



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 period April 2011 – July 2011. This report presents the latest performance information covering the reporting period of Quarter 2 (July to September) and for the Year to Date (April to September).

Quarter 2: July – September 2011

- Serious Acquisitive Crime reduced by 10.5%. This equates to 50 less victims of crime.
- Burglary reduced by 3.8%. This equates to 5 less victims of crime.

Crime Type	Jul-Sept 2010	Jul-Sept 2011	Change
All Crime	2927	2977	+1.7%
SAC	486	435	-10.5%
Burglary in Dwelling	133	128	-3.8%
Violent Crime	650	670	+3.1%
Damage	536	582	+8.6%

Table 1: Summary of BwD Crime Performance – July to September 2011

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

Quarter 2 has realised some challenges to crime reduction coming as it does against generally lower levels in Quarter 2, 2010/11 than was the case for Quarter 1.

Raised levels of other stealings – particularly theft of metal which is a trend reflected nationally due to the high value of scrap – is a significant factor in the all crime total for Quarter 2 showing a slight increase of 1.7%.

However the performance with regard to serious acquisitive crime is a notable achievement because recently released national crime statistics indicated a rising trend in burglaries, but they are continuing to show sustained reductions in Blackburn with Darwen.

Year to Date: April – September 2011

- All crime still showing a reduction when compared to the same period last year (28 less victims of crime)
- Serious Acquisitive Crime and in particular Burglaries showing significant reductions

Crime Type	Apr-Sept 2010	Apr-Sept 2011	Change
All Crime	6164	6136	-0.5%
SAC	961	871	-9.4%
Burglary in Dwelling	275	235	-14.5%
Violent Crime	1388	1384	-0.3%
Damage	1216	1267	+4.2%

Table 2: Summary of BwD Crime Performance – April to September 2011

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

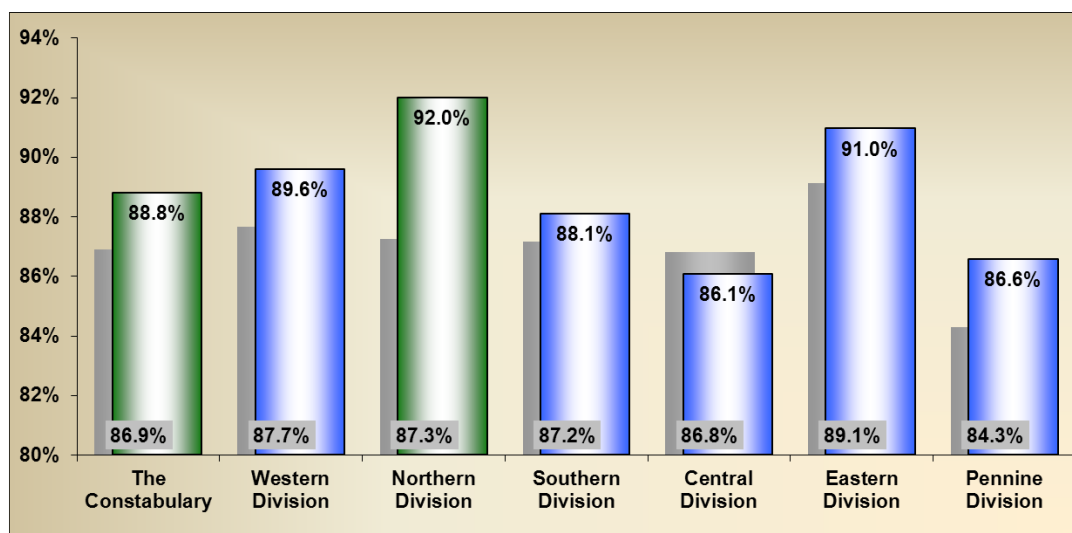
The continued reductions in Serious Acquisitive crime are a particular achievement because this type of crime normally tends to increase during time of economic challenge. Criminal damage has increased when compared to the same period 12 months ago – when exceptionally low levels were achieved. Plans are in place lead by the Shared Neighbourhood Teams to address the issues relating to damage.

- 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 for the year to date is 35.6%.

Over the year main performance challenge has been in relation to acquisitive crime – something often found in challenging economic circumstances. As the year progresses, violent crime is also emerging as a threat. The profile of violent crime in the borough is such that much of it is committed indoors (approx. 50% occurs indoors) and is linked to alcohol consumption. These are factors that require multi-faceted partnership solutions more so than is the case for violence in public spaces linked to the night-time economy.

CONFIDENCE & SATISFACTION

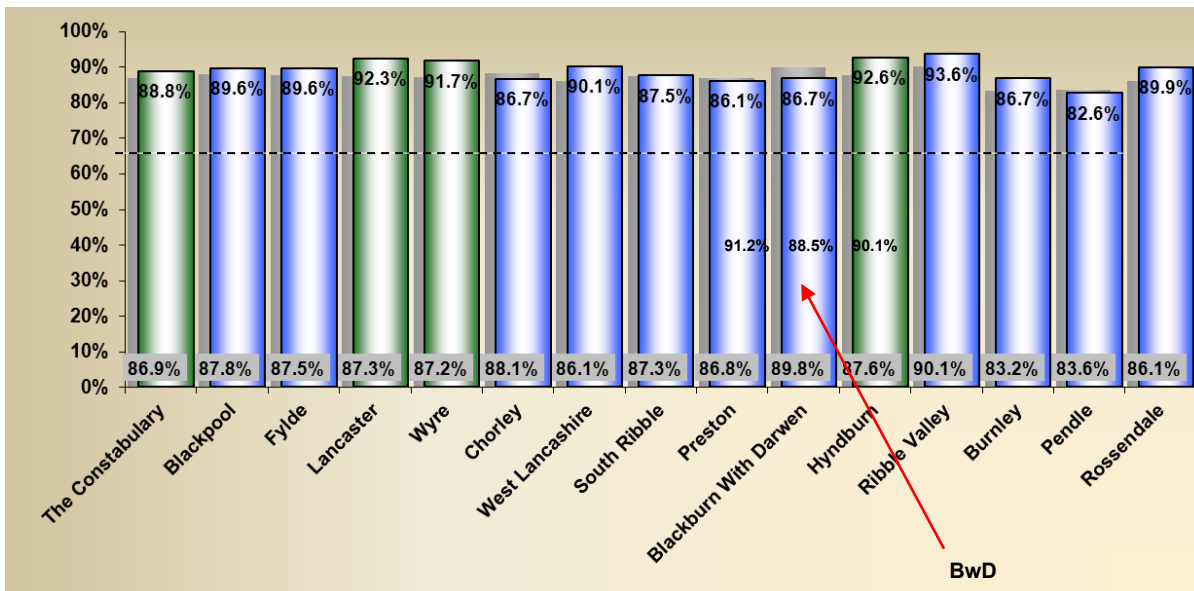
Levels of public confidence in the police and the satisfaction of people who interact with police are important measures of the quality of policing service Lancashire Constabulary provides. Eastern Division has a particularly proud record and public confidence in policing in the division has recently moved from being among the best, to the very best in the county. Table 3 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 Sept 11)

Table 3: Public Confidence in Lancashire Constabulary as a whole

The next table (table 4) below shows how confident people are in different boroughs across the county area:



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

Table 4: Public Confidence in Lancashire – breakdown by boroughs

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. Processes are well established within the Community Safety Partnership to identify appropriate partnership interventions in the most problematic cases.

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.

Most recently the division has responded to tragic loss of life on roads in the borough following a collision on the A666 at Darwen in which 3 lives were lost, and a collision on Barbara Castle Way in which 1 pedestrian was killed. Investigations continue into these incidents overseen by specialist officers.

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 areas of work to prioritise. They 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 Act received Royal Assent on 15 September 2011 and will change the way that Police Forces are governed and have a major impact on the wider community safety landscape. The Act will

replace Police Authorities with a directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner. There will be one Commissioner for the Lancashire Force area and the Act now confirms that elections will take place on Thursday 15 November 2012 with the Commissioner coming into post a week later, on Thursday 22 November 2012. The elections will be run by a Police Authority Returning Office who, for the Lancashire Force area will be the Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen Council.

The Police Authority will continue to operate and fulfil all its functions and requirements up to 21 November 2012 and Blackburn with Darwen will continue to have one place on the Authority.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act includes the establishment of a Police and Crime Panel comprising a member from each of the Local Authorities in the Lancashire Force area and a minimum of two co-opted members to support the Police and Crime Commissioner in the effective exercise of his/her functions. Early discussions involving Lancashire County, Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Preston Councils are taking place to consider the establishment of the Police and Crime Panel. Blackburn with Darwen is represented by Andrea Gregson with a meeting scheduled for Tuesday 11 November. All Local Authorities will be involved in the establishment of the Panel.

The Police Authority continues to contribute at a national level to the development of secondary legislation and guidance in support of the Act and is actively working with partners at a local level to ensure a smooth transition from the Authority to the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Authority is particularly aware of the impact that this Act will have on the wider community safety landscape and is working closely with Community Safety Partnerships to ensure that they are in the best possible position to work with the Commissioner.

As Joint Chair of the Transition Governance Board that has been established by the Police Authority and the Constabulary. I am confident that we are working towards a safe transition and ensuring the best possible outcome for the residents of Blackburn with Darwen and the rest of the Lancashire Police Force area.

Cllr Malcolm T Doherty
Chairman
Lancashire Police Authority