

Avon & Somerset Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment

2025 - 2026

27th November 2025

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) 2025-26 is to provide a specific focus on violence-related needs within our local area. It aims to increase understanding of the types, distribution, and extent of violence. This assessment provides insights into the current and future wellbeing needs of a defined population, to help partners collectively agree on priorities and allocate resources.

This SNA should inform:

- The Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) governance on setting priorities and performance measures.
- VRP partners on identifying interventions to commission.
- VRP partners on assessing risk and protective factors of children and young people.

BACKGROUND

In March 2019, the (then) Home Secretary announced a £100million Serious Violence Fund to help tackle serious violence. Of this, £35 million was allocated for the development of Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) across England and Wales. Eighteen Police force areas worst affected by serious violence received this VRU funding. A VRU is responsible for driving local approach and strategy to tackling Serious Violence and embedding cultural change.

Bringing together Police, Local Authorities, Health, Fire, Education, Justice and Community Representatives for a multi-agency response to the local drivers of serious violence and the delivery response to tackle them.

In June 2019, the Avon and Somerset Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) was awarded £1.16 million from the Home Office to set up a Violence Reduction Unit. It was agreed locally that responses needed to be truly local and so a ‘Hub and Spoke’ model was the preferred approach, this resulted in the OPCC leading the strategic coordination from the Hub and the five local authorities driving the local responses through the Spokes (Figure 1).

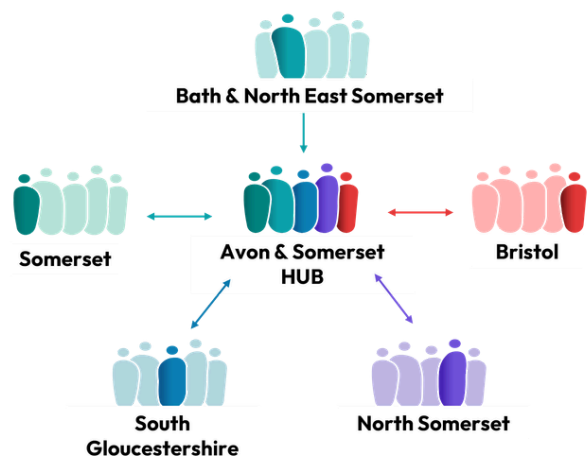


Figure 1: The Avon and Somerset Hub and Spoke model



BACKGROUND CONTINUED

In Avon and Somerset partners have come together since 2019 to shape this response. In 2023 it was agreed that the collaboration should be called the Violence Reduction Partnership, and this would encompass the Hub and Spoke model and the wider partners across the system. This partnership is overseen by the Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board (SVRPB), which ensures that the partnership is both efficient and effective in its plans to tackle serious violence.

Further to this in January 2023 the Government launched the Serious Violence Duty, which placed legal responsibility on police, justice, fire and rescue, health, and local authorities (known as the “specified authorities”) to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. They must work together in a local government area (section 8 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Police Act 2022 (“the 2022 Act”)) or can agree to work together over a wider geographic area, such as a police force area. The VRP is the collaboration in which local partners respond to this duty.

Avon & Somerset Serious Violence definition

The Avon and Somerset VRP embraces a priority focus on the prevention and reduction of public space violence for under 25’s (children and young people); including homicide, attempted homicide robbery, wounding, grievous bodily harm, knife and gun crime, alcohol and drug related violence and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as county lines and modern slavery.

We also recognise and commit to supporting a joined-up response to existing partnership work to tackle serious violence across the whole pathway and in the broadest sense, including domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences and violence against women and girls more generally.



The VRP has adopted a public health approach into its ways of working both at a strategic and operational level. This follows four key steps (Figure 2).¹

At a pan Avon and Somerset level, our strategic needs assessment works to assist us in understanding stages 1 and 2 of these core steps. In doing this we can then influence stages 3 and 4. This strategy will therefore draw out areas for us to focus and drive across these 4 stages, this will direct us in making positive change.

At an operational level, the spokes use this approach in identifying vulnerable people and places at risk of serious violence, their local partnerships will respond to these specific needs and tailor responses. This isn't always through interventions but might be through existing statutory support services, police disruption or referring on to other more appropriate support pathways.

In terms of **approaches to intervention**, the public health model is built upon these 3 layers² of intervening and eradicating a problem:

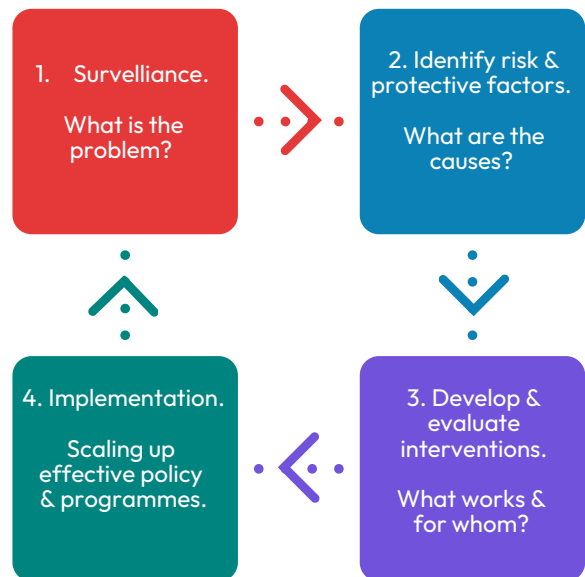


Figure 2; Four key steps of the VRP public health approach.

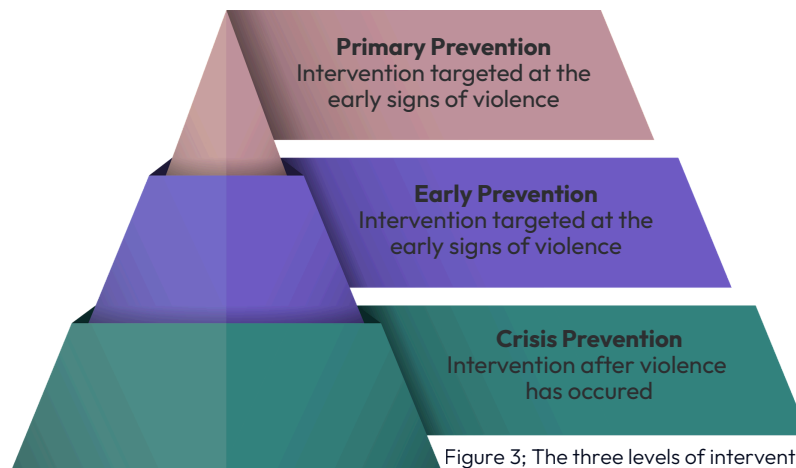


Figure 3; The three levels of intervention.

The spokes within the local authorities apply local knowledge and assessment, as well as utilising the strategic needs assessment, in determining what sort of interventions they need locally. These will cut across the approaches above. An example of a **primary intervention** is tailored awareness sessions in school settings. **Early intervention** may include mentoring or diversionary activities such as sports and art-based activities. **Crisis intervention** may potentially have a criminal justice outcome where the individual has perpetrated violence, such as focused deterrence, however it can also include therapeutic and trauma informed approaches, such as cognitive behavioural therapy and social skills development.



ASVRP Serious Violence SNA RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Risk factors are those which are associated with an increased likelihood of being a victim or perpetrator of violence, whilst protective factors are associated with a reduced likelihood of violence.

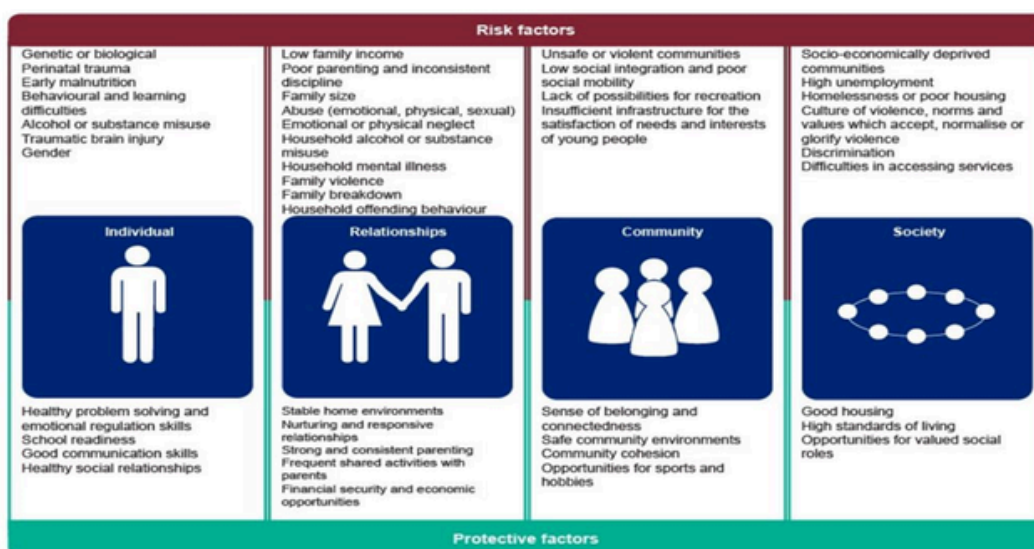
Understanding which factors can make individuals vulnerable to violence can help identify at risk populations and target preventive interventions accordingly. Viewing the ways in which these risk factors come together and influence patterns of behaviour throughout the life course provides insights into the key points at which interventions to break the cycle should be implemented.

Protective factors are integral to a strength or assets-based approach to violence reduction, in line with the underpinning principles of any Violence Reduction Strategy. Protective factors provide an opportunity to build resilience against serious violence through the work of the VRP, and across the system more widely.

It is important to note that these factors often interact with each other. For example:

- A person with a mental health issue may turn to substance abuse, which in turn increases their propensity for violence.
- Economic stress within a community can lead to higher crime rates, further perpetuating a cycle of violence.
- Exposure to violence in the media might normalise aggressive behaviour, especially if coupled with a family environment where violence is common.

What are the risk factors associated with serious violence in the area?



Source: A whole-system multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention A resource for local system leaders in England, Public Health England 2019





In January 2024, the Avon and Somerset VRP published its Serious Violence Strategy and set out nine strategic commitments for its work to reduce and prevent serious violence ([AS-VRP-Strategy-24-25.pdf](#)).

- 1. Interventions:** Commission and fund interventions and responses that address the causes of serious violence, reduce known risk factors, and strengthen protective factors.
- 2. Risk identification:** Ensure that the right people and places are being identified to access the right support through the VRP and beyond.
- 3. Hotspots and contextual responses:** Develop and embed multi-agency responses to serious violence hotspots, with the VRP building an evidence base for contextual safeguarding responses.
- 4. Engagement:** Build and develop meaningful engagement approaches to offer co-production opportunities and ensuring that lived experience is a thread across VRP delivery responses.
- 5. Local opportunities:** Contribute to building opportunities and tackling disproportionality within our most affected communities facing serious violence.
- 6. Awareness and resilience:** Build awareness and drive community led counter-narratives to serious violence, which in time will increase confidence and resilience around complex and generational issues.
- 7. Leadership:** Drive system changes through implementation of coordinated and shared responsibility of key partners, all of whom are working to prevent serious violence in the long-term.
- 8. Data and evidence:** Develop and build multi-agency data, insights, and evidence to increase our ability to make an impact on serious violence in Avon and Somerset.
- 9. Sustainability:** Drive cultural and financial sustainability consideration to continue the work of the VRP beyond 2025.



A number of different data sources can be used to understand serious violence in Avon and Somerset. These different data sources need to be triangulated with the voice of lived experience to create a full picture of what is happening, and therefore how violence can be prevented.

Crime Data

- Police recorded knife-enabled serious violence incidents
- Police recorded non-domestic homicides
- Serious violence offences using the VRP serious violence definition
- Police Reported ASB incidents
- Domestic Abuse Incidents

Health Data

- Number of hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object.

Education & Children's Services Data:

- Number excluded from school (permanently or fixed term)
- Number persistently absent from school
- Proportion of 16 -17 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training
- Numbers of children in need
- Youth Justice Performance

Community

- Community satisfaction with safety initiatives and law enforcement efforts.
- Cohesion and trust levels

Criminal Justice Pathways

- Rates of re-offending
- Reduction in prison leavers with an accommodation need.
- Increase in prison leavers who gain entry into employment.
- Reduction in risk of harm

AVON AND SOMERSET PRIORITIES

The Avon and Somerset VRP embraces a priority focus on the prevention and reduction of public space violence for under 25's (children and young people); including homicide, attempted homicide, robbery, wounding, grievous bodily harm, knife and gun crime, alcohol and drug related violence and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as county lines and modern slavery.

The Avon and Somerset Partnership recognises and commits to supporting a joined-up response, working in partnership to tackle serious violence in the broadest sense, including domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences and violence against women and girls more generally.

Whilst it's important to gain an understanding of overall serious violence across Avon and Somerset it is imperative that a one size fits all approach is not undertaken, at a high level we can gain an understanding in relation to the volume and trends in relation to serious violence and the causal factors, however it is important to identify local drivers in order for effective targeted interventions to be put in place.

While there is no single measure of violent crime, the [Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\)](#) has shown gradual decreases in violence with and without injury, and domestic abuse, over the last ten years. It has also indicated a rise in sexual assault. Over the same time period, trends in CSEW stalking and police recorded homicide have remained relatively flat.



ASVRP Serious Violence SNA SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR THE AVON & SOMERSET AREA



OVERALL TRENDS

- **Violent Crime Increase:** Avon & Somerset recorded a 12% rise in overall crime (year ending March 2025), with violence against the person up 16%, stalking and harassment up 25%.
- **Knife Crime:** 6% of offences involved a knife (slightly higher than regional comparators), though this was a 1% decrease from the previous year.
- **Robbery:** Higher than Most Similar Group (MSG) averages.
- **Hospital Admissions:** Violence-related admissions remain lower than national averages but show local variations.

EMERGING THEMES ACROSS AVON & SOMERSET

- **Youth Violence:** Under-25s remain a priority group; public space violence and exploitation are key concerns.
- **Hotspots:** Concentrated in urban centres (e.g., Bristol East Central, Bath City Centre, Weston-super-Mare).
- **Risk Factors:** Substance misuse, mental health issues, poverty, school exclusions, and social media harms.
- **Protective Factors:** Education engagement, community cohesion, trauma-informed support.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HIGHLIGHTS

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET (B&NES):

- 16% increase in recorded crime;
- violent & sexual offences = 42% of crime.
- Street-based SV up 5.85%; knife-flagged offences up 3%.
- Strong student population influence; pockets of deprivation remain.

BRISTOL:

- SV stable overall but knife **flagged offences down 19%**.
- East Central locality highest rates; youth cohorts (14–17) show reductions.
- High diversity and structural inequalities identified as causal factors.

NORTH SOMERSET:

- Lower overall violence compared to national averages.
- Violent & sexual offences = 47% of crime; SBSV stable (+1%).
- Knife-flagged offences mainly involve males 18+; Weston-super-Mare is a hotspot.

SOMERSET:

- 13% increase in recorded crime; SBSV down 4%.
- Knife crime reduced by 13%; robbery down 14%.
- Rural isolation and transport issues noted as risk factors.

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE:

- 10% increase in recorded crime; SBSV down 7%.
- Knife-flagged offences decreased by 22%; robbery up 20%.
- Education exclusion and neurodiversity linked to exploitation risk.

ASVRP Serious Violence SNA SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR THE AVON & SOMERSET AREA



CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- **Domestic Abuse:** Rising across all areas (e.g., Bristol +6%, Somerset +4.2%).
- **Hate Crime:** Increased in all areas; racial hate crime most prevalent.
- **Mental Health:** Hospital admissions for under-18s higher than national averages in some areas (e.g., North Somerset).
- **Economic Stress:** Fuel poverty and food insecurity persist, especially in deprived wards.
- **Youth Justice:** First-time entrants generally declining, but re-offending rates vary.

Overall Picture Under 25's

- **Under-25s remain the priority group** for serious violence prevention. Most incidents occur in **public spaces** and are linked to exploitation, knife crime, and robbery.
- Youth violence is not **evenly distributed**; it is concentrated in **urban hotspots** such as Bristol East Central, Bath City Centre, and Weston-Super-Mare.

TRENDS & PATTERNS

Volume & Direction:

- Youth cohorts (14–17) in Bristol show **reductions in knife-flagged offences** (down 43% for victims aged 14–17 and 34% for 18–25).
- In Somerset, **street-based serious violence among 10–17-year-olds decreased by 4%**, and knife crime fell by 13%.
- North Somerset saw **stable levels of street-based serious violence (+1%)**, but Weston-Super-Mare remains a hotspot.

- Bath & North East Somerset recorded a **5.85% increase in street-based serious violence**, with knife-flagged offences up 3%.

Offender Profile:

- Majority of offenders are **male (80–93%)** and predominantly **White (92–96%)** where ethnicity is recorded.
- In B&NES, 43% of offenders and 40% of victims were under 25.
- **Youth Violence:** Victims under 25 decreased in some areas (e.g., B&NES down 13%), but remain a significant proportion of overall victims.

Risk Factors:

- **School exclusions, persistent absence, and special educational needs** strongly correlate with youth violence risk.
- **Social media harms** and online exploitation are emerging drivers.

Protective Factors:

- Engagement in education, community cohesion, and trauma-informed support reduce risk.

EMERGING ISSUES

- **Exploitation:** County lines and criminal exploitation remain key concerns, especially in Bristol, North Somerset and Somerset.
- **Mental Health:** Hospital admissions for under-18s due to mental health conditions are higher than national averages in some areas (e.g., North Somerset).
- **Community Voice:** Young people cite **fear of knife crime**, lack of safe spaces, and cost-of-living pressures as major concerns.

ASVRP Serious Violence SNA KEY THEMES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE



THE AVON & SOMERSET SVSN ASSESSMENT (2025–26)

This section “What are young people telling us” Captures insights gathered through surveys, consultations, and engagement activities across local authorities.



KEY THEMES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Safety Concerns:

- Young people consistently express fear of knife crime and violence in public spaces. Many worry about whether they will be supported if they become victims of crime.

Cost of Living & Housing:

- Concerns extend beyond safety to economic pressures—affording rent and living independently in the future is a major worry.

Police Relationships:

- There is a perceived mistrust between young people and the police. They want better communication and more positive engagement

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE WANT

Visible Policing:

- More police presence in areas where they feel unsafe, especially in town centres and hotspots.

Education & Awareness:

- Lessons in schools about knife crime, exploitation, and healthy relationships.

Better Communication:

- Police training to improve interactions with young people and build trust.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT EXAMPLES

B&NES:

- Knife crime survey (312 participants) revealed that carrying knives is often linked to protection and peer influence.

North Somerset:

- Workshops highlighted concerns about social media harms and lack of affordable activities after school.

Somerset:

- Youth hubs and surveys show young people want safer streets and fewer county lines incidents.

Bristol:

- Engagement through meaningful consultation and co-design by amplifying the voices and lived experiences of the most at-risk young people through a range of inclusive platforms and initiatives.

South Gloucestershire:

- Young people reported feeling unfairly treated for being in groups or based on appearance.

EMERGING INSIGHTS

- Young people value **safe spaces**, **positive activities**, and **authentic involvement** in decision-making.
- They want **community-led solutions** and **trauma-informed support** rather than punitive-only approaches.

ASVRP Serious Violence SNA SNA RECOMMENDATIONS

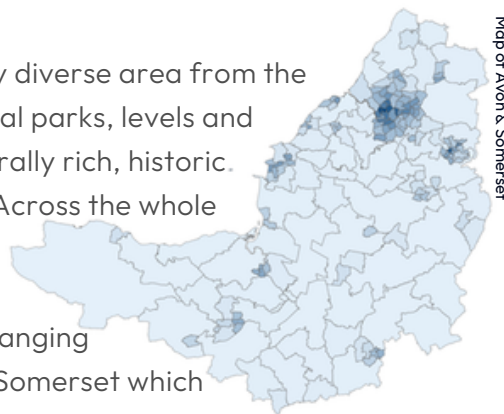


1. Continue to maintain a focus on identifying children who are engaged in or at risk of serious violence and commission evidence-based interventions across primary, secondary and tertiary levels which seek to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors.
2. Improve our collective understanding of those aged 18-24 years who are engaged in or at risk of involvement in serious violence and explore opportunities to reduce the risk for those young people. Scoping of this work should include a particular focus on those who face increased risk as they transition to adulthood.
3. Enhance the partnership's focus on the collection of evidence around the impact that interventions are having and the impact that risk management processes are having on individual young people.
4. Data Analysis, Management, Performance and Evaluation Group (DAMPEG) to continue to review and improve processes to enhance data collection, insight and analysis across the Avon and Somerset area. This should include development of plans to address remaining data gaps, address data quality issues as they arise and to ensure a clear and consistent approach to data analysis. A key component of this work will involve the further development dynamic data dashboards that can be accessed easily by partners.
5. Carry out a mapping exercise to provide a more extensive picture of the wide range of initiatives taking place relating to serious violence within agencies, to better understand and track changes in provision across sectors, identify gaps and reduce duplication in our ways of working to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors for children and young people.
6. Provide greater visibility of the wider local and regional responses that support collective work to address serious youth violence, such as education and health to ensure that there is good alignment and reduce the risk of duplication.
7. Improve data quality so that the VRP can better understand the true ethnic breakdown in recorded/reported offences and young people identified as being at risk of serious violence and contribute to wider work to tackle disproportionality.
8. Ensure consultation and engagement approaches with young people and communities are effective and in line with best practice to ensure they are involved in the design of solutions and to improve awareness of the action being taken to address serious violence across the partnership and its impact.
9. Further define how governance of the Avon and Somerset VRP links to other partnerships, such as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), safeguarding and youth justice. Agreeing effective collaboration across those structures to respond dynamically to national direction and deliverables with the right ways of working in place.
10. Provide therapeutic interventions for victims and perpetrators, integrating systemic practice models and trauma recovery frameworks.



POPULATION

Avon and Somerset is a geographically diverse area from the beautiful and scenic rolling hills, national parks, levels and market towns of Somerset to the culturally rich, historic. and vibrant cities of Bristol and Bath. Across the whole of Avon and Somerset 22.8% of the population live in rural areas, however this varies greatly by Local Authority ranging from Bristol, which is wholly urban, to Somerset which has almost half its population living in rural areas. Bristol has a population density almost 4 times that of England.



Map of Avon & Somerset

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimated the resident population of Avon and Somerset at 1.7 million people (in 2021) across almost 734,000 households (based on ONS population estimates). The 2024 estimated population is 1.8 million people 4% growth and is expected to continue.

Mid-year estimates indicate an increase in population across all Authority areas since 2021. With a 11% increase in those aged 18-24 years, driven by Bristol and Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) figures, explainable through the student populations, with four large universities located within those areas. Both Bristol and Bath and North East Somerset have significantly higher proportion of students aged 18 to 24, higher than local and national figures, which reflects the higher education establishments in the area.

There were notable moves into areas for other age brackets. There is an estimated 7% increase for A&S in the group who were 10-17 in 2024, driven by the estimated increase of 10% in South Gloucestershire.

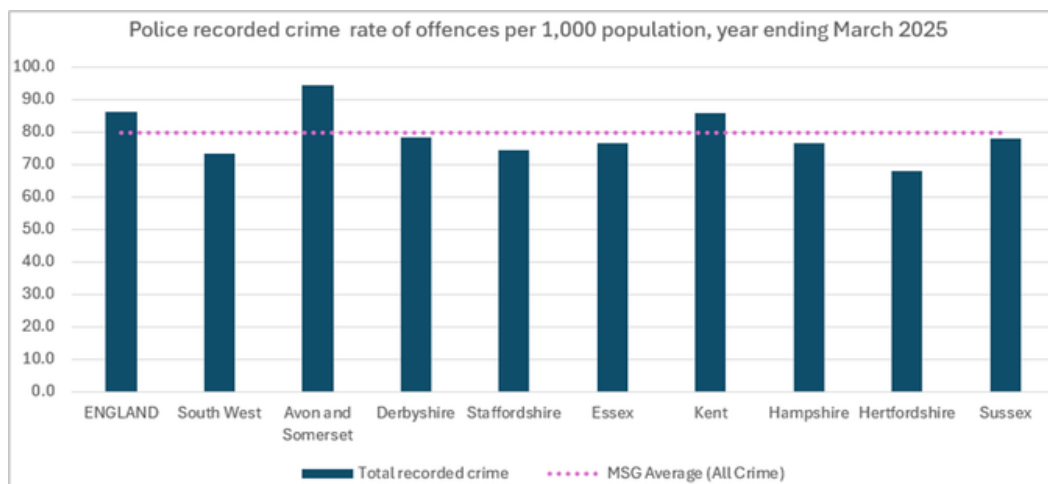
Females make up 51% of the population and males 49% with those aged 0-24 making up almost 29% of the Avon and Somerset population.

The Avon and Somerset population is predominantly White British (84.3%). This varies greatly across the local authorities with Bristol being the most diverse and above the national average for those other than White British residents.

In relation to religion/beliefs the 2021 census had a 93.4% response rate to the question on religion/beliefs. Of the Avon and Somerset residents who answered, the predominant categories were no religion (49.4%) and Christian (46.0%). Bristol has the most diversity, with 10.2% of the population having a religion other than Christianity.

AVON & SOMERSET VIOLENT CRIME 2024/25

To establish statistical comparators constabularies are put into Most Similar Groups (MSGs) by the office of official statistics (ONS). The Avon and Somerset MSG group includes Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent and Sussex



Avon and Somerset (94.3) overall crime rate per thousand population for the year ending March 2025³ is higher than that of England (86.1) and significantly higher than the Southwest rate of 73.4. The rate is similar for most of our MSG group areas is lower than the MSG average of 79.6.

When comparing A&S against the MSG average (31.7) and England (31.5), Avon and Somerset Constabulary had higher crime rates per 1000 persons for Violence Against the Person (37.9). Similarly, the rate is higher than the South West rate of 30.2. Stalking and harassment, Robbery, and Sexual Offences show a similar picture.

Area Name	Violence against the person	Violence with injury	Stalking and harassment	Sexual offences	Robbery	Possession of weapons offences
ENGLAND	31.5	8.5	9.7	3.4	1.3	0.9
South West	30.2	8	9.6	3.6	0.7	0.7
Avon and Somerset	37.9	8.2	13.5	4.3	1.4	0.6
0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93

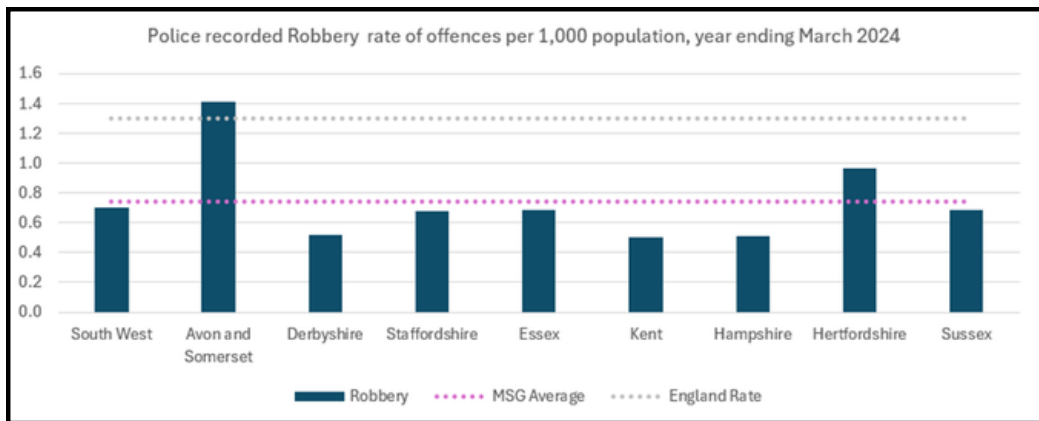
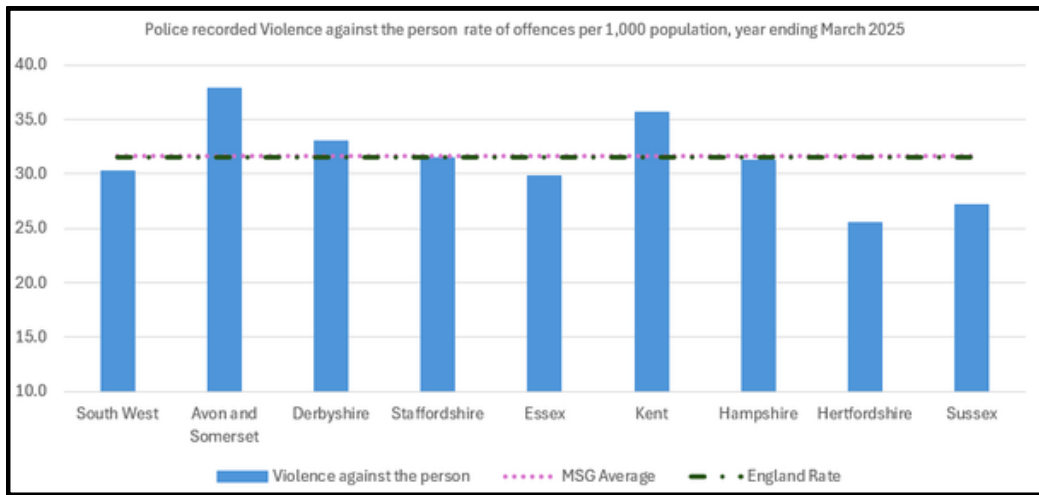
Table 1: Rate of Crime per 1,000 population

However, rates of Violence with injury, and Possession of weapon offences are lower than England and MSG rates.

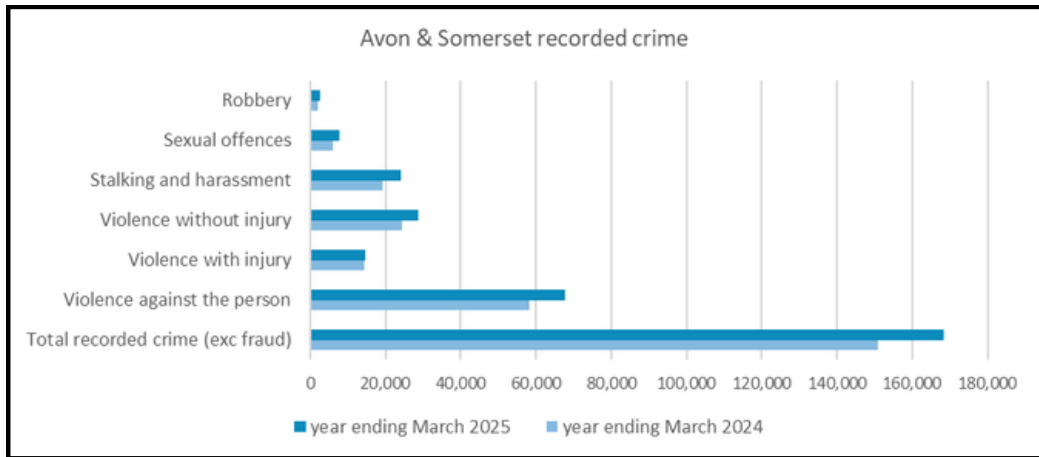
A&S has a higher rate of Robbery (likely all types) than other constabulary regions in its Most Similar Group.



ASVRP Serious Violence SNA WHAT WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT A&S



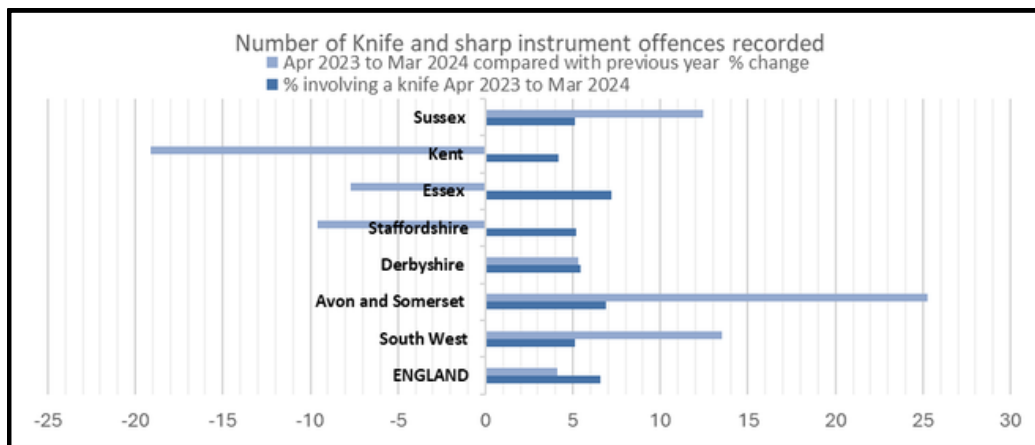
Avon and Somerset saw a 12% increase in recorded crime for year ending March 2025 is 12%.



Violence against the person increased by 16%, Violence with injury 2% , Violence without injury 18% and Stalking and harassment 25%.

In 2024/25, across A&S 6% (1559n) of offences involved a knife. This was a 1% decrease on the previous year, slightly higher than MSG comparators and the South West but lower than England





AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PLAN:

Priority 2: Reduce violent crime, with a specific focus on (a) male violence against women and girls and (b) serious youth violence.

The objectives of this plan are to reduce crime and harm, have more confident communities and safer places and effective policing and partnerships.

This will be done through:

- Reduction in the carrying and use of knives to commit crime.
- Better protection of children and vulnerable adults from criminal exploitation.
- We will work together with police, local authorities, health, education and other partners and with communities, children and young people to implement solutions which address the root causes of knife crime.
- Improving how agencies identify children and young people who are at risk of being harmed or causing harm and work together, and with partners in our communities, to keep them safe and divert them away from criminal activity and harm.
- Recognising the importance of access to education and employment in helping young people to secure a future free from crime. We will champion working with education services, partners and communities to address the barriers to keeping young people at risk of violence and exploitation in education.
- Develop a deeper evidence base for the social and economic causes of violent crime and then a plan which addresses these.

4P PLAN

This plan ensures coordinated activity across all four pillars:

1. Pursue,
2. Prepare,
3. Prevent,
4. Protect.



What has been happening across Avon and Somerset:

Awareness of **Section 27 seized funds** and the investment made into community projects has been significantly improved through targeted internal and external communications

Hyperlocal Knife Crime Fund: Funding secured from the Home Office by the OPCC to support proposals to address knife crime in identified locations in Bristol. Interventions being funded include:

- Outreach in Castle Park
- Immersive education sessions using VR

Bleed kits continue to be installed across A&S.

Knife Crime Awareness Week

Hotspot Action Fund: Funding from the Home Office to support visibility patrols across A&S and to deliver targeted interventions to reduce serious violence and ASB. Coordinated through the OPCC with the provision of funding to Local Authorities, policing and community groups to deliver problem orientated initiatives.

Early Intervention Teams:

Work within the VRP spokes across each of the 5 Local Authority areas.

Their mission is to reduce serious youth violence by identifying children at risk and coordinating multi-agency interventions.

Focus on children under 18 who are:

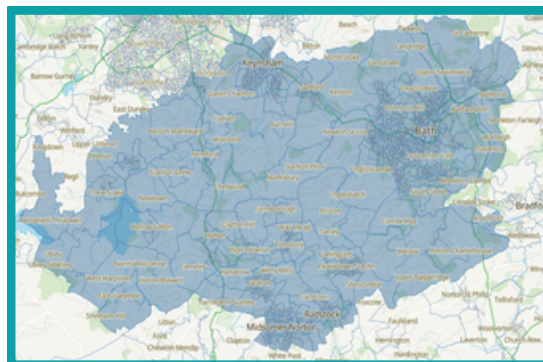
- At risk of or involved in serious youth violence (SYV)
- Experiencing criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Engaged in high-level anti-social behaviour
- On the edge of serious criminality

Supported by Youth Project Coordinators who coordinate a number of school engagements across Avon and Somerset – delivering educational inputs, carrying out bike marking etc.



PLACES & POPULATION

As a local authority area, Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) was formed in 1996 and covers approximately 135.2 square miles. The B&NES population in [mid-2024 population](#) is estimated to be 200,028.



Map of B&NES: Source; Census 2021

It is projected that the student age population will remain significant in B&NES. The local population is projected to continue to become older with further implications, for example, increasing the strain on the NHS and adult social care.

The local population's age structure is similar to the UK's population as a whole but there is higher number of people aged between 20-24 highlighting the area's notable student population. Between 2001 and 2019, the growth in the 20-24 age range accounted for nearly 40% of the area's population growth. ONS population projections indicate that the B&NES population will increase to 210,848 by 2030, an increase of nearly 8% from 2020.

B&NES is less ethnically diverse than the UK as a whole, the 2021 Census shows 85.6% of B&NES residents identified as 'White: English, Welsh, Scottish, NI or British', followed by 5.8% 'White: Other White' and 3.3% Asian (all primary asian categories from [2021 census](#)) From the [January 2024 school census](#), 80.9% children define themselves as White British. (all school types, state funded, attended schools located in B&NES)

As a whole, Bath and North East Somerset remains one of the least deprived local authorities in the country and continues to become relatively less deprived over time. However, there are still pockets of deprivation locally and there are two small areas within the most deprived 10% nationally.

The 10-17 resident population Males – 8,742, & Females – 8,291, White population is c.14,960 for the 10-17 age group as at the time of the 2021 Census (March 2021). This represents 90.7% of the entire 10-17 year old population (c.16,495). Therefore, the proportion of other global ethnic groups is 9.3%.

The 2021 Census shows 4.1% of people in B&NES have bad or very bad health as compared to the England 5.3%.



B&NES

B&NES VISION

To create a safer Bath and North East Somerset by reducing incidents of serious violence through targeted prevention, effective intervention, and comprehensive support systems.

We believe that intervening and preventing issues early is the best way to ensure children, families and communities lead lives free from violence and trauma.

We aim to divert children at risk of violence (either as a victim or offender) away from that risk, and to manage the risk of serious violence in the community.

People who have experienced trauma can have trouble identifying, expressing, and managing emotions. This can lead to anxiety and potentially violent behaviour.

We aim to educate local communities about the impact of trauma on individuals. We can then create an environment and culture that effectively supports victims of trauma and rehabilitates individuals to prevent future violence.

A trauma-informed community can then work together to help current victims of trauma and help to prevent trauma for future generations.

B&NES PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGY & ACTION

B&NES STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

B&NES Council's Corporate Strategy⁴ sets out an overarching purpose to **'IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES'**. The vision for all children and young people is that they live in safe, happy and healthy families and communities, which is detailed in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for B&NES.⁵

Health & Wellbeing Board

The Vision for 2030 sets out four priorities:

- Ensure that children and young people are healthy and ready for learning and education
- Improve skills, good work and employment
- Strengthen compassionate and healthy communities.
- Create health promoting places

The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) has been closely aligned to the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the Early Help Strategy and the B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) Strategy to ensure a more coherent strategic focus on delivering better outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset Council.

Our Key Outcomes and Priorities:

- Children and young people are safe
- Children and young people are healthy
- Children and young people who are vulnerable have fair life chances
- Children and young people are engaged citizens within their own community

The Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Strategy and Implementation Plan⁶ provides a vision for the next five years, 2023 to 2028, uniting partners behind three clear objectives. These are:

- Focus on prevention & early intervention
- Fairer health and wellbeing outcomes
- Excellent health and care services



B&NES

The B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP)

The Bath and North East Somerset Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) has outlined its priorities for 2024 to 2027 in a strategic plan.⁷

The priorities in this strategic plan have been identified through a range of evidence. This includes learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews, bringing executive partners together for two development days and consulting with wider partners. The BCSSP has also considered current legislation, national, regional and local plans, local strategic needs assessment, including crime and disorder, public health and housing.

The overarching community safety priorities of the BCSSP are:

- **Priority 1:** To develop the strategic oversight and scrutiny of the CSP arrangements
- **Priority 2:** We will further develop our work with partners to prevent people from becoming involved in and reduce instances of serious violence.
- **Priority 3:** Continue to identify opportunities for longer term funding to reduce domestic abuse incidents and improve outcomes for survivors.



WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SERIOUS VIOLENCE IN B&NES

Key Findings from Statistics

The Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Strategy and Implementation Plan provides a vision for the next five years, 2023 to 2028, uniting partners behind three clear objectives. These are:

- Focus on prevention & early intervention
- Fairer health and wellbeing outcomes
- Excellent health and care services

Incidence of Violence:

- There was a 16% increase in the number of recorded crimes in 2024/25 with a rate per 1,000 of 81.1
- The whole of Bath and North East Somerset saw increases in the levels of violence in 2024/25
- Violent and sexual offences accounted for 42% of recorded crime
- Violence and Sexual Offences increased by 20% in 2023/24
- The estimated cost of Violent Crime in Bath and North East Somerset⁸ rose by 18% in 2024/25

Incidence of Street Based Serious Violence:

- Street Based Serious Violence (SBSV)⁹ increased by 5.85% (19n) in 2024/25 against previous year, 2023/24
- There were increases across most Police beat areas
- 17.1% of SBSV took place on a Saturday
- 16.2% of SBSV crime taking place between 11pm-1am

Types of Street Based Serious Violence:

- 18.75% (9n) increase in possession of weapon
- Knife-Flagged offences increased by 3% (3n)

B&NES DATA

Demographics & Profiles Street Based Serious Violence

Where offenders identified:

- 31% decrease in identified offenders
- 27% decrease in males, 51% decrease in females offending
- 87% offender's male
- 92% offenders white
- 1% increase in identified victims
- 67% of victims were male with 33% female
- 92% of victims were white

Children and young people (aged 10-24)

- The number of identified offenders decreased by 31%
- Where age is stated 43% of offenders were 25 or under of which 93% were male
- Where age is stated 40% of victims were 25 or under of which 93% were male
- Victims under 25 decreased by 13%

Impact on Communities of Street Based Serious Violent Crime:

Street Based Serious Violence 2023/24 police beat areas

- 66% of SBSV occurred in 3 police beat areas
- 38% occurring in Bath City Centre
- Based on ward level data the biggest volume recorded in Kingsmead (30%)
- Significant increases on previous year in some areas (although numbers are low)

Most SBSV Crime occurred in;

- Bath City Centre (130n)
- Bath City West (53n)
- Bath City Outer (45n)

B&NES DATA.

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Substance Misuse

During the year 2023/24 in B&NES there were:

Adults

- 1,100 adults in treatment (1,083 22/23) of which;
- Males 70% (n=765) Females 30%(n=335) in treatment.
- Those aged between 30 to 49 years old accounted for 55%, followed by those aged 50+ (30%) and 18-29 (15%)

Young People

- For Bath and North East Somerset, the number of young people in treatment continues to increase.
- 2023/24 there were 115 males and 70 females 32% increase on 2023/23 (45yp)
- Young people aged 14-15 accounting for 48%, those aged 16-17 (44%) and those under 14 (8%).

Mental Health

- Depression: QOF Prevalence (18+ yrs) shows an increasing trend year on year for England
- The percentage of new patients aged 18 and over with depression, decreased in 2023/24. BANES, 1% of patients were presented and this lower compared to South West region (1.3%) and England (1.5%).
- The number of Hospital admissions for mental health conditions (<18 yrs) in 2023/24 was 35 (96.0 per 100,000)
- 2023/24 rate 96.0 lower than the South West rate of 127.5, however, higher than the England rate of 80.2.



B&NES DATA

Anti-Social Behaviour

- According to the police definition of anti-social behaviour (ASB) there were
- 2,378 incidents in 2024/25, a slight decrease of 2% on the previous year.
- Nuisance incidents (e.g. rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours) accounted for 79% (1,880) of reported ASB.

Deliberate Fires

- In BANES in 2024/25 there were 104 deliberate fires, this is a decrease of 26% compared to 2023/24 (n=37).
- Over the last 12 months Twerton (18n), Kingsmead (16n) and Paulton (7n) have seen the most deliberate fires.

Domestic Abuse

Based on local police data,

- 3,255 domestic abuse incidents were recorded in B&NES in 2024/25, an increase from 3,057 in 2023/24 (up 6.5%).
- The rate of domestic abuse related incidents and crimes per 1,000 population was 16.7 per 1,000, an increase from 15.6 per 1,000 in 2023/24.

Hate Crime & Discrimination

- In 2024/25 there was 470 hate crime incidents a 11.9% increase compared to 2023/24.
- Racial hate crime accounted for 61% of hate crime in B&NES.

Hospital Admissions for Violence

- During 2021/22-23/24, there were 145 hospital admissions, with a rate of 24.9 per 100,000. This rate has reduced by 4.7 from the previous year 2020/21-2022/23 (29.6).
- The rate of 24.9 is lower than both the South West (25.7) and England (34.2).

Financial Stress & Unemployment¹⁰

- Across the 15 distribution centres in B&NES a total of 9,977 food parcels were distributed in 2024/25 (Parcels Distributed to: Children 3,206, Adults 6,771) (update footnote), 10% increase since 2022/23¹¹
- 8,825 (10.5%) households in fuel poverty in 2023
- After Housing Costs, relative poverty for B&NES is 19.3% 2022/23. In England it is 30.0%.¹²

Employment

The monthly unemployment rate for B&NES in the twelve months ending June 2025 is 3.7%. The rate has fluctuated over the 15 months since March 2024 where the rate was 3.4%.

- Economic activity rate June 2025: 79.5% (Great Britain 78.8%)
- Employment rate June 2025: 76.5% (Great Britain 75.5%)
- Unemployment rate June 2025: 3.7% (Great Britain 4.1%)
- 1,320 male and 1,165 females out of work benefit claimant's resident in B&NES, 2.0% of the working age population respectively.
- Of the 2,485 claimants 430 were aged 16 to 24 (17% of claimants).



B&NES DATA

Offender Management

Probation supervised 18 individuals convicted of a serious violent crime during the period 2024/25;

Those aged 18-25years (4n)

- 100% were male
- 25% (1n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: Education, Training, Employment (ETE) (1n), Relationships (1n) & Accommodation (1n)

Those aged 26+years (14n)

- 86% male
- 16% (9n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: 79% Accommodation (11n), 71% (10n) ETE, 57% (8n) Alcohol and 50% (7n) Drugs.

Children & Young People: (Children's Safeguarding)

Children in Care

- There were 218 Children Looked After by B&NES LA as of 31st March 2024. This is at a rate of 59.8 per 10,000 children aged under 18 years.¹³

Children in Need

- There were 705 open Child in Need Plans
- 2024 CIN Census, showed (30.2%) children with recognised long-term health problems or disabilities that limited day-to-day activities.

Child Protection

- There were 141 children on a Child Protection Plan.

Education Training & Employment

The National overall absence rate of 6.4% in Autumn 2024/25, a decrease from 6.7% in Autumn 2023/24.



The B&NES rate of 6.27% is lower than the national and regional rate, this is a minor decrease on the 6.28% rate in 2023/24.

- Nationally, percentage of persistent absentees 2024/25 Autumn term (10% or more missed) 17.8% in Autumn 2024/25, a decrease from 19.4% in Autumn 2023/24.
- The B&NES rate of 16.37% is lower than the national rate, this is a decrease on the 17.5% rate in 2023/24.¹⁴
- In 2023/24, the average attainment 8 score in BANES is 49.2 higher than the average for South West 46 and England 46.1

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- 17.5% of children eligible for free school meals, the number of pupils eligible for FSMs continues to increase
- (2,199, 8%) in 2015/16 to 4,737 (17%) in 2023/24 to 4,761 (17.5%) in 2024/25
- 2,469 children have an education, health and care plan¹⁵
- 3,925 children are receiving SEN support in our schools
- There is a 10.7% increase in the number of EHCPs in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, an increase lower than the South West region (12.9%) but similar to that of England (10.8%).¹⁶

SEN Children known to Youth Justice Service: School Age Children

- 38 individual children had an intervention with B&NES Youth Justice Service in the period April 2023 to March 2024 academic year, Of which
- 79% had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and or a SEN support plan
- 80% of students working with the YJS have attended special schools (16%) or been educated in an Alternative Learning Provision (ALP) setting

B&NES DATA

Post 16 (Above School Age)

- 20 individual children had an intervention with B&NES Youth Justice Service in the period April 2023 to March 2024 academic year, Of which
- 50% had an EHC Plan (or a ceased EHC Plan).
- 100% were engaged in ETE at YJS programme end following commencement of a further education programme in September 2023.
- 12 were still on their course and 1 young person working at the end of YJS programme.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

- The participation rate in April 2025 in B&NES for young people aged 16 and 17 years is 94.4%.
- The NEET rate in B&NES in 2024/2025 is 2.3%, compared with a South West rate of 3.9% and a rate in England of 3.4%.¹⁷

Poverty and Economic Disparities

In 2024/25, the number of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) increased by 0.5% from 2023/24.

- In 2024/25, there were 4,761 children known to be eligible for free school meals in BANES.¹⁸
- 2023/24, there were 4,706 children living in relative low income families in B&NES, this number has increased by 5% (224) on previous year

Housing

- 2023/24, 804 households owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act in B&NES and this number increased by 309 from 2022/23.
- The crude rate per 1,000 is 9.8 and is lower than South West (11.5) and England (13.4).
- In 2023/24, 413 young people approached B&NES as homeless or at risk of homelessness

Youth Justice Service

First Time Entrants

- In 2024 the rate of First Time Entrants has increased from 108 to 137(46.6%) per 100,000 in the population. This equates to 24 individual children compared with 16 in the previous reporting period (January to December 2023).

Reducing Re-Offending

- The rate of re-offending for the period April 2022 to March 2023 is 2.00. This is a reduction from 3.67 (-45.5%).
- There were 6 re-offenders in the previous reporting period committing 22 further offences and 5 re-offenders in the current period committing 10 further offences.
- The rate is considerably lower than the South West Region (4.32), PCC Area (4.87) and England and Wales (4.36).



WHAT B&NES YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TELLING US

Children and young people should have opportunities to have their voices heard and be taken seriously in decisions that affect them. When young people are involved, we know this leads to better decision-making and improved services.¹⁹

The VRP conducted a knife crime survey in 2025, asking children about their views and concerns around knife crime. 312 children participated and responses suggested children felt that reasons for carrying knives included for protection. The results are being interpreted and will inform service delivery in the coming year.

As a Youth Justice Service, we have sought to develop the priorities and actions through hearing the voices of children we work with.

We have asked children we work with the following questions:

- As a young person, what are you most concerned about?
- What do you think should be done about it by police / council / schools etc.?

The themes of what children were concerned about included:

- Concerns about the cost of living and being able to afford to rent somewhere to live – both for their family and when they are older and living independently.
- The impact of violence in their lives – a concern about knife crime and experience of being a victim of violence.
- If they are a victim of crime, will something be done about it and will they be supported.
- The relationships that the Police have with young people: feelings of mistrust that the children felt can go both ways.

What children wanted to be done about their concerns:

- For Police to have good training to communicate with young people and to get to know them better
- For there to be more Police on the streets and in areas where they feel less safe – this was a common theme.
- Lessons about knife crime in schools



WHAT DOES BEST PRACTICE TELL US (NATIONAL/LOCAL)

The B&NES VRP meets monthly as a multi-agency case meeting to discuss individuals identified as linked to exploitation and violence. It provides a platform for cross agency discussion and agreement to support and divert people away from violence going forward, through partner agency referrals or support directly from our VRP staff.

This Partnership to Reduce Exploitation and Violence (PREV) is not a case management meeting, rather the focus of this group will be on individuals where there is a known risk of serious violence, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), adult exploitation and/or of serious 'street-based' violence taking place.

Systemic Practice Model

As part of its Children's Transformation Programme and supported by Department of Education funding, the Local Authority has adopted a systemic practice model for Children's Services. This is integrated within a trauma informed, relationship aware approach and is attachment focused.

Enhanced Case Management

The Service is delivered in partnership with three other Youth Justice Services and Forensic CAMHS to deliver trauma recovery, Psychology-led support to children in the youth justice system.

The model has been developed by Johnny Matthews and Tricia Scuse, based on Maslow's hierarchy of need and a seven-stage trauma recovery model, and builds on work previously undertaken in Wales.

Evaluations have commented on how the flexibility of the Psychologists' approach has been identified as central to the success of the work. The approach is perceived to have contributed to improvements in a range of psycho-social outcomes and rebuilding of family relationships. There has also been an improvement in children's mental health, coping skills and understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Improved relationships with staff in YJS's have also been noted and overall, no negative impacts have been identified for children.

B&NES LOCAL SERVICES

The B&NES VRP consists of the VRP Lead (part-time), VRP Coordinator (full-time) and VRP Development Officer (part-time). We lead on the commissioning of interventions and provisions funded through the B&NES VRP grant, consulting with our statutory partners.

The activity to reduce serious violence that the partnership has commissioned and co-ordinated has included detached youth work, lived experience mentors, Alternative Routes Workshops in Schools, Street Doctors Training, Night Time Economy Joint Briefings, Surrender Bins, Bleed Control Kits, Parent Knife Crime Awareness Sessions and staff training.



B&NES LOCAL SERVICES

The Police Early Intervention Team (EIT) Delivers:

Teachable Moments B&NES car. Funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of the Hotspot Policing Programme. This is a pilot involving the police and a youth worker in a car on a Friday late shift following up on calls to the police involving children to engage and safeguard.

Compass

Compass works with 8 to 17 year-olds who are assessed as being at risk of offending. The model includes using a Key Worker model, an Early Help Assessment to identify need, agreement of a plan, and the use of Team Around the Family or Child Meetings to review plans. The Service monitors individual improvement in the areas of social well-being, emotional well-being, engagement in education, training and employment and child-parent relationships.

Compass supports parents and carers in areas such as mediation, parenting skills, managing conflict and support in navigating any challenges within education. Compass is jointly funded by the Local Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Turnaround

Turnaround works with children aged 10 to 17 years who are on the cusp of the youth justice system. To be eligible for Turnaround a child would need to have received a level 3 anti-social behaviour warning, No Further Action, a Police Facilitated Community

Resolution, a first time Youth Caution, interviewed under caution or be released under investigation or pre-charge bail for an offence.

Turnaround uses the new Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool to assess need and develop a support plan. Like the Compass Service, it operates using a key worker model and uses Team Around the Child or Family Meetings to review progress.

Southside

A community-led project for supporting those affected by domestic abuse is also commissioned by the B&NES VRP to offer lived-experience mentoring to those at risk of being involved in serious violence.

COMMUNITY VOICE

B&NES VRP aim to prioritise developing community links with professionals and businesses. Provide more professionals' training around youth violence. Further to this, we hold a series of knife crime awareness events in community settings such as school halls, to educate and raise awareness around the causes and effects of bladed article related crime.





Figure 5: Map of Bristol. Source Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

PLACE & POPULATION

The population of Bristol is estimated to be 483,000 people. Bristol is the largest city in the South West and one of the twelve 'Core Cities' in the UK.

Bristol's population grew by an estimated 44,000 people over the decade 2013-23, a 10.0% increase (England and Wales grew by 6.8%).

The greatest increase was in the number of 19-23 year olds, with this age group growing by 12,100 (+28.3%) over the decade.

Net international migration was the largest component of population growth in Bristol in the 12 months to mid-2023. For the second consecutive year, net international migration to Bristol was almost 5 times higher than natural change (births minus deaths) and was the highest net international migration in almost two decades.

As seen nationally, there has been a marked change in immigration since 2021. Until 2019 EU nationals were the larger component of total immigration, whereas since 2021 the majority of immigration is now non-EU nationals. This coincides with free movement ending for EU nationals, the introduction of the graduate visa route,

the easing of travel restrictions following the COVID-19 pandemic and external developments such as the war in Ukraine.

Increases in non-EU migration include both international students and workers. Bristol has seen a significant rise in the number of in-migrants from India in the last 3 years, plus other countries including China, Nigeria, Pakistan and Ukraine.

The number of births each year are falling gradually. In 2022 the number of births fell to 5,048, a fall of 26% since the recent peak of 6,781 births in 2012 and the lowest number since 2003.

The population of Bristol has become increasingly diverse and some local communities have changed significantly. There are now more than 287 different ethnic groups in the city, more than 185 countries of birth represented, at least 45 religions and more than 90 languages spoken by people living in Bristol.

In 2022/23 there were 70,920 students registered at the two Bristol universities. In the 10 years up to 2022/23 university student numbers increased by more than half (51%, +24,000). Overseas students make up more than a quarter (27%) of all students at the two universities - of these, 3% come from EU countries and the remaining 24% come from countries outside of the EU.

Healthwise, the 2021 Census shows 4.9% of people in Bristol have bad or very bad health as compared to the England 5.3%.



BRISTOL

VISION FOR A SAFER CITY

- We are One City, many communities
- Safe & Inclusive
- Fair, hopeful, aspirational for all

PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGY & ACTION

- Voice and lived experience at heart
- Data and evidence informed
- Innovative and solutions focussed
- Working as One City

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. One City Many Communities

- Mobilise the wider City Partners and diverse communities to utilise their assets to create opportunities, reduce inequality and to find new solutions.
- Engage and work closely with and with communities of place and experience recognising the expertise, knowledge and skill which lies with our communities.
- Prioritise young people and community voices to inform and shape local investment and action.
- Take positive action to address the structural inequities.

2. Prevention & Early Intervention for Families & Young People:

- Invest in children, families and young people's programmes and activities
- Providing broad experiences and opportunities for all of our young people to grow, develop and lead.
- Maintain targeted youth engagement programmes for those most at risk to divert young people from violent pathways.

- Work with schools and school leaders to ensure that schools are inclusive and that all young people can thrive.

3. Enforcement & Criminal Justice

- Increase police presence and undertake targeted operations.
- Prosecute violent offences alongside strong mentoring and diversionary programmes.
- Develop comprehensive rehabilitation for offenders to reduce reoffending and maximise the impact of sentencing.

4. Victim Support

- Recognise that victims and perpetrators may be both.
- Take a trauma informed approach.
- Ensure a range trauma informed support for victims of violence.

5. Data led & Evidence Informed

- Maintain live data and intelligence dashboards to inform partner action.
- Develop an evidence based approach supported by a new Academic Hub in partnership with the University of Bristol.

The Bristol PSVP Board has 5 active priority workstreams under its Harm Outside the Home (HOtH) Strategy:

1. Communities & Voice
2. Prevention, Identification & Early Intervention
3. Intervention & protection
4. Disruption
5. Recovery

The strategy also adopts the eight national practice principles.



SERIOUS VIOLENCE IN BRISTOL

WHAT WE KNOW

- Issues are localised.
- Racism and social exclusion are identified as causal factors by communities.
- School attendance and exclusions are a particular issue.
- There is a level of fear and anxiety amongst some communities and groups of young people.
- There is a lot of energy, concern and desire for change.

KEY STATISTICS FINDINGS

Incidence of Serious Violence:

- Overall Serious Violence Offence volumes were similar in the last two financial years. However, there was a 14% year-on-year decline in the latest six-month period (October 2024- March 2025).
- East Central Locality has recorded the highest rate in the last two years and has experienced an overall increase of 15% in the last three years to March 2025.
- While Central Ward has recorded the highest rate for all serious violence across the last three years, the rate has decreased by 32% since 2021/22. This ward also contains a number of LSOAs which are predominantly related to the Night-Time Economy (NTE). Since 2021/22, Lawrence Hill ward has seen a rate increase of 17%.
- Knife-flagged offences decreased by 19% in 2024/25. These crimes accounted for 11% of all serious violence in the latest year, down from 13% in 2023/24.

Demographics & Victim Profiles

- Offenders aged under 14 have increased the most since 2022/23. 79% of crimes linked to under 14 victims in the past three years were assault with injury offences- this is higher than the average across all age groups (65%).
- 14-17 and 18-25 offenders and victims have decreased in the last year, driven by a reduction in knife-flagged offences that is most pronounced amongst younger cohorts; the number of 14-17 and 18-25 victims of knife-flagged serious violence decreased by 43% and 34% respectively.
- In the 12 months to September 2025, 65% of victims of serious violence were male, down from 67% in the previous 12 months.

Types of Serious Violence:

- Assaults with Injury and Personal Robbery offences fell by 3% and 12% respectively, while business robberies increased by 30%.

Impact on Communities:

- Heightened fear and reduced community cohesion in affected areas.
- Increased pressure on emergency and health services due to violence related injuries.



BRISTOL DATA

RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Substance Misuse

The use of alcohol and other illegal drugs is a significant factor impacting on the prevalence of violence, sexual violence, intimidation and anti-social behaviour.

- There are an estimated 5,436 opiate and/or crack users in Bristol (2019-20).
- Bristol has the second largest estimated rate of opiate and/or crack users (per 1,000 population) of the English core cities.
- 4.7% of opiate drug users left drug treatment successfully and did not re-present to treatment within 6 months (2023, NDTMS).
- In the 18-29 age group there is a significant reduction in the number of opiate users compared to 14 years ago.

Mental Health

- 7% of Bristol residents reported a low life satisfaction score in 2022/23, higher than the national average (lower values indicate favourable performance).
- Local data shows 19.9% of Bristol residents have “poor mental wellbeing”, rising to 24.4% in the most deprived areas.
- Disabled people are the least satisfied with life (39%), significantly lower than the Bristol average (64.1%).

Anti-Social Behaviour

According to the police definition of anti-social behaviour (ASB) there were:

- 9,257 incidents in 2024/25, a similar number to the previous year (9,2664) but significantly lower than 2021/22 (-17.8%).
- 43% of respondents to the Quality-of-Life Survey 2024 felt that anti-social behaviour is a problem locally, up from 41% last year.



- Residents' concern for the general level of crime and anti-social behaviour is much higher in deprived areas, with 71%

- of respondents feeling that ASB is a problem locally - this represents a gap of 28% when compared to the citywide average.

Deliberate Fire Setting

- 731 deliberate fires were recorded in Bristol in 2024/25, a 18% decrease from 893 in 2023/24.
- 36% of fires occurred between 6pm-10pm.
- 46% of fires occurred between May and August.

Domestic Abuse

- Based on local police data, 7,048 domestic abuse flagged crimes with victims over the age of 16 and 4,963 domestic abuse incidents (across all ages) were recorded in Bristol in 2024/25, an increase of 6% and 25% in crimes and incidents respectively compared to 2023/24.
- The rate of domestic abuse related incidents and crimes per 1,000 population (aged 16 and over) was 30.3 per 1000, an increase from 26.8 per 1000 in 2023/24.
- For Bristol in 2024/25, where victim age was recorded, 44% of all domestic abuse related crimes with victims aged 16 and over were a repeat offence, up from 42% in 2023/24.

Repeat offences are defined as multiple offences committed against the same victim within 12 months of the latest offence.

- In Bristol, females over the age of 16 are 2.7 times more likely to be a victim of a domestic abuse related crime in Bristol than males.
- There have been 9,129 recorded contacts made to Children's Social Care in the past three years (April - March) due to domestic abuse, representing 5,891 children.

BRISTOL DATA

RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Hate Crime & Discrimination

- Police recorded hate crimes increased by 15% from 2023/24 to the year ending March 2025 and by 27% since 2022/23.
- Race-flagged hate accounted for 73% of all hate crime in 2024/25 and increased by 18% compared to the previous year.
- Offenders aged under 18 have almost doubled since 2022/23.

Hospital Admissions

- Assault related hospital admissions in Bristol increased by 20% in the 12 months to March 2025.
- In the year ending March 2025, 70% of assault related admissions were for bodily force (up from 61% in the previous year).
- The proportion of assaults involving a sharp object (13%) has decreased in 2024/25, with total admission volumes involving a sharp object down by 23%.

Financial Stress & Unemployment²⁰

- Around 1 in 31 (3.2%) households in Bristol experienced severe food insecurity in 2024/25, and 1 in 12 (7.9%) experienced moderate to severe food insecurity.

The Quality-of-Life survey also provides insight into fuel poverty in Bristol and in 2024:

- 30% of respondents were extremely or moderately worried about keeping their home warm this winter (31% in 2023) but this rises to 40% in most deprived areas.
- 72% of residents were satisfied with the state of repair of their home, reducing to 65% in most deprived areas.
- 11% found it difficult to manage financially, rising to 17% in most deprived areas.



- 20950 (10.3%) of households are in fuel poverty in 2023, down from 27,561 (13.8%) in 2022²¹. This is lower than the national average (11.4%).

Employment

- The unemployment rate for Bristol was 3.8% in the twelve months ending December 2024, similar to the Great Britain average (3.8%).
- As of March 2024 there were 7,390 male and 5,380 female out of work benefit claimants resident in Bristol (4.3% and 3.2% of the working age population respectively).
- The employment rate for working age (16 to 64) in December 2024 was male 82% and female 78.9%, the gap has reduced to 3.1 percentage points from 9.1pp in December 2023.

Offender Management

- Probation supervised 127 individuals convicted of a serious violent crime during the period 2024/25.
- Of those aged 18-25years (30n).
- 90% were male
- 47% (14n) sentenced to custody.
- Assessment of criminogenic needs are as follows: education, training, and employment 77%, lifestyle 73%, attitudes 70%, thinking & behaviour 67%.
- accommodation 67%, relationships 63%, drug use 50%, alcohol 13%.

Of those aged 26+years (97n)

85% were male

- 57% (55n) sentenced to custody.
- Assessment of criminogenic needs are as follows: accommodation 65%, education, training, and employment 59%, relationships 56%, thinking & behaviour 54%, lifestyle 53%, attitudes 53%, drug use 47%, alcohol 20%.

BRISTOL DATA

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING)

Children in Care

- As of 10th October 2025, there are 767 Children in Care in Bristol. Data taken from the annual national data collection from local authorities show that Bristol had a rate of 80 Children in Care per 10,000 children at the end of 2022/23, higher than the national rate of 71 per 10,000 but in line with statistical neighbours.
- There was a significant increase in the number of children in care each year between 2021/22 and 2023/24. Some of this increase can be attributed to more 16/17-year-olds coming into care. While this is in line with statistical neighbours, it is a significant increase and has placed additional pressure on placement sufficiency, especially for older children and those with more complex needs.

Children in Need

- As of October 2025, there were 1,396 Children in Need in Bristol, compared to 1,216 in the same period last year.
- 46% [AR1] of current Children in Need have a Child in Need Plan
- Currently, the most common age group of Children in Need is 10-15 years (40%), followed by 5-9 years (24%).
- 47% are White British.

Child Protection

- As of 10th October 2025, there were 400 children with a Child Protection Plan in Bristol.

Missing Children

- The number of missing episodes increased by 14% in 2024/25, while the proportion of Missing Return Conversations accepted decreased year-on-year since 2020/21.
- Prevalence of different factors in the reason for going missing include running to friends (41%), family difficulties (38%), peer influences and issues around education (both 36%), mental health (34%) and substance misuse (32%).

Early Help Referrals

- 125 referrals have been made by Families in Focus teams in Bristol in the past three years (2022/23 to 2024/25), and 145 contacts received during this period.

EXPLOITATION DATA²²

Children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 260 contacts were made to Bristol City Council Child Social Care for CSE reasons in 2024/25, down by 6% since 2022/23.
- When a child is referred to children's social care services and is assessed as being in need of children's social care services, Bristol recorded 180 episodes with CSE as an assessment factor.

Children at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- 476 contacts were made to Bristol City Council Child Social Care for CCE reasons in 2024/25, up by 15% since 2022/23.



BRISTOL DATA

EXPLOITATION DATA

Children at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- When a child is referred to children's social care services and is assessed as being in need of children's social care services, Bristol recorded 207 episodes with CCE as an assessment factor.

EDUCATION TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

Suspensions and Permanent Suspensions within Bristol

- Overall Suspensions from mainstream schools within Bristol increased by 14% in 2024/25.
- Permanent Suspensions reduced by 21% (this excludes children within Bristol attending out-of-area schools).
- As of November 2024, the suspension rate and permanent exclusion rate in Bristol was 2.8 and 0.03 respectively.
- Term 2 2024/25 sees an increased rate of suspensions compared to term 1 2024/25 with 1,722 suspensions and 1,025 pupils suspended. There have been 22 exclusions. This remains a citywide improvement priority.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

- There are 6.5% of 16-17 year olds in Bristol (2024/25) who are recorded as being "not in education, employment or training" or their current situation is not known, which equates to 626 young people (16-17 year olds). This is similar to the previous year (6.6%) but higher than the England average of 5.6%, and places Bristol as the third lowest performing city when compared to the other English core cities.

Poverty and Economic Disparities

- 15% of Bristol's population live in the most deprived 10% of areas in England in 2019 (16% in 2015).
- 17,200 children (21%) and 13,600 older people (17%) in Bristol live in income deprived households.

Housing

- In the year ending September 2024, the average house price in Bristol was £340,000, £57,500 higher than the England and Wales average of £282,500 and the highest of all the Core Cities.
- Over the last decade, average house prices in Bristol increased by almost 80% (+£150,000) compared to an almost 50% increase in England and Wales (+£92,500), again the highest increase of all the Core Cities.
- Earnings in Bristol are similar to the national average and other English Core Cities, but as house prices are significantly higher this results in affordability issues.

Modern Slavery Referrals linked to County Lines²³

- Since January 2022, 148 Modern Slavery Offences flagged as 'Arrange or facilitate travel of another person with a view to exploitation' have been recorded in Bristol - 64 such offences were recorded in 2024/25 (up from 30 in the previous year).
- Victim Age was recorded for 51 of 64 offences in the last financial year to March 2025.
- Of these, 49% of victims were aged 18-24 and 51% were 0-18.
- 66% of offences during this period involved male victims.



BRISTOL DATA

Youth Justice Service

- The rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system in Bristol is 158.7 per 100,000 (12 months to December 2024). Rates for both Bristol and England have gradually been decreasing since 2010 and for the first time in 2024 Bristol's rate is now statistically similar to the England average.
- Across all the wards, data shows that there were 501 individual children committing 1,359 offences in Bristol during the three-year period April 2022 to March 2025. During this three-year period the number of individual children committing offences was lowest in 2024/25 with the lowest number of offences committed.
- Across Bristol the rate of offenders per 1,000 of the population (aged 10-17) was 12.5 for the three-year period (i.e. April 2022 to March 2025), a decrease on the previous period (14.4).

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) is in part co-located with our neighbourhood team approach. This enables better join up across children's services and a greater focus on earlier intervention and prevention, and shared risk management. The YJS participates in locality meetings where children are discussed to ensure the most appropriate services are in place to meet needs

SYSTEMIC PRACTICE

The Preventing Serious Violence Partnership Board oversees and delivers Bristol's approach to preventing serious violence.



This is rooted in a Public Health approach bringing together the work of all partners with communities and equity at its core.

Working with Families & Children

In Bristol our practice with children and families in all of our teams, is supported by our Systemic Practice Hub. The system delivers trauma informed practice that is relationship based. The Hub is overseen by the Principal Social Worker for Children and Families, and is composed of three Systemic Practice Leads, each of whom are integral in promoting systemic thinking and learning in order to ensure the best interventions are enabled for children and families.

Enhanced Case Management (ECM)

The ECM project continues to offer a psychologically informed and supported approach to working with the children most impacted by previous trauma within the criminal justice system. In partnership with Forensic Child Adolescent Mental Health Services (F-CAMHS), the project develops the multi-agency understanding of the child and families' needs and supports the network in agreeing a consistent approach to addressing the impact of that trauma. The independent scrutiny and evaluation has shown significant improvements in children's outcomes, as well as linked benefits to wider approaches to practice across the service, and improved working relationships between partner agencies.

BRISTOL VRP

Police Early Intervention Team (EIT)

Bristol YJS works closely with A&S EIT to support children in the criminal justice system who are at risk of involvement in serious youth violence, or of being exploited. Three Police Officers are seconded from the EIT to work directly with Bristol YJS, offering enhanced information and intelligence sharing opportunities, and bringing police knowledge and expertise into those professional networks.

Turnaround

The Turnaround programme is a Ministry of Justice funded prevention and early intervention scheme delivered by Youth Justice Services. The programme began in December 2022, and Bristol YJS is currently funded to deliver the programme until April 2026. The programme offers support, resources and interventions for children identified as at risk of entering the Youth Justice System. Bristol YJS has worked with over 60 children and families to date under the Turnaround programme.

The programme takes a child-first approach, seeking to identify and facilitate young people's engagement in positive activities in their community, creating opportunities for return to education provision where necessary. The service report back on the children who have engaged with positive involvement in mental health support, mentoring and supportive relationships, educational and vocational activities, sports, music, or social and emotional activities.



Safer Connections

As part of Bristol City Council's transformation of children's services, the new Safer Connections team has been established to strengthen citywide responses to Serious Youth Violence and Harm Outside the Home (HOtH), building on the previous Safer Connections approach.

The Safer Connections team is responsible for responding to Serious Youth Violence and HOtH through a contextual safeguarding approach, supporting both statutory and partnership services to target the social conditions that enable abuse, aiming to create safety within the environments children inhabit through prevention, disruption, support, and recovery.

What we do:

Review and support the triage of referrals into First Response where Serious Youth Violence and/or HOtH is the primary concern, offering direct support to social care teams, children, and families.

- Provide intensive support to children and families, through keyworkers and practice leads, disrupting harm and building safety via relationship-based interventions.
- Hold daily incident briefings, reviewing police reports, intelligence, and missing episodes citywide to ensure timely, targeted responses.
- Coordinate multi-agency safeguarding responses, including strategy discussions, peer group mapping, and contextual assessments to address risks in specific locations or networks.

BRISTOL VRP

- Work alongside schools and citywide partners, offering consultation, coordination, and joint planning to strengthen safeguarding practice.
- Deliver training and promote contextual safeguarding, fostering open communication, shared decision-making, and a collective commitment to protecting children, families, and communities.

OUR STRUCTURE

Children’s Practice Team

The Children’s Practice Team work directly with children and families where risks outside the home have been identified. The team aims to disrupt harm and build safety through intensive support, including strategy discussions, missing child coordination, family network meetings, and direct work with children and families. The HOtH Leads supports lead professionals with consultations and contribute to multi-agency planning, ensuring that interventions are tailored, trauma-informed, and responsive to the child’s needs.

The Partnership Team

The Partnership Team leads on inter-agency coordination to address harm occurring in the spaces children inhabit, such as schools, peer groups, public areas, and online environments. They work closely with education settings, police, health, youth services, and community organisations to improve their response to HOtH as well as assess and intervene in locations and networks where exploitation or abuse is suspected.



Their responsibilities include reviewing daily incident briefings, conducting peer group and location assessments, supporting complex strategy discussions, and facilitating joint planning to reduce risk. The team also provides training, consultation, and community engagement to strengthen contextual safeguarding approaches and ensure a coherent, citywide response to Serious Youth Violence and HOtH.

Communities & Voice

The views and voices of children, young people, young adults and families are central to everything we do as a partnership. Our approach will continue to be shaped by lived experiences of children, young people, families, and the wider community and robust multi-agency intelligence.

The new HOtH strategy has been developed with valuable input from our partners, stakeholders, children, young people, young adults and families. A partnership action plan is being developed alongside the strategy, describing how we will make the best use of resources to make our communities safer, work together to reduce the impact of violence and exploitation by empowering communities and address the risk factors that can lead to being a victim or perpetrator of violence and exploitation.

Children, young people, young adults, families, and communities are central to shaping solutions. We are committed to authentic and empowering participation—moving beyond consultation to co-production. We will continue to provide safe spaces for those with lived experience to inform design, delivery, and evaluation of services.

BRISTOL VRP

Our approach will ensure that youth voice is embedded ethically and equitably, championing a Child First ethos that shifts responsibility from children to the adults and systems that surround them. We will also promote community-led narratives and target disproportionality in how harm is experienced and addressed. We will prioritise youth voice in a way that is ethical, inclusive, and empowering—ensuring participation is meaningful and genuine. Young people are and will continue to be engaged through safe and supportive methods that allow them to influence decisions and processes that affect their lives. Our work recognises and seeks to positively influence the structural and social adversities that shape young people’s lives. Our work supports a system-wide shift that sees safeguarding as a shared responsibility.

WHAT BRISTOL YOUNG PEOPLE & PARENTS ARE TELLING US

As part of the development of the strategy and the work undertaken to develop the Bristol Child Exploitation Collaboration we listened to children, young people, young adults and families across the city. They told us what makes them feel safe and unsafe, what support they needed, and their perspectives on harm outside the home in Bristol.

A place for her to go, a decent youth club for the evenings, a youth worker who can try to help navigate young people through social media, peer pressure, hands on grassroots rolling your sleeves up work” **Parent**

“Sometimes the community don’t really know what the young person’s dealing with, that their being exploited and all that. So all they’ll see is he’s getting into trouble” **Male (21).**

“Acceptance is a big thing. If you tell them no, automatically you’re going to be seen as the lame one, or as not like them. It doesn’t even have to be forced, but if you want to be with them it’s so easy to be manipulated without you even knowing it, because you want to be accepted. A lot of people are scared to be alone. If you’re in a good group of friends but they kick you out, if a bad group come to you and ask you to do something, you’ll do it because you don’t want to be alone.” **Male (21).**

“As a young female, I feel really unsafe when I’m walking by myself sometimes” **Female (15)**

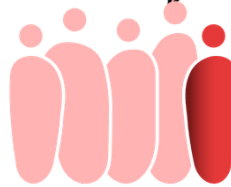
“You can’t close the door to the outside world anymore, it follows you in through social media. They can’t even close their bedroom door to it. There could be people verbally beating them up and you as a parent don’t know as its all on the phone. There is no escape for the younger generation, it fills their life, seeing what people are saying about them.” **Parent**



"The way that lifestyles is glorified, county lines and all that, is very hard because yeah, the money is nice to have. To sit there counting out £10,000 is lush, but you can't spend it. Kids don't realise you are doing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week work. You can never put it behind you. The one thing I struggled with was the constant phone ringing, the sound of that ring tone sends you crazy after a while. Only 2 hours sleep at night. That's why in my music I refuse to glorify the lifestyle. When you see your best friend who you grew up with die, yeah. That's it. So at the end of the day, if more people would actually speak about the realistic side of lifestyle, then maybe people would understand, but being truthful, it doesn't make money." **Male (19)**

"There needs to be more opportunities for young people to gain practical experience and skills, so that they are more likely to work" **Male (16)**

"...suddenly you realize how important it is for teenage females to kind of be reminded of how special they are and that you're not what happened to you. I think something does happen to teenage girls, it really does lower your self-confidence..." **Female (16)**



"It would be helpful to be given knowledge of the different services and what you could potentially get access to and how, and what their procedures are because I have never dealt with social care. I don't know why they're asking me certain questions... They were saying going to First Response, but I don't know who they are, you're talking to somebody who has never had dealings with social care, it can be really overwhelming not knowing the procedures and next steps. So, someone guiding you through the process or just help familiarising yourself with how the agencies work and what they can offer and a comprehensive guide to, that would be helpful" **Parent**

"I would say that the things I've seen is not good, but that's mostly because of where I grew up. If you didn't live where it lived and you seen something for the first time, you'd be scared. Like, you wouldn't know what to do. But once you get used to it, once you just get surrounded by it all your life, it's like normal, that kind of desensitizes someone. Then it just makes you think, well, that's normal because it happens everyday" **Male (15)**

This feedback reinforces our commitment to making the system more responsive, transparent, and supportive; especially those at greatest risk.



BRISTOL BEST PRACTICE

What does best practice tell us (national/local)

The BPSVP Board is committed to developing an evidence based approach. An Academic Hub has been developed in partnership with Bristol University and the University of the West of England. Bristol University have assembled a world class team of multi-disciplinary researchers and have undertaken an initial rapid review of current evidence. Further work is planned to develop the evidence base, including the training of community and embedded researchers.

CAMPAIGN SUB-GROUP

Knife Crime

The topic of knife crime was chosen by young people in Bristol, as many places, including Bristol, have been hit massively with the increase of knife crime violence. As a group we hope to reduce the risk for young people. We aim to do this by raising awareness and working with decision makers and higher authorities.

Prevention, Education & Welfare

The Prevention, Education and Welfare group are focusing on educating young people on how to prevent and recognise unsafe situations. This will include working with schools to find out what support there is for young people in regards to mental health and safety. This group is all about addressing the root causes to ensure the wellbeing of young people in Bristol.

Police & Crime

The Police and Crime subgroup aims to find out when the police are working on in relation to young people. We want to find what is being done to improve relationships between the police and the youth, building trust and making them feel safer around them. We also want to find out what is being done to improve the city's crime rate in relation to young people, making sure that they feel secure and safe.

Safer Communities & Environments

The safer communities and environments sub group aims to achieve safe surroundings for all within the community so that they feel they can express themselves freely and have an environment that doesn't make them feel unsafe or endangered. We want to work with local young people, and higher authorities that have the same passion for safety as we do in order to resolve the issues we stand for through social media and contact in schools and other organisations. With their support we want to ensure that people feel safe in their surroundings by creating fun and enjoyable spaces. We need to make sure that young people in Bristol have spaces to go to.

The evidence base is currently not strong, and the localised nature of many interventions means that it's difficult to predict their impact on a community. There are several high-quality reviews that have already been done on this topic which do provide some valuable insights.²⁴

Strong partnership and wide stakeholder engagement, including with communities is generally found to be crucial to tackling serious youth violence. This is not the work of a small team or a single agency but a whole system.



BRISTOL BEST PRACTICE

What services do we currently have in place locally

Community leadership and engagement is an essential element of Bristol's place-based response to serious violence. Four new place-based locality partnerships have been established. These locality partnerships bring together community leaders and local stakeholders to understand and respond to issues, concerns and opportunities. This approach has also supported fast and effective multi-agency acute responses when the need has arisen.

Only working closely with members of local communities as equal partners can we understand the complex and interconnected risk and protective factors for violence.

Safer Connections have held a number of workshops with young people and their families focussing on exploitation and serious violence awareness.

The City Office have convened a series of Round Tables to bring together key partners in the city, to develop a shared understanding of serious youth violence and bring together the resources available within the city to take a multi-agency approach to tackle the issue as One City.

These meetings set out to tackle the issue as One City and form part of Bristol's overall approach to preventing serious violence, bringing together strategic stakeholders to explore, collaborate and innovate.

To date, the Round Tables have explored the multi-agency landscape within the city (including pathway mapping and lived experience mapping) and explored best practice within and beyond the city. This collaboration includes independent VCSE programmes, especially those delivering sport, creative arts and youth and play partnerships.

Safer Connections currently funds a number of interventions designed to support young people and prevent serious violence and exploitation.

- **1 to 1 community mentoring** facilitates adults with lived experience to work with young people at medium or high risk of exploitation and serious youth violence. These packages of support are bespoke and tailored to the needs and interests of the individual young person to increase the likelihood of engagement and positive outcomes.
- **Multi agency detached youth work** is delivered in identified areas across the city, targeting areas where there is concern about organised exploitation of children and missing children. This intervention sets out to meet young people where they are, engage with them and develop meaningful relationships. The work includes 'pop up' youth activities, responding to serious incidents, involvement and support in contextual safeguarding assessments and late-night detached work.



BRISTOL FUNDED INTERVENTIONS

- **Parent support programmes** for parents and carers of children and young people involved in/on the periphery of SYV and exploitation are a key element of Safer Connections delivery. This service offers a combination of 1 to 1 support for parents, peer support (to develop community networks to build safety), Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) strategies and support for protective strategies for siblings.
- **Education Inclusion Support** involves supporting young people at risk of exclusion or being moved schools due incidents in education settings involving weapons or drugs. This service also supports education settings to assess risk and to safety plan for young people involved in serious youth violence and exploitation.
- **The Weapons in Schools Pathway** is a package of support for young people who have been found in possession of an offensive weapon on the premises of an education setting and aims to support young people involved in these incidents, prevent further offending and to keep them safe.
- **Drugs in Schools Pathway** is a package of support for young people who have been found in possession of a small quantity of a controlled drug on the premises of an education setting. The Drugs in Schools Pathway aims to support children involved in these incidents, prevent further offending and to keep them safe.
- **Targeted Group Work** involves working in partnership with local youth organisations to co design and deliver interventions for young people. This programme is centred around supporting identified friendship groups of young people aged 11-25 who are involved in child criminal exploitation (CCE) and/or SYV to manage conflict and improve relationships. Creating safe places is key to this work to enable young people to share their experiences, challenges, and perspectives around living in the community, whilst supporting them with decision-making and goal setting. This work also includes social education on issues to include knife crime and exploitation.
- **Specialist Wellbeing Support** provides specialist trauma informed following a significant incident of serious youth violence.
- **Prevention Workshops** include raising awareness and developing specific campaigns (identified with young people) on SYV, exploitation, county lines, knife crime, the negative influences of social media and working with young people to raise aspiration.

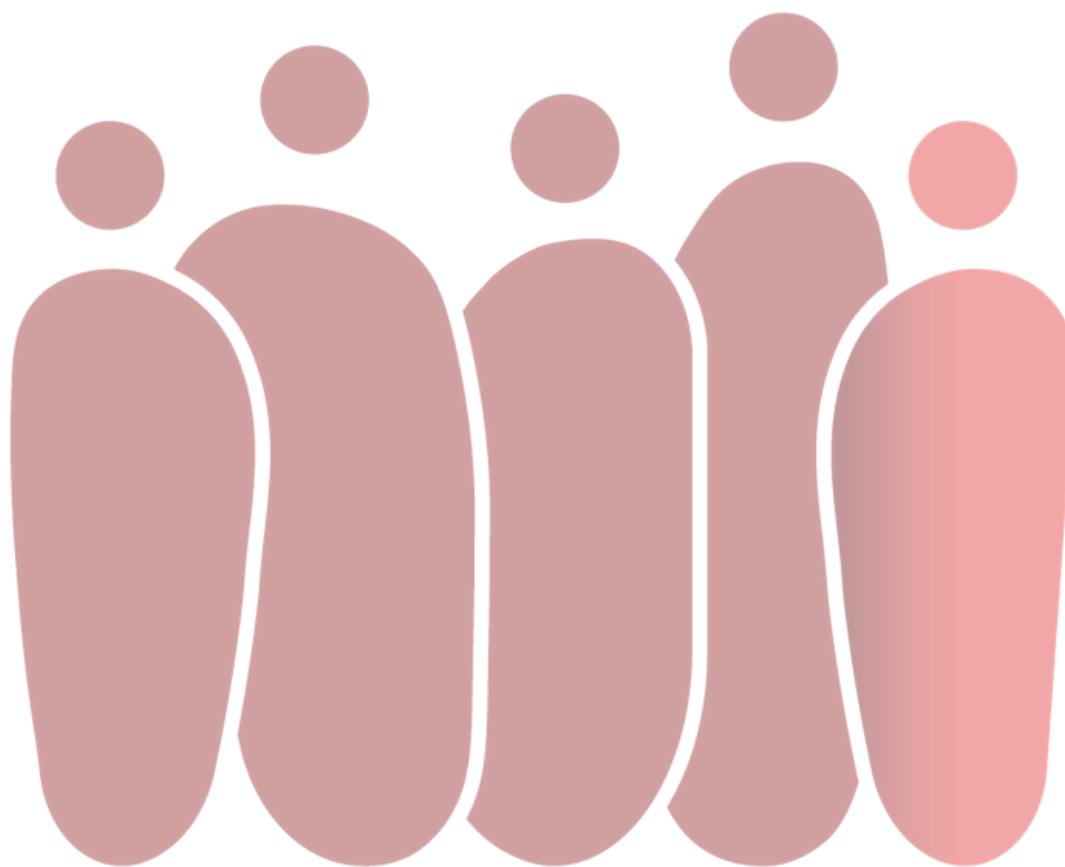


BRISTOL BEST PRACTICE

Girls & Young Women's work currently commissioned by Safer Connections involves a number of organisations which are set up to run Girls and Young Women's programmes across the city.

This programme of work covers the following themes to include:

- anti-violence & exploitation workshops,
- Higher Education elements to encourage continued learning,
- skill-building workshops (such as cooking, arts, dance and movement and holistic therapy),
- confidence and self-esteem building
- awareness raising through workshops focused on sexual exploitation, healthy relationships and choices, sexual harassment, boundaries and consent.
- professional facilitators building relationships through activities with young women and encouraging them to seek relevant advice and help.
- young women-led activities to encourage leadership and decision making.



PLACE & POPULATION

North Somerset is a Unitary Authority covering 145 square miles and is one of the 5 local authorities forming Avon and Somerset. North Somerset is made up of 35 wards and combines both urban and rural areas. It has a population of 216,700. The 2024 Population Mid-Year estimates indicate a population of 224,578.

Around 10% of North Somerset's population lives in areas that are amongst the 20% most deprived in England. All of these are in Weston-super-Mare. However, there are also significant pockets of deprivation in the other towns and in some villages across the county with the additional challenges of transport networks in the rural areas.

The population is made up of 51.4% women, and 48.6% men. With 95.7% of the population white compared to 81.0% for England.

North Somerset has a greater proportion of those aged 65 and over at 23.93% (51,872) compared to England 19.4%. Children and young people (0-17) at 19.77% (42,845) and people of working age 56.3% (122,011) have lower proportion as compared to the England averages of 20.84% and 60.74% respectively.

The population is growing, but most of the population growth is expected to be in adults over 65 where there has been a 42.6%

increase in the over 65 years population since 2001.

17.7% of the population are School children or full-time students (20.4% England). Those unemployed is 2.2% compared to 3.5% unemployed in England. Whilst 40.3% of the population is economically inactive (39.1% England).

The 2021 Census shows 4.9% of people in North Somerset have bad or very bad health as compared to the England 5.3%.

The number of children (aged under 16) living in Relative low income families in North Somerset in 2022/23, 6,641 (17.2%) children were recognised as living in absolute low-income families. This is lower than England at 24.6% and the South West 21.5%.

In North Somerset, income deprivation had a greater adverse effect on children and young compared to the older age group (60 years and over). There are higher proportions of young people living in more deprived areas in North Somerset, with 27 of LSOAs among the 20% most deprived in England.

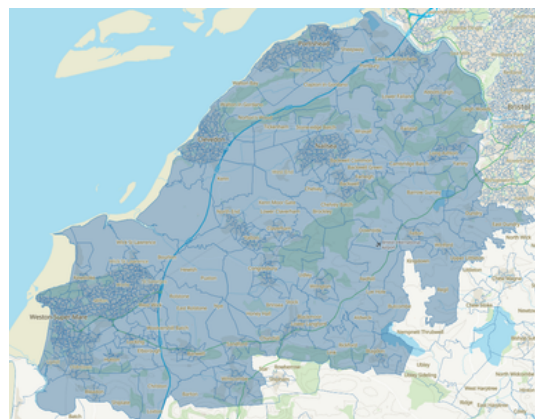


Figure 6: Map of North Somerset: Source Office for National Statistics – Census 2021



NORTH SOMERSET

Vision

To create a safer North Somerset by reducing incidents of serious violence through robust identification, effective intervention and accessible education.

NORTH SOMERSET PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGY & ACTION

Strategic Priorities

1. Robust Identification

- Identify risk factors for individuals at earliest opportunity by making effective use of data and intelligence from across the partnership. This is achieved through participation and multi-agency collaboration within existing and emerging pathways, including but not limited to Daily Safety Briefings and VRP case meetings.
- Supporting the Teachable Moments Engagement Car (TMEC) provision in North Somerset to identify young people within North Somerset communities who could be supported by the partnership.

2. Effective Intervention:

- Directly supporting young people identified by the VRP or partners in relation to violence, through one-to-one support from Early Intervention Team (EIT) and Start to Finish worker, funded by the VRP.
- Enhance prevention through supporting the robust prosecution of violent offenders in respect of youth violence, achieved through collaborative working with partners and colleagues across the partnership to deter future incidents.

- Promote the Young Victim Service in North Somerset, to support young people affected by youth violence.

3. Accessible Education:

- Deliver, support or commission relevant education and awareness provision for parents and carers of young people in North Somerset.
- Promote education and awareness programmes for professionals working with young people in North Somerset.
- Deliver education and awareness projects within educational settings (KS3+) across North Somerset, including but not limited to Blunt Truth.
- Engage and education wider local communities in person and via online communications in relation to local, region and national days and weeks of action.

We will work with communities to ensure our towns and villages are clean, resilient, and safe for everyone.²⁵

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by delivering the actions in the Community Safety Partnership Plan. Including the North Somerset Evening and Night-time Economy Delivery Plan, the Violence Reduction Unit Response Strategy, the Hate Crime Strategy, the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Public Space Protection Orders.



NORTH SOMERSET STATISTICS

What we know about serious violence in North Somerset:

Key Findings from statistics

- Compared with national and some regional statistics, North Somerset as a whole experiences lower levels of violence.
- There was a 13% increase in the number of recorded crimes in 2024/25²⁶ with a rate per 1,000 of 83.6

Incidence of Violence:

- Violent and sexual offences accounted for 47% of recorded crime
- The cost of Violent Crime in North Somerset²⁷ rose by 10% in 2024/25
- Violence and sexual offences increased by 19% in 2024/25.
- Increases in violent offences in 13 of the 15 Police beat areas.

Street Based Serious Violence

- Street Based Serious Violence²⁸ stayed relatively stable with an increase of only 1% in 2024/25
- Small increases across 50% of North Somerset except Ashcombe increasing 63%.
- Knife-Flagged offences 55% of offenders were males aged 18 or above (where age stated).

Demographics and Victim Profiles – Street Based Serious Violence

- 93% of offenders were White (where ethnicity stated)
- 8% increase in the number of identified offenders
- 83% offenders were male
- 23% of offenders were aged 25 or under
- 24% (22n) decrease in offenders aged 25 or under



- 29% of identified victims were female
- 92% of victims were White with 8% from other ethnic groups (where ethnicity stated)
- Over one third of identified victims were aged 25 or under
- 57% (31n) decrease in victims aged under 25

Hotspots

- 50% of SBSV occurred in 4 police beat areas, Weston Town Centre, Ashcombe, Worle & North Weston
- 26% SBSV occurring in Weston Town centre beat area
- 63% increase in Ashcombe

DATA

NORTH SOMERSET WHAT THE DATA SAYS: RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Substance Misuse

During the year 2023/24 in North Somerset there were:

Adults

- 1,115 adults in treatment
- of which;
- Males 66% (n=735) Females 34%(n=380) in treatment.
- Those aged between 30 to 49 years old accounted for 56%, followed by those aged 50+ (32%) and 18-29 (13%)

Young People

- 2023/24, there were 25 males and 20 females
- Young people aged 14-15 accounting for 44%, those aged 16-17 (56%)

NORTH SOMERSET DATA

Mental Health

Depression: QOF Prevalence (18+ yrs)

The percentage of new patients aged 18 and over with depression shows an increasing trend 2023/24 with North Somerset at 1.8%, higher than the South West region (1.3%) and England (1.5%)

- The number of Hospital admissions for mental health conditions (<18 yrs) in 2023/24 was 165 (376.1 per 100,000)
- 2023/24 rate 376.1 is almost five times higher than England (80.2) and almost three times higher than the regional rate (127.5)

Anti-Social Behaviour

According to the police definition of anti-social behaviour (ASB) there were

- 2,464 incidents in 2024/25, a 9% decrease on the previous year.
- Nuisance incidents (e.g. rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours) accounted for 77% (1,890) of reported ASB

Deliberate Fires

- In North Somerset in 2024/25 there were 136 deliberate fires, this is a decrease of 16% compared to 2023/24 (n=26).
- Over the last 12 months Weston-super-Mare South (18n), Weston-super-Mare Winterstoke (16n) and Weston-super-Mare Hillside (16n) have seen the most deliberate fires.

Domestic Abuse

Based on local police data,

- 4,691 domestic abuse incidents were recorded in North Somerset in 2024/25, an increase from 4,507 in 2023/24 (up 4.1%).
- The rate of domestic abuse related incidents and crimes per 1,000 population was 21.6 per 1,000, an increase from 20.8 per 1,000 in 2023/24.



Hate Crime & Discrimination

- In 2024/25 there was 491 hate crime incidents a 10.5% increase compared to 2023/24
- Religion or Belief hate crime rose by 78%, Gender 39% and Disability by 21%

Hospital Admissions for Violence

- During 2021/22-23/24, there were 175 hospital admissions for violent crimes, with a rate of 29.3 per 100,000. This rate has increased by 3.9 from the previous year (25.6)
- The rate of 29.3 is higher than both the South West's rate of 25.4 and lower than England's 34.2²⁹

Financial Stress & Unemployment

- Across the 8 distribution centres in North Somerset a total of 13,457 food parcels were distributed in 2024/25 (Parcels Distributed to: Children 5,560, Adults 7,897), 17% decrease since 2022/23
- 8,903 (8.8%) households in fuel poverty³⁰

Employment

The monthly unemployment rate for North Somerset in the twelve months ending June 2025 is 3.2%.

- Economic activity rate June 2025: 82.7% (Great Britain 78.8%)
- Employment rate June 2025: 80.7% (Great Britain 75.5%)
- Unemployment rate June 2025: 3.2% (Great Britain 4.1%)
- 1,700 male and 1,510 females out of work benefit claimant's resident in North Somerset, 2.5% of the working age population respectively.
- Of the 3,210 claimants 625 were aged 16 to 24 (19% of claimants)

NORTH SOMERSET DATA

Supporting Families Programme

After 13 years of delivery, the Supporting Families programme ended on 31 March 2025. The number of families in North Somerset in the Supporting Families with successful outcomes Programme in 2024/25, was 30% at year end.³¹

Offender Management

Probation supervised 21 individuals convicted of a serious violent crime during the period 2024/25;

Those aged 18-25years (3n)

- 100% were male
- 0n sentenced to custody

Those aged 26+years (18n)

- 100% male
- 50% (9n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: 56% (10n) Accommodation and ETE, 33% (6n) Alcohol and Drugs

Children & Young People (Children's Safeguarding)

The children we support as of the end of March 2025:

Children in Care

- 279 children in care, 20 of these children are unaccompanied asylum seeking children – at a rate of 64.34 per 10,000
- 260 care leavers (161 care leavers aged 18 to 21 years; 99 care leavers aged 22-24)

Children in Need

- 277 children on a child in need plan at a rate of 63.87 per 10,000
- Child Protection
- 139 children with a child protection plan – at a rate of 33.05 per 10,000

Children Missing

There were 434 missing episodes during the year 2024/25, involving 150 young people.

- of which 84 Female, 65 male and 1 Other.
- 14% aged Under 13yr (21n),
- 58% aged 13y to 15y (87n)
- 28% aged 16/17y28 (42n)

Early Help Referrals

- 183 families (340 children) supported through early help in our family wellbeing service
- The number of children identified as at risk of CSE as of 31/3/2025 – 10
- The number of children identified as at risk of CCE as of 31/3/2025 – 66

Education Training & Employment

In North Somerset we have 64 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, 4 special schools and 1 pupil referral unit in the area.

- 95 different languages spoken in our schools
- In 2023/24, the average attainment 8 score in North Somerset is 46.1 is similar to the average for the South West 46 and England 46.1
- 16.6% of children eligible for free school meals the number of pupils eligible for FSMs has increased from to 5,152 (16.3%) in 2023/24 to 5,242 (16.6%) in 2024/25
- 2,644 children have an education, health and care plan³²
- 3,278 children are receiving SEN support in our schools
- There is a 25.1% increase in the number of EHCPs in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, an increase significantly higher than the South West region (12.9%) and that of England (10.8%)³²



NORTH SOMERSET DATA

The National overall absence rate of 6.4% in Autumn 2024/25, a decrease from 6.7% in Autumn 2023/24.

- The North Somerset rate of 6.7% is higher than the national rate and lower than the regional average, this is a decrease on the 7% rate in 2023/24

Nationally, percentage of persistent absentees 2024/25 Autumn term (10% or more missed) 17.8%, a decrease from 19.4% in Autumn 2023/24. The North Somerset rate of 18.2% is higher than the national rate, this is a decrease on the 20.5% rate in 2023/24.³⁴

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

- The NEET rate in North Somerset in 2024/2025 is 2.8%, compared with a South West rate of 3.9% and a rate in England of 3.4%.³⁵

Poverty and Economic Disparities

- 2024/25 the number of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) increased by 1.75% from year 2023/24
- In 2024/25 out of 5,242 children eligible, 4,131(13.1%) were taking free school meals in North Somerset

Housing

- 2023/24, there were 7,302 children living in relative low income families in North Somerset, this number has increased by 8% (552) on previous year
- 2023/24, 832 households owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act in North Somerset, this figure increased by 22 from 2022/23
- The crude rate per 1,000 is 8.4 and is lower than South West (11.5) and England (13.4)

- In 2023/24, 707 young people approached North Somerset as homeless or at risk of homelessness

Modern Slavery Referrals linked to County Lines

Responding locally, young people are being identified with the aim of delivering appropriate targeted interventions. Policing priorities include the disruption of all forms of serious organised crime and exploitation.

Youth Justice Service

First Time Entrants

- 2024/25 the rate of First Time Entrants continues to see a downward trend 141 to 114 per 100,000 in the population. This represents 24 individual children compared with 29 in the previous reporting period.

Reducing Re-Offending

- Re-offending has reduced
- Overall re-offending rate of 38.2% for the period July 2022 - June 2023, a reduction of 7.8pp
- There were 39 children in the cohort and 11 re-offended compared to 25 in 21/22 with re-offending cohort

Serious Youth Violence

Youth Justice data indicates that 11 children in North Somerset have been involved in violence related offending. over 90% of children involved in violence have been known to children social care and over 60% have Special educational needs.

Exploitation

County Lines drug dealing activity remains a concern for North Somerset, particularly in Weston-super-Mare. Drug offences continue to be a challenge in North Somerset. During 2024-25, 77 children have been identified as being at risk of criminal exploitation, of which 27 are currently open to YJS services (April 2025).



WHAT NORTH SOMERSET YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TELLING US

In 2024, North Somerset VRP commissioned Collaborate Digital to deliver education to over 3,000 students across 9 secondary schools through workshops and assemblies. The engagement focused on enabling students to demonstrate their understanding of social media harms by helping them design and create podcasts. The podcasts and interactive learning were subsequently used to share key messaging around the role of social media today. Young people shared their experiences and thoughts on social media, highlighting that the negative relationship between social media and serious youth violence has not gone away, and is growing. Teacher and student feedback was overwhelmingly positive and directly helped shape commissioning for 2025/26.

Through Teachable Moments Engagement Car (TMEC), North Somerset VRP collect data and information including feedback from young people; lots of young people report lacking cost-effective activities and opportunities after school.

North Somerset Blunt Truth sessions collect anecdotal information from Year 9 students across North Somerset as to why young people carry knives; reasons shared by young people are that knives are carried:

- for protection
- to fit in
- because other people do
- for status.



WHAT DOES BEST PRACTICE TELL US (NATIONAL/LOCAL)

North Somerset VRP commissioned research with young people and professionals, including the role of social media in serious violence.

Key findings included: **Social media issues have not gone away.**

The governance structure for the North Somerset VRP is provided by the North Somerset VRP Steering Group - a multi-agency forum that convenes quarterly to review data and progress updates, agree on delivery adjustments, and propose operational improvements aimed at reducing serious violence. This group serves as a mechanism for accountability, ensuring that decisions and delivery remain aligned with the objectives and priorities outlined in core strategies.

North Somerset VRP draws on research from the Youth Endowment Fund and its toolkit to best inform and support decision making.

Ensuring Trauma Informed Approaches

- North Somerset VRP commits to being trauma informed in its approach to support and intervention, by adopting a system-wide shift to understand how trauma affects young people. For example, the VRP is directly involved in North Somerset Daily Safety Briefing, to discuss any incidents in the last 24 hours involving young people, enabling the partnership to take a trauma informed approach to supporting young people in the local area.

NORTH SOMERSET BEST PRACTICE

Evidence reviews and resources

- The localised nature of many interventions means that it's difficult to predict their impact on a community. However, elements in interventions have been shown to be consistently useful across a range of setting.
- North Somerset VRP draws on research from the Youth Endowment Fund and its toolkit to evaluate projects and opportunities aimed at preventing children and young people from becoming involved in violence. This evidence base informs strategic direction and delivery planning by identifying which types of interventions are supported by research

WHAT SERVICES DO WE CURRENTLY HAVE IN PLACE LOCALLY

North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership delivery plan reflects the strategic priorities and requirements of various forums, including:

- Police and Crime Plan (2024-29)
- A&S Violence Reduction Partnership Executive Board Strategic (2025-26)
- North Somerset Community Safety Board (2022-25)
- North Somerset VRP Local Profile
- North Somerset Youth Justice Plan (2025-26)
- Youth Endowment Fund impact evaluation

In March 2025, the North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership steering group agreed the following projects to be financially supported by VRP funding:



- **Start to Finish:** This project enables joined-up work with individuals who have already been through the Criminal Justice System, and who have a range of complex needs. These complex needs are likely to require multiple interventions from a range of agencies; Start to Finish aims to reduce re-offending and improve opportunities through tailored support. Individual complex needs could include offending, domestic abuse, homelessness or in vulnerable accommodation, mental or physical health issues, substance misuse, family breakdown, finance/benefit/debt issues and/or education/training/employment issues. Each individual accepted onto the project is allocated a Start to Finish Worker who completes an assessment, identifies their needs, develops a plan. The worker supports the individual through interventions to address needs on a 1 to 1 basis, enabling, supporting, advocating and coaching them to achieve positive change. Start to Finish workers identify agencies already involved and engage in joint working, planning and solution-focused interventions with the individual, acting as a coordinator to include the individual, seek continuity and ensure clarity as to each other's responsibilities in relation to the plan.
- **Blunt Truth:** a knife crime workshop currently delivered to year 9 students in secondary schools in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset - where North Somerset VRP taking the lead on co-ordination and delivery.

NORTH SOMERSET FUNDED PROJECTS

The aim of the **Blunt Truth** workshop is to encourage young people to report to their school, the Police or anonymously through Fearless (the youth arm of Crime Stoppers) should someone they know is carrying a knife.

During 2024/25, North Somerset VRP, Army Reserve Medics, Avon Fire and Rescue and Neighbourhood Policing colleagues delivered Blunt Truth workshops to over 1,900 students across 9 secondary schools in North Somerset.

Evaluation for Blunt Truth during 2024/25 show a 61% increase on average of those confident in reporting knife crime or carrying before vs after a Blunt Truth input – with some schools showing much higher percentage increases in confidence.

- **St Giles Trust:** Supporting knife crime and violence education across North Somerset, St Giles Trust's SOS+ project deliver sessions to raise awareness with professionals, parents and young people. Their award-winning approach uses trained professionals with lived experience of the criminal justice system to equip children and young people to think critically, assess risk and make better life choices, making them more resilient to the risks of becoming involved in gangs, exploitation and violence.
- This pro-social-modelling approach allows their staff to offer an alternative to the often glamourised narrative of gang culture and criminal lifestyle; where their ability to draw from their own life experiences has enjoyed success where conventional approaches have failed.

- During 2025/26, St Giles Trust are delivering primary school education sessions, post 16 education sessions and parent/carer webinars.
- **Diversionsary Safe Spaces:** following consultations and engagement with both adults and young people, North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership made a commitment to deliver new diversionary and safe spaces for young people in Weston super Mare area of North Somerset.

With the uncertainty of funding beyond March 2026, North Somerset VRP has not commissioned or made commitments to projects and interventions beyond then. However, the VRP continues to maximise opportunities in North Somerset by actively supporting the coordination and/or delivery of:

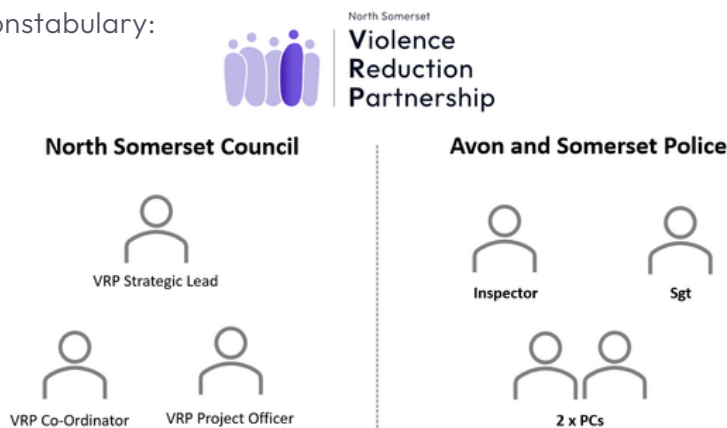
- Teachable Moments Engagement Car (TMEC)
- Young people engagement including Blunt Truth follow up school engagement
- Community engagement such as partaking in the series of community engagement stalls during 'Keeping Town Centres Safe' during Summer 2025.

Recent adjustments to the staffing model within the Avon and Somerset Early Intervention Team have resulted in the withdrawal of PCSOs from Violence Reduction Partnerships across the region. This change has reduced capacity for proactive community and youth engagement, requiring the VRP to adjust approaches to engagement accordingly.



NORTH SOMERSET FUNDED PROJECTS

However, North Somerset VRP has dedicated staff from North Somerset Council and Avon and Somerset Constabulary:



North Somerset VRP continues to co-ordinate a referral-based case meeting on a fortnightly basis to discuss young people raised as involved in violence at a multi-agency level and agree the most appropriate course of action. The VRP are also directly involved in North Somerset Daily Safety Briefing, to discuss any incidents in the last 24 hours involving young people.

COMMUNITY VOICE

In preparation for the 2025/26 delivery plan, North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership hosted a professional's consultation in relation to serious violence. These findings directly influenced commissioning and delivery planning, and included:

The most important ways in preventing youth violence in the future identified as increased diversionary activities, improved work or training prospects, better awareness for parents and carers and specific mentoring or other 1:1 support. Commitment to these themes are represented through:

- Diversionary safe spaces
- St Giles Trust parent/carer webinars
- Start to Finish 1:1 support provision

Throughout November 2025, North Somerset VRP is facilitating interactive workshops with young people at Weston

College to hear their perspectives on serious violence. The sessions aim to explore their views on why violence occurs and gather their ideas on how it can be reduced or prevented in North Somerset.

North Somerset VRP places strong emphasis on community engagement across all age groups, including family-focused events held at community centres throughout the year. The VRP also values the insights of professionals such as teachers, sports coaches, and youth workers, recognising the importance of understanding how different individuals communicate and interpret societal issues.

Our engagement with young people specifically takes many forms including pop up stalls in schools, as part of intervention delivery (such as Blunt Truth) and public facing engagement such as commitment to delivering on Keeping Town Centres Safe work during summer 2025.



PLACE & POPULATION

Serious violence in Somerset, a largely rural county in South West England, presents unique challenges and requires tailored strategies for prevention and intervention. The approach to tackling serious violence in Somerset must consider the county's specific social, economic, and environmental context.

Somerset is comprised of four former district authority: Mendip, South Somerset, Sedgemoor and Somerset West and Taunton, covering covers 3,452 square kilometres (1,333 square miles) with a resident population of 576,900.³⁶

The population is 571,548 made up of 51.1% women, and 48.96% men. With 96.4% of the population white compared to 81.0% for England.

Somerset has a greater proportion of those aged 65 and over at 24.8% compared to England 19.4%. Children and young people (0-17) at 19.2% (109,694) and people of working age 56.0% (319,958) have lower proportion as compared to the England averages of 20.84% and 60.74% respectively.

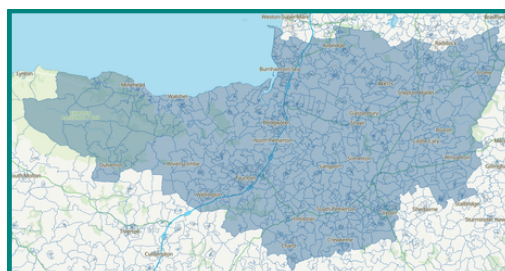


Figure 7: Map of Somerset: Source Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

The population is growing, but most of the population growth is expected to be in adults over 65 where there has been a 46.5% percentage increase in the over 65 years population since 2001.

16.6% of the population are School children or full-time students (20.4% England). Those unemployed is 2.3% compared to 3.5% unemployed in England. Whilst 41.1% of the population is economically inactive (39.1% England).

The 2021 Census shows 5.1% of people in Somerset have bad or very bad health as compared to the England 5.3%.

The number of children (aged under 16) living in relative low-income families in Somerset in 2022/23, 21,893 (22.7%) children were recognised as living in absolute low-income families. This is lower than England at 24.6% but higher than the South West 21.5%.

48% of the population live in a Rural area (England: 18%) (Census 2011) and 16.9% of the current population are children (0 to 15 years). Almost 1 in 4 of the residents of the county are over the age of 65 (25% in 2021).

47,806 Somerset people live in one of the 20% most deprived areas in England, but 61,253 live in one of England's 20% least deprived areas. (This compares to 40,000 and 74,000 in 2015) Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).



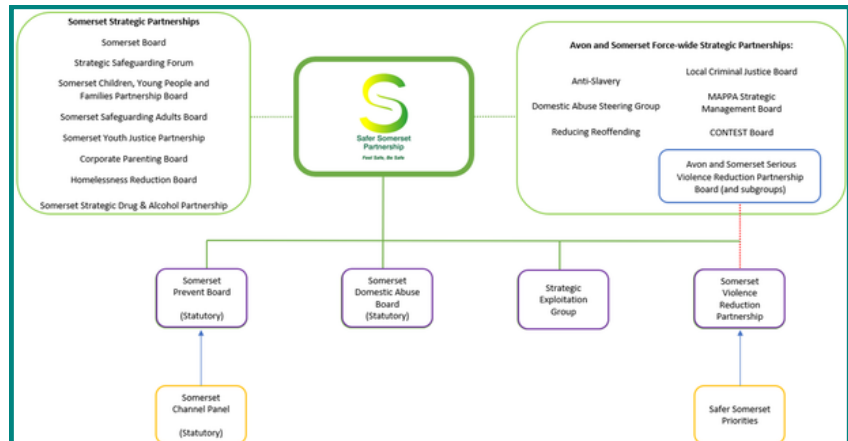
SOMERSET

VISION

“Our collective vision is to eliminate serious violence, protect the vulnerable and create safer communities, through the opportunities provided by the evolving Violence Reduction Partnership”

PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGY & ACTION

Somerset VRP is a subgroup of the Safer Somerset Partnership (local community safety partnership). This year a new Somerset Strategic Exploitation Group has also become a subgroup of the Safer Somerset Partnership.



This group will oversee an all-age strategic exploitation strategy for Somerset and work alongside the Somerset VRP. The local Somerset serious violence strategy for Somerset will support the overarching aims of the Safer Somerset Partnership Community Safety Plan, the Avon and Somerset VRP Serious Violence Strategy and the Somerset Strategic Exploitation Strategy, all of which draw on a wide range of needs data and profiles.

Safer Somerset Partnership - Strategic Priorities

The Safer Somerset Partnership sets out countywide priorities in its Community Safety Plan. The current plan for 2022-25 prioritises the improvements to serious violence as follows:

Short Term

- Refine the partnership's structure to deliver an effective response to exploitation and serious and organised crime.
- All statutory partners embed standardised practice and policy in relation to modern slavery.
- The Violence Reduction Partnership is supported in its work to coordinate multiagency plans to reduce youth violence.

Medium Term

- The partnership delivers an effective response to the Serious Violence Duty.
- The partnership delivers an effective strategic response to sexual violence.

Long term

- Increase collaboration with other strategic partnerships, delivering a refreshed response to county lines.
- The partnership demonstrates its commitment to support women and girls to live free from violence and harassment.



SOMERSET VRP

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Somerset is a subgroup of the Safer Somerset Partnership and further commits to reducing Serious Violence through its local strategy.

The local Somerset Serious Violence strategy sets out what the priorities and approach will be for delivering a partnership response to serious violence in Somerset.

The definition of serious violence and the scope of this work in a locally agreed Avon and Somerset definition.

The local strategy is informed by the Avon and Somerset VRP Serious Violence Needs Assessment and supports the Avon and Somerset VRP strategic priorities. It will also interlink with the other strategies that support the reduction of serious violence through the overarching aims of the Safer Somerset Partnership Community Safety Plan.

The Somerset Serious Violence Strategy prioritises preventing and reducing harm from the following serious violent crimes: knife crime, street based violence (focus U25s), sexual violence. With an additional focus when these crime types are linked to exploitation and/or occur in high harm locations.

This local strategy aims to achieve

- A reduction in A&E admissions due to sharp instrument injury
- A reduction in serious violent crimes
- A reduction of the fear of violence in communities



Somerset VRP will do this by targeting priority serious violence crimes, particularly in high harm locations by:

- Increasing capacity for prevention and early identification
- Using evidence based approaches
- Engaging with our communities
- Providing a targeted partnership response in our communities

The success of this strategy will be considered by monitoring A&E and police data; evaluating the outcomes of VRP interventions and activity and asking local communities.

Somerset Strategic Exploitation Group: strategic priorities:

The Somerset Exploitation Needs Assessment 2024-25 tells us:

- that Sexual exploitation made up 55% of all recorded exploitation between 2019 and 2024.
- Sexual exploitation disproportionately affects teenage and young adult female
- There is significant overlap between child sexual and criminal exploitation, highlighting the need for integrated approaches.

The pending Somerset Exploitation Strategy 2025-28 is likely to include actions around a need for targeted interventions for those most at risk

SOMERSET VRP

Somerset Youth Justice Service – strategic priorities:

Our strategic priorities for 2025-2028:

- To reduce offending, the frequency and harm of childrens offending.
- To reduce the over-representation of certain groups of children within the Youth Justice Service (YJS).
- Improve the educational outcomes for children known to the YJS.
- Increase participation of children, their families, and our communities in the YJS.
- Recognise and respond to serious youth violence and child exploitation.
- Continue to strengthen prevention and diversion to reduce the number of children entering the youth justice system.

The Somerset Strategic Exploitation Group

The Somerset Strategic Exploitation Group considered a wide range of data including recorded crime data for non-domestic violence and public space violence, children's services data, youth justice data and assault, serious violence and self-harm health indicators.

Key findings include:

- Street-Based Serious Violence (Ages 10–17): Reduction in recorded offences in 2024/5 compared to previous two years. Knife Crime is down 13% in the last full year (818 offences 2024/5 vs. 940 2023/4).
- Data for street-based serious violence offences over the last 2 quarters (1st Jan-30th June 2025) shows that 10–17-year-olds have carried out 176 offences (a reduction of 39 offences from the same period the previous year)
- Overall SYV Trends: Improving picture, but further quarters are needed to confirm sustained change.
- Robbery has declined by over 14% in the past year

In the past 6 months those most at risk are:

- Children with Child Exploitation (CE) Banners 142 children flagged in June 2025. This has increased from 138 in February 2025. 65% male
- Looked After Children (CLA) – 51 children
- Care Leavers – 58 children
- Children on CIN Plans – 32 children
- Children on CP Plans – 11 children
- Youth Justice Service (JYS) – 25 children
- Children Who Go Missing – 22.8% had CE banners



SOMERSET CASE STUDY

After data and local engagement identified a spike in serious youth violence in the Bridgwater area, spanning to North Somerset and Taunton via rail links - Operation Asrai was established to address concerns. A specific group of individuals in Bridgwater were linked to a defined investigation.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team, Children's Social Care, and other partners have all played a key role in supporting young people and reducing harm. The Bridgwater Neighbourhood Team is continuing with daily targeted hot spot patrolling and engagement with businesses and other stakeholders where possible.

ASB interventions (such as civil injunctions) are being progressed where there is supporting evidence to do so. Regular Multi agency meetings were stood up to meet demand and subsequently stood down after police being assured that vulnerable children can be identified and support via business as usual.

A multi-agency day of action in Bridgwater took place in May 2025 that brought agencies together to engage with the public - and young people in Bridgwater - in an organised way.



SOMERSET STATISTICS

Key Findings from statistics

Incidence of Violence:

- There was a 13% increase in the number of recorded crimes³⁷ in 2024/25 with a rate per 1,000 of 83.2
- Almost 85% of Somerset saw increases in the levels of violence in 2023/24
- Violent and sexual offences accounted for 50% of recorded crime
- The estimated cost of Violent Crime in Somerset rose by 14% in 2024/25
- Violence and Sexual Offences increased by 17% in 2024/25
- Robbery increased by 29% in 2024/25

Types of Street Based Serious Violence:

- Street Based Serious Violence (SBSV)³⁸ decreased by 4% in 2024/25 against previous year
- There were decreases across 65% of Somerset Beats
- August 2024 highest number of monthly SBSV crimes in the previous 3-year period

Demographics & Profiles Street Based Serious Violence SBSV

Where offenders/victims identified:

- 7% increase in identified offenders
- 6% decrease in females offending
- 80% male offenders
- 94% offenders white
- 4% decrease in identified victims
- 65% of victims were male with 35% female
- 96% of victims were white

Children and young people (aged 10-24)

- The number of identified offenders decreased by 25%
- Where age is stated 39% of offenders aged 10 to 25 of which 75% were male
- Knife flagged offences 24% of offenders were males aged 25 or under

- Where age is stated 41% of victims were under 25 of which 72% were male

Impact on Communities:

Street Based Serious Violence 2024/25 police beat

- 55% of SBV occurred in one fifth of police beat areas
- 20% occurring in 2 beat areas Taunton Central (10%) and Yeovil Town (10%)
- Significant decreases on previous year in some areas (although numbers are low)
 - Taunton Central 66%(19n)
 - Bridgwater Town Central 52% (11n)
 - Bridgwater Town East 37% (7n)
 - Taunton Central 29% (20n)
 - Wellington Centre & South (10n)

SOMERSET DATA

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Substance Misuse

- During the year 2023/24 in Somerset there were

Adults

- 2,315 adults in treatment
- of which;
- Males 65% (n=1515) Females 35%(n=800) in treatment.
- Those aged between 30 to 49 years old accounted for 57%, followed by those aged 50+ (25%) and 18-29 (18%)

Young People

- In 2024/25 the number of young people in treatment (175n) increased by 17% (25n) on the previous year
- There were 85 males and 80 females in treatment
- Young people aged 14-15 account for 40%, those aged 16-17 (51%), those 14-15 (43%), those under 14 (9%)



SOMERSET DATA

Mental Health

Depression: QOF Prevalence (18+ yrs)

- The percentage of new patients aged 18 and over with depression shows an increasing trend
- 2023/24 with Somerset at 1.9%, higher than the South West region (1.3%) and England (1.5%)
- The number of Hospital admissions for mental health conditions (<18 yrs) in 2023/24 was 120 (107.5 per 100,000)
- 2023/24 rate 107.5 is lower than the South West rate of 127.5, but higher than the England rate of 80.2

Anti-Social Behaviour

According to the police definition of anti-social behaviour (ASB) there were

- 6,721 incidents in 2024/25, increase of 4% on the previous year.
- Nuisance incidents (e.g. rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours) accounted 78% (5,230) of reported ASB

Deliberate Fires

- In Somerset in 2024/25 there were 381 deliberate fires, this is an increase of 3.8% compared to 2023/24 (n-14).
- Over the last 12 months deliberate fires occurred across Somerset; Sedgemoor 116n, Somerset West and Taunton 103n, South Somerset 101n and Mendip 61n

Domestic Abuse

Based on local police data,

- 12,293 domestic abuse incidents were recorded in Somerset in 2024/25, an increase from 11,792 in 2023/24 (up 4.2%).
- The rate of domestic abuse related incidents per 1,000 population was 21.3 per 1,000, an increase from 20.4 per 1,000 in 2023/24.



Hate Crime & Discrimination

- In 2024/25 there was 1213 hate crime incidents a 10.5% increase compared to 2023/4
- Racial hate crime accounted for 55% of hate crime in Somerset, and increased by 9.1% on 2023/24
- Disability based hate crime rose by 17%
- Transphobic based hate crime reduced by 9% and Religion or belief by 4.5%, with numbers remaining low in these categories

Hospital Admissions

- During the period of 2021-22-23/24, there were 365 hospital admissions, with a rate of 23.1 per 100,000. This rate has increased from the previous year (20.9).
- The rate of 23.1 is lower than both the South West's rate of 25.6 and England 34.2

Financial Stress & Unemployment³⁹

- Across the 7 distribution centres in Somerset a total of 17,601 food parcels were distributed in 2024/25 (Parcels Distributed to: Children 6,404, Adults 11,197), 12% decrease since 2022/23
- 27,917 (10.5%) households in fuel poverty⁴⁰

Employment

The monthly unemployment rate for Somerset in the twelve months ending June 2025 is 3.8%.

- Economic activity rate June 2025: 80.9% (Great Britain 78.8%)
- Employment rate June 2025: 78.0% (Great Britain 75.5%)
- Unemployment rate June 2025: 3.7% (Great Britain 4.1%)
- 4,460 male and 3,995 females out of work benefit claimant's resident in Somerset, 2.5% of the working age population respectively.
- Of the 8,460 claimants 1,565 were aged 16 to 24 (18.5% of claimants)

SOMERSET DATA

Supporting Families Programme

After 13 years of delivery, the Supporting Families programme ended on 31 March 2025. The number of families in Somerset in the Supporting Families with successful outcomes Programme has continued to be 100% 2024/25 at year end.⁴¹

Offender Management

Probation supervised 81 individuals convicted of a serious violent crime during the period 2024/25;

Those aged 18-25years (24n)

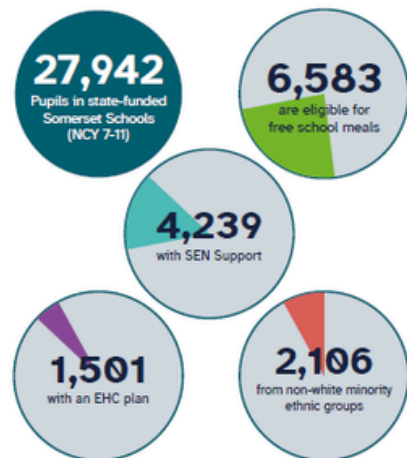
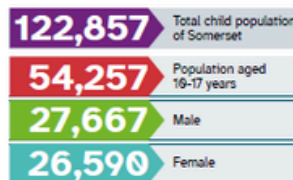
- 92% were male
- 29% (7n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: – Education, Training, Employment (ETE) (19n), Drugs (16n) and Accommodation (12n)

Those aged 26+years (57n)

- 93% male
- 39% (22n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: 63% Accommodation (36n), 47% (27n) ETE, 26% (15n) Alcohol and 28% (16n) Drugs

Children & Young People (Children’s Safeguarding)

The children we support as of the end of March 2025:



Children in Care

- 627 children in care, at a rate of 55 per 10,000⁴²
- 389 care leavers

Child Protection

- 302 children with a child protection plan – at a rate of 27 per 10,000

Children in Need

- 701 children on a child in need plan at a rate of 62 per 10,000

Safeguarding



Exploitation Data sourced from LA’s

There were 117 children deemed as at risk of child exploitation



SOMERSET DATA

Education Training & Employment

In Somerset we have 218 primary schools, 7 middle schools, 28 secondary schools, 1 all through school, 9 state-funded special schools and 4 pupil referral units in the area.

- In 2023/24, the average attainment 8 score in Somerset is 42.7 is below South West 46 and England 46.1
- 21.2% of children eligible for free school meals the number of pupils eligible for FSMs has increased from 15,187 (20.9%) in 2023/24 to 15,285 (21.2%) in 2024/25
- 5,725 children have an education, health and care plan⁴³
- 9,876 children are receiving SEN support in our schools
- There is a 12.1% increase in the number of EHCPs in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, an increase similar to the South West region (12.9%) and higher than that of England (10.8%)⁴⁴

The National overall absence rate of 6.4% in Autumn 2024/25, a decrease from 6.7% in Autumn 2023/24.

- The Somerset rate of 7.1% is higher than the national and regional rate, this is a decrease on the 7.3% rate in 2023/24.

Nationally, percentage of persistent absentees 2024/25 Autumn term (10% or more missed) 17.8% in Autumn 2023/24, a decrease from 19.4% in Autumn 2023/24. The Somerset rate of 19.2% is higher than the national and regional rate, this is a decrease on the 20.7% rate in 2023/24.⁴⁵



Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

- The NEET rate in Somerset in 2024/2025 is 3.8%, compared with a South West rate of 3.9% and a rate in England of 3.4%.⁴⁶

Poverty and Economic Disparities

- 2024/25, 21.2% of the population were known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM) an increase of 0.3% from the year 2023/24.
- In 2024/25, out of 15,285 children eligible, 12,249 (17.0%) were taking free school meals in Somerset.⁴⁷
- 2023/24, there were 23,271 children living in relative low income families in Somerset, this number has increased by 7% (1505) on previous year

Housing

- 2023/24, 2762 households owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act in Somerset, this is a reduction of 519 from 2021/22
- The crude rate per 1,000 is 10.7 and lower than South West (11.5) and England (13.4).
- In 2023/24, 1695 young people approached Somerset as homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Youth Justice Service

First Time Entrants

- 2024/25 the rate of First Time Entrants reduced by 37%, a reduced rate of 88 per 100,000 in the population from 140. This represents 48 individual children compared with 67 in the previous reporting period.

Reducing Re-Offending

- Reoffending in Somerset has decreased substantially
- Overall re-offending rate of 30.7% for the period April 2022 – March 2023, a reduction of 10.7pp
- There were 101 children in the cohort and 31 re-offended compared to 81 in 21/22 with 34 re-offending cohort

SOMERSET DATA

Child Exploitation (CE)

There were 29% of children starting an intervention programme in 24/25 who were identified as being at risk of child exploitation. This is an increase from 16% in 2023/24.

Serious Youth Violence

Youth Justice data indicates Eight Somerset children received substantive outcomes for 11 serious youth violence offences in 2024/25, a decrease from 11 children who received outcomes for 18 offences in the previous year. These offences are violence against the person, drugs, and robbery offences with a gravity score of five or greater.

For the 8 children who received substantive outcomes for SYV in 2024/25:

- 100% Male
- All aged 16y or Younger (16y -3n, 15y- 3n and 14y-2n)
- 4 White, 4 Other global ethnic groups
- 2 CLA at time of offence
- 5 identified as at risk of child exploitation
- 3 have an ECHP

WHAT SOMERSET YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TELLING US

Youth Hubs Surveys

The VRP have continued to survey young people who engage with our youth hubs. Over 3000 young people talked to the youth hub workers or completed a survey in the first year of operating across Taunton and Bridgwater.

Here is a snapshot of some of the feedback from the Taunton hub:

- 64% of children and young people, didn't know about Fearless and anonymous reporting
- 38% wanted further information made available through school
- 81% of children and young people spoken to felt that if they fell out with someone, they would know what to do to stop things getting worse

WORD MAP OF WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID MADE THEM FEEL SAFE:



SOMERSET VRP

Somerset East:

Town centre safety education program

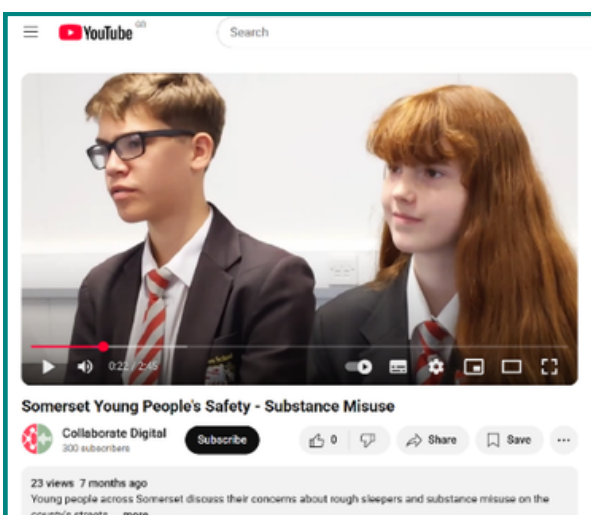
As part of the Home Office Hotspot/ASB program for 2024/5 a series of education sessions were carried out across education settings in the East of the county to promote safety in town centres. Young people told us about their concerns in relation to VAWG, adults and substance misuse, and online safety spilling into the community.

Children and young people have told us that they want to live in safe communities where streets and parks feel safe at night. They told us that they want fewer children and young people involved in county lines and fewer incidents of violence.

Their voices are captured on these videos:

Click on the links below:

- [Women and Girls](#)
- [Substance Misuse](#)
- [Online Harms](#)



Knife Crime awareness week 2025

Although Somerset remains a safe place to live, with knife crime offences representing less than 5% of recorded serious violent crimes, the impact can devastate communities and invoke fear.

We wanted to gauge Somerset young people's awareness of knife crime, whether it was a concern for them, if and where they would report it and where they get their information about it.

The survey ran during Knife Crime Awareness Week starting 19-25 May, running beyond it up until the 2 July 2025 and 280 young people took part.

Some key findings are:

- a little under two thirds of participants know the factors that constitute a knife crime
- Roughly half are concerned by knife crime, with a proportional increase in concern as they get older.
- A little under two thirds would report knife crime to the Police, with Crimestoppers or Fearless.org receiving less than 10%.
- They felt that social media was the biggest factor in our views on knife crime, with the news, TV and movies, research and data, as well as witnessing or experiencing it also significant factors.



SOMERSET CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

6,000 children and young people in Somerset have chosen their priorities. This plan amplifies the voices of Somerset's children and young people – representing everyone from prebirth to adulthood (0 to 24 years) and their families. It aims to hear what it's like growing up in Somerset, and what priorities are most important to children and



young people. At the end of the plan is a section about how people and organisations need to work together to support children, young people and their families – and what all professionals in the public sector and communities can do to help.

The plan asked children and young people for feedback about living in safe communities. They said:

- they want to live in safe communities where streets and parks feel safe at night.
- they want fewer children and young people involved in county lines and fewer incidents of violence.

The Safer Somerset Partnership Board (Community Safety Plan) will lead on this and measure what is working better by:

- Early identification of children most at risk of exploitation,
- reduced number of young people in the Youth Justice system

Young People will commit to:

- Producing community safety resources for schools and colleges

The plan talks about actions professionals can take:

- focus on strengthening relationships between professionals and with children and families. People, processes and systems are caring.
- listen to families – to understand what matters for them, to build on what is already working well and to design services, based on what we learn from individuals and their communities.
- do less time on diagnosis, assessments and referrals – and more time on helping when people need it, stepping outside of our comfort zone.
- use relationship based and trauma aware practice, personalised support (personalised care) and whole family working. Everyone can be a key worker for a family.

A full copy of the plan can be found at [Somerset Children and Young People's Plan](#)



SOMERSET BEST PRACTICE (NATIONAL/LOCAL)

LOCAL PRACTICE

Safer Somerset Priorities meetings

These meetings are Somerset's tactical multi-agency response to serious violence. The purpose is to:

- add value to multi-agency efforts to reduce harm in our communities.
- To reassure the community by delivering tangible outcomes in response to concerns.
- To assist services in responding to, disrupting and preventing serious violence, including serious youth violence (SYV).

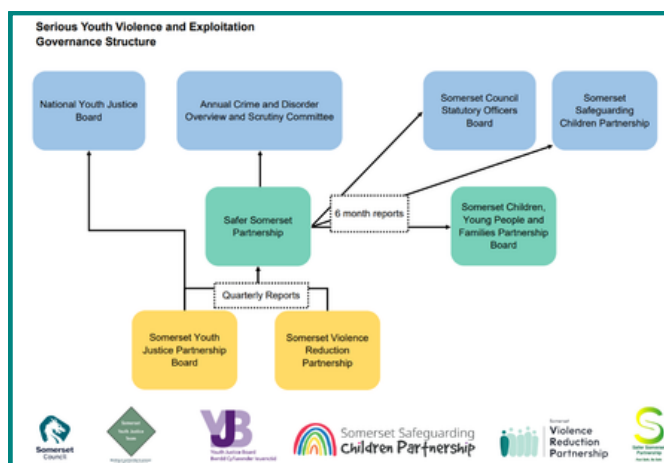
So far these meetings have accomplished:

- Several successful examples where cases being brought to SSPM have resulted in action being taken to reduce harm (see Annex A).
- Provides an escalatory procedure for One Team Coordinators to refer into.
- Actions are now being tracked due to assistance from Dave Smithers, Community Safety Team.
- A shared online folder within the council has been developed which all participants have access to, which includes copy of actions from meetings.
- 1-2-1 consultation meetings agreed to and planned with almost all attendees.
- Positive feedback from participants includes that the SSPM provides a forum they would not otherwise have.
- Information is being shared that was not previously.
- Increased attendance e.g. Education Safeguarding leads.

SOMERSET STRATEGIC EXPLOITATION & SERIOUS VIOLENCE:

6-Month Briefing

Following the Somerset Serious Youth Violence JTAI inspection in May 2024 it was agreed that the SSP would provide a 6monthly report to key local partnerships on serious youth violence and exploitation to ensure that strategic leaders understand the current profile and activity in relation to Serious Violence, Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation across Somerset.



The report takes into account sub reports produced by:

- Safer Somerset Partnership Subgroup Report – Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership
- Safer Somerset Partnership Subgroup Report – Somerset Strategic Exploitation Group
- Youth Justice Partnership Quarterly Management Report

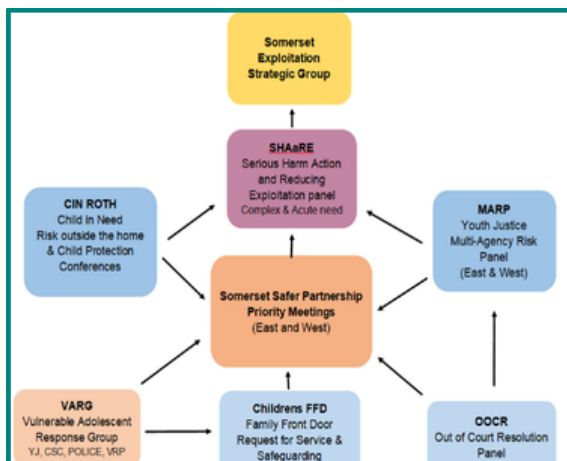
Some key points from them are:

Locations, individuals and groups of concern are considered by single teams and agencies and then as a multi agency across the SYV pathways. Locations that have been considered in recent months at the Safer Somerset Priorities and SHaRE meetings.



BEST PRACTICE (NATIONAL/LOCAL)

A new children's service SYV and Exploitation Pathway has been tested since July 2025:



Trauma informed network

Since 2023 Somerset VRP have contributed funding and expertise to support delivery of the Somerset Trauma Informed Action Plan, coordinated by Somerset Children's Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit. Actions delivered include:

- Operating a multi-agency Trauma Informed steering group
- Setting up a Trauma Informed network, for which a website and newsletter are up and running with over 700 sign-ups
- Providing a Trauma Informed forum week in June 2024 which was attended by just under 800 practitioners
- Developing a sustainable Trauma Informed training program for Somerset

More information can be found at [Somerset Trauma Informed Network - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)



SOMERSET VRP FUNDED INTERVENTIONS

Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership commissioned interventions for 2024-5 specifically targeting 1-17 year olds in Somerset. This included: 3 high-impact programs; 142 individuals supported at £1,035 avg. Cost.

- **Hospital Youth Workers** (A&E Navigators): 2 Substance Misuse Workers sit within Musgrove Park Hospital and Yeovil General Hospital A&E departments during the weekend nights. Any young person who is admitted with an injury or suspected risk from violence or exploitation are offered support.
- **Sports Mentoring:** Young people at risk from ASB or violence are provided with holistic mentoring and supported into community activities to improve sense of belonging and wellbeing.
- **Early intervention for young people at risk of exclusion from school:** This program operates in partnership with the family intervention service at Somerset Council and offers users a variety of tools at a “teachable moment” that provide social skills tailored to a young persons need, covering areas such as anger management, relaxing techniques, stress management, healthy relationship work, reflection techniques.
- **Education programs:** Somerset VRP have provided behaviour change programs through education to over 8000 pupils through the following programs: Active bystanding & town centre safety: Collaborate Digital have provided a powerful and innovative way of listening to and involving young members of the community. They take pod casts created by pupils to spread the word to the public by delivering an online public vote. [Somerset Street Safety 2025](#)

SOMERSET VRP

SOMERSET VRP FUNDED INTERVENTIONS

- **Rights respecting schools:** Unicef aim to determine the impact of this human rights-based approach to support schools in Somerset to improve pupil well-being and engagement, tackle exclusion and attendance rates, and support children and young people feeling safe and seeking protection from violence, abuse, and neglect. [Somerset secondary schools achieve UNICEF Bronze Rights Respecting Schools Award! - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- **Social Skills programs 18-25yr olds:** To deliver an intervention programme to young people who may be a risk of committing knife crime offences. To engage young people who are already marginalised and provide them with a short-term intervention that aims to increase their confidence in relation to social skills, managing relationships and taking part in meaningful occupation.
- **Youth Hubs:** 140 pop-up youth hub sessions led by youth organisations will be delivered across the county with a key aim of Reduce the risk of harm to young people in our town centres and hotspot locations by engaging with young people, parents, guardians, and the public, raising awareness of key concerns around youth safety.

SOMERSET VRP ADDITIONAL FUNDING/PROJECTS

- Somerset VRP have a number of additional opportunities to provide the following activity in 2025-26:
- Prevention panel pilots Young Futures Prevention Panel: 6 month pilot in North Somerset and Sedgemoor equating to £200,000 grant. Now expecting this will be an 18 Month pilot with additional funding to be announced by the Home Office.
- One off grant for sexual exploitation prevention: £31 000 grant for targeted interventions for young women aged 16-25 at risk of sexual exploitation and violence aimed at building confidence in a safe space for young women to help spot the signs of sexual exploitation and violence and reduce risk of harm.
- Hotspot response funding 2025-26: £30,000 has been awarded to target all 15 of the police identified hotspot locations in Somerset this year, by providing education workshops around spotting the signs, diversion and active bystanding to education settings in the catchment for key areas.

Police Early Intervention Team (EIT)

Over the past year, the Police EIT has continued to develop, with the role formally revised to include Child Criminal Exploitation alongside serious youth violence. The team's core function is now to identify children at risk of CCE and serious youth violence, ensure timely and appropriate information sharing with partner agencies, and ensure that every child has a clear and appropriate offer of support or intervention.



SOMERSET VRP

Family First Pilot – Somerset East

The Somerset East EIT has transitioned into the Family First Pilot, which aims to strengthen cross-partnership working, communication and coordinated support. The pilot is designed to ensure an efficient, effective and timely response to the needs of vulnerable children and young people, including those involved in offending.

As part of this pilot, the Somerset East EIT is now co-located with key safeguarding and intervention partners, including:

- Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit
- Youth Justice
- Operation Topaz (CSE)
- Operation Ruby (Child Abuse)
- Operation Bluestone
- Children’s Social Care Assessment Team

This co-location has significantly improved information sharing, joint decision-making and multi-agency response.

Somerset EIT Activity – Last 12 Months

In the past year, Somerset EIT has:

- Supported 2 young people through the use of buddy tags.
- Disrupted over 10 adult exploiters using CAWNs and CCE letters.
- Attended Out of Court Disposal Panels and Local Children’s Network (LCN) meetings.
- Supported warrants and custody engagements, working with young people arrested and suspected to be exploited.
- Reviewed 164 young people identified as at risk of violence and/or CCE.
- Conducted 121 one-to-one visits with young people.
- Delivered approximately 63 face-to-face school engagements, including pop-ups and DSL visits.
- Completed approximately 30 visits to intervention and support providers.
- Participated in 19 partnership engagement events.

Disruption Activity

In addition to safeguarding and diversion, the team now plays an increased role in disruption activity, including:

- Use of Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs)
- Liaison with internal partners to utilise ASB Referral and Out of Court Panel Referral forms.
- Supporting the use of higher-level ASB powers

This approach ensures both protective and enforcement-based responses are used proportionately.



PLACE & POPULATION

South Gloucestershire Unitary Authority covers an area of approximately 496.96 square kilometres, bordering the local government areas of Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire. South Gloucestershire is made up of 28 wards and combines both urban and rural areas. A large portion of the South Gloucestershire population live on the Bristol ‘fringe’ area, with further population concentrations living in the towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury.

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-year population estimates 2024, South Gloucestershire is home to 306,332 residents.⁴⁸ Overall, the population tends to experience better than national average outcomes, such as higher life expectancy and lower levels of poverty and deprivation (2). It is important to note, however, that the area is not uniform, with variation in demographics and outcomes across the area.

18.7% of the South Gloucestershire population are aged 65 and over, which is lower than the South West region (22.7%) (1). South Gloucestershire has a large proportion of young people aged 0 to 19 (22.8%), which is slightly higher than the South West region (21.3%) (1).

South Gloucestershire has an ethnic minority population of 8.8%, an increase of 3.8% since 2011 (5%) (1).

This is slightly higher than the South West region (6.9%) but considerably lower than England (19%) (1).

19.5% of the population are School children or full-time students (20.4% England). Those unemployed is 2.5% compared to 3.5% unemployed in England. Whilst 35.3% of the population is economically inactive (39.1% England).

The 2021 Census shows 4.2% of people in South Gloucestershire have bad or very bad health as compared to the England 5.3%.

The number of children (aged under 16) living in Relative low-income families in South Gloucestershire in 2022/23, 8,178 (15.4%) children were recognised as living in absolute low-income families. This is lower than England at 24.6% and the South West 21.5%.

According to the 2019 (IMD)

South Gloucestershire is ranked 267th out of 317 local authorities in England (with 1 being the most deprived and 317 being the least deprived) (4). South Gloucestershire has no small areas, known as local super output areas (LSOAs), that rank in the 10% most deprived nationally. There are pockets of deprivation, with the most deprived LSOAs generally being clustered within the urban areas.⁴

More detailed information about the demographic make-up of the South Gloucestershire population can viewed in the ‘Our population’ dashboard hosted on the [Population Health Intelligence Portal \(PHIP\)](#).



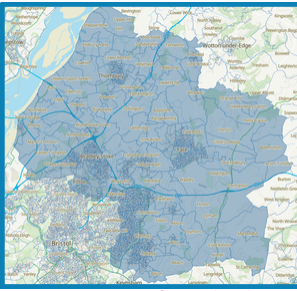


Figure 8: Map of South Glous:
Source Office for National
Statistics. Census 2021

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE VRP

VISION

To create a safer South Gloucestershire by reducing incidents of serious violence through targeted prevention, effective intervention, and comprehensive support systems.

PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGY & ACTION

Strategic Priorities

South Gloucestershire Council have five strategic priorities within our 2024-2028 council plan,⁴⁹ including 'supporting children and young people to thrive' and 'help reduce inequalities by working together to provide a public health approach to violence reduction, focussing on understanding the cause of violence'.

There is also an agreed serious violence definition for the five Violence Reduction Partnerships within the A&S force area 'The A&S VRP embraces a priority focus on the prevention and reduction of public space violence for under 25's (children and young people); including homicide, attempted homicide, robbery, wounding, grievous bodily harm, knife and gun crime, alcohol and drug related violence and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as county lines and modern slavery.

We also recognise and commit to supporting a joined-up response to existing partnership work to tackle serious violence across the whole pathway and in the broadest sense, including domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences and violence against women and girls more generally'.

Our 2024-2025 South Gloucestershire Youth Justice Service⁵⁰ vision for children and young people in South Gloucestershire is that they get the very best start in life, reach their full potential and live their lives safe from harm (violence, abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation). To achieve this vision, we will work together with local communities to improve their outcomes. We want South Gloucestershire to be a place where safeguarding is everybody's business.

South Gloucestershire Community Safety Partnership have developed a three-year strategic plan (2025-2028). Through the delivery of our strategic priorities, we aspire to achieve our vision "to tackle crime and disorder, fostering a community where everyone feels secure and confident. We are committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all residents, workers and visitors, reducing the fear of crime, and creating an environment where everyone has an opportunity to thrive". The strategic plan identifies four priority areas which will be the focus of the partnership over the next three years, these are taking action against serious violence, responding to community-based crime and disorder, supporting those most vulnerable to crime and tackling offending behaviour. These priority areas will be the driving force to enable the partnership to meet its objectives both statutory and non-statutory.



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE SERIOUS VIOLENCE STATISTICS

Key Findings from statistics

Violence Offences increased by 14% in 2023/24

Incidence of Violence:

- There was a 10% increase in the number of recorded crimes⁴ in 2024/25 with a rate per 1,000 of 71.7
- Over 75% of the South Gloucestershire area saw increases in the levels of violence
- Violent and sexual offences accounted for 46% of recorded crime
- The cost of Violent Crime in South Gloucestershire⁵ rose by 22% in 2024/25
- Violence Offences increased by 14% in 2024/25

Types of Street Based Serious Violence:

- Street Based Serious Violence (SBSV) [1] decreased by 7 % (23n) in 2024/25 against previous year, 2023/24
- There were decreases across nearly 60% Police beat areas
- 20% of SBSV took place on a Monday
- 37% of SBSV crime taking place between 8pm- 1am.
- 20% increase in robbery
- Knife-Flagged offences decreased by 22%

Demographics and Profiles Street Based Serious Violence

Where offenders are identified:

- There is a 20% decrease in identified offenders
- There is a 20 % increase in males, 20% increase in females offending
- 84% of offender's are male
- 83% offenders white

- There is a 8% decrease in identified victims
- 74% of victims were male and 26% of victims were female
- 86% of victims were white

Children and young people (aged 10-24)

- The number of identified offenders aged 10-25 decreased by 35% (45n)
- The number of identified offenders aged 10-17 decreased by 40% (28n)
- Where age is stated 44% of offenders were 25 or under of which 88% were male

Impact on Communities:

Street Based Serious Violence 2024/25 police beat data

- 54% of SBSV occurred in 5 police beat areas
- Significant increases of 22% on previous year in Yate & Doddington (9n)

Most SBSV Crime occurred in;

- 11.7% Staple Hil and New Cheltenham(35n)
- 11.4% Kingswood and Woodstock (34n)
- 10.7% Yate and Doddington (32n)

SOUTH GLOUS DATA

Substance Misuse

- During the year 2023/24 in South Gloucestershire there were

Adults

- 885 adults in treatment
- of which;
- Males 64% (n=565) Females 36%(n=320) in treatment.
- Those aged between 30 to 49 years old accounted for 63%, followed by those aged 50+ (24%) and 18-29 (13%)



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE DATA

Substance Misuse

Young People

- the number of young people in treatment reduced by 1n
- 2023/24, there were 30 males and 25 females
- Young people aged 14-15 accounting for 52%, those aged 16-17 (40%) and those under 14 (8%).

Mental Health

- Depression: QOF Prevalence (18+ yrs) shows an increasing trend year on year
- In 2023/24, South Gloucestershire recorded 1.8% new patients, and this is higher than the South West region (1.3%) and England (1.5%)
- The number of Hospital admissions for mental health conditions (<18 yrs) in 2023/24 was 50 (81.6 per 100,000)
- 2023/24 rate 81.6 is lower than the South West rate of 127.5 and similar to the national rate of 80.2

Anti-Social Behaviour

According to the police definition of anti-social behaviour (ASB) there were

- 2,557 incidents in 2024/25, a slight decrease of 3% on the previous year.
- Nuisance incidents (e.g. rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours) accounted for 75% (1,910) of reported ASB

Deliberate Fires

- In South Glos in 2024/25 there were 205 deliberate fires, this is the same as 2023/24
- Over the last 12 months Yate Central (19n), Dodington (17n) and Yate North (17n) have seen the most deliberate fires.

Domestic Abuse

Based on local police data,

- 5,822 domestic abuse incidents were recorded in 2024/25, an increase from 5,293 in 2023/24 (up 10.0%).
- The rate of domestic abuse related incidents and crimes per 1,000 population was 19.7 per 1,000, an increase from 18.0 per 1,000 in 2023/24.

Hate Crime & Discrimination

- In 2024/25 there was 576 hate crime incidents a 2.5% increase compared to 2023/24
- Racial hate crime accounted for 64% of hate crime in South Gloucestershire, 4.3% up on 2023/24
- Gender based hate crime increased by 52%, numbers are low in this category

Violent Crime Hospital Admissions

During the period of 2021/22-23/24, there were 260 hospital admissions, with a rate of 29.0 per 100,000. This rate slightly decreased from the previous year (30.3).

- The rate of 29.0 is higher than South West (25.4), however, lower than England (34.2)

⁵¹

Financial Stress & Unemployment

- Across the 6 distribution centres in South Gloucestershire a total of 6,404 food parcels were distributed in 2024/25 (Parcels Distributed to: children 2,650 adults 3,754), an 7% decrease since 2022/23
- 9,306 (7.4%) households in fuel poverty⁵²



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE DATA

Employment

The monthly unemployment rate for South Gloucestershire in the twelve months ending June 2025 is 3.2%. The rate was 2.2% June 2024

- Economic activity rate June 2025: 85.3% (Great Britain 78.8%)
- Employment rate June 2025: 82.7% (Great Britain 75.5%)
- Unemployment rate June 2025: 3.2% (Great Britain 4.1%)
- 2,150 male and 1,930 females out of work benefit claimant's resident in South Gloucestershire, 2.2% of the working age population respectively.
- Of the 4,075 claimants 895 were aged 16 to 24 (22% of claimants)

Supporting Families Programme

After 13 years of delivery, the Supporting Families programme ended on 31 March 2025. The number of families in South Gloucestershire in the Supporting Families with successful outcomes Programme win 2024/25 was 100% at year end.⁵³

Offender Management

Probation supervised 32 individuals convicted of a serious violent crime during the period 2024/25;

Those aged 18-25years (8n)

- 88% were male
- 25% (2n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: – Education, Training, Employment (ETE) (3n), Lifestyle (3n) and Accommodation (3n)

Those aged 26+years (24n)

- 88% male
- 46% (11n) sentenced to custody
- Assessed criminogenic need: 54% Accommodation (13n), 46% (11n) ETE, 33% (8n) Drugs and 21% (5n) Drugs

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

(Children's Safeguarding)

Children in Care (March 2025)

- 211 (34.4 per 10,000) Children in Care at the end of March 2025. Statistical Neighbours average CiC population is 54.3 per 10,000.
- 147 CiC were aged between 10 and 17 years (31/3/25)
- Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking children (UASC) account for 30 of the 211 being CiC (14%).

Child Protection (CP)

- 244 CP Plans (39.8 per 10,000) at the end of March 2025. 12 months ago, CP plans numbered 248 so little change. Statistical Neighbours average is 34.2 per 10,000.

Children in Need (CiN)

- 531 CYP on a CiN plan at the end of March 2025

Missing Persons

- Between 1/4/24 to 31/3/25 327 young people were reported missing; this is a decrease from 354 the previous year. This equated to 492 reported missing episodes
- Of the 327 children reported missing in this year, 115 were CiC (35% of children reported missing)

Children at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Between 1 April 2024 & 31 March 2025 there were 56 Children/Young People discussed at the Partnership Intelligence Management Meeting (PIMM) who are at risk of CCE.

Children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Between 1 April 2024 & 31 March 2025 there were 21 Children/Young People, discussed at PIMM who are at risk of CSE.



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE DATA

Education Training & Employment

In South Gloucestershire we have 95 primary schools, 16 secondary schools, 6 special alternative provision schools in the area.

- Numbers of children attending school 41,576 (as of Spring 2025 census): 12.58% of children are from an ethnic minority background and 1.57% children preferred not to say.
- Numbers of children attending secondary school 17,562 (Spring 2025 census).
- In 2023/24, the average attainment 8 score in South Gloucestershire is 43.5 below the South West 46 and England 46.1
- 16.2% of children eligible for free school meals the number of pupils eligible for FSMs has increased from to 6,461 (15.7%) in 2023/24 to 6,623 (16.2%) in 2024/25
- 3,236 children have an education, health and care plan⁵⁴
- 5,599 children are receiving SEN support in our schools
- 2239 children with an EHCP
- There is a 15.0% increase in the number of EHCPs in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, an increase higher than both the South West region (12.9%) and that of England (10.8%)⁵⁵
- Between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 there were 1012 children who were Elective Home Educated (EHE) at some point during that year. A 20% increase on previous year

The National overall absence rate of 6.4% in Autumn 2024/25, a decrease from 6.7% in Autumn 2023/24.



- The South Gloucestershire rate of 6.5% is higher than the national and lower than regional rate, this is an increase on the 6.4% rate in 2023/24

Nationally, percentage of persistent absentees 2023/24 Autumn term (10% or more missed) 17.8% in Autumn 2023/24, a decrease from 19.4% in Autumn 2023/24.

- The South Gloucestershire rate of 17.9% is higher than the national and lower than regional rate, this is a decrease on the 18.3% rate in 2023/24⁵⁶

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

- The NEET rate in South Gloucestershire in 2024/2025 is 2.7%, compared with a South West rate of 3.9% and a rate in England of 3.4%.⁵⁷

Poverty & Economic Disparities

- In 2023/24, 8,645 children were living in relative low income families in South Gloucestershire, increased by 8% (642) on previous year. this number has gradually increased since 2021/22
- In 2024/25, the number of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) increased by 2.5% from the year 2023/24
- In 2024/25, there were 6,623 children known to be eligible for free school meals in South Gloucestershire.⁵⁸

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE DATA

Housing

- In 2023/24, 925 households owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act in South Glos, this is an increase from 2022/23 (757)
- The crude rate per 1,000 is 7.4 and is lower than South West (11.5) and England (13.4)
- In 2023/24, 513 young people approached South Glos as homeless or at risk of homelessness

Youth Justice Service

First Time Entrants

- 2024/25 the rate of First Time Entrants continues to see a downward trend 86 to 72 per 100,000 in the population. This represents 20 individual children compared with 24 in the previous reporting period

Reducing Re-Offending

Re-offending has increased

- Overall re-offending rate of 30.0% for the period April 2022 – March 2023, an increase of 14.0pp
- There were 30 children in the cohort and 9 re-offended compared to 25 in 20/21 cohort with 4 re-offending

Serious Youth Violence (SYV)

In respect of SYV (as defined by the YJB) South Glos has relatively low numbers. SYV Data (YJB Toolkit) indicates that in the year ending December 2024 there were 2 SYV offences recorded by children in South Glos (a decrease of 1 from previous year's figures), a rate of 0.7 per 10,000 children. The family average is 2.9. In the year ending December 2024 serious violence offences comprised 2% of all offences. Local data would suggest this figure is 5 offences in the year ending December 2024.

Knife & Weapon Crime

Knife and weapon crime has now become a significant area of concern for South Glos following the escalation of serious violence across 2023-24 which impacted on South Glos children both as victims and perpetrators. In 2024-25 we have seen a reduction in terms of seriousness but are now seeing more knife possession offences coming to the OOCR panel.

The geography places South Glos directly next to the two most active areas for group (peer on peer) related and youth knife crime in Bristol East and Bristol North.

In 2024/25 the YJS dealt with 10 incidents of knife/weapon possession crimes within the Out of Court Disposal panel, a further 7 matters were dealt with in court (17 altogether, 16 YP).

The previous 3 years data were between 13 and 15 incidents each year of knife/weapon related offences. has not been a significant area of concern for South Glos until recently, but an area we have always remained vigilant over.

This past year has shown an increase in serious violence where weapons have been a significant factor (2 of the 3 mandatory serious incident notifications).

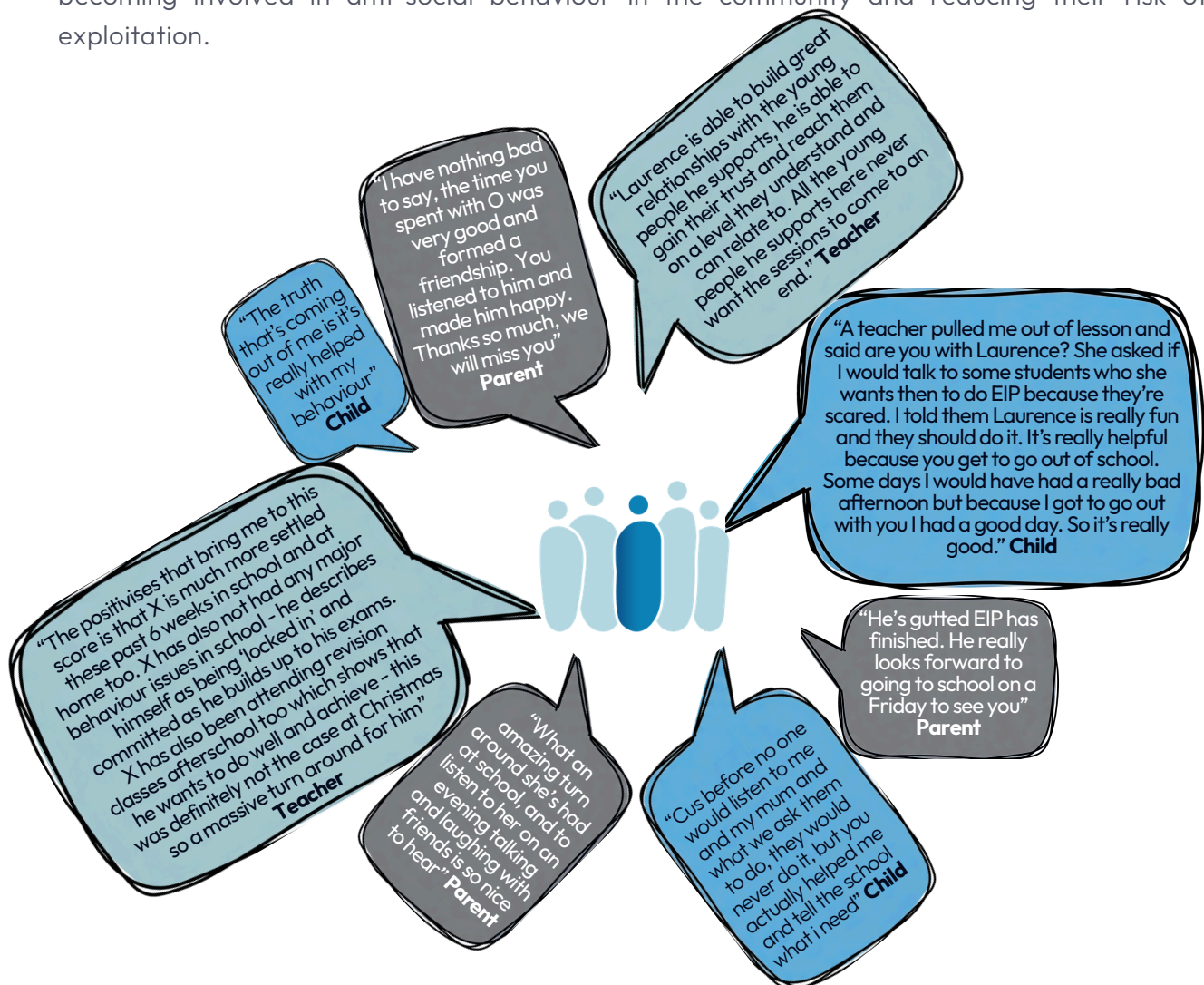
Of note an offence of serious violence with a knife committed in the previous year was sentenced in 2024-25, the young person received a mandatory life sentence.

So, whilst numbers are small, we are seeing more statutory outcomes (65%) for knife related matters than we have ever seen.



WHAT SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS & TEACHERS ARE TELLING US

South Gloucestershire VRP recognises the importance of a young person's voice and ensure we gather these where interventions have been offered through the use of 'distance travelled', evaluation and outcome tools. Our Education Inclusion Project routinely captures the voice of child, parent and school at the beginning and end of the intervention, this feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We can evidence that this intervention is reducing the number of young people being permanently excluded from education, significantly reducing their risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour in the community and reducing their risk of exploitation.



South Gloucestershire VRP have included a parenting support package in our current delivery plan. We have developed a parental survey to gather information on what support parents would find helpful/supportive on various subjects such as exploitation, serious youth violence, healthy relationships. We plan to introduce parenting workshops alongside a sustainable resource library of services and to develop parenting support networks throughout South Gloucestershire. We successfully bid for money forfeited under S27 of the Misuse of Drugs Act to support this work.



WHAT SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TELLING US

We carried out a survey of young people during our summer Community Safety days to find out what impacted on young people feeling safe/unsafe in their local area. The results fed into our Safer Streets Town Centre work carried out by the Community Safety Team.

We successfully bid to take part in the Area Leaders Programme; a Youth Endowment Fund initiative aimed at partnership self-assessment and development of work to prevent serious youth violence through additional resources and learning from research partners and participating local authorities.

WHAT DOES BEST PRACTICE TELL US (NATIONAL/LOCAL)

Young People's Community Intervention Meeting (YPCIM) has been developed in South Gloucestershire to look at anti-social behaviour involving young people in the community through a multi-dimensional lens, this new way of working removes young people from the existing MAM process, which has been found to be not fit for purpose due to limited professional representation, the new YPCIM will ensure that the right agencies are involved, providing a more holistic and coordinated approach to tackling anti-social behaviour.

This new approach will allow us to -

- Share information about a young person's involvement in ASB with the agencies involved in that young person's network.
- assess the risk and underlying causes
- Agree on a coordinated plan of support/intervention at an earlier stage
- Monitor progress and outcomes
- Refer to a more appropriate meeting such as RTG (Risk Outside the Home Tactical Meeting) should there be other concerns such as CCE, serious youth violence in a more streamlined way.

- Plan extended case conferences for individual young people when concerns about ASB have become more complex and more time and intensive conversations are required.

As part of the work to address gaps in early intervention for young people becoming involved in anti-social behaviour the Community Safety Team alongside Police have developed the existing Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts to ensure that they -

- Are Speech and Language assessed using appropriate language to increase understanding for young people
- Include not only punitive elements, but also supportive elements to engage young people in education and offer meaningful activities and interventions to divert them towards a more positive pathway
- Ensure a clear plan for the young person that has agreed to the contract and that this can be reviewed and monitored
- Explains the different types of ASB to increase understanding of the behaviour and the ripple effects this has on the community



SOUTH GLOS COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM

This Summer, the Home Secretary has written to Police and Crime Commissioners, Chief Constables and Local Authority Chief Executives about Crime and ASB in town centres, Local authority areas were tasked with developing action plans with partners to be delivered between 30th June and 30th September 2025.

As part of this plan the Community Safety Team organised a half day event for Shopping Centre Managers and security staff, police, South Gloucestershire Council and Town Councils to explore best practice in tackling crime and ASB in town centres.

The event was well attended and the round table conversations often naturally drifted towards discussion about groups of young people causing ASB in Town Centres. Shopping Centre Managers, Security and Youth Provisions shared best practice, including how to engage with people which was facilitated by the Community Safety Team.

Yate Shopping Centre was identified as a 'hotspot' for ASB, to understand this we wanted to hear the young people's voices that were involved in anti – social behaviour at the location. The CST funded a young people's voice project delivered by Learning Partnership West, this was to encourage young people to speak up for themselves about their experiences and to feedback at the event. Young people shared that they felt as if they were being unfairly treated by staff and Police for being in groups and for their appearance, sometimes being asked to leave the location for no apparent reason. Interestingly, the majority of the young people filling out the safety in Town Centres survey indicated that large groups made them feel unsafe.

We have used evidence/information from our Partnership intelligence Management Meeting (PIMM) to identify themes and trends within South Gloucestershire and have used this to inform our commissioning to make sure we are delivering effective interventions at the right time.

We are also using evaluation tools to inform our onward plans. A barrier to implementing sustainable interventions is the short-term nature of the funding for VRPs. Many of the interventions are commissioned externally and can be expensive to commission as a short-term contract. Long-term funding would allow us to plan more effectively, sustainably and enable us to retain service providers that have delivered positive outcomes for our young people.

Ensuring Trauma Informed Approaches

South Gloucestershire VRP have funded Trauma Recovery training for our EIT Police officers, exploitation social workers and a member of YJS staff. We have made this investment following a critical incident in which a South Gloucestershire young person lost his life to a knife incident which had an immediate and long-lasting impact on the community. There was a recognition that professionals not only need to work in a trauma informed way but need to have the skills to support with trauma recovery for young people affected by Serious Violence.



SOUTH GLOS BEST PRACTICE

Gloucestershire VRP continue to use trauma flags on Police systems so young people coming into contact with Police can be dealt with using a trauma informed approach, this reduces the risk of further trauma to that young person.

The localised nature of many interventions means that it's difficult to predict their impact on a community. However, particular elements of interventions have been shown to be consistently useful across a range of settings.

We have identified through PIMM evidence of a strong link between young people not attending school either through permanent exclusion (PEX), being electively home educated or having a reduced timetable and their increased risk of exploitation.

We have also identified that a high percentage of young people not in education are neurodivergent whether that be diagnosed or undiagnosed with schools being under resourced and unable to manage their presenting needs and any resulting behaviour putting those young people at increased risk of PEX.

LOCALLY SERVICES

In line with the South Gloucestershire Council plan 2024 to 2028 we want people to be safe and to feel safe in South Gloucestershire and for everyone to receive the education they need.

To support this priority the South Gloucestershire VRP have funded the **Education Inclusion Project** which provides 6-8 weeks of support to young people at risk of exclusion from school. The project works with young people, school and parents to resolve any issues or barriers to the young person staying in their educational setting. We have decided to focus funding on this area as our data shows that a high percentage of young people on our risk management pathway are neuro diverse whether diagnosed or undiagnosed or have had adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) and their vulnerability to exploitation increases exponentially if they are not in education. The project has worked with 72 young people this financial year, five of which subsequently received a permanent exclusion leading to a 93% success rate.

We commissioned Unique Voice to deliver the '**Belonging**' programme into 30 primary schools. This was delivered to year 5 & 6 in preparation for transition to secondary school. The programme covers community belonging, healthy relationships and age-appropriate material on healthy and unhealthy relationships. An evaluation was included in the cost of this intervention and demonstrated positive feedback from both professionals and young people. The intervention reached 1,600 year 5 & 6 children. The feedback from teachers included "By far the best content our year 6's has received to date" "Really engaging content which was appropriate and accessible for all".



SOUTH GLOS BEST PRACTICE

HorseWorld ‘Discovery’ programme was delivered to young people as a therapeutic intervention. This was offered to young people who are not in full time education, have ACE’s and are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing which contributes to their risk of exploitation and Serious Youth Violence.

The Wheels Project This has been commissioned to support young people not receiving a full-time educational provision or not attending education. Young people are transported to this intervention by the Police which enables them to build positive relationships with those officers. The programme teaches teamwork and skills to enable those young people to build on what they have learnt in future college courses/employment opportunities.

Detached Youth Work (YDW) is being delivered throughout South Gloucestershire in hotspot locations that are identified through our PIMM meetings as well as evidence from Police data. We have funded a mobile youth vehicle ‘Doris’ which enables our YDW to reach rural areas to provide youth services. Doris is deployed to community events throughout the local authority area and is now recognised by young people as a safe place to go. Our youth detached contract has also been extended to include small group work into schools where there are concerns around peer conflict, exploitation or serious youth violence as well as healthy relationships this has allowed us to provide early intervention support to young people and schools.



BeXcellence are commissioned to deliver 6-8 weeks of lived experience mentoring to young people. We have adapted our delivery of this offer for this financial year having previously worked with our most high-risk young people who need more long-term support to an early intervention model. This will allow us to support more young people, and work will be more focussed on reducing risk, engagement in positive activities based on individual interests and needs.

DGF Psychology provide individual support for young people at risk of exploitation, including family support as needed. DGF support the young person and wider family to help manage any risks identified. Interventions are undertaken by a trained therapist using a CBT based model. DGF work with 6 - 8 young people over the 6-month period, as referred by the Council’s Practice Development Managers and Violence Reduction Partnership officers.

The agreed outcomes for DGF to work towards for the young person and /or their family during the intervention are:

- An assessment of where yp and their family are in terms of their motivation to change and seeking a positive move at the end of the intervention (yp and/or family).
- Increased ability to identify and understand abusive and exploitative behaviours (yp and/or family).
- A reduction in levels of risk /harm for the young person
- Reduced association with risky peers / adults
- Improved parent / carers capacity to prevent abusive / harmful behaviours
- Support the young person to engage in education / employment or training as appropriate.
- Improved mental health and well-being

SOUTH GLOS LOCAL SERVICES

The South Gloucestershire risk management pathway has undergone a review and a new Risk Outside the Home Tactical Group (RTG) has been introduced.

The purpose of this new group will be

- To utilise the multi-agency space within the meeting to identify appropriate interventions and referrals in response to emerging risks outside the home to reduce the likelihood of serious harm to our children. The ROTH Tactical Group will aim to work within the preventative space, assessing risk and action planning to prevent individuals becoming at higher risk of serious harm.
- The group are responsible for developing an early understanding of themes, emerging trends, and potential links and inter-connections between young people, possible perpetrators and locations/places where children may be experiencing extra familial harm ensuring an appropriate multi-agency action plan is in place.
- Partners will work together to complete early scoping for those Victims, Offenders, Locations and Themes (VOLT) through the sharing of partnership intelligence, to develop plans for individual and community-based interventions and disruption of perpetrators and places and spaces where harm occurs.

The Police Early Intervention Team (EIT)

- EIT officers are allocated our most high-risk young people. They make regular contact, build positive relationships and signpost young people onto positive paths
- Our EIT officers deliver small group work, individual educational packages or words of advice as an early intervention to try to divert the children from crime
- The EIT officers have been involved in supporting transport to and from The Wheels Project. This has allowed them to build positive relationships with young people and to steer them onto a more positive path

In addition, there are a series of educational packages, covering multiple subjects that police deliver in the classroom.



SOUTH GLOS COMMUNITY VOICE

The South Gloucestershire VRP work closely with our neighbourhood beat teams and regularly take part in partnership community events to engage with the public throughout our local authority area. This year we have supported the Safer Streets campaign, attended Yate Youth Festival, supported conversations at college freshers' events around safety in the community and supported the Police & Crime Commissioner at community forums. We use these opportunities to speak to residents and gather information about community areas that feel unsafe, or any community concerns they may have. We then work in partnership with the Police to address those concerns. We also worked in Partnership with

We have funded a mobile youth bus called 'Doris' which stands for the Delivery of Rural Inclusion and Support. 'Doris' allows us to deliver detached youth work sessions into our more rural areas along with sessions in our more residential areas. 'Doris' is becoming well known amongst young people in South Gloucestershire and is used frequently by our youth service providers for different events. We have received positive feedback from young people, parents and our youth service providers.

We work closely with our neighbourhood beat team partners to tackle ASB in hotspot areas taking a joint approach with retailers to support them and reduce incidents, we are also part of our Community Tension Monitoring Group who have oversight of tensions within the community, and we work in partnership to resolve those issues.

We also work with our Violence Reduction partners where there are cross border issues effecting young people to reduce risk, plan disruption where necessary and safeguard young people.



Term	Definition
<p style="text-align: center;">Absolute Low Income Families</p>	<p>Absolute low income is defined as a family in low income Before Housing Costs (BHC) in the reference year in comparison with incomes in 2010/11. A family must have claimed one or more of Universal Credit, Tax Credits or Housing Benefit at any point in the year to be classed as low income in these statistics.</p> <p>Absolute low income takes the 60 per cent of median income threshold from 2010/11 and then fixes this in real terms (i.e. the line moves with inflation). This is designed to assess how low incomes are faring with reference to inflation. It measures the number and proportion of individuals who have incomes below this threshold. The percentage of individuals in absolute low income will decrease if individuals with lower incomes see their incomes rise by more than inflation.</p> <p>A family is defined as a single adult; or a married or cohabitating couple; or a Civil Partnership; and any dependent children.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)</p>	<p>Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traditionally understood as a set of 10 traumatic events or circumstances occurring before the age of 18 that have been shown through research to increase the risk of adult mental health problems and debilitating diseases.</p> <p>Five ACE categories are forms of child abuse and neglect, which are known to harm children and are punishable by law, and five represent forms of family dysfunction that increase children’s exposure to trauma.</p> <p>The 10 original ACEs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical abuse • sexual abuse • psychological abuse • physical neglect • psychological neglect • witnessing domestic abuse • having a close family member who misused drugs or alcohol • having a close family member with mental health problems • having a close family member who served time in prison • parental separation or divorce on account of relationship breakdown
<p style="text-align: center;">Avon & Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)</p>	<p>The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) brings together specialist partners, at both the strategic pan Avon and Somerset and local authority level. Working together to identify and understand the underlying causes of local violent crime and provide an effective response to reduce and deter people from carrying out these crimes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP)</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is a strategic guide for service providers that helps them to meet local needs and best support children and young people. The plan aims to ensure that children and young people have the best start in life, are healthy and happy, and are prepared for adulthood</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)</p>	<p>Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. There are many forms of child criminal exploitation. All are extremely harmful to a child and their families both in the immediate and long term.</p> <p>County lines is just one form of criminal exploitation other forms of exploitation include using young people to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move counterfeit money/goods • steal to order • street robberies and stealing of vehicles • holding and moving of guns and weapons, • being used to perpetrate violence against rivals, for money or to control members of their own group as punishments



Term	Definition
<p>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</p>	<p>Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity</p> <p>(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or</p> <p>(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.</p> <p>The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.</p>
<p>Children Looked After (CLA) Child in Care (CiC)</p>	<p>A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked after child. Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care, a term which many children and young people prefer.</p> <p>Each UK nation has a slightly different definition of a looked after child and follows its own legislation, policy and guidance. But in general, looked after children are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • living with foster parents • living in a residential children's home or • living in residential settings like schools or secure units. <p>A child stops being looked after when they are adopted, return home or turn 18. However local authorities in all the nations of the UK are required to support children leaving care at 18 until they are at least 21. This may involve them continuing to live with their foster family.</p>
<p>Children in Need (CiN)</p>	<p>Children in need are defined in law as children who are aged under 18 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need local authority services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development • need local authority services to prevent significant or further harm to health or development • are disabled
<p>Community Safety Partnership</p>	<p>Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were introduced by Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and bring together local partners to formulate and implement strategies to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in their communities.</p>
<p>County Lines</p>	<p>County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.</p>
<p>Data Analysis, Management, Performance & Evaluation Group (DAMPEG)</p>	<p>The Serious Violence Data Analyst Group (DAMPEG) is established to provide data-driven insights and analyses to understand and combat serious violence and meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty. This group will leverage data to inform policy, strategic decisions, and operational responses</p>
<p>Education Health & Care Plans</p>	<p>An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.</p> <p>EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.</p>



Term	Definition
Enhanced Case Management	Enhanced Case Management (ECM) is a relational psychosocial approach to working with children supervised by youth justice services (YJSs). ECM is based on the Trauma Recovery Model (TRM), which has links to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and comprises a series of intervention layers that are sequenced according to developmental and mental health need.
Health & Wellbeing Board	Health and wellbeing boards were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to act as a forum in which key leaders from the local health and care system could work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities. They became fully operational on 1 April 2013 in all 152 local authorities with adult social care and public health responsibilities.
Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	Young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training are at risk of becoming socially excluded
Owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act	<p>Households including one or more dependent children owed a prevention or relief duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act, crude rate per 1,000 estimated households that include at least one dependent child. Children should count as dependent if they’re under 18 and living at home. An 18 year old can also count as dependent if they’re in full time education or can’t support themselves for other reasons, and they live at home.</p> <p>Prevention duties include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness within 56 days from becoming homeless. Relief duties are owed to households that are already homeless and require help to secure settled accommodation. Although it is in principle possible, it is not likely that a household will be included in the numerator more than once per financial year. Applications are made on a household, rather than individual, basis and the timescales and nature of the process are such that it is not likely that a household will make more than one application in a year.</p>
Referral to Children’s Social Care	<p>A referral, in the context of child protection, is when someone contacts Children’s Services because they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.</p> <p>Anyone can make a referral including a parent, wider family member, friend, doctor, teacher or health visitor.</p>
Safeguarding and Promoting the welfare of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting children from maltreatment • preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development • ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
Serious Violence Duty (SVD)	The legal responsibility on police, justice, fire and rescue, health, and local authorities (known as the “specified authorities”) to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence.
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are learning difficulties or disabilities that affect a child or young person’s ability to learn.



GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Strategy meeting (AKA Strategy discussion)	The purpose of a strategy discussion [AKA a strategy meeting] is to decide whether the threshold has been met for a single or joint agency (HSC and Police) child protection investigation, and to plan that investigation. They happen when it is believed a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, serious harm.
Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA)	provides a specific focus on related needs within local areas
Systematic Review	Systematic reviews typically involve a detailed and comprehensive plan and search strategy derived a priori, with the goal of reducing bias by identifying, appraising, and synthesizing all relevant studies on a particular topic. Often, systematic reviews include a meta-analysis component which involves using statistical techniques to synthesize the data from several studies into a single quantitative estimate or summary effect size
Youth Justice Service (YJS)	The YJS provides a range of services to help and support young people, and their families, to try to keep them away from crime and anti-social behaviour



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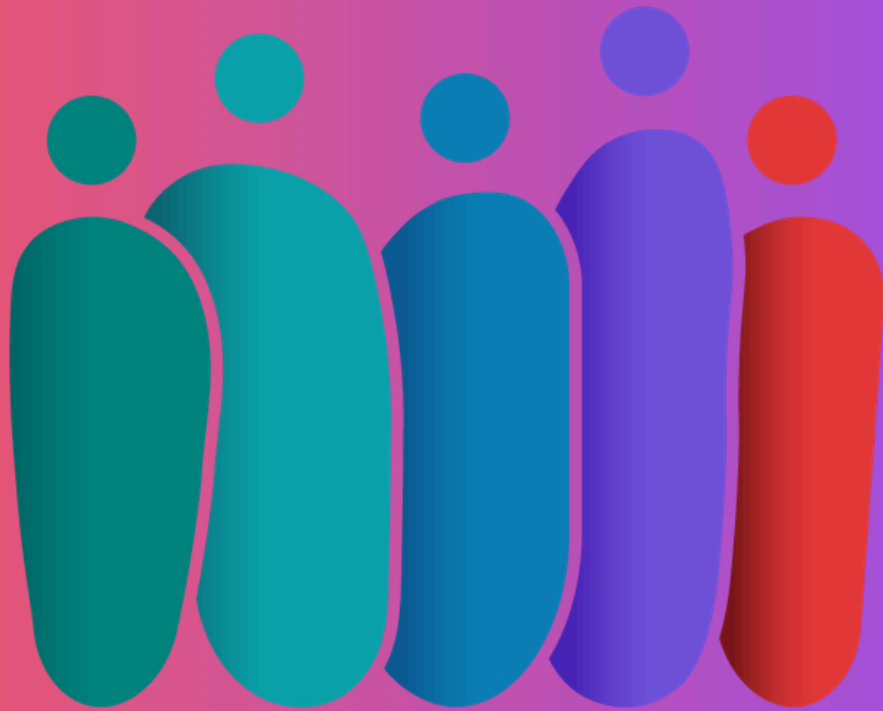
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**Thank you to all
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