

AGENDA

KENT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Wednesday, 12th July, 2023, at 10.00 am
Online

Ask for: **Lucy Tricker**
Telephone **03000 417703**

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

A. Committee Business

- A1 Introduction
- A2 Apologies
- A3 Declarations of Interest
- A4 Notes of meeting held on 21 March 2023 (Pages 1 - 6)

B. Matters for Information/Discussion - Standing Items

- B1 Kent Community Safety Agreement Update (Pages 7 - 22)
- B2 Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group Update (Pages 23 - 30)
- B3 Kent Community Safety Partnership Terms of Reference Review (Pages 31 - 46)
- B4 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Consultation (Pages 47 - 142)
- B5 Kent Police and Crime Commissioners response to Mental Health: Verbal Update
- B6 Neighbourhood Policing Restructure Update: Verbal Update
- B7 Response to the Serious Violence Duty (Pages 143 - 146)

C. Matters for Information

- C1 Date of next meeting
 - 16 November 2023
 - 14 March 2024

D -RESTRICTED ITEM(S)

Meeting not open to the press and public and reports not for publication

D1 Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Update

D2 Kent and Medway PREVENT Duty Delivery Board (PDDB) Update

Tuesday, 4 July 2023

KENT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

21st March 2023 at 10:00am

NOTES of a meeting of the Kent Community Safety Partnership held Online on Tuesday, 21 March 2023.

PRESENT: Mr H Hill (Chair), Mr J Rivers (Vice-Chair), Mr S Peerbux, Mr N Wilkinson, Ms S Brinson, Supt P Steenhuis, Ms L McMahan, Mr M Powell, Mr S Mochrie-Cox, Mr B Platt, Mr S Butler, Ms C Jones, Mr D Satchell, Mr R Phillips, Mr M Hand, Mr M Overbeke, Ms B King, Ms S Davison, Ms C Collins, Ms J Mookherjee, DI J Ross, Ms C Bright, Ms K Turner, Ms A Agyepong, Ms S Annan-Veitch, Ms A Tyler, Ms S Scott, Mr P Breckon, Mr P Rollington and Mr S Beaumont.

A1 Introduction

Apologies were received from Mr A Harper, Mr A Pritchard, Ms A Broom, Ms D Haylett, Ms E Sills, Ms J Harmen, Mr J Quinn, Ms L Dixon, Ms L Conner, Mr M Woodward, Mr P Dosad, Ms S Poole, Ms S Denson, Ms S Howard, Ms S Robson Mr P Ramewal, Ms L Connor, Ms V Widden,

A4 Notes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022

RESOLVED that the notes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022 were correctly recorded and be signed by the Chairman.

B1 Kent Community Safety Agreement Review and Refresh Update

1. Mr S Peerbux (Head of Community Safety, KCC) introduced the update.
2. Ms S Brinson (Community Safety Team Leader, KCC) gave an overview of updates made to the Community Safety Agreement (CSA) advising that some, but not all chapters of the CSA had been updated; with all changes recorded in the version control.
3. In the previous year's refresh, new priorities had been added to reflect both national and local issues and saw the inclusion of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) priority was extended to include Neighbourhood Crime and the cross-cutting theme Response and Recovery from Covid-19 Pandemic priority was renamed to Response and Recovery from Significant Community Events.
4. It was noted that there had been a change to the legislation section of the CSA, with a reference to the sharing of information to support the work of Community Safety Partnerships (CSP), and a reference to the Police Crime Sentencing and Court Act 2022 which had added a new duty for CSP's regarding reducing serious violence. It was said that this was the first piece of legislation that had directly amended the Crime and Disorder Act and the primary focus of CSPs for a number of years. It was also noted some of the future considerations including the New Protect Duty, known as Martin's Law, and references to other bills and legislation going through Parliament.

5. An overview of further changes and amendments was given including the war in Ukraine, the Cost-of-Living Crisis, exit from the European Union and migration and resettlement.
6. It was noted that there was limited need to change the chapter on governance aside from the inclusion of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board which was now a responsible authority within the CSPs.
7. Ms Brinson confirmed that following the latest review, the current priorities and cross-cutting themes appropriately reflect the key issues for community safety partners and as recommended that they are retained.
8. A Partnership Member noted the Serious Violence Duty required authorities in Kent to agree on a definition of serious violence. Representatives from each authority had been brought together to agree on a definition and make a partnership arrangement. Work was ongoing but much progress had been made.
9. A Partnership Member raised a concern that there needed to be both local and county-wide strategic needs assessments and strategies in relation to serious violence.
10. The Chair raised that there needed to be a focus on the cost of living, vulnerable people and the rise of scams within the document due to a large degree of public concern. Ms Brinson noted that these sections could be strengthened in the CSA.
11. Mr Peerbux noted that there may be a review of the remit of CSPs as part of a National PCC review but no timescale was given for when the review was expected to take place.

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) considered and commented on the refreshed Kent Community Safety Agreement. Agreed to the priorities and cross-cutting themes for 2023/24; noted the duty for partners to attend the upcoming Scrutiny Committee arrangements.

B2 Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group Update

1. Mr Peerbux introduced the update and provided an overview of projects that had been funded by the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) Crime Reduction Grant (CRG). A number of projects were included in a business case to access the CRG Tactical funding pot but these did not meet the criteria. The CRG Tactical funding pot of the CRG closed on 24 February 2023, leaving approx. £10,000 underspend of the KCSP allocation which will be retained by the PCC.
2. Work was ongoing with the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) and partners to identify projects for the new year to fund from the PCCs Crime

Reduction Fund. Mr Peerbux said that he would welcome any ideas for projects from partnership members.

3. It was noted that the VAWG conference would take place the following week with many speakers covering key topics including trauma of VAWG, Incels, Safer Streets and support services available. It is expected that over 150 people will attend either in person or online.
4. The KCST was looking at alternative ways of delivering the Community Safety Information Sessions so that they would be shorter but more frequent and can align with emerging issues and/or local/national campaigns etc.
5. Partners were made aware that there are resources available signposting to the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Services website which can be utilised when hosting events.
6. It was also noted that co-location was working, due to the commitment from KCST staff who were working collectively in the office at least one day a week.
7. Nick Wilkinson thanked the team for the funding for the Extremism conference which would had over 300 attendees.

RESOLVED the Kent Community Safety Partnership noted the progress and actions undertaken by the Working Group and the work of the KCST.

B3 Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Review Update

1. Ms A Agyepong introduced the update and advised that a number of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) highlighted learning and recommendations regarding MARACs. As a result, the multiagency MARAC project group completed a thorough review of the MARAC process, undertook consultations with stakeholders and proposed a new model that was signed off by the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Executive Group in July 2022 with funding agreed upon with key partners.
2. The proposed new model would support an increase in oversight, progress and strengthening of the work of the MARAC and also support the prioritisation of often complex cases.
3. Ms S Annan-Veitch, Ms A Tyler and Ms S Scott then gave a presentation on the new proposed case management model. Please find the slides attached.
4. Asked by a Partnership Member about the utility of the case management system. It was confirmed that the new system would save time and improve safeguarding by ensuring the most complex cases get the time they need to be considered.

5. Implementation of the new model was expected to take place in early July 2023. There would be a focus on recruitment and the case management system development.
6. Asked by the Chair about the funding going forward or if negotiations would be required each year. In response, it was said that some partners had committed to funding ongoing, but others would need to be negotiated with. The Partnership would be updated on progress going forward.

RESOLVED that the Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Review Update be noted.

B4 Crimestoppers Update

1. Mr P Breckon introduced the update and gave a presentation. An overview of the charity was given, it was noted that it was an independent 24/7 charity and all those who contacted the charity were given anonymity with no personal details taken. 95% of users said that anonymity was important.
2. It was said that by the end of the year, Crimestoppers expected to disseminate 195,000 pieces of information to police forces across the UK. It was noted that Crimestoppers were able to get into some communities better than the Police due to mistrust in the Police and authorities.
3. Partnership Members were encouraged to contact senior members of Crimestoppers if they thought the charity would be able to support work in their areas of interest or if they had noticed any emerging trends. Crimestoppers could supply materials and raise awareness which in turn would generate more information that could then be passed on to the Police.
4. An overview of recent national and local campaigns was given, including puppy trafficking which led to a 40/50% increase in reports. It was noted that campaigns would be tailored to the specific contexts of the issues or areas being targeted. A drug campaign in Maidstone and Medway was successfully targeted at younger people by utilising Social Media platforms Snapchat and Instagram.
5. In Kent, there would be around 4,500 information disseminations in the financial year 2022/23 which would lead to 6,000 crime reports. The most wanted page had produced numerous results which helped locate those individuals.
6. Fearless, the youth branch of Crimestoppers, helped raise awareness of various crime types with young people. The service was undergoing a revamp in Kent and work was ongoing on how to make it most effective. There had been ongoing struggles to recruit an outreach worker.
7. Mr P Rollington gave further details on Crimestoppers zones, which were first implemented in Kent and then set up in the rest of the country. The zones were implemented where neighbourhood watches were not in place. It had

been shown to be effective at reducing crime but could only be targeted in specific areas, so could be just a block of flats but not across the whole of Kent.

8. The Chair asked about the impact of the pandemic on the Charity. Mr Breckon replied that there had been an increase in public order offences reported due to the lockdown regulations, but otherwise a decrease. However, it was said that in Kent over the past year, the number of dissemination had so far indicated that they would be higher than the levels seen before the pandemic.
9. Asked by the Chair about funding, Mr Breckon said that there was funding and noted that it was a £6 million turnover charity which was not massive in national charity terms but enough to maintain day-to-day operations. National campaigns were difficult the charity had to bid for funding from various areas and pots. Overall, the financial situation was characterised as being solid, but there could be difficulties going forward.
10. The Chair remarked on the important work the charity was doing and that the figures and outcomes delivered were encouraging.

RESOLVED that the Crimestoppers update be noted.

B5 Neighbourhood Policing Review Update

1. Superintendent P Steenhuis introduced the update and advised that the review was taking place due to significant financial challenges and a need to increase police officer numbers.
2. The new model would protect frontline services as much as possible while delivering neighbourhood policing most effectively going forward.
3. It was noted the redesign would see 210 officers in geographical beat teams. A child-centred policing team that would enhance the level of youth engagement. Neighbourhood task forces had been working well in Maidstone, Margate and Medway and would now be present in all 13 Kent districts eventually. There would be three divisional prevention hubs. Overall, the new model would offer a more structural, simplified and coordinated approach to policing in the community. The model would ensure a problem-solving approach was taken to the issues found within Kent communities.
4. The launch date of the new model was given as 7 June 2023; however, it was noted that it would not be at full capacity on day one. It was expected on day one 50% of beat officers would be in place.
5. It was noted that the reduction of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) was unfortunate, but the new model would maintain the same level of youth engagement with school officers and the child-centred policing team.
6. It was noted that two-way engagement with the local Councils and reports to Council meetings would continue going forward.

RESOLVED that the Neighbourhood Policing Review Update be noted.

D1 Domestic Homicide Review Update

1. Mr Peerbux provided an update on the Kent and Medway Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) cases as well as a case briefing on the most recently published case for Jean 2018 which can be found on the kent.gov website using the link below.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/partnerships/kent-community-safety-partnership/domestic-homicide-reviews>

RESOLVED that the Domestic Homicide Review Update be noted.

D2 Kent and Medway PREVENT Duty Delivery Board Update

1. Mr Wilkinson (Assistant Director Contest and Serious Organised Crime, KCC) provided an update on the PREVENT Duty Delivery Board.

RESOLVED that the update on the PREVENT Duty Delivery Board be noted.

D3 Kent and Medway Joint Exploitation Group Update

1. Mr Wilkinson provided Members with an update on the Kent and Medway Joint Exploitation Group.

RESOLVED that the update on the Kent and Medway Joint Exploitation Group be noted.

By: Shafick Peerbux - Head of Community Safety, KCC
Shirley Brinson - Community Safety Team Leader, KCC

To: Kent Community Safety Partnership – 12th July 2023

Classification: For Information

Subject: Kent Community Safety Agreement Update

Summary This report includes details of the refreshed Kent Community Safety Agreement draft action plan for 2023/24

1.0 Background

1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gave statutory responsibility to local authorities (KCC/District/Boroughs), Kent Police and key partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities. Under this legislation Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (now Community Safety Partnerships) were required to carry out 3 yearly audits and to implement crime reduction strategies. A formal review of the 1998 Act took place in 2006, with the result that three year audits were replaced with annual partnership strategic assessments and rolling partnership plans, whilst in two tier authority areas a statutory County Community Safety Agreement was introduced.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) outlines the key community safety priorities for the county along with the cross-cutting themes that support the identified priorities. It is a rolling document which is reviewed and refreshed annually with the relevant Chapters and appendices being updated as required.

2.2 In the most recent review of the CSA it was agreed to retain the existing priorities and cross-cutting themes:

Priorities

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

Cross Cutting Themes

- Early intervention, prevention & education
- Reduce re-offending and support victims
- Improve quality of life and enhance community resilience
- Support mental health and wellbeing
- Response and Recovery from Significant Community Events

2.3 Whilst the priorities were unchanged some of the emerging issues which partners felt worthy of specific note included the cost of living crisis, the publication of the Serious Violence Duty guidance which impacts all community safety partners, and the potential impact of other reviews relating to the Protect Duty, CSPs and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). These issues were included in the updated Chapter on the

Community Safety Landscape along with a range of other existing and emerging issues.

- 2.4 The draft Kent Community Safety Agreement (April 2023) was discussed at the March meeting of the KCSP and following suggested changes raised at the meeting, the content was subsequently updated as agreed.

3.0 Action Plan Development

- 3.1 Following the development of the new CSA, the action plan has been refreshed by members of the KCSP Working Group, priority leads and other relevant partners to ensure that it appropriately reflects the updated priorities and cross-cutting themes. A draft of the refreshed plan is attached for information (Appendix A).
- 3.2 The action plan includes the key pieces of work that are being delivered by community safety partners across the county linking in with other multi-agency groups and strategies where possible, including the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership, the Substance Misuse Alliance, the Joint Exploitation Group, the Prevent Duty Delivery Board, Safeguarding Boards/Partnerships, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) etc. Activities and links related to groups and strategies are referenced throughout the action plan, (*shown in green*), to help support multi-agency delivery and partnership working and may be updated in-year subject to revisions and changes that take place within those groups and plans.
- 3.3 The action plan also includes a number of projects which the KCSP has proposed to support in 2023/24 through the use of the Kent PCC's Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) funding (*shown in purple*) – these will be covered in more detail in the report from the KCSP Working Group.
- 3.4 Like the Community Safety Agreement itself, the action plan is also a rolling document and as such contains a number of actions that are ongoing or which take place annually and are directly linked to the KCSP's core functions, such as delivery of Domestic Homicide Reviews and sharing of lessons identified; Strategic Assessments; or coordination of cross county community safety issues such as Information sharing; Raising awareness of campaigns etc.
- 3.5 New actions that have been added to the plan, in addition to the funded projects mentioned above, include a number of activities relating to the introduction of legislation and new duties around Serious Violence. KCSP members will be working together with partner agencies and other multi-agency partnerships to support implementation, which may result in the action plan being developed further in-year to reflect additional areas of work that the KCSP could help to deliver.
- 3.6 The refreshed plan details the overall aim for each priority, the planned outcomes, the actions to be taken, how delivery will be measured and reported and who is responsible for coordinating activity or feedback. This will remain a live document, which the KCSP Working Group and the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) will be monitoring throughout the year and updating if required.

- 3.7 KCSP members are invited to feedback on the content of the draft action plan via email to the kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk by the end of July 2023 for inclusion in Version 1 of the 2023/24 action plan; Or at any point during the life of the plan should they identify a potential new action that might be appropriate for inclusion.

4.0 Performance Monitoring

- 4.1 In 2022/23 the Kent Community Safety Team (KCS) explored the potential to source an analytical resource with the aim of producing a county community safety strategic assessment which would not only inform the refresh of the Community Safety Agreement but would help partners involved in the annual strategic assessment process. Unfortunately it was not possible at that time to secure an analyst but an assessment was commissioned to inform the refresh of the CSA.
- 4.2 In 2023/24 the KCST will continue to work with Kent Police to further explore the options around analytical support. If successful, the analyst will be able to help identify a range of proxy indicators chosen to represent the key priorities, whilst members of the KCSP Working Group monitor some of the quantitative outcomes from the action plan. This will enable the Working Group to be able to highlight any issues or concerns to the Kent Community Safety Partnership at future meetings, as well as utilising the information gathered in-year to help inform future Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committees. The KCST will also work with district community safety colleagues to review the strategic assessment produced in 2022/23 to help in its development and potentially support the work of local CSPs when undertaking their annual assessment process.

5.0 Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

- 5.1 The Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee will take place on 19th July 2022 to review the work of the Kent Community Safety Partnership over the past 12 months (2022/23) in relation to the CSA published in April 2022, and to comment on the refreshed CSA for the year ahead.
- 5.2 The committee will be held as a hybrid meeting, with committee members and the partners who are presenting at the event attending the Council Chambers in person, whilst the leads of other priorities will be available if needed via video conferencing to respond to any additional questions.
- 5.3 A comprehensive written report will be supplied to the committee ahead of the meeting providing a range of data and information about each priority as well as the actions undertaken by partners to address them during 2021/22. This year, at the request of the committee members, the focus for KCSP partners will be on the priorities of: Preventing Neighbourhood Crime & ASB; Serious Violence & Organised Crime; Substance Misuse; and Domestic Abuse. In addition to the focus topics a brief overview will be given to cover the other priorities.
- 5.4 The Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee will be webcast live and the minutes published on the Kent.gov website.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) members are asked to note the refreshed action plan which supports delivery of the refreshed Community Safety Agreement.
- 6.2 KCSP members are invited to provide feedback on the content of the draft action plan via email to kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk (KCST) by the end of July 2023, or at any time in-year if new actions emerge.

Attachments:

Appendix A: Draft Community Safety Agreement (CSA) Action Plan

For Further Information:

Shirley Brinson
KCC Community Safety Team Leader
shirley.brinson@kent.gov.uk

Shafick Peerbux
KCC Head of Community Safety
shafick.peerbux@kent.gov.uk

Key:

- **Purple actions** – funded projects supported by the KCSP using the PCC’s Crime Reduction Grant (CRG)
- **Green actions** – activities that link to another multi-agency partnership group and/or strategy

Priority: Domestic Abuse

Aim: Support delivery of the Domestic Abuse Strategy to prevent abuse, provide services, reduce risk and work in partnership

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes (What do we want to achieve from our partnership activities?)	Actions (What actions do we need to take to deliver the planned outcomes?)	Measure (How will we monitor delivery of the planned outcomes?)	Timescale (Delivery date?)	Lead Agency (Who will feedback on the action?)
Page 1 ↑.1	<p>Improving practices: Commission and support the Domestic Homicide (DHR) process on behalf of CSPs across Kent and Medway with the aim to identify lessons, improve practice and ensure changes are implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake DHRs where the criteria has been met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of DHRs commissioned and completed 	Ongoing	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade lessons identified through a range of methods including: online seminars for practitioners & professionals, briefings, reports, partnership meetings and new digital learning options (i.e. seminar recordings and case-related videos). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online seminars delivered and no. of people attending • Survey feedback • Digital learning shared with partners • Briefings / reports provided to partners 	March 2024	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DHR Steering Group will monitor action plans from completed reviews and ensure that changes are implemented by partner agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions and recommendations completed 	Ongoing	
1.2	<p>Improving practices: Review the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Services Website and raise awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with DA colleagues to review the current website. • Ongoing distribution and dissemination of promotional material for use across the County. • Delivery against partnership media and communications plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task and finish group established • No. of requests for posters, cards & pull up banners • Annual update on media and comms campaigns including 'reach' achieved 	March 2024	KCC Commissioned Services / Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)

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1.3*	<p>Improving Practices: Support the development of the 2024-2029 Domestic Abuse Strategy for Kent and Medway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners within the Domestic & Sexual Abuse Executive Group and the associated DSA Tactical Group to support the development of the Domestic Abuse Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings provided to KCSP on the DA Strategy • Awareness raised with partners around the consultation • Relevant actions implemented 	March 2024	Domestic Abuse Tactical Group
1.4	<p>Supporting victims: People experiencing domestic abuse access effective support which meets their needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates provided to partners about service provision for adults and children impacted by domestic abuse including the implementation of new burdens introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on newly commissioned service provision including SAFER (sanctuary provision) and SASS (services for children in safe accommodation) • Updates on community based support 	Ongoing	KCC Commissioned Services
Page 12 1.5*	<p>Improving Practices: Support the work of Domestic Abuse partners to deliver bitesize open access learning resource videos</p>	<p>Crime Reduction Grant Funding 2023/24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce five short videos on the topics of: signs of abuse, safe enquiry, safety planning, understanding the risk, signposting & support • Promote the use of the resources with multi-agency partners and ensure the videos are available to all via open access channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Videos produced and made available through open access channels • Use of the videos will be monitored • Feedback sought from agencies 	March 2024	KCC Commissioned Services
1.6*	<p>Improving Practices: Support the delivery of Reducing Abusive Behaviour Training (policy deployment) to multi-agency partners</p>	<p>Crime Reduction Grant Funding 2023/24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the available training with partner agencies • Promote the use of the policy templates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of people and agencies attending the training • Evaluation of the training • Learning shared with the Domestic & Sexual Abuse Tactical Group and other partners as relevant 	March 2024	KCC Commissioned Services

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Priority: Road Safety

Aim: Raise awareness of Road Safety issues across the County to help reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Kent roads

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
2.1	Ensuring consistency: Raise awareness of road safety campaigns across partnerships to facilitate joint working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share details of road safety campaigns and events with local Community Safety Partnerships (<i>via the Safer Communities Portal, e-bulletins, etc.</i>) and promote consistent messaging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of information shared with partners Campaigns promoted Feedback from the Kent & Medway Safer Roads Partnership and/or district colleagues on activities 	ongoing	Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership
2.2*	Improving Practices: Support delivery of Vision Zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners within the refreshed Kent & Medway Safer Roads Partnership to support Vision Zero and safe systems approach across Kent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular engagement with partners around Vision Zero Reduction in Killed or Very Seriously Injured 	ongoing	

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Priority: Substance Misuse

Aim: Work together in partnership to reduce the harm of drug and alcohol misuse

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
3.1*	Partnership working: Work in partnership to deliver the national 10 year 'From Harm to Hope' drugs strategy and the Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2023-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners in the Substance Misuse Alliance and Drug Tactical Delivery Group to support the governance, oversight and monitoring required by central government to deliver the national strategy including the '<i>Combating Drugs Partnership</i>'. Work with partners in Kent and Medway Regulatory Licensing Steering Group and CSPs to explore Cumulative Impact Policy/Zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies maintain engagement as members of the Combatting Drugs Partnership Gather relevant data from authorities to evidence an area/s where a CIP may be effective CSPs are aware of the newly developed Kent strategy Briefings provided to the KCSP on progress 	Ongoing	KCC Public Health

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information with local community safety partnerships via Community Safety Managers and CSP meetings • Work with partners to increase numbers in treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and report on numbers in treatment 		
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Priority: Preventing Neighbourhood Crime and ASB**Aim: Tackle the problems caused by Anti-Social Behaviour through effective partnership working**

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
4.1 Page 14	Improving practices: Implement a framework for use of ASB tools and powers across partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a method of collecting details about the use of ASB tools and powers by Kent Police and Local Authority partners to facilitate sharing of good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of powers by Kent police and LA's is collated • Benchmark the use of ASB tools and powers • Increase the use of ASB tools and powers across the county 	March 2024	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)
4.2	Improving practices: Deliver OSARA Problem Solving training to partners and ensure the learning is being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCST team members to deliver training to partners, in conjunction with others already trained, to help develop problem solving skills that can assist in fighting crime, ASB & reducing reoffending • Monitor use of OSARA problem solving and share findings with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and deliver a minimum of 2 multi-agency OSARA training sessions • No. of people / CSPs / agencies who receive the training • No. of partners that are using problem solving methods and sharing best practice 	March 2024	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)
4.3	Improving practices: Work with partners to identify and share best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing sharing of best practice via Community Safety Information Sessions, regular e-bulletins, Safer Communities Portal, and partnership groups • Raise awareness with CSPs and other partners of up and coming weeks of action/campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of CSIS events delivered and No. of people attending • Feedback from CSIS events • Best practice is shared with partners via ebulletins and CSIS events • Guidance and support provided by the KCST if needed 	Ongoing	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)

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4.4*	Work in Partnership: Deliver an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) workshop and CPD event for multi-agency partners	Crime Reduction Grant Funding 2023/24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership to develop and deliver a hybrid workshop to support partners in tackling ASB including the government action plan, sharing of best practice, implementation of any new duties, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of people engaged • Feedback from attendees 	March 2024	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)
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Priority: Serious Violence and Organised Crime

Aim: Reduce harm to our communities caused by Serious Violence and Organised Crime

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
Page 19 5.1*	Partnership Working: Work with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and other partners to implement the 'Serious Violence Duty'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the VRU to create a Strategic Needs Assessment on serious violence which uses the definition as set by the specified authorities. • Work with the VRU to create and publish a Serious Violence strategy which governs the work of the specified authorities who cover the county. • Work with district and borough community safety partnerships to create local serious violence strategies which reflect the needs of local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and reporting framework developed in partnership • Monitoring and reporting of identified measures 	January 2024	Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)
5.2	Improving Practices: 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"> • Specified authorities contribute to the development of a data sharing portal through the sharing of data relevant to understanding serious violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data sharing portal is created which includes data from all specified authorities and which allows participating organisations to analyse and understand serious violence 	March 2024	Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)
5.3	Improving Practices: Reduce the harm experienced by communities linked to knives and weapons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share data on the prevalence of knife and weapon related harm including the people and places about whom risks are highest. • Create and share resources which allow parents and professionals to understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of serious violence linked to knives and weapons compared to the previous 12 months. 	March 2024	Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

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		how to keep young people safe or which help to divert them into positive activities.			
5.4*	Improving Practices: Children and young adults develop the skills or confidence to help them be positive members of their communities	<p>Crime Reduction Grant Funding ('23/24) – Decision Pending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create resources for schools and colleges to support individuals being Active Bystanders and to challenge unacceptable language or behaviour. • Develop a network of community-based sport provision. • Improve access to employment and training opportunities through closer working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pilot scheme to deliver messages through PSHE lessons in schools is established. • Community sport is available in places of concern across the county. • Young adults where there are risks of violence identified are supported by the DWP to access training or employment. 	December 2023	Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)
Page 16 5.5	Partnership working: 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to support law enforcement response to serious and organised crime (SOC) • Raise awareness with organisations of the national strategy and support local implementation of the CHB framework adopting a multi-agency partnership tactic, addressing threats or risks to Kent residents, and neighbourhood policing. • Promote and contribute to sharing intelligence with the KCC SOC team and raise awareness across services. • Raise awareness with partners around OCG (Organised Crime Group) Co-ordinators in the Serious Crime Divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen information sharing arrangements and governance with Divisional SOC Boards, CSP and VRU. • Agencies and VRU Coordinators are members of SOCPs and there is triangulation of information • CSPs are aware of emerging themes or patterns and are briefed in a timely fashion. • KCC SOC Team to support raising awareness programme and evaluate effectiveness 	March 2024	KCC SOC Team
5.6	Prevention: Work in partnership to share information on the exploitation of adults and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and promote the Kent police intelligence portal relating to all forms of exploitation (Modern Slavery / Human Trafficking, County Lines etc.) • Ensure emerging themes, risks or concerns are raised at the Joint Exploitation Group (JEG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and briefings are shared with the KCSP and CSPs from JEG • Strategic oversight of exploitation concerns and clear intelligence sharing processes are in place 	March 2024	Kent County Council

DRAFT Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) Action Plan - 2023/24**Priority: Safeguarding Vulnerable People****Aim: Raise awareness of safeguarding issues and work in partnership to protect vulnerable people**

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
6.1*	Improving Practices: Support the work being undertaken by the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing sharing of suicide prevention campaigns (such as 'Release the Pressure') and promotion of suicide prevention training, across community safety partners and frontline staff. Raise awareness of the Amparo Service with the aim to increase referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates provided to KCSP by Suicide Prevention Group Good practice & campaigns shared with partners Partners are aware of how they can support Suicide Prevention activities Increased referrals to Amparo 	Ongoing	KCC Public Health
Page 17 6.2*	Co-ordination and consistency: Work in partnership with the Safeguarding Boards to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and link into local and national campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate community safety partner activities in relation to Adult Safeguarding Awareness week Link into the wider partnership work of the Kent & Medway Adult Safeguarding Board and the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of the activities delivered Feedback from events Shared learning outcomes disseminated to partners 	Ongoing	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)

Priority: Preventing Extremism and Hate**Aim: Work together in partnership to address the issues of extremism and hate and support community cohesion**

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
7.1*	Prevention: Work in partnership to share information about Prevent and Channel alongside the referral process to reassert the overall objective of stopping people from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing sharing of information/guidance with community safety partners from the Prevent Duty Delivery Board (PDDDB) and updates on the Prevent Partners Action Plan via PDDDB, CSMs, CSPs and Safer Communities Portal. Prevent Partners Action Plan to be disseminated to partners through PDDDB and Cross Directorate Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing and regular updates provided to the KCSP and partners from PDDDB Recommendations from the Independent Prevent Review to be shared 	Ongoing	Kent and Medway Prevent Team

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Page 18 7.2	becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Prevent Team to share information with partners and implement recommendations (as appropriate) in relation to the Independent Review of Prevent (IRP) published February 2023; and in relation to the delivery of the soon to be refreshed CONTEST, Channel Duty guidance and Prevent Duty Guidance. • Support the Prevent Coordinator with the dissemination of Prevent training, surrounding the changes with the IRP, training focus and communities understanding of Prevent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on information shared • Feedback from partners • Success stories • Ongoing training offer from Prevent Coordinator and Prevent Education Officers 		
	<p>Understand the problem: 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"> • Support the work of the two Prevent education officers and Prevent Community Engagement Officer (PCEO) to raise awareness across the county and promote partnership engagement • Encourage partners to make appropriate and relevant Prevent referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTLP and CTSRA briefings provided to the KCSP and local CSPs • Factsheets and training disseminated • Increased intelligence reporting • High level briefings where appropriate 	Ongoing	Kent and Medway Prevent Team

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<p>7.3*</p> <p>Page 19</p>	<p>Raise Awareness: 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"> • Take a partnership approach to the National Hate Crime Action Plan and raise awareness of the four key strands: Education, Protection from Hate Crime, Internet and Community Cohesion. • Raise awareness of information/data to better understand the under reported area of hate crime as per Government Action Plan • Information about reporting mechanisms and 3rd party reporting platforms shared with partners • Raise awareness and disseminate translated Hate Crime leaflets to professionals and residents as appropriate • Ongoing sharing of information, guidance, learning, and best practice from the Hate Crime Forum, South East Regional, NPCC Hate Crime & Cohesion Group, and relevant scrutiny panels. • Work with partners within the Hate Crime Forum to deliver actions from the Hate Crime Action Plan and conduct activity to improve partnership response to hate crime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing and regular updates / information provided by Hate Crime Forum to CSPs. • Number of partner agencies / members of the public made aware of translated leaflet • Reporting of hate crime by protected characteristics • Number of reporting mechanisms and 3rd party reporting platforms shared 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chair of the Hate Crime Forum</p>
<p>7.4</p>	<p>Understand the problem: 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 is included in the CTLP to better understand risk/vulnerabilities / safeguarding referrals. • Increase awareness around safeguarding referrals such as prevent and signposting support • Raise awareness of on-line and off line hate material including graffiti / stickering • Increased awareness in schools and young people • Partner agencies sharing hate crime data with Kent Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent & Medway Business Hate Crime Guide is shared • Increased number of safeguarding referrals such as Prevent • Increased reporting of graffiti/stickering to KCC Prevent Team • Repeat data monitored • Increased reporting by Partners 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chair of the Hate Crime Forum</p>

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7.5*	Improving Practices: Support delivery of the Hateful Extremism CPD event.	<i>Crime Reduction Grant Funding 2023/24</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Kent & Medway Prevent Team and Kent Police to deliver a CPD learning event (continuous professional development) to multi-agency partners across the County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event delivered and no. of people attending (virtually / in-person) Feedback from attendees Learning shared with partners 	March 2024	Kent and Medway Prevent Team / Kent Police
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Priority: Violence Against Women & Girls

Aim: Work together in partnership to reduce violence against women and girls

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
Page 20 8.1*	Raise Awareness: Raise awareness of the national Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy and consider adopting the Kent Police VAWG action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all partners are aware of the Government's VAWG strategy and key activities in particular relating to Safer Public Spaces Share the Kent Police VAWG action plan with partners and consider adopting as the multi-agency delivery plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSP Partners are aware of the Strategy and have considered VAWG as part of their CS Plan or associated action plan 	Ongoing	Kent Police
8.2	Improving Practices: Share resources and best practice arising from the VAWG conference delivered in March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share resources pack produced for the Conference with partners to share information about services, support, etc. Review feedback from the Conference and implement any relevant suggestions / feedback Undertake research in relation to best practice around VAWG across the country and share with partners to improve local responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share conference resource pack with partners Best practice is identified and shared with partners 	March 2024	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)
8.3*	Improving Practices: Deliver Tackling Victim Blaming Language training to multi-agency partners	<i>Crime Reduction Grant Funding 2023/24</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and deliver online training for up to 400 multi-agency partners to increase the understanding of the impact of language on victims and to increase staff confidence in working with the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of events delivered No. of people and partner agencies attending 	March 2024	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)

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Priority: Multiple

No.	Objective / Planned Outcomes	Actions	Measure	Timescale	Lead Agency
9.1	Understanding the problem: Work in partnership to share data and information to support the annual Strategic Assessment Process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sourcing and uploading of partnership data to the Safer Communities Portal to help inform strategic assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of partners providing data 	December 2023	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a virtual workshop (if required) to give partners the opportunity to present and explain their data and the impact on community safety to district/borough colleagues for their local assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of attendees Number of districts and partners represented 	January 2024	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the options to secure analytical support for a county Community Safety Strategic Assessment and utilise their analytical skills to identify measures to support performance monitoring of the CSA action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyst secured County SA delivered Performance monitoring in place 	March 2024	
9.2*	Raise Awareness: Produce a range of Community Safety video resources linked to the recorded Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS)	<p><i>Crime Reduction Grant Funding 2023/24</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Kent Community Safety Team and other partners to deliver a minimum of six Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS) during 2023/24 Develop and edit recordings of the CSIS events to provide a digital resource for future use by community safety partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of events delivered No. of partners and agencies attending No. of recordings produced 	March 2024	Kent Community Safety Team (KCST)

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By: Shafick Peerbux - Head of Community Safety, KCC
To: Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) – 12th July 2023
Classification: For Information
Subject: Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group Update

Summary This report provides an update on the key activities and projects being managed on behalf of the Kent Community Safety Partnership by the Working Group.

1.0 Background / Introduction

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gave statutory responsibility to local authorities, the police, and key partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities. Under this legislation the responsible authorities were required to form multi-agency 'Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships' to undertake this activity. Subsequent revisions introduced additional responsibilities to tackle anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and reduce reoffending, and the partnerships were renamed Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).
- 1.2 The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) operates at a county level, with the overarching purpose to manage the Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) on behalf of the responsible authorities in Kent and to deliver safer and stronger communities. The KCSP is supported by a multi-agency working group which has a particular remit to prepare and monitor the Community Safety Agreement, including the action plan and performance reports, as well as managing the Kent Community Safety fund on behalf of the governing group.

2.0 KCSP Funding – Crime Reduction Grant 2022/23

- 2.1 The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) granted the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) £39,661 from the Crime Reduction Grant for 2022/2023. The grant has been used to fund projects throughout Kent, focussing on the priorities identified in the Community Safety Agreement and the Police and Crime Plan. Similar funding was also provided by the PCC to all Community Safety Partnerships across Kent and Medway, to help deliver projects in support of local priorities.
- 2.2 Two thirds of the funding (£26,440) was made available for upfront project spending with the remaining third of the grant (£13,220) allocated to a tactical pot for spending in-year. A total of £27,765 was spent to fund six projects with an £11,896 underspend retained by the OPCC. 2.3 An update on the projects funded in 2022/23 was provided in the report presented to the KCSP members in March, the following is a

brief update on the outcomes of the remaining projects which have now been delivered and received year end feedback.

- **Trauma Awareness Programme** (£13,000) - aims to enable young people and identified younger adults to increase awareness of the power of feeling strong emotion(s) and how to establish an internal 'sense check' and emotional repertoire. A comprehensive training package has been developed for use by programme attendees - including a handbook, toolkit, Children & Young Peoples (CYP) facilitators manual, and a resources list. A total of 4 training sessions were delivered over a 2-month period. In total 59 professionals who specialise in working with Children and Young People (CYP) from a range of organisations attended and completed the training. The professionals included IDVAs and family practitioners, CYP mentors and tutors, youth development support worker, counsellor and mental health practitioners.
- **Gaming & Online Awareness of Hate and Extremism** (£4,600)- The Gaming and Extremism project (gaming bus) is a community engagement initiative to promote awareness of how hateful extremism and potential radicalisation is spread via gaming and how it can be countered. Events took place between February and May in conjunction with schools led by the Prevent Education Officers (PEO) working closely with local partners. At the end of March 2023 sessions had been accessed by approximately 900 school pupils in Years 6-7 primary and secondary education with a further session planned for May. Selected locations received additional online safety sessions delivered by the PEOs as a follow up looking at the dangers of exploitation for extremism via online gaming.
- **Violence Against Women & Girls Conference** (£4,705) –The conference was delivered as a hybrid event on Tuesday 28th March at the Detling Showground and virtually via Microsoft Teams. The £4,705 funding enabled the hire of a venue and audio-visual support, with additional funding provided for refreshments and ancillary costs by KCSP partners. Further information regarding the conference is detailed later in this report.

3.0 KCSP Funding – Crime Reduction Grant 2023/24

- 3.1 The funding allocation to the KCSP remains the same as in previous years (£39,661), however, please note this is an indicative award as the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) has not yet received final funding confirmation of the Victim Service Grant. As this is indicative funding, there is a chance the final funding could reduce or be revised depending on the PCC's confirmed commissioning budget.
- 3.2 As in previous years a third of the funding (£13,221) has been allocated to a Tactical Pot for in-year spending, with the remaining two-thirds (£26,440) available for upfront project spend.
- 3.3 The PCC has stated that the primary focus of the Crime Reduction Grant is to deliver against the PCCs priorities, in particular the following areas have been highlighted:
 - Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
 - Anti-social behaviour (ASB)
 - Safer Streets approach to crime prevention.
 - Support for children and young people at risk or committing crime or ASB.

- Support delivery of Serious Violence Duty Projects and violence reduction.
- 3.4 Fifteen project proposals were received from partners for consideration by the KCSP Working Group at their meeting on 24th April 2023. However, many were not fully formed projects, as such the KCSP Working Group undertook a shortlisting exercise and the KCST subsequently worked with partners to secure detailed proposals for the projects the partners voted to support.
- 3.5 Based on the shortlisting exercise and submission of detailed project proposals, the projects listed below received a consensus of support and were submitted to the Chair and the Police and Crime Commissioner for approval.
- Domestic Abuse Bitesize Training Videos (£4,200)
 - Reducing Abusive Behaviour Policy and Training (£5,440)
 - Online Library PSHE School Resources (£6,000)
 - Tackling Victim Blaming Language Training (£1,600)
 - KCSP Anti-Social Behaviour workshop & CPD Event (£5,000)
 - Community Safety Information Sessions (£1,500)
 - Hateful Extremism CPD event (£3,500)
- (Please see Appendix A below for a summary of the projects)
- 3.6 At this stage the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has confirmed funding for six of the above projects with a decision pending on the joint project with the VRU in relation to the school resources.
- 3.7 It should be noted that the remainder of the projects which received support from partners and were shortlisted did not have sufficient information to put them forward as part of the initial business case. As such the KCST will continue to work with partners to explore these projects for potential funding through the Tactical Pot (£13,220). Partners are welcome to submit any additional projects or other suggestions for funding opportunities, training and/or collaborative working to the KCST: kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk

4.0 Violence Against Women and Girls Conference

- 4.1 The KCSP delivered a Community Safety Conference on the 28th March 2023 covering the topic of Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) which was attended by over 250 people (with just under 150 attending in person and just over 100 attending virtually) from a variety of statutory agencies as well as 3rd sector organisations. The feedback from the conference has been very positive with 90% of respondents rating it as 'excellent' or 'very good', although this rises to 98% if 'good' is also included.
- 4.2 The conference included several excellent speakers on a range of topics including the Trauma Effect of VAWG, Misogyny and Incels (involuntary celibates), Active Bystander programme, case studies on safer communities and commissioned support services, etc. Those attending in person had access to a marketplace with stall holders and networking opportunities, and all attendees were able to interact during the event through Question-and answer sessions.

- 4.3 Of those who responded to the conference survey 78% stated that they would feedback to colleagues on the seminar content with around half sharing information or feeding back to managers. Whilst approx. a third plan to do additional research with just over a quarter aiming to undertake further training. Some of the comments received were: “Great to see this high on the agenda at last”; “A very interesting, informative conference gained a lot of knowledge that I was not aware of”; “The day was very well organised. To have the conference both in person and virtually meant that these were opportunities for everyone. The stalls on the day were very informative and shared very useful information”; “Just a thank you to all the speakers for a very informative day and for all the hard work behind the scenes to organise the conference”. In addition to the conference survey, a VAWG survey was also circulated to attendees to help inform the CSA Action Plan for 2023/24.
- 4.4 Following on from the conference a resource pack has been disseminated to delegates including information about the available commissioned services, bite size videos about VAWG, reports and partner information. The PowerPoint presentations and recorded videos from the event are also available for partners via the Safer Communities Portal.

5.0 Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) Update

- 5.1 The KCST delivers Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS) covering a broad range of topics. For the forthcoming financial year, the KCST partners are trialling an alternative format for the CSIS events, making them shorter sessions and delivering them more frequently. The KCST are currently in the process of devising a schedule around upcoming awareness weeks/topics as well as incorporating new and emerging issues in-year. The first session was delivered to partners in June 2023 on the changes to Neighbourhood Policing in Kent and next month’s session will cover the topics of scams and dangerous dogs (although this may be subject to change). If anyone has any suggestions of speakers/topics that would be relevant for the information sessions, or if you would like to attend, please contact the KCST via the team mailbox: kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk
- 5.2 The KCSP commission Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) on behalf of the district/borough Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) across Kent and Medway, with the KCST managing the process. Published DHRs are available on the [KCC](#) and [Medway Council](#) Websites. Since the start of this year, three DHRs have been published in the names of [DHR Jean 2018](#), [DHR Kitty 2020](#) and [DHR Leanne 2019](#)
- 5.3 The KCST delivered Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) learning webinars throughout 2022, in total five sessions were delivered and the KCST, on behalf of the KCSP, are in the planning stages of DHR seminars for this year. Dates and content are still in discussion and will give further update at next meeting.
- 5.4 As part of the KCST’s role in sharing good practice and facilitating joint working, the team produces and circulates monthly E-Bulletins with the latest community safety updates and any relevant news, publications, and legislation. The most recent bulletin included updates and information on recent DHR publication, Best Bar None Award, Community Safety Partnerships Review and Anti-Social Behaviour Powers, PCCs

Youth Survey & ASB Survey, Domestic Abuse Awareness Campaigns, Domestic Abuse Virtual Webinars, Domestic Abuse advice line, Safeguarding Adults Reviews publications, Save the date for National Safeguarding Adults Awareness weeks and details of the Safer Communities Portal.

- 5.5 The KCST would like to encourage partners to contact the team if they would like to subscribe to the e-bulletin or have any suggested topics for the information sessions, brief updates for the e-bulletins, Please email the KCST:
kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 The KCSP is asked to note the progress and actions undertaken by the Working Group and the work of the KCST.

For Further Information:

Shafick Peerbux
KCC, Head of Community Safety
shafick.peerbux@kent.gov.uk

Appendix A: Project Summaries for 2023/34 Business Case (subject to approval):

Reducing Abusive Behaviour (RAB) Policy and Training Launch (£4,200)

- The Reducing Abusive Behaviour Group is part of the multiagency Kent & Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive network. Its purpose is to coordinate the approaches to tackling abusive behaviour and to enable greater focus on changing the behaviour of the individual causing harm. As part of their work the multi-agency group have developed two template policies in relation to responding to clients or staff who may be using abusive behaviour in their relationships. The policies can be used and adapted by a range of organisations to respond to clients and staff members who may be causing harm through their behaviour.
- Two different training sessions are planned to assist organisations to develop their approach to people using abusive behaviours incorporating the launch of the policies. One session will be for HR Professionals 'Holding those using abusive behaviour to account', the other will be for Frontline staff 'Identifying and Supporting Clients using abusive behaviour'.
- There will be a total of three training sessions delivered virtually by an external agency, with one session for HR professionals (up to 20 people) and two sessions for front line professionals (up to 40 people).

Domestic Abuse Bitesize Training Videos (£5,440)

- Domestic Abuse partners plan to produce five short DA videos utilising the 7-minute learning approach as this is manageable in most services and learning is more memorable as it is simple and not clouded by other issues and pressures.
- The videos propose to cover:
 - **Signs of Abuse** - Understanding that coercion and control are central to domestic abuse and what this might look like
 - **Safe Enquiry** - How to ask about domestic abuse safely and appropriately.
 - **Safety Planning** - Making sure that you are able to take some initial steps to increase the client's safety.
 - **Understanding Risk** - Covering the factors that increase risk (for instance fear, escalation, strangulation, point of leaving etc) and the implications for information sharing.
 - **Signposting & Support** - Being able to signpost people to the right support with confidence.
- The primary audience for the training videos are professionals working in public-facing roles. The videos are not meant to provide comprehensive domestic abuse training, they act either as a refresher between more in depth safeguarding or domestic abuse training for roles where this is necessary or as a brief standalone piece of training in roles where more in depth training is not given. .

Tackling Victim Blaming Language Training (£1,600)

- Following on from the recent VAWG conference in March 2023, the KCST would like to offer training to partners and professionals in relation to 'victim blaming language'. Focusing on 3 areas, Rape myths, Reacting to victims from a trauma-informed place and Victim-blaming in the media
- Up to four sessions can be delivered virtually via MS Teams for up to 100 people per session with each session taking 90-120mins.

Online Library PSHE School Resources (£6,000)

- The VRU is working with an external company that has produced a range of resources to support schools, providing 'a whole school approach to relationships, sex, and health education that supports positive and safe peer cultures' to be delivered as part of PSHE lessons.
- The VRU has offered to jointly fund this project with the KCSP with the aim to offer licences to a number of schools in Kent and Medway as part of a pilot project. The schools will be identified in partnership with other agencies and will test the use of the resources that would build on the Bystander Approach and promote positive relationships, and, if successful, promote the resources across all secondary schools.

Anti-Social Behaviour Workshop & CPD Event (£5,000)

- The KCST is proposing to deliver an event/workshop on behalf of the KCSP on the subject of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) to be delivered later in the year.. ASB has been the subject of a recent national consultation with regards possible changes to the ASB tools and powers, as well as the publication of a draft National ASB Action Plan: plus the new duties given to PCC's around ASB.
- The workshop will bring partners together from across the county to raise awareness of potential changes to ASB tools and powers, to share knowledge and good practice, to help upskill professionals and to work together to implement any national changes.

Community Safety Information Sessions (£1,500)

- The KCST is planning to deliver regular information sessions for partner agencies throughout 2023/24. The sessions will be relatively short (max. 1hr) and will focus on a range of emerging issues, new areas of business, recent legislation/strategies and awareness raising campaigns.
- The funding will pay for the editing of the recorded events to provide a professional product for use by partners which will be accessible to those unable to attend the briefing sessions.

Hateful Extremism CPD event (£3,500)

- The Kent and Medway Prevent Team in partnership with Kent Police plan to deliver a Hateful Extremism CPD event in 2023/24 building on the success of the events delivered over the last couple of years.
- The aim of the future CPD event is to provide an update to partners and professionals on the latest situation, emerging issues, and to strengthen knowledge on the issues – something that is not being offered elsewhere.

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By: Shafick Peerbux - Head of Community Safety, KCC

To: Kent Community Safety Partnership – 12th July 2023

Classification: For Decision

Subject: KCSP Terms of Reference Update 2023

Summary: This paper details the annual review of the Terms of Reference for the KCSP and its subgroups.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 introduced a number of revisions to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 including the establishment of a County Strategy Group, known in Kent as the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP). These regulations set out the remit for the group, meeting frequency, governance arrangements and included a detailed list of required members.
- 1.2 Amendments to these regulations came in 2010 and 2011 which removed some of the bureaucracy. As a result, the remaining requirements for the KCSP as set out in the regulations are:
- There shall be a County Strategy Group whose function shall be to prepare a community safety agreement based on the strategic assessments of local strategy groups (CSPs) for the county area.
 - The County Strategy Group shall consist of two or more persons appointed by one or more of the responsible authorities in the county area. The County Strategy Group may also be attended by persons who represent co-operating and participating persons/bodies and other partners that the Group invites.

2.0 KCSP Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The KCSP terms of reference (ToR) were last updated and approved by the Partnership in July 2022. Since that time, there have been no legislative changes that would impact the governance arrangements for the Partnership.
- 2.2 The ToR for the KCSP remain largely unchanged (see Appendix A) aside from the 'Membership' section reflecting the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board who took on the responsibilities of the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).
- 2.3 Additionally, the 'Responsibilities' section has been updated to acknowledge new and emerging legislation that impacts directly on the work of the KCSP for example the Serious Violence Duty introduced in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

3.0 KCSP Subgroups Terms of Reference

- 3.1 The KCSP has two subgroups which it is responsible for overseeing. The KCSP Working Group and Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Steering Group, both have their own ToRs. The annual review of the subgroups ToRs has been aligned with that of the KCSP and as such members of these subgroups have also recently reviewed their respective ToRs.
- 3.2 The KCSP Working Group members recently reviewed their ToR (see Appendix B) and the majority of changes were in relation to the 'Membership' section to reflect NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board but also to expand the KCC representatives who attend from the Contest and Serious Organised Crime and the Strategy, Policy, Relationships Corporate Assurance teams.
- 3.3 The DHR Steering Group members recently reviewed their ToR (see Appendix C) and there was one change within the 'Purpose' section to ensure compliance with Section 9 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act (2004) but also to 'be cognisant of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021'. The 'Responsibilities' section has been updated to include 'the intentional engagement of families where possible' as this is a significant aspect of the DHR process. The lessons learnt from DHRs will also be shared with the new 'Local DA Boards' which were established by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- 3.4 There has been no further guidance received from the Home Office since the December 2016 changes to the statutory DHR guidance that would impact on the DHR Steering Group ToRs. It is understood that the Home Office will be reviewing the DHR guidance following a stakeholder consultation and the ToRs will be updated accordingly upon receipt of new guidance.
- 3.5 It is worth noting that currently the KCSP Working Group does not have a Chair and is being covered by the Vice-Chair from KCC until a new Chair is secured. Similarly, the DHR Steering Group which is also Chaired by KCC does not have a Vice-Chair. Therefore, it is anticipated that named representatives from partner agencies will be sought for election at the upcoming subgroup meetings in the Autumn.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The KCSP members are asked to agree the Terms of Reference for the Kent Community Safety Partnership and approve the Terms of Reference for the KCSPs two subgroups (KCSP Working Group and the DHR Steering Groups).
- 4.2 KCSP Members are asked to note that the KCSP Working Group and the DHR Steering Group currently requires a Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.
- 4.3 All KCSP member organisations shown in the Terms of Reference should ensure that they are signed up to the latest version of the Kent and Medway Information Sharing Agreement.

- 4.4 The KCSP members are asked to note that the Terms of Reference for the KCSP and its subgroups will be reviewed annually and included as an agenda item at least once a year.

Attachments:

Appendix A – Kent Community Safety Partnership ToR

Appendix B – Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group ToR

Appendix C – Domestic Homicide Review Steering Group ToR

For Further Information:

Honey-Leigh Topley

Community Safety Officer, Kent Community Safety Team

honey-leigh.topley@kent.gov.uk

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. TITLE

For the purposes of the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007, the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) will serve as the 'County Strategy Group'.

2. OVERARCHING PURPOSE

The KCSP is responsible for addressing community safety issues through coordinating the work of countywide 'responsible authorities' and other partner agencies to tackle identified priorities and deliver safer and stronger communities.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- To prepare a County Community Safety Agreement annually based upon an aggregation of the local Community Safety Partnerships strategic assessments and other information sources as appropriate,
- To address community safety issues through joint working, recognising the importance that stronger communities can have to delivering safer communities,
- To provide guidance on major cross agency projects and management information support systems,
- The co-ordination of community safety activity to achieve county wide priorities as set out in the Kent Community Safety Agreement and the countywide ambitions,
- To performance manage the community safety agreement and the associated action plan on behalf of the responsible authorities for Kent,
- To attract resources from appropriate funding streams including the Police and Crime Commissioner's Crime Reduction Grant and have robust financial arrangements in place to support the management of these funds.
- To fulfil the statutory requirements as set out in Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) regarding the initiation and undertaking of Domestic Homicide Reviews on behalf of all Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Kent and Medway.
- To fulfil statutory requirements/duties set out in new and emerging legislation that directly impacts the work of the Kent Community Safety Partnership for example the Serious Violence Duty introduced in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

4. MEMBERSHIP

The KCSP shall consist of a core membership of representatives appointed by one or more of the 'responsible authorities' in the county area, namely:

- Kent County Council (KCC)
- Kent Police
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
- Local Authorities (District / Borough Councils) - *currently collectively represented by a nominated Chief Executive*
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)
- NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board
- Probation Service

Additionally, the chairs of the local CSPs shall be extended an open invite to attend the KCSP meeting.

The KCSP may also be attended by persons who represent co-operating and participating persons and bodies for the areas in the county area and such other persons as the county KCSP invites.

These can include a representative from:

- Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)
- Medway Community Safety Partnership.
- Kent Housing Group
- Kent and Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board
- Kent and Medway Joint Exploitation Group
- Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB)
- Kent Safeguarding Children's Multiagency Partnership (KSCMP)
- Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group
- Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB)
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Safer Roads for Kent Partnership
- Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)
- Kent Substance Misuse Alliance
- Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Steering Group

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

All representatives attending KCSP meetings must have sufficient seniority within their own organisations to be able to make decisions, implement change and where appropriate commit resources on behalf of the body or group which they represent. Substitute members are assumed to have that capability delegated to them.

All members of the KCSP should be able to commit to regular attendance and represent their organisation effectively.

Reviewed – June 2023

To be Approved by the KCSP on 12th July 2023

All members of the KCSP have the responsibility for sharing relevant information and/or feedback from the partnership to their respective agencies, collective group and/or any authorities/bodies they have been nominated to represent i.e. Kent Association of Local Councils, District/Borough councils.

The KCC Scrutiny Committee meets annually as the Crime and Disorder Committee to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken by the responsible authorities with regards to their crime and disorder functions; with adequate notice, KCSP members may be required to provide information and/or make themselves available to attend the meeting to answer questions on the work of the KCSP in the appropriate area.

The Police and Crime Commissioner may also require representatives of the responsible authorities for any area that lies within the police area to attend a meeting for the purpose of assisting in the formulation and implementation of any strategy (or strategies) that relate to any part of the police area.

6. CHAIRPERSON

The Chair will be the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety for the County Council as the lead authority.

The Vice Chair will be elected from amongst the other KCSP members.

A Chair/Vice Chair may only be removed from office if more than 50% of the responsible authorities so decide by way of a vote at a meeting of the KCSP.

7. MEETINGS

The KCSP shall meet three times per year or at such other intervals as it shall decide with the meeting cycle being agreed annually.

The Chair of the KCSP will agree the agenda prior to the meetings and this should reflect the terms of reference and provide opportunity for discussion of any other business.

KCSP papers will be circulated at least five working days prior to meetings to allow sufficient time for partners to prepare and will include the previous board minutes, agenda and relevant paperwork.

A meeting will be regarded as quorate if no less than 4 of the responsible authorities are represented.

Attendance by non-members is at the invitation of the Chair.

8. DECISION-MAKING

Reviewed – June 2023

To be Approved by the KCSP on 12th July 2023

The KCSP will use its best endeavours at all times to make decisions by consensus.

Decisions will be recorded in the minutes, with actions being reviewed at subsequent meetings.

9. SUB GROUPS

The KCSP can establish subgroups as necessary. The KCSP will oversee the work of the subgroups and have ability to scrutinise actions and outcomes.

The current subgroups of the KCSP are:

- KCSP Working Group who supports the work of the KCSP, in particular by managing the PCCs Crime Reduction Grant allocated to the KCSP and any other available funding streams; and preparing and monitoring of the Kent Community Safety Agreement.
- DHR Steering Group ensures that the requirements of Section 9 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act (2004) with regards to the initiation, undertaking and monitoring of actions from DHRs is fulfilled on behalf of all CSPs in Kent and Medway.

9. COMMUNICATION

All KCSP member organisations are required to be signed up to the Kent and Medway Information Sharing Agreement and abide by its principles.

Official-Sensitive paperwork will be circulated to the KCSP members via a secure method and it is the responsibility of the KCSP members to ensure that they have appropriate information security measures in place (in accordance with the Data Protection and Information Governance), including:

- Data protection policies and management processes.
- Retention, archive, storage and disposal policies and processes.
- Incident reporting procedures.
- Controls to minimise the risk of loss or breach.

KENT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. TITLE

The group will be known as the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) Working Group.

2. OVERARCHING PURPOSE

To support the work of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP), in particular by

- (i) Managing the Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) funding allocation from the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner on behalf of the KCSP.
- (ii) Preparing and monitoring the Kent Community Safety Agreement and managing the review process.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

On behalf of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) to:

- Develop and produce the County Community Safety Agreement (CSA) on behalf of the KCSP based on the annual strategic assessments and to include the undertaking of an annual review and refresh (if required).
- Develop and performance manage the CSA Action Plan to coordinate community safety activity and monitor the performance measures that are in place; ensuring that remedial action is taken regarding areas of concern and that any exceptions are raised with the KCSP.
- Maximise co-ordination and co-operation at an operational level between partners with the aim of tackling the community safety issues identified within the County Community Safety Agreement
- Facilitate delivery of Community Safety conferences / seminars / events on behalf of the KCSP subject to an identified need.
- Provide support, guidance and sharing of information to ensure delivery of the annual Strategic Assessment process.
- Ensure robust financial monitoring and budget arrangements are in place to support and manage the available funding streams.
- Advise the KCSP on any emerging national, local or pan Kent issues, policies and priorities; with any appropriate recommendations for solutions and most effective use of available resources.
- Liaise and coordinate with other statutory bodies (e.g. Medway CSP, Safeguarding Boards/Partnerships, etc.) and external bodies (e.g. Home Office) to disseminate best practice and develop guidance.

Utilising the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) as a central knowledge hub to support the Working Group and the Partnership to facilitate coordination, delivery and communications both with the public and partner agencies.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall consist of senior officer representatives appointed by the responsible authorities for the County area, namely:

- Kent Police
- Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)
- KCC – Currently represented by officers from Community Safety, Public Health, Trading Standards, Highways, Contest and Serious Organised Crime and Strategy, Policy, Relationships Corporate Assurance
- NHS Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board
- Probation Service
- Local District/Borough Authorities – Currently collectively represented by two nominated Community Safety Managers.

The KCSP Working Group may also be attended by persons who represent co-operating and participating person/bodies as required for example representatives of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), the Safeguarding Boards/Partnerships for Children and Adults, the Safer Roads for Kent Partnership, etc.

5. RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS

All representatives must have sufficient seniority within their own organisations to be able to make decisions, implement change and where appropriate commit resources on behalf of the body or group which they represent. In the case of those that have been nominated to represent a collective group or number of authorities/bodies, it will be their responsibility to obtain approval from each of the individual authorities or bodies they represent. Substitute members are assumed to have that capability delegated to them.

All members should be able to commit to regular attendance and represent their organisation effectively. If members are unable to attend, they should nominate an appropriate substitute / named deputy to attend on their behalf.

All members have the responsibility for sharing relevant information and/or feedback to their respective agencies, collective group and/or any authorities/bodies they have been nominated to represent.

6. CHAIR PERSON

The Chair and Vice Chair are revised every two years and elected from amongst the members.

7. MEETINGS

The group will meet quarterly, or as required, ensuring that meetings take place prior to the KCSP to help inform the agenda for the KCSP meeting including any emerging issues or themes that need to be escalated.

A meeting will be regarded as quorate if no less than four of the responsible authorities are represented.

8. DECISION MAKING

The group will use its best endeavours at all times to make decisions by consensus.

Decisions will be recorded in the minutes, with actions being reviewed at subsequent meetings.

9. COMMUNICATION

All KCSP member organisations are required to be signed up to the Kent and Medway Information Sharing Agreement and abide by its principles.

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Kent and Medway Domestic Homicide Review Steering Group

Terms of Reference

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance and to meet the requirements of Section 9 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act (2004), whilst being cognisant of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and conforming to the Home Office Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) statutory guidance (issued in April 2011 and subsequently updated in December 2016).

All Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Kent and Medway agreed to a joint DHR Protocol covering all community safety partnership areas to ensure a consistent approach is adopted across the county. As a result, the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) has lead responsibility for instigating the protocol on behalf of all CSPs in Kent and Medway should a domestic homicide occur.

The DHR Protocol is managed, commissioned and administered by the Kent Community Safety Team (on behalf of the KCSP) in accordance with the Home Office DHR Guidance.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To lead the development, monitoring and implementation of processes associated with DHRs across Kent and Medway, including the intentional engagement of families where possible.
- To maximise agency co-ordination and co-operation in implementing the Kent and Medway DHR protocol and procedures.
- To monitor and report on DHR progress, prevalence, performance and activity, including the quality assurance of action plans in relation to recommendations arising from active reviews, as well as overseeing their implementation upon completion.
- To advise the Kent and Medway Community Safety Partnerships on emerging issues, priorities, solutions and the most effective use of available resources.
- To ensure that lessons learned from DHRs are cascaded to the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, local DA Partnership Boards, MARAC Steering Group, DA Commissioning teams and agencies across Kent and Medway.
- To review and receive feedback on the quality of the work of the Independent Chairs, Review Panels and the effectiveness of the DHR protocols and procedures.

- To monitor the costs associated with DHRs, seeking to ensure best value in partnership funding spend, and report back to partners via the Kent Community Safety Partnership as appropriate.
- To monitor regional and national DHR developments and related learning.
- To collaborate with KMSAB and KSCMP to triangulate common themes and recommendations and to work on a system wide approach recommendations and learning.

MEMBERSHIP

Criteria for membership

Steering Group meetings are to be attended by; staff members that represent the organisations with a statutory duty to co-operate in DHRs (and/or Community Safety Partnerships if not listed below) as well as any other persons/agencies the Steering Group deem appropriate.

Agencies with a statutory duty to co-operate with DHRs as named in the 2016 updated Home Office DHR guidance are:

- Chief Officers of Police for Police areas in England and Wales;
- Local Authorities;
- Strategic Health Authorities established under [section 13 of the National Health Service Act 2006];
- Primary Care Trusts established under [section 18] of that Act;
- Providers of Probation Services;
- Local Health Boards established under [section 11 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006];
- NHS trusts established under [section 25 of the National Health Service Act 2006 or section 18 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006];

It is recognised that the above list does not take into consideration the subsequent reorganisation of the National Health Service and the unification of Probation providers – these agencies have been replaced in the membership list with the relevant new bodies.

It is also recognised that the Police and Crime Commissioner has a vital role to play in the DHR process and as such, a member of the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner is also invited to Steering Group meetings.

A representative from the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership and Kent & Medway Safeguarding Adults Board are also invited to Steering Group meetings to facilitate the sharing of lessons learnt and good practice.

Member Responsibilities

Members should be able to:

- Effect policy and resourcing decisions on behalf of their organisation.
- Effect organisational change to address blockages, problems and barriers to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.
- Take responsibility in cascading information across their organisations/partnerships.
- Provide updates on DHR recommendations.
- Nominate substitutes to attend meetings and provide Action Plan updates.

MEETINGS

Frequency

- The Kent & Medway DHR Steering Group will meet at quarterly intervals during the year as a minimum to be able to provide appropriate feedback and adequate reassurance to the KCSP at their meetings.
- Members will undertake to attend all meetings of the Kent & Medway DHR Steering Group. Members should nominate an appropriate substitute to attend in their absence where possible.

Quorum

- A meeting will be regarded as quorate if 4 or more members of the group (representing different organisations) are present.

Chair

- The Kent Community Safety Partnership (who have accepted lead responsibility for implementing DHRs across Kent and Medway) have nominated the Head of Community Safety for Kent County Council to Chair the Steering Group, with the Vice Chair being nominated and appointed from the other Statutory members. The chair(s) will be reviewed every two years.

Decision-making

- The aim is to make recommendations and decisions by consensus to ensure that all legislative requirements are met.

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From: David Whittle, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance, KCC
 Akua Agyepong, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care and Health, KCC
 Florah Shiringo, Director, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

To: Kent Community Safety Partnership

Date: 12th July 2023

Subject: Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 – 2029: pre consultation.

Summary:

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy is a partnership document managed by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. The strategy also meets tier one requirements to complete a domestic abuse safe accommodation strategy.

The strategies aim is to *“reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly”*.

Kent County Council and Medway Council have worked with partners to develop the strategy, which is being launched for a 12 week consultation on the 24th July 2023.

An executive summary, easy read and British sign language version of the strategy will be available for the consultation.

The Community Safety Partnership are asked to:

- note the development of the strategy.
- consider the progress made report.
- consider the draft executive summary, and draft strategy.

1. Background

1.1 The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group is Chaired by Kent Police and has representation from Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service, the NHS, DWP, Probation services and district, borough and city councils.

1.2 One of the key responsibilities of this group is to enable joint collaborative working across services which respond to those impacted by domestic abuse, to manage the development of strategy and the implementation of actions across partners. Having a partnership across services enables coordinated change and improvement.

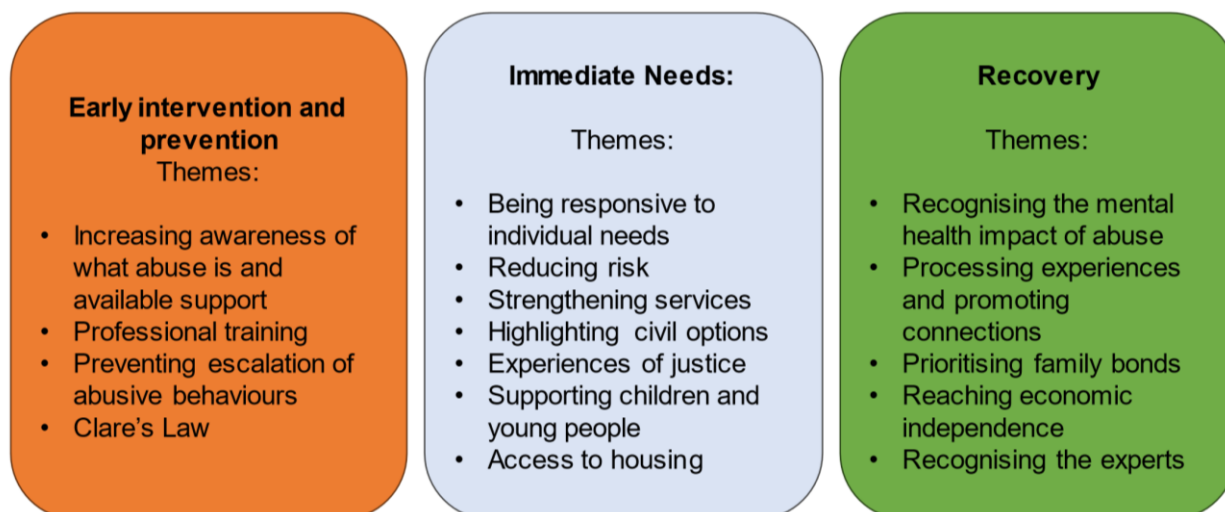
1.3 The 2020 to 2023 Domestic Abuse Strategy is ending. The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group are publishing a 'progress made' report (Appendix A) which details achievements but also areas of focus moving forward which are integrated into the 2024 to 2029 strategy draft.

2. Development of the 2024 to 2029 draft strategy

2.1 Before moving to draft the strategy, officers across Kent and Medway talked to people impacted by abuse and those delivering services. Workshops were run across Medway and Kent and one to one sessions were completed. In-depth interviews and a survey provided feedback, and previous research on the experiences of men, the experiences of children and young people and of those impacted by abuse using one stop shops and refuges was utilised.

2.2 A draft executive summary (Appendix B) has been produced which will be available in British sign language and easy read for the consultation. The full draft strategy is attached as Appendix C.

2.3 The themes within the strategy have been identified using areas highlighted by those with lived experience.



- 2.4 The consultation on the strategy is being run for 12 weeks, recognising that part of this time is over summer, but also to allow engagement with as many groups as possible during the consultation period. The strategy development group are working with consultation teams across partners to identify opportunities to increase awareness of the strategy.
- 2.5 Once finalised the strategy will be supported by a delivery plan and activity indicators (detailed within the full strategy). Progress against themes will be monitored via the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group and associated governance structures.

3. Conclusions and next steps

- 3.1 The 2024 to 2029 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy seeks to strengthen coordinated partnership working and focus across services which support individuals and families being affected by domestic abuse. It seeks to provide a clear narrative and definition of improvement with partners working to the 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”*.
- 3.2 After the consultation is completed, the strategy will be refined. A ‘You Said, We Did’ will be developed and presented back to partners to gain final approval.
- 3.3 A delivery plan will be developed across the partnership to support robust monitoring against the commitments made within the strategy.

The Community Safety Partnership are asked to:

- note the development of the strategy.
- consider the progress made report.
- consider the draft executive summary, and draft strategy.

Appendix A: Progress report, 2020 – 2023 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy.

Appendix B: draft executive summary, 2024 – 2029 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy.

Appendix C: draft 2024 – 2029 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy.

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Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020 - 2023: Progress made



Accessing support

This is an evaluation document supporting the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy.

If you need support **now** this can be accessed by telephoning Victim Support on **0808 168 9276**, or visiting **www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk**

If you are in immediate danger please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact Kent Police on the non-emergency telephone number 101 or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge on **0808 2000 247** or the Men's Advice Line on **0808 801 0327**.

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This report is necessarily an overview given the large amount of progress which has been achieved across the partnership. Many commitments from the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy are listed, but due to duplication and to support conciseness not all commitments and completed work is included.

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In partnership with and supported by





Foreword



Our Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2020 – 2023) has coordinated our partnership vision. This vision has enabled us to bring together our approach and the delivery of services, ensuring that we are working to the same collective aim and commitments.

Domestic abuse is wide reaching and prolific, it is destructive and abhorrent and every minute, of every day it effects those that are subject of it. To ensure that people receive the best response we must continue to work together, both as a collective partnership and as individual organisations, to strengthen the delivery of services; working towards our aim; to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, hold to account those that commit such crimes, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support quickly.

We have measured our progress against the Kent and Medway domestic abuse delivery plan which has pushed forward projects that are linked to the commitments made within the strategy. We have achieved a lot over the last three years and in this progress report we celebrate some of the work which has been delivered through our partnership and look to the future to continue to work collaboratively to strengthen our response to those impacted by domestic abuse.

Thus, as we look to the development of the 2024 – 2029 strategy we need to not only assess the progress we have made, observing our achievements but also acknowledge areas where we need to retain our focus, continuing to identify opportunities for improvement. This progress report works to identify these areas.

Our progress has been supported through collaborative working across the public sector, this work would not have been possible without the invaluable support and aid of the voluntary sector organisations which work within this space. We are also extremely grateful for those people impacted by abuse who have and continue to give their feedback on experiences, and these experiences shape our strategies and commissioning decisions. Your insight and contribution is invaluable to the development of our work.

Simon Wilson, Assistant Chief Constable, Kent Police



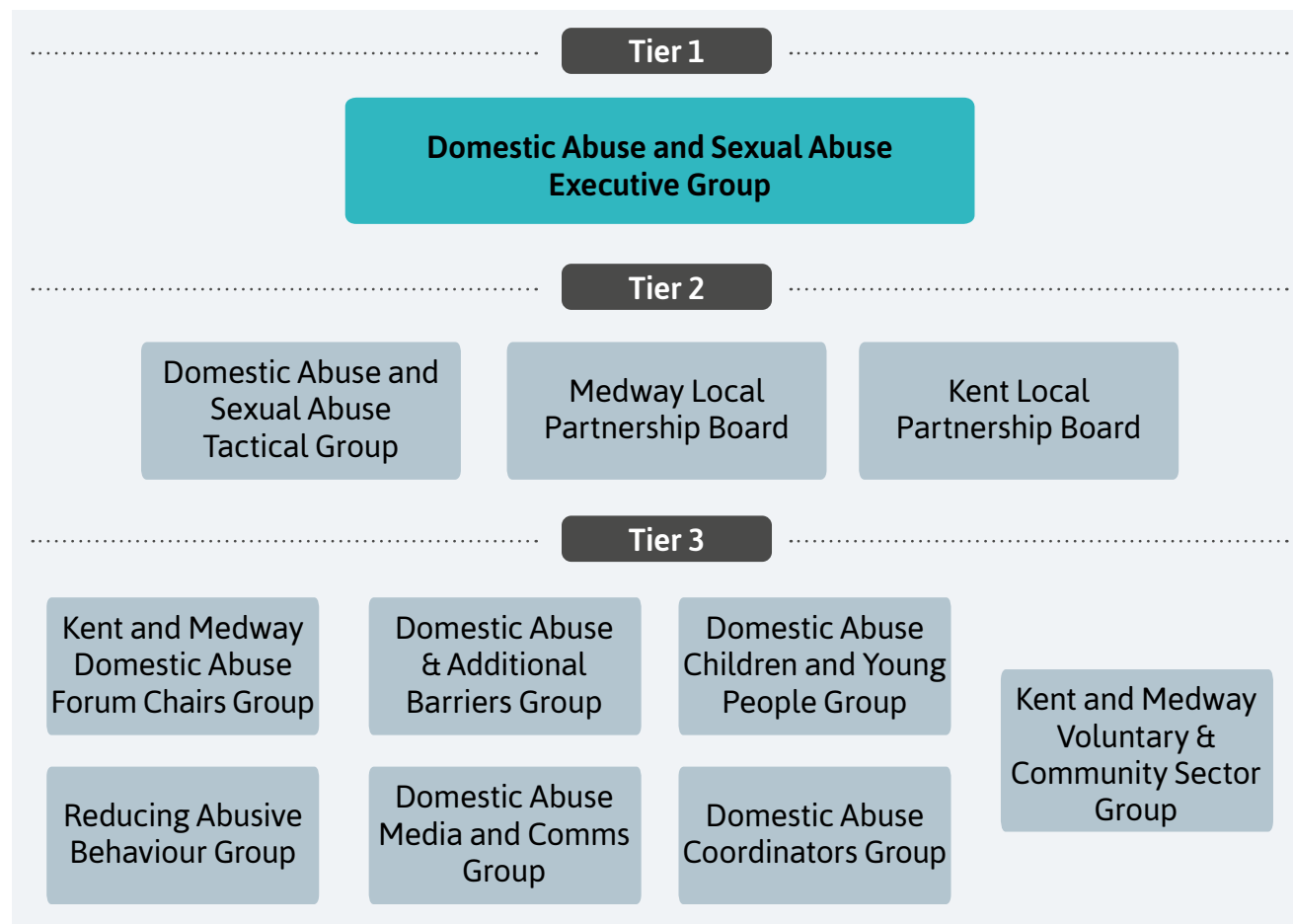
Our governance

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The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group is the overarching partnership group which works to ensure progress against the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy.

Group which has a focus on community-based support, and the statutory Local Partnership Boards across Kent and Medway which oversee work linked to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

There are a number of subgroups which support the delivery of the strategy, including the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical





Our priorities

The Kent and Medway domestic abuse delivery plan is a project-based plan. Projects sit under 5 priorities.

As we move to the 2024 – 2029 strategy we will maintain a project-based monitoring process but will also work to include quantitative key performance indicators into our measurements of achievement.

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Priority 1 Drive change together

The priority of driving change together recognises the adverse impact of domestic abuse on society, and that working together across agencies will support greater progress and stronger outcomes.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- working to challenge societal attitudes that allow domestic abuse to occur, so it is unacceptable in any form, and increase awareness of how to better prevent and respond to domestic abuse,
- working to collectively bring together comparable, accurate and consistent data on areas such as commissioning, provision and gap analysis,
- ensuring strong participation in safeguarding review processes for both adults and children, making sure that key learning is proactively shared with the wider workforce.

Increasing awareness

The ‘Domestic Abuse Aware’ campaign is entering its third year.

This campaign is commissioned via the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Services (KIDAS) and supported by a group that includes representatives from across the partnership.

The creation of coordinated, impactful social media content works to amplify messages whilst content calendars and toolkits have steadily increased the campaigns reach.

One of the focuses of this work is to ensure that the campaign is inclusive, promoting the understanding that domestic abuse happens to everyone irrespective of age, gender, orientation, ethnicity or disability. Images and content themes have been chosen to increase representation and the campaign has built relationships with community groups to increase the audiences.

By proactively delivering public facing campaigns this work has raised awareness of abuse in all its forms, promoted domestic abuse as everybody’s business and educated people on how to get support from local and national services.

Worried about your mental health after suffering domestic abuse?
Talk to your GP

To talk to someone about your relationship
Kent & Medway DA services can help

Get Help Now

Domestic Abuse Support
Kent 0808 16 99 111
Medway 0800 917 9948
www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk

In an emergency always call 999

A 1/4 of older people living with abuse do so for more than 20 years

Domestic Abuse has no age limit

Find resources and support

In an emergency always call 999
For non-emergencies call
Kent: 0808 16 99 111
Medway: 0800 917 9948
www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
#KvsnSeeSpeakOut

1. Drive change together continued

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) was commissioned by Kent County Council to create an events programme that would provide free information, advice and resources to educate people across all areas of the community about the impact of domestic abuse.

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service created a free virtual conference with sessions for all knowledge and expertise levels.

The conference was designed to promote understanding of the barriers to reporting, and how best to reach and engage minoritised groups. Workshops included how domestic abuse affects older adults, responding to forced marriage, LGBTQ+ perspectives on domestic abuse support, domestic abuse and learning disabilities among many other topics.

There was a total of 10,301 registrations across the 16 events with over 1000 people watching the post event recordings. This conference content is still available for people to learn from and listed within useful links at the end of this document.

Standardised training modules have been developed by the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and Medway Domestic Abuse Services (MDAS) and are available to all. This includes information on safe enquiry and sign posting, impacts on adults and children and safety planning.

Championing the Needs of People Affected by Abuse

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Champions project is being developed by the Domestic Abuse Forum Chairs and is delivered through the nine local forums across Kent & Medway.

There are two project streams under the Champions umbrella – Professional Champions & Employer Champions.

These schemes promote a joined-up approach to providing the best support to those impacted by domestic abuse by increasing the knowledge and competency of key people throughout formal and informal networks.



Working together to support White Ribbon accreditation

Kent County Council, Medway Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Tonbridge and Malling District Council, Dartford Borough Council, Sevenoaks Borough Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Service have worked to gain White Ribbon accreditation.

While we know that anyone can be impacted by domestic abuse, we also know that women have a higher risk of being impacted by violent and sexual behaviour. By supporting the White Ribbon campaign, we are standing against violence and supporting dialogue around harmful behaviours.

Each organisation who has committed to becoming White Ribbon accredited has signed up to a three-year action plan, which demonstrates how core criteria are met across the organisations in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG). The action plan offers achievable goals for the organisation to bring about genuine change.



Using an evidenced based approach to support our work

Since 2020, Kent County Council (KCC) in collaboration with partners have published an annual domestic abuse needs assessment.

1. Drive change together continued

The partnership is committed to revising the needs assessments yearly (with a full local needs assessment being completed every three years). The needs assessment supports us to ensure that we are making the most of data collected across the partnership, bringing this together and strengthening information year on year. It supports the identification of gaps in provision, helping us to understand where we need to focus work.

The partnership has completed additional qualitative work including specific projects looking at the experiences of male survivors, work with professionals to better understand barriers of access to refuge, and work with children, young people, parents and professionals to understand how services should be shaped and improved. This work has supported the development of commissioned services.

In line with KCC, Medway aims to update its needs assessment annually with a full review every three years. Medway uses data collated from providers to identify gaps in provision. It also relies on the work from its Survivor Voice Group, a subgroup and project collating ongoing quantitative and qualitative feedback from those with lived experience and partner agencies who provide front line support to those who have experienced abuse. Medway uses focus groups with young people, and input from stakeholders to feed into the needs assessment and shape commissioning decisions.

Community Safety Partnership Team and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) are published on both the Kent and Medway council websites. The publication process is vital in ensuring the dissemination of the lessons identified and as part of this process, the Kent Community Safety team also inform a wide variety of professionals and groups.

In addition, the Kent Community Safety team produces a short briefing document for completed DHRs which provides a short narrative, themed lessons to be learned and reflective questions to support the reader in applying the lessons to their own practice. These documents have been very well received, enabling partners who utilise them to cascade a consistent and succinct message to the professionals in their agencies.

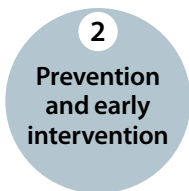
The Kent Community Safety Team also hold 'Lessons to be Learnt' seminars with Independent Chairs, agency representatives, expert and bereaved family speakers. Six DHRs were published in 21/22 and a further two in 22/23. In 2022, five themed webinars were delivered to present these recent publications. 615 frontline professionals from multi-agency partners attended across the events. All webinars were recorded, edited and made available on the Safer Communities Portal.

The Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board developed a joint learning document with the Kent Community Safety Team on successfully engaging with service users, which was published to the KMSAB website and shared widely to partners.

Opportunities for improvement

As we look to the development of future priorities, we would like to continue to develop work on;

- continuing to strengthen collaborative commissioning, using data available to identify gaps and need,
- continuing to strengthen available information to front line services, so that referral options are clear to those working with people impacted by abuse,
- continue to strengthen the support we offer to our collective workforce, aiming to ensure that any person within the workforce who is experiencing domestic abuse is supported well,
- to continue to work with businesses to ensure that they have access to information on how to support staff members who may disclose abuse.



Priority 2 Prevention and early intervention

This priority aims to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention, this is not only about stopping domestic abuse but also preventing escalation of abuse.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- working to identify and support families at risk of domestic abuse,
- challenging gender inequality, sexual stereotyping and domestic abuse normalisation where it exists,
- working with partners to promote safety where children are displaying harmful behaviours,
- expanding Operation Encompass,
- the early identification of abuse of adults at risk.

Working to reduce risk

In KCC the Domestic Abuse Development Programme was designed in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, to ensure an appropriate staff response to domestic abuse across Integrated Children’s Services.

Kent’s multi-agency domestic abuse forums developed a set of practice principles for staff working with people impacted by domestic abuse, aiming to align with the Kent Practice Framework.

This training was rolled out between September 2022 and January 2023 and supports staff to address domestic abuse complexities which they deal with every day. Four sessions have been completed with 40 practitioners from across Integrated Childrens Services attending each session, there are plans to formally evaluate this programme.

KIDAS work with Integrated Children’s Services in providing joint supervisions for complex cases which involve domestic abuse. Staff within Early Help and social work teams can access specialised domestic abuse expertise through KIDAS to support understandings of trauma and best responses.

Healthy relationship education in schools

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a new early intervention programme which is available to schools and youth settings in Kent and Medway designed to examine healthy relationships, online harms as well as cyber safety and cyber bullying.

This programme will offer an interactive media workshop to discuss healthy relationships and online safety. The multi-media experience uses compelling video, creative thinking, data analysis and mind-mapping to explain and explore healthy relationships and online safety. Young people are encouraged to create their own scripts, produce podcasts, dance, rap, poems, or videos on these topics. Time is given for reflection and to actively demonstrate understanding and empathy.

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust have created resources available to schools to enable the inclusion of domestic abuse and healthy relationships within the curriculum. The Kent school health team deliver free training opportunities and resources to support schools in this process.

2. Prevention and early intervention continued

Brighter Worlds Animation and package

The Brighter Worlds project was developed by the Local Children’s Partnership Group in West Kent as a direct response to the increasing number of schools and partners highlighting concerns around the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on children and young people pre and post pandemic.

Each animation involves an ‘alien spacecraft’ looking into a child’s world through a range of different scenarios and then encouraging the children watching to review and analyse the presented scenes. Animation can be a strong preventative resource that can support the sustainability of ACEs and trauma awareness amongst primary school age children.

KCC and partners are seeking opportunities to expand access to this animation across Kent.

Medway Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) Network

Medway has created a networking forum for PSHE leads or equivalent, and teachers to obtain information, share good practice and resources and make links with other schools and organisations.

There are resources available to Medway schools accessed via Google drive and the PSHE Association. These include primary and secondary work packages and lesson packs on abusive relationships and managing family conflict. Medway provide training to teachers to support the delivery of high-quality relationship and sex education.

Currently Kent is looking at joining this network as a collaboration and to support even stronger partnership working.

Bystander Training and Prevent

Violence which happens in a public place can significantly overlap with violence and abuse that happens or occurs in the home or as part of a relationship.

A key part of the work to tackle violence, including domestic abuse, is active bystander training. The active bystander approach equips professionals with the knowledge and skills to discuss with young people about the importance of intervention whenever they see something which they feel is

unacceptable. This may be when a friend is carrying a knife, or when they witness misogynistic or homophobic behaviour.

The Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) have trained 20 trainers and run workshops for approximately 250 professionals to learn about the approach and how it can be incorporated into their practice. Further training sessions are being planned for 2023 – 24, and work is underway with Kent County Council’s marketing team to create resources to support the development of the approach across the County.

Over the last 3 years the Kent and Medway Prevent team who deal with individuals vulnerable to radicalisation have seen a presence of domestic abuse in referrals coming through to the Channel panel (a multi-agency panel that assesses the risk of radicalisation).

The Prevent Team have noticed an overrepresentation of males between ages of 16+ as having a presence of domestic abuse as a factor in their referrals. This includes an individual who has either experienced domestic abuse, shown abusive behaviours, or witnessed domestic abuse. Funding has been provided by the Home Office to commission a project exploring the link between domestic abuse and extremism, and the team are starting to assess the results. These results will be shared widely with organisations.



2. Prevention and early intervention continued

Over the last two years the Prevent Education Officers (PEO) and Prevent Coordinator include Incels and extreme misogyny in their training. The PEOs have seen an increase in schools requesting materials during this time to assist them in challenging students' curiosity into misogynistic narratives. This is addressed by a whole school approach to healthy relationships through the PHSE curriculum, and relevant resources are shared with the schools. Misogynist comments and aggressive behaviours towards female staff and peers should be addressed robustly, as part of a school's wider approach to sex and relationships. Following the tragic Plymouth shootings, training in relation to Incels has been delivered by the Prevent Coordinator to domestic abuse charities and partner organisations across Kent and Medway.

Adolescent to parent violence

The Police and Crime Commissioner commissions support for adolescents who are displaying violent or abusive behaviour or conflict towards their parents. This service provides a restorative led intervention to reduce family conflict and abuse within homes, aiming to help families communicate more effectively and agree how to better manage conflict.

Working to expand Operation Encompass

Kent Police continues to be a proud participant of Operation Encompass supporting children when they are experiencing domestic abuse.

When Covid-19 and lockdown took hold back in Spring 2020, Kent Police made a renewed commitment to continue to share notifications with schools. Since then, Police have strived to improve and develop this early information sharing with schools further. One way this has been achieved is through the development of the 'Operation Encompass PLUS' notification and where appropriate information on non-domestic abuse safeguarding concerns are shared with schools. In addition, the Health Visitor service now receive Domestic Abuse Notifications.

Kent Police have launched a new child AWARE risk assessment in January 2023. These risk assessments are now completed by Officers and staff who deal with safeguarding concerns for children including at domestic abuse incidents. Use of the *AWARE* mnemonic; *Appearance, Words, Activity, Relationships and Dynamics and Environment* now helps to accurately identify and prioritise risk.

Identification of the abuse of adults

While domestic abuse can affect anyone, data collection shows that older people may be underrepresented in service use. We also know that those who are older are more likely to be impacted by a disability.

Media content has been developed and scheduled with domestic abuse partners, to raise awareness with professionals and the public on the abuse of

adults including those with learning disabilities, older people and intergenerational abuse. Awareness of this has been raised through the 16 days campaign and National Safeguarding Week.

Kent Safeguarding teams support early identification of abuse of adults including those with learning disabilities and abuse affecting older people. The 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk – Financial Abuse Toolkit' now makes appropriate links to domestic abuse and identifying coercive and controlling behaviour. The toolkit was reviewed to ensure it makes links to the definition of domestic abuse and how to offer support where domestic abuse is suspected. It also highlights referral pathways to domestic abuse agencies.

Domestic abuse is considered as a factor within the Kent Adult Carers strategy. Ensuring that the links and distinction between carer burn out and coercive controlling behaviour are made with clear risk information and referral pathways available to staff.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisor support for older people impacted by domestic abuse. The commissioned service provides tailored support from the point of crisis and beyond recovery.

2. Prevention and early intervention continued

The Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (HIDVAs)

Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (HIDVAs) have been in place at Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley, Medway Maritime Hospital and East Kent Hospital Foundation NHS Trust acute sites since 2018.

HIDVAs are based at the hospital sites and raise awareness of domestic abuse, providing specialist support to staff and patients around disclosures of domestic abuse. The hospital IDVA services have found that health-based support will often identify survivors who are otherwise missed by services such as the older population and men, offering people the chance to engage and receive specialist support. The Integrated Care Board have achieved further funding to provide this service across Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust acute sites.

To recognise the significant impact of domestic abuse on a person's mental health, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) have appointed a Health IDVA. The HIDVA works with KMPT healthcare staff and patients to improve the identification of domestic violence and abuse, and make sure people are referred to the right support. This has been supported by funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Opportunities for improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to prevention and early intervention which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes:

- continuing to work to improve content and the promotion of uptake of more consistent domestic abuse curriculum content as part of relationship and sex education,
- ensure that all relevant people especially schools are aware of resources available,
- work to closely align Operation Encompass with the midwifery service,
- explore ways to promote learning and development on issues of complexity - particularly intersections between mental capacity, coercive control behaviour and vulnerability,
- and continuing the work on understanding trauma reactions and how these impact practice and practical ways to apply learning.



3

Provision of services

Priority 3 Provision of community and safe accomodation services

This priority recognises people’s experiences of domestic abuse as individual and that people will need different types of support and solutions based on their experiences. Support must be holistic, trauma informed and with an awareness that healing can be complex and take time.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- working together to ensure staff understand the landscape of provision, using and referring to services effectively,
- ensuring we use an evidence-based approach to commission services,
- building on trauma informed approaches to support individuals and families.

Referral pathways

Domestic abuse is prolific and impacts many of the services delivered by partner organisations. Because domestic abuse is linked to many other areas of business, commissioning happens across different partnerships and agencies.

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and the Medway Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS) has greatly increased coordinated delivery.

Comprehensive Domestic Abuse Services

Kent

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) was commissioned in April 2017. This contract is supported by Kent County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Thanet District Council, Dover District Council, Swale Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Ashford Borough Council and Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

This service covers both safe accommodation and community-based support. The service includes;

- a single county wide point of access, creating dedicated referral, triage and response pathway for people affected by domestic abuse,
- creating clear pathways of support which can be stepped up and down,
- specialist support delivered across a variety of accommodation settings and in the community,
- qualified Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA).

- training provided to professionals, those impacted by abuse, and communities around domestic abuse to educate and raise awareness.

Medway

In 2019 budgets were pooled from Housing, Children’s Services, Public Health and Medway NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to commission an integrated domestic abuse service in Medway (MDAS).

The contract offered support for medium and high-risk victims and survivors in Medway for the first time (previously only high-risk clients had access to support).

MDAS works with children and adults who have experienced abuse, offering educational services including workshops to young people and professionals, support services for those experiencing abuse and project and programme work.

3. Provision of services continued

The partnership structure has greatly supported information sharing between commissioners. Monthly meetings are being held between the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office, Kent County Council and Medway Council to share commissioned service information. The Domestic Abuse Coordinator and Domestic Abuse Forum Chairs meetings offer opportunities to share information across local and countywide spaces.

Childrens Commissioning within KCC have brought together and are maintaining a directory of services offered to young people impacted by abuse. This is being made available to Early Help and social workers.

Evidence led commissioning

Our approach to strategy, commissioning and service provision is evidence led and based on findings from our needs assessments.

The Kent Domestic Abuse Research programme collates and triangulates research to provide evidence to decision-makers across the full range of organisations represented by the cross-agency domestic abuse partnership. This includes literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative projects and bringing together data and other information across the partnership.

Two learning events have been hosted by the partnership to support shared learning and development.

The first event focused on understanding the narratives and experiences of children and young people impacted by domestic abuse, and the second focused on life threatening illness and domestic abuse.

Both events have been attended by organisations across the partnership, supporting organisational learning and the sharing of experience across sectors.

Medway Public Health conducted focus groups on healthy relationships and support needs with primary, secondary and college students.

The feedback has been included in the Medway Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment and will inform commissioning decisions. Medway’s Survivor Voice Group has collated feedback directly from the voluntary sector via the One Stop Shop, Refuges and Advisory Groups, which are fed into the Local Partnership Board, and needs assessment.

Building on trauma informed approaches to support individuals and families

Trauma informed practice supports practitioners to respond effectively to the different ways trauma

can impact a person. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Ambassador programme (Kent) launched in May 2022. Ambassadors support practitioners by working with them to build knowledge, to help develop initiatives to reduce the impact of ACEs and seek to support a trauma informed approach to care. As of March 2023, over 300 people had completed the programme of training.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned services to upskill professionals to deliver the Healing Together programme which is a trauma informed programme for children aged 6-16 years old who are impacted by domestic abuse. The majority of professionals trained have been from educational establishments.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also funded a Young Women’s Trauma Informed Mentor, and Children & Young People Trauma Informed Worker. One-to-one psychoeducational mentoring and emotional support is available for young women and girls aged 16-24 years who have experienced, are at risk of, or are currently experiencing domestic abuse within their intimate relationships.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned trauma focussed therapeutic services for children impacted by physical and emotional abuse, sexual abuse or domestic abuse.

3. Provision of services continued

Farm based activities provide children and their family members with a quiet and peaceful setting to visit during their recovery.

Medway refuges, have trauma informed counselling for adults and play therapy sessions for children and young people. Due to feedback from the Survivor Voice Group work, additional provision has been commissioned to expand this service, and it has now been commissioned to provide support to clients within the dispersed accommodation scheme in Medway.

Provision of services, safe accommodation

In response to the Domestic Abuse Act, the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group added an addition to the original strategy, this was published in January 2022. The addition focussed on safe accommodation services.

Housing options, flexibility and access

Journey mapping

In wanting to take a trauma-aware approach to the housing journey for those impacted by domestic abuse, Maidstone Borough Council overhauled the previous housing operational mechanism.

Maidstone Borough Council were aware that the housing process for people who have experienced domestic abuse could be difficult to navigate and

wanted to improve the language and system being used to support equity, empathy, and to be trauma informed.

The system itself changed to include safe enquiry as the first priority. Maidstone Borough Council also eliminated several steps when someone discloses abuse before they receive an assessment. This change sought to reduce the need for a survivor to re-tell their circumstances and to reduce the risk of re-traumatisation. Maidstone Borough Council created a visual flowchart to share with both those who have experienced abuse and professionals to support understanding of processes.

Tenancy Support

Tenancy support Officers have been recruited as part of the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Services (KIDAS) contract. These posts support those in safe accommodation to find permanent housing, and also support clients to maintain their tenancies if this is their chosen outcome. The officers act as a broker with other agencies such as landlords in both the private and public sector.



3. Provision of services continued

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation

The Domestic Abuse Coordinators group includes representation from all District, Borough and City Councils, Kent County Council and Medway Council. This group is working to create a local network of support to strengthen housing responses through collectively working towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation.

Working collaboratively across areas this work will be pioneering as the group works together to share progress, resources and best practice to strengthen responses.



Swale Borough Council support DAHA and are working to improve the housing response to domestic abuse. They have signed up for membership and finished their self-assessment and will now be looking at changes to be made to improve services.

Training has been revised and Swale Borough Council will be rolling out refreshers on trauma informed practice, non-judgemental language and risk assessment. The training incorporates input

from 'by and for' services available locally to deliver inputs to staff.

Staying Close By:

Safe Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER), KCC

SAFER is a scheme which has been developed by Kent County Council (KCC) with engagement from all partner agencies and those with lived experience of domestic abuse. The contract is due to be procured and in place by 1st October 2023.

The scheme looks to extend the availability of sanctuary services within Kent (additional security within a home) and the availability of support for those residing in properties where sanctuary has been applied.

A countywide single point of access will receive the referral and notify the organisation/s responsible for delivering the property security element who will conduct a property assessment and install the

required security measures. A support package for the adult survivor will also be offered. Support for children residing in the home will be offered through the Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS).

Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS), KCC

A support service has been designed and procured for children living in safe accommodation. This service has been developed through survivor engagement and co-production.

The service supports access to group, one-to-one and peer support, and (based on feedback) has extended the length of provision available for therapeutic support for young people.

Feedback recommended training and development of the wider workforce in relation to supporting children and young people and this has been incorporated in SASS which will support the development of knowledge and skills of our inhouse Integrated Childrens Service.

Safe in Medway

Medway has the dispersed accommodation offer which is known as Safe in Medway (SiM). Within this project is the family practitioner who provides support for young people and families, with accessing schools and general well-being. Medway also commissions counselling and play therapy to children within their refuge accommodation. This offer has recently been extended to include SiM.



3. Provision of services continued

Kent Fire and Rescue Service supporting more people affected by abuse:

Kent Fire and Rescue Service have been developing their policies to ensure people experiencing abuse are consistently supported to stay safe, this includes staff experiencing domestic abuse, ensuring that where threats of arson are made against a person impacted by abuse everyone in the house is supported including children.

There has also been an increase in the Out of Hours Team to ensure that all safeguarding concerns can be acted on, no matter what time they come in, ensuring that people impacted by domestic abuse can get the right safety support 24/7. These changes are backed by an increased level of training across teams.

Homelessness and recognising multiple need

The Blue Light Project

In Medway, there is the Blue Light Project, which is formed of professionals such as mental health services, probation, rough-sleepers initiative, substance misuse services and the core domestic abuse support provider. The project aims to discuss cases where the clients are facing multiple-disadvantage and can struggle to have meaningful engagement with services, many of whom are street homeless.

The reciprocal agreement

Kent and Medway Councils, District, City and Borough Councils, Kent Housing Group and the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), have established a Kent and Medway wide domestic abuse reciprocal scheme.

The managed reciprocal scheme will enable individuals and families at risk of domestic abuse and who have a social tenancy, to move to a safe area whilst retaining their tenancy, aiming to make it faster and easier for people to find properties while retaining the benefits of their current tenancy.

The scheme is a formal collaboration between social housing landlords. Benefits include supporting increased housing options for people experiencing abuse, providing a supportive framework to both people impacted by abuse and social landlords, and making the best use of housing stock across Kent and Medway.

Access of services to all

Our protected characteristics such as our ethnicity, gender, sexuality and age can impact our risk of domestic abuse. Our demography may also influence the forms that abuse might take. 'By and for' services can offer specialist support, holding understanding of experience, and of power dynamics within and outside the domestic space and how this may impact abuse.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a dedicated male Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service and a support service providing British Sign Language for Deaf people impacted by domestic abuse and sexual violence. There is also a child and young persons' advocate providing support for 8 -18-year-olds county-wide.

Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) have worked with the KCC Sensory Services team to help improve access for Deaf people experiencing abuse. The working group has implemented access to a video relay service, for all the teams to enable effective communication with Deaf people who use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first or preferred method of communication and voice-over relay.

Posters, websites and social media comms have been created to highlight and reflect the use of SignLive to spread the word so that Deaf people can access services and support.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned a mentoring support service for men affected by emotional, financial and domestic abuse. This service includes some support for children and young people.

Kent County Council is currently developing a training offer to domestic and sexual abuse service providers, in supporting people who face additional barriers and vulnerabilities. This training will support knowledge and skills to aid those supporting people who may have mental health support needs or be impacted by substance dependencies.

Medway 'We Hear You' (W.H.Y) is a project which has been set up by those with lived experience of substance misuse. The service also includes those with lived experience of various types of trauma including domestic abuse, and is working to represent the voice of service users and bridge gaps between support services. Medway Council is linking in with the project to ensure that the work being carried out by W.H.Y is forming part of the Survivor Feedback Group and feeding into the domestic abuse Local Partnership Board.

Kent and Medway Councils are currently scoping work to expand support of 'by and for' service provision.



Opportunities for improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to the provision of services which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes:

- further collaborative, needs led, work by commissioners across the market of by and for services,
- building additional support mechanisms for those with barriers to access such as drug or alcohol dependencies or mental health support needs, and those who may be unable to access refuge due to high level needs.

4

Minimising harm

Priority 4 Minimising harm

This priority is about supporting positive outcomes and promoting equality of access for anyone who experiences domestic abuse.

This outcome recognises the longer-term impact of domestic abuse and the importance of working collaboratively to support people in their recovery.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- recognising that domestic abuse may impact children, young people and the whole family in the longer term,
- understanding that for many children and young people the experience of managing parental conflict can be traumatic and difficult,
- working to increase understanding of abuse that happens in family relationships so that victims & survivors of adult family violence and 'honour' based violence are identified and supported,
- local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) will be used effectively to reduce repeat victimisation.

Understanding longer term impacts

Research was commissioned by KCC to better understand the impact of abuse on children, young people and the whole family, and to understand what children and young people view as good interventions.

Themes that came out strongly included:

- the importance of having someone trusted to talk to,
- young people wanted to make sure that the non-abusive parent had access to support, they also talked about having support together as a family,
- the importance of having friends or peers who may have had similar experiences and therefore a better understanding your experience,
- the importance of schools in supporting an understanding of healthy relationships.

For young people experiencing abuse the Young Person's Independent Domestic Violence Advisor service helps people aged between 16 and 25. This service aims to support young people to stay safe and process experiences as well as helping with practical aspects such as employment and housing.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned online therapeutic counselling support for children, young people and where appropriate their parents and families. Case studies have shown that clients with complex needs feel overwhelmed and emotional at the start of their

counselling journey, but at the end are better able to cope with life and show improvements in their mental health.

'Honour-based' violence

Kent and Medway was the 9th highest Police Force Area for residents contacting Karma Nirvana, the specialist 'honour-based' abuse organisation helpline in 2020/21.

For the day of memory for those lost to 'honour-based' abuse, a campaign led by Karma Nirvana, created social media posts for partners to share to help spread awareness.

The Know, See, Speak Out Domestic Abuse awareness campaign created social media posts for partners to share. There was also a new page created for the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse website to help people to identify 'honour-based' abuse and reach out for help.

Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) providers have commissioned training for staff from Southall Black Sisters to further develop their awareness, knowledge and support to those impacted by this form of abuse.

The Kent Community Safety Team also held lessons learnt seminars after Domestic Homicide Reviews, with Independent Chairs, agency representatives, expert and bereaved family speakers.

4. Minimising harm continued

The final webinar of 2022 was themed around cultural competency and focussed on the DHRs of Simran and Tamana, both of which highlighted learning in relation to ‘honour-based’ violence. All webinars were recorded, edited and made available on the Safer Communities Portal.

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

Kent Council Council (KCC) have been leading on work to better understand options for support for those experiencing domestic abuse who have No Recourse to Public Funds. Working across the partnership, we have pulled together information around experience and how professionals may be able to support this group.

This included talking to our frontline professionals, exploring internal and external training offers, discourse across our voluntary sector partners, working with other local authorities through our regional group and seeking ways to develop the work.

We have presented this work in various partnership forums, with plans to support a cross partnership workshop and training development.

Local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

MARAC is a safeguarding forum to discuss how to help people experiencing domestic abuse at high

risk of murder or serious harm. A series of reviews had shown that the MARAC system in Kent & Medway needed additional resource to help professionals effectively support those who need it most.

Steering and working groups brought together professionals from across the county, with a breadth of safeguarding expertise, to address the issues and enable in-depth risk management.

The MARAC review has resulted in a new hub model which is partnership funded, doubling the coordinating staff available to fulfil this crucial function, with new technology creating more efficient information sharing and action planning.

Due to launch this year (2023) the new model should deliver innovative ways to reduce the risk posed by people using abuse to gain power and control.

Highlighting the link between domestic abuse and suicide

Following discussions with the KCC Community Safety team, the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Programme worked with Kent Police to show that 30% of all suicides in Kent and Medway between 2019 & 2021 were impacted by domestic abuse. This work has been nationally recognised and continues to shape national discussions.

The work of the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention programme has supported:

- inclusion of domestic abuse as a priority within our local Suicide Prevention Strategy,
- funded local partner pilots into trauma impact workshops for people who have experienced domestic abuse where the abuse has stopped,
- investment in qualitative research with those who have been impacted by domestic abuse, who have previously attempted suicide or have self-harmed,
- funding for six community level projects with a specific focus on reducing the risk of domestic abuse related suicides,
- targeted local mental health campaigns.

The Kent & Medway Suicide Prevention Team have also commissioned domestic abuse & suicide prevention training.

This was developed in October 2022, test run and is now being rolled out for free across all Kent & Medway partnerships. The aim of this training is to highlight risk and protective factors related to suicide and domestic abuse, navigate emotionally sensitive conversations and to assess and de-escalate risk.

The Police and Crime Commissioner have commissioned a specialist 1:1 advocacy service and peer support for families who have been bereaved by suicide or unexplained death following domestic abuse.

4. Minimising harm continued

Opportunities for improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to minimising harm which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes to:

- promote access to mental health support that is trauma informed,
- recognising the importance of strengthening the relationship between the non-abusive parent/caregiver and child by giving them spaces to discuss their experiences and tools to grow together,
- acknowledging the non-linear process of recovery, enabling, where possible support to be accessed longer term and for historic cases of abuse.





Priority 5 Justice, recovery and ongoing protection

This priority focuses on reducing the impact of domestic abuse on the family and reducing the likelihood of future incidents, whether through pursuing those showing abusive behaviours through the criminal justice system, via civil outcomes, through working with families to change behaviour or through rehabilitation.

Our commitments included:

- working with partners to support assessment of the criminal justice response to current, new and emerging issues in relation to the protection of people who have experienced abuse,
- all agencies working together to ensure that there is a robust approach to those showing abusive behaviours,
- accessible information about protection orders, disclosure schemes and what people who have experienced abuse can expect from the criminal justice system.

Kent Police Domestic Abuse Hub

The Domestic Abuse Hub was launched in May 2022, and provides innovative support for those being impacted by abuse via technology. This enables people to immediately speak with an officer via video, allowing for fast-time crime recording, statement taking and capture of evidence including the scene of the incident and any visible injuries.

The Hub will contact people reporting standard risk domestic abuse where it is recent and the person using abusive behaviour is not at the scene using rapid video response. This is recorded and can then be used as the first account, to formulate a statement to save the person retelling their story and to evidence fear and emotional impact where it would be appropriate to consider an evidence led prosecution.

By having instant contact with the person experiencing abuse an officer can also implement immediate safeguarding and referrals to partner agencies to provide protection to people, where needed.

The Police and Crime Commissioner led a detailed analysis of Kent Police offender data to build a perpetrator profile in Kent. This found that 10% of offenders are responsible for 63% of harm.

The Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination Panels (MATACs) are a multiagency panel managing the highest harm repeat perpetrators of domestic abuse. The Panel brings together agencies to produce an action plan bespoke to each offender.

These include education, prevention, diversion, disruption and enforcement tactics. Perpetrators are contacted and told that they are a priority offender, to explain the seriousness of their offending and determine whether they will engage in the MATAC process. The approach is designed to get to the root of the problem - to challenge offender behaviour and either influence behavioural change or engage in disruption and enforcement.

This system has resulted in a 65% average reduction in all offending after MATAC intervention and a 63% reduction in domestic abuse offending.

Preventing unwanted contact from prisoners

To stop unwanted contact while a person is in prison and protect those being impacted by abuse, a new Victims' Helpline has been set up to prevent unwanted contact.

5. Justice, recovery and ongoing protection continued

This Justice Department project is especially important if the person impacted by abuse is subject to controlling, coercive behaviour, exploitation, harassment or intimidation. Preventing contact is critical in stopping further harm, maintaining confidence and supporting prosecutions.

A robust approach to those showing abusive behaviours

In 2021 the Home Office made funding available to Police and Crime Commissioners to support the delivery of domestic abuse perpetrator focussed programmes. A pilot programme was successfully secured for the delivery of both domestic and stalking perpetrator programmes in Kent & Medway, alongside support for those impacted by abuse and their children. Programmes are delivered in both one to one and group settings.

The programme focuses on building an individuals' skills to cope with challenging situations, overwhelming feelings, and difficult emotions. The work is strengths based, drawing on the perpetrators (non-abusive) strengths to develop changes, whilst robustly holding them to account for their abusive behaviour. A dedicated Victims Link Worker works in conjunction with Kent Police, and existing victim support services.

Local access to programmes to reduce abusive behaviours

Domestic Abuse Forums and Community Safety Partnerships have ensured that residents of Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Swale, Medway, Folkestone & Hythe and Ashford are able to access a 27-week programme designed to help those who acknowledge that their behaviour to their partner has been, or is still, abusive. The programme seeks to support respectful relationships between partners or ex-partners and any children who may be witnessing abuse.

Domestic abuse training for family lawyers

Invicta Law and Kent County Council (KCC) were successful in their bid to host a Safe Lives pilot training programme for those working in Family Law. This specialist training spanned the whole family justice system, delivering a cultural-change training programme to create systemic transformations within the family justice system and strengthen practitioner capacity to respond well to domestic abuse.

Three training sessions were delivered to staff across a number of organisations. There was significant appetite for further training, information and networking with local services.



5. Justice, recovery and ongoing protection continued

In response Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS), Medway Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS) & Invicta Law have been collaborating to design a further session to explore the use of court as a tactic of abuse, avoiding victim blaming language, using safety planning and the orders available to protect those affected by abuse.

In addition, it has been identified that those who are affected by domestic abuse are often facing court without legal representation or with no eligibility for legal aid. A legal support project has been developed by KCC and KIDAS to provide legal support and advice to assist people impacted by abuse through court processes.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a legal advice service for those impacted by domestic abuse. This service supports documentation for special measures in court, non-molestation orders and child related orders. The providers have their own legal team consisting of experienced, qualified, and fully regulated barristers and solicitors.

Integrating Research into Practice

To support social work staff confidence and knowledge around domestic abuse in family court, a workshop was run on the ways the court needs to protect the safety and wellbeing of both children affected by abuse and their non-abusive parents, as well as how The Children and Family

Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass) and social workers have an important role to play in assisting the court to do so.

This formed part of Integrated Children’s Services 2021’s Communities of Practice spotlight on domestic abuse. This included workshops on local services, typologies of abuse, domestic abuse and suicide, assessment tools as well as providing a reflective space for staff.

Coming together to tackle abusive behaviour The Reducing Abusive Behaviour Group helps to coordinate the approaches to tackling abusive behaviour across Kent and Medway and to promote a greater focus on holding the individual causing harm to account and changing their behaviour.

As part of this work the group has explored ways to increase the confidence of organisations to respond to people using abusive behaviour. Tools being developed to achieve this include template policies, designed to be used and adapted to help a range of organisations to respond appropriately to clients and staff members who may be causing harm through their behaviour.

To ensure clear information is available to help people navigate the criminal justice process the Police and Crime Commissioner has created an easy-to-use Victim Voice guide to support confidence in reporting crimes.

This process aims to enable the individual to access the information and support they need and are legally entitled to. The guide takes people through each stage of the criminal justice system - from how to report a crime, the protective orders available to what happens if the case goes to court.

Opportunities for Improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to justice, recovery and ongoing protection which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes:

- pressure on court systems has led to long lags in between charge and prosecution, strategies should seek to increase the capacity within the system and keep people informed of progress against their case,
- currently only a small proportion of those using abusive behaviour are accessing support services or being heard at Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination Panels (MATAC),
- Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders will come into force, strategies should encourage uptake.

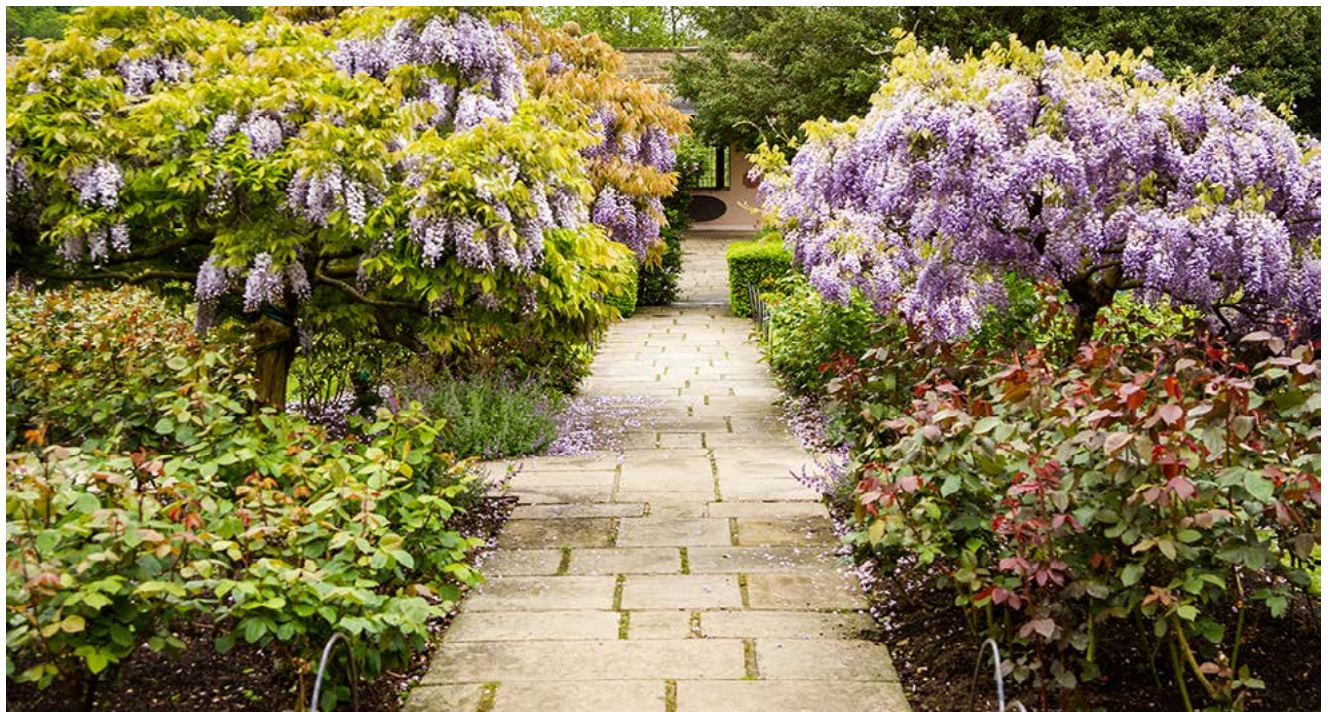
4

Conclusion

Across the partnership significant work has taken place over the three-year life of the strategy. Many areas of work have been significantly pushed forward, with collaborative working supporting stronger project development, better links between services and ultimately a stronger response.

The strategy and many of the commitments set within it were rightly challenging goals. We must be visionary and continue to push boundaries to support change.

This document explores the progress which we have made, but has also identified opportunities for improvement, and, as we develop our new strategy we will seek to integrate these learnings, working to understand how we can do better, seeking to continue to push work forward which will lead to meeting our aim; *to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly.*



Useful links

Domestic Abuse: It's Everybody's Business (2020)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiiBcbpVr7s&list=PLphMV3M-GI_R8xpBrrS-OmwlszEyGNWcU

Domestic Abuse Support Services in Kent and Medway

<https://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/service.page?id=Kf8cT9ubi50>

Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment (2020)

Domestic abuse – Kent Public Health Observatory
(kpho.org.uk)

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2020) - Domestic-abuse-strategy-2020-2023.pdf

(kent.gov.uk)

Office of Police Crime Commissioner Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2021) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy 2021 to 2024: call for evidence – GOV.UK

(www.gov.uk)

Office of Police Crime Commissioner, Violence Against Women and Girls Report (2021) – vawg-paper_september-2021.pdf

(kent-pcc.gov.uk)

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, The Victim Voice guide is available here

<https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/projects-and-campaigns/victim-voice/>

Kent Community Safety Agreement (2022)

[Kent Community Safety Agreement April 2022](https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/projects-and-campaigns/victim-voice/)

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, Relationship and sex education | Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

(kentcht.nhs.uk)

Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Website

<https://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk>

Kent Adult Carers Strategy (2022) Appendix B – Adult Carers Strategy Engagement and Consultation Outcome Report March 2022.pdf

(kent.gov.uk)

Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board Kent & Medway SAB website

(kmsab.org.uk)

Kent Safeguarding Children Multiagency Partnership Home – Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership

(kscmp.org.uk)

Kent Practice Framework kcc-practice-framework.pdf

(proceduresonline.com)

Medway safeguarding Children Partnership Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership

(medwayscp.org.uk)

Safeguarding Adults at Risk: Financial abuse tool kit Financial-abuse-toolkit.pdf

(kent.gov.uk)

Further information

For further information about any aspect of this progress report please contact:


Kent County Council

Strategy, Policy and Relationships

PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk

Alternative formats

If you require this strategy in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk



**Kent and Medway
Domestic Abuse Strategy
2024 - 2029:
Executive Summary
Consultation draft**

Have your say

We want to hear your feedback on our proposed Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy.

Your views are important in helping us ensure that we continue to develop and improve our support and services for people and families affected by domestic abuse.

The consultation will run from the **24th July – 16th October 2023**. Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/domesticabusestrategy to complete the online questionnaire.

If you have any questions, please contact us on PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk.

What happens next?

Following the end of the consultation a full analysis and report will be completed and will be presented at governance groups, including the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, before the strategy is agreed and finalised. This will also be published on the above mentioned website.

Accessing support

This is a strategy document about how we want to develop and improve our services over the next 5 years.

If you need support now this can be accessed by telephoning: Victim Support on 0808 168 9276, or visiting <http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk>

If you are in immediate danger please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact Kent Police on the non-emergency telephone number 101 or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge on 0808 2000 247 or the Men's' Advice Line on 0808 801 0327.

Introduction

This is a document produced by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. The Executive group includes partners across Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Services, Kent Police, the National Probation Service, the NHS, the Department of Work and Pensions, the Police and Crime Commissioner and all Kent District, Borough and City Councils (referred to in this document as the Partnership).

This strategy works to achieve the Executives' 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'.**

This is an Executive summary of the full Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy. The full strategy includes further information on all areas within this summary.

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy identifies joint commitments across the Partnership for those impacted by domestic abuse and is inclusive of those who are abused, those who perpetrate through abusive behaviour, and children who witness abuse, using the voice of people who have experienced abuse to identify areas of priority across the Partnership's collective service provision.

This strategy also supports Kent County Council and Medway Council's statutory duty to fulfil their responsibility to have a strategy which details aims and priorities for adults and children who have experienced domestic abuse in safe accommodation services.

This strategy and the commitments in it have been grounded in the experiences of people affected by abuse. By sharing their experiences with the research programmes in both Kent and Medway they have supported the development of themes and priorities which are the focus of this strategy. We want to say thank you to those who have helped. Without your valuable insight this strategy could not be formed.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created a statutory definition of domestic abuse for the first time. The Act outlined that behaviour is classed as domestic abuse when:

‘Two people are personally connected to each other, over the age of 16 and where the behaviour between each other is abusive’.

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of the following:

- physical or sexual behaviour;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- economic abuse;
- psychological or emotional control and abuse.

The definition includes children who witness abuse. Children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse independently of the adult who experiences the abuse.

Additionally, so called ‘honour-based abuse’ is an umbrella term which may include forced physical traumas such as breast flattening or female genital mutilation, psychological pressure or forced marriage. This is often perpetrated by a person’s family and members of a community with the aim of protecting or defending honour.

This is a violation of human rights and is a form of domestic abuse.

No recourse to public funds

“While I appreciate the help I received, I also feel I was grossly misguided. And I think my situation is very niche and they weren’t quite sure how to guide me... In cases like mine, where there’s the element of, you know the immigration aspect and financial abuse to the extent I’ve experienced...”

People experiencing abuse who may have limited access to public funding due to their immigration status may be highly vulnerable, their status may be an additional way for a person using abusive behaviour to control them.

Dependent on a person’s situation there may be opportunities to support them under various legislation which might include the Care Act (2014) and the Children Act (Section 17, 1989) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

The Partnership will work where possible to support those impacted by abuse where limits to public funds may be in place, supporting staff training on available routes to support.

Domestic abuse continued

Key Statistics

National statistics

- The crime survey for England and Wales estimates that 5% of adults over the age of 16 and over (2.4 million) experienced domestic abuse in the year ending 2022, (6.9% women and 3.0% men)¹.
- On average the Police in England and Wales receive over 100 calls relating to domestic abuse every hour ².
- One in seven (14.2%) children and young people under the age of 18 will have lived with domestic abuse at some point in their childhood³.

Kent and Medway

- An average of nearly 34,000 calls per year were made to Kent Police relating to domestic abuse in the last 5 years.
- 40% of domestic abuse incidents reported to Kent Police had a child or children recorded as an involved party.
- 93% of Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Services clients accessed support within the community and 7% of people were supported in safe accommodation (2022/2023).

Safe Accommodation – data from our refuges Kent (2022/2023)

- 209 adults used Kent refuges.
- 48.8% of people in Kent refuges had accompanying children.
- 3.0% of people in refuge identified as lesbian, gay, or pansexual.
- Of those in refuge, 6.7% had a physical or sensory disability and 1.4% had a learning disability.
- 40% of those in refuge identified as needing mental health support (as a secondary need).
- 36.8% of people in refuge came from outside Kent.
- 63.3% of individuals in refuge identified as “White - British” and 25% identified as other ethnic groups.

Medway (2022/2023)

- 59 people accessed safe accommodation services.
- 13% of people who used services were between 16 – 25 years old.
- 47 children were supported in safe accommodation
- 51% of people reported as having a mental health support need.
- 16% of people accessing refuge had a disability
- 21% of people accessing refuge accommodation identified as black or from a minority ethnic group.
- 113 people have benefited from Sanctuary Scheme adaptations.

These statistics and our needs assessment help shape our commitments within our strategy.

1. Office of National Statistics, Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2022 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrendsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022>

2. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Increasingly everyone's business: A Progress report on the police response to domestic abuse (Dec 2015) <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/increasingly-everyones-business-domestic-abuse-progress-report.pdf>

3. The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, available at: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/impact-on-children-and-young-people/>

Domestic abuse
continued

The commitments of the Partnership are split across three key areas which have been informed by what people with lived experience have told us. These sections are early intervention and prevention, immediate need and recovery.

1. Early intervention and prevention

- Increasing awareness of what abuse is and available support
- Professional training
- Preventing escalation of abusive behaviours
- Clare's Law

2. Immediate Needs

- Being responsive to individual needs
- Reducing risk
- Strengthening services
- Highlighting civil options
- Experience of justice
- Supporting children and young people
- Access to housing

3. Recovery

- Recognising the mental health impact of abuse
- Processing experiences and promoting connections
- Prioritising family bonds
- Reaching economic independence
- Recognising the experts

1. Early intervention and prevention

This theme aims to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention, to stop domestic abuse occurring, to identify domestic abuse as early as possible and get support in place to stop the impacts from escalating.

“For me it’s like everyone just needs educating. What is domestic abuse? So, at school you go all the way through every organisation. You know, every judge, solicitor, whoever is involved in anything to do with domestic abuse should be trained. . . People would think differently. I think, you know, courts would be different., the legal system will be different and other people’s perceptions. Even if it’s taught at school, young girls, boys, how they grow up and their perception of what abuse is really important.”

“I feel like something needs to be taught in schools. That’s just my opinion. Because what I kind of uncovered with my counselling is that me personally, a lot of my issues stem from childhood trauma, and then you end up finding yourself in a relationship at a young age with a trauma bond. . . If I had been taught better about relationships and what gaslighting is and what manipulating someone looks like I would [have been] a lot more educated like now.”

“Domestic abuse training needs to be there for every professional and it should be a statutory thing that every professional needs to have, like health and safety. Because if people knew how to recognise the signs of it, I think people could help others to pick it up and to recognise it themselves, or at least be able to offer them a service that’s available in your area if you want to access it.”

Across the Partnership we will increase our capacity to respond to domestic abuse earlier and to prevent abuse from taking place.

Our commitments are summarised here, there is more detail in the full strategy.

1. Increasing awareness of what abuse is and available support

Understanding what a healthy relationship looks like, and what the tactics of abuse include, can support people to recognise what abuse is and the support options available. When a person is ready to reach out for help, they should be able to identify where to turn to for help quickly.

The Partnership will:

- work collaboratively to provide consistent messaging around domestic abuse, increasing

1. Early intervention and prevention
continued

awareness that domestic abuse includes coercive, financial, emotional, physical and sexual abuse and can impact anyone;

- increase awareness of the services available and that they are inclusive;
- provide educational resources and proactively reach out to communities who are less likely to access support.

2. Professional training

We need to ensure that professionals working across our services have access to training and development opportunities that give them the skills they need to identify and respond to domestic abuse. Staff should feel confident and empowered to respond to disclosures.

The Partnership will:

- support professionals across our services to understand and identify the many forms of domestic abuse, feel confident in assessing risk and taking a trauma informed response.

3. Preventing the escalation of abusive behaviours

People who perpetrate through abusive behaviours cause significant harm to others. They may themselves have experienced or witnessed abuse and they can be at increased risk of suicide.

We need interventions in place to support the person while disrupting abusive behaviour.

Interventions should be in place to support people identify their harmful behaviour and make changes, whilst services work together to manage risk and prevent further harm.

The Partnership will:

- work with communities to promote positive behaviours and challenge harmful gendered stereotyping;
- support work on bystander interventions and seek opportunities to develop service provision for those showing signs of developing abusive behaviours working with the Violence Reduction Unit, and the Prevent team where appropriate.

4. Clare’s Law

Clare’s Law gives people the ‘right to ask’ if their current or ex-partner has previous history of domestic abuse, and the right for Partners to proactively release information if someone is believed to be at significant risk.

By giving people the right information, we can support them to make informed choices about their safety.

The Partnership will:

- increase awareness of Clare’s Law, making this as accessible as possible so that people are able to make choices that increase their safety.

2. Immediate Needs

By immediate need we mean the services, interventions and support that people need whilst domestic abuse is occurring and in the immediate aftermath. These services may help with managing risk and increasing safety, but people may also need support with practical issues such as access to housing and school places.

"I was in such a bad place and didn't know where to go, who to talk to. It was hard to talk because of the kids around. It was hard to actually pick up the phone and physically try and call someone and talk to them. You know, some sort of service. So in the end, one evening I was just at a point where I really just wanted to end my life again and I found the Victim Support online and it had the online chat, so I started talking to somebody from there. That helped."

"It is the real loneliness. That is what for me probably was the hardest part in the beginning... I do believe for me the loneliness every time he would go was what made me take him back. I had nobody. I mean, normally you would have friends you can pick up the phone and call. I didn't have that. I had no friends anymore, not one."

"Even in diversity, there's still diversity that needs to happen, but here no one looks like me, so I think there's also that loneliness here where I want to go to staff, but you can't quite understand all the things that I may need because you don't know what it's like to be me. Constantly having to explain yourself and who you are is exhausting."

"My child had already taken so much time off school, just like every other kid [because of the pandemic]. But then to add another six months to that and then not have provisions in place for catch ups and stuff... They are doing OK, but they could do with extra support. That is one thing that I would have said and I did ask about, but, I was told that it could be looked into, but I just don't think it ever happened. Is that if the child's gonna be out of school longer than a month, if they could somehow implement a tutor to come into refuge, to teach them that would be amazing."

2. Immediate Needs

continued

1. Being responsive to individual needs

The Partnership must ensure that services can meet the needs of our diverse population, recognising that people’s experiences of abuse, their journeys, trauma, support needs, and recovery are different.

Some individuals and communities may face multiple and intersecting barriers to support, and our services need to have the knowledge and skills, as well as an understanding of experience to proactively engage and respond.

The Partnership will:

- provide safe accommodation and specialist support that meets the needs of anyone experiencing abuse, strengthening our responses to people facing multiple barriers and increasing service uptake for under-represented groups;
- strengthen links with community groups, faith groups and leaders to expand opportunities for collaborative working, develop needs led work across the specialist ‘by and for’ market and work to improve the response to those with multiple barriers to access.

2. Reducing risk

Domestic abuse takes multiple forms with risk impacted by a number of factors; this includes whether a person has separated from the

abusive person, whether they are pregnant, their demography and other factors. In keeping people safe, risk must be managed and where possible reduced.

The Partnership will:

- strengthen the processes that enable us to jointly respond to the highest risk domestic abuse cases to increase safety and hold people perpetrating abusive behaviour to account;
- act on learnings when domestic abuse has been fatal or there have been failures in safeguarding adults and children.

3. Strengthening services

The Partnership will work collaboratively to utilise opportunities and commission where gaps in existing services are identified to ensure the strongest support is available for those impacted by domestic abuse.

The Partnership will:

- centralise and share information on commissioned services to increase awareness of available interventions and work to identify opportunities to extend collaborative commissioning working with the marketplace.

2. Immediate Needs

continued

4. Highlighting civil options

There are civil options available to people experiencing abuse, such as non-molestation orders, and occupation orders which can help to protect a person and their children, and disrupt the behaviour of the person perpetrating through abusive behaviours.

The Partnership will:

- increase awareness of civil options and ensure that professionals are able to signpost to relevant services;
- support the investigation of breaches of protective orders.

5. Experience of justice

For those experiencing domestic abuse the decision to report offences to the police or to seek help from services is not taken lightly and can be daunting.

The Partnership will:

- increase professional training and advocate for greater specialist domestic abuse support for those who are going through the criminal justice system.

6. Supporting children and young people

Children who witness domestic abuse are victims of abuse in their own right. As a Partnership, we will develop our response to children who have experienced abuse, including making sure services are available to support them.

The Partnership will:

- consistently fund support for children in safe accommodation, ensuring they have access to services that are age appropriate, and meets their needs. We will develop projects to minimise time outside of education;
- seek to support the family as a whole, ensuring information is shared appropriately where a child or young person witnesses abuse, recognising the importance of children's lived experiences in designing services and influencing governance.

7. Access to housing

Domestic abuse may impact a persons ability to remain in their own home safely. As a Partnership we are committed to improving access to safe and stable accommodation for people experiencing abuse.

The Partnership will:

- explore projects which strengthen the housing response to those who are unsafe at home, including options for specialised referral and support routes;
- recognise the importance of social and family networks and support people to find more permanent, settled accommodation.

3. Recovery

Domestic abuse and the associated trauma can have a significant impact on the people affected. There can be damaging long and short-term physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health impacts on adults and children. The process of recovery is personal and is not linear. The Partnership want Kent & Medway to be a place where people have the opportunity to thrive, to recover from harm to support healing and resilience.

"I think with domestic abuse, it takes a very, very long time to process what's happened... It's something that's a long-term recovery I suppose. I think a lot of things are triggering me and that's bringing back a lot of emotions about what has happened and the way that I feel about myself and I feel like I need the support more now."

*"It's like the calm after the storm, where I've now gone, oh s**t - actually you're not OK. You are harbouring some real trauma that you've never said out loud, that you haven't had time or space to."*

"I think for me [a group programme] would be really good to do because I don't think I totally accept or understand the level of abuse that I went through, because for me it was just a general normal day-to-day thing... I think it would really help me to have a better understanding of the abuse that I actually went through and the trauma that that caused and help me come to terms with that."

1. Recognising the mental health impact of abuse

Domestic abuse and the associated trauma can have a significant impact on the people affected. There can be damaging long and short-term physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health impacts on adults and children. Many of those affected have mental health support needs and should be able to access support that is tailored to their needs.

To ensure that people get the support they need, the Partnership will:

- promote better understanding of domestic abuse within mental health settings and support access to mental health services that are trauma informed and responsive to the needs of people who have been impacted by abuse.

3. Recovery
continued

2. Processing experiences and promoting connections

Domestic abuse erodes self-esteem and creates feelings of shame, guilt, and loneliness. Supporting people to understand the abusive tactics that have been used in their relationships and process the effect that this has had is an important step in recovery, for both adults and children.

The Partnership will:

- work to ensure there is equitable and accessible access to group work programmes for adults and children in a wide range of settings to encourage participation;
- support initiatives to build confidence and grow social support networks.

3. Prioritising family bonds

Domestic abuse can both directly and indirectly disrupt the relationship between a parent and their child. A person perpetrating abuse may use tactics that undermine safety and relationships between family members. Supporting all members of the family to process their experiences, rebuild strong healthy bonds and giving parents and children new strategies after abuse is a crucial part of recovery.

The Partnership will:

- investigate an integrated whole family approach

to support, exploring services which aid parenting after experiencing abuse;

- provide services that aim to increase the safety of children by working with the abusive parent to increase their insight into the impact of their behaviours, whilst holding them accountable for the abuse.

4. Reaching economic independence

Financial abuse is a pattern of coercing and controlling behaviour that dominates a partner or family member’s ability to acquire, use and maintain financial resources.

For many people affected by domestic abuse the impact of abuse can drastically alter their financial situation which may include losing homes or tenancies, property loss or damage. The effects of economic abuse may include unemployment, diminished employment prospects, debt, or coerced debt. This can lead to long-term consequences and can severely limit long-term economic stability and financial independence.

The Partnership will:

- raise awareness of financial abuse and the impacts and consequences of this, both within our staff and within our communities;
- work to establish clear routes of support for people who experience financial abuse.

3. Recovery
continued

5. Recognising the experts

Rebuilding identity and empowerment are important factors in recovering from the experiences of abuse. Allowing space for people to grow and to input into the systems and services that they have been a part of should be prioritised.

The Partnership will:

- recognise the importance of peer-support programmes and interventions that work with the local community and informal networks and continue to be led by experts by experience in our services and governance structures, promoting greater service user involvement in service design, delivery and policy making.



Safe Accommodation

The full strategy includes details on Kent County Council and Medway Council’s statutory requirements for people impacted by domestic abuse in safe accommodation. Here we outline the identified gaps in provision and how we will, or have met these gaps.

Kent

Gap identified

How we will or have met the gap

Support services for children and young people in safe accommodation.

We will commission support for children in safe accommodation which includes access to group support, one to one and peer support.

Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.

Specialist independent domestic abuse advisors will continue to support access.
Additional training with domestic abuse, mental health and drug and alcohol services will be developed.

Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of safe accommodation.

Tenancy Support Officers have been introduced to increase support and advocacy for those moving from safe accommodation.
Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation is being sought by all tier 2 authorities, supported by KCC.

Sanctuary options (where a person is offered support and security to enable them to stay in their home).

We will commission a Sanctuary service which will extend the availability of services within Kent.

Access to refuge accommodation for men.

A pilot which will support men in safe accommodation is being developed.

Safe Accommodation
continued

Medway

Gap identified

How we will or have met the gap

Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.

We will continue to commission an Access Independent Domestic Violence Adviser to offer specialist support for those with barriers to access.

Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of safe accommodation.

Medway have introduced a specialist Domestic Abuse Housing Options Officer, who is also a trained Independent Domestic Violence Advisor to support access to secondary accommodation.

Support in temporary accommodation.

An additional Independent Domestic Violence Advisor has been brought in to support people facing multiple barriers to access, where Sanctuary measures are installed in their property.

Mental Health support within safe accommodation.

The mental health needs of children and adults are supported through an in-house counselling service and play therapy, for people in both refuge and dispersed safe.

Access to refuge accommodation for men and others who cannot access refuge.

Medway has commissioned a dispersed accommodation scheme for those people where refuge is not suitable/accessible.

How we will measure success

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will oversee a delivery plan managed with regular updates on progress being made across our governance structures.

In addition to monitoring delivery of our plan we will use a small number of focussed activity indicators to monitor our progress and to identify where we may need to make changes.

More details of how we will measure our performance are available in the full strategy.

In partnership with and supported by



Further information

For further information about any aspect of this executive summary please contact:

Kent County Council

Strategy, Policy and Relationships

PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk

Alternative formats

If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call **03000 421553** (text relay service number: **18001 03000 421553**). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

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The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 – 2029

Consultation Draft

Have your say:

We want to hear your feedback on our proposed Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy.

Your views are important in helping us ensure that we continue to develop and improve our support and services for people and families affected by domestic abuse.

The consultation will run from the **24th July to the 16th October**. Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/domesticabusestrategy to complete the online questionnaire.

If you have any questions, please contact us on PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk.

What happens next:

Following the end of the consultation a full analysis and report will be completed and will be presented at governance groups, including the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, before the strategy is agreed and finalised. It will also be published on this website for you to see.

Alternative formats:

If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

Accessing support:

This is a strategy document about how we want to develop and improve our services over the next 5 years.

If you need support now this can be accessed by telephoning:

Victim Support on 0808 168 9276, or visiting

<http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk/>

If you are in immediate danger please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact Kent Police on the non-emergency telephone number **101** or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge on 0808 2000 247 or the Men's Advice Line on 0808 801 0327.

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Foreword

Domestic abuse is prolific and wide reaching, in 2022 2.4 million adults experienced abuse¹. The impact of abuse can result in a range of negative and harmful effects on health, wellbeing and outcomes in life. Domestic abuse impacts upon future generations and their ability, capacity and attitude towards relationships, parenting, self-esteem and mental health. Abuse does not sit in isolation but may be linked to other life experiences which may include financial exclusion, mental health support needs, substance dependencies or homelessness.

The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group are proud to be prioritising and continuing to build on the achievements of our domestic and sexual abuse multiagency partnership. This strategy, our second Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2024- 2029) has been developed using narratives of lived experience. These narratives are powerful and illustrate the often complex journey a person moves through that may include identifying abuse, immediate need and recovery. This journey can look different for everyone and is not linear.

Domestic abuse can be hidden, leaving lasting physical, mental, social, and economic damage. Within this strategy we aim to challenge negative societal attitudes and stigma linked to discussing abuse, encouraging conversation and education. We need to ensure the immediate needs of people are met, by establishing support services to help intervene when a person is ready to disclose abuse, support children impacted by abuse and aid the development of programmes which challenge perpetration and abusive behaviours. We must also work to ensure that services can be shaped and developed to respond to a longer-term journey of recovery, recognising that this recovery involves broader structures which aid the re-establishment of stability.

¹ Office of National Statistics, Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2022, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2022>

Many different services, both statutory and voluntary work to support families and individuals affected by domestic abuse across Kent and Medway. These services often work together to make sure that provision is coordinated, identifying potential areas for improvement in services that are being delivered. This strategy seeks to support this coordination working to ensure that people feel safe, secure and supported during their journey.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to those who have provided examples of lived experiences of abuse and engaged with our research programmes both in Medway and in Kent, thank you to the children and young people who have given their ideas for development of services and thank you to those professionals who have given their time to feed into the development of this strategy. Without your valuable insight this strategy could not be formed.

An executive summary of this strategy has been produced. The executive summary is available in Easy Read and in British Sign Language.

Introduction

This is a document produced by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group which includes partners across Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Services, Kent Police, the National Probation Service, the NHS, the Department of Work and Pensions, the Police and Crime Commissioner and all Kent District, Borough and City Councils (referred to in this document as the Partnership).

This strategy works 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'*.

This strategy identifies joint commitments across the Partnership for those impacted by domestic abuse, and is inclusive of those who are abused, those who perpetrate through abuse, and children who witness abuse, using the voice of people who have experienced abuse to identify areas of priority across the Partnership's collective service provision.

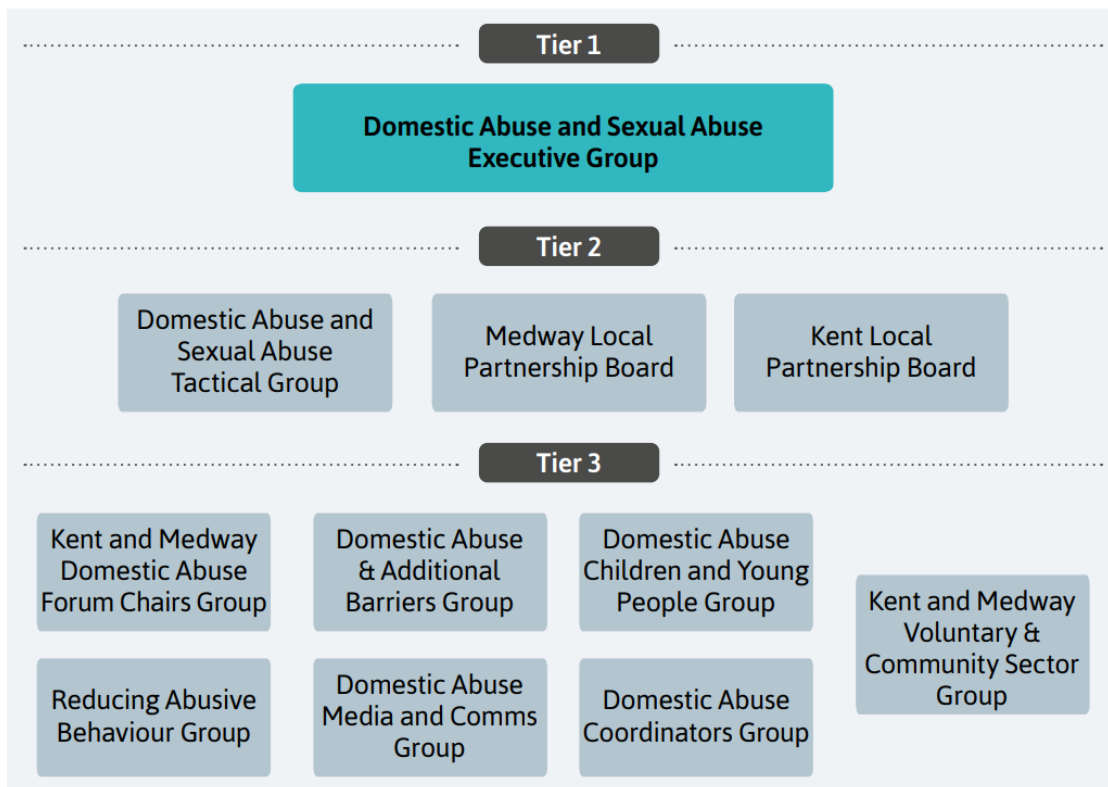
This strategy also supports Kent County Council and Medway Council's statutory duty to fulfil their responsibility to have a strategy which details aims and priorities for adults and children who have experienced domestic abuse in safe accommodation services.

Governance

The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, and the associated governance structure supporting this work, brings together experts in the field of domestic abuse, who work in partnership to strengthen responses across Kent and Medway.

The Executive Group is supported by a number of meetings including the statutory Local Partnership Boards within Kent and Medway which ensure delivery of legal duties linked to the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act. This strategy includes areas which relate to these legal duties which are highlighted.

The Partnership will work collaboratively to meet the commitments within the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy which sets out the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Executive Groups joint vision, priorities, and commitments.



The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Domestic abuse is cruel and complex, anyone can be impacted by abuse regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, socio-economic status or sexuality. The abuse experienced can leave physical and emotional scars that can last a lifetime, damaging self-esteem and impacting on quality of life.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created a statutory definition of domestic abuse for the first time. The Act outlined that behaviour is classed as domestic abuse when:

‘two people are personally connected to each other, over the age of 16 and where the behaviour between each other is abusive’.

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of the following:

- physical or sexual behaviour

- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological or emotional control and abuse

Children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse independently of the adult who experiences the abuse.

Additionally, so called ‘honour-based’ abuse is an umbrella term which may involve physical abuse including forced physical traumas such as breast flattening or female genital mutilation, psychological pressure or forced marriage. This is often perpetrated by a person’s family and members of a community with the aim of protecting or defending honour.

This is a violation of human rights and a form of domestic abuse.²

Statement on sexual abuse

While this strategy seeks to coordinate aims and delivery on domestic abuse it will incorporate sexual abuse when this aligns with the domestic abuse definition, the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership recognise that sexual abuse and violence happens outside of this definition.

The Partnership seeks to support coordinated working on sexual abuse which is not included within this strategy. The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will create a working group made up of key partners to establish the actions required across the Partnership to strengthen and embed responses to sexual abuse and violence across Kent & Medway. This working group will collaborate with existing partnership activities and statutory responsibilities, such as the safeguarding boards and responses to the Serious Violence Duty, to ensure approaches are aligned.

Kent County Council and Medway Council have a responsibility by law to assess the need for support in safe accommodation for all those impacted by abuse, both for those who live within area, and those who come from outside the area.

The definition of safe accommodation includes:

- refuge
- specialist accommodation (including dedicated specialist support for people with protected characteristics such as a disability).

² The Crown Prosecution Service, ‘So-Called Honour-Based Abuse’

Updated: Mar 2023, <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/so-called-honour-based-abuse>

- dispersed accommodation which includes self-contained accommodation.
- move on, or second stage accommodation, a place to move to when intensive support is no longer needed but a level of support is still beneficial.
- sanctuary schemes where physical security measures have been put in place into a person's home.

No recourse to public funds

"While I appreciate the help I received, I also feel I was grossly misguided. And I think my situation is very niche and they weren't quite sure how to guide me... In cases like mine, where there's the element of, you know the immigration aspect and financial abuse to the extent I've experienced..."

People experiencing abuse who may have limited access to public funding due to their immigration status may be highly vulnerable, their status may be an additional way for a person using abusive behaviour to control them.

Dependent on a person's situation there may be opportunities to support them under various legislation which might include the Care Act (2014), the Childrens Act (Section 17, 1989) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

Domestic abuse facts and figures

The Domestic Abuse strategic needs assessments uses data from services to identify trends in Kent and Medway's service provision for those affected by domestic abuse. The assessment also highlights any gaps in support and provision, or areas which we need to strengthen.³

Statistics on domestic abuse are helpful in identifying trends, but any use of statistics needs to be carefully considered because domestic abuse is often hidden and under reported. Changes in statistical information can be due to multiple factors.

Domestic abuse - the national picture

³ Kent Public Health Observatory 'Domestic Abuse' <https://www.kpho.org.uk/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/health-intelligence/population-groups/domestic-abuse#tab1>

- The crime survey for England and Wales estimates that 5% of adults over the age of 16 and over (2.4 million) experienced domestic abuse in the year ending 2022, (6.9% women and 3.0% men) ⁴.
- On average the Police in England and Wales receive over 100 calls relating to domestic abuse every hour⁵.
- Proportionately more adults aged 20- 24 years experienced domestic abuse in the last year compared with adults aged 55 years and over (however we know from research that older people are less likely to report abuse)⁶.
- A higher percentage of adults with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without a disability.⁷
- One in seven (14.2%) of children and young people under the age of 18 will have lived with domestic abuse at some point in their childhood.⁸
- A report conducted by SafeLives showed that people experiencing mental health support needs or substance dependencies found it harder to access services⁹.
- Fifty-seven per cent of women in prison report having experienced domestic abuse, suggesting a link between trauma and abuse leading to offending behaviour.¹⁰
- Women from minoritized ethnicities are disproportionately affected by forced marriage, dowry abuse, honour-based violence, sexual exploitation through trafficking and female genital mutilation.¹¹

⁴ Office of National Statistics, Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2022
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrendsendlandandwales/yearendingmarch2022>

⁵ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Increasingly everyone's business: A Progress report on the police response to domestic abuse (Dec 2015) <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/increasingly-everyones-business-domestic-abuse-progress-report.pdf>

⁶ Office of National Statistics, Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2022, available at:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022>

[Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022)

⁷ Office of National Statistics, Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2022, available at:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022>

⁸ The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, available at:
<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/impact-on-children-and-young-people/>

⁹ Safelives, Spotlight Report # SafeAndWell, Safe and Well: Mental health and domestic abuse (May 2019), available at: <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Spotlight%20%20-%20Mental%20health%20and%20domestic%20abuse.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/majority-of-women-in-prison-have-been-victims-of-domestic-abuse/>

¹¹ Safelives, Supporting B &ME victims – What the data shows (Aug 2015), available at:
https://safelives.org.uk/practice_blog/supporting-bme-victims-%E2%80%93-what-data-shows

- People from minoritized ethnicities are less likely to disclose abuse and may suffer 1.5 times longer before seeking help.¹²
- There were 2,877 ‘honour’-based offences recorded by the Police (2021/2022) in England and Wales – a 6% rise from the previous year¹³.
- Over a quarter of domestic homicide reviews are for people over the age of 58.¹⁴
- 28% of transgender and non-binary people in a relationship had experienced domestic abuse.¹⁵
- Prevalence of Domestic Abuse by orientation shows lowest prevalence for people identifying as heterosexual (5.2%) and higher prevalence for gay and lesbian people (8.4%) and higher still for those identifying as bisexual (15.2%).¹⁶

Domestic Abuse in Kent and Medway

In Kent and Medway

- Over 3000 people accessed the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service in 2022/2023, 93% of users accessed support within the community and 7% within safe accommodation.¹⁷
- Most districts in Kent have a higher number of crimes reported per 1,000 population than the national average¹⁸.
- An average of nearly 34,000 calls per year were made to Kent Police relating to domestic abuse in the last 5 years¹⁹.
- The proportion of repeat domestic abuse victims in Kent (56% in 2021) and repeat domestic abuse suspects (58%) has increased over the past 5 years.²⁰

[Supporting B&ME victims – what the data shows | Safelives](#)

¹² Nomis – official census and labour market statistics (Jan 2022- Dec 2022) available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/apsnew>

¹³ Gov.UK (Oct 2022) Statistics on so called ‘honour-based’ abuse offences, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁴ Safelives, What Domestic Homicide Reviews tell us about the abuse of older people (Sept 2016) available at: https://safelives.org.uk/practice_blog/what-domestic-homicide-reviews-tell-us-about-abuse-older-people

¹⁵ SafeLives.org.uk (2021) ‘Transgender victims’ and survivors’ Experiences of Domestic Abuse, available at: <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Briefing%20-%20Transgender%20Victim-Survivors%27%20Experiences%20of%20Domestic%20Abuse%20Final.pdf>

¹⁶ Kent Public Health Observatory, Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment October 2020 https://www.kpho.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/118651/Domestic-Abuse-Needs-Assessment,-October-2020.pdf

¹⁷ Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Data (2022/2023)

¹⁸ ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

- 40% of domestic abuse incidents in Kent reported to Kent Police had a child or children recorded as an involved party.²¹
- It is estimated that there are 20,615 children aged 0-17 in Kent who are living in households where a parent is impacted by domestic abuse²².

Safe Accommodation – data from our refuges and other safe accommodation

Kent (2022/2023 KCC commissioned services data)

- 209 people accessed Kent County Council commissioned refuge.
- 48.8% of people in Kent refuges had accompanying children.
- 3% of people in refuge identified as lesbian, gay, or pansexual.
- Of those in refuge, 6.7% had a physical or sensory disability and 1.4% had a learning disability.
- 40 % of those in refuge identified as needing mental health support (as a secondary need).
- 63.3% of individuals in refuge identified as "White - British" and 25% identified as other ethnic groups.
- 36.7% of people in refuge came from outside Kent.

Medway

- 59 people accessed safe accommodation services in Medway.
- 47 children were supported whilst in safe accommodation.
- 15 adults and children accessed counselling and play therapy in refuge.
- 21% of people accessing refuge accommodation in Medway identified as black or from a minority ethnic group.
- 13% of people were between 16 – 25 years old.
- 51 % of people reported as having a mental health need.
- 16% of people had a disability in refuge.
- Over a year 113 people have benefited from Sanctuary Scheme adaptations to enable them to remain safely in their homes.

Identified gaps in provision – safe accommodation.

Gaps identified from the 2021 needs assessment which focused on safe accommodation are highlighted within the table below, as is information on how we will, or have met this gap.

Kent

²⁰ This is when the same victim or suspect is on more than one crime report committed in that year.

²¹ Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Data (2022/2023)

²² Kent Public Health Observatory (n 16)

Gap identified	How we will meet or have met the gap
Support services for children and young people in safe accommodation.	Within Kent the safe accommodation support service for children is commissioned. This service supports access to group, one-to-one and peer support, and has extended the length of provision available for therapeutic support for children and young people.
Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.	<p>Training is being developed for those working with people with mental health support needs on domestic abuse, and for those working in domestic abuse on mental health. Additional training has also been rolled out on intersectionality between dependencies (including alcohol and drug dependencies) and domestic abuse.</p> <p>Specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisors have been commissioned. These roles provide a dedicated, intensive, specialist resource delivering a joined-up, multi-agency support package, liaising with key organisations such as mental health services, substance misuse treatment services and criminal justice agencies to deliver consistency and positive outcomes for vulnerable clients.</p> <p>Further work is ongoing to develop projects in this area.</p>
Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of refuge or other safe accommodation	<p>Tenancy Support Officers have been introduced to increase support and advocacy for those moving from safe accommodation.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation will support strong and consistent housing responses across area, and is being sought by all tier 2 authorities, supported by KCC.</p>
Provision in Sanctuary ²³ schemes vary across the county, meaning some people may get more robust support in one scheme compared to another.	<p>KCC will commission a Sanctuary service which will extend the availability of services within Kent.</p> <p>Safe Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) is a scheme which has been developed by Kent County Council with engagement from all partner agencies and people with lived experience of domestic abuse.</p> <p>The scheme looks to extend the availability of Sanctuary services within Kent and access to support for those residing in properties where Sanctuary has been applied.</p>

²³ Where security measures are put in place in a person's home

Access to refuge accommodation for men.	A pilot which will support men in safe accommodation is being developed to increase access to safe accommodation for men.
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Medway

Gap identified	How we will meet or have met the gap
Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.	Medway Council will continue to commission an Access Independent Domestic Violence Adviser to offer specialist support for those with barriers to access such as complex mental health needs or substance and/or alcohol dependency. This is also an outreach post to work with those who are rough sleeping with the aim of supporting people into safe accommodation.
Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of refuge or other safe accommodation.	Medway Council have introduced a specialist Domestic Abuse Housing Options Officer, who is also a trained Independent Domestic Violence Advisor to support access to secondary accommodation.
Support in temporary accommodation.	The dispersed accommodation contract was reviewed early in 2023 to include households placed in temporary accommodation due to domestic abuse, providing they are placed in suitable 'safe and relevant' accommodation as outlined in Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. An additional Independent Domestic Violence Advisor has been brought in to support people facing multiple barriers to access, who have needed Sanctuary measures installed in their property.
Mental Health support within safe accommodation.	The mental health needs of children and adults are supported through an in-house counselling service, for people in both refuge and dispersed safe accommodation.
Access to refuge accommodation for men and other people impacted by abuse who cannot access refuge e.g. larger families, those with pets or other needs.	Medway Council has commissioned a dispersed accommodation scheme for those people where refuge is not suitable/accessible or those who want to remain in Medway and close to their school, work or support networks. This scheme started in December 2021.

Funding

The Domestic Abuse Act has created specific funding to support those impacted by domestic abuse who access safe accommodation. The funding allocated to date is detailed in Appendix A. At the time this strategy was published this was not known past 2024/2025. Funding available will continue to be used to meet gaps identified through the needs assessments which are refreshed or renewed yearly.

Whilst statutory funding is specific to the support of those who access safe accommodation, we know that most people experiencing domestic abuse will choose to access support in the community, wanting to increase their safety whilst maintaining their networks and homes.

Within this strategy we have used the information available including published research, quantitative information and talking to people about their experiences, to identify where the Partnership can make a difference, but we do recognise that this strategy is aspirational and elements are not funded through statutory monies.

Funding for some areas of this strategy is dependent on continued local and national funding and options for collaborative bids. The Partnership will seek opportunities to access monies to support commitments and work with local providers to strengthen local bids from Kent and Medway.

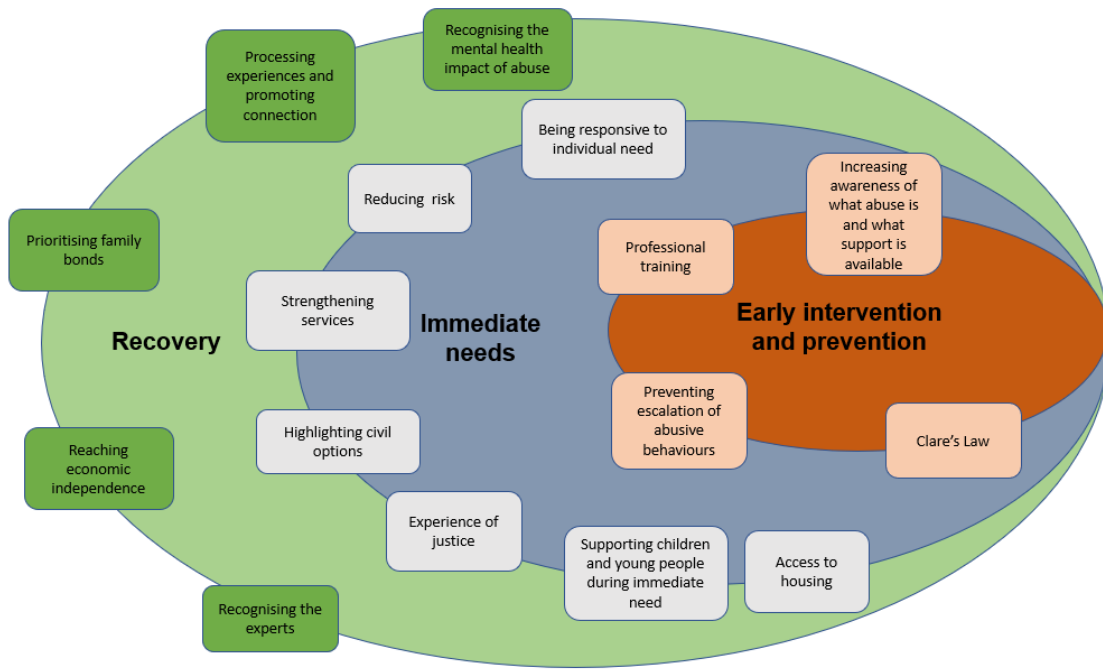
Kent and Medway strategic priorities

This section of the strategy outlines commitments from the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group (the Partnership). It starts with a focus on early intervention and prevention which 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.

The strategy then moves to focus on support when a person is in crisis or in immediate need exploring the provision and support that adults, children and families need at this time.

Lastly the strategy explores recovery, and 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.

The headings under each priority have been informed by the findings of the research programme and from interviews on experience.



Draft

Early intervention and prevention

For me it's like everyone just needs educating. What is domestic abuse? So, at school you go all the way through every organisation. You know, every judge, solicitor, whoever is involved in anything to do with domestic abuse should be trained...People would think differently. I think, you know, courts would be different., the legal system will be different and other people's perceptions. Even if it's taught at school, young girls, boys, how they grow up and their perception of what abuse is really important."

'I feel like something needs to be taught in schools. That's just my opinion. Because what I kind of uncovered with my counselling is that me personally, a lot of my issues stem from childhood trauma, and then you end up finding yourself in a relationship at a young age with a trauma bond...If I had been taught better about relationships and what gaslighting is and what manipulating someone looks like I would [have been] a lot more educated like now."

What do we mean by early intervention and prevention?

This theme aims to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention, to stop domestic abuse occurring, to help people identify domestic abuse as early as possible and get support in place to stop the impacts from escalating.

Early intervention can take different forms. We know that anyone can be impacted by abuse at any age, and identifying opportunities to reduce the long-term impacts needs to happen across life stages.

Early intervention means increasing awareness and providing education, so that people are aware of what domestic abuse is, while giving people the skills they need to identify healthy relationships. If a person has identified that they are experiencing abuse, they need to know what support is available, so they can get the right support at the right time to prevent further escalation.

Education also helps people to identify when their behaviours may be abusive. Earlier identification of harmful behaviours can support access to interventions which can prevent escalation of this behaviour.

Clare's Law can also support opportunities to identify risk earlier and is included within this section.

Increase awareness of what abuse is and available support.

"I think even that domestic abuse helpline needs to be even more sign posted because I didn't even know about it. And they helped me to where I am now".

"Having and knowing where to go when you are in that real lonely state is one of the most important things, if you have got nobody else".

"[people experiencing abuse] have just got to feel that they can go somewhere. Because when you do reach out, you've reached that point where you really need help and you don't want people just to leave you hanging."

Knowing where and how to access support is crucial, when a person is ready to reach out for help they must know where to turn. Effective communications can support increased awareness and can also be used to promote understanding of domestic abuse and that it can affect anyone irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or orientation.

Understanding what a healthy relationship is and looks like can support identification of relationships which are abusive.

To increase awareness of service provision and of what domestic abuse is, the Partnership will:

- work collaboratively to promote consistent messaging on access, ensuring that messaging and imagery is inclusive and diverse.
- use available communication channels to increase awareness of what abuse is and that it can impact anyone, ensuring communication is accessible.
- work to 'reach out' to communities who are less likely to engage with service provision.
- include communications on 'honour' based abuse including forced marriage, and work with communities to better understand how best to increase awareness of support.
- continue to improve information, promotion and uptake of available resources for more consistent domestic abuse curriculum content as part of healthy relationship and sex education, helping to identify abuse in early intimate relationships.

Professional training

“Domestic abuse training needs to be there for every professional and it should be a statutory thing that every professional needs to have, like health and safety. Because if people knew how to recognise the signs of it, I think people could help others to pick it up and to recognise it themselves, or at least be able to offer them a service that’s available in your area if you want to access it.”

Across the Partnership we have the opportunity to promote stronger understandings of abuse throughout our staff groups.

Staff should feel confident and empowered to respond to disclosures within complex contexts that they may find themselves within. It is important that staff are trained as part of their induction and that training is reviewed and updated regularly.

We need to ensure that professionals working across our services have the training to develop the skills they need to identify and respond to domestic abuse as early as possible.

To support our staff to identify domestic abuse, and have trauma informed, strong responses the Partnership will:

- support professionals across our services to be domestic abuse informed, taking opportunities to identify risk and using trauma informed approaches in response.
- continue to develop our understanding of trauma and ensure our staff have access to training and development opportunities to explore and develop in this area.
- continue to support the Kent and Medway domestic abuse professional champion’s programme.
- ensure training is available for staff on areas such as options for support for those with no recourse to public funds, financial, sexual or coercive abuse.

Preventing escalation of abusive behaviours

People who perpetrate through abusive behaviours cause significant harm to others. To stop abuse from occurring, recurring, or escalating we need to address those causing it. People perpetrating abusive behaviours may themselves have

experienced or witnessed abuse and they can be at increased risk of suicide.²⁴ We need interventions in place to support the person while challenging and disrupting this behaviour.

Education is important in helping people to define abuse and to challenge behaviours and attitudes linked to this. We are working closely with the Violence Reduction Unit and Prevent team who support narrative on positive, strength-based identities where abusive and dangerous behaviours are challenged.

To reduce the escalation of abusive behaviours the Partnership will:

- support awareness of adverse childhood experiences (ACE) and trauma informed practice.
- work across communities to promote positive behaviours and challenge harmful gendered stereotyping.
- support work on bystander and upstander interventions.
- work with the Prevent team to better understand links between extremism, incels and domestic abuse.
- work to increase the recognition of, and response to, those perpetrating abusive behaviours across Partnership services in order to support the person, promote accountability and disrupt abusive behaviour.

Clare's law

If effectively used Clare's law can help to identify risk of abuse.

"You know, there's Clare's law, but Clare's law is not well known. If you haven't been through domestic abuse, you don't know what Clare's law is..."

"[Clare's Law] was a very long vetting process. It's about seven weeks of various interviews of police officers to make sure that you need to know what you're requesting."

Clare's Law²⁵ also known as the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)

²⁴ Highlighting the link between domestic abuse and suicide, Kent County Council, July 2022, available at: <https://nspa.org.uk/resource/link-domestic-abuse-and-suicide/>

²⁵ Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme – GOV.UK
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-pilot-guidance>

gives people the '*right to ask*' if their current or ex-partner has any previous history of violence or abuse. It is called Clare's Law after Clare Wood who was killed in 2009 by an ex-partner who unknown to her had been violent to previous partners.

Under the '*right to ask*' the person impacted by abuse, family members and close friends can ask for this information which is released to the person at risk. The request is considered by a panel of Police, Probation, and other services. Information is only then passed on to the person at risk if it is deemed lawful, proportionate and necessary.

Under Clare's Law people also have the '*right to know*' where services proactively release information if they believe someone is at risk.

To increase the take up and use of Clare's law to prevent harm the Partnership will:

- review processes around Clare's law to try to make this as accessible as possible and increase use.
- increase awareness of the scheme through local social marketing so that people can make informed decisions about their safety.

Immediate Needs

What do we mean by immediate needs?

“I was in such a bad place and didn't know where to go, who to talk to. It was hard to talk because of the kids around. It was hard to actually pick up the phone and physically try and call someone and talk to them. You know, some sort of service. So in the end, one evening I was just at a point where I really just wanted to end my life again and I found the Victim Support online and it had the online chat, so I started talking to somebody from there. That helped.”

“It is the real loneliness. That is what for me probably was the hardest part in the beginning...I do believe for me the loneliness every time he would go was what made me take him back. I had nobody. I mean, normally you would have friends you can pick up the phone and call. I didn't have that. I had no friends anymore, not one.”

By immediate needs we mean the services, interventions and support that people need whilst domestic abuse is occurring and in the immediate aftermath. These services may help with managing risk and increasing safety, but people may also need support with practical issues such as access to housing and school places.

All experiences of abuse are individual, and our services need to be flexible and responsive to meet these needs. Feedback from workshops and the voluntary sector highlighted the importance of high quality, joined up support, non-judgemental responses where people feel heard, and services which are both open to all and tailored to individual need.

Within this section we also look at housing and safe accommodation services with commitments to support improved responses.

Being responsive to individual need

I had police officers turn up to ask me how I was. One of them sat down with me, gave me probably about sort of eight or nine different brochures. And it was like, you know, phone these people talk to these people. And but you don't wanna be here when she comes back...I think they handed me some [pamphlets] and they were just like, you know, these people won't be able to help you because these only deal with women. But if you give them a phone call and say, you know can you give me numbers? They would probably have other numbers you can call for help."

"If you've got money, whether it's joint money or not, there's not much help for you. People perceive that you can go and get a good solicitor, or you can leave him. Pack your bags and just leave and get in the car and go. And also, if you've got a home, you're not getting housing, they aren't gonna give you a home because you've got a home.... I think there's a lot of women probably like me who can never get out."

"Even in diversity, there's still diversity that needs to happen, but here no one looks like me, so I think there's also that loneliness here where I want to go to staff, but you can't quite understand all the things that I may need because you don't know what it's like to be me. Constantly having to explain yourself and who you are is exhausting."

The Partnership must ensure that services can meet the needs of our diverse population; recognising that people's journeys, trauma, support needs, and recovery are different. Characteristics such as our ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disabilities, and age can affect the risk of experiencing domestic abuse, the abusive tactics used and sometimes, the support we need.

Information collected nationally, and locally from those with lived experience of domestic abuse, has highlighted a need for specialist services that are tailored to diverse characteristics.

Some individuals and communities may face multiple and intersecting barriers to support. This can in turn result in the over or under representation of people facing these inequalities within our support services.

People facing multiple barriers may have complex, overlapping need, which may be underpinned by a history of abuse. There may be high rates of mental health need, and problematic substance use, contact with the criminal justice system and issues around housing or homelessness. People who have barriers to access may have

experienced multiple episodes of trauma and/or adverse childhood experiences, which increases their likelihood of further trauma such as domestic abuse.

To respond to need we should ensure that services are equipped to support people experiencing multiple barriers effectively.

Safe Accommodation commitments

To support those who flee abuse and seek support in safe accommodation the Partnership will:

- have the right safe accommodation options, and specialist support, that meets the needs of anyone experiencing abuse whether they are male, female or nonbinary, non-disabled or disabled, whether they are experiencing abuse from a partner or family member and whatever their sexual orientation or ethnicity.
- strengthen options for people facing multiple barriers when trying to access safe accommodation, which may include dependencies or mental health support needs.
- ensure safe accommodation options for all family types, including those with older male children and larger families are available.
- increase awareness of options for support where people may own assets.
- explore opportunities to provide short-term accommodation for people at risk of facing multiple barriers, such as homelessness and domestic abuse.

To ensure that services are able to respond and meet the needs of our diverse population the Partnership will:

- increase service uptake for under-represented groups by seeking to address barriers to access and inform development of services.
- strengthen existing links with community groups, faith groups and leaders to expand on opportunities for partnership work.
- further collaborate to develop needs led work and support the specialist 'by and for' market.
- explore ways to promote learning and development on issues around intersectionality, including mental capacity, coercive controlling behaviour and financial abuse.
- work to increase access for those experiencing multiple barriers by using a multi-agency approach to support the work of our commissioned domestic abuse services, including the introduction of multi-agency meetings and panels to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Reducing risk

“I called the police and that was the first time I called the police on him for domestic violence, and this was probably like the 15th 16th thing that's happened between us.”

Domestic abuse takes multiple forms with risk impacted by a number of factors; this includes whether a person has separated from the person perpetrating through abusive behaviours, whether they are pregnant, their demography and other factors. In keeping people safe risk must be managed and where possible reduced.

To support strong management of risk the Partnership will:

- establish the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) hub and case management system to strengthen our response to the highest risk domestic abuse cases.
- work with the Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Boards to ensure that learnings from Domestic Homicide Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Children's Safeguarding Practice reviews are supported.
- work to increase participation with, and referrals to multi-agency tasking and coordination (MATAC) groups, which are in place for those at high risk of repeating abusive behaviours.
- where a person is perpetrating abusive behaviour, work together to ensure timely information sharing about abusive incidents that allows for risk management and coordinated actions that promote accountability and disrupt behaviours.
- support processes in place to notify both the person who has experienced the abuse and professionals to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place prior to release dates.
- strengthen the Offender Focused Approach²⁶ in investigation of crimes linked to Violence Against Women and Girls.
- increase availability and access to programmes aiming to support people perpetrating abusive behaviour to make sustainable change in their relationships.
- explore approaches to increase professionals' access to specialist domestic abuse advice to aid risk management and safeguarding practice.

²⁶ An 'offender-centric' approach to policing involving a focus on the background, circumstances and actions of the offender, rather than those of the person impacted by the offence.

Strengthening services

It is important that we use all resource wisely to ensure the strongest support available for those impacted by domestic abuse. This means working collaboratively to utilise opportunities and commission where gaps in existing services are identified.

The definition of domestic abuse is inclusive of the sexual abuse that can happen as part of the tactics to gain power and control in a relationship. Where sexual abuse forms part of the domestic abuse experienced it is important that services align so that people receive the expert care and support needed.

To utilise opportunities to strengthen provision, the Partnership will:

- work towards creating a central resource which lists commissioned services to support collaborative commissioning and increase awareness of provision including with front line professionals.
- work across our services to identify opportunities to extend collaborative commissioning, starting by identifying priority themes.
- continue to work to identify funding and bidding opportunities, supporting our providers to collaborate to bring together strong bids.
- work to identify lobbying opportunities to support services which help people in the community or in other accommodation options including temporary accommodation.
- make sure that referral and signposting is clear for people impacted by abuse and the professionals working to support them, including creating accessible journey maps across different services to aid understanding of possible processes and interactions.
- work to ensure that domestic and sexual abuse services are aligned to deliver expert care to those that need it.

Highlighting civil options

Reporting incidents of abuse to the police, and navigating the criminal justice system, may not always be the first or preferred route for a person experiencing abuse. This may be for reasons such as fear of reprisal or previous negative experiences of the justice system. There are civil options available to people experiencing abuse, such as non-molestation orders, and occupation orders which can help to protect people and their children and disrupt the behaviour of the person perpetrating through abusive behaviours. Some orders can also be obtained whilst pursuing the criminal justice route and can be used as a further supportive measure. If orders are breached, it then becomes a criminal matter and an arrestable offence.

To increase take up of available civil options the Partnership will:

- increase awareness of the civil options that are available to people experiencing abuse.
- support the investigation of breaches of protective orders.
- ensure that professionals are aware of civil orders and how to signpost people impacted by abuse to the relevant support services.

Experiences of justice

For those experiencing domestic abuse the decision to report offences to the police or to seek help from services is not taken lightly and can be daunting. People experiencing abuse want to be listened to, taken seriously, for the person offending to be held accountable, and to be able to make their own choices about what happens next.

To strengthen experiences of justice the Partnership will:

- increase professional training on gathering evidence of coercive and controlling behaviour to support conviction rates.
- advocate for greater specialist domestic abuse support for those who are going through the criminal justice system.

Supporting children and young people during immediate need

"I think, just like, someone to talk to about it, like, yeah, I think someone to just talk to in general because like, sometimes you don't want to talk about it to your parents, you don't want to talk about it to your friends... a professional or someone, someone who you feel like you can trust" (child age 14).

"like as a family you can cause you, you kind of forget things when you're by yourself... So like you [talking about mum] will remember things that I might not remember that are important" (child age 14)

"They did a lot of activities for the kids. And for us, because they took us all to the zoo one day in the summertime, which is really, really nice because I don't think any of us have really gotten out like that."

“My child had already taken so much time off school, just like every other kid [because of the pandemic]. But then to add another six months to that and then not have provisions in place for catch ups and stuff... They are doing OK, but they could do with extra support. That is one thing that I would have said and I did ask about, but, I was told that it could be looked into, but I just don't think it ever happened. Is that if the child's gonna be out of school longer than a month, if they could somehow implement a tutor to come into refuge, to teach them that would be amazing.”

Children who witness domestic abuse are victims of abuse in their own right, and as such it is important that services are available, and that the Partnership develops its response to children who experience abuse. This includes making sure that where abuse is occurring and a child or young person has been present during an incident, the right people are made aware.

Young people can also experience or use abusive behaviours within their own relationships. Making sure that there is appropriate support and information available for young people is imperative.

Safe Accommodation commitments

Tier 1 authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that children have access to support who are in safe accommodation.

To improve access to services for children in safe accommodation, the Partnership will:

- offer support for children in safe accommodation, both for children from Kent and Medway who stay in area, and those who are living in safe accommodation in Kent and Medway from other local authority areas.
- ensure that all children and young people in safe accommodation have access to support that is age appropriate and meets their needs, which may include access to ongoing education, counselling, play therapy, advocacy services and other opportunities.
- minimise time out of education for young people fleeing with an adult experiencing abuse.

It is important to recognise that many children and young people stay within their communities, and, in the case where families have separated, may be navigating relationships between parents. Children and young people as witnesses to abuse are likely to experience trauma responses and should be supported.

Children and young people's voices are crucial in developing strong responses. The Partnership will:

- ensure that children's voices and experiences are represented through formal governance and in designing and reviewing services.
- recognise the importance of schools in supporting children and young people and work collaboratively, sharing information where appropriate to improve outcomes.
- develop comprehensive whole family support, recognising the importance of recovery for wider family networks and blended family groups.
- continue to improve the process for sharing Domestic Abuse Notifications to ensure that it is equitable across the education and healthcare systems.

Access to housing

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced changes which impact housing authorities. The Act now extends priority need status to all those who are eligible for assistance and homeless as a result of domestic abuse. This will mean that housing authorities no longer need to consider if a person is vulnerable as a result of their abuse in order for them to access accommodation secured by the local authority.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places requirements on housing authorities in relation to security of tenure when rehousing people fleeing domestic abuse who were an existing lifetime social tenant.

The Act emphasises that support is available to all those fleeing abuse, including those who cross local authority borders, and that housing and support needs for adults and children fleeing abuse should be met irrespectively of whether they have stayed close to home or moved to another authority.

"I wasn't able to get housing and I think housing is massive. It's such a massive, massive part of leaving because when you've got two children in an abusive situation like that, you do everything to protect them..."

That's the issue with the whole refuge situation, it's too long. I know there's a housing crisis and these things, but, like I was saying to you earlier about the emotions, you then start falling back into depression because you're still [in refuge].

If a person is forced to leave their home to find safety, access to a safe place to be for themselves and their children (if they have them) is paramount. If a person is forced to leave without their children, it is important that their accommodation is safe and is a place that their children can visit.

Once a person is ready, it is also important that they have support to gain secondary or move on accommodation so they can leave safe accommodation at a time which is right for them.

Kent County Council, Medway Council and Borough, District and City councils are working across Kent and Medway to ensure availability of safe accommodation options and to improve access to safe and stable accommodation for people experiencing abuse.

The 12, District, Borough and City Councils across Kent and Medway have a protocol in place to support reciprocal moves across borough boundaries. This scheme sets out a commitment from the 12 districts to cooperate in a transparent and equitable way to assist applicants to move in exceptional circumstances; and local housing authorities to manage the process of accepting and referring applicants. This can prove to be particularly effective for applicants needing to move out of their current area to a safer one as a result of domestic abuse.

The Kent and Medway Housing Reciprocal agreement is also being established. The scheme enables individuals and families who are at risk of domestic abuse and who have a social tenancy, to move to a safe area whilst retaining their tenancy. This is a collaboration between social housing providers and landlords to make better use of their housing stock and protect residents who are at risk of domestic abuse.

To strengthen our housing response, the Partnership will:

- work across our services to understand need and demand for housing for those fleeing domestic abuse.
- explore projects which strengthen the housing response including options for specialised referral and support routes.
- further explore why people may be choosing to move into temporary accommodation rather than safe accommodation options.
- work with the Kent Housing Group as they explore action across temporary accommodation to support availability and quality.
- recognise the importance of social and family networks and how this impacts accommodation choices.
- continue to support those leaving refuge or dispersed accommodation and temporary accommodation to find more permanent, settled accommodation.

- extend training to staff on domestic abuse and homelessness legislation, working to reduce the amount of people impacted by domestic abuse identified as intentionally homeless.

Draft

Recovery

What do we mean by recovery?

Domestic abuse and the associated trauma can have a significant impact on the people affected. There can be damaging long and short-term physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health impacts on adults and children. These repercussions remain long after the immediate safety needs have been met. In this section we will be looking at what the Kent & Medway Partnership should do to support people to recover from these experiences.

Whether the abuse is from a family member or a romantic partner the tactics of abuse may be used to isolate a person from friends and family, to erode self-esteem, distort sense of reality, take away financial autonomy and ability to make decisions.

The process of recovery is personal and is not linear. Each person who is impacted by abuse will have a different vision for what this looks like and how they would like to be supported to achieve this. The Partnership want Kent & Medway to be a place where people have the opportunity to thrive, to recover from the harm, heal and build resilience.

Having a robust approach to supporting people to heal from the trauma of abuse is also part of our commitment to the prevention of further abuse.

Recognising the mental health impact of abuse

As a response to the trauma of domestic abuse, many of those affected have mental health support needs, we also know that people using abusive behaviour are more likely to target those who have existing mental health issues. Mental ill-health is frequently used against people experiencing abuse, who report barriers to support.

Barriers range from shame and stigma to complicated service landscapes, rigid referral criteria, long waiting lists and a lack of appropriate services. For groups facing additional forms of discrimination and inequality, these impacts can be compounded.

Between 60 and 70% of women seeking mental health support have experienced domestic abuse.²⁷ Despite this, feedback around the mental health response has highlighted a lack of pathways that are tailored to the needs of those recovering from abuse.

²⁷ Womens Aid, The Road to Recovery (2022)

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Womens-Aid-APPG-Report-Final.pdf>

I still have night terrors. I feel like I'm right back there. I feel like he's in the room.

It gave me a safe space every week. But again, you know, you're talking about 8 years' worth of abuse. It's never gonna come out and be healed in 12 weeks.

Having counselling support for me and play therapy for the children, without the worry of a waiting list in the community has been the best thing for us

I'm currently trying to find some counselling for myself but that's quite a battle at the moment. I need specific trauma counselling and that's quite hard to access without having to pay for it. [...] There's a real gap in service provision with regards to trauma counselling for those that aren't able to pay for it privately.

I've got anxiety and PTSD and it's really affecting my eating. I've been trying to get more therapy but I've been told I'm not eligible as I don't meet the criteria for support.

Domestic abuse services often operate based on the level of risk caused by the person perpetrating abusive behaviour, but a person's need for services which support recovery, may not correspond to a risk-based model. This also fails to recognise the long-term impact of abuse, which lasts beyond the period of crisis.

In recognising the intersectionality between domestic abuse and mental health support needs the Partnership will:

- promote better understanding of domestic abuse and trauma-informed practice within mental healthcare settings.
- develop mental health support that is responsive to the needs of people who have been impacted by abuse.
- continue to strengthen understandings of suicide and domestic abuse.
- promote service delivery models that look at the needs of a person as well as the risk posed to them by the person perpetrating abuse.
- support opportunities to encourage a goal-based outcome to manage the end of support.
- explore opportunities to provide clear pathways for people who would like support around abusive experiences that are no longer current or posing active risk.

"I think with domestic abuse, it takes a very, very long time to process what's happened...It's something that's a long-term recovery I suppose. I think a lot of things are triggering me and that's bringing back a lot of emotions about what has happened and the way that I feel about myself and I feel like I need the support more now."

Processing experiences and promoting connection

Domestic abuse erodes self-esteem and creates feelings of shame, guilt, and loneliness. Supporting people to understand the abusive tactics that have been used in their relationships and processing the effect that this has had is an important step in recovery, for both adults and children.

*"It's like the calm after the storm, where I've now gone, oh s**t - actually you're not OK. You are harbouring some real trauma that you've never said out loud, that you haven't had time or space to."*

"I think for me [a group programme] would be really good to do because I don't think I totally accept or understand the level of abuse that I went through, because for me it was just a general normal day-to-day thing...I think it would really help me to have a better understanding of the abuse that I actually went through and the trauma that that caused and help me come to terms with that."

About Group Working:

Psycho-educational groups provide a space for domestic abuse education, processing, and recovery. They provide a supportive setting for people to talk about their experiences whilst learning about the tactics used by people using abusive behaviour. This can increase safety, understanding of trauma responses, awareness of warning signs as well as lessening isolation and establishing social bonds.

Groups offer a safe and confidential place for people who would not normally have an outlet, validating each other in an empowering way.

"My eldest is doing the Freedom programme at school. The school are phenomenal... They do play therapy and games...They're teaching them what a positive relationship looks like."

'Doing the phoenix programme has been amazing [...] I looked forward to it because it was communication with other people'.

The tactics of abuse and steps to increase safety, such as moving away, increase isolation and loneliness. Feeling connected to other people is crucial for mental wellbeing and self-esteem.

"I've been getting some invites for peer support groups, if I can juggle my working week around I'd quite like to go to those, just to sit with other people"

"I'm living somewhere where I don't know anyone. I don't have any family. You know, I generally don't have any support, so I'm with the children 24/7, which isn't a bad thing, but it's intense...I'm definitely lonely. And then I don't help myself because I'm so scared of meeting anyone or it happening to me again."

To promote connection the Partnership will:

- work to ensure there is an equitable and accessible group work service across Kent & Medway for adults and children, promoting joined up delivery.
- seek to deliver groups collaboratively in a wide range of settings to encourage participation.
- support initiatives that help people build confidence and grow their positive social support networks.
- continue to explore programmes that allow people to remain safely in their own community networks.

Prioritising family bonds

Domestic abuse can both directly and indirectly disrupt the relationship between a parent and their child. A person perpetrating through abusive behaviour may use tactics that undermine safety and relationships between family members. Supporting all members of the family to process their experiences, rebuild strong healthy bonds by giving parents and children new strategies after abuse is a crucial part of recovery.

The largest predictor of future victimisation is experiencing or witnessing abuse in the past²⁸. We know that the intergenerational transmission of risk can be mitigated by supporting parents and children to recover together.

The non-abusive parent's needs as an adult victim must be seen alongside their children's needs.

In the end, because of his loss of control over me, he then ramped up his control of our daughter.

[My son] spent a long time not being able to get over the fact that we weren't together. But [the abuser] didn't live here. The school spent a long time talking to him about why, because when [the abuser] lived here, he wasn't happy... We got to the bottom of it and he said it wasn't because he wanted mummy and daddy back together but because when mummy and daddy were together it was the last time he consistently saw daddy. It took a good six months to get it out of him. To understand. He would shut down every time we asked why.

Everything just got the better of me and I could feel myself losing myself. I wanted to get some help to just try and help me get some strategies in place for my parenting with my children because I felt like I was losing them a little bit as well.

Recognising the impact of abuse on wider family bonds, the Partnership will:

- investigate integrated whole family support, addressing needs of the individual and of the unit.
- explore providing services that support parenting after experiencing abuse.
- provide services that aim to increase the safety of children by supporting the abusive person as an individual and as a parent, increasing their insight into the impact of their behaviours, whilst holding them accountable for the abuse.

Reaching economic independence

Financial abuse is a pattern of coercing and controlling behaviour that dominates a partner or family member's ability to acquire, use and maintain financial resources.

For many people affected by domestic abuse the impact of abuse can drastically alter their financial situation which may include losing homes or tenancies, property

²⁸ JDiBrief – Analysis, Repeat Victimisation: Summary (1of5) Author: Chainey, S, UCL Jill Dando Institute. Accessed: 30th May 2023.

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jill-dando-institute/sites/jill-dando-institute/files/repeat_victimisation_1-5_all.pdf

loss or damage. The effects of economic abuse may include unemployment, diminished employment prospects, debt, or coerced debt. This can lead to long-term consequences and can severely limit long-term economic stability and financial independence.

When you leave refuge the support workers apply for grants for you to try and get furniture and appliances and stuff like that for when you move.

It all came down to the fact that we had assets. Whichever avenue I took there were assets, and you could sell your house to release the asset but of course you can't sell the house it's not yours to sell it's in joint names and so it's a continuous dead end.

When people talk about control and coercion, I don't think there is a way that you can actually articulate how horrific it is when you're in it.

He cancelled all my banking credit cards and transferred all of the money from our accounts so that I couldn't access any of it.

The impact of abuse often undermines practical stability and safety, including financial control. The Partnership will:

- work to increase the recognition of financial abuse as a factor in domestic abuse with professionals, who are working with older people or people who have care needs.
- work to establish clear support for people who have experienced economic abuse and who have left, or are contemplating leaving, an abusive relationship or situation.
- provide education and awareness to help people recognise the features of economic abuse and awareness of mechanisms to reduce vulnerability.
- promote access to financial advocacy for people who have experienced abuse.
- utilise the Employer Champion Scheme to involve employers to make sure the workplace is a safe space for people who have experienced abuse.

Recognising the experts

Rebuilding identity and empowerment are important factors in recovering from the experiences of abuse. Allowing space for people to grow and to input into the systems and services that they have been a part of should be prioritised.

Offering opportunities to contribute to peer support services, giving access to training and employment is empowering, builds confidence and supports recovery. It is also beneficial for the services and structures around individuals who can benefit from their expertise.

What is peer support?

Peer support activities and programmes give space for people to draw on their own experiences and offer emotional and practical support to help each other move forwards.

This can take the form of user-led support groups, mentoring and befriending, time-banking schemes, forums, events and days out which enable people to be both providers and recipients of support. Peer support can be utilised for adults and children.

These relationships can offer empathy and empowerment, creating a sense of agency and belief in personal control.

This strategy and the commitments in it have been grounded in the experiences of people affected by abuse. By sharing their experiences with the research programmes in both Kent and Medway, giving their ideas and their time they have shaped the strategy. We want to say thank you to those who have helped. Without your valuable insight this strategy could not be formed.

The Partnership recognises the invaluable knowledge of those with lived experience. The Partnership will:

- recognise the importance of peer-support programmes and interventions that work with the local community and informal networks.
- continue to be led by experts by experience in our services and governance structures, promoting greater service user involvement in service design, delivery and policy making.

How we will measure success

This is a five-year strategy which embodies our approach to tackling domestic abuse and our work to *'reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly'*.

In 2027 a review of the strategy will take place to ensure that this approach is still appropriate and that we are achieving our ambitions.

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will oversee a delivery plan managed by the governance structure with regular updates on progress being made to the Partnership.

In addition to monitoring delivery of our plan we will use a number of activity indicators to monitor areas of activity within this strategy. Quantitative measurements in this complex area must always be applied with caution but paired with quantitative learnings can help us identify progress.

Activity indicators

	Activity indicator
Early Intervention and Prevention	
	Reach of domestic abuse awareness campaign and website traffic.
	Number of people who sign up to the Domestic Abuse Champion Programme.
	Number of people accessing Clare's Law – 'right to ask'.
	Average length of time that a disclosure takes through Clare's Law.
	Number of disclosures made under the 'right to know' - Clare's Law.
Immediate Needs	
	Average time it takes to wait for children to gain a school place after moving to safe accommodation.
	Enforcement of non-molestation breaches.
	Number of notifications made to schools through Operation Encompass.
	Number of domestic abuse notifications made by Kent Police to services.
	Number of people who have settled accommodation destinations from refuge.
	Number of people refused safe accommodation.
	Prosecution rates for coercive and controlling behavior.
	Conviction rates for coercive and controlling behavior.
	Number of people who are presenting themselves as homeless due to domestic abuse.
	Number of people who have been referred to and accessed sanctuary support schemes.
	Number of people impacted by domestic abuse identified as intentionally homeless.
	Number of people accessing safe accommodation who have multiple

	barriers such as dependencies or mental health support needs.
	Number of people being offered housing through the Kent and Medway housing reciprocal agreement.
	Number of referrals being made to the multi-agency tasking and coordination meeting.
	Number of adults and children accessing community support
Recovery	
	Number of children and young people who access therapeutic support in safe accommodation.
	Number of people referred and accessing group work (both adults and children).
	Number of people who are trained as employer champions.
	Number of people being referred to commissioned perpetrator programmes.
	Number of people accessing and completing commissioned perpetrator programmes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Kent			
2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
£3,103,909	£3,112,501	£3,174,764	£3,234,633

Medway			
2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
£592,126	£593,765	£605,643	£617,069

Tier two authorities have been allocated smaller amounts ranging between around £35,000 - £38,000 annually.

Appendix B: Overview of Legislation

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 works within a wider legislative context. Other key legislation includes:

Upcoming: Online Safety Bill	This legislation is likely to introduce a new set of laws to protect children and adults online and make social media companies more responsible for their users' safety on their platforms.
Upcoming: The Victims and Prisoners Bill	This Bill aims to establish measures to <i>'better serve victims and the public through improving victims' experience of the Criminal Justice System'</i> ²⁹ . The Bill will include statutory guidance and minimum expectations in relation to the role of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), will require commissioners to consider child victims in the delivery of IDVA services and will introduce a statutory duty on Police and Crime Commissioners, health and local authorities around the joint commissioning of domestic abuse support services ³⁰ .
The Police, Crime and Sentencing Courts Act 2022 (including the Serious Violence Duty) ³¹	The Police, Crime and Sentencing Courts Act 2022 ³² received Royal Assent in April 2022. Part 2 of the Act creates a requirement for specified authorities to collaborate and plan to reduce or prevent serious violence. Specified authorities are required to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in an area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a shared strategy.

²⁹ Gov.uk 'Victims and Prisoners Bill ' (Mar 2023), Updated: Apr 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/victims-and-prisoners-bill>

³⁰ GOV.UK 'The Police, Crime and Sentencing Courts Act 2022', (Mar 2023), Updated: Nov 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill>

³¹ [Serious violence duty: Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-duty)

³² GOV.UK 'Serious Violence Duty' (Dec 2022), Updated: Jan 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-duty>

	<p>In Kent and Medway the definition of ‘serious violence’ includes domestic and sexual abuse and the Partnership will be working closely with the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Strategic Board to support this work.</p>
The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	<p>In 2017 a new law called the Homelessness Reduction Act³³ was passed by Parliament. The introduction of the Act supports people who are homeless, to have access to accommodation.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 changed homelessness legislation to give priority need to people who have experienced domestic abuse. The changes to the legislation mean that, people made homeless due to domestic abuse are given priority need for homelessness assistance.</p>
Modern Slavery Act 2015	<p>The Modern Slavery Act 2015 provides law enforcement the tools to fight modern slavery.</p> <p>The Act consolidates previous offences relating to trafficking and slavery placing specific requirements on employers and businesses. Modern slavery is often hidden from view and may involve or take place alongside a wide range of abuses and other offences such as grievous bodily harm, assault, rape, or child sexual abuse.</p>
The Serious Crime Act 2015	<p>This Act introduced the offence of coercive or controlling behaviour against an intimate partner or family member and holds a maximum penalty of five years.</p>
The Care Act 2014	<p>This legislation introduced the general duty on local authorities to promote an individual’s ‘wellbeing’, which includes considering a person’s domestic, family and personal relationships. The Care Act includes Section 42 which states that if an adult with care and support needs (such as a disability) is suspected to be at risk of any form of abuse or neglect, the local authority must make enquiries and take steps to protect them. This includes working with other agencies such as health and the Police and providing independent advocacy when it is needed.</p>
The Protection of Freedoms	<p>This legislation makes stalking and harassment an</p>

³³GOV.UK ‘Homelessness Reduction Act: policy factsheets ‘ (Nov 2016), Updated: Feb 2018
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-bill-policy-factsheets>



Act 2012	offence.
The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004	This legislation extends provisions to combat domestic violence and creates a new offence of 'causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult'.
The Children Act 1989 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002.	This legislation places a duty on local authorities to provide services to Children in Need and to investigate the circumstances of a child where they are informed that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act extends the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others, including in the home.






Appendix C: Linked Boards




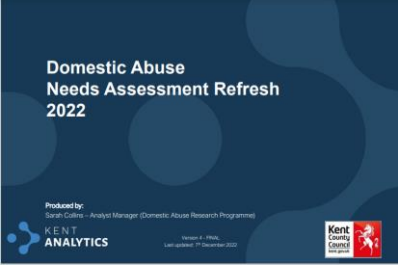
The Partnership has cross representation or updates the following groups.

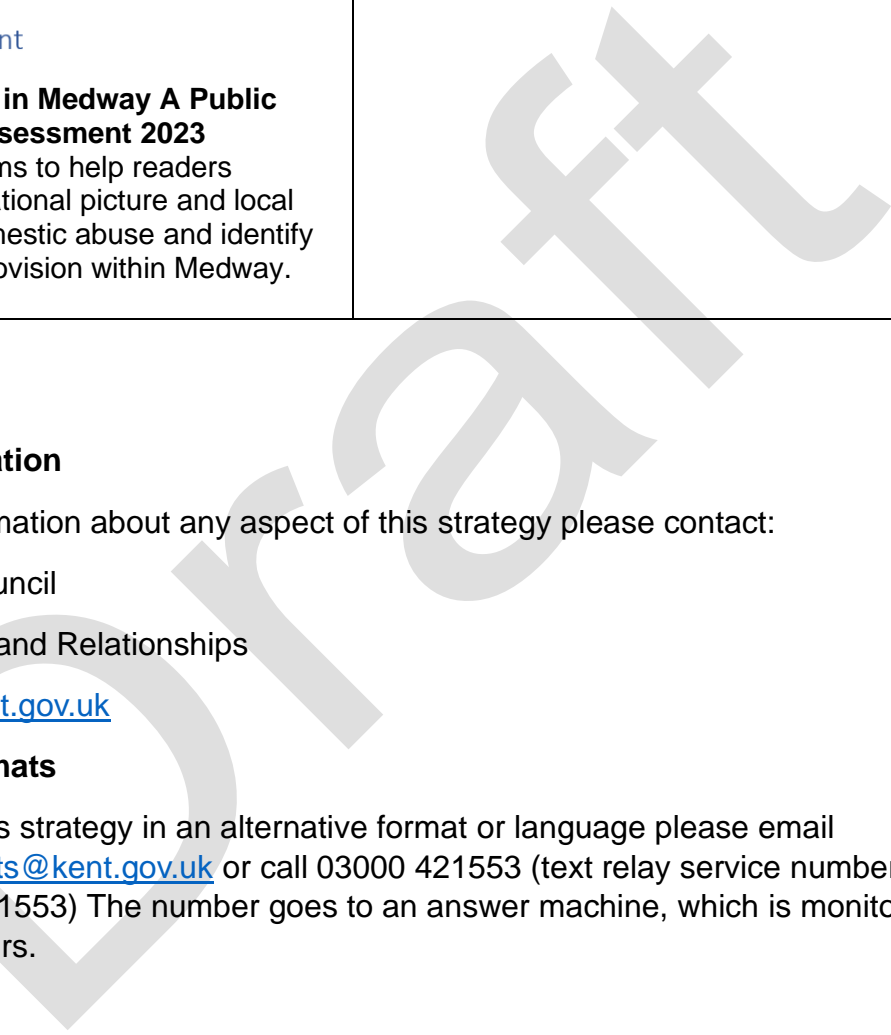
- Kent Community Safety Board
- Kent Housing Group
- Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board
- Kent Criminal Justice Board
- Medway Community Safety Partnership
- The Suicide Prevention Board
- Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board
- Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board
- Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership Board
- Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership
- The Integrated Care Partnership

Appendix D: Linked Strategies

 <p>Community Safety Agreement The Kent Community Safety Agreement sets out how partners will work together to address key community safety priorities for Kent, one of which is supporting vulnerable people.</p>	 <p>Medway Adult Social Care Strategy The strategy sets out Medway's strategic priorities for action, identifies the improved outcomes for adult social care service users, and looks at how success will be measured.</p>
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 <p>Kent and Medway Interim Integrated Care Strategy</p>  <p>Kent and Medway Interim Integrated Care Strategy The Kent and Medway Integrated Care strategy sets out the shared purpose and common aspiration of partners to work in increasingly joined up ways.</p>	 <p>Making Kent Safer The making Kent Safer plan sets out the priorities and actions of the police and crime commissioner.</p>
  <p>Kent and Medway Housing Strategy Sets out the strategic direction for housing across Kent and Medway based on the collective ambitions and aims of local authorities and their housing association partners.</p>	 <p>Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy Sets out the strategic objectives and targets of Kent's approach to tackling neglect. The strategy also identifies key risk and contributing factors that can have an impact on neglect.</p>
 <p>Medway Community Safety Partnership Plan The Medway Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSP) brings together a variety of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations with a shared commitment to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in Medway.</p>	<p>Preventing suicide in Kent and Medway: 2021-2025 Strategy Preventing Suicide in Kent and Medway The Kent and Medway preventing suicide strategy aims to reduce suicide and self-harm as much as possible, adopting the six priorities from the national suicide prevention strategy and adapting them for local circumstances.</p>

<p>Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2022 to 2025</p> <p>Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board – Strategic plan The Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board addresses the strategic safeguarding issues and shares learning from good practice and other experience to improve adult safeguarding.</p>	 <p>PROTOCOLS FOR KENT AND MEDWAY</p> <p>Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board – to safeguard adults who are at risk of sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and human trafficking.</p> <p>The protocol provides guidance to professionals and volunteers from all agencies involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all trafficked and exploited adults.</p>
 <p>Violence Against Women and Girls Enquiry The Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy was set up to create a legacy of partnership working designed to make Kent safer for Women and Girls where ever they are.</p>	 <p>Serious Violence Duty – Strategy (upcoming) Kent and Medway has one of 18 Violence Reduction Units (VRU's) formed in 2019 under the Home Office Serious Violence Project's Programme, to drive a whole system, preventative approach to tackling the causes of serious youth violence. The VRU is in the process of developing a strategy based on a strategic needs assessment.</p>
<p>Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2023-2028</p> <p>Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy The Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy is in draft format, aiming to be published in 2023. The new strategy aims to prioritise</p>	 <p>Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment Refresh 2022 Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021</p>

<p>partnership and tackle the consequences of drug and alcohol harm. The Kent strategy will seek to implement a range of harm reduction strategies and ensure there are quality services for very high-risk families, vulnerable people and communities.</p>	<p>requires local authorities to assess the need for support for victims of domestic abuse and their children who may need access to safe accommodation. The key objectives of the Domestic Abuse 2022 needs assessment refresh were to update key metrics around the profile of domestic abuse in Kent and to develop an understanding of domestic abuse in relation to children and young people.</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse in Medway A Public Health Needs Assessment</p> <p>Domestic Abuse in Medway A Public Health Needs Assessment 2023 This document aims to help readers understand the national picture and local prevalence of domestic abuse and identify current service provision within Medway.</p>	

Further information

For further information about any aspect of this strategy please contact:

Kent County Council

Strategy, Policy and Relationships

PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk

Alternative formats

If you require this strategy in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553) The number goes to an answer machine, which is monitored during office hours.



Title: Response to the Serious Violence duty from specified authorities

Author: Mark Powell – Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit Director

Date: 3rd July 2023

To: Kent Community Safety Partnership Board

Classification: Official

The paper outlines the work of the specified authorities to meet the requirements of the Serious Violence duty and the findings from the Violence Reduction Unit's Strategic Needs Assessment of March 2023. The Board are asked to note to contents of the report.

1. Introduction.

- 1.1 The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 ("the PCSC Act") received Royal Assent in April 2022. Part 2 of the PCSC Act creates a requirement for specified authorities to collaborate and plan to reduce or prevent serious violence. The specified authorities are:
- Chief Officers of Police for police areas in England and Wales
 - Probation Services
 - Youth Offending Teams
 - All fire and rescue authorities operating in England and Wales
 - Integrated Care Boards in England
 - Local authorities including district councils and county councils
- 1.2 The Duty requires specified authorities to work together through an agreed partnership arrangement. The purpose of the collaboration is to plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence, and to prepare and implement a shared strategy. The Duty also requires the specified authorities to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities for the area in the preparation of their strategy.
- 1.3 The specified authorities were required to confirm the partnership arrangement to the Home Office in March 2023, and must publish both a Strategic Needs Assessment and Strategy by January 31st 2024. The authorities confirmed the partnership arrangement to the Home Office in March 2023 and details of the arrangement are listed below.
- 1.4 The key performance indicators which have been set by the Home Office are:
- a reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object.





- a reduction in knife and sharp object enabled serious violence recorded by the police.
- a reduction in homicides recorded by the police.

2. Response to the requirements of the Serious Violence duty

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

3. Public place Serious Violence

- 3.1 The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) published a strategic needs assessment (SNA) of public place serious violence in March 2023. The SNA is a grant requirement for all 20 VRUs in England and Wales and is published annually. The Kent and Medway assessment includes bespoke analysis of serious violence at the district or borough level and supports the CSPs in their strategic planning to prevent violence.
- 3.2 Separate needs assessments for domestic abuse (DA) are produced by Kent County Council and Medway Council. The Councils have a legal requirement under section 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act to assess the need for support for victims of domestic abuse





and their children who may need to access safe accommodation. Findings from the DA needs assessments are not included within this paper.

3.3 Key findings from the VRU needs assessment include:

- Public place serious violence remains lower than that was seen in the county pre-pandemic, and violence linked to the night time economy has reduced when compared to the previous year.
- Those aged between ten and twenty four are disproportionately involved in serious violence either as victims or suspects of the offences. Eighty five percent of the suspects are male and eighty one percent of the victims are male. There were 298 individuals who experienced twenty percent of the harm. The key offence types are robbery, knife or weapon enabled crime, violence with injury and violence linked to drug supply. Violence against women and girls is a priority shared with Kent Police.
- There was a disproportionate increase in the numbers of children involved in knife enabled serious violence when compared to adults.
- Incidents of serious violence are spread unequally across the County and often coincide with urban or coastal areas of deprivation. The most frequent times when violence occurs are 3 – 4pm, 6 – 8pm and 11pm – midnight.

4. Strategic Priorities for 2023 - 24

- 4.1 The Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (SVPP) Board has agreed to commission a strategic needs assessment that is led by the VRU which will include public place serious violence, domestic abuse and sexual abuse. The assessment will be completed by December 2023 and will use data from all specified authorities. The SNA will be available to all CSPA to support localised strategic planning for 2024 – 25.
- 4.2 The specified authorities have agreed to develop a data sharing platform which will allow user generated reporting and analysis of serious violence. The platform will use data from Police, Local Authorities, Probation and other contributing partners. The first phase of the platform has commenced and will, if successful, allow users to analyse violence in locations. The estimated date for completion is September 2023. The second phase of the work will allow analysis of person level data held by agencies but has not yet passed all information governance requirements and no start date has been set.
- 4.3 The Board has commissioned a report to understand the links between multi-agency boards where the causes of violence are considered, and for recommendations to be made on how the SVPP Board can enhance the activity of existing boards. The report will inform the Terms of Reference for the SVPP Board.
- 4.4 The VRU has the following priorities:





- Knife crime including where injury is caused, knife enabled robbery and possession. The VRU will improve analysis of individuals who are repeat offenders or where risks are emerging, develop the active bystander approach to encourage peers to act to keep their friends safe, teach street aid first aid skills to young people, and develop resources for schools and parents.
- Locations and afternoon/evening violence. The VRU will fund community sport to be delivered in hotspots and high harm locations and use a multi-agency focussed deterrence approach to tackle gangs and Young Street Groups.
- Individuals at risk of exploitation will be offered mentoring, A & E navigators will work in Medway and Ashford to support those who have been injured, and CBT will be funded for young people affected by violence.
- Participation. The VRU will work to ensure that children and parents' voices are heard, fund a Community Conferencing service to work with communities affected by violence. Young people have reported that they are affected by misogyny and sexualised language which are making places unsafe for girls, that some transport hubs are unsafe spaces for them, and young people are helping to create resource on how to be an active bystander and a good friend as part of the VRU work.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The Board is asked to note the contents of the report and to support the actions from the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Board.

