











Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

Community Partnerships Service Impact Report 2025 to 2026

We build on the strengths of local people and places to reduce isolation, improve wellbeing and help residents get support earlier so our communities can thrive.







Reigate & Banstead
Borough Council
Banstead | Horley | Redhill | Reigate

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Foreword

The Community Partnerships Service brings people, voluntary organisations and neighbourhoods together to strengthen wellbeing, reduce isolation and support early help across the borough.

Over the last year the service has worked across five connected teams:

- Community Centres
- Community Development
- Community Safety
- Financial Resilience
- Partnerships and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) engagement

Each play a vital role in helping residents feel supported, connected and able to thrive.

The service builds on strengths already present in our communities: trusted local spaces, active residents, committed volunteers and strong voluntary and community organisations. By working closely with a wide range of partners, the service helps ensure support is more connected, accessible and shaped by local experience.

During 2025 and 2026, Community Partnerships supported residents across the borough facing rising living costs, growing isolation and increased demand for local support services. This included investing in local organisations, strengthening neighbourhood networks, improving safety and enabling community-led activity across our key neighbourhoods.

As local government arrangements evolve, the strengths, partnerships and community connections developed through this work will continue to provide an important foundation for supporting residents and communities.



Cllr James Baker

Portfolio Holder
Community Partnerships

Local context and community need

Reigate & Banstead is a borough of distinctive neighbourhoods, active community organisations and residents who care about where they live. Community Partnerships works across the borough, with a particular focus on five priority neighbourhoods: Horley, Merstham, Preston, Redhill West and Woodhatch and Whitebushes.

Across these neighbourhoods, rising living costs and access barriers continue to affect wellbeing and financial stability, increasing demand for early, local help. Community Partnerships has responded by working with and through trusted local organisations and spaces, ensuring activities are shaped by lived experience and local insight.

While Reigate & Banstead is often seen as affluent overall, pockets of deprivation remain. Several priority neighbourhoods, including Merstham, Redhill West, Woodhatch and Whitebushes, Preston and parts of Horley, fall within more deprived national deciles, with challenges linked to income, housing, health and access to local services and sources of support. In some of these areas, around one in five residents live with a long-term health condition or disability.

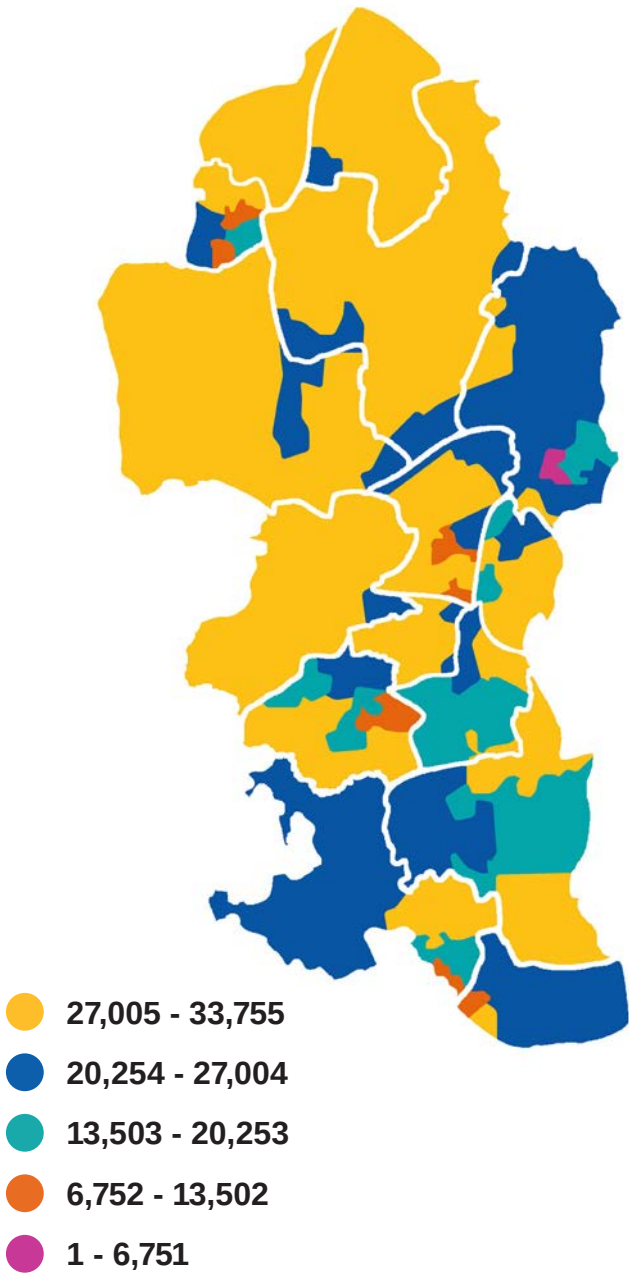
Resident Survey (2025) findings reflect this mixed picture. While three-quarters of respondents report satisfaction with parks and green spaces, and 67% describe their local area as friendly and welcoming, nearly half express dissatisfaction with transport and the cost of living. At the same time, housing affordability remains a key pressure locally, with house prices and private rents significantly higher than national averages, placing additional strain on lower-income households.

These survey findings also show a strong sense of local connection, with over six in ten residents agreeing they feel they belong to their local area, and around half agreeing that people pull together to improve their neighbourhood.

Combined, these overlapping pressures highlight the importance of early, local and preventative action built on existing community strengths. This shapes how Community Partnerships works alongside residents and partners across the borough.

The map on the right shows deprivation distribution across the borough by national percentage rank (information from the National Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025, via the ONS and LGA).

Map 1: Deprivation across Reigate & Banstead (IMD 2025)



Sources: English Indices of Deprivation 2019 and 2025; Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA); Reigate & Banstead Borough Resident Survey 2025; ONS and Valuation Office Agency housing data.

Our approach to supporting communities

Stronger, safer communities | **Participation and community leadership** | **Inclusive access and financial resilience** | **Partnerships and shared value**

In response to this context, Community Partnerships works as one connected service, bringing together people, places and partnerships to promote wellbeing, early help, prevention and community-led solutions, with teams working interdependently to achieve shared outcomes.

The work of Community Partnerships contributes to four shared themes that reflect the issues and priorities that matter most to residents and communities locally. These themes run through all areas of delivery and provide a shared way of understanding impact across the service, with resident wellbeing a core outcome running through all four themes.

Community Centres The Community Centres team manages local community buildings as inclusive hubs for residents, enabling a wide range of activities, services and events that bring people together, reduce isolation, and provide accessible spaces for community-led activity. Their work ensures that centres are welcoming, sustainable, and responsive to local need.



Community Development The team works directly with communities and the voluntary sector to build skills, confidence and organisational capacity. The team supports engagement, volunteer development and grassroots activity, helping communities to identify their own priorities and develop sustainable solutions to local challenges.



Partnerships Team The Partnerships team builds and maintains relationships with voluntary, community and statutory partners. The team supports joint working and grant funding to ensure services are coordinated, efficient and aligned to shared priorities. Their role is to connect organisations and strengthen the local support system.



Financial Resilience Using data and intelligence to identify residents and communities most at risk of financial pressure. The team designs and targets campaigns, interventions and communications to ensure support is directed where it will have the greatest impact. Their work focuses on prevention, improving take-up of support, and reducing the risk of financial crisis through evidence-led action.



Community Safety Lead and coordinate work to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and harm. The team works with partners and communities to identify risks, support early intervention and deliver preventative initiatives. Their focus is on creating safer environments and improving residents' sense of safety and wellbeing.

How our approach works in practice

Community Partnerships brings together the places, people and relationships that already exist in our neighbourhoods. Our community centres, local groups, volunteers and long-standing partnerships give us a strong foundation to build on. These familiar settings make it easier for residents to take part, ask for help early and stay connected to what's happening locally.

By working alongside communities day to day, we help create practical opportunities for people to meet others, get advice, join activities and shape what happens in their area. We support local organisations to grow capacity, and we help partners coordinate so residents experience clearer pathways rather than bouncing between services. This is particularly important given that around a third of residents report feeling not well informed about available council services and support. Through consistent, neighbourhood-based working, this approach helps reduce isolation, build confidence to seek support, and enables partners to respond in a more connected, coordinated way.



Community Centres supporting people and place

Participation and community leadership → **Inclusive access and financial resilience**

Our community centres in Banstead, Horley and Woodhatch are at the heart of local community life. They are open, welcoming places where people can come together, take part and feel supported. They offer something for everyone, creating spaces where different communities can connect.

The centres are vibrant hubs where activity, friendship and support sit side-by-side. Whether residents drop in for a hot meal, join an activity, volunteer or meet new people, these spaces offer something for everyone. At a time of rising living costs and growing isolation, they have helped residents stay connected, confident and supported within their own neighbourhoods.

Community centres at a glance over 2025 and 2026

29,239 residents engaged through activities

8,140 hot meals served

20,198 volunteer hours contributed

4,450 sessions delivered annually

3,629 residents attended events



Community Centres supporting people and place (cont.)

Participation and community leadership → **Inclusive access and financial resilience**

Why residents value their community centres

Community centres are valued for much more than the activities they offer. The 2026 Community Centres Survey found that residents see them as welcoming, affordable places where people can stay active, access support and connect with others.

99% of residents said community centres are essential or important to their local community







> **I could not survive in my current circumstances without the food clubs and community fridge.**

> **A place that gives me purpose.**

What residents told us they value most

- **67%** value cafe and food provision
- **66%** value fitness and wellbeing activities
- **51%** value community events
- **39%** value foot clinic services
- **32%** value hairdressing and barber services

Community Centres supporting people and place (cont.)

Participation and community leadership | **Inclusive access and financial resilience**

The difference community centres make

Community centres do more than provide activities. For many residents they offer friendship, routine, practical support and opportunities to stay connected to their local community. Our 2026 survey findings show that community centres are making a positive difference to residents' lives locally.

What residents told us about the impact of community centres:

- 87% said they had met new people and felt less isolated
- 83% felt more connected to their local community
- 81% could access information and support more easily
- 70% said the community centre had made a positive difference to their life

Chatty Café

The Chatty Café pilot provided opportunities for residents to connect socially in a welcoming environment.

90% of participants reported feeling better or much better after attending.

> **"Since discovering Banstead Community Centre, my life has changed. I feel happier, less lonely and more active.**







Community Centres supporting people and place (cont.)

Participation and community leadership → **Inclusive access and financial resilience**

Listening to residents and responding to local needs

The 2026 Community Centres Survey reinforced the importance of community centres as welcoming, affordable and inclusive local spaces. Residents also identified opportunities to improve access, broaden participation and expand activities for families, younger people, working-age residents and neurodivergent residents.

This feedback is helping inform how community centres respond to changing local needs.

Residents told us they would like to see:

- More evening and weekend activities
- More youth activities
- More SEND and neurodiverse provision
- More adult learning opportunities

Responding to different community needs

The 2026 Community Centres Survey highlighted the importance of providing activities and support that meet a wide range of needs. Alongside their wider programme, community centres work with our Community Development Team and local partners to deliver targeted activities and support for residents facing particular challenges or life circumstances.

Andy's Man Club

- Up to 12 regular participants
- Six trained volunteers

SEN Youth Group

- 78 young people engaged

Forget Me Not Café

- Dementia-friendly support
- Up to 15 attendees per session

Building on what residents told us

Investment in Horley Community Centre, alongside ongoing improvements at Banstead and Woodhatch, is helping to provide more flexible, accessible and sustainable community spaces.

Residents told us that community centres help them feel connected, supported and part of their local community. Their feedback will continue to shape how centres respond to local needs and build on the strengths that already exist within our neighbourhoods.



Community Development working alongside communities

Stronger, safer communities | **Participation and community leadership**

Our Community Development team works alongside residents in Horley, Merstham, Redhill West, Preston, Woodhatch and Whitebushes, building strong relationships at the heart of each neighbourhood. Embedded Community Development Workers spend time locally, listening to what matters and supporting residents to take action together.

Rather than focusing on short-term interventions, the team works to build long-term relationships with local people, which leads to more consistency and shared ownership. Through sustained, neighbourhood-based working, this helps communities grow in confidence, leadership and resilience.

Practical support and connection

Rising costs remain a daily reality for many residents. Community Development responds by combining practical support, advice and connection helping residents meet immediate needs while opening routes into longer-term resilience.

Energy support and financial resilience

Energy saving workshops in Horley supported residents to understand energy use, reduce waste and save on bills. Residents received practical energy-saving items matched to household needs.

One resident caring for a husband with cancer received a heated clothes airer to replace a tumble dryer, reducing drying costs from around £1.40 per load to around 10p, saving approximately £9 per week (around £36 per month).

Forest Explorers - Redhill West

Forest Explorers engaged children and families, particularly from minority ethnic communities, in nature-based learning and activity. For many families, this was the first time they had accessed a programme of this kind. The project was delivered in partnership with Growing Health Together and Redhill Phoenix.

- **36** children aged 2-12 participated
- **72%** of participants were Asian, **19%** white and **9%** black
- Around **80%** of families required free transport to attend

The success of the programme was driven by trusted relationships with Growing Health Together and Redhill Phoenix, and the practical removal of barriers such as transport.







> **Pleasantly surprised at how much can be done with a little bit of imagination and nature.**

> **I am so proud of myself, I made the fire!**

Community Development working alongside communities (cont.)

Stronger, safer communities | **Participation and community leadership**

Food Clubs and everyday support

Food Clubs operate in key neighbourhoods in partnership with organisations including Merstham Community Facility Trust, St Marks Church, Redhill Baptist Church and FareShare. These clubs provide low-cost food that would otherwise go to landfill, while linking residents to wider support such as employment services, money advice and community opportunities.

This combination of food access and connection helps reduce pressure while strengthening pathways into longer-term support.

> **“I feel better about the future and not so lonely.**

Reducing isolation and building connection

In Whitebushes, a monthly Community Cuppa grew from conversations about isolation and the under-use of the Village Hall. Up to 33 residents now attend sessions, with residents supported to become Wellbeing Walk leaders.

In Merstham, the Chronic Pain Support Group supports residents living with chronic pain to better manage their condition through peer support, practical techniques and professional input. Mid-point evaluation shows strong early impact:

- Confidence in managing pain increased across the programme (from 4.8 to 7 out of 10).
- 100% of participants are now using new techniques to manage their condition.
- 100% of participants reported feeling less alone since coming to the group.
- Participants also reported increased confidence, improved mood and wellbeing, and a stronger sense of connection and support.

> **“It gives me a purpose and helps me get out as I rarely leave the house.**

> **“I’ve found the Chronic Pain Group absolutely brilliant. Such a lovely supportive group of people.**











Community Development working alongside communities (cont.)

Stronger, safer communities | **Participation and community leadership**

Partnerships and local leadership

Community Development Workers facilitate regular neighbourhood partnership meetings, bringing together residents, voluntary organisations and services to agree priorities and coordinate action.

- **Redhill West**
  256 partners on the mailing list, average attendance **33**
- **Merstham**
  121 partners, average attendance **28**
- **Preston**
  116 partners, average attendance **26**
- **Woodhatch & Whitebushes**
  116 partners, average attendance **20**
- **Horley:**
  74 partners, average attendance **13**

The forums play a key role in ensuring activity remains shaped by what communities are experiencing.

Connecting residents to support - Preston health events

In Preston, community health events delivered with Banstead Primary Care Network (PCN) and Tadworth Leisure Centre brought together local organisations and residents.

- First event: **60** organisations and **250** residents
- Second event: **52** organisations and **431** residents
- Average engagement of around **22** residents per stall

> **If I had known about these organisations, I wouldn't have gone to my GP.**

> **Please do it again.**



Partnerships supporting the voluntary and community sector

Inclusive access and financial resilience → **Partnerships and shared value**

Across Reigate & Banstead, many residents turn first to local charities, community groups or familiar faces when they need help. The Partnerships team strengthens this local system so trusted organisations can respond early and effectively, even as demand increases.

Investing in local organisations

In 2025/26, **£364,548 was distributed across eight funding schemes to 60 organisations,** helping sustain community venues, protect essential services and expand support during a period of rising demand.

Funding supported a wide range of frontline and preventative activity, including foodbanks, advice services, mental health and wellbeing support, community venues and practical help for residents facing financial pressure. Alongside this, the team supported coordination and visibility, helping organisations work together rather than in isolation.



Thriving Communities Fund

Community sector solutions with real reach - the Thriving Communities match fund is an example of how local investment can unlock much wider value.

By investing **£104,000 of Council funding,** the programme generated over £200,000 in community-led value, supporting 26 projects shaped by what residents said they needed. Projects included food and energy support, mental health and emotional wellbeing provision, youth outreach, creative programmes and opportunities for connection through nature and community activity.

Residents were involved in reviewing and voting on project proposals, helping to ensure funding decisions reflected local priorities and lived experience. This shows how relatively small amounts of funding can support practical, preventative activity that responds directly to community needs.







Partnerships supporting the voluntary and community sector (cont.)

Inclusive access and financial resilience | Partnerships and shared value

Strengthening networks around residents

Alongside funding, the Partnerships team plays a key role in strengthening the networks and relationships that sit around residents.

This includes coordinating older people's service provider networks, creating space for organisations to share learning, identify gaps and improve coordination around issues such as transport, access and isolation. Activity such as the Ageing Well event and Older People's Forum strengthened awareness of services and improved connections between providers supporting older residents.

> **Great opportunity to network.**

> **Helpful to hear about what services are available.**

The team also convenes Get Connected, a borough-wide network for professionals supporting young people. Held twice a year, Get Connected provides space to share insight, build relationships and respond to emerging issues affecting young people, helping strengthen coordination across youth, community and safety services.

Volunteering is a vital part of this system. Working closely with Voluntary Action Reigate & Banstead (VASE), the team supports borough-wide volunteering by promoting opportunities, celebrating contribution and helping organisations recruit and retain volunteers, strengthening capacity and connection across the VCFS. The Council also supports employee volunteering, giving all staff up to two days to volunteer in their community.

Removing barriers to access

Sometimes the barrier to support is not willingness, but access or means. By offering targeted transport support:

- **59** residents were supported through taxi vouchers
- **£3,370** was awarded to six organisations through travel grants

For some residents, this enabled attendance at appointments or access to vital services. For others, it simply meant leaving the house, seeing another person or maintaining independence.



> **Your funding is never just about transport - it's about connection, confidence and wellbeing.**

What this means for communities

By investing in trusted organisations, enabling communities to shape solutions, strengthening volunteering and connecting services through networks such as Thriving Communities, Get Connected and Older People's forums, the Partnerships team helps ensure support is earlier, more resilient and greater than funding alone.

This work underpins much of the assistance residents rely on, consistently supporting the local system so help feels human, familiar and more connected.

> **Improved awareness of issues affecting young people.**

Financial Resilience shaped by resident insight

Inclusive access and financial resilience → **Partnerships and shared value**

Within this wider system of support, the **Financial Resilience Project** focuses on one of the most pressing challenges facing residents, as rising costs continue to affect many households across the borough. This year, the focus was on helping residents build financial resilience, access the support they are entitled to and stay secure in their homes, while listening closely so that support feels clearer, kinder and easier to reach.

Financial resilience is not just about income. It is about dignity, confidence and having the space to manage day-to-day life without constant crisis.

Listening to residents and improving how support feels

At the heart of this work was a commitment to understand what support feels like from a resident's perspective.

Four focus groups with **47** residents were held in familiar, trusted settings including Banstead Pantry, Longmead Community Centre, Woodhatch Food Club and Horley Food Club. Residents shared honest feedback about letters, tone, timing and what makes support easier or harder to engage with.

This insight led directly to changes in how we communicate. We simplified language, softened tone and targeted messages more carefully. As a result, residents are more likely to engage and take up support.

> **"The letter was clear and everything went like clockwork.**

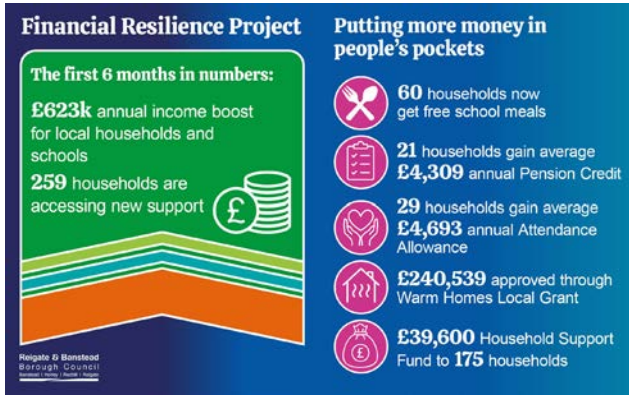
Strengthening the approach through research and insight

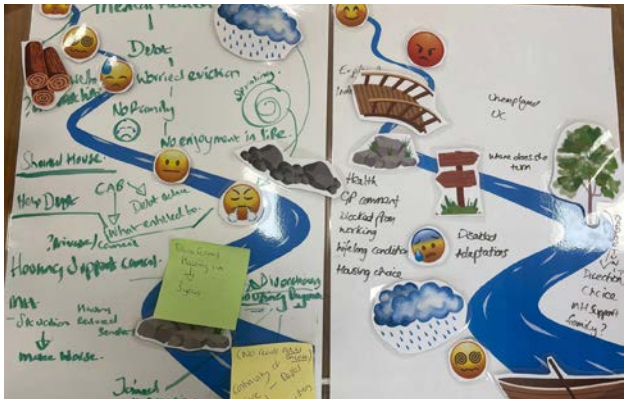
Alongside this work, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council is a partner in the Surrey Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC), a five-year programme led by Surrey County Council and the University of Surrey, focused on understanding what works to improve health and wellbeing.

As part of the HDRC programme, a Community Researcher was embedded within the team, strengthening our ability to:

- Listen to residents
- Design better focus groups and surveys
- Use evidence to shape decisions, not just report outcomes
- Build staff and voluntary sector confidence in research and evaluation

This has helped move financial resilience work beyond delivery alone, towards a more evidence-led, reflective and resident-informed approach.





Financial Resilience shaped by resident insight (cont.)

Inclusive access and financial resilience | **Partnerships and shared value**

Targeted campaigns and meaningful impact

Informed by resident insight and research learning, 14 targeted support campaigns were delivered through letters, SMS and phone calls, helping residents access support including income-related benefits, food and energy assistance, Warm Homes funding, and employment or housing advice.

This has helped residents claim support they didn't know they were entitled to, unlocking a £635,663 annual income boost for more than 250 households, with an estimated £3.4 million lifetime financial impact.

Key outcomes included:

- **21** households claiming Pension Credit (an average of **£4,309** each per year)
- **29** households claiming Attendance Allowance (an average of **£4,693** each per year)
- **60** children moved onto free school meals
- **26** households registered for Warm Homes support, with **£240,539** in energy-efficiency improvements approved

National recognition

In 2026, RBBC's Financial Resilience Project received the Local Area Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) Award for 'Best use of data or research' in a district council. This national award, recognised the project's strong use of resident insight and evidence to shape more effective, accessible support.



Resident experience

This feedback shows that financial resilience is about more than money. Clearer communication, respectful engagement and trusted routes into support helped residents feel more confident and in control.

> **"For a couple of months, I'm ahead with the gas and electric. I can breathe again.**

Resident feedback, research insight and frontline experience now shape how financial resilience support is designed and delivered, improving communication, targeting support more effectively and strengthening collaboration with Voluntary Sector partners. This helps ensure support remains evidence-led and based on real experiences from local people.

> **"Being a survivor of domestic abuse, it can be hard to trust people. This process was simple, kind and respectful.**

Community Safety local partnership in action

Stronger, safer communities

Partnerships and shared value



Community Safety in Reigate & Banstead is delivered through a strong, established Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The partnership brings together Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, probation, health, Children's Services, housing providers, ESDAS, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Council teams to reduce crime, protect vulnerable people and improve feelings of safety.

The CSP provides the strategic framework that enables agencies to work together around shared priorities, using local intelligence, joint planning and coordinated responses to prevent harm and respond early to risk.

Resident Survey findings show that while most residents feel safe in their local area during the day, feelings of safety reduce significantly at night, reinforcing the importance of visible, coordinated community safety activity.

Community Safety Partnership priorities

Since 2025 the Community Safety Partnership has focussed on three core priorities:

- Strengthening strong and resilient communities
- Protecting residents from harm
- Preventing violence against women and girls (VAWG) and domestic abuse

The priorities shape how partners plan activity, share information and respond collectively to issues affecting individuals, families and neighbourhoods.

Community safety at a glance over 2025 to 2026

- **59** antisocial behaviour cases supported
- **1,575** fly-tipping responses
- **230** noise complaints investigated
- Safer Streets engagement delivered in priority locations
- CCTV upgrades across key town centres and public spaces
- Resolve ASB Awards 2026 - runner-up
- Home Office recognition as "one of the best examples in the country"

These figures reflect not just enforcement, but coordinated prevention, early intervention and visible reassurance.

Working together to prevent harm

Regular partnership meetings, delivered through the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), allow partners to share intelligence and coordinate joint casework. This enables earlier identification of risk, coordinated responses for individuals and families, and clear pathways between enforcement, support and safeguarding.



Community Safety local partnership in action (cont.)

Stronger, safer communities | **Partnerships and shared value**

Safer Redhill - improving safety at neighbourhood level

Safer Redhill is a flagship example of Community Safety Partnership (CSP) delivery at neighbourhood level. Partners work together to improve safety, visibility and confidence through joint patrols, detached youth work, environmental improvements, public art, business engagement and shared problem-solving.

This coordinated approach has reduced crime in priority areas, improved public confidence and strengthened relationships between services and the community. The Home Office described Safer Redhill as “one of the best examples in the country”, recognising the strength of partnership working and place-based delivery.

Protecting residents

Protecting people at risk is central to CSP activity. Partners work together across multiple areas, including the Serious Violence Duty, hate crime and cohesion, modern slavery awareness and referral, and domestic abuse.

Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and domestic abuse is a core CSP priority. Working with ESDAS and Surrey Police, partners deliver coordinated safeguarding, access to specialist support and trauma-informed responses shaped by lived experience. Learning from Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) continues to inform service improvement.

Investment in CCTV across town centres, parks and car parks supports deterrence, evidence gathering and public reassurance, complementing our wider partnership activity.

How this helps communities feel safer

Through strong CSP leadership and effective local delivery, Community Safety work has helped ensure that risks are identified earlier, and that support is coordinated and accessible, helping communities feel safer. This partnership-led approach plays a vital role in building safer, more resilient neighbourhoods across the borough.









Learning, improvement and looking ahead

Throughout the year, Community Partnerships has continued to learn from residents, volunteers, partners and front-line experience. This insight has helped us strengthen what works, adapt our approach and improve how support is offered.

Residents consistently value clear information, familiar places and early conversations with people they trust. Engagement, feedback and research, including learning through the Surrey HDRC and tools such as LIFT, have deepened our understanding of local need and helped shape support that feels more accessible and connected.

We continue to navigate rising living costs, pressure on VCFS capacity and growing demand for face-to-face support. Differences between neighbourhoods, transport barriers and confidence to seek help all reinforce the importance of delivery rooted in local neighbourhoods.

Looking ahead, we will build on our strengths in partnership working, community leadership, insight and early help. As local government continues to evolve, this strong foundation enables Community Partnerships to respond to change while continuing work that is local, connected and reliable, and that helps residents feel connected, confident and supported in their communities.















Thank you to the residents, volunteers, community groups and partners who make this work possible across Reigate & Banstead.







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