



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

15 May 2025

Building Safer & Stronger Communities

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Richard Overton, Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing & Enforcement
Lead Director:	Dean Sargeant – Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services
Service Area:	Neighbourhood Enforcement
Report Author:	Jas Bedesha, Service Delivery Manager – Safer, Stronger Communities
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Yes – 2 April 2025
Report considered by:	SMT – 15 April 2025 Business Briefing – 1 May 2025 Cabinet – 15 May 2025

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note the partnership working and continued focus Building Safer & Stronger Communities has on tackling the root causes of crime across the borough.
- 1.2 Endorse the data and intelligence led approach to focus resources and partnership working to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping across the borough.

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- 1.3 Delegates authority to the Director for Neighbourhood & Enforcement in consultation with the Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing & Enforcement, to submit bids for external funding that supports Building Safer & Stronger Communities.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the Council's continued focus to build safer, stronger & healthier communities through the Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme.
- 2.2 If approved, this report seeks approval on the continued use data and intelligence to focus resources and partnership working in areas requiring greater focus in order to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Telford & Wrekin Council is committed to building safer, stronger & healthier communities while protecting and enhancing our environment.
- 3.2 Working in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner and West Mercia Police, in April 2021 the Council launched the Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme. The aim of this initial investment was to work with partners and focus on small pockets of the borough to make all areas safer.
- 3.3 Founded on data, intelligence and community collaboration, this initial two-year programme saw £2.5m invested that delivered a range of interventions to protect vulnerable children, young people and adults most at risk of being exploited and becoming the victims and/or perpetrators of crime while addressing crime in the most vulnerable areas of the borough.

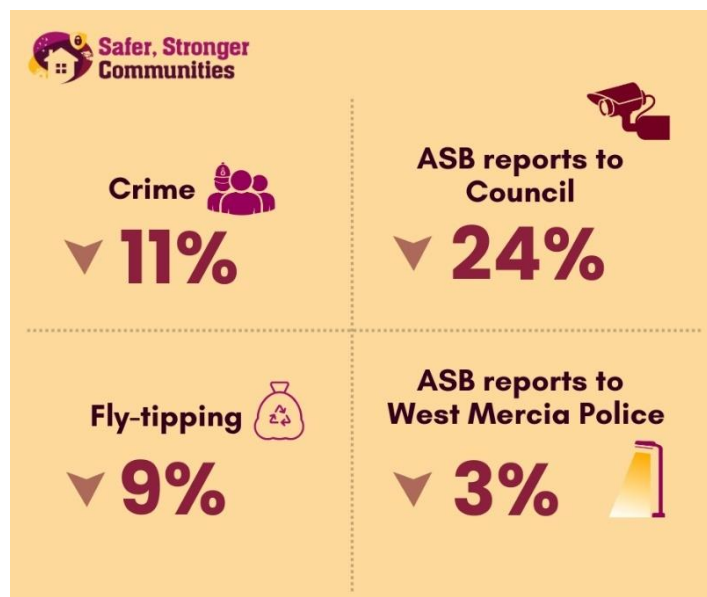


Figure 1 rolling year comparison - 2023/24 to 2024/25

- 3.4 As shown in figure 1 during the last 12 months there has been a reduction in crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping across Building Safer & Stronger Communities investment areas. Since the start of the programme anti-social behaviour and fly tipping has also reduced with borough wide recorded crimes per 1,000 people consistently below the regional average and below the national average since 2023.
- 3.5 The Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme is now entering a further two years which takes the total investment since 2021 to £6m. While evolving to meet the needs of residents across the borough, underpinned through data and intelligence, the programme continues to focus on the following priority themes:
- Education & Skills
 - Housing Standards
 - Crime Reduction
 - Environmental Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Community Resilience
 - Health Inequalities
- 3.6 Evidence suggests that well-designed youth activities, including after-school programs, mentoring, and sports programs, can reduce crime and reoffending, particularly when they focus on building skills, promoting positive behaviours, and providing structured supervision. During the 2021 consultation and launch events, residents provided feedback on the need to increase the range of youth activities locally.
- 3.7 Building Safer & Stronger Communities, as part of the youth offer that continues to grow across the borough, has developed a range of youth activities working in partnership with external organisations, education settings and Town and Parish Councils. This development included the increasingly popular Urban Games initiative where those aged 8-16 have the ability to participate in a range of sports and physical activity at no cost. During the 2024 summer holidays over 3,000 children and young people attended the free sessions and since launch in 2022 approximately 9,000 children and young people have attended to date.
- 3.8 Urban Games has been complimented by Telford Kicks which is a Friday night free football offer across the borough that regularly has over 130 children and young people attend each week. Some of those who attended Telford Kicks have secured their own coaching qualifications as a result and are now supporting Telford Kicks in a coaching and mentoring capacity.
- 3.9 Working with partnering Town and Parish Councils, investment has supported the development of youth clubs at Park Lane Centre, Woodside, Arlestone Community

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Centre, Wellington, Great Dawley Town Hall, Dawley, with two more opening in Ketley Bank and Wrockwardine Wood. These youth clubs are well attended with 30 children and young people attending weekly.

- 3.10 This work has been supported by engagement with education settings to complete safety surveys with pupils to understand safety concerns on the journey to/from school and any gaps in provision. This invaluable feedback has supported the implementation of additional street lighting and/or removal of vegetation as well as the development of the 'Making A Change' competition where children and young people have the opportunity to bid for funding to implement their ideas. This competition has developed 'art and dance' classes providing children and young people the opportunity to engage with the elderly as well as wellbeing initiatives to take a 'break' from social media. This competition is now in its third year.
- 3.11 Further specialist youth provision has been commissioned to support children and young people with specific vulnerabilities; this comprised external support through St Giles Trust who provided lived experience mentors to complement the existing offer for young people at risk of criminal exploitation.
- 3.12 A decent place to live is the foundation on which residents across the borough build their lives. The Council has been working hard to tackle housing concerns in Sutton Hill, Brookside, College, Hadley and Hollinswood to ensure rented property meets the correct standards. This work has enabled the council to proactively inspect over 900 properties and in doing so support both tenants and landlords. Recent work has comprised engagement with landlords and tenants in Hollinswood to tackle issues that residents have raised on the standard of communal areas, rough sleeping, grounds maintenance and fly tipping on private land. This has been supported through regular engagement with residents with teams from across the council as well as West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) with positive progress being made.
- 3.13 Working with West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood Team, crime data and intelligence has been used to develop local area action plans that make optimal use of available resources. This has included activity to focus on shop lifting in Telford Town Centre and Newport resulting in a 5% reduction. Other interventions have included measures to tackle the illegal use of motorbikes/mini motos and quad bikes through multi-agency working and has seen the seizure of motorbikes and mini motos.
- 3.14 In support of the Council's commitment to tackling violence against women and girls while building on the feedback from the safety matters survey completed in 2023, investment has been delivered into supporting the introduction of the Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative (LSAVI). This accreditation scheme commits nighttime economy venues to enhancing safety of all visitors, particularly women,

through providing training and awareness to staff alongside developing best practice for venue safety and supporting vulnerable individuals. There are currently 34 accredited venues across the borough. In supporting the nighttime economy, work has included investment into enhancing safety which has seen investment into two ID scanners at popular late-night venues; one scanner was used to support a successful police investigation into an incident on the first night of operation.

- 3.15 Since 2021, there have been many interventions and initiatives brought forward to tackle anti-social behaviour. Some of which have included the commission of street art to reduce graffiti in repeat locations but also the installation of 170 new street lights as well as CCTV. The live monitoring of CCTV has been supported by trained volunteers who are seeking employment opportunities/experience and compliments the Council's own and West Mercia Police resource.
- 3.16 CCTV has also been extended into taxi's on a voluntary basis with funding provided from this programme and the Community Safety Partnership. The council has worked in partnership with taxi operators to bring forward a voluntary scheme which, once all are installed, will see 20% of Telford and Wrekin licenced taxi's fitted with CCTV units. Choosing to approach this through the use of a pilot has seen growing interest and support from taxi operators with increasing numbers expressing an interest in having CCTV fitted. The council will continue to explore funding opportunities to support the on-going success of the voluntary scheme and is committed to working with Telford and Wrekin licensed taxi operators to have all vehicles fitted with CCTV. This pilot has attracted interest from the Department for Transport that now sees Telford and Wrekin among the highest licensing authorities in the country with the number of CCTV units installed on a voluntary basis.
- 3.17 Working with partners, multi-agency forums have also been established to tackle anti-social behaviour in local centres including Dawley High Street and Wellington Centre. These multi-agency forums have provided focus to tackle community and business concerns in partnership and continue to make a difference locally.
- 3.18 A review of anti-social behaviour reports across the borough during August 2024 shows a reduction of 28% compared with August 2023 with recorded crime also reducing by 16%. On detailed review of the town centre for the same period, there was a reduction of 65% in anti-social behaviour reports and 43% reduction in recorded crime. These initiatives together with the wider offer demonstrate the positive impact that has been made to date.
- 3.19 The Council continues to engage with residents on tackling fly tipping to reduce the impact this crime has on the community and environment. Over the past 12 months, the number of fly tips reported to the council has decreased; in some parts of the borough this has decreased by 48%. During 2024/25, the Council has

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investigated over 1,200 fly tips, issued 186 warning letters and 130 statutory notices and 40 fixed penalty notices. Tackling fly tipping remains a priority for the council.

- 3.20 To increase community engagement and awareness in relation to fly tipping, the council developed Telford & Wrekin Watch that launched in 2022. This innovative community engagement and awareness tool allows members of the public to support the council with the identification of offenders. In 2024, this platform issued 38 appeals via social media with the released video footage being viewed over 76,000 times. A recent appeal in resulted in successful identification and issue of £1,000 penalty.
- 3.21 In tackling neighbourhood enforcement issues locally, the Council has continued the successful partnership of the Community Action Teams with partnering Parish and Town Councils. 14 Town and Parish Councils have signed up to this jointly funded service which enables a local focus on priorities via a local area enforcement action plan.
- 3.22 The Health & Wellbeing Strategy clearly references the importance that inclusive resilient communities have on resident's wellbeing, and the Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme has supported the development of low impact community activities. These activities for adults and community clubs, include walking football and hockey, which impact on a range of health and wellbeing outcomes, such as tackling isolation and loneliness and physical activity. There are approximately 10 groups across the borough offering various activities including knit & natter, tea, toast & talk, coffee mornings, models for heroes, chair yoga and community gardens. These groups are well attended and continue to grow in popularity.
- 3.23 Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme is data and intelligence led. Using data and intelligence, the next phase of the investment will see continued focus on interventions to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping. This will be in parallel to delivering a range of interventions that prevent individuals from being drawn into crime and violence as well as the delivery of activities for adult and young people.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 Working with partners, the Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme seeks to deliver interventions that tackle the root cause of crime across the borough with much of this focus on prevention.
- 4.2 This partnership working is underpinned through data and intelligence to ensure investment decisions are based on evidence and the impact can be clearly demonstrated. The interventions delivered to date continue to evolve to the needs of residents and local communities.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 There is a variety of legal powers and techniques available that tackle the root causes of crime.
- 5.2 Partnership working and maximising effective use of available resources ensures a continued focus on reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping. This breadth of partnership working has delivered a variety of interventions since 2021 and is contributing towards the reduction of crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping.
- 5.3 The Council and partners could choose not to continue to fund the Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme, however given the notable impact the funding to date has delivered such a decision may be counterproductive.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 Data and intelligence demonstrates that this programme and partnership working to date is making a difference to residents and communities across the borough. However, there is a risk that without ongoing focus and investment, there is potential to undo the significant improvements made to date. Opportunity will continue to be sought to secure funding, primarily external, to build on the positive progress made to date.
- 6.2 There is a risk that interventions bought forward may not have the impact or outcome as initially envisaged. To mitigate this risk, interventions are based on data and intelligence and regularly reviewed to ensure the impact made and the value added.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 The Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme supports the following priorities:
 - Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their community.
 - All neighbourhoods are a great place to live; and
 - Our natural environment is protected – we take a leading role in addressing the climate emergency.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme has invested £4m since April 2021. In addition to this, a further £1.5m was secured from the Home Office through the Safer Streets Programme along with £500,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity (UKSP) fund.
- 8.2 In continuing this programme for the next two years, existing budgets will be used to compliment the £250,000 funding allocated by the Police & Crime Commissioner in

2025/26 and 2026/27. Opportunity will continue to be sought to maximise Community Safety Partnership funding along with other external sources of funding where available.

- 8.3 Costs associated with fly tipping are met from existing budgets with the income received from issuing fixed penalty notices used to offset associated costs.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 Enforcement Officers have delegated powers under a wide range of legislation relating to environmental offences. This enables them to carry out investigations, issue fixed penalty or other statutory notices, or to refer offences for prosecution where appropriate. Legal advice is sought on an on-going basis in relation to individual cases.

- 9.2 There are no known HR matters arising from the content of this report.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 While focused on priority areas, the Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme has borough wide benefit with all wards being affected.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 Through tackling the root causes of crime, Building Safer & Stronger Communities seeks to address the long term issues of social deprivation that creates opportunities to improve the quality of life and wellbeing for all communities in the Borough.
- 11.2 The programme promotes and utilises green spaces across the Borough and has seen the use of Apley Woods and the Wrekin to encourage use and awareness of local nature reserves as part of nature walks. This not only promotes physical activity but improves mental health.
- 11.3 Adult and youth activities that have been supported by this programme provide a range of active sessions that improve both physical and mental health while reducing isolation and loneliness.
- 11.4 Reducing the fear of crime and creating safe vibrant spaces actively contributes to economic and social activity.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 The Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme seeks to work with all residents, to build vibrant, inclusive and cohesive communities.

13.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 The Council is committed to tackling fly tipping while working hard to inform residents on the correct ways in which to dispose waste appropriately. The council has two household recycling centres and a bulk waste collection service which compliments weekly kerb side collections.

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- 13.2 The Building Safer & Stronger Communities programme works with the community to bring forward volunteering opportunities. This includes supporting those interested in enhancing environmental standards through the 1,600 Street Champions who volunteer to complete additional litter picks in their community. Such work is complimented by initiatives such as 'clean and green' that encourage children and young people to help keep their local area clean and green.

14.0 Background Papers

- 1 Cabinet - 18 February 2021

15.0 Appendices

None.

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	10/04/2025	10/04/2025	RP
Finance	03/04/2025	03/04/2025	PT
Director	10/04/2025	10/04/2025	DRS