

Community Safety Plan



2020 to 2024

Introduction

Medway is the largest urban area in the south east outside London, with great connections to the capital and Europe. Medway is at the heart of the Thames Gateway, only 30 miles from central London, with frequent high-speed trains linking Medway to London's St Pancras International in just 35 minutes. Being just 40 miles from Dover and Folkestone, there are excellent links to the Channel ports and Eurotunnel; Paris is just over three hours away by train.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) brings together a variety of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations with a shared commitment to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in Medway. We believe that by working together and involving our local communities we can make a real difference in improving the quality of life for those living and working in Medway.

The 2016 - 2020 Community Safety Action Plan provided the partnership with some challenging targets and I am pleased to say we have worked collectively in tackling the issues that affect those who live, work, learn and visit Medway. The Partnership acknowledges that we need to remain focussed on effectively reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and supporting our community to ensure Medway remains a safe place.

To ensure this the new four year plan for 2020 – 2024 again sets the partnership some tough challenges with regard to reducing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour. The priorities and key objectives set out in this plan are based upon an assessment of crime and disorder issues across Medway. I am confident that by working together on this plan, building on previous successes, we can make an even greater contribution to improving the quality of life in Medway.

Every four years the partnership produces a four year community safety plan which is informed by an audit of crime and disorder and through consultation with the wider public. The CSP then produces a four year 'rolling' community safety action plan which is reviewed annually through a strategic assessment. Each year the Strategic Assessment assists us in revising the action plan, and this year a commencement of a new 4 year plan.

Medway Council has announced its aspiration to become City of Culture in 2025. Ensuring Medway remains a safe place to live, work, learn and visit will help us together to create a legacy for Medway and improve local pride within our communities. Medway is thriving as a place to live, work, learn and visit, and we will continue to support all of our communities and provide opportunities to ensure Medway's future remains prosperous.



Councillor Adrian Gulvin
Chair Medway CSP
Portfolio Holder for Resources

Community Safety Partnerships

The purpose of the CSP is to deliver safer communities as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and relevant legislation. In doing this the partnership co-ordinates community safety activity in Medway at a strategic level; to reduce crime and the fear of crime, to address the risk, threat and harm to victims and local communities, and also to facilitate the strengthening of Medway's communities in the delivery of local initiatives.

Medway CSP is a statutory body bringing together a number of public sector agencies, known as responsible authorities, to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and reducing reoffending. The responsible authorities are;

- Medway Council.
- Kent Police.
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS).
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company (KSS CRC).
- Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

These statutory partners work with other organisations, agencies and community sector organisations within the framework of the CSP to deal with community safety issues.

The CSP and Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) are under a mutual duty to cooperate with each other and to take account of the other's priorities.

The operation of the CSP is subject to annual scrutiny by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Medway Council.

Our approach is evidence-based, and follows from a **strategic assessment** (see appendix 1) of crime and disorder issues in Medway. This combines police and partner data with professional knowledge from other stakeholders. The strategic assessment has determined four key priorities where a multi-agency response is required as the issues are complex and require collaboration to make an impact. The strategic assessment goes into more detail on the activities of the CSP in the last year and the process for identifying the priorities for the next 4 years.

Strategic Drivers

The following values and strategic drivers are key to the CSP:

- We will be responsible for an overarching strategic framework for reducing crime and improving community safety in Medway.
- We will ensure that all partner agencies work together and ensure the work of each agency is "joined up" and that our performance is effectively managed.
- We will ensure that our work is informed by national and county priorities and research, including the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Localism Act 2011 and Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- We will take an intelligence-led process to our business and ensure problem solving is a tool used to address issues.
- We will engage with the community as a whole, encouraging people to become involved with reporting and tackling crime and disorder in Medway.
- We will also engage with other partnerships on issues that relate to Medway both at the area and citywide level.
- We will allocate funding using transparent procedures and based on available evidence; and
- We will work to ensure that our human and financial resources are used as effectively as possible, by monitoring and evaluating our work.

Public Consultation

The CSP held a public consultation event at Mid Kent College in Gillingham in July 2018 (for the year 2018 – 2019). This was specifically aimed at hearing the voice young people but also included representation from community groups, the voluntary sector and elected Members.

- 79% felt safe during the day
- 39% felt safe during the evening, with 23% stating they neither felt safe nor unsafe.

There were table-top discussions held which discussed a number of issues covering topics such as staying safe on social media, knife crime, detecting and stopping coercion, gangs, ASB, mental health and better communication with young people. Concerns around perceived gang activity was raised, as well as by a number of partner agencies from youth workers to housing providers.

When asked if the priorities of community safety partners were correct, 90% of attendees agreed they were. These priorities were –

- Tackling ASB
- Preventing radicalisation
- Human trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Youth gang violence
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Reducing reoffending
- Addressing homelessness and begging
- Tackling the harm caused by substance misuse.

We will continue to hold annual consultations with the next public consultation event in March 2020 (for the year 2019 – 2020).

Our Priorities

Stemming from our annual review and strategic assessment, and following public consultation, we have identified four priorities for 2020-24.

Safeguarding Adults and Children (Tackling Serious Violence and County Lines)	Reducing Vulnerability	Reducing Reoffending	Listening to our Communities and Partners
CSE / Modern Day Slavery / Human Trafficking	Substance Misuse	Community Payback	Community Engagement events
Organised Crime Groups, Gangs and County Lines	Homelessness	Rehabilitative interventions	Young people's voice – Youth Police Advisory Group (YPAG), Medway Youth Council etc.
Cuckooing	Contextual Safeguarding	Integrated Offender Management (IOM)	Parent and Carers Forum' Special Education Needs (SEN)
Medway Task Force	Mental Health	Youth Offending	Communications
Kent and Medway Serious Youth Crime Project	Radicalisation		Annual consultation event
	Tackling ASB		Empowering Communities
	Domestic Abuse		

CSPs are responsible for developing strategies for reducing crime and offending in their areas, and have a statutory duty to work together to: reduce re-offending; tackle crime and disorder; tackle anti-

social behaviour; tackle alcohol and substance misuse; and tackle any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment.

Safeguarding Adults and Children (Tackling Serious Violence and County Lines)

Safeguarding Adults and Children has primarily been identified will be a priority due to the national concerns about the increase in county line activity as well as the need to tackle serious youth violence. To ensure there is a coordinated approach in relation to safeguarding, there is a protocol in place between the CSP, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Kent and Medway Adult Safeguarding Board and Medway Safeguarding Children's Partnership to ensure the sharing of assessments and plans to ensure there is a strategic alignment. The Serious Violence Strategy (2018) and the Children's Commissioner's report 'Keeping Kids Safe, Improving Safeguarding Responses to Gang Violence and Criminal Exploitation (2019) both discuss the need for better joint agency working and information sharing as well as a co-ordinated approach to tackling violent crime, especially youth related violence.

CSE, Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking are atrocious crimes, and have a devastating impact on the victim. It is important that together we are able to effectively respond to victims of these crimes and protect those who are at risk of becoming a victim, and must improve our understanding of the scale and threat.

Medway has a well-developed multi-agency **Serious and Organised Crime Partnership**, including representatives from key community safety partners, education, health and social care which reviews all available information and ensures all available powers are brought to bear locally against serious and organised crime as per Home Office recommendations. This includes those that may fall victim to **cuckooing** from gangs, young people at risk of exploitation or even those at risk of homelessness. By continuing to share intelligence and information regarding young people identified as being at risk of CSE and organised criminal exploitation is key, with a continued focus on taking action quickly to prevent more significant risk of harm.

The creation of the **Medway Task Force**, whose aims align with the work of the CSP is an opportunity to take a coordinated approach to keeping Medway safe and preventing the levels of violence being seen in some London boroughs.

In 2018, in response to the Government's Serious Violence Strategy, Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner launched his Violence Reduction Challenge (VRC). By bringing together valuable partners from across Kent and Medway, the VRC sought to better understand the existing problem of violent crime across the county, and build upon the excellent work already being delivered.

In August 2019, the Home Office then approved an application from the PCC for £1.1m to create a multi-agency Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). The aim of the unit is to identify the major early causes of violence, co-ordinate activity to tackle it, deliver long-term reductions, and encourage the involvement of local communities in the work of the VRU and that of local service providers to build their capacity to deliver the best long term solutions to reduce violence, particularly with young people.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) established the Supporting Families Against Youth Crime (SFAYC) Fund to support the delivery of the government's Serious Violence Strategy. Kent County Council was successful in securing £1,362,645 in funding from the SFAYC Fund over two years, to deliver and lead a collaborative (North) **Kent and Medway Serious Youth Crime Project**. The SFAYC supports the early intervention and prevention theme of the government's Serious Violence Strategy. This strategy sets out multiple strands of activity that are not solely focused on law enforcement, very important as that is, but also depends on partnerships across a number of sectors, such as education, health, social services, housing, youth services, victim services and others. The collaboration brings together Medway Council, Kent Police, the Metropolitan Police and Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner to deliver the project for North Kent and Medway.

The approach will coordinate and harness the 'totality' of partner resources to support to reduce the impact of gang activity and protect children at risk of criminal exploitation.

Reducing Vulnerability

This will be a stand-alone priority due to the need to focus on early intervention and prevention work in multiple areas of work. There are many types of vulnerability and Medway has many excellent services and voluntary organisations that can help to reduce this vulnerability if a joined up approach can be taken.

Substance misuse impacts strongly on each of the partnership priorities identified. In order for the partnership to address the priorities, it is essential to have an effect on substance misuse issues. Both alcohol and drug misuse continues to be an area of concern. A key programme to support those facing severe and multiple disadvantage (substance misuse, involvement in the criminal justice system and homelessness) is the Blue Light Project, the multi-agency team that meets monthly.

Medway Council's Housing Services team have continued to receive funding from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government for their Rough Sleeping Initiative. There is a national focus on **homelessness** and it is important that we will build on the successes of this initiative in supporting our rough sleepers, particularly those individuals that are the hardest to engage, to assist them accessing the support they need to overcome their addictions. Co-ordination of the operational response to tackle rough sleeping and problematic begging across Medway has improved and includes a range of different services working together with Housing Services.

There will also be a focus on **contextual safeguarding**, looking at common themes, locations or people which will enable emerging issues to be solved holistically. To achieve the intended outcomes in this strategy, we will take a child-centred approach. Contextual safeguarding is key to this priority. This means that as well as taking a whole-family approach, we account for every context and environment that adolescents encounter beyond their family.

Mental health, although not criminal, is an issue at the heart of many cases which are reported to the Community Safety Unit. Poor mental health is often a causal factor in a person's anti-social behaviour and victims of crime whose mental health is adversely affected by their experiences are often placed at increased risk. In addition, the provisions for detention of people under the Mental Health Act have changed, meaning that police custody suites are no longer be available to be used as "safe places" for people detained under the Mental Health Act. This has, amongst other things, prompted the need to review how partners manage and support people with mental health conditions involved in crime and disorder. This includes paying greater attention to interventions that prevent people reaching crisis point, thereby reducing the need to detain people. Mental Health is also a priority for the Police and Crime Commissioner.

There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable people and young people. The purpose for these groups is to manipulate people to hold extreme views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity. This will leave them vulnerable to future **radicalisation**. There is also a high percentage of young people, who are 'self-informing' from the internet in the absence of positive influencers. We consider these cases as serious safeguarding concerns that need to be prevented.

ASB harms communities; in recognising this we need to continue to **tackle ASB** collectively across a number of agencies. We know that ASB can lead to negative perceptions of the levels of crime and of the police, and the impact can be devastating on quality of life and the environment.

Domestic violence remains an under-reported crime. This means that many victims do not receive the help and support they need. It also means that organisations find it difficult to measure the true extent of domestic violence. By encouraging victims to report incidents, agencies will be in a better

position to help prevent further domestic violence. This will also help organisations to bring the perpetrators to justice, and to work with them to ensure that they do not re-offend.

Reducing Reoffending

Community Payback enables offenders on community sentences to undertake projects of community value. We will continue to support and strengthen Community Payback, which has delivered thousands of hours of voluntary work for local residents and helps to improve cohesion and confidence.

The Policing and Crime Act 2009, which came into effect from the 1st April 2010, placed a new duty on CSPs to implement a strategy to reduce reoffending by adult and young offenders. Reducing reoffending is critical to both protecting communities from crime and to delivering a more effective and economic justice system. A further element, **rehabilitative interventions** designed to help individuals turn their lives around, we believe is best achieved through coordinated local services.

IOM brings together providers of probation services, police, treatment providers and other agencies to target intensive multi agency resources at those in priority groups, who cause the most harm to our communities. A seamless approach ensures that risks are robustly managed and that individuals receive the required support, to reduce re-offending. This may include the electronic monitoring of those convicted of serious acquisitive crime and/or drug testing of those with class A drug addiction.

It is important to continue to provide support for young people who are involved in offending. The **Youth Offending** Team provide restorative justice services to young people who have caused harm and those harmed by their behaviour. They work across the Local Authority raising awareness of Restorative Practice and encouraging use of restorative approaches. Restorative solutions are crucial in such areas as; restorative conferencing, mediation, restorative referral order panels, direct and indirect reparation.

Listening to our Partners and Communities

The CSP is committed to hearing from the community and understanding some of the issues beyond the statistics. We are proposing to make this an independent priority in the next plan and ensure that we have a systematic way of engaging in existing panels and groups to gauge concerns and inform the actions we take forward. In addition we will aim to promote community cohesion through a range of initiatives engagement events encompassing the whole community, with a focus on hard to reach groups, for example hearing **young people's voice**, those with **special educational needs**, older people and minority communities.

Community engagement is important as it helps to ensure that public services reflect and respond to the views and concerns of local people. It also helps people within a community feel involved in and responsible for improving their quality of life and provides solutions that work over the long term. Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings are open to everyone and give residents the chance to influence what happens in respect of policing and community safety in their neighbourhood, and it is important that the CSP supports these community groups.

Communication with our communities is key. Communicating our work will raise awareness with external and internal audiences of the role of the CSP and its responsibilities and achievements; ensure the public is informed of key achievements; improve community confidence and gain community support, engagement and involvement in identifying and addressing community safety and policing priorities; raise awareness of community safety measures and what is acceptable and safe behaviour in everyday life. Shared communication opportunities will be explored, as well as utilising existing publications such as 'Medway Matters', the council-produced magazine published four times a year and delivered to every household in Medway.

We will ensure that we hold an **annual consultation event** where we will focus on a specific issue and seek broader feedback on perceptions of community safety from attendees. Perceptions of safety

are a key indicator of the overall health and wellbeing of a community. A safe community is one where people are able to participate and live their lives in an environment without fear or risk of harm or injury. Community safety is about providing an environment where people are informed, engaged and welcome. In developing this four year Community Safety Plan, the CSP will aim to address and improve perceptions of safety within our communities. It is important that as Medway continues to see a huge amount of regeneration in the coming years, we ensure that these spaces are a safe place to live, work, learn and visit.

Empowering communities to stay safe and feel safe will not only improve the wellbeing of residents, but also make them feel safer within their communities, making them stronger and encouraging residents to be involved in local decision making.

The Chair of the CSP's Strategic Executive Group will share plans and assessments with other strategic groups, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, Medway Children's Safeguarding Board and the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board. An information sharing protocol is in place to facilitate this.

Action Plan

The action plans for each of the priorities of the CSP will be appended to the plan and reviewed annually.

Further Information

More detail is contained within the Strategic Assessment which is appended to this document as **Appendix 1**.

Glossary of terms

ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
KFRS	Kent Fire and Rescue Service
KSS CRC	Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company
MDS	Modern Day Slavery
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
PACT	Partners and Communities Together
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SFAYC	Supporting Families Against Youth Crime
VRC	Violence Reduction Challenge
VRU	Violence Reduction Unit
YPAG	Youth Police Advisory Group