



UK Government

**BEATING  
CRIME** PLAN

# **BEATING CRIME PLAN**

**Fewer victims, peaceful neighbourhoods, safe country**

July 2021



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# Foreword

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## THE PRIME MINISTER

If we are to succeed in levelling up this country we must give everyone the security and confidence that comes from having a safe street and a safe home.

It is why, first as Mayor of London and now as Prime Minister, I have always been absolutely determined to come down hard on the criminals who bring such misery to so many lives.



And that's what this plan is all about. Building on what we've achieved in the past two years – thousands more police on the streets, tougher sentences for the worst offenders, tens of millions of pounds to make our streets safer after dark – it represents the most comprehensive, far-reaching strategy of its kind yet devised.

Combining prevention, deterrent and enforcement, it will give the fantastic men and women in our police and criminal justice system the tools they need to keep people out of trouble in the first place, and to hammer those who persist in breaking the law – whether they're on the streets, behind closed doors or on the internet.

It gives the law-abiding majority the respect and support they need and deserve should they fall victim to any crime. And it sends a very clear message to criminals – be they fraudsters, rapists, vandals or the vile individuals who prey on young children to run County Lines gangs – that we are coming for you.

None of us can fulfil our potential if we live in fear, none of us can rise up if we're held down by those who would do us harm. If we as a society, as a country, are to truly flourish then we have to start by beating crime – and I'm proud that this Government has the plan to do just that.

*Boris Johnson*

**Crime destroys lives. Victims are often left traumatised, injured or heartbroken. Crime can ruin neighbourhoods and does great economic damage to our country. It makes people feel unsafe on the street and in their homes. Criminal activity fuels and funds huge criminal enterprises. Involvement in crime can set someone on a path that brings enormous harm to themselves and others.**

Cutting crime is central to our mission of levelling up the country. By doing so, we will improve the quality of life for everyone, everywhere. Safe communities attract investment, create better conditions for businesses to thrive and boost jobs and life chances – restoring people’s confidence and pride in their villages, towns and cities.

In this Beating Crime Plan, we set out our strategy for protecting the law-abiding majority, swiftly bringing criminals to justice and managing offenders with rigour and discipline.

This Government has already made significant progress on crime. This is thanks to the growing numbers of hard-working and dedicated police officers, National Crime Agency officers, police staff, prosecutors, probation officers and prison officers – the ranks of whom have swelled and which will continue to grow. We have made significant investment in new recruitment drives, a new focus on organised crime, increased prison capacity, a smarter approach to the sentencing framework and supervision that cuts crime and protects the public and many other measures. Far from becoming complacent, we will continue to build on this success for the public.

We will confront serious violence, neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour head on. We will support the police in protecting public spaces, including the transport network. We have nearly doubled the investment in our Safer Streets Fund, as part of a relentless effort to make our neighbourhoods safe. As most crime is committed by a small number of persistent offenders, we will also manage them with discipline, incentives and clear consequences – encouraging them to turn their backs on offending, dealing robustly with those who fail to play by the rules.

Drugs are a scourge on society. We will address both the supply and demand – coming down harder on drug dealers, dismantling county lines gangs, making clear that ‘recreational use’ is not harmless and supporting drug and alcohol addicts to access the treatment services they need to turn their lives around.

A New Action Plan will tackle fraud, which is the biggest crime in England and Wales, to reduce the serious harm this crime causes and to make it safer for us all as we go about our lives. The threat posed by fraud to our economy and the public is one we are determined to address, working with the public and industry to prevent the crime and by disrupting, pursuing and bringing to justice the most harmful. The National Crime Agency will be strengthened through the recruitment of additional officers and new capabilities that can take on these tech-enabled criminal networks. Catching criminals is only the first step. The next stage is taking them to court. We are going to speed up the process and reduce waiting times in the court system.

We will ensure more victims get the justice they want, need and deserve. We will increase victim engagement within the court system, including by better understanding and improving the victim experience of the system, by boosting the support for victims throughout the process and by working with judges to roll out special measures to support vulnerable witnesses to give evidence.

Changes to the sentencing and release framework will mean that offenders will serve sentences that better reflect the severity of their crimes. There will be more prison places to keep criminals off our streets and to rehabilitate offenders. We will improve security in prisons, creating the control and order necessary to reform and rehabilitate offenders.

We will do more to break the cycle of repeat offending, making sure that prison leavers have the foundations they need to turn their backs on crime and certainty that failing to do so will have swift and certain consequences.

This means the whole of Government doing more to ensure prison leavers have somewhere to live, a job and access to treatment for substance misuse. It also means supervising and managing offenders in the community more rigorously, through Integrated Offender Management and wider electronic monitoring – to drive compliance with probation conditions and teach the kind of self-discipline that is crucial to successful lifestyles. We will also ensure that offenders are seen to clean up neighbourhoods as reparation for their crimes, so that justice is done and seen to be done.

To prevent and detect crime we must all recognise the importance of protecting and supporting victims. It is only by doing so that we can ensure offenders are brought to justice. Victims must be heard and helped at every stage in the process – and this must be reflected in legislation.

We will therefore consult on a Victims' Law that will codify their rights in legislation and hold criminal justice agencies to account for delivering them. This Government will do everything in our power to protect victims and support them to rebuild their lives, and pre-charge bail will be reformed to improve the protection of victims and witnesses.

New plans for violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation and abuse will tackle every aspect and effect of those abhorrent crimes. We will empower victims to come forward through public communication campaigns. The Rape Review Action Plan demonstrates how justice outcomes will be improved for this hugely under-convicted crime, including through providing better support for victims from Independent Sexual Violence Advisors.

We will also make sure that victims get their phones and other technology back sooner if they submit them as evidence.

Our country has endured an unprecedented period in its history that has made massive demands of all of us. It has seen certain types of crime increase. All crime threatens the sense of togetherness that the British people have worked so hard to build. As we emerge from the COVID pandemic, it is vital that we build back safer.

This Beating Crime Plan illustrates the depth of our commitment and is our blueprint for cutting crime, increasing confidence in the criminal justice system as a whole and putting victims first. It also evidences our commitment to supporting the dedicated and hard-working men and women from across our criminal justice system who keep us safe. Just like them, as we continue to move forward and beat crime, we will be focused, smart and unrelenting.



A blue ink handwritten signature of Priti Patel.

**The Rt Hon  
Priti Patel MP**  
Home Secretary



A black ink handwritten signature of Robert Buckland.

**The Rt Hon  
Robert Buckland QC MP**  
Lord Chancellor

# Executive Summary

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**Crime is a scourge on our society. Unchallenged, it grows and wrecks the lives of individuals and families, robbing them of their sense of safety and their quality of life. It undermines and destroys the neighbourhoods we call home. We all have a right to live a life free from the blight of crime and those who choose to break our laws must face justice.**

The Beating Crime Plan makes plain that this Government is on the side of the law-abiding majority, and sets out how we will together deliver on our shared vision of fewer victims, peaceful neighbourhoods and a safer country.

While overall crime has been falling for some time, we know that this is not a reality recognised or enjoyed by all. We also know that even where crime does fall, the public rightly expect us to be focused, smart and unrelenting in continuing to drive it down further.

And over the past decade, we have also seen worrying rises in some of the most destructive and devastating crimes, such as homicide and knife crime, with drugs playing a prominent role.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made a challenging picture even tougher and more complex. We've seen increased demand on police to enforce lockdown restrictions, alongside a significant drop in many types of crime as offenders' movements were limited. However, criminals took their activity online and sought to exploit digital opportunities for fraud and crime.

As we unlock and a sense of normality returns to our lives, this Plan sets out our strategic approach to cutting crime. It builds on significant Government investment in the criminal justice system and complements our existing strategies on child sexual abuse and violence against women and girls. Almost 9,000 extra police officers have been recruited since 2019, more than 440 new prosecutors have been recruited, and we have invested in 1,000 extra probation officers and 18,000 new prison places.

This Plan sets out our determination to go further. It sets out our strategic approach: cutting homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime; exposing and ending hidden harms; and building capability and capacity to deal with fraud and online crime. It sits alongside our other work on hidden harms, as well as the work that will follow later this year when we publish our domestic abuse and national cyber security strategies.

Homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime are concentrated in certain neighbourhoods, with nearly a quarter of neighbourhood crime concentrated in just 5% of local areas. We also know that many of these crimes are committed by a small number of persistent criminals, with just 5% of offenders accounting for up to 50% of all crime. Drugs often play a prominent role; and in the year to March 2020 48% of homicides were drug-related.

That is why we are focusing our efforts on the places where these crimes occur, the people who commit them and the criminal enterprises that fuel the drugs trade. We already have strong foundations in place to tackle the root causes of crime. We have invested in strengthening our ability to tackle these crimes and the drug trade that underpins them, including £70 million in the Safer Streets Fund, £105.5 million in Violence Reduction Units, £165 million in the Supporting Families Fund and £65m in tackling drugs supply and county lines.

This plan introduces bold new measures to drive down crime:

- **Reconnecting the police with the public.** We will ensure every single person living in England and Wales will have access to the police digitally through a national online platform, allowing them to access a range of interactive police services in one coordinated place, including details about their neighbourhood police officers and their contact details so that they can raise any concerns with their neighbourhood officers directly.
- **Improving the responsiveness of local police to 101 and 999 calls** by working with HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services to develop league tables for answering calls and ensuring that the public know how responsive their local force is when they call them for help.
- **Intervening early to keep young people safe and away from violence** – including a new £17 million package focused on those admitted to A&E with a knife injury or following contact with police.
- **Investing over £45 million in specialist teams in both mainstream schools and Alternative Provision** in serious violence hotspots to support young people at risk of involvement in violence to re-engage in education.
- **Expanding our use of electronic monitoring** for serious acquisitive offenders to a further 13 police force areas – covering half the country – and ensuring that many more neighbourhood criminals have their movements tracked upon release from prison, supporting probation and the police to deter and detect further acquisitive crimes.
- **Trialling the use of alcohol tags** – which detect alcohol in the sweat of offenders guilty of drink-fuelled crime – on prison leavers in Wales to help change behaviour and reduce violence and other alcohol-related crime.
- **Encouraging prison leavers to turn their backs on crime by securing employment.** We will hold a summit later this year to bring employers together to encourage more prison leavers to enter employment and turn their backs on crime. We will lead the way with the goal of recruiting 1,000 prison leavers into Civil Service roles by the end of 2023.
- **Empowering the police to take more knives off the streets** and to prevent serious violence by permanently relaxing conditions on the use of section 60 stop and search powers.
- **Expanding the role for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)** – we will launch the second part of our PCC Review to equip PCCs with the tools and levers they need to drive down crime and anti-social behaviour in their local areas.



The Plan also includes new tactics and investment to deal with the problem of illegal drugs, which we know are a key driver of these crimes. The plan sits alongside the end-to-end approach on drugs the Government is setting out in its response to the Dame Carol Black review. Measures to tackle drugs include:

- **Investing £31 million to expand Project ADDER<sup>1</sup>** – which combines tough law enforcement with increased provision of treatment and recovery services – to eight new local authorities across the country.
- **Increasing the police’s use of drug testing on arrest** to crack down on recreational drug use and ensure those involved in crime after using drugs are identified.
- **Delivering a cross-Government summit** to work up a comprehensive package of measures that will drive down demand for illegal drugs and tackle these challenges across society.

To deliver the Beating Crime Plan, we need everyone to play their part. The Prime Minister is driving delivery, and we are relying on all those involved from Police and Crime Commissioners to Local Criminal Justice Boards to make this vision a reality. Together we can beat crime.

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<sup>1</sup> Project ADDER: addiction, disruption, diversion, enforcement and recovery.

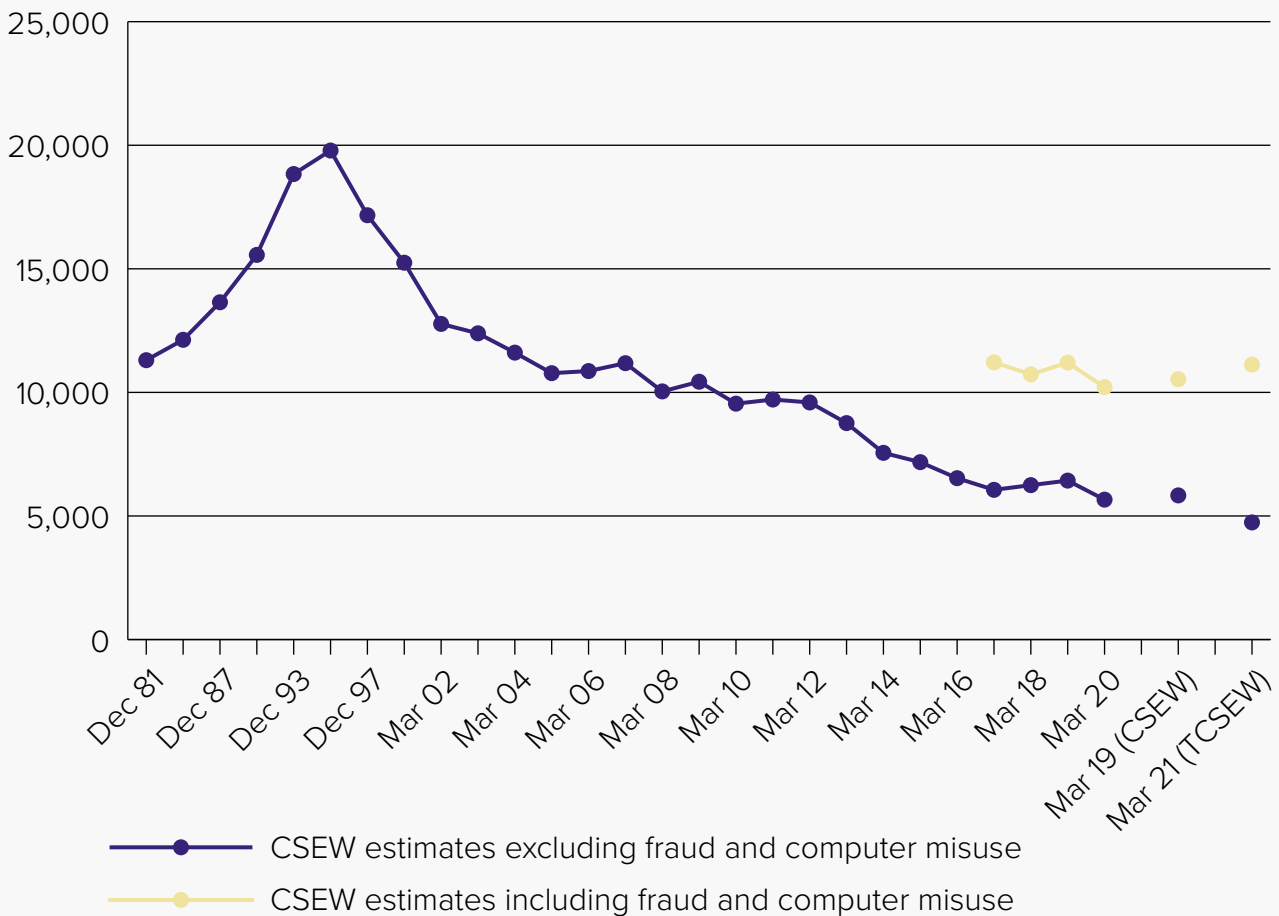
# Chapter 1 – Introduction

**Cutting crime is central to our mission of levelling up the country. By reducing levels of crime, we will improve the quality of life for everyone, everywhere. A safe place is a more prosperous place. Safe and secure neighbourhoods attract investment and create better conditions for businesses to thrive. They boost employment opportunities and life chances, restoring people’s confidence and pride in their villages, towns and cities.**

## 1.1 The problem

According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales, crime has been falling for some time. Between 2009-10 and 2019-20, overall crime in our country fell by 41%.<sup>2</sup> During the same period, violence fell by 33% and theft by 34%.<sup>3</sup>

Crime estimates from the CSEW and TCSEW, 1981 to 2020-21.



<sup>2</sup> Crime Survey for England and Wales data from Table A1 in [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales/appendix-tables)

<sup>3</sup> As above.

But, this is not a reality that is recognised by the public and we share their determination to see a renewed fight against crime and anti-social behaviour. We know crime reductions in recent decades have not been enjoyed by all in equal measure. Furthermore, towards the end of this period, some crime types began to rise. Homicide rose by 35% between 2013-14 and 2016-17.<sup>4</sup> There was also a 41% rise in hospital admissions for assaults with a sharp object, a key indicator of serious violence, in England from 2014-15 to 2018-19.<sup>5</sup> Neighbourhood crime<sup>6</sup> also showed some increases, with a rise of 16% between 2016-17 and 2018-19.<sup>7</sup>

Similar increases have taken place overseas. The US and Canada have seen upward trends in their homicide rates.<sup>8</sup> This is partly driven by the virulent and active drugs trade and global drug supply is thriving: production of cocaine more than doubled between 2014 and 2019.<sup>9</sup>

That is why in July 2019, the Prime Minister stood on the steps of Downing Street and vowed to do whatever it takes to drive down crime, roll up country lines drug-dealing networks, and to restore order to our country.

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Nearly **9,000** extra police officers have been recruited.<sup>10</sup>



There are **3,900** more prison officers than in 2016.<sup>11</sup>



We are investing in **18,000** new prison places.



More than **440** new prosecutors have been recruited.



**1,000** additional probation officers with 1,500 more on the way.

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We have brought an urgent focus to serious violence and homicide, providing the police with investment to help them do their jobs, putting £65 million into dismantling county lines and drug supply, as well as funding a network of Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) to stop violence long before it seizes young people. We have given the police the powers they need to get weapons off the streets by permanently relaxing voluntary conditions on Section 60 stop and search powers, introducing Knife Crime Prevention Orders to prevent those most at risk from carrying knives, and commencing provisions in the Offensive Weapon Act 2019 to ban a range of knives, weapons and specific firearms. We have also invested in developing and implementing new, innovative approaches that will help in the long term to prevent serious violence through the £200 million, 10-year Youth Endowment Fund.

<sup>4</sup> Police recorded crime data from Table A4 in Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Monthly hospital admissions for assault by sharp object - March 2021 - NHS Digital

<sup>6</sup> 'Neighbourhood Crime' is a group of crimes that consists of vehicle-related theft, domestic burglary, theft from the person and robbery of personal property.

<sup>7</sup> [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

<sup>8</sup> US: [FBI — Murder](https://www.fbi.gov/newsroom/special-reports/murder)  
 Canada: [Number and rate of homicide victims, by Census Metropolitan Areas \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/24-626-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>9</sup> World Drug Report 2021 [WDR21 Booklet 3.pdf \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/wdr2021-booklet)

<sup>10</sup> This is based on the provisional data as published in the quarterly update publication to 31 March 2021 [Police Officer uplift statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-officer-uplift-statistics)

<sup>11</sup> Based on numbers published in [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service workforce statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/her-majestys-prison-and-probation-service-workforce-statistics)

We know from the data that our approach is working. In the year to March 2020, crime fell by 9%. Serious violence fell by 8% and neighbourhood crime fell by 12%.<sup>12</sup> As a result of our funding to roll up county lines, more than 1,100 lines have been closed, over 6,300 arrests made, over £2.9 million in cash confiscated and large amounts of drugs seized.<sup>13</sup> Through this work, the police have safeguarded more than 1,900 vulnerable people exploited by the drug dealers.

Operation Venetic, led by the NCA, the largest law enforcement operation of its kind in UK history, successfully targeted users of encrypted devices employing the notorious 'EncroChat' platform. The results have been astonishing, with 746 arrests, including many major gangsters and the seizure of 77 guns, over 1,800 rounds of ammunition, more than two tonnes of Class A and B drugs, 55 flashy cars and 73 luxury watches from criminals. The work on this goldmine of intelligence continues, with a significant impact on crime gangs across the UK.

However, in the last year, COVID has made our challenge more complex than ever. As we put in place necessary restrictions to save lives, there was a significant fall in some crimes. With people's movements limited, opportunist criminals, like robbers and burglars, were denied their usual targets. In England and Wales, there was a 10% fall in total police-recorded crime in 2020-21 compared to the previous year, driven by a 32% drop in theft offences.<sup>14</sup>

The fall in crime allowed the police to be more proactive. As discussed at the Hidden Harms Summit last May, throughout the pandemic law enforcement has collaborated with local partners to adapt its response to the changing threat to identify and safeguard vulnerable individuals, as well as using increased capacity for preventative action. We established proactive policing pilots to tackle domestic abuse in Sussex, Cumbria and South Wales. The pilots are testing new means of reaching victims; establishing joint working between police and probation to put in place a robust approach for perpetrators in the community on license; and strengthening the ability to identify high-harm perpetrators, putting in place preventative or disruptive measures to prevent reoffending.

Additionally, during lockdown, the police were also able to focus their resources even more on drugs. Offences, such as drug possession and drug trafficking, both increased, meaning more drug offenders were targeted by the police. As a result of the police's efforts, there was a 14% increase in the number of offences that were reported and recorded in 2020-21.<sup>15</sup>

Even with this increased effort, county lines drug-dealing continued to plague the nation, and we saw gangs move from using the rail network to utilising roads more. Lockdowns also encouraged criminals to take their activities online, trying to steal our personal information or hacking into business systems and holding individuals and businesses to ransom.

As the restrictions placed on society to deal with the pandemic ease, we are seeing some rises in crime again, albeit early indications are these will be below the pre-COVID level.

In the face of these challenges, our determination to cut crime and build back safer is stronger than ever. This is our plan to beat crime.

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<sup>12</sup> Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk))  
Serious violence as measured by hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object in Crime in England and Wales:  
Other related tables - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk))

<sup>13</sup> Management Information from the Home Office County Lines Programme monthly reporting

<sup>14</sup> [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

<sup>15</sup> Police recorded crime data from Table A4 in [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

## 1.2 Our ambition

Our ambition is to increase trust in our criminal justice system as a whole. Our plan to confront crime will deliver the change that Britain needs, with less crime, fewer victims, and a safer country.

The law-abiding majority must believe that victims of crime will see justice done; that those who choose to break our laws will be found and brought to justice; and that once convicted criminals will be managed properly to ensure that they do not offend again. They want to see us being smart and tough when it comes to preventing and detecting crime. And they want victims and their welfare to be at the heart of everything we do. That is why we are taking a targeted approach to beat crime, focusing on three key areas.

### 1. Cutting homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime

We are urgently addressing the rises we have seen in recent years in homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime such as robbery and burglary. These crimes are chilling, ruining lives and sending shockwaves through families and neighbourhoods. They strike at our sense of security in our homes, on our streets, and in our country. **That is why the Beating Crime Plan commits the whole Government to do everything within its power to drive these crimes down.**

### 2. Exposing and ending hidden harms and prosecuting perpetrators

Domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, rape, and other forms of sexual violence are horrific crimes. Often hidden from public view, these crimes can mean home is not a safe place. This plan sets out the unique challenges they pose and the approach that we are taking to tackling each of them, with strategies to reflect their complexity.

### 3. Building capability and capacity to deal with fraud and online crime

As we increasingly rely on technology and spend greater proportions of our lives online, criminals seek to exploit whatever digital opportunities they can. Fraud and cyber-related offences are growing rapidly and now make up over 50% of all crime.<sup>16</sup> These are long-term threats which we must address now, for the sake of individual victims but also for the health of our economy. This plan outlines how we are already investing in ways to tackle these crimes as well as making sure we are one step ahead of the criminals.

Online crime is not confined to attempts by criminals to defraud people or businesses or to hold them to ransom. It is also used to spread hate, or to sell illegal weapons or substances, or by abusers to take their criminal behaviour online. Online offending is as serious as offline offending. Our Online Safety Bill will place a new legal duty of care on in-scope companies, who will need to limit the spread of illegal content and harmful activity online and remove illegal content. This means there will be less illegal content online and, when it does appear, it will be removed more quickly. The Bill will undergo pre-legislative scrutiny in the current Parliamentary session.

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<sup>16</sup> Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales data in Table A2 in [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

### **1.3 Geographical Scope**

The geographic scope of this Plan is England and Wales. These matters are devolved in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Crime prevention and policing are reserved matters in Wales, as are the courts, judges, and civil and criminal proceedings. There are also a number of specific reserved matters in Wales which have a direct bearing on this plan, including: the misuse of drugs, the subject matter of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, criminal records, and firearms and knives. However, the broad approach to confronting crime, set out in this plan, also draws on some important devolved matters in Wales, including health, education and local authorities. We are therefore working closely with the Welsh Government and other devolved bodies in Wales the Plan's implementation. We will also engage with the Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive to ensure an effective and coherent UK-wide approach to these issues.

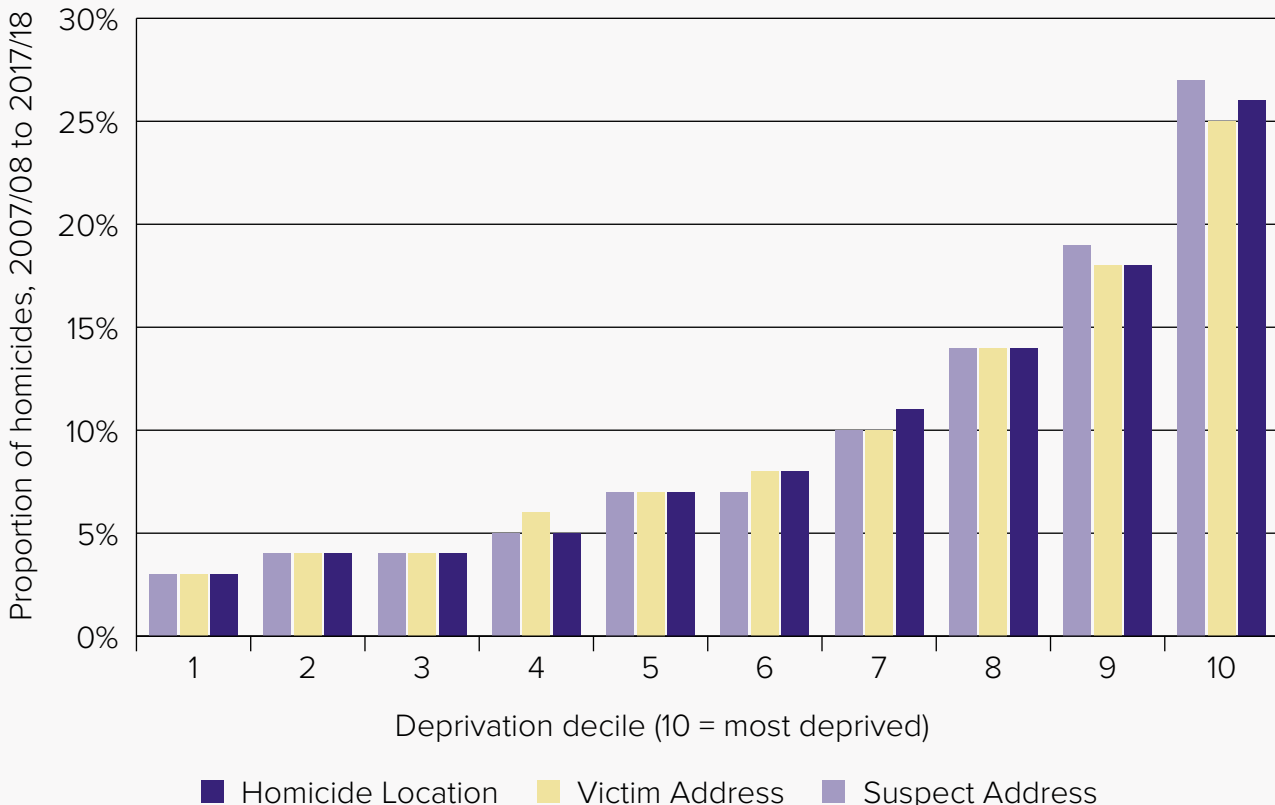
# Chapter 2 – Cutting homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime

## 2.1 The problem

Homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime strike at our sense of place. Where we live, raise children, work, play and travel. Left unaddressed, they can have a corrosive impact on victims, neighbourhoods, towns and cities. These crimes can lead to a collective sense of fear, with areas getting a reputation that deters investment, cements poverty, and damages prospects for our young people. This Government is therefore committing to focus its efforts on confronting these crimes as we build back safer.

**Homicide** – the killing of a person at the hand of another – is the most serious crime. Like so much crime, it falls hardest on the poorest. The number of homicides rose by 35% between 2013-14 and 2016-17,<sup>17</sup> with the average homicide rate per population in the 10% most deprived areas being seven times greater than the rate in the 10% least deprived.<sup>18</sup>

Homicide Index: Homicides from 07/08 to 17/18

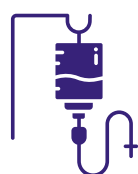


<sup>17</sup> Police recorded crime data from Table A41 in: [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales/appendix-tables)

<sup>18</sup> [Trends and drivers of homicide: Main findings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/trends-and-drivers-of-homicide-main-findings)

Sadly, 16 to 24-year-olds are more likely than older groups to die at the hands of another. And the report from the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities found that for every white victim of homicide aged 16-24 in 2018-19, there were 24 black victims.<sup>19</sup> While 73% of victims in the year to March 2020 were male, 58% of adult female homicide victims were killed by someone they knew, such as a partner or ex-partner.<sup>20</sup> We are already making progress in driving down homicide but we know there is more to do. The number of homicides fell by 16% in 2020-21 compared to the previous year, but we must drive it down further.<sup>21</sup>

**Serious violence** – such as crimes that involve knives or guns – can have life-changing consequences for those involved.



Hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object in England and Wales rose by **41%** from 2014-15 to 2018-19,<sup>22</sup> and offences involving firearms increased by 42% from 2013-14 to 2018-19.<sup>23</sup>

Changes to the drugs market, like the county lines model of exploitation, is partly fuelling these increases as gangs fight for control of territory and settle scores. These crimes also hit the poorest hardest, with the poorest fifth of people having hospital admission rates for injuries caused by violence five times higher than those of the most affluent fifth.<sup>24</sup> We also know that they disproportionately affect black people.<sup>25</sup> Our approach to reducing serious violence is succeeding. Hospital admissions have seen year-on-year falls of 8% and 14% in 2019-20 and 2020-21 respectively,<sup>26</sup> and offences involving firearms were 14% lower in the year to 2020-21 than in the previous year.<sup>27</sup> But we must go further and prevent more families from losing their children to mindless stabbings.

<sup>19</sup> Kumar, S. et al., (2020), 'Racial Disparities in Homicide Victimisation Rates', Accessed January 2021. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41887-020-00055-y>

<sup>20</sup> Trends and drivers of homicide: Main findings - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Homicide in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk))

<sup>21</sup> Police recorded crime data from Table A4 in: Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk))

<sup>22</sup> Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk)).

<sup>23</sup> Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables - Office for National Statistics (excludes air weapons)

<sup>24</sup> National five-year examination of inequalities and trends in emergency hospital admission for violence across England | Injury Prevention ([bmj.com](https://www.bmj.com))

<sup>25</sup> <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/supplementary-information/2020/hospital-admissions-for-assault-by-sharp-object-from-2012-to-2020>

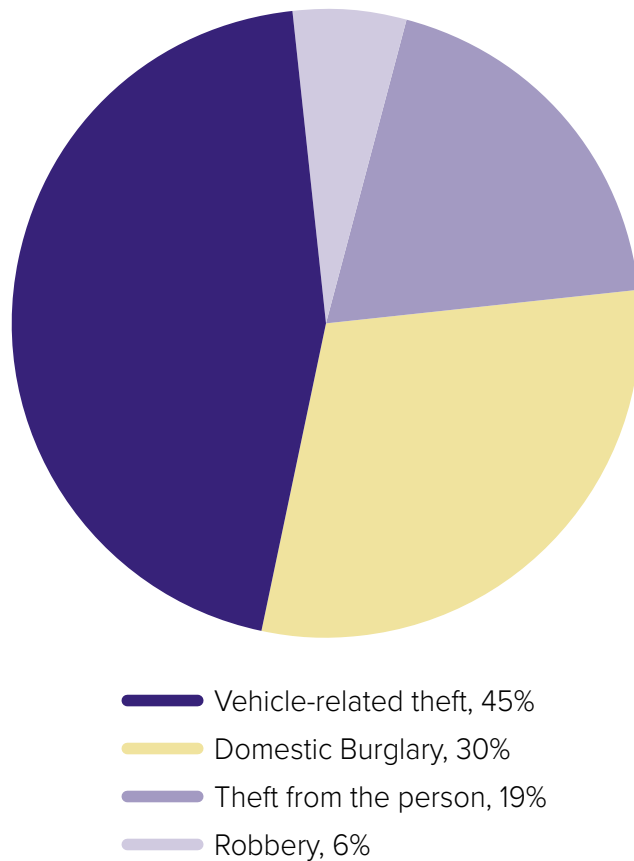
<sup>26</sup> Monthly hospital admissions for assault by sharp object - March 2021 - NHS Digital

<sup>27</sup> Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk))



**Neighbourhood crime** – which consists of vehicle-related theft, domestic burglary, theft from the person (including pickpocketing) and robbery of personal property – is more widespread, with around two million offences every year against households and individuals. Burglary, which violates homes, is a particularly devastating crime and one that – along with other neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour – we are determined to drive down. Prior to the pandemic, neighbourhood crime fell by 12% between 2018-19 and 2019-20.<sup>28</sup> This plan will ensure we reduce these crimes further and faster.

Neighbourhood crime by offence type



Source data: based on Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ending March 2020

Beyond these crimes, we also know the devastating impact anti-social behaviour can have on individuals and neighbourhoods. Anti-social behaviour can be defined as behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person. It can be targeted at a specific person or group, can cause nuisance, annoyance and suffering to a community and can affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings. The public feel that anti-social behaviour has generally been falling over recent years, though that trend may be changing.<sup>29</sup> We are determined to make sure that the tools available to those seeking to tackle anti-social behaviour are effectively deployed.

<sup>28</sup> [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crimeandjustice/crimeandjustice/crimeandjustice/crimeandjustice)

<sup>29</sup> [Crime in England and Wales: Annual supplementary tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crimeandjustice/crimeandjustice/crimeandjustice/crimeandjustice)

## 2.2 Our approach

Homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime are concentrated around ‘hotspots’. They are often driven by drugs, and disproportionately involve repeat offenders.



Drug addicts commit **45%** of acquisitive crime (excluding fraud)<sup>30</sup> and, in the year ending March 2020, **48%** of homicides were drug-related.<sup>31</sup>

There are an estimated 314,000<sup>32</sup> opiate and crack cocaine users who generate around 95% of the costs of drug-related crime.<sup>33</sup>

To reduce homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime, we have developed a clear and evidence-based approach with which every police force and criminal justice partnership can align. This will enable everyone in the crime fighting family – the police, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)<sup>34</sup>, prosecutors, prisons, probation – as well as other partners, such as schools, Clinical Commissioning groups and, from 2022, Integrated Care Systems, and businesses – to work together and adopt a consistent, data-driven, and focused approach to fighting and preventing crime.

At the heart of our strategy to reduce homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime are targeted interventions to address places, people, and criminal enterprises, underpinned by excellence in the basics. Tackling homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime may involve a combination of these factors, but a deep understanding of each, and consistent and sustained application of all four, will yield results.

## 2.3 Excellence in the basics

The British people have a set of basic expectations of the criminal justice system. Support for the police and the courts is often based on personal experience. The public rightly expect to be able to contact their local police – to be able to know their names, to be able to reach them, to be able to see them in their neighbourhood, and for the police to work with them in confronting crime and making their streets safer. If they are burgled, they expect it to be investigated and the police to attend to secure any evidence. If they provide evidence to the police, they want it followed up and to be kept informed. If their case does not proceed, they want to know why. They want offenders caught and punished and they want gangs hanging around their local area dealt with. When a case proceeds, they want justice to be swift and certain, and for the punishment to fit the crime.

<sup>30</sup> [Measuring the costs of drug-related crime in Understanding organised crime: estimating the scale and the social and economic costs \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

<sup>31</sup> [Homicide in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

<sup>32</sup> [Opiate and crack cocaine use: prevalence estimates by local area - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

<sup>33</sup> [Dame Carol Black Review of Drugs \(2020\)](#).

<sup>34</sup> The use of ‘PCCs’ in this document also refers to Mayors exercising PCC or equivalent functions – currently those in London, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

## What we have done

To help the police meet these expectations, we are giving forces the strength in numbers they need. By March 2023, we will have supported police forces in recruiting an extra 20,000 police officers. All forces have met or exceeded the allocations set for them in 2020-21, with nearly 9,000 extra officers already recruited. We have already invested £700 million of taxpayers' money to support this uplift. In 2021-22, we are going further by investing an additional £415 million to support the next wave of officer recruitment.

We must also ensure that victims are confident that the courts will swiftly process cases and bring offenders to justice, and that, through the sentencing framework, the punishment will fit the crime in every case. We have kept the justice system and the courts going throughout the COVID pandemic. The Police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) introduced an interim charging protocol to prioritise the most important cases for progression through the criminal justice system, having been among the first comparable jurisdictions internationally to re-start jury trials. To ensure the timely delivery of justice and build public trust, we need to go further to reduce delays that have built up during the pandemic and speed up how quickly cases can be heard in court. In addition, Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service and the senior judiciary have published a plan for restoring court listing and timings to pre-pandemic levels this year in the Magistrates' Courts.

Prisons also play a vital role in cutting crime. They keep criminals off our streets, work to tackle serious and organised criminality inside prisons and in the community and demonstrate to the public that crime does not pay. But they also provide an opportunity to rehabilitate offenders so they can go on to lead law-abiding lives on release and not commit further crimes. We have embarked on the largest prison building programme in over a century, with an additional 18,000 prison places across England and Wales by the mid-2020s.

## How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

- The Government, on behalf of taxpayers, will be asking police forces to report regularly – not just about the number of the 20,000 officers recruited, but how they are being deployed and what results they are having. While it is for Chief Constables to decide how to deploy their officers, the public rightly expect that the police will pursue available opportunities to prevent and detect crime.
- We will work with Greater Manchester Police to evaluate the benefits of sending a police officer in person to every domestic burglary in Greater Manchester, to assess its impact on crime prevention, detection and public confidence.
- We will ensure every single person living in England and Wales will have access to the police digitally through a national online platform, allowing them to access a range of interactive police services in one coordinated place, including details about their neighbourhood police officers and their contact details so that they can raise any concerns with their neighbourhood officers directly.
- We will galvanise the response needed to drive down anti-social behaviour. We will establish the principles required for a strong and effective partnership response to anti-social behaviour, working with PCCs, local authorities and other partners to help set expectations for local agencies, so that they work together to address anti-social behaviour issues, including dealing with persistent offenders. We want to ensure that the flexible measures and powers available to local areas under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, including the Community Trigger, are being used swiftly and properly to stop those who cause the persistent anti-social behaviour that blights neighbourhoods.

- We will improve the responsiveness of local police to 101 and 999 calls by working with HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services to develop league tables for answering calls and ensuring that the public know how responsive their local force is when they call them for help.
- We will maximise capacity across our courts to reduce outstanding caseloads that have built up during the pandemic and speed up how quickly cases can be heard in court. Having removed the limit on Crown Court sitting days this year, we will use the entire court estate and every available judge.



**32** Nightingale courtrooms have been extended to March 2022 with no limits on Crown Court sitting days in 2021-22 to enable continued additional capacity for Crown Courts.

We will support temporary changes to court operating hours where the local judge wants to use this to hear more cases.

- We will also legislate to modernise court processes, remove outdated procedures and unnecessary hearings, and make better use of video links and online procedures. This includes allowing for more virtual hearings through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (PCSC Bill), underpinning open justice by allowing the possibility of remote attendance by the press and members of the public. This will streamline criminal proceedings, saving court time and reducing delay for defendants, victims and witnesses. Improving the overall efficiency of our courts will help address the outstanding caseload and support recovery.
- We will publish a Prisons White Paper, which will set out the vision for prisons as the ultimate sanction, but also a place where we confront violence and reduce harm, so that prisoners can turn their lives around. We will explore how we can support them better on release so they make a positive contribution to society, focusing on: safety and security; order and decency; and reducing crime by reducing reoffending.
- We will explore options to understand the experience victims have with policing and wider criminal justice system partners better to help drive excellence in the service provided to victims by each part of the system and thereby enabling us to prevent and detect more crime.
- We will build on the commitments in our Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy, the Rape Review, and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy to better understand offence, offender, and victim characteristics, to inform efforts to prevent offending and to pursue perpetrators, helping guide both operational and strategic decisions to protect the public, including through our National Crime and Justice Laboratory.

## 2.4 Place

Certain geographical locations are disproportionately and consistently blighted by high levels of crime.



Nearly a quarter of all neighbourhood crime was committed in just **5%** of local areas in 2018-19.<sup>35</sup>

By analysing where crime takes place, we can target resources more accurately and return a sense of governed space to the areas where it is needed most. And by deepening our understanding of the problems particular parts of our country face, we can invest in the things that will make the biggest difference: removing opportunities to commit crime; increasing the capacity of partners to cut crime; and making it more difficult for criminals from one part of the country to export the crimes they commit to another.

### What we have done

As well as causing distress to victims, neighbourhood crime can use up significant amounts of valuable police time to investigate. We know investment in crime prevention can remove the opportunity for offenders to commit these crimes. Over the last two years, we have invested £45 million in the Safer Streets Fund. That money has helped areas remove the opportunities to commit crime by introducing more alley gates, CCTV, streetlights and home security. Money provided to areas participating in the programme has helped make places and homes more secure, removing the opportunity for offenders to commit crime. To date, 102 areas have been awarded money provided through the fund and independent evaluation demonstrates that it is having positive impact. We are building on this success, rolling out a further round of the fund, with £25 million focused on improving the safety of public places, specifically targeted at areas of concern for women and girls.

### Case Study: Safer Streets Round 1

Humberside's Police and Crime Commissioner was awarded £550,000 from the Safer Streets Fund in partnership with the local authority and housing association. This investment, targeted at an estate identified as one of the most deprived areas in England, has resulted in upgrading 20 communal entrances to blocks that drive a high level of burglary, serious acquisitive crime, cuckooing and drug dealing and installing 18 secure storage facilities for motorbikes and bicycles that are frequently stolen.

Alongside this, they have installed fencing and gates to restrict frequent escape routes and are creating seven community gardens to disrupt motorcycle through routes. There is a dedicated community outreach to residents on the estate, including restorative justice with victims of crime. Some funding went towards improvements to the estate suggested by the community.

<sup>35</sup> [Safer Streets Prospectus \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

We have worked with partners to identify the 18 areas worst affected by homicide and serious violence which account for 80% of violence. Since 2019, we have invested £136.5 million to provide the police with more resources. This money has enabled them to ensure a forensic focus on the streets and neighbourhoods where crime occurs. For 2021-22, the new 'Grip' programme will roll out highly-targeted, analytically-driven policing operations in the highest crime hotspots in those forces, with visible patrols to suppress criminal behaviour. And a sophisticated, data-driven approach will allow forces to micro-target places where serious violence is most likely to occur.

## **Case Study: Essex Police Force**

Essex Police have been awarded £3.59 million from the Serious Violence Fund over three years for the Surge, now Grip, programme to support the police operational response to serious violence. This funding allowed them to invest in additional patrols, increased investigative and intelligence capacity and equipment to support their response.

Using Surge funding, Essex Police conducted Operation Ark in Southend, a 90-day trial deploying high-visibility patrols to the 20 hotspots where serious violence was most likely to occur. Results from Operation Ark showed a significant reduction in violence-related crime harm of 88.5% in the hotspot areas on the days that patrols visited compared to the days they didn't, as well as seeing substantial socio-economic cost savings.

This model has informed the Grip programme, so that in 2021-22, all 18 of the forces receiving money from the Serious Violence Fund will carry out targeted, analytically-driven patrols in the areas worst affected by serious violence.

We have also increased the capacity of local areas to cut serious violence through our investment of £105.5 million in developing a network of VRUs. VRUs bring together key partners across policing, the criminal justice system, local government, education, health and the community to develop a locally-driven and comprehensive approach to serious violence. VRUs can see the full picture of violence in their area, from the root causes to known perpetrators. They are a crucial vehicle for delivering targeted, well-evidenced interventions aimed at young people at risk of being exploited and drawn into criminality, including behavioural therapies, mentoring programmes, sports-based interventions and other activity to cut crime.

## **Case Study: Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit**

Thames Valley VRU has been awarded £3.48m from the Serious Violence Fund over three years, bringing together key partners to identify the drivers of serious violence in innovative ways, and addressing these through targeted interventions.

The VRU has invested in a range of promising interventions to support and divert vulnerable young people from committing violent crimes. This includes intervening at 'teachable moments' in A&E and custody suites shortly after involvement in violent incidents; a 'focused deterrence' pilot, highlighted by the Youth Endowment Fund as one of the best evidenced interventions available to prevent serious violence; and drug diversion schemes.

Alongside this, the VRU has pioneered the 'Thames Valley Together' project, aiming to allow over 1,000 users across multi-agency partners to share data within a single shared system, utilising analytics to drive crime reduction. This free-flow of information across children's services, local authorities, policing, health, education and others will allow the VRU to identify at-risk individuals, locations, or institutions earlier than ever before, ensuring a swift joined-up response for those most at risk while informing service planning and investment.

County lines drug-dealing gangs export the problems they cause to other parts of the country, using our roads and railways to send drugs and weapons from our cities to our villages and towns. Inevitably, these criminals export their own brand of violence, 80% of which starts in just three police force areas, those of the Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police, and Merseyside Police,<sup>36</sup> which is why through our County Lines programme we have targeted our investment in these areas. In addition, the British Transport Police's dedicated county lines taskforce, together with our use of technology, including Automatic Number Plate Recognition to target the roads network, is disrupting the ability of criminal gangs to run their operations and stopping them from spreading crime to other parts of the country. Our approach is improving the way we identify, track and, ultimately, bring to justice those who transport offenders, victims, drugs, cash, and weapons around our country.

Shops are critical to areas, and often have become as much part of community identity as the church or pub. There has been too much violence targeted at retail workers and too much acquisitive crime on these premises. We are working closely with the industry and police through the National Retail Crime Steering Group to help identify offenders, support victims and bear down on the problem.

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<sup>36</sup> The cities of London, Liverpool and Birmingham account for approximately 80% of all county lines when the origin of the line is known: [2020/21 NCLCC County Lines Strategic Assessment 20/21](#)



We know the serious impact that persistent anti-social behaviour can have on both individuals and communities. That is why we have provided police, local authorities and other local agencies with a range of flexible tools and powers that they can use to respond quickly and effectively to anti-social behaviour through the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This includes the Community Trigger, which is an important mechanism for ensuring that persistent problems are identified and tackled. It gives victims the right to request a formal case review (where a locally defined threshold is met), to determine whether further action can be taken. We have produced and will continue to review comprehensive statutory guidance on the Trigger and the other anti-social behaviour powers to support local areas to make effective use of them.

### **How the Beating Crime Plan will go further**

- We will invest over £45 million to roll out new schools-based Support, Attain, Fulfil, Exceed (SAFE) and Alternative Provision taskforces alongside our VRU network. These aim to keep vulnerable young people from entering a life of crime and help them to make successful transitions into further education, employment and training. The taskforces will be based in serious violence hotspot areas and will use specialists, including mental health professionals, family workers, and speech and language therapists to support young people at risk of involvement in crime to re-engage in education.
- Through our PCSC Bill we are introducing a new serious violence duty. The PCSC Bill will require the police, fire and rescue authorities, councils, youth offending teams, specified Clinical Commissioning groups and, from 2022, Integrated Care Systems, and probation services in a particular place to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. This will include preparing and implementing a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence in their local neighbourhoods, having consulted with education authorities, prison services and youth custody authorities in their area.
- We will hold an annual Homicide Summit for the remainder of this Parliament. Attended by Chief Constables of police forces with the highest homicide rates in England and Wales, they will oversee police progress in tackling homicide, and discuss issues and barriers that the Government can help to overcome, building on existing governance structures.
- We will design crime and disorder out of areas by setting national security standards on building and area design nationally. We have embedded security standards and crime prevention principles within the National Model Design Code and are developing minimum standards as part of the review of the Housing, Health & Safety Rating System to ensure domestic security is not just a privilege to some. The Social Housing White Paper also announced a review of the Decent Homes Standard. As part of that review, we want to explore how we can go further in using the Decent Homes Standard to keep social housing residents secure and help tackle anti-social behaviour.
- We will consult on proposals to extend the security requirement ('Part Q') of the Building Regulations to existing homes undergoing refurbishments. It is currently only applicable to new homes. The intention of the proposed changes would be to help ensure properties are only fitted with products, such as doors and windows, that meet security standards



- We are committed to tackling and preventing anti-social behaviour, and we will galvanise the multi-agency response needed to drive down anti-social behaviour including persistent behaviour and reoffending. We will work with partners to establish the core principles required for a strong multi-agency response to anti-social behaviour and set expectations for how local agencies will work together to stop the behaviour and demonstrate to victims and the wider public that anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.
- We will work with local areas to ensure the powers introduced by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime, and Policing Act 2014, including the Community Trigger, are implemented effectively and explore how they can be better used against those who cause persistent anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods. We will work with agencies to understand local challenges, improve data, and amplify local models of best practice and the statutory guidance. We also know that some PCCs have created dedicated anti-social behaviour taskforces in their area, which other areas could replicate.

## 2.5 People

Most crime is committed by a small number of persistent criminals:



**50%** of crime is committed by **5%** of offenders.<sup>37</sup>

Certain experiences like witnessing domestic abuse, being put into care, not going to school, or having lower educational attainment<sup>38</sup> can make it more likely that individuals become involved in crime. Looking for these experiences can help us to identify those at risk, and intervene early to prevent them becoming criminals. For those already offending, we can bring them to justice and manage them through incentives, and consequences, encouraging them to turn their lives around.

### What we have done

Our work on early intervention has focused on providing universal support for all young people; targeted support for those identified as being at risk of involvement in criminality; and targeted interventions for those who have started to offend. Central to our work are the investments the £200 million Youth Endowment Fund is making to improve the evidence base on what works and ensure that we focus resources on interventions most likely to prevent children and young people becoming involved in crime and violence in the future.

Universal support can help people at risk to live successful, crime-free lives. Family hubs are a way of joining up services locally and we are providing £14 million to champion family hubs including a new national centre to provide expert advice and build the evidence base. Work to develop new digital products to help professionals collaborate more effectively and improve access to services for families is also underway. Family hubs will complement the existing programmes we have designed to give our young people the best start in life, such as Cyber Choices and National Citizen Service.

<sup>37</sup> The Start of a Criminal Career: Does the Type of Debut Offence Predict Future Offending? Research Report 77 ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

<sup>38</sup> [Collaborative Approaches to Preventing Offending and Re-offending In Children \(CAPRICORN\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

Targeted support focuses on young people at-risk of involvement in crime. We are up-skilling the professionals who work with vulnerable young people and investing £13 million in the Trusted Relationship Fund, targeting those at risk of exploitation and abuse. We are supporting their families too, investing £165 million in the Supporting Families programme. The programme helps families access the services they need to get back on track, including finding employment for parents and improving school attendance for children. This work is in addition to our Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Community Coordinators, who have supported over 12,000 individuals at risk of being drawn into offending.

Targeted interventions are aimed at young people who are already offending. We are investing in a new £17 million package of youth interventions to provide high-intensity therapeutic and specialist support, including from trained youth workers at crisis points, such as when a young person is admitted to accident and emergency with a knife injury or is arrested. We are also providing over £1 million for specialist support to young people to exit county lines and for young women and girls affected by gangs.

Those who go on to offend must be brought to justice. The PCSC Bill reforms the sentencing and release framework to make it smarter and more targeted, to protect the public from serious and dangerous offenders. We are also supporting offenders in turning their backs on crime and living more productive lives. Our approach balances managing them with rigour, and incentivising them to turn their lives around, with swift and certain consequences if they fail to comply.

To supervise offenders more rigorously, we launched a new unified Probation Service operating under twelve regions across England and Wales in June 2021. Under the leadership of Regional Probation Directors, the Probation Service will supervise all offenders in the community, commission rehabilitative services and forge partnerships with key agencies to protect the public and tackle the causes of crime.

We are implementing the refreshed Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Strategy, where the Probation Service will work with local police, local authorities and wider partners to identify the most persistent offenders in their area and take action to stop them from committing crime.

We are also extending supervision of convicted terrorists and increasing capacity in the Approved Premises estate to improve the monitoring of our highest risk offenders. To support this, we are delivering enhanced training, as well as investing in improved CCTV and body-worn technology in specific sites.

As part of our work to ensure appropriate punishment in the community, we are revitalising unpaid work to ensure offenders are visibly and publicly making reparations for their crimes by undertaking work that is valuable to their local areas, such as cleaning the streets, estates, alleyways and open spaces of litter and other visible signs of disorder in local neighbourhoods. Since June 2021, the Probation Service has been responsible for all unpaid work delivery so that Government, working with local areas including PCCs, can make best use of these hours.

We are also incentivising offenders to turn their backs on crime. IOM schemes include clear pathways to support services such as access to mental health services and women-specific services to help address the root cause of criminal behaviour. By facilitating offenders' access to these services, we are helping them turn their back on crime. We are investing nearly £200 million for commissioned rehabilitative services from 26 private and voluntary sector organisations across England and Wales.

We need to break the cycle of repeat offending that leads to 80% of convicted or cautioned crime being committed by someone who has offended previously.<sup>39</sup> To confront crime, however, requires a new and ambitious approach. That is why we have established the Prison Leavers Project: a £20 million programme to develop innovative ways to reduce reoffending and why we are working in 16 prisons to test new approaches to ensure offenders leave prison with the best chance of turning their backs on crime.

The heart of our approach is to put in place the foundations that offenders need to help them turn their backs on crime: somewhere to live, a job and access to treatment for substance misuse.



**JOB:** Ex-offenders have much lower levels of employment than the general population. Around **17%** of ex-offenders released from custody in 2011/12 were in P45 employment one year after release.



**HOME:** In 2018/19, approximately **40%** of adult prisoners were released to unsettled accommodation, rough sleeping, homeless or their accommodation status was unknown on their first night of release.



**TREATMENT:** Around **62%** of prisoners have either an alcohol or drugs need or both.

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Having stable accommodation can prevent offenders committing further crimes. It also means that the police and Probation Service know where a prison leaver is living, enabling them to supervise offenders robustly and use the tools at their disposal to do so, such as electronic monitoring. That is why last week saw the launch of a £20 million scheme to reduce the number of prisoners leaving prison homeless. From this summer, we are introducing a new provision of temporary accommodation and support for up to 12 weeks post-release for those leaving prison at risk of homelessness, initially in five probation areas in England.

We know that having a job helps cut crime. Ex-offenders with jobs are between 6 and 9 percentage points less likely to reoffend.<sup>40</sup> That is why we are also setting expectations for prison leavers that they should be seeking or securing work. We will do this by delivering our manifesto commitments to create a Prisoner Education Service and increase the number of Prison Work Coaches. This will increase our ability to ensure prisoners progress onto Universal Credit and use this foundation to seek and secure work. It also sends a clear signal that a job is not just the best way out of poverty, it is one of the best routes out of crime.

We know that appropriate treatment for those with substance misuse problems can prevent crimes being committed. At the start of this year, we committed £80 million to expanding substance misuse treatment services in England to support the recovery of prison leavers with drug and alcohol addictions and to place offenders into tough and effective

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2019>

<sup>40</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/Government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/217412/impact-employment-reoffending.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/Government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217412/impact-employment-reoffending.pdf)

community sentences with a requirement to undergo drug and alcohol treatment. This funding will bring another 5,000 offenders into treatment, and we know that offenders who have engaged in treatment commit 33% fewer crimes than they did previously.<sup>41</sup>

Where offenders under community supervision choose to reoffend, they will face swift and certain consequences. Breaches of conditions will be dealt with, so that offenders understand the consequences of their actions, which could include a period in custody.

We have substantially increased the use of electronic monitoring over the past year, showing that courts have increasing confidence in its value. We are expanding its use further. Courts across England and Wales are now able to impose an Alcohol Abstinence and Monitoring Requirement as part of a community order or suspended sentence order to help tackle alcohol-related crime. Offenders can be banned from drinking for up to 120 days and are continuously monitored via an ankle-worn tag.

We have also launched the first phase of the innovative Acquisitive Crime GPS tagging project. The project imposes location monitoring, using a GPS tag, on serious acquisitive offenders leaving prison. Offenders' movements are mapped against acquisitive crimes being investigated by the police, enabling the police to rule them in or out of an investigation and providing a powerful deterrent against reoffending. Currently operating in six police force areas, it will be fully evaluated to measure its effectiveness at reducing neighbourhood crime.

Stop and search is one of many vital tools used by the police to tackle serious violence and keep our streets safe. In the last year, it removed over 11,000 weapons from the streets and resulted in over 74,000 arrests. That is why we are making it easier for the police to use stop and search powers by permanently relaxing voluntary conditions on Section 60 stop and search, used when the police anticipate serious violence.

We are also making sure that the police have the right powers to help stop people from offending again. Our PCSC Bill introduces Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVROs). SVROs will give the police powers to take a more proactive approach to offenders, making it easier to target those already convicted of an offence involving a knife or offensive weapon by giving police the automatic right to search these offenders.

SVROs build on the measures we introduced through the Offensive Weapons Act, which strengthened legislation on firearms, knives and corrosive substances and provided for Knife Crime Prevention Orders (KCPOs). KCPOs will enable the police and partner agencies to prevent knife enabled violence through a range of positive interventions and prohibitions. We will pilot KCPOs in London for 14 months before we consider rolling them out across England and Wales.

### **How the Beating Crime Plan will go further**

- The Youth Endowment Fund will invest up to £30 million via two grant rounds in 2021 focused on keeping children and young people away from crime and helping families to build strong and supportive home environments.
- We will better identify Foreign National Offenders who attempt to return to, or enter, the UK through data-sharing arrangements with international partners, enabling us to intercept drugs and people of concern who might commit crime in the UK.
- We will surpass our record of trainee probation officer recruitment with a further 1,500 by April 2022 allowing us to supervise offenders and prevent crime better.

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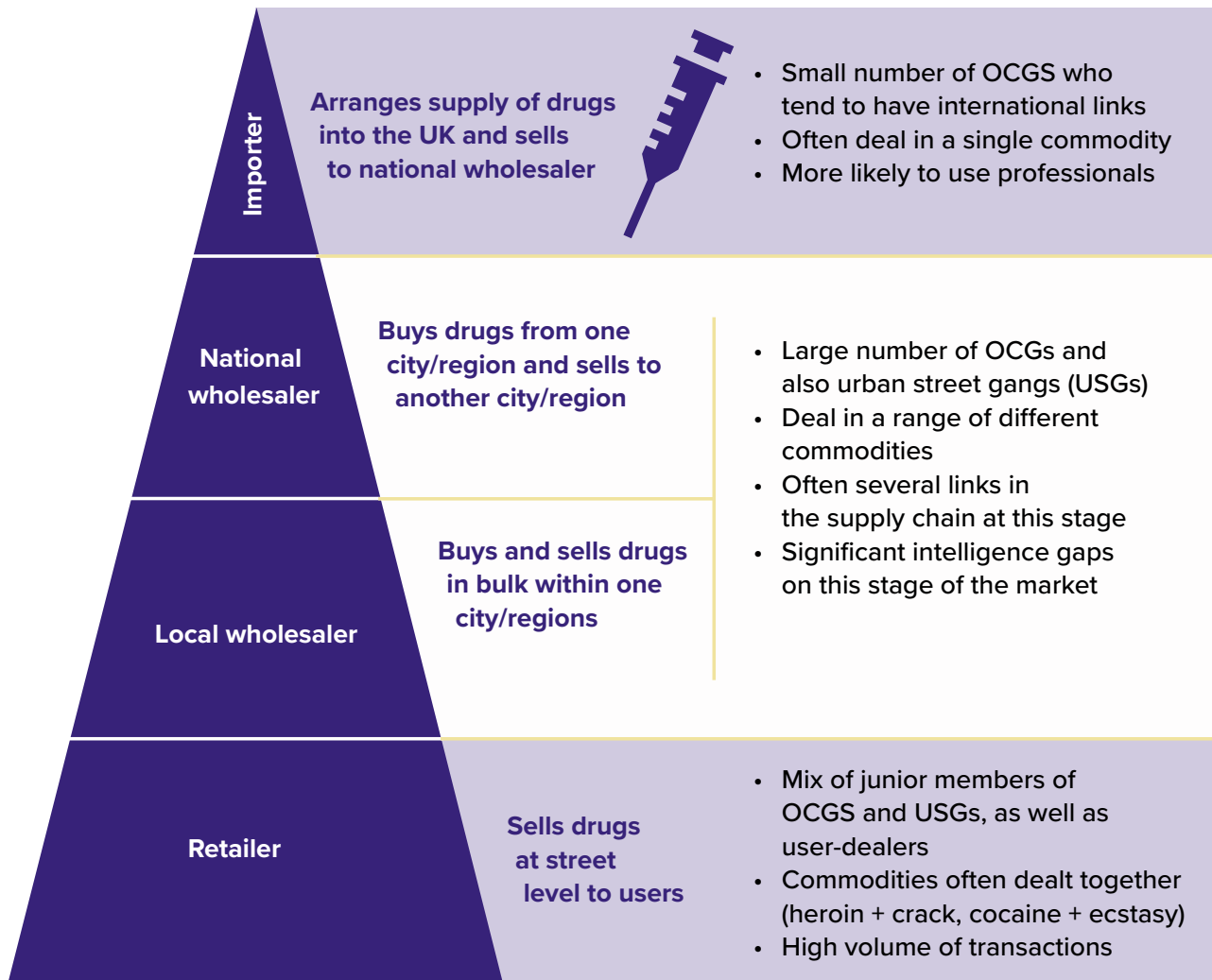
<sup>41</sup> [PHE-MoJ-experimental-MoJ-publication-version.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

- We will invest more in probation services. In 2019-20 and 2020-21, we have invested an additional £155 million in each year in probation.
- We will embed an enhanced level of supervision to monitor those managed under IOM schemes, prioritising neighbourhood criminals.
- We will introduce a statutory duty for probation to consult a range of partners when designing and delivering schemes to support community objectives and need through unpaid work. Probation will work with PCCs, councils, charities and other local organisations to use offenders' unpaid work time to clean up the streets, alleys, estates, and open spaces in neighbourhoods.
- We will assess whether PCCs should play a greater role in canvassing public views on the areas in their community that would benefit from placements, as well as using their expertise on local areas of crime and deprivation through the PCC Review.
- We will expand the Acquisitive Crime GPS tagging project. From Autumn 2021 we will roll it out to a further 13 police forces: Bedfordshire, the City of London, Cumbria, Derbyshire, Durham, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, the Metropolitan Police, North Wales, Nottinghamshire and Sussex. This expansion will take the project's coverage to half the country, enabling a robust control study of the effect of GPS tagging on reoffending to take place.
- We will launch alcohol monitoring on licence in Wales later in 2021 as we explore how alcohol tags can change behaviour and reduce alcohol-fuelled crime including on release from prison.
- We will lead the way through the recruitment of 1,000 prison leavers to Civil Service roles by the end of 2023 as part of a wider Life Chances recruitment target covering veterans and care leavers. We hope that the private sector will join us. To this end, we will host an employer summit towards the end of this year to bring business and Government together to cut crime.

## 2.6 Business

The most visible elements of crime are often felt in local neighbourhoods: a stolen car, gang violence, or drug-dealing. These crimes are often driven by a complex web of global, organised criminal business whose primary motivation is profit. While we must continue to bring the leaders of these “businesses” to justice, if we are to deal with their impact permanently, we must understand and attack their entire business model, turning low-risk, high-reward activities into the opposite. There must be no easy money in crime. Our work to cut homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime therefore includes a ruthless focus on the business of crime, disrupting the trade in illegal drugs, making it harder for criminals to profit from stolen goods, stopping them from continuing their activities in prison and tackling money laundering and recovering criminal assets.

## Overview of domestic drug distribution<sup>42</sup>



### What we have done

Today we have published our initial response to Parts 1 and 2 of Dame Carol Black's major independent review of drugs policy. This sets out our commitment to implement recommendations from the review and take a systems-wide approach to suppress the criminal supply of drugs as well as reduce demand from those who use them. We are already taking action to disrupt the trade in illegal drugs that plagues our towns and cities.

Since 2019-20, we have delivered a comprehensive programme of activity to tackle the threat posed by county lines gangs. Our funding has expanded the National County Lines Coordination Centre to improve intelligence and co-ordinate the national law enforcement response. We have also provided funding for the Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police and Merseyside Police so that they can intensify their efforts to neutralise the major exporting drug-dealing gangs, 80% of which come from those forces. Alongside this investment, we have also provided funding for importing areas, enabling complementary disruption activity at the start and end of the drug-dealing line.

<sup>42</sup> Dame Carol Black Review [Part 1 Evidence Pack - PowerPoint Presentation publishing.service.gov.uk](#)

Our work on county lines is succeeding. Our investment has seen Operation Orochi in London, Project Medusa in Merseyside and dedicated county lines task forces in the West Midlands and British Transport Police cut supply lines and use the distribution networks of the gangs against them. Working closely with forces, the tide is now turning and we are making an impact. The latest assessment of county lines shows a reduction in the total number of deal lines per month, with numbers reported to have fallen from between 800-1,100 in 2019-20 to 600 in 2019-20.<sup>43</sup> We know taking action against the exploitative county lines business model is critical to our neighbourhoods and we will continue to surge activity to rid our towns and cities of these ruthless county lines gangs.

Our comprehensive approach to disrupting the trade in illegal drugs combines work to strengthen the law enforcement approach with improvements in our ability to get drug users into treatment. Evidence shows that criminality declines rapidly for drug-addicted offenders when they stop using.<sup>44</sup> Our innovative Project ADDER is developing the multi-agency response to drugs in some of the worst-affected neighbourhoods. It demonstrates what can be achieved when law enforcement, treatment services and the criminal justice system work together. We have established ADDER areas in five places in England and Wales and are establishing a further eight local authorities this year, helping us build the evidence base to inform the development of our long-term strategic response to reducing drug-related harm.

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<sup>43</sup> [National County Lines Coordination Centre latest assessment](#) indicates that there has been a reduction in the total number of potentially active deal lines, with numbers reported to have fallen from between 800-1,100 in 2019/20 to 600 in 2020/21. The reduction in potentially active lines is believed to be linked a change in reporting and enhanced operational activity.

<sup>44</sup> [Heroin Technical Report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



## Case study 4: Project ADDER in Blackpool

Project ADDER, a programme aimed at addressing drug misuse in some of the hardest hit areas across England and Wales, has built on strong existing partnerships and initiatives in Blackpool, which in 2019 had the highest rate of drug-related deaths in England. This has provided a solid foundation upon which Lancashire Constabulary and Blackpool Council have built a whole-system approach that disrupts the middle market supply of drugs while engaging young people and adults with complex drug addiction, who might not currently have access to treatment services. By bringing together leaders across the council, police, drug treatment, housing and other health and social care providers in weekly strategic meetings, the project has been able to deliver a trauma-informed, person-centred approach. This has already resulted in an individual's life saved through nasal Naloxone, an emergency rescue treatment for known or suspected opioid overdose. The project began mobilisation in November 2020 and went live in January 2021.

Project ADDER is providing £4.95m funding over 2.5 years, including:

- A police ADDER taskforce to undertake targeted enforcement-led intelligence activity, which has to date resulted in 82 Organised Crime Group disruptions.
- Enhancing the ADDER coach-led model utilising out of court disposals to divert individuals into treatment and recovery services.
- Work coaches engaging prisoners pre-release on employment to improve drug treatment engagement.
- A team of peer mentors supporting treatment providers and encouraging those in treatment, which has contributed to an 12% increase in those entering drug treatment from mobilisation up until April 21.

Although most of the crime caused by drug users is by the 314,000 users of heroin and crack cocaine, the demand for drugs goes wider. It is that demand that drives the drugs business and generates violence and misery in our towns and cities. Reducing demand for drugs must also address all users in all circumstances, and that means there must be clear consequences for all, including those who might regard themselves as harmless or recreational users.

Drugs are illegal for a reason: they are harmful, affecting physical and mental health, relationships, career prospects and wider society. Individuals who use illegal substances need to know they are not only risking their health, but funding dangerous criminals who rely on fear, exploitation and violence. We all experience the harms that drugs cause, and it is everyone's responsibility – law enforcement, employers, educators, families, and members of the public – to play their part and call out drug use.



Reducing demand for drugs includes making sure there are clear consequences for all those who use drugs. This will include looking at potential financial penalties and attendance at drug awareness courses. Police will identify users and deliver the appropriate sanction, while also helping to change behaviour. It is important that our approach unapologetically tackles the harms of drugs and the role they play in fuelling criminal markets and damaging lives and neighbourhoods, regardless of how, when and by whom they are consumed. We need to ensure there are consequences for those who regard their drug use as harmless or recreational, and we intend to bring forward proposals in this area.

Our initial response to Dame Carol Black’s review highlights a range of cross-Government activity which is already underway in response to the challenges raised in the review. We have also committed to publishing a new cross-Government Drug Strategy later this year which will set out our longer term ambition to tackle drugs in the coming years, with a focus on three areas: breaking the business models of criminal supply chains, developing a high quality drug treatment and recovery system and addressing illicit drug use in wider society by shifting behaviour and attitudes.

The Government is investing in the critical specialist capabilities needed to tackle serious and organised crime, including data collection and intelligence sharing. Operation Venetic successfully targeted criminals who were using encrypted devices and continues to deliver significant impact against organised criminal networks across the UK. These investments are building capabilities at a national and regional level, helping the National Crime Agency (NCA), police and partner organisations to protect the public from the most technologically sophisticated and harmful criminals, including those involved in the illegal drugs trade.

We are also working with partner agencies to make it harder for criminals to profit from stolen goods. We have established an expert Stolen Goods Working Group with the police and academia to develop innovative ways to attack the markets for stolen goods.

We are targeting vehicle-related crime by making cars harder to steal, harder to steal from and harder to sell on. A recent national week of action co-ordinated by the British Transport Police focused on stopping catalytic converter theft. Partnership working between police, local authorities and other partners to carry out investigations and enforcement activity in the scrap metal and waste industries led to the recovery of over 1,000 stolen catalytic converters.

While the damage caused by crime is felt most heavily in our neighbourhoods, our prisons can provide opportunities for offenders to continue their offending and grow their networks, as they take advantage of modern technology and corruption in the public sector.



We have invested **£100m** into prison security via the Security Investment Programme.

This programme has included the installation of Enhanced Gate Security, which includes x-ray baggage scanners, metal detecting portals and passive drugs dogs to prevent illicit items entering our prisons. We have also installed mobile phone blocking equipment, to disrupt illicit communications that facilitate criminal activity in and emanating from prisons. We have also developed a comprehensive response which brings police, prisons, probation, the NCA and other partners together to bear down on the most capable and harmful reoffenders.

At the heart of this criminal enterprise are illicit financial flows. Our aim must be to make the UK the hardest place in the world for international villains to make and export money. We have strengthened the legal powers for tackling money-laundering and recovering criminal assets. We are improving our ability to gain critical intelligence of money-laundering through reform of the Suspicious Activity Reports regime. A dedicated project led by the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) is deepening our understanding of the cash flows that sustain the international drugs trade. We are strengthening the capability and capacity of the NCA and policing, making sure that they have the data, technology, and investigative tools they need to target these criminals, both here and abroad.

### **How the Beating Crime Plan will go further**

- We will work with technology companies to ensure that their services do not undermine critical law enforcement capabilities to investigate and prosecute serious crimes.
- We will enable police forces to make use of Overseas Production Orders to gain rapid direct access to electronic evidence directly from US Communications Service Providers, replacing existing bureaucratic processes and enabling swifter progress of investigations and prosecutions for serious crimes.
- We will publish a long-term drug strategy by the end of the year with a focus on a whole of Government approach to tackling both drug supply and demand.
- We will continue to implement our end-to-end plan to disrupt drug supply and roll-up county lines through work upstream, at the border and in-country to ensure that the drugs market is a low-reward high-risk enterprise.
- We will make clear the unacceptability of any drug-taking while signposting to interventions. This work will look to the role of educators, employers and the public to land effective messaging to deter illicit drug use. We will also hold a summit to bring together a range of partners to explore the full range of levers to reduce the demand for drugs.
- We will expand Project ADDER, allocating £31 million to encompass eight additional local authorities in 2021-22 and 2022-23 (Bristol, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newcastle, Wakefield, Liverpool City, Knowsley and Wirral). This will take the total investment in this programme to £59 million since 2020-21.
- We will improve our ability to deal with illicit finance. We will increase the number of trained financial investigators; improve our ability to seize and deny criminal assets; and bolster the NECC. We will also introduce legislation that tackles economic crime, including the use of UK corporate structures in facilitating high-end money-laundering.
- We will increase our capacity and capability. We will strengthen the NCA; increase the capacity of Regional Organised Crime Units in 2021-22 by recruiting 300 additional officers focused on organised criminality; and develop the critical data, intelligence and investigative capabilities needed to take on modern, tech-enabled criminal networks.

- We will deliver the priorities set out in the Integrated Review 2021<sup>45</sup> and an ambitious set of upstream operational, programmatic and diplomatic interventions to lead and support cross-Government efforts against upstream threats that drive crime on our streets.
- We will continue to strengthen our relationship with INTERPOL (the International Criminal Police Organization), including through the UK's presidency of the G7 this year. This will include enhancing our ability to share data with international partners by investing in the development of technical capabilities to support transnational investigations into all types of crime as well as hosting the INTERPOL General Assembly in 2024.
- We will tackle serious and organised crime within the UK's territorial seas, strengthening the border as an intervention point through implementation of the UK 2025 border strategy. We will also expand our international programmes, building the capacity of our international partners to disrupt serious and organised crime upstream before it reaches the UK.
- We will develop a 'Joint Operating Model' along with the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and NCA to enhance the effectiveness of our domestic capabilities to tackle crime with an international dimension.
- We will deliver the International Law Enforcement Alert Platform (ILEAP). This ambitious service will be integrated into UK policing, NCA and borders systems. It will consolidate different international alert data sources and present them to front-line UK users so that they can take appropriate action against criminals attempting to enter the UK and facilitate the provision of UK alerts to international partners.
- We will maximise our use of the Prüm (Convention) data-sharing capability. Building on the comprehensive package of capabilities delivered by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement that we reached with the EU last year, this will include securing new DNA and fingerprint connections with EU Member States and implementation of the vehicle registration data capability.

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<sup>45</sup> [Global Britain in a competitive age \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/95481/global-britain-in-a-competitive-age) The Integrated review is a comprehensive articulation of the UK's national security and international policy. It outlines three fundamental national interests that bind together the citizens of the UK: sovereignty, security and prosperity.

# Chapter 3 – Exposing and ending hidden harms

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## 3.1 The problem

Home is not a safe place for everyone. Crimes such as child sexual abuse and exploitation, violence against women and girls (including domestic abuse and sexual violence) and modern slavery typically take place behind closed doors, hidden from view. These crimes are deeply damaging and can have a long-term physical and psychological impact on victims and survivors.

**Child sexual abuse and exploitation** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, which may or may not involve physical contact, and is increasingly facilitated online or through technology. While sexual abuse is predominantly perpetrated by adult males, women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. In England and Wales, 7.5% of adults are estimated to have experienced sexual abuse before they were 16 – approximately 3.5% of men and 11.5% of women – according to the latest prevalence survey by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).<sup>46</sup> Child sexual abuse remains under-identified and under-reported, though we have seen steep increases in reporting to the police over recent years. Over 89,000 child sexual abuse offences were recorded by police in the year ending March 2021, an increase of approximately 290% since 2013.<sup>47</sup> However, too few of these recorded crimes result in a charge and the total number of prosecutions and convictions for all child sexual abuse offences have fallen (by 25% and 34% respectively) from a high in the year to December 2016.<sup>48</sup> The Government is driving forward implementation of the Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy with the aim of tackling all forms of child sexual abuse, regardless of where it takes place, or who perpetrates it.

**Violence against women and girls** refers to acts of violence or abuse that we know disproportionately affect women and girls although it can affect anybody (including men and boys). Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, ‘honour’-based abuse and murder, as well as many others. One in five women are victims of sexual assault (or attempted assault) in their lifetime (compared to 5% of men)<sup>49</sup>, over 27% of women had experienced domestic abuse after the age of 16 years old (compared to 14% of men)<sup>50</sup>, and 20% of women aged 16-74 experienced stalking after the age of 16 (compared to 10% of men)<sup>51</sup>. We also know that the number of violence against women and girls crimes, including domestic abuse, stalking, rape, indecent exposure and unwanted touching has remained broadly the same since 2008-09. However, the volume of cases being referred by police, charged by the CPS and subsequently going to court has declined significantly since 2016.

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<sup>46</sup> [Child sexual abuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandcare/sexualoffencesandviolence/childsexualabuseandexploitation)

<sup>47</sup> [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice)

<sup>48</sup> [Criminal justice system statistics quarterly: December 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2020)

<sup>49</sup> [Sexual offences prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2020](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandcare/sexualoffencesandviolence/sexualoffencesprevalenceandtrends)

<sup>50</sup> [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandcare/sexualoffencesandviolence/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrends)

<sup>51</sup> [Stalking: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/stalking)

**Modern Slavery** encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. Research by the Home Office in 2017 found there are 17 types of modern slavery<sup>52</sup>, yet its hidden nature makes producing an accurate measure of its scale difficult. While there was a 52% increase in referrals between 2018 and 2019, this plateaued in 2020 with 10,613 potential victims of modern slavery referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM); a similar number as in 2019. The plateau in referral numbers is primarily thought to have resulted from the COVID pandemic and associated restrictions. In 2020, the most common exploitation type for adult potential victims was labour exploitation, while for child potential victims, criminal exploitation was most reported with 28% of these referrals linked to county lines. UK nationals were the most referred nationality, accounting for 34% of all referrals in 2020<sup>53</sup>. The Home Office estimates that modern slavery cost the UK between £3.3 and £4.3 billion in the year ending March 2017.<sup>54</sup> In the year to March 2021, there were 8,730 modern slavery offences, a 5% increase from the year to March 2020.<sup>55</sup>

### 3.2 Our approach

The Prime Minister held the first ever Hidden Harms Virtual Summit in May last year, bringing together a range of partners to share emerging practice and discuss how best to tackle these issues in the context of the increased risks posed by the COVID pandemic.

Rooting out these crimes requires a comprehensive and sustained response, at both a domestic and a global level, with a relentless focus on prevention and disruption, safeguarding those at risk, supporting victims and bearing down on offenders.

Across the board, we are clear about the outcomes we want to see: increased reporting of these crimes to the police; increased numbers of offenders brought to justice; improved victim care and support; and an overall fall in the prevalence of these crimes. Achieving this requires sustained effort across Government and a wide variety of partners.

We are taking action. We have passed a landmark Domestic Abuse Act, and published the Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy and the Violence against Women and Girls Strategy. We have put in place a Rape Review Action Plan and committed to consulting on a new Victims' Bill and publishing new strategies on modern slavery and Domestic Abuse. We have also published a revised Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales, which focuses on victims' rights and sets out the minimum standards that organisations must provide to victims of crime. We will use the New Plan for Immigration and the Nationality and Borders Bill to ensure modern slavery victims are identified and supported as quickly as possible.

We are also pioneering work with industry and international partners to tackle the online manifestations of these crimes. Our work includes publishing a draft Online Safety Bill and ongoing preparations for this year's G7 Summit, which will focus on child sexual abuse and violence against women and girls. In addition, we will publish a new strategy for tackling hate crime this autumn to help stamp out the abhorrent crimes that target victims (based on race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity).

These targeted strategies, action plans, and new laws reflect the varied and complex challenges in exposing and ending hidden harms and the need for a tailored response to each. However, our approach across all of this work has some common points of focus.

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<sup>52</sup> [A typology of modern slavery offences in the UK \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

<sup>53</sup> [Modern Slavery: National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, end of year summary 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

<sup>54</sup> [Economic and social costs of modern slavery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

<sup>55</sup> [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

### 3.3 Increasing reports

The fact that these crimes are under-identified and under-reported to the police can mean that they are particularly complex to understand and investigate. For example, ONS data estimates that three quarters of adults who experienced rape or assault by penetration as children did not tell anyone about their experience at the time. People were even less likely to tell the police - only an estimated 7% of victims and survivors informed the police at the time of the offence and only 18% told the police at any point.<sup>56</sup>

We have been encouraged by increased reporting of these crimes, such as the 290% increase in child sex offences recorded by the police in the period between year ending March 2013 and March 2021.<sup>57</sup> Increased reporting reflects greater victim confidence and better identification of offending by the police and other agencies. We have also seen the number of live police operations increase since the Modern Slavery Act became law, from 188 in December 2016 to at least 3,070 in June 2021.<sup>58</sup>

We also know that those who have been affected by hidden harms are much more likely to share their experiences in the right circumstances.



The Violence Against Women and Girls Call for Evidence received over **180,000** responses.

Many of the responses to the Violence Against Women and Girls Call for evidence were from victims sharing their experiences, some of them for the first time. This is the largest ever consultation the Government has run in this area. The responses and engagement have provided us with rich evidence about these crimes, but also of their deeply destructive nature.

#### What we have done

We know identifying these crimes and responding effectively is the first step to tackling the problem. We have equipped frontline professionals with the skills and tools they need by creating statutory multi-agency guidance and making available free e-learning on forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation. We have also funded the Centre of Expertise for child sexual abuse to improve the frontline professional response to this crime, as well as delivering tailored training to social workers, health professionals, police and designated safeguarding leads in schools. This is accompanied by £2 million funding this year for the police Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme and £250,000 for the Public Protection and Safeguarding Leaders programme.

Close collaboration between safeguarding agencies is vital to tackle these complex crimes. We have invested in Operation Encompass, an innovative scheme that facilitates schools and police working together to provide emotional and practical support to children affected by domestic abuse. We are also engaging non-statutory agencies to play their part, supporting community-based organisations to identify abuse and refer victims to help through the national codeword scheme, which provides a discreet way for victims of domestic abuse to signal that they need emergency help.

<sup>56</sup> [Child sexual abuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/people-in-the-uk/child-population/child-sexual-abuse-in-england-and-wales)

<sup>57</sup> [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/people-in-the-uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

<sup>58</sup> [Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Programme \(policingslavery.co.uk\)](https://www.policingslavery.co.uk/)



To support this, we are also delivering public communication campaigns to engender behavioural change. We have delivered the Hidden in Plain Sight campaign on modern slavery and the You Are Not Alone campaign on domestic abuse.

### How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

- We will support employers to improve their response to domestic abuse through robust guidance, policies and support plans.
- We will extend the reach of our Stop Abuse Together campaign on child sexual abuse.
- We will work with organisations such as CrimeStoppers and Neighbourhood Watch to raise understanding and awareness of hidden harms among local communities.
- We will publish an enhanced version of our widely adopted Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit, which provides comprehensive guidance for safeguarding partners to develop stronger local threat assessments and place-based responses.

### 3.4 Improving criminal justice outcomes

Increasing reports to the police is only the start of delivering for victims and society as a whole. It is vital that more of these complex crimes end in prosecutions and convictions to secure justice for victims and protect the public from those who prey on the vulnerable. All victims of crime must have confidence that they will see justice done, that they will be supported to recover from their trauma and protected when they are at risk of further harm.

The new Victims' Bill consultation will be the cornerstone to our plan for driving up satisfaction and trust in the criminal justice system. It will ensure all victims of crime receive their rights and that they are appropriately supported to cope and recover. This work will build on the recent publication of the revised Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales (Revised Victims' Code) which sets out 12 key overarching rights which all victims can expect from all criminal justice agencies, such as the police and the CPS.

#### What we have done

We have given the police and their partners the powers they need to stop offenders in their tracks. For example, the Domestic Abuse Act introduced Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to provide more effective, and longer-term protection for victims of domestic abuse and their children.



We are also investing in specialist technology and national security expertise, including the NCA's dark-web capabilities, to **grow our capability** to **catch offenders** wherever they operate.

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We are also delivering a greater focus on stopping re-offending to stop perpetrators moving from victim to victim and continuing their abuse. We have provided sex offender managers with digital forensics tools, polygraphs, and training to detect reoffending, particularly by those who commit offences over the internet. In January 2021, the CPS published an ambitious programme of work proactively to address domestic abuse offending which aims to help narrow the disparity between reporting and criminal justice outcomes. We are also introducing tougher measures through the PCSC Bill to end the halfway release of certain offenders sentenced for serious violent and sexual offences. This will ensure that the sentence served reflects the gravity of the offence committed and will keep the worst offenders behind bars for longer.

We are transforming how police and the CPS handle investigations through the ambitious plan set out in the Rape Review Action Plan, the CPS' Rape and Serious Sexual Offences 2025 Strategy and dedicated workstreams such as Operation SOTERIA. We have committed to returning the volume of cases being referred by the police, charged by the CPS and going to court to 2016 levels. Operational partners will also be held to account for the first time, with performance scorecards being published every six months. Furthermore, to improve the court experience for victims we are implementing measures in the Domestic Abuse Act, providing new protections and support for victims, ensuring that abusers will no longer be allowed directly to cross examine their victims in the family and civil courts and providing better access to special measures in the courtroom to help prevent intimidation.

### How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

- We will continue to support work to increase modern slavery prosecutions through a £1.4 million investment in the police in 2021-22, and through testing a new approach to improve the engagement of modern slavery victims in the criminal justice process.
- We will make investment in new cutting-edge technology like the Child Abuse Image Database.
- We will strengthen orders to manage sex offenders through the PCSC Bill.
- We will invest in NCA capabilities to identify and disrupt serial sex offenders better.
- We will draw on any learning from the implementation of the Rape Review Action Plan to increase the number of offenders brought to justice for child sexual abuse and exploitation crimes.

## 3.5 Victim support

Hidden harms can cause enormous emotional and psychological harm for victims, who often require significant support to rebuild their lives. Evidence shows that access to early and continuing support for many crimes is an essential factor in enabling victims to engage, and to remain engaged with, the criminal justice system. Research shows, for example, that if a rape victim receives support from an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser or rape support service, they are 49% less likely to withdraw from the criminal justice investigation when compared to victims who did not receive support.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Walker et al. (2019) Rape, inequality and the criminal justice response in England: The importance of age and gender, *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 2021, Vol. 21(3) 297–315





We continue to make record investment, with more than **£300** million being spent this year alone on victims' services.

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Our investment is in addition to the decisive action we took at the beginning of the COVID pandemic to ensure victims continued to have access to critical support services, including counselling and advice, with over £92 million made available since the start of the pandemic.

### What we have done

We have provided focused funding to provide the highest quality of support for victims, such as £125 million funding to local authorities for 2021-22 to support victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation. The NHS has also set out its Strategic Direction on Sexual Assault and Abuse Services which details how the health system will provide lifelong care to victims and survivors.

We are also testing new approaches to providing victims support, such as the creation of a new Transformation Fund to promote and embed best practice on effectively supporting victims of child sexual abuse from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds.



To make sure that victims feel supported throughout the CJS process, we have provided **£27** million investment over two years to recruit **700** new Independent Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence Advisors, an increase of **44%**.

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We are continuing to roll out Independent Child Trafficking Guardians who provide advocacy support for child victims of modern slavery and are currently available in two-thirds of local authorities in England and Wales.

Section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999, which enables pre-recorded cross-examination and re-examination evidence, has been rolled out to the Crown Courts for vulnerable witnesses and is being piloted for intimidated victims and witnesses. With the judiciary, the Government will expand the Section 28 pilot for intimidated witnesses, such as complainants of sexual or modern-day slavery offences with the aim of wider roll-out, subject to evaluation.

## How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

- We will ensure sustainability of funding through the Victim Funding Strategy, which will set out commissioning standards and expectations and ensure that victims continue to receive the support they need now and in the future.
- We will consult on a statutory underpinning for Independent Sexual and Domestic Violence Advocates through the Victims' Bill consultation.
- We will support local authorities to prepare and fulfil their relevant functions under the new duty to provide accommodation-based support under the Domestic Abuse Act.
- We will continue to look for opportunities to improve services, such as transforming the support provided for victims of modern slavery through the NRM and Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract which provides medical, mental health, financial and accommodation support to over 6,000 victims every year.
- We will produce guidance for local partnerships on the 'Child House' model of multi-agency support for children and young people affected by sexual abuse.

## 3.6 Prevention and early intervention

We must aim to stop abuse before it happens to ensure fewer people are subjected to the trauma of these heinous crimes by adopting a comprehensive public health approach.<sup>60</sup> We continue to work closely across Government on a range of early help programmes, including Supporting Families, Family Hubs and early years support, which are so crucial to providing stability for families to reduce vulnerability to being involved in crime as a victim or perpetrator.

### What we have done

We are improving education and awareness for all children, including through implementation of the new Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education curriculum, which focuses on healthy relationships and staying safe online, as well as teaching pupils about laws relating to a range of areas including exploitation, grooming, coercion, harassment, domestic abuse and female genital mutilation.

We are also improving understanding and earlier responses to a range of harms, including through The Children's Society's Prevention Programme of ten officers, who work with local and regional partners to develop preventative approaches to exploitation. This is in addition to Government engagement with businesses, including through work with private sector supply chains to prevent labour exploitation in the UK and overseas.

We are also developing the evidence base around prevention and early intervention, including through the final year of the Trusted Relationships Fund to tackle abuse and exploitation.

## How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

- We will deliver a new national campaign in order to create behaviour change regarding violence against women and girls and, in so doing, raise awareness.
- We will establish a comprehensive programme to understand what works in preventing violence against women and girls. This will comprise a broad range of high quality, evidence-informed prevention projects alongside a crucial assessment toolset to establish the most effective methods in this space.

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<sup>60</sup> A multi-service public health approach was supported by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities

- We will take forward an ambitious package of measures to strengthen the Modern Slavery Act's transparency in supply chains legislation. We are also committed to creating a single enforcement body to improve the enforcement of employment rights across the board and take enforcement action against any employer abusing employment law.
- We will make our online spaces safer by introducing ground-breaking new legislation through the Online Safety Bill to ensure tech companies are playing their part in ridding their platforms of abuse, as well as leading international initiatives to drive the necessary global response to what is a global inter-connected problem through the G7 and our closest allies.
- We will develop the evidence base around prevention and early intervention, including through research from the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre and targeted prevention interventions supported by a modern slavery prevention fund.
- We will encourage international investment in this agenda, including through renewed investment in the newly integrated Countering Exploitation Programme, an essential vehicle for delivering the Government's international and manifesto commitments to tackle modern slavery and child sexual exploitation and abuse worldwide.

# Chapter 4 – Building capability to deal with fraud, cyber and online crime

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## 4.1 The problem

Economic, cyber and online crime affects all of society, harming people, businesses, and Government. As the amount of time we spend online increases, the opportunities for criminals multiply. Together, fraud and cybercrime represent over 50% of crime. Online crime, including online hate crime, damages our economy and society.

**Fraud** accounts for approximately 42% of all crime against individuals and is growing. The techniques used by fraudsters mean that its impact is widespread. It affects the security of our online activity and it undermines our ability to communicate because of fraudulent messages claiming to be from Government or business.



Fraud costs society at least **£4.7** billion each year.

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As well as the financial impact, it has a range of mental and physical health effects, from stress, through to difficulty sleeping and, in some cases, depression.<sup>61</sup>

**Cybercrime** is estimated to cost the UK billions of pounds each year, through trying to steal our personal information or hacking into business systems and holding individuals and businesses to ransom, or by seeking to disrupt or take key public services and critical national infrastructure offline. Cyber offences can also facilitate other crimes such as fraud, stalking, domestic abuse and hate crimes. Victims of cybercrime describe the impact as similar to ‘physical world’ crimes, with significant and long-term emotional and wellbeing impacts created through the ‘violation’ of criminals hacking into their accounts and not knowing what further harm may come from the attacks. Cybercrimes committed against business such as extortion through ransomware, hacking, and leaking of customer data or stealing of intellectual property can ruin a company’s reputation and destroy livelihoods.

Evidence suggests that fraud and cybercrime have increased during the pandemic. With more of our life happening online, criminals are seeking to exploit a host of new opportunities. Ransomware attacks have threatened our public services when we have been at our most dependent on them. There has been a rise in the reporting of online shopping and romance and investment frauds since the pandemic began.

## 4.2 Our approach

This instability threatens both our economy and our national security. It has the potential to threaten our post-COVID economic recovery. Since criminals operate in an agile way, taking advantage wherever they can exploit weakness, we need to close down all routes open to them. Otherwise, they will evolve their operations to attack us through the gaps that remain.

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<sup>61</sup> A survey of victims of fraud and cybercrime, unpublished Home Office research.

### 4.3 Fraud and economic crime

As we have seen during the pandemic, the threat from fraud is constantly evolving. It is not sufficient to respond to this threat by focusing on individual types of fraud. Fraudsters are quick to adapt to change and exploit weaknesses in new systems or new technologies. To confront them, we must take a systematic approach, deepening our understanding of how they operate, reducing the opportunity for them to target our country, and ensure that law enforcement has the skills and ability to catch and bring to justice those who seek to defraud the people who live and the businesses that operate here.

#### What we have done

In July 2019, we published the Economic Crime Plan, setting out how the public and private sectors would work together to confront economic crime. It set out priority actions including seizing more criminal assets, strengthening corporate transparency and our overall international response to illicit finance and anti-corruption. We have backed delivery of the plan with over £80 million dedicated to tackling this type of crime.

To tackle fraud, we have provided £25 million funding to support Action Fraud, creating the capacity to investigate fraud, and improve the skills within the police to address it. This also funds improved intelligence gathering in the NECC, as well as Active Fraud Defence within the National Cyber Security Centre.

#### How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

Given the scale of the problem of fraud against individuals, we need to do more. We have set out a framework for tackling fraud<sup>62</sup> covering how we will deal with the threat it poses.

- We will restrict the opportunities that fraudsters seek to exploit. We are working with the tech, financial, telecoms and accountancy sectors and will seek to agree sector charters with commitments to strengthen firms' defences. The forthcoming Online Safety Bill will require tech companies to tackle fraud, giving firms the responsibility of protecting their users from fraud. We will examine the case for additional regulation to tackle harms such as fraud disseminated via paid-for advertising online.
- We will make it harder for fraudsters to target the UK. Since its launch last year, the National Cyber Security Centre has shut down over 50,000 scams and taken down almost 100,000 websites.
- We will improve our understanding of how fraudsters are operating. We will replace Action Fraud with an improved national fraud and cybercrime reporting system and increase intelligence capabilities in the NCA and the national security community to identify the most harmful criminals and organised criminal gangs.
- We will take fraudsters off the streets and increase arrests and prosecutions. We will increase law enforcement investigative capacity in the City of London Police, as national lead force for fraud, and in Regional Organised Crime Units across England and Wales. We will also establish a new fraud investigative function in the NCA to target the most complex and serious fraudsters, meeting a manifesto commitment to create a new national cybercrime force focused on fraud.
- We will provide better support for the victims of fraud. We want to expand the National Economic Crime Victim Care Unit and make public communications more coherent and coordinated.

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<sup>62</sup> In the Statement of Progress of the Economic Crime Plan published May 2021

## 4.4 Online and cyber crime

As technology develops, so too do opportunities for cyber criminals to target the UK. The arrival of 5G and the Internet of Things will create multiple new vulnerabilities, including inside people's homes. 'Deep Fake' technology provides opportunities for fraud and identity theft or for exploitation and extortion. We need to confront these crimes and develop and improve technological safeguards so that citizens never become victims.

### What we have done

We are working across government to deliver improvements to the UK's cyber resilience and ensure we stay ahead of cyber criminals. We have invested £195 million over the last five years to establish a specialist cyber law enforcement network to disrupt and prosecute cyber criminals and support victims in response and recovery. We are developing a campaign to confront the growing threat of ransomware and to disrupt cyber criminals based overseas.

We have already committed to publishing a standalone hate crime strategy later this year and, following the racist abuse directed at some England players after the European Championship (Euro 2020) final, committed to extending the use of Football Banning Orders so that online abusers can be banned from stadiums for up to 10 years, in the same way that violent thugs are barred from grounds.

Additionally, we are committed to stamping out these abhorrent crimes, which cause great harm to victims and associated neighbourhoods. In 2018 the Government asked the Law Commission to review hate crime legislation. The review will report in 2021 and will consider any reforms to the law as it applies online, including to ensure that legislation keeps pace with the changing nature of these crimes. We also fund the Police Online Hate Crime Hub to improve the police response to victims of online hate crime and help police forces to coordinate investigations. The Hub allows the public to report any online abuse through a single online portal, known as True Vision, and where a jurisdiction can be identified, it is passed to the relevant force. Where this is not possible (e.g. because a perpetrator cannot be identified) the Hub also directs support to victims.

In the Queen's Speech on 11 May 2021, the Government committed to leading the way in ensuring internet safety for all, especially for children, while harnessing the benefits of a free, open and secure internet. We have since published the draft Online Safety Bill. For the first time, tech companies are going to be accountable to an independent regulator to keep their users safe. Under the new legal duty of care, in-scope companies will need to remove and limit the spread of illegal content and activity online. This means less illegal content online and when it does appear it will be removed quicker.

The Government will set out in legislation the priority illegal harms which will include types of online crime which cause significant harm to victims and thereby ensure companies prioritise action on the most harmful illegal content. For these harms, companies will need to consider the necessary systems and processes to identify, assess and address these offences based on a risk assessment.



Ofcom, the independent regulator, will have a tough suite of enforcement powers to use against companies who fail to fulfil their duties. This includes fines of up to **£18** million or **10** per cent of qualifying annual global turnover (whichever is greater).

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### How the Beating Crime Plan will go further

- We will publish a new National Cyber Security Strategy later this year. The Strategy will drive significant improvements in the UK's response to cybercrime. It will strengthen the Law Enforcement response and drive greater collaboration with the National Cyber Security Centre and the National Cyber Force.
- We will publish a new strategy for tackling hate crime this autumn, setting out our commitment to stamping out these abhorrent crimes including their online elements, which cause greater harms to victims and associated neighbourhoods.
- We will set out further plans this summer for driving down online racist abuse as part of our response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report.
- We will amend legislation to extend the use of Football Banning Orders so online abusers can be banned from stadiums, in the same way that violent thugs are barred from grounds. The change will be brought forward as soon as practical.

## Chapter 5 – Governance and accountability

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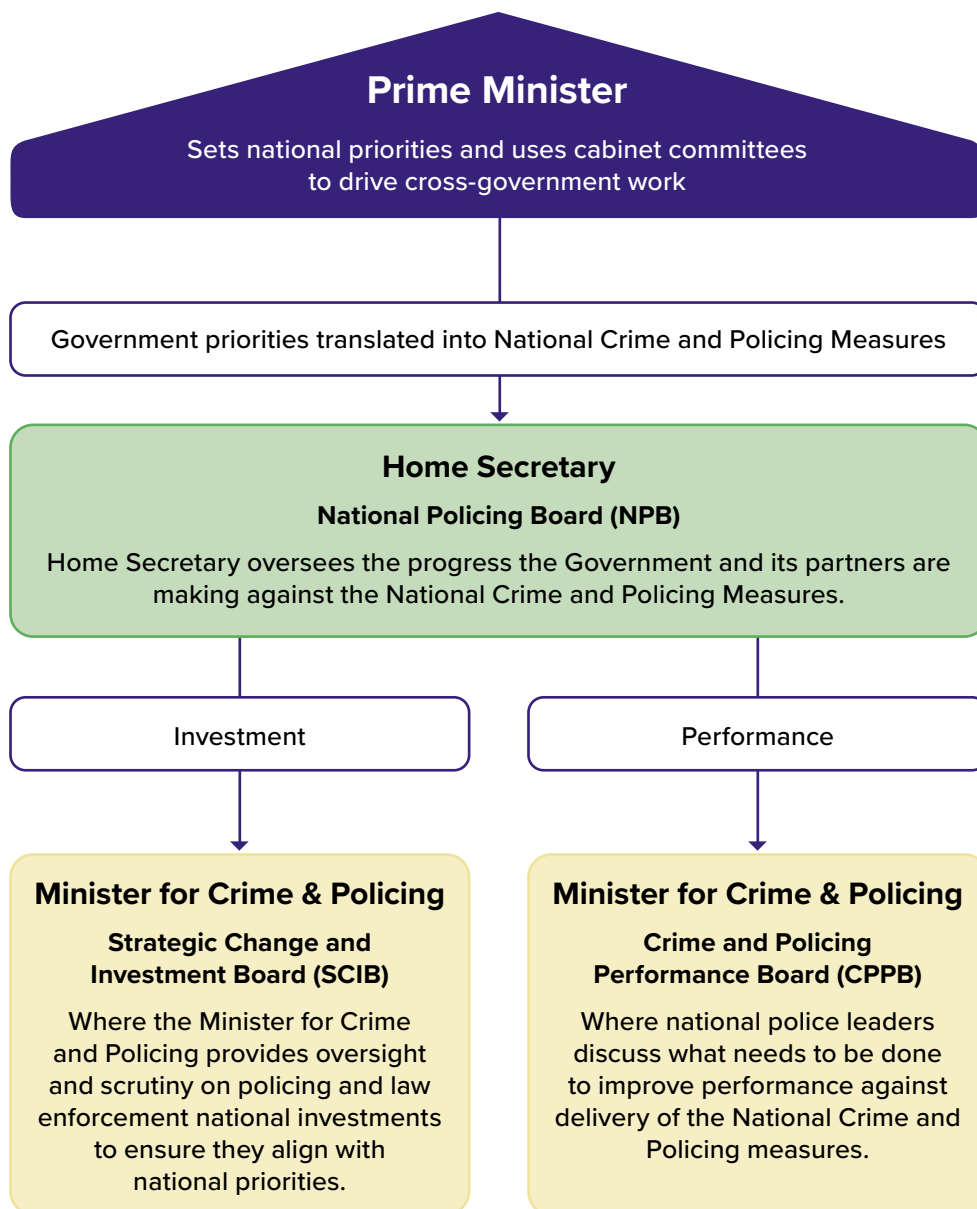
**Across all of Government we are clear that reducing crime and delivering an effective criminal justice system that is on the side of victims and the law-abiding majority are mission critical priorities. We know what we need to achieve to help create safer communities and we are determined to deliver this. This means, across the entire system, having clear aims and ambitions, using timely and informative data and making that publicly accessible wherever possible.**

Nationally, the Prime Minister is driving delivery of this plan across Government through relevant cabinet committees. This may include the Crime and Justice Taskforce, which considers matters relating to the prevention of crime and the effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

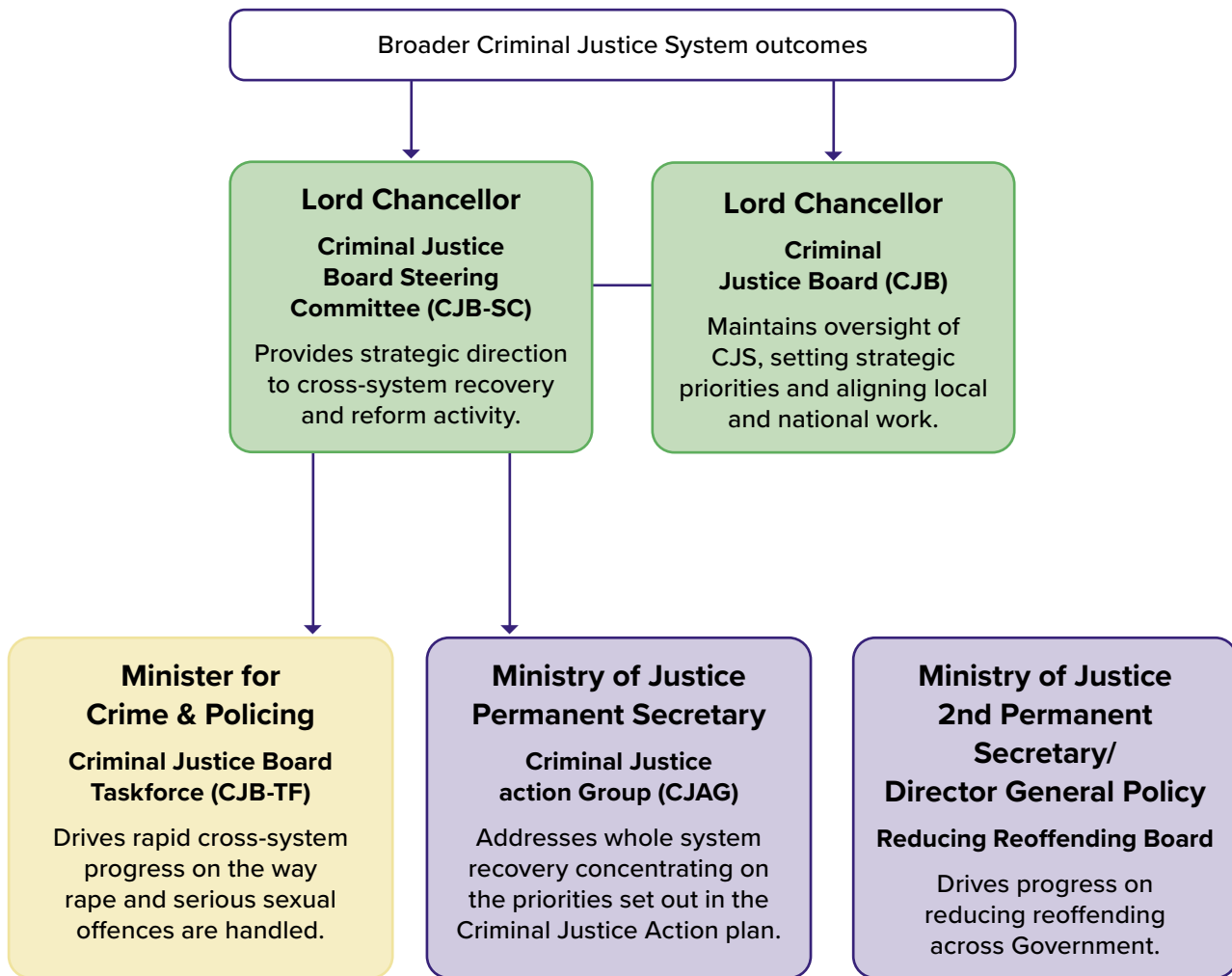
The Home Secretary oversees the progress the Government and its partners are making towards delivering the National Crime and Policing Measures at the National Policing Board, and the Minister for Crime and Policing chairs the Crime and Policing Performance Board (CPPB), where national police leaders discuss what needs to be done to deliver.

The CPPB takes a data-driven approach, which Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has spearheaded through the creation of a national digital performance pack, which draws on data from the Home Office and other government organisations. This is combined with evidence of what works from the College of Policing, as well as judgements from HMICFRS and insights from NPCC working groups, to ensure that the actions the CPPB agrees are grounded in the best possible information.





More broadly, across the whole criminal justice system, the Lord Chancellor is ensuring that operational agencies are held properly to account to drive recovery from COVID and reform the system. We will take the same data-driven approach here by publishing criminal justice scorecards that reflect data across police, the CPS, and the courts system to improve transparency and help identify and address performance issues. This is achieved through a series of ministerial and official-led boards that consider recovery from COVID, reform of the system and reducing reoffending.



We will also strengthen scrutiny of prisons by introducing online dashboards so that the public can better observe the progress being made and we will set this out further in our Prisons White Paper in the Autumn. This will build on the independent scrutiny provided by HM Inspectorate of Prisons and the other independent scrutiny bodies.

PCCs are the bedrock of our system of local governance. They are responsible for securing an efficient and effective police for their area; setting the police and crime objectives for their area through a police and crime plan; setting the force budget and determining the precept; contributing to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary; and bringing together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up.

They also play a key role in galvanising local partnerships such as Local Criminal Justice Boards and Community Safety Partnerships to ensure that crime fighting activity is co-ordinated and that local resources are used efficiently and effectively.

To help PCCs carry out their duties effectively, we have undertaken a review of their role, focusing on how it can be improved. Part One of the Review delivered recommendations to sharpen the accountability, visibility and transparency of PCCs, as well as considering their role in strengthening fire governance and progression of the Government’s longer-term ambitions on mayoral devolution.

As part of this, we will shortly launch a consultation on the policing protocol to provide a ‘brighter-line’ on the boundaries of operational independence and to reflect better the Home Secretary’s role within the police governance system.

Part Two of the Review will now focus on ensuring PCCs have the tools and levers they need to equip them to fight crime, drugs misuse and antisocial behaviour. We will do this by assessing the role of PCCs in offender management and local partnerships.

We will also examine the role that PCCs play in maintaining public confidence in policing and in tackling crime and antisocial behaviour, with a focus on the activities and reporting that can address the public's priorities, including the implementation of an effective Community Trigger Process.

This next stage will also build on the work started in Part One of the Review, ensuring effective scrutiny and complaint measures are in place for the model. From an accountability standpoint, we will consider how PCCs use data to ensure the effective delivery of policing services in their area, and will consider the merits and demerits of introducing recall for very serious breaches of behaviour.

