



September 2022

Community Safety

Community Safety Strategy

Continued development of the Community Safety Partnership Strategy through stakeholder engagement, draft priorities have been developed with 15 partner organisations. Anticipate a draft to be completed by November 2022.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Coordinator post appointed to this week. The coordinator will act as West Northants Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Champion and support the delivery of West Northants Domestic Abuse Strategy and the continuing development of West Northants Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. The role will co-ordinate and support the work of the Community Safety Partnership and its task and finish groups, focus on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence reduction initiatives within West Northants and lead on the procurement and contract management of Domestic Abuse Services funded by West Northants Council.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Due to the need to recruit to fill two vacancies in our Anti-Social Behaviour Team, we have sought the opportunity to look across our locality areas, to ensure that we are consistent in our approach to supporting both victims and taking action against those causing anti-social behaviour within our neighbourhoods. We now have three officers who will cover the whole of the West Northants area. The officers will receive and investigate direct complaints utilising the anti-social behaviour legislation and by working with the police and partner organisations take appropriate action to tackle anti-social behaviour and hate crime.

Knife Crime

As part of the knife angel legacy plan, the augmented reality Knife Angel is available for schools, groups and individuals to view in Northampton's Central Museum until the end of October.

Three Knife Amnesty Bins have been ordered and work is underway to secure permissions for two locations in Northampton and one in Daventry. Delivery is expected late November.

Partnership support offered for Northants Police Weeks of Action Against Serious Violence, activity during the week included:

- An additional session of major bleed control training in Rectory Farm Community Centre for volunteers and professionals working in the community.
- A well-known fly tipping hotspot cleared, a place known for hiding weapons and associated with drug dealing next to a Primary School.
- Kicks football groups at Northampton Academy ran with arranged educational input from various youth support services.

Safer Streets

A Home Office bid for £100,000 for physical community safety improvements and youth provision in Blackthorn and Bellinge was successful. Currently obtaining quotes to reinstate 6 CCTV cameras in Blackthorn and Bellinge and looking at feasibility of installing a new camera in a Blackthorn anti-social behaviour/criminal activity hot spot. The bid also includes Improvements to underpasses in Blackthorn and under Great Billing Way between Blackthorn/Rectory Farm and Billing/Ecton Brook, including lighting upgrades, clearing and deep cleansing. Youth provision will also be in place for Bellinge, this will be informed by the safety mapping work which will be completed in the area by youth provider Free2Talk with young people and the schools.

Community Engagement

School Engagement

Plans continue for October's Young Citizens Scheme (face to face community safety event with our primary schools across West Northants), to promote healthy, safe and strong individuals and communities. Participants will become better citizens, be safer in their schools and communities, online and on the roads; be better equipped to make choices and understand the consequences of their actions; be better informed of how to react in an emergency and have a better understanding of and relationship with the range of agencies which operate in West Northants.

Not all schools are able to attend Young Citizens, so we have commissioned Amplitude Media to produce a series of animations which cover this range of subjects. The project is now complete, and we are in the process of launching the programme to both schools, youth groups and any professionals working with young people.

West Northamptonshire Council is working in partnership with The Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation (IHWO) engaging with schools across the West to take up the invitation to be part of this year's Diwali Light Parade in Northampton Town Centre on Saturday 15 October 2022. Over the past 21 years, the Hindu community has presented a fabulous parade, with many different local schools and communities, full of amazing lanterns and costumes. Festive Road CIC - who have a brilliant track record in working with community groups and schools - are offering a one-day lantern-making workshop for up to 30 pupils. This a great opportunity for children to learn not only the skills to make specific lanterns for the October parade, but also about Diwali Lights. We have 6 schools who have been selected to take part.

Community Forums and Events

Bike marking and crime prevention event held on the Racecourse on Saturday 9 July in partnership with Northants Police to offer free security cycle marking along with information and advice. The public were also informed of the recent improvements to CCTV in the park, addition of new help points, and the introduction of a new park watch scheme as part of the Safer Streets 3 project.

Remembering Srebrenica civic event held at the Guildhall Courtyard on Monday 11 July. Speeches made by the Vice Chairman, Northampton's Mayor, Chair of Northampton Inter Faith Forum and Northants Police, followed by a minute of silence and the lighting of 11 candles by dignitaries across the West.

Ukraine Independence Day event held at the Guildhall Courtyard and Great Hall on Wednesday 24th August where West Northamptonshire residents, Ukrainian families and hosts joined the nation in commemorating Ukraine's declared independence from the Soviet Union. Speeches

were made by our Chairman, Our Leader, and a Ukrainian community member. A national dance by Ukrainian dancer followed. Members of the public were invited to lay sunflowers.

Personal Safety session delivered to staff at Northampton General Hospital on Wednesday 27 July with a focus on preventing violence against women and girls. Over 230 personal safety items given out and 91 people signed up to Police Neighbourhood Alert scheme.

International Youth Day was held on Northampton Racecourse on Friday 12 August followed by youth engagement days on 15 and 16 August in Towcester and Daventry respectively. Youth Day brought together partners providing services for young people and offered activity tasters. Some activity had to be reduced as a result of the heatwave, but good engagement and networking was seen across the event. Consultation took place with young people to scope out the expansion of the forum was conducted across all three events, with current Youth Forum members surveying their peers. Plans to develop are plans to set up new Youth Forums in the Daventry and South Northants localities with a view to creating an overarching Youth Parliament for West Northants, giving young people the opportunity to engage in local democracy. The current Youth Forum members have provided views and feedback on what this might look like and how to engage other young people. Three drop-in sessions have been arranged in August to tie in with International Youth Day to start engaging young people in each locality around the future plans.

West Northamptonshire Council has been supporting the newly formed trustee board for Southbrook Community Centre, Daventry with advice and guidance to help set them up with the Charity Commission and become fully constituted to open the centre back up from closing since the pandemic. In partnership with Food for Thought Charity they opened their first Community Larder on Wednesday 27 July to run throughout the school holidays to support our most vulnerable families, the community run service aims to provide a consistent supply of produce at fair prices and at the same time preventing unnecessary food waste. Every week the centre seen over 70 residents, with most signing up to the DWP Household Support Fund.

West Northamptonshire Council has been working in partnership with Northamptonshire General Practice Alliance in helping to set up Happy Cafes in Daventry and Moulton. Focussing on low level mental health and wellbeing and based on scientific research the Ten Keys to Happier Living are explored through the Action for Happiness social movement. Talks have also been held with multiple partners and faith groups in Towcester to identify gaps and opportunities for service provision.

Resettlement Schemes

Homes for Ukraine

We currently have approximately 500 Ukrainians living with sponsors across West Northants. All our sponsors and families have had an initial visit from a support worker, some families as expected require additional support, whilst others need very limited support. In order to increase our offer of services we are working towards ensuring services are accessible and delivered at a neighbourhood level. We have created several hubs within our libraries, which are being used to deliver: job clubs with our economic development team; support from DWP with access to benefits; ESOL classes; fire service drop in's for free home fire safety checks; and support from the police's community engagement team.

The support workers are based at the hubs listed below offering direct support to our families and sponsors:

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| Mondays | Moulton Community Centre (NN3 7AX) | 2pm – 4pm |
| Tuesdays | Brackley Library (NN13 6AJ) | 2pm – 4pm |
| Thursdays | Towcester Library (NN12 6AD) | 2pm – 4pm |
| Fridays | Brixworth Library (NN6 9DS) | 1pm – 3pm |
| Fridays | Weston Favell Library (NN3 8JZ) | 12.30pm – 3pm |

Development of the hubs continues. Alongside this work we are also focusing on rematching the families whose sponsors do not wish to continue post six-months. We are aware of these families and are working hard to secure alternative placements.

Afghan Bridging Hotels

There are currently 280 Afghans across our two bridging hotels. We are seeing families move out, but they are quickly replaced by new families arriving from third countries.

Some examples of activity across the hotels include: Debutots (dramatic play and storytelling for 6 months - 7-year-olds), sports activity sessions, Learn2Live youth group, cricket courses with the Steelbacks, coffee mornings for the Women with local Muslim Women Groups, Adult Learning, providing ESOL and cultural awareness courses, hate crime awareness sessions and engagement from the local neighbourhood policing teams. Community events have also been arranged for the families and British Red Cross and our Domestic Abuse services have provided awareness sessions focused on women's rights in the UK.

The focus at the hotels is very much based on move on support, backed up by the government's newly devised housing pathway, allowing Afghan Nationals to find their own private sector accommodation.

Afghan Resettlement

We have pledged to accommodate and resettle 10 households and have recently sourced and secured our first private tenancy. The team are working on getting the property ready for a family at one of our hotels to move into.

REGULATORY SERVICES

A multi-agency vehicle check involving our Neighbourhood wardens, Trading Standards team and the DVSA and Police took place on one of the hottest days in August at locations in Towcester and Upper Heyford. The Police targeted work vehicles including those with trailers and machinery as there has been an increase in rural crime relating to the theft of farm machinery. Neighbourhood Wardens checked that operators held the correct paperwork/license to carry waste and provided advice and guidance on how to correctly dispose of commercial waste. Trading Standards provided advice to those in business to ensure that they are trading safely and fairly in West Northamptonshire. At the end of one of the shifts, the High Sherriff of Northampton who had been observing the checks treated those involved to refreshments in recognition of their hard work.

A new 'No Cold Calling Zone' has been set up in a residential street in Woodford Halse, thanks to our Trading Standards Team working with local police and residents with Neighbourhood Wardens helping with erecting the signage. A no cold calling zone is a designated area where the residents declare they will no longer accept traders calling at their homes without an appointment. They are clearly signposted, sending a clear message to uninvited callers that they are not welcome.

There are strict criteria for where zones can be located. They must be small areas – for example individual streets or sheltered housing areas - where there are higher than average levels of doorstep crime and many of the residents are elderly or vulnerable.

This is the 38th such zone to be designated in West Northamptonshire.

Environmental protection and Health Protection team members from across the area having been working together in recent weeks to carry out checks at the Shambala festival at Kelmars Hall. Colleagues from the Health Protection team have carried out checks on the wide range of mobile food vehicles and catering facilities and reviewed the safety of a range of temporary structures. Environmental Protection team members oversee the noise control measures at the festival and work alongside organisers and their noise consultants who employ some highly sophisticated technology to monitor noise levels in the surrounding villages.

Throughout this year, Northamptonshire Police Chief Inspectors are having surge weeks to target Serious and Organised Crime areas. As part of that initiative, our Trading Standards team and Northamptonshire Police carried out operations at two Northampton premises suspected to be supplying illegal tobacco. Whilst no illegal tobacco was identified on this occasion, further visits across WNC will continue as part of the fight against Serious and Organised Crime and the links to human trafficking and modern slavery.

A shop sold an e-cigarette to a 16-year-old girl during test purchasing operations carried out by our Trading Standards team in August.

Two girls were used, under the supervision of Trading Standards officers, with one visiting visited 7 shops and the other 6 shops, attempting to buy e-cigarettes or cigarettes. The legal age to buy these in the UK is 18.

12 of the shops refused the sales; however, one of the shops sold an e-cigarette after making no checks at all and will now face further investigation.

All of the shops chosen for the exercise were the subject of complaints regarding underage sales, and shopkeepers across West Northamptonshire are being reminded of the proof-of-age checks they must make before selling tobacco or e-cigarettes. Most businesses do this by operating a Challenge 25 policy. If a customer looks under the age of 25, proof of age is required, and staff must be trained to verify the customer's age before selling age-restricted products.

The Licensing team have reviewed and taken enforcement action against 15 drivers in the last five months, this has included revocations, suspensions, refuse to renew etc. and some may have been detailed investigations taking place over weeks. The team have been attending schools to carry out multi-agency checks and have picked up some matters that have resulted in possible ongoing investigations and may result in cautions etc. This work was paused during the school summer holidays.

Neighbourhood Wardens and the Kingdom LA Support Team continue to issue fixed penalty notices for fly tipping and littering offences and have had a number of successful prosecutions in the last few weeks. These related to cases in the Castle, St Georges and Headlands areas of Northamptonshire.

A coordinated campaign to encourage residents to care about their local area will be launched in the coming weeks. This will highlight work that is being carried out to deal with fly tipping and other environmental crime and highlight how we can all work together to make West Northants a better place to live work and thrive.

Working in collaboration with North Northants Council, Regulatory Services have developed a new online Event notification form and background process to ensure that Regulatory partners are duly notified in a timely manner and have the opportunity to support event organisers to hold safe events. The key aim of the partnership is to provide a quality assured process for multi-agency consideration of the safety of events in North and West Northants. Detail of the newly formed West and North Event Safety Partnership and the online form can be found at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/esp including a list of guidance documents that event organisers can access to help them ensure the organisation of a safe event.

Councillor David Smith

Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Regulatory Services