

## 3.2.07 Neighbourhood Perceptions and Community Reassurance

### Introduction: why is this important?

There is a long established link between neighbourhood perceptions and health and wellbeing. Neighbourhood perceptions can be differentiated into public feelings and thoughts and behaviours about the personal risk of criminal victimisation. These feelings, thoughts and behaviours have a number of damaging effects on individual and group life - they can erode public health and psychological wellbeing, they can alter routine activities and habits, they can contribute to some places turning into 'no-go' areas via a withdrawal from community and they can drain community cohesion, trust and neighbourhood stability.

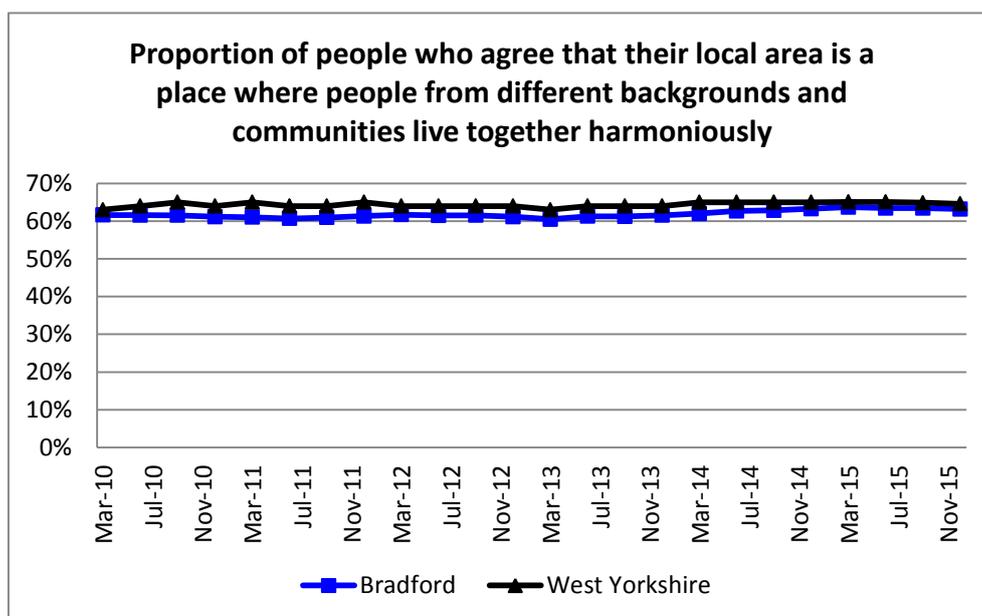
Factors influencing the fear of crime include public perceptions of neighbourhood stability and breakdown, circulating representations of the risk of victimization and broader factors where anxieties about crime express anxieties about the pace and direction of social change. There may also be some wider cultural influences: some have argued that modern times have left people especially sensitive to issues of safety and insecurity

Stable and sustainable neighbourhoods require an environment of good governance, public participation, partnership working and civic pride. Effective partnership working is at the heart of each of these. It also has a vital part to play in working with local people to create the conditions that underpin a sustainable neighbourhood; a flourishing local economy; good quality public services; a diverse, vibrant and creative local culture; safer, cleaner, greener streets; and a sense of place and pride.

Health burdens related to road traffic accidents are also a significant issue in the district.

### What do the facts and figures tell us?

The chart below shows the trend over the past 5 years regarding how people feel about their neighbourhood with regards to people from different backgrounds live together.



Source: iQuanta

It can be seen that from 2013 there was an upward trend that people perceived communities were living harmoniously. This could reflect the more focused work undertaken by the public sector through Ward Officer Teams and the Stronger Communities partnership. We use both the Ward

Action Plans and Community of Interest Plans to set priorities and develop strategies to improve neighbourhoods and wards.

### What strategies, policies and best practice have been developed locally and nationally?

One of the five priorities within the Bradford District Plan 2016-2020 is Safe, clean and active communities. The Neighbourhood Support Hub has been operational since May 2014 and supports District wide functions including Anti-Social Behaviour, Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Reduction, Licensing, Hate Crime, Community Engagement and Prevent. The Hub has a strong 'enforcement and problem solving' element which supports the Neighbourhood Policing Areas and Teams.

Analysts from the police and council work in the hub to provide data products and intelligence that captures emerging trends and spikes in crime and anti-social behaviour as well as identifying key performance indicators. This activity also informs the Strategy Groups around the prevention and intervention initiatives. Work continues towards the aspiration to align information and data systems in order to better understand the District, Area and Ward trends and tailor responses to local need, through existing structures including Ward Officer/Partnership Teams, Area Partnership Teams and Area Committees. The Hub supports neighbourhood working which has been important in providing community reassurance.

Relevant strategies include:

- Community Safety Annual Strategic Assessment for the Bradford District 2014/15
- Bradford District Community Safety Plan 2015/18
- Neighbourhoods and Resources Strategy Group Delivery Plan
- Bradford District Plan 2016-2010

### What challenges have been identified in a local context?

The key challenge is to involve communities to participate in their neighbourhoods and take part in community activity. This would increase community reassurance and improve neighbourhood perceptions. To aid this an Active Communities campaign (People Can) has been proposed by the New Deal outcome group: Safe, Clean and Active Communities. The group is seeking ways to develop strong communities, as a way of filling the gap created by significant reductions in public sector funding.

The 'People Can' campaign aims to highlight the contributions of communities within Bradford District and build on these strengths, as part of the New Deal. The success of 'People Can' will be determined by the energy and commitment that we can all contribute.

### What do our stakeholders tell us?

To increase perception and reassure communities our stakeholders have identified that approach to neighbourhood working is required. This means Officers having ownership, accountability and responsibility over Neighbourhoods and Wards. Following the implementation of Council Ward Officers the Police have also restructured and employed Police Ward Officers who will have responsibility over a Ward.

### Recommendations: What do we need to do? How do we ensure this remains a priority?

This theme is primarily about building public confidence and trust within communities and tackling the fear of crime; working with residents to identify and take action to improve outcomes and services within Wards and Neighbourhoods. It is about ensuring that national and local priorities are driven through residents at the local level.

Ward officer teams have been successfully co-ordinating a multi-agency approach to tackling Neighbourhood priorities and they bring together the local policing teams, the fire service, council cleansing officers, traffic officers and highways officers, along with other partners, to work with residents to identify and take action to improve the services within Wards and Neighbourhoods.

## References

Bradford District Plan 2016-2020

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/2312/bradford-district-plan-final.pdf>

People can make a difference

<http://peoplecanbradforddistrict.org.uk/>