3.35am, Sunday, September 4, after reports of an altercation outside the William Aylmer pub on Kitson Way.

Witnesses reported two men, who are both Polish and in their 30s, were attacked by a group of four or five males.

Officers are treating this as a potential hate crime.

One of the men suffered a cut to his head while the other suffered a broken nose.

Both victims were treated at Princess Alexandra Hospital and have now been discharged.

Supt Trevor Roe said: “This was a vicious and horrible attack.

“Although we are considering this matter as a potential hate crime, it is not being linked with the attack at The Stow last weekend.

“I want to reassure the public and the community in Harlow we are treating this very seriously and do not tolerate assaults of any kind.

“Harlow is a strong and resilient community but I understand the concerns that recent events will cause.

“There will be an increased number of visible policing patrols in Harlow to both reassure and protect the community.

“The attack took place in the town centre outside a popular pub and we believe there will have been people who witnessed it.

“If you know anything about this attack I urge you to come forward as your information may be vital to bringing the perpetrators to justice”.

Anyone with information is asked to contact DI Louise Metcalfe at Harlow CID on 101.

People can also give information to the independent crime-fighting charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via an anonymous online form at www.crimestoppers-uk.org.

Close working and community engagement in Harlow

Two officers from Poland are supporting Harlow Community Policing Team's engagement with the Polish community following recent events in the town. Essex Police is investigating the death of Arkadiusz Jozwik, who was assaulted in The Stow on Saturday August 27, and a separate incident in which two Polish men were assaulted in Kitson Way on Sunday September 4.

Chief Constable Stephen Kavanagh met with Colonel Rafal Batkowski, Director of International Co-operation of the Polish State Police, on Tuesday September 6. The meeting gave them the opportunity to discuss the investigation into both incidents and the work Essex Police is doing to reassure the Polish community in the county.

During that meeting, Essex Police accepted an offer by the Polish State Police to send two officers to support our engagement work with Polish residents in Harlow. 2nd Lieutenant Bartosz Czernicki and Chief Sergeant Dariusz Tybura – who work for the International Co-operation division of the Polish State Police, based in Warsaw – are working alongside our officers for a week.

They are accompanying Harlow community policing team officers on patrol and will not be patrolling alone. They will be in uniform but will have no investigative role and no police powers.

District commander Chief Inspector Alan Ray said: “Bartosz and Dariusz have been patrolling with our team across Harlow since Tuesday and have been well received by all members of the community.

“They are helping us engage in particular with members of the Polish community who do not speak English as their first language.”

2nd Lieutenant Bartosz Czernicki said: “The aim of our visit is to establish co-operation with the local Polish community, and to make it easier for them to report various incidents to the police.

“We are collecting various information and we will pass these suggestions on to the Essex Police.”

Chief Sergeant Dariusz Tybura said: “On Wednesday September 14 we went on our first patrol with colleagues from Harlow police station. We have been welcomed very

warmly by both the Polish and the British communities here. They often approach us to have a friendly chat, and sometimes raise some issues.”

Police have thanked residents for attending a community meeting following recent events in the town.

Essex Police organised the meeting on Saturday, September 10, following the death of Arkadiusz Jozwik, who was assaulted in The Stow on Saturday August 27, and a separate incident in which two Polish men were assaulted in Kitson Way on Sunday September 4.

There were about 40 people at the meeting, which was also attended by deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex, Jane Gardner, Harlow Council leader Jon Clempner and Harlow MP Robert Halfon.

Chief Superintendent Sean O’Callaghan said: “It was a positive meeting and I’d like to thank residents for taking the time to attend and speak to us about their concerns and experiences from across the town.

“We heard from members of the public about their experiences of anti-social behaviour and hate crime, and I spoke to a number of residents individually after the meeting about their specific concerns.

“I want to reassure the community that we do take these matters seriously and are committed to tackling the problems you have been facing.

“As part of this, we will be continuing our work with Harlow Council and other partners to tackle the wider issues of anti-social behaviour. I understand some residents may be reluctant to report incidents but I would ask them to please tell us or the council, because the information you provide is vital and we cannot deal with problems unless we know about them.

“We assess all reports of anti-social behaviour and base our response in each case on the level of threat, risk and harm it presents. We will attend where victims are vulnerable or have been subject to repeated problems or harassment.

“There may be cases that do not necessarily require a police presence or where other agencies have a responsibility. However, we will still use the information you provide to build up a picture of any recurring issues so that we can target our patrols and find the best way to tackle the problem.

“Essex Police does not tolerate hate crime and it is important to let us know about any incidents so that we can do our best to help you. Letting us know gives us a chance to investigate, prosecute offenders and ensure you and your community are protected.”

- To report anti-social behaviour, please call 999 in an emergency or 101 in a non-emergency. You can also report incidents online at www.essex.police.uk/do-it-online
- To report incidents of hate crime, please call 999 in an emergency or 101 in a non-emergency. If you do not want to speak to police, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or report online via the True Vision website www.report-it.org.uk

Your feedback is most welcome.

You can have your say about the new Police and Crime Plan for Essex in an online survey or by email here:

<http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk/police-and-crime-plan-2016-engagement-and-online-survey/>

Should you wish to contact the PCC about this meeting, or any other matter you can do so through the following routes:

By email: pcc@essex.pnn.police.uk

By writing to:

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex
3 Hoffman's Way
Chelmsford CM1 1GU

You can learn more about the PCC's work at:
www.essex.pcc.police.uk

News alerts will usually be tweeted via the Essex PCC Twitter account:

<https://twitter.com/essexpcc>

Reporting Crime:

All criminal information and intelligence reported to Essex Police allows them to build a picture of criminality and emerging issues in the area, and therefore plan and respond to these more effectively.

Local policing teams will always act on intelligence received from the community. If you have information regarding any criminal activity please either call the force control room on 101, your local policing team, or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Crimestoppers is a completely anonymous line where you can report any criminal activity.