



Saffron Walden Public Meeting District Profile – February 2017

Uttlesford district is one part of the Uttlesford and Braintree District Policing Area (DPA) which comprises two of England's largest districts, covering 484 square miles. The DPA consists of five growing market towns at Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Braintree, Witham and Halstead and the surrounding rural areas. The population of the DPA is increasing and is currently estimated to comprise over 224,042 residents and 93,300 households.

The DPA presents a challenging mix of urban and rural policing. Stretching from the middle of the county to the borders with Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, it is split into 124 parishes with 107 parish councils and four town councils.

The M11, A120, A12, A130 and A131 run through the DPA and the DPA is linked to London by two separate railway lines. The rail and road links to London allow a high proportion of the population to commute to work. These links also make cross-border travelling more viable for criminals.

Uttlesford district covers 248 square miles and has a population of over 84,800. The largest employer within the district is Stansted Airport.

Uttlesford district was voted as the number one most desirable rural area in which to live in Great Britain, in the Halifax Rural Areas Quality of Life Survey 2014; accordingly many residents of both Uttlesford and Braintree districts expect a high quality of life and have high expectations of their service providers, including the police and their partners.

Within the Uttlesford district, 95.4% of the population is 'White British,' 1.6% 'Asian', 1.1% 'Black', 1.1% 'Mixed Race' and 0.9% is 'Chinese' or 'Other'.

Policing Structure and Resources

The Uttlesford and Braintree DPA is part of the North Local Policing Area (LPA). The DPA is run by one District Commander, who has one Community Policing Team Inspector and three Local Policing Team Inspectors.

The DPA has two operating bases, Braintree Police Station and, currently, Great Dunmow Police Station. The DPA is covered 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by the Local Policing Teams (LPTs) operating from these two bases. The DPA is only operating from Great Dunmow on a temporary basis whilst it awaits the fitting-out of 'The Lodge' police office at Uttlesford District Council, as a replacement for Saffron Walden Police Station. A police 'front office' is already operating in Uttlesford District Council reception. Uttlesford and Braintree have separate district councils and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) but the DPA has one Community Policing Team (CPT) to serve them. The CPT divides itself to cover two Community Safety Hubs, one at Uttlesford District Council and the other at Braintree District Council. Uttlesford and Braintree CPT has an

establishment of one Inspector, two Sergeants, eight Police Constables, nine Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and ten Special Constables. However, these CPT Officers are split across two shifts.

Also serving the two district councils/CSPs are one Police Licensing Officer, one Crime Prevention Tactical Adviser and one Missing Persons Liaison Officer.

The LPTs for Braintree and Uttlesford have an establishment of three Inspectors, 12 Sergeants and 80 Constables.

There is a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) based at Braintree Police Station.

The custody suite at Braintree has closed and so all prisoners from the DPA must be taken to the nearest custody suite with available cells – usually Chelmsford, Harlow or Colchester.

There are two police front counters within the DPA that are currently open to the public: a police front counter facility is maintained from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, within the reception at Uttlesford District Council offices in Saffron Walden, and Braintree Police Station is open between 9am and 5pm, seven days per week.

The DPA is supported by a cadre of Special Constables, consisting of one Special Inspector, five Special Sergeants and 26 Special Constables who support Local and Community Policing Teams as well as organising and delivering their own policing operations.

Volunteer 'Active Citizens' are deployed on foot in the community, alongside police officers and PCSOs, on crime reduction initiatives. Their aim is to engage with the public, provide crime prevention advice and to provide administrative support to the policing of the DPA.

Community Concerns and Media

The Community Policing Team provides the local press with a weekly briefing and the media have been invited to several policing events and operations.

The local Community Policing Team, Specials and District Commander are active on social media, commenting on events, incidents and campaigns. This is supported by the local Community Safety Partnership.

Police Visibility and Police Station Closures

Although Essex Police and their Community Safety Partners help maintain Uttlesford as a safe, low crime district, the community remains concerned with the perceived level of visible police officers. It should be noted that Uttlesford and Braintree districts cover vast geographic areas.

The community have voiced their concerns to the press regarding the closure of Saffron Walden Police Station and they fear that closure of the station will lead to an increase in crime and ASB. However, Saffron Walden Police Station is not fit for purpose and had to be evacuated following a gas leak in 2015, which followed a rat infestation in 2014. Agreement has been reached between Essex Police and Uttlesford District Council for

Essex Police to occupy and operate from 'The Lodge' in the grounds of Uttlesford District Council offices. It is anticipated that the project to fit out The Lodge for police use will be completed in March 2017.

Examples of Problem Solving Initiatives

Birchanger Services and the M11/A120 junction area have been identified as 'hotspots' for illegal immigrants decamping from the back of lorries. In order to raise awareness of the harms of human trafficking and vulnerability of immigrants to modern slavery, Essex Police and the Community Safety Partnership organised a multi-agency operation to educate the management and staff at the services and also to stop-check hauliers using the services to educate and deter them. The High Sheriff of Essex, the Leader of Uttlesford District Council and the Chief Executive were all in attendance. As a result of the operation, 2134 vehicles were checked through the ANPR system, 17 HGVS and two foreign coaches were thoroughly checked, ten fixed penalty notices were issued, two uninsured vehicles were seized, one van was prohibited from driving for mechanical issues, one van was overweight and a £300 fine was issued and 150 questionnaires were completed with HGV drivers providing significant intelligence.

A local newspaper in Saffron Walden reported residents' concerns that illegal drugs were openly supplied and used in the town centre. A highly visible licensed premises check operation was organised between Essex Police and the Licensing Team to deter and/or detect any such activity and to provide support and direction to the town centre licensees and customers. Drug wipes were used on customers, staff and on surfaces to identify any possible drug use and health advice leaflets regarding drink and drugs were handed out to customers. Robust licensed premises checks were completed and a boost was given to the local Pubwatch scheme. As a result, one person was arrested, drug users/suppliers were diverted or deterred from using/supplying in the town centre, more robust preventative licensee/door-staff activity was encouraged and a positive media story was provided to the newspapers with which to reassure the community.

In response to residents raising concerns regarding ASB issues related to drug use and supply in Saffron Walden, CPT officers decided that intervention and public reassurance was required through a high visibility stop and search operation targeting identified locations. The district council's ASB Coordinator worked with the Special Constabulary and CPT and accompanied them on the operation. As a result, one person was arrested for possession of Cocaine, two Cannabis warnings were issued, one man was arrested on suspicion of handling a stolen motorbike (along with no insurance and driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence) and an amount of Cannabis was seized following the execution of a search warrant.

Following reports of frequent, low-level ASB from a specific address which was blighting other residents' lives, Braintree Community Safety Hub coordinated a detailed plan to tackle the ASB. There were some concerns regarding drug use, but the majority of the ASB appeared to be related to the occupant's vulnerability to exploitation by undesirable visitors to the address and the ASB caused by the number and behaviour of these visitors. Following multi-agency meetings it was decided that an application would be made to the court for a closure notice. The application was successful and resulted in a dramatic reduction in calls to the address.

Uttlesford Crime Comparison

The table below sets out the crime figures for Uttlesford, comparing reports for 1st January 2016 to 31st December 2016 with 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2015.

Areas of note:

- All Crime has increased by 15.9% (386 more offences);
- Violence without Injury has increased by 48.1% (154 more offences);
- Sexual Offences has increased by 27.4% (17 more offences);
- Criminal Damage has increased by 21.0% (73 more offences);
- Theft of Motor Vehicle has increased by 34.6% (18 more offences);
- Shoplifting has increased 35.5% (33 more offences);
- Other Burglary has decreased by 14.5% (43 fewer incidents);
- Anti-Social Behaviour has decreased by 5.1% (61 fewer incidents).

12 Months to December

Crime/Incident Type	# offences		# diff	% diff
	2015	2016		
ALL CRIME	2422	2808	386	15.9
Violence with Injury	234	274	40	17.1
Violence without Injury	320	474	154	48.1
Sexual Offences	62	79	17	27.4
Robbery	9	8	-1	-11.1
Dwelling Burglary	151	153	2	1.3
Other Burglary	296	253	-43	-14.5
Theft from Vehicle	238	216	-22	-9.2
Theft of Motor Vehicle	52	70	18	34.6
Theft from the Person	22	29	7	31.8
Theft of Pedal Cycles	21	20	-1	-4.8
Shoplifting	93	126	33	35.5
Other Theft	369	393	24	6.5
Criminal Damage (incl. arson)	347	420	73	21.0
Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents	1197	1136	-61	-5.1

Violent Offences

During the above reporting period, All Crime increased in Uttlesford district by 15.9% (386 more offences), which is largely accounted for by increases in offences of violence and sexual offences - Violence with Injury increased by 17.1% (40 more offences); Violence without Injury increased by 48.1% (154 more offences); and Sexual Offences increased by 27.4% (17 more offences).

Some of this increase is as a result of changes to the National Crime Recording Standards counting rules. Violence without Injury offences have increased nationally due to changes in the recording process, which has resulted in previously unrecorded crimes such as harassment and malicious communications being added. The latest national data comparing the 12 months to August 2016 with the 12 months to August 2015 shows that 42 of the 43 forces in England and Wales have seen increases in Violence without Injury offences.

Much of these increases appear to be attributable to an increased and positively encouraged reporting and recording of domestic abuse. In Uttlesford, during the above reporting period, 43% of violent offences and 54% of the most serious sexual assaults against people over the age of 16 were as a result of domestic abuse.

Operation Juno is one of the force's responses to tackling domestic abuse. Uttlesford district is served by a team of Operation Juno officers at Chelmsford Police Station who are dedicated to investigating domestic abuse related offences and offenders.

Few of the serious offences occurred in public between strangers and Uttlesford remains a very safe place for the public by day or night.

Uttlesford does not have a significant night-time economy (NTE), but the DPA's licensing officer, CPT and partners are active in ensuring that the district's licensees maintain a safe NTE, with a particularly well supported and effective Pubwatch and a 'Behave or Be Banned' scheme in the main towns and surrounding villages. Over 100 offenders have been banned from drinking in Pubwatch members' premises under the Uttlesford Behave or Be Banned scheme.

Acquisitive Crime

With the support of partners such as the Integrated Offender Management Scheme, known offenders within Uttlesford have been successfully targeted and disrupted by the Local and Community Policing Teams, which in turn has resulted in significant reductions in 'acquisitive crime' - Other Burglary has decreased by 14.5% (43 fewer offences) and Theft from Vehicle offences have decreased by 9.2% (22 fewer offences).

However, Uttlesford has suffered 18 more theft of vehicles this year compared to last year (a 34.6% increase over the previous year). A significant number of the reported thefts relate to hire vehicles that had not been returned; such reports may be relatively easy to investigate but can be time consuming to resolve. The DPA has run several targeted patrols operations supported by funds secured through tasking bids; one in particular targeted hotel car parks where tradesmen's vans were vulnerable to break ins. The DPA has delivered crime prevention advice through partners, the press and leaflet posting, as well as supporting Uttlesford District Council's work to extend the ANPR coverage of the district.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social Behaviour in Uttlesford has decreased by 5.1% (61 fewer incidents) in the 12 months to December 2016. This reduction is a result of intelligence-led and targeted police and partnership activity, against offenders, and at key locations and events.