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Community Confidence Action Research – Irvine Fullarton Final Report



February 2024



OFFICIAL

Acknowledgements

The Project Team would like to thank everyone who participated in this project in Irvine Fullarton by providing their views and attending the various community conversations. We would also like to thank the community organisations and local partners who gave time to support the project and promoted our work in the community. Your willingness to be involved and your honesty during this work has been integral in supporting the continuous improvement of policing in Scotland and helping Police Scotland provide a better service to local communities.

Introduction and context

In 2021 the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the Deputy Chief Constable for Local Policing (Police Scotland) requested research be conducted exploring the relationship between deprivation and confidence in policing in selected areas of Scotland. This stemmed from national research that suggested areas experiencing deprivation are less likely to have confidence in policing.

Delivered by the SPA Strategy and Performance Team and Police Scotland's Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing Division (PPCW), Irvine Fullarton in North Ayrshire was selected using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and information from Police Scotland. The project was also keen to work in areas with local partners who were willing to engage in and support the work.

We used a wide definition of "deprivation" drawing from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. This index uses a range of data relating to income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing. Therefore, there can be many different reasons for an area to be identified as "deprived".

The project aimed to investigate confidence in policing in Irvine Fullarton and work with the community to develop initiatives to try to enhance it. A six-stage model was developed comprising of:



In total these stages took about 15 months to complete. During this time there have been increasing financial pressures on policing in Scotland, coupled with the rising cost of living and its effect on communities, as well as [decreases in confidence](#) in policing nationally. The wider picture on trust and confidence in policing will be explored as part of the final report for the whole project and not in this area report.

It is within this context that the [Community Confidence Action Research Project](#) delivered the aforementioned work in Irvine Fullarton. The following sections provide further detail on the activity undertaken as part of these six stages.

About Irvine Fullarton

Fullarton is an intermediate zone within Irvine. It is a small area in the North Ayrshire Local Authority and is found **the West** region of Scotland.

Fullarton has an estimated population of 2,607 ([NRS, 2021](#)) as of 2021 and is classed as the second most vulnerable community in North Ayrshire in the [Improvement Service Community Outcomes Improvement Database](#).

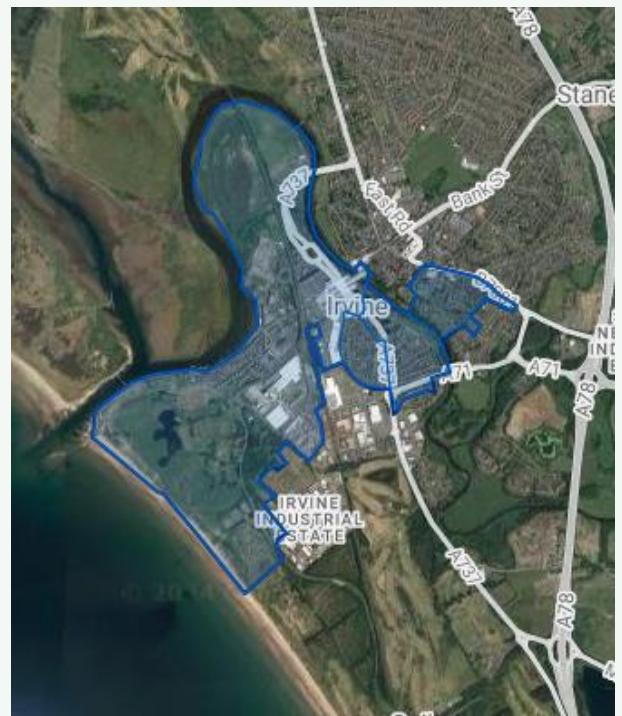
Fullarton is made up of four data zones, with the following ratings on the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation \(SIMD\) 2020](#) (0 equals most deprived and 100 equals least deprived).

Data Zones in Fullarton	SIMD Percentile
S01011230	2
S01011231	5
S01011232	4
S01011229	6

The average percentile ranking across all the data zones in North Ayrshire is 38. This means that the Fullarton community experiences the impacts of deprivation more so than the Local Authority area average. Therefore it is classed as deprived in the SIMD when compared to North Ayrshire.



Above – Location of Fullarton - [Google Maps, 2023](#)



Above – Map of Fullarton - [SIMD 2020](#)

About Fullarton

In 2022 the majority of properties in Fullarton were clustered in council tax bands A, B and C (93%), with 6% in D and E and 1% in F, G and H. In North Ayrshire there is a slightly more even spread of properties across the bands (bands A-C 69%, D-E 23%, and F-H 8%) ([Scottish Government](#)).

Notably in relation to North Ayrshire and Scotland as a whole, Irvine Fullarton has:



Lower educational attainment
([CPOP, 2020/21](#))



A higher proportion living within 500 meters of a derelict site
([ScotPHO, 2021](#))



A higher rate of working age population deprived
([ScotPHO](#))



Lower life expectancy for males and females than Scotland average
([ScotPHO, 2021](#))



A higher percentage of those claiming out of work benefits
([CPOP, 2020/21](#))



A higher rate of children in poverty
([CPOP, 2020/21](#))



A higher rate of early mortality than North Ayrshire
([CPOP, 2020/21](#))

About Fullarton – Crime Data

Group 1: Non-Sexual Crimes of Violence

Violent crime in Irvine Fullarton has increased in the past year however this may be due to changes in recording processes with different crime categories now recorded as Group 1 crimes as the volume of this crime type has increased at both North Ayrshire and national level as well. The rate for this crime type remains almost three times the national average.

Group 3: Acquisitive Crime

Acquisitive crime levels have fluctuated year on year but have now fallen in 2023 to the same level as 2018. This again bucks the North Ayrshire and national levels which have both increased in 2023. Acquisitive crime displays a far higher rate compared to local authority and national levels in each of the past five years with crime regularly four times the national average for this crime type.

Group 5: Other (including drug related)

Similar to the Acquisitive Crime analysis, a similar trend is found regarding drug related crime which is consistently at least three times the national average and has seen an increase in recorded crime in 2023.

Group 2: Sexual Crime

Sexual crime has decreased in Irvine Fullarton in 2023 and is at the lowest level for the past seven years except for the Covid year 2020. This is a different trend compared to the North Ayrshire and national figures which have both seen an increase during 2023.

Group 4: Damage Related Crime

Damage related crime has increased in 2023 within Irvine Fullarton whilst the North Ayrshire and national figures have both shown a decrease whilst both national and North Ayrshire damage related crimes have decreased during the year.

Group 6: Miscellaneous Offences

The same is seen for miscellaneous crime which shows more than double the local and national rate every year. Traffic related offences have reduced to the lowest level in the past 7 years in Irvine Fullarton whereas the North Ayrshire and national levels have both increased in 2023.

Group 7: Road Traffic

Traffic related offences have reduced to the lowest level in the past 7 years in Irvine Fullarton whereas the North Ayrshire and national levels have both increased in 2023.

Source: Police Scotland
Management Information

About Fullarton – Call Demand Data

Encouragingly, the level of calls have predominantly reduced to Irvine Fullarton in 2023.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Antisocial behaviour calls have reduced with the lowest level of calls in the past few years. The 2023 level is still double the local authority and national rate for antisocial behaviour.

Personal Safety

There has, sadly, been an increase in drug related deaths recorded within Irvine Fullarton during 2023. There were, however, no identified suspected suicides recorded by police in the area in 2023.

Traffic

Traffic related calls remain consistently lower in Irvine Fullarton compared to the North Ayrshire and national level.

Crime

Crime related calls also show a similar trend with call levels remaining over double the North Ayrshire average.

Public Welfare

Public welfare calls have remained low and are only slightly higher than the North Ayrshire and national average where call levels at these levels have increased in the past couple of years compared to the local level.

In general crime figures for Irvine Fullarton appear high but this is in the main due to the number of crimes in Irvine Town Centre.

Source: Police Scotland
Management Information

1. Initial Engagement

Engagement with community organisations started in Fullarton in December 2022.

After contacting North Ayrshire Local Authority, council staff helped the project team engage with community groups in the area.

These contacts were essential to the successful running of the project in Fullarton through helping share information with the community, advising on the design of the project surveys and facilitating our community conversations.



2. Community Confidence Survey

Community Confidence Survey

A survey was designed to gather views on the community and policing in Irvine Fullarton. Hosted on the Scottish Police Authority's Citizen Space the survey contained 15 questions and ran from 6th February to 26th March 2023. Questions were made available online via social media channels and on paper via community organisations with a freepost envelope to the SPA office for returns. There was also the option to request another format if required. In total 50 responses were received.

The findings were published in [April 2023](#) and key findings included:

- Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Irvine Fullarton had a sense of community, describing the residents as friendly and down-to-earth making the area a nice place to live. However, some responses recognised how the impacts of deprivation effected the community.
- Regarding confidence in policing, the highest proportion of respondents expressed low levels of confidence in police for 'Tackling antisocial behaviour'. (54%, n=27). The most of respondents scored 'Medium' for their level of confidence in the majority of other indicators.
- In relation to trust in policing, a 'High' degree of trust was observed across two indicators 'To care about people like you' (46%, n=23), and in general (42%, n=21).
- Focusing on police performance, the highest proportion of respondents thought that 'In general' the police are doing 'A very good' or 'somewhat good job' (42%, n=21). However, people thought the police were doing 'A somewhat poor' or 'Very poor job' in relation to 'Tackling anti-social behaviour' (46%, n=23). These results are similar to SPA national polling conducted in Jan/Feb 2023.
- The vast majority of respondents had not noticed any change in local policing engagement in the last 6 months (88%, n=44); nor had their view on local policing changed in the same timeframe (84%, n=42).
- Many responses reflected that they feel there is a lack of visible policing within the area which is said to influence perceptions of policing. Some respondents noted that inaction in relation to anti-social behaviour had also impacted their opinions on policing.

2. Community Confidence Survey

Community Confidence Under 16s Survey

Between the 20th February 2023 and 26th March 2023, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland ran a survey in six local schools with students from the Irvine Fullarton area to gain views on policing from those under the age of 16 as part of the Community Confidence Action Research Project.

Schools were invited to take part and contribute to the design of the questions. A range of questions were made available on paper and via the SPA's Citizen Space platform (with the paper questions simplified in case needed for younger age groups). It was at the discretion of schools on how these questions were made available to pupils. In total 82 responses were received and of these 79 provided consent and were analysed for this report.

Pupils in Irvine Fullarton had a generally positive view of the police; with responses identifying that the police are there to "keep you safe" and to help the community.

A greater level of police focus on addressing drug use, drug crime, and vaping in area was suggested by many respondents.

Tackling anti-social behaviour (including speeding, littering, and graffiti), targeted police presence in the mall and beach, and building better relationships with young people are issues that matter to pupils.

3. Community Conversations

On 25th May 2023, the SPA and Police Scotland held an engagement session with community groups and members of the public in Fullarton

The day focused on the findings of the Community Confidence Survey and aimed to gain insights on how people felt policing in Fullarton could be enhanced via table and room discussions of the following questions:

- Do you recognise Fullarton in these findings and in what ways?
- Is there anything you feel is missing or would want to add?
- What do you think could enhance confidence in policing in Fullarton?

There were approximately 30 attendees over the day including council officers, locally elected members, community group leaders and members of the public.

This was followed up with direct engagement with community groups in the area and their members asking what they felt impacted confidence in policing and how they felt it could be enhanced.

The key themes for policing that emerged from these conversations were:

- **Communication** e.g. different approaches to social media, email newsletters or updates, police attendance at meetings, drop in sessions, pop-up stall etc.
- **Visibility/Contact** e.g. greater visibility of police in the community, on foot or on bikes, visibility outwith incident response etc.
- **Targeted resourcing** e.g. utilise pre-existing relations/networks, community leaders etc.
- **Partnership working** e.g. clearer understanding, relationship building with less paper work, promote services and multi-agency preventative work etc.
- **Young people** e.g. work with young people of all ages (in and outside of school settings), engaging in formative points in life etc.

Those who provided feedback generally found the event valuable and it was great to see police and partners taking on board community feedback to enhance service delivery.

On 26 July 2023 the SPA and Police Scotland held two one-hour sessions to feedback on the initiatives developed in response to the engagement with the community. In total there was about 16 attendees and those who attended were supportive about the 'Tests of Change' that had been proposed.

4. Initiative Implementation

This section outlines small-scale initiatives implemented by local policing and PPCW based on community feedback.

Communication and Engagement

- Improved, friendlier and more personal use of social media, and ongoing discussions to adapt language further.
- Leaflets and emails given out to stakeholders
- A presentation was created by local policing and PPWC colleagues to deliver insights about modern policing to community groups
- Several pop-up centres took place including at Irvine's Asda and XS Stock. More supermarkets arranged, and discussions with Rivergate Mall for a quarterly pop-up stand.
- The sharing of 'Good News' stories – Such as quad & off-road bikes deployment in key areas – impacts have been shared.



Police Scotland North Ayrshire @PSOSNAyrshire
Jun 7

PC Jenner & Steven Bodys of @North_Ayrshire's @TSScot gave a #ShutOutScammers input at @ScottishMSA, Bourtreehill, Irvine today.

Men's Sheds are community spaces for men to connect and create.

The campaign aims to combat a rise in scams, & empowering people to report to police.

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4. Initiative Implementation

Increased Visibility and Targeted Resources

- Two extra Locality officers covering Fullarton
- Two town officers also covered the Fullarton retail zones. All officers have pedal cycle access.
- There was increased capacity of the local Priority Policing Team to target drug dealers.



A large quantity of cocaine was seized. (Image: Web)



By Murray Grayston
Trainee Reporter

@murray_grayston

Share   

0 Comments

A MAN has been cautioned and charged after cocaine with an estimated street value of £50,000 was seized in Lawthorn.



Detectives executed a warrant in Kirk Vennel in Irvine yesterday, Wednesday April 5. (Image: Street View)



By Murray Grayston
Trainee Reporter

@murray_grayston

Share   

0 Comments

A MAN has been arrested in connection with drugs related offences following the search of a property in Irvine.

4. Initiative Implementation

Partnership Working

- Officers supported the efforts of the Irvine Clean Up Crew
- Arrangement with North Ayrshire’s “Police Scotland Youth Volunteers” to provide assistance to the Clean Up Crew volunteers
- Partnership working with North Ayrshire Trading Standards
- Localised campaign to ban under 18 sales of hammers, screwdrivers, and weapons that do not meet the 18+ Offensive Weapons Act criteria
- Police Scotland Ayrshire provided funding for Coastwatch Scotland to purchase a water cooler, patrol bags and sun cream – partnership assistance for #SaferShores.



5. Initiative Implementation

Young People

- Campus Officers continued to engage with secondary schools in the area but also started engaging with primary schools.
- There was also officer attendance at multiple out of school events including at Dumfries House Outdoor Centre
- In response to young people's concerns of under-aged pupils using Nicotine Vapour Products, North Ayrshire Preventions & Interventions Officer liaised with multi-agency partners to produce a schools presentation which explains the laws, dangers environmental impact. The presentation has now been rolled out across all North Ayrshire schools from P7 primary and up.



5. Evaluation

To evaluate the initiatives a three-pronged approach was taken:

- A survey conducted in November 2023 with those 16 and over mirroring one conducted in Feb-March 2023;
- Questions with under 16s in schools mirroring questions from Feb-March 2023; and
- Conversations with community representatives.

The survey contained 15 questions and ran from 31st October 2023 to 27th November 2023

It should be noted that due to small sample sizes and the non-representative nature of the samples the findings of these surveys cannot be generalised to the entire Irvine Fullarton population and should be considered indicative only.

Key findings

16 and Over Survey

- Just over half of respondents were unaware of initiatives undertaken by local policing.
- There was an upward shift in responses for confidence in policing 'in general' from a majority 'medium' to 'high' level between Feb-March 2023 and Oct-Nov 2023.
- Overall, rates of confidence and trust decreased across a range of indicators between Feb-March 2023 and Oct-Nov 2023. This is similar to the downward trend in confidence documented in SPA national polling between July 2022 and 2023.
- Awareness of initiatives seemed to have no impact on confidence or trust in policing.
- While a higher proportion still feel Irvine Fullarton has a sense of community, there was a decrease in those who 'strongly agreed/agreed' and an increase in those who 'disagreed/strongly disagreed' between Feb-March 2023 and Oct-Nov 2023.
- Comments on Irvine Fullarton largely centred around the area having a strong community, anti-social behaviour, mention of resources on physical police visibility, and wider public services response.

5. Evaluation

Community Confidence Evaluation Under 16s Survey

- Overall, most of the pupils who responded appeared to view policing positively with little variation from Feb-March 2023.
- There was limited awareness of initiatives that had been implemented in Irvine Fullarton.
- The most notable change was in relation to having 'a general worry or problem outside of school', with a higher proportion of pupils reporting they would not speak to the police or being unsure of what to do.

Community Reflections

- Stakeholders commended communication approach used by project team in the area; but stakeholders noted that communication methods for public could perhaps have been further diverse to improve engagement.
- In terms of timeframes, feedback was noted that "ideas presented by community were put in place really quickly" but some people highlighted three months is perhaps not enough time for the test of change to be noticed.
- Many stakeholders noted that having events during the day may exclude those who work during this time.
- It was noted by multiple stakeholders that individuals in the community started off interested, however this interest tailed off.
- It was felt that the local police should make more of an effort to publicise the good things they are doing in the community.
- Overall people reported that it was good to see the police listening and responding to community needs.

6. Project Closure and Next Steps

This publication marks the formal closure of the Community Confidence Action Research Project activity in Irvine Fullarton.

Regarding the future of the initiatives implemented by local policing in Irvine Fullarton, these will continue where possible.

At a future date, the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing Division will return to Fullarton to review if there are any longer-term impacts of this work in the community.