

# Medway Community Safety Partnership

## Strategic Assessment 2022



COMMUNITY SAFETY  
PARTNERSHIP

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## Medway Community Safety Partnership

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Medway Community Safety Partnership (CSP) brings together the key agencies involved in crime prevention and community safety work, namely:

- Medway Council
- Kent Police
- The Probation Service
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)
- Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board

To ensure we effectively address crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB), and reoffending issues which 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 2022. It will reflect upon the work that has been undertaken to support the priorities outlined in the Community Safety Plan. It will also identify gaps or future aims for the Community Safety Partnership.

## Introduction

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There has been a considerable amount of work taking place across all services in Medway to keep Medway Safe. The Medway Task Force continues to grow from strength to strength with successes in gaining funding in further rounds of the Home Office's Safer Streets fund. To date this has seen nearly £500,000 used for initiatives to fight neighbourhood crime, anti-social behaviour, reduce violence against women and girls (VAWG) and reduce violent crime. A focus of multiple agencies has been on work to reduce violence against women and girls, which is a growing concern across the country. Operation Vigilant has been a key Medway partnership operation focussed within the night-time economy; this has been complemented by initiatives such as the Medway Safe Spaces scheme which aims to not only give practical support but also improve feelings of safety within the community.

Community safety is a key issue for all agencies, and I would continue to encourage all agencies to ensure that community safety is considered in all their decision making.

Within this report are many examples of work to reduce vulnerability. The Community Safety Partnership works closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board to identify any synergies in workstreams and how to support each other in improving outcomes for communities and individuals. This will be crucial during these difficult times with concerns surrounding the cost of living on the minds of many. Working even closer with 'third sector' organisations will be key to providing a co-ordinated response. Key tools in reducing vulnerability are the Blue Light Project and the Medway Vulnerability Panel, both are multi-agency initiatives focussed on complex cases. It is also extremely exciting to see Medway become a Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) Network Area with work to be focussed on directly improving the lives of those facing multiple disadvantages.

Colleagues in Medway from Kent Fire and Rescue Service have created a protocol regarding deliberate fires after seeing an increase in incidents in a particular area. The improvement this made to information sharing and joint working, to allow further action to prevent deliberate fires, was considerable. Its success has seen it replicated in other areas in the County. This is just one example of innovative work taking place in Medway.

The CFO Activity Hub in Chatham, delivered by Interventions Alliance now provides tailored support and an enabling environment to those under probation supervision who are unable to access or benefit from mainstream services due to multiple or complex barriers. The aim is to encourage activities which help those taking part to gain employment and to lead law abiding lives. Initiatives such as this will hopefully break the cycle of reoffending, reducing the harm and risk to our community and residents.

The removal of Covid-19 restrictions has afforded the opportunity for agencies to reconnect in person with the community through a series of engagement events. The inaugural Safety in Action Day event, which took place at the Historic Dockyard in Chatham in July 2022, was

a big success, with over 5,500 people visiting the different stalls and activities. There was a huge amount of positive engagement with important safety advice delivered in a fun and interactive way.

Whilst I am certain that all agencies will continue to strive to deliver the very best service they can, we must also understand that there will be difficult times ahead. With budget constraints and a likely increase in the need for responses, most agencies will be working to their limits, and this will no doubt have an impact on service delivery. Whilst services will look to deliver in new and innovative ways to overcome some of the barriers, they may face we must also ensure we continue to work closely together to keep Medway safe.

The cost-of-living crisis has created challenges for business, families and communities, and as a partnership we understand that many local people are worried about rising energy costs and heating their homes. The wider impact this could have on community safety is touched on in this assessment.

I am also encouraged with the commitment from our Police and Crime Commissioner of an uplift in the number of police officers recruited to Kent Police and that Medway will benefit from this increase.

I continue to be proud of the work the Community Safety Partnership is undertaking to ensure Medway remains a safe place to work, live, learn and visit. It will help us to create a legacy together for Medway and improve local pride within our communities as well as supporting our aspirations to become an even more Child Friendly city.

**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:

Safeguarding Adults and Children (Tackling Serious Violence and County Lines)	Reducing Vulnerability	Reducing Reoffending	Listening to our Communities and Partners
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		

## Multi-Agency Working

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### The Medway Task Force



The Medway Task Force is a multi-agency team based in the offices of Medway Council. The team consists of representatives from Kent Police, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and the Department for Work and Pensions as well as input from Victim Support and Immigration and a large number of teams and agencies on the periphery.

The Task Force has 3 main aims:

- To reduce violent crime
- To reduce vulnerability
- To build resilient communities

Whilst a majority of the work focuses on geographical areas there are many work streams and projects that aim to support the whole of Medway. Key successes have included the awarding of the Home Office's Safer Streets funding in rounds 1,3 &4 as well as the national award-winning virtual Safety in Action programme that led to the inaugural Safety in Action Day event in July 2022. The Task Force also managed the Medway Vulnerability Panel, ensuring high risk and complex cases of vulnerability are looked at from a multi-agency perspective whilst also looking at innovative ways of reducing vulnerability.

### The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit



The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) is a partnership between the police, local councils, health service providers and other key agencies to deliver a reduction in violence across Kent and Medway.

The VRU funds and works on many different projects and initiatives that not only tackle violence but also look at reducing vulnerability, steering young people onto positive paths and away from violence and criminality. One initiative from the VRU and the Kent Police Schools Team is a Commitment Pledge which was developed after the VRU funded 25 school trips to the Ben Kinsella Exhibition in Barking and Dagenham. The Pledge has a number of statements that students promise to abide by, with the Rowans AP Academy in Medway being the first school to sign up.

There is also a VRU schools toolkit available for schools to use in order to help prevent serious violence. The toolkit touches upon different aspects such as trauma-informed practice and understanding a young person's behaviour. It is hoped this will help to reduce vulnerability through the school environment.

## Overview

Priority	What we have been doing
<b>Safeguarding Adults and Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medway Task Force have been successful in gaining Safer Streets 4 funding (£203,000).</li> <li>• The number of schools taking part in virtual Safety in Action reached 40 in 2022 with over 2300 students engaged in the live programme.</li> <li>• Medway Youth Service has secured funding to allow their hospital-based project to continue for a further 2 years aiming to help young people at ‘reachable moments’</li> </ul>
<b>Reducing Vulnerability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medway Public Health have created the peer-to-peer Naloxone (opiate overdose antidote) distribution scheme to reduce deaths and hospital attendance.</li> <li>• Medway has been successful in an application to join the Making Every Adult Matter Network Area (MEAM). This will help to support some of the most vulnerable people in Medway.</li> <li>• There have been several sessions delivered to prevent radicalisation including a session delivered by Small Steps in a Medway secondary school and Equaliteach who delivered the Think Programme in a Medway primary school.</li> <li>• Kent Police has created a Domestic Abuse Hub, a significantly strengthened remodel of the Vulnerability Hub and is able to provide additional support to victims.</li> </ul>
<b>Reduce re-offending</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CFO Activity Hub, run by Interventions Alliance, has opened in Chatham. This will provide additional support to those on Probation with a view to helping them become law abiding members of the community.</li> <li>• The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) scheme has seen a significant reduction in the Cambridge Harm index score, reducing the community impact of offending.</li> <li>• Community Payback continues to expand it’s offering with an indoor group starting in October 2022.</li> </ul>
<b>Listening to our Communities and Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inaugural Safety in Action Day took place in July 2022 with over 5500 people in attendance engaging families in safety messages and interactive activities.</li> <li>• Child Friendly Medway City Hall events continue to take place allowing young people an opportunity to raise issues that concern them and to have a say in services and activities they would like.</li> <li>• The Annual Community Safety Partnership Consultation took place online allowing greater access to the community.</li> <li>• Kent Fire and Rescue Service have undertaken a number of initiatives to reach under-represented communities to ensure equal access to services.</li> </ul>

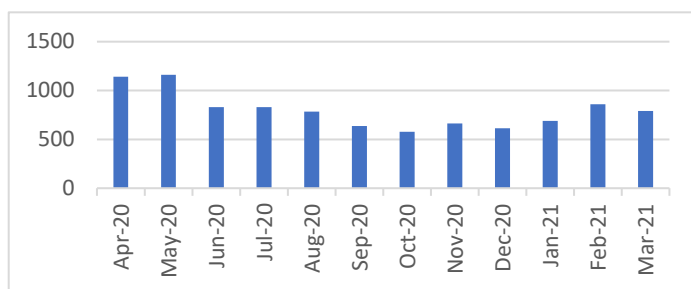


## The Crime Picture in Context

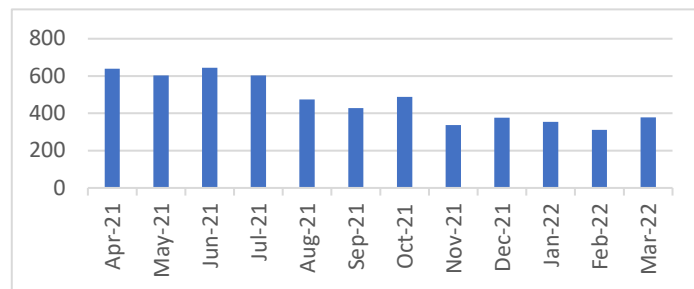
To allow for consistency and due to the way that data is collected, this strategic assessment will reflect on crime and anti-social behaviour data from April 2021 - March 2022.

Following an 11% decrease seen in the 2020-21 period, crime has increased by 9.7% in the 2021-22 period. The figures for 2020-21 were heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions during lockdown periods. During this time there were less opportunities to commit certain types of crime and the public were in a heightened state of vigilance due to not being able to go about their normal lives. It is not surprising since the removal of restrictions that we have seen an increase in recorded crime, and it appears to have returned to pre-pandemic levels. Work continues to reduce crime wherever possible and examples of this will be shown throughout this report.

It is very positive to see that cases of anti-social behaviour have declined significantly in the 2021-22 period, falling by 41%. This is again likely due to the changes in Covid-19 restrictions after a 59% increase in the 2020-21. The increase in the previous year was saw an increase in people reporting 'Covid rule breaches' such as noisy parties and nuisance gatherings. The figures have returned towards pre-pandemic levels.



ASB Reports Seasonality 2020-21



ASB Reports Seasonality 2021-22

It is worth noting that June 2021 is a peak in terms of anti-social behaviour reports, something not seen in the previous year. In England, June 2021 saw the lifting of legal limits for social contact after several periods of lockdown since the start of the pandemic. It is likely that as people socialised more, this saw an increase in gatherings. The reopening of the night-time economy also created more incidents of drunk and rowdy behaviour.

## All Recorded Crime

<b>Level of Crime</b>	<p>32,541 recorded crimes (April 21 – March 22, Kent Police Data October 2022)</p> <p><b>116 per 1000</b> people (Based on the population of 279,800 in the 2021 Census available at <a href="http://www.ons.gov.uk">www.ons.gov.uk</a> )</p>																										
<b>Peer Comparison</b>	<p><b>11th</b> highest number of recorded crimes for Unitary Authorities (59 responding authorities, <a href="http://lginform.gov.uk">lginform.gov.uk</a>) (Down from 9<sup>th</sup> previously)</p>																										
<b>Annual Change</b>	<p><b>9.7%</b> increase (Based on final figures of 29,652 for 2020-2021)</p>																										
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## Anti-Social Behaviour

<b>No of Incidents</b>	<p><b>5641 incidents</b> between Apr 21 - Mar 22 (Based on Kent Police data available Oct 2022)</p> <p><b>20 incidents per 1000 people</b> (Based on the population of 279,800 in the 2021 Census available at <a href="http://www.ons.gov.uk">www.ons.gov.uk</a> )</p>																										
<b>Annual Change</b>	<p><b>41% decrease</b></p> <p>3933 fewer incidents (Compared with the 9574 incidents between Apr 20 - Mar 21)</p>																										
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<b>Hotspots</b>	<p><b>Top 5 Wards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River</li> <li>• Gillingham South</li> <li>• Gillingham North</li> <li>• Chatham Central</li> <li>• Luton and Wayfield</li> </ul> <p>These 5 Wards account for 46% of all ASB incidents in Medway.</p>																										

## Benchmarking

For the purposes of benchmarking all comparisons have been made with Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) belonging to the Home Office's 'Most Similar Group'. Medway has been compared with all 14 CSPs within the grouping to provide transparency in the comparison process. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) use the Crime Severity Score (CSS) to calculate harm, this data is currently experimental in nature but published to help users develop it further.

The Crime Severity Score (CSS) is designed to reflect the relative harm of offending, rather than how many crimes there are. Offences are given a score, for example under the current system, murder is giving the top weighting score whilst cannabis possession has the lowest point score per offence. The weighting score is calculated by analysing sentencing data, the tougher the sentence the greater the weight for that offence. Once calculated it is multiplied by the number of incidents. The total is then divided by the population for the area being looked at which gives the Crime Severity Score. It should be noted that the Crime Severity Score can fluctuate according to changes in the way Police Forces record offences.

Offence rate per 1,000 population Total recorded crime				Crime Severity Score Total Recorded Crime			
	Apr '20 to Mar '21	Apr '21 to Mar '22	% Change		Apr '20 to Mar '21	Apr '21 to Mar '22	% Change
<b>England and Wales</b>	77	89	15%	<b>England and Wales</b>	13.6	15.9	16%
<b>Medway</b>	106	117	10%	<b>Medway</b>	19	20.4	7%
<b>Basildon</b>	96	107	11%	<b>Basildon</b>	15.7	17.9	14%
<b>Bolton</b>	99	126	28%	<b>Bolton</b>	18.8	24.1	29%
<b>Bury</b>	82	110	34%	<b>Bury</b>	15.3	21.3	39%
<b>Corby</b>	94	87	-7%	<b>Corby</b>	17.1	16.5	-3%
<b>Dartford and Gravesham</b>	101	113	12%	<b>Dartford and Gravesham</b>	16.6	18	8%
<b>Gosport</b>	69	85	23%	<b>Gosport</b>	11.8	13.3	13%
<b>Havant</b>	69	85	23%	<b>Havant</b>	11.5	15	30%
<b>Kirklees</b>	90	103	14%	<b>Kirklees</b>	15.9	18.1	14%
<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth</b>	77	85	10%	<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth</b>	14.4	18	26%
<b>Peterborough</b>	97	110	13%	<b>Peterborough</b>	17.7	20	13%
<b>Stevenage</b>	83	93	12%	<b>Stevenage</b>	11.2	13.8	24%
<b>Tameside</b>	93	118	27%	<b>Tameside</b>	17.1	21.2	24%
<b>Thurrock</b>	86	96	12%	<b>Thurrock</b>	14	16.7	19%
<b>Wigan</b>	88	112	27%	<b>Wigan</b>	15.2	18.1	19%

(Data from the Office of National Statistics, Crime Severity Score dataset available at [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk))

The number of recorded crimes continues to rise across England and Wales and within all the areas we have used for benchmarking apart from one. Whilst Medway remains near the top for this cohort for the offence rate and crime severity score it is promising to see that the increase, when comparing the last two financial years, is one of the lowest amongst the cohort. The percentage increase is also significantly lower in both instances when compared with England and Wales. This suggests that the work taking place in Medway is stemming the increase to an extent whilst also highlighting the need for this to continue to reduce increases further and work towards a decrease.

<b>Offence rate per 1,000 population Violence Against the Person</b>			
	Apr '20 to Mar '21	Apr '21 to Mar '22	% Change
<b>England and Wales</b>	30	35	18%
<b>Medway</b>	52	56	9%
<b>Basildon</b>	42	47	14%
<b>Bolton</b>	38	50	32%
<b>Bury</b>	30	42	38%
<b>Corby</b>	43	41	-5%
<b>Dartford and Gravesham</b>	45	48	7%
<b>Gosport</b>	28	41	45%
<b>Havant</b>	31	42	38%
<b>Kirklees</b>	39	46	19%
<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth</b>	33	37	11%
<b>Peterborough</b>	38	43	14%
<b>Stevenage</b>	34	37	8%
<b>Tameside</b>	37	49	32%
<b>Thurrock</b>	35	37	6%
<b>Wigan</b>	32	44	36%

<b>Crime Severity Score Violence Against the Person</b>			
	Apr '20 to Mar '21	Apr '21 to Mar '22	% Change
<b>England and Wales</b>	4.3	5.1	19%
<b>Medway</b>	7.4	7.8	5%
<b>Basildon</b>	5.4	6.3	15%
<b>Bolton</b>	5.4	8.1	50%
<b>Bury</b>	4.4	6.3	42%
<b>Corby</b>	7.1	6.4	-10%
<b>Dartford and Gravesham</b>	6.3	6.9	10%
<b>Gosport</b>	3.6	4.7	31%
<b>Havant</b>	3.6	4.7	30%
<b>Kirklees</b>	5.4	6.3	16%
<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth</b>	4.8	6.2	29%
<b>Peterborough</b>	5.7	6.6	16%
<b>Stevenage</b>	3.9	4.6	17%
<b>Tameside</b>	6.1	7.6	25%
<b>Thurrock</b>	4.7	5.2	12%
<b>Wigan</b>	4.4	6	36%

(Data from the Office of National Statistics, Crime Severity Score dataset available at [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk))

Medway is again showing one of the lower percentage increases when compared with the majority of other CSP's in the Violence against the person category. Medway has seen great success in securing funding for tackling various types of crime. The Medway Task Force has secured 3 sets of Safer Streets funding from The Home Office, with themes including reducing acquisitive crime, tackling violence in public spaces, tackling violence against women and girls, and reducing anti-social behaviour. Funding through the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit and Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (as will be discussed in further detail within this document) has provided opportunities to tackle county lines and the associated criminality.

Examples of initiatives to tackle violence and improve feelings of safety include the use of the HollieGuard App. The Hollie Guard App was set up by the Hollie Gazzard Trust, which was created following the tragic murder of Hollie by an ex-partner in 2014. The app is free to download with many features including an alert feature, which you activate by shaking your phone, this will trigger an alert with your location to your emergency contacts via an SMS. It can also record voice and video which saves to the server not your phone. The app is useful in assisting to gather evidence which is normally difficult in domestic abuse or stalking cases. The Medway Task Force were able to fund vouchers which allow for enhanced features to the app including a 24/7 monitoring service. The vouchers are distributed through Kent Police and through Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) as part of the Domestic Abuse Service delivered by Oasis. Early feedback has been positive with many professionals' agreeing that the enhanced app has allowed their clients to feel safer, feel able to go out into public spaces, and has provided a lifeline for them.

## Progress on Our Priorities

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

#### Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking

Vapes continue to be an ongoing issue in Medway. The Vapes are often from questionable sources and contain dangerous substances. In the period between April and June 2022, 6 children were hospitalised due to the use of vapes. Links have been made between Children's Services and Trading Standards with the sharing of information and intelligence to identify key locations that may be selling illegal vapes to young people. This is further improved by links with colleagues in the Medway Task Force who work closely with Trading Standards.

Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership held two webinars for professionals in July 2022 regarding the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). They covered topics such as how and when to refer to the NRM in response to exploitation and/or human trafficking and identified First Responder organisations. Other topics included support for children under 18 with Barnardo's, the Duty to Notify for adults and signposting to a local toolkit. Speakers for the webinar included the Local Independent Child Trafficking Guardian Service and Medway Council's Missing and Exploitation Coordinator. Another webinar specifically for schools and colleges will take place in October.

Operation Madrid, created to combat a potential rise in sexual assaults and rapes committed in Medway during the night-time economy, had seen a large amount of success during its pilot. An initial 6 deployments were made of plain and uniformed officers into the night-time economy to coincide with the first four weekends of the national reopening of licensed premises. Several arrests and interventions were made during this initial phase which ensured numerous vulnerable victims were safeguarded. The NHS have confirmed that sexual assault referrals into their services within Medway decreased in 2021 by 11.5% (comparing figures from July/August 2021 to those for 2020). The operation has been extended beyond the pilot phase and has become the force response to safeguarding women and girls in October 2021. It has become Operation Vigilant.

#### Organised Crime Groups

Medway Community Safety Unit conducted a week of targeted proactive action to combat knife crime and drug dealing within Medway between 16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022. This included two days of joint work with British Transport Police (BTP) at Gillingham and Chatham Train Stations as well as weapons sweeps across hot spot wards, utilisation of Section 1 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) and Section 23 Misuse of Drugs Act searches. This led to 6 arrests for offences including knife point robberies and possession with intent to supply. There were 38 stop searches conducted with 16 weapons seized and over 200 wraps of class A drugs were

recovered. These results were briefed to Kit Malthouse MP as a highlight of the work Kent Police are doing to tackle knife crime and serious violence.

Medway's Community Policing Team (CPT) led Operation Ratify due to a significant increase in the theft of motorbikes across Medway. The operation ran between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 with approximately 135 offences that could be directly attributed to the remit of Operation Ratify. CPT were able to recover and seize 50 mopeds/motorbikes that had been stolen and these were returned to their owners. There were 30 arrests made, with 14 suspects identified as directly involved. Case files are being completed with multiple charges for multiple offenders. There has been a dramatic reduction in this crime type verified by analytical data.

### **Cuckooing**

Medway Community Policing Team (CPT) have conducted numerous cuckooing and brothel checks during August 2022 as part of Operation Aidant. They targeted addresses that are suspected to be used to house victims of modern-day slavery or those being exploited through illegal sex trade. This has led to significant intelligence gathering, safeguarding, and further planned work with the modern-day slavery team.

### **Medway Task Force**

The Task Force secured funding from the Home Office Safer Streets 3 fund equating to approximately £190,000. The focus of the funding was to identify ways of preventing violence in the community particularly against women and girls. Workstreams, including improved streetlighting, street scene improvement and Friends of the Park events held locally, all helped to improve feelings of safety in the community. Ladies' Nights events, which are discussed later in this document, were a great success in engaging women that can be difficult to reach. There were a number of sporting events, including 'buggy fit' sessions to encourage female participation. The funding also allowed the development of a Medway Safe Spaces scheme which was launched firstly in Rochester and continues to be rolled out across Medway. The scheme involves businesses agreeing to provide somewhere, for a person that may feel lost, confused, unwell or who may have been a victim of crime, to make a call or sit for short time until they recover. The scheme should provide the feeling of a community being there to help if ever needed. To date there are over 90 Safe Spaces in town centres across Medway.

Perhaps as a reflection of the success of projects from the Safer Streets 3 funding, the Task Force have been successful in securing around £203,000 in the Safer Streets 4 round of funding. Projects within this round of funding will include youth diversionary activities in local parks, the renovation of a ball cage, Active Bystander training, installation of CCTV, work with Trading Standards and Local Housing Providers as well as other elements. Outcomes from Safer Streets 4 will be incorporated into next year's assessment.



Medway's Virtual Safety in Action programme has continued to grow. In November 2021, the programme was awarded the Children and Young People Now Award for Safeguarding. The programme, including sessions on fire, water, internet, road, and personal safety, took place again in February and March 2022. The number of schools taking part doubled to 40 with over 2300 students engaged in the live sessions. Worksheets and a playing card game were also provided to add additional learning opportunities. Once again safety booklets and safety packs were delivered to all schools regardless of whether they signed up to the live sessions.

The success and feedback from the virtual programme identified an opportunity to create an exciting, interactive learning experience for families based on the theme of safety as well as general health and wellbeing. Working in partnership with the Historic Dockyard Chatham, the Medway Task Force held the inaugural Safety in Action Day in July 2022. The event had over 35 different agencies and organisations involved and not only offered safety advice and education but gave families the opportunity to see and meet with those working, often behind the scenes, to keep Medway safe. The event was a huge success with over 5500 people attending.

### **Kent and Medway Serious Youth Crime Project**

The Kent and Medway Serious Youth Crime Project has now concluded. A full evaluation and report are currently being prepared and will be shared with key partners as soon as it is complete. However, there are many other examples of work that has been ongoing in medway to tackle serious youth crime.

Medway Youth Service have continued their hospital-based project that provides a youth worker presence when young people arrive at the hospital potentially following a violent incident. Based at Medway Maritime Hospital, the project's funding has been renewed for a further two years, with targeted work looking for reachable moments, when young people who are vulnerable to exploitation or risk can be supported.

The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner and the Violence Reduction Unit have co-commissioned a new service from Catch22 which provides support to children and young people to reduce risk and prevent serious youth violence, exploitation, gangs, and county line activity. The service supports children and young people up to the age of 25 who are at risk of child criminal exploitation (CCE) and county lines in Kent and Medway using both preventative and protective interventions. A bespoke programme of support is created from a focus on the young person's individual needs and working closely with the relatives and immediate support network. The service is delivered by a team of specialist caseworkers with interventions that take a holistic, trauma-informed approach that is age appropriate and relevant to the risks and experiences of the young person.

The Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) has established good information sharing on people and places which helps with the understanding of issues relating to serious violence. Issues are

reported regularly in Medway and trigger a multi-agency response with a good strong partnership approach delivered by statutory services. The VRU Coordinator is well embedded with teams and works collaboratively with them to tackle problems. Recently the Medway Task Force worked with the Violence Reduction Unit to provide funding to a local Pupil Referral Unit to enable the refurbishment of a container to create a space for workshops. This is an innovative and creative solution to provide young people with a variety of options to develop future skills.

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

### **Aims and items to note for the Community Safety Partnership**

- Consider closer partnership working on cases of suspected cuckooing to protect those who may not be easy to engage.
- Continue to grow the Safety in Action programme and event to ensure key safety messages can be delivered to families in Medway.
- Scrutinise the findings of the Kent and Medway Serious Youth Crime project and identify opportunities for learning and future interventions.

## **Reducing Vulnerability**

### **Substance Misuse**

In December 2021 HM Government released 'From harm to hope' a 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives. In response to this document a Medway Health Needs Assessment was produced. This report looks at elements of the strategy where Medway Council's Public Health Directorate have a significant role and assesses the readiness of Medway to meet the objectives laid out within the Government strategy. Medway Council commissions substance misuse treatment services which are split into two parts, an Engagement Assessment Stabilisation and Treatment service delivered by Turning Point and a smaller Wellbeing and Recovery service with Open Road. Pre-pandemic data shows treatment is equal to or better than the England average and local data suggests this has continued throughout the pandemic, despite additional difficulties. Additional funding has seen increased capacity across substance misuse services and caseloads are now lower allowing for greater levels of support. There has been an increase in both outreach and in-reach programmes with increased and extended peer mentor programmes also made available.

Another central theme of the 2021 drug strategy is addressing crime. It is widely accepted that there is a well-established relationship between drug use and crime. Approximately half of all homicides and acquisitive crimes relate to drugs. NHS England commission a Liaison and Diversion Service. This is based in the custody suites of Police Stations throughout Kent. The custody suite at Medway is the busiest however the number of referrals from the Liaison and

Diversion Service to treatment services are low and this is something that could be a focus of improvement. There have been strong relationships built between the substance misuse services and probation services which will seek to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. An additional Criminal Justice worker has also been added to the treatment service.

This year, Medway Public Health have set up a peer-to-peer Naloxone (opiate overdose antidote) distribution outreach scheme. Members of the peer network have been trained by an expert so that they can then train those that use drugs as well as friends and professionals how to use Naloxone. There have been several reports of how the naloxone that has been distributed by the peer network has been used to reverse an overdose. Not only is this early success saving lives but also reducing the need for ambulances to be called and Emergency Department attendances at a time when both are exceptionally busy.

There is some concern amongst substance misuse professionals regarding changes to drug policies including Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement orders (AAMR's) which can be imposed by a court as part of a community order or suspended sentence order and the use of drug tags. The electronic monitoring tags take a sample of the wearer's sweat every 30 minutes. If alcohol is detected, or the tag is tampered with, an alert is sent to the Probation Service. In the event of non-compliance, the Probation Service can decide whether a case should be brought back to the court to review the breaches. There is also concern about how Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATR's) and Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRR's) will work with the new Mental Health Treatment Requirement (MHTR) with crossover in complex cases with multiple concerns.

### **Combating Drugs Partnership**

Addressing the harms of substance misuse in Medway is currently led by the Medway Combating Drugs Partnership (CDP). Locally the group reports to both the CSP and the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Nationally to the Joint Combating Drugs Unit. Medway's CDP is chaired by Medway Council's Director of Public Health.

The three strategic priorities of the strategy are:

- Break drug supply chains - Increasing the response to the supply of the most harmful drugs by restricting upstream flow; securing the border; targeting the 'middle market'; going after the money; rolling up county lines; tackling the retail market; restricting the supply of drugs into prisons.
- Deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system – Treating addiction as a chronic health condition; reducing stigma; improving quality, capacity and outcomes of treatment; rebuilding the professional workforce; addressing physical and mental health needs; improving access for rough sleepers; maintaining secure and safe housing for those in treatment; improving employment opportunities; increasing

criminal justice system referrals pathways; improving engagement of people before they leave prison and better continuity of care into the community.

- Achieve a generational shift in demand for drugs – changing societal attitudes to drugs by building a world-leading evidence base; applying tougher and more meaningful consequences; delivering school-based prevention and early intervention; supporting young people and families most at risk of substance misuse.

The priorities are to be achieved by setting up and operating a collaborative partnership that ensures a systemwide approach with joint accountability. The CDP will write a joint Needs Assessment and Strategic Action Plan by early 2023.

### **Homelessness**

There has been a continued focus on partnership working which has been hugely beneficial to those facing homelessness as well as those sleeping rough. Medway Council's Housing Team continue to work closely with the Community Safety Team and the wider Community Safety Unit in dealing with encampments and jointly supporting the rough sleeping street count. This has helped ensure that rough sleepers are aware of the support available and to provide assistance in finding suitable accommodation where possible. The Blue Light Project also continue to meet, discussing clients with the most complex needs with the aim of reducing their vulnerability. This allows for multi-agency work to effectively target support.

As part of the Safer Streets project (which will be discussed throughout this document) a Ladies Night Initiative was set up by colleagues in the Housing Team and the Medway Task Force. This programme allows vulnerable women the opportunity to have access to services as well as safety items to reduce their vulnerability. The sessions have up to 16 partner agencies involved and, following a successful pilot using the Safer Streets Funding, further funding has been secured through the Medway Community Safety Partnership to allow the sessions to run on a monthly basis. These sessions have raised some safeguarding concerns with women bringing young children to the sessions as they have no safe place or support to leave them with. Children's Services have been approached for their input to ensure all appropriate safeguarding is in place.

Some challenges for the services involved in reducing homelessness have been identified. There has been an increase in the number of households reporting domestic abuse. This can lead to the need for quick and urgent moves from properties or the need to facilitate moves outside of area which can be complicated by the lack of available and suitable housing, especially at short notice. There has also been an increase in the number of homelessness approaches, including where there have been evictions of complex and vulnerable individuals. This is likely to further increase through the cost-of-living crisis which will have a wide-ranging impact on many people in Medway and especially the most vulnerable sections of the population. The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Bill 2022-23 will see the potential closure of poor quality houses in multiple occupation. Whilst very positive in terms

of ensuring people live in good quality and safe housing, the closure of properties will lead to the need to find alternative accommodation, potentially for several individuals or families per property adding further to the list of people requiring urgent accommodation.

On a very positive note, Medway has been successful in its application to join the Making Every Adult Matter Network Area (MEAM). Medway will be funded for two years as a MEAM Network Area. Following funding from a National Lottery grant, MEAM were able to increase the number of local authorities they work with. Based on the high level of collaborative work with statutory and voluntary partners and Housing Services in Medway, MEAM were keen for Medway to be involved. MEAM is a coalition of national charities, Clinks, Homeless Link, Mind, and associate member Collective Voice. Working together MEAM supports local areas across the country to develop effective, coordinated services that directly improve the lives of people facing multiple disadvantages, using shared knowledge and practical experience from this work to influence policy at the national and local level.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that young people are vulnerable to abuse in many different social contexts such as school and the local community as well as being vulnerable to a range of external threats. This approach is relevant to a range of risks including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation (including county lines), modern slavery and trafficking, missing young people and risks associated with gangs.

Medway Youth Service has been working in partnership with the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit to develop contextual safeguarding location assessments, looking at both schools and communities. An example of this is work in Gillingham High Street where several incidents of anti-social behaviour were being reported by business owners, residents and those visiting the High Street. Medway Youth Service were able to have a team active within the area at key times which saw a reduction in the incidence of anti-social behaviour. The increase in anti-social behaviour in Gillingham High Street during the summer holidays was also tackled through Operation Taxi, which was led by Kent Police, Medway Community Safety Unit's Town Centre Team. This included increased high visibility patrolling, and an increased use of police powers such as Section 1 searches and dispersal authority. There was a reduction in both shoplifting and anti-social behaviour offending.

Another element of this work was undertaken by Kent Fire and Rescue Service following reports of several deliberate fires. Through Operation Refuse in February 2022, a new protocol was created to ensure police were notified of incidents and intelligence was shared in both directions to allow appropriate safeguarding as well as referrals to KFRS' Fire Setter Team. The Fire Setter Team work with young people who have been setting or showing an interest in deliberate fires, working to understand why this behaviour is occurring, to educate around the risks of starting fires to themselves and the wider community and to try and

prevent reoccurrence of the behaviour. The protocol was very successful and has been replicated in other areas across the County.

## **Mental Health**

The Rough Sleeper Mental Health Service has been commissioned on a fixed term basis by different borough and district councils across Kent however NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board is committed to continue funding these services recurrently from April 2023. This will ensure work between the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, and the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) outreach teams can continue to offer an assertive outreach approach. In addition to the existing provision NHS Kent and Medway has recently been successful in bidding for additional funding for rough sleeper mental health services which will be used to increase the capacity of the service in Medway and provide more support.

The Medway Safe Haven, which was launched in 2020, continues to offer face to face mental health support for anyone aged 16 and over from 6pm-11pm, 365 days a year. The service, run by Mental Health Matters, continued to operate throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and quickly mobilised a telephone and video call support service. Virtual consultations via a video call are still available to those that cannot attend in person. No appointment or referral is needed and anyone who lives in Kent or Medway can use the service. The Haven provides information and one to one emotional support from trained mental health professionals for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis or who needs support with their mental health. The service can also help with staying well and crisis planning as well as support people to access other services and support. The service provides presentations at local stakeholder groups and community groups to promote the service and engage the community. NHS Kent and Medway is currently working with multiple agencies to review and co-produce a revised Safe Haven model and other community crisis alternatives to improve access.

Another great addition to mental health services in Medway is a new Mental Health Crisis Prevention Service. The new crisis peer alternative service which launched earlier this year works with people aged 18+ in Medway who are struggling to find the extra help they need. This could be because they:

- Recently experienced a mental health crisis and still need some support
- Frequently require mental health crisis support
- Have complex emotional difficulties (formerly known as personality disorder)
- Are waiting for a mental health assessment (having been referred by a healthcare professional)

The service helps people to manage their mental health using recovery-focused support techniques. The aim is to prevent people's mental health issues from escalating to a point where more specialist support is needed. The service is provided by Rethink Mental Illness and North Kent Mind on behalf of Porchlight.

The Dementia Crisis Support Service is also a new innovative service set up to support people living with dementia and their carers who live at home. The service is intended to enable people to remain in their own homes and reduce unnecessary admissions into Medway Maritime Hospital. The service can provide short term support and home treatment for challenging behaviour and physical problems as well as assessments of patients physical and mental health needs. There is also support for carers and the enhancing of their skills as well as other services aimed to support the patient at home and reduce the need for hospital-based treatment or admission.

### **Radicalisation**

There has been good engagement with Medway schools and education partners and the Prevent Education Officer meets frequently with the Medway Education Safeguarding Officer. Using part of the commissioned services grant from the Home Office a number of sessions were delivered in Medway's education settings. A session was delivered by Small Steps, from a former right-wing extremist to 150 pupils in year 10 at a Medway secondary school. Equaliteach delivered the Think Programme in a Medway primary school to year 6 students. Both sessions were observed by the Prevent Education Officer and elements will be incorporated into their training offer. There have also been six training sessions for staff in Kent and Medway. These were focused on how to hold conversations on controversial issues and conspiracy theories and truth.

There has been excellent engagement with Special Education Settings with sessions on the radicalisation risks from online gaming using the 'Young Zak' resource which was developed at the University of Kent Centre for Child Protection. 'Young Zak' also formed part of the Prevent Education Officers involvement in the Medway Virtual Safety in Action Programme for year 6 students in March 2022. In partnership with Medway's Youth Service, the session focused on internet safety and how some may use the online gaming platforms to spread hate. Over 40 schools took part with more than 2000 young people.

In the period of April 2021 to July 2022 Medway accounted for 16% of all referrals to the Channel Panel. 78% were referred with 'unclear ideology' while the rest were for right-wing terrorism. Of those referred 50% have been adopted by the Channel Panel, 17% were rejected, 17% were closed at Section 36 Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with the remaining referrals awaiting assessment or transferred to another area. Of those adopted onto the Channel Panel, 67% have consented to supportive intervention. There have been several incidents of racist/extremist graffiti or stickers being left at locations in Medway, some involving racist symbolism as well as others referring to the IRA. Medway Council staff remove offensive graffiti and stickers as soon as possible after incidents are reported.

Medway Youth Service worked closely with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) on several projects, including the Safety in Action online events and the Competition Winners Lunch and the (Safety in Action Day). The online safety presentation and videos were a great

opportunity for the Youth Service to interact with a wide group of young people in year 6, making use of digital engagement to share important messages about keeping safe. The lunch was an opportunity to work with a specific group of year 6 pupils, and we were able to have in depth conversations around safety and how much knowledge and information they knew or had learned from the online event. It was also a great opportunity to promote the Youth service and the activities and sessions being run.

### **Tackling ASB**

Medway Council's Community Safety Team continues to investigate high level and complex cases of anti-social behaviour. Many of the reports require a multi-agency or interdepartmental approach. Some examples of the partnership working include working with Medway Youth Service Outreach Team in parks, a funding application submitted by Greenspaces for a graffiti board in Hillyfields and a PCSO Task Team being deployed into Cozenton Park in Rainham to address localised concerns. The Community Safety Team will soon be involved with a project being run in partnership with the Street Scene, Waste Services and Town Centre Managers at Medway Council to reduce signal crime such as fly-tipping and graffiti. This project will initially be run in Gillingham and Chatham and will also be extended through an approach to Public Health for support in addressing street drinkers who frequent these areas.

The Community Safety Team frequently investigates cases during which a vulnerable person is identified. The reason for vulnerability can vary but referrals have been made to the Medway Vulnerability Panel for cases involving domestic abuse and welfare concerns. Referrals are also made for adult or child safeguarding concerns to both social services and police where needed. The team continue to work to reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour by addressing some of the root causes that may lead to someone behaving in such a way. Whilst consideration to vulnerability is given, the team are also able to use enforcement measures when and where required to prevent anti-social behaviour.

Due to an internal awareness of the service provided by the Community Safety Team, some crossover from other departments and referrals has been identified. A review is planned to streamline the process, so that the department that is best placed to lead the investigation does so with the support of other departments rather than multiple investigations being run at once. It is likely that as part of this process, a review of what falls within the remit of the Community Safety Team will also be carried out so that resources can be utilised to provide the best possible service to complainants. Following this review, the Community Safety Team's webpage will also be updated to clearly state what the Community Safety Team can and cannot investigate.

During the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022, the Community Safety Team have received a total of 247 service requests which consist of neighbour disputes, anti-social behaviour in greenspace areas and other communal areas. Also included are reports of overnight sleeping in tents, traveller incursions, alley gate padlock replacement requests and



nuisance vehicles. For the same period in 2021 there was a total of 176 service requests showing an increase of 40% in 2022. The volume of Community Protection Warnings (CPW's) issued increased to 12 from 7 within the same periods but Community Protection Notices (CPN's) remained the same at 3, with Community Protection Warnings still showing success in reducing anti-social behaviour at the early stages. Medway has also seen an increase in traveller encampments with 15 incursions between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 compared to 7 incursions in the same period of 2021. This is an increase of 114%. This has placed a strain on the service and if the trend continues the service will likely be stretched until the November period when incursions have historically reduced.

Kent Fire and Rescue Services' (KFRS) Education Team have worked collaboratively with other agencies and other KFRS teams to promote key safety messages. In the academic year 2021/22, the Education Team delivered safety sessions to 50 Medway primary schools reaching 16,800 students. There were also sessions delivered to 13 Medway secondary schools reaching a further 3970 young people. Considering the increase in deliberate fires and Operation Refuse, the Education Team also worked to support and provide a more bespoke delivery to Medway Secondary Schools. Whilst this followed the KFRS mainstream Think Choice programme, Officers referenced Firestoppers and reinforced key messages associated with the consequences of fire setting. The programme works to equip young people with a strategy to identify risk and safely exit a situation.

### **Domestic Abuse**

There have been a number of reviews within the work to tackle domestic abuse. During quarterly contract review meetings, it was identified that there were low levels of referrals between substance misuse and domestic abuse services. In response to this there have been improved pathways established through training and identifying key contacts within the services. A full review was also carried out of the MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference) process with full engagement from all partner agencies. Following the emergence from Covid-19 restrictions it has been a challenge to rebuild the relationship with partners, with staff moving on and roles changing, but work is ongoing to establish and strengthen these relationships. It has also been a time for workers to return into community settings. Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) have now returned to community-based settings and are working from children's social care settings as well as meeting clients face-to-face.

There has long been concerns about moving victims of domestic abuse outside of the area they are familiar with and away from any support network they may have. Dispersed accommodation is now live, and this allows victims to access safe accommodation without having to move outside of Medway and away from their support network. Another positive outcome is the increase in the capacity of counselling services within Refuge accommodation meaning more support can be provided for victims. The Medway Task Force were able to secure funding through the Safer Streets 3 fund for enhanced HollieGuard vouchers for

victims of abuse and stalking. Referrals are made by police officers or IDVA's to the Task Force who issue the vouchers. This provides the client with a 24/7 monitoring service via the app, when activated, and the app can also record voice and video footage that can be used as evidence if required.

It appears that referrals for domestic abuse have continued to increase following Covid-19. This increase will continue to stretch resources and there are concerns about retaining staff due to the increase in workloads. There may also be challenges in continuing to provide support through the legal system. The introduction of new offences under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 means there may be a requirement for further ongoing support through the Criminal Justice System and there may be delays in cases being heard at court.

As part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Medway's Public Health Team have been obtaining survivor feedback to feed into the Local Partnership Board. They have visited refuge accommodation services; One Stop Shop drop in and survivor advisory groups to obtain the voice of both adults and children using a trauma informed approach. Whilst work is ongoing to collate both qualitative and quantitative data some of the key points raised so far include the importance of adults and children having timely access to therapy both in safe accommodation and in the community and the need for community-based events that enable those moving into the area to integrate and feel settled within Medway. This would help a lot of victims who are facing multiple disadvantages.

Kent Police have introduced a Domestic Abuse Hub which is a significantly strengthened remodel of the previous Vulnerability Hub. The Hub is able to provide additional support for victims. It currently operates 7 days a week from 8am-8pm but hours will be extended from February 2023 to 8am-10pm. The Hub will continue to increase its resource and responsibility to become a centre for excellence for operational domestic abuse matters. This will be achieved through the utilisation of video technology and telephones to enable officers to respond virtually to suitable high priority and appointment domestic abuse calls, reducing the need for physical attendance. There will be greater coordination of relentless pursuits, completing Operation Encompass notifications and completing child protection notifications as well as signposting victims and making referrals (IDVA/MARAC). Feedback to date from victims has been extremely positive. Operation Encompass is the sharing of Police information with schools by Kent Police officers when they attend a domestic abuse incident. This enables the school to support their pupil when that child next attends school.

High-risk stalking cases continue to be heard at the Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Panel (MASIP) which has been running since July 2020. The monthly meeting is comprised of police as well as other relevant agencies. If a stalking case is identified as high-risk, it must be referred to MASIP for discussion using the applicable referral form. The Officer in the Case (OIC) will be expected to dial in to the meeting to present and discuss the case. The investigation will continue whilst awaiting the next MASIP meeting. The MASIP meeting will

review safeguarding and other intervention measures such as the possibility of an application for a Stalking Protection Order. Orders will only be made inside of the MASIP process.

The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned a Stalking Advocate Service. There has been a significant increase across the country in recorded stalking cases. The Stalking Advocate Service has been set up in response to this and to offer support to people who have experienced stalking. A number of trained Independent Stalking Advocates (ISACs) will be able to assess risk, develop safety plans and provide free security items to help victims feel safe at home and in public, work with clients to gather evidence and provide emotional, practical and safety support. The service will work in partnership with the police and other agencies to achieve the best outcome for the clients. The programme is for anyone living in Kent and Medway who has been subjected to stalking. Victim Support also offer a stalking advocacy service where victims receive specialist support and advice. There is also work taking place with perpetrators with Compulsive and Obsessive Behaviour Interventions delivered by Interventions Alliance and Lookahead.

## **Reducing Vulnerability**

### **Aims and items to note for the Community Safety Partnership**

- Work to improve the number of referrals from the Liaison and Diversion Service to treatment services for substance misuse.
- Agencies to work together to support the MEAM project and consider any learning from it that may benefit how their agency works with individuals with complex needs.
- Continue to build upon the success of the Safety in Action project in schools.
- Consider ways to promote various schemes and projects that focus on preventing violence against women and girls.

## **Reducing Reoffending**

### **Community Payback**

Unpaid work is slowly returning to pre-covid levels following the lifting of restrictions. There are still some challenges stemming from the pandemic including to the way that Community Payback works and not being able to transport those on probation in the vans that were used previously. However, there are many positive projects taking place and to diversify delivery, in October, an indoor working group was started. The current project during the indoor session is making hats for the homeless. The team continue to work closely with Medway Council, conducting alleyway and garden clearances to support the local community. There is also engagement with local historical places such as Fort Amherst and Fort Slough as well as the newest addition, Fort Horsted. There are also some unpaid work projects with a few local schools and at the allotments in the Luton area. Ongoing work is taking place to build further partnerships with local agencies including the Medway Task Force.

## **Rehabilitative Interventions**

Since the reunification of the Probation Service in June 2021, supporting rehabilitative services have been contracted by His Majesties Prison and Probation Service under the Commissioned Rehabilitation Service, for delivery by appointed providers. In Medway, Interventions Alliance, who are part of the Seetec group provide advice and assistance for employment, education, and training as well as accommodation. Interventions Alliance also provide wellbeing services, delivered in partnership with Forward Trust. Those under probation are referred directly by Probation practitioners depending on their need.

Interventions Alliance delivers the CFO Activity Hub in Chatham. The hub offers tailored support within a warm, welcoming, and enabling environment, to those under probation supervision who, due to their multiple or complex barriers are unable to access or fully benefit from mainstream services. The programme, available to individuals following release from prison and those serving community sentences has dual aims; to encourage effective engagement with core probation services and to encourage participation in activities to help individuals obtain employment and lead law-abiding lives. A Support Worker attends Medway Integrated Offender Management (IOM) meetings, with a view to identifying those who would benefit from the additional voluntary support, provided by the hub.

A particular highlight was the Journey to Change Art Exhibition held at the Chatham CFO Activity Hub in June 2022. Local stakeholders were invited to attend the event which featured dance, poetry, and an opportunity to view art and craftwork, produced by participants, annotated with their personal experiences of change. The exhibits included a replica of the first ever Seaplane, built by the Short Brothers at their factory in Rochester. One of the hub participants spent time researching the history of the Seaplane and wrote a piece that accompanied the model. The exhibits formed part of a national tour and have been displayed in our CFO Activity Hubs in Sussex, the Southwest and across the North west. Those attending the exhibition are asked to vote for their favourite items and give written feedback, which will be shared with the artists when the tour has concluded.

## **Integrated Offender Management (IOM)**

The Integrated Offender Management Scheme (IOM) has seen some promising success in the reduction of harm. Using the Cambridge Crime Harm Index the total score for the Medway cohort, was 21,873 for offences before the cohort went onto IOM and it decreased to 1532 for offences committed whilst on IOM. This is a huge decrease in harm score but there is not a significant decrease in offending suggesting a reduction in the severity and community impact of the offences. For example, someone who had been committing burglary may now be committing a shoplifting offence which scores lower on the harm index. This is certainly a step in the right direction. Work has been undertaken to identify the criminogenic needs of the IOM cohort with finance a concern in 90% cases. There is consideration being given to identify opportunities to work with partner agencies to support the cohort with concerns such as finance.

The scheme currently works with two cohorts with a third cohort to begin towards the end of 2022. The FIXED cohort 'neighbourhood crime offenders' are adult offenders that are subject to statutory supervision and have committed either, burglary, robbery, theft from the person or, theft of or from a motor vehicle. They must have a high, very high or prolific risk of reoffending and would benefit from an IOM approach. This cohort will also include neighbourhood crime offenders who have a GPS tag fitted as a condition of their release from prison on licence. The FLEX cohort is for offenders who do not meet the criteria for the 'fixed cohort' but have similar needs, risk of reoffending or offence types that are likely to have an impact on neighbourhood crime offending. The third cohort which will be introduced will be the FREE cohort. This cohort will be made up of adults aged 18-25 who are repeat offenders. These individuals will not meet the need for the MAPPA 2 (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) process but would benefit from an intervention and this will link closely with those identified by the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU).

### **Youth Offending Team**

The Youth Justice Plan 2022-24 has been developed with extensive consultation with children and young people as to what the priorities, targets and actions they would like to be included in the plan. The plan is coherently informed by the child first Youth Justice Practice. This is important because it brings the practice of the team closer to the lived realities of the children that they work with. The aim is for the Youth Offending Team to work with children in a strengths-based way. There is an ambition for young people working with the Youth Offending Team will be able to gain accreditation for the work that they undertake using the AQA framework. We have recently recruited a Youth Justice Officer to undertake this piece of work.

The Youth Offending Team is about to commence a new Ministry of Justice initiative called 'Turnaround'. The team will receive £227,719.30 to the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, to deliver the project. During this time the team are committed to work with a total of 73 children who are identified as being at the cusp of offending. Sources of referrals can be police informal community resolutions and children released under investigation by the police. A criteria of the referral is that the child is not currently open to Children's social care.

The numbers of children that YOT have that are involved in county lines and gangs has increased. The lifestyle that this type of offending involves is particularly challenging in terms of enabling children to make choices and changes in their lives. Traditionally children assessed as being high risk of offending are placed in the ISS Program, Intensive Supervision and Surveillance, providing between 20-25 hours a week of activities to disrupt children's offending. This is currently not resourced in Medway and the Youth Offending Team are exploring how they can resource such a programme within their existing staffing resources. The team also continue to highlight the need for a Police Officer in the team, which is part of the criteria laid out in the Crime and Disorder Act. As the team continues to work with very

risky children, their capacity to manage their risk would be greatly improved with a Police Officer in the team.

## **Reducing Reoffending**

### **Aims and items to note for the Community Safety Partnership**

- Agencies to make staff aware of the Community Payback offer to see whether other work options can be explored.
- Further promote the CFO Activity Hub when working with those that meet the specified criteria, such as when appropriate cases are referred to the Vulnerability Panel.
- Identify opportunities for other agencies to support the IOM cohort to help with maximising benefit/income and work opportunities.

## **Listening to our Communities and Partners**

A key element of a Child Friendly Medway is to have the voice of young people listened to, for young people to be involved in developing services and to listen to the concerns young people and those working with young people have. A strong partnership between the Child Friendly Medway initiative and the Medway Task Force and Community Safety Partnership has provided excellent engagement opportunities. The Child Friendly Medway team were part of the Virtual Safety in Action programme's competition winners lunch event. The event was held at Rochester Fire Station with the winning year 6 class from a Medway primary school invited to a special event. Students were able to engage with colleagues from the Medway Task Force, Kent Fire and Rescue, Kent Police, Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI), His Majesty's Coastguard and Medway Council's Road Safety Team, Youth Service and Child Friendly Medway. As well as a live rescue demonstration, activities with each agency, a tour of the fire station, students were also treated to lunch before returning to school.

The inaugural Safety in Action Day event was held in July 2022 at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham. With over 35 agencies represented the event was a great opportunity to engage families with safety advice and interactive activities. The event was attended by over 5,500 people and received extremely positive feedback with many requests for the event to be held again next year. As part of the event, there was an activity trail which involved families looking for hidden letters around the site and completing a game sheet. When all the letters were placed in the correct order they completed the sentence, 'We are all working . . . to keep Medway safe'. The event trail ended at the Child Friendly Medway stand which gave an excellent opportunity for engagement. The team collected 780 game sheets from families taking part. There was engagement with young people of various ages with comments and suggestions for a Child Friendly Medway written on postcards. There was also the opportunity to raise awareness of the initiative with those that had no prior knowledge and distribute information about free Summer of Sport activities.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service continue to work to connect with communities to keep everyone safe with videos and press releases shared on KFRS social media and website aimed at under-represented groups. Visits have taken place by local crews to continue relationship building and ensure equality of access to services. The Collaboration Team works with under-represented faith groups and has regular meetings with Kent Police Community Liaison Officers as well as inviting groups to the fire station or visiting them in the community. KFRS have also supported the Homes for Ukraine host families with offers of free home fire safety visits. These visits may have included fire safety advice, the installation of fire alarms, the installation of carbon monoxide alarms or signposting to other agencies.

Following the murders of young women such as Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa who were simply walking home, there was a call from the public and agencies for more to be done to keep women and girls safe. Medway Sport organised an International Women's Day Event in March 2022. This gave women and girls an opportunity to try new sports and activities whilst also being able to speak with different agencies that offer support and advice including personal safety advice. The event was attended by several schools as well as members of the public. The Medway Task Force and Community Safety Partnership developed a safety campaign called 'It's Good to Know' which launched in October 2022. Whilst aimed at anyone regardless of gender, the campaign highlighted some useful safety advice and support agencies. The videos developed within the campaign which cover topics such as drink spiking, exercising alone, the Safe Spaces scheme and help and support will be shared with colleges and universities for use on screens in student areas.

The Medway Task Force has also undertaken and supported a number of door knocking events, particularly in the areas of Luton and Chatham. These events have involved a considerable number of partner agencies and have identified vulnerable people who were then given additional help and support such as help to ensure they were on the correct benefits or additional fire safety support. There was also an opportunity to hear about the issues within the local communities and work has taken place, such as increased patrols, to tackle some of those issues.

The Community Safety Partnership undertook an online consultation for 2022. Of all respondents 73% said they either felt very safe or fairly safe in Medway during the day with 7% saying they felt very unsafe or fairly unsafe. When asked how safe they felt during the evening in Medway, only 26% of respondents reported feeling very safe or fairly safe and over half felt very unsafe or fairly unsafe. In future it would be useful to further explore the reasons why people don't feel safe particularly in the evening. Whilst this would allow the targeting of resources towards potential problem areas it may also reveal whether there is in some cases a greater perception and fear than is perhaps warranted. If this was the case, then further promotion of the good work being undertaken and initiatives to tackle negative perceptions would be of great benefit. It should also be noted that the number of respondents

was fairly low overall, making it difficult to generalise the responses to the whole population of Medway.

The survey did provide a good insight into the issues those responding felt were an issue in Medway. The top concerns were people driving carelessly or too fast (80%) and people using or dealing drugs (76%). These concerns were closely followed by people dropping litter (69%), people not clearing away dog fouling (64%) and people fly-tipping (61%) which perhaps feature so high as they are more frequently experienced by a greater number of people than other categories such as violent crime and cyber-crime. The top 5 issues those responding felt should be addressed as a priority were:

- People using or dealing drugs
- People driving carelessly or too fast
- Violent Crime
- People Fly-tipping
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places

The results of the survey will be discussed by partner agencies within the Community Safety Partnership to ensure the findings are considered when looking at future workstreams.

### **Listening to our Communities and Partners**

#### **Aims and items to note for the Community Safety Partnership**

- Identify other means of communicating information about the Community Safety Partnership with communities.
- Work closer with Medway Youth Council and other Youth organisations to give a greater voice to young people.
- Look at ways to increase the number of replies to the Community Safety Partnership Consultation.



## To Conclude

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At a time when services are under immense pressure for multiple reasons it is extremely positive to be able to report such a wealth of work and effort put in by all agencies to keep Medway safe. Not only are there excellent examples of agencies working in their own fields but also many great examples of multi-agency and partnership working. There is clear evidence of the ongoing recovery of services from the pandemic and a preparedness to continue services through what could be a difficult winter period with seasonal flu included.

Safeguarding continues to be at the heart of the work by partners in the Community Safety Partnership. Further work on contextual safeguarding is allowing partners to identify common threads and trends, seeing partnerships emerge where they may not have been before. The concerns around vapes, particularly the use of them by young people and links to exploitation, has seen the importance of information sharing between Children's Services and Trading Standards to identify trends and any businesses that may be selling to those underage or selling illegitimate items.

Partners continue to target those who wish to cause harm to others with initiatives such as Operation Ignite targeting illicit tobacco. There is a greater understanding of the impact that illicit tobacco can cause such as violent incidents and a significant financial cost to society. The Medway Task Force have had a huge amount of success in creating opportunities for partnership working, obtaining funding in both Safer Streets 3 and 4 of the Home Office's funding. This has led to a series of initiatives from street scene improvement, education through Active Bystander Training sessions, the creation of a Safe Spaces scheme and various engagement opportunities.

Last year this report highlighted the work that professionals across Medway were doing to ensure people did not fall into gaps between services in terms of help and support. It is evident within this report that this continues to be the case. Both the Medway Vulnerability Panel and the Blue Light Project continue to review complex cases from a multi-agency perspective, offering opportunities to think outside the box and maximise the opportunity for help and support for individuals. Medway has also been fortunate to receive MEAM status and funding allowing for additional work with homeless individuals and there will be great interest in reviewing this as part of the assessment next year. There have also been further door knocking events and community engagements to help identify 'hidden harm' and those that are vulnerable but may not have come to the attention of services previously.

The new CFO Activity Hub in Chatham has given further opportunity for intervention to prevent reoffending. The work at the hub to support offenders back into the community and into work has a huge benefit not just for the individual but for the wider community. The success of Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is reflected in the reduction of the

community harm score. Whilst it may be that the number of offenders and offences has not dropped as significantly, the fact that the crimes committed are having less of an impact of society is certainly a positive step in the right direction as we know reducing reoffending is critical to both protecting communities from crime and delivering a more effective and efficient justice system. With those managed through IOM reporting concerns about money amongst other concerns, it is likely that we will see more synergies across partners who can assist the cohort.

The lifting of Covid-19 restrictions has afforded the opportunity for agencies to get back into communities with face-to-face events. The Safety in Action Day event was a huge success and was an excellent opportunity to engage with families whilst also providing fun and educational activities which will hopefully keep them safe whether at home or out and about in the community. Other engagements have allowed for more direct engagement with communities to understand the issues they face and what services may be of benefit to them.

The Child Friendly Medway Team has grown and developed allowing for increased consultation with young people up to the age of 25. This is extremely important in allowing young people a voice in the way services are designed for them and for all different agencies to understand the views and concerns of young people. It is also an excellent opportunity to provide reassurance, to tackle perceptions that may have been created by social media and to learn together with projects going forward.

We need to be cognisant of the cost-of-living crisis and how it will impact the whole country, with those who previously felt comfortable beginning to feel it's effects. We will see a range of impacts on areas of community safety. With the potential for inflation and interest rates rising, the cost of energy - heating and lighting - for individuals, families, public services, and businesses is at record highs. The effects are being felt now and are forecast to become broader as winter grips. The least well off and the vulnerable will be disproportionately affected.

We may see changes with increasing numbers of thefts, break-ins, and shoplifting. Some people may turn to crime, to try to meet basic needs. Some people will enter the criminal justice system for the first time. Exposure to the law, especially for 'lower end' offences can have profound consequences, damage life chances and trap people – particularly the young – in a cycle which adversely impacts confidence, behaviour, and trust, and disproportionately pushes people towards a cycle of reoffending and stigma. Those suffering domestic abuse are likely to feel a greater sense of entrapment, owing to financial ties and complexities with partners and families, unable to escape abusive relationships.

Frontline staff across the sector will be exposed to higher volumes of the public in distress, including incidents involving suicide, aggression, anger, upset and desperation. In many circumstances, staff will feel helpless or unable to assist which may be detrimental - after prolonged periods - to the mental health, safety, happiness, and judgement of employees.

The effects of the cost-of-living crisis are expected to be most acute in winter, at the time flu and Covid typically reduce staffing capacity. This will further increase the burden on workforces. We may see behaviour changes, for example access to drugs and alcohol as a means to cope, medicate and escape may be attractive for some. Dependency, injuries and fatalities, and stress on health services have the potential to increase. These are challenges that are not unique to Medway, and partners are aware of how the cost-of-living issues will impact the work we do.

Whilst times ahead may be tough, we should be confident in saying that all agencies will continue to work hard to keep Medway safe.

## 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 / 2022 -2023 Quarterly Updates
- Interventions Alliance
- Kent and Medway NHS
- Kent and Medway Prevent
- Kent and Medway Public Health
- Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service
- Kent Police – ASB data and published crime data April 2021- March 2022, Control Strategy.
- Local Government Association – LG Inform Database
- Medway Council – Child Friendly Medway Initiative
- Medway Council – Community Safety Team
- Medway Council – Housing Team
- Medway Council – Power BI and Ward Profiles
- Medway Council – Public Health
- Medway Council – Trading Standards
- Medway Council – Youth Service
- Medway Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Medway Task Force
- Office of National Statistics
- Public Health England – Local Health, [www.localhealth.org.uk](http://www.localhealth.org.uk)
- The Probation Service

## Glossary of Terms

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ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CFO	Co-Financing Organisation
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSU	Community Safety Unit
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
ISACs	Independent Stalking Advocates
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
KFRS	Kent Fire and Rescue Service
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASIP	Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Panel
MDAS	Medway Domestic Abuse Service
MSCP	Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership
MTF	Medway Task Force
MYC	Medway Youth Council
OIC	Officer in the Case
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
SEN	Special Educational Needs
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