



## **Briefing Note for The Police and Crime Commissioner** **Epping Public Meeting 16.02.17**

### **Epping District Profile**

Within the Epping Forest district there are a number of towns and villages, the largest of which are Loughton, Waltham Abbey and Epping. The west of the area borders three Metropolitan Police boroughs and Hertfordshire to the north of the Epping West and Ongar beats.

A large proportion of residents commute into London because of the district's close proximity to the city and good transport links.

The district has a vibrant night-time economy (NTE), including a variety of restaurants, pubs and clubs in Loughton and Epping town centres, and this contributes positively to the economy.

Epping Forest runs through a large area in the west of the district. Whilst managed by the Corporation of London, there are some policing implications to the forest. Historically, it has been a location used for public sexual encounters and this has caused concern to residents and other users of the forest, although this is not currently an issue. It is also not uncommon for the search for a vulnerable or missing person to include the forest, which can be resource intensive given its size.

The population of Epping Forest District is 124,659 of which 85% (106,233) are 'White British', 6% (6636) are 'White Other' and 9% (11790) are 'Black or Minority Ethnic' (2011 UK Census).

### **Policing Structure and Resources**

The Epping Forest district is part of the Epping Forest and Brentwood District Policing Area (DPA) which falls under the West Local Policing Area (LPA).

The Community Policing Team (CPT) is based at Loughton Police Station. This team delivers community policing within the district. The team comprises one Sergeant, six Police Constables and eight Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Although the team often works closely on joint operations with Brentwood, Brentwood has its own separate CPT.

There are six Local Policing Teams (LPTs) in Epping, consisting of six Sergeants and 38 Constables in total. These teams provide cover for the district 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are based at Loughton Police Station. The teams provide a policing response to incidents and the investigation of crime throughout the fairly urban area in the south and west, right up to the north in more rural areas such as Ongar, Sheering and Theydon Bois. Brentwood has its own LPT.

The Criminal Investigations Department 'Proactive' (CIDP) works under a local Detective Inspector. The department is based at Brentwood and is responsible for targeting prolific offenders and the prevention and detection of crime.

The Criminal Investigations Department 'Reactive' (CIDR) is based at Loughton Police Station and works under a local Detective Inspector to provide cover for the district from 8am to 10pm. The department is responsible for the investigation of the more serious crimes such as dwelling burglary and robbery.

Operation Juno teams are responsible for the investigation of all domestic abuse crimes within the West LPA and are based at Harlow and at Grays Police Station.

### **Community Concerns and Media**

During the last 12 months, the community has expressed concern regarding the following issues:

- Ongar stabbing - there was a stabbing at Ongar prior to Christmas and members of the community (shop owners/parish councillors) were considering calling for the traditional Christmas light switch on to be stopped.
- Fly tipping – joint operations and investigations with the enforcement teams have taken place within the district as well as with adjoining districts.
- Parking at Abridge Road, Theydon Bois, where two neighbours are very vocal in their campaign relating to cars parked on the main road outside of their homes. The Essex Parking Partnership is looking at this and some enforcement is carried out by the police relating to obstruction.
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Epping is currently an issue – The CPT is running Operation Stream where they are working closely with the CCTV and Community Safety Team to identify offenders of ASB.

### **Examples of Problem Solving Initiatives**

#### **Addressing ASB on Epping High Street**

During 2016, there was an increase in calls to the police relating to incidents of ASB in Epping High Street. The calls increased from 7 to 27 when comparing data from 2015 to 2016. The CPT has been working with the local community and ASB Officers at Epping Community Safety Team to tackle ASB. The CPT has examined the details of the incidents and the times that problems have most commonly been occurring and the team has changed their shift times to work at the most appropriate times to tackle these problems.

It was identified that the incidents were caused by youths and by working with the Community Safety Team, CCTV operators and schools they have managed to identify the offenders. The offenders are being visited at home and parents are being informed of and shown the behaviour of the youths. Where anti-social driving is involved, prosecutions and or Section 59 warnings/seizures are being enforced.

#### **Tackling ASB at Halloween in North Weald**

There were numerous reports of ASB in North Weald, during Halloween 2015, caused by youths setting off fireworks. The Community Safety Partnership carried out some follow-up work with the parish council, resulting in new CCTV near the shops in North Weald.

During Halloween 2016, the CPT was on duty and the CPT Inspector authorised a dispersal zone to prevent people gathering and causing ASB. This dispersal zone also gave the police the power to seize any items that people had in their possession that may be involved in ASB. A large quantity of eggs and alcohol was seized in the build-up to Halloween, but there was no trouble reported in North Weald. The members of the public that had reported the incidents of ASB the previous year, thanked the police for their action. A similar operation will run this year.

## Preventing Burglaries

The Community Policing Team has been concentrating its efforts on joint operations with CID to reduce burglaries and arrest offenders. The CPT has worked with volunteers (Active Citizens) and the Community Safety Team in patrolling locations effected by burglaries. Patrolling and being visible in the area should help to deter further crime. In addition, timer switches for lights were given to members of the public, along with crime prevention advice. Whilst this preventative work was ongoing, the CPT also used ANPR to detect travelling criminals. This work resulted in the arrest of a travelling burglar who was wanted in another police area and who may have been active in Epping Forest, and the arrest of a man on foot in Debden about an hour after he had burgled a local house. The CPT's work has helped the district achieve a 9.9% reduction in burglaries this year, compared to last year - which is 76 fewer houses burgled in a year.

## Preventing Crime and ASB

In the autumn of 2016, the police received reports of crime and anti-social behaviour in relation to a housing estate in Waltham Abbey. The gangs unit and the CPT identified that this was possibly linked with drug dealing and the teams worked closely together to identify the people involved. In December 2016, a search warrant was executed and this resulted in £1,200 of Cocaine and £800 cash being seized. Two men were arrested and, working with the Community Safety Team, the CPT arranged for the men to be evicted from the address (owned by a private landlord). The men were charged and are currently on remand awaiting trial. There are now no issues associated with this address in Waltham Abbey.

## Information from the Serious Crime Directorate

### Major Crime - Operation Barracuda

A husband who killed his wife after a row over his affair has been jailed for life. Darren Byrne assaulted Maria Byrne during an argument on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Byrne, a former stockbroker, denied murder but was convicted of murder and arson on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 following a trial at Chelmsford Crown Court. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and must serve a minimum of 24 years. He was also sentenced to 6.5 years for arson, to run concurrently.

### Serious Economic Crime - Operation Rodeo

An investigation by officers from the Serious Economic Crime Unit investigated the activities of a male, claiming to be a trader in the City of London, suspected of using victims' money to fund an extravagant lifestyle and recent property purchases. Investors were encouraged to deposit funds for investment on the foreign stock exchange and promised monthly interest returns of 5% of deposit. A male and his partner have been charged with £200k investment fraud and money laundering and await trial.

## Epping Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Data

The table below sets out the crime figures for Epping, comparing reports for 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 with 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

Areas of note:

- All Crime has increased by 10.9% (802 more offences);
- Violence with Injury has increased by 14.8% (97 more offences);
- Violence without Injury has increased by 21.4% (218 more offences);
- Dwelling Burglary has decreased by 9.9% (76 fewer offences);
- Theft from the Person has increased by 61.0% (36 more offences);
- Criminal Damage has increased by 19.8% (169 more offences);
- Anti-Social Behaviour has increased by 2.1% (76 more incidents).

### **12 Months to December**

Crime/Incident Type	# offences		# diff	% diff
	2015	2016		
ALL CRIME	7383	8185	802	10.9
Violence with Injury	655	752	97	14.8
Violence without Injury	1019	1237	218	21.4
Sexual Offences	126	127	1	0.8
Robbery	74	79	5	6.8
Dwelling Burglary	765	689	-76	-9.9
Other Burglary	391	424	33	8.4
Theft from Vehicle	749	794	45	6.0
Theft of Motor Vehicle	403	446	43	10.7
Theft from the Person	59	95	36	61.0
Theft of Pedal Cycles	72	47	-25	-34.7
Shoplifting	448	462	14	3.1
Other Theft	933	973	40	4.3
Criminal Damage (incl. arson)	854	1023	169	19.8
Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents	3591	3667	76	2.1

### Anti-Social Behaviour

During the above reporting period, ASB increased in Epping district by 2.1% (76 more incidents) when compared to the same reporting period the previous year. Please see the information included on pages 2 and 3 in relation to policing work undertaken on Epping High Street to address ASB – Operation Stream, and work to address ASB at Halloween.

### Theft from the Person

In Epping District, during the reporting period, offences of Theft from the Person increased by 61% (36 more offences) when compared to the same period the previous year. The vast majority of these offences have involved purse dippings which have occurred in and around Epping High Road, Loughton High Road, Sun Street in Waltham Abbey and at tube stations between 11:00 and 14:00. The CPT and the Community Safety Partnership will be targeting these areas, looking for suspects and giving out purse bells and crime prevention advice to members of the public.

## Criminal Damage

During the reporting period, Criminal Damage increased in Epping district by 19.8% (169 more offences). Criminal damage can include offences such as graffiti, damage to cars, windows, houses and commercial premises. However, no patterns have been identified in relation to the offences reported in Epping during the past 12 months.

## Violent Crime

During the reporting period, offences of Violence with Injury increased by 14.8% (97 more offences) and Violence without Injury offences increased by 21.4% (218 more offences).

Some of the violent crime in the district can be linked to the night-time economy. Recent activity by the police in restricting the hours of a bar in Loughton, coupled with the Transport for London night tube service, means that there now appears to be less people in the district after midnight. The Street Pastor service that ran in Loughton has now stopped, due to the lack of people around; however this service will restart if the night-time economy becomes busier. In the meantime, the possibility of these volunteers becoming Active Citizens is being explored.

It is believed that some of the increase in violent crime may be 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.

In addition, some of the rise in violent crime appears to be attributable to an increased and positively encouraged reporting and recording of domestic abuse. It is interesting to note that in Epping district, during the above reporting period, 34.6% of Violence against the Person offences were as a result of domestic abuse.