

Slough Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027



In Slough, we will work together to prevent all violence

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*Working for the
community, led by
the community*

A: Foreword

“His senseless killing has stunned our entire community and beyond. His death has united and inspired Slough to respond with a robust grassroots plan to counter knife-crime.” Family of Abdul Aziz Ansari, aged 18

A message from Safer Slough Partnership

From children to the elderly, serious violence can affect people across all stages of life. Many survive serious violence but suffer ongoing physical, mental or emotional health problems. Tragically, we have also seen lives lost and ruined in Slough as a result of serious violence.

We are committed to stopping serious violence before it begins. By approaching the issue as a public health problem, we aim to achieve long-term reductions in serious violence and improve the health and quality of life of all people in Slough. To do this means properly understanding the issue and local needs; addressing the risk factors that increase the likelihood of somebody becoming an offender or a victim of serious violence. Prevention must be central to our approach.

In order to be successful we will require the involvement of a range of agencies including health, public health, all integrated care boards, education, local authorities, police, criminal justice agencies, the voluntary sector and, importantly, the communities of Slough. Only with this joint effort can we prevent the loss of life and physical and psychological damage that serious violence can cause.

We have an opportunity to make a really positive impact; to change the fortune of some of the most excluded in our town and improve their outcomes.

With this in mind, we are determined to end the misery serious violence can cause individuals, families and communities. We will prevent serious violence from occurring, intervening early to prevent it damaging lives and listen to lived experiences to ensure solutions are in place to make Slough a safe place to live, work and visit.



**Superintendent Lee Barnham,
Local Police Area Commander Slough
and chair of Safer Slough Partnership**

A message from Slough's Young People*

"The lives of those people directly affected are changed forever."

"When a young person is hurt in our town, their family and friends are also hurt."

"The wider community becomes more fearful, and we feel less safe."

"A safer Slough is possible - let's make it happen!"

"Slough's young people have been impacted more than most by violence in recent years."

"As young people, living in Slough, we recognise we have a role to play too."

"We welcome this strategic approach to tackling violence and some of its underlying causes and the commitment from partners to work together."

"We recognise that too often, young people feel their choices around violence and exploitation are reduced by circumstances, including poverty, poor mental health, special educational needs, housing, family influences or peer groups."

"Both as individuals and through our schools and youth groups, we are ready to make a difference, by being active citizens and making it clear that violence and knife crime are not welcome here."

*Collective voices from the young people of Slough collated in consultation in 2023 with the support of Together As One.

B: Introduction

The 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.

The PCSC Act does not define serious violence for the purposes of the Duty, but requires specified authorities to work together to identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in their area as far as possible. In determining what amounts to serious violence in their local area, the specified authorities must take into account the following factors listed in Section 13 (6) of the PCSC Act:

- a) the maximum penalty which could be imposed for any offence involved in the violence
- b) the impact of the violence on any victim
- c) the prevalence of the violence in the area
- d) the impact of the violence on the community in the area.

What is serious violence?

In Slough, we have a partnership of specified authorities - Safer Slough Partnership - which includes the following organisations and sectors: Slough Borough Council, Thames Valley Police, Youth Justice Service, Slough Children First, Slough Business Community Partnership, Slough Safeguarding Partnership, Slough Council Voluntary Services, Police and Crime Commissioner, National Probation Service, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Frimley Integrated Care Board, Public Health Slough, and education leaders.

The Partnership has adopted a definition through the wider work of Thames Valley's Violence Reduction Unit, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and local community safety partnerships.



This is defined as: 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

Partners agreed that offences will be broken down into the following two categories for our own local performance framework:

Group 1 offences

- All homicide
- All grievous bodily harm
- All knife crime (as collected for Home Office recording)

Group 2 offences

Slough and other areas in Thames Valley were keen to ensure that a narrow definition of serious violence did not detract from the overall approach to violence. Therefore, in addressing serious violence, other offences which contribute to the overall threat, inherence and understanding of serious violence, are also encompassed within this strategy. This incorporates:

- All actual bodily harm
- All drugs supply
- All sexual assaults
- All rape

Vision and commitment

The following pages will outline what we know about serious violence in Slough and set out the methodology and thinking behind how we can effectively work together to tackle this.

This 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.

Our vision in Slough is that we will:

Work together to prevent all violence. We will change people's attitude to violence, ensuring early signs of violent behaviour are recognised and responded to. We will deal robustly with violence when it has occurred.

Our strategy is based upon a prevention model, focusing on three key prevention priorities. This strategy recognises that long-term change cannot be achieved without a sustainable long-term plan. These priorities will drive that plan.

Primary Prevention

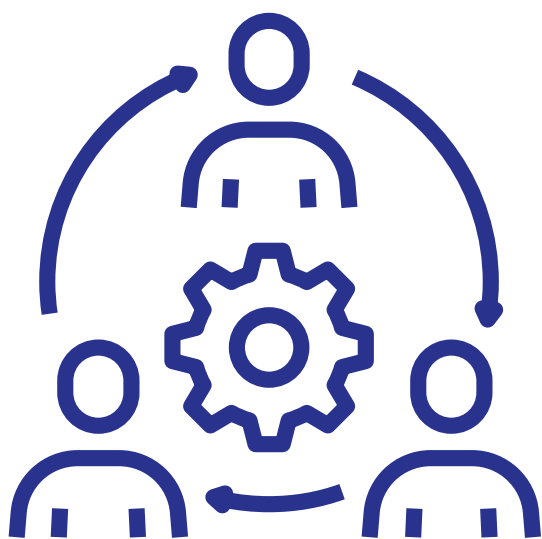
To prevent serious violence before it occurs. By challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster serious violence, we can help prevent it from happening. If we are to reduce serious violence, it will take all community members and professionals to change mind-sets and believe that it is preventable.

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.



National Data

In order to form a co-ordinated approach to tackling serious violence, we need to be aware of what is happening on a national and local scale.



Homicides

Police recorded crime showed the number of homicides in the year ending March 2022 increased by 25% compared with the year ending March 2021. This is a similar level to the year ending March 2020 including the Grays lorry incident with 39 victims.

Knife related

There was a 10% increase in the number of police recorded offences involving knives or sharp instruments (knife-enabled crime) in the year ending March 2022 compared to the year ending March 2021.



48,931 offences 2022

55,076 offences 2020

Hospital admissions

There was no change in the number of hospital admissions for assault with sharp objects in the year ending March 2022 compared to the year ending March 2021 and remains lower than the year ending March 2020.



4,118 admissions 2022
4,112 admissions 2021
4,769 admissions 2020

This strategy recognises that long-term change cannot be achieved without a sustainable long-term plan. These priorities will drive that plan.



Local Data

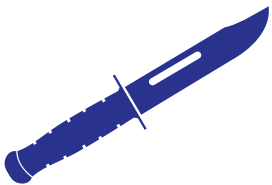


816

serious violence with injury - group 1 and 2 offences



55%
GBH



44%
Knife-enabled ABH
Recorded between January 2018 and 30 Sept 2023



75% of the murders involved aggrieved and offenders knowing each other. Of these, 5 involved a knife/machete (data for these extended to October 2023).

Out of 10 attempted murders between January 2018 and April 2023:



80% of the aggrieved knew their suspects



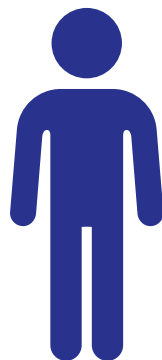
50% of these offences involved young males who had previous altercations/hostilities prior to the attacks



30% of cases mentioned offenders having mental health issues



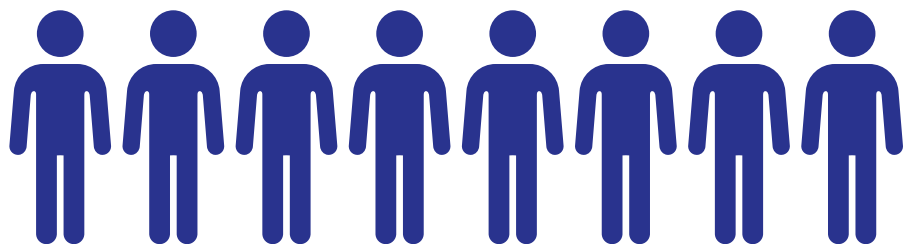
20% of aggrieved and offenders were from the same household



Males under 25 represent 18% of total of Slough's population, but 24% of **victims** of Group 1 offences and 32% of **suspects** of Group 1 offences.



- Age band 18-21 was the most recorded victim cohort for Group 1 offences
- Age band 11-14 was the most recorded male victim cohort for Group 2 offences



From 2018-2023 there were **885 suspects** for serious violence of which **155 were repeat suspects**, including 38 individuals who committed between 3 and 8 offences.

Key considerations



In the community

The following data is taken from the annual Community Safety Survey for 2023/24. A total of 445 responded.

- 81% of residents in Slough felt the level of crime has increased in the last 12 months
- Out of the 119 respondents who said they had been a victim of crime, 91% did not report it.

Top 5 Concerns for Respondents (Crime)



In schools

- 49% of Year 6 students experienced being hit by another student
- 34% of secondary school suspensions were due to disruptive and anti-social behaviour
- 36% of secondary school exclusions were due to physical abuse towards staff
- School exclusions: Physical abuse represented 50% of the secondary school permanent exclusions for the 22/23 period in Slough.

Across Slough's primary schools for 2022/23, 28% of primary school suspensions related to physical abuse towards staff. This is followed by 27% due to disruptive and anti-social behaviour and 21% physical abuse towards students. Oxwell's Student Survey 2023 also published findings which show 14% of Year 5 respondents had experienced being bullied in the last year and 13% of Year 6 students experienced bullying.

Furthermore, Oxwell's report showed a spike in Year 6 students experiencing another pupil at school hitting, kicking or punching them on purpose. Specifically, 49% of respondents from that year group had this experience happen a few times, and 6% experiencing it frequently.



In the home

- 22.7% of serious violence in Slough was linked to domestic abuse.
- Violence with injury represented 81% of these cases and the highest peak in records was in 2020 (Entire time period of Jan 2018 to Apr 2023)
- 55% of Group 1 offences were domestic abuse related.



Hotspot areas

We can map where crime takes place across Slough according to the data. This gives statutory partners an idea on how best to target their resources effectively. See Appendix 2 for maps of hotspot areas in Slough.

Methodology

Understanding Risk and Resilience for Young People



When looking at risk and resilience factors for young people who have been shown to be more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of violence, we consider: Individual factors, Relationship factors, Community Factors and Societal factors. This helps to identify and recognise local factors in Slough, and where to focus in tackling violent crime.

See Appendix 3 for further information on what we know that reduces that risk for each factor mentioned.

Consultation



We are clear that we cannot rely solely on data, that we need a community led approach to understand the causes of serious violence.

We also recognise the need to listen to partner agencies, voluntary groups and their professionals to ensure a comprehensive co-ordinated approach to tackling violence.

To support the development of the strategy, the Safer Slough Partnership held a wide variety of meetings and workshops have taken place to gather views, knowledge and expertise.

Community initiatives such as the 'Knife Angel', also helped to ensure that the voice of primary school students was captured.

These consultations enabled commentary from a community perspective, and professional perspective, helping to identify cause, impact, identification of gaps and opportunities to do better.

Cause: There was a common recognition, across young people and professionals, of the links between drugs, gangs and violence. Causational effects including adverse childhood experiences, varying from domestic abuse, parents being imprisoned, through to intergenerational links. A common theme arose in relation to a lack of a 'role model' within a family unit. And sometimes a linked lack of discipline /boundaries for young people.

A further common theme was the use of and impact of social media, with access to immediate information, poor role models and the draw to an unhealthy lifestyle and unwise choices.

Impact: Communities and professionals recognised the traumatic effect of violence on communities and individuals, but also that there was a degree of normalisation to reports of homicides, the sight of blue and white tape, and flashing blue lights. The lasting effect is one of a lack of pride, and a lack of confidence in the 'system' to address issues when they arise.

Gaps: Common to all, was an acknowledged lack of facilities, withdrawal of youth provision over a period of time.

How to improve: There was a strong desire from communities and professionals to see the provision of more community facilities and services, especially youth services. Professionals identified opportunities to work better together to reduce silo working, when working with individuals and/or families. Both professionals and communities reported that owing to funding constraints, community organisations experienced being pitted against each other when seeking/bidding for resources.

Slough approaches and principles

Our strategy, while retaining clear links to related national strategies, is based upon a public health approach. As such, we will work in partnership with a broad range of agencies to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on early intervention and prevention, and informed by evidence and evaluation of interventions. The Safer Slough Partnership ensures a wide range of agencies will be involved in taking joint action.

As this approach 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. Also, due to the nature of the approach, it is recognised that many of the actions planned will not have an immediate impact or be a short-term fix; while the effect of enforcement or disruption actions may be experienced in the short term, preventative actions are more likely to be seen in the medium or longer term.

We will:



Be evidence-based

- Base intervention on data and intelligence.
- A public health approach understanding root causes and addressing the risk and protective factors for individuals at risk of being a victim or perpetrator.



Focus on problem solving

- We will use problem solving techniques, and principles of contextual safeguarding to address challenging locations.



Use continuous learning and development

- We will deliver practice and process that reflects and embraces emerging intelligence and research, that continually develops and is based upon reflection and learning, including rapid reviews, Serious Case Reviews and Adult Reviews, legislation, and policy changes.
- Ensure that workforce and community development takes place.



Co-ordinate community response

- We will work in partnership across all agencies and the community to develop long term solutions to violence.
- Our work will be underpinned by the voice of those who have experienced violence and our communities.



Understand equalities and intersectionality

- Ensuring that we understand the interconnected nature of social classification, ensuring service delivery reflects service demand and seeks to address the gaps that exist in services to support those with protected characteristics and those disproportionately affected. We commit to actively seeking to support the duties instilled by the Equalities Act 2010.

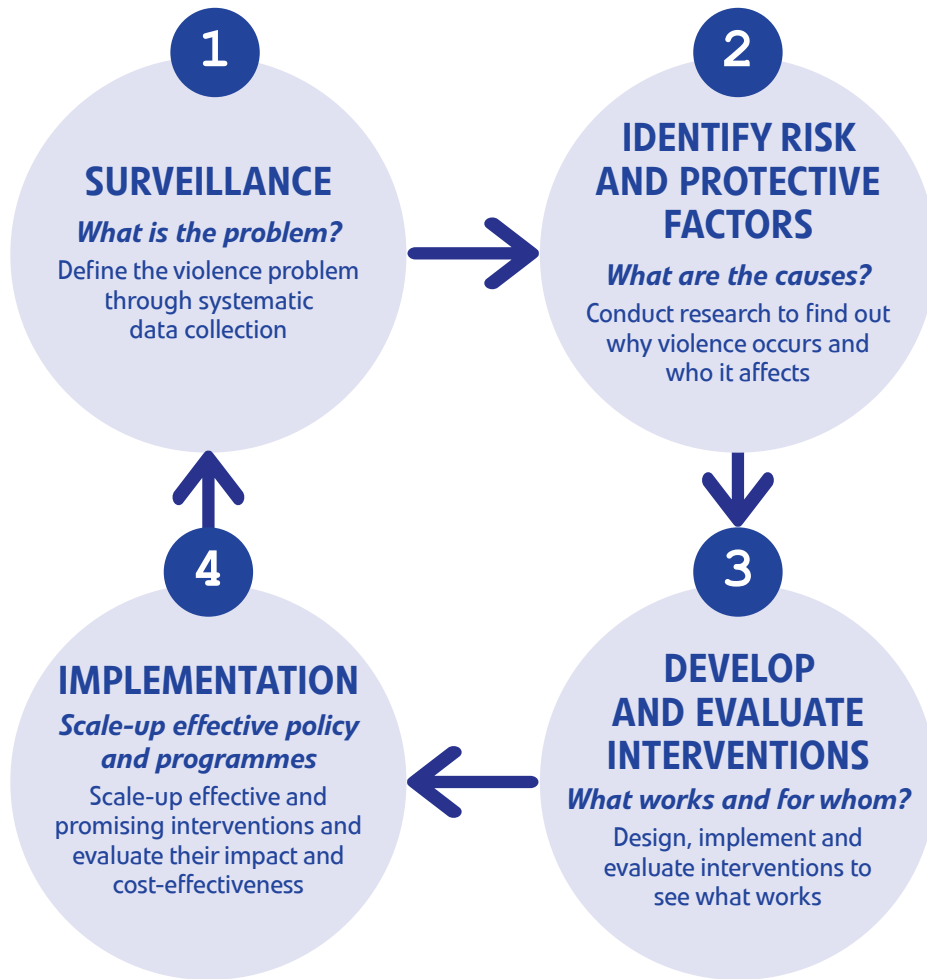


Ensure we have governance and accountability

- We will ensure that we implement processes to improve and maintain good performance.
- We will ensure that success is built upon, and that barriers are reported upon through a local partnership violence board that reports to Safer Slough Partnership.

The four steps of a public health approach to violence prevention

(World Health Organisation, 2002)

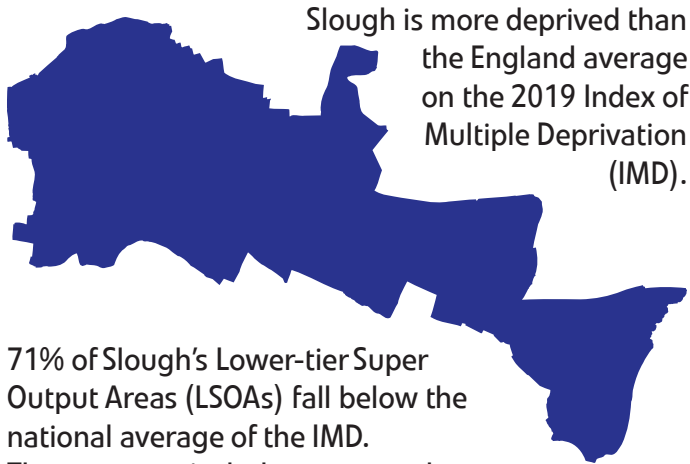


We recognise that the challenge of serious violence sits within a complex picture of other local and national strategies. This strategy therefore does not sit in isolation, but takes into account and compliments those strategies and plans. See Appendix 4

Equalities impact assessment findings


In order to ensure we adopt the best approach and embed the right practices to tackle serious violence in Slough, we need to recognise latest data around the population. The following looks at data from the 2021 Census and draws out significant findings from the Slough Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment, September 2023 as part of the equalities impact report.

Deprivation




71% of Slough's Lower-tier Super Output Areas (LSOAs) fall below the national average of the IMD.


There are particularly severe pockets in Britwell, Chalvey, Herschel Park, Elliman, Wexham Court, and Colnbrook with Poyle.



Slough has the largest proportions of children in relative and absolute low income families and pensioners in poverty in Berkshire and has larger proportions than the South East and England averages.



5,180 households were estimated to live in fuel poverty in 2020. Analysis from Frimley Health and Care estimates a significantly larger proportion of the population is at risk.



Slough scored as more vulnerable than the South East average but less than the England average on the Hardship Fund Vulnerability Index.

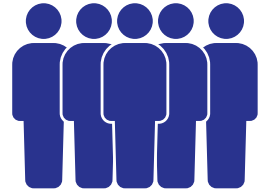
Sources:

- Low income families: DWP, 2021/22.
- Pension credit: DWP, November 2022.
- Fuel poverty: DBEIS, 2021.
- Hardship fund vulnerability index: British Red Cross, June 2020.
- Loneliness index: ONS/NHS/Red Cross, 2019.

Population (source: 2021 Census)

Slough's population in the 2021 Census was 158,500. This is an increase of 13% from 2011, compared to increases of 7.5% in the South East and 6.6% in England. This growth is also larger than our neighbouring authorities:

- Buckinghamshire 9.5%
- Hillingdon 11.7%
- Spelthorne 7.7%
- Windsor & Maidenhead 6.2%



Slough has a mean household size of 3 people per household. This is the largest mean household size in England and Wales. The mean for England and Wales is 2.4.

Slough has the third smallest population within Berkshire but is the most densely populated.

Slough's residents are aged:



0-15 (25%)

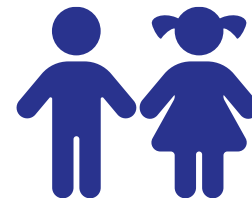


16-64 (65.4%)



65 or over (9.7%)

Slough's average age is 34, compared to 41 for the South East and 40 for England.



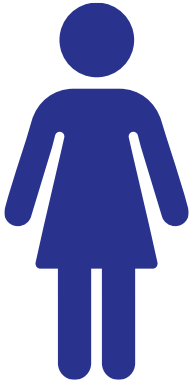
Slough has the second largest proportion of children aged 15 or under in England and Wales, behind only Barking and Dagenham.

56% of Slough's population were born in the UK, 24.3% were born in the Middle East and Asia, and 12% were born in the EU.

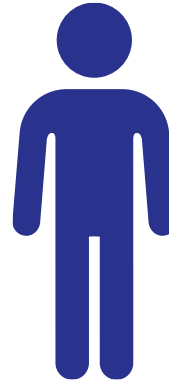
46.7% of Slough's population are from Asian ethnic groups and 36% are from White ethnic groups.



Gender

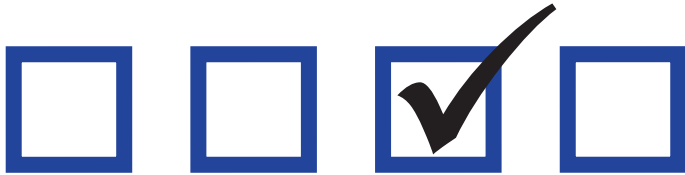


- **Females** are over-represented as victims of Group 2 crimes
- **Females** are significantly over-represented as victims of sexual offences e.g. 90% of all victims in age range 11-30



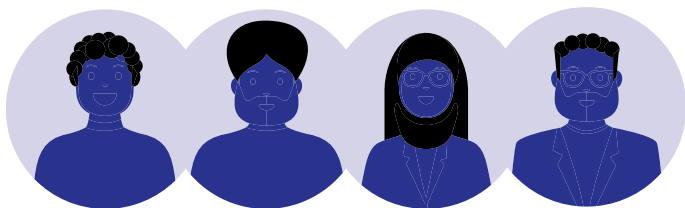
- All victims of homicide over past 5 years were **male**
- **Males** are over-represented as victims of violence with injury offences, accounting for over 70%
- **Males** account for 85% of all serious violence with injury offences

Data



- Data capture of victim and suspect profiles in relation to protected characteristics is poor, either not seeking to identify protected characteristics or records showing unknown e.g, around 50% of all group 2 offences for period 2018-2023 were shown as being unknown

Ethnicity



- Black ethnic groups are over-represented as suspects of drug offence suspects at 20% versus 8% of population
- The majority of the victims and suspects of attempted murders and murders were south Asian

Age

15-24

- There is an over-representation of the **age group 15-24 for victims** of violence
- **Male suspects aged <25** represented 32% of serious violence with injury offences. An over-representation, with a peak at age 18-21
- There is an over-representation of the **18-24 cohort** as suspects of drug related offence

Streetsafe: Following the tragic case of Sarah Everard, the Home Office published an online-anonymised survey where respondents could flag areas and reasons of concerns relating to Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG). Slough had the highest return across all Thames Valley. Top concerns were: Unwanted attention (27%), Being followed (25%), Harassment (26%).

All above data from the Slough Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment, September 2023.

C: Our 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 (SSP) 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 full detailed plan is available on request.



D: Priorities

Based on our learnings and findings as mentioned in the Slough Serious Violence Strategy, we have drawn up the following priorities, goals, aims and actions. These actions will be monitored by a live working document owned by the Safer Slough Partnership.

Priority 1: Primary Prevention

Mission: To prevent serious violence before it occurs.

What we aim to achieve: To reduce the incidence of violence by:

- changing societal attitudes and behaviours towards it by ensuring communities and young people inform plans and activity
- working with schools to deliver evidence-based approaches at primary and secondary school
- problem solving approaches to high demand locations
- seeking to make public spaces feel safer through effective partnership and environmental design.

How we are going to achieve our mission: By working with:

- schools - develop primary and secondary school PHSE networks; ensure delivery of educational programs that promote healthy relationships and

- discourage abusive behaviours, such as inappropriate use of social media. We will work with schools, community organisations, and workplaces to promote awareness and education on violence, equipping people with the tools to make wise choices, and to respond appropriately and safely when dealing with violent situations
- faith groups and community projects - we will encourage faith groups, youth and community projects, including the voluntary sector agencies, to proactively promote clear messaging about violence and where to get support both locally and nationally
- public bodies, businesses and employers - we will address hotspot locations through effective problem solving, partnership working to identify solutions, such as environmental changes, and use of legislation to create safer places.

Priority 2: Secondary Prevention

Mission: 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.

What we aim to achieve: To reduce the incidence of violence by:

- effective identification and intervention of those at risk of involvement in violence
- ensuring effective systems and processes (Weekly Contextual Tracker, Risk Management Meetings, Team Around the Child and their Family, CiN Meetings, Core Group Meetings) for the sharing of information to mitigate risk and provide the necessary protective factors to prevent violence.

How we are going to achieve our mission: We will work with partner agencies, including schools, to agree a standardised approach to partnership involvement for those at risk of involvement as a victim or perpetrator of violence. We will need to ensure that partners working with those susceptible to involvement in violence work with individuals and groups in a relationship and strength-based way and adopt a trauma informed approach.

By utilising data, local knowledge and research-based evidence and approaches, we will identify the services and interventions required for targeted cohorts of young people and individual young people and families where a more individualistic and intensive approach is required to prevent escalation of risk and involvement in violence.

Priority 3: Tertiary Prevention

Mission: Identify and target those at highest risk of causing serious harm with a range of support and where necessary enforcement activity to prevent serious violence.

What we aim to achieve: To reduce the incidence of violence through:

- the systemised identification of high-risk cohorts and those who are repeat offenders
- identification of needs and vulnerabilities of those cohorts: planning appropriate interventions for those cohorts; and working as a partnership to reduce the risk of offending.
- proactive tackling of the street drugs markets, cuckooed addresses and by disrupting gangs/criminal networks.

How we are going to achieve our mission: By working in partnership:

- to ensure a system for identifying high risk or emerging high-risk individuals and repeat offenders
- to ensure clear partnership plans are in place for

these individuals taking into account needs, vulnerabilities and risk factors in order to develop a plan that is owned and transparent

- by addressing street drugs markets, drugs markets that seek to exploit the vulnerable (Cuckooed addresses), and through tackling local gangs/criminal networks
- working across Thames Valley and other neighbouring/national partnerships to address the risk of county lines.

We will ensure that the partnership systems work together and there is governance in place through a Strategic MACE that is accountable to Safer Slough Partnership, ensuring the agenda of 'exploitation' and 'risk to others' work together.

We will seek to address the 'gap' in provision that occurs for those transitioning from childhood to adulthood, developing pathways for support and intervention resulting in clear action plans and where necessary escalate to IOM and MAPPA, and/or take robust enforcement activity to 'catch and convict'.

Priority 4: Leadership and Governance

Mission: To provide and ensure effective leadership to drive the cultural changes required to prevent violence before it occurs and ensure there are robust and effective systems in place to address the risk of violence.

What we aim to achieve: To reduce the incidence of violence by ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the local context, that informs and drives activity across the three areas of prevention across the partnership, and that effectiveness of delivery is ensured through accountability and scrutiny of the Safer Slough Partnership and other relevant boards.

How we are going to achieve our mission: Recognise everyone is a leader in combatting violence, we will hold each other to account. Implement the Serious Violence Duty at organisational and system level.

Work with communities, places of education, faith

groups and partners to:

- complete Strategic Needs Assessments based upon intelligence (data), public/community opinion, the voice of those directly affected by serious violence, the voice of professionals and up to date best practice
- complete Equalities Impact Assessments to identify intersectionality
- ensure that serious violence strategy 'talks to' and is informed by other strategic plans
- ensuring that there are effective systems in place to identify and address at risk/high risk cohorts of young people
- ensure that the pathways to intervention/support are clear, robust and subject to scrutiny
- address gaps in information and data.

Through a quarterly report and developed dashboard that assesses 'impact', but also progress in respect of plans.

E: Partnership principles

Continuous learning

Slough has experienced a number of homicides over the past five years, and in an effort to understand what needs to be done Safer Slough Partnership undertook 'deep dive' reviews of learning in 2023. Some of the key themes are reflected below.

Theme	Findings	What needs to be done
Role of community	One review highlighted the need to engage with, and seek the views of the public, to understand why violence is happening, and what needs to be done.	This needs to be a continuous exercise.
Pathways to support	A safeguarding practice review found that there must be a clear pathway to expedite support for all at risk of involvement in serious violence.	A subsequent 'deep dive' identified an ongoing need to improve this situation.
Planning	Learning event and a deep dive both found that risk mitigation plans for individuals were unclear.	Address individual risk factors more effectively.
Risk management	A review found that 'silo working' led to a situation where risk was escalating, and yet support was diminishing owing to 'silo' working.	A need to ensure: (a) children social care worked more closely with youth offending (b) risk continually assessed.
Responsiveness	Schools found themselves isolated, where their voice was not being listened to and felt they were holding the risk.	Identified a need for an 'escalation route'.
Vulnerability	A number of vulnerability factors shone through learning reviews and deep dives, that include adverse childhood experiences, mental health, neuro-diversity, social deprivation, individuals with mixed heritage seeking their identity.	Each vulnerability showing a need for understanding, but also an opportunity to actively screen for.
Delays in treatment	The deep dive highlighted the need/opportunity to ensure that treatments for those at highest risk are prioritised within the wider system e.g. CAMHs.	Review priority of treatments within the wider systems e.g. CAMHs.
Exploitation versus risk	An apparent theme was a focus on 'exploitation' of young people at the expense of the 'risk posed' to immediate family, wider peer groups and community.	A collaborative approach by partners to identify threshold of risk.
Public confidence	A review found evidence of a lack of confidence in the system, where a young person was a repeat suspect for assaulting another young person. The victim and family were too scared to support a prosecution suggesting a lack of faith in the system.	Partners to evaluate how they can build trust with the public.
Violence, drugs and gangs	Across the last five years and now, the theme of violence being linked to drugs and gangs shines through.	Education and awareness through communities including, schools and faith groups.

Violence and young people

Effective Strategies and Interventions



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.

This is a strategy addressing serious violence affecting people of all ages in Slough, however, analysis of the data around victim and suspects shows there is a need to consider early prevention with young people under 25.

Six strategies for preventing violence involving young people, with related interventions, were identified as having some evidence of effectiveness (CDC, 2016):

1. **Promote family environments that support health development** - this includes parenting programmes, family nurse partnerships and therapeutic approaches to trauma.
2. **Provide quality education in early life** - this includes bullying prevention, school-based programmes and classroom management.
3. **Strengthen young people's skills** - this includes universal school programmes (e.g. social skills training) and behavioural/skills-building interventions.
4. **Connect young people to trusted adults and activities** - this includes mentoring programmes, after-school programmes and recreational activities.

5. **Create protective community environments** - this includes limiting alcohol and weapon access, data sharing, hotspot and problem-solving policing, environmental design and community norm change.
6. **Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk** - this includes therapeutic and cognitive behavioural approaches for perpetrators, hospital-based interventions and substance misuse programme.

Youth Endowment Fund toolkit assessed



What works to prevent youth violence?

The YEF 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.

For each approach it explains:

- Description of the approach
- How effective it's likely to be (Evidence of Impact)
- How confident you can be in the impact, as well as indicative costs and links to related resources and programmes.

The SSP 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.

Diversiónary projects

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 delivered in Slough to meet the goal of preventing and reducing serious violence in the borough.

Youth Community Outreach (Community and Detached Team)

The Community and Detached team deliver support to young people in multiple ways, we are able to engage children and young people through an authentic youth work model. By involving young people in a range of interventions, and seeing them in different environments, this enables us to assess the transferability of the skills and knowledge they are gaining through targeted group work in school, informal education on the street and 1:1 mentoring support. Local activities and 'in the moment' engagement enable diversion of young people on the periphery of becoming involved in serious youth violence and associated activities.

Targeted outreach in hotspot areas based on local intel provides support and a feeling of safety to local residents.



StreetGames: Promising Practice

The Slough Sports Scholarship is delivered by SBC's Public Health team on behalf of Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit, commissioned through StreetGames. The project supports young people aged 10-18, displaying risk factors linked to serious youth violence. Referrals (from schools, YOT, youth detached team, early help and children services) are sent to the programme co-ordinator who will build a relationship with the family via phone calls and

home visits before placing the young person into either 1:1 sports-based mentoring focusing on the development of life skills or a community sports programme. Young people are offered opportunities for additional mentoring, training, and volunteering to support their positive youth development and provide additional protective factors to mitigate against risk factors.



StreetGames: Upskilling of Community Sports Workforce

SBC's Public Health team commissioned through StreetGames, have supported community sports organisations to increase their confidence, competence, and experience to deliver programmes to young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system. They ensure that clubs are trauma informed and pro-social in their approach when delivering 1:1 sports-based mentoring or taking on referrals on young people displaying risk factors. They have also used upskilled sports practitioners and used the principles of the Holiday Activity Fund to work with 30 at risk young people through school holidays to provide diversionary activities.



Choices: PHSE programmes through schools

There is evidence of schools taking significant responsibility for young people in preventing violence, managing risk whilst providing pastoral support.



Working with the voluntary sector

Whilst the strategic needs assessment and reflections from reviews found many areas of improvement, it also highlighted effective practice to build upon, and to celebrate. This included the work with the voluntary and not-for-profit sector. Here are some examples of the work that is being delivered in Slough.

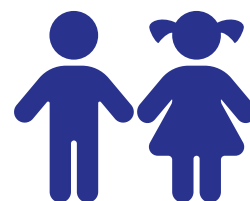
Social Action: Together As One

Emerging in the late 1990s in response to violence among Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim gangs in Slough, Together As One (formerly Aik Saath) is committed to empowering young individuals to resolve local tensions and strengthen cohesion. Originating from a determination to address the violence, the charity has consistently empowered youth for positive change. Participants have actively contributed to two anti-knife crime campaigns and drafted the foreword to this strategy document. The attendees at Together As One represent the diverse fabric of Slough, including students from grammar schools, comprehensive schools, and the pupil referral unit, fostering inclusivity and collaboration among the town's young people.



Slough Young Carers

We know that caring responsibilities often make young people more vulnerable to the perceived protection and belonging that involvement in gangs can sometimes bring. Slough Young Carers offers weekly sessions for children (5-10) and young people (11-19). Activities, co-produced with young participants, focus on enriching lives beyond caregiving, providing additional learning opportunities, promoting health and wellbeing, and celebrating young carers.



Hospital Navigators Project

The Hospital Navigators Project is delivered by Together As One on behalf of Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit at Wexham Park Hospital. The project supports young people aged between 11 and 25 who present at the Emergency Department due to violence, substance misuse or poor mental health. Navigators stationed at the hospital at 'peak hours' for when those impacted by violence typically arrive. The project also accepts out-of-hours referrals. 193 young people were referred onto the scheme last year with more than half being successfully referred onto a positive pathway. 37% of those who engaged, have done so for more than three months, underlining the staff and volunteers' determination to 'walk with' the young people until they are in a better place.



F: Case Study: Partnership Working

The **Knife Angel** is a 27 foot sculpture made of 100,000 knives seized from knife amnesties around UK police forces and was present in Slough during January 2023.

Hazard Alley carried out workshops in schools around awareness of knife crime in terms of the laws and education. The following are four outcomes and findings from the eight schools engaged:

1

High awareness of knife crime in the community

The children and young people we worked with has a high level of awareness of the culture of knife carrying and are not surprised that this is happening in their communities. They were knowledgeable about recent knife crime incidents in Slough.

2

Limited awareness of the risks of carrying a knife

The children and young people were mainly unaware of the Bystander Law and had limited understanding of the risk of carrying a knife, even if the intention was never to use it. Year 7 students challenged why carrying a weapon to protect themselves wasn't a justified reason to carry a weapon.

3

Culture of knife carrying

Some children and young people were very aware of knife crime using terminology such as grassing, slashing and shank. They shared young people carry weapons to protect themselves, to feel safe and a sense of belonging to a group/community.

4

Keen to empower themselves through education

Overwhelmingly the 10-12 year olds we educated were keen to participate in the sessions, and explored the risks of knife crime for themselves, their loved ones and the wider community.

The initiative is about bringing police, partners, and the community closer together to take a stand against all forms of violence and aggression whilst the monument is present. Education of young people is very important around making the right choices in life and seeing the consequences of being found in possession of a knife. The initiative was successful for a number of reasons:

- More than **8,500** conversations took place between members of the public, volunteers, police officers and PCSOs at the site



- **56** educational sessions were delivered to more than **3,000** children, young people and adults, covering topics such as knife crime, domestic abuse, violence against women and girls, exploitation and bullying. Sessions were delivered by The Safety Centre, Slough Children First, Faron Paul, Alison Cope (both Anti Knife crime campaigners), Slough Borough Council, Together As One (Aik Saath) and Thames Valley Police

- More than **900** tags with messages of reflection and pledges against violence were tied to the fencing around the Angel



- More than **200** hours were volunteered by more than **50** individuals, organisations and voluntary sector partners



- **14** Primary, Secondary and Higher education schools and colleges visited the angel to pay their respects or receive educational inputs



- **92** hot meals were provided by Pizza Express, Slough



- **44** knives were surrendered at the Knife Amnesty bin located at Slough Police Station

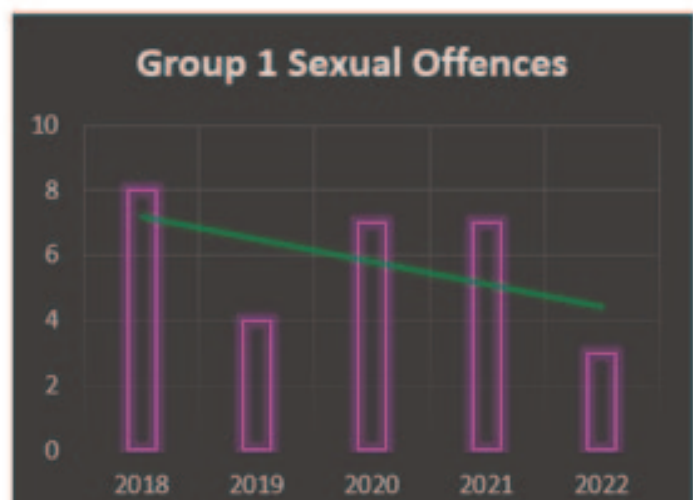
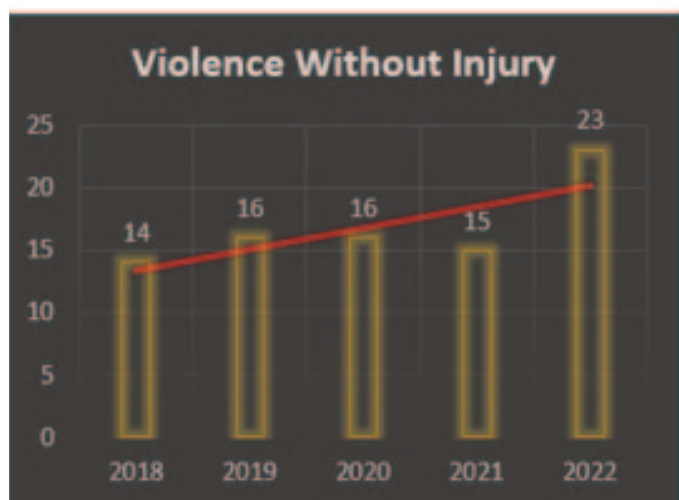
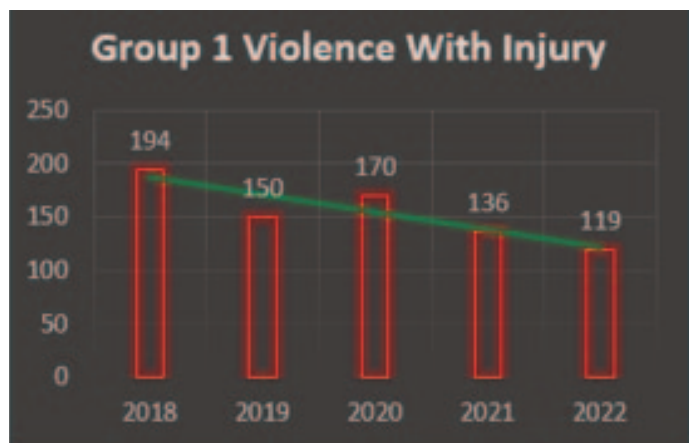


- **1,928** 10-12 year olds young people involved via engaging and immersive sessions



Appendix 1: Group 1 crime data

The four tables below break down the Higher Offence Categories to visualise the overall fall in serious violence. Except violence without injury, all categories show falling trend lines.



Appendix 2: Hotspot mapping

Hotspot areas

Serious violence incidents (as defined by the Violence Reduction Unit), are shown in the form of a heat map. Brighter colours denote higher densities of incidents.

These have been overlaid onto the existing serious violence hotspots (dark blue polygons) which show locations of current focus in the Slough Local Policing Area.

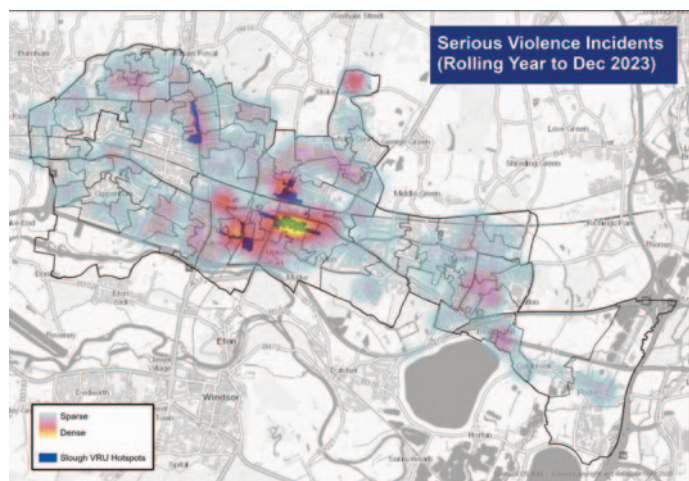
The highest levels of incidents occur in and around the town centre, including Chalvey. Slough Police Station is located in the town centre which also impacts mapping results.

At the northern edge of the map Wexham Park Hospital shows as having a number of incidents listed.

To provide context, it must be noted that whilst some violent offences do occur at this location, they are artificially inflated to some degree.

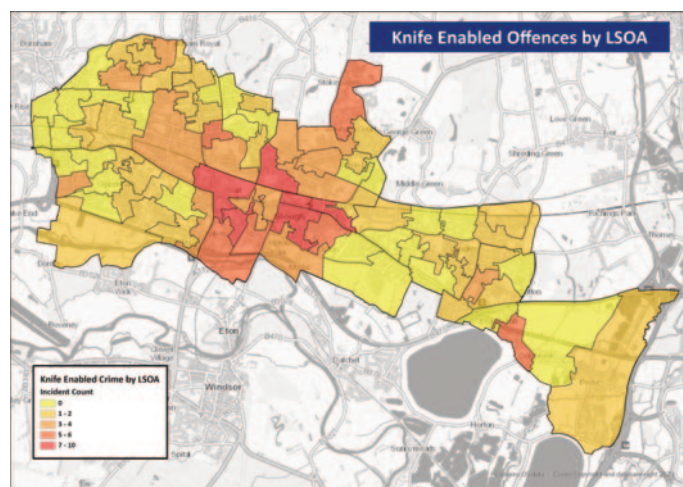
Recording issues mean that if an injured person presents at the hospital having been injured elsewhere, the hospital is sometimes given as the occurrence location. This is particularly common when an injured party will not engage and give the true location that an injury was sustained.

Where incidents have actually occurred at the hospital, they are most likely to have been perpetrated against hospital staff and in some cases on police officers.

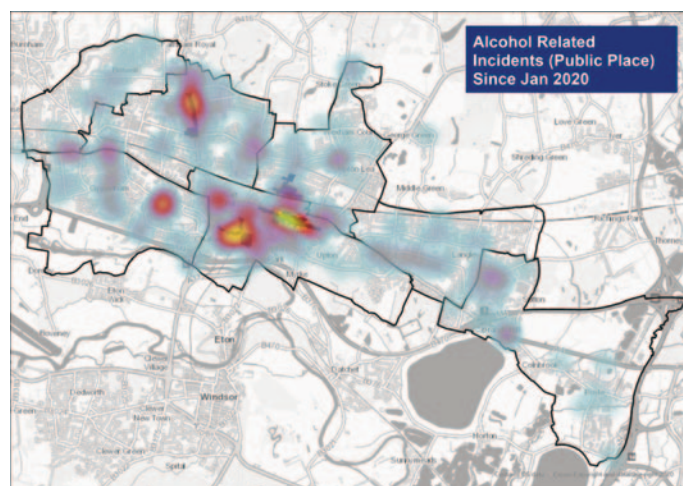


This map shows levels of knife enabled crime mapped to LSOA (lower level super output areas - used to divide up geographical areas based on population sizes) level across Slough.

Again, the highest density of offences is weighted towards the town centre, with lesser hotspots found in Langley, Farnham Road and Britwell.



This map is to note high rates of alcohol related incidents in Slough to provide oversight of hotspot areas and the link with various areas of focus.



Appendix 3: Understanding Risk and Resilience in Young People

Individual factors

Risk

- Young men/boys
- Both victims and perpetrators appear to be getting younger
- Young people who have mental health problems or low self esteem
- Young people with problematic substance misuse
- Young people with impulsive or aggressive personality traits
- Young people who have been in conflict with authority, such as anti-social behaviour
- Young people living in poor families
- Special Educational Need
- Young people who are achieving less well at school

Resilience

- Young women/girls are at lower risk, though we know that girls are increasingly victims
- Young people with low levels of impulsiveness
- Young people with above average intelligence
- Young people living in medium income families

Relationship factors

Risk

- Young people who have been exposed to childhood trauma either in families (such as abuse) or in society (such as racism)
- Young people whose parents are in conflict with each other, are involved in criminal activity or who are not supervising them closely
- Young people who have peers involved in violence or anti-social behaviour, are affiliated to gangs or exposed to criminal exploitation

Resilience

- Young people with close relationships to parents who show strong parental supervision
- Young people with strong bonds to their schools
- Young people with peers who are not involved in violence or antisocial behaviour

Societal factors

Risk

- Young people in societies that are more accepting of violence
- Young people living in societies with poor educational and economic supports and opportunities

Resilience

- Young people in schools and other settings that promote positive cohesion and inclusion
- Young people with access to good education and work opportunities

Community factors

Risk

- Young people living in poorer communities
- Young people who are excluded from mainstream learning (formally or informally)
- Young people exposed to illicit drugs markets
- Young people living in areas with poor housing quality and stability

Resilience

- Young people living in non-violent and non-deprived communities
- Young people living in communities with good access to transport, lighting, green spaces and other assets

Appendix 4: Local and national strategies

We recognise 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 strategies and plans.

Locally

Early Help Strategy

Domestic Abuse Strategy

Slough Corporate Plan

Thames Valley Police Strategic Plan [Thames Valley Police Strategic Plan Summary 2023-2024](#)

Office for Police Crime Commissioner Police and Criminal Justice Plan [Police and Criminal Justice Plan - Thames Valley PCC \(thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)

Health and Wellbeing Board

Slough Safeguarding Partnership

Nationally

Serious Violence Duty Guidance [Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Serious Violence Strategy [Serious Violence Strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

ASB Action Plan [Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

From Harm to Hope Ten year drug Strategy [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The duties and functions of local authorities are set out in numerous Acts of Parliament.

Particularly relevant functions include:

- The ASB, Policing and Crime Act [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- The Local Government Act 1972 ('the 1972 Act'), Part IX which prescribes the functions of local authorities, including public health functions and social services functions

- Core social services, duties and functions are set out in the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. Additional duties and functions are set out in the Children Act 1989 (in respect of children) (safeguarding duties at sections 27 and 47), Children Act 2004 (safeguarding duty at section 11), the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Care Standards Act 2000, the Childcare Act 2006 and the Mental Health Act 1983
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (section 16) includes the duty placed on safeguarding partners and relevant agencies to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the local area.
- Community safety duties and functions are set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 ('the 1998 Act') and Police and Justice Act 2006. Under section 17 of the 1998 Act, local authorities are under a duty to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their day-to-day activities. Youth Justice Offending service duties are also set out in the 1998 Act. Criminal Justice duties are set out in the Criminal Justice Act 2003
- Education duties and functions are set out in the Education Reform Act 1988, the Education Act 1996, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002 and Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Child Poverty Act 2010
- Youth Offending Teams are established by local authorities under section 39(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Their statutory duty is to co-ordinate the delivery of youth justice services in the authority's area, and to carry out functions assigned in the youth justice plan formulated by the local authority

