



CRIME

Blackburn with Darwen lies within the Lancashire Constabulary Eastern Division. Reduction and detection of crime is the foremost priority for the division and detailed performance information is available for an aggregated total of all crimes as well as individual crime categories such as criminal damage.

Crime in the borough has reduced consistently in recent years and the size of the reduction together with the number of detected crimes puts the town in a very strong position when comparisons are made with crime performance in other areas both within Lancashire and nationally.

The last report to the council forum highlighted strong performance for the start of the new fiscal year covering April and May. This latest report presents a still strong picture of performance for Blackburn with Darwen up to the end of July. Some of the highlights for this period are:

- All Crime reduced by 2.2%. This equates to 95 less victims of crime.
- Burglary reduced by 22.1%. This equates to 40 less victims of crime.
- Violent Crime reduced by 3.4%. This equates to 34 less victims of crime.

A summary of all the main crime categories for the period April – July 2011 is shown below:

Crime Type	Apr-July 2010	Apr-July 2011	Change
All Crime	4337	4242	-2.2%
SAC	662	573	-13.4%
Burglary in Dwelling	181	141	-22.1%
Violent Crime	987	953	-3.4%
Damage	870	875	+0.6%

Table 1: Summary of BwD Crime Performance – April to May 2011

NB: SAC stands for Serious Acquisitive Crime which is Burglary, Robbery, and Vehicle Crime

The continued reductions in Serious Acquisitive Crime reflects a lot of coordinated work to reduce offending in crime types that normally tend to increase during times of economic challenge. Criminal damage has increased slightly when compared to the same period 12 months ago – when exceptionally low levels were achieved.

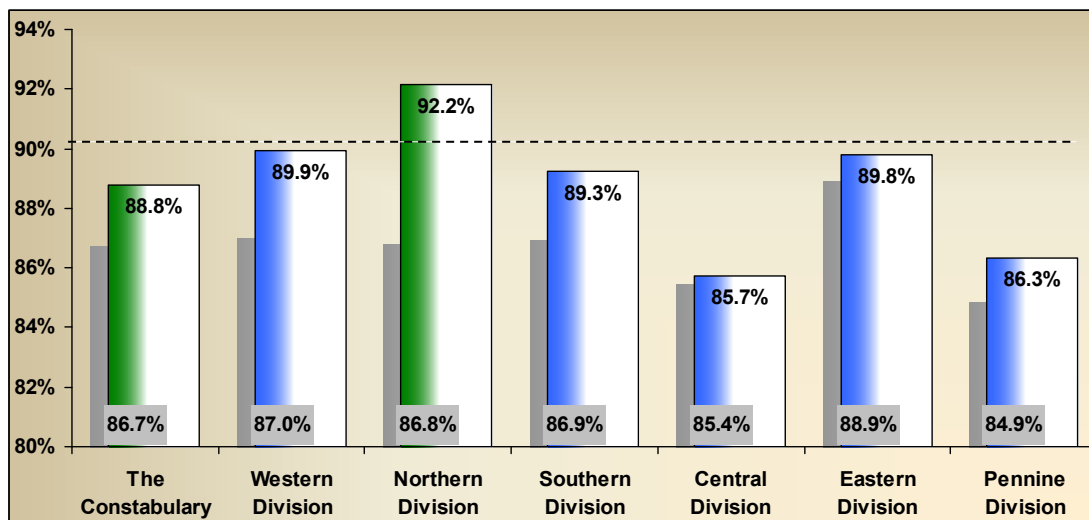
In addition a key measure of how effective the police are in tackling crime is how many offences are detected – in other words what proportion of crimes result in an offender being brought to justice. In Blackburn with Darwen the detection rate for all crime in April to July is 34.8%.

Over the year the main performance challenge continues to be in relation to acquisitive crime. Theft of metal is also a significant challenge for the borough at a time when prices for scrap are at record levels. The police are involved in a variety of enforcement and multi-agency initiatives to tackle this issue.

CONFIDENCE & SATISFACTION

Levels of public confidence in the police and the satisfaction of people who interact with police are important measures of the quality of policing service Lancashire Constabulary provides. Eastern Division has a particularly proud record and public confidence in policing in the division has been among the very best in the county. Table 2 below uses the latest

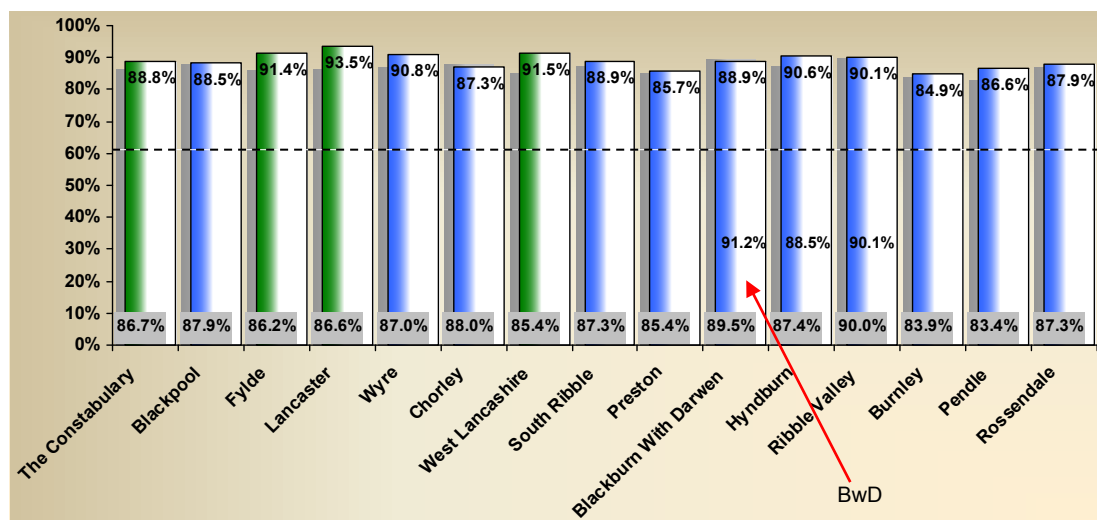
data available to show how confident people are in Lancashire Constabulary as a whole. Blackburn with Darwen is covered by Eastern Division:



(Confidence File - Confidence Measures - Period Comparisons – BCUs Jul11)

Table 2: Public Confidence in Lancashire Constabulary as a whole (NB. Green shading denotes a statistically significant change)

The next table (table 3) below shows how confident people are in different boroughs across the county area:



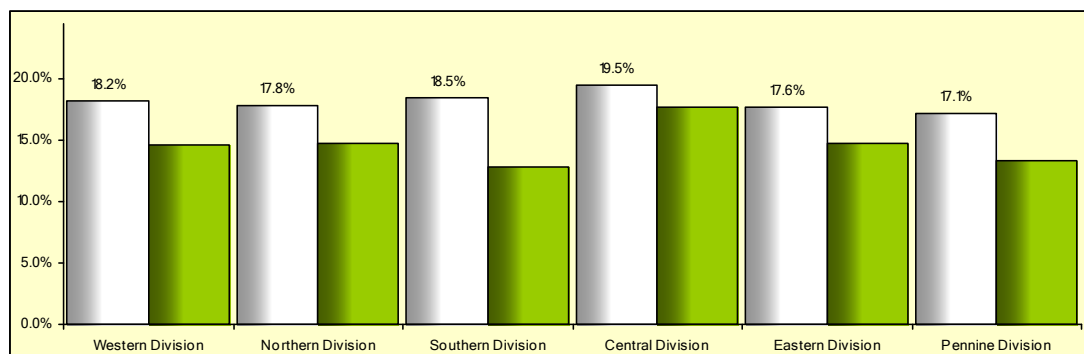
(Confidence File - Confidence Measures - Period Comparisons – CDRPs Jul 11)

Table 3: Public Confidence in Lancashire – breakdown by boroughs (NB. Green shading denotes a statistically significant change)

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The borough continues to show strong performance in tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). Eastern Division recognises the damaging impact ASB can have on neighbourhoods and police have been at the forefront of implanting minimum standards for dealing with reports of ASB. These standards are designed to ensure a high quality of service to all victims of ASB and to identify those cases of real vulnerability. One indicator of vulnerability is the number of repeat calls to specific locations where anti-social behaviour is reported and a lot of work takes place to tackle these types of incidents that account for a disproportionate amount of the total.

In this regard the division continues to see strong performance and the chart below demonstrates how every division in Lancashire Constabulary is reducing the number of repeat incidents of anti-social behaviour:



(Daily ASB File – Area Summary Chart 24 Aug 11)

Table 4: Anti-Social Behaviour: Repeat Incidents last 180 days – breakdown by BCUs (NB. Green shading denotes a statistically significant change)

OTHER POLICING ISSUES

In addition to the issues above, Blackburn with Darwen also continues to deal with other significant issues such as Premiership football matches and other large events. The English Defence League have sustained some localised activity in the borough, although a joined up approach between police and the local authority is designed to mitigate the impact and build long term solutions to the issues raised.

One legacy of the nationally supported EDL event in Blackburn on 2 April 2011 was a strong commitment across the borough to enhancing even further the tradition of partnership working and tolerance within communities.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

There will be challenges to come for policing in Blackburn with Darwen and in common with the main issues presented in the last report probably the most significant being to maintain outstanding performance while dealing with contracting resources and potential reductions in staff.

Crime tends to be closely correlated to wider social factors – particularly recession and economic hardship. Eastern Division will have to manage difficult choices about what areas of work to prioritise and it will do this by using the experience of its staff and by working with partners in the borough to provide a policing service that is responsive and meets the needs of local people.

CHANGES TO POLICE GOVERNANCE

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill which proposes changes to the way in which Police Forces are governed, is now going before the House of Commons with an expected Royal Assent date of 16th September.

The Bill has a number of proposals, the main impact is to replace Police Authorities with directly elected Police Commissioners. There will be one commissioner for Lancashire and the Police Minister has confirmed that the elections will not now take place in May 2012 but in November 2012. These will be stand alone elections as there are no other elections taking place in November 2012.

Blackburn with Darwen will continue to have one place on the Police Authority between May 2012 and November. The Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen has been appointed the Police Area Returning Officer and will be responsible for the conduct of all elections for the Constabulary area.

Each Local Authority in Lancashire will also have one seat on the Police and Crime Panel proposed in the Bill and discussions are underway to ensure that mechanisms are in place for this to operate effectively. All district, Unitary and the County Council will be represented on this Panel and there will also be a number of places available for independent members.

The Police Authority had reservations about the model of governance proposed and has made strong representations to the Government. A number of these have been taken on board and these include the ability of the Commissioner to appoint a Deputy and strengthening the checks and balances provided by the Police and Crime Panel. The Authority is committed to ensuring that there is a safe and smooth transition to the new governance arrangements and with the Constabulary has established a Transition Board jointly chaired by myself and the Chief Constable to make sure that the outcome remains the maintenance of effective and efficient policing for Lancashire and continued emphasis on providing the outstanding levels of performance that I am pleased to be able to report.

Cllr Malcolm T Doherty
Chairman
Lancashire Police Authority