



Draft Wokingham Community Safety Strategy 2021-2024

This draft strategy outlines the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership's priorities for 2021- 2024. It is based on an independent local Strategic Assessment of crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse and other data. It is informed by national and local policies including the Wokingham Community Vision, the Corporate Delivery Plan 2020-2024 and the Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2012-2024 (*Thames Valley Crime and Police Commissioner*)

The Wokingham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of the following partner agencies:

- Wokingham Borough Council
- Thames Valley Police
- Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner
- Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group
- Berkshire Healthcare Trust
- Wokingham Youth Offending Services
- National Probation Service

In addition to these members, the partnership works with other agencies that support the delivery of reducing crime and disorder locally such as Trading Standards, Housing Associations, third sector agencies including, Involve Community Services, Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB), Berkshire Women's Aid and Cranston Drug and Alcohol Service.

The Partnership operates in a complex network of boards and strategies to deliver a range of priorities that span several different but interconnected workstreams. This includes the Wokingham Wellbeing Board the Adult Safeguarding Board, West of Berkshire Safeguarding Children's Board, Wokingham Children and Young People's Partnership and the Thames Valley Criminal Justice Board.

It will continue to work closely with these boards, ensuring that the intricate relationships continue to compliment individual respective delivery plans and outcomes including reducing reoffending. The Partnership will also ensure that it uses every available opportunity to reduce crime and disorder in the design and delivery of public spaces, town planning and housing infrastructure.

The Community Safety Partnership recognises that Wokingham is a safe Borough to live and visit. When comparing recorded crime to other areas of the Thames Valley and its most similar family areas, it has some of the lowest levels of recorded crime. The partnerships vision is to **Build Safe and Strong Communities in Wokingham**, this underpins the focus and the priorities of our work.

As part of the process of setting out the draft priorities in this strategy the partnership has undertaken wide consultation, with both residents and key stakeholders. The

results of the feedback have been analysed and informed the priorities set out in this 3 year plan. A summary of results can be found at the end of this strategy.

The Partnerships three strategic themes represent our overarching work, whilst the specific priorities are areas we will endeavour to concentrate on in more detail.

Proposed Draft Priorities 2021-2024

Strategic Themes

Listening to the needs and concerns of local residents and taking action – We will ensure that the partnership has a robust and clear approach to listening, monitoring and responding to issues and concerns at a local neighbourhood level. The partnership wants to ensure that we place communities and neighbourhoods at the heart of our approach. We understand that many issues of local concern require a multi-strand approach involving several partner agencies. We will therefore take a problem-solving approach to help communities and businesses to address behaviours and incidents and crimes. This includes burglary, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour as well as other key issues that affect local communities including unauthorised encampments, and rural crime concerns. We will support Neighbourhood and Resident Action Groups (NAGS) to improve communication and engagement with residents.

Intervening early and preventing issues escalating – we will ensure all residents especially children and young adults have access to a range of support services and information. This will help to ensure that issues are dealt with at the earliest opportunity using a range of measures and interventions to stop them escalating. We know that intervening early can help us catch young people before they go down the wrong path, encouraging them to make positive choices. Therefore, we fully recognise the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes and provide young people with the skills and resilience to lead productive lives free from being drawn into anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, crime and exploitation including serious violent and knife crime. We will provide targeted activity through the Supporting Families Initiative (formerly Troubled Families) working with partner agencies to support young people on the periphery of offending. This will include a diversionary activities and mentoring offer that will underpin the partnerships work and delivery of the governments Violence Reduction Strategy. Where there is a need, we will take adequate and proportionate action including enforcement steps to address issues and protect communities.

Working together to protect vulnerable residents – We will ensure that all victims and the vulnerable have the access to help, information, and advice they need. This includes victims experiencing domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, hate crime, vulnerable residents at risk of being drawn into exploitation and racialisation, and residents targeted by specific crime times including fraud. Through the Integrated Early Help Service we will provide support to families, children, young people and their carers to protect them from and give them the skills to prevent them becoming victims.

As a partnership we will ensure that services and information reach all sections of the community, especially those that may have additional barriers to accessing help such as ethnic minority groups and residents with protected characteristics. We recognise

the wider social and economic factors influencing criminality, including those linked to housing, education and health. Vulnerable people and how we provide a range of assistance for a cross section of communities is a priority for several boards. Including, featuring as a priority for the refreshed Wokingham Wellbeing Board Strategy. The partnership will work in close alliance to compliment this workstream.

Furthermore, as a partnership we understand and recognise the benefits of physical and emotional wellbeing, especially those gained through health and leisure opportunities. Not only because they have a role to play in helping to keep residents healthy, but also in helping individuals make overall positive lifestyle choices. To assist some of the most vulnerable of our residents the Council's leisure services team has enabled access to leisure facilities including swimming and gym membership free of charge to a wide range of vulnerable groups. In addition, the leisure services team will continue to deliver targeted programmes that address social isolation and health inequalities for those facing additional barriers to access and participation. This includes ensuring the new 3G pitch at Cantley and state of the art Boxing Hub facility coming online during summer 2021, will be available to targeted young people in order to bolster our diversionary activities offer.

Specific Aims

1) Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots

Our aim is to:

- listen to communities at a neighbourhood level to identify crime and disorder hotspots to improve safety in areas using a multi-agency problem solving approach.

We will achieve this by:

- exploring and investigating hotspots identified in the Strategic Assessment
- monitoring the number of cases referred and resolved by the partnership problem-solving groups.
- We will review enhanced policing, security presence and situational measures in hot-spots.
- We will review the toolkit of available enforcement interventions including Protection Orders (PSPOs)

2) Reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse

Our aim is to:

- prevent and intervene at the earliest stage possible.
- reduce the risk of people becoming repeat victims of domestic abuse
- reduce the harm caused to children and young people affected by domestic abuse

We will achieve this by:

- monitoring the number of victims referred to specialist services and responding to emerging issues.
- Working in partnership to promote opportunities for perpetrators to change their behaviour.
- continuing to deliver appropriate interventions and specialist support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse including development of a Healthy Relationships programme.
- increasing the number of practitioners trained to recognise domestic abuse and how to refer to support services.

- increase community awareness and messages through communications campaigns

3) Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime

Our aims are to:

- understand the risks around knife crime, reduce the harm it causes and reduce knife crime incidents, particularly those linked to public spaces, gangs and county lines drug dealing.

We will achieve this by:

- educating young people and promoting awareness of violence prevention
- reducing crimes of serious violence and knife crimes in the borough.
- working with our partners to adopt a long term, preventative public health approach to serious violence and harm.

4) Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults

Our aims are to:

- utilise the use of criminal and civil powers to protect victims
- ensure that victims have the right level of information, help and support
- ensure that communities are equipped to recognise and report issues of concern including exploitation

We will achieve this by:

- monitoring the use of civil powers, for example, community protection notices, premises closure orders, and injunctions.
- increasing the number of practitioners trained to recognise the signs of exploitation and how to refer for support

5) Reduce incidents of residential burglary and theft from vehicles

Our aim is to:

- make Wokingham Borough a hostile place for burglars and vehicle thieves to operate by encouraging community resilience and pursuing offenders

We will achieve this by:

- tackling organised criminals by working in partnership
- multi agency problem solve to reduce crimes
- reducing crimes of thefts from vehicles
- reducing crimes of residential burglary
- increasing the number of crime prevention messages to the community
- supporting residents through a range of schemes including; Neighbourhood Watch, Adopt a Street and Living Streets Audits

How will we delivery our priorities?

1. Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots

The partnership will intervene at the earliest possible stage to reduce issues escalating. It will engage with community and neighbourhood groups, and encourage a growth in community resilience. We will listen to concerns of local residents and respond appropriately utilising the multi-agency problem solving and anti-social behaviour panel. We will use restorative justice and community/group activity where appropriate.

To tackle some of the root causes of criminal behaviours the partnership will continue to work with different agencies including mental health, drug & alcohol and floating support services to implement a multi-agency and problem solving approach to tackle anti-social behaviour hotspots and help people maintain their accommodation where it may be at risk.

2. Reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse

The partnership will support those impacted by domestic abuse, tackling perpetrators, raising awareness and educating people around healthy relationships and personal safety. The partnership will continue to focus on Domestic Abuse (DA) as the request for assistance from victims has seen an increase in demand locally. The community safety team will develop a violence against women and girls (VAWG) strategy, which will ensure that the partnership has a co-ordinated response in implementing the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. We will support and contribute to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - meetings to review serious cases and Multiagency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) - focussing on repeat domestic abuse victims and perpetrators. High risk cases will continue to be referred to Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) for guidance and support. The council's team will work with the police and the Home Security Scheme to protect those at risk by target hardening.

The council will tackle perpetrators by taking possession action against council tenancies where appropriate and will liaise with the police to prosecute offenders to keep families safe. We will also ensure that access to help to address offending behaviour is available for perpetrators.

The council has appointed a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, to champion good practice locally. Training will be given to front line staff and to council contractors who deal council tenancies. Through the Early Help Hub we will offer 'Reducing parental Conflict Training'.

The partnership will support DA awareness week in November 2021 and will continue to raise awareness locally as well as throughout the course of the year of the issue. Furthermore, we will ensure that we are ready for the implementation of the new Domestic Abuse Bill expected to become law in 2021. Work on a local housing-based support assessment is already underway to underpin a accommodation based support strategy. Further work will include the completion of the domestic abuse housing accreditation programme (DAHA). Which ensures that support linked to housing is consistent and in line with national good practice models and practice. The Partnership will implement a 'Healthy Relationships' course to Year 8 & 9 pupils for those schools who have requested it. It educates young people on the key elements of a healthy relationship and how to recognise a relationship which is toxic.

The partnership will continue to implement recommendations from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR).

3. Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime

The partnership will continue to support the work of the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit and implement a local response to the Serious Violence Strategy whose aims include the reduction in the number of people carrying and using knives, early intervention to stop people becoming involved in gangs, support for those already involved in serious violence and robust enforcement where necessary. Through the Youth Offending Service (YOS) we will run restorative justice workshops. The Public Protection Partnership will be undertaking more test purchasing on knives and warning businesses that it is illegal to sell knives to anyone under the age of 18. We will deliver new knife crime workshops working with local young people who may be at risk of committing violent crime including identified specific young people who need support to stop them becoming involved in serious crime.

4. Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults

The partnership will continue to work together closely to safeguard vulnerable members of our community. We will ensure that education and awareness about exploitation and the signs are provided to communities, young people and professionals. We will ensure that individuals who are vulnerable to exploitation are provided with information, support and help. We will utilise the child missing and at risk of exploitation (EMRAC) process to protect and safeguard young people from exploitation. The partnership is keen to ensure that we are live to issues and concerns in relation to tackling exploitation, especially county drugs lines (CDL's). Cases can be complex and multi-faceted requiring a sensitive and joined up approach ranging from support to enforcement. However, where deemed necessary we will advocate the use of criminal and civil powers including community protection notices, premises closure orders, and injunctions to intervene. We will also work to ensure that practitioners and communities are equipped and trained to recognise and report issues of concern and who to refer individuals on to for support.

5. Reduce crimes of residential burglary and theft from vehicles

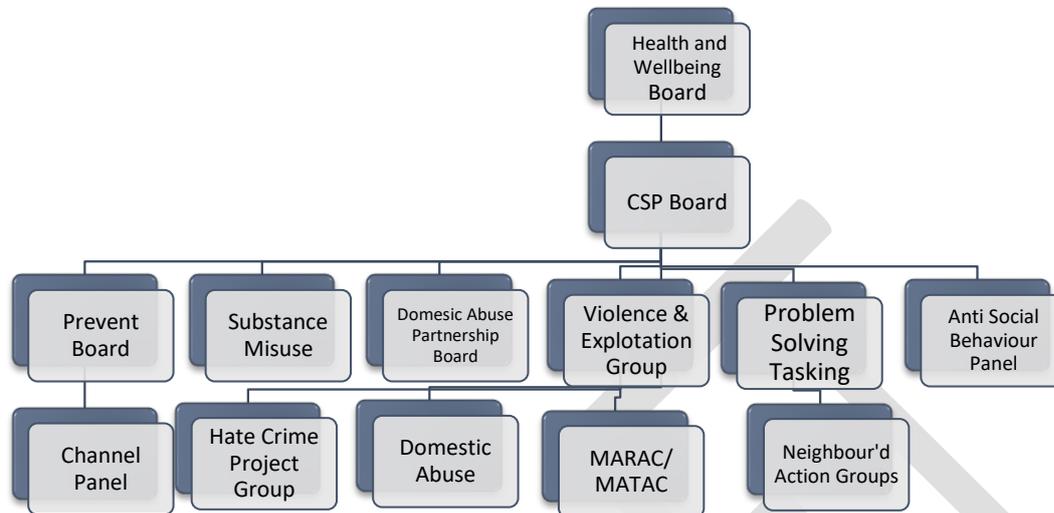
Thames Valley Police is the lead agency that has the duty to hold offenders to account and reduce burglaries and theft from motor vehicles. Other partners will complement their activities by working in partnership to provide effective community messaging to educate residents of how to better protect their property and prevent crime, and target harden hot spots. The partnership will work to target organised criminals when they are operating in the Wokingham Borough to commit burglaries and theft from vehicles by making the borough a hostile place or criminals to operate.

Covid19

The partnership recognises that Covid19 has produced an exceptional set of circumstances and challenges. It has also resulted in dramatically changing and unusual trends. Notable trends have included a fall in burglary and vehicle crime offences and a rise in domestic violence and anti-social behaviour in residential estates and parks and green spaces. Therefore, we will keep a watchful eye on emerging issues and remain flexible in our approach and respond accordingly.

Community Safety Partnership Governance & Delivery Groups

The work of the partnership is driven by a number of multi-agency groups the governance structure and delivery groups for the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) are set out below.



Summary of Consultation Results

This strategy was widely consulted upon with residents and key stakeholders. The consultation process was undertaken through a web-based survey for a period of one month. Draft priorities were presented as part of the information with additional free text boxes provided for responders to articulate their suggestions and opinions at each stage. There were 134 respondents to the survey. The consultation results provide a strong endorsement of the draft priorities and as a result no significant changes are proposed.

In response to whether the Strategic and Specific aims addressed the most important issues 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The highest support for any aim was Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) at 96% and the lowest was Exploitation at 85%. Other priorities suggested were speeding vehicles and noise nuisance. There was recognition and concern that resources to deliver were limited, reducing and likely to reduce further.

Respondents shared concerns about increasing crime levels, increasing anti-social behaviour (ASB), a reduction in visible policing and reporting mechanisms for communicating with residents. Anti-social behaviour was the highest concern relating mainly to gathering groups of young people in parks.

Bigshotte Park is mentioned most often as an area experiencing anti-social behaviour and specific suggestions to resolve this problem from respondents include a Public Space Protection Order and re-deployable CCTV. Other locations featured were Wokingham Town, Sindlesham, Baker Crescent and Sol Joel Skate Park.

Some respondents asked for a better dialogue on local concerns with a suggestion that Neighbourhood Action Groups should be re-introduced. There were also calls for better incident/crime reporting mechanisms and there was frustration that there was no feedback following a report.

Wokingham Community Safety Team

For more information contact the Wokingham Community Safety Team on <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-and-safety/community-safety/community-safety-partnership/>

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