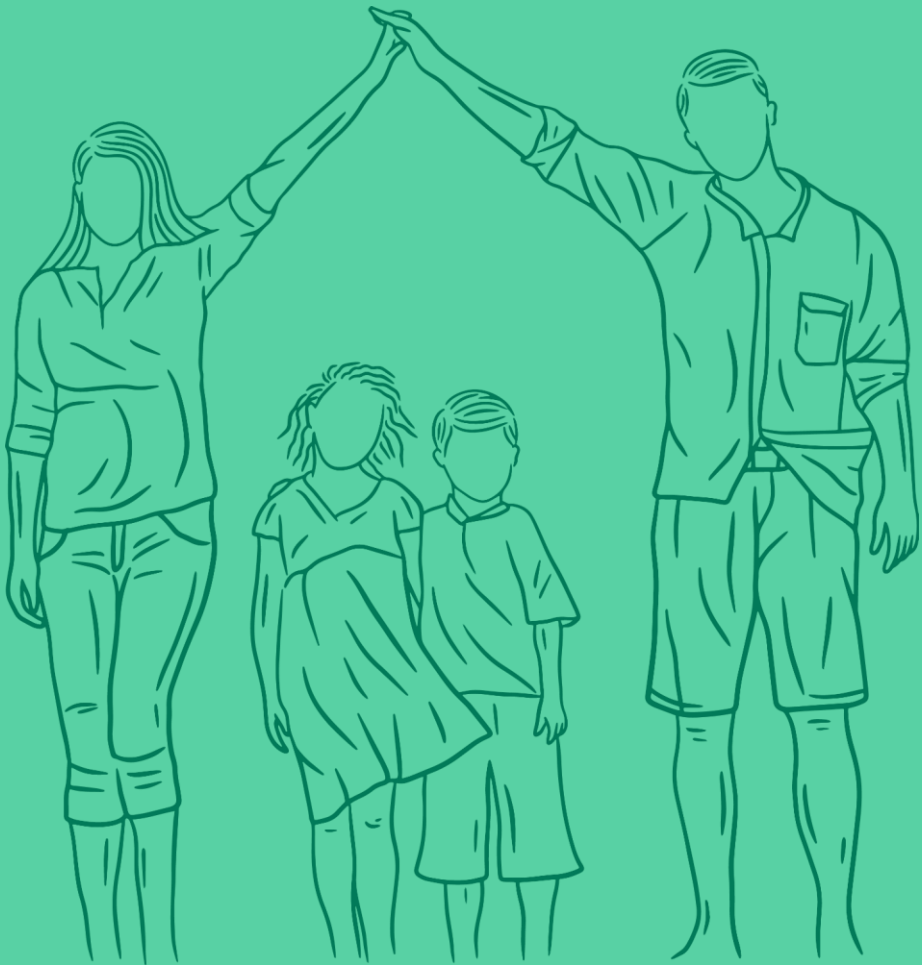


# Safer Sandwell Community Safety Strategy

## Delivery 2022-23

To ensure that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods



# Introduction

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of the key priorities and actions identified in the strategy for enhancing and strengthening community safety across Sandwell
- Community safety is a complex and multifaceted area and effective partnership working is crucial in achieving Sandwell's community safety vision of ensuring that the communities feel safe, protected, and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods
- The Safer Sandwell Partnership has a statutory obligation to develop and deliver a Partnership Plan, which contains community safety priorities based on the current evidence base across the Borough.
- In this presentation, we will discuss the evidence base that informs the Community Safety Strategy, the priorities and actions identified in the strategy, progress to date and the next steps for implementation and ongoing review

# Safer Sandwell Partnership Overview

- The Safer Sandwell Partnership is a collaborative initiative between the local authority, the police, and other key agencies to enhance community safety across the Borough of Sandwell. The partnership was established in line with the statutory requirements under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and subsequent amendments to the legislation.
- The Safer Sandwell Partnership facilitates the development and delivery of a Partnership Plan that outlines the community safety priorities based on the current evidence base across Sandwell. The partnership is responsible for setting the strategic direction for community safety across the Borough subject to annual review.
- Key partners involved in the Safer Sandwell Partnership include the Sandwell Council, West Midlands Police, Fire and Rescue Service, National Health Service, Probation Service, and other voluntary and community organisations.
- The partnership plays a crucial role in enhancing community safety by working collaboratively to prevent and tackle crime and disorder, addressing community safety concerns to deliver on the community safety vision for Sandwell ....

# **Community Safety Vision**

**To ensure that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods**



# Community Safety Strategy - Plan on a Page

	Priority 1: Prevent Violence and Exploitation	Priority 2: Reduce Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime	Priority 3: Prevent and Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
Priority areas include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prevention of Public Place Violence</li> <li>✓ Domestic Abuse/ Sexual Assault and Abuse</li> <li>✓ Violence where victims and offenders under 25</li> <li>✓ Child Exploitation</li> <li>✓ Modern Slavery</li> <li>✓ Preventing Extremism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reducing Adult Reoffending</li> <li>✓ Reducing Youth Reoffending</li> <li>✓ Serious Organised Crime</li> <li>✓ County Lines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reducing Hate Crime</li> <li>✓ Reducing Crime</li> <li>✓ Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour</li> </ul>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure robust, effective victims pathways, support and responses are in place</li> <li>✓ Use data and analysis to develop an understanding of each type of violence, abuse and exploitation</li> <li>✓ Understand and further embed a trauma informed approach</li> <li>✓ Ensure effective training is in place to continue to educate and raise awareness of violence, abuse and exploitation</li> <li>✓ Equip our young people / future adults to stay safe and make positive choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Support offending pathways</li> <li>✓ Management of high-risk offenders and targeting of key cohorts to reduce rates and seriousness of offences committed</li> <li>✓ Continue to strengthen and develop partnership approaches around tackling serious organised crime</li> <li>✓ Confirming and being able to clearly articulate the Boroughs approach to prevention and diversion as it relates to youth crime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase community awareness of how to prevent crime and maintain and/or improve safety</li> <li>✓ Strengthen our approaches to tackling ASB</li> <li>✓ Embed and build upon our approaches to tackling hate crime</li> <li>✓ Better informed tasking and resource deployment</li> <li>✓ Enhance community safety on our high rise estates</li> <li>✓ Engage with our communities to help us work together in partnership to tackle crime and ASB</li> </ul>
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ As part of the 'Protect' strand of the PoVE Plan ensure current victim pathways are reviewed and are working</li> <li>✓ Ensure victim pathways are incorporated into training plans</li> <li>✓ Ensure regional approaches in place through close working relationships with the OPCC and WMVRU.</li> <li>✓ Ensure a robust dialogue and support from the data and analysis sub group from the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)</li> <li>✓ Enhance data sets to measure, monitor and review all priority areas of violence, exploitation and abuse</li> <li>✓ Review how effective trauma informed training has been</li> <li>✓ Develop resources to support trauma informed practice in relation to violence, abuse and exploitation</li> <li>✓ Develop a Prevention of Violence, Exploitation and Abuse Training Plan</li> <li>✓ Develop a training data set including evaluation data</li> <li>✓ Encourage and support funding bids to support priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Strengthen pathways to prevent the cycle of reoffending</li> <li>✓ Embedding new commissioned services to support offenders</li> <li>✓ Embed new Integrated Offender Management</li> <li>✓ Review ways of working with domestic abuse perpetrators/sexual violence/abuse</li> <li>✓ Strengthen and develop the organised crime response through the OCG partnership</li> <li>✓ Raise awareness of serious organised crime and organised criminal gangs with partners</li> <li>✓ Development of a model which will provide early identification and interventions preventing offending and reoffending – with a particular emphasis on youth offending</li> <li>✓ Specific focus on understanding data in relation to over-represented children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Enhance and promote community safety and crime prevention information on the Council website</li> <li>✓ Distribute community safety and crime prevention materials and resources on priority issues identified</li> <li>✓ Development of a new council wide ASB Policy and new ways of working</li> <li>✓ Co-produced Service Standards for anti-social behaviour</li> <li>✓ Review and update the partnership Hate Crime Plan</li> <li>✓ Strengthen engagement with communities</li> <li>✓ Review and develop data sets and a new dash board</li> <li>✓ Improve intelligence gathering</li> <li>✓ We will work in partnership with Housing colleagues to deliver the CCTV / Concierge Services upgrade and expansion programme across our high-rise estate</li> </ul>

Cross cutting priority 1: Protect and support vulnerable victims of abuse, violence, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour

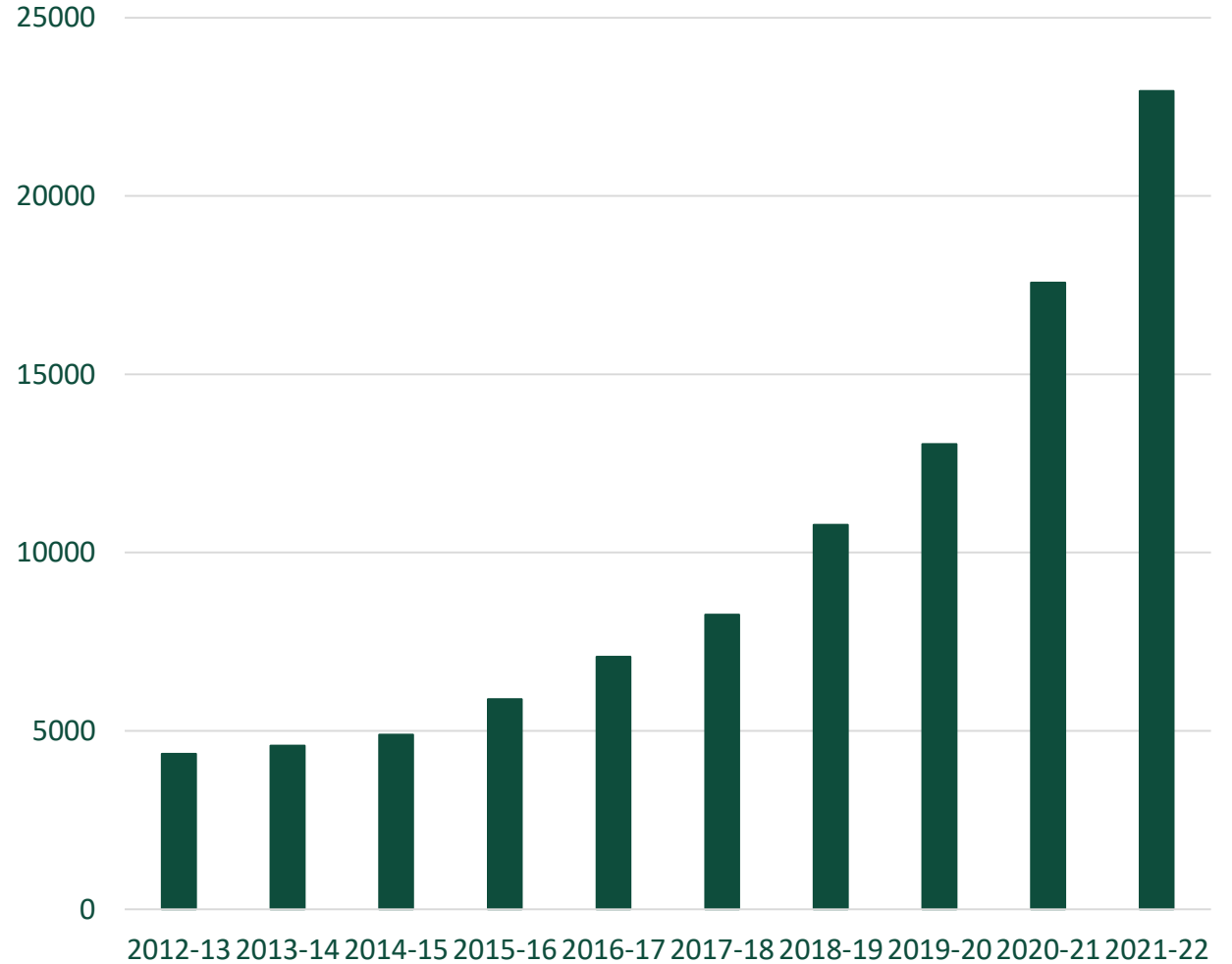
Cross cutting priority 2: Tackling Substance Misuse – saving lives and reducing crime

Cross cutting priority 3: Serious Violence Duty

# Serious violence is rising

- Over the last ten years, local, national and international data all show the same picture – incidents of violence are rising
- Better recording systems, increased awareness, targeted interventions, multi-agency partnerships are all positive contributions to that picture
- Ten years ago, just over 4000 incidents of violence were reported
- Today, that number is five times higher with over 20,000 incidents reported

**Reports of violence in Sandwell**



Sandwell is committed to tackling serious violence, with a range of strategies and initiatives in place to address this issue.

The partnership will continue to work collaboratively with key stakeholders to develop and implement effective solutions.

## Tackling Violence Against the Person in Sandwell

**Challenges:** The increases in serious violence have been accompanied by a slight shift towards younger victims and perpetrators and an increase in threats to kill with over 700 incidents recorded in Sandwell last year

**Approaches:** Increased focus on early intervention and preventative work across the partnership, including increased police presence in schools and community schools, collaboration with the Violence Reduction Partnership, and targeted youth services provision

**Recent work:** Launch of the Multi-Agency Decision Making Panel for out of court disposals, development of multi systemic therapies within youth justice,. Launch of the Serious Violence Duty. Introduction of the St Giles Violence Intervention Project in the local A&E department to engage with victims of violence. Placement of a new knife bin in Smethwick. Promotion of regional safeguarding policies and procedures,. Partnership safeguarding days in local schools and a Safeguarding Champions program.

**Future direction:** Preparation of Sandwell's Serious Violence Needs Assessment, continued collaboration with the Violence Reduction Partnership and utilising OPCC Community Safety funding to support projects working with young people at risk of offending



Domestic abuse is a serious and ongoing issue in Sandwell and tackling it remains a top priority for the partnership.

Domestic abuse-related crimes continue to account for a significant proportion of all violence against the person offences and homicides in the area.

**Challenges:** Increase in domestic abuse crimes and decrease in non-crimes, as legislation is tightened, i.e., cohesive control. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult for victims to access support and for services to provide face-to-face support

**Approaches:** The Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership leads on this work. There is a clear move towards earlier intervention, with an increase in standard risk and medium-risk victims reaching out for help. Work to address domestic abuse across the Borough includes implementing the new Domestic Abuse Strategy and revising Sandwell's Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership

**Recent work:** £841,142 New Burdens Funding allocated to Sandwell to provide safe accommodation services with further funding confirmed for the next 2 years. 5 year refuge contract awarded. Whole Systems Task and Finish group established to co-ordinate joined up and integrated interventions including IDVAs and family projects. Domestic Homicide Review 13 published and ongoing learning and training delivered.

**Future direction:** Ongoing interventions including new pilot perpetrator intervention with The Children's Trust. Sandwell also chosen by OPCC to submit a bid for the Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Intervention Programme. Roll out the Check with Me First Campaign across all health professionals.

## Tackling Domestic Abuse in Sandwell



Sexual assault and abuse is a serious problem in Sandwell, with the police recording the highest ever number of sexual offences in 2021-22, including a concerning increase in sexual crimes against children.

Advances in technology have led to an increase in online sexual harassment, abuse.

Sandwell's Sexual Assault and Abuse Survey in 2021 revealed that one in three respondents reported experiencing sexual abuse or assault.

## Tackling Sexual Assault and Abuse in Sandwell

**Challenges:** Sexual assault and abuse are still vastly underreported crimes, highlighting the need for greater awareness-raising and support for victims. Difficulties in detecting and preventing online sexual crimes.

**Approaches:** The Sexual Assault and Abuse subgroup was established to ensure a specific focus on sexual assault and abuse given the increases in numbers. A Sexual Abuse and Assault Needs Assessment and Strategy has been developed and implemented. Education initiatives to prevent sexual crimes and provide appropriate support and protection for victims. Prevention and intervention strategies to address root causes.

**Recent Work:** "Men at Work" training for school staff to educate young people around healthy relationships and misogyny. Safer Streets Round 3 Funding to tackle violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment and bystander training and new Safe Spaces Scheme with local businesses. New Sexual Assault and Abuse Training delivered by The Haven. Partnership Sexual Abuse and Assault / FGM Event "Together We Move, Together We Change" attended by 147 delegates

**Future Direction:** Continued work on education initiatives, safe spaces, and visible security/police presence to address the concerns of survey respondents and prevent sexual assault and abuse in Sandwell

Modern slavery is a pervasive and complex issue that is prevalent in Sandwell, affecting individuals from all walks of life. It is estimated that there are tens of thousands of potential victims of modern slavery in the UK, with many cases going undetected. To address this issue, the Sandwell partnership has developed a comprehensive approach to tackling modern slavery, which includes a range of strategies aimed at identifying and supporting victims, as well as prosecuting perpetrators.

## Tackling Modern Slavery in Sandwell

**Challenges:** The hidden nature of modern slavery reduces the available evidence to make a charging decision. Many modern slavery cases may not be recognised or dealt with, particularly in relation to criminal and cuckooing exploitation

**Approaches:** Sandwell has an established strategic Anti-Slavery Partnership and a Slavery and Human Trafficking Operational Partnership (SHOP) to tackle modern slavery cases in a coordinated manner. It is essential to work collaboratively across agencies to identify and prosecute such cases and to support and protect victims

**Recent work:** Focused partnership activity on nail bars in conjunction with the National Crime Agency. Best practice update given at Local Government Association Annual Conference. Modern Slavery Dashboard developed using Power BI. Sandwell Police appointed a modern slavery SPOC. Work with landlords in relation to reports of modern slavery in their properties, with 106 properties reported in the last 12 months. Ongoing training and awareness raising. Sharing best practice with other LAs.

**Future direction:** Sandwell will continue to work collaboratively across agencies to identify and prosecute modern slavery cases and to support and protect victims. Sandwell will continue to review and update its Resettlement Pathways to provide appropriate support for victims. Sandwell will continue to increase awareness of modern slavery in the community and train more individuals and organisations to recognise and report cases. Sandwell will continue to incorporate best practices and update its modern slavery transparency statement to promote transparency and accountability. Sandwell will work to improve its data collection and analysis to enhance understanding across the area.

Child exploitation, including child sexual exploitation, is a significant issue that requires attention in Sandwell.

In 2020, there was a significant reduction in child exploitation referred to the police, most likely due to the impact of the pandemic. However, it is important to note that the pandemic may have also contributed to an increase in vulnerability for children, making it even more important to address the issue.

## Tackling Child Exploitation in Sandwell

**Challenges:** One of the biggest challenges in tackling child exploitation is the hidden and complex nature of the crime, which can make it difficult to detect and prosecute. Another challenge is that perpetrators often exercise a high level of control over their victims, making it difficult for victims to speak out or seek help

**Approaches:** The Child Exploitation Board (CEB) leads on this area of work. Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT) has created new data sets for Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) which are being incorporated into the Prevention of Violence and Exploitation (PoVE) scorecard. The Horizons Team works in partnership to promote awareness and tackle child exploitation across the Borough, including changes made to Multi Agency Child Exploitation Meetings to discuss all high-risk children every 4 weeks. The Sandwell partnership has also established a Child Exploitation Hub to embed a coordinated approach to identifying and tackling child exploitation cases

**Recent work:** The work of the Horizons Team has been commended in an OFSTED report and they were the winners of a West Midlands Team of Excellence award. Sandwell Youth Services has delivered a significant programme of youth activities to engage young people and raise awareness of the risks of exploitation. Successful prosecution of perpetrators has resulted in lengthy prison sentences, including 11 years and 44 months. Sandwell has also been commended for its partnership working during County Lines Intensification Weeks, which aim to tackle the exploitation of vulnerable children by criminal gangs

**Future direction:** Going forward, it will be important to continue to work collaboratively across agencies to identify and prosecute child exploitation cases and to support and protect victims. There is also a need to continue to raise awareness of the risks of exploitation and engage young people to better understand their concerns and issues. Sandwell can also continue to work on cross-border cooperation to better address child exploitation cases which often cross regional or national borders

Reducing offending / reoffending is crucial to making communities safer and to preventing individuals from becoming victims of crime.

To achieve this, the HMPPS West Midlands Probation Region Delivery Plan, 2022-23 prioritises providing prisoners with the necessary training and skills to secure employment on release, supporting them in addressing substance misuse issues, and facilitating opportunities to maintain family ties and secure accommodation as they reintegrate into society.

## Reducing Offending, and Reoffending – Adults

**Challenges:** Addressing the root causes of offending, such as mental health issues, substance abuse, and lack of education and job skills. Ensuring sufficient funding and resources for rehabilitative services and support for offenders both in prison and in the community

**Approaches:** The Reducing Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organisation Crime group (RROSOC) leads on this area of work. HMPPS commission training and education programs for offenders to acquire job skills and re-enter the workforce upon release. Alongside substance abuse treatment programs and support for maintaining family ties to address underlying issues. Temporary accommodation upon release is also available to reduce homelessness and increase stability

**Recent work:** Implementing a national target operating model by 2024 and finalising new team structures in relation to Integrated Offender Management and young adults' transitions. Offering several rehabilitative service contracts to support offenders accessing tailored interventions to address factors contributing to their offending. Implementing nationally approved structured Interventions and toolkits to supplement accredited programs and ensure speedy and effective information in relation to domestic abuse and child safeguarding checks between key partners

**Future directions:** Continue investing in rehabilitative services and support for offenders both in prison and in the community. Implement evidence-based practices and interventions to address the root causes of offending and reduce recidivism rates. Increase collaboration and partnership working between criminal justice agencies, community organisations, and local authorities to tackle serious organised crime and reduce its impact on communities

The Sandwell Youth Justice Plan focuses on early intervention and prevention for children and young people who are at risk of or who have already engaged in offending behaviour.

The plan includes various approaches such as diversionary activities, restorative justice, and targeted interventions for those who have already offended.

## Reducing Youth Offending & Reoffending

**Challenges:** The current pandemic has increased the vulnerability of children and young people, making it important to address the issue of youth offending and reoffending. Disproportionality and cultural competence issues continue to be challenges that must be addressed to ensure equity in the youth justice system

**Approaches:** The Youth Justice Board leads on this area of work. Sandwell's Youth Justice Plan focuses on early intervention and prevention for children and young people who are at risk of or who have already engaged in offending behaviour. This includes working with partners to identify and support vulnerable children, providing diversionary activities and restorative justice approaches, as well as providing targeted interventions for those who have already offended. The plan also focuses on ensuring that the needs of children and young people are met, such as their educational and mental health needs, in order to reduce the likelihood of reoffending

**Recent Work:** The Sandwell Youth Justice Service has launched a multi-agency decision-making panel to oversee out-of-court disposals and has partnered with Safeground to create a bespoke intervention for girls in the youth justice system. The introduction of Turnaround Funding aims to support young people on the cusp of entering the youth justice system, and there are clear pathways to the Strengthening Families Service to provide ongoing support. The Sandwell Youth Justice Service has also embedded arts-based youth justice work and supported the Plain-Speaking project with Community Safety Funding. The service is working with Recre8 to create a bespoke intervention for Sandwell around peer-on-peer violence and with SafeLives to upskill workers in direct interventions with young people where domestic abuse behaviours are a concern

**Future Direction:** The Sandwell Youth Justice Service is focusing on developing a Transitions Team in the Probation Service to manage 18–25-year-olds, providing continuity and managed transitions. All NEET young people will have mentoring support, and there will be monthly meetings and record-keeping of career plans for all NEET Post-16. A new KPI Framework is being introduced from April 2023 to measure progress and hold the service accountable for achieving its goals

Serious organised crime is a complex and constantly evolving issue, making it difficult to provide a comprehensive overview of trends.

Serious organised crime groups are involved in a range of criminal activities, including drug trafficking, firearms offences, fraud, money laundering, and human trafficking. As of the 30/01/23 Sandwell had 9 mapped organised crime groups, this is the 3rd highest in the West Midlands, next to the major cities of Birmingham and Wolverhampton

## Reducing Serious Organised Crime

**Challenges:** Serious organised crime is a complex and constantly evolving issue, involving activities such as drug trafficking, firearms offences, fraud, money laundering, and human trafficking. The constantly evolving nature of serious organised crime makes it difficult to provide a comprehensive overview of trends

**Approaches:** The development of a Sandwell Partnership Organised Crime Group to tackle organised crime effectively.. Focus on increasing organised immigration crime and working around County Lines Intensification Weeks.

**Recent Work:** Regular partnership disruptions to Organised crime groups in Sandwell. In January 2023, there were 24 such disruptions. Sandwell Partnership work around County Lines Intensification Weeks held up as exemplar of good practice across the wider West Midlands Force. In October 2022, this included: 22 children and adults safeguarded, 6 cuckooing visits, 390 children engaged with through schools, 34 visits to high/medium risk young people, 10+ case reviews along with social workers, 5 drop-in sessions around contextual safeguarding. SMBC Cuckooing Video shared with staff and partners emphasising the roles of individual teams and the benefits of partnership working to protect vulnerable individuals

**Future Direction:** Future directions of work around serious organised crime in Sandwell will involve continued partnership working to disrupt organised crime groups, focusing on identifying and safeguarding vulnerable individuals, and implementing preventative measures to reduce the risk of criminal exploitation

Preventing and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a complex issue that requires a multi-disciplinary approach.

In Sandwell, this approach involves bringing partners together both strategically and operationally to provide a coordinated response at the local and borough-wide levels. By working together, partners are able to share data and intelligence, focus on problem-solving, and bring together resources to prevent and tackle crime and ASB in our communities.

## Preventing Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour in our Neighbourhoods

**Challenges:** Preventing and reducing crime and ASB requires a multi-disciplined approach. The causes of crime need to be understood and addressed to provide a holistic response

**Approaches:** Borough and Town tasking lead on this area of work. Partners come together monthly to share intelligence and coordinate a response. Community and place-based concerns are discussed in these meetings. Community Safety Analysts provide data to inform the partnerships

**Recent Work:** Delivery of the Borough Hate Crime Plan, which included support for third-party reporting centres, hate crime awareness workshops, and regular training for community members and professionals. Implementation of a new Boroughwide Nuisance Bikes Plan, which included all-out days in hotspot areas, engagement with associated businesses, the introduction of a new force-wide bikes team, and the use of CCTV in strategic locations. Successful delivery of the Commonwealth Games and the annual partnership Safer 6 Community Safety campaign, which involved litter picks, ASB walkabouts, fire safety checks, illegal trading operations, and more. Successful bid and commencement for the Safer Streets Round 4 Project in Bearwood

**Future Direction:** Continue the multi-disciplined approach to preventing and reducing crime and ASB. Focus on understanding and addressing the root causes of crime. Develop training tools co-designed by residents and not-for-profits in each of Sandwell's six towns to prevent crime and ASB. Continue evidence-based deployment of Sandwell's deployable camera stock and focus on vehicle crime.



# Ongoing work

In order to further enhance and strengthen community safety across Sandwell, the Safer Sandwell Partnership and its partners have developed the 2023-24 PoVE/RRSOC and Tasking Plans. These plans are designed to build on the work already done and continue the progress towards the partnership's goals.

The plans have been developed with input from various partners, including the police, local authorities, and community organisations. The following four areas of work will be included in the plans:

- Publication of the Serious Violence Needs Assessment - this will help identify the root causes of serious violence in Sandwell and inform the development of effective prevention strategies
- Implementation and embedding of the Serious Violence Duty - this duty requires relevant partners to work together to prevent and tackle serious violence
- Supporting the planned national review of Community Safety Partnerships - this review will provide an opportunity to reflect on the effectiveness of community safety partnerships and identify areas for improvement
- Ongoing improvements to data provision and analysis - this will help the partnership make better-informed decisions and track progress towards achieving its goals

Through these plans, the Safer Sandwell Partnership and its partners will continue to work with the communities of Sandwell to ensure that residents feel safe, protected, and confident in their homes and neighborhoods.

# Conclusion and Moving Forward

The Safer Sandwell Partnership is committed to improving community safety across the Borough through a collaborative approach with key partners and our communities

Through the implementation of the Community Safety Strategy and the 2023-24 PoVE/RRSOC and Tasking Plans, the partnership will continue to progress work in enhancing and strengthening community safety across the Borough

It's important for all partners to remain accountable and support the delivery of the partnership's vision of ensuring that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected, and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods

We encourage all stakeholders to continue to engage with the partnership and to provide feedback to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our communities

Together, we can and will continue to make Sandwell a safer place to live and work