



Flitwick Town Council

FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL SECTION 17 CRIME & DISORDER AUDIT

The Council's Corporate Strategy contains several actions to improve safety in the Town and it has relevant powers to do so.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 however gives certain public authorities such as the Town Council, a specific duty to consider the crime and disorder implications of its actions and to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of these functions and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

"An Engaged Community" is one of the five "pillars" of the Council's Strategy 2021-2025, Flitwick Matters. Within this, one of the key actions is to "Work to make our Town Safer" which includes commitments to:

- Work with Central Bedfordshire Council to extend CCTV services and monitoring
- Work with the Police and other partners on community safety initiatives, disseminate information to the community and ensure residents know where to report matters of concern.
- Undertake a crime reduction audit on the Council's activities and services to enable the Council to lead by example.
- Lobby for road safety improvements.

Flitwick is a relatively safe place with 46 recorded crimes per 1000 people in 2021. This compares with 70 recorded crimes per 1000 people in Bedfordshire, 78 in England and 79.5 in the UK. Despite this, in the Town Council's recent Resident's Survey, fear of crime, particularly at night was an issue. 56% of respondents felt safe or relatively safe at night, against a national average of 75%. 90% of residents felt safe during the day against a national average of 94%.

This is the first Section 17 audit recorded and Council is now asked to consider the impacts and recommendations resulting. It is important that crime reduction is built into the everyday business of the Council. The audit should be reviewed and revised annually, and any actions included in the Delivery Plan.

The following is a summary of the conclusions and recommendations:

Cen	Impact	Actions in place	Recommendation
Policy	Can affect the way services and activities are operated	Cascades from Strategy and Delivery Plan.	See proposal on Crime and Disorder Policy for Rufus Centre. Recommend widening it to cover all facilities, services, and activities.
Public Office at the Rufus Centre.	Can impact on staff or the public	Public access only to Foyer, one corridor (with toilets) and Café. Authorised access to other areas of building. Designated Safe Place (linked with CBC) where people can get immediate help or reassurance and securely speak to other agencies such as BDAP (Partnership on Domestic Abuse) or have other agencies contacted on their behalf such as Police, ambulance or Social Services.	Ensure necessary staff are fully aware of security and safe place and trained to respond.
Flexible rooms for hire for meetings and training.	Can impact on staff or the public, but low risk. Generally known organisations and businesses.	Usual security arrangements for the Rufus Centre apply.	
Rufus Centre: Office Accommodation for rent on first and second floor.	Control on who enters these areas is down to tenants.	Council controls access to other parts of the Centre. Tenants have keypads to control who enters rented areas. Alarm system set in specific areas.	Reinforce security rules and responsibilities to tenants and make share Crime and Disorder Policy with them when adopted.
CCTV provision	Can detect and deter crime	Council currently provide CCTV on Millennium Park and the Rufus Centre. Recordings viewed as necessary and made available to Police on request.	In accordance with Strategy, Council will liaise with CBC on extending CCTV (and possibly ANPR cameras at Town's gateways).

Running and facilitating events & festivals.	Generally, a great community spirit and positive effect, but can attract criminals such as thieves or scammers. Can attract anti-social behaviour particularly when continue later in the evening	The Council lead on some events such as Family Funday and Christmas lights and support others such as the Food Fest. Council work with the CBC Safety Advisory Group on all events to ensure an adequate event management plan and insurance etc. Consideration is given to how attractions and Christmas lights are placed. Police presence is requested for larger events and security is provided for events after 7pm.	Ensure that Management Plans and risk assessments take account of potential for crime. Apply relevant parts of Crime & Disorder Polices to events such as capacity considerations.
Allotments. • Station Road • Steppingley Road.	Few issues but can be minor theft of produce.	All allotment holders have a gate key and a “responsibility to lock up”. Steppingley Road is easier to access as hedge not so secure	Discuss with Safer Central Team and remind allotment holders about locking up. Improve fencing at Steppingley Road.
Market	No reports of theft but can attract adult daytime drinkers.	Council support and promote the weekly market at Village Hall. Provide bin for cans.	Discuss issues with new Market Manager and assist with risk assessment.
Burial Ground at Church Road	Low impact, very little vandalism even though open at all times.	Council maintain to a high standard which discourages vandalism and encourages tidiness and pride.	
Council owned Street Lighting.	Street lighting can deter crime and antisocial behaviour.	Small number of columns not adopted by CBC are maintained by FTC. Council fix “lights out” without delay. Pass on any complaints about CBC lights to the principal council.	Arrange regular inspection by Public Realm team. In the longer term consider viability of upgrading and passing to CBC.
Car Parks	Low impact bur parked cars can always attract crime.		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hub • Rufus Centre 		<p>General carpark serves Town as well as Hub. No CCTV but locked between set times. Lights to be upgraded.</p> <p>Serves mainly only the Centre. It is lit when building is in use. CCTV covers top carpark and all vehicles entering or leaving.</p>	<p>Consider CCTV. Replace barrier separation to Village Hall Carpark.</p>
Bus Shelters	Type & location can affect anti-social behaviour. Some graffiti takes place.	FTC maintain small number of bus shelters.	<p>Consider implications of the location of any new or re-sited shelters. In long term CBC will provide real time information.</p> <p>Inspect regularly and remove graffiti promptly.</p>
Promotion of the Town across various media.	Can impact positively on the image of the Town.	<p>FTC promote town through all channels in accordance with its Communications and Marketing Policy.</p> <p>Take a multi-agency approach to a Community Safety Plan.</p>	Provide more crime prevention and security information advice through all communication channels.
Civic Reception.	Positive impact on the community.	Annual event by Mayor to strengthen community and recognise achievement.	
Other Civic events, including Remembrance Day & Civic Service.	Positive impact on the community. Aware crowds can always attract criminals or anti-social behaviour.	FTC organise and undertake risk assessments. Liaise with CBC and Police as necessary.	
Public Open Space:		FTC maintain parks to a high standard to encourage pride in the park and discourage anti-social behaviour.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flitwick Manor Park. 	Has been some sculpture stolen and lighting fires and people rough sleeping.	Have cleared the area used for rough sleeping. Electric gates to carpark. Liaise	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinksley Road • Playing field & Skatepark at Millennium Park • Station Road (next to Allotments) 	<p>Some drug taking</p> <p>Generally little problem, but some complaints of loud music playing.</p> <p>No significant issues</p>	<p>with Police re prevention of drugs.</p> <p>Again, liaise with Police re prevention of drugs</p> <p>Work with Youth Service provider for Skatepark and influencing users.</p>	<p>There is debate about whether it would be beneficial to remove a hedge which might shield anti-social behaviour. Keep this under review.</p>
<p>Play Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Althorp Close • Beaumont Road • Firtree close • Hinksley Road (including Street Snooker and outdoor Gym equipment) • Millennium Park (inc outdoor Gym) 	<p>Can attract older young people to “hang out” with some potential for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Some issues with children throwing stones resulting in complaints from residents.</p> <p>Some complaints from noise from playing football and playing music</p> <p>Some graffiti</p> <p>Some vandalism has occurred.</p>	<p>FTC maintain all play areas to a high standard to encourage users not to abuse the facilities and discourage anti-social behaviour. Regular inspections for safety, litter & fouling</p> <p>Some CCTV coverage</p>	<p>Ensure some inspections are at busy times to monitor use.</p> <p>Remove graffiti promptly. May be necessary to re-locate Street Snooker.</p> <p>Consider upgrading CCTV.</p>

<p>equipment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naseby Close • Roman Way • Station Road • Trafalgar Drive 			
Other Public Realm Services	<p>Keeping the Town tidy and well maintained has a positive impact on anti-social behaviour, littering and creates pride.</p> <p>Instances of “tagging” graffiti (symbol identifying writing author)</p> <p>Some occurrences of rough sleeping</p>	Continue to “top up” maintenance of public realm	<p>Consider impact when planning work priorities.</p> <p>Remove graffiti as soon as possible. Consider providing a graffiti wall and making known on social media.</p> <p>Liaise with Police and CBC.</p>
Flitwick Papers	Good publicity tool which facilitates information and advice on avoidance of crime and personal safety.	Quarterly newsletter to all homes.	Use to promote community safety
People Project Partnerships.	Help to support and strengthen the community and support vulnerable people. Makes them less susceptible to crime.	<p>FTC support, facilitate and promote.</p> <p>Groups include:</p> <p>Alzheimer’s Support Group.</p> <p>Countryside Volunteer Group.</p> <p>Good Neighbours Volunteer Scheme</p> <p>Asperger’s Group</p> <p>“Bobby Van” for home safety.</p>	Consider joining the “Friends Against Scams”(a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams.)

Monthly Lunch Club for older people and delivery to vulnerable people.	A supportive service which helps strengthen the community. In times of rising costs can help prevent some people in need not turn to crime.	FTC initiates this service.	Consider also supporting "Xtra Food"
IT & Data Protection	Can be vulnerable to scams and fraud.	FTC recognises its legal obligations and has policies and procedures in place to ensure compliance with best practice.	Consider security when undertaking risk assessments and continually review with IT contractor.
Financial Management	Need to consider possible crime	FTC reviews Financial Regulations annually and undertakes financial risk assessment.	Develop financial operating procedures.
Health & Safety	Safe systems of work should consider crime potential.	FTC have health and safety advisers to assist with safe working procedures and safety risk assessments.	Ensure that where possible, crime is designed out.
Grants	Subject of funding could have positive or adverse effects	FTC give grants to support community groups.	Include crime & disorder box to application form, to consider any impact of the proposal.
Planning Application and current Licensing Applications.	Can have considerable effect.	FTC consider implications when making observations to CBC.	
Road improvements	Can have implications	FTC consider when commenting or lobbying	
Mayoral Engagements	Promote Town and support community groups and events. Undertaken in various locations or on-line, impact difficult to assess.		Need to consider security of Mayor and undertake risk assessments. Take advice from Police.
Councillor surgeries	Undertaken in various locations.		Need to consider security of councillors and undertake risk assessments. Take advice from Police.
Working with CBC to deliver town	Impact can depend on use of frontage. May introduce continental type market,	Council have now purchased 3 Station Road and town centre frontage.	Consider CCTV. Incorporate crime considerations at

centre regeneration.			any planning stage.
Youth Hub	Some damage caused at centre. Generally, very positive outcomes.	Operation contracted to 4YP. Includes youth Club night, Asperger's Group and Baby sign language class. Includes awareness of drugs and nuisance issues. The Hub has been offered for the Education of Ukrainian children on two days per week	Aspiration to improve youth services. To help the integration of local refugees which must have positive effect for the future.
Distribution of a range of waste sacks on behalf of CBC.	Useful service which helps to reduce littering and fouling.	.	FTC continues this service.
Flitwick Business Group-	Businesses working together can not only help the local economy but get businesses to work together to deter crime.	Support given by Council to the Group by offering space for meetings.	Expand Business Network and evaluate the benefits of linking with Ampthill. Could progress initiatives with CBC and Police including Shop Watch and Pub Watch and also link with CCTV coverage.
Signage & Notice Boards	Can have positive impact by providing use information but may be vandalised.	FTC provide a number of noticeboards including 3 new ones.	Consider height, type and location Counter vandalism early. Consider trialling digital noticeboards.
Economic Development/ Tourism	A more affluent town helps to reduce crime and vandalism.	FTC have regular meetings with local police.	Take crime reduction in to account when agreeing to new projects.

Flit Valley Walk-leading partners, walk on existing rights of way.	Positive for community and promotion of the Town. Occasionally some vandalism, latterly to signage.	Listed on FTC's assets. Public Realm team maintain, and volunteers also report any damage.	Continue with service as it helps appreciation of the countryside. Include as part of Green Wheel project.
Rufus Centre taken over in 1999. A range of facilities and services, including the new Rendezvous Café.	Hospitality can attract anti-social behaviour and it is important it is well managed.	FTC provides a range of hospitality events such as weddings, celebrations and conferences and also provides facilities for the community. Adopt a high standard of management.	Council is developing a suite of policies and related procedures summarised in Appendix 1 below, which it is believed should be adopted to ensure the Centre is compliant with the industry's best standards. See also recommendation under "Policy" above.
New services	Opportunity to reduce crime by design.	FTC uses as an opportunity to review delivery methods and impact on crime reduction.	
Maulden Road-proposed Country Park.	As with all parks, as it is developed it can attract crime and anti-social behaviour. There have been cases of illegal occupation by travellers.	FTC own the site and intend to develop it as wetland and woodland and to have paths to ensure it is disability friendly. It will encourage biodiversity and be included in the Green Wheel route.	As the plan is drawn up, there will be the opportunity to design out crime.
Town Centre Project-Station Rd	Again, as open space it can attract crime and anti-social behaviour.	FTC intend to keep this site as an open space asset for the future. In the meantime, it will be developed as recreational land and a wildflower meadow. A good standard of maintenance is important.	Again, there is an opportunity to design out crime.

Appendix 1: Summary of Suite of Crime & Disorder policies being developed for the Rufus Centre.

Crime and Disorder Policy.

How to identify situations which could facilitate crime.
Identifying possible criminal activity.
Associated procedures and responsibilities.
Working in partnership, including “Pub Watch” and “Best Bar” None.

Rufus Centre Functions, Events & Bar Policies and Procedures.

Right of refusal and removal.
Preventing drug dealing on the premises.
Adequate security and door staff.
Ensuring people incapable from drink get home safely.
Major incident procedure.

Drug Policy.

Expected standards and counter measures.
High risk areas.

Customer Search Policy

How and when to implement the search policy.
What to search for.
Personal safety of staff carrying out searches.

Alcohol Policy and Code of Practice.

Recognising with the sale of alcohol comes social responsibility. i.e., responsible retailing.

Dispersal Policy.

Steps to disperse customers safely after last orders or at the close of an event.

Proof of Age Policy.

Challenge 25 policy-asking for ID for customers who look under 25.

Capacity Management.

Identifying areas of potential overcrowding and a crowd management plan.

Alcohol Promotion Policy.

Promoting alcohol in a socially responsible way in accordance with the Portman Code.

Crime & Disorder Audit/ Adopted 210622

Review and update regularly.

Drunk & Disorderly Behaviour Policy.

What to look for and internal.

When to step in.

Drinks Service Policy.

What will and will not be sold.

Free drinking water always available.

Glass Collection Policy.

Lost and Found Property.

Noise and Public Nuisance Policy.

External and internal noise control.

Weapons Policy.

Prevention of people with weapons entering the premises.