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1 Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

1.1 Summary

Safe, healthy and vibrant neighbourhoods are fundamental to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community. Studies have found that stress, fear of crime, and repeat victimisation lead to ill health. Crime in Cornwall is comparatively low but its impact on the community can be significant.

Taking into account key messages from the evidence available, the following spatial planning issues have been identified:

Issue CASB1 – The Core Strategy should recognise the links between crime, poverty, economy, health, accommodation needs and access to services, in order to address the aim of a safer Cornwall through joint working.

Issue CASB2 – The Core Strategy could explore ways to reduce the negative impacts associated with the night-time economy.

1.2 Purpose

This is one in a series of papers dealing with a specific theme. Each can be read in isolation or together with other papers to gain a wider understanding of issues facing Cornwall. This paper sets out the evidence base and the policy context for crime & anti-social behaviour and describes how the issues that need to be addressed in relation to crime & anti-social behaviour could be taken forward in the Core Strategy. These papers will form the first stage of the development of options for Core Strategy policy. Other issues papers available in this series include:

- *Housing*
- *Economy*
- *Tourism*
- *Retail & town centres*
- *Education & skills*
- *Social inclusion*
- *Sport recreation & open space*
- *Health*
- *Transport & accessibility*
- *Energy*
- *Climate change*
- *Soil, air & water quality*
- *Flooding, drought & water consumption*
- *Biodiversity & geodiversity*
- *Landscape & seascape*
- *Historic environment*

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- *Design & efficient use of resources*
- *Agriculture & food*
- *Coast & maritime*
- *Minerals*
- *Waste*

This series of papers is closely linked to the topics of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report. The SA scoping report identifies the sustainability objectives, decision making criteria and indicators against which the LDF and other plans in Cornwall should be tested, to examine whether plans are sustainable. The SA scoping report also identifies key messages from national, regional and local plans for the Cornwall LDF, a baseline and sustainability issues for each topic. These Core Strategy issue papers largely build on the SA scoping report and start to examine in greater detail the messages from evidence and research, the opportunities and threats and planning issues that need to be considered in the Core Strategy (the SA scoping report can be found at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17394>)

1.3 What is the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour?

Safe, healthy and vibrant neighbourhoods are fundamental to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community. National studies have found that stress, fear of crime, and repeat victimisation lead to ill health, and there is a strong correlation between poor health, high levels of crime and poverty. Crime in Cornwall is comparatively low but its impact on the community can be significant.

Whilst all topics in these issues papers are interlinked, this Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour paper has particularly strong links to the Housing, Design, Social Inclusion and Health papers.

1.4 Crime and anti-social behaviour 'portrait' of Cornwall

Over the last four years, the British Crime Survey showed that crime reduced in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by 25%, substantially above the 15% target set by the Government under Public Service Agreement 1, and Cornwall was one of very few local areas nationally to have succeeded.⁽¹⁾

- Crime rates in Cornwall are amongst the lowest in the country and in 2008/09 the all-crime rate was the lowest in our grouping of most similar policing areas nationally.
- At just under 33,000 incidents (reported to the police), anti-social behaviour is the most numerous type of incident that police and partners have to deal with. The number of antisocial behaviour incidents remained fairly stable compared with last year and incident rates were slightly lower than the average for similar policing areas nationally.
- The financial cost of crime, to victims, businesses, the taxpayer and our communities in general, is huge – in 2008/09 crime in Cornwall is estimated to have cost at least £220 million. Sexual offences and violent assaults resulting in injury have the greatest impact at an estimated £69.8 million and £45.7 million respectively.

¹ All data in this paper taken from the Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2008/09

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- 50% of all recorded crime in 2008/09 occurred in five out of the 19 Community Network Areas – Camborne & Redruth, Penzance, Falmouth & Penryn, Truro and Newquay.

1.5 What is the role of the Core Strategy?

The Core Strategy can provide planning policies and strategies aimed at improving community safety and reducing crime. Consideration needs to be given to issues such as:

- Developing sustainable communities;
- Increasing access to services and employment opportunities;
- Reducing the negative impacts associated with the night-time economy;
- The design of new developments, with an emphasis on 'designing out crime';⁽²⁾
- Poverty and debt issues;
- Health related issues.

In developing these policies, the Core Strategy needs to take into account all other relevant plans, strategies, policies and programmes as well as involving key stakeholders such as Devon and Cornwall Police, the Fire Service and the Primary Care Trust along with local community groups and the Cornwall Strategic Partnership.

1.6 Relevant policy context and key evidence

When preparing the Core Strategy, the Council does not start with a blank sheet of paper. There is a whole series of policies at national and regional level which have to be followed and the Core Strategy needs to be prepared within the framework set by national and European legislation and national & regional guidance. This section focuses on the most relevant published legislation, plans & strategies and draws out their key messages for the Core Strategy. The key directives, acts, plans and strategies identified and used are:

National

- Crime and Disorder Act (1998)
- Police Reform Act (2002)
- Securing the Future - UK Government sustainable development strategy (2005)
- Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener (2002)
- Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (2004)
- Strong and Prosperous Communities: The Local Government White Paper (2006)
- Every Child Matters (2003)
- Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan (2004)
- Planning Out Crime Circular 5/94
- Manual for Streets (2007)
- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2006)
- Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (2009)
- Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise (2001)

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Regional

- N/A

Local

- 'Future Cornwall' Cornwall Sustainable Community Strategy (2010)
- Community Safety and Drugs Strategy for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (2005-2008)
- Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Community Safety Strategic Assessment (2008/09)
- Cornwall Alcohol Strategy 2010-2012: "Taking Responsibility for Alcohol" (2010)

1.7 Relevant evidence and research

All Crime Rate

There were 27,962 recorded crimes in 2008/09 and the number of crimes reduced by 5% (or 1,479 crimes) compared with the previous year. The all-crime rate is improving, albeit there was a slight rise at the beginning of summer 2009.

Crime is concentrated in town centres with the largest towns (20,000+ people) seeing the highest levels of crime. Large numbers of people are attracted into the town centres for work and leisure, including those drawn in by the night-time economy, and this generates greater opportunities for crime and brings together offenders and victims in time and place.

Crime rates in more rural areas and smaller towns are considerably lower, although community perceptions about the levels of crime may not reflect the reality.

Violent Crime

In 2008/09 violence against the person reduced by 4.4% compared with the previous year and the level of crime is now at its lowest figure since 2001/02. The reduction was predominantly in assaults with injury linked to alcohol, which reduced by 9% compared with 2007/08. However, 47% of violent crime in 2008/09 was still recorded as linked to alcohol.

The main hotspots are the town centre areas. There were significant increases in violence in town centre areas within Penzance, Camborne and Launceston, where the rise is in less serious offences.

Young males (aged 18 to 24) are much more likely to be involved in violent crime, both as victims and offenders.

50% of non-domestic assaults with injury were linked to alcohol. Crime was more concentrated around the weekend and in the peak hours linked to the night-time economy.

Serious Acquisitive Crime

Serious acquisitive crime is made up of dwelling burglary, thefts from and of vehicles and robbery.

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Trends in dwelling burglary show a slow but steady rise in the number of recorded crimes per month since last summer. Clusters of crimes were noted in various places across the county but there is a significant issue in Camborne, particularly Pengegon.

Trends in vehicle crime deteriorated for the latter part of 2008/09 but appear to have stabilised in recent months. There were significant rises in vehicle crime in Camborne and Redruth, Truro (Moresk and Tregolls but not the immediate town centre), Penzance town centre and Newlyn, Saltash and Millbrook.

Both vehicle crime and dwelling burglary peak in the summer months, particularly August. Dwelling burglary has a second distinct peak in December, in the run up to Christmas.

Long term trends have shown year on year falls in serious acquisitive crime and, based on the impact of the previous recession on crime, it is reasonable to assume that the economic downturn is a factor in the changes observed over the last 18 months. The rise in unemployment, particularly as this becomes more entrenched, may prolong or exacerbate negative trends, especially in dwelling burglary.

Communities living in deprived areas are at considerably higher risk of victimisation but patterns of both vehicle crime and dwelling burglary over the last year indicate increased targeting of more affluent areas. Offenders are more likely to come from deprived areas – unemployment and problem substance use (in which unemployment may also be a factor) can be key drivers in offending.

Serious Sexual Offences

There were 151 recorded serious sexual offences in Cornwall in 2008/09. However, national estimates indicate that around 83% of crimes are never reported.

Particular clusters of offences in 2008/09 were noted in Truro, Camborne and Newquay. The proportion of offences recorded as linked to alcohol was generally higher than average in these areas, indicating a link with the night-time economy.

Anti-Social Behaviour

There were 32,673 incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded by the police in 2008/09, which was a reduction of 2% compared with the previous year.

Anti-social behaviour remains one of the highest priority issues for the community, and adversely affects feelings of safety and general satisfaction with the area as a place to live.

The main hotspots are Penzance East, Newquay Town, Boscawen (Truro town centre) and Redruth North. The level of reported incidents remained fairly stable in Newquay and Truro and reduced slightly in Redruth North (following a voluntary child curfew last summer). Deteriorating trends, however, were apparent in Penzance, Camborne and St. Austell.

Social and environmental problems arising from anti-social behaviour such as graffiti, litter and abandoned vehicles, disorder, drug and alcohol misuse, young people hanging around, and road safety, all affect people's quality of life and can add to a rise in their fear of crime.

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Alcohol Misuse

There is a clear link between alcohol abuse and anti-social behaviour. Community perceptions of issues linked to alcohol are more focused on the anti-social aspects of drinking behaviour, such as drunk or rowdy behaviour in public places, rather than the threat of actual violence.

The principal hotspot for alcohol-related violence was Newquay, where crime was concentrated around pubs and clubs in the town centre. In 2008/09 crime in the town centre saw a significant drop compared with the previous year. Crime in Newquay is highly seasonal and additional resources are allocated every summer. The other main hotspots were the town centres of Penzance, Truro, Falmouth, Camborne and Launceston, where the level of crime is more constant throughout the year.

70% of violent offenders on the Probation caseload have been identified as having an alcohol problem and a large proportion is aged under 25 years.

Drug Misuse

There were 1,290 recorded drug offences in 2008/09 and the number of crimes increased by 13% or 150 crimes compared with the previous year. The majority of drug crime (59%) relates to the possession of cannabis.

The Community Network Areas of Penzance, Newquay, Camborne & Redruth and Liskeard saw the highest levels of activity relating to drug trafficking and possession in 2008/09. Significant increases in the number of drug offences were noted in Liskeard and Torpoint, St. Agnes and Bodmin.

Although Newquay consistently sees the highest rate of drug offences, the number of crimes remained stable last year and recorded crime in pubs and nightclubs reduced.

Domestic Abuse

The trend for all recorded incidents of domestic abuse in Cornwall is rising. The number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police increased by 10% compared with 2007/08. Non-crime incidents accounted for the majority of the rise but the number of crimes saw a small increase, reflecting a rising trend throughout 2008/09 in offences of actual bodily harm.

Recorded incidence of domestic abuse was highest in West Cornwall and this is consistent with previous years. Rates of crime were particularly high in 2008/09 in the Treneere area of Penzance, Close Hill area in Redruth and Pengegon area of Camborne South.

Women, children and vulnerable adults are most likely to be the victims of domestic abuse but men also experience abuse and are less likely to seek help. Young people (aged 20 to 24) are at highest risk of victimisation.

There is a shortage of refuge places throughout Cornwall and in the east of the County there is no provision at all.

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Traffic Offences

Recent consultation⁽³⁾ shows that public concerns about road safety are more focused on speeding and anti-social or dangerous driving rather than on road casualty reduction.

The statistics show that community concern about speeding has increased, with 55% of groups selecting it as a priority issue, compared with 31% in 2007. There are several areas where speeding has remained the top priority; these are Arwenack in Falmouth, Altarnun and Bude Rural, Copperhouse in Hayle, The Lizard, Porthleven and Wendron.

Young People

In 2008/09 there were 1,493 crimes where a young person under the age of 18 was recorded as the primary victim (8% of all recorded crime) and the number of crimes reduced by 5% compared with 2007/08. The current trend is fairly flat (no further improvement).

Young people aged 15 years and over are at significantly higher risk of becoming a victim of violent crime, theft and sexual offences. Young males are more likely to be victims of violence against the person and young females are more likely to be the victim of a sexual offence.

The Youth Offending Team worked with 919 young offenders in 2008/09. Their crimes accounted for 16% of all detected crime. Criminal damage, theft and violence are the most common crimes. The majority of crime was committed by young males (particularly aged 15 years and older).

The main clusters of young offenders were in Falmouth (Penwerris North), Penzance (Treneere), St Blazey, Bodmin and Redruth North. There is a strong relationship statistically between the number of young offenders in the local population and reported incidence of anti-social behaviour – some of this will be caused by the young offenders themselves but a disordered environment can also act as a trigger for offending behaviour.

Young offenders are more likely to come from areas that are considered deprived for income, employment, health and educational attainment (Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007), and where there is higher incidence of domestic abuse.

Deprivation

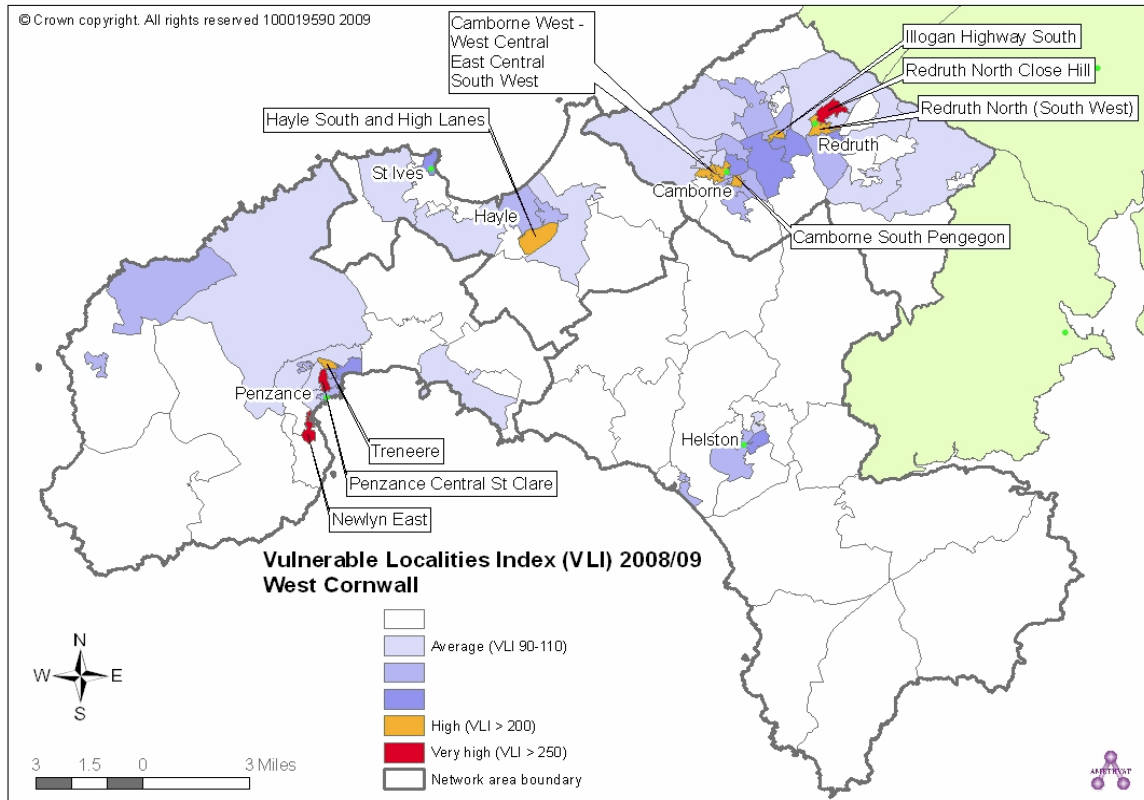
In line with national findings there is some correlation between deprivation factors and crime, particularly in employment and health deprived areas. The Vulnerable Localities Index (VLI) builds on this relationship and provides a single measure to help identify areas where problems are most likely to exist. The VLI is calculated using crime statistics (for dwelling burglary and criminal damage to a dwelling) as well as income, employment, education and age factors.

The majority of the areas with high VLI are in the West of the county, where deprivation is extremely high and has a strong influence on the combined index.

The following maps show the VLI mapped for West, Central and East Cornwall service areas:

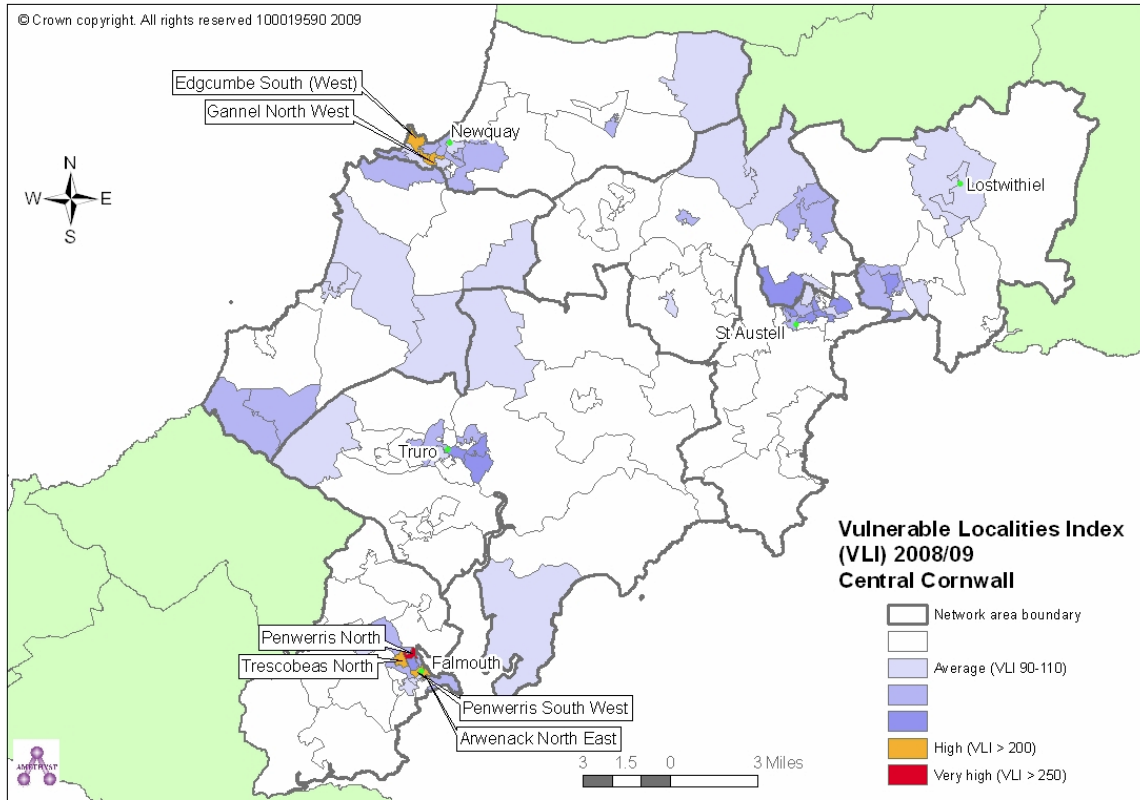
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VLI mapped for West, Cornwall service area



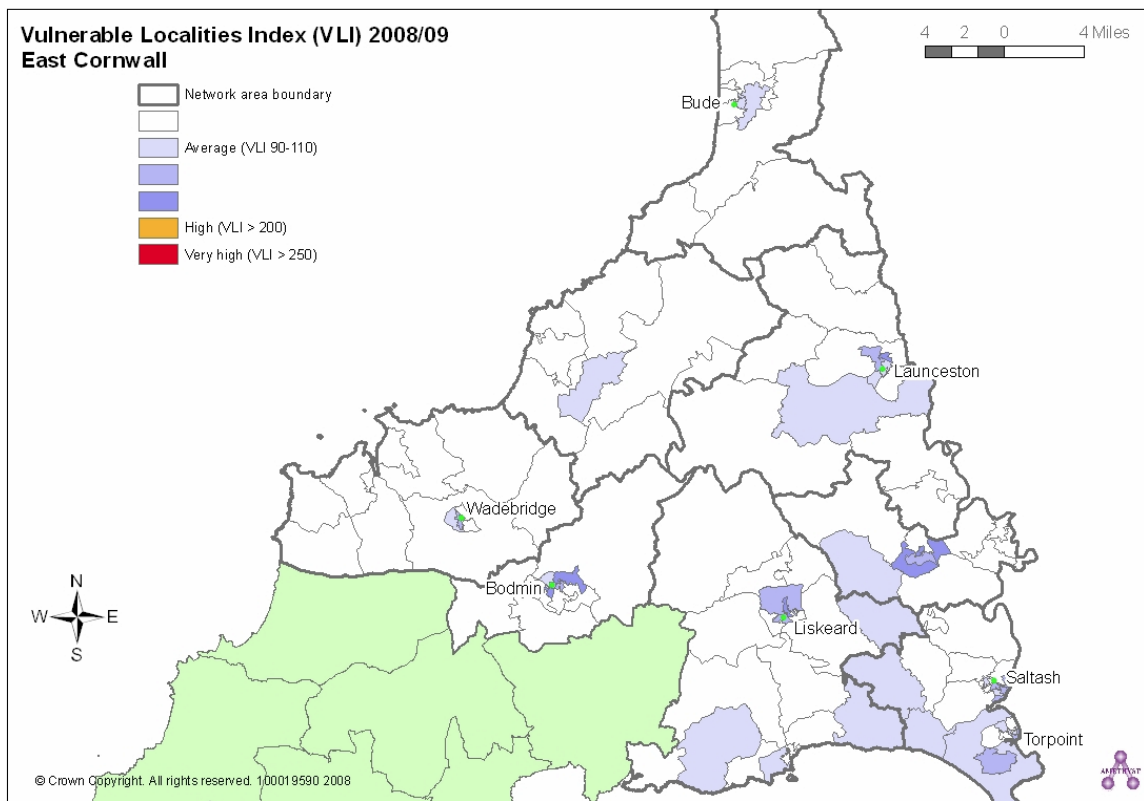
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VLI mapped for Central Cornwall service area



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VLI mapped for East Cornwall service area



For more detailed information, there is a separate issues paper in this series on Social Inclusion which deals with deprivation.

Strategic Priorities

Based on the findings of the Community Safety Strategic Assessment, the following strategic priorities have been identified by the Cornwall Community Safety Partnership:

- Violence against the person with a focus on assaults with injury, alcohol-related violence and tackling problem alcohol use;
- Anti-social behaviour with a focus on rowdy / nuisance behaviour and criminal damage, improving safety and quality of life in our town centres, engaging with communities and providing reassurance;
- Domestic abuse with a focus on increased support for and improved safety of survivors and their families;
- Serious acquisitive crime with a focus on dwelling burglary;

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- Sexual offences with a focus on most serious sexual offences (improving support to adult victims of a serious sexual offence);
- Reducing the harm caused by illegal drugs to individuals, their families and the community;
- Road traffic collisions with a focus on reducing the most serious incidents that result in death or serious injury.

In addition there is an overarching aim to reduce re-offending by addressing the underlying causes of offending, with a focus on problem substance use, housing and education, training and employment.

1.8 Emerging Evidence and Policy

The gathering of evidence is an iterative process and must be continued throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy. Additional evidence should be considered right up to the 'submission' stage in the process. We are not aware of any relevant emerging evidence or policies at this time although where applicable emerging documents will be taken into account if available before the submission of the Core Strategy.

1.9 Gaps in Evidence

- None identified at present.

1.10 Key Messages from the Evidence Review

A number of key messages and issues were drawn out from the evidence review. The table below identifies the messages deemed most relevant and the source documents.

Table 1.1

| Message | Relevant Document(s) |
|--|----------------------------|
| New development and regeneration initiatives should ensure that every opportunity is taken to 'design out crime'. New development should create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, or fear of crime, does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Once a development has been completed, the main opportunity to incorporate crime prevention measures will have been lost. | PPS1, Circular 5/94 |
| Local planning authorities should manage the evening and night-time economy in centres, taking account of the potential impact of new leisure development, including the cumulative impact on the character and function of the centre, anti-social behaviour and crime, including considering security issues raised by crowded places, and the amenities of nearby residents | PPS4 |

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| People should be given a sense of belonging and belief that they can influence what happens in their area. This will result in a shared responsibility for their community with resultant reduction in crime / disorder and increased community safety and environmental improvements. | Cornwall Sustainable Community Strategy (2008) |
| Agencies need to work in partnership with other public bodies and community groups to contribute to safer and stronger communities through positive actions aimed at the reduction of crime and disorder and improving the quality of life for all. | Crime and Disorder Act (1998) Community Safety and Drugs Strategy for Cornwall and IOS (2005-2008) |

1.11 SWOT Analysis

Table 1.2

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime in Cornwall is comparatively low when compared with national statistics. • Ongoing partnership working through Cornwall Strategic Partnership. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal fluctuations in crime levels due to tourism. |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the quality of life. • Raising peoples expectation and aspiration levels • Raising educational attainment levels. • Designing out crime in new developments. • Ensuring good access to services • Partnership working between multi-agency groups and Cornwall Strategic Partnership. • Youth intervention work, youth clubs etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worklessness • Economic downturn • Drug and alcohol abuse • Night time economy • Youth issues |

1.12 Climate Change Considerations

Climate change is explored in a separate issues paper in this series, as well as in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (visit www.cornwall.gov.uk). The scoping report sets out a series of sustainability objectives against which the Core Strategy and other parts of the LDF will be assessed, to gauge how far they will promote sustainable development. The relevant objective for crime and anti-social behaviour is:

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1.13 Proposed Sustainability Objective

To reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.

1.14 Main Spatial Planning Issues

Taking into account the key messages from the current evidence available, the spatial planning issues are listed below.

Issue CASB 1

The Core Strategy should recognise the links between crime, poverty, economy, health, accommodation needs and access to services, in order to address the aim of a safer Cornwall through joint working.

Issue CASB 2

The Core Strategy could explore ways to reduce the negative impacts associated with the night-time economy.

These issues will work towards achieving the following long term objectives for Cornwall as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy - 'Future Cornwall':

- To improve our communities through quality building, using housing development to meet local need and drive the regeneration and sustainability of communities, promoting smaller settlements to be centres of employment and services and set an example in design for sustainable living
- To promote equality of opportunity and well-being, improve access to quality services, increase participation in influencing local decision making and encouraging individuals to engage in shaping and delivering services in their communities

This paper summarises the evidence on crime and anti-social behaviour brought together to inform the Cornwall Core Strategy. However, it will be added to and kept up-to-date as other relevant evidence becomes available. In updating these papers all previous versions will be archived to ensure it is clear what evidence was available at each stage.

1.15 Appendix A

Appendix A

Consultation to date:

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The Issues papers were first published for stakeholder consultation in September 2009. The papers were amended to take into account consultee responses and were then circulated to Planning Policy Advisory Panel members in November 2009. They were also given to all members at a series of three area based consultation events in March 2010.

Revisions to Issues Papers:

In writing the draft Issues and Options report in March 2010 it was clear that it was necessary to revise the issues identified in some of the topic based issues papers. Some issues were requirements under other legislation or procedural matters, and therefore options could not be set against them (e.g. The Core Strategy should work with other plans and programmes...) Others were in fact options and needed to be set as options under an overarching issue (e.g. The Core Strategy has a role in supporting the growth and sustainability of the micro and small business economy). There was also some repetition between different topics and these issues could be amalgamated.

Criteria for Changes:

The issues have been rationalised against the following criteria:

- Is this a Spatial Planning Issue?
- Is the issue covered by other legislation?
- Can options be generated against each issue?
- Is this an issue and not an option?
- Is the issue rooted in evidence?
- Is there potential to amalgamate issues?

Issues in Consultation Version:

Issue C&ASB1 – The Core Strategy should recognise the links between crime, poverty, economy, health, accommodation needs and access to services, in order to address the aim of a safer Cornwall through joint working.

Issue C&ASB2 – The Core Strategy should consider how design could contribute to the reduction of crime and the fear of crime both during the day and at night.

Issue C&ASB3 – The Core Strategy could explore ways to reduce the negative impacts associated with the night-time economy.

Revised Issues:

Issue CASB1 – The Core Strategy should recognise the links between crime, poverty, economy, health, accommodation needs and access to services, in order to address the aim of a safer Cornwall through joint working.

Issue CASB2 – The Core Strategy could explore ways to reduce the negative impacts associated with the night-time economy.