

# Medway Community Safety Partnership

## Strategic Assessment 2021



COMMUNITY SAFETY  
PARTNERSHIP

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## Contents

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Item	Page
Introduction	3
Community Safety Plan 2020 – 2024	4
Overview	5
The Crime Picture in Context	6
All Recorded Crime	7
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	8
Progress on Existing Priorities	9-20
• Safeguarding Adults and Children (Tackling Serious Violence and County Lines)	9-12
• Reducing Vulnerability	13-16
• Reducing Reoffending	17-18
• Listening to our Communities and Partners	18-20
To Conclude	21-22
Background and Data Information	23
Glossary of Terms	24
Appendix 1	25

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## Introduction

Medway Community Safety Partnership (CSP) brings together the key agencies involved in crime prevention and community safety work. This includes Medway Council, Kent Police, The Probation Service, Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) and the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

To ensure we address the crime, ASB, and reoffending issues that are having an impact on Medway we:

- Conduct an annual Community Safety Strategic Assessment to collate and analyse data and crime patterns.
- Listen to the views and concerns of Medway residents and undertake consultations to ensure we address the issues that matter the most to residents.
- Review and monitor performance and delivery against objectives.
- Strive to build and maintain strong relationships between partner agencies to ensure a cohesive approach to tackling crime and ASB.

The purpose of the strategic assessment is to provide an analysis of the levels and patterns of crime and disorder. The assessment analyses any changes since the previous assessment and will review the possible causes as well as assessing the implementation of the previous Community Safety Plan. Consideration will be given to the views of Medway's residents and what they identify as priorities together with the analysis of crime and disorder to identify the key matters that the Partnership should prioritise.

This report is a summary of the key findings of the Partnership's Strategic Assessment 2021. It will reflect upon the work that has been undertaken to support the priorities outlined in the Community Safety Plan. The report will reflect the ongoing adjustments and recovery programme for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It will also identify gaps or future aims for the Community Safety Partnership, which will enable us to focus on ensuring that Medway is a great place to work, live, learn and visit.

Ensuring Medway remains a safe place to work, live, learn and visit will help us to create a legacy together for Medway and improve local pride within our communities.



**Councillor Adrian Gulvin**

Portfolio Holder for Resources and Chair of the Community Safety Partnership

**Community Safety Plan 2020 - 2024**

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In line with the Community Safety Plan 2020-2024, the priorities of the Community Safety Partnership are:

<b>Safeguarding Adults and Children (Tackling Serious Violence and County Lines)</b>	<b>Reducing Vulnerability</b>	<b>Reducing Reoffending</b>	<b>Listening to our Communities and Partners</b>
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Human Trafficking	Substance Misuse	Community Payback	Community Engagement events
Organised Crime Groups	Homelessness	Rehabilitative interventions	Young people's voice - YPAG, Medway Youth Council (MYC) etc.
Cuckooing	Contextual Safeguarding	Integrated Offender Management (IOM)	Parent and Carers Forum (Special Education Needs - SEN)
Medway Task Force (MTF)	Mental Health	Youth Offending	Communications
Kent and Medway Serious Youth Crime Project	Radicalisation		Annual Consultation Event
	Tackling ASB		Empowering Communities
	Domestic Abuse		

## Overview

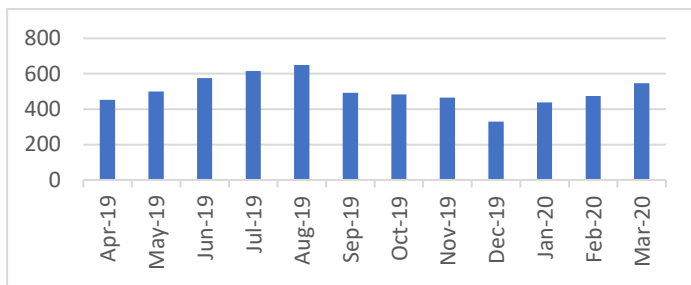
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Priority	What we have been doing
<b>Safeguarding Adults and Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful in a £193,000 funding bid to the Home Office for initiatives to improve the safety of women and girls in the community.</li> <li>• Around £30,000 in funding from the Violence Reduction Unit for projects including an Advan Project, virtual learning programme for year 9 students, work training placements, Eyes on Luton project and an Opportunities Fair.</li> <li>• Kent Police have created a Schools Team to help improve contact and information sharing with schools.</li> <li>• Op Ignite saw over 250,000 illicit cigarettes being taken off the streets. Over 80kg of hand rolling tobacco confiscated, over £20,000 recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and a total of 9 premises closed by Kent Police utilising powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.</li> </ul>
<b>Reducing Vulnerability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 1,800 GPs across Kent and Medway have undertaken safeguarding training.</li> <li>• Virtual Safety in Action was delivered to 22 primary schools reaching over 1200 Year 6 students with over 3,500 receiving Safety in Action safety booklets.</li> <li>• Approximately 70 cases have been referred to the Medway Vulnerability Panel with 53 discharged due to a resolution in issues, improved circumstances, or appropriate support in place.</li> <li>• A peer-to-peer Naloxone distribution scheme is being set up and a number of 'Naloxone Champions' will be recruited and trained to help prevent deaths from drug overdoses.</li> </ul>
<b>Reduce re-offending</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smooth transition and transfer of staff and workload from the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company to the Probation Service.</li> <li>• CFO Activity Hub opened its doors in Chatham in June 2021 which opens up opportunities to those under probation who are unable to access mainstream services due to multiple or complex barriers.</li> <li>• Successful scheme in partnership with Medway Foodbank with a staff member and someone on probation pairing up to assist with collecting and transporting items.</li> <li>• Work is ongoing within the Youth Offending Team on an App to support young people who are working with the team.</li> </ul>
<b>Listening to our Communities and Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medway Youth Council report on the effect of COVID on young people and survey which received over 400 responses.</li> <li>• The Medway Go! Scheme launched over the summer which saw a number of sporting activities taking place across Medway with schemes also including Fit and Fed, where young people were able to receive a nutritious lunch as well as taking part in activities.</li> <li>• Child Friendly Medway City Halls have been launched to encourage young people to help shape initiatives and ideas to make Medway even more Child Friendly.</li> <li>• A series of Hate Crime Awareness Events were held across Medway to engage with the public, to hear their views and to educate people about the support that is available.</li> </ul>

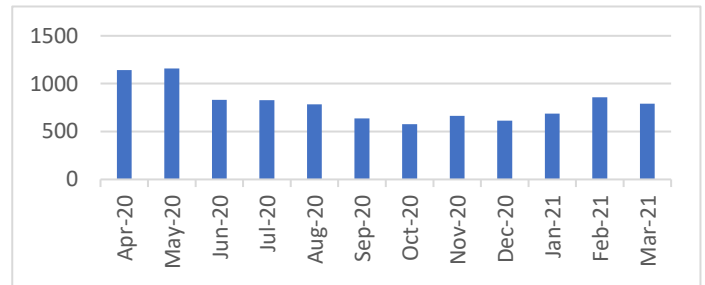
## The Crime Picture in Context

To allow for consistency and due to the way that data is collected, this strategic assessment will reflect on crime and anti-social behaviour data from April 2020 - March 2021. However, this is the first full year of data that has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and there will be irregularities caused by new legislation and guidelines that were brought in by the UK Government.

In terms of anti-social behaviour there has been an increase in reports. It is important to remember when comparing with several years previous that the methods of data reporting have changed. For instance, 9 reports related to one 'event' in April 2020 in Luton and Wayfield. It is likely that a large percentage of the increase can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic as periods of lockdown saw restrictions on leaving homes and the size of gatherings limited even as restrictions began to lift. Any gatherings became more obvious and with the threat of the virus spreading more people felt it was important to report breaches and anti-social behaviour to reduce the spread in the community.



ASB Seasonality April 2019 – March 2020



ASB Seasonality April 2020 – March 2021

The graphs above show the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Peaks in the 2019-2020 period of July and August are where expected due to the summer holidays and more people out and about in the community rather than in school and work. However, for the 2020-2021 period the peaks are evident in April and May. The first full lockdown period began on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, so it is no surprise that incidents of gatherings, noise and anti-social behaviour peaked around this time. In fact, April 2020 saw over 700 more incidents than April 2019.

Recorded crime has seen an 11% decrease as it continues to level after brief increases due to a change in recording methods several years ago. Violent crime continues to form a large percentage of overall crime which is why the partnership continues to focus upon its reduction. Recorded crime in April and May was significantly lower when compared with the previous year largely due to less opportunities with people being required to stay at home. However, there was a decrease across the board and work continued throughout the pandemic to tackle those involved in county lines and organised crime groups.

All Recorded Crime																											
<b>Level of Crime</b>	<p><b>29,652</b> recorded crimes (April 20 – March 21, Kent Police Data November 2021)</p> <p><b>106 per 1000</b> people (Based on the population estimate of 279,142 for 2020 from the Office of National Statistics, June 2021)</p>																										
<b>Peer Comparison</b>	<p><b>9th</b> highest number of recorded crimes for Unitary Authorities (58 responding authorities, lginform.gov.uk) (Down from 8<sup>th</sup> previously)</p>																										
<b>Annual Change</b>	<p><b>11%</b> decrease (Based on final figures of 33,334 for 2019-2020)</p>																										
<b>General Trend</b>	<table border="1"> <caption>General Trend Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Recorded Crimes (Approximate)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr 16 - Mar 17</td> <td>23,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apr 17 - Mar 18</td> <td>31,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apr 18 - Mar 19</td> <td>35,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apr 19 - Mar 20</td> <td>33,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 20 - Mar 21</td> <td>30,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Period	Recorded Crimes (Approximate)	Apr 16 - Mar 17	23,000	Apr 17 - Mar 18	31,000	Apr 18 - Mar 19	35,000	Apr 19 - Mar 20	33,000	April 20 - Mar 21	30,000														
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<b>Breakdown of Crime Types</b>	<table border="1"> <caption>Breakdown of Crime Types</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Crime Type</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Violence Against the Person</td> <td>48%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crimes Against Society</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Theft and Handling</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Criminal Damage</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burglary</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexual Offences</td> <td>4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robbery</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Crime Type	Percentage	Violence Against the Person	48%	Crimes Against Society	15%	Theft and Handling	13%	Criminal Damage	11%	Burglary	5%	Sexual Offences	4%	Robbery	1%										
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ASB	
<b>No of Incidents</b>	<p><b>9574 incidents</b> between Apr 20 - Mar 21 (Based on Kent Police data available Nov 2021)</p> <p><b>34 incidents per 1000 people</b> (Based on the population estimate of 279,142 for 2020 from the Office of National Statistics, June 2021)</p>
<b>Annual Change</b>	<p><b>59% increase</b></p> <p>3551 additional incidents (Compared with the 6023 incidents between Apr 19 - Mar 20)</p>
<b>General Trend</b>	
<b>Seasonality</b>	
<b>Breakdown of incident types</b>	
<b>Hotspots</b>	<p><b>Top 5 Wards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River</li> <li>• Gillingham North</li> <li>• Luton and Wayfield</li> <li>• Gillingham South</li> <li>• Chatham Central</li> </ul> <p>These 5 Wards account for 42% of all ASB incidents in Medway.</p>



## Progress on Our Priorities

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

The partnership continues to look at initiatives to reduce serious violence and county line activity. Having identified locations where violence occurs and where county lines appear to be operating action has been taken to tackle the issue. This includes a Memorandum of Understanding with the British Transport Police around serious violence operations at train stations that tend to lead to activity in nearby High Street areas. We know those involved in county line activity, particularly young people, use the train services from London as well as those to coastal towns such as Margate. Any disruption the partnership can achieve through links with British Transport Police is invaluable.

Various warrants have been executed for county line activity in Medway and Kent Police continue to disrupt and remove active lines. This has resulted in weapons, drugs and cash being seized. Intelligence around target premises is shared for multi-agency operations such as Operation Ignite. Operation Ignite has run since its initial deployment in August 2020 and aims to combat the sale of illicit tobacco in Medway. Illegal trade has a multitude of other criminal elements that various agencies need to work to counter. Coordinated and led by Kent Police, other agencies involved include HM Revenue and Customs, Immigration, Trading Standards, Medway Public Health and Kent Fire and Rescue. From a Kent Police perspective, the levels of violence that have been involved include a stabbing and several GBH-level assaults. This has seen special search powers under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 authorised. In total, Operation Ignite has conducted four rounds of pre-planned warrants resulting in over 250,000 illicit cigarettes being taken off the streets. Over 80kg of hand rolling tobacco has been confiscated, over £20,000 recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and a total of 9 premises closed by Kent Police utilising powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This is supplemented by the fines issued by HMRC and Immigration Enforcement, which combined, total over £50,000.

The Serious Organised Crime Partnership (SOCP) is chaired by Kent Police and brings together key partners to discuss common themes and concerns in terms of organised crime. In April 2021, Medway Council's Housing Team, Kent Police and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) conducted a joint operation which had been born out of the SOCP process. This operation aimed to tackle an industrial site which was suspected to have forced labour conditions, unsafe working practices, red diesel, stolen vehicles as well as being concerned in the supply of drugs. This operation took many weeks to plan, and organise, and involved a high number of officers from all agencies concerned. This resulted in three arrests and successful prosecutions for numerous offences. Medway Council's Housing Team served several prohibition notices and fines in excess of £250,000. The SOCP discuss trends at their monthly meetings, and whilst some activity isn't graded as 'organised crime' – there is a good flow of

information between partners designed to ensure a joint approach to problem solving issues within Medway.

Partners have continued to work to identify and tackle cases of cuckooing. Cuckooing sees someone or more commonly a group of people involved in county lines, taking over the property of a vulnerable person. Those targeted are usually drug users or those that can be exploited such as the elderly or those with learning difficulties. Victims can be forced into one room or even to leave the property all together. They suffer from anti-social behaviour and there is a risk of violence. Medway's Community Safety Unit continues to support the County Lines and Gangs Team in conducting numerous welfare and cuckooing checks to those where intelligence suggests they are vulnerable to cuckooing or had possibly been a victim previously. Kent Police introduced a Problem-Solving Task Force made up predominantly of PCSO's who undertake targeted work within areas identified as being an issue. They have worked to be a presence and tackle some of the issues around cases of cuckooing. Officers from the Medway Task Force presented at Medway Council's virtual Landlord Forum in October 2021 to discuss ways that agencies could work with landlords to identify cases of cuckooing, modern day slavery and exploitation. This was very well received with landlords given an overview of the signs to look out for and how to report any concerns.

The Medway Task Force has undertaken work within the Gillingham North Ward whilst also continuing to work within the Luton area. The team are also involved in a number of cases and concerns across Medway. The Task Force, in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership, was awarded over £30,000 from the Violence Reduction Unit to work on violence reduction projects. This has included a project called Eyes in Luton which aims to work with the local community to create artwork loosely based around eyes to be displayed locally, making those committing or thinking of committing crime or anti-social behaviour know that the neighbourhood is watching.

The funding is currently being used to fund placements with a local company for several young people at risk of being involved in criminality. There has also been the opportunity to engage an Ad-Van through Crimestoppers. This has been taken directly to schools with interactive activities promoting violence reduction. Finally, the last aspect of the funding was a Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives project and Opportunities Fair. Split into 3 sessions focussing on positive relationships, exploitation and opportunities, the sessions discussed peer pressure, sexting, county lines and where to go for help as well as given information on positive activities they could get involved with. The fair which was open to young people aged 14-25 featured organisations involved in education, careers, volunteering, training, apprenticeships as well as opportunities for new hobbies. It also featured stalls from support and wellbeing agencies to highlight what is available to young people.

The Medway Task Force also completed the Safer Streets 1 project in North Gillingham, reaching nearly 2,000 door knocks, and giving out safety items, including 616 property marking kits, to improve safety and decrease the risk of acquisitive crime in the area. From

this work, around 250 referrals were followed up by Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Recycling Team and officers from the Department for Work and Pensions. More recently in October 2021, the Task Force were successful in a bid for over £190,000 for Safer Streets 3 funding. The focus on this round of funding is to reduce violence against women and girls. The team will be working closely with partner agencies to deliver initiatives to make target areas safer and improve public perception around safety.

Medway Councils Community Safety Team have continued to work closely with Kent Police PCSO's, to support those within our community affected by ASB. In the last year they have taken on 108 cases and have issued 18 Community Protection Warnings (CPW) and 4 Community Protection Notices (CPN) from January to November 2021. These notices can be issued against a persistent antisocial behaviour perpetrators.

There has been 3 applications into the Community Trigger process. The Community Trigger lets people request the CSP review responses to complaints of anti-social behaviour. One did not meet the requirements for a Community Trigger, one was not upheld and finally one was partially upheld where a private housing provider was required to carry out some additional work.

The Community Safety Team are also the first point of contact in dealing with unauthorised encampments, supported by Kent Police. Unauthorised encampments are defined by the Government as "encampments of caravans and/or other vehicles on land without the landowner or occupier's consent and constituting trespass". The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives Local Authorities in England and Wales powers to make directions to leave land being used by such groups (section 77). It is offence to fail to comply with such a direction. If a direction to leave is not complied with, then the team can apply to the Magistrates Court for an order requiring the removal of vehicles and any occupants from the land (section 78). Officers also work closely with other local authorities across Kent and Southeast London. In the last year the team have dealt with 10 encampments. They also work closely with Medway Norse to identify sites that could benefit from designing out weak access points.

Medway's Community Policing Team and Licensing Team continue to lead on Operation Madrid, with the aims of preventing sexual assaults and serious violence against those that would seek to enjoy the night-time economy within Medway. The operation was planned to coincide with Covid restrictions lifting within the night-time economy. It utilised officers in both plain clothes and uniform to patrol the River Ward (Rochester High Street and the surrounding areas) for overt patrolling. During the operation, a number of arrests, positive interventions, stop searches and intelligence has been obtained, as well as grading of potential suspects and safeguarding of potential victims.

The operation runs in three parts:

- Pre-deployment – Which includes, training, awareness and education for businesses and partners involved with the night-time economy, to recognise vulnerability and take positive action.
- Deployments – This is where disruption/interventions are made, with the safeguarding of potential victims.
- Post deployment – This stage involves assessing risk, ongoing education, and intelligence sharing.

Operation Madrid aims to identify predatory behaviour by potential perpetrators and prevent offences through overt interventions. There is also work to identify vulnerable people and safeguard them through engagement and advice with support from partner agencies where required. This operation assists with gathering information and intelligence for future disruption work and investigations. It also provides an opportunity for education and training as well as an increased awareness of concerns for licensed premises, night-time economy businesses as well as the local barracks, universities, and local charity partners. Operation Madrid has seen a great example of agencies working together to safeguard people and this sees shared objectives achieved and strengthens working relationships.

Partners continue to engage with the Serious Youth Violence project in partnership with Kent County Council. To date 16 young people have been referred to the project by Medway Youth Offending Team with 12 accepted onto the cohort. The scheme gives much needed support to those young people identified as being at risk of gang or serious youth violence. This work links in closely with interventions by the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) as well as the Medway Task Force and the new Kent Police School's Team.

The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) have been undertaking a number of work streams for young people up to the age of 25 as well as monitoring trends around violence, such as locations of concern. The Home Office has allocated £500,000 of funding for delivery of high intensity therapeutic interventions for those under 18. This funding has been used to fund a number of Cognitive Behavioural Therapists to work with youth justice and adolescent/early help teams. There has also been additional funding to provide teachable moments. A currently NHS funded project in Medway Maritime Hospital's Accident and Emergency Unit will be further extended using this funding, until at least the end of March 2022. This project sees interventions take place with those who have suffered harm from violence. The VRU have also supplied 'buddi-tags' which have been working well. In one case a young person who had been placed out of area had run away from their placement and returned to Medway, The VRU coordinator was able to use the data from the tag to quickly identify their location and they were able to be seen by police and social care to ensure their welfare. They were returned safely to their placement.

The Schools' Team has been set up within Kent Police as a result of a public survey. The team is still in its infancy with 4 Constables currently in post meaning 16 secondary schools have a named officer. It is hoped by the starts of the 2022-23 academic year the team will have its

full quota of 11 officers. The Constables are working daily within their settings carrying out a mixture of wrap around care in the form of clinics and surgeries as well as assisting in developing certain parts of the PHSE syllabus. One concept that has been pioneered by the Medway Schools Team has been to raise awareness around the topic of consent and sexual offences, this has been in the form of an interactive session with the team. The feedback has been extremely positive to date and the session is now going to be rolled out across the county, this is obviously very topical given the current violence against women and girls campaigns that are being run nationally.

The core purpose of the Schools Police Officer (SPO) role is to work with schools, educational establishments, and other youth related organisations to provide a visible and accessible police presence, working closely with young people, parents and carers, the establishment staff, other agencies, and internal colleagues. They will work with these key stakeholders to increase safety, identify early intervention safeguarding opportunities, reduce the fear of crime and victimisation, and disrupt criminal activity. The aim is to achieve this through positive dealings with young people, information sharing between partners and policing teams and supporting in the intelligence gathering around the child, to create a respectful and positive culture of policing amongst children and young people.

### **Reducing Vulnerability**

There has been an increase in deaths related to alcohol in Medway with the impact of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns likely have played a part. It is hoped that there will soon be an increase in residential detox beds available through a new setting in Fareham and it is hoped this will reduce waiting times. It appears drug supply has been maintained throughout the pandemic but with some evidence of dangerous adulteration emerging. An example of this is isotonitazene in heroin. Isotonitazene is a potent synthetic opioid which is believed to have similar potency and toxicity as fentanyl. Public Health England have raised an alert and organisations within Medway have been made aware of the signs.

Nasal Naloxone has been made available to professionals who may discover people who are overdosing on opiates. It is seen as a less invasive method than the injectable Naloxone and therefore more likely to be used. Naloxone is a highly effective antidote to opiate overdoses and is currently available through treatment providers. In Medway a peer-to-peer Naloxone distribution scheme is being set up which will recruit 'Naloxone Champions' from people with lived or living experience of substance misuse. Individuals will be trained to reach out to others who are less likely to engage with support services but are at a high risk of drug related death. It is hoped that following the success of similar schemes across the UK which have been effective at increasing harm reduction and reducing drug related deaths, Medway will also see a positive outcome.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a call to get 'everyone in' to protect those sleeping rough from the virus with over 60 in accommodation at the height of the pandemic.

This was predominantly from April to July 2020, but some remained until July 2021. This did however give a good opportunity for sustained access to those who had been sleeping rough and more opportunity to engage with them. Joint working between voluntary, third sector, and statutory partners saw high numbers of people worked with and found longer term accommodation rather than returning to sleeping rough. There is a high number of people with a long-term history of sleeping rough and having complex needs that remain in accommodation. They are also accepting more help and support which is a good success story.

Another positive element has been the significant and improved development of partnership working because of the response to COVID-19. This has led to improved strategic approaches. More efficient and effective methods of communication were required at a time when face-to-face meetings were unable to go ahead. An example of this was initial telephone and messaging groups set up with partner agencies to pass on information quickly such as regarding the availability of PPE or even exploring how to set up cold weather provisions during lockdown scenarios. The COVID-19 services meeting was so successful it has been adopted into an ongoing Housing Strategy and Partnerships meeting to continue to close work and information sharing. The Housing Options service for those facing immediate homelessness and homeless prevention appointments continue to be delivered mainly via telephone which is a significant shift from how they were delivered pre-pandemic. However, a face-to-face facility is retained for those that need an interpreter appointment or are unable to use a phone. This system continues to work well with no identified negative impacts upon the service delivery or statutory compliance.

There has been an increase in Serious Adult Reviews around neglect, particularly self-neglect of adults known to be living with long-term mental health conditions. The pandemic saw the closure of many community-based support groups and a reduced service in terms of what could be offered online. The lack of community involvement for vulnerable adults has meant that they have in some cases gone unnoticed within the community. This has also been seen through several community initiatives held by the Medway Task Force where door knocking exercises have found a number of vulnerable people living in poor conditions or without access to the support they need.

The Medway Vulnerability Panel, coordinated by the Medway Task Force, is one way in which partners are trying to reduce vulnerability and support those who would benefit from a partnership approach. Key partner agencies meet once a month to discuss ways to support vulnerable adults that have been referred to the panel. To date over 70 people have been referred to the panel since it started in July 2020. Cases are often complex where previous interventions may not have worked. Where possible consent is requested so that teams can work with the client to support them. The panel has seen many successes from improving people's living conditions, ensuring appropriate mental health support, and resolving issues of anti-social behaviour which so often have other root causes behind them.

To help reduce vulnerability in the home Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) continue to offer Safe and Well Visits. During the pandemic visits were restricted to customers who were at a high risk of fire given the information provided. All customers had a telephone assessment. Due to the relaxation of restrictions, KFRS are now back visiting customers, but personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn at all times whilst in the customers' home. Safeguarding cases relating to hoarding and self-neglect were problematic to identify due to issues with access during the pandemic. KFRS are looking at lessons learnt from SARs and KFRS are contributing to the review of The KMSAB Self-Neglect and Hoarding Policy at this current time. There has been increase in safeguarding cases raised for mental health crisis, particularly at the start of the pandemic and it has continued. Cases continue to be referred from the Medway Task Force with a KFRS officer based within the Task Force Team. This allows for good partnership working.

In the health sector, a safeguarding tool kit has been rolled out to the 150 primary care sites across Kent and Medway to help GP's build their confidence and ensure that their practices are competent in knowledge, responsibilities, and actions regarding their statutory safeguarding responsibilities. Over the course of 2021 over 1,800 GPs across Kent and Medway have received safeguarding training.

Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP) are drafting Medway's contextual safeguarding strategy with the aim of presenting the final strategy to the MSCP executive in September. The aim is to bring together information from smaller area meetings into a larger meeting on contextual safeguarding to identify the key places and spaces as well as themes in terms of child exploitation. The Early Help Partnership Board was established in November 2020. This has seen the production the Early Help Strategy in Medway which was launched in July 2021. Over 100 practitioners attended the launch and pledges were made to drive the priorities forward. The strategy will be reviewed in December to assess the impact for families and evaluate how well it is being driven across the partnership.

Colleagues from the Clinical Commissioning Group have identified concerns with the number of non-accidental injuries (NAI's) to babies under 12 months which appears to have increased. Perhaps even more significant is that there has been an increase in cases in families not previously known to social services, where incidents can sometimes go under the radar. Specific issues appear to be around the misuse of cannabis, alcohol, and the presence of an 'absent' male partner in the house. In response to these concerns the national ICON programme was launched locally on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021. This programme aims to raise awareness with parents about how to safely look after crying infants as studies have shown a key trigger to a baby being shaken is a caregiver's inability to stop an infant crying. The programme tells parents they are not alone and supports them with coping with their own emotions, stress, and planning. Risk summits have been held across the health system about both NAIs and young people's mental health. Chaired by the Chief Nurse they have been a

platform for all health partners to reconsider best practice, address challenges and to further build working relationships across the system.

The pandemic saw an inevitable rise in concerns about mental health, particularly in young people who had limited social interaction and were prevented from attending school. For some young people school provides a respite from a chaotic home life and without this, during lockdown, may have further impacted on their mental health. Concerns about exams, future prospects and not falling behind have also compounded the issue. With services already under pressure prior to the pandemic the pressure has increased even further. There has been an increase in the number of young people in need of specialist mental health residential placements (Tier 4 beds). It is apparent in this increase that not all of these children were previously known to children and young people's services.

During the Euro 2020 football tournament (held in 2021) Operation Goodison was run. This saw Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA'S) available for the day after England played to support victims while offenders were in custody. The One Stop Shop continues to operate and support victims. Plans are currently in place to ensure it adapts to the latest guidance following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. There continues to be support from a number of agencies and at least 8 professionals on the rota each week. Medway Council's Housing Team are working to implement the provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 including committing an officer to form part of the One Stop Shop service. This is seeing an increased pressure on the Housing Options Teams. This pressure is further increased by the current situation in Afghanistan as well as the general need for Housing within Medway.

Medway Youth Service was able to resume detached work from August 2020 following the lockdown restrictions. This has enabled them to play a vital part in tackling areas of anti-social behaviour by engaging young people in activities and being a presence in areas identified as a problem.

There has been a number of education programmes run in schools to improve safety. Whilst the pandemic prevented students attending school, virtual initiatives were created to ensure that young people could still be reached. The Medway Task Force ran a virtual Safety in Action programme for year 6 students. The sessions, held as Teams live events, saw 22 schools take part, over 1,200 students. Safety in Action booklets were delivered to 63 schools reaching over 3,500 students. The themes covered included fire safety, road safety, internet safety, water safety and personal safety. Plans are currently in place to develop the programme further for 2022.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service have also offered fire safety sessions. Physical events were paused during lockdown and a virtual delivery was created. Since restrictions have lifted there has been a rise in face-to-face session requests however the virtual sessions remain a useful offer. Work is now ongoing to market fire safety sessions to secondary schools across Medway. In addition, we have actively increased our communication to such groups by



creating short videos around key messages, activities like 'The 12 Days of Christmas' and can provide tutor time digital school sessions in addition to our main programme. In the Medway area, 7,148 primary aged students have participated in the Fire Safety education programme. KFRS have also attended 2 Freshers Fairs and 1 Careers event to reinforce key safety messages.

A Home Office Prevent Peer Review Report for Kent and Medway was published in June 2021. Kent and Medway are a regional priority area for Prevent and receive additional funding to deliver Prevent outcomes such as training and education. The review team found that the Kent and Medway team is delivering Prevent to an extremely high standard. There is good partnership working between agencies and partnerships are firmly developed and practise is consistently outstanding. This is important in ensuring that partners across Medway are working together to reduce radicalisation and to also report concerns when needed with robust policies and procedures for dealing with cases of this nature.

### **Reducing Reoffending**

Between July and September 2018, the review, 'Strengthening Probation' took place. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) set out its plans to reform the case management of adults under probation supervision in England and Wales. This meant that at a national level all the Community Rehabilitation Company contracts expired on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021. With effect from 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021, responsibility for case management, community payback and programmes, along with most CRC staff transferred to the new unified Probation Service. During 2020-21 the National Probation Service (NPS) and Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) have worked closely together to manage the safe and smooth transfer of services and staff, to the Probation Service and Commissioned Rehabilitative Services, to minimise the impact of the transition for our service users, stakeholders, and the communities we serve.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Payback was required to adopt an emergency delivery model which comprised of the unpaid work part of the business to adapt its delivery with the person on probation reporting directly to a work site rather than being transported by a minibus from a muster point. This had a negative impact on compliance as not all sites were easy to reach by public transport and there would be an additional fuel cost for those who had their own transport. This has seen some projects, including those with Medway Council, put on hold as it has not been possible to facilitate them. Community Payback developed a successful project with Medway foodbank, using a member of 'Unpaid Work' staff and an individual 'Person on Probation' to visit sites around the Medway area to collect and return donations to the office. Given the limited scope for achieving unpaid work hours this has not been sustained but future opportunities to work together have been discussed

One significant concern that hinders work to reduce reoffending is the high demand for accommodation without enough availability for affordable housing. Most properties

advertised in the private rented sector in Medway exceed the Local Housing Allowance and most are unaffordable for those on Universal Credit, when factoring in the required top up and bills. Some landlords are requesting a guarantor with specified minimum earnings and who owns their own property.

The CFO Activity Hub, located in Chatham, delivered by Seetec, Interventions Alliance opened its doors to participants in June 2021. The CFO Activity Hub, provides a safe and supportive space where participants can and most importantly, want to engage on a voluntary basis. The hub offers tailored support within a warm, welcoming and an enabling environment, for people under probation supervision who, due to their multiple or complex barriers are unable to access or fully benefit from mainstream services.

The Youth Offending Team continue to see the knock-on effect of the pandemic with courts continuing to deal with a backlog of cases caused by closures and social distancing restrictions. This means that young people are waiting for extended periods for their case to come to court as well as a slow down and delay in cases coming to the Youth Offending Team from courts. It is hoped that a recent pick up in cases in the last few weeks will continue and the situation will improve soon.

There is a shift nationally in youth offending team caseloads moving from a majority of court cases to caseloads that are made up primarily of out of court disposals and this is also observed locally. In Medway 59% of the Youth Offending Team's caseload is made up of out of court disposals with the remaining 41% being court cases. This reflects the work to deal with children outside of the court process and onto a diversionary path. The pandemic has made Medway's Youth Offending Team more determined to explore how they can make better use of technology to engage young people and their families. This would not be as an alternative to the 1:1 relationships-based practice that they approach the work from but would work as a compliment to it. It is hoped this would increase the impact of the team's work and reduce reoffending whilst also supporting young people to visualise and reach more positive goals. There is currently work on developing a web-based app to engage young people in identity and motivational work as part of the Youth Justice Board's Pathfinder Programme.

### **Listening to our communities and partners**

The Medway Task Force's virtual Safety in Action project for year 6 pupils across Medway was a good opportunity to capture the views of students. As part of the live sessions, students were asked to fill out feedback forms about what they had learnt. The feedback was very positive with 100% enjoying the sessions. It was interesting that a significant amount of those taking part said they would be more likely to talk to a parent about the sessions than a friend or sibling. This means that the messages are going home with them which is extremely positive. The feedback will also be used to further develop the project for next year. The project has since expanded to work with SEN schools through an art and music project. It was

also recently shortlisted for a Children and Young People Now Award and the team is currently awaiting the outcome.

The Task Force has also held several engagement events to speak with residents and understand the concerns in local communities. A recent event led by Kent Fire and Rescue Service saw members of the Medway Task Force as well as Housing Officers and other agencies door knock several addresses in Twydall to speak to residents about home safety and to see what issues may have been affecting them. This led to further referrals and support being put in place for several residents. This approach has also uncovered multiple safeguarding concerns for vulnerable residents who would not otherwise have come to anyone's attention.

Medway Youth Council published their annual report for 2021 with the title, COVID: The Effect on Youth. Despite the issues around COVID they received over 400 responses. Over 50% of respondents felt their mental health has got worse during the pandemic but they also suggested some great ways of improving it, through exercise, new hobbies and using services such as 'Kooth', an online mental health service for young people. In response to the findings Medway Youth Council pledged to continue working with mental wellbeing organisations to support them in reaching out to young people.

Medway Council is working to ensure it is even more Child Friendly. In September 2021, Child Friendly City Hall events were launched with young people invited to meet and discuss the issues that concern them and how they would like to tackle these issues. The first event attracted over 100 young people and many professionals working with young people in Medway. Young people were asked about things that were important for a Child Friendly Medway with safety, the environment, transport, and education amongst the many answers. Interestingly, safety was spoke about a lot at both City Halls to date and it has become clear that perception of crime for young people is something that needs discussing. Social media means news travels fast, but it also means stories can be taken out of context and issues can seem a lot worse than they are. The Community Safety Partnership will be working on the next City Hall Event with the theme of safety to let young people know about initiatives to make them safer and look at how perceptions of crime affect their feelings of safety.

We are now starting to see a return to face-to-face events with the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions. 'In person' activities across the youth service have been taking place throughout the summer with activities at the Youth Centres and out and about in the community. The Medway Go project ran throughout the summer holidays with Medway Sport amongst the partners taking part. This saw young people offered a variety of activities as well as locations where lunch was included to reduce 'holiday hunger' during the summer holidays.

Partners have been visiting various locations in Medway to promote and discuss Hate Crime Awareness Week. Led by the Community Liaison Team at Kent Police, locations such as Rochester Cathedral and Mid Kent College amongst others, held engagement events with

agencies such as the Community Safety Team, Kent Fire and Rescue and Victim Support. Events like this are important to show the help and support that is available to those who are victim to hate crimes.

Following recent horrific events involving several high-profile murders of women the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner is looking at what further can be done to tackle violence against women and girls. In partnership with other agencies and the community, the aim is to identify gaps in provision and seek ways to prevent these crimes. A recent 'Call for Evidence' survey was launched to understand the feelings of women and girls in Kent on topics such as safety, prevention, education, and support for victims. Results of the survey have not yet been published.

The Community Safety Partnership have been unable to hold the annual consultation event this year due to COVID restrictions and uncertainty over whether a large event would be able to go ahead. However, there will be a paper consultation carried out which will also include an online consultation before the end of 2021. This will help us to inform our Community Safety Partnership priorities as we move into 2022.

## To Conclude

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This year's Strategic Assessment reflects not only the large amount of hard work statutory partners, commissioned services and the third sector have put into keeping Medway safe but also the aims for the future as we move into the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The examples within this document show how services have adapted and continue to adapt to the needs and concerns of Medway residents.

Partners continue to put safeguarding at the heart of all they do, targeting those who wish to cause harm to others. Initiatives such as Operation Ignite review the wider impact that illicit tobacco can cause such as violent incidents and a huge financial cost to society. The benefits of tackling these crimes range from the prosecution of violent criminals to protecting the public's health. The work of the Medway Task Force has seen a further push towards partnership working with initiatives such as Safer Streets seeing the important parts each agency plays to achieve the overall outcome. The focus on both early intervention and enforcement work to reduce violence is something that needs to continue with further partnerships made to enhance this work.

Reducing vulnerability through initiatives such as the Vulnerability Panel and focusing on contextual safeguarding allows the partnership to better target resources and reach those that will benefit most from intervention and support. There is a real sense that professionals across Medway are trying their very best to ensure people do not fall between the gaps in terms of services and support. Initiatives such as door knocking in local communities by various agencies also uncover hidden harm, those that may be vulnerable but don't come to the attention of services. With fatigue felt across services who have seen an increase in demand on top of a back log caused by the pandemic, the work of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to support statutory services is now more important than ever. Medway Council Community Safety Team after a period of vacancies, is at full strength and through co-location in Medway Police Station continues to tackle ASB and support the work of Kent Police with its ability to take a more long-term problem-solving approach to tackling this issue.

Reducing reoffending is critical to both protecting communities from crime and delivering a more effective and efficient justice system. Reducing reoffending is a key priority as it forms part of the duties placed on CSPs. The Policing and Crime Act 2009, which came into effect in 2010, placed a new duty on CSPs to implement a strategy to reduce reoffending by adult and young offenders. As the new Probation Service becomes further established it is expected that there will be further links with partners to develop initiatives to support offenders to reintegrate into society and not commit further crime. The Youth Offending Team has seen a positive development in the use of technology to support their work and this is reflected in many services who have had to find new ways of working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Partnership continues to prioritise listening to communities and partners as the community is at the heart of everything we seek to do. Consultations with communities help agencies to target resources and develop initiatives to support the wider community. It is evident throughout the assessment and from information from partner agencies that not only have communities been listened to, but this has been turned into action. Consultations saw requests for school officers and a Schools Team has been created by Kent Police. The Medway Task Force were successful in their Safer Streets 3 funding bid to the Home Office with a range of initiatives based on consultation with the public and stakeholders on what was needed to improve feelings of safety in a particular area of Medway.

To conclude, there has been a great deal of work by all partners and some great examples of partnership working. The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic looks set to continue for some time and this will have some influence on how services work, but it is evident that no matter the circumstances the partnership will continue to do everything it can to keep Medway safe. There should be a focus on further networking for organisations that have not been able to meet at normal meetings and events. This will establish further partnership working at an operational level and to promote new ways of working and 'out of the box' thinking. Greater links with charities and the third sector would also be of benefit to improve ways of working within the community and to help the partnership hear the voices of those that may not have come to the attention of statutory services.

## Background and Data Information

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Annual strategic assessments of crime and disorder are carried out to satisfy the requirement under Regulation 5 of the Formulation and Implementation of Strategy Regulations 2007.

The assessment is based upon information that has been made available by partner agencies and information available in open-source material. The data will have some limitations; it is not always possible to get the same time frame from every source as Partners measure their data in different ways. It should also be noted that not all data has been cleansed due to the large volume.

The following is a list of departments and data sources used to inform the strategic assessment.

- Community Safety Partnership Action Plan 2021-2022 Quarterly Updates
- Home Office Peer Review, Kent and Medway Prevent June 2021
- Kent Police – Published crime data April 2020- March 2021, Control Strategy.
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company / Interventions Alliance
- Kent and Medway Prevent
- Kent and Medway Action Plan (Domestic Abuse)
- Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group
- Local Government Association – LG Inform Database
- Medway Council – Power BI and Ward Profiles
- Medway Council – Public Health
- Medway Council – Trading Standards
- Medway Council – Youth Service
- Medway Council – COVID-19 Updates (Available via [www.medway.gov.uk](http://www.medway.gov.uk) )
- Medway Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Medway Task Force
- Probation Service
- Public Health England – Local Health, [www.localhealth.org.uk](http://www.localhealth.org.uk)

## Glossary of Terms

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ACES	Adverse Childhood Experiences
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
BUDDI	GPS monitoring
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSU	Community Safety Unit
KFRS	Kent Fire and Rescue Service
KSS CRC	Kent Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
MDAS	Medway Domestic Abuse Service
MSCP	Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership
MTF	Medway Task Force
MYC	Medway Youth Council
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SOCP	Serious and Organised Crime Partnership
VRU	Violence Reduction Unit
YOT	Youth Offending Team



## Appendix 1

Figure 1: Breakdown of Crime Types shown in All Crime Summary

<b>Violent Crime</b>
- Violence Against The Person
- Homicide
- Violence with injury
- Violence without injury
- Most Serious Violence
- Sexual Offences
- Rape
- Other sexual offences
<b>Robbery</b>
<b>Burglary Dwelling</b>
<b>Burglary Other than Dwelling</b>
<b>Burglary - Residential</b>
<b>Burglary - Business and Community</b>
<b>Vehicle Crime</b>
- Theft Of Motor Vehicle
- Theft From Motor Vehicle
<b>Vehicle Interference</b>
<b>Theft and Handling Exc VI</b>
- Shoplifting
- Theft of Pedal cycle
- Other Theft
<b>Criminal Damage</b>
- Arson
- Criminal damage
<b>Crimes against society</b>
Drug Offences
- Trafficking
- Possession of drugs
Possession of weapons
Public order offences
Other crimes