

# Oxfordshire Violence and Vulnerability Strategy 2024-2027



## Executive Summary

The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership is the accountable body for the county-wide responses to the government’s Serious Violence strategy. This document sets out how the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership will address public space youth violence including knife crime and serious violence associated with drug-related exploitation of vulnerable adults and children in the county; focussing on the people who are posing the greatest threat, harm, and risk to our communities.

The Thames Valley Office Police and Crime Commissioner’s definition - *“Serious Violence includes specific types of recorded crime, such as homicide, grievous bodily harm, incidents that involve a knife, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing”* - has been adopted for the purposes of this strategy.

Serious violence also includes domestic and sexual violence and can be prevalent in other public settings such as the night-time economy. Whilst we fully recognise that sexual violence, domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is cross-cutting and no less serious in terms of risk and harm, for clarity and accountability these areas are delineated into distinct strategies and plans as illustrated in the table below, each with their own measures and impact indicators. These priority areas are addressed by the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board, and TVP’s Violence Against Women Girls strategy (which is supported in implementation through partnership arrangements), the Community Safety Partnerships’ local responses under initiatives such as NightSafe and Safer Streets, and through partners in Oxfordshire’s Sexual Violence and Exploitation (SVEN) network.

Drug treatment and intervention activities will be embedded within our Combatting Drugs strategy, our Public Health area response to the Government’s 10-year drug strategy ‘From Harm to Hope’. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Exploitation Sub-Group leads and coordinates multi-agency activity to safeguarding children from exploitation and the Modern Slavery Partnership has the same responsibilities in relation to types of exploitation that do not fall within the remit of any other partnership group (e.g. adult labour exploitation). Youth exploitation and crime are also addressed within the County’s Youth Justice & Exploitation Service Annual Plan. All this work is underpinned by the PCC’s Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021-25, Thames Valley Police’s Strategic Plan 2022-23 and OCC’s Children and Young People’s Plan 2018-23.

The framework below illustrates how these strategic and operational priorities are addressed across the partnership:

|  |   |   |                                       |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Knife crime, County Lines, Serious Violence and Homicide Reduction | Oxfordshire Violence and Vulnerability Strategy<br>Youth Justice and Exploitation Service Annual Plan |   |                                       |
|  | Oxford Community Safety Partnership Plan  | Cherwell & West Community Safety Partnership Plan | S&V Community Safety Partnership Plan |
|  | Local Policing Area 7-point plan  | Local Policing Area 7-point plan                  | Local Policing Area 7-point plan      |

|                                    |   |  |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Child exploitation                 | Oxfordshire Safeguarding Childrens Exploitation Strategy<br>Oxfordshire Safeguarding Childrens Board CE Subgroup Action Plan<br>Youth Justice and Exploitation Service Annual Plan  |  |
| Domestic abuse and sexual violence | Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy<br>TVP VAWG Strategy  |  |
| Night-time economy                 | Oxford Nighttime Economy Plan<br>NightSafe Oxford   |  |
| Prevention and Early Intervention  | Oxfordshire Early Help Strategy<br>Oxfordshire Neglect Strategy<br>Oxfordshire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-25 (Inequalities, Health & Wellbeing, Children & Young People)<br>Oxfordshire Learner Engagement Strategy |  |

This strategy is aligned with the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit workstreams to reduce serious violence, tackling county lines and misuse of drugs through:

- early intervention and prevention activities, particularly focussed on young people.
- supporting communities and partnerships work together using a public health approach.
- effective law enforcement and criminal justice responses to deter offending and bring people to justice.
- protect and support vulnerable people from the harm caused by drugs and the drug trade.

The government's Serious Violence Strategy focusses on the impact of drug dealing and its associated violence including knife crime on young people, vulnerable adults, and communities. Whether drug supply is from outside of Oxfordshire, commonly known as County Drug Lines (CDL), or Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) based in the county, the extent of the problem in Oxfordshire and our 'hotspot' areas can be identified through our Strategic Intelligence Assessment and Interactive Crime dashboard.

Both drug dealing operating models rely on child criminal exploitation (CCE), resulting in Oxfordshire children dealing in the county or running drugs to other regions, and children from other areas coming to Oxfordshire to move drugs and money for organised crime groups. Risk factors for CCE include but are not limited to missing episodes, school exclusions, not being in suitable education, employment or training, parental substance abuse, domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, substance misuse, unsafe accommodation, poor mental health and contact with the youth justice system.

Both models also target vulnerable adults and their properties, commonly known as "cuckooing," to facilitate their trade; often using threats and violence to enforce compliance. This strategy addresses the increasingly visible nature of these activities in the public domain which causes real concern for our communities, who are collaborating with us to report drug dealing and the resulting paraphernalia and 'drug litter.' The health impact from drug using is well known, coupled with the increasing levels of violence associated with the County Drug Lines and local Organised Crime Groups models.

"National and local research continues to determine root causes of why young people are carrying knives to inform the work needed to tackle the issue and reduce the risks posed. Although not

exhaustive, below are some common factors identified by Safe4Me known to influence young people to carry knives:

- County lines and local OCGs
- Gang affiliation – protection/status
- Media attention/glamorisation
- Fear of crime – being attacked/self-protection
- Victim of bullying – self-protection
- Peer pressure – perception that most young people carry knives

The common factor is the ‘vicious circle’ young people find themselves in, for example – in a gang/drug network it is an expectation to be armed: ‘fear or be feared’, ‘live or die’ – also risking the knife they carry being used on them in a confrontation or causing injury to themselves.<sup>1</sup>

## **A Partnership Approach**

In spring 2022 Oxfordshire’s Safeguarding Children’s Board launched a system-wide a set of principles and a statement of intent for all partners in the county working on the youth agenda which also aligns with the Youth Justice Board “Child First” principles.

We will work in partnership together with you, your family and all the agencies who are here to support you in Oxfordshire. If you need our help to be and feel safe, we will:

- Ask, not assume, what is happening in your life and what would help.
- Act by seeking to understand your lived experiences, and work with you.
- Discuss with you your choices and how you can feel safe and in control.
- Respect and value you and the people who care about you.
- Work as a team - with you, your family and each other as professionals - so that everyone’s ideas and knowledge are used.
- Be honest with you and communicate clearly in a way that you can understand.
- Focus on who and what helps you to feel safe and where you feel safe.
- Work with you at your pace wherever possible - but if things are not improving fast enough for you or if we need to immediately protect you, we will act quickly and decisively.

This strategy includes partners from across a broad spectrum of drug treatment, health authorities, social housing organisations, Thames Valley Police, local authorities, education and voluntary sector and community groups; all contributing to the identification, diversion, and protection of those most at risk. This agenda cuts across the child and adult safeguarding frameworks and statutory duties.

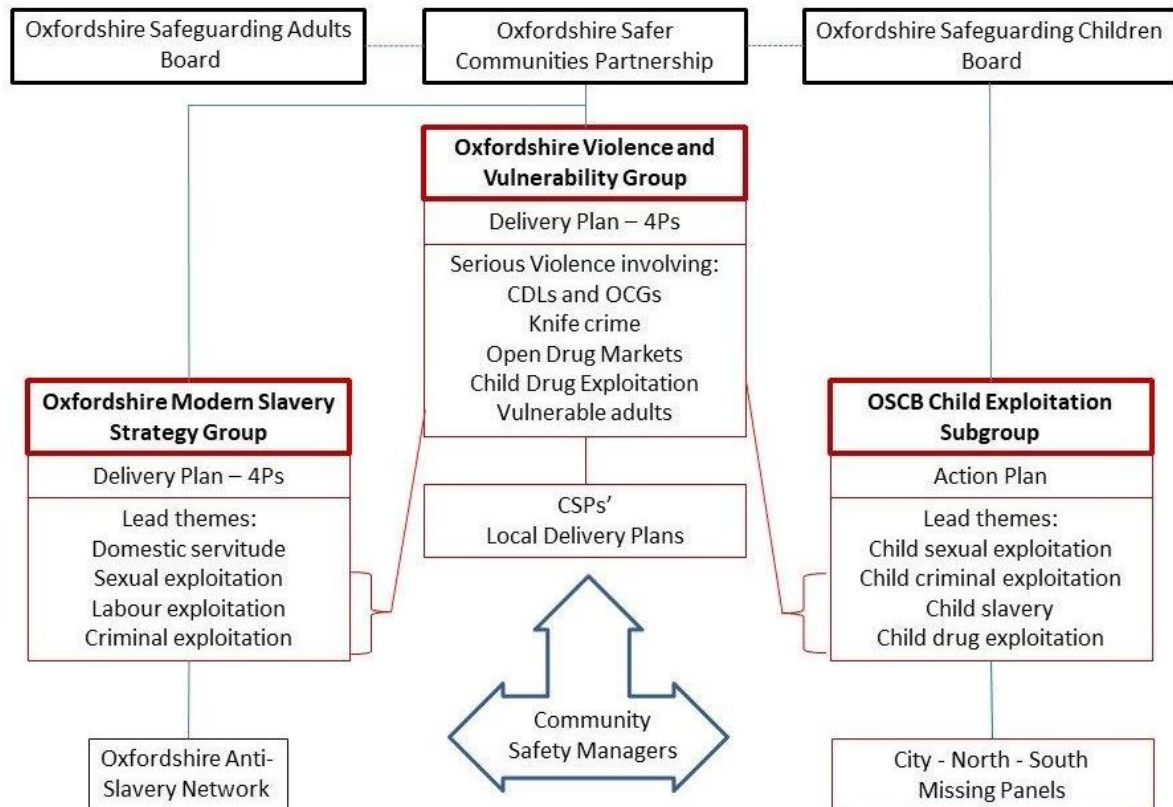
Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has funded Oxfordshire’s Violence Reduction Co-ordinator role, which is co-located within the Youth Justice and Exploitation Service. Oxfordshire’s Violence Reduction Coordinator has

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/knife-crime/>

brought necessary additional capacity across local partnerships in preparation to meet the requirements of the new Serious Violence Duty and provide local co-ordination in its implementation. The Violence Reduction Coordinator is mandated to collaborate across organisational boundaries to improve information and data-sharing to develop an informed local understanding of serious violence and its causes. The role acts as a single-point-of-contact for communication and coordination across the partnership to ensure effective alignment of planning and delivery between the VRU and local partnerships.

The interdependencies between boards and working groups are shown in the diagram below:



## Context

This Strategy encompasses Oxfordshire’s response to the threat, risk and harm posed by the current models of drug dealing and the exploitation and violence associated with it.

The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership (SOP) Violence and Vulnerability Delivery Plan details the strategic and tactical deliverables with a whole-county view, in conjunction with the district Community Safety Partnerships’ localised delivery plans.

This strategy contains seven components necessary to effectively address the threat, risk, and harm of serious violence:

1. Governance – effective oversight and strategic support for delivery
2. Data and Insight – intelligence gathering and data analysis to gain the best and most up-to-date understanding of the problem.
3. Communication – changing the narrative, campaigns, and messaging to the public.

4. Prevent – early intervention and prevention activities, particularly focussed on young people.
5. Pursue – effective law enforcement and criminal justice responses to deter offending and bring people to justice.
6. Protect – protect and support vulnerable people from the harm caused by drugs and the drug trade.
7. Prepare – supporting communities and partnerships to work together using a public health approach.

Each Local Policing Area (LPA) will have a 7-point Violence Reduction plan under Operation Rasure to undertake knife crime enforcement operations which use the multi-agency approach of this Violence & Vulnerability Plan.

A Neighbourhood Community Safety Framework has been developed by the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership which provides a consistent place-based approach to community safety issues for the Oxfordshire districts to apply to risk and need issues within their localities. The framework is applicable to community safety risks that impact the quality of life in neighbourhoods where the visible signs of crime and anti-social behaviour are seen and felt by the local community, for example: drug dealing, child criminal exploitation, anti-social behaviour, and violence outside the home. Elements of the framework can be applied to addressing other types of risk such as burglary, car crime and violence in the night-time economy.

It provides focussed coordination of local partner and community resources that is flexible to local circumstances and the nature of the risk. It uses the established problem-solving triangle that recognises the inter-connection between the victim, offender, and location, by proposing neighbourhood-level interventions for each of these elements to reduce risk and provide sustainable, legacy activities. The framework supports the contextual safeguarding model by coordinating interventions at the person, family, peer, school, and neighbourhood levels. Using a localised assessment of need, it helps partners identify where there are local or strategic gaps in provision.

### **Data on Serious Violence in Oxfordshire**

For the purposes of Oxfordshire's Strategic Intelligence Assessment (2023) serious violence has been defined by three groups of recordable crime/activity, based on the OPCC's definition of Serious Violence for Thames Valley.

Group 1: These are recorded offences that we intend to have direct impact on and reduce through violence prevention and reduction work. These will be monitored for the purposes of performance and submission to the Home Office under the Serious Violence Duty.

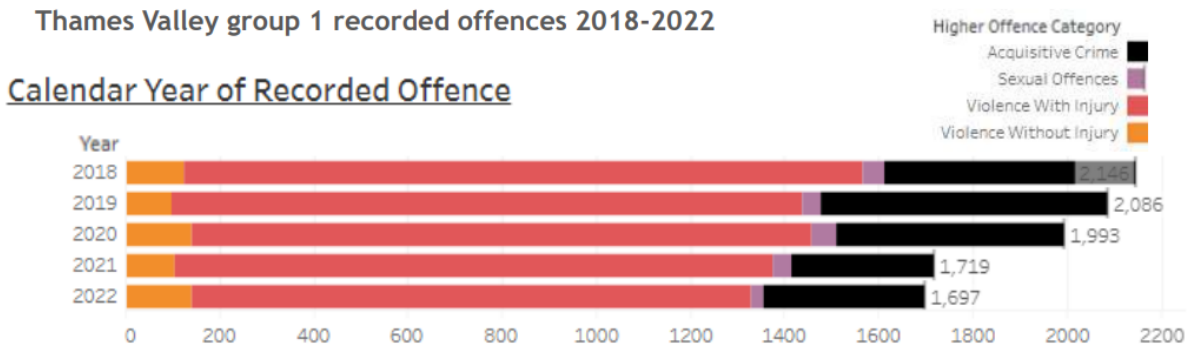
- All homicide
- All Grievous Bodily Harm
- All Knife Crime (as collected for Home Office recording)
- Inclusive of all ages, location types (public/private) and domestic flags

Group 2: These crimes are recorded offences which contribute to the threat, inherece and understanding of Group 1 offences. These will be analysed for the purposes of understanding the correlation/relationship of the crime type, the person/s involved and the context. Group 2 crimes can increase because of improved awareness, reporting, recording, trust, and confidence in policing and other external factors.

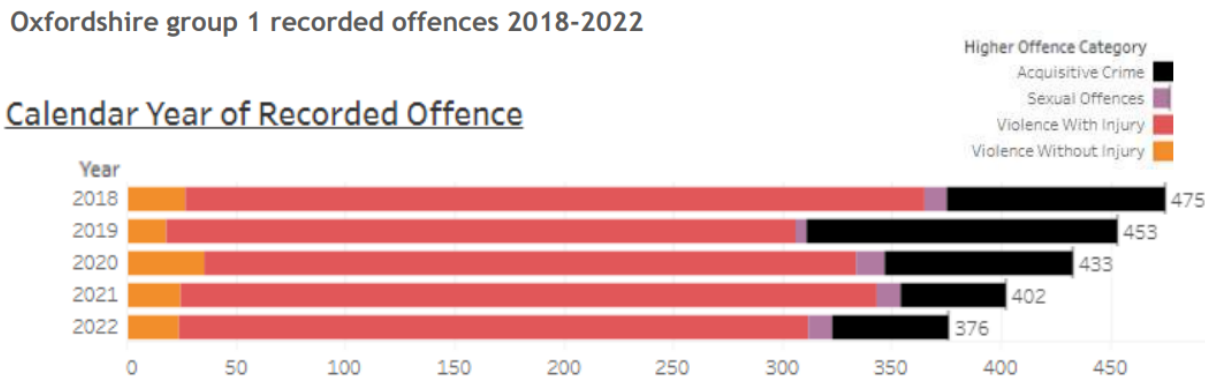
- All actual bodily harm (excluding 'other' violence with injury)

- All drug supply/trafficking (excluding possession alone)
- All sexual assault (excluding sexual activity and 'other' sexual offences)
- All rape

Thames Valley Police Crime figures tell us that there was a 23% decrease in Group 1 offences in 2022 compared to 2019. In 2022, Violence with Injury was the most common Group 1 offence with 70% falling into this category.



According to the Thames Valley Police crime figures Group 1 offences decreased across Oxfordshire compared to 2019 (pre-COVID). There has been a 20% decrease (-77) in recorded offences in 2022 compared to 2019. This is slightly below the percentage change across Thames Valley meaning Oxfordshire offences decreased, but not as quickly as the wider Thames Valley.



Oxfordshire has the lowest rate of Group 1 serious violence in the Thames Valley area with 2.9 people per 1000 population. Cherwell and Oxford Districts had a higher-than-average rate per 1000 population compared to the county average.

## Group one serious violence, calendar year 2018-2022

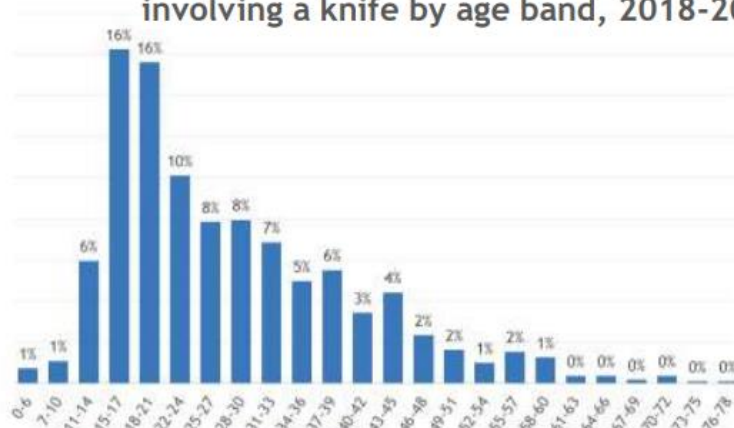
| Area            | Recorded cases | Census 2021 population | Rate per 1000 population |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Berkshire       | 2,002          | 161,500                | 12.4                     |
| Buckinghamshire | 1,706          | 553,100                | 3.1                      |
| Milton Keynes   | 1,833          | 287,100                | 6.4                      |
| Oxfordshire     | 2,139          | 725,300                | 2.9                      |

## Group one serious violence by Oxfordshire districts, calendar year 2018-2022

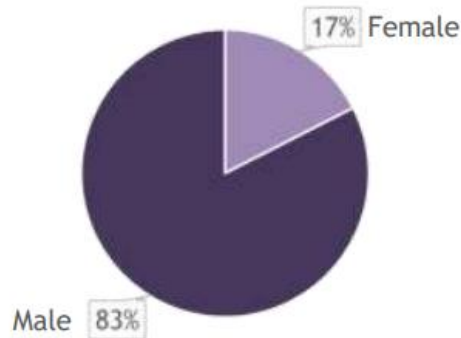
| Area                | Recorded cases | Census 2021 population | Rate per 1000 population |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cherwell            | 530            | 161,000                | 3.3                      |
| Oxford              | 863            | 162,000                | 5.3                      |
| South Oxfordshire   | 268            | 149,100                | 1.8                      |
| Vale of White Horse | 276            | 138,900                | 2.0                      |
| West Oxfordshire    | 202            | 114,200                | 1.8                      |

In Oxfordshire, 16% of 15–17-year-olds and 16% of 18–21-year-olds were the suspects in serious violence offences involving a knife. Males (83%) were more likely to be a suspect in a serious violence occurrence involving a knife than females (17%). 91% of males aged 15-17 were the suspect in occurrences relating to serious violence involving a knife.

## Group one suspects of Serious Violence involving a knife by age band, 2018-2022



## Group one suspects of serious violence involving a knife by gender, 2018-2022



### Knife Crime

For the calendar year January to December 2022, there were 180 perpetrators involved in possession of knife offences in Oxfordshire. Of these, 59% were young people aged under eighteen. 42% of perpetrators in the Vale of White Horse were aged under eighteen.

#### Perpetrators of Possession of an article with a blade or point Offences recorded in Oxfordshire Jan-Dec 2022

|                     | 0-17      | 18 and over | Age not Recorded | Total      |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Cherwell            | 10        | 31          | 0                | 41         |
| Oxford              | 26        | 48          | 0                | 74         |
| South Oxfordshire   | 9         | 15          | 0                | 24         |
| Vale of White Horse | 10        | 14          | 0                | 24         |
| West Oxfordshire    | 4         | 13          | 0                | 17         |
| <b>Oxfordshire</b>  | <b>59</b> | <b>121</b>  | <b>0</b>         | <b>180</b> |

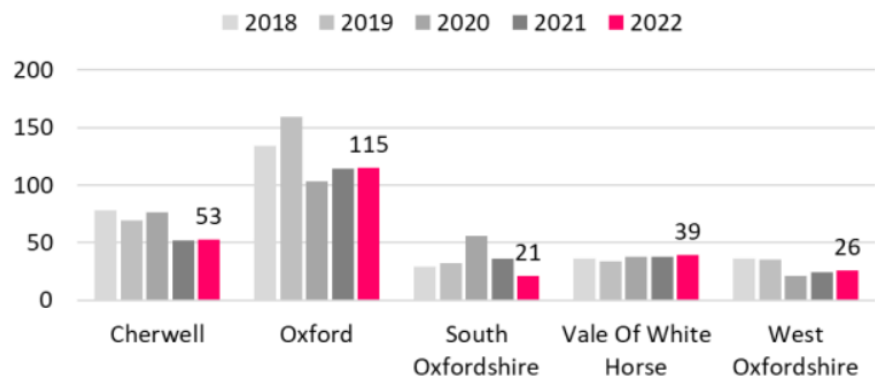
Data Source: Thames Valley Police Crime System - Niche "Note: The data is inclusive of valid crimes only. CSP in list: 'Cherwell', 'Oxford', 'South Oxfordshire', 'Vale of White Horse' and 'West Oxfordshire'. Filter set to: 'Suspect' or 'Offender'. HO Category Number in list to 10D - includes classification of; Possession of Article with Blade or Point', 'Having an article with a blade or point in a public place', 'Having an article with a blade or point on school premises', 'Threaten with an article with a blade or point in a public place' and 'Threaten with an article with a blade or point on school premises'."

In 2022, Thames Valley Police recorded a total of 254 victims of knife crime offences in Oxfordshire. This was 14% below the previous 3-year average from 2019-21. South Oxfordshire saw a fall of 49%.



**Victims of violent, sexual and robbery offences recorded in Oxfordshire where a sharp or bladed implement was linked to the offence as a weapon**

Source: Thames Valley Police Crime Recording System - Niche RMS extracted April 2021. Note: Knife Crime offences have been identified following the Home Office Definition, this will be specific violent and sexual offences, robbery and threats to kill offences where a pointed, bladed or sharp instrument has been used in the offence and is capable of piercing the skin or has been used as threat.



In the year ending December 2022, demographic details of recorded victims and suspects of knife crime shows:

- 70% of knife crime victims were males and 27% were females.
- 83% of knife crime suspects were males and 16% were females.

**Victims (by age)**

- 79% of knife crime victims were aged 18-64
- 18% were children under 18.
- 22% were aged 18-24
- 1% were aged 65 or over.

**Suspects (by age)**

- 72% of knife crime perpetrators were aged 18-64, a reduction of 6% from previous year.
- 27% were children under 18.
- 26% were aged 18-24
- 1% were aged 65 or over.

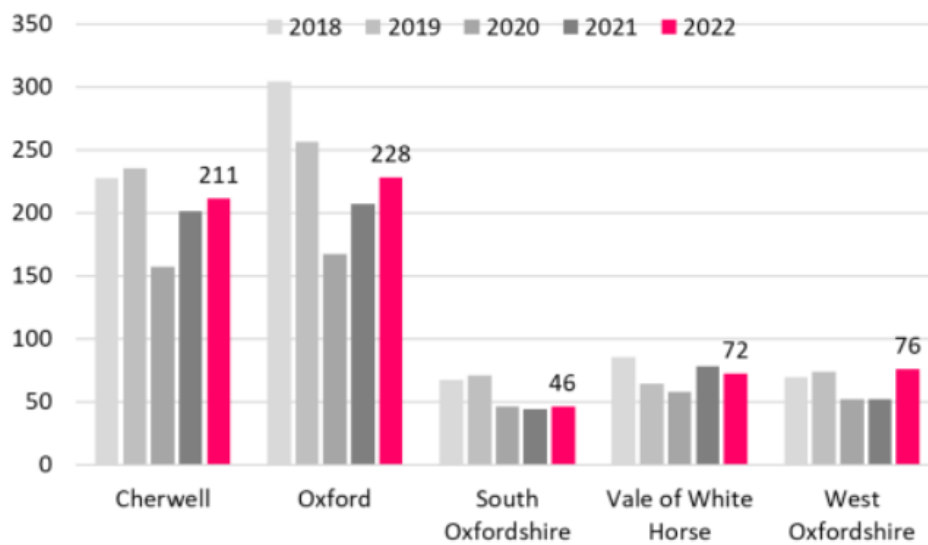
Source: Thames Valley Police

Decline in use of hospital services because of knife crime.

In 2022 (Jan – Dec) Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust recorded a total of:

- 633 Oxfordshire residents attending A&E units following assault with a sharp object. This is an 8% decrease from the benchmark years of 2019-21.
- There was an increase in incidents in West Oxfordshire of 28%.
- 19 Oxfordshire residents admitted as an in-patient following an assault with a sharp object.

## Assault by sharp object admissions Emergency Department (calendar year)



Source: Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; UK Parliament: Knife Crime Statistics

District CSP plans will include data from the Strategic Intelligence Assessment to reflect crime trends within smaller locality areas across the County.

### Outcomes and Impact

In line with the Home Office statutory guidance the partnership will be expected to self-monitor and collectively evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this County strategy. CSPs have a statutory requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to keep the implementation of local plans under review for the purposes of monitoring effectiveness and make any changes where necessary and to publish the outcomes of each review.

Three key success measures for the prevention and reduction of serious violence are:

1. Homicide rates
2. Hospital admissions for knife/sharp object assault, and
3. Police-recorded knife crime

Outcomes may also be based on data on police recorded violence offences included in the strategic needs assessment; this could include (but is not limited to) offences involving firearms, robbery, and possession of weapons offences.

Police data on charge rates for serious violence offences, like robbery; and Ministry of Justice statistics for offenders cautioned/convicted for knife and weapons related offences are also useful sources of information for measuring the success of a partnership.

The success measures specified above will not prevent Oxfordshire districts from adopting additional success measures to help track progress in dealing with serious violence issues in localities. The partnership should use both quantitative and qualitative indicators to ensure that evaluation is data-informed and captures the voices and views of our children, families, and

communities. Various sources of data including Health, Education and Social Care data should be explored to ensure a more nuanced and holistic picture of violence drivers and indicators. Additional measures could include:

- Children living in a household where there is domestic violence.
- Children living in a household with a family member convicted of an offence.
- Victims of/at risk of criminal/sexual exploitation
- Those who have had missing episodes.
- Children outside of mainstream school

## 1. Governance

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Governance is by the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Coordination Group which has senior representation from across the system. Intra-board protocols are in place with the Safeguarding Boards and Health & Wellbeing Board. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Co-ordination Group is the agreed county problem-solving group around tackling and preventing serious violence. It acts as a landing point for VRU work across Oxon and every other meeting focuses on serious violence. There is a clear link between Oxfordshire activities and the work of Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit through the county's Violence Reduction Coordinator. There is independent oversight and scrutiny of this strategy from the County's strategic boards for community safety and safeguarding, and support from Thames Valley VRU.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has a statutory relationship with the Local Authority under the Crime and Disorder Act and a contractual relationship with County Councils and Community Safety Partnerships around community safety funding. This relationship includes mutually supportive joint-working around information-sharing, meeting attendance, networking, and support with identifying and bidding for funding opportunities at a national and regional level. The PCC also has a convening power and can bring together partners at a regional level in support of Oxfordshire planning (e.g., HMPPS partners). The PCC attends the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Coordination Group, district CSP meetings and Thames Valley YOT Managers meetings amongst other partnership forums. The PCC oversees compliance with the delivery of the Serious Violence Duty, ensuring funding is received by the Home Office and is allocated following collaboration with partnerships, including the CSPs, across the Thames Valley.

Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Violence and Vulnerability Delivery Plan contains strategic activities that have an Oxfordshire-wide impact. Local CSP-level operational delivery is held within each district plan where violence, young people and exploitation are addressed.

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Responsible: | Safer Oxfordshire Partnership  |
| Accountable: | Safer Oxfordshire Partnership  |
| Consulted:   | Local Community Safety Partnerships, OSCB Child Exploitation Subgroup, Modern Slavery Strategy Group, Neglect Strategy group, Domestic Abuse Strategic Board |
| Informed:    | OSAB, OSCB, Oxfordshire Modern Slavery Network, Sexual Violence & Exploitation network (SVEN), Youth Justice Management Board                                |

Local CSP Delivery Plans contain tactical activities only relevant to their local areas and driven by multi-agency TTCG and JATAC forums and CSP meetings. The local CSP plans which underpin this strategy operationalise at a local level the 4 Ps approach. These plans depend upon

the governance and data framework under this strategy and the county-wide interventions that support local operational delivery. These plans include:

- Who (such as the voluntary and community sector, young people, and communities) the partnership will work with; why they have been chosen; and how they will collaborate,
- Consultation arrangements with young people and communities
- Suitable and relevant local outcome measures

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Responsible: | Local Community Safety Partnerships  |
| Accountable: | Local Community Safety Partnerships  |
| Consulted:   | The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership  |
| Informed:    | OSCB Child Exploitation Subgroup, Modern Slavery Strategy Group, Neglect Strategy group, Sexual Violence & Exploitation network (SVEN), Youth Justice Management Board |

## **2. Communication and Communities**

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Communication activities are coordinated across partner organisations through Safer Oxfordshire Partnership and CSPs. A shared, common language is used and messages are agreed and used in both public and internal communications. Appropriate communication channels are identified including media outlets, social media and local community and organisation channels.

Campaign activities and communication materials are used to support Home Office, National Crime Agency, VRU and Thames Valley Police initiatives. The results of intensification weeks, championed by the NCA, are communicated by Thames Valley Police, and shared by partners through social media channels.

There are regular press releases on Stronghold activities and local drug warrants heavily utilising social media.

Role specific safeguarding training is embedded across all statutory partners and agencies supporting children and young people. OSCB quality assure the training materials and deliver a broad range of theme specific training including child sexual exploitation training, alongside all levels of safeguarding training. Agencies have specific intranet pages on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Partners have access to and can use the Home Office Child Exploitation Disruption toolkit within their localised plans.

## **3. Data and Intelligence framework**

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Oxfordshire knife crime and serious violence data is analysed and a balanced picture set out against the national trends through Local Authority and VRU Strategic Intelligence and Needs Assessments/Analyses. These analytical products facilitate multi-agency tasking and case management processes and are facilitated through information sharing protocols.

### Data Analysis

- Each Local Policing Area in Thames Valley Police has a dedicated Problem-Solving Analyst to identify key locations and times of knife crime and serious violence to inform prevention and enforcement activity.

Serious Violence and Stop and Search Dashboards are available to LPAs.

- The Child Exploitation Sub-Group is developing a prevalence report on Child Exploitation for each locality area and Oxfordshire County as a whole.
- Interact is a dashboard and data visualisation tool (facilitated by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner) that gives access to strategic non-personalised data to partner organisations for the purpose of collating and analysing crime-related data at a district level to inform crime reduction and community safety planning.
- Data on area-based criminality shared within Local Policing Area daily briefings, and meetings which are locality-based, multi-agency and discuss case-level information and resourcing.
- Intelligence submissions are sourced from a range of teams within partner organisations through Thames Valley Police Force Intelligence Hub (FIH)
- Thames Valley Together will provide a strategic needs assessment for serious violence to all CSPs and victim and offender profiles for LPAs.
- Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit provides a strategic needs assessment around serious violence [Strategic Needs Assessment - Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit \(tvvru.co.uk\)](https://www.tvvru.co.uk)
- The Local Authority Strategic Intelligence Assessment has developed and incorporated key data relating to serious violence available on Oxfordshire Insights - [SIA 2023 \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).

### Information Sharing

The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Information Sharing Protocol was reviewed and signed in 2021 (2021-24). The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board information sharing protocol is signed by all Board members.

### Review and learning

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) identify learning from serious incidents and improvements to inform local organisational practices and multi-agency arrangements. The Jacob CSPR published in January 2021 reviewed the death of a child affected by child criminal exploitation. Recommendations were made for improvement in the multi-agency arrangements for tackling child exploitation in Oxfordshire, and this strategy will support the work taken forward because of the review overseen and led by the Child Exploitation sub-group of OSCB.

OSCB facilitate learning events focussed on child exploitation. Practitioner learning events for teachers, social care professionals, police officers and other front-line professionals with up-to date information on child exploitation. CSPRs and Domestic Homicide Reviews are used to identify learning and system change requirements.

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) has a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) sub-group to ensure the responsibilities of the Board are carried out in respect of Safeguarding Adult Review and other forms of learning reviews activities. The OSAB also has a Vulnerable Adults Mortality Panel to oversee the Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) programme within Oxfordshire. LeDeR is the review process that looks at all deaths of people with a learning disability, regardless of the cause, to ensure that the person received a standard of care we would expect anyone else to receive. Reviews of deaths are conducted with a view to improve the standard and quality of care for people with learning disabilities. It is the first national programme of its kind aimed at making improvements to the lives of people with learning disabilities.

Thames Valley Police hold an annual internal Conference focussing on a Compendium of Learning from statutory reviews; this is well attended by all ranks and roles and allows learning from statutory reviews to be disseminated.

Probation Service deliver learning events for probation front-line professionals incorporating learning from internal Serious Further Offence Reviews as well as multi agency learning reviews both local and national.

#### **4. Prevent – early intervention and prevention activities, particularly focussed on young people**

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Young people at risk of exploitation will be protected from the harm of drugs, gangs, and associated violence through the delivery of universal, targeted and specialist support services. A contextual safeguarding approach is taken that looks not only at the person and their family but identifies risk and protective factors in their peer groups, and school and neighbourhood settings. Violence and vulnerability planning provides agencies with the opportunity to put these wider multi-agency safeguarding approaches into practice.

Non-school settings include a vast number of youth activities across the county, many are universal services open to all, whilst the development of targeted activities enables agencies to tailor support to those more at risk. This currently involves unrestricted access activities in more deprived neighbourhoods, and with the use of local youth partnerships the opportunity to cross refer young people to suitable interventions.

The voluntary and community sector in Oxfordshire is vast with over 160 organisations working with children and young people and over nine hundred people signed up to the Sector Insider monthly newsletter. Plus, a large number of early years' providers including 170+ individuals signing up to the Oxon VCS Early Years Network since Autumn 2020. Spread across the county these groups and organisations provide essential preventative services and support services.

##### Prevention and early intervention activities

- Young people are provided with PSHE input related to drugs and violence, and the existing safeguarding mechanisms for supporting young people are in place. PSHE-accredited resources which have been funded and developed by the VRU for Key Stages 1-3 are available to all School Police Officers.
- Launch of Exploitation Toolkit through the OSCB for all schools and alternative providers across the County. Developed because of the Jacob C SPR. This toolkit is available to all partners on the OSCB website and serves as a practical guide with links to all available resources and services to schools which support children and young people.
- Offer of trauma-informed training and support to all schools across the County from the Violence Reduction Unit. Training in Restorative Justice provided to all School Police Officers.
- Attendance and exclusions training with schools via Attendance Network meetings and In-Year Fair Access Panels advocates in use of Early Help Assessments.
- Bespoke Early Help training delivered to Early Years services, Police and Health Visitor service.
- Education training has been delivered to 150+ Children's Social Care staff and managers.

- Targeted Youth Support Service development of a directory of activities countywide on GROOP website.
- Voluntary sector youth organisations work together to provide relevant activities to young people, providing them with safe spaces to discuss concerns and empower them to talk about their lived experience and feedback on how services can best meet their needs.
- Local Policing Areas use Independent Advisory Groups to seek the views of the local community and to inform Police activity and planning in their local area.
- Providers have safeguarding practices embedded within their organisations and staff trained in exploitation and referral processes.
- The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Childrens Board have responsibility for promoting the welfare of children and ensuring agencies play their part in protecting young people from harm. The Board run a series of learning events for practitioners on child exploitation and county drug lines. Learning documents and tools are available on their website, as are the interagency procedures for gang activity, youth violence and criminal exploitation affecting children.
- Voluntary and community sector partnerships exist across the County with a range of providers offering universal, targeted and specialist support. These are reflected on the
- Targeted Youth Support Service Groop platform. Organisations such as Oxfordshire Youth, Safe! Children Heard and Seen and SeeSaw work across the County.
- Strong joint-working with County alternative provision and Head of Virtual School. Alternative Provision Headteachers/DSLs attend JATAC, Missing & Exploited Panels and Child Missing Education Panel.
- Governor Services have exclusion training for governors (6x/yr.) that includes all relevant groups for Oxfordshire. Training is provided via the Learner Engagement Team. The key message is for Governors to hold the school to account, to ensure that all children have the opportunity to thrive, and to take a strategic view of any pupil groups showing gaps from others, planning how to allow all children to engage successfully with school (including questioning reasonable adjustments) and aiming to lower any barriers that may prevent this.
- Multi-agency Early Years performance framework and dashboard has been developed.
- Children's Services Threshold of Need document has been updated and provides additional guidance on when early help processes should be used to support children and families as soon as a problem first emerges.

### Targeted Support

- The Community Impact Zone (CIZ) aims to create more opportunities for children and families in the four key areas of Cowley Marsh, Cowley, Blackbird Leys, and Northfield Brook. Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and Thames Valley Police jointly fund this work. The CIZ is collaborating with communities, organizations, and local authorities to support local people to thrive, encourage people to participate in and shape their community, and tackle inequality and increase social mobility by working to change the system.

- Police schools' officers support specific individuals and work with the schools' management teams. Schools PCs attend In Year Fair Access Panels (IYFAP) to try and ensure schools have accurate information about Police recorded concerns to help inform proportionate decision-making.
- The Virtual School will be funding three times home-school link workers in the North, City and South of Oxfordshire with a focus on children and young people with Social Workers who are at risk of exclusion.
- The Locality Community Support Service address risk issues with young people raised by schools and colleges through a Community Around the School Offer. The offer coordinates engagement and activities to reduce the risk behaviours in a community and school setting. CASOs support schools where a young person, or group of young people are displaying risky behaviours and are at risk of becoming NEET.
- Launch of updated County Early Help Strategy which outlines the early help offer of each partner across the system from universal to statutory services and sets out strategic aims. This includes an Annexe B which serves as a service directory for professionals.
- The 'Attendance pathway' has been updated to include the requirement for a Strengths and Needs or Early Help Assessment to be complete either where there are issues with attendance or before a suspension or exclusion decision is made.
- A joint activity pathway has been created by adult services, Children's services, and Oxford Health NHS Trust, designed to support practitioners in adult and children's services to work collaboratively and co-ordinate early help support for families where parents have additional needs.
- A multi-agency early help 'Neglect and Attendance Group' has been established to look specifically at how early help processes can be used to improve attendance, reduce suspensions and exclusions for children where neglect is an identified problem for the family.
- School nurses are trained and embedded in child exploitation processes, collaborating closely with Police, Social Care, and schools to identify and protect young people at risk.
- Trained Restorative Justice practitioners work in some schools following a specific incident and hold a formal RJ meeting within 48 hrs to reduce the need for extended fixed term exclusion whilst police investigate.
- Since July 2019, 70 schools have received restorative training. Thirty-five staff have been trained to practitioner level across eighteen settings. This has resulted in:
  - 90% of trained schools who had previously permanently excluded have not excluded or have seen a reduction in exclusions since the training.
  - 83% of trained schools who had previously suspended have not suspended or have seen a reduction in suspensions since training.
  - 96% of individuals who were non-attending for a variety of complex reasons and were supported by a restorative intervention are now re-engaged in school. The remaining 4% now have appropriate support in place.
- Restorative Justice Service run by Thames Valley Partnership is available to organisations who require restorative justice interventions.
- Agreed local information sharing with Op Encompass to improve the responses between the police and schools where a pupil is at risk of domestic abuse. This scheme involves information sharing between police and schools in cases where a school-aged child has experienced a domestic abuse incident, so the school is in a better position to support the affected child. 100% of schools across Oxfordshire have signed up to this process.



- Children Heard and Seen – police investigators obliged to refer to the charity when a custodial sentence is imposed or highly anticipated. Rolled out county-wide, automated data feeds from prison service of all adults who enter prison, compared with Niche to find out which children are linked, home visit and support offered by CHS.
- The Compass Partnership provide diversionary activities including mentoring and physical activities to children on the fringes of criminality and exploitation through a network of County-wide partners. Organisations involved are Oxfordshire Youth, SOFEA and Raw.
- The Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS) provides detached youth work responses to 'hot spot' areas across the county at times of need or increased risk. Provides one to one support to the most vulnerable young people. Targeting groups of young people at risk of criminality, exploitation, and poor mental health early to provide prevention and early intervention and increase aspirations and life chances.
- The Alternative Provision (Meadowbrook) is collaborating closely with partner agencies to protect and safeguard their pupils at risk of drug exploitation and they are represented at key multi-agency meetings.
- Learner Engagement Services offer early intervention through Lead Behaviour Practitioner provision, Exclusion and Reintegration provision, and funded intervention through In Year Fair Access Panels Support and challenge of schools and governors available through In Year Fair Access Panels and training for Governors.
- OXSIT (Oxfordshire Schools Inclusion Services) available for commissioning by schools to support children at risk of permanent exclusion with special educational needs. SENSS advisory services also available to schools to support and advise on best meeting children's special educational needs. Mental Health Support Teams and School Nursing Services available to work with children experiencing mental health and well-being challenges.
- Health care professionals can update exploitation and safeguarding concerns on the patient record to assist in care planning and risk levels.
- The OSCB Exploitation Screening Tool has been reviewed and there are improvement plans underway as part of the CE Subgroup workstream.
- School nurses work closely with Children's Social Care colleagues to support young people at risk of exploitation and have established working arrangements with the school PCs.
- There is a VRU-funded Hospital Navigator programme in place at the John Radcliffe Hospital whereby those who present at A&E for issues relating to serious violence, mental health or risk-taking behaviour are seen and supported and signposted for ongoing support. This is being evaluated by Oxford Brookes university for impact and outcomes.
- Custody Navigator pilot – VRU funded pilot for 12 months based in Abingdon custody to provide 'teachable moment' engagement following arrest for adults (18+) involved in drug or violence-related criminality.
- Community Coaches – funded through the VRU in collaboration with four Thames Valley football clubs. Provision of 1 to 1 direct intervention and mentoring support for young adults aged between 18-24 to divert them away from criminality.

## Specialist services

- The Youth Justice & Exploitation Service (YJES) is a specialist service delivering on the Local Authority's statutory functions around youth justice and social care for children who are at elevated risk of or who are being exploited. The model is embedding trauma-informed and contextual safeguarding approaches as part of its core work. The YJES collaborates very closely with partners including Forensic CAMHS to ensure work is underpinned by psychological and developmentally informed approaches.
- Young people open to the Youth Justice & Exploitation Service (YJES) are screened for substance misuse issues and onward referrals made to Aquarius (OCC commissioned drug and alcohol service provider). Aquarius and the young person undertake a full assessment is worked with to build resilience and raise awareness around substance misuse, health, and related criminality. YJES staff use their Building Resilience Toolkit providing activities in 1-2-1 or group work sessions to develop young people's understanding of exploitation risk and give them strategies to stay safe.
- The YJES work with young people who are alleged to have committed and who have committed serious violent and drug-related offences. The YJES work very closely with Forensic CAMHS services to ensure work is developmentally and psychologically informed and use evidence-based approaches such as the Trauma Recovery Model to support the most complex of young people in their journeys to desistance from crime.
- Drug Diversion Scheme – Thames Valley Police, YJES and Aquarius are working in partnership to deliver the Drug Diversion Scheme. This offers a treatment-based response to young people stopped by Police in possession of controlled drugs with the aim of diverting them away from the criminal justice system.
- Each district CSP attends the local JATAC and TTCG meetings (Police-led meetings where local issues/individuals are discussed and problem-solving approaches are used)
- Strategic Management Group process, a localised problem-solving task and finish process in place to respond to serious incidents and in areas of high prevalence and concern; these groups can respond to initial acute incidents/concerns and then step-down to a Community Safety group which takes forward contextual safeguarding approaches to respond to places, spaces and people of concern using the '4 Ps' model
- Young people can be discussed at a locality Missing and Exploitation Panel in the Cherwell/West, South and City areas, bringing together professionals to understand and manage risk.
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Plans (MARAMPs), Social Care Strategy Meetings and Core Groups are in place to case manage substantial risk young people under the statutory (CWCF, CP) and non-statutory (CIN) frameworks.
- Development of County SEND strategy to improve post-sixteen education, learning, employment, and training to prepare young people for adulthood and to offer a range of specialist learning provisions for young people who have a high level of need.
- The National Referral Mechanism process is used when a young person is identified as being at risk of exploitation. The risk-management around that young person remains with the police and Children's Social Care. A positive NRM decision by the Single Competent Authority can affect criminal justice outcomes at Court if used as part of a defence under Section 45 of the Modern Slavery Act.
- The police Problem Solving Teams receive referrals through an RFG risk matrix and are therefore involved in the management of higher risk young people in each locality across the county. Support, mentoring, and engagement are used to build a relationship with young people, however, where appropriate criminal justice sanctions are identified and used in the risk-management process.

- Safeguarding and medical staff in hospitals work to a protocol that identifies young people thought to be victims of violent assault including stabbing. These young people are referred through to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for assessment.
- There are established working processes with young person's mental health services including Liaison & Diversion, Forensic Child, and Adolescent Mental Health Service (FCAMHS), the Child and Adolescent Harmful Behaviour Service (CAHBS) the Neuropsychiatry CAMHS team, MHSTs and the specialist Horizon service. These provides the levels of specialism needed to support people with ADHD/ASD or autism, children with complex needs, children in Police custody, children who have experienced sexual harm or abuse and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour.
- The Phoenix Team provides health services for young people who are Children we Care For, those open to the Residential & Edge of Care Service and young people open to YJES. A voluntary Health Needs Assessment is offered and Pheonix Nurses can support young people with accessing sexual health services, dentists, opticians, and mental health support. Phoenix Nurses can develop health plans with young people around their individual needs and offer 1:1 direct support.

## **5. Pursue effective law enforcement and criminal justice responses to deter offending and bring people to justice**

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A multi-agency approach to disrupt drug-related criminality across all CSPs in Oxfordshire. All agencies bring to bear the interventions and enforcement actions at their disposal facilitating timely responses to emerging threats and sharing of local briefing information. There should be excellent cooperation between local partners and between organisations nationally where needed. A range of enforcement processes and interventions are used, including Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders, civil injunctions, Child Abduction Warning Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders.

The Local Police Areas have a resource focussed on targeting OCGs called Stronghold Tasking Teams that work closely with CID and local Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

Criminal justice agencies work together effectively with Probation, the Youth Justice and Exploitation Service, Children's Social Care, and Integrated Offender Management teams amongst others to share intelligence and manage risk. Where possible young people are diverted away from the criminal justice system and both children and adults in custody have access to the relevant support services.

### Oxfordshire Pursue arrangements.

- Links have been established with the Southeast Regional Organised Crime Unit to share information and cooperation in targeting priority organised crime groups.
- Cross-LPA planning and information is based on common needs where CDLs or OCGs are operating between areas in Oxfordshire. TTCG and JATAC meetings are central to information-sharing and tactical planning.
- All CSP areas have a local multi-agency tasking mechanism to tackle drug exploitation and organised crime from local and County Line groups.
- LPAs use focused deterrence programmes, using the principles of problem solving, designed to focus activity on those individuals presenting the greatest risk to local communities and divert them away from offending.

- All knife crime offences are dealt with by the Priority Crime Team in the LPAs
- Systems/processes in place to ensure that there are effective supervisory reviews for knife crime and serious violence, and file quality for knife enabled crime with appropriate victim impact statements and use of bad character.
- Operation Rasure - Each LPA has a 7-point plan to activate operational knife crime and homicide reduction plans.
- Organised Crime Groups are mapped, scored and appropriate management plans put in place. Appropriate proactive capability is in place within Thames Valley Police with relevant skills, knowledge and expertise in covert policing tactics which can be used when required.
- Effective tasking and utilisation of level 2 and ROMA resources. Appropriate Risk Management Occurrences in place with multi agency plans for all identified nominals and localities that are auditable.
- Individuals involved with drug-related activity are reflected in the LPA's Integrated Offender Management cohort or managed through other processes.
- Liaison with Drug FAM to provide support for those families impacted through drug misuse and County Lines
- Stop and Search - Systems and processes in place to ensure stop and search is being used effectively whilst ensuring public confidence is retained. Evaluation process of stop search to reduce knife crime and serious violence whilst ensuring legitimacy and community confidence. The LPA has a network of stop and search champions led by a single point of contact to review all stop searches on the LPA. The Stop Search SPOC attends the Independent Advisory Group and force Stop and Search group where LPA performance is also monitored. All stop and searches are reviewed by a supervisor, team leaders will dip check their teams stop and searches and the LPA SPOC will review all paper-based stop and search forms. Body Worn Video is now mandatory across Thames Valley Police and dip checks will include a review of the footage, both internally and independently in the community. Stop search examples on body worn video are shown to IAG members to aid transparency.
- All knife crime incidents across Force are reviewed on daily basis by VRU and where diversionary interventions suitable they are offered.
- The YJES runs a Joint Decision-Making Panel (JDMP) which is multi-agency that triages all cases referred by Police decision-makers in the Youth Justice Unit (TVP) to ensure young people are assessed for suitability for out-of-court interventions and are offered the lowest level intervention proportionate to presenting risk.
- Multi agency systems and processes in place to use ASB legislation and civil injunctions to reduce knife crime and serious violence LPAs have designated ASB SPOCs, Neighbourhood Officers trained in ASB legislation and Civil Orders, Problem-Solving and Neighbour teams are intricately linked with District Council ASB teams.
- Thames Valley Police have recently introduced a central Drugs Task Force (DFT) to achieve a holistic and systematic approach to combatting County Drugs Lines across the force. The implementation of the DFT has brought an ability to assist LPAs in the management and disruption of these CDLs as well as identified, resilient home-grown drug lines that pose a significant risk to communities or vulnerable individuals.
- The Probation Service work closely with Police colleagues and other partners through MAPPA, JTAC and TTCG arrangements to manage gang, county line and OCG nominals. These cases are held within a small specialist team of Probation Officers.

- The Probation Service provide interventions to reduce harm in relation to domestic abuse, TACT offending, sexual offending, and other harmful behaviours.
- The Probation Service use a 1:1 toolkit that looks at identity and moving away from an offending identity that can be used for gang/SGO/county lines.
- Effective MARAC arrangements are embedded; this is a non-statutory process that brings together statutory and voluntary agencies to jointly support adult and child victims and survivors of domestic abuse who are at a high risk of serious harm or homicide, and to disrupt and divert the behaviour of the perpetrator. The Oxfordshire PDU (Probation Delivery Unit) has an excellent Designated MARAC Officer training offer.

## **6. Protect – protect and support vulnerable people from the harm caused by drugs and the drug trade**

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Adults vulnerable to exploitation by drug dealers are identified by support agencies and social housing landlords. Effective responses are put in place by the police, housing providers and local authorities to protect the person within their own property. Where “cuckooing” is identified as a risk, partners work together to manage the risk and restore community confidence.

Adults who use, or have used, drugs, and those with mental health support needs are more at risk of being vulnerable to exploitation so partners work together to identify potential risks. The National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify are used in all cases, with agencies understanding their statutory duties.

Criminal justice options are considered in the context of exploitation and the individuals support needs, and joint agency operations are undertaken to prevent underage sales of knives and parents are aware of the possibility of knives being taken from home.

### Protecting vulnerable adults

- Agencies are trained in Modern Slavery responsibilities, NRM and the Duty to Notify. This is led by the Modern Slavery Strategy Group’s Delivery Plan.
- “Cuckooing” protocols are in place in Oxfordshire that include effective recording and case management on police and Council systems. Procedures for the use of Closure Orders and effective community reassurance approaches are being developed.
- Tenant support agencies, such as housing providers, Adult Social Care, floating support services and mental health services need staff training to spot the signs of cuckooing and share relevant information.
- Trading Standards conduct test purchasing operations in retail premises selling knives and bi-annual Operation Sceptre week-long knife crime operations are implemented.
- Good working relationship between all partners, particularly Turning Point, identified on the Drug Rehabilitation and Testing requirements run by Oxford Crown Court.
- The Probation Service provide support to victims via the victim liaison unit and the Domestic Abuse Safety Officers (DASO).
- The Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) Framework is designed to support anyone working with an adult where there is a high level of risk and the circumstances sit outside the statutory adult safeguarding framework, but where a multi-agency approach would be

beneficial. It enables an initiative-taking approach which helps to identify and respond to risks before crisis point is reached. The referring organisation should have attempted all they can to reduce or minimise risk prior to referring to MARM. If risks remain, the organisation can then refer the case for discussion at a MARM meeting, which is designed to enable a collaborative, coordinated and multi-agency response to risks ensuring timely information sharing, a holistic assessment of risk and the development of multi-agency risk plans.

## **7. Prepare – supporting communities and partnerships work together using a public health approach**

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Local agencies work with transport companies to minimise the supply of drugs and exploited young people into the county. This includes taxi firms and car hire companies to identify potential drug supply routes and locations.

Ensure emergency services can respond effectively and report concerns to partner agencies.

Communities are engaged in problem-solving in public spaces where there is high drug use and drug dealing, and there is an established flow of community intelligence.

Environmental Visual Audits are conducted in hot-spot areas to address serious violence and drug dealing.

- The police and partners work with British Transport Police and Network Rail on addressing the movement of drugs on public transport. Work is being done on understanding the use of hire cars as a preferred method of transportation.
- The Oxfordshire Joint Operating Framework (JOF) for the Transportation of Children and Adults with Care and Support Needs and Taxi Licensing was commissioned by the Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group of Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) and is the result of collaboration between the City and District Councils, the County Council, and the Police. The JOF provides a set of minimum standards for taxi licensing and transporting children and adults with care and support needs in the county. Key areas include mandatory training, use of safeguarding materials and information, information sharing, joint operations, and quality assurance. Taxi drivers receive safeguarding training which covers indicators of exploitation including CDLs and how to raise concerns.
- The Youth Justice & Exploitation Service has delivered parenting groups in line with the PACE (Parents Against Criminal Exploitation) model to inform, educate and empower parents to become key partners in safeguarding their children.
- Community Safety Problem Solving Officer conducts Environmental Visual Audits and Crime Reduction Surveys in hot spot areas, collaborating with partners to implement recommendations, and access Operation Pacation VRU resources.
- Street Safe and Common Place web portals are used to understand where the public feel unsafe and the data accessible to agencies to implement solutions.

### **Conclusion**

Oxfordshire's Violence & Vulnerability strategy outlines how Oxfordshire partnerships are responding to the Serious Violence Duty and the duty upon Community Safety Partnerships to make serious violence an explicit priority in local plans in line with the home Office guidance. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership has used the Oxfordshire Strategic Intelligence Assessment and

VRU's Strategic Needs Assessment to underpin County-level approaches. In comparison with the rest of Thames Valley Oxfordshire has relatively high levels of serious violence, particularly in Oxford city and the Cherwell area which both contain areas with dense, urban populations.

Local CSPs can use various data analysis tools to drill-down into the data to better understand localised trends around risk and need to inform their responses to serious violence. Local CSP plans around serious violence should 'operationalise' and provided targeted delivery on elements of this County-wide strategy. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership is currently developing a bespoke, localised Serious Violence Dashboard that incorporates a variety of both quantitative and qualitative success measures and indicators for this strategy, which will be reviewed by the partnership on a bi-monthly basis. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership will review the Strategy on an annual basis, and elements of the County delivery plan that become embedded as 'business as usual' will be incorporated.

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