

01 Introduction

Safer Slough Partnership - which includes statutory partners such as the council, police, health, probation and children services - has adopted a definition of serious violence through the wider work of Thames Valley's Violence Reduction Unit: **"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."** A Serious Violence Strategy was drafted in 2023/24 as per the Serious Violence Duty.

07 Additional information

We recognise that the challenge of serious violence sits within a complex picture of other local and national strategies. This strategy therefore does not sit in isolation but takes into account and compliments those other strategies and plans. For more information on how we are addressing serious violence in Slough please visit [Safer Slough Partnership priorities - Slough Borough Council](#)

06 What to do?

Safer Slough Partnership has worked with a number of partners and teams to focus on prevention and behaviour change with young people. This strategy recognises this work and draws on the success to develop the action plan. Here are some examples of the diversionary projects and voluntary-led approaches delivered in Slough to meet the goal of preventing and reducing serious violence in the borough:

- Youth Community Outreach
- Street Games
- Choices
- Social Action
- Hospital Navigators
- Campaigns such as Knife Angel

05 Things to consider

The Slough Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, September 2023) reviewed the latest research and evidence to enhance local understanding of the strategies and interventions which are most likely to have an impact on prevention and reduction. Six strategies for preventing violence involving young people, with related interventions, were identified as having some evidence of effectiveness (CDC, 2016):

- promote family environments that support health development
- provide quality education in early life
- strengthen young people's skills
- connect young people to trusted adults and activities
- create protective community environments
- intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk.

The Youth Endowment Fund Toolkit summarises the best available research evidence about different approaches to preventing serious youth violence. It is based on real life data about what has happened when these approaches have been used before. The Safer Slough Partners will continue to look at the toolkit and evaluate and assess ways of working based on findings through the resource. The SSP will note how successful and unsuccessful projects have been, as measured by the YEF Toolkit. Partners will stay up to date with emerging themes and lessons learnt from across the country through this platform.

02 Serious Violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty is a new law that requires relevant public services such as the council and police to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. It is part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022 and came into force on 31 January 2023. It requires local areas to publish their local strategies by 31 January 2024.

The Government also announced an amendment to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, to ensure that serious violence is a priority for Community Safety Partnerships and ensure they have a Serious Violence Strategy in place. The Serious Violence Duty also requires a Strategic Needs Assessment to be completed to understand crime trends in the area and identify cohorts most vulnerable to serious violence.

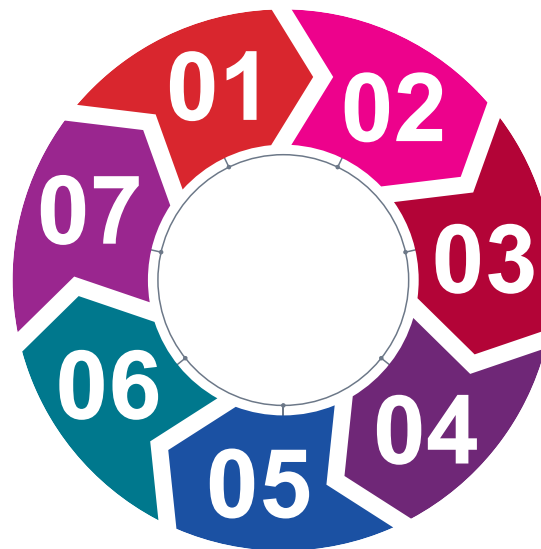
03 What are the priorities of the Serious Violence Strategy?

The strategy outlines a multi-agency commitment to prevent people from becoming involved in and reducing instances of serious violence in Slough. It will embed the voices of lived experiences within the communities and focus on short and long-term solutions to addressing needs. It is based upon a prevention model, focusing on three key prevention priorities:

Primary Prevention - To prevent serious violence before it occurs. By challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster serious violence, we can help prevent it from happening. If we are to reduce serious violence, it will take all community members and professionals to change mind-sets and believe that it is preventable.

Secondary Prevention - By developing prevention mechanisms that specifically target those at risk of either committing serious violence or being the victim of serious violence, we will reduce both the number of future assaults and make a sustainable positive change.

Tertiary Prevention - By providing effective support for victims and interventions for those who have previously committed serious violence, we will reduce re-victimisation and reoffending. We will capitalise on 'teachable moments' in order to change behaviour.



04 Action plan

By reflecting on effective strategies and practices that have worked, through the review of cases and the evaluation of the data around serious violence in Slough, the Safer Slough Partnership has devised an action plan. This will be a working document which will be owned by the SSP and hold partners and stakeholders accountable for the work they have delivered and achieved according to the plan. The plan focuses on the four priorities identified in the strategy and sets out the goals, aims, activities, actions and how this will be measured. The plan is based upon a public health approach. It seeks to address the root causes of serious violence, it is anticipated that the actions taken will address not only this issue but also other challenges we face, such as anti-social behaviour, as the underlying factors can frequently be similar.