Cambridgeshire’s Vital Signs®

Vital Signs® is a programme initiated by the Community Foundations of Canada. The goal of Vital Signs® is to “take the pulse” of our community; to provide a sense of where we are at... and where we might be going.

Cambridgeshire Community Foundation’s 2015 Vital Signs® mini report looks at safety in the community. We have focused on statistics published by GT Place Analytics to highlight how Cambridgeshire and Peterborough perform compared to the national average.

In addition, this report includes results from a survey we conducted recently. We asked local people how they would describe community safety in their area and what they felt should be prioritised. We also asked them about the contribution they felt the voluntary sector makes to reducing levels of crime and improving community safety.

The aims of this 2015 Vital Signs® mini report are to help us:

- Better inform our donors about crime and safety issues and opportunities in the community
- Assist us in making connections between individuals and groups to address those issues
- Set priorities and identify opportunities for our funding

In summary, we hope this report will be a catalyst for further conversation and consideration.

Survey respondents were asked about the contribution, if any, they believe the charitable sector is already making locally to the priorities listed.

- Building stronger and more supportive communities
- Understanding the impact of mental health, alcohol and substance misuse on crime
- Tackling crimes targeted at the elderly or other vulnerable members of the community
- Tackling domestic abuse, including raising awareness and increasing reporting
- Challenging anti-social behaviour
- Tackling child sexual exploitation including grooming via the internet and child-on-child offences
- Reducing crime and re-offending

Legend:
- Highly significant contribution
- Positive contribution
- Modest contribution
- I have no knowledge if a contribution is being made
- No contribution
Overall since 2003/4 the total number of offences has decreased in all Cambridgeshire districts and Peterborough.

Violent crimes
2013/14 data shows that violent crimes per 1,000 population in Cambridge (12.72) and Peterborough (15.22) were above the national average of 12.09 per 1,000 population.

Burglaries
2013/14 data shows that burglaries per 1,000 population in Cambridge (3.87) and Peterborough (3.73) were above the national average of 3.59 per 1,000 population.

Respondents particular concerns:
- Over 1/3 of respondents said they were not concerned about crime in their area
- Just under 1/3 were concerned about burglary and anti-social behaviour
- Just under 1/4 were concerned about drugs
- Just over 1/10 were concerned about vehicle crime and criminal damage (inc. arson)

111 people responded to our community consultation survey. Respondents were asked to describe community safety in their area in one word:

Respondents were asked what improvements they felt could be made to community safety in their area, responses included: a more obvious police presence, more activities for young people, improved street lighting and road safety measures including speed limits, pedestrian crossings and parking improvements.
Since the 1st of April 2014, Cambridgeshire Community Foundation has awarded over £80,000 in grants to 33 projects tackling crime. Grants have been made from a number of funds including the Cambridgeshire High Sheriff’s Award Scheme, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority Community Fund, the Dulverton Trust Fund, the Microsoft Research Limited Fund, the Ridgeons Community Fund, the Ridgeons Family Charity Fund and the Police and Crime Commissioner Youth Fund for Cambridgeshire.

2 examples of recent grants made:

• £8,000 to the Cambridgeshire Police Shrievalty Trust to provide home security for vulnerable and persistently targeted domestic abuse victims (and their children) and for older victims of crime.
• £1,965 to the Romsey Mill Trust towards running an open access youth club in the Abbey Ward of Cambridge for young people at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour and crime.

Survey respondents were asked which (if any) of the priorities listed they think there is capacity and interest in the local charitable sector to do more to address, if there was additional funding available.

- Building stronger and more supportive communities
- Challenging anti-social behaviour
- Tackling crimes targeted at the elderly or other vulnerable members of the community
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To read more about Vital Signs® and the work of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (registered charity 1103314) please visit our website www.cambscf.org.uk