



Introduction

The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) has delegated 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 contextual information and related data outlining the reason each priority has been identified, 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 (April 2023) 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

The following document includes data taken from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), alongside local partnership datasets up to the end of September 2023 (unless otherwise stated), as well as Government reports and strategic needs assessments. The data is provided as a snapshot to help evidence why priorities have been included with the Community Safety Agreement.

Priority: Domestic Abuse

Context

Domestic Abuse (DA) continues to be identified as a priority for eleven of the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) either as a stand-alone priority or as part of a broader theme and is detailed within the county agreement.

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence, it is rooted in power and control and includes multiple tactics. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as happening between people over 16 and includes: 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. 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 2021 introduced measures at both a national and local level. Tier one authorities now have a duty to:

- Appoint a multiagency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board. This has been operating since May 2021 and is now Chaired the Head of Housing & Regulatory Services at Maidstone Borough Council, reflecting the partnership nature of this work. This is supported by subject

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

- Assess the need for safe accommodation-based support. In Kent there have been a number of successive needs assessments (2020, 2021, 2022 & 2023) each with their own focus. Data from the latest assessment is presented below.
- Provide support to survivors and their children residing in safe accommodation, as defined by the Act (refuge, sanctuary, secondary or move on accommodation and specialist accommodation).
- Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of support within safe accommodation. The Kent and Medway Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-2029 was published in March, reflecting the aims and ambitions of 20 partners in tackling and responding to abuse, incorporating our safe accommodation duties.
- Monitor and evaluate the strategy. Progress is tracked via a delivery plan as well as a number of quantitative Activity Indicators and monitored by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. Progress will be reported annually to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee and the Kent Community Safety Partnership.

National prevalence

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) report, Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2023¹ The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 2.1 million people aged 16 years and over (1.4 million women and 751,000 men) experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2023. There was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse experienced in the last year compared with the previous year.

The police recorded 889,918 domestic abuse-related crimes (excluding Devon and Cornwall) in the year ending March 2023, a similar number to the previous year. There were 51,288 domestic abuse-related prosecutions in England and Wales for the year ending March 2023, compared with 53,207 in the year ending March 2022.

The 2023 Kent Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment reported² that in 2022/23, there were 26,621 domestic abuse related crimes in Kent a reduction of 10.8% compared to the previous year (-3,235 crimes). Domestic abuse related crimes made up 19% of total crimes (almost one in five crimes), compared to 17.1% nationally.

In 2022/23, there were 2,083 controlling and coercive behaviour crimes recorded by Kent Police, which equates to 1.6 crimes per 1,000 16+ population. There was a reduction of 42% (1,510 crimes) compared to the previous year. However, this reduction was likely the result of a review in November 2021 into the over-recording of this offence in previous years following the transition from the use of Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-Based Violence (DASH) to Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) as a risk assessment approach and also changes to the Home Office Counting Rules for recording crimes.

Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment

The 2023 Needs Assessment for Kent has been completed and published. This provides a detailed analysis of need and service use relating to domestic abuse in Kent and is used to determine the level of need for support within the area and inform commissioning decisions.

Key findings from the 2023 Needs Assessment showed:

- The prevalence of domestic abuse remains high, with an estimated 43,800 females and 17,700 males who may have been affected by domestic abuse in Kent in the past year. In contrast to this, the volume of domestic abuse related crimes reported to Kent Police in 2022/23 decreased.
- In line with the reduction in domestic abuse related crimes, referrals to the single point of access for the countywide commissioned Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS)

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Referral, Assessment and Triage service decreased in 2022/23 and fewer survivors were accessing KIDAS refuges and community-based support.

- Although data shows there was some reduction in support service use, comparing take-up with estimated prevalence and reported domestic abuse related crimes shows a gap between the potential need for support and those accessing available services.
- The majority of survivors are supported in community-based support services (through KIDAS and other community-based organisations) and there is a need for an equitable offer of support across the county for both adults and children/young people, with sustainable funding.

Kent & Medway Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy

The Kent & Medway Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy was published in March 2024³, bringing together 20 partners to achieve the joint collective aim to: *'reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly'*.

The development of priorities, themes and commitments within the strategy was collaborative, seeking feedback and input from a wide range of partners and stakeholders. This included interviews, surveys and workshops with adults, children and young people who were affected by abuse as experts by experience. Their voices are represented throughout the final strategy.

There was significant informal consultation including community events, multiagency workshops, professional forums and an 11-week formal consultation. Responses supported several changes, recorded via a 'You Said, We Did' report.

The strategy commitments are made across three key themes:

1. **Early Intervention & Prevention** - The focus on early intervention and prevention aims to challenge negative societal attitudes and stigma linked to discussing abuse, increasing awareness, reducing the escalation of abusive behaviours and encouraging conversation and education.
2. **Immediate Need**- The support and systems needed when a person is in crisis or in immediate need, exploring the provision and support that adults, children and families need, their experiences of justice and access to housing.
3. **Recovery** - The strategy explores how services can be shaped and developed to respond to a longer term journey and progression to healing, recognising that this involves broader structures which aid the re-establishment of stability

Progress against the Strategy is measured against activity indicators and recorded in a partnership delivery plan, overseen by the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group.

Service Provision

The Council has multiple commissioned services that deliver support to survivors of domestic abuse.

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) has been in place since April 2017 and runs until March 2026. 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.

In 2023/24 the single point of access, delivered by Victim Support, received 18,458 referrals for adults aged 16 year and over. Of these, 18,070 (98%) were Kent residents, 1,039 (5.6%) were

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assessed to be at high risk of harm or homicide, 5,840 (31.6%) medium risk and 11,579 (62.7%) 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 2023/24 KIDAS received 3602 referrals for support both in refuge and the community, with 3154 individuals being supported in total (229 of those were supported 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 NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board and a pilot has expanded this service to Acute sites within the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust since June 2023.

Further services remain in place to 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.

Throughout 2023 new services were procured to extend the councils safe accommodation support offer. This includes;

- The Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) this service offers support to children and young people residing in all forms of safe accommodation and began accepting referrals from August 2023. Up until the end of March 2024 the service has had 88 children and young people referred to receive a range of therapeutic and non-therapeutic, activity-based support.
- The Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents Scheme (SAFER) which enables 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. This service commenced in December 2023. Up until 31 March 2024 there have been 112 households referred to be made safer by this service, a total of 139 adults and 174 children were residing in these properties. Of those referred, 86 properties have now been made safer with a total of 119 adults and 146 children who are now living in safe accommodation.
- Male refuge pilot – three bedspaces offering support for male survivors and their accompanying children who are fleeing domestic abuse. This service opened in December 2023 and was full within 3 weeks.

One Stop Shops

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 2022 and June 2023, there were 1,265 visitors to One Stop Shops, of which 176 accessed the support virtually. During this period, approximately 4.4% of One Stop shop visitors were male and records show that there were 1,820 children living in the households of One Stop Shop visitors. Of those that were asked if they found their visit useful, 78% responded positively.

Communications Campaign

The Know, See, Speak Out; End Domestic Abuse Communications Campaign was in its third year in 2023-24. The campaign has created an annual calendar of social media content that is freely available for organisations across Kent & Medway to utilise. This content is updated monthly and shared via the Media and Communications Subgroup and with a wider mailing list. The 2023 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse used several methods to engage new audiences. There was a 5.6 million reach for total seen content on social media over the course of the campaign. 99

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organisations shared content, it generated over 700 bookings on the 16 Days webinar series, was featured in a community magazine distributed to 56,000 homes, had posters displayed across the Stagecoach South East bus network and successfully increased press coverage. Press coverage including a BBC South East TV programme feature with a survivor interview, Heart FM breakfast news, KentLive and BBC South East news article was generated.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

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. Across Kent & Medway there are 13 MARACs, one in each district. Between January and December 2023 there were 2,873 adults discussed at MARAC in Kent and Medway, which included 3,866 children, who are classed as victims in their own right, living in the households where high-risk domestic abuse was taking place.

After review and agreement to change how MARAC functions, the MARAC Hub Change Programme is now underway. The MARAC Hub Manager, and two of the MARAC Co-ordinators are in post, with the third MARAC Co-ordinator going through HR recruitment processes currently, all joining the already in post MARAC Supervisor. Following the formal 'be the best' review and consultation towards the end of 2023, the pilot MARAC post has not been taken forward by NHS Kent and Medway; there is however a commitment from the Chief Nursing Officer that the funding will be made available 2024-25 to support this work and further internal discussions are underway within NHS Kent and Medway to identify the relevant funding required. The Case Management System (CMS) is slowly progressing, with a timeline for delivery and 'go-live' being confirmed shortly. The MARAC Hub Steering Group has met twice this year and it was agreed to create three Working Groups to support and feed into the MARAC Hub Steering Group: Operating Protocols Working Group, Training Working Group, and Case Management System Working Group, these are underway too.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

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

- Collaborate Digital, a specialist educational media company 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. The service is focused on examining healthy relationships, attitudes, behaviours, online harms as well as cyber safety and cyber bullying and is aimed at those aged 9-14 years. Delivery commenced in the east of the county, moving to the North during 23-24. The service will be focusing on West Kent during 24-25 and engagement will shortly be commencing with schools. 33 inputs can be delivered during 24-25 and responses for schools on deliveries to date has been overwhelmingly positive. able to receive the programme during 2023. Feedback from one school stated "For [our students], having the time to think about those important issues, but to do it in a way that allowed them to use their creativity, was really beneficial. The assembly was really, really good - it was very well pitched at the age range of pupils that we had in there. And I also found that it covered a big range of topics without rushing through each one, and definitely things that I felt were appropriate to the pupils in our school."

Additional funding was awarded by the PCC for 2024/25 to increase capacity within domestic abuse and sexual violence support services. This included:

- Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) and Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA). Totalling £1,172,672.92. This funding has increased the number of ISVAs and IDVAs available in Kent by 25 FTE, including specialist Child and Young Person (CYP) IDVAs, ISVAs focusing on mental health and teenagers and IDVAs dedicated to supporting elderly victims of domestic abuse.

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- Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Violence (SV) Funding of £664,540.39 has also been allocated to increase the availability of community-based DA and SV services. Services provided include additional Outreach Workers, a free legal advice service, stalking advocates, therapy, and counselling.

The additional ISVA/IDVA and DA/SV funding is only in place until March 2025. This additional funding totals £1.8m and without further funding confirmation from the Ministry of Justice exit planning from these services will need to commence in the autumn. This will present a significant risk to the availability of services to victims but also to the organisations delivering these services.

The PCC has also funded an Adolescent to Parent Violence and Conflict Service through the Restorative Justice contract, which is receiving a number of referrals, particularly through Early Help.

In addition, 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) alongside the delivery of 1:1 perpetrator behavioural change programmes.

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.

References:

- 1) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2023>
- 2) [Analytics report \(kpho.org.uk\)](https://www.kpho.org.uk/analytics-report)
- 3) [Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-2029](#)

Actions 2023/24	Progress
<p>Commission and support the Domestic Homicide (DHR) process on behalf of CSPs across Kent and Medway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2023/24 the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) received eleven notifications and has commissioned seven new DHRs. During the same period three DHRs were published; <i>Kitty</i>, <i>Leanne</i> and <i>Diana</i> following quality assurance from the Home Office. • 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 2023 and March 2024, 152 actions across a number of DHRs have been implemented resulting in two further DHRs being signed off with all actions completed.. • The Kent Community Safety Team (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 2023 three DHR Lessons Identified seminars were delivered aimed at professionals and frontline practitioners covering the learning and recommendations of recently published cases. Over 350 people attended these events with 96% rating it as excellent, very good or good.

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<p>Review the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Services Website and raise awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is being undertaken to fully redevelop the Domestic Abuse Services website in line with requirements. A holding page and new Referral Pathway have been developed to provide information about how to obtain immediate support in Kent and Medway. • The #KnowSeeSpeakOut campaign has created an annual calendar of social media content that is freely available for organisations across Kent & Medway to utilise. This has been commissioned by the KIDAS partners and managed through the Projects & Partnerships team to increase coordinated and consistent messaging around abuse and maximise the impact of campaigns. • The 2023 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse achieved; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - highlighting the voices of people who experienced abuse, utilising stories shared by 16 Days of Action Ambassadors to increase understanding and recognition of abuse - 5.6 million reach for total seen content - 99 organisations shared content, - generated over 700 bookings on the 16 Days webinar series, - featured in a community magazine, distributed to 56,000 homes, - posters displayed across the Stagecoach South East bus network - press coverage including a BBC South East TV programme feature with a survivor interview, Heart FM breakfast news, KentLive and BBC South East news article was generated.
<p>Support the review and refresh of the Domestic Abuse Strategy for Kent and Medway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent and Medway 2024-29 Domestic Abuse Strategy has been developed, consulted upon, and published (March 2024). Priorities and themes in the strategy were developed following feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including lived experience narratives.
<p>Raise awareness of the implementation of new burdens introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Review of the 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. • New services have been developed and procured to support the council in implementing its new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe Accommodation Support Service, delivering support to children residing in safe accommodation, started accepting referrals from August 2023. - Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents service, expanding the council's safe accommodation support offer, began accepting referrals from December 2023. - Male refuge pilot developed and began accepting referrals from December 2023.
<p>Support the work of Domestic Abuse partners to deliver bitesize open access learning resource videos</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 domestic abuse partners to develop a range of videos. • Five domestic abuse bitesize learning videos were launched on the 15th of February 2024. These training videos are a free resource that are able to be accessed by partners and aimed at professionals working in public-facing roles

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Support the delivery of Reducing Abusive Behaviour Training (policy deployment) to multi-agency partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project to increase uptake of template policies set out by the Reducing Abusive Behaviour Subgroup (of the DA Executive Group), which aims to coordinate the approaches to tackling abusive behaviour and enable greater focus on changing the behaviour of the individual causing harm.• Template policies helping organisations respond appropriately to clients and staff who may be causing harm through their behaviour have been produced. Free training opportunities to promote the use of these materials have been delivered by Respect on the 26th and 28th of March 2024.• The KCSP used some of the Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) project funding provided by the PCC to support the development of Reducing Abusive Behaviour policies and delivery of related training.
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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 the 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. 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 restructure 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 Member and Representatives from KCC, Chairman of Kent & Medway Fire and Rescue Authority, Assistant Director for Customer & Building Safety, Customer Engagement & Safety from Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS), as well as a number of cooperating agencies.

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.

At the time of writing, the Department for Transport (DFT) is yet to publish the Annual Road Casualty Statistics for 2023, however the [Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain, provisional estimates](#): year ending June 2023 was published on 29 November 2023¹.

Provisional data on Kent and National Highways Roads (excluding Medway) for 2023 shows 3,324 total Collisions (38 Fatal, 666 Serious and 2,620 Slight) resulting in 4,501 Casualties (41 Fatal, 736 Serious and 3,724 Slight). Compared to 2022 data there was an overall decrease in collisions across all severities of 70 and decrease in casualties by 31. 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 an increase of 14 KVSIs compared to 2022. Although the data shows an approximate 0.6% decrease in total casualties in 2023, there is however a 7.8% increase in the number of KVSIs casualties when compared to 2022 figures.

The increase in KVSIs casualties for 2023 (KCC's 12 months compared to DFT's 9 months) is partly

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reflective of information in the DFT [Provisional road traffic estimates, Great Britain: October 2022 to September 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/123456/Provisional_road_traffic_estimates_Great_Britain_October_2022_to_September_2023.pdf), published on 13 December 2023 which shows Traffic levels nationally in 2023 was 2.3% higher when compared to 2022 but overall 2.7% lower when compared to 2019 pre-pandemic levels². At the time of writing, traffic flow data for 2023 was not available from the DFT, however an increase of all severity casualties against a potential drop in traffic nationally would be unusual.

2023 casualty data in Kent has seen a slight decrease and remained fairly consistent across all road user types (pedestrian, motorcycle, cars, goods vehicles and micro mobility (electric scooters and electric cycles)) casualties compared to 2022. Pedestrian, Pedal Cyclist and Electric scooters casualty percentages have remained the same when compared to 2022, however there has been a 1% increase in Motorcycle casualties and a 1% decrease in Vehicle casualties when compared with 2022.

Overall casualties have been declining in Kent, they have decreased by 449 which equates to 9% in the 5 year period since 2019. The adoption of Vision Zero and the principles of a Safe Systems approach seeks to continue this decrease in the number of KVSIs.

In September 2021 KCC adopted a five year Road Safety Strategy for Kent and a 30 year vision³. 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.
- 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.

As part of exploring options for a more proactive approach to road safety engineering, enforcement and behavioural change interventions, trials of new and emerging technology and tools have been undertaken to consider if and how they can be incorporated in our safe system approach. These have included trials in the use of average speed camera technology and AI seatbelt and mobile phone enforcement cameras. Data sources are actively being identified to supplement the use of collision and casualty data, examples include connected vehicle data to identify risks and a trial using British Horse Society data on highway related incident, and near miss location collected by their members.

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 overarching working groups focusing on the following:

- Tactical Coordination of the partnership.
- Communication and engagement.
- Performance monitoring.

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- Killed or Seriously Injured incidents.
- Weekly partnership activity.

The KMSRP have commissioned an external consultancy company to conduct an external review of the partnership, one of the outputs of this review will be a strategy for the KMSRP.

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.

References:

1) *Reported road casualties in Great Britain, provisional estimates: year ending June 2023 (published 29 November 2023)*

2) *Provisional road traffic estimates, Great Britain: October 2022 to September 2023 (published 13 December 2023)*

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

Actions 2023/24	Progress
<p>Raise awareness of road safety campaigns across partnerships to facilitate joint working.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2023, the KMSRP delivered a Winter Drink and Drug Campaign across the county, encouraging drivers to 'make the right choice'. Digital display vans were present in some highstreets featuring the campaign messages and Crimestoppers information. Pub packs were delivered by Kent Police's Licensing team across the county from December 2023 – March 2024. The posters included information on the Drink & Drug Drive campaign, Spiking, VAWG, Crimestoppers and the Victim Support service. Alongside this activity, a campaign was launched by Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner 'PCC's new roads initiative targets persistent offenders' - Roads Policing Initiative Yields Results (kent-pcc.gov.uk) • The KMSRP has created two new working groups 'communications and engagement' and 'safe behaviours' the two groups will work together to raise awareness of road safety messages across social media platforms with a collaborative approach. • In 2024, the KMRSP will be looking at working more closely with the local CSP's to establish where Road Safety is a priority and identify opportunities to work together.
<p>Support delivery of Vision Zero</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC Safer Road Users Team has continued to promote and deliver the Young Driver and Passenger (YDP) course across educational establishments in Kent. Over the next year the YDP course will be further developed and become a partnership resource. The portfolio lead at KCC for Young Driver focused interventions has been selected onto the working group to contribute to the Best Practice national guidance for interventions and campaigns within Road Safety. • 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. • The KMSRP has looked at 2023 casualty data and created a 'motorcycle' subgroup, this group will identify opportunities to engage with motorcyclists working in partnership with key stakeholders. • Regular meetings take place between reps. from the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) and Safer Roads Partnership to share

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information.

- The KCST e-bulletin is used to promote campaigns locally to district partners and there are plans to include Vision Zero and Safe System in one of the regular Community Safety Information Sessions during 2024/25

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 crime¹.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported 1.0 million incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) recorded by Police in England and Wales in the year ending December 2023 (including British Transport Police)¹. This was a 4% decrease compared with the year ending December 2022 (1.1 million incidents)¹. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) year ending December 2023 showed that 35% of people had experience or witnessed some type of ASB. In addition 24% perceived ASB to be a fairly or very big problem in their local areas, whilst 8% perceived their local area had a high level of ASB¹. Since the year ending March 2013 survey, the trends across both measures have remained constant, with little change year on year¹.

In Kent and Medway between November 2022 and October 2023 there has been an overall decrease in ASB of -0.8% compared to the previous 12 months, equating to 227 less incidents. At a district level, five of the twelve districts within Kent recorded increases. The most prevalent types of ASB are attributable to 'Rowdy or nuisance gathering in public' with over a third of all incidents in this category (35%) followed by 'Drunken or Rowdy Behaviour' at 19%. The next highest proportion is 'Motor Vehicle Nuisance' with 18%. Together these types of incident account for just over 70% of overall ASB in Kent and Medway.

The Home Office statutory guidance for frontline professionals was originally published in July 2014 following the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, the guidance has been updated several times since in 2017, 2021, 2022 and most recently in March 2023 to coincide with the launch of the Government's ASB Action Plan. Since the publication of the 2014 Act partners across the county have worked together to ensure consistency of practice in relation to the ASB Case Review process (formerly referred to as the 'Community Trigger') and to share good practice and deliver training.

In March 2023 the Government launched their Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan² which had 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 fines, 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.

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Alongside the publication of the ASB Action Plan in March 2023 the Home Office also published a research and analysis paper 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 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 witnessed³. ASB impacted nearly all participants' quality of life to some degree and 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.

In conjunction with the publication of the ASB Action Plan, Research report and updated Statutory Guidance, 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 findings and recommendations from the consultation were published in November 2023⁵ and subsequently the national ASB action plan was updated and new legislation in the form of the Criminal Justice Bill is going through parliament (*at the time of writing*) to strengthen the ASB powers available to agencies.

The KCSP discussed the findings and recommendations at their November 2023 meeting, and in response to the Government's renewed focus, the KCSP hosted a multi-agency hybrid event on ASB in March 2024 with a focus around the Government's ASB Action plan. The Police and Crime Commissioner spoke at the event along with the National Police lead on Anti-Social Behaviour. The event included several key topics which were explored within the overarching theme, including Complex needs, Homelessness, Begging, Vehicle Nuisance, Youth ASB, Deliberate Fires and Community Payback. Those attending in person had access to marketplace stall holders and networking opportunities, and all attendees were able to interact during the event through the Question-and-Answer panels and survey feedback. Following the event a resource pack was shared with attendees including the latest information on ASB, reporting routes, resources, services, etc. and has since been shared with community safety partners more widely.

The Retail Crime Action Plan was published by the National Police Chiefs' Council in October 2023 to set out measures to tackle the rise in shoplifting, catch more offenders and keep retail workers safe⁶. According to the ONS Crime in England and Wales, shoplifting has increased nationally by 37% (to over 430,000 offences) compared with the year ending December 2022 and is the highest figure since current police recording practices began for the year ending March 2003¹. Implementation of the action plan is due in 2024/25, and includes a police commitment to prioritise urgently attending the scene of shoplifting instances involving violence against a shop worker, where security guards have detained an offender, or where attendance is needed to secure evidence. Kent police ascertained the top 20 retail crime offenders in Kent and tasked management of each person was taken on by the ASB team. In conjunction with the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) and local authorities the ASB team have ensured a problem solving approach to each person and their offending.

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

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community safety partners. Funding by the Home Office to tackle serious violence on hotspot areas is to be merged with ASB funding for 2024/25. This has meant the identification of 27 hotspot areas by Kent police that will be subject to additional patrols and problem solving. In 2024/25 the KCSP is exploring the potential to deliver further multi-agency training in relation to ASB tools and powers including Community Protection Notices and Case Reviews

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.

References:

- 1) Office for National Statistics. *Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2023* (published 25 April 2024)
- 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)
- 5) Home Office Consultation outcome - *Community Safety Partnerships review and Anti-Social Behaviour Powers: Government Response* (published 14 November 2023)
- 6) National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) – *Retail Crime Action Plan* (October 2023)

Actions 2023/24	Progress
Use of ASB tools and powers across partner agencies and sharing of good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Police continue to record details of 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. • Sharing of good practice around ASB continues to take place through the Community Safety Information Sessions, the KCST e-bulletins and regular Community Safety Managers (CSMs) meetings held by the district/boroughs. • The KCSP delivered an ASB event in March 2024 (see below) focusing on multi-agency partnership working in relation to ASB which included sharing a range of case studies. • The Government's new ASB action plan (published in March 2023 and subsequently updated) aims to introduce recording of incidents, case reviews, etc. and quarterly reporting to the PCC. Further details and guidance will hopefully be provided in 2024/25
Deliver OSARA Problem Solving training to partners and ensure the learning is being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSARA training was delivered to Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) in May '23 and one additional multi-agency sessions was delivered to partners in March '24. Further training for partners can be provided on request.
Work with partners to identify and share best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS) online events were delivered virtually in 2023/24 with approx. 40-50 people attending per session. The new format of one-hour lunchtime briefing sessions has been well received, with the majority of survey responders rating the sessions as four or five, out of five. • CSIS topics have included dangerous dogs, scams, Domestic Abuse Strategy, homelessness, Neighbourhood Policing (NHP) model, co-occurring conditions, healthy relationships, building safety, etc. • KCST e-bulletins achieved the target of nine or more editions produced

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	<p>and circulated in 2023/24. The bulletins are directly emailed to approx. 200 partners and professionals, however it is expected that the number of recipients is likely to be higher as partners share the bulletins with colleagues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bulletins included a range of information sharing good practice, partnership data, events, training, publications, media reports, legislation, etc.
<p>Deliver an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) event for multi-agency partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ASB event took place on the 19th March 2024 at the Kent County Showground in Maidstone. The hybrid event included delegates attending in person and virtually online with several marketplace stalls in attendance. • Attendees were from a diverse range of agencies from the NHS to Parish Councils and Local Authorities to Adult Safeguarding. • Approximately 200 people attended on the day, with around 125 attending in-person and 75 attending virtually with 89% of those who responded to the post-event survey rating it as 'excellent' 'very good' or 'good' • There were several interactive Question and Answer Sessions held throughout the day around the topics discussed. • A Resource information Pack has been created and has been emailed to all attendees who attended the event, it is also available via the Safer Communities Portal and has been shared with the April edition of the e-bulletin. The pack contains useful information covering government guidance and legislation, a summary of the government's ASB action plan, reporting routes, ASB related organisations, and details of support services and useful resources.
<p>Extend the reach of the Tonbridge Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) into rural locations [pilot project]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new radio system has recently been installed and is working well. The scheme went 'live' at the end of March 2024. • Several retailers have already joined the scheme in the project area whilst other rural businesses have expressed interest and are monitoring progress. • Three radios have also been issued to Beat Officers covering the area which will enable officers to keep in touch with rural businesses in both the day and night-time economy as the scheme expands. • The lead agency has confidence that the scheme will expand as time goes by and extend to other towns and villages.

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 11.4 per 100,000 people which while lower than the national average is still the highest rate it has been in Kent since 2010. The total number of drug and alcohol-related deaths from Kent real-time surveillance data (the data gathering is a partnership between the police and public health) between April 2023 and March 2024 was 383 deaths. This is a crude rate of 31 sudden deaths from drugs and /or alcohol per 100,000 adult population in Kent. It indicates another increase in sudden deaths from drug and

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alcohol in Kent. Nitazenes, which are illegal in the UK, are synthetic drugs produced in laboratories. They are similar to heroin and morphine, but can be several hundred times more potent. This contributes to the rising drug deaths in Kent. In response, KCC Public Health are working with all partners including police, in tackling the opiates problem, sharing the latest warnings, guidance and intelligence with partners as quickly as possible to help keep people safe via the Local Drug Information System – a network that includes police, public health, hospitals and substance misuse providers. The team are also in constant contact with councils across the country, pooling knowledge about effective ways to tackle these illicit, dangerous copy-cat products.

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 2022. 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). 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

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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.

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. In Kent, key systems have been set up to ensure the partnerships and delivery are fit for purpose. The strategy is in place post public consultation. A network is in place via the Kent Substance Misuse (Drug and Alcohol) Alliance which is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services. The programme’s Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for Kent is the Director of Public Health and reports to central government. A Senior Executive Group has been created chaired by the Director of Public Health and has leads from key agencies (Police, Probation, Providers, Commissioners, ICB (NHS) and Secure Estate. This drives the objectives of the strategy – including its key objective of getting more people into structured treatment and recovery services. There is also a group sitting alongside the Executive Group and the Alliance that tackles system learning on preventing drug deaths and this is linked closely to the Adult Safeguarding Board.

Three main aims of Kent’s Strategy for tackling Alcohol and Drug Harms 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

Each of these priorities will have an action plan and report to the senior executive group.

Need for Services in Kent

In 2022, the deaths in Kent that are related to alcohol are 36.9 per 100,000⁸. This equates to 603 people in 2022/23. This is a little lower than the national rate which is 39.7 per 100,000. However Thanet, Gravesham, and Maidstone rates are higher than Kent’s average at 36.9 per 100,000, and Thanet and Gravesham are higher than national average at 39.7 per 100,000. In Kent and Medway (2022/23) there were over 6,550 hospital admissions in which alcohol is recorded as a primary or

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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 Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) estimates).

In Kent, there were over 800 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. From Kent real-time surveillance data between April 2023 and March 2024, depression is the predominant psychological health issue followed by anxiety. Depression and anxiety were noted along with reports of Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The proportion of clients entering drug treatment with mental health issues is 73.2% (688 patients) while receiving treatment for mental health in Kent; and 82% of clients entering alcohol treatment while receiving treatment for mental health. 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

Between March 2023 and February 2024, there were 5,498 adults accessing structured treatment (for both drugs and alcohol) in Kent with over 1,500 successfully completing treatment free from dependence. During the same period over 1,300 young people received group work and almost 200 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

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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 of opiate clients into treatment as these are falling nationally and locally. The Commissioning team has done a review of declining numbers of opiate users in treatment in Kent, and outlined what is working and plan for 2024/25:

Improving Treatment and Recovery services

- Learning from opiate drop-out work
- Learning from breakfast/dinner clubs
- Buprenorphine (which is a new opiate substitution therapy) – additional funding
- OHID deep dive - Multiagency Stakeholder engagement into the drop in opiate users into treatment services.

The information provided will help us build on the dialogue between Kent and Central Government to support delivery of the drug strategy and consider what action can be taken to support delivery, including bespoke support for the Kent system and developing case studies that will support others.

Criminal justice

- Communication continues to strengthen between all stakeholders
- Various meetings including CSTR, Custody subgroup, Prison subgroup, reducing reoffending meetings, task and finish meetings and more. Drug and alcohol services and prison data leads reviewing information
- Meetings with NDTMS to ensure that Kent Criminal Justice Partners are recording information accurately
- Audit and review of the Criminal Justice pathways - this includes working with Medway to utilise the Continuity of Care tool affectively.
- Review of Criminal Justice protocols
- Utilisation of bridging prescriptions and 3-way meetings for releases
- Prison in-reach roles
- Reviewing co-location
- Friday prison releases ending

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 2023/24 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,

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cost effective and related to the substance in question.

References:

- 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 2023/24	Progress
<p>Work in partnership to deliver the national 10 year 'From Harm to Hope' drugs strategy and the Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy has been published. The webpage and strategy document can be found via this link: https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/service-specific-policies/health-policies/substance-misuse-drug-and-alcohol-strategy • Senior Executive Meetings / Combating Drug Partnerships and Kent Substance Misuse Alliance meetings took place quarterly throughout 2023/24. • Public Health successfully organised a workshop on alcohol licensing and cumulative impact policy (CIP) involving partners such as licensing officers, community safety managers in the districts, Kent Police and Trading Standards. • The numbers in treatment services have been increased, and Public Health are currently working on analysis focused particularly on increasing numbers of opiate patients into treatment services. • Probation continue to chair the CSTR (Community Sentence Treatment Requirements) Steering Group and the Ops Group. There is good partnership attendance and this continues to support increasing statutory drug rehabilitation requirements (DRRs), alcohol treatment requirements (ATRs), and mental health treatment requirements (MHTRs) at sentence. A further direction is helping to improve women's services in this area recognising the specific circumstances and needs of this cohort. • Continuity of Care Needs is a focus to ensure those requiring drug treatment are linked in with treatment providers within three weeks of release from prison. This will improve chances of successful engagement and treatment. Improved joint approach between prison health, partners and improved information sharing is key. Roll out has started with Probation introducing the 'Probation Notification and Actioning Programme' (PNAP) to improve how Probation are notified that a person has been referred to a community treatment provider from custody so Practitioners can follow up and support the Person on licence to attend the treatment provider appointment.

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

In December 2023, the Government published its latest 'Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Strategy 2023-2025: No Place to Hide'. The Strategy states that serious and organised crime is estimated to cost the UK at least £47 billion annually with a minimum of 59,000 people in the UK known to be involved in serious and organised crime¹. The mission of the strategy is to reduce serious and organised crime in the UK which will be achieved through five lines of action; In-county, UK Border, International, technology and capabilities, and multi-agency response. The strategy looks at measuring success through a clear set of performance metrics on the impact of law enforcement activity on reducing serious and organised crime in the UK. Locally partners continue to deliver the aims using the framework that has been developed for counter terrorism and modern slavery as this is a fully embedded framework across Kent partnerships, using the four thematic pillars often referred to as the 4P's, Protect, Prepare, Prevent and Protect (Home office, Nov, 2018)

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.

The Serious Violence Duty (SVD) was introduced through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, to commence on 31st January 2023. The duty places several requirements upon local areas, including agreeing a local partnership arrangement to lead on the duty, a definition of serious violence, having consistent data sharing, analytical processes to produce a Strategic Needs Assessment, and production of a Strategy to set out how the duty will be implemented locally. The work to respond to the serious violence duty has been coordinated by the VRU. There was an existing agreement by the majority of authorities for a partnership board with a definition of serious violence. The Board, which is chaired by the PCC with senior leaders from the specified authorities in attendance, have met and 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.

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- The Terms of reference for the Board and how the Board will work collaboratively with existing multi-agency meetings where risk factors relating to serious violence are addressed.
- To support a data sharing platform which is now in phase two.
- The Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) and Strategy via consultation along with the specified and relevant authorities. Workshops were held across all areas along with surveys to gain the key points to be included. These were finalised on 31st January 2024 and published to the OPCC and VRU Websites as well as being shared with the CSPs².

Kent and Medway's Serious Violence Duty (SVD) priorities are:

- Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse
- Serious Youth Violence a 0-25 approach
- Violence linked to drugs and alcohol

The next steps are for the leads to the three strands of the Strategy to agree plans for delivery and what that will look like.

Prevalence of Violence

Nationally the ONS report on Crime in England and Wales, year ending December 2023, showed that police recorded 2 million offences of violence against the person³, a decrease of 3% compared with the year ending December 2022 (2.1 million offences). This follows large increases in police recorded violence against the person since 2015³. Knife-enabled crime recorded by the police in the year ending December 2023 (excluding Greater Manchester Police and Devon and Cornwall Police) increased by 7% (to 49,489 offences) compared with the year ending December 2022 (46,153 offences), but remain 3% lower compared with the year ending March 2020 (51,206 offences)³.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides the best picture of the overall trend in violent crime³. Estimates from the CSEW for the year ending December 2023 showed that people aged 16 and over experienced an estimated 1 million violence incidents, indicating no change compared with the year ending December 2022 survey³. This follows on from a general downward trend in violent crime since its peak in 1995³.

In Kent violent crime (offences of violence against the person, sexual offences, and robbery) account for the greatest proportion of total crime. In the 12 months November 2022 to October 2023, there has been an 8.2% decrease (-7,188 offences) compared to the previous 12 months for the county. For Kent (excluding Medway) there has been an -8.5% decrease (-6,105 offences) with all districts seeing decreases. It is important to recognise that most serious violent crime remains rare. The vast majority (91%) of violent offences fall within the category of violence against the person (including violence without injury); followed by Sexual offences (8%) and then Robbery, all of which have declined during this 12 month period.

Public place violence is unevenly spread across the County with districts on the North Kent coastline being those most affected. It also affects those aged under 25 more than those aged over 25, with 40% of the victims of public place violence aged between 10-25 and 48% of the suspects being in this age group. Children are of particular concern as some of the reductions in overall levels of violence are not replicated when looking at those aged 10-17. The majority of suspects and victims of serious violence are male.

Serious and Organised Crime

Serious and Organised Crime is defined in the 2018 Strategy as individuals planning; co-ordinating and committing serious offences; whether individually; in groups and/or as part of transnational networks. The definition remains unchanged in the 2023 strategy. The main categories of serious

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offences covered by the term are: child sexual abuse; modern slavery and human trafficking; organised immigration crime; illegal drugs; illegal firearms; organised acquisitive crime; cybercrime; fraud; money laundering; and bribery, corruption and sanctions evasion.

In Kent the Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) that pose the highest threat and risk are discussed at the OCG Disruption Panel (*all OCGs across the UK are measured in terms of disruptions – minor, moderate or major impact against the OCG*). At a district level Serious and Organised crime panels (SOCP) operate on a monthly basis (chaired by Kent Police) with representatives from a range of public sector organisations and enforcement agencies. Disruption activity relies on good and appropriate information sharing between local partner agencies. SOCPs hold valuable intelligence that can enable law enforcement agencies to pursue Organised Crime Groups.

The National Crime Agency (NCA) publishes the National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) with the most recent assessment published in July 2023 covering the calendar year 2022 (January to December 2022)⁴. The NCA's Director General stated: *“Over the past year, we have felt the reverberations of international conflict, instability and poverty. Organised crime groups capitalised on the war in Ukraine and the cost of living pressures, shifting their campaigns to prey on the well-meaning and the vulnerable, whilst human traffickers and drug smugglers have adapted their routes and methods to maximise profits. The consequences play out on our shores and streets on a daily basis: last year (2022) a record 45,755 people used small boats to arrive on UK shores, while drug prices fell and drug production and deaths rose. The harm to the public is not always so visible. More crime is online, taking place behind closed doors, on the dark net and through encrypted apps. We now estimate that there are between 680,000 and 830,000 people in the UK (1.3% to 1.6% of the adult population) who pose varying degrees of sexual risk to children, and assess that viewing indecent images of children increases the risk of offenders escalating to contact abuse.”*⁴

Vulnerable individuals continue to be exploited across a range of threats⁴. Organised crime groups involved in organised immigration crime facilitate the movement of people into the UK in hazardous conditions with no regard for their safety. The exploitation of victims occurs at home and abroad, with offenders trafficking people within the UK and across borders, forcing people into various forms of modern slavery. Globally, serious and organised crime places children at risk of child sexual abuse and exploitation, both in person and online⁴.

- It is estimated there are a minimum of 59,000 known individuals engaged in serious and organised crime offending in the UK (excluding child sexual abuse offending); and that there are an estimated 680,000-830,000 individuals in the UK posing varying degrees of sexual risk to children from downloading and sharing indecent images of children to direct contact abuse⁴
- Fraud is a prevalent and consistent threat, with all of UK society affected by its economic and social consequences. There were 3.7 million frauds experienced by individuals in England and Wales in the year ending December 2022⁴.
- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework to identify potential victims of modern slavery and ensure they receive the appropriate support. Referrals for modern slavery and human trafficking have increased: in the year ending December 2022, 7,936 referrals were made for potential victims of exploitation (an increase of 10.3% on the previous year). It is likely this represents an improved awareness of the modern slavery and human trafficking threat, alongside increased movement across the UK border since COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were lifted⁴. From January to March 2024, 4,524 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the Home Office⁵.
- Drug use, drug seizures and drug offences continue to increase within the UK with a total annual cost to society of over £21 billion⁴.
- Organised acquisitive crime focuses on high-harm and cross-border burglary, vehicle crime, robbery, heritage and cultural property crime, plant and agricultural thefts and metal and infrastructure crime, amongst other crime types. It is highly likely that all areas of organised

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acquisitive crime will increase in the coming years due to increases in the cost of living⁴.

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.'

Many local CSPs have well established multi-agency arrangements in place 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 / SOC Panels, etc. 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 2023/24 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) HM Government. *No Place to Hide: Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2023-2028* (published December 2023)
- 2) Kent and Medway *Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027*
- 3) Office for National Statistics. *Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2023* (published 25 April 2024)
- 4) National Crime Agency (NCA). *National Strategic Assessment 2023 for Serious and Organised Crime* (published July 2023)
- 5) Home Office. *Modern Slavery: National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, quarter 1 2024 – January to March* (published 10 May 2024)

Actions 2023/24	Progress
Work with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and other partners to implement the 'Serious Violence Duty'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VRU worked with partners across the county during 2023/24 to develop a Serious Violence Strategy • The Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Strategy were published in January 2024. The needs assessment included bespoke analysis of public place serious violence for the 13 CSPs along with the picture for the county.
Improve the sharing of data so that there is a common understanding of serious violence informed by a multi-agency data set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data sharing platform that allows analysis of locations and the impact of serious violence has been created and tested. Additional work is required to install software on partner systems to allow the platform to go live. • Additional work to extend and enhance the platform is ongoing.

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<p>Reduce the harm experienced by communities linked to knives and weapons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VRU share data on knife crime with all CSPs as part of monthly reporting on public place serious violence. • Quarterly analysis of knife crime to illustrate patterns and trends has been commissioned and the report is anticipated in April 2024. • The VRU has partnered with Kent Police and the Ben Kinsella Trust to develop resources on knife crime which are available through the VRU website.
<p>Support the government's new tactic for protecting the public and tackling serious and organised crime: 'Clear, Hold, Build' (2023) which builds on the government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy (2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOC team continue to offer input into the local CHB implementation. Additional work is required here to extend and enhance the partnership contributions. • SOC team are well established in all SOCPs across Kent and Medway and provide substantial input. Additional work is required to enhance the partnership input into the SOCPs. • Prevent and SOC Week of Action 20/11/23 delivered training to KCC staff, Kent Police, Partners and key stakeholders with over 1200 participants and a far reach in raising awareness. • Intelligence reporting training has been delivered on regularly intervals and the SOC team will continue to promote the importance of reports and reporting lines available.
<p>Work in partnership to share information on the exploitation of adults and children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Exploitation Group (JEG) continues to meet quarterly with ongoing support from a range of partners. 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. • Kent County Council SOC team continue to promote the Kent Police Intelligence portal and demonstrating the organisational leads training available to staff via the KMCSB. The SOC team are members of JEG and continue to provide input on themes pertinent to the group and addressed at SOCPs. • Work with partners to educate, raise awareness, understand and provide safeguarding and signposting for those who are at risk of being exploited or being exploited • Development of SOC newsletters which are being shared regularly alongside additional Rapid reads, whilst promoting Kent Fraud Alert across organisations • High level of training delivered regularly by KCC SOC team. Training specifically covers organisational responsibilities under the Modern Slavery Act as a First Responders.

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 review Safeguarding Vulnerable People continues to be identified as a priority within the CSA.

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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. 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 2023/24 included scams and doorstep crime, homelessness, dangerous dogs, hate crime, co-occurring conditions, healthy relationships and compulsive obsessive behaviour interventions, buildings safety and the domestic abuse strategy. The regular e-bulletins shared with partners during 2023/24 also raised awareness and promoted a range of related information including but not exhaustive to: service information e.g. AMPARO support following suicide, Local and National strategies/policies e.g. Domestic Abuse Strategy, new legislation e.g. Online Safety Act, Local and National surveys/consultations e.g. CSP review & ASB powers and Domestic Homicide Review Legislation, Local and National awareness campaigns e.g. the Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week and the Know, See, Speak Out; End Domestic Abuse Communications Campaign and the publication of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and Safeguarding Adult 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, youth violence, radicalisation, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, missing children, etc. As appropriate other data sources may also be looked at, for example scams.

Scams / Doorstep Crime

In the NCSC's Annual Review for 2023 (Sept '22-Aug '23) it was noted that fraud continues to be one of the most significant threats facing UK businesses and citizens¹. The UK [Fraud Strategy](#) 2023 outlines a comprehensive plan to tackle fraud and protect the public. It aims to reduce fraud by 10% compared to 2019 levels by December 2024 and emphasized the collaboration between government, industry and the public². Scams are a significant concern in the UK, affecting individuals and businesses alike, in Kent, the Trading Standards Victim Safeguarding Officers work closely with KCC Community Wardens who visit and work with scam victims, identified by the National Trading Standards Scams Team (NTSST). In 2023/24 Kent Trading Standards Victims Safeguarding Officers conducted 139 interventions on behalf of the most vulnerable victims of Fraud. These victims were defrauded out of more than £600,000 but through the interventions undertaken officers prevented these victims losing in total a further £286,000, achieved through refunds, stopping further payments, compensation by their banks and negotiating new contracts. Additionally, the Community Wardens engage 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 Fraud Strategy.

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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 time³. 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 scam⁴.

Doorstep crime is a significant concern in Kent, affecting vulnerable individuals who may fall prey to deceptive tactics by doorstep criminals. These criminals, also known as rogue traders, cowboy builders, or building and gardening scammers, cold-call unsuspecting households with convincing deals to persuade them to agree to work being carried out. Trading Standards, with the assistance of the wider Service, delivered three Doorstep Crime Awareness Weeks in 2023/24 to engage with communities identified as having a higher prevalence of these sort of crimes. Staff delivered guidance to households, engaged the support of banks, gave presentations to vulnerable groups, visited chemists, building supply merchants and doctors surgeries. Additionally, have attended various public events and delivered scam/fraud awareness presentations to community groups and businesses. This included: Church groups, community centres, Kent Showground Dementia event, Kent Police Open day, Age Concern, MP drop-in centre, British Sign Language Centre, Barclays, HSBC, Mencap and so on. In total engaged with around 2130 members of the Kent community

Suicide Prevention

The Department for Health and Social Care published their new national suicide prevention strategy in September 2023, [Suicide prevention strategy for England: 2023 to 2028 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118122/suicide-prevention-strategy-for-england-2023-to-2028.pdf) which aims to reduce the suicide rate over the next five years. The Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention multi-agency Network, originally formed in November 2009 developed and published the [Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-25](#), which is the driver to reduce local suicides and is led by the multi-agency group.

The Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy has seven strategic priorities⁵:

1. Reducing the risk in high priority groups (Middle aged men, people with a previous suicide attempt, people with a history of self-harm, people known to secondary mental health services, people who misuse drugs and alcohol, people who are impacted by domestic abuse, people with problematic debt, children and young people).
2. Tailor approaches to improve the mental health and wellbeing across the whole population; (working with all relevant partners to improve the mental health and wellbeing in high-risk groups including; LGBTQI+, military and veterans, people with learning difficulties, ethnic and religious minorities, individuals impacted by family breakdown, prisoners and other people in contact with the criminal justice system)
3. Reduce access to the means of suicide
4. Support research, data collection and monitoring
5. Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide
6. Provide better information and support for those bereaved by suicide
7. Demonstrate system leadership and quality improvement across the system and within services.

There is an implementation plan setting out actions and accountabilities, which is overseen and delivered by the suicide prevention team based in KCC's Public Health department.

The Suicide Prevention team manage and use a data set called 'real time suspected suicide surveillance system' (RTSS). This is where data on suspected suicides is received on a fortnightly basis from Kent Police. This allows the team to improve data, evidence and understanding around suicide, including priority groups and subsequent risk factors and to ensure that interventions

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continue to be developed and adapted in a timely manner. The team analyses the data regularly to monitor any concerning or emerging trends and escalate as appropriate. A monthly analysis is shared with the Director of Public Health. An annual analysis of the RTSS is presented to key stakeholders to share key findings, including demographics and risk factors, and how this data acts to inform priority areas for the programme.

The Kent and Medway Network meetings include the Suicide Prevention Network which delivers the aims of the strategy, the Children and Young People Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Network and the Better Mental Health Network where wider health issues such as social isolation, resilience, gambling, etc. are shared. These Networks consist of over 100 multi-agency partners, including, VCSE, statutory agencies, academics, individuals with lived experience. The Network have been responsible for drafting the local strategy and provides an opportunity for system learning regarding best practice sharing, discussing issues/current challenges and opportunities for collaboration or improvement.

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.

References:

- 1) *National Cyber Security Centre Annual Review 2023 (September 2022-August 2023)*
- 2) *Policy Paper. Fraud Strategy: stopping scams and protecting the public (May 2023)*
- 3) *Love is Blind: Feelings of Loneliness and Isolation Go Hand in Hand with Romance Scams, Nationwide Building Society (February 2022)*
- 4) *St James's Place Partnership: How loneliness can contribute to financial scams*
- 5) *Kent and Medway Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Strategy 2021-25*

Actions 2023/24	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. Materials can be downloaded from the bottom of the webpage: www.releasethepressure.uk inc. five posters designed to target particular population groups i.e. the LGBT+ Community and people in financial difficulty. Over 3,000 calls per month and 54,000 text conversations were had by the two 24 hour services at the heart of the campaign in 2023/24. • Over recent years, the programme led a national conversation regarding the links between domestic abuse (DA) and suicide culminating in 2023 in DA being included as a risk factor in the Government's Suicide Prevention Strategy for the first time. • The Suicide Prevention team worked closely with DA colleagues and as part of the '16 days of action: end domestic abuse campaign' hosted a Learning event and share actions that frontline practitioners can take to reduce the risk of suicide. A digital briefing continues to be distributed to workforces across the system. • In 2023/24, around 770 people attended suicide prevention training across Kent and Medway. • The team are working with Public Health experts to develop a bespoke full-day training package for frontline professionals, looking at DA, suicide, substance misuse and trauma. • The Amparo Support Service for People Bereaved by Suicide supported around 90 bereaved individuals and families during 2023/24. Amparo also offer community response plans where support to individuals, students or the workplace is offered as a whole www.amparo.org.uk

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme funds the 'Money and Mental Health' project, delivered by Citizens Advice, to provide financial support and mental health support. A total of 627 clients were supported in 2023/24 with just under a million pounds of financial outcomes for their clients and a 100% reported improvement for mental health. • Quarterly Networks hosted by the team bring together over 500 members across three of the Networks to discuss best practice, shared insight and learning and opportunities for improvement or collaboration. • System leadership elements within the programme include providing the system with insight and learning from data sources, such as Real Time Suspected Suicide Surveillance, provided fortnightly by Kent Police. As well as developing toolkits and audits for front line professionals with guidance and implications for practice. Much of the research and reports are here: Suicide Prevention Team Resources (padlet.com)
<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 2023 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 and the KMSAB jointly delivered a DHR/SAR learning webinar on 22nd November themed around 'Who Cares for the Carers as part of the SAAW. • The KMSAB website 'Carers' pages was promoted widely as part of this event and KMSAB website data shows that the pages for carers and also useful links and resources pages had significant increases (1358% and 308% respectively) in visits following the 2023 SAAW campaign compared to the previous year.

Priority: Preventing Extremism and Hate

Context

'Preventing Extremism and Hate' has been a standalone priority within the Kent Community Safety Agreement since 2018/19. Over the last 8 years there has been disruption to 37 late-stage attack plots and as before this is a mixture of different ideologies and extremism such as extreme right-wing, Islamist extremism and predominantly self-initiated terrorist attacks. During the last five years the terrorist threat level was raised to Severe 3 times, it is currently standing at Substantial, which it has been at since February 2022. 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 that have occurred over the last couple of years, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, increased assertiveness of the Chinese Communist Party and the instability of Iran. In October 2023 the biggest terrorist attack in the last few years with the Israel and Hamas conflict. This conflict in Gaza is causing more radicalisation than the declaration of the caliphate by Daesh and other similar events because of the polarisation in society and the impact of fake news. Partners are aware that more radicalisation is being created in the country and the majority of this is due to the spread of 'misinformation and disinformation'. Due to this attack the proscription of further extremist groups has taken place [Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk). The UK faces constant threats from Islamist Extremism, Extreme Right Wing, and self-initiated terrorists. Low sophisticated style attacks using bladed articles and vehicles are still classes as the preferred method.

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Preventing Extremism

The UK counter-terrorism strategy (known as CONTEST) was refreshed in July 2023. PREVENT forms part of the CONTEST strategy and aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent work also extends to supporting rehabilitation and disengagement of those already involved in terrorism.

Alongside further recommendations from the Independent Review of Prevent (IRP) back in February 2023, the updated Prevent Duty Guidance (PDG) was released in October 2023 which came into force in December 2023. This guidance replaced the 2015 PDG.

The objectives of Prevent are to:

1. tackle the ideological causes of terrorism.
2. intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation.
3. enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

To tackle the ideological causes of terrorism, Prevent focuses on reducing the influence of radicalizers on susceptible audiences, as well as reducing the availability of, and access to, terrorist content. Work to counter radicalisation and reduce permissive environments extends across academia, civil society, communities, government, and industry. Prevent takes a partnership approach to disrupting radicalisers, including those who sow division and hatred, by working with local, regional, and national partners, law enforcement agencies, and other government partners. Prevent intervenes early by identifying people who are susceptible to radicalisation and providing support to those suitable for intervention.

The Kent and Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board (PDDDB) 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 PDDDB 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 and Medway. The collection plan and development for the latest Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) improves year after year and this year Kent and Medway were again the highest returning areas in the Southeast for the CTLP questionnaire from partners. A CTLP subgroup of the PDDDB meets quarterly to ensure the CTLP process is a genuine partnership approach. The CTLP for the year ahead 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 via a briefing in July 2024.

Following the IRP, the Channel Duty Guidance was updated in October 2023. The Channel Programme is part of PREVENT and uses a multi-agency approach to;

- identify people at risk.
- assess the nature and extent of that risk
- develop the most appropriate support plan for the person concerned.

Channel provides early support for anyone who is at risk of radicalisation, supporting terrorist organisations, or committing acts of terrorism, regardless of age, faith, ethnicity, or background. People can receive support before they begin on, or once they are on a trajectory towards participating in terrorist related activity. Cases should not be adopted onto Channel where no such terrorism concerns exist.

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. The success of Channel is dependent on the co-operation and co-ordinated activity of

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partners. It works best when the person and their families engage and are supported consistently. Further information relating to consent for Channel support and engaging people and their families can be found in section 6 of the Channel Duty guidance. The Channel Duty is intended to secure effective local co-operation and delivery of Channel and build on good practice. Channel Annual Assurance Statements for KCC are completed each year and sent to the Home Office by the local authority Chief Executive.

Kent and Medway have now been a non-Dovetail site since December in 2022, the first area to transition back to Counter Terrorism Policing Southeast. Referrals are now received straight to CTPSE who co-ordinate activity by requesting relevant information from panel partners about a referred person. The police use this information to make an initial assessment of the nature and extent of the concerns. Based on meeting the Prevent threshold the information will then be presented to a Channel panel. The Prevent Duty Delivery Board oversee the Channel Panel process, KCC remain as the lead authority for the overall delivery of Channel Panel across Kent and Medway.

A review of the transition from Dovetail was completed by CTPSE and further discussions are ongoing with CTPSE and Homeland Security.

Since April 2019 Kent and Medway has remained a designated Prevent priority area which brings with it 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. For the year ahead (2024/25) Kent and Medway continues to receive priority status, one of a number across the country and the only priority area in the Southeast, which brings its own challenges with the high level of expectation for the small team alongside the local threat and risk level. The Kent and Medway Prevent Team deliver Prevent activity across the county, including managing the Channel process, providing training and awareness, engaging with schools, other educational establishments, community groups and many other settings. The team also monitor online sentiment, support agencies locally in understanding and responding to the risk of terrorism and radicalisation as well as delivering and leading on work for teams within KCC and Medway Unitary Authority and commissioned services under the Prevent Duty.

Prevent Statistics

Since the introduction of the Prevent duty in 2015, over 4,400 referrals have been supported through the Channel Programme¹. In the year ending 31 March 2023, there were 6,817 referrals to Prevent, this is an increase of 6.4% compared to the year ending March 2022 (6,406), and the third highest number of referrals since the first period reported in 2015/16². Similar to last year, the Education sector made the highest number of referrals (2,684; 39%), followed by the Police (1,943; 29%). As in previous years, where gender was specified (6,801), most referrals were for males (6,125; 90%)². Of the referrals where age of the individual was known (6,796), those aged 15 to 20 again accounted for the largest proportion (2,203; 32%). Those aged 14 years and under account for the second largest proportion (2,119; 31%) of referrals. Nearly half (46%) of referrals that became adopted cases are for individuals aged between 11 and 15².

Looking in more detail at the journey of individuals referred, the number of referrals discussed at a Channel panel (1,113, 16%) and adopted as a Channel case (645, 9%) decreased when compared with the previous year, despite the overall number of referrals increasing². The proportion of referrals being discussed at a Channel panel has decreased (16% this year versus 23% last year). The proportion of referrals that were adopted as a Channel case also decreased (9% this year versus 13% last year)².

Similar to the previous year's publication, for the type of concern associated with referrals, Home

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Office analysts have amended the type of concern categories which disaggregates the 'Mixed, unstable and unclear' (MUU) category into its respective sub-categories². The category 'vulnerability present but no ideology of CT risk' accounted for the largest proportion of referrals (2,505; 37%) in the year ending March 2023². For the third year running, the number of referrals for Extreme Right-Wing concerns (1,310; 19%) is greater than referrals for Islamist concerns (781; 11%)². Of the 645 referrals that went on to be adopted as a Channel case, 296 (46%) were for Extreme Right-Wing concerns, 115 (18%) were for Islamist concerns, and 103 (16%) were for those with a Conflicted ideology².

The IRP made a recommendation on 'mixed, unstable or unclear' and 'other' strands of referrals. Recommendation 16 advised that the Home Office should 'improve Prevent datasets by revising how referrals are categorised. The Homeland Security Group should consider all options, including delineating and/or removing the 'mixed, unstable or unclear' and 'other' strands, against Prevent objectives. The Government accepted this recommendation and committed to improving understanding of the categorisation of referrals.

The response to this recommendation included a research piece to understand the types of referrals and cases being categorised as 'mixed, unclear and unstable' (MUU). To further understand the category of 'Mixed, Unstable or Unclear' (MUU) ideologies, the Home Office conducted internal analysis and external research. The research found variation in understanding and use of the 'MUU' category. This suggested work was required to disaggregate the category and improve recording practices. Approaches to managing risk and supporting 'MUU' cases varied, although practitioners reported that holistic support, using both ideological IPs alongside other forms of support, was generally felt to be best practice. Further updates are awaited on this with the introduction of a new case management system, which goes live in May 2023 and a number of new categories will be shared.

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 2023/24 the fourth successful Hateful Extremism conference was delivered in February 2024, with increasing numbers of attendees both online and in person. In total around 300 people attended the event from a variety of organisations including police, fire and rescue, local authorities, NHS, etc. (172 online and 130 in person). Based on the feedback, 78% of online attendees were new to attending the event whilst 56% of those in person were new to attending. The 2024 event was extremely well received with an overwhelming 95% awarding the event a 4-5 star rating with an average rating of 4.6% out of 5. 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. Additionally, feedback indicated that the topics covered during the event will be useful in their work..

Due to this continued success and much needed type of event another CPD event is planned for February 2025, again with a range of relevant and high-profile speakers sharing their expertise and knowledge. The 2024 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. This CPD event is in line with the recommendations of the Independent Review of Prevent (IRP) due to the need for ongoing and updated training delivering to practitioners and as stated in the IRP complies with '...countering ideologies that can lead people to committing or supporting acts of terrorism which can only be done if Prevent properly understands the nature of these ideologies and how they attract and suborn individuals'.

Hate Crime

Hate crime is defined as any incident, that may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a

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personal characteristic. There are five centrally monitored strands of hate crime: race or ethnicity; religion or beliefs; sexual orientation; disability; and transgender identity. Whenever an incident has occurred, this will be recorded on Kent police systems as a Non-Crime Hate Incident (NCHI). Though Kent Police are in line with Policing Codes of Practice, they have adopted an additional threshold test which clarifies that personal data should only be included in an NCHI if the event presents a real risk of significant harm to individuals or groups with a particular characteristic or characteristics or that a future criminal offence may be committed against individuals or groups with a particular characteristic or characteristics.

Kent Police works across statutory and non-statutory partners as well as community groups to ensure the most appropriate and proportionate response to reduce associated risks of serious physical and emotional harm, as well as reducing community tension and division.

Hate crime is everyone's business and can impact on anyone. In order to maintain trust and confidence from the public, it is a vitally important aim to get the response right first time, especially as hate crime is under-reported and often victims do not report on the first occasion. Hate Crime is a priority for Kent Police.

Kent Police are working with the existing themes from the Government Hate Crime Action Plan (listed below), which are also used to direct the work of the Hate Crime Forum and is shared as everyone's responsibility in tackling hate crime:

- 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.

Nationally the Law Commission published recommendations to reform hate crime legislation and to remove the disparity in the way hate crime laws treat each protected characteristic – race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity. These are with the Government and may lead to changes in the future coverage of the monitored strands. These are:

- 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 the Strategic Hate Crime Lead works with various partners including the IAG (Independent Advisory Group), KCC Prevent Team, Education, Victim Support Services and NHS to monitor and track the partnership response in tackling hate crime. In addition, the Strategic Hate Crime Lead chairs the Southeast Regional

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Forum and is a member of the National Hate Crime & Cohesion Gold Group to ensure an enhanced response to any trigger events/factors impacting hate crime and community sentiment.

The 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 communities, raising awareness around hate crime, act as tactical advisors to police and partners, and signpost support for victims.

Independent review and scrutiny of hate crime is integral to legitimacy and community trust and confidence therefore there are platforms in place to provide this. This includes in Kent, 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. Two weekly meetings between the Advocate and Strategic Hate Crime Lead ensure a review of police action and ongoing safeguarding and signposting support when appropriate following discussions between the Advocate and the victim.

The Neighbourhood Policing Model has three pillars focussed on engaging communities, problem solving and targeted activity to ensure a high-quality policing service is provided as per the commitment in the Kent Police Pledge. Police and partner agencies work together to provide the most appropriate engagement and response when tackling hate crime. The Neighbourhood Policing structure is:

- Prevention Hub
- Rural Task Force (these are both centralised, specialist functions)
- Child Centred Policing
- Neighbourhood Task Force
- Beat Team (these three functions sit within the Community Safety Units)

Monthly updates between the Strategic Hate Crime Lead and the Crown Prosecution Service ensure victims of hate crime receive a sensitive and appropriate service. Hate Crime Conviction rates and sentence uplifts are reviewed with feedback on any adverse outcomes or good practice.

There is a strong working relationship with the KCC Prevent Team where there is also representation on tactical and strategic meetings. Not all hate crime is linked to extremism and terrorism, but it is likely that a terrorist act will be motivated by hate which may be personal, ideological or the result of manipulation by others so police and partners have access to regular training, CPDs and events to recognise the links and make referrals. Many perpetrators of terrorist activity commit less serious hate crimes prior to progressing to more serious offending. Not every hate crime offender will escalate to extremist crime, and the challenge is to identify those with the potential to do so, thereby enabling counter-terrorist colleagues to reduce the risk posed.

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 2022 to 2023 (year ending March 2023)³ reported:

- there were 145,214 hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales (excluding Devon

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and Cornwall police), a 5% decrease compared with the year ending March 2022 (153,536 offences) , the first annual fall since the Home Office began collecting comparable data in the year ending March 2013³.

- there were 101,906 race hate crimes, 8,241 religious hate crimes, 24,102 sexual orientation hate crimes, 13,777 disability hate crimes and 4,732 transgender hate crimes in year ending March 2023³
- Hate crimes targeting transgender people saw a rise of 11% from 4,262 to 4,732 the highest number since the time series began in the year ending March 2012. Transgender issues have been heavily discussed over the last year which may have led to an increase in these offences, or more awareness in the police in the identification and recording of these crimes³.
- The number of hate crimes recorded by the police has more than tripled since the year ending March 2013, from 41,294 offences to 145,214 offences recorded in the latest year (it is thought this is linked to improvements in crime recording by the police and a growing awareness of hate crime leading to improved identification of such offences³).

In Kent and Medway for the rolling year up to March 2024, there have been a total of 5,433 incidents (4,228 notifiable offences and 1,205 non-crime hate incidents) compared to a total of 6,156 incidents last year. Of the incidents recorded up to March 2024, the prejudice breakdown was: Racial 2,843, Religion 161, Disability 436, Transgender 163, Sexual Orientation 667. By being professionally aware, other offences are identified early on, i.e. Domestic Abuse related hate crime, in the rolling year to March 2024 there were 222 such offences identified.

Monitoring of hate crime and community sentiment continues throughout the year and can be impacted by trigger events and activities such as the Middle East crisis, migration, humanitarian crisis, protests, media, political horizon, actions of activists. However, in Kent & Medway, there have not been any spikes or concerns.

Hate crime remains under reported so partners need to continue to raise awareness and encourage reporting through Kent Police or the various other third party reporting platforms such as Report It, Community Security Trust (CST), Tell MAMA, GALOP, Kent Police colleagues and also remain professionally curious for other offences such as domestic abuse and vulnerabilities such as to radicalisation to ensure appropriate safeguarding, interventions, and signposting support as part of our partnership response.

Whilst Community Safety Partnerships 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.

References:

1) Home Office. *Prevent and Channel factsheet – 2023 (released 7 September 2023)*

2) Home Office. *Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2022 to March 2023 (published 14 December 2023)*

3) Home Office. *Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023 (updated 2 November 2023)*

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Actions 2023/24	Progress
<p>Work in partnership to share information about Prevent and Channel alongside the referral process to reassert the overall objective of stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The multi-agency Prevent Duty Delivery Board (PDBB) meets quarterly throughout the year. The last meeting of 2023/24 was held on 11th April. • The Prevent Coordinator and Assistant Director CONTEST/Serious Organised Crime regularly attend CSP meetings across the county. • Prevent Community Engagement Officer link in with all priority area Community Safety Units (CSUs) and Task Forces. • Regular updates of Prevent Action Plan • Briefings and newsletters are being shared regularly • High level of training delivered in 2023/24. The training offer for 2024/25 is in the process of being updated. • The Hateful Extremism CPD Event was successfully delivered on 27th Feb '24 (see 7.5 below for further details) with next year's event in the planning stages. • Delivery of KCSP funded project by PEOs in local communities (Gaming Bus) (see 7.6 for further details)
<p>Work with partners to understand the key issues from the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) and Counter Terrorism Situational Risk Assessment (CTRSA) and encourage intelligence reporting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refresh of the latest CTLP is now complete (undertaken between Jan '23 – Dec '23) with partners feeding back information to help inform the refresh, with over 53 CTLP responses received. • The CTLP briefing event for Strategic Leads across the partners agencies took place on 27th March 2024. • Going forward wider briefings will be shared including the Counter Terrorism Situational Risk Assessment (CTRSA) which will be delivered to partners on 9th July 2024. • Graffiti and stickering updates provided to partners. • High level of training delivered in 2023/24 with training ongoing including information about the CTRSA, threat and risks updates. • Dissemination of information to KCSP partners.
<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"> • Briefings and updates are shared with CSPs with hate crime data and request raising hate crime awareness and changes in community sentiment to be reported. • Hate crime presentations delivered with a 365 partnership approach all year around, including themed months/weeks and days of action. • New work of pilot listening circle re hate crime with student community at Canterbury Christchurch University working in partnership with Community Liaison Manager at the venue. • Translated Hate Crime Leaflets continue to be shared with communities of interest at events, activities and key festivities. An identification of gap with an audio awareness is being filled. • Reporting and recording with breakdown of home office recording under prejudice types continues to be monitored, shared in appropriate meetings to improve reporting, performance, outcomes and victim support. • In addition to promoting third party platforms for reporting, a new one has been launched called RAKKHA focused at educating Sikh and South Asian Communities and thus increased reporting and signposting support.

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<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"> • Hate Crime Business Guide continues to be shared with business industry for preventative messages and reporting of hate crime and other vulnerabilities • A new Security Industry Authority (SIA) poster has been created and approved by the National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) / National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and SIA and awaits final artwork before sharing with security personnel. This will aid in the prevention and reporting of hate crimes in the business industry and security personnel. • Increased awareness of how to make a Prevent referral and reporting graffiti stickering across all platforms • Regular monitoring of hate crime repeat data has allowed for early targeted and appropriate response by police and partners.
<p>Support delivery of the Hateful Extremism CPD* event <i>(*continuous professional development)</i></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 delivery of the Hateful Extremism event. • The hybrid event was delivered on 27th February 2024 with around 300 partners and professionals in attendance - 130 people attending in person and a further 172 online. • Based on feedback 78% of online attendees were new to the event whilst 56% attending in person were new. • Speakers included a range of professionals from across the county as well as impactful input from survivor or a terrorist attack. • The event was well received with 95% of respondents giving the event a 4-5 star rating.
<p>Gaming & Online Awareness of Hate and Extremism</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 the use of a 'gaming bus' which is a community engagement initiative to promote awareness of how hateful extremism and potential radicalization is spread via gaming and how it can be countered. • Three funded sessions were successfully delivered between March and April 2024 in Gravesend, Folkestone and Canterbury. • The bus was in each location for the whole school day, engaging with approximately 750 pupils from Year 6 and Year 7. • Students engaged well with the gaming bus and held conversations with the agencies during the sessions. • The full year end feedback report will be compiled following the delivery of the final two sessions.

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 most of the local community safety partnerships (CSPs) have referenced VAWG within their plans

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alongside topics such as domestic abuse and tackling violence, as such it remains a priority for the KCSP for the forthcoming year.

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

- The publication of the HO 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.

In February 2023 the Home Secretary included VAWG within the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) which recognises VAWG as a national threat alongside terrorism and serious and organised crime. In May 2023, the National Police Chiefs' Council published the first national strategic threat risk assessment (STRA) of violence against women and girls aiming to provide a better understanding of the influences and levers that contribute to VAWG being a national threat

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 others¹. 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.

In September 2022 a prototype dashboard for data relating to VAWG was released on the GOV.UK website and provided data on a number of abuse types. The prototype will not be developed further, instead the ONS are exploring extending the questions used in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) to include harassment and are exploring potential data collection to understand young people's attitudes to VAWG. Whilst the dashboard has been removed, the data was primarily taken from the CSEW and updated figures are included below (March 2023):

- 5.7% of women aged 16 and over, were victims of domestic abuse in the last year²
- 3.2% of women aged 16 and over, were victims of sexual assault in the last year³
- 4.4% of women aged 16 and over, were victims of stalking in the last year³,
- estimated 25% of women aged 18 to 74 experienced abuse before the age of 16⁴,
- 2,905 cases of honour-based-abuse (HBA) related offences were recorded by the police in the last year, a slight increase of 1% compared with the year ending March 2022.⁵

In January 2023 CrimeStoppers released a report on Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces following a number of high profile murders (some of which are mentioned above)⁶. 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 globally⁶. The findings from the report 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 that 10% of women said they had been raped, with 23% saying they had been 'forced' to have sex⁶.

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The high-level findings from the National Police Chiefs' Council STRA (May 2023) show⁷:

- VAWG accounts for at least 15.8% of all recorded crime and is a significant contributor to demand on policing (Based on a six-month period 1 October 21 - 31 March 22).
- The VAWG statistical bulletin identified that at least 507,827 offences against women and girls were recorded in a six-month period (1 October 2021 - 31 March 2022) in England and Wales.
- There is considerable underreporting of VAWG crimes. The Crime Survey for England and Wales consistently outlines high volumes of women and girls who experience VAWG, such as sexual assault and stalking and harassment but do not report to police. Barriers to reporting are particularly pertinent in relation to minoritised communities.

Specific VAWG crime types⁷

- Data available indicates the following VAWG threat areas have seen increases over recent years: domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment, and modern slavery and human trafficking.
- Domestic abuse is a key contributor to VAWG overall. There were 447,431 DA flagged offences for all genders recorded in a six-month period across England and Wales.
- Stalking and harassment accounts for 43% (217,945) of all VAWG and is recorded by forces as varying between 26% and 56% of total VAWG locally. Domestic abuse is a key driver for stalking and harassment, and crime data identifies that 32.4% of all stalking and harassment offences are domestic abuse related.

In the 12 months November 2022 to October 2023, Kent Police recorded 41,013 VAWG offences, this is a decrease of -11.2% (-5,165) compared to the previous year, with reductions seen across all districts. In Kent (excluding Medway) there were 33,473 recorded VAWG offences which equates to an -11.2% reduction (-4,218) compared to the previous year. Of the VAWG offences recorded, 54% were domestic abuse related.

Following on from the Violence Against Women and Girls Conference (in March 2023) delivered by the KCSP, the partnership utilised some of the Crime Reduction Grant funding from the PCC in 2023/24 to deliver training around Victim Blaming Language. Initially, four sessions were delivered in but due to their success, a further two sessions were delivered resulting in over 480 people from a wide range of community safety partners having a greater understanding of victim blaming language and rape myths. Excellent feedback was received from attendees and follow-on training / awareness raising is being explored for 2024/25.

There are a number of prominent White Ribbon Ambassadors across Kent including the Kent PCC, Independent Chair for KMSAB, KCC's General Counsel and KCC's Head of Community Safety, who are supported by a multitude of White Ribbon Champions. 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. Work to actively promote the White Ribbon campaign continues, led by the Steering Group. Last year strong links were forged with the 16 days of action to end domestic abuse (mentioned within the Domestic Abuse section above)

Kent Police' 'Project Vigilant' is routinely used in the Night Time Economy and refers specifically to the tactic of deploying officers to identify predatory behavior traits and make interventions, with the wider deterrence factor achieved by advertising the tactic, and deterring potential offenders through visible engagements. Kent police have now trained over 100 officers in Project Vigilant tactics across the County and the training will continue to rollout on 2024. Throughout 2023 Kent Police continued to promote the Licensing scheme of Best Bar None, building on the success of the previous year. By agreeing to join the scheme, licencees work closely with police, council, and

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businesses to reduce crime and keep their communities safe. Kent now has over 130 licensed premises signed up to this self-accreditation scheme and has been recognised nationally for its work on successfully introducing the scheme into Kent and Medway.

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

References:

- 1) Home Office – Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (published July 2021)
- 2) Domestic Abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2023
- 3) Crime in England and Wales, victim characteristics: year ending March 2023 (published 6 March 2024)
- 4) The lasting impact of violence against women and girls (published 24 November 2021)
- 5) Statistics on so called ‘honour-based’ abuse offences, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023 (published 19 October 2023)
- 6) Crimestoppers report on Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces (published January 2023)
- 7) National Police Chiefs’ Council, Violence Against Women and Girls, Strategic Threat Risk Assessment 2023 (published May 2023)

Actions 2023/24	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"> • VAWG walk and talks have taken place monthly. Starting in October 2022 and continuing throughout 2023/24 with a different district each month. Police coordinating the events but working with local partners to develop and deliver. • Two VAWG Engagement Events were held in 2023/24 on 26th April 2023 and 14th December 2023 (hybrid) in-person or online – Chaired by Police but partners and public invited. Group discussions took place both online and in-person. To ascertain what could be done better and the public perception / demands.
<p>Share resources and best practice arising from the VAWG conference delivered in March 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VAWG resource pack completed after the Conference in March 2023 and shared with partners following the event – the resource pack included a range of information on VAWG and related information from a range of services and organisations, as well as reports, leaflets, and videos. • Kent Police are currently undertaking research into delivery across the country and if beneficial will be shared with partners during 2024/25
<p>Deliver Tackling Victim Blaming Language training to multi-agency partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial funding was approved for four sessions but following positive feedback from attendees a further two sessions were commissioned. All six sessions were well attended with approximately 80 people attending each session virtually via MS Teams. • The sessions had excellent interaction from the audience throughout. • Feedback from those attended was asked for in both comments and a poll. Responders rated the sessions an average 4.9 out of 5 and the comments were extremely positive. • This has led to over 480 people having a greater understanding of victim blaming language and rape myths. • Those attended came from a wide range of community partners including Social Services, Public Health, Domestic violence charities and Local Authorities. • As such the wider understanding of victim blaming and myths around Rape has been increased and improved across the county.