

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26



FOREWORD

The Braintree District Community Safety Partnership Annual Report outlines how local agencies have worked collaboratively during 2025–26 to make the Braintree District a safer place and to minimise concerns about crime within the community.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a joint responsibility on specific statutory agencies and wider partners to develop and implement strategies to protect communities from crime and to ensure residents feel safe.

These efforts are designed to raise awareness, educate and prevent issues, complementing the daily work of local agencies. We take pride in the Partnership's achievements and are committed to continuing our impactful work.

Cllr Mary Cunningham

Chair, Braintree District
Community Safety Partnership

Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities
Braintree District Council

Tracey Parry

Community Services Manager
Braintree District Council

Throughout the year, partners have worked together to deliver a range of successful projects and initiatives in support of the identified priorities for 2025/26 which were:

- Protect the vulnerable
- Promote healthy relationships
- Promote online safety
- Build community resilience
- Promote safety in our communities

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY GROUP

The Responsible Authority Group is the strategic group of the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership and consists of strategic and operational officers who are collectively responsible for addressing crime, disorder and community safety across the Braintree District.

These organisations include Braintree District Council, Essex Police, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, National Probation Service, NHS Essex Integrated Care Board, Eastlight Community Homes and Essex County Council (Education).

The group has overall strategic responsibility for making sure that the priorities identified from the annual Strategic Assessment are outlined within the Action Plan, and the projects within the Action Plan are delivered.



STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

Each year the Community Safety Partnership is required to produce a Strategic Assessment report about crime and disorder levels in its area. The results of the Strategic Assessment are used by the Partnership to identify themed priorities for the coming year. The Partnership produces an Action Plan which describes how it will deliver on the identified priorities.

The Strategic Priorities for 2026-27 are:

Protect the vulnerable

- Safeguarding Individuals at Risk of Domestic Abuse (All Risk Levels)
- Preventing Stalking, Harassment and Coercive Control
- Protecting Individuals from Violence and Serious Harm

Promote healthy relationships

- Sexual Harm Prevention & Safe Relationship Education
- Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention & Behaviour Change

Promote online safety

- Preventing Online Fraud and Protecting Residents from Scams
- Protecting Children from Online Grooming and Exploitation

Build community resilience

- Preventing ASB and Supporting Resolution of Neighbour Disputes
- Reducing Substance Misuse and Drug Related Harm in Communities

Promote safety in our communities

- Reducing Shoplifting and Theft Against Individuals
- Preventing Burglary and Protecting Homes and Businesses

FUNDING

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (OPFCC) allocated grants from its 2025–26 Community Safety Fund to all Community Safety Partnerships across the county. As in previous years, the OPFCC set aside a proportion of this funding for Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (formerly Domestic Homicide Reviews). This fund supports the coordination of the review process, panel administration, funding for independent chairs, lesson learning seminars, and monitoring and reporting on the implementation of recommendations.

The allocation of funding is determined by a formula that takes into account population size, levels of deprivation, and crime rates. For the fiscal year 2025-26, the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership was awarded a funding allocation of £14,111.



ACTION PLAN 2025-26

The Braintree District Community Safety Partnership is committed to producing an annual Action Plan that serves as a foundational document outlining the priorities and strategies for partner organisations.

This comprehensive plan details how these agencies will coordinate to achieve the specified actions. The formulation of the Action Plan is a collaborative effort, incorporating ideas and projects derived from extensive discussions with all involved partners. These actions encompass specific projects and initiatives proposed by partner agencies, which are subsequently reviewed and collectively agreed upon by the Responsible Authority Group. This inclusive approach ensures that the plan is robust, well-informed and reflective of the collective expertise and insights of all stakeholders.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2025-26

Safer Streets Halstead

At the end of June 2023, the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex launched their own Safer Streets fund, and an intervention plan was developed by the Council and community safety partners for two lower super output areas in Halstead.

An informal environmental visual assessment was carried out by Essex Police to highlight areas of concern both environmental and physical and this informal assessment was submitted alongside the bid application in early August 2023. The Council received official confirmation in November 2023 that the Halstead bid was successful, and the Council was awarded a total of £300,223. The fifth round of Safer Streets ran for eighteen months and officially began on 1st October 2023. All Home Office funding was spent by 31st March 2025, and all match funding was spent by 30th September 2025.

This Safer Streets programme delivered several Home Office funded and match funded interventions from partners which included Halstead Town Council, Essex Police, Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse, Fusion Lifestyle, Neighbourhood Watch, Essex Youth Service, Essex County Council, Eastlight Community Homes and Crimestoppers. This funding round continued with the key objectives from previous funding rounds which were to reduce Violence Against Women and Girls, neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour.

A comprehensive report on the Halstead Safer Streets project is available upon request; please refer to the contact details provided at the end of this report.

Safer Streets Braintree

The Braintree Safer Streets programme is a targeted, partnership-led initiative delivered by the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership, in collaboration with The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Office and local partners. In 2025, the partnership secured £138,619 of Safer Streets funding from the PFCC to deliver a programme of interventions within identified areas of Braintree, supported by additional match funding from partner agencies. The programme aims to reduce anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood crime and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), while improving public perceptions of safety through a combination of enforcement, prevention and community engagement activity.

The Braintree Safer Streets programme forms a key component of the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership's response to Violence Against Women and Girls, anti-social behaviour and emerging crime trends within Braintree Town Centre. The programme has been developed in alignment with the CSP Action Plan priorities, with a strong emphasis on prevention, early intervention and multi-agency partnership working.

A central element of the programme has been the establishment of a dedicated Street Warden role to provide a consistent, high-visibility presence within the Braintree Safer Streets area (predominately Braintree Town). The Street Warden commenced in post in October 2025 and has since

played a critical role in community engagement, reassurance and intelligence gathering. During the reporting period, the Street Warden has engaged with over 300 members of the public, made over 30 referrals, visited more than 50 local businesses and undertook in joint patrols alongside Essex Police and the Street Scene Protection Team. This visible presence has supported both deterrence and early identification of issues affecting the town centre.

The programme has also delivered targeted interventions focused on young people and early prevention. Detached youth outreach has been a key strand of delivery, with the Essex Youth Service undertaking multiple outreach sessions across the town centre and surrounding parks. Over 20 outreach sessions have been delivered in identified hotspot areas with approximately 200 young people engaged with. These interventions have contributed to building trust with young people, reducing risk factors associated with ASB and crime and supporting positive behaviour change.



Alongside outreach delivery, the programme has included a strong educational and preventative element. The “Stronger Together” theatre-based intervention, delivered by Theatre Inspiring Change, has been implemented in local secondary schools to promote awareness of healthy relationships, consent and behaviours associated with VAWG. During the period between October and December, 6 performances were delivered across Notley High School, Braintree Sixth Form and Alec Hunter Academy, with additional sessions scheduled for continuation in 2026. In addition, Crucial Crew was delivered within the district, providing Year 6 pupils with education on safety, relationships and risk awareness, further reinforcing preventative messaging.

The programme has also supported wider community engagement and awareness activity. Partners delivered a ‘Community Day of Action’ on 28th November in George Yard Shopping Centre in Braintree focusing on gender-based violence, alongside ongoing Community Safety Engagement Days and partnership-led initiatives within the town centre. These activities have provided opportunities to raise awareness, promote reporting, and engage directly with residents and local businesses on issues relating to crime, anti-social behaviour and personal safety.

In addition to engagement and prevention work, the programme includes physical and environmental measures to improve safety and deter offending. Plans for enhanced CCTV coverage within Braintree Town Centre have progressed providing an increased surveillance capability that acts as both a visible deterrent to offending

behaviour and a tool for supporting enforcement, through the capture of evidential footage to assist in investigations and prosecutions. Development of town centre signage linked to Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) has also been progressed, with design and location planning undertaken alongside the wider PSPO review.

Financial monitoring demonstrates ongoing investment in the programme delivery, with £45,530.17 of PFCC Safer Streets funding spent up to end of 2025/26.

Overall, the Braintree Safer Streets programme has delivered a coordinated and multi-layered approach to community safety, combining high-visibility enforcement, targeted youth engagement, education, environmental improvements and community involvement. The programme has demonstrated strong partnership working between Braintree District Council, Essex Police, the PFCC and wider partners, ensuring that interventions are intelligence-led, responsive and aligned to local need. Through its focus on prevention, reassurance and engagement, the programme continues to contribute to reducing anti-social behaviour, addressing VAWG and improving perceptions of safety within Braintree Town Centre.

Domestic Abuse Support and Intervention

Supporting individuals and families affected by domestic abuse remains a core priority for the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership, with a strong emphasis on early intervention, partnership working and victim-centred support. A key element of this work is the ongoing delivery of the Sanctuary Scheme, which provides practical security measures to enable victims to remain safely in their own homes where appropriate. These measures include enhancements such as reinforced doors, window locks and designated safe spaces within the property, following a joint risk assessment with Police and specialist services. Demand for Sanctuary support highlights the continued prevalence of domestic abuse within the district. During the 2025-26 year, 20 referrals were received demonstrating a consistent and rising need for intervention and support. Referrals are primarily received through housing providers, particularly Eastlight Community Homes, alongside specialist organisations such as Next Chapter, reflecting effective partnership pathways into support services.

The CSP continues to support identified individuals through the Domestic Abuse Subgroup and other dedicated multi-agency meetings, with the aim of providing multi-agency support and intervention for individuals at an early stage.

The Domestic Abuse Sub-Group is for domestic abuse cases where the individual has contacted the local authority or been referred by a partner agency. Meeting regularly, the subgroup brings together partners including housing providers, Essex Police, mental health services and domestic abuse specialists to share information,



assess risk and agree structured action plans tailored to individual needs. During 2025-26, the subgroup has reviewed 41 cases, demonstrating both the scale of the issue and the Partnership's commitment to coordinated intervention. The forum has proven highly effective in improving outcomes for victims, supporting access to appropriate housing options, facilitating relocation where necessary and enabling individuals to remain safely in their homes with additional support measures in place.

Technology Facilitated Abuse training sessions were delivered to professional partners whose roles involve working with survivors of domestic abuse on 26th March 2026 and 8th April 2026, to raise awareness of the increasing use of technology as a tool for coercive and controlling behaviour. These sessions brought together a range of partners, including housing providers, probation, adult social care, the Change Project and domestic abuse services, with a total of 43

attendees across both sessions. The training focused on improving understanding of how perpetrators may use digital platforms, social media, location tracking and online communication to monitor, harass and control victims, as well as strengthening partners abilities to identify these behaviours and respond appropriately. The sessions were delivered to enhance professional awareness, improve safeguarding responses and support a coordinated, multi-agency approach to addressing emerging forms of domestic abuse.

In addition to direct support, the Partnership has continued to prioritise awareness raising and preventative activity. This includes support for countywide campaigns such as #BehindTheSmile and participation in the 16 Days of Action. These campaigns are delivered through partner networks and social media channels, ensuring consistent messaging across the district.

Between 27th November 2025 and 10th December 2025, Braintree District Council, through the Community Safety Partnership, delivered three Domestic Abuse Awareness Days across Halstead, Braintree and Witham as part of the national 16 Days of Activism campaign, an international initiative held annually to raise awareness of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, promote support services and encourage action to prevent abuse. These events were delivered in partnership with Essex Police, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, housing providers and voluntary organisations to raise awareness of domestic abuse, promote available support services and provide opportunities for residents to speak confidentially with trained professionals. Across the three events, approximately 160 individuals engaged with partners, with five individuals disclosing domestic abuse concerns and receiving direct support, including referrals to specialist services, housing support and perpetrator intervention programmes. The events also facilitated wider engagement through the distribution of crime prevention materials, promotion of J9 Safe Spaces and Compass, as well as signposting to partner services. A coordinated social media campaign significantly extended the reach of the initiative, achieving over 74,000 views and generating strong public engagement and discussion around domestic abuse and support pathways. Overall, the campaign strengthened partnership working, increased awareness of domestic abuse and contributed to improved access to support services for those at risk.

A comprehensive report on the 16 Days of Action Campaign is available upon request; please refer to the contact details provided at the end of this report.

Overall, the Partnership's approach to domestic abuse combines practical safety interventions, coordinated case management and proactive awareness activity. This ensures that individuals at risk or experiencing domestic abuse are identified early, supported effectively and provided with clear pathways to access the help and protection they need.



The J9 Domestic Abuse Initiative plays an important role in strengthening the Partnership's response to domestic abuse by equipping staff and community-facing organisations with the knowledge and confidence to recognise the signs of abuse, respond appropriately and refer individuals to specialist support services. As part of this, fully funded J9 training opportunities were made available to Braintree District Council staff and partners, including sessions delivered during the 16 Days of Activism campaign. Training enabled officers to enhance their understanding of domestic abuse, build confidence in managing disclosures and improve their



ability to identify and support vulnerable individuals. This approach reflects a wider organisational commitment to embedding safeguarding awareness across frontline services and highlights the importance of continuing to expand J9 training delivery moving forward.

The Community Safety Partnership also provided funding to Next Chapter Domestic Abuse support service to facilitate venue hire, enabling Next Chapter to deliver structured help and advice sessions for residents. This took place over a series of five consecutive weekly sessions, allowing the organisation to run its domestic abuse recovery programme in a safe and accessible location within the district. Approximately 10 individuals benefitted from these sessions, with feedback from attendees reported as positive. The sessions played an important role in supporting survivors of domestic abuse, helping them to feel more empowered and strengthening their ability to progress in their recovery journey. In addition, funding was also used to facilitate further sessions, including a Mental Health Toolkit training programme for Braintree residents, delivered in partnership with external providers.

This support ensured that individuals already engaging with Next Chapter services had access to face-to-face programmes locally, reducing barriers to attendance and enhancing engagement. By providing suitable venues within the district, the CSP has enabled the continued delivery of specialist support programmes, contributing to improved outcomes for survivors of domestic abuse and supporting wider priorities around safeguarding and recovery.

Safeguarding – Transport Network



The Community Safety Partnership has undertaken targeted activity to safeguard vulnerable young people using public transport through the delivery of Operations Henderson and Make Safe. Operation Henderson focused specifically on raising awareness of the risks of child exploitation within transport networks and surrounding areas, recognising that locations such as train stations can be used by offenders to facilitate criminal or sexual exploitation and movement of vulnerable young people. The operation was delivered in partnership with Essex Police and the Braintree District Council Licensing Department, with engagement taking place at Braintree and Witham train and bus stations along with taxi ranks. Officers worked directly with licensed taxi drivers, staff and members of the public to improve awareness of exploitation risks, how to recognise warning signs and

the importance of reporting concerns. Encouragingly, feedback indicated a good level of awareness amongst drivers, alongside meaningful engagement with 19 young people around these issues.

Research and local data obtained from the Strategic Assessment indicate that transport networks are frequently utilised by vulnerable young people who may be at risk of sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and trafficking. These individuals often gravitate towards stations due to their busy, anonymous nature, which offers some degree of shelter and access to food and drink. Additionally, bus and rail networks can be exploited by offenders to traffic young people for the purposes of sexual and criminal exploitation. In addition to the general public, all staff working within and around a station (ticket collectors, engineers, coffee shop workers etc) play a crucial role in safeguarding these vulnerable young individuals.

Child Criminal Exploitation & Child Sexual Exploitation

The ‘Spot It Stop It’ training session, delivered on 17th January 2026, brought together 11 participants from a range of professional backgrounds including taxi drivers, social work students, a sexual health worker and Braintree District Council Street Scene Protection staff, providing a valuable multi-agency approach to safeguarding. The training focused on improving awareness and understanding of exploitation, equipping attendees with the knowledge to recognise the signs of child exploitation and respond appropriately. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many describing the session as “eye-opening” and highlighting that it increased both their understanding and confidence to identify and report concerns.

The training contributes to wider child exploitation work within the district by strengthening frontline awareness across key sectors, particularly those likely to encounter vulnerable young people in community settings such as transport and public spaces. By improving confidence in identifying risks and encouraging early reporting, the session supports a proactive and preventative approach to safeguarding, ensuring that children and young people at risk of exploitation can be identified and supported at the earliest opportunity.



Crucial Crew

The Crucial Crew event, delivered in October 2025, was a successful multi-agency initiative led by Braintree District Council to support Year 6 pupils in developing essential safety knowledge as they transition to secondary school. The event engaged 440 pupils from seven primary schools across the district and was delivered in partnership with Essex Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and The Children's Society. The programme covered a range of key topics including personal safety, healthy relationships, gang awareness, fire safety, vaping and internet safety, using interactive workshops to promote engagement and learning. Feedback from both pupils and teachers was overwhelmingly positive, with the majority of teachers rating the event highly and 65% of pupils describing the event

as "very good". Pupils reported increased confidence in their ability to recognise risks and respond appropriately to safety concerns, demonstrating a clear positive impact on awareness, decision-making and personal resilience.

A comprehensive report on the Crucial Crew Programme is available upon request; please refer to the contact details provided at the end of this report.



Knife Crime Awareness

During Knife Crime Awareness Week in November 2025, Essex Police deployed metal detector arches at Secondary schools in Braintree and Halstead as part of a proactive engagement and prevention approach to tackling knife crime among young people. Witham school deployments took place in early 2026. These deployments acted as both a visible deterrent and an opportunity to engage directly with pupils, reinforcing key messages around personal safety and the risks associated with carrying weapons. The initiative was positively received by both school staff and students, with strong partner collaboration ensuring smooth delivery. Officers reported valuable engagement with pupils, who asked questions about safety and the purpose of the arches, helping to improve understanding and awareness. The deployments also highlighted opportunities for further education, particularly around what items can trigger detection, supporting wider preventative messaging. Metal detector arch deployments are intended to enhance school safety, deter young people from carrying weapons and prevent potential incidents before they occur, with feedback from schools indicating a positive response to their introduction.

Metal detection arch deployments have also been extended beyond school environments into the night-time economy, forming part of a wider preventative approach to tackling knife crime across the district. Following deployments at schools, Essex Police introduced the metal detection arches at a number of licensed premises, in Braintree Town across a planned programme of dates. These deployments aim to deter individuals from carrying



weapons in public spaces, increase visible enforcement and provide reassurance to the public, particularly in higher-risk evening settings. By targeting both young people in schools and adults within the night-time economy, the Partnership is taking a coordinated approach to prevention, reinforcing the message that knife crime will not be tolerated at any level.

In addition to school-based interventions, a newly upgraded knife surrender bin was installed outside Braintree Police Station during the same period, providing a safe and anonymous way for individuals to dispose of weapons. This complements enforcement and education activity by reducing the number of knives in circulation within the community.

Overall, this coordinated approach contributed to increased awareness among young people, strengthened partnership working with schools and police, and supported wider efforts to prevent knife crime and reduce risk within the Braintree district.

Road Safety

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) capability has been delivered across the Braintree District through £10,000 of funding secured by Braintree District Council via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which was subsequently allocated to Essex Police to support enhanced enforcement activity and contribute to wider road safety and crime prevention objectives. The ANPR system provides real-time monitoring of vehicle movements, enabling the swift identification of uninsured vehicles, stolen vehicles and those linked to criminal activity, thereby supporting targeted enforcement and improving response times. The equipment was purchased and utilised by Essex Police in March, with the ANPR unit deployed on eight separate occasions, resulting in three arrests, including two for drug-related offences and one for a traffic-related offence. This activity demonstrates the effectiveness of ANPR technology in supporting frontline policing, improving road safety outcomes and disrupting criminal activity within the district.



Essex Police continue to deliver regular weekly “Speed 100” enforcement checks across the Braintree District, utilising the TruCam speed detection device to target speeding at identified hotspot locations. These checks form part of an ongoing road safety initiative aimed at reducing speeding offences, improving driver behaviour and preventing serious and fatal collisions. The Community Safety Partnership has also worked collaboratively with Essex Police to coordinate a number of these checks in response to complaints received from residents about speeding in specific areas across the district. Through visible enforcement and consistent activity, this work supports wider efforts to enhance road safety and provide reassurance to local communities.

Fire Service Education and Prevention Activity

Across the period April 2025 to March 2026, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service delivered a comprehensive programme of education and prevention activity across the Braintree District, engaging 13,951 children and young people through 173 sessions delivered in schools and community settings. This programme covered a wide range of key safety themes including water safety, knife crime, cyber safety, healthy relationships, home safety and wider personal safety issues, equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to recognise risks and make informed decisions. Delivery was consistent throughout the year, with particularly high levels of engagement recorded during the summer and autumn terms, including 4,884

young people reached between April 25 and June 25 and a further 3,504 during July through targeted summer safety and knife crime inputs. In total, activity was delivered across a wide range of primary and secondary schools within the district, supporting early intervention and building resilience among young people at key transition points.

A significant element of this work included targeted seasonal campaigns linked to known risk periods. The Halloween and Bonfire Night campaign in October 2025 reached 2,686 individuals across 31 sessions, focusing on firework safety, anti-social behaviour prevention and personal safety awareness. This was complemented by continued delivery in November and December, where a further 731 individuals were engaged across 26 sessions, including inputs on knife crime, home safety and healthy relationships. These seasonal interventions play an important role in reducing risk during peak periods and reinforcing key safety messages within the community.

On 31st October 2025, the Community Safety Partnership coordinated and part funded a targeted Night of Action in Witham to address seasonal increases in anti-social behaviour and provide reassurance to the local community. The operation was delivered in response to known spikes in anti-social behaviour during the Halloween period and formed part of a wider programme of partnership activity across the district. A range of partners were involved, including Essex Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Braintree District Council’s Children and Young Person Safeguarding Officer and the Youth Service, reflecting a strong multi-agency approach.



Alongside high-visibility patrols and engagement activity, the partnership supported the delivery of diversionary provision for young people, working with Essex Youth Service to provide a dedicated youth session in Witham on the night of 31st October 2025, offering a safe and structured environment as an alternative to engaging in anti-social behaviour. This was complemented by detached outreach activity on the evening, enabling practitioners to engage directly with young people in hotspot locations, provide advice around personal safety and fire safety, and signpost to support services.

Alongside education delivery, safeguarding remained a core focus of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, with a total of 164 safeguarding referrals made across the year. These referrals demonstrate the value of frontline engagement in identifying vulnerable children and young people and ensuring appropriate support is put in place at an early stage. Collectively, this programme of activity highlights a strong, preventative approach to community safety, combining education, awareness and safeguarding to protect young people and reduce risk across the Braintree District.

Neighbourhood Watch

The Community Safety Partnership provided a £200 contribution towards the printing of a Braintree District Neighbourhood Watch Members Guide, following a successful funding application. This guide was developed to promote community safety, raise awareness of crime and anti-social behaviour and provide residents with clear information on how to report concerns and access support. The printed materials are being distributed through community engagement events and local networks, helping to strengthen community involvement and improve awareness of community safety initiatives. This funding supports CSP priorities around building community resilience and promoting safety within the district.



Fraud Prevention and Awareness

The Fraud Prevention Coordinator at Essex Police has delivered a sustained programme of fraud awareness and prevention activity across the Braintree District, supporting both community engagement and direct victim support. Over the year, the coordinator has delivered in excess of 40 community-based fraud awareness events, engaging approximately 1,500 residents through a combination of talks, market stalls and awareness stands held across a wide range of locations including sheltered housing schemes, community venues, banks and town centres. These sessions provided practical advice on identifying and preventing fraud, alongside the distribution of crime prevention materials such as purse bells, card defenders and address-blocking devices to reduce vulnerability to scams.



In addition to community outreach, the Fraud Prevention Coordinator has played a key role in supporting victims of fraud by providing tailored advice, implementing safeguarding measures and where possible, assisting in the recovery of lost funds. This proactive and preventative approach has contributed to improved awareness of fraud risks across the district, particularly among older and more vulnerable residents. Through continued partnership working with organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch and housing providers, this activity has strengthened community resilience and supported residents to better protect themselves from financial harm. Braintree district CSP has supported this work through £2000 of funding to purchase fraud prevention items such as purse bells, contactless card defenders, car key signal blocking pouches and fraud awareness leaflets.

Braintree Police Station Open Day

On 29th August 2025, the Community Safety Partnership supported the Braintree Police Station Open Day, working alongside Essex Police, Eastlight Community Housing, The Salvation Army, The Children's Society, the Ambulance Service and a range of other partners to engage with members of the public. The event was highly successful, attracting an estimated 800–1,000 attendees, including visitors from outside the district. Throughout the day, partners delivered a range of engagement activities focused on improving community safety awareness, including crime prevention advice, safeguarding support and the distribution of community safety resources funded by the CSP.

A key focus of the event was to better understand public perceptions of safety, with attendees invited to complete a Community Safety Survey to help inform future priorities. Community Services officers

engaged directly with approximately 140 residents, providing guidance on a range of issues including personal safety, crime reporting and cost of living support. The event also included practical demonstrations and interactive opportunities, including CPR training delivered to 80 individuals and 15 new applications to become Special Constables, highlighting the wider benefits of community engagement in supporting recruitment and resilience.

The Open Day was delivered alongside Operation Guardian activity, with joint patrols taking place within the town centre to further engage with residents and provide visible reassurance. Overall, the event provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen relationships between local services and the community, improve awareness of support services and contribute to the CSP's wider objectives around engagement, prevention and community safety.



999 Football Tournament

The 999 Football Tournament is an Essex Police led initiative delivered with support from the Community Safety Partnership, aimed at engaging young people identified by schools as those who would most benefit from direct support and positive intervention. The event brings together pupils from schools across the Braintree and Uttlesford districts, who compete in a structured football tournament while also having access to a range of services and professionals in a supportive and informal environment.

The 2025 tournament took place on 17th and 19th June 2025 at the Discovery Centre, Great Notley, and marked the fourth year of delivery. The event engaged approximately 180–200 pupils, with participation from 11 boys' teams and 8 girls' teams, creating an inclusive and positive setting for engagement. The tournament was supported by partner organisations including Next Chapter, Salvation Army Outreach and The Children's Society, ensuring that safeguarding, wellbeing and support were embedded throughout the event.

A key focus of the tournament was to support vulnerable young people, with schools encouraged to nominate pupils who would benefit most from the opportunity. Throughout the event, professionals engaged directly with participants, delivering messages on topics such as healthy relationships, knife awareness, drug education and personal safety in a way that was accessible and engaging. The presence of partner organisations also allowed for early identification of vulnerability and ensured that appropriate support pathways were visible to those who needed them.

Feedback from schools, professionals and parents was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the value of the event in building confidence, promoting positive behaviour and strengthening relationships between young people and local services. Overall, the tournament provided a valuable early intervention and engagement opportunity, supporting CSP priorities around protecting vulnerable individuals, promoting safety and building community resilience across the district.

The event highlighted the importance of listening to youth voices and using their feedback to inform positive change.

Operation Guardian – Braintree

Operation Guardian is a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner funded initiative delivered in Braintree Town Centre, aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour and serious violence through a combination of enhanced enforcement, community engagement and partnership working. The operation is based on a defined hotspot zone, which for the 2025–26 period covered the majority of Braintree Town Centre. Braintree was selected as part of a county-wide assessment of crime and harm, ranking 15th out of 30 towns across Essex, with the top 15 locations receiving targeted funding and support.

Funding received through Operation Guardian supported a range of activities designed to increase visibility, deter offending and improve community confidence. This included the delivery of three Community Safety Days of Action and one Night of Action, alongside additional out-of-hours patrols within the town centre.



Community engagement formed a key part of the initiative, with Days of Action bringing together a wide range of partners including Essex Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, housing providers, Open Road and other local organisations. These events provided opportunities to engage directly with residents, with events seeing Braintree District Council officers and partners engage with over 320 members of the public, distributing community safety items and offering advice around crime prevention, cost of living support and personal safety.

In total, four Days of Action were delivered across the reporting period, alongside a targeted Night of Action held in March 2026, which focused on the night-time economy. This operation involved Essex Police, Braintree District Council Licensing and Enforcement Officers and the Open Road SOS Bus, providing a highly visible presence within the town centre. During the evening, licensed premises were visited to promote key safety initiatives including the “Ask for Angela” scheme, while anti-drink spiking resources were distributed to members of the public. Engagement activity was carried out with both premises and individuals and the coordinated operation resulted in enforcement activity including one arrest, alongside wider reassurance and safeguarding engagement.

A significant element of Operation Guardian funding was also allocated to support enhanced enforcement patrols. Braintree District Council’s Street Scene Protection Team delivered monthly weekend patrols of approximately 4 hours, over an 8-month period, equating to 32 additional funded patrol hours. In addition to this, the Council provided match funding through its own resources, delivering an additional 4 hours of patrols per week within the Operation

Guardian zone between August 2025 and March 2026. This period spans approximately 35 weeks, equating to a further 140 hours of additional patrol time delivered by the Council. Combined, this represents a significant increase in enforcement visibility within the town centre, supporting compliance with Public Spaces Protection Orders and addressing anti-social behaviour related issues.

Overall, Operation Guardian has provided a coordinated and intelligence-led response to crime and disorder within Braintree Town Centre. Through a combination of enforcement, engagement and targeted activity, the initiative has strengthened partnership working, increased public reassurance and contributed to tackling key community safety priorities including anti-social behaviour, serious violence and Violence Against Women and Girls.



Drink Spiking Awareness

As part of National Anti-Spiking Week in September 2025, the Community Safety Partnership delivered a coordinated programme of activity across the Braintree District, working closely with Essex Police, Braintree District Council Licensing and Street Scene Protection Officers. A joint operation took place on 17th September 2025, during which officers visited licensed premises across Braintree, Witham and Halstead. More rural areas of the district were also a focus, with visits extending beyond pubs to include sports clubs and restaurants. Locations such as Hatfield Peverel, Terling, Finchingfield, Gosfield, Panfield and Bocking, among others, were visited to ensure activity was not limited to the main towns within the district. Officers used these visits to raise awareness of drink spiking and provide practical prevention advice to staff and managers. Across the district, over 20 venues were visited, demonstrating strong coverage of the night-time economy.



To support this work, the CSP funded and distributed anti-drink spiking products, alongside educational materials including posters and guidance on the 'Ask for Angela' scheme, helping venues to better safeguard vulnerable individuals and respond appropriately to concerns. During the visits, council officers also carried out premises licence checks and commercial waste compliance checks, while Essex Police engaged directly with staff on wider issues such as drug use and criminal behaviour linked to the night-time economy.

In addition to venue visits, public-facing engagement activity was delivered through pop-up stands in Witham and Halstead, where officers spoke directly with residents about drink spiking, personal safety and reporting mechanisms. This coordinated approach strengthened partnership working, increased awareness of spiking risks and provided both businesses and the public with practical tools to help prevent incidents. Overall, the initiative supported wider CSP priorities around protecting vulnerable individuals and improving safety within the night-time economy.



Drug & Alcohol Support

The Braintree District Community Safety Partnership continues to work collaboratively with Open Road and Phoenix Futures to deliver vital support services for individuals affected by drug and alcohol dependency. As part of this ongoing provision, accessible drop-in services are available, offering a non-judgemental environment where individuals can seek support, receive practical advice and be signposted into appropriate treatment pathways. This provision focuses on early intervention and harm reduction, helping to prevent escalation and support individuals on a pathway towards recovery.

During the reporting period, Phoenix Futures received over 20 referrals within the Braintree district for individuals presenting with complex needs, highlighting both the demand for specialist services and the importance of effective multi-agency referral pathways. In addition, Open Road has continued to provide outreach support through initiatives such as the SOS Bus, which has been present at four Community

Safety Engagement Days, offering visible and accessible advice, brief interventions and referrals into structured support services.

Open Road are also now regularly in attendance at multi-agency complex case meetings, providing specialist input around substance misuse and contributing to the development of coordinated support plans for individuals with complex needs. Their involvement ensures that substance misuse is effectively considered alongside other vulnerabilities, enabling a more holistic approach to case management and improving outcomes for those requiring support.

Together, this coordinated approach demonstrates the strength of partnership working in responding to substance misuse, ensuring that vulnerable individuals are identified early and supported through a combination of outreach, referral and targeted intervention. This work contributes to wider CSP priorities around protecting vulnerable people, reducing harm and building safer, more resilient communities.



Essex Youth Service

The Essex Youth Service continues to play a key role in delivering targeted outreach and early intervention support to young people across the Braintree District. Through a programme of detached youth work, practitioners provide a consistent and visible presence in key hotspot areas, including town centres, parks and transport hubs. This approach enables youth workers to engage with young people in informal settings, building trust and providing guidance around personal safety, exploitation, healthy relationships and wider community safety issues. Delivery has remained consistent, with regular weekly sessions taking place across Braintree, supported by additional targeted activity in identified high-risk locations.



A particular focus of this work has been in Witham, where Essex Youth Service has delivered outreach sessions at locations such as Witham Train Station and Witham Skate Park. These sessions have provided opportunities to engage directly with young people around issues including staying safe when travelling and recognising the risks associated with exploitation. While initial engagement was sometimes limited,

continued presence and relationship-building has resulted in improved interaction with young people and increased awareness of support services available to them.

Targeted activity was also delivered during key risk periods, including Halloween/Bonfire Night. Working in partnership with local organisations, Essex Youth Service supported a coordinated response in Witham to provide diversionary activities for young people, including an open session delivered through a local youth provision. This was complemented by detached outreach activity on the evening which the CSP supported by proving funding for outreach workers.

During the winter months, detached youth outreach activity increased with approximately 60 young people engaged with across identified hotspot areas in the district, demonstrating the continued reach and value of this work. In addition to direct engagement, youth workers have supported wider initiatives such as youth voice programmes, enabling young people to contribute to the development of future provision. This has led to the creation of youth-led initiatives and further opportunities for participation, strengthening community resilience and ensuring that young people feel heard, supported and connected to local services.

Community Engagement

Braintree District Council's Community Services Team, working in partnership with a wide range of Community Safety Partnership agencies, has continued to deliver an extensive programme of community engagement activity across the district. Over the reporting period, the team has supported and attended more than 80 community engagement events, including outreach activity within local towns, villages and skate parks. These events have enabled meaningful engagement with a significant number of residents, creating valuable opportunities to provide support, raise awareness and strengthen relationships within local communities.

A broad range of themes were address throughout these engagements which includes community safety and wellbeing. This consisted of raising awareness of personal safety, Violence Against Women

and Girls (VAWG), the Safer Streets agenda and the risks associated with drink spiking. Officers also provided guidance on Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), delivered careers-focused sessions and offered practical advice relating to the cost of living. In addition, close working with local foodbanks ensured that residents were signposted appropriately to available support services where required.

To support engagement activity, a variety of practical resources were distributed to residents to help reduce risk and improve safety. These included cigarette butt litter boxes, anti-drink spiking kits, anti-theft purse bells, credit and debit card defender pouches, car key signal-blocking pouches and reflective wristbands. Supporting materials such as leaflets and information packs were also provided to reinforce safety messaging and promote access to relevant services.



Schools have continued to play an important role in supporting community engagement activity across the district. The CSP has worked closely with local schools to deliver targeted awareness sessions to young people on a range of safety and wellbeing topics. Engagement at establishments such as Alec Hunter Academy and Hedingham School has included participation in interview days and careers events, providing students with insight into community safety roles, personal development and employability. These sessions have also enabled discussion around key issues including healthy relationships, resilience, exploitation and anti-social behaviour. Through this partnership approach, the CSP continues to strengthen its early intervention work, ensuring that young people are well-informed, supported and encouraged to make positive choices.



In addition to the Council's activity, Essex Police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have continued to play an active role in community engagement. Their involvement has included attending coffee mornings and supporting Operation Guardian Community Engagement Days, working collaboratively with partners to promote community safety, provide reassurance and improve public confidence across the district.



Anti-Social Behaviour Workshop

The Community Safety Partnership delivered a multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) workshop in November, bringing together key partners including all housing providers operating within the Braintree District, alongside Essex Police colleagues. The workshop was funded from the Council's UKSPF allocation and was designed to strengthen understanding of the legislative powers available to agencies in tackling anti-social behaviour, including the use of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs), Community Protection Notices (CPNs), closure powers and wider enforcement tools. The event featured expert input from external specialists, including a barrister with expertise in ASB legislation and representatives linked to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Office, providing attendees with practical insight into the effective use of enforcement powers and legal processes.

The workshop aimed to ensure a consistent, joined-up approach across agencies when responding to ASB, with a strong emphasis on partnership working, early intervention and improving outcomes for victims. Feedback from attendees was highly positive, with the event receiving an average satisfaction rating of 4.63 out of 5 and the majority of participants reporting that the workshop met or exceeded expectations. Attendees noted an improved understanding of ASB legislation, available powers and the impact of ASB on victims.

A key outcome of the workshop was a collective commitment from partner agencies to improve the way ASB is managed across the district. This included a renewed focus on the earlier use of

enforcement tools, increased collaboration between agencies, improved information sharing and greater use of partnership forums. Housing providers and other partners also committed to reviewing their internal processes, sharing learning with colleagues and exploring opportunities to strengthen enforcement approaches. Overall, the workshop has supported a more consistent and coordinated response to ASB, ensuring that partners are better equipped to use the full range of available powers and deliver improved outcomes for victims and communities.



Rural Crime – Property Marking

The Community Safety Partnership has provided £3,060 of funding to the purchase of forensic DNA Selecta property marking kits to support rural crime prevention across the Braintree District. These kits have been provided to Essex Police for distribution, with officers proactively contacting and visiting farms to offer the kits free of charge and provide guidance on their use. The kits are designed to protect valuable farm machinery and equipment by applying a unique, traceable DNA code, which can be used by police to identify stolen property and support recovery. Typically, the kits include a forensic liquid solution, applicators for marking equipment, warning signage to deter offenders and registration details linking items to their owners. Over 10 farms across the Braintree District have benefitted from this initiative, with approximately 150 farms located within the district. The scheme will continue to be delivered and expanded over a number of years, ensuring continued support to the rural community and strengthening long-term crime prevention measures.

This initiative provides a significant deterrent to theft by clearly identifying property as marked and traceable, making it less attractive to offenders. It also strengthens the ability of law enforcement to recover stolen goods and supports the prosecution of offenders through forensic evidence. By working in partnership with Essex Police to deliver and promote the scheme directly to farms, the CSP is helping to address rural crime, improve security and provide reassurance to the agricultural community.



ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CASE REVIEWS

The ASB Case Review gives victims of persistent anti-social behaviour the ability to demand a formal case review to determine whether there is further action that can be taken regarding a case they have reported to the appropriate services.

Victims of ASB can use this tool if they feel that agencies have not taken action in respect of their complaint. Where the Essex Countywide threshold is met in any ASB care review requests, relevant agencies including the Local Authority, Police and Housing Providers have a duty to undertake a review to take a more collaborative, problem-solving approach aiming to find a solution for the victim.

Between 2025 -2026, a total of 21 requests were submitted for an Anti-Social Behaviour case review within the Braintree District. Out of the 21 requests received during this period, 13 met the established threshold criteria, meaning they qualified for a full multi-agency review. These thresholds typically include factors such as the number of complaints made, the time frame in which they occurred, and the perceived impact on the victim.

Following the reviews, it was identified that in 4 of the qualifying cases, the response from partner agencies, including the Police, Local Authority and Housing Providers, had not been appropriate or sufficient in addressing the concerns raised by the victims. As a result, recommendations were made to improve practice and ensure that further action was taken to better support the individuals affected.

This data highlights both the importance of the ASB case review process in holding agencies accountable and the ongoing need to ensure that victims of anti-social behaviour receive timely and effective support.

Individuals, businesses or community groups can apply online for a review by searching for the 'Braintree ASB Case Review' section of the Braintree District Council website or by contacting Braintree District Council directly.

MOVING FORWARD

Braintree District Community Safety Partnership has received a funding allocation of £14,111 for 2026-27 from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (PFCC).

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