

Hampshire

Area Assessment

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oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services

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Hampshire at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Hampshire. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from

No green flags have been identified for Hampshire

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

No red flags have been identified for Hampshire

The local area

Hampshire is the third largest shire county in the UK. It includes five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the New Forest National Park and coastal areas.

More than 1.25 million people live in Hampshire, mostly in urban areas such as Basingstoke, Gosport, the M27 corridor and Winchester. A quarter of the population is aged over 60 and this proportion is expected to grow quickly. Fewer people from black and ethnic minority groups live in Hampshire than in other parts of the south east of England.

House prices are higher than the national average and they vary from area to area. Hampshire is relatively safe and crime is low. Few people are out of work and most residents are healthy. However, there are areas, for example in Gosport and Havant, where skill levels, average earnings and health are lower than the national average.

The next section tells you how Hampshire's public services are doing in each of their local priority areas.

How is Hampshire doing?

Hampshire and its partners work to reduce inequalities in outcomes for residents according to individual need through a focus on specific areas of multiple disadvantage

Quality of life, health, services, opportunity and people's level of achievement is variable across Hampshire. Inequality is often linked to where people live, with residents in some rural areas and in some urban areas where deprivation is relatively high, doing less well. Hampshire partners have improved their understanding and action to tackle this in the last year. There are some important projects in place, like reducing child poverty, ensuring services better meet the needs of people from minority groups and improved support services for children. Health and education services for vulnerable children are improving, by making sure that the most deprived areas receive the greatest level of help. Some councils are making slow progress in making sure that every one has equal access to their services.

Hampshire is a globally competitive environment for business growth and investment, where everyone has the opportunity to develop their skills and play a full part in the county's success

The Hampshire economy is holding up relatively well in the recession, and should do well when the recovery begins. The number of people not in work and claiming benefits is rising, but not quickly. However, too many people in Hampshire do not have the right level of skills to help them get work, and too many 16 to 18 year olds are not in education employment or training. Hampshire councils are helping people cope with the recession, by making sure those in need get benefits more quickly and through many schemes to help businesses and people who are having problems with mortgage payments, debt and job loss.

Hampshire is acclaimed for conserving and using natural resources more efficiently, and for reducing and adapting to the effects of climate change

Hampshire partners work well to reduce the use of natural resources and

protect the environment. Most have targets for reducing energy and water use and for recycling their waste. Hampshire's performance in reducing the need for waste to go into landfill sites is one of the best in the country. The amount of rubbish households produce is reducing and more waste is recycled.

Hampshire provides excellent opportunities for children and young people

Most children and young people in Hampshire get good results at school, but children in care do not do as well as they should. Partners are improving the results for children from poorer backgrounds and those with special educational needs. But there is more to do to make sure that all children and young people get the best they could from their education. Hampshire partners are aware of the issues and are working together, including through locally organised children's partnerships, to improve the situation.

Most children and young people in Hampshire are healthy. Hampshire's partners work with children to encourage healthy eating, and provide extra support for children who are overweight. Young people with mental health problems benefit from a relatively good and improving service. Arrangements to help children and young people stay safe are good. The number of teenage pregnancies is fairly low, but not reducing quickly enough in some areas.

Hampshire's communities are cohesive and inclusive, and vulnerable people are safeguarded

The number of people aged over 65 in the county is expected to grow to nearly a third of the population by 2017, and organisations are looking at future accommodation and transport needs, and projects to try to prevent older people feeling isolated. Hampshire care services for vulnerable people are helping people get services more suited to their needs and to help them stay independent. Hampshire's public sector partners are particularly strong in working with younger people to better understand what they need.

Residents in Hampshire generally get on well together and treat each other with respect. Hampshire and its partners support many good neighbourhood projects and events. Work to address rural access issues in Hampshire is under way but there is no overall plan which all the organisations serving rural communities are signed up to. This is important in making sure that all people can easily access services. The use of public transport is low in Hampshire. Some rural bus services are improving but access to transport is still a problem for people who live in more isolated parts of the county.

Hampshire's communities feel safe and

can expect not to suffer violence or anti-social behaviour, especially that caused by alcohol and drug misuse

Hampshire is a safe place to live and people feel safe. Crime levels - including personal crime, arson and criminal damage - are low and reducing. The police and partners have been especially successful in tackling anti social behaviour, stopping burglaries and in neighborhood policing work. However, violent crime is still too high, there are too many minor assaults, incidents of domestic abuse and alcohol related anti social behaviour. Community safety partners have plans, and actions are in place, to improve these areas.

Partners have been very successful at improving road safety and reducing casualties and accidents. Initiatives such as the 'Village 30' scheme are reducing traffic speed. The number of people injured in fires reduced by almost 40 per cent last year. Partners also work well together to try to help people with life-threatening medical emergencies as quickly as possible before they get to hospital.

Hampshire's environment and cultural heritage are enjoyed and celebrated

Hampshire is a good place to live. The natural environment, national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty and coastline are well maintained. Hampshire is a successful tourist destination, and this generates £2.72 billion to the local economy. People are generally satisfied with how clean and tidy village and rural areas are kept, although a minority of towns and built up areas are not kept that well.

Partners work well together, and many district councils have invested in improving local cultural facilities. Lots of people in Hampshire use art galleries, theatres, museums and libraries.

Hampshire's residents can make choices to improve their health and well being

Generally people in Hampshire, including older people, are healthy and are getting healthier. But some parts of the county people's health is less good and life expectancy varies by as much as eight years. Partners are making the important links between health, and services such as housing, transport and leisure to support health improvements. Waiting times for hospital treatment are meeting or beating national targets, and most people in Hampshire are pleased with GP services. But people in rural areas wait longer for an ambulance than in neighbouring urban areas. This is a key issue and our 2010 area assessment will report on progress in this.

Hampshire partners have good focus on helping to improve the mental health

and wellbeing of local residents, including by reducing reliance on medication. People with mental health problems and learning difficulties are also supported to eat well and be physically active. However, partners are not currently meeting their aims to reduce the number of people, especially older people, who are admitted to hospitals as an emergency.

Hampshire's residents receive excellent public services and value for money

Most public service partners provide good services in Hampshire and all have an increasing focus on value for money.

Hampshire health services and partners need to do more to make sure that the money available goes as far as possible in meeting people's health needs. In some parts of the county, significant changes in the delivery of health services are being planned and these need to be seen through to improve value for money. This is a key issue and our 2010 area assessment will report on progress in this.

Sharing the management and delivery of public services to improve value for money is developing slowly, but partners have been slow to take the larger scale opportunities, for example by sharing waste collection arrangements. This will be increasingly important as financial pressure increases in the coming years. This is a key issue and our 2010 area assessment will report on progress in this.

Infrastructure and services are developed to support economic and housing growth while protecting the environment and improving quality of life

Most Hampshire districts are working to improve their local economies despite the recession. Major development schemes are still being built, which will increase job and business opportunities. The current downturn in the economy is likely to result in too few new homes being built in the next few years to meet the high and increasing demand, but longer term targets should be achieved.

Partners are making progress in dealing with traffic issues, but this remains a difficult challenge and a barrier to attracting new businesses and people to some areas. The condition of Hampshire roads has improved.

Social and affordable housing needs are met, including provision to support rural communities

The need for more social and affordable housing is significant in Hampshire and progress on the delivery of affordable housing, including in rural areas, is mixed. Most districts have either met or beaten their target for completing affordable homes in the past year, but some have not. Partners have recently agreed arrangements for more affordable homes, including some in rural areas.

Homelessness is reducing, and fewer people are being put in temporary accommodation in most districts. Housing partners work well together to improve the quality of life for vulnerable people. New 'extra-care' homes have been provided to give older and vulnerable people support to live more independently.

About Hampshire

A recent survey shows that in Hampshire 86 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is broadly the same as the average for similar areas and higher than the national average of 81 per cent.

Hampshire is the third largest shire county in the UK. It includes five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the New Forest National Park and coastal areas. More than 1.25 million people live in Hampshire, mostly in urban areas such as Basingstoke, Gosport, and Winchester. The cities of Southampton and Portsmouth have their own local government structures and local services. But they have a big effect on transport, employment, housing and economic needs and deliver some services along side and in partnership with other Hampshire partners.

A quarter of the population is aged over 60 and this proportion is expected to grow quickly. Fewer people from black and ethnic minority groups live in Hampshire than in other parts of the south east of England.

The area is mainly prosperous and fewer people are out of work than in other parts of the south east of England. Most young people achieve good exam results. However, there are areas, such as Gosport and Havant, where skill levels, average earnings and employment rates are below those for the rest of the county. House prices are higher than the national average and they vary from area to area.

Hampshire is relatively safe and crime is low. Most people are healthy and they take more exercise than the average for England, but the picture and life expectancy varies across the county. Fewer people are obese than the national average. Relatively few teenagers get pregnant in Hampshire but numbers have risen in some areas, including in Andover and in some parts of Winchester.

In Hampshire, public service organisations include the county council, 11 district councils, 251 parish and town councils, the police, probation, fire and rescue and health services. These organisations work in partnership on important issues, such as community safety, children and young people, the economy and health together with other partners such as charities, business and community groups. The Hampshire Senate and local strategic

partnerships aim to pull together representatives of these and other key organisations to tackle local issues. Public service partners have agreed the following priorities for the area in a county wide Sustainable Community Strategy:

Hampshire is a globally competitive environment for business growth and investment, where everyone has the opportunity to develop their skills and play a full part in the county's success.

Hampshire provides excellent opportunities for children and young people.

Infrastructure and services are developed to support economic and housing growth whilst protecting the environment and quality of life.

Social and affordable housing needs are met, including provision to support rural communities.

Hampshire's communities are cohesive and inclusive, and vulnerable people are safeguarded.

Hampshire and its partners work to reduce inequalities in outcomes for residents according to individual need and through a focus on specific areas of multiple disadvantage.

Hampshire's communities can feel safe and can expect not to suffer violence or anti-social behaviour.

Hampshire's residents can make choices to improve their health and wellbeing.

Hampshire's environment and cultural heritage are enjoyed and celebrated.

Hampshire is acclaimed for conserving and using natural resources more efficiently, and for reducing and adapting to the effects of climate change.

Hampshire's residents receive excellent public services and value for money.

How well do priorities for Hampshire express community needs and aspirations?

Hampshire is large with lots of different communities. People need different types of services in built up urban areas to those in isolated rural areas. This is a key challenge in providing services in Hampshire. Individual partners understand these differences and make sure that services are tailored to suit in most areas. Hampshire's public sector partners are particularly strong in engaging younger people and in making sure they understand older people's needs.

Public service partners in Hampshire have a good knowledge about the communities they serve and a clear understanding of what local people want and need. They have worked together through the Local Strategic

Partnerships to set Local Area Agreement (LAA) priorities and challenging targets to improve the area and the quality of life for local people. These priorities are clearly based on a good understanding of local needs.

Public service partners in Hampshire individually collect and use a large amount of information about local people and services. However, results from these consultations are not well co-ordinated across all public services. This may result in duplication and missed information between the various partners. Partners could use the information collected by the voluntary sector more effectively to help make decisions about services.

Good consultation by most Hampshire partners with local people is used effectively to improve services. There are some gaps but actions are in place to address these. Targeted consultation with residents from minority groups such as black and minority ethnic and gypsy and traveller communities is under-developed in some areas. In Hampshire, the developing central 'observatory' for coordinating information, and county wide groups such as the Hampshire Community Safety Partnership and the Hampshire Senate are beginning to provide a good picture of what local people need and how services measure up. Hampshire Police continues to improve the way it communicates and works with local people to develop a better joint understanding of local communities.

Health services in Hampshire have assessed the needs of residents, and in particular how health varies across the county. This has helped partners to identify priorities, and work together to make improvements for people with the poorest health. Key public service organisations in Hampshire - for example county and district councils, police and the fire and rescue service - understand that they have an important part to play in helping people to be healthier.

Partners in Hampshire are focused on people's individual needs, and have a clear vision of how to continually improve services. The Hampshire 'Getting Personal' approach allows people who need social care to make important choices about how that care is delivered. The health and social care services which will be needed in the future by an ageing population are being planned for. This also includes planning what transport, housing, leisure and cultural pursuits will be needed for older people. The health needs of people with learning disabilities are now better understood.

Partners make sure they ask children and young people what they think about the services they receive, and how well their needs are met. Councils are also working in partnership to meet the needs of ethnic minority people to reduce the likelihood of isolation and disadvantage. Partners are now working together to properly assess and meet the health needs of rural communities.

All partners offer residents the opportunity to get involved in local decisions about services. There are many examples of community groups influencing decisions to make sure that services meet their needs. This includes Hampshire Action Teams, targeted consultation to ensure that adult and children's services meet local needs and the well structured and effective local groups set up in Eastleigh and Havant. Voluntary organisations report they have good ability to influence Hampshire's public services. Some councils are still at the early stages of working with community groups.

The majority of Hampshire's residents who responded to a survey said that they do not feel they have been involved in local decision making in the last year. Participation rates are low when compared to the rest of the south east and vary across Hampshire. For example, the proportion of residents who say they are participating in decision making in Winchester is almost double that in Fareham. In more than half of Hampshire districts, residents do not believe that their views will influence local decisions. Increasing the level of participation would help services to better understand and meet local needs.

Hampshire and its partners work to reduce inequalities in outcomes for residents according to individual need through a focus on specific areas of multiple disadvantage

People's quality of life, how healthy they are, how well children do at school and what opportunities people have, vary across Hampshire. Inequality is often linked to where people live, with residents in some rural areas and in some urban areas where deprivation is relatively high, doing less well. Hampshire partners have improved their understanding and action to tackle this in the last year. Councils are giving good support to help the most vulnerable people through the current recession by making sure they get the benefits they need quickly. Specific projects are underway to work with and better serve people from minority groups. However, some councils are making slow progress in ensuring that services are delivered in a fair and equal way, for example, by doing assessments of services to understand what they are like for different parts of the population. This is a risk to ensuring that the needs of all Hampshire residents are fully met.

In some services there is a good focus on people who may be more vulnerable or disadvantaged. For example there are plans in place to make children's education achievement more equal, and better for everyone. Partners know the specific children and areas that they need to work with, and what their needs are. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) states it will make improvements for the poorest and most vulnerable. This is helping to make sure that the most deprived areas receive the greatest level of services. The CYPP also commits to working with health partners to improve the health and wellbeing of children in care, through better use of health care and advice, and dental care. The county council has developed a support service for children in care so that when they have formal meetings and reviews, they are helped to speak up for themselves. Work in Hampshire's children's centres is helping to address family poverty, by offering support to unemployed parents who are considering training or finding employment. This is an important step in helping lift children out of poverty.

An area for further improvement is making sure people who are homeless make use of their local GP services. Winchester's Trinity Centre is one of three projects across Hampshire providing specific health services for homeless people. National figures show that 'rough sleepers' have an estimated

average life expectancy of just 42 years, and are four times more likely to die from unnatural causes, for example accidents, assaults, murders, drugs or alcohol poisoning. There may be some homeless people who do not register with councils for housing, and so it is difficult to know what the real need is. The primary care trust is looking at ways of more effectively helping the homeless improve their health.

Hampshire is a globally competitive environment for business growth and investment, where everyone has the opportunity to develop their skills and play a full part in the county's success

The Hampshire economy is holding up relatively well in the recession. In Hampshire the number of people not in work and claiming benefits is rising but not as much as most of the rest of the country. Unemployment in Hampshire is slightly below the regional average and well below the national figure.

Too many people in Hampshire do not have the right level of skills to help them get work. In Hampshire 25 per cent of people of working age have qualifications no higher than NVQ Level 1. Although this is about average nationally, it is low for a relatively affluent area like Hampshire and is a barrier to the growth of the local economy. Partners have set challenging targets and are working well together to improve skills levels, but progress is slow. Skill and qualification levels vary across the area, and are noticeably lower in parts of the south of the county. This gap in skills makes it more difficult for Hampshire people to find work both during the recession and in the future recovery.

Too many of Hampshire's 16 to 18 year olds are not in education, employment or training - more than six per cent. Although improving, there are more young people leaving care who are not in education or employment in Hampshire than in similar areas. Each young person known not to be in education employment or training is supported, and many local and national schemes such as apprenticeships and job fairs are used to give young people more opportunities. However, Hampshire has a poor record of knowing what some young people are doing. In 2008 more than one in six of its 16 to 18 year olds was classed as 'activity unknown'. The former South Central Connexions service transferred to Hampshire County Council in April 2008, and knowledge about these young people has now improved. Partners aim to reduce the overall number of people who are not in education, employment or training by half by 2011 but although reducing, it is unlikely that this target will be met. Younger people are affected by this recession and it is important, especially for vulnerable groups, that they are helped to prepare for work now and have the skills for employment in the future.

Hampshire councils are helping people cope with the recession. Schemes are modest in terms of the amount of money available, but all are well designed,

timely and appropriate to needs. Most district councils have increased the number of staff working to help people in need get benefits more quickly as demand increases. An economic action group is focusing on the recession and has, for example, developed schemes to help people keep up their mortgage payments, prevent people becoming homeless, and offer advice in dealing with debt and job loss. People in Rushmoor, for example, have access to good information and help and in East Hampshire a local Credit Union is helping people in most financial need.

Help for businesses is widespread and well targeted. This includes funding from councils to support workers and help Hampshire's independent businesses develop new opportunities. Local produce is promoted and used - for example in school meals - and schemes such as 'Brand New Forest' are successfully improving local trade.

The future prospects for the Hampshire economy, when the recovery begins, are better than in some other areas of the country. Partnership working in economic development is good and improving in Hampshire. The Hampshire Economic Partnership (HEP) is well organised and increasingly influential. The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) has become a major influence in the south of the county in economic development. The Basingstoke Diamond for economic growth is developing and has a growing influence.

Hampshire is acclaimed for conserving and using natural resources more efficiently, and for reducing and adapting to the effects of climate change

The area's commitment to managing its natural resources is high. Improving the use of natural resources and protecting the environment is a stated priority in most Hampshire councils. Most have targets for reducing energy and water use and recycling their own waste. Eastleigh Borough Council is very strong and is a centre for excellence in 'tackling climate change' and New Forest District Council leads its community well in this and in reducing its own carbon usage. Most councils are at the early stages of improving their understanding and measuring their use of natural resources now so they can track future improvement.

The county council, together with its district council partners in the Hampshire Project Integra waste management partnership, performs very well in reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and in increasing recycling. This long established partnership has made significant innovative investment to reduce landfill. Its investment in three new incinerators is producing enough energy for 50,000 houses with the potential for producing combined heat and power in the future. The proportion of waste going into landfill is low in Hampshire (eighth lowest in the country, and the best performing county in the UK). Hampshire has a high average recycling and composting rate (ranked 38th out of 150 councils) and is reducing the amount of household waste collected. This is a strong performance, the challenge now is to bring the below average performers, such as Basingstoke and Gosport up to the level of

the best and beyond, such as Eastleigh and Fareham.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue is reducing the effect of fires and other emergency incidents on the environment as well as reducing its own carbon footprint. It has set targets to reduce gas, electricity and water use and to increase recycling and reduce car use. Hampshire Police is working with key partners and other organisations to lessen the impact of climate change and to reduce carbon emissions both in offices and for its vehicles. Health services in Hampshire are looking at how they can help improve the environment. They have set themselves targets and developed plans to be more efficient in the way they use energy. For example, health services are reducing the need for patients and staff to travel by car by ensuring clinics are close to public transport. New buildings are being designed to make better use of energy.

Some partners in Hampshire are very ambitious in their efforts to tackle environmental sustainability. The county council is aiming to be a climate change centre of excellence and is one of only a handful of councils in the country using the Aalborg international standard to measure and improve its performance in this. Some Hampshire organisations consider the environmental impact of buying goods and services. For example the county and district councils have a good track record of using ethical, fair trade and local suppliers of goods. This is all positive and a good indication that things are likely to improve in this area.

Hampshire provides excellent opportunities for children and young people

Most children and young people in Hampshire achieve good results at school and have a good start in life. There is a gap in attainment between these and children whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. This gap is closing in some areas, but the picture is different for different groups. For example children in care do not do as well as they should in school and too many young people who have been in care are not in work, education or training. The county council is improving the results for children and young people with special educational needs and those from poorer backgrounds. Hampshire's voluntary sector plays a major part in this. There is still more to do to make sure that all children and young people get the best they could from their education. Hampshire partners are aware of the issues and are working together, including through locally organised children's partnerships, to improve the situation. This is a key area for improvement in Hampshire and our 2010 area assessment will report progress in this.

Most children and young people in Hampshire are healthy. Hampshire has relatively low levels of children who die as infants, obese children, and children with tooth decay. Although the overall numbers of teenagers who become pregnant is fairly low, it is not reducing quickly enough to meet nationally set targets. Partners have worked together to tackle this through education, information and sexual health support for teenagers. There has been good progress in some districts, but Gosport has persistently high rates. Sexual health services across the county vary in quality and a recent review found that Hampshire's approach to improving sexual health is not well coordinated. The Hampshire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership has a plan in place to improve this. Our 2010 area assessment will report progress in this.

Across Hampshire a high percentage of women continue to smoke in pregnancy compared to those in other parts of the country. Efforts to improve this are having mixed results, and partners understand this is an area where more work is needed.

Hampshire's partners are developing 'Healthy Schools', which have a focus on good mental and physical health for children and young people. All schools are part of a healthy eating scheme, and there is good support in areas where there are more obese children. Test Valley Borough Council leads for Hampshire councils in work with the primary care trust to reduce childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating in schools. The primary care trust and its partners also have strong links with children's centres and with children who have physical and learning disabilities to help them improve their health.

Children and adolescents with mental health problems benefit from a relatively good and improving service, although it isn't always as easy as it should be for young people to access the service. Further improvement is a key priority, and partners are also working to improve support for young people and their families when they move between children's and adult's mental health services.

Arrangements to help children and young people stay safe are good in almost all children's services and settings. The number of children killed or seriously injured on the roads has fallen markedly since 2005. Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries have reduced since 2006 and are below the national average. In line with national developments, Hampshire has looked at how it safeguards children and young people and further improvements are planned. A recent inspection of child protection arrangements shows that county council staff have a good understanding of when to refer children and young people who need specialist help and a particularly effective service is provided in emergencies. Inspectors also identified a number of areas for development and the need for the council to review the high caseloads in one part of the county.

Hampshire's communities are cohesive and inclusive, and vulnerable people are safeguarded

Residents in Hampshire generally get on well together and treat each other with respect. Hampshire and its partners work well to support this through good neighbourhood based initiatives in many areas. This includes the annual MELA world music and cultural event in Eastleigh, and the community respect and environment weeks (CREW) in Test Valley. In Winchester the council is working with the local university and residents to help students to integrate with the local community, and Rushmoor is working well to meet the needs of the growing numbers of Nepalese families in the area.

The voluntary and community sector in Hampshire is active and well organised. There are between 8-10,000 community and voluntary sector organisations in the county. Hampshire Voluntary Sector Consortium (HVSC) is

the network which supports these organisations in areas including health, social care and children's services. All public sector partners in Hampshire are signed up to a target to increase the number of people who volunteer their time and energy, and to making sure that the voluntary sector thrives. Although this is difficult to measure, progress is being made.

In line with the generally good health of people in Hampshire, people aged over 65 are more healthy than in most other parts of the country. There are relatively low levels of deprivation among Hampshire's older people. Partners are changing the way adult social care is delivered for different individuals by developing an approach called 'Getting Personal'. This is based on the needs of each user and sometimes their carers as well. The approach is making a difference to the quality of care and support people get by putting people first and improving choice. The voluntary sector is working with the county council to better understand the kind of services people will need in the future.

The 'Getting Personal' approach now includes a wide ranging offer of help and advice for every person with care and support needs, regardless of their means, and an aim to provide free 'crisis' care for up to eight weeks for people who might otherwise have to go to hospital. People are also taking part in a trial in Basingstoke where 240 local service users have commented on how they could be more involved in the design of their care packages so that their individual needs are properly met. The results of this work will be used to improve services across Hampshire.

Hampshire partners are focusing on the needs of an ageing population and have made good progress in most areas. The number of people aged over 65 is expected to grow to nearly a third of the population by 2017, and organisations are thinking about what this will mean to public services. County, district, town and parish councils are working with health services, the police and the voluntary sector to develop plans of action. This includes reviews of accommodation and transport needs, and projects to try to prevent older people feeling isolated. The OPAL project - Older People's Area Link - is a well used free phone service where older people can find out about befriending services and transport options, and where their nearest neighbourhood care group is (there are 112 across the county). The OPAL helpline is staffed by older volunteers.

Councils, health services and the voluntary sector are working together to try to prevent older people experiencing falls. Research shows that increasing physical activity helps people avoid accidental falls, advice and support is being offered on what exercises older people should be doing.

Work to address rural access issues in Hampshire is under way but is not well co-ordinated. The county council has a rural plan to help it deliver its own services and work is in progress to make sure the needs of people disadvantaged by rural isolation are understood, so they can be addressed. Other partners are developing their own plans. While there are some good examples of partners working together to meet the needs of rural communities - for instance through a mobile Children's Centre which visits rural villages - there is no overall plan which all the organisations serving rural communities are signed up to. The result is a gap in joined up planning which may lead to differences in how easy it is for people to benefit from services. However there are some good examples of public services serving rural communities. These include the county council improving slow Broadband

services in isolated areas, and improved community transport schemes in some areas.

For those in most need, transport services are provided, but transport to get young people in isolated areas to skills training and education venues, for example, is still a problem. Hampshire is affluent with high car ownership and use; less than one in six people use buses, so things are difficult for people who do not have use of a car. The county council provides a range of transport schemes especially for older people and to get people to and from hospital, and for home to school transport. Hampshire has made good progress in some areas in improving bus services. Quality bus partnerships are in place and the £33 million A3 bus corridor north of Portsmouth has been completed and has resulted in greater passenger numbers. In North Hampshire the Blackwater Valley Quality Bus Partnership service between Camberley and Aldershot is growing in use.

Hampshire's communities feel safe and can expect not to suffer violence or anti-social behaviour, especially that caused by alcohol and drug misuse

Hampshire is a safe place to live. Crime levels are low and are reducing for most types of crime. The risk of personal crime is low and partners are reducing arson, criminal damage and the number of young people who go into the Youth Justice System for the first time. Neighbourhood policing is making a real difference in improving safety in local communities. Safer neighbourhood teams, working with partners, are tackling problems that concern local people, especially anti-social behaviour. For example, in reducing bin fires in Gosport, car fires in Havant and the use of CCTV to catch fly tippers in Rushmoor. Anti-social behaviour in areas such as Bishop's Waltham have reduced with the introduction of more high visibility patrols working with Hampshire County Council Accredited Community Safety Officers. Hampshire Police service has run a successful anti-social behaviour campaign over the summer which has made big reductions in anti-social behaviour in local communities. For example, in Aldershot it has reduced by 20 per cent.

People in Hampshire have fewer concerns about anti-social behaviour than in other similar areas. They believe that the police and other public services are successful in tackling anti-social behaviour and crime to help create neighbourhoods that are and feel safe. Partners are providing good opportunities for young people to get advice and support and take part in free activities especially over the summer months when anti-social behaviour tends to be greater.

Partners have been successful in improving road safety and reducing casualties and accidents. This is an area of particularly strong performance in Hampshire. Where it has been implemented, the 'Village 30' initiative is reducing traffic speed in villages by up to 10 per cent. A '20 is Plenty' scheme has been introduced with local schools and this is helping drivers to get the message to slow down near schools. These are positive schemes which are

only introduced where there is a definite need and when local people choose it for their area.

The police with partners have been especially successful in reducing the number of burglaries. However, there are still too many minor assaults and partners are focusing on reducing these and specifically the number of people who are victims of domestic abuse. Although serious violent crime is still too high, the police have improved in resolving these. Community safety partners have plans, and actions are in place, to improve these areas. Re-offending by young people in Hampshire is higher than in similar areas, but this is improving.

Hampshire partners have developed and funded a '10 point' plan to reduce the harm that alcohol causes, in terms of health, safety and crime. As is typical across the country, on Friday and Saturday nights in Hampshire up to three quarters of all attendances at Accident and Emergency departments are as a result of alcohol. Alcohol accounts for almost half of all violent crime. Health, police, council and voluntary sector partners are working closely to put in place information, education and front line services, with a focus on prevention. Alcohol Exclusion Zones such as in Winchester City Centre are helping to tackle the problem of drinking in public places.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service works well to protect local people. The number of people who have been injured in fires has reduced over the past five years, with almost 40 per cent fewer last year. It is continuing to reduce the number of incidents that could be prevented, especially in rural areas. Although there was a rise in the number of deaths during 2008-2009, overall the number has fallen in the last five years. Over the last four years it has contacted 87,000 people across Hampshire about visiting their homes to carry out a fire-safety check and did 20,000 home fire safety visits. The number of accidental fires has reduced by a quarter over the last year.

Partnership working to make communities safer is good and improving in Hampshire. For example, the Fire and Rescue Service has established an effective Arson Task Force with Hampshire Police. This joint working has improved the investigation and detection of deliberate fires resulting in the successful conviction of 26 per cent of offenders. Arson reduced by nearly a quarter last year. It works well with the ambulance service to operate 'co-responder' schemes, where firefighters provide vital medical care at life-threatening medical emergencies until an ambulance arrives, helping to increase patients' chances of survival.

District community safety partnerships and the work of all district councils together with local police and support officers are effective in keeping crime and antisocial behaviour low. A county wide community safety group is now working well to coordinate crime reduction and safety activity across the county.

Hampshire's environment and cultural heritage are enjoyed and celebrated

Hampshire has a well kept, rich and diverse natural environment. The area has many high quality parks, open spaces and the rural natural environment is

good. This includes national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty, coastline and historic buildings. The area is well kept and most district councils perform well with high public satisfaction in street cleaning and in maintaining the environment and open public spaces. People are generally satisfied with how clean and tidy village and rural areas are kept, although a minority of towns and built up areas are not kept that well. Levels of graffiti, fly tipping, fly posting and abandoned vehicles are too high in some areas.

Partners provide varied, well maintained and popular leisure facilities. This wide range of options means that most residents will find something to suit their needs. All districts encourage health improvement through participation in physical activity using promotional events, taster sessions and reduced fees for people in most need. Many districts have invested in improving local cultural and leisure facilities, although planned schemes to improve leisure facilities in Gosport have not yet been delivered.

Cultural facilities are good and improving. High numbers of people use arts venues, theatres, museums and libraries across the county. More Hampshire people get involved in the arts than the national average. Local libraries are being improved and new Discovery Centres are attracting more people to use them. Events such as 'Hog the Limelight' - an annual programme of arts in villages - are being targeted toward areas of most need. Cultural events are effectively promoted to a wider audience and people who need to can get discounts and special offers.

Hampshire is a popular tourist destination and its natural environment is an important part of what it has to offer tourists. Hampshire is the most visited county in the south east, generating £2.72 billion to local economy and eight per cent of its employment. Partners work well together to protect this asset through effective coastal and heath-land management plans. Many events are held across Hampshire to increase the number of visitors, such as the Winchester Hat Fair, the 'Big Day Out' in Gosport, and popular music and cultural festivals in many districts. These events are well supported by local partners.

The area covers much of the existing New Forest National Park and part of a new South Downs National Park Authority (NPA) being set up in 2010 to go live in April 2011. This NPA area will cover 15 different councils across the region. It is important that the councils and the NPAs work and plan together to serve local people, businesses and visitors and to maintain the environment and culture of the area.

Hampshire's residents can make choices to improve their health and well being

People in Hampshire are healthy compared with the national average. There are fewer adults in Hampshire who smoke, binge drink, are physically inactive. There are also fewer who are obese, misuse drugs, stay in hospital because of alcohol misuse, are diagnosed with diabetes or tuberculosis, or die early from heart disease, stroke or cancer. The overall picture of Hampshire though hides the differences in how healthy people are depending to a large extent on where they live. For example, although the Hampshire wide target for people

who have quit smoking has been achieved, Rushmoor, Gosport and Havant failed to meet it. This means that there remains a gap between the health of those living in more deprived areas compared to others. Life expectancy within Hampshire varies, for example, men in Hart have the best and Gosport the worst life expectancy, with as much as eight years difference depending on location.

Partners are working closely together to help improve the health and wellbeing for everyone in Hampshire, but particularly for those in most need. Three district councils in Hampshire have joined with the primary care trust to put in place staff to work locally to improve people's health. Another good example of joined up working is the project - focussed on Rushmoor, Havant and Gosport - to reduce the number of people having heart attacks and strokes by reducing smoking and targeting obesity. The voluntary sector is playing a big part in this project. Important links are being made between health and other public service areas such as housing, transport and leisure services, recognising that all public services need to support improvements in people's health.

Waiting times for treatment at hospitals in Hampshire meet or beat national targets. Most people in Hampshire are pleased with the service they received from doctors and nurses in GP practices, and have high levels in confidence in the service. The service 'out of hours' in Hampshire meets patients' needs generally better than the national picture reflects.

People in rural parts of Hampshire who make an emergency call for an ambulance wait longer for one to arrive than in neighbouring areas or nationally. However, things are improving. The ambulance service is working with others to improve the response to a life threatening medical emergency. Its 'co-responder' project, where either a trained volunteer or firefighter from the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service will get to the patient ahead of the ambulance to start treatment, has been successful. The ambulance service has been able to demonstrate that patients who receive this service are not disadvantaged and receive high quality treatment. This is now being rolled out in more areas. Our 2010 area assessment will report progress in this.

Hampshire has a strong commitment to improving the mental health and wellbeing of local residents. The county council and primary care trust are working together to ensure good and improved mental health services and where possible avoid the need for medication. People with mental health problems and learning difficulties are also being helped to live healthier lives, through advice on eating well and being physically active.

Partners are not currently meeting their aims to reduce the number of people admitted to acute hospitals as an emergency. More people - and particularly older people - have to go to hospital because of an illness or an accident rather than be treated at home or in the community, than health services had planned for. There are actions underway to improve this, including GPs being alerted when an ambulance is called by one of their patients, so that they can help assess what the best treatment would be. This approach will soon be rolled out across Hampshire. The 'extra-care' homes being built in Hampshire help to keep people out of hospital by providing the support they need to be able to stay at home for as long as possible. Hampshire's 'Getting Personal' model of care for adults aims to provide free care in a crisis, so that there is less delay when people need help. Another important development is the use

of a 'trigger tool' which is a list of things for visitors to a frail or older person's home - for example 'meals on wheels' staff - to look out for, in case it's a sign that the person isn't coping very well. Help is then offered quickly to avoid things getting worse. The Hampshire Community Innovations Partnerships (CIP) effectively supports older people who are gradually becoming vulnerable and at risk of losing their independence, but who do not yet qualify for services.

Hampshire's residents receive excellent public services and value for money

Public service partners provide good services in Hampshire and all have an increasing focus on value for money. Council finances are generally well managed; most have good records in keeping council tax rises low and in making savings to make sure that they have the money to deliver services over the shorter term. All Hampshire councils are affected by the recession and report falling income.

The efficiency of health services in Hampshire is improving but partners need to do more now and in the future to make sure that the money available goes as far as possible in meeting people's health needs. In some parts of the county, significant changes in the delivery of health services are being planned and these need to be seen through. A key issue is that people who could be looked after at home or in their local community are still going into hospital for treatment, which does not make the best or most efficient use of local services, and can be less good for the patient. There are examples of good partnership to make people healthier but health and other partners still need to improve how they work together to make changes which are in the best interests of the patient and the public. This is a key issue for improvement in Hampshire and our 2010 area assessment will report progress in this.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service manages its resources well. It keeps within its budget and uses good financial management, innovation and extensive partnership working. It is providing good value for money. Financial management is robust in Hampshire Police. Money is targeted at high priority areas, such as Neighbourhood Policing and lower performing areas such as violent crime. Its costs are in line with the performance it achieves and demonstrate value for money.

Health and social care services are working well together to improve the experience of patients as they leave hospital. The hospitals which most Hampshire residents attend now have joint teams to make the process smoother when people are ready to go home. This is not only good for the patient but by preventing duplication it also saves money.

The primary care trust, mental health trust, county and district councils are working together to make sure that money spent on mental health services is good value. Partners are developing new ways to measure how effective services are, so that patients get the best quality and most cost effective treatments. Voluntary and community based organisations in Hampshire deliver a lot of support to residents, in particular in terms of care to vulnerable people, and in many cases this is funded by public bodies. Health and social

care organisations benefit not only from the value this provides, but also the local knowledge and dedication which volunteers bring.

Sharing the management and delivery of services to improve value for money is developing in Hampshire. There are examples of good joint working, shared management and smaller scale sharing up of budgets. This is in place for example between local councils and the health service in adult and children's services, and between the police and local councils in community safety. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service is now developing joint approaches to volunteering, use of buildings, use and management of IT and equality and diversity with Hampshire Police. Local councils share the management and delivery of some smaller services. Where these arrangements are in place service levels and value for money are good, for example, in the shared delivery of building control services between district councils and in the shared delivery of housing benefits and letting services. Two district councils, Havant and East Hampshire are now sharing one chief executive, with the potential to make further savings in costs and a future 'public service village' approach in Havant is being planned between the County Council and Havant Borough Council.

However some councils seem reluctant to share services. Partners have been slow to take the opportunities for improved efficiency and value on a larger scale. Higher cost services, such as waste collection are not usually delivered across more than one council area in Hampshire. Partnership working is emerging too slowly and there is clear potential for improved efficiency which has not yet been taken. As financial pressure increases, health, local government, police and fire will need to look for significant larger scale joint services, cross-sector management and pooled budgets. This is important not only in delivering value for money but also in making access to services easier and less confusing for the public. This is a key area for improvement in Hampshire and our 2010 area assessment will report progress in this.

Hampshire currently provides good value for money in its waste disposal. This is a highly effective, high performing service which has made multi million pound savings. The potential savings of moving to a single waste authority responsible for both collection and disposal have not yet been fully considered. This may save money and also help weaker district councils meet the standards of the better districts.

Infrastructure and services are developed to support economic and housing growth while protecting the environment and improving quality of life

Most Hampshire districts are improving their local economies despite the recession. Major development schemes are still being built in Hampshire. The long awaited improvements to Rowner in Gosport have begun. Major development schemes have been completed, for example in Farnborough, and new leisure facilities at Eastleigh have led to more visitors to the town. Others are in progress such as town centre developments in Aldershot,

Fareham and in Basingstoke, and science and business parks and retail distribution in Test Valley.

Plans for major leisure, urban, retail and business developments are progressing well. Eastleigh Borough Council for example is strong, innovative and influential. It is investing in local jobs through its support for a new £32 million hotel, conference and leisure facility at the Rose Bowl. East Hampshire District Council has successfully won financial support for the redevelopment of Whitehill and Bordon as an eco town. These developments will increase job and business opportunities in the area and the Whitehill and Bordon project could lead the way nationally in environmentally friendly development. The progress despite the recession of these projects is positive for the future Hampshire economy.

Partners are making steady progress in dealing with traffic issues in the county. However congestion remains a difficult challenge and continues to be a key concern for local people and businesses in parts of Hampshire, such as Gosport and in Basingstoke. Through the Local Transport Plan and the work of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and Transport for South Hampshire, the area is tackling congestion. Work is underway to pinpoint local hotspots and improve them. Most congestion points in the county are on motorways and adjoining links. Plans are in place to ease some of these, for example part funding for the M27 Junction 5 improvements phase 1 is agreed. Completed works on the M27 Junction 8 at Segensworth have cut congestion and delays at peak times. The condition of Hampshire roads has improved over the year. The county council has increased its funding by £2 million to form a 'pothole busting campaign' to fix road surface potholes following the damage caused by extreme weather in 2008 and 2009.

The A32 Gosport to Fareham road has been congested for many years and progress is slow for people and businesses in that area. After the failed bid for a light rail tram system, work started this year on a £20 million Phase 1 bus rapid transit (BRT) system. This will link a dedicated bus-way using new high quality buses every 5 minutes along a disused railway route to the existing road network. Phase 1 of BRT ends before the centres of the towns it connects and does not easily link to Portsmouth or Queen Alexandra Hospital, Cosham. Further phases have been identified with a total cost of up to £175 million. This funding has yet to be secured. In the meantime traffic congestion is limiting development and investment in Gosport.

The South East Plan sets a target of 102,200 new homes by 2026. So far nearly 16,000 homes have been built since 2006, which is more than the target to date. Good progress is being made in many Hampshire housing development sites, although the current downturn in the economy is likely to result in too few new homes being built in the next few years. The overall housing numbers mask some significant variation in performance across districts with three districts failing to meet their share of the overall target. A key risk remains in the south of the county where the funding available to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), part of which is set aside to deliver new housing, is under threat from central government.

Social and affordable housing needs are met, including provision to support rural

communities

Housing needs are significant in Hampshire, which is one of the least affordable places in the country to live. Good progress has been made in most districts in reducing homelessness, introducing greater choice for tenants, providing housing support and in reducing the need for people to be put in temporary accommodation.

Housing support schemes in Hampshire are improving the quality of life for vulnerable people. Hampshire County Council and its partners in the primary care trust, district councils and voluntary sector work well together to extend the range of support available for vulnerable people, improve their quality of life and improve value for money. For example, new 'extra-care' homes have been provided to give older and vulnerable people support to live more independently.

Progress on the delivery of affordable and rural housing is mixed. Having affordable decent housing is a high priority for residents and this is recognised by partners and reflected in county-wide targets. Most districts have either met or beaten their target for completing affordable homes in the past year, but some have not. Hart District Council has not achieved its target, although affordability is a particular concern in this mainly affluent part of the county. Not enough rural affordable homes have been delivered. Partners have recently agreed arrangements to provide more affordable homes over the next three years. The county council is helping by making land available for rural developments. The six districts where rural housing is of greatest concern are working well together.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

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