

Warwickshire

Area Assessment

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oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services

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Warwickshire at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Warwickshire. 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 Warwickshire

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

-  Red flag: Ensuring all organisations improve the success and well-being of the people of Warwickshire

The local area

Warwickshire is a largely rural county in the West Midlands, with no dominant centre of population. The major towns are Leamington Spa, Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Rugby and Nuneaton.

The world famous Stratford-upon-Avon, birth place of William Shakespeare, is in the county, attracting many visitors to Shakespeare country. The game of rugby was first played here. George Eliot was inspired, among the rich heritage of the North of the county which has seen Romans and Saxons come and go. Warwick is steeped in a rich historical past attracting people to the castle and to wander amongst its streets and buildings.

A rural county, agriculture has been celebrated at the Royal Agricultural Society of England showground, after 170 years, for the last time in 2009 at Stoneleigh Park. The county now hosts new technology and is fast developing into a centre for the computer gaming industry.

The population is just under 527,000 with a relatively high older population and a declining younger population. Its population is growing faster than in other parts of the country. Much of this is due to people moving into Warwickshire from the neighbouring urban areas of Coventry and

Birmingham. Warwickshire has a high White British population when compared to the national average, although its population of ethnic minority residents has been increasing. Deprivation is relatively low but there are areas in the north of the county with significant deprivation.

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

How is Warwickshire doing?

We belong to safe, strong & cohesive communities

Crime levels are falling in Warwickshire. The police are targeting the most serious crimes, but most types of crime have reduced. Roads are safer in Warwickshire than they were 10 years ago seeing a significant fall in the number of people killed or seriously injured.

Victims of domestic abuse are taken very seriously. Local partnerships work together to support individuals and to increase awareness and intolerance of domestic abuse.

The Fire and Rescue Authority know they have to improve their fire prevention service. They also know that they have to change the way they work to improve the service as a whole. This is a difficult task and part of the challenge will be to explain the plans to residents so they understand the reasons for the need to modernise the way the service is provided.

We live healthy, active & independent lives

People living in Warwickshire are generally healthy and live longer than in many other areas. But NHS Warwickshire, hospitals and local councils need to work better together to make sure people are as healthy as they can be. It is important for the health service to be well represented when working with partners, so they can make sure the best decisions are made for people.

There are more GPs here than elsewhere, and people use their dentists more than elsewhere in the West Midlands. Ambulances response rates are good.

North of the county residents have much poorer health, with Nuneaton and Bedworth particularly standing out in Warwickshire. Here some people have the poorest health in the country, and this is deteriorating.

Too many people are overweight or obese, including children. Partners are increasing the work they do to encourage everyone to exercise more, eat well and healthily. But it is important to make sure people know what will make the most and best difference to them.

We all have an equal opportunity to enjoy & achieve

Good progress is being made to lift schools out of special measures and there are improved exam results at schools that have not performed as well - mainly in the north of the county. Children from some ethnic backgrounds are getting more support. These groups are doing better as a result.

Plans have been drawn up for the future of Warwickshire's schools. Funding some of the proposed changes could be difficult as finances are being hit by the recession. Plans for a major shake up in Nuneaton's secondary schools will need to be carefully communicated to families in the catchment area.

There is an excellent foster care service. Young people and their carers receive good support and tend to do well.

Our environment is clean, green and sustainable

The amount of rubbish recycled in Warwickshire is increasing faster than anywhere else in the Country. And it's set to increase more as new facilities to process recycling materials are built and come into use. Working with other councils, two waste to energy plants are planned - one in Staffordshire and one in Coventry. This will significantly reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

Progress on reducing carbon emissions is patchy. Some organisations are not doing what they should to reduce their emissions - the NHS could be doing a lot more to work with partners given that they are among the main consumers of energy in the county. Not all organisations know what their emissions are, however there are some good projects in place.

Effective action has been taken to reduce the impacts of flooding. Partners know which areas are most at risk. Flood defence work is underway in some places, and gulleys and ditches are being cleared. The water company is improving some storm drains.

Our housing is appropriate and affordable

House prices vary hugely in Warwickshire. They are most expensive around Warwick and Stratford. But councils work hard to make sure that affordable homes are built, and are proving successful in this. There are plans to build a lot of new homes in Warwickshire. People are not happy with every aspect of these plans - for example, the proposal to build a new 'eco-town' south of Stratford-upon-Avon.

More homes are needed that are accessible and suitable for older people. And more sites and pitches are needed for gypsy and traveller communities. Homeless people are getting more help. In turn this means that fewer people

are becoming homeless in some parts of the county, although some people still have to spend too long in temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast.

Our places are accessible

Road networks are good in and around Warwickshire. And improvements continue to be planned and made - for example at the Longbridge junction of the M40. Lots of people own cars in Warwickshire. Railway facilities are improving. A new parkway station opened at Coleshill in 2007, and there are plans for another one at Stratford and a new station in Kenilworth. The new station at Coleshill has encouraged many more people to use the train.

More people are now using buses. In North Warwickshire a new fleet of buses running between key places means that more people can get to work by bus. Late running is the main worry for people using buses in the county. More people are cycling, and cycling schemes have been improved. Some areas have good community transport schemes, but not everyone in Warwickshire can benefit. Where these are available they help people without cars who can't use public transport.

Council services are easier to use in most areas. Many towns have one stop shops where you can get help with all services the councils provide (County and District). New mobile libraries are visiting many more people in their communities, which is helping older people in sheltered housing and in villages.

Our economy is innovative, competitive & entrepreneurial; Our workforce is well trained and highly-skilled; Our economic well-being is improved

A strong economy requires fit, healthy people who are supported into employment. It also requires all public organisations to work hard on training, providing jobs and ensuring that what they do is sustainable. The organisations in Warwickshire need to work better together to deliver some of these things - in particular the way the NHS is able to help.

Warwickshire is being hit hard by the recession. Many people have lost their jobs - particularly in the manufacturing sector and the car industry. The number of people claiming Jobseekers allowance doubled in the year to May 2009 to 12,160. More people need help with their rent and council tax. Many businesses have failed - 2,000 just in the first three months of 2009.

Councils have pulled together advice and information that will help people. Events have been held for businesses. Partners working across Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull have secured funds of over £22 million to help businesses, and training for people becoming redundant. Help is given to start up new businesses, including accommodation and advice.

About Warwickshire

A recent survey shows that in Warwickshire 83 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 broadly the same as the national average of 81 per cent.

Warwickshire is a largely rural landlocked county within the West Midlands, with Worcestershire and the West Midlands metropolitan authorities to the left, and Leicestershire and Northamptonshire of the East Midlands to the right.

The county has a population of just under 527,000 people with no dominant centre of population. The major towns are Nuneaton, Stratford, Leamington, Warwick and Rugby. Warwickshire's older population is greater than regional and national averages, and as this group increases, the younger population is in decline. The area is dominated by a White British population, higher than regional and national averages. However, the minority ethnic population has increased by 43 per cent since 2001. The Indian population is the largest of the ethnic minorities in Warwickshire, although the Black and Chinese populations have increased two-fold since 2001. Levels of deprivation in Warwickshire vary between districts, with the highest percentage living in deprived areas in Nuneaton and Bedworth, and the lowest in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Unemployment is relatively low in Warwickshire and earning levels are high when compared to West Midlands and England averages. House prices are highest in the south of the county, with affordability below the national average. Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick are the least affordable areas. Housing needs exceed availability.

The health of people in Warwickshire is better than the England average. Overall life expectancy is above the England average and early death rates have fallen. However, smoking in pregnancy and the rate of road injuries and deaths are higher than the England average.

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

A Sustainable Community Strategy for the area has recently been agreed. For the first time all public bodies in Warwickshire have a clear set of common ambitions and priorities to guide services and direct investment. The strategy reflects the key issues facing Warwickshire's communities and local people. Running through it are three principles. These are "narrowing gaps", "access" and "targeting support for people in vulnerable circumstances".

Good use of information to work out what different communities need is a strength in Warwickshire. There is a thorough understanding of local communities. There are good data sources available including demographic, social and economic data generated through the Warwickshire Observatory.

There is much better recognition of inequality in Warwickshire which is looking at why people have such variable quality of life in different parts of the county.

This information has been used to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy and is used to decide how to change and improve services. The first joint strategic needs assessment between the County Council and the NHS was produced in 2009 and provides a further level of understanding of health and social care needs.

Residents, service users and other relevant organisations are routinely asked how they would like to see services improve. The introduction of community forums is improving the way organisations listen to local residents.

Children's services take every opportunity to listen to the views of young people and families. Most have achieved the 'hear by right' standard which is a tried and tested standard framework for organisations to improve the way they involve children and young people. We can see how children's voices are heard and acted upon.

We belong to safe, strong & cohesive communities

Crime levels are reducing across Warwickshire. The daily level of crime has reduced from 124 per day to 99 over the last two years. Most categories of crime have recorded a fall. Stratford sees some of the lowest crime rates in the country - other areas are seeing reductions with targeted operations by the police on burglary. Warwickshire Police Force has changed the way it works and targets the most serious crimes which has contributed to the fall. There is a very clear focus on known criminals, persistent offenders, missing persons and people at risk of abuse. Every day police officers are briefed on all the latest incidents in the previous 24 hours. This 'tasking' meeting means that officers have very good intelligence about crimes in each of the localities in which they work.

Fewer people are dying and being injured on Warwickshire's roads. Far fewer children are killed or seriously injured - down by two thirds - since 1994. Most people die or are seriously injured on the smaller rural roads in the county.

More police officers have been put on these roads rather than the central motorway network. This has resulted in savings of over £500,000 and better policing of Warwickshire's roads.

The Safer Roads Partnership is very clear which roads cause most of the deaths and injuries and are the ones that are targeted with police officer time, fixed and mobile cameras and road improvements. This has been done while also reducing costs by over £250,000. It is estimated that in reducing the number of deaths and injuries Warwickshire's economy has been saved over £37 million pounds in the last year. Drink driving campaigns are effective and fewer people have been found to be over the limit. People are safer on Warwickshire's roads.

Domestic abuse is not tolerated in Warwickshire. The last 4 years have seen big changes in the way the police, the NHS, councils and voluntary organisations support people subject to abuse. By raising awareness of the issue and encouraging people to report problems the numbers of incidents reported have doubled. Victims are taken very seriously and every case is carefully reviewed. Cases of most risk are monitored very carefully and are included on a daily briefing. Police officers visit those most at risk to support both victims and perpetrators to help reduce repeat occurrences. There has been a steady but important reduction in the numbers of repeat offences.

There were several murders a year as a result of domestic abuse in Warwickshire but this has reduced to zero in the last 2 years. 47 per cent more people are being convicted in court through specialist domestic courts with nearly 9 out of 10 cases being successfully convicted. This requires good evidence and investigation.

Of particular note are the good partnerships in place which ensure that people in custody with mental health problems are properly assessed and cared for. Specialist nurses see offenders in custody early on.

Partners in Warwickshire are looking at all the aspects of why and how domestic abuse occurs. They are beginning to explore and understand the implications of the global difficulties of forced marriage and honour crimes amongst some communities. People in these communities are particularly vulnerable if they report a crime and the police are determined to ensure that everyone is protected whatever their circumstances.

There is a lot of targeted activity to help reduce the number of people who continue to have problems, including a programme to support victims and intervene with perpetrators to deal with their behaviour. It will be particularly important to reduce this repeat victimisation in coming years.

Fewer people are dying in house fires in Warwickshire. The Fire and Rescue Authority has had good success in reducing arson and nuisance fires. The Authority targets prevention work towards those at highest risk in urban areas but prevention work is patchy in rural areas.

They have been slow to make the changes needed to provide a more efficient, modern fire service that balances emergency response with good prevention and protection work and gives taxpayers good value for money. The pace of change is picking up.

The Authority understands where it needs to improve. It has recently proposed an improvement plan based on big changes to the way it uses its staff and its fire stations. This plan has the potential to deliver much greater value for money by driving efficiency savings alongside really improving services - especially prevention work. To achieve this, the Authority will need to talk with its communities so that local people understand the value of its plans and be prepared to take and stick to tough decisions.

Better liaison between the Warwickshire authorities and Gypsy and Traveller groups is improving relations between the travelling and settled communities, and saving taxpayers thousands of pounds. A new protocol to standardise the approach taken by the Police and Local Authorities to unauthorised

encampments has been signed recently. It aims to ensure that Gypsy and Traveller groups who camp illegally in the County are managed in a firm but fair manner, taking account of their needs while respecting the rights of landowners and neighbouring settled communities.

Representatives from all councils and the Police Service have signed the protocol and adopted the new procedure for dealing with unauthorised camps. Other services involved in the partnership include the Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership, NHS Warwickshire and the West Midlands Consortium for Travelling Children.

Improved relationships and liaison between the authorities and Gypsy & Traveller groups has minimised the cost of dealing with unauthorised encampments. Better communications have allowed all sorts of welfare issues to be dealt with, and is resulting in better understanding in both Gypsy & Traveller communities and settled communities of each other's needs, rights and responsibilities. For example, close work with a Gypsy & Traveller community in Rugby has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of life for those living on and around this site.

We live healthy, active & independent lives

Warwickshire is a county with generally healthy people. Life expectancy is high and deaths from cancer and circulatory disease are reducing. Warwickshire expects a big increase in the number of older people in the next 10 years which will mean more demand for health and social care services especially.

Babies generally get a good start in life with more breastfeeding, better immunisation rates and fewer babies under a year dying. However, 15 per cent of pregnant women are still smoking. NHS Warwickshire and midwives are working to discourage this as much as possible and help mums-to-be to quit.

People are able to access their dentists more than in other parts of the West Midlands. More women take up cervical and breast cancer screening services than other parts of the region. There is the only fully digital breast screening service in the country and a wider age range of women are invited for screening than elsewhere. Warwickshire has more GPs than other parts of the country so should be in a good position to help with some of the challenges that face people in keeping healthy and active.

If you need an ambulance in an emergency they get to you quickly much of the time. Demand on the ambulance service is increasing every year though, and the service is currently seeing calls for emergency ambulances at the highest level ever in the West Midlands. An independent review has recommended that the 17 West Midlands NHS Primary Care Trusts and the Strategic Health Authority should provide an extra £10 million. The extra money will enable a recruitment and training drive to continue. The review also highlighted the need to look at new ways of delivering the service, and the need for West Midlands Ambulance Service and the NHS to work in partnership to agree on an appropriate level of funding to ensure national response standards are met. The Audit Commission will be watching closely to

see whether this happens.

A picture of good health in the county masks a poorer quality of life for some people. People in Stratford on Avon are the healthiest - more people quit smoking than expected here. According to data for 2008/09 around over 1 in 5 adults regularly take part in sport and active recreation. This is slightly up on the previous year but no better than the national average.

Nuneaton and Bedworth area has some of the poorest health with more people dying from most types of conditions. This area is recognised nationally as being an area of deprivation. Warwickshire organisations have been working for some time to try and make life better here. They are trying to narrow the gap between the best areas and the worst in the county in how long people live but this is actually getting wider.

There are some early signs of health improvement in Nuneaton and Bedworth but effort in the area will need to continue for a long time. For example, there has been a reduction in the rate of hospital admissions due to alcohol problems and fewer people are dying prematurely since 2005 especially from heart disease. Nuneaton and Bedworth has seen a lot of investment in leisure facilities and is the area in the county showing most improvement in the adults doing sport.

Deaths from cancer overall are not reducing. Although fewer women are dying from cancer, more men are dying from cancer. Focussed effort will be needed to get men, especially, to seek medical advice including from the new health centre that has just opened in Camp Hill.

Warwickshire organisations have made an important commitment to continue to focus on areas of greatest deprivation. A recent review showed that lots of different things are happening in Nuneaton and Bedworth but there is still a lot more that can be done to help people live longer. There needs to be more co-ordinated work to target action where the evidence is proven to reduce deaths. Areas that need to be focused on in the next few months are cancer, heart disease and strokes, diabetes and helping keep older people fit in the winter period. There is a need for better co-ordination of tobacco control, alcohol management and help to reduce obesity by all partners. This will ensure that these important public health challenges become everybody's business.

Nearly 2 out of 3 people are overweight or obese in the county (347,000 people) which will lead to increasing health problems in the future. Highest rates of obesity are seen in Nuneaton and Bedworth at nearly 30 per cent but 23 per cent in Stratford and Warwick. In order to help the right people GPs need to record Body Mass Index when they see their patients but in Warwickshire this is not being done often enough. A low number of patients get given advice on exercise from their GPs.

Child obesity is an issue. Nearly one in five children aged 11 are classed as obese. Again children in the north of the county are even more likely to be overweight or obese. Fewer people in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth eat fresh fruit and vegetables. The combined effect of the limited exercise, increasing weight and poor diet means more people are getting diabetes and high blood pressure.

This problem is well recognised by councils and health services and they are increasing opportunities for all people to exercise more and provide advice and support to people wanting to lead healthier lifestyles. There are a wide range of opportunities available for people who want to be active from family based help to Ryton Organic gardens, with projects educating children about healthy eating and introducing vegetable growing competitions across the county. However, clarification is needed about which initiatives will help people the most and which make the most sense to provide.

More school children - around nine out of ten during 2007/08 - are doing at least 2 hours of physical education and sport in schools. But not all primary schools have good facilities for sport. This is mainly through lack of playing fields and halls of adequate size.

Sexual health screening for Chlamydia - a condition that can cause infertility amongst young people, is very low. But there are some good ideas being implemented which should see an increase in screening and better access to sexual health advice.

Deaths from accidents are rising and many of these will be older people falling over. Falls prevention work is best in the south of the county and is not as developed in the northern areas. Ambulance services and hospitals are working with NHS Warwickshire to try and make a real difference here. They need to understand the problem better though and provide assessments and prevention support equitably.

The number of teenage pregnancies is less than the national rate but success in reducing this is variable. Warwick area appears to have least success with some of the biggest reductions seen in Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby and North Warwickshire this year.

People are not always able to die at home if they choose to in the north of the county due to lack of community services to look after them. Many people therefore die in the hospital in an environment which is not of their choice. Plans are being put in place to help provide more care at home which intend to provide the same Gold Standard care as is already provided in Stratford and South Warwickshire. Some progress has been made with a new hospice opening in Coventry, new consultants and some community services. It will be important for there to be co-operation between hospitals, mental health services, councils and the PCT to achieve this for all.

We all have an equal opportunity to enjoy & achieve

Overall, educational attainment is above the national average and improving. A higher percentage of pupils in Warwickshire's schools get good results at GCSE level which is higher than the national average.

However, the average figure masks some big differences. Children living in Nuneaton and Bedworth and parts of North Warwickshire do not do as well overall, while those living in Warwick and South Warwickshire do better. Children in the care of the local authority have the worst outcomes.

Most of the county's underperforming secondary schools are in Nuneaton and Bedworth as well as North Warwickshire. These are more likely to have children with special educational needs, higher rates of exclusions, more children who have offended and children most likely to leave school with no job or place in further education. Councils are working with underperforming schools to give more support for teachers, working to reduce exclusions and helping to support pupils with emotional problems and poor behaviour.

This is now starting to show results. The number of exclusions from schools across Warwickshire is still high but has reduced slightly. In 2008, four of the five schools that had poor ratings from Ofsted are improving, and the number of secondary schools which were not achieving the government's minimum target for achieving 5 good grades at GCSE level in 2008 had reduced from five to three.

In April 2009 only two secondary schools in Warwickshire are in special measures. These are Alderman Smith in Nuneaton and Coleshill School in North Warwickshire. Out of 196 primary schools, four are on notice to improve. While very few primary and secondary schools are judged to be inadequate, only half are judged as good or excellent. This needs to be higher to match standards in similar areas and is an area for further improvement.

Standards in school sixth forms and colleges are better than in similar areas.

The County Council has also targeted more support for children in the care of the local authority. It recognises that these children have the greatest problems and barriers to achieving and need more help to do well. It has set up a 'virtual' school with a head teacher in place to monitor their progress and results; and is also providing private tuition. The results of this are encouraging on an individual basis. However, the gap in attainment between this group and their peers is still very large. An influx of unaccompanied child asylum seekers, in the care of the local authority, in 2008 is influencing the overall results.

Children from black and ethnic minority backgrounds have shown the biggest rate of improvement. Schools have put in extra support to help children from black and ethnic minority backgrounds catch up on their exam results. Boys, in particular, were not doing as well. GCSE results in 2008 show that the gap has been closed. For example, in 2008 52.8 per cent of children from black Afro Caribbean backgrounds got good GCSEs compared with only 31 per cent in 2007.

There is more help available for people most likely to leave school with no job or place in further education or training. These include teenage parents and young people with special educational needs. This is helping to keep the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training lower than elsewhere. Despite the recession, fewer than 6 in every 100 school leavers in the county were in this position in 2008/09.

Warwickshire, like other counties in England, has a rapidly changing population. This in turn has a big impact on what schools need to provide. In 2008, almost one in 10 families with children entering school for the first time were unable to get their child into the primary school of their choice. Around one in three Warwickshire primary schools (60 schools) were oversubscribed

for the 2008 reception intake. In contrast some schools have surplus places. Warwickshire has 12 per cent surplus places in its primary schools and 25 schools with over a quarter of places empty.

This is higher than the County Council would wish to enable it to provide value for money and choice for parents. It reflects a difficult mix of different birth rates in different parts of the county, people coming to live in the county and some planned reductions in school places.

The County Council has now drawn up good plans for the future of primary schools in Warwickshire. Its plan uses good information to forecast the number of primary school places needed and aims to reduce the waste of empty places to improve value for money.

Whilst many school buildings have been improved, more funds are needed to complete the necessary repairs. As part of its plan, the Council intends to rebuild at least 10 primary school buildings in the worst condition and significantly improve at least 90 schools over the next 14 years. The biggest hurdle to delivering the Council's plan, known as the Primary Strategy for Change, is money. Much of the money is expected to come from selling off council buildings that are no longer required. But the downturn in the property market is currently affecting this.

There are 5 secondary schools with a quarter of their spaces unfilled. There has been significant investment in secondary school buildings in Warwickshire with three brand new schools completed or near completion. The Council has redeveloped all eight special schools.

The County Council's plans for secondary schools have been prioritised to concentrate on developing a comprehensive strategic plan for Nuneaton and Bedworth. This is an area with the highest level of surplus places, poor school buildings and poor exam results. It is seeking government support under the Building Schools for the Future Programme. This involves five schools. Three will be rebuilt and two will be refurbished. There are proposals to establish a new Academy to replace two secondary schools that are currently underperforming in Nuneaton.

The Fostering service was judged as outstanding in its most recent inspection by Ofsted. Warwickshire's policy of promoting foster care and supporting foster carers means that few children need to go into residential care. This is a better situation for these vulnerable young people and is better value for money. Children can stay in foster care beyond the age of 18 under the Staying Put project. This provides support for young people who are most vulnerable.

Schools are leading on the healthy eating agenda. Significant progress has been made in improving the provision of school meals. More children are taking school meals and eating healthy options. Around 94 per cent of Warwickshire schools have achieved Healthy Schools Status.

Schools taking part are reporting better levels of attention and behaviour of their pupils, rising levels of self confidence and better educational attainment. Information about what works is being shared through individual schools experiences since going down the healthy schools route. Providing healthy

meals and educating pupils about the importance of healthy lifestyles will help to reduce the level of childhood obesity in the county.

The way children and young people get help with mental health problems has improved. The same guidelines are now used across the county for making referrals to children's and adolescent mental health services and 24 hour access to these services. This means that all children and young people with mental health problems get the same level of response, and a quicker response in emergencies.

A pilot in 3 secondary schools is helping to improve young peoples' access to mental health services. By introducing mental health expertise in to schools, staff are helped to identify and support children with mental health needs at an early stage. The results of the project will be assessed and if successful it will be rolled out to schools across the county. This will also help the county get more accurate and complete information about children and young people's mental health and the services needed.

Warwickshire has a dedicated Young Persons Substance Misuse Service. This provides approved treatment to young people with drug problems. Once in the system, young people get treated quickly with few delays. The service treated 134 young people across Warwickshire in 2008/09, which could mean that there are people who may not be accessing the service. The service is aiming to make sure this is not the case. It has plans to identify young people attending accident and emergency departments and finding out what more can be done by talking to groups more likely to have a drug problem, such as pupils excluded from school.

Our environment is clean, green and sustainable

There is a growing commitment across Warwickshire to reduce CO₂ - the main greenhouse gas and thought to be the major contributor to climate change. Over 100 public, private and voluntary organisations across the county are working in partnership on a whole range of climate change projects. There are many projects and improvements taking place across Warwickshire. These include more energy efficient heating, insulation and lighting in buildings and some small-scale energy generation by solar panels and wind turbines. Some councils are putting in new systems to help accurately measure the amount of energy they use.

Real progress on climate change is being hindered though. Most organisations do not have accurate information about their CO₂ emissions or how this is reducing.

CO₂ produced from cars, buses and commercial vehicles is highest per person in North Warwickshire Borough. This is partly due to a great deal of commuting in and out of the area. Most organisations in the county are struggling to measure and reduce their CO₂ emissions from transport. More needs to be done to have any impact, including for organisations like the police who do a large part of their job 'on the move'.

CO2 emissions from the industrial sector appears to be higher in Rugby than other parts of the county. More work on understanding why this is the case will be important to ensure that the partnership includes those organisations that are the biggest emitters and can target these specific areas.

Some health organisations such as hospitals and NHS Warwickshire are not actively tackling their CO2 emissions with their partners. They are among the biggest users of energy and are among the biggest emitters of CO2 in the county. This has been recognised more recently though - the NHS in the region has a strategy for carbon reduction. Locally, South Warwickshire Hospitals has a new Carbon Reduction Manager, a Waste Manager and a dedicated intranet site which advises staff and encourages their engagement. The NHS could make a significant contribution to cutting CO2 emissions and save money if they were making this a priority and working more widely with other organisations.

Councils across Warwickshire have different approaches to help tackle homes that are hard to heat. There is a general lack of good information and attention on improving conditions and promoting affordable warmth in private housing. There could be many people wasting energy on heating homes with poor insulation or poor heating systems.

Overall, Warwickshire is now increasing its recycling faster than anywhere else in the country.

Recent changes to the waste and recycling services introduced in Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon and Rugby districts have successfully raised the level of recycling. These include alternating weekly collections of waste for recycling with household rubbish. Food waste is now collected every week, either with garden waste, which goes for composting, or in the household rubbish.

Recycling levels are amongst the best in the country in these districts, topping fifty per cent. This system does not operate in Nuneaton and Bedworth or North Warwickshire districts where recycling rates are lower. The level of 43.2 per cent achieved in 2008/09 is set to soar again this year once the full effects of the new schemes are felt.

The new collection systems were introduced before the facilities to process materials for recycling were built, however they are now starting to come online. Until these systems become fully operational, garden waste and materials for recycling are being transported out of the county, involving long distances and cost. Therefore the full environmental benefits of recycling are not being realised in the meantime.

The County Council is also working with other neighbouring councils to build new facilities to deal with the rubbish that cannot be recycled or composted. This involves two large PFI projects to build energy from waste plants. One will be built in Coventry and the other in Staffordshire. Both will be operational in the next five to ten years. This will mean that virtually no waste from Warwickshire's homes needs to be sent to landfill once these are built.

The risk of homes being flooded in Warwickshire is being reduced through coordinated action. Some 2000 properties across Warwickshire were flooded in the summer of 2007 with repair costs put at £90 million. More flooding

followed in 2008. Concerns about flooding have understandably heightened. The severe weather of early 2009 put extra pressure on keeping the roads open with the county only having 2 days supply of salt at one stage. The effects of climate change means that extreme weather events will be more common in the future.

Since 2007 the Warwickshire Strategic Flood Forum has been the focus for planning a county-wide response to flooding. Good progress is being made. Public organisations are clear on which areas are most at risk. Some work has been done to design flood defences and many flood alleviation schemes are underway or agreed. The County Council has been clearing road gulleys and many ditches have been cleaned out by private landowners. The local water company has cleaned out some sewers, upgraded pumps and will be improving some storm drains in Kenilworth and Whitnash. People in the areas worst affected by flooding have been able to apply for grants and help with protecting their homes. A Flooding Emergency Plan for Warwickshire is being drawn up. Public organisations are better prepared for dealing with future flooding events as a result.

Our housing is appropriate and affordable

The ability of people to afford to buy a home in Warwickshire varies enormously. House prices are highest in the south of the county with Stratford and Warwick being the most expensive areas. Councils are working hard to enable more to be built and have done this successfully, beating targets in the worst affected districts. Over the last three years, around 1,330 new affordable homes were built in Warwickshire - about 22 per cent of all new homes built. But the demand for affordable housing outstrips supply across Warwickshire and this is likely to continue. Developers are encouraged to build a high proportion of homes that people can afford to buy or rent, in new housing projects. More is being done to find suitable sites in rural areas that can provide homes for local residents and some schemes are underway.

Much work is underway to make sure housing is available to suit older people's needs. The county, as a whole, lacks housing that provides older people the opportunity to live independently, but with extra support nearby. Some of these 'extra care' housing schemes are coming on stream in Rugby, Stratford and Nuneaton and Bedworth and all districts have schemes either underway or ready for tender. There are plans to have approximately 500 Extra Care places in Warwickshire by the end of 2013.

Councils are helping older people to live active lives; living in their own homes as long as possible. For example, the Borough Care Alarm scheme in North Warwickshire helps support vulnerable people over 62 living at home. The Telecare scheme in Rugby, Warwick, and North Warwickshire is an extension of this idea which provides sensors in homes to monitor the person's well-being and safety. An increased use of direct payments and individual budgets has enabled more users and carers to buy the support they need tailored to their needs. Over 16,000 people are now supported at home, an increase of 38 per cent over the previous year. This has successfully reduced reliance on residential placements by 13 per cent over the last 12 months and represents an improvement in value for money.

The quality of residential care is improving. Nine out of the ten Council run

residential homes are rated as either good or excellent compared to only three in 2008. All local authority homes and most voluntary care homes meet the required training standards although improvements are needed in private providers where achievements are lower. Overall in Warwickshire there has been a fall in the number very poor rated services from 10 in September 2008 to 3 in March 2009.

There are around 1600 people belonging to Warwickshire's Gypsy and Traveller community. The issue of unauthorised encampments has been a real concern in some areas. This has prompted public services to work closely with gypsies and travellers to increase the number of, and improve the quality of, available approved pitches. Councils are clear on the number of pitches they need to provide, and work is underway to identify sites for these. New sites are coming online in Stratford and other sites have been given temporary permission. One of the largest at Pathow is being upgraded to improve the accommodation and pitches. In Rugby, a lot of effort has gone into considerably improving one of its largest sites. This is going some way to ensure the Gypsy and Traveller community are not forced into camping illegally in the district and that people are having their housing needs met.

There is much pressure to build new homes in the county. Warwickshire is looking to produce a blueprint for development which could signal 40,000 more homes being built in the next twenty years but this figure could go higher. Most of the new homes are likely to be built in an area running from Nuneaton to Leamington. This includes a large amount of development in Rugby, Kenilworth and Leamington. Proposals for an Eco Town south of Stratford upon Avon are being considered by government. Local people are opposing it - a recent review has questioned the sustainability of the existing plans. Local Councils do not support the plans, but are going ahead with plans for a smaller 'leisure village' in the area. In Camp Hill Nuneaton, there are plans to invest in many more private homes. This is part of a big regeneration scheme helping to balance the mix of social and private homes in this deprived area.

More effort is needed to reduce the number of empty private homes in Warwickshire. There are some empty homes 'hot spot' areas in Nuneaton and Bedworth and Warwick. These areas are not showing a fall in the levels of homes that are empty for more than six months. In Stratford the Council's work with property owners is showing results. In 2008/09 30 empty private properties were made fit and all but one is now occupied.

Council house waiting lists are below the regional and national levels in all of Warwickshire's districts. New schemes have been introduced which have improved the process for allocating the available social houses for rent and is liked by most users.

The quality of council homes in Warwickshire is improving and most come up to decent standards but there are inconsistencies across the county. All Council homes in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough already meet government standards for 2010, but one in ten council properties in Warwick district do not. The energy efficiency of council homes in Warwickshire does not compare well to other authorities nationally, and is well below average. This means some residents live in properties which are hard to heat and keep warm. This is an area which needs more focus across the county.

The approach to preventing and dealing with homelessness across Warwickshire is varied, but is generally having positive results. These include schemes to help people pay for deposits on private rented accommodation; refuges for people fleeing domestic violence; help for people at risk of re-possession and finding accommodation for people using the salvation army feeding service. The length of time that homeless families are placed in bed and breakfast, and the use of hostel accommodation, is variable across the county. All of the districts are reducing the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless families, and the length of time they spend in them. The use of hostels and the length of stay is also reducing. Living in this type of temporary accommodation is disruptive for people - so the less time people have to spend here, the better.

Our places are accessible

Warwickshire is well-connected to the rest of the UK. The county has good motorway, road and rail links and easy access to local airports. Car ownership is high and persuading more people to use other forms of transport is needed to reduce congestion and CO2 emissions.

A road scheme in Warwickshire is benefiting local communities with two other big schemes underway. The Barford bypass was completed in 2007. There is less traffic and congestion in the village and air quality is better. The Rugby Western relief road should have the same impact. The new road is scheduled for completion in 2010. Major improvements to junction 15 on the M40 - Longbridge - are aimed at reducing the incidents of major traffic delays and congestion.

The opportunity for people to use public transport in Warwickshire is getting much better.

A new parkway railway station at Coleshill opened in 2007, building on the success of the earlier Warwick Parkway station. The Coleshill station links major employment sites and acts as a gateway to Birmingham Airport and the NEC. Around seven in 10 of the passengers using the station are 'new to rail'. It is estimated that 450,000 vehicle kilometres were removed from the local road network in its first year. There are plans in the pipeline to build a third parkway rail station - at Stratford. The County Council hopes to repeat the success the other two stations, and have this new station open in time for the 2012 Olympics.

The quality of bus services in Warwickshire is improving and this is encouraging more people to use public transport. The Council has invested in the quality bus initiative to improve standards and journey times on some routes in Nuneaton and Bedworth. Bus patronage was up by 70 per cent on some routes in this area. Prestigious 'Goldline' bus services have been introduced in Warwick and Leamington and six per cent more people are using them. North Warwickshire has a new fleet of seven buses. These run between Birmingham International Airport, Coleshill Parkway, Atherstone, Nuneaton and Tamworth which means that people can get to work more easily. A new bus station in Warwick is easier to use by people with mobility problems. The main area for improvement in Warwickshire's bus services is punctuality.

Investment in community transport is significant. In most areas, more people are being helped to get around. The Community Links bus service has been expanded to five buses. It is helping over 1,000 people in Stratford on Avon District who have no access to a car or cannot use public transport. There are helpful schemes for people who can get jobs but cannot get to their place of work. This includes a bus to work and back schemes in Nuneaton and North Warwickshire. Schemes to help with the cost of attending interviews and childcare are also available. However, there is a gap in services for people living in Warwick District. The district had no community transport scheme for six months in 2009. The new scheme of providing taxi tokens for older people living in rural areas does not help people with disabilities living in urban areas. This is an issue for some vulnerable people who may be socially isolated as a result.

The county's park and ride scheme in Stratford is not successful so far. It is not representing value for money or meeting the needs of residents or visitors. The numbers of people using the park and ride have been lower than expected. Some incentives have been made to encourage use, but opening times have been reduced to cut losses. The facility - owned by the County Council - is competing with the town centre car parks, which are an important income stream for the District Council. This is testing how well the two councils work together. Plans for another park and ride scheme for Leamington/ Warwick have been abandoned.

The opportunity for people to cycle in safety is improving. As a result, more people are cycling to work as an alternative to the car. Warwickshire has some good cycling routes and is expanding these. Over £1 million pounds has been spent in the Warwick and Leamington urban area to improve cycling and walking facilities. Schemes include the Coventry Road cycle scheme, Tachbrook Road cycleway and the Warwick Technology Park cycle scheme. Work is underway on the Kenilworth Connect2 project. This is creating an off-road route for walkers and cyclists linking the town centre with the Greenway and with Warwick University. Recent traffic counts have seen a 34 per cent increase in usage in the last 5 years on the Ashlawn Road cycleway (Dunchurch to Hillmorton) used by an average of 114 people a day. The Dunchurch Road cycleway has seen an increase each year and is used by an estimated 150 people each day as well.

People across Warwickshire are benefiting from easier access to council services. The number of One Stop Shops is increasing, providing council services. For example, Warwick District has four of these with another one planned for Leamington. Some areas have located these within libraries, some are within tourist information centres and one has incorporated the local Post Office. Having these centres is a local council decision so provision varies. Rugby has chosen to have some kiosks instead of a full-blown 'service centre'. But it has recently opened the Brownsover Information Centre which is helping people report problems and access information on housing, benefits and jobs. In North Warwickshire, the Atherstone One Stop Shop includes a credit union and Citizens Advice Bureau. The police and local health organisations are not using the network of One Stop Shops as a location for delivering services and advice. Public and voluntary organisations have been reviewing their property needs on an area basis to make more progress on joining up. However, plans to progress these are being affected by the recession and decline in the property market.

More is being done to take services to people in the county. Warwickshire's Library services have been recognised for its new fleet of mobile libraries - for best bus design and overall mobile service. The service makes 50,000 visits each year delivering nearly 300,000 books to elderly people in sheltered housing and in rural villages.

Our economy is innovative, competitive & entrepreneurial; Our workforce is well trained and highly-skilled; Our economic well-being is improved



Red flag: Ensuring all organisations improve the success and well-being of the people of Warwickshire

To make a real difference the whole of the public sector needs to ensure it plays its part in making a difference to people's lives. In the best organisations they ensure that what they do on a day to day basis also makes a difference in other ways. For example, hospitals buying food from local producers and other goods from local organisations to help the community or councils helping their employees stop smoking.

Better outcomes could be achieved in Warwickshire in terms of reducing health inequalities, encouraging people to stop smoking and curb their obesity levels. Work on tobacco control could be much better co-ordinated. Improving training for people, reducing CO2 emissions, ensuring strong investment in the county to create jobs and using every organisation's purchasing power to obtain value for money - these are the key points that every partner should be considering and aiming towards. For example, the climate change work being undertaken in Warwickshire needs to be carried out in partnership with the NHS in order to achieve real benefits. This is not happening currently.

There are a number of hospitals and community services in Warwickshire which makes working together quite difficult. Most of the organisations deliver adequate or better services for which they are mainly responsible. However, much more can be done by councils, NHS Warwickshire, hospitals and police working better together to ensure that all organisations play a bigger part in the quality of life of people of the county. A strong and effective decision making board is needed to help this. The NHS in particular are finding it difficult to show that they can really contribute to more than only health care. Other partners need to recognise the opportunities for working with health sector partners to deliver partnership outcomes.

A number of recommendations have been made to the Warwickshire Partnership (the main decision making group) to improve the way they ensure that the NHS in particular is included in the decision making process. This will mean that NHS skills are used in developing and implementing plans in for job creation, training young people, supporting older people and procuring supplies. It also means that councils and police will understand better what

they can do to improve health.

Without improved joint working practices, in a climate of increasing pressure on public funds, the prospects for Warwickshire will be challenging.

What's being done in response?

Organisations across Warwickshire recognise the challenge of ensuring that each of them contributes to both the public health agenda and to the wider success of the county. A review of the way organisations work together is currently underway.

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It is becoming increasingly important for Warwickshire's organisations to work effectively on a sub-regional basis with neighbouring organisations in Coventry and Solihull. The economies of the three areas are closely linked, with the success or failure in one area having an impact on the others.

The situation with the car manufacturing sector is a case in point with major closures occurring at Ryton and Longbridge in recent years. Manufacturing across the sub-region has been in decline and is being hit hard in the current recession.

Partners working together has brought in more funding, reaped bigger economic benefits and more opportunities to help people and businesses respond to changes in the economy. A sub-regional plan is being developed that pulls together ideas on economic development, planning, housing and transport.

In the meantime, maintaining good relationships, established initially in response to car plant closures, has been a good building block for tackling the effects of the current recession. Working in this way has secured over £22 million funding to help businesses and training for people becoming redundant.

There is a system in place that links businesses in difficulty with support and access to financial help. Business Coaches have helped 122 Warwickshire businesses within the first three months of start-up.

Both NHS Warwickshire and NHS Coventry are increasingly working more closely together.

Warwickshire's Regeneration programmes continues to focus on Nuneaton and Bedworth. But despite many millions invested in the area the gap between people's standard of living in the area and the more prosperous areas is growing. The district now falls within the top third of the most deprived local authorities in England, and is now more deprived than in 2000. In 2008 more than 12 per cent of the population was out of work and claiming benefits. This has risen in 2009 because of the recession. Investment in the area has provided significant help and space for business start-ups. The Pride in Camp Hill programme in Nuneaton has been in place since 2003. So

far over 200 homes and a new village centre have been built, 50 new businesses have started up and nearly 282 people have achieved qualifications. But the scale of improvement is not sufficient to narrow the gaps. The community is still dependent on significant external support.

The World-Class Stratford programme continues to be a risk. Increasing the numbers of visitors to the Stratford area is the aim of the 'World-Class Stratford' regeneration programme. This is running alongside the redevelopment of the world-famous Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Elements of the programme have been controversial from the outset, attracting some local opposition. Proposals for a new river footbridge were scrapped in July 2008 and the Phase 2 programme is now on hold or being scaled back because of the recession. Some funding is at risk if the project to re-model Waterside and Southern Lane is not agreed soon.

Progress is being made to reduce the reliance on manufacturing jobs. Overall, this sector accounted for only 12 per cent of local jobs in 2007; down from 21 per cent in 1998. To compensate for this the proportion of jobs in the business, professional services, ICT, transport and distribution have increased. For example, Warwickshire is developing as a centre for the computer gaming industry. Support is available to encourage new businesses to come to Warwickshire especially to sites being developed for the future such as Ansty and Nuneaton. New jobs are in the pipeline at both these locations, although these are the areas being hardest hit by job losses. Plans are also being developed for the future development of the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh although the recession has seen some plans for this postponed.

People and business in Warwickshire are being hit hard by the recession. This is partially because Warwickshire has a high number of jobs in the manufacturing and car industries - a sector that is badly affected. Public organisations in Warwickshire have responded in a number of ways. Some of this work is well targeted. Some actions have not been in place long enough to see the results. The overall impact of this work so far has been fairly small.

The rate of job losses and business failures has been higher than in other parts of the country. The total number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance stood at 12,160 in May 2009 - nearly double what it was the previous year. In the first three months of 2009 there were 2,000 fewer businesses, a drop of 8.1 per cent.

As soon as the credit crunch started to bite, councils across Warwickshire pulled together available information and advice. This is available through their websites. Warwick District Council sent leaflets to all homes and businesses in the district. On the Branching out Bus (BOB), advisors from the Citizens Advice Bureau, Credit Union and Housing and Benefits service give advice to people in all parts of North Warwickshire on subjects such as learning new skills, housing issues, applying for a job and managing finances. Businesses have had the opportunity to attend 'beating the credit crunch events'. Information is easily found because of this prompt action.

There has been a campaign across the county, led by Warwick District Council, together with the voluntary sector - Warwickshire Welfare Rights - to increase the amount of money available to the most vulnerable people through claiming the benefits they should be getting. Information is being used to identify people who may be entitled to benefits but are not claiming - in

particular pensioners and carers. Benefits take-up has increased across all districts. For example, in Stratford-on-Avon District this meant an extra £250,000 in benefits being awarded to the vulnerable and those households most in need.

Demand for debt counselling is high and increasing. People in this situation currently have to wait to see a case officer with the Citizens Advice Bureau. But money is being injected to pay for more advisers. There is also a new scheme in the pipeline aimed at ensuring people get professional advice over legal matters and support with court appearances.

All councils are seeing an increase in the number of people claiming benefits to help with their rent and council tax. More help is being given to people who are claiming for the first time and are not familiar with the benefits system.

More is being done to prevent homelessness. There are various schemes such as rent express being used in Stratford District. This is helping people get into affordable rented accommodation. In Nuneaton and Bedworth there is a Housekeeper Partnership which provides professional advice to people at risk of losing their homes at an early stage. They also work with Coventry and Warwickshire Debt Advisory service to help people struggling with their finances.

Warwickshire has an extensive network of help for local businesses and their workers. Some of this is happening on a sub-regional level, covering a partnership of organisations across Warwickshire Coventry and Solihull. Working in this way has secured over £22 million funding to help businesses and training for people becoming redundant. There is a system for linking businesses in difficulty with schemes giving them support and access to funding. Business Coaches have helped 122 Warwickshire businesses within the first three months of start-up.

Most councils have taken action to help small businesses get business rate relief. Most are paying for goods and services quickly and some are helping businesses understand how to bid for council contracts.

Warwickshire County Council is running a "Skills for Jobs" project. It is able to provide advice and support for people made redundant as well as people who are long-term unemployed. There are helpful schemes for people who can get jobs but cannot get to their place of work. This includes bus to work and back schemes in Nuneaton and North Warwickshire. Schemes to help with the cost of attending interviews and childcare are also being considered.

There are many opportunities and help around for people thinking of starting their own business. Some of this is targeted at people who have been made redundant. There are enterprise business centres in Nuneaton, Rugby and Warwick. These provide start-up business accommodation with on-site support. As a response to the market conditions, the Hub centre in Exhall, has created some small enterprise 'pods' for start-up businesses unable to afford the expense of a full unit. 5 of the 6 units are now occupied. A full-time enterprise coach has assisted 48 people in providing bespoke business start-up advice between April and June 2009.

Warwickshire County Council provides over 200 industrial and commercial

workspaces. Most of these are located in areas where more help for the local economy is needed. The Council is being more flexible with its leases and licences and is looking at ways of providing more help to tenants who are struggling to pay their rents.

The number of empty shops in Warwickshire has increased, but towns are not being hit any harder than anywhere else. Action has been taken in all of Warwickshire's town centres to help bring back confidence to the high street. Most have a programme of festivals and events, and are improving marketing to encourage more local shopping.

Tourism in Warwickshire is benefiting from the economic downturn. Tourism plays an important part in the local economy, particularly in the south of the county. There is still some way to go to get back to peak levels, but many local attractions are seeing strong growth in the number of ticket sales and visitors.

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/>

Alternative formats - If you require a copy of PDF documents in this site in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call: 0844 798 7070

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