



Introduction

The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) has delegated performance monitoring of the Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) to the senior officer led sub-group known as the KCSP Working Group, along with relevant priority leads from the partner agencies.

The following report includes a summary of performance and contextual information along with the actions undertaken by partners to tackle the CSA priorities. These are updated by partners and reviewed on a regular basis by the Working Group, any significant changes or areas of concern are reported to the governing group (the KCSP) for consideration as part of the reporting cycle. The priorities identified in the Kent Community Safety Agreement published in April 2022 (and covered within this report) are:

- Domestic Abuse
- Road Safety
- Preventing Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Substance Misuse
- Serious Violence and Organised Crime
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People
- Preventing Extremism and Hate
- Violence Against Women and Girls

Priority: Domestic Abuse

Context

Domestic Abuse (DA) has been identified as a priority for all twelve local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) either as a stand-alone priority or as part of a broader theme and following the latest annual review it remains a priority within the county agreement.

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence but takes many forms. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines Domestic Abuse as: physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; psychological, emotional or other abuse. It can include a single incident or repeated patterns of abusive behaviour. The person carrying out the behaviour and the person directly receiving the abuse must be over 16. Children are now defined as victims of abuse in their own right if they see, hear, or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either the victim or perpetrator.

Legislation and Statutory Duties

The Domestic Abuse Act received royal assent in April 2021 and introduced measures at both a national and local level. The changes introduced by the Act include a statutory definition of domestic abuse; introduction of a Domestic Abuse Commissioner; a new domestic abuse protection notice and order; and a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to survivors and their children in safe accommodation (refuge, sanctuary, secondary or move on accommodation and specialist accommodation).

Tier one authorities have a duty to:

- Appoint a multiagency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board. This was appointed in May 2021 and is Chaired by an Assistant Director in Adult Social Care and Health (KCC) reporting

up to the multi-agency Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group.

- Assess the need for accommodation based support - 2020, 2021 & 2022 needs assessments have been completed. Data from the latest assessment is presented below.
- Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of support within safe accommodation. The 2020-2023 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy has been published and incorporates safe accommodation duties, and the 2024-2029 strategy draft will be out for consultation between the 24th July – 16th October 2023.
- Monitor and evaluate the strategy. Progress is monitored via a delivery plan managed by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. A progress report is being published with the strategy.

Prevalence

According to the Office for National (ONS) report providing an 'Overview of Domestic Abuse in England and Wales' for year ending March 2022 (published in November 2022)¹ the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)² estimated that 5.0% of adults (6.9% women and 3.0% men) aged 16 years and over, experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022; this equates to an estimated 2.4 million adults (1.7 million women and 699,000 men). Approximately 1 in 5 adults aged 16 years and over (10.4 million) had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years. There was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse experienced by adults aged 16 to 59 years in the last year, compared with the year ending March 2020; a year largely unaffected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the last time the data was collected.

The police recorded 1,500,369 domestic abuse related incidents and crimes in England and Wales in the year ending March 2022; 910,980 of these were recorded as domestic abuse related crimes³. The number of domestic abuse-related crimes has continued to increase in recent years with the latest figure 7.7% higher than the year ending March 2021, and 14.1% higher than the year ending March 2020. As the CSEW showed no change when compared with before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the increase in domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police may reflect increased reporting.

In the same time period as above (2021/22) Kent Police recorded a total of 59,137 domestic abuse related crimes and incidents, of which 38,973 were recorded as domestic abuse related crimes³. Compared to 2020/21, there was a slight decrease (-0.9%) in the number of domestic abuse related crimes recorded; 9,109 of the domestic abuse related crimes recorded in 2021/22 in Kent were stalking and harassment³.

Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment

As detailed above the Local Partnership Board has the responsibility for conducting a Needs Assessment⁴. In 2020, a full Needs Assessment for Kent and Medway was published. This was updated in 2021, focusing on support in safe accommodation, in line with the Act. In 2022, the Needs Assessment included an update of key metrics around the profile of domestic abuse in Kent (excluding Medway) and focused on developing an understanding of domestic abuse in relation to children and young people.

Key findings from the 2022 Needs Assessment showed⁴:

- 94% of survivors accessed support via community-based provision in 2021/22 (provided through the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service and the Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service).
- Most districts in Kent have a higher number of domestic abuse related crimes per 1,000 population than the national average, with the exception of West Kent districts.
- The proportion of repeat domestic abuse crime victims has increased over the past 5 years to 43.7% in 2021.

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- In 2021/22, there was a 10% increase in Kent households owed prevention or relief duty due to domestic abuse compared to the previous year.
- The Children's Commissioner modelled prevalence estimates 20,615 children aged 0 – 17 in Kent are living in households where a parent is suffering domestic abuse.
- In 2021, 40% of domestic abuse incidents reported to Kent Police had a child (or children) recorded as an involved party (where they may have witnessed the abuse). This equates to around 1,500 incidents per month.
- The reach of support for children and young people aged under 16 was around 1,200 in 2021/22, which is relatively low in comparison to the estimated number living with domestic abuse in their family.

Service Provision

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) commenced in April 2017. It is jointly funded by KCC, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Kent Fire and Rescue and District and Boroughs and managed by KCC Adults Commissioning on behalf of these partner agencies. The contract includes accommodation-based services, such as refuges and community-based support for those aged 16+. Through collaboration with the PCC a single point of access was added to their wider Victim Support contract.

A formal review including evaluation of the performance of the contract was completed in 2022 and the KIDAS service was found to be good and delivering positive outcomes for victims of domestic abuse. This informed implementation of the second contract extension opportunity until 31 March 2026.

In 2022/23 the single point of access, delivered by Victim Support, received over 22,000 referrals. Of these 3% were from individuals who were not resident to Kent, 1,716 (8%) were assessed to be at high risk of harm or homicide, 8,713 (39%) medium risk and 11,670 (53%) standard risk. The Single Point of Access makes safe contact with the individual, offers initial safety planning advice and onward referral, with consent, to the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service. Throughout 2022/23 KIDAS received 3723 referrals for support in refuge and the community with 2,906 individuals being supported in total (209 of those were in refuge).

The KIDAS contract has enabled KCC and its public sector partners, to further develop partnership working by supporting the delivery of services including the Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (HIDVA) Service. This is funded by the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System and is being expanded to Acute sites within the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust from June 2022.

New services have been delivered to address the findings of the Needs Assessment and support the council to meet its new statutory responsibilities around providing support to those residing in safe accommodation. This includes the Specialist IDVA Service, Tenancy Support Worker and Enhanced Therapeutic Support. Further new services have been developed to extend the councils safe accommodation support offer. This includes the Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents Scheme (SAFER) that is currently undergoing procurement. This Scheme will enable those experiencing domestic abuse to remain in their own homes safely if they choose to do so, where the perpetrator does not live in the accommodation.

In June 2023, Childrens Commissioners launched a support service for children and young people (0-18) who are residing in safe accommodation in Kent. The service will offer a range of therapeutic and non-therapeutic, activity-based support to enable young people to feel empowered to make positive decisions and identify the things that will have an impact on their sense of wellbeing. The service was codesigned with partner organisations and young people to ensure it best meets the

needs of the service users.

In the community, partners also work together to deliver Domestic Abuse (DA) One Stop Shops (OSS) which are a multiagency endeavour to help victims of domestic abuse in the local communities across Kent. KIDAS providers have an active role in the delivery of OSS. They offer access to impartial advice, information and support from a range of agencies, under one roof, free of charge and accessible without pre-arrangement. Between July 2021 and June 2022, 620 face to face visits were recorded in One Stop Shops, with a further 157 accessing support virtually (777 visits in total). During this period, approximately 6.7% of One Stop shop visitors were male and records show that there were 1,011 children living in the households of One Stop Shop visitors. Of those that were asked if they found their visit useful, nearly all (99.4%) responded positively.

The Know, See, Speak Out; End Domestic Abuse Communications Campaign was in its second year in 2022-23. This campaign includes free monthly content focusing on key content areas, connecting with a selection of awareness days and mini-campaigns such as Valentine's, Christmas and 16 Days of Action.

The 16 Days of Action is the peak of the annual campaign, this year connecting to the global 16 Days campaign, the White Ribbon campaign and the Football World Cup and #TheGoal campaign. This included the launch of a new Employer Champion programme, encouraging people to undertake free bitesize training and sharing the campaign with friends, family and colleagues.

New in 2022 were dedicated social media channels on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to enhance awareness raising efforts and offer reposting for those organisations that may find posting directly difficult. Across the year the campaign had 1173 mentions across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Web, a total of 6.9m reach (total seen content), 119 organisations shared campaign content, 74 Employer Champions and 143 employers were engaged directly, and 303 partners and 151 football clubs were contacted directly for the Employer Champion and World Cup aspects across the 16 Days campaign. A partnership with Stagecoach resulted in posters shared on all buses across the Kent & Medway network. The Kent & Medway DA social channels extended reach and engagement and enabled partner sharing. There were 8,017 post reach, 3,530 page reach, 112 shares and 242 reactions.

A MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) is a meeting where information is shared on victims at the highest risk of serious harm or murder as a result of domestic abuse. It is attended by representatives of local agencies such as police and health. From 2020, the meetings have taken place fortnightly. Across Kent & Medway there are 13 MARACs, one in each district. In 2022/23, there were 2,862 adults discussed at MARAC in Kent and Medway, an increase of 4.7% compared to the previous year. In 2022/23, 3,775 children were identified as living within households where high-risk domestic abuse was taking place and are classed as victims in their own right. A review of MARAC has taken place and agreement has been made to change how MARAC functions in Kent and Medway. A multiagency project hub is due to be in place later this year.

The Police and Crime Commissioner fund services in response to domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) which includes the following contracts:

- Collaborate Digital, this has been commissioned to deliver universal, open to all, age-appropriate messages to children and young people with the aim of building social skills, aiding decision-making, supporting resilience, and changing behaviours. Delivery commenced in the east of the county in January, with 33 schools able to receive the programme during 2023. Over 90 schools applied, demonstrating the high need for the intervention.
- Additional funding was awarded for 2023/24 to increase capacity within domestic abuse and sexual violence support services. This included:

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- Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) and Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA). Funding aimed at increasing the number of ISVAs and IDVAs available in Kent by 18.5FTE, including Child and Young Person (CYP) IDVA's across 10 services.
- Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Ringfence Funding (£936,104) aimed at increasing the availability and capacity of support services in Kent. This funding has enabled additional posts to be recruited such as a specialist IDVA for the 16-25 age group and an IDVA to support older victims of DA, alongside additional Outreach Workers, a free legal advice service, stalking advocates, therapy, and counselling.
- Approximately £1.6 million of additional funding from the Home Office was secured to extend and enhance the delivery of domestic abuse and stalking perpetrator interventions in Kent. This funding commenced on 1 April 2023 and runs to 31 March 2025. Delivery will provide intensive multi-agency case management through a team consisting of Kent Police, the perpetrator interventions provider (Interventions Alliance), and victim services (Lookahead and Victim Support).

The following actions and progress updates highlight just some of the key areas that partners have been working together on to help tackle the issues of domestic abuse and to support victims.

Notes:

1) Office for National Statistics. Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview: November 2022

2) Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) March 2022. The CSEW data presented in this release for the year ending March 2022, are not badged as National Statistics. They are based on six months of data collection between October 2021 and March 2022. Caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates.

3) Office for National Statistics. Domestic Abuse Prevalence and Trends, England and Wales: Year Ending March 2022 (published November 2022)

4) Kent Public Health Observatory. Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment Refresh (published December 2022)

Actions 2022/23	Progress
Commission and support the Domestic Homicide (DHR) process on behalf of CSPs across Kent and Medway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2022/23 the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) received seven notifications and has commissioned the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) to undertake five new DHRs. During the same period two DHRs were published. The KCST continues to manage a number of cases which are at various stages of the process. • Learning from reviews is shared with partners via presentations at CSP meetings and short written briefings on each published review is shared across a variety of partners and frontline staff via email and the Safer Communities Portal (access available via MS Teams for professional colleagues). • In 2022 five DHR Lessons Identified seminars were delivered aimed at professionals and frontline practitioners based on different themes including: Domestic Abuse (DA) and Young People, DA & Suicide, DA & Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) involving carers, DA & harmful practices and cultural competence. Over 600 people attended these events with 87% rating it as excellent or very good. • The multi-agency DHR Steering Group meets quarterly to monitor the DHR process and oversee delivery of the action plans associated with each published review. Between April 2022 and March 2023, over 100 actions have been signed-off, across several different reviews. In addition seven reviews were fully signed-off with all recommendations implemented.
Refresh and maintain the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the Know See Speak Out: End Domestic Abuse Campaign, funded by KIDAS and Medway Council, website content has been updated. Content has been added and updated in relation to the

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<p>Services Website and raise awareness</p>	<p>campaigns or social media focuses. This includes toolkits created for professionals to access information and tools, webinars and downloadable campaign material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated or created pages include; taking action and joining the Know, See, Speak Out: End Domestic Abuse campaign, Become an End Domestic Abuse Employer Champion, the End Domestic Abuse campaign for health professionals, giving information about the Emergency alerts, a page on responding to and supporting friends and family, on mental health and domestic abuse and on domestic abuse myths. • Work is moving forward on reviewing the current Kent and Medway website to seek to improve functionality.
<p>Support delivery of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'progress made' report on the delivery of the 2020 – 2023 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy will be published on the 24th July 23. • KCC SPRCA working with Medway colleagues have led on the development of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 24 – 29. Priorities and commitments have been developed using narratives of lived experiences. The strategy provides partnership commitments which will be monitored via qualitative and quantitative methods by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. • The strategy also works to meet tier 1 obligations linked to safe accommodation (the Domestic Abuse Act).
<p>People experience domestic abuse access effective support which meets their needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of KIDAS contract has been completed and been through internal governance processes to implement the second contract extension until March 2026. Contract performance and review findings were shared at the KCSP in November 2022. • Two new services have been developed to support the council in implementing its new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act. The contract for the Safe Accommodation Support Service, delivering support to children residing in safe accommodation commenced in June 2023. The Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents service, expanding the council's safe accommodation support offer is currently being commissioned and expected to commence by the end of 2023.

Priority: Road Safety

Context

Road Safety is often raised by communities as a key concern, especially the perception of road danger and speeding vehicles. In April 2022 the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner published a new Police and Crime Plan entitled 'Making Kent Safer' 2022-2025 which outlines the key priorities for the Force and included a new priority on Road Safety and the Vision Zero Strategy (see below for more details). Whilst most local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) do not include road safety as a priority within their local plans it is not simply because it is not a concern but that local partnerships are limited in their ability to impact on this particular issue. At a county level Road Safety remains a priority within the CSA.

Joint working between agencies is key to supporting Road Safety and in Kent the 'Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership (KMSRP)' brings together key partners to coordinate road safety interventions, enforcement, engineering and supporting publicity. The Partnership is in the process of restructuring and reorganisation which is detailed further below. It is governed by a Strategic Board that is now chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent and includes a Cabinet

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Member and Head of Service for KCC, Director of Operations from Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) and Assistant Chief Constable.

Data from personal injury crashes is collected by Kent Police and then cleansed and validated by Kent County Council. Following this, the data is sent to the Department for Transport (DfT) for final review against national figures before it is made public. The DfT annual report on Road Accidents and Safety Statistics for 2022 is not due for publication until September 2023. We are able to share provisional data for 2022 only at this stage.

At the time of writing the Department for Transport is yet to publish the Annual road casualty statistics for 2022, however the Reported road casualties Great Britain, provisional results: 2022 was published on 24 May 2023¹ and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-provisional-results-2022>

Provisional data for 2022 shows 3,394 total Collisions (41 Fatal, 586 Serious and 2,767 Slight) resulting in 4,532 Casualties (44 Fatal, 641 Serious and 3,847 Slight) on Kent and National Highways Roads (excluding Medway). Compared to 2021 data there was an overall increase in collisions across all severities of 233 and increase in casualties by 345. Since the introduction of Kent County Council's Vision Zero strategy in September 2021, Killed or Very Seriously Injured Casualties (KVSIs) are being looked at more closely rather than the traditional KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured). On this basis there was a decrease in Fatal casualties of 3 and a decrease of 20 KVISI casualties compared to 2021. Although the data shows an approximate 6.8% increase in total casualties in 2022, there is however a 12.1% decrease in the number of KVISI casualties when compared to 2021 figures.

The drop in KVISI casualties for 2022 is reflective against the DfT, Road Traffic Statistics report, published in September 2022 (<https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/summary>) which shows Traffic levels in 2021 was 12.1% lower when compared to 2019 pre-pandemic levels. At the time of writing, the Traffic data was not available for 2022, however an increase of all severity casualties against a potential drop in traffic nationally would be unusual.

2022 casualty data in Kent has seen an increase in pedestrian, motorcycle, cars, goods vehicles and micro mobility (electric scooters and electric cycles) casualties compared to 2021. This reflects anecdotal evidence that the 'gig' economy of increased delivery driving could be resulting in greater numbers of vehicle conflicts. Also, the financial viability and cheaper form of travel for those in the micro-mobility category are increasing numbers. However cyclists saw a decrease in overall casualties of 37 when compared to 2021.

Overall casualties have been declining in Kent, they have decreased by 1259 which equates to 21.7% in the 5 year period since 2017. The adoption of Vision Zero and the principles of a Safe Systems approach seeks to continue this decrease in the number of KVISI's.

In September 2021 KCC adopted a five year Road Safety Strategy for Kent and a 30 year vision². The long-term vision behind the strategy is that by 2050 there will be zero, or as close as possible, road fatalities or life-changing injuries on our road network. The strategy uses a safe system approach. Safe System is an approach to road safety and traffic management that starts with the idea that everyone has the right to be safe on the highway network. This is rooted in the belief that every traffic death reflects a failure in the system, and that none are acceptable. It is a methodology that sees all aspects of the system interacting with each other and looks at network risks to prioritise interventions. The Safe System Approach is a proactive methodology to achieve zero deaths. This approach comprises the following themes:

- Safe roads and streets – designing our highway network to reduce the chances and consequences of collisions.

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- Safe speeds – designing roads and enforcing speed limits appropriate to the usage and environment.
- Safe behaviour – education, training, publicity, engineering, enforcement, and technology to improve the way people use Kent’s roads and streets.
- Safe vehicles – ensure the vehicles on the Kent network are as safe as they can be by promoting safer technology for car and goods vehicle fleets.
- Post collision response – react as quickly as possible to crashes, study the causes of the most serious collisions, and provide support for the victims of road crashes.

The restructure and reorganisation of the KMSRP, mentioned above, now reflects the safe system structure and methodology, with working groups for each of the five system themes as well as over-arching working groups focusing on the following:

- Tactical Coordination of the partnership.
- Communication and engagement.
- Performance monitoring.
- Killed or Seriously Injured incidents.
- Weekly partnership activity.

The KCSP will continue to work with partners to support the road safety agenda including raising awareness with partners around the Vision Zero strategy. The following actions and progress updates highlight just some of the key areas that partners have already worked on together on to help address road safety.

Notes:

1) Reported road casualties Great Britain, provisional results: 2022 (published 24 May 2023)

2) Vision Zero The Road Safety Strategy for Kent (Adopted July 2021)

Since the roll out of CRASH (Collision Recording and Sharing) a number of Highway Authorities using the system (including Kent County Council) have seen an uplift in the number of serious casualties being reported. The DfT has advised that part of the increase is likely to be related to the CRASH system where previous categorisation of some slight injuries may now mean they are recorded as serious injuries.

Actions 2022/23	Progress
Raise awareness of road safety campaigns across partnerships to facilitate joint working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership continues to support the delivery of the strategy and its working groups will develop delivery plans that are aligned with the Strategy and the Safe System approach. • Regular meetings with the KCST and KCSP to establish opportunities to work collaboratively and share information on school work and campaigns for road safety. • The newly restructured Road Safety & Active Travel Group within the Transportation department will host internal training and development to promote the delivery of the partnership actions and further encourage Collaborative working.
Support delivery of Vision Zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually a delivery plan is created based on the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) calendar. Members of the Safer Roads for Kent Partnership work together to facilitate communications with the plan highlighting joint working events and campaigns to ensure consistency within the partnership. • The KCC Safer Road Users Team joined the expert panel in May at the Young Driver Focus Conference. The portfolio lead for Young Driver focused interventions has been selected onto the working group to contribute to the Best Practice national guidance for interventions

	<p>and campaigns within road Safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partners of the Safer Roads Partnership are supporting Vision Zero and the Safe System approach through shared collaborative process for education and campaign work across all road user groups.• Collaborative working across a number of events to ensure visible collaborative presence (including Kent police open day, Fire station open days , DVSA centres).• Discussions are in progress around developing the online Safer Communities Portal and using the KCST e-bulletin to promote campaigns locally to district partners.
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Priority: Preventing Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Context

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) has been identified as a priority for all twelve local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) either as a stand-alone priority or as part of a broader theme and following the latest annual review it remains a priority within the county agreement along with preventing neighbourhood crime’.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported 1 million incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) recorded by Police in England and Wales in the year ending December 2022¹. This was a 29% decrease compared with the year ending December 2021 (1.4 million incidents) and a 23% fall compared with the year ending March 2020 (1.3 million incidents)¹. Levels of ASB incidents were higher in the year ending December 2021, in part, because of people reporting breaches of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions in their local area since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, which most police forces logged under ASB on their crime and incident recording systems¹.

In Kent and Medway between April 2022 and March 2023, Kent Police recorded 27,528 incidents of anti-social behaviour, which is an 18% decrease compared to the previous 12 months when there were 32,564 incidents recorded (2021/22). The most prevalent types of ASB are Rowdy or nuisance gathering in public, Drunken and rowdy behaviour, Neighbour disputes/nuisance, and Motor vehicle nuisance on road inc. noise.

In January 2021 the Home Office published revised Statutory Guidance, around ASB powers, for frontline professionals and in 2021-22, district/borough partners worked together to jointly review and refresh the ASB Case Review process, commonly referred to as the ‘Community Trigger’ incorporating the Government’s updated statutory guidance around ASB tools and powers. During the same year the Kent Community Safety Team commissioned the delivery of an ASB training programme for district / borough colleagues to support partners across the county, focusing on Community Protection Notices and Civil Injunctions; as well as providing training in relation to OSARA problem-solving which is aimed at addressing ASB issues although the principles can be used to assess a wide range of issues. The delivery of OSARA training sessions by members of the KCST continued in 2022/23 with further training sessions planned for 2023/24.

In March 2023 the Government launched their Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan² which has three main aims:

- to ensure ASB is treated with the urgency it deserves – including dedicated funding for PCCs working with others to target hotspot enforcement from 2024
- changing laws and systems to take a zero-tolerance approach – including banning of nitrous oxide, new laws to replace the Vagrancy Act, etc.
- giving the police and other agencies the tools to discourage the blight of ASB – including higher

finances, and stronger means for councils to revitalize communities

The action plan sets out the range of responsibilities for partners in relation to ASB including PCCs, Police Forces, Local Authorities, Probation, Youth Services, Youth Offending, Housing, and Health Services.

Alongside the publication of the ASB Action Plan the Home Office also published a research and analysis paper in March 2023 entitled: '*Anti-social behaviour: impacts on individuals and local communities*'³ which states that despite often being described as 'low-level crime', existing evidence suggests anti-social behaviour (ASB) can result in a range of negative emotional, behavioural, social, health and financial impacts. The key findings from the report noted that demographics and personal circumstances were associated with different types of ASB that were likely to be experienced or witnessed. Those living in the most deprived areas were more likely to have experienced or witnessed ASB in the last 12 months compared to those in less deprived areas. Those with long-term physical or mental health conditions were more likely to have experienced or witnessed ASB in the last 12 months compared to those without the same conditions³.

ASB had impacted nearly all participants' quality of life to some degree. This impact was greater when:

- ASB was personally experienced compared to witnessed
- the ASB incidents were more frequent
- participants had certain personal or situational circumstances that increased their likelihood of experiencing ASB impacts; these included individuals with mental or physical health conditions, those living in more deprived areas and younger people, among others³

The study helped to quantify the individual impacts of ASB. Emotional impacts were found among nearly all participants, with annoyance (for 56% of participants) and anger (for 42%) being the most widespread impacts across ASB types³. Fear, loss of confidence, difficulty sleeping and anxiety were also common emotional impacts. While they were less commonly experienced (each by around a quarter of participants), they were described as being more severe and longer lasting³.

ASB also impacted wider communities, both positively and negatively. Participants recognised that while ASB in general could reduce trust and a sense of community by making people avoid interaction, it could also bring people together by having a common cause³.

In conjunction with the publication of the ASB Action Plan and the Research report the government also launched a consultation⁴ in March 2023 around the relationship between CSPs and PCCs with the aim of enhancing the accountability model of CSPs and considering how CSPs and PCCs work together to tackle ASB with the aim of strengthening the co-operative working. The consultation also considered the expansion of ASB powers and whether amendments were required to ensure they are being used effectively. The consultation closed on 22 May and the public feedback is being analysed.

ASB continues to be identified as an issue across the county and remains a priority within the Kent Community Safety Agreement. The KCSP remains committed to supporting local partners where possible but acknowledges that the operational activity is undertaken at a district/borough level by community safety partners. In 2023/24 the KCSP is planning to arrange an event to bring partners together to consider the aims of the Government Action Plan, to share good practice, to enhance partnership working and to discuss potential new powers as a result of the above publications.

The following actions and progress updates highlight just some of the key areas that partners have worked together on to help tackle the issues of ASB.

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Notes:

- 1) Office for National Statistics. *Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2022 (published 27 April 2023) – [All figures exclude Devon and Cornwall Police and Lincolnshire Police].*
- 2) Policy Paper - *Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan (published 27 March 2023)*
- 3) Home Office Research & Analysis – *Anti-social behaviour: impacts on individuals and local communities (published 27 March 2023)*
- 4) Home Office Consultation – *Community Safety Partnerships Review and Anti-Social Behaviour Powers (published 27 March 2023)*

Actions 2022/23	Progress
Implement a framework for identification and use of ASB tools and powers across partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Police records and details the use of all their ASB powers within each district. The records are accessible to Police via a central repository on SharePoint. Work is continuing with IT to develop a tool to count each power as it is being used. • Local authorities also keep their own records on the use of ASB powers locally but further work is needed in relation to the possible central collation of data.
Deliver OSARA Problem Solving training to partners and ensure the learning is being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSARA training has been delivered to district / borough community safety colleagues in Maidstone and Tonbridge & Malling by members of the KCST. • Training has also been delivered to local policing teams and training dates have been scheduled for Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS). • Further partnership training sessions are being planned for 2023/24.
Work with partners to identify and share best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two half-day Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS) were delivered virtually in 2022/23 on a variety of topics, including presentations from district/borough community safety colleagues sharing information about local ASB projects. The CSIS events have been well attended and well received. • Monthly e-bulletins continue to be shared with approx. 200 partners and colleagues across Kent. • An awareness events calendar produced by the KCST is regularly updated quarterly and shared with partners via the e-bulletin.

Priority: Substance Misuse

Context

In a National review of drugs and drug treatment services by Dame Carol Black, it was found that the illicit drugs market in the UK, is worth an estimated £9.4 billion a year, with around 3 million people taking drugs in England and Wales including 300,000 in England taking the most harmful drugs (opiates and/or crack cocaine)¹. Kent Drug deaths from 2018 to 2020 were the highest on record (182 deaths to Kent residents) and the Kent Alcohol specific mortality rate is 10 per 100,000 people which while lower than the national average is still the highest rate it has been in Kent since 2010. In the last half year (6 months of data) in 2023 we have seen so far 115 sudden deaths related to drug and alcohol. If this becomes a full year effect – this will be an increase in deaths in 2023. Drug and alcohol addiction fuels many costly social problems, including homelessness and rising demands on children’s social care¹. The drugs market is driving most of the nation’s crimes: half of all homicides and half of acquisitive crimes are linked to drugs². People with serious drug addiction occupy one in three prison places². Taking the health harms, costs of crime and wider impacts on society together, it is estimated that the total costs of drugs to society is over £19 billion,

which is more than twice the value of the market itself¹. These findings were anticipated in the Kent Needs Assessments on drugs and alcohol in 2020. Here findings of the increasing complexity, needs of rough sleepers, high degree of co-occurring conditions (mental illness and substance misuse), vulnerability of slipping through gaps in services, poor physical health outcomes, family trauma and early death were outlined alongside changes in substance misuse supply and the harm resulting from complex drug misuse involving cocaine (as well as alcohol and opiates).

The department of health estimates that there is a £3 social return for every £1 spent on alcohol treatment³. Alcohol misuse is the biggest risk factor for death, ill-health and disability among 15-49 year-olds in the UK and the fifth biggest risk factor across all ages⁴. It is estimated that there are around 10 million adults in England who drink above the UK Chief Medical Officers' low risk guidelines⁵ and in Kent, around 308,000 were drinking above the recommended levels of alcohol in July 2021³.

National & Local Strategies & Reviews

In response to the Professor Dame Carol Black review mentioned above, the government published its 10 year drugs plan to combat illegal drugs titled 'From Harm to Hope' sets out how national and local partners will focus on delivering three strategic priorities: Break drug supply chains; Deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system; Achieve a generational shift in demand for drugs⁶. By the end of 2024/25 the aim is to:

- prevent nearly 1,000 deaths, reversing the upward trend in drug deaths for the first time in a decade⁶
- deliver a phased expansion of treatment capacity with at least 54,500 new high-quality treatment places (an increase of 20%) – with a specific focus on opiate and crack users, rough sleepers and offenders with addiction⁶
- contributed to the prevention of three-quarters of a million crimes including 140,000 neighbourhood crimes through the increases in drug treatment⁶
- close over 2,000 more county lines through relentless and robust action to break the model and bring down the gangs running these illegal lines⁶
- deliver 6,400 major and moderate disruptions (20% increase) against activities of organised criminals⁶

The Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy for 2023 to 2028 is overseen by the Kent Substance Misuse Alliance (a Strategic partnership meeting) and is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health. The alliance is a partnership of key stakeholders including Kent Police, the Police & Crime Commissioner, KCC Commissioners, NHS commissioners, Mental Health Trust, KCC Safeguarding, Social Care, Trading Standards, Community Safety and others who work together to tackle alcohol and drug related harms. All the priorities in the Kent Strategy are taken from local needs and stakeholder's views and are also aligned to the National Drug Strategy: "From Harm to Hope". The Alliance governance is reporting to both the Kent and Medway Health and Well Being Board and the Kent Community Safety Partnership. This is important for the wide-reaching nature of substance misuse and the importance of tackling supply, crime and disorder.

The heart of this Strategy is to empower, encourage and support individuals and communities to take a more active role in preventing and reducing the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol in Kent.

Consultation and Publication of the Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy

There was an extensive consultation of the strategy – both stakeholders and public. As a result the 13 priorities were accepted and strengthened in relation to commissioning, service user involvement and children and young people. Stakeholders also strengthened the need to progress better outcomes for people with substance misuse disorder and mental illness and better access to recovery and employment services and better signposting into treatment via police custody and

hospital admission. These have been reflected in the new strategy which is published on the KCC website ([Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2023-2028 | Let's talk Kent](#))⁷.

Corporate responsibilities

The 10-year Drug and Alcohol Strategy is required to establish a **combating drugs partnership** that will bring together local partners in order to understand their populations, identify challenges and solutions. These Partnerships will be accountable for delivering the outcomes in the National Outcomes Framework with a named Senior Responsible Officer reporting to central government. Alcohol harms are implicit in this government guideline.

Therefore in Kent – we have set up the systems. Our strategy is in place. Our network is in place via the Alliance. This has a named Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) who in Kent is Dr Anjan Ghosh (Director of Public Health) and will report to central government and hold delivery partners to account. The SRO will be responsible for ensuring the right local partners come together, building strong collective engagement, and designing a shared local plan to deliver against the National Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework. The SRO has created an executive group to drive the strategy and has key senior partners from the Police, Probation services, KCC commissioning, PCC and Providers.

Three main aims are:

- Reducing the harmful effects of drug & alcohol on the Kent population.
- Reducing health inequalities caused by drug & alcohol misuse
- Reducing crime and the economic burdens from drug & alcohol misuse

The 13 Priorities for the Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy⁷ are:

- Improve Prevention, early intervention and behaviour change
- Early Help: Create better Prevention to Treatment Pathways
- Improve hospital and acute pathways to treatment
- Better support for Children and young people living with alcohol misusing parents / Preventing inter-generational alcohol misuse
- Tackling High Rates of Suicide and Self Harm associated with substance misuse
- Continue Improvements to Treatment and Recovery Services
- Improve Criminal Justice Routes to Substance Misuse Treatment
- Improve Treatment and Recovery for Targeted Groups/ Vulnerable People
- Improve Pathways to Treatment and Recovery to Rough Sleepers
- Improve treatment and recovery for people with co-occurring conditions
- Work in partnership to share data and intelligence in order to identify those at risk of drug / alcohol related harm & exploitation and to provide safeguarding and intensive support
- Disrupt Supply of Illegal Drugs

Need for Services in Kent

In 2021, the deaths in Kent that are related to alcohol are 36.6 per 100,000⁸. This equates to 587 people in 2021/22. This is a little lower than the national rate which is 38.5 per 100,000. However Thanet and Gravesham rates are higher than Kent's average at 37 per 100,000 but still below the national average. In Kent and Medway (2021/22) there were over 6,800 hospital admissions in which alcohol is recorded as a primary or secondary diagnosis (including those admitted for toxic effect of alcohol, mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol, etc).

Given the increasing number of people in Kent drinking to hazardous and harmful levels (22% of the Kent population are drinking over recommended units each week and 15% are binge drinking) this is leading to a higher incidence of people becoming physically dependent on Alcohol. Over 14,000 people in Kent are estimated to need help for alcohol dependence and currently only 2,600

are in treatment creating an unmet need of 82% (higher than national average of 80%). For Crack and Opiates – there is an estimated 5,600 people in Kent needing help for this and a treatment gap of around 63% (using OHID estimates).

In Kent and Medway there were over 1,400 hospital admissions in which substance misuse is recorded as a primary or secondary diagnosis (including those admitted for mental and behavioural disorders resulting from opioids, cannabinoids, cocaine, etc.).

People with mental health issues, who are not accessing care, are known to self-medicate with alcohol and drugs. Co-occurring conditions (Dual Diagnosis) refers to the co-existence of mental health and substance misuse problems. Problematic substance use is one of the most common co-morbid conditions among people with a major mental illness, with prevalence of mental health of around 75% in users of drug services and 85% among users of alcohol services². In Kent the Treatment Substance Misuse Suicidality Audit in 2018 found that 15 to 25% of clients had suicide intent and 41% reported a mental health diagnosis.⁹

Given the figures above – getting people into high quality structured treatment as soon as possible is a key priority for Kent.

Treatment

During 2022/23 there were just over 5,000 adults accessing structured treatment (for both drugs and alcohol) in Kent with over 1,300 successfully completing treatment free from dependence. During the same period over 1,500 young people received group work and almost 300 accessed structured treatment.

In recognition of the recommendations outlined by Professor Dame Carol Black and the government's 10-year drug strategy, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) has announced a three-year funding package for local authorities. The funding named the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant, is aimed at implementing local measures to address the aims of the treatment and recovery section of the national drug strategy. As a result there will be an investment of approx. £7 million into Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services in Kent over the next 3 years which will increase capacity to tackle substance misuse, provide access to the most vulnerable groups including rough sleepers and those people with co-occurring conditions and via the criminal justice pathways.

This is a direct result of the Dame Carol Black Review and the Government's response to the national crisis in drug and alcohol services. There is national stipulation that there must be no further disinvestment into substance misuse treatment services for the services to remain safe. Kent has traditionally always had better outcomes than the national average, however nationally all services have had cuts over the last 10 years and subsequently a loss in quality services has resulted. Kent services have maintained good ratings however with increased prevalence and complexity services have been stretched. Therefore the re-investment into the services has been welcomed by providers enabling them to re-instate outreach services, psychology services, better training and increased volume of people accessing rehab and detox services. It is noted that it is important to acknowledge the impact of covid 19 pandemic on both the changes on alcohol consumption and access to care and treatment.

Partner services have also been significantly re-organised over the last few years (probation, social care, mental health) and all services are facing increased complexity of patients, a renewed need to work together and improve the pathways to care and support.

One of the key challenges facing the partnership and the commissioned services are getting more numbers into treatment as these are falling nationally and locally. Some of the reasons for this may

be:

- A rapid onset of funding in a highly stretched sector – leading to pressures in recruitment and delays in getting people into post
- Increased complexity of service users and pathways e.g. rough sleepers
- A lack of clarity of pathways into treatment from the public.

Each one of the above has an action plan attached – particularly the emphasis on clarity of pathways into treatment and the commissioning team in KCC is working on better messaging and marketing.

Individuals that require support from drug and alcohol treatment services often face multiple challenges in addressing their addiction. Individuals have housing-related challenges, co-morbidities and mental health conditions all of which must be addressed in addition to treating the drug and alcohol addiction in order to successfully reach abstinence. However, often individuals face barriers to accessing care services due to their substance misuse. Therefore, the approach to drug and alcohol treatment is one that must be a multi-agency approach.

Substance Misuse continues to be identified as a priority for most of the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) either as a stand-alone priority or as part of a broader theme and following the latest review it remains a priority within the county agreement. It should be noted that there are strong links between Substance Misuse and other CSA priorities such as ‘Serious Violence and Organised Crime’ in the form of County Lines drug dealing and other associated activities and as such there may be some actions in the 2022/23 action plan which link across more than one priority.

The following actions and progress updates highlight just some of the key areas that partners are working together on to help tackle the issues of substance misuse. The illegal nature of many drugs and the widespread use of alcohol means actions to tackle misuse must be both practical, cost effective and related to the substance in question.

Notes:

- 1) Home Office. *Independent Report (Dame Carol Black) – Review of drugs: Summary (updated 17 September 2020)*
- 2) Dept. of Health & Social Care. *Independent Report - Review of Drugs part two: prevention, treatment, and recovery (updated 2 August 2021)*
- 3) Kent Public Health Observatory *Alcohol Needs Assessment (December 2021)*
- 4) Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. *Local Alcohol Profiles for England*
- 5) Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. *Guidance - Alcohol: applying All Our Health (Updated 1 March 2022)*
- 6) UK Gov. *Policy Paper. From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives (updated 29 April 2022)*
- 7) *Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2023-2028*
- 8) *Local Alcohol Profiles for England*
- 9) *Report to the Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board (19th March 2019) – Reducing Alcohol Consumption Deep Dive.*

Public Health Guidance: Alcohol and drug prevention, treatment and recovery: why invest? (published February 2018)

Actions 2022/23	Progress
Work in partnership to deliver the national 10 year ‘From Harm to Hope’ drugs strategy and the Kent Drug and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kent Substance Misuse Alliance meets on a quarterly basis. • Following the public consultation of the strategy analysis has been completed. Feedback from the consultation has been used to help finalise the Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy for 2023-2028. The final

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<p>Alcohol Strategy</p> <p><u>Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2023-2028 Let's talk Kent</u></p>	<p>Strategy, alongside the consultation report, and updated Equality Impact Assessment, was presented to the Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee in March 2023 with a recommendation for its adoption. It will also be presented to the KCSP and published.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report and details of the decision will also be made available on the consultation webpage. An email will be sent to stakeholders and people who have asked to be kept informed via Let's talk Kent. • Governance - The Senior Executive Group of the Kent Substance Misuse Alliance / Combatting Drug Partnership was formed during 2022/23 with the first meeting taking place on 27th April '23. The purpose of the Exec Group is to help drive forward the Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy with the particular emphasis on meeting outcomes laid out in the Combating Drug Partnership performance outcomes Framework. • There are currently 13 action plans for the operational aspects of the strategy, one action plan for each of the 13 priorities. Outcome measures are being worked out and a report must go back to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) in July for progress. • Plan for co-production of enhanced and improved treatment pathways including better access to inpatient detox and rehab and hospital liaison • Extensive partnership work and outreach via district councils for rough sleepers to enter treatment • Enhanced employment support opportunities for people entering treatment and recovery. • Better clarity of messaging regarding how to access treatment in Kent • Enhanced Drug and Alcohol Treatment on arrest • A whole system workshop is planned for September 2023 to enhance best practice and improve numbers into treatment services. • Socialise and publicise the Joint Working Protocol for Co-Occurring Conditions (Dual Diagnosis) working closely with Adult Safeguarding colleagues and mental health • Work alongside police partners regarding preventive policing and tackling supply.
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Priority: Serious Violence and Organised Crime

Context

As a result of changes in legislation and government strategies such as the 'Serious and Organised Crime Strategy,' the scope of community safety has expanded over the years beyond the traditional remit of 'crime and ASB' to consider issues such as human trafficking, modern slavery, gangs, organised crime groups (OCGs) etc. In addition, there has been an increased focus around violence reduction, initially with the publishing of the government's Serious Violence Strategy, the development of a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in Kent and more recently the introduction of new legislation and statutory duties for agencies around tackling violence. These issues are a priority for many of the local CSPs as well as the KCSP and as such 'Serious Violence and Organised Crime' remains a priority within the CSA.

Legislation and Strategies

The Government published the refreshed 'Serious and Organised Crime Strategy' in November 2018 with four overarching aims to: disrupt criminal networks, build resilience (*in vulnerable people,*

communities, businesses, systems), stop the problem at source and establish a single, whole system approach. In 2018 the Government also published a Serious Violence Strategy focusing on specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, gun crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. The strategy noted the important links to the Government's work on serious and organised crime, as well as acknowledging that tackling serious violence is not a law enforcement issue alone and requires a multiple strand approach involving a range of partners across different sectors.

In March 2019 the Home Secretary announced £100 million Serious Violence Fund, with around a third of the funding (£35million) being invested in Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) in 18 police force areas across the Country. Kent received £1.16million in 2019/20 to tackle serious violence including establishing a VRU. The VRU is a multi-agency approach bringing together police, health, local authorities, etc. The initial funding from the Government in 2019/20 has been renewed on an annual basis since that date, and in 2022 the Home Office confirmed that the Kent VRU would receive further funding for the next three years until March 2025.

In July 2021 the Government introduced the Beating Crime Plan which sets out the strategic approach to: cutting homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime; exposing and ending hidden harms; and building capability and capacity to deal with fraud and online crime. It complements other existing strategies, and sits alongside other work on hidden harms.

In April 2022, the Government introduced the Serious Violence Duty which was enacted as part of the 'Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022'. In December 2022 the Government published its statutory guidance for responsible authorities on the Serious Violence Duty. The guidance provides information about the new duty including changes to section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, ensuring preventing and reducing serious violence is a priority for community safety partnerships (CSPs). The guidance also outlines the requirement for strategic needs assessments and Serious Violence Strategies and sets the timeframe for delivery. The KCSP is working in partnership with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the 20 specified authorities named in the duty, along with the relevant authorities (Education and Prisons) and other key partners across Kent and Medway to meet the requirements set out in the guidance.

Partnership Response to the requirements of the Serious Violence duty:

- Representatives of the specified authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner met in February 2023 to discuss the response to the duty. The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has responsibilities as the receiver of funding for the duty from the Home Office and the oversight and reporting responsibilities that are associated with the funding. The PCC will use his convening powers for the local partnership arrangements for the Duty to chair a Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (SVPP) Board with representatives from the specified authorities.
- The specified authorities agreed a definition of serious violence for the purposes of the duty which is: *Specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, robbery and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent such as in domestic abuse, sexual offences, gangs, county lines and drug supply.*
- The February meeting agreed that Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are the local partnership model for discharging the Serious Violence Duty. Each CSP is required to produce a strategy to tackle crime and disorder which includes serious violence within their district or borough, and these strategies will reflect the needs of the local communities. Individual CSPs have agreed either to meet the requirements of the duty through the SVPP Board or at a district level through their community safety partnership.
- The initial meeting of the Serious Violence Partnership Prevention Board was held on 30th June 2023.

Partnership Working in 2023/24

- The Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (SVPP) Board has agreed to commission a strategic needs assessment (SNA) that is led by the VRU which will include public place serious violence, domestic abuse and sexual abuse. The assessment will be completed by December 2023 and will use data from all specified authorities. The SNA will be available to all CSPA to support localised strategic planning for 2024/25.
- The specified authorities have agreed to develop a data sharing platform which will allow user generated reporting and analysis of serious violence. The platform will use data from Police, Local Authorities, Probation and other contributing partners. The first phase of the platform has commenced and will, if successful, allow users to analyse violence in locations. The estimated date for completion is September 2023.
- The Board has commissioned a report to understand the links between multi-agency boards where the causes of violence are considered, and for recommendations to be made on how the SVPP Board can enhance the activity of existing boards. The report will inform the Terms of Reference for the SVPP Board.

Prevalence of Violence

Nationally the ONS report on Crime in England and Wales and in the year ending December 2022, police recorded 2.1 million offences of violence against the person². This was a 20% rise compared with the pre-coronavirus pandemic year ending March 2020 (1.7 million offences) and a 5% rise compared with the year ending December 2021 (2 million offences)². Violence with injury was 6% higher (558,886 offences) than levels recorded in the year ending March 2020 (525,298 offences). In addition, violence without injury increased by 14% to 811,873 offences compared with the year ending March 2020 (713,739 offences)². *All figures exclude Devon and Cornwall Police*. There were 697,632 stalking and harassment offences in the year ending December 2022. This was a 44% increase compared with the year ending March 2020 (484,822) but there was no change in comparison to the year ending December 2021². There have generally been increases since the year ending March 2012, though this was partially influenced by changes in Home Office Counting Rules and improved recording practices across this period.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides the best picture of the overall trend in violent crime². Estimates from the CSEW for the year ending December 2022 showed that there were 1.1 million violent offences. There was no significant change compared with the pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic year ending March 2020 (1.2 million offences)². However, there remains a general downward trend in violent crime since its peak in 1995. Across all violent offences, wounding decreased by 49% (to 175,000 offences) in the year ending December 2022 compared with the year ending March 2020 (341,000 offences)².

In published crime statistics, violent crime as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime differ. This includes large volume crimes such as stalking and harassment, which the survey does not publish in its main estimates of crime but are in the police figures. In the year to December 2022, stalking and harassment accounted for a third (34%) of all police recorded violence².

At a local level the VRU completed their most recent Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) in March 2023, looking at a three year period up to Sept 2022. The key findings from the SNA showed that the overall levels of serious violence in the County remain lower than the pre-pandemic time period but there had been increases in most offence types when compared to the same period in 2020-21. The main offences are assault where an injury is caused, with or without a knife or weapon being used, and robbery. Those aged 15-24 are disproportionately involved in violence either as a suspect or as a victim of violence.

Serious violence is distributed unequally across the County and levels of serious violence can be overlaid with indices of deprivation and those with a strong night-time economy. There are peaks in levels of serious violence which occur at different times of the day which suggests that there are a variety of drivers behind the violence and different approaches are required to reduce or eliminate violence at those times.

Serious and Organised Crime – Prevalence

The National Crime Agency (NCA) publishes a National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime (SOC), this is usually published at the end of May providing a review of the previous calendar year. However, the most recent assessment was published on 25th May 2021 covering the calendar year 2020 and was included in last year's report to the Scrutiny Committee, as such it has not been included here.

According to a recent report presented to the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner at the Performance and Delivery Board in June 2023, as of April 2023 Kent Police had mapped 55 Organised Crime Groups (OCGs)³. All OCGs across the UK are measured in terms of Disruptions, which are submitted quarterly by each Force based on Minor, Moderate or Major Disruptions of impact against the OCG. In 2021/22, the OCG Management Unit (OCGMU) which was still in its infancy recorded 146 OCG Disruptions³. In 2022/23, the OCGMU recorded 266 disruptions against mapped and scored OCGs, an increase of 82% from the previous year³. The Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) continue to target OCG criminality across the force.

Kent Police Divisional County Lines and Gangs Teams (CLGT) provide a proactive and preventative capability to reduce the harm caused to Kent communities from County Line criminality and Kent-based Gang activity. They investigate the County Line activity which carries the greatest threat risk and harm and target those who supply controlled drugs and fit the current NPCC definition taken from the 2018 Home Office Serious Violence Strategy, '*A County Line is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons.*' In April 2023 the Force recorded 39 active county lines³. Since January 2023 the number of active county lines has fluctuated slightly with the highest month being March where there were 43 lines recorded³.

Many local CSPs have well established multi-agency groups to address OCG and gang activity within their local areas by using a range of partnership powers resulting in a number of successes which are shared to promote good practice. Young People at risk of County Lines exploitation are identified through the sharing of intelligence between partners, locally this includes District Contextual Safeguarding meetings. There is discussion at the multi-agency Prevent, Prepare Protect agenda item within each District's multi-agency meeting structure and a plan agreed on how individuals will be protected from harm.

Details of some of the partnership activities undertaken in 2022/23 to address the priority of 'Serious Violence and Organised Crime' are included in the table below. However, it should be noted that much of the activity relating to Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) is at an operational level undertaken by Kent Police and district / borough partners, as such much of the activity of the KCSP over the last year has been in relation to the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty.

Notes

- 1) Home Office Policy Paper – Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act: serious violence duty factsheet (updated 10 May 2022)
- 2) Office for National Statistics. *Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2022* (published 27 April 2023)

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3) *Making Kent Safer Plan: Delivery and Performance – presented to the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board (June 2023)*

Actions 2022/23	Progress
<p>Work with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and other partners to support and implement the 'Serious Violence Duty' and implement a partnership approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular discussions are ongoing between the VRU and the KCST to share information. • The VRU attended the Medway CSP and Kent CSP in summer/autumn 2022 to discuss the production of a joint Serious Violence Strategy. The suggestion was provisionally agreed subject to the publication of statutory guidance. • <u>Statutory guidance from the Home Office</u> on the new Serious Violence duty was published on 16 December 2022. The VRU circulated a briefing in early January 2023 to partners to highlight the key activities required to be implemented either by individual agencies or as part of a partnership. • The VRU led a partnership workshop in February 2023 to discuss the new duties and next steps. Specified authorities agreed the partnership arrangements, the definition for Serious Violence and the key priorities for the year ahead. • The Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment has recently been refreshed and shared with partners.
<p>Support the work of the Joint Exploitation Group (JEG) by sharing information and raising awareness with partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Exploitation Group (JEG) continues to meet quarterly with ongoing support from a range of partners and has refreshed the Terms of Reference (TOR) and membership. • Briefings from JEG are regularly shared and updates given at the KCSP meetings. • The quarterly report presented at JEG which highlights the issues around missing children, modern slavery, etc. is shared with Safeguarding Leads across Kent and Medway to raise awareness and highlight emerging issues.

Priority: Safeguarding Vulnerable People

Context

The priority of Safeguarding Vulnerable People reflects the outcome of strategic assessments undertaken by local community safety partnerships (CSPs) with many choosing safeguarding and/or vulnerability either as a stand-alone priority or selecting elements for inclusion within their plans. In the latest reviews Safeguarding Vulnerable People continues to be identified as a priority within the CSA.

Whilst CSPs have a role to play within this priority there are a number of multi-agency groups including the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP), Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB), Joint Exploitation Group (JEG) etc. which take a lead on a number of these issues. JEG has a focus with regards sexual exploitation, gangs/county lines, human trafficking/modern slavery, online safeguarding, radicalisation/extremism, and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. As such, the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) link into these boards and subgroups and is working with them to support and implement actions, as well as monitor performance via their reporting processes. Reciprocal arrangements have been established for the KCSP to report into the Safeguarding Boards/Partnerships or their subgroups to ensure effective links are established and maintained. Information and reports

produced by the groups are shared with community safety partners through the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) e-bulletins and Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS). Topics relating to this priority covered at CSIS events in 2022/23 included the Suicide Bereavement Service, Domestic Abuse and Suicide Toolkit and Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking. In previous years CSIS events have also included topics such as immigration, loneliness, self-neglect, contextual safeguarding, etc. The regular e-bulletins shared with partners during 2022/23 also raised awareness and promoted a range of related articles including: scams awareness, safeguarding training, Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training, support for asylum seekers, safeguarding adults awareness week, suicide bereavement services, and the publication of a range of safeguarding policy documents and Adult Safeguarding Reviews (SARs).

Although there is no single indicator or group of indicators that can effectively be used as a proxy measure to monitor such a broad topic as safeguarding or vulnerability, as mentioned above KCSP members are linked into JEG and other safeguarding groups which play a key role in monitoring issues such as sexual exploitation, missing children episodes etc. As appropriate other data sources may also be looked at, for example scams. During the Covid-19 pandemic there was a noticeable increase in the number of scams, and in 2021 the National Cyber Security Centre (part of GCHQ) disclosed that more than 2.7 million scams had been removed from the internet¹. In Kent, the Trading Standards Victim Safeguarding Officer works closely with KCC Community Wardens who visit and work with scam victims, identified by the National Trading Standards Scams Team (NTSST). In 2022/23 Kent Trading Standards Victims Safeguarding Officer conducted 133 engagements with victims (mainly vulnerable adults) who had been defrauded out of over £1.1 million. Through these interventions the Officer prevented these victims losing in total a further £250,675, achieved through 'trader' negotiation, refunds and stopping payment. Additionally, the Community Wardens carried out 867 visits, engaging with scam victims. This is significant work, as victims require at least 2 visits and results in victims being safeguarded through partnership working, referrals to Adult Social Care and support service, engagement with family and charity liaison, as well as by providing them with advice and guidance on doorstep crime prevention. It should be noted that people defrauded in their own homes are 2.5 times more likely to either die or go into residential care within a year. Stopping scams and protecting the public is the focus of the government's new Fraud Strategy. In addition to working with scam victims, Trading Standards delivered two Doorstep Crime Awareness Weeks in 2022/23 working with partners such as Kent Police and the Community Wardens. During the events staff were able to engage with residents, traders, banks, supermarkets, Age UK etc. to raise awareness and provide advice through group talks, provision of leaflets, 1-to-1 advice, etc. The work undertaken was well received with residents grateful to staff for taking the time to come out and advise on such an important subject.

Research has shown that a quarter of people who experience loneliness have been the victim of a scam – and the same proportion of older people report feeling lonely at least some of the time². Not having someone to double-check things with is one of the main causes of these people falling victim to fraudsters but fraud can also come from within families, as well as occurring when lonely people use fraudsters as their only contact with the world. Loneliness has many negative effects on those who have the misfortune to experience it, most notably poor mental and physical health, but one further consequence that is often overlooked is the increased likelihood of becoming the victim of a financial scam³.

Five years ago the Government published a cross-government strategy to tackle loneliness which has recently been followed up by a report entitled: Tackling Loneliness annual report March 2023: the fourth year⁴. Since the publication of the original strategy, the government has worked with a wide range of partners to raise awareness of loneliness and improve the support for lonely people in England, revealing how loneliness can affect every area of our everyday lives.

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The latest government report noted that the number of adults (16+) experiencing chronic loneliness in England has remained consistent over the last five years at 6%, based on data from the Community Life Survey⁴. However, since 2018 there is a much greater understanding of which groups are more at risk of experiencing chronic loneliness⁴, including:

- young people, with younger age groups progressively more likely to be lonely than people in the oldest age group (aged 65 or over)
- those with poor mental wellbeing
- people with a disability or long-standing health problem
- people not living with a partner (either married or cohabiting)
- gay, lesbian, or bisexual people and people who chose 'other' when asked about their sexual orientation
- people on lower incomes
- people who are out of work
- those who have recently moved to their current address
- women, who are at greater risk of loneliness than men

A report on the impact of COVID-19 on factors associated with loneliness found that those more likely to experience loneliness before the pandemic were also less resilient during it, and continue to feel the impact today⁴. Furthermore, evidence is emerging that the current cost-of-living pressure is likely to exacerbate loneliness⁴.

It is clear that safeguarding is not the responsibility of a single agency but can only be achieved by effective partnership working. The following actions and progress updates highlight some of the areas that partners are working together on to support Safeguarding Vulnerable People.

Notes:

1) National Cyber Security Centre News (10 May 2022)

2) Love is Blind: Feelings of Loneliness and Isolation Go Hand in Hand with Romance Scams, Nationwide Building Society (February 2022)

3) St James's Place Partnership: How loneliness can contribute to financial scams

4) Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). Tackling Loneliness annual report March 2023: the fourth year (published 30 March 2023)

Actions 2022/23	Progress
<p>Support the work being undertaken by the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Steering Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release the Pressure continues to be promoted by KCC and other partners, including new posters designed to target particular population groups including the LGBT+ Community and people in financial difficulty. Materials can be downloaded from the bottom of this webpage www.releasepressure.uk. Over 25,000 calls and 20,000 text conversations were had by the two 24 hour services at the heart of the campaign in 2022/23. • Major new qualitative research was completed in Kent which gives a voice to Domestic Abuse (DA) victims who have attempted suicide which has been recognized nationally. In July 2022 the Secretary of State for Health referenced this work when he said that the new Suicide Prevention Strategy would include a section on domestic abuse for the first time. • The Suicide Prevention team worked closely with KCST colleagues to host a DHR Learning event in July to explore the links between DA and Suicide and share actions that frontline practitioners can take to reduce the risk of suicide. A digital briefing was also distributed to workforces across the system. And over 100 people attended additional DA and Suicide training put on later in the year.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022/23, 800 people attended suicide prevention training across Kent and Medway • The Amparo Support Service for People Bereaved by Suicide has supported over 100 bereaved individuals during 2022/23 www.amparo.org.uk
<p>Work in partnership with the Safeguarding Boards to raise awareness and link into local and national campaigns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week (SAAW) took place in late November 2022 with a different theme for each day. The Kent and Medway Adult Safeguarding Board (KMSAB) worked with partners on the communications and the KCST worked with community safety colleagues to identify activities taking place during that week. • The KCST provided printed literature to the SAAW coordinator for distribution to partners and use at events. Literature included posters and cards promoting the DA services website; and mental health crisis care cards (printing was funded by the KCSP in previous years) • The KCSP used some of the Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) project funding provided by the PCC to fund the design and printing of 2,000 z-folded concertina cards to raise awareness of adult safeguarding which were distributed as part of the SAAW resource packs.
<p>Support the delivery of Trauma Awareness training for professionals to ensure they are trauma informed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCSP used some of the Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) project funding provided by the PCC to support health partners in delivering a comprehensive training package to a range of professionals working with adolescents. • The aim was to enable young people and identified younger adults to increase awareness of the power of feeling strong emotion(s) and how to establish an internal 'sense check' and emotional repertoire. A comprehensive training package was developed for use by programme attendees - including a handbook, toolkit, Children & Young Peoples (CYP) facilitators manual, and a resources list. • In total 59 professionals who specialise in working with Children and Young People (CYP) from a range of organisations attended and completed the training which took place in January and February 2023. The professionals included IDVAs and family practitioners, CYP mentors and tutors, youth development support worker, counsellor and mental health practitioners.

Priority: Preventing Extremism and Hate

Context

'Preventing Extremism and Hate' was first identified as a standalone priority within the Kent Community Safety Agreement in 2018/19. Since the start of 2017, there has been disruption to 37 late-stage attack plots and as before this is a mixture of extreme right-wing terrorism, Islamist extremism and self-initiated terrorist attacks. Since 2019 there have been 8 terrorist attacks in the UK. The only terrorist attack in the UK in 2022 was at Western Jetfoil Dover in Kent on 30 October 2022. During the last four years the terrorist threat level was raised to Severe 3 times, it is currently standing at Substantial. It should be noted that the threat level of Substantial is still classified as a 'heightened' threat level and there is very little between Severe and Substantial levels. The most recent review of the CSA priorities identified the need to keep 'Preventing Extremism and Hate' as a priority for the partnership. There are many threats we have faced in 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, increased assertiveness of the Chinese Communist Party and the instability of Iran. UK faces threats from Islamist Extremism, Extreme Right Wing and self-initiated terrorists. The time

taken from planning to attack can be very short and low sophisticated style attacks using bladed articles and vehicles are often the preferred method.

Preventing Extremism

The UK counter-terrorism strategy (known as CONTEST) is due to be refreshed in late 2023 and the Independent Review of Prevent was published in February 2023. PREVENT forms part of the CONTEST strategy and aims to safeguard vulnerable and susceptible people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and addresses all forms of terrorism. The Kent and Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board (PDDB) is the strategic body overseeing the delivery of the Prevent Duty across Kent, it is jointly chaired by a Corporate Director from KCC and Medway Unitary Authority. Part of the remit of the PDDB is to ensure information is shared as appropriate with partners, this includes relevant elements of the Counter-Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) which sets out the risks and threats in Kent. The collection plan and development for the latest Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) improves year after year and this year Kent and Medway were the highest returning areas in the south east for the CTLP questionnaire from partners. A CTLP subgroup of the PDDB meets quarterly to ensure the CTLP process is a genuine partnership approach. The CTLP 2023/24 has been presented and shared as appropriate and is used to inform the development of the Counter Terrorism Situational Risk Assessment (CTSRA) and Prevent Partners Action Plan which will also be shared with partners once complete.

The Channel Programme is part of PREVENT and is a multi-agency approach to providing support for individuals vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, including people holding and expressing extremist views. The programme can offer a tailored package of support including theological or ideological mentoring, it is not a criminal sanction. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed the Channel programme on a statutory footing and created a duty on each local authority in England and Wales to ensure that there is a panel in place for its area. Statutory guidance for Channel panels was originally published in March 2015 but this was updated with refreshed guidance on Channel Panels being published in November 2020 and due to the IRP will be refreshed along with the Prevent Duty Guidance in 2023. Channel Annual Assurance Statements for KCC are completed each year and sent to the Home Office by the local authority Chief Executive.

In 2016 Kent became one of nine national local authorities taking part in a twelve-month pilot project known as Dovetail, this involved transferring administration and case management of the Channel process from the police to the Local Authority. Due to the success of the pilot, Kent continued to use Dovetail which has also been rolled out to other authorities across the country. During 2020/21, Dovetail was rolled out in Medway and the Kent Channel Panel merged with Medway to become a joint Kent and Medway Channel Panel ensuring a consistent approach across the whole area and some efficiencies for partner organisations who previously attended both panels. At the end of 2022 we received notification of the end of the Dovetail Pilot and case management was handed back to Counter Terrorism Policing Southeast in December 2022. This has come with its own challenges and PDDB are overseeing the development of this new process. KCC still remain as the lead authority for the overall delivery of Channel Panel.

In April 2019 Kent and Medway was designated as a Prevent priority area which brought additional Home Office funding to increase local resources, namely a Prevent Coordinator and Prevent Education Officer. In 2020 further funding was received leading to the addition of a second Prevent Education Officer and a Prevent Community Engagement Officer. During 2021/22 a Prevent Peer Review was undertaken with positive feedback around the professionalism of the processes, staff and leadership as well as a number of recommendations to help improve practices further. For the year ahead (2023/24) Kent and Medway continues to receive priority status and are now the only priority area in the Southeast, which brings its own challenges with the high level of expectation for the team alongside the local threat and risk level. The Kent and Medway Prevent Team deliver

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Prevent activity across the county, including managing the Channel process, providing training and awareness, engaging with schools and other educational establishments, monitoring online sentiment, supporting agencies locally in understanding and responding to the risk of terrorism and radicalisation. There are now only just over 20 Prevent priority areas nationally.

According to Home Office National Statistics for Prevent in 2021/22 there were 6,406 referrals into the Prevent programme nationally, which is an increase of 30% compared to year ending March 2021 (4,915)¹. This increase is likely to have been driven by the associated impacts of lifting the public health restrictions that were in place to control the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19)¹. The Education sector made the highest number of referrals (2,305; 36%), followed by the Police (1,808; 28%)¹. The year ending 31 March 2022 saw the highest proportion of referrals received from the Education sector since comparable data was available¹. This marks an increase compared to the previous reporting period where referrals from the Education sector were at their lowest proportion (1,221 of 4,915; 25%)¹. The public health restrictions in place due to COVID-19, especially the closure of Education settings, likely impacted the data in both year ending March 2021 and year ending March 2022¹.

As in previous years, where gender was specified (6,403), most referrals were of males (5,725; 89%)¹. Of the referrals where age of the individual was known (6,393), those aged 15 to 20 again accounted for the largest proportion (1,902; 30%). However, those aged under 15 account for an increased proportion of referrals (1,829; 29%) compared with previous year, and those under 15 account for the largest proportion of cases that are discussed at a Channel panel (32%; 480 of 1,486) and adopted as a case (37%; 299 of 804)¹. The number of referrals discussed at a Channel panel (1,486) and adopted as a Channel case (804) increased when compared with year ending March 2021¹. However, the proportion of referrals being discussed at a Channel panel has decreased slightly (23% this year compared with 27% last year). The proportion of referrals that were adopted as a Channel case remained similar (13% in both years)¹.

This year (ending March 2022), Home Office analysts have improved the way in which a referral's type of concern is presented. Previously, referrals were grouped into one of 4 categories: 'Islamist', 'Extreme Right Wing', 'Mixed, Unstable and Unclear (MUU)' and 'Other'. In the latest report, the sub-categories that were aggregated into MUU in previous years are reported directly to provide a more granular view of types of concern¹. The category 'Vulnerability present but no ideology or CT risk' accounted for the largest proportion of referrals (2,127; 33%) in the year ending March 2022¹. For the second year running, the number of referrals for Extreme Right-Wing radicalisation concerns (1,309; 20%) is greater than referrals for Islamist concerns (1,027; 16%). Of the 804 Channel cases, the most common were cases referred due to concerns regarding Extreme Right-Wing radicalisation (339; 42%), followed by those with concerns regarding Islamist radicalisation (156; 19%) and those with a Conflicted ideology (120; 15%)¹.

Following the identification of 'Preventing Extremism and Hate' as a priority within the CSA in 2018/19, the KCSP recognised a need to raise awareness of the issue across Kent and Medway and to cascade information and learning. In 2022/23 the third successful Hateful Extremism conference was delivered in February 2023. The 2023 event was extremely well received with an overwhelming 66% awarding the event a maximum 5 star rating with an average rating of 4.6%. Over 90% of all attendees felt confident using what they learned at the conference to help safeguard people from radicalisation and extremism, which in turn has a positive impact on the reduction of related crime. Due to this continued success and much needed type of event another CPD event is planned for February 2024, again with a range of relevant and high-profile speakers sharing their expertise and knowledge. The 2023 feedback received highlighted the quality of speakers and greatly assisted attendees with their understanding, being able to spot the signs, to intervene early, to deter individuals, and to increase referrals. The event was opened by Figen Murray, mother of Martyn Murray who was killed in the Manchester Arena attack. Figen has been

instrumental in lobbying Government for Martyns Law and a new Protect Duty will be implemented in 2024. Other speakers included Assistant Chief Constable, Kent Police, Counter Terrorism Policing South East (CTPSE), Home Office Intervention Provider, Tell Mama and the Kent and Medway Prevent team

Hate Crime

Hate crime is defined as ‘any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic.’

There are five centrally monitored strands of hate crime: race or ethnicity; religion or beliefs; sexual orientation; disability; and transgender identity.

Currently we are still working with the existing themes from the Government Hate Crime Action Plan 1) Work in Partnership to tackle Hate Crime 2) Build our understanding of hate crime 3) Respond to hate crime in our communities 4) Increase the reporting of hate crime 5) Improve support for the victims of hate crime. The plan is used to direct the work of the Hate Crime Forum and is shared as everyone’s responsibility in tackling hate crime. This is being updated Nationally following a Law Commission Review (see below) and the launch of the National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) Hate Crime Strategy.

Nationally the Law Commission has been considering proposals to reform hate crime laws to remove the disparity in the way hate crime laws treat each protected characteristic – race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity. The proposals will be presented to Government and may lead to changes in the future coverage of the monitored strands. In December 2021 the Law Commission published the following recommendations:

- **Levelling up the protection for disability and LGBT+ victims:** Hate crime laws do not protect all five protected characteristics to the same degree. For example, aggravated offences only apply in respect of racial and religious hostility. This current hierarchy of protection is widely seen as unfair and sends a negative message to victims of hate crimes on the basis of disability, sexual orientation and transgender identity. The Law Commission has recommended that across the various hate crime laws all protected characteristics should be treated equally.
- **Tackling sex and gender abuse:** The Law Commission has recommended that “sex or gender” should not be added to the protected characteristics for aggravated offences and enhanced sentencing as it would be ineffective at protecting women and girls and in some cases, counterproductive. The Commission has recommended: Extending the offence of stirring up hatred to include of sex or gender, which would help to tackle the growing threat of extremist misogynist “incel” ideology; In addition, there is also a recommendation that the government review the need for a specific offence to tackle public sexual harassment.
- **Protecting freedom of expression:** Whilst the Commission has recommended some extensions to hate crime legislation, these are coupled with reforms to hate speech laws and new protections for freedom of expression to ensure that only the most egregious hate speech is criminalised.

At a county level, the multi-agency Hate Crime Forum chaired by Kent Police works with partners including the IAG (Independent Advisory Group) to monitor and track the partnership response in tackling hate crime. In addition, the Strategic Hate Crime Lead meets regularly with partners to better understand hate crime and also provides the link to other local and strategic meetings and represents at a Southeast Regional, National Gold and Cohesion Group as well as Operation Cavell which is the joined-up response to tackling assaults and hate crimes against the NHS.

At a local level dedicated Police Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) who are based within district Community Safety Units (CSUs) act as the key point of contact for Kent’s diverse communities. They work with diverse individuals and groups, raising awareness around hate crime, act as tactical

advisors to police and partners, and signpost support for victims.

In Kent there is a Hate Crime Advocate in the Victim Support Service who contacts each victim of hate crime and works in partnership to ensure victims are provided tailored support. Regular meetings between the Advocate and Strategic Hate Crime Lead ensures service recovery and feedback of best practice or lessons learned.

The new Neighbourhood Policing Model launched in June 2023, has five pillars focussed on the core elements and these ensure we can provide a high-quality policing service as per our commitment in the Kent Police Pledge. Police and partner agencies work together to provide the most appropriate engagement and response when tackling hate crime.

- Prevention Hub
- Child Centred Policing
- Neighbourhood Task Force
- Beat Team
- Rural Task Force

Regular updates with the Crown Prosecution Service ensure victims of hate crime receive a sensitive and appropriate service.

Hate Crime Awareness week takes place annually in October across the country. This week of action encourages police, local authorities, key partners, and communities to continue raising awareness about hate crime, reporting mechanisms, signposting tailored and timely support in order to tackle hate crime. Hatred not only has the potential to cause serious physical and emotional harm, it can damage communities and cause division. In addition to the awareness week there is an annual award scheme 'No2H8 Crime Award' which is run nationally by a coalition of organisations and is designed to recognise upstanding individuals who have contributed toward the cohesion of different communities within the UK through the tackling of hatred and prejudice. The Strategic Lead for Hate Crime at Kent Police is one of the judges.

The Home Office report on Hate Crime in England and Wales (year ending March 2022)² reported

- there were 155,841 hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales, an increase of 26% from year ending March 2021 (124,104 offences)
- there were 109,843 race hate crimes, 8,730 religious hate crimes, 26,152 sexual orientation hate crimes, 14,242 disability hate crimes and 4,355 transgender hate crimes in year ending March 2022.
- Hate crimes targeting transgender people saw the largest proportional rise. There were 4,355 anti-trans incidents in 2021/22 – up by 56% from 2020/21.
- there were annual increases in all five strands of hate crime, ranging from 19% for race hate crimes to 56% for transgender hate crimes

The upward trend in hate crime seen in recent years is attributed to various factors including increased partnership awareness, improvements in crime recording by the police, media, concerns around levels of migration, the pandemic and terror incidents. Some events such as Black Lives Matter protests in response to the murder of George Floyd, have preceded large rises in hate crime. More than 100,000 racist hate crimes were recorded in England and Wales for the first time last year, statistics show.

In Kent and Medway in the rolling year to March 2023, there were 4,809 hate crimes reported, compared to 4,942 the previous year which was post the pandemic. Some of the hate crimes relate to public order offences, violence without injury and criminal damage.

However, hate crime remains under reported so we need to encourage reporting and also remain professionally curious for other vulnerabilities such as radicalisation to ensure appropriate

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safeguarding, interventions, and signposting support as part of our partnership response.

Whilst CSPs have a role to play within this priority the Prevent Duty Delivery Board and multi-agency Hate Crime Forum take the lead on a number of the issues. As such, members of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) link into these boards and groups and are working with them to support and implement actions, as well as monitoring performance via their reporting processes.

Notes:

1) Home Office – Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2021 to March 2022 (published 26 January 2023)

2) Home Office – Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022

Actions 2022/23	Progress
<p>Work in partnership to share information about Prevent and Channel to embed the process and to help Prevent violent extremism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The multi-agency Prevent Duty Delivery Board (PDBB) meets quarterly throughout the year with the last meeting of 2022/23 held on 17th January 2023 and the next undertaken in April 2023. • Representatives from the Kent & Medway Prevent Team (the Prevent Coordinator and Assistant Director for CONTEST / Serious Organised Crime) attends the KCSP and district/borough CSP meetings regularly. • The Prevent Community Engagement Officer links in with all priority area Community Safety Units and Task Forces across the county. • Regular updates of the Prevent Action Plan take place through various meetings and reviews. • Briefings and newsletters from the Prevent Team are shared regularly with partners and colleagues • A high level of training has been delivered in 2022/23. The training offer has recently been updated for 2023/24 and shared widely with partners. • Hateful Extremism CPD Event was successfully delivered on 28th Feb '23 (see below for further details).
<p>Work with partners to understand the key issues from the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) and encourage intelligence reporting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refresh of the latest CTLP is now complete (undertaken between Oct '22 – Jan '23) with partners feeding back information to help inform the refresh - over 30 CTLP returns were received. • The CTLP briefing event for Strategic Leads across the partner agencies took place on 29th March 2023. • In 2023/24 wider briefings will be shared including the Counter Terrorism Situational Risk Assessment (CTSRA) which will be delivered to partners on 4th July 2023. • Updates around graffiti and stickering related to extremism are provided to partners. • Dissemination of information to KCSP partners including information about the CTSRA, threat and risks updates.
<p>Work in partnership to educate and increase the reporting of hate crime; increase access to support for victims; and improve the operational response to hate crimes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner agencies, stakeholders and other individuals, organisations are members of the Hate Crime Forum which meets quarterly where trends, concerns and local initiatives are discussed. • Quarterly meetings take place with the County and District IAGs include data and context to trends and allow members to provide their tactical advice around improving the partnership response to tackling hate crime. • Regular meetings with the Hate Crime Advocate are in place to ensure any learning, service recovery and good work is shared with Police

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	<p>investigators and any other relevant personnel as well as embedded for wider learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned above the Hateful Extremism Conference was held in February 2023 in partnership with KCC, CTPSE and others with hate crime on the agenda. • Hate Crime Awareness week takes place annually in October, with many partnership activities and events taking place. Hate crime is everyone’s business so there are monthly partnership CPDs to raise topical awareness and also share lived experiences. Examples of these include Strategies to tackle Anti-Muslim hatred, transgender hate crime workshop, • The Security Industry Authority have agreed to promote a collaborative Kent Poster focusing on awareness, prevention, reporting and signposting support for the Security Industry in retail and business crime and taxi industry. • A working definition of Anti-Semitism has been shared by the Home Secretary and adopted by Kent Police as per other Police Forces. It is from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA): <i>“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”</i> • Guidance such as The NPCC Disability Hate Crime and Carers Guide, Kent and Medway Hate Crime Business Guide have been shared with partners. • Triggers impacting community tensions are monitored to ensure an effective response with weekly returns to the National Community Tension Team. • Monthly data return as part of Information Sharing Protocols with Community Security Trust (CST) and Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks). • Ongoing engagement with victims to ensure their safety and provision of bespoke support.
<p>Work with partners to educate, raise awareness, understand and provide safeguarding and signposting support for hate crimes and early identification of other vulnerabilities such as those to radicalisation and domestic abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kent & Medway Business Guide is being shared with Business Industry and includes a QR code to help access Hate crime/Prevent resources and signposting support. Wider dissemination was undertaken as part of National Hate Crime Awareness Week (NHCAW) in Oct '22. This continues to be shared beyond the awareness week due to trends in reporting of certain roles/prejudice types i.e. an increase in racially aggravated offences against security staff so repeat victims, offenders and venues continued to be monitored with a partnership response. • Increased awareness of AWARE principles in training so there is early consideration of safeguarding/Prevent referrals. This is included in all CPDs and approx. 25 have been delivered in 6 months. Encouraging the reporting of graffiti/stickering is included to encourage reporting. Signs and how to make a prevent referral has also been included in all CPDs. • There are Hate Crime Champions in Kent Police in place supported by Hate Crime SPOCs. All repeat data is monitored locally and through the monthly Hate Crime Performance meeting inc. repeat data, DA data,

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	<p>trends in volumes, outcomes, hate crime satisfaction, adverse outcomes and feedback from independent scrutiny (CPS/ Hate Crime Advocate/ IPAG etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action days, weeks are in place and where required with the partnership response to focus on key areas where there are highlighted gaps i.e. outstanding suspects • Whilst a new neighbourhood policing model is being consulted on with schools (to be implemented in June 2023) a small central unit remains and works with our network of local officers, VRU and Youth Justice teams to support schools building on the early achievements of Child Centred Policing. Hate Crime Awareness/ guidance/ signposting support were previously in place with the schools officers and with the changes, there will remain a focus working with partnerships and other colleagues in Community Safety Units, Community Liaison Officers.
<p>Support delivery of the Hateful Extremism CPD* event <i>(*continuous professional development)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCSP used Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) funding provided by the PCC, and match funded by Prevent partners, to deliver a CPD event on Hateful Extremism. • The hybrid CPD event took place on 28th February March 2023 (full details provided in the text above).
<p>Gaming & Online Awareness of Hate and Extremism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCSP used Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) project funding provided by the PCC to fund the use of a 'gaming bus' which is a community engagement initiative to promote awareness of how hateful extremism and potential radicalisation is spread via gaming and how it can be countered. • Events took place between February and May in conjunction with schools led by the Prevent Education Officers (PEOs) working closely with local partners. • At the end of March 2023 sessions had been accessed by approximately 900 school pupils in Years 6-7 primary and secondary education with a further session planned for May. Selected locations received additional online safety sessions delivered by the PEOs as a follow up looking at the dangers of exploitation for extremism via online gaming. • The final session took place on 26th May '23 with feedback and a full evaluation to be shared with partners in due course.
<p>Provision of literature / promotional materials to support the priority of Preventing Extremism and Hate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCSP used Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) project funding provided by the PCC to support the production of hate crime materials including design, translation and printing costs for posters and two reusable collapsible banners. • The posters were also translated into a range of languages including Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Polish, Arabic, Lithuanian, Turkish, Romanian, Ukrainian and Chinese. A small number of each poster have been printed with electronic versions available for online use and local printing.

Priority: Violence Against Women and Girls

Context

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is an umbrella term used to cover a wide range of abuses against women and girls such as domestic homicide, domestic abuse, sexual assault, abuse experienced as a child, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, misogynistic behaviours by Incels (involuntary celibates) and harassment in work and public life. While men and boys also suffer from many of these forms of abuse, they disproportionately affect women.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) was added as a standalone priority within the Kent Community Safety Agreement in April 2022. In the latest strategic assessment review process many of the local community safety partnerships (CSPs) have referenced VAWG within their plans alongside topics such as domestic abuse and tackling violence, as such it remains a priority for the KCSP for the forthcoming year.

The inclusion of VAWG as a priority within the Community Safety Agreement was in response to a number of recent issues:

- The publication of the Home Office strategy in 2021/22: Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls;
- The inclusion of VAWG as a priority in the Kent PCC's Police and Crime Plan entitled 'Making Kent Safer 2022-2025'.
- Public concern following several high-profile cases in recent years, including the murders of Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa, and the Kent Police Community Support Officer, Julia James.

The Government's 'Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls' strategy published in July 2021, stated that Violence against women and girls is an unacceptable, preventable issue which blights the lives of million's. Crimes of violence against women and girls are many and varied¹. They include rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse, 'honour-based' abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting', as well as many others. While different types of violence against women and girls have their own distinct causes and impacts on victims and survivors, what these crimes share is that they disproportionately affect women and girls¹.

These crimes are deeply harmful, not only because of the profound effect they can have on victims, survivors and their loved ones, but also because of the impact they can have on wider society, impacting on the freedom and equality we all should value and enjoy. These impacts can include day-to-day decision-making, but also extend to the social and economic costs to the economy, society, and taxpayer. We know that the devastating impact of these crimes can include the loss of life, the destruction of homes, futures, and lives¹.

The Government's strategy included data from the Crime Survey in England and Wales (CSEW) which provides the best available estimate of prevalence for a number of violence against women and girls crimes, namely: domestic abuse, stalking, rape (including assault by penetration), indecent exposure and unwanted touching¹. The data presented in the strategy showed that the prevalence of these crimes had remained broadly the same since 2008/09. However, the CSEW does not include information relating to any other forms of violence against women and girls. As such, our understanding of the prevalence of crimes such as 'revenge porn,' 'honour'-based abuse, female genital mutilation, and forced marriage is limited. Police data provides us with some understanding of these wider crime types. However, it only captures crimes which have been reported to and recorded by the police and so does not give a measure of prevalence¹.

There is no reliable national data on the specific context, location or type of harassment that occurs. A nationally representative survey commissioned by the Government Equalities Office found that in the last 12 months 20% of women had experienced unwanted sexual comments. Furthermore, 6% had experienced being followed or threatened, and 14% had experienced unwanted non-sexual touching¹.

In September 2022 a prototype dashboard for data relating to violence against women and girls was released on the GOV.UK website and currently contains ONS data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). It provides data on a number of abuse types including domestic abuse and sexual offences. The purpose of the prototype is to demonstrate what is possible within the dashboard, and to gather feedback, which will shape future iterations. Key data in the prototype dashboard is primarily taken from the CSEW for England and Wales (year ending March 2022) unless otherwise stated²:

- 6.9% of women aged 16 and over, were victims of domestic abuse in the last year
- 3.3% of women aged 16 and over, were victims of sexual assault in the last year
- 4.9% of women aged 16 and over, were victims of stalking in the last year,
- 24.8% of women aged 18 to 74 experienced abuse before the age of 16,
- 2,887 cases of honour-based-abuse (HBA) related offences were recorded by the police in the last year.²

In January 2023 CrimeStoppers released a report on Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces following a number of recent high profile murders (some of which are mentioned above)³. The report acknowledged that these incidents had reignited societal conversations about gendered violence and women's right to feel safe in public. With the rise of smart phone technology to document instances of sexual harassment and gendered violence, combined with online platforms which allow women and girls to attest to their experiences, there has been a groundswell of academic and popular attention to this topic, both in the UK, and globally³. Owing to developments in modern technology and changing attitudes and public discourses, there is now a sustained interest in this topic in many countries around the world. Key findings from the CrimeStoppers report included³:

- Around one in six participants' (16.8%) first experience occurred when they were aged 10 or younger (3.7% aged 0-5, 13.1% aged 6-10)
- 30.9% of participants first encountered unwanted sexual behaviour between the ages of 14-16
- Almost the same percentage (29%) first experienced unwanted approaches between 11-13 years

The findings demonstrate that the majority of those who experience sexual harassment encounter it for the first time during adolescence or childhood. The survey also found that 10% of women said they had been raped, with 23% saying they had been 'forced' to have sex³.

- Less than 1% of victims said they felt flattered, attractive or desired after their most recent harassment experience
- Around 78% of female participants spoke of experiencing unwanted questions about their sex life, and two thirds experienced staring (leering) and comments on their clothes, body or appearance. The research found that respondents change their behaviour or activities to avoid a repeat incident, with nearly 10% shunning outdoor areas where they had previously encountered unwanted sexual behaviours
- More than a third (38%) have been followed and nearly a quarter (23%) have witnessed flashing/genital exposure. Whilst the largest group of perpetrators were strangers, they were closely followed by classmates during their younger years, then acquaintances and colleagues in later life³

In 2022/23 KCSP partners worked together to deliver a VAWG conference which took place on 28th March 2023. The conference was delivered as a hybrid event on Tuesday 28th March at the Detling Showground and virtually via Microsoft Teams. It was attended by over 250 people (with just under

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150 attending in person and just over 100 attending virtually) from a variety of statutory agencies as well as 3rd sector organisations. The feedback from the conference has been very positive with 90% of respondents rating it as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’, although this rises to 98% if ‘good’ is also included. The conference included several excellent speakers on a range of topics including the Trauma Effect of VAWG, Misogyny and Incels (involuntary celibates), Active Bystander programme, case studies on safer communities and commissioned support services, etc. Those attending in person had access to a marketplace with stall holders and networking opportunities, and all attendees were able to interact during the event through Question-and answer sessions. Of those who responded to the conference survey 78% stated that they would feedback to colleagues on the seminar content with around half sharing information or feeding back to managers. Whilst approx. a third plan to do additional research with just over a quarter aiming to undertake further training. Some of the comments received were: “Great to see this high on the agenda at last”; “A very interesting, informative conference gained a lot of knowledge that I was not aware of”. Following on from the conference a resource pack has been disseminated to delegates including information about the available commissioned services, bite size videos about VAWG, reports and partner information. The PowerPoint presentations and recorded videos from the event are also available for partners via the Safer Communities Portal.

White Ribbon was also actively promoted at the conference with a number of ambassadors in attendance including the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner and KCC’s Head of Community Safety. White Ribbon UK’s work is preventative, with an aim to end violence before it starts. It encourages everyone, especially men and boys, to make the White Ribbon Promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men’s violence against women. All men can make a difference and stop violence against women before it starts. KCC is an accredited White Ribbon organisation alongside other partner agencies.

The following actions and progress updates highlight some of the areas that partners are working together on to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls.

Notes:

- 1) Home Office – Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (published July 2021)
- 2) Prototype Dashboard – Violence against women and girls
- 3) Crimestoppers report on Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces (published January 2023)

Actions 2022/23	Progress
<p>Raise awareness of the national Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy and consider adopting the Kent Police VAWG action plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Police have produced a VAWG walk and talk document which has been shared with partners. • VAWG walk and talks have taken place monthly since October 2022 and will be continuing through 2023/2023 with a different district each month. Kent Police are coordinating the events but working with local district/borough partners to develop and deliver the events. • A VAWG Engagement Event was held on 26th April (hybrid) in-person or online. Chaired by Kent Police with partners and public invited. Group discussions took place both online and in-person to ascertain what we can do better and the public perception / demands.
<p>Develop a comprehensive understanding of communities, including hotspots and concerns at a local level across the County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The StreetSafe online tool is being promoted at all relevant events and training sessions which enables people, particularly women and girls, to report locations where they feel or have felt unsafe and to identify the features on why that location made them feel unsafe. The StreetSafe tool is police-supported and has been developed in cooperation with the Home Office and the National Police Chiefs’ Council • As mentioned above VAWG walk and talks are being delivered by

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	<p>partners in a number of locations enabling direct engagement with members of the public to discuss what makes them feel unsafe in their communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Police have also invested in ‘My Community Voice’ (MCV) which gives local people a say in how the police approach neighbourhood policing priorities and work with local partners. It is a two-way engagement tool that allows the public to raise issues in their area and enables the police to create a personalized policing response.
<p>Support delivery of the ‘Best Bar None’ accreditation scheme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022 Kent Police began working with local authority partners across Kent and Medway to introduce ‘Best Bar None’, an accreditation scheme supported by the Home Office and drinks industry that aims to improve standards and safety in the evening and night-time economy. By agreeing to join the scheme, licensees work closely with police, council and other businesses to reduce crime and keep their communities safe. They must be able to demonstrate their competency in four key areas – venue management, staff training and care, customer safety and welfare, and customer service and community. • The KCSP used a small amount of the Crime Reduction Grant funding provided by the PCC to purchase a number of stickers in support of the roll out of Best Bar None. The stickers have been distributed to the district officers who have been trained to undertake the Best Bar None Accreditation process and are then given to accredited venues to raise awareness. • In February 2023, at a UK-wide event held at the House Of Lords, Kent was announced as the winner of Best New Scheme for 2022. “The recognition given to Kent and Medway’s Best Bar None scheme is testament to all agencies within the local Community Safety Partnerships and their commitment to focus on what matters most to Kent’s communities”.
<p>Deliver a community safety partnership event on Violence Against Women and Girls to raise awareness and share best practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCSP used Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) funding provided by the PCC and match funded by KCSP partners to deliver a VAWG conference on 28th March 2023 (full details provided above). • Over 250 attended the event either in person or virtually • Speakers covered a range of topics around trauma, Incels, Service Provision, case studies, etc. • 98% rated the conference as excellent, very good or good • A resource pack was shared with attendees following the Conference