

# SERIOUS VIOLENCE IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH

## Partnership Strategy Document

JANUARY 2024



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## FOREWORD

In crafting this Serious Violence Strategy, we embark on a collective journey to confront and curtail the pervasive issue of violence within our communities. This strategy aspires to transcend mere reaction to violence but looks to delve into the intricacies of prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation. From socioeconomic challenges to systemic issues, this strategy aims to foster a nuanced understanding, encouraging collaborative efforts to address and mitigate the root causes of such violence, learning from those with lived experience. With a focus on collaboration, innovation, and community engagement, this strategy aims to foster lasting solutions, paving the way for a safer, more resilient society across all our communities within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The prevention and reduction of serious violence in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is everybody's business....

## WHY DO WE NEED A PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY ON SERIOUS VIOLENCE?

The Serious Violence Duty was introduced as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and came into force on 31st January 2023. This Duty places a requirement on specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence in their local area through the adoption of a public health approach.

As part of the Duty, agencies are obliged to share data and information, identify the types of serious violence that occur in the local area, and determine what is causing that violence. Named organisations must work collaboratively to produce an evidence-informed strategic needs assessment, publish a serious violence response strategy, and engage in impact evaluation and monitoring. It states that “specified authorities” within an area are required to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. In addition to this, it also requires that “relevant authorities” should be consulted by the specified authorities in the preparation of the strategy, and they must collaborate with the specified authorities if their involvement is requested.

- Police
- Probation
- Youth Offending Teams
- Fire and Rescue
- Local Authorities
- the Integrated Care Board (Health).

Specified Authorities



- Prison
- Youth Custody
- Education.

Relevant Authorities



## DEFINITION OF SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Serious Violence is not defined as part of the Duty itself and this allowed individual areas to develop a 'local definition' of serious violence. However, the duty does state that the specified authorities should include a focus on public space youth violence including homicide, violence against the person which may include both knife crime and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing. In addition to this, the Home Office has set three key success measures which are:



A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object and especially among those victims aged under 25.



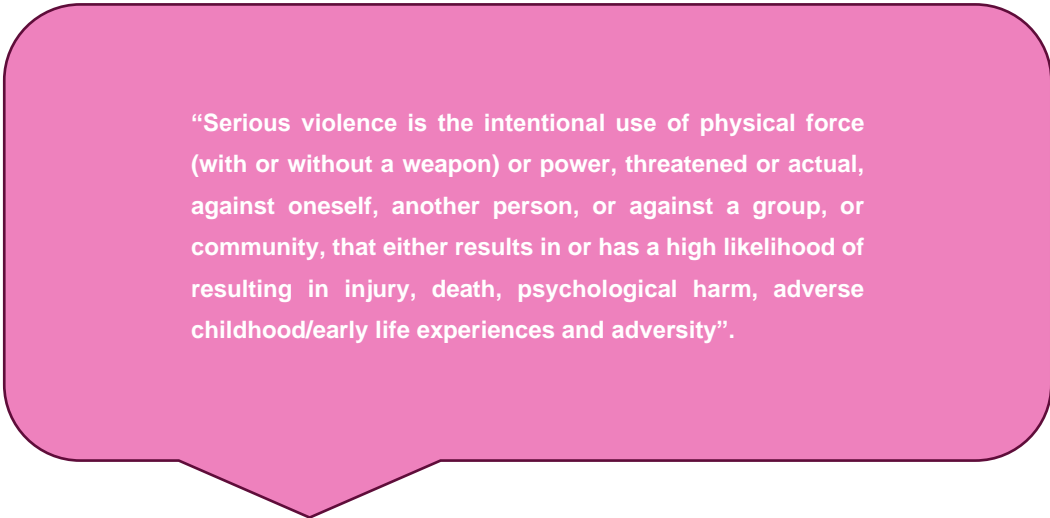
A reduction in knife-enabled serious violence and especially among those victims aged under 25.



A reduction in all non-domestic homicides and especially among those victims aged under 25 involving knives.

**Home Office Key Success Measures**

A local definition of serious violence was collaboratively developed with all partners across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in late summer of 2023. This definition recognises that the very nature of serious violence is complex, multifaceted, and dynamic and with this in mind we have based our local definition on the World Health Organisation definition with some additional factors:

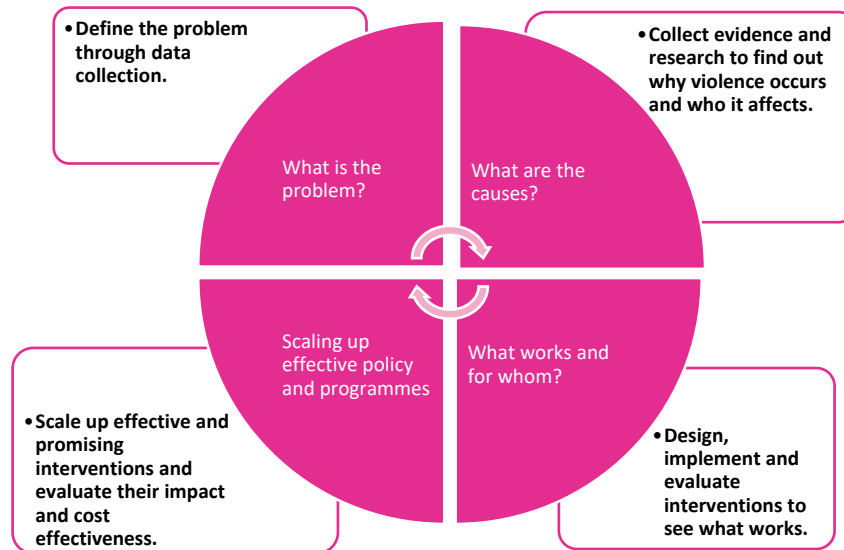


“Serious violence is the intentional use of physical force (with or without a weapon) or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group, or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, adverse childhood/early life experiences and adversity”.

When developing this local definition, it was acknowledged that there is a broad and varied demographic and geographical footprint across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough itself and that within this footprint, there are varying levels of both serious violence and individual and collective factors that may contribute to the prevalence of serious violence and its impact or perceived impact on people and communities.

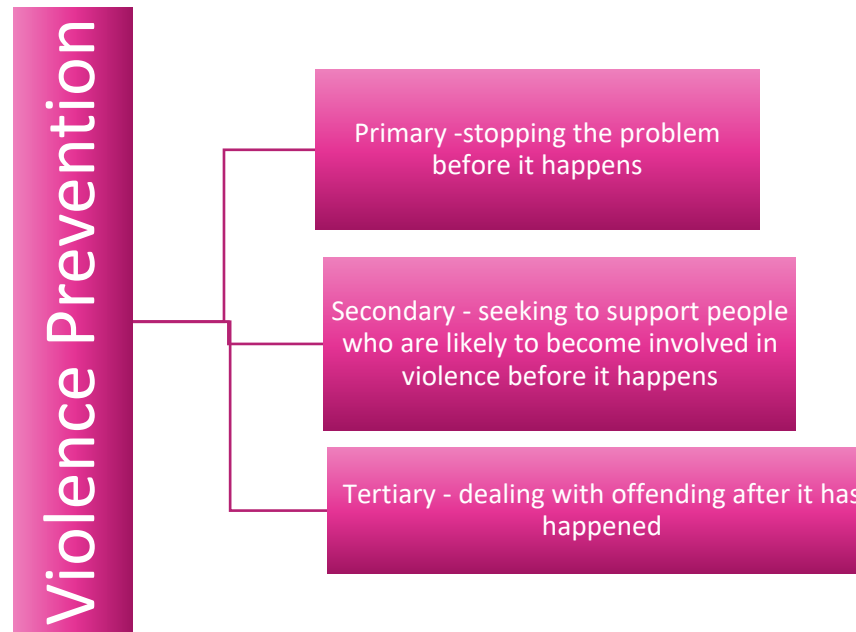
## OUR APPROACH TO THIS STRATEGY – WHAT IS IT?

Our strategy within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, is based upon a public health approach which provides a framework for understanding the risk factors that drive serious violence, alongside the protective factors that prevent it. This approach to violence looks to improve the health and safety of all individuals at a population level by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence in the first place. The World Health Organisation 4-step approach for implementing a public health approach consists of four steps as outlined below:



The WHO 4 Steps Approach

This approach supports the partnership across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to consider the three levels of violence prevention interventions as described by Conaglen and Gallimore (2014) and outlined below. These levels of violence prevention are described as primary, secondary, or tertiary levels and supports the public health-based approach to the overall prevention and reduction of serious violence:



**Levels of Violence Prevention**



## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, our overall aim and objectives are:

**AIM:**

**To reduce the risk of people being drawn into serious violence (either as a victim, offender, or witness) and protecting communities from the wider impacts of it.**

**OBJECTIVES**

**Raise the awareness and understanding of serious violence and associated risks at all levels, including:**

- Individual
- Community
- Service
- Partnership

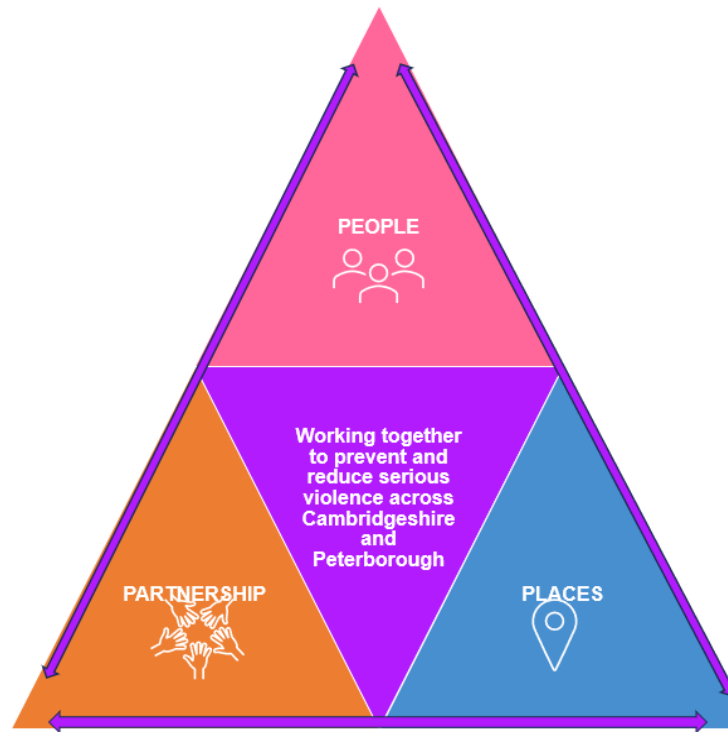
**Ensure that individuals, communities, services, and the wider partnership work collaboratively prevent and reduce serious violence locally.**

**Engage in early intervention to prevent and reduce serious violence from occurring locally, particularly among young people and at-risk groups.**

These aims and objectives will be achieved by reducing the risks of serious violence for all communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough but with a clear emphasis on the priority groups who have been identified as being at risk of serious violence as outlined below:



We will address the area of serious violence by focusing on three interconnected core elements which work together in supporting the overall aim of this strategy in preventing and reducing serious violence across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Those three core elements are 'People, Partnership and Places' and are shown in the graphic below:



Core elements of focus to reduce and prevent serious violence.

## HOW WILL WE KNOW IT IS WORKING?

As this strategy is based on a public health approach looking at addressing the drivers of serious violence at a population level, it is important to acknowledge that seeing the impact of this strategy will be longer term in the whole although there will be some identifiable short-term factors that can be measured. It is therefore important that as a Partnership we develop an evaluation framework which will look at the effectiveness and impact of the overall process as well as looking at the impact of individual interventions. The expected outcomes for this approach are likely to include the following:

### People

- Those at risk of serious violence are more easily identified and are referred to the relevant/ appropriate support services.
- Those in receipt of support are more positively engaged with the services they are referred to, aiding their longer-term recovery.
- Individuals and the wider community are more aware of and protected against the risks associated with serious violence.
- Lower-risk groups are more aware of serious violence, building their overall resilience while empowering them to make better choices.

### Partnership

- Enhanced partnership working across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through the adoption of a collaborative, multi-agency-informed public health approach to serious violence.
- Partners regularly and purposefully share data and information with others to better identify those at risk of serious violence.
- Partners are more engaged with the serious violence programme through more joint working, decision making and commissioning.
- The capabilities of partners improve through greater understanding of serious violence and their collective role in addressing it.
- A greater number of professionals are trained to work with cohorts of service users and persons with lived experience.

### Places

- A reduction in the risk of violence (both actual and perceived) in spaces and contexts where people are most at risk of being exposed to or drawn into serious violence.
- The risk of serious violence occurring in hotspot areas is lowered.
- Public spaces are safer, including for young people.
- More serious violence hotspot areas are identified quickly/ easily.
- There is increased support in areas where violence occurs/has occurred.
- There is increased community awareness of serious violence, risk, and risk mitigation.
- There is increased levels of community integration, engagement, and participation.

The governance arrangements in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are in place to support effective partnership working at a strategic and operational level. The countywide High Harms Board is the partnership body responsible for providing multi-agency strategic direction to enable the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty and ultimately the prevention and reduction of violence, abuse and exploitation across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, to help duty holders co-ordinate and deliver their statutory duties.

There is a newly formed Serious Violence Duty Operational Delivery Group that sits under the High Harms Board and is made up of all specified and required authorities as well as other key players in this area. The Community Safety Partnerships are also essential in this structure, as they bring together representatives from various agencies and organisations to address community safety issues. The governance arrangements in place also ensure that everyone involved is working towards the same goal and that efforts are collaborative, integrated, effective, and sustainable moving forward.

Serious violence being everybody's business means that it is being included in strategic and operational discussions at several different strategic boards and groups across the partnership, such as the Child Exploitation Strategic Group. This ensures collaboration in all directions and assurance that the area of serious violence is on the joint agenda of the partnership and not just heard in one place. This emphasises the analogy of there being several cogs at work in this complex area of serious violence and there is often not one answer to how we can prevent and reduce it.

## REFERENCES:

Conaglen, P and Gallimore, A (2014): "Violence Prevention: A Public Health Priority."

Serious Violence Duty Statutory Guidance (2022). Home Office

World Health Organization, 2017. Violence Prevention Alliance: The public health approach. [online] Available at: [http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/public\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/public_health/en/) [Accessed 24 Nov. 2017]

