

ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP REVIEW FORM
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

PARTNERSHIP NAME:

**Darlington Community Safety
Partnership.**

PARTNERSHIP FUNCTION:

To make Darlington Safer.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR

Objectives:

1. Protecting and supporting people.
2. Promoting safer places.
3. Tackling violent crime, including domestic abuse.
4. Building strong and cohesive communities.

PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES

Darlington Community Safety Partnership (CSP) continues to meet both virtually via Teams and in person quarterly and delivered a range of services, projects and initiatives in support of its vision, objectives and associated plans during 2024/25.

In terms of performance, there has been a decrease of 13.4% in the number of reported crimes (1614 less crimes), and an increase of 16.7% in the number of reported anti-social behaviour incidents (374 incidents) in Darlington when compared with a similar reporting period 2023/24 (1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 compared with 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025).

Categories of crimes showing an increase of over 10% during 2024/25 include Business Burglary (37 offences), Racially Aggravated Crime (14 offences) and Drugs Offences (65 offences).

The town centre has recorded a 9.1% decrease in crime during the same period (decrease of 136 crimes), an increase of 61.7% in the number of reported anti-social behaviour incidents (116 incidents) when compared with a similar reporting period during 2023/24.

Categories of crimes showing an increase of over 10% during 2024/25 include Sexual Offences (12 offences), rape (3 offences), Burglary (11 offences), Business Burglary (10 offences), and arson (1 offences).

Regionally the use of Operation Cargo, to target the most prolific offenders and safeguard the top locations and locally the successful relaunch of Shop watch has seen reductions since mid-summer 2023. This reduction for Darlington is currently 6.1% and 21.8% in the Town Centre compared to the previous year. Two more Shop watch schemes are in the process of being set up on the Yarm Road retail park and the North Road Retail park.

The increase of Anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre over recent months has had a significant impact on the figures however over the last few weeks we have started to see decreases. This has been achieved by working with partners and businesses across the Town Centre to identify those causing such issues. As a result, we have recently received an Injunction on a young person and served a number of Acceptable Behaviour Agreements on others. This seems to have circulated around others and behaviours have improved.

The above tactics and initiatives remain active to target offenders and keep the public safe.

With regards to drugs offences the increase is largely down to proactive police operations and working collaboratively with our CCTV department where CCTV will report suspicious activity.. With regards other offences such as serious sexual assaults and robbery, these have predominately been known offenders to the victim i.e., domestic abuse or organised crime related in respect of robbery. There appears no information to suggest any heightened risk to the public in this area.

The night-time economy in the town centre does drive crime but continues to be policed by a night-time economy operation every weekend. The police have also completed several specific passive drug dog operations in Darlington to disrupt drugs offences etc. Darlington remains a safe space in the NTE as acknowledged by the recent Purple Flag accreditation.

In terms of anti-social behaviour, there have been significant reductions noted last year due to a number of factors including targeted operations, more focused and regular patrols involving Motorcycle Section and Operation Trailblazer which focuses on intelligence led policing in hotspot areas for ASB. These activities have been well supported by partners which has had a considerable impact on the yearly figures.

Performance against objectives remains a standing item on the agenda of each partnership meeting including the Darlington Community Safety Partnership, the Darlington (CSP) Multi-Agency Problem Solving Group and individual organisation "daily" tasking and coordination.

Darlington CSP activity has remained focused throughout the period of reporting and supported the delivery of key achievements around the business priorities, all of which are well-evidenced

in the Darlington Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-2026 and linked documents.

The Partnership is well attended, remains focused on the threats and risk around community safety and regularly reviews membership, ownership of themes, action plans and deliverables. To support this process, a Partnership Planning Event will be held on shortly to review the partnership plan 2021-2026 and formulate the plan for 2026-2031

Governance arrangements and the CSP Risk Register have been reviewed. Governance arrangements remain unchanged and have been approved by partners. The CSP Risk Register is currently being reviewed by all members and is subject to scrutiny at each CSP meeting. Governance arrangements have been reviewed with specialist advisors in DBC Legal and Procurement with no suggested amendment.

BUDGET ADMINISTERED

£20,000 has been awarded by the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner to support the Darlington Community Safety Partnership Multi-Agency Problem Solving Group (MAPS).

DBC RESOURCES CONTRIBUTED e.g., finance, employees, accommodation, other assets

Staffing:

1. Dedicated Community Safety Staff - Staff from Community Safety facilitate and support the CSP and contribute to projects and programmes of work.
2. Contribution to Community Safety Partnership provided by a range of staff across Council Directorates e.g., Community Services, Housing, Environmental Health, Public Health, Young Peoples' Engagement and Justice Service, Building Stronger Families and Early Help Services.
3. Accommodation is provided to Darlington Neighbourhood Policing Teams who are co-located with DBC Community Safety and Young Peoples' Engagement and Justice Service in Central House Annexe, Gladstone Street, Darlington.

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS OUTSTANDING ACTIONS, IF ANY, FROM PARTNERSHIP TOOLKIT QUESTIONNAIRE

See "Supporting Evidence."

ISSUES OF CONCERN, IF ANY e.g., finance, staffing etc

Funding across the public sector remains a challenge and can impact on the capacity and capability of the Council and Partner Agencies to develop programmes of work to deliver CSP objectives.

Other concerns include:

- a) Financial challenges.
- b) Demand management
- c) Conflicting priorities.
- d) Sophistication of organised crime.
- e) Industrial action.
- f) Finite resources.
- g) Staff recruitment and retention.
- h) Public expectations and confidence in partners.
- i) Cost of living crisis.
- j) Local elections.
- k) Ageing workforce.

ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF CONCERN (including responsible officer and timescales)

Threat and risk (which includes areas of concern) is monitored on a continual basis with any areas of concern being escalated to Darlington CSP. During the period of review all areas of potential concern have been managed effectively / mitigated and the partnership has continued to deliver in a difficult operating environment.

IS THE PARTNERSHIP TO CONTINUE? Yes

OBJECTIVES FOR 2025/26

1. Protecting and supporting people.
2. Promoting safer places.
3. Tackling violent crime, including domestic abuse.
4. Building strong and cohesive communities.

Completed By Lead Officer:

Name Chris Knox

Post Head of Community Safety

Date 09.04.2025

Reviewed By Director:

Name Ben Grabham

Post Assistant Director of
Environmental Services and
Community Safety

Date 12th June 2025
