

# Wokingham Borough

## Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment

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## Executive Summary - Serious Violence Review

- Serious violence, as defined by the Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) & Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's), is increasing when looking at the 5 year change. Increases in Group 1 serious violence include knife crime offences specifically in the Violence with & without injury offence categories, as well as increases in GBH. Group 2 serious violence offences all increased (Actual Bodily Harm, Sexual Assault, Rape and Drug Supply) when looking at the 5 year change. The previous Violence Reduction Unit Definition also demonstrated increases in the total of serious violence recorded in Wokingham Borough over the last 5 years.
- Violence with injury including GBH has increased when looking at the 5 year change. Other violent or potentially violent offences are increasing, such as Public Order Offences, Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm & Sexual Offences. Drug Supply also has an increase when looking at the 5 year change, however the fluctuations seen in drugs supply are likely to be related to Police activity, which can fluctuate depending on demand.
- Risk factors for offending identified within Integrated Offender Management (IOM) offender assessment were: substance misuse, accommodation & employment. It is not known how these relate to serious violent offending specifically. Applications filed due to loss of accommodation & homelessness have increased in Wokingham Borough, alongside a small increase in the number of people claiming unemployment benefits.
- More than 13% of MAPPA cases are related to Serious Violence, a large proportion of the non-serious violence cases still relate to violent offences.
- School permanent exclusions & fixed term Fixed-Term Exclusions are increasing in Wokingham Borough & strongly linked with youth offending. Permanent exclusions particularly affect vulnerable groups such as those eligible for Free School Meals or receiving Special Educational Needs. These exclusions are associated with persistent disruptive behaviour, physical assault against adult or drug & alcohol related.

## Serious Violence Recommendations

In response to the Serious Violence Duty and the data presented, the first recommendation would be to have greater and more consistent data sharing to ensure that comparison can be made year on year without significant changes to the scanning streams. A better understanding of the data will support better and more in-depth analysis. As well as allowing for better suggestions for further data that may be required to be collected in the future.

The second recommendation is to identify the most appropriate trigger points for early intervention and the most appropriate agencies to intervene at those moments. For example, criminal justice involvement is likely to be too late to apply effective early interventions, and enforcement and offender management agencies (such as the police, Youth Offending Service, probation, and IOM) are not well placed to deliver these initiatives. However, there may be opportunities to reduce access thresholds to address issues earlier than currently possible and employ alternative sanctions such as restorative and out of court disposals to those in the early stages of offending behaviour, particularly where specific vulnerabilities exist. Universal and voluntary sector services are much better placed to identify and address problems early if the right resources and commissioning structures are available.

Following on from the second recommendation to support the identification of early intervention points a better understanding, through case reviews is required. The journeys taken to serious violent offending and how these differ to those who are more likely to engage in less serious violence. Effort should be made to understand the relationship between public order and criminal damage and future serious violent offending as this could help identify trigger points and opportunities for early intervention. In a similar vein, the CSP could work with schools to identify learning points from pupils who have been excluded for possession of offensive weapons to identify again, any opportunities for earlier multi-agency intervention.

While two of these recommendations focus on early intervention, prevention is also a key factor in addressing serious violence. In particular, the possession of a knife is known to increase an individual's risk of both experiencing and perpetrating serious violence, but it also increases the risk of exclusion from school, which is another known predictor of re-offending. Anecdotally, knives are thought to be carried in response to a fear of victimisation and as a perceived deterrent towards others who would potentially cause harm. There is likely to be scope for educational sessions to raise awareness of the risks of knives and dispel myths on their protective characteristics to dissuade young people from carrying them in the first place. However, there is also a clear need to work with young people who feel afraid and understand the measures that are most likely to make them feel protected and the types of support that they might engage in when feeling vulnerable.

### Serious Violence Review

The Serious Violence duty was imposed on a range of authorities (Local Authority, Criminal Justice, Health and Social Care, Police & Fire and Rescue), following public consultation in July 2019. The duty requires local authorities, the police, fire and rescue, criminal justice agencies and health authorities to work together to formulate an evidence based analysis of the problems associated with serious violence in a local area. Then produce and implement a strategy detailing how they will respond to those particular issues. The duty aims to ensure the required services work together, sharing information to support targeting for their interventions, where possible through existing partnership agreements, the partnerships should collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence in their local communities.

The core themes for complying with the duty are:

1. Focused on a defined population
2. With and for communities: embed the voices and lived experiences of the communities
3. Focused on long and short-term solutions
4. Data-based: including inequalities to create new insights to understand local drivers of Serious Violence

5. Rooted in evidence of effectiveness to tackle problems: learn from others to guide our activities to what is most effective

This report aims to provide Wokingham Borough Council Community Safety Partnership with details about the Serious Violence picture to support the decision making process for their strategy and fulfilling the Serious Violence duty.

In a joint effort between Thames Valley's CSP's, Violence Reduction Unit and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, a working definition of Serious Violence was agreed upon.

“Serious Violence includes specific types of recorded crime, such as homicide, grievous bodily harm, incidents that involve a knife, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing.”

In order to further develop this definition and define what should be included in the monitoring and analysis of serious violence 3 groups were formed:

#### Group 1 –

Crime in this category form the core measurement of serious violence in Thames Valley. These are recorded offences that we aim to have a direct impact on and see reductions. These will be monitored for performance and submission to the Home Office under the Serious Violence Duty.

- All homicide
- All grievous bodily harm
- All knife crime (as collected for Home Office Annual Data Requirement 160)
- Inclusive of all ages, location types (public/private) and domestic flags

#### Group 2 –

There was widespread agreement that sexual offences should not be discounted in what we deem to be important, regardless of whether or not it was the original intention of the Home Office. Group 2 crimes are recorded offences which contribute to the threat, inherece and understanding of Group 1 offences. These would be analysed for the purposes of understanding the correlation/relationship of the crime type, the person involvement and the context. These would not be included in Home Office reporting but would be monitored for partnership sharing. These crimes can increase because of improved awareness, reporting, recording, trust and other external factors. It is, therefore, not always appropriate to assume that Reduction = Good

- All actual bodily harm (thus excluding 'other' violence with injury)
- All drug supply / trafficking (thus excluding possession alone)
- All sexual assault (thus excluding sexual activity and 'other' sexual offences)
- All rape

#### Group 3 –

Lastly, there were questions about how we consider in strategies some of the wider work and investment but is not captured in crime types. Therefore, this final section is to capture police activity that indicates additional resource, focus and better outcomes for Group 1 and 2 offences. Increased in activity is generally a positive indicator but, additionally, recorded activity should be able to be tracked to improved outcomes. These would not be included in Home Office reporting nor would we be reporting to the partnership formally.

- Op Deter (robust approach to knife enabled crime, combining prosecution, early intervention and diversion to tackle offending) demand, throughput and engagement
- Stop & Search (related to knife / blade possession)
- Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVRO)

Prior to the new working definition being released in May 2023 Thames Valley's Violence Reduction Unit had developed a definition of Serious Violence:

- Any incident where a person 25 and under is found in possession of a knife
- An eligible incident with a weapon linked
- Any incident of alleged GBH or more serious
- Any incident where a person 25 and under is alleged to be involved in Possession with Intent to Supply (PWITS)/concerned in the supply of drugs

<b>Serious Violence Offence Type</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
Possession of a knife (25 and under)	9	9	9	20	5
Eligible offences with a weapon linked	75	73	62	90	77
Violence with Injury (GBH or higher)	9	11	6	9	3
Violence with Injury (ABH)	16	25	19	28	24
Violence without Injury	19	10	18	28	19
Burglary	2	2	0	1	3
Robbery	21	21	16	10	10
Sexual Offences	0	0	0	2	2
Public Order	8	4	3	12	16
Serious Violence (GBH or higher)	17	25	19	16	27
Supply of drugs (25 and under)	7	3	15	9	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>110</b>

Table 1 Serious Violence in Wokingham Borough since 2018/19 based on VRU definition [Source: TVP]

The Serious Violence picture in Wokingham Borough appears to be stable with a peak in 2021/22, with at least 19% more offences than any other year in the last 5 years. The data suggests that overall current totals for 2022/23 are stable when compared with the previous 4 years. Offences with a weapon linked are increasing in Burglary, Sexual Offence and Public Order. GBH and higher offences that don't include as linked weapon have also increased to the highest point in the last 5 years.

A&E admissions because of violence have been highlighted in the Cardiff model of information sharing as a useful dataset in this area. Public Health England publish statistics on hospital admissions for violence (including sexual violence) and these figures illustrate that, while figures nationally and regionally have decreased slightly (according to the latest available data, the rate of hospital admissions for violence per 100,000 population in Wokingham Borough has increased slightly in the 3 years to 2020/21 compared to the 3 years to 2019/20. Despite this, the rate of hospital admissions in Wokingham Borough is still around half that of the South-East Region.

	England	South East	Wokingham Borough
Hospital admissions for violence (including sexual violence) per 100,000 population (2018/19-2020/21)	41.9	29.4	14.8
Hospital admissions for violence (including sexual violence) per 100,000 population (2017/18-2019/20)	45.8	31.6	14.1

Table 2 Public Health England Statistics on Violence [Source: [Public Health Profiles - PHE](#) accessed 21/09/2023]

In Wokingham Borough this equates to 70 recorded hospital admissions for Violence between 2018/19 and 2020/21. Of those 70 reported admissions 50 were male and 15 female, following the trends that we tend to see within the demographics of Serious Violence Victims. For those instances with a cause summary reported 35 (50%) of admissions were reported to be caused by assault by bodily force, 10 (14%) Assault by sharp object and 10 (14%) assault by unspecified means. A summary of those with other contributing factors reported that 15 admissions were alcohol related, 35 substance misuse related and 10 mental health related.

Some more recent (2022/23) violence health data has been provided by the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. A total of 144 presentations were recorded, 87% had a presenting complaint of alleged assault recorded. 29% were aged 16-25 and 44% aged 26-45. 65% of incident location types were recorded as public spaces (e.g. educational establishment, licensed premises, public building, road/pavement).

Since the implementation of the Hospital Navigators Programme, (provided by Starting Point funded by the Violence Reduction Unit) 33 residents of Wokingham Borough have been supported, 55% of these were female and 39% male. The reasons for emergency department attendance vary from drugs/alcohol (45%), other injury (24%), self-harm or suicidal ideation (21%) and injury with a weapon (3%).

Whilst knife and weapon possession overall have reduced, the possession of a knife in other age groups had increased 15% in the last 5 years. Suggesting that it's not just the 25 and under age groups that serious violence should be focused on.

Offence Type	2018/19	2022/23	5 Yr Change
Possession of a knife (25 and under)	9	5	↓ 44%
Possession of another weapon (25 and under)	8	1	↓ 88%
Possession of a knife (other ages)	67	77	↑ 15%
Possession of another weapon (other ages)	24	17	↓ 54%
<b>Total Weapons Offences</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>↓ 7%</b>

Table 3 Possession of a knife by those under 25 compared to other weapons offences [Source: TVP]

Other offences that may be associated with serious violence include, Public Order offences with the largest increase in the other age group category. Sexual Offences within the other ages category has the second biggest increase. All 25 and under categories have decreased apart from Acquisitive Crime.

Offence Type	2018/19	2022/23	5 Yr Change
Sexual Offences (25 and under)	3	2	↓ 33%
Sexual Offences (other ages)	173	224	↑ 29%
Public Order Offences (25 and under)	25	14	↓ 52%
Public Order Offences (other ages)	243	868	↑ 257%
Criminal Damage Offences (25 and under)	27	27	
Criminal Damage Offences (other ages)	963	728	↓ 24%
Acquisitive Crime (25 and under)	70	79	↑ 13%
Acquisitive Crime (other ages)	3178	2994	↓ 6%

Table 4 Trends in other offences not included in serious violence definition [Source: TVP]

Under the current Serious Violence definition there have been increases over the last 5 years in knife crime and GBH. The knife crime increases are caused by increases in the violence with and violence without injury that have involved a knife.

Serious Violence Offence Type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	5 Yr Change
<b>Knife Crime</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>↑ 5%</b>
Robbery	21	21	15	10	12	↓ 43%
Sexual Offences				2	2	
Violence With Injury	17	25	18	32	23	↑ 35%
Violence Without Injury	2	5	4	3	5	↑ 150%
<b>Grievous Bodily Harm</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>↑ 13%</b>
<b>Homicide</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>1</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>↑ 5%</b>

Table 5 Group 1 Serious Violence in Wokingham Borough since 2018/19 based on current TVP definition [Source: TVP]

Both the current and previous Serious Violence definitions demonstrate that over the last 5 years there have been small increases in the amount of Serious Violence reported in Wokingham Borough.

Group 2 Serious Violence Offence Type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	5 Yr Change
Actual Bodily Harm	518	580	504	624	559	↑ 8%
Rape	46	56	39	59	60	↑ 30%
Sexual Assault	61	85	69	70	87	↑ 43%
Drug Supply	24	40	92	57	33	↑ 38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>↑ 14%</b>

Table 6 Group 2 Serious Violence in Wokingham Borough since 2018/19 based on current TVP definition [Source: TVP]

When looking at the current definition for serious violence, there has been an increase across all 4 offence types when looking at the 5 year change. An overall increase of 14% has been reported, with the greatest percentage increase being reported in Sexual Assaults. The greatest count increase was seen in Actual Bodily Harm, which has the greatest number of occurrences reported year on year when compared to the other Group 2 offence types.

## Risk Factors

### Youth Offending

The Prevention and Youth Justice Service (PYJS) is responsible for the delivery of prevention (early and targeted intervention), formal and informal diversion and statutory

work. The service is also responsible for providing Appropriate Adult services to Loddon Valley Police Station and for Return Home Interviews for Wokingham children who are reported missing within the Borough.

Current data suggests that First Time Entrants (FTEs) were increasing in 2022/23 with a total of 28, the PYJS have identified that the increase has been impacted due to the clearing of a backlog of investigations in 2022 as a result of the pandemic. Preliminary data for Quarter 1 2023/24 reports to have 2 FTEs vs the 10 reported in Quarter 1 2022/23, this demonstrates a positive reduction of 80%. Suggesting the backlog of investigations was cleared in 2022/23.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	3Yr Change
Reoffenders	3	5	4	
Re-offenses	14	8	10	
Rate of re-offending	4.7	1.6	2.5	- 47%

Table 7 Rate of re-offending in the PYJS cohort [Source: Wokingham Borough Council PYJS]

In the last 3 years the rate of re-offending within the PYJS cohort has decreased by 47%. Suggesting that interventions provided by PYJS have had a positive impact on reducing likelihood that young people will reoffend.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Serious Youth Violence* Offences	6	5	2
Number of children involved	2	5	2
Breakdown of types of Serious Youth Violence Offences			
Drug offences	0	0	0
Violence against the person offences	0	2	1
Robbery Offences	6	3	1

Table 8 Breakdown of PYJS Serious Violence Offences over the last 3 years [Source: Wokingham Borough Council PYJS]

\*Serious Violence here refers to the Youth Justice Board definition: any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of 5 or more (substantive outcomes only)

Over the last 3 years the number of Serious Violence Offences committed by children has reduced by 67% (against the YJB definition) The breakdown of the types of Serious Youth Violence Offences suggests that Robbery and Violence against the person offences are more likely to be the types of serious violence that young people are involved in. Despite this being the case, the number of Robbery and Violence against the person offences have been reducing over the last 3 years. Despite the low levels of youth Serious Violence recorded in Wokingham Borough the PYJS are committed to continue to identify, plan and deliver relevant prevention programmes to support ongoing low levels of Serious Youth Violence.

	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	No. of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	No. of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	No. of SV offences	Rate of SV offences
Wokingham Borough	6	3.2	5	2.6	2	1.0
YJS Family average	28	4.9	20	3.5	14	2.5

Table 9 Wokingham Borough Council PYJS Serious Violence Offences vs YJS family average [Source: Wokingham Borough Council PYJS]

We can see that within Wokingham Borough Council's PYJS family average there has been a reduction in the number of Serious Violence offences and the rate of Serious Violence offences year on year for the last 3 years. With a PYJS family average reduction of 50% vs Wokingham Borough's 67% reduction, suggesting that Wokingham Borough Council's PYJS approach to interventions relating to Serious Violence are having a positive impact. Every year Wokingham Borough have reported much lower number in their Serious Violence offences compared to their family average.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	3Yr Change
Knife and offensive weapon offences (not included in serious violence)	7	8	8	+ 14%

Table 10 PYJS knife and offensive weapon offences not included in Serious Violence Offences over the last 3 years [Source: Wokingham Borough Council PYJS]

The knife and offensive weapon offences for Wokingham Borough include Possession – blade or knife and Possession – offensive weapon. These have seen a slight increase (14%) in the 3 year change but has remained stable for the last 2 financial years, with a total of 8 offences recorded each year. Further action is planned to enhance the “pre-charge bail” prevention pathway. The PYJS will work jointly with TVP to identify and implement a prevention pathway specifically designed for children arrested (or voluntarily interviewed) for weapon related offences.

	Community Resolution (including DDS)	Prevention	Other Interventions
2021/22	115	45	47
2022/23	90	55	35

Table 11 Total cohort by intervention type [Source: Wokingham Borough Council PYJS]

The number of young people on a community resolution intervention has decreased by 22% compared to the previous financial year. The completion rate for community resolutions for 2022/23 was 29%, the complete data set was not made available for completion rate in 2021/22. However for Q2-Q4 2021/22 the completion rate was 22%.

#### School Permanent Exclusions & Fixed-Term Exclusions

Analysis of the Department of Education and Ministry of Justice data demonstrates that children who have been permanently excluded are more likely to have been cautioned or sentenced for a Serious Violence offence than those who have not been excluded. Beyond this correlation there is little understanding on how or whether school exclusion causes involvement in Serious Violence, 88% of children received their first exclusion before their first serious violence offence but there is often a significant time lag between them [source: [The role of systems of support in serious youth violence: evidence and gaps \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-data-and-analysis/2022/04/the-role-of-systems-of-support-in-serious-youth-violence-evidence-and-gaps)].

	2021/22	2022/23
No. of Permanent Exclusions	16	23
No. of Fixed-Term Exclusions	432	1052
No. of new pupils having One or More Fixed-Term Exclusions	254	429
No. of new pupils having multiple Fixed-Term Exclusions	95	200
No. of Days missed in school for Fixed-Term Exclusions	836.5	2131.5

Table 12 Permanent and Fixed-Term Exclusions data [Source: Wokingham Borough Council PYJS]

The rate of exclusion in Wokingham Borough (0.05%) was below the national rate of exclusion (0.08%) in 2021/22. In the last 2 school years (2021/22 to 2022/23), there have been 39 Permanent Exclusions from state-funded Primary, Secondary, Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units in Wokingham Borough. Permanent Exclusions are increasing in Wokingham Borough when comparing the two years with an increase of 44% from 16 to 23.

Permanent exclusions in the school year 2022/23 (23) are associated with Persistent Disruptive Behaviour (8), Physical assault against adult (5) or Drug and alcohol related (3). Previous data indicated there was a correlation between serious violence (specifically possession of a weapon), and permanent exclusion. The more recent data from the last school year would suggest that this is not currently the case in Wokingham Borough.

Fixed-Term Exclusions have seen a 143% increase from 2021/22 (432) to 2022/23 (1052). With the increase in Fixed-Term Exclusions there has also been an increase in the number of pupils being suspended, as well as an increase in the number of pupils with multiple Fixed-Term Exclusions. The average number of days missed in school has also increased, the average number of days missed from school has increased from 1.9 days (2021/22) to 2 days (2022/23). Suggesting that on average pupils on 2022/23 were being suspended for slightly longer periods of time.

The most common reasons cited for Fixed-Term Exclusions in Wokingham Borough are Persistent Disruptive Behaviour (49%), Physical assault against a pupil (14%), or Verbal abuse/threat to an Adult (13%), making up 76% of the reasons for Fixed-Term Exclusion for 2022/23.

Both permanent exclusions and Fixed-Term Exclusions are higher for males than females, they are more common in pupils with either PPG or FSM and pupils with SEN support needs.

#### Child Exploitation

No updated data for Child Exploitation has been provided beyond that provided in the Starby Serious Violence Problem Profile from the Strategic Assessment – May 2022. Please see below:

Another key risk factor for youth criminality is youth exploitation, particularly but not exclusively, child criminal exploitation. Wokingham Borough Council's Children's Services chair and administer a multi-agency forum known as EMRAC (Exploited and Missing Risk Assessment Conference) to discuss cases of young people identified as at risk of exploitation or going missing.

Area of Concern at Referral to EMRAC	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Criminal Exploitation	33	25	16
Sexual Exploitation	12	10	10

Child goes missing	18	10	4
<b>Total Referrals</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>31</b>

Table 13 Referrals to Wokingham Borough EMRAC by the area of concern at referral [Source: Wokingham Borough] (NB. Some referrals may have more than one concern identified)

Although the number of referrals to EMRAC have declined over the past 3 years, Child Criminal Exploitation remains the most common concern for the borough, representing more than half of referrals each year. Cases of suspected sexual exploitation have not declined at the same rate as other concerns.

68% of referrals are male, consistent over the years, while the biggest reductions have been in younger referrals (under 16), while those aged 16-17 have not declined at the same rate as other age groups, representing 65% of referrals in 2021/22. This could indicate that those opportunities for early intervention are not being identified as readily as in previous years. Similarly, the biggest reductions have been in White British referrals, while referrals of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds have not declined at the same rate, representing 35% of referrals in 2021/22.

#### Adult Offending

The Probation Service have provided data on Thames Valley Violence and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) Cases managed at any point from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019-31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. A total of 308 cases have been identified for Wokingham Borough, according to the current person on probation postcode that was provided within the data set. The Offender Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS) offence category for all cases is violence.

Main Offence Category Description	Sentence Length					Total
	≤ 1 year	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-12.5 years	>12.5 years	
Malicious wounding and other like offences (misdemeanours)	58	50	16	3	2	<b>129</b>
Common and other types of assault	68	57	0	1	0	<b>126</b>
Wounding and other acts endangering life	1	2	4	5	3	<b>15</b>
Assault on Police Officer	9	3	1	0	0	<b>13</b>
Murder	0	0	0	0	10	<b>10</b>
Manslaughter (Category)	2	1	1	0	0	<b>4</b>
Firearms offences	0	1	1	1	0	<b>3</b>
Cruelty to or neglect of children (Summary)	0	2	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
Perverting the course of justice (Category)	1	1	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
Aggravated burglary in a building other than a dwelling (including attempts)	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Kidnapping (Category)	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Offences in relation to dogs	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>308</b>
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Table 14 Wokingham Borough Violence and MAPPA cases broken down by main offence category and sentence length [Source: South Central Probation Service]

The most common offence description is malicious wounding and other like offences, with a range of sentence lengths. MAPPA Violent Offence has been marked as yes for 71 of the 308 offences. When looking at the Offence Subcategory Description 30 offences were categorised as GBH and 10 as murder. These 40 (13%) offences would be classified as Group 1 Serious Violence.

No updated IOM data has been provided beyond that provided in the Starby Serious Violence Problem Profile from the Strategic Assessment – May 2022. Please see below:

Between January 2020 and November 2021, the Probation Service worked with 288 cases from Wokingham Borough. This includes data from the previous South-West & Central Probation, Thames Valley CRC, and the recently combined South-Central Probation. These cases are predominantly male (80%) and aged 30-49 (45%). The most common offence type recorded against Probation cases is Violence (28%), followed by Drink Driving (17%) and other motoring offences (11%) and a variety of Acquisitive offences (17%). Drugs (7%) and Sexual offences (5%) are less prevalent.

A National Review of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programmes across the country found that different police forces were taking differing approaches and produced national guidance to standardize how the IOM resources were used. The recommendation is that the IOM should focus on neighbourhood crimes, specifically Robbery, Burglary, and Vehicle Theft, with an additional free category that forces could use to align to local priorities. In the Thames Valley, the free category is used to work with Female offenders, Domestic Abuse perpetrators, Organised Crime Groups, and offenders of Knife Crime. The IOM programme is about rehabilitation and so the focus is on persistent criminals or offenders with significant pathway needs (according to the 7 pathways to re-offending). Violent offenders are less likely to fall into this category and therefore less likely to be appropriate for IOM intervention.

Emerging trends in the IOM sphere is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health in the rehabilitative process, which might initially have been attributed to substance misuse, and there is more understanding of the relationship between the two. In addition, there is recognition that offenders do not need to reach abstinence from addictive substances to prevent re-offending as, if other things can be resolved, such as financial stability, positive relationships, and improved attitudes to offending, substance use can be controlled or reduced without leading to re-offending.

95% of referrals to IOM come from Probation indicating scope for greater partnership involvement. IOM have capacity to take more referrals and it is likely that many partners within the CSP work with people who would fall under the Neighbourhood Strategy, particularly within the transition from Youth Offending Services to adult services, where there can be a risk of people falling through the gaps in the system as they turn 18 and these cases could be referred into the IOM for a more intensive approach. IOM nominals spend an average of 1 year and 5 months on the cohort, achieving approximately 16% reduction in charges in the first six months and 50% reduction in charges in the last six months.

Between 80-100% of IOM nominals in Bracknell and Wokingham have been convicted of both SAC and Violent offences and 60% have a DV Flag as either a victim or a perpetrator, while 53% have also been recorded as a victim of serious violence (ABH and above).

Bracknell and Wokingham IOM cohort is 13% female, which is average for the Thames Valley and higher than the prison population (5%).

The TVP 2022/23 Q2 IOM Performance Partner Document report (Appendix xx) shows that the Bracknell & Wokingham LPA has 12 nominals being the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest in the force area with only Windsor & Maidenhead having fewer. All of the 12 nominals are violent offenders, 10 are male.

Of these, 9 are in the community and 3 are in custody. In the previous 6 months 3 nominals were at liberty and did not commit an offence (25%).

There is an increase in charges in the 6 months after addition compared to the previous 6 months before joining IOM. (5 nominals committing 22 offences compared to 4 nominals committing 25 offences).

Across the force area only 4% of nominals wearing a Buddi (GPS) tag were charged with an offence compared to 22% without a tag.

#### Drug and Alcohol Misuse

The Berkshire West Drug and Alcohol needs assessment 2022 states there is a strong association between problem drug use and violent crime and that approximately 30% of suspects of serious violence offences in the Thames Valley have previous history of drug use/supply; for Wokingham Borough this figure is approximately 23%, the lowest in the Thames Valley.

The number of new presentations to drug and alcohol treatment services in Wokingham Borough in 2021/22 have increased by 72% compared to 2020/21 and are 102% higher than 4 years ago in 2018/19. The caseload for the service had increased by 39% in the last 4 years.

Substance Category	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total
Alcohol only	85	110	72	114	103	139	157	157
Alcohol and non-opiate	28	39	28	41	31	46	49	49
Non-opiate only	27	33	19	30	50	65	52	52
Opiate	65	116	52	118	57	131	157	157
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>415</b>

Table 15 New presentations to drug and alcohol treatment and total in treatment each year

The majority of all those in treatment in 2021/22, are male (65%), 30-49 (62%), and White British (88%). Of all those starting treatment in 2020/21, 7% recorded a housing problem, 2% being NFA (No Fixed Abode), this has increased in 2021/22 to 11% with a housing problem and 5% NFA. 14% of those new to treatment recorded their employment status as long term sick or disabled, 18% unemployed and seeking work and 16% unemployed and not seeking work. 32% of all in treatment are recorded as parents, 52% of the parents in treatment have all children living with parent and 5% have some children living with parent. Of those living with their children just 26%, a reduction from 34% in 2020/21, were subject to Children's Social Care (Early Help 1.4%, Child in need 7.2%, Child protection plan 15.2% and Looked after children 2.2%).

6% of opiate users achieved a successful completion which is a small increase on the 5% from 2020/21, as well as the increases in percentage of successful completions there has been a decreases in re-representations within 6 months from 33% (2020/21) to 25% (2021/22). Despite the small improvements in the opiate users successful completions there have been decreases in successful completions in non-opiate only (30%), alcohol only

(27%) and alcohol and non-opiate (30%). The percentage of re-representations within 6 months has increased when compared with 2020/21 in non-opiate only (14%), alcohol only (17%) and alcohol and non-opiate (14%).

The source of referral into drug and alcohol treatment services is self, family, and friends (45%), followed by substance misuse services (37%), then GP, community based care and Other all with 4.6% for each referral.

#### Accommodation and Education, Training and Employment

Alongside alcohol and substance misuse, accommodation and education, training and employment are the other two highest scoring pathway needs at assessment for IOM nominals. Accommodation and Education, Training and Employment are the pathway needs that can have a significant impact on the likelihood that IOM nominal will re-offend, specifically the impact that meaningful occupation and stable housing can have.

The claimant count is taken from the ONS website, some caution should be taken when looking at this data as some people are able to claim both contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit at the same time. The ONS are not currently able to identify these individuals prior to producing the Claimant Count. Consequently, there has been a small amount of double counting. Information from DWP suggests this double counting increased at the start of the pandemic and has stabilised at approximately 1.0 to 1.5% of the Claimant Count.

Year	Total
Wokingham Borough claimant count (Apr 2023)	1,820
Wokingham Borough claimant count (Apr 2022)	1,750
Wokingham Borough claimant count (Apr 2021)	3,485

Table 16 Wokingham Borough claimant counts [Source: CC01 Regional labour market: Claimant Count by unitary and local authority (experimental) - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)]

The numbers of people claiming unemployment benefits reached a high in 2021 during the pandemic. Between April 2021 and April 2023 there has been a 48% decrease in the number of claimants for Jobseeker's Allowance and/or Universal Credit. Even with the decrease seen they are still greater than pre-pandemic levels, when compared with April 2019 (920 claimants) the number of claimants in April 2023 is 98% higher.

Homeless applications made to the local authority are also publicly available via the national HCLIC system. In 2022/23, Wokingham Borough assessed 339 households against the Homelessness Reduction Bill, a 27% increase compared to 2021/22 (315).

	2021/22	2022/23	% Change
Total households assessed	315	399	↑ 27%
Households owed a prevention duty	131 (41.6%)	179 (44.9%)	↑ 37%
Households owed a relief duty	182 (57.8%)	211 (52.9%)	↑ 16%
Households not owed a duty under the Bill	2 (0.6%)	9 (2.2%)	↑ 350%

Table 17 Change in Homeless Applications [Source: Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)]

Households were either assessed as being owed a prevention duty under the Bill (threatened with imminent homelessness) or a relief duty (homeless at the time). The largest increase has been in households owed a prevention duty, indicating earlier help-seeking behaviour.

	<b>Households with Prevention Duty</b>	<b>Households with Relief Duty</b>
Primary Reason for Loss of Accommodation	<b>39.7% (52 households)</b> End of private rented tenancy – assured short hold <b>25.2% (33 households)</b> Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	<b>28.6% (52 households)</b> Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate <b>20.9% (38 households)</b> Domestic abuse
Household Structure	<b>27.5%</b> Single parent female <b>20.6%</b> Single adult male <b>19.8%</b> Single adult female	<b>45.1%</b> Single adult male <b>21.4%</b> Single parent female <b>17.6%</b> Single adult female
Outcome of Duty	<b>46.8%</b> Homeless (including intentionally homeless) <b>39.6%</b> Secured accommodation for 6+ months (63.6% private rented, 27.3% social rented)	<b>37.8%</b> Secured accommodation for 6+ months (49.2% private rented, 40% social rented) <b>50.6%</b> 56 days elapsed

Table 18 Comparison of households owed a prevention duty or owed a relief duty 2021/22  
[Source: [Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/tables/tables-on-homelessness)]

The difference in gender profile of those households owed a prevention duty compared to those households owed a relief duty illustrate that females are more likely to receive a prevention duty, while males are more likely to receive a relief duty. This could indicate that females are more likely to seek help earlier, while they are still housed, or that females are more likely to be given notice by their friends/family.

The outcomes for households with prevention duty in Wokingham Borough are that 46.8% are likely to be homeless including intentionally homeless, this is more than double the percentage seen nationally of 20.2%. In Wokingham Borough 39.6% secured accommodation for 6 or more months, of those who secured accommodation the majority secured it through private rentals (63.6%) and just 27.3% through social rentals, nationally 44.1% secured social rented, and 38.4% private rented. Change the order

Of the outcomes with the relief duty 37.8% secured accommodation for 6 or more months lower than the 39.7% seen nationally. For those who secured accommodation 40% secured social rentals (51.4% nationally), but still a greater proportion of 49.2% secured accommodation through privately rented accommodation (28.4% nationally). Of those households with accommodation secured 67.7% were able to remain in Wokingham Borough, which is slightly lower than the national average at 69.9% remained in the same local authority.

Support Need Identified	Mental Health	Physical Health	Domestic Abuse	Offending History	Alcohol Dependency	Drug Dependency
Wokingham Borough applications	25.2%	17.3%	12.7%	7.9%	3.3%	4.8%
National applications	23.1%	14.8%	10.3%	8%	4%	5.6%

Table 19 Primary support needs of households owed a prevention or relief duty for 2021/22  
[Source: [Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)]

A total of 393 support needs were identified in Wokingham Borough. The support needs most prevalent within those households assessed as owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Bill are mental health issues and physical health issues, both of which are higher than the national representation. This is also the case for Domestic abuse support need in Wokingham Borough, further highlighting the importance of ensuring safe and suitable accommodation for survivors.

### Summary and Interpretation

Serious Violence in Wokingham Borough is increasing, based on both police-recorded crimes that match the VRU definition and the current Thames Valley definition of serious violence (taking into account Group 1 and 2 Serious Violence). Hospital admissions for violence (including sexual violence) per 100,000 population, requires an update, but the data we have suggests they have been increasing in recent years. The increases in police-recorded group 1 serious violence are primarily made up of increases in recorded GBH (13%) and knife crime (5%). Within knife crime, Violence with and without injury were the two offence types that increased. Within group 2 serious violence Actual Bodily Harm, Rape, Sexual Assault and Drug Supply have all increased when looking at the 5 year change. This indicates that there have been increases in violent offences in Wokingham Borough over the last 5 years.

Furthermore, while serious violence is increasing in Wokingham Borough, there are also trends of increasing levels of lesser impact violence, including violence occasioning ABH, public order offences, and Sexual offences. The national focus on an early intervention and prevention approach to tackling serious violence calls for a greater understanding of the trigger points and journeys people take that lead to involvement in these types of offences.

Serious Youth Violence is decreasing in Wokingham Borough according to the YJB definition. Despite these decreases, recorded knife and offensive weapon offences involving youths in Wokingham Borough are stable with unchanging totals for the last two years (2021/22 and 2022/23). There has been an overall reduction in the total numbers in the cohort for intervention when compared with the last financial year. First time entrants to the Youth offending cohort have been increasing however the latest figures suggest that this is reducing again to normal levels, this is thought to be related to the clearing of the backlog of investigations as a result of the pandemic.

School exclusions are strongly linked with youth offending in research; however both permanent and fixed term exclusions are increasing in Wokingham Borough. Both Fixed-Term Exclusions and exclusions are more likely to be related to Persistent Disruptive Behaviour, Physical assault against adult/child or Drug and alcohol related and therefore related to less serious incidents.

Wokingham Borough CSP's previous strategic assessment highlighted that domestic abuse, child abuse, social care involvement and Special Educational Needs (SEN) were prevalent in youth offending and child criminal exploitation cases. The increasing complexity of cases should not be underestimated.

Data provided by the probation service on their MAPPA cases that reside within Wokingham Borough suggests that most cases relate to malicious wounding and other like offences and common and other types of assault. It is likely that a proportion of these MAPPA cases will relate to serious violence incidents, 13% of the MAPPA cases would be classified as serious violence under GBH or murder. It is not possible to identify how many further cases would be included as knife crime as this is not included in the data set.

Accommodation and Education, Training and Employment were two of the highest scoring pathway needs at assessment at IOM but also have the largest improvements at IOM exit, indicating a strong association with serious and persistent offending and their significance in achieving desistance from re-offending [Source: Starby May 2022 Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment]. The number of people applying for homelessness support has increased, there is evidence of people applying for support earlier and being offered the prevention duty. Wokingham Borough still fall far below the national average for successful outcomes. The most prevalent support needs recorded include mental and physical health issues followed by domestic abuse, all of which have a higher-than-average proportion reporting when compared with the national data set. The number of people claiming unemployment in Wokingham Borough increased exponentially during the pandemic, and although numbers have reduced since lockdown restrictions ended, they still exceed pre-pandemic levels.

## **Recommendations**

The Local Government Association's Safer and Stronger Communities Board "support a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime, which has become an increasing priority for councils. Early intervention and prevention needs to be central to this work, as opposed to relying solely on a criminal justice strategy. This requires the input of a range of partners, including in the health and education sectors." [Source: Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021: serious violence duty factsheet].

In response to the national guidance and the data presented here, the first recommendation would be to have greater and more consistent data sharing to ensure that comparison can be made year on year without significant changes to the scanning streams. A better understanding of the data will support better and more in-depth analysis. As well as allowing for better suggestions for further data that may be required to be collected in the future.

The second recommendation is to identify the most appropriate trigger points for early intervention and the most appropriate agencies to intervene at those moments. For example, criminal justice involvement is likely to be too late to apply effective early interventions, and enforcement and offender management agencies (such as the police, YOS, probation, and IOM) are not well placed to deliver these initiatives. However, there may be opportunities to reduce access thresholds to address issues earlier than currently possible and employ alternative sanctions such as restorative and out of court disposals to those in the early stages of offending behaviour, particularly where specific vulnerabilities exist. Universal and voluntary sector services are much better placed to identify and address problems early if the right resources and commissioning structures are available.

Following on from the second recommendation to support the identification of early intervention points a better understanding, through case reviews is required. The journeys taken to serious violent offending and how these differ to those who are more likely to engage in less serious violence. Effort should be made to understand the relationship between public order and criminal damage and future serious violent offending as this could help identify trigger points and opportunities for early intervention. In a similar vein, the CSP could work with schools to identify learning points from pupils who have been excluded for possession of offensive weapons to identify again, any opportunities for earlier multi-agency intervention.

While two of these recommendations focus on early intervention, prevention is also a key factor in addressing serious violence. In particular, the possession of a knife is known to increase an individual's risk of both experiencing and perpetrating serious violence, but it also increases the risk of exclusion from school, which is another known predictor of re-offending. Anecdotally, knives are thought to be carried in response to a fear of victimisation and as a perceived deterrent towards others who would potentially cause harm. There is likely to be scope for educational sessions to raise awareness of the risks of knives and dispel myths on their protective characteristics to dissuade young people from carrying them in the first place. However, there is also a clear need to work with young people who feel afraid and understand the measures that are most likely to make them feel protected and the types of support that they might engage in when feeling vulnerable.

## Appendix A – Data Sources

Data Sources are listed by the dataset that was used and the agency from which it was sourced

Provider of Data	Description of Data Used
Wokingham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Domestic Abuse Housing Needs Assessments</li><li>- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24</li></ul>
Police Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Recorded Crime Data with offender, victim and property attributes</li><li>- Police calls for service re ASB</li></ul>
Youth Offending Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Caseload Data plus Assessments</li></ul>
Integrated Offender Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Performance Data</li></ul>
South East Probation Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- MAPPA Cases</li></ul>
Drug and Alcohol Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Public Health WBD NDTMS</li></ul>
Office of National Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Census Data</li><li>- Claimant Counts</li></ul>
Public Health England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fingertips Tool for Violence</li></ul>
HCLIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Homeless Applications Data</li></ul> <p><u>Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK (<a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>)</u></p>