



social exclusion

Fight against exclusion looks promising

Social exclusion prevents members of society from enjoying a better quality of life. Providing opportunities to stimulate inclusion can also encourage sustainability through health, financial reward and safety. This section sees the growth of youth crime slowing, improvements in access to transport, above average educational attainment amongst vulnerable pupils and teenage pregnancies falling for the fourth year.

Indicator SE1 - Crime re-offending (Recidivism Rates Hertfordshire Youth 10-17)

2005/6 saw another rise (7%) in the number of children and young people entering the criminal justice system. Although higher than in other parts of the region, it is lower than in previous years and is partly due to the success of award-winning¹ new methods employed for handling residential disturbances.

The target to reduce the number of young people received into custody to 3% (currently 3.4%) led to a re-organisation of resources to increase the capacity for Intensive Supervision and Surveillance from 28 young people to 40. Relationships with specialists in drugs/alcohol, mental health and education in the Youth Offending Teams were also strengthened. Third quarter re-offending rates for 2005 show a 2% reduction in Pre-court/Reprimand Penalties, against last year's 4% rise and rose by just 1% for First-Tier Penalty re-offenders. The percentage of Community Penalty re-offenders fell by 4% but those re-offenders with Custodial Penalties declined by 20%.

Indicator SE1 - Crime re-offending (Recidivism Rates Hertfordshire Youth 10-17 years)				
Type of Penalty	2004 % to re-offend	2005 % to re-offend	2005 County to re-offend	2005 County Offending
Pre-Court and Reprimands	23.0	21.0	81	386
First Tier Penalties – Referral Orders	38.0	39.0	75	194
Community Penalties	58.0	54.0	56	104
Custodial Penalties	80.0	60.9	14	23
Overall	Not available	32.0	226	707

Source: Hertfordshire County Council Youth Justice Service 2007

¹ see last year's report for information on the Municipal Journal Award

Increased government funding for activities in preventing crime has allowed the Youth Inclusion and Support Panel team to extend their work. This now includes 14-16 year-olds who display anti-social behaviour or who are subject to Individual Support Orders. This is in addition to the work with 8-13 year-olds currently funded by the Children's Fund.

Indicator SE2 - Educational Attainment of Children In Care and Care Leavers

The educational attainment of Hertfordshire's children in care, also reported in the Annual Performance Assessment, generally showed performance levels remaining above the national average; i.e.

- Key Stages**
 Improvement in performance and participation in all levels was slow but steady. Hertfordshire again exceeded the Key Stage 2 English and Maths floor target for 11 year olds.
- Target to achieve at least 1 A* to G at GCSE for young people leaving care**
 Improvements continued with results achieved being above the national average at 61.3% and well above our statistical neighbours' 54.3%.
- Target to achieve 5 A* to C**
 Results also improved in this target; rising from 10.9% in 2005-6 to 11.3% in 2006-7. This was again above our statistical neighbours' 8.2%.

Provisional data for the number of 'children in care missing school for 25 days for any reason' is still of concern but fell from 18.5% in 2005-6 to 16.3% in 2006-7. Non-attendance at school by children in care is subject to particular data analysis and will continue to be targeted for action in 2007-8. Work to reduce the number of children in care that disengage from education in Key Stage 4 has had an impact both on their overall attainment and their continuing involvement in education after 16 years.

Percentage of Care Leavers Engaged in Education, Training or Employment

The Education Support Service (ESS) for children in care and care leavers continues to support postsixteen year olds with a high quality service to enable them to participate in education, training or employment. However, 2007 performance outcomes do not accurately reflect the overall picture in relation to care leavers in education, training and employment (ETE). This is due to this year's cohort



having a larger than usual number of young people unavailable for ETE due to long-term illness, caring for their own children and serving custodial sentences. In addition, this year it was more difficult to track young people leaving care as the responsibility for providing a leaving care service was moved from voluntary providers and returned in-house.

Table 1: Percentage of Care Leavers engaged in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday (PAF A4 indicator)

	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007
Hertfordshire	66%	70%	72%	75%	59.8%
England	49%	56%	59%	75%	Not published

ESS's responsibility also includes supporting young people going on to study at University via a Leaving Care Grant. Of the 21 young people reported last year that enrolled at university, 20 successfully completed their first year and went on to their second year. Just 1 young person deferred for a year. In October 2007 a further 15 young care leavers enrolled at university; nationally only 1% of care leavers go on to university. Of the 18-21 year old county care leaver cohort, 16% are now in higher education, making Hertfordshire a leading authority in this performance area. During the year a three-day residential course for Year 11 students was held in collaboration with Hertfordshire University and is thought to have made a direct contribution to raising aspirations amongst young people in care to go to university. The course included GCSE course work preparation, revision classes, information about higher and further education, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration-building, all of which was designed to encourage individual young people to develop the desire to achieve.

ESS also provides targeted support to children in care to increase attainment and participation. The programme currently underway has been recognised for having a positive effect on outcomes as Joint Area Review inspectors stated in their report;

“there is very good support for them (young people) in schools and colleges from the looked after education team... Young people interviewed value the wide range of experiences and opportunities that are made available to them.” (JAR Report 2007)

During the year, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 began to have an impact as the Act provides local authorities with the power to direct schools to admit children in care even if school is fully subscribed. This is aimed to reduce the long wait that children in care experience when changing school.

HERTS Awards

In their role as corporate parents, local authorities must show the strongest possible commitment to helping every looked after child achieve the highest educational standards. This includes supporting their aspiration of attending further or higher education.

The HERTS Awards is a celebration event organised by Hertfordshire's Education Support Service to demonstrate a small part of this commitment. Eighteen months in development, the event engaged young people throughout its concept, design and promotion. HERTS Awards is based on the acronym 'Hertfordshire Encouraging a Road to Success'. There are 3 award levels:

- **Bronze** - children or young people reaching targets that stretch their achievements.
- **Silver** - children that have achieved well beyond expectation or targets in a particular area.
- **Gold** - exceptional achievement in any area.



Unique certificates and HERTS Award Badges were jointly designed between the young people's working team and graphic designers and are presented to Award winners. A number of bursaries are also

awarded to looked after young people having shown exceptional commitment, skill or talent. Several of these are sponsored by external companies and an award is also presented to a fostered child or young person that has made an outstanding contribution.

Promotional activities are conducted ten months prior to the event to encourage nominations from teachers, social workers, carers, CSF professionals, partner agencies, Connexions, and the Independent Support Service. The event is overwhelmingly well-received and has become a highlight in the annual calendar, not only for the young people looked after, but also for staff throughout the county council and its partner agencies. A compliment file has been created and contains a great many positive letters and emails from carers and young people themselves.

For more details on HERTS Awards contact Felicity Evans, Corporate Parenting Officer on 01992 555926

2 A pdf of the JAR Report may be downloaded from our report website.



Indicator SE3 - Access To Transport

Access to transport is a key factor in preventing social exclusion as accessing healthcare, employment and education relies upon an ability to get to these services. In 2007 several of the schemes proposed in the county's Accessibility Strategy 2006-2011 had been implemented and were making an impact.

- **SCooTs** was set up to enable young people in rural areas to borrow scooters to access work or further education until they can afford their own transport. Managed by the Community Development Agency, 124 enquiries were received and 21 clients were accommodated by July 2007.
- **Lister Health Shuttle** is based in Stevenage and provides assistance for patients and visitors who find it difficult to get to hospital. The service was extended to provide transport between the Lister and QEII hospitals. By October the Shuttle was being used by 26,000 people annually and came first at the annual National Transport Awards.
- **Broxbourne Health Shuttle** was set up for the district's residents that have difficulty accessing health services. After identifying a need for a scheme similar to Lister's, a vehicle was purchased using County Council Local Transport Plan funding. The scheme is run by the WRVS³.

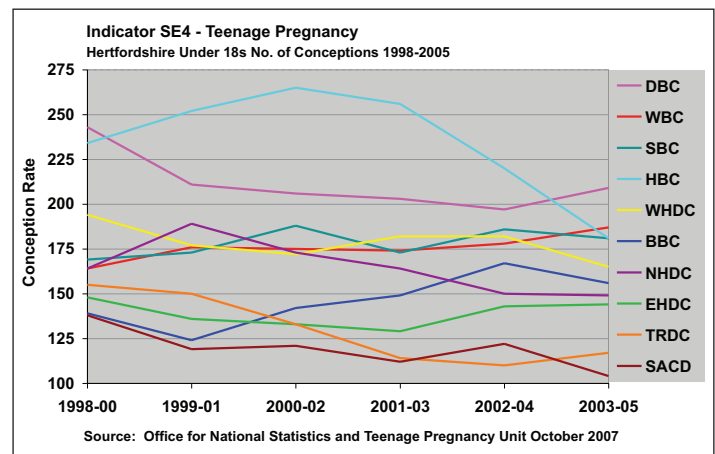
Health transport schemes have helped the county meet its accessibility indicator target 'Percentage of people who find it difficult to travel to a local hospital'. Indicators are continually developed through an accessibility officer who meets regularly with others regionally to discuss best practice. Further indicators are developed as action plans are implemented to refine delivery of the Accessibility Strategy.



SCooTs enables young people to access work or further education

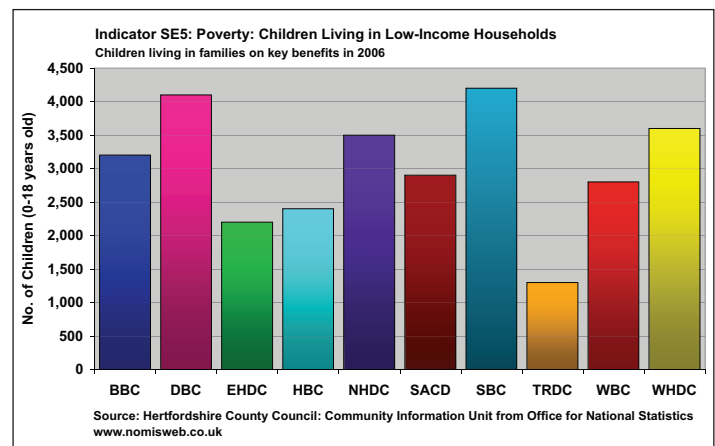
Indicator SE4 - Teenage Pregnancy

Provisional figures⁴ show county teenage pregnancy rates fell for the fourth year in 2005; a 22.7% fall overall since 1998 and exceed the county's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy target. The rate remains significantly below national (41.1%) and regional (32.7%) averages leading to another upgrade to DCSF Green status. Rates were highest in Welwyn Hatfield whilst Dacorum had the greatest rise and number of conceptions per thousand population. Ward variations mirrored socio-economic factors.



Indicator SE5 - Poverty: Children Under 16 (now under 18) Living in Low-Income Households

As the Index of Deprivation is undergoing revision, a proxy indicator 'Children living in low income households' has been produced to allow monitoring to be maintained in the interim. It is intended to run in parallel with the new Index when it is created. It should be noted that this indicator has a wider age range and there are limitations as to its accuracy around benefit eligibility used to define low incomes.



³ Women's Royal Voluntary Service: www.wrvs.org.uk/

⁴ See the Teenage Pregnancy Action Plan 07/08 via our website