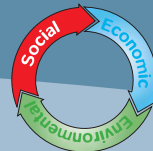




Crime



Crime is one of the most obvious indicators affecting quality of life. Actual crime causes a financial burden on the community and contributes to social exclusion and the decline of neighbourhoods. However, it is often fear of crime, which keeps people in their houses, rather than out enjoying the local countryside or out in towns at night.

INDICATOR CR1 – Recorded Crime per 1,000 Population

Important changes to how crime is recorded in Hertfordshire took place in April 2002 when Hertfordshire Constabulary adopted the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). As a result the validity of this indicator will be reviewed and a more relevant measure for levels of crime in Hertfordshire will be considered in the future.

The previous system only recorded a report by a member of the public as a crime if, after an initial investigation by officers, there was evidence that a crime has taken place. The new system now records crime based on allegations made by the complainant. Crimes are only removed from the system if there is evidence that the alleged crime did NOT take place.

As a result, this new system is much more victim orientated and victim led. This fits in with Hertfordshire Constabulary's new intelligence led policing style that helps to direct resources where they are most needed. It records more information and with the new enhanced 24 hour / 7 days a week Crime Recording Bureau it encourages the public to contact the police.



Crime



The result of this new method for recording crime means that the number of recorded crimes for the county has increased. However the public should not be alarmed, as this does not reflect a sudden, dramatic increase in criminal activity. The increase is statistical and a result of the new system. Direct comparison between this year's figures and last year's figures is misleading.

There were 64.2 crimes recorded per 1,000 population for the year 2001/02, (compared with 59.88 in 1999/2000 and 61.60 2000/01). This will be a "bench-mark" year for the Constabulary in terms of recording crime. All forces have now adopted the NCRS across

the country and an increase in recorded crime has also been experienced by them. These increases were predicted when the new system was introduced in April 2002.

The new system does mean that performance between the country's different police forces can now be more realistically compared. It is also now more in line with the independent British Crime Survey, which still shows Hertfordshire residents feel more safe and secure than those in other parts of the country.