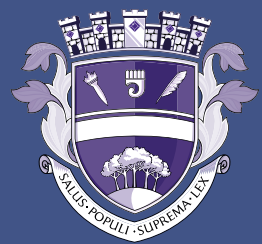


SERIOUS VIOLENCE STRATEGY

2024-2027



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

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Introduction

In 2022, the Government issued guidance on implementing a Serious Violence Duty, outlining commitments and responsibilities for both Central and Local Government, as well as designated partners such as the police, justice (Youth Justice and Probation), health, education, and fire and rescue. This new Duty mandates specified authorities to coordinate efforts and strategize to prevent and reduce Serious Violence.

In this endeavour, local areas are encouraged to adopt a public health approach, focusing on:

- A specific population.
- Collaboration with and for communities.
- The generation of both short-term and long-term solutions.
- Utilisation of data and intelligence to identify population burdens and inequalities.
- Rooting strategies in evidence of effectiveness to address the issue.

Harrow's Serious Violence Strategy aligns with these core principles. It acknowledges that a sole reliance on law enforcement may not yield the necessary long-term solutions to Serious Violence. The strategy underscores a commitment towards prevention and early intervention while providing support and protection to those deemed at risk of Serious Violence within the community. This strategy presents Harrow's understanding and approach to delivering interventions that prevent and respond to incidents of Serious Violence.

In addition to the statutory requirements for Community Safety Partnerships to conduct strategic assessments and formulate plans addressing issues of crime in their respective areas, the recent implementation of the Serious Violence Duty imposes additional obligations on local boroughs to develop a dedicated focus and plan specifically targeting Serious Violence.

Our partnership, Safer Harrow, has proactively taken measures to prepare for this new Duty, against a backdrop of recent knife-related incidents in Harrow over the past year. The partnership remains dedicated in its commitment to addressing knife crime, aiming to prevent serious injury or worse, the loss of life.

Through extensive consultation, active engagement with local communities, and capturing the perspectives of young people, we have access to first-hand understanding of their concerns and the actions they desire to enhance the quality of their neighbourhoods. These concerns, along with insights gained from lessons learned, successes, and best practices from previous strategies, have significantly contributed to the latest strategic assessment.

This ensures that the priorities we have identified are shaped by the input of Harrow’s residents.

Our Vision

The London Borough of Harrow’s vision is to restore pride in Harrow. By working with key partners in the borough, Harrow’s ambition is for Harrow to be a place where individuals, families and communities thrive, making the most of the opportunities to live, learn and work free from the fear of violence. In taking this forward, one of our main priorities is to create a borough that is clean and safe. In doing so, we will:

Focusing on the prevention of violence - by implementing preventative interventions and diversions at the earliest opportunity

Tackle inequalities – challenging and taking action to address the root causes of violence

Build on community assets – recognising individual and community strengths and how this can build a whole system’s approach to reduce violence

Work collaboratively – making sure everyone is playing their part and sharing responsibility through the concept of contextual safeguarding

Be led by intelligence – using data and intelligence to shape our approach and response to violence

Definition of Serious Violence

Harrow’s Community Safety Partnership, Safer Harrow, has adopted the London Guidance and has defined Serious Violence for the purposes of the Serious Violence Duty as

“Any violence and exploitation affecting young people under the age of 25, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. Within the context of these types of violence, it encompasses homicide, grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, personal robbery, threats to kill and violence against property caused during the commission of one of these offences”

Domestic abuse is as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The following non-domestic crime categories are included in Serious Violence:	The following non-domestic crime categories are included in Sexual Violence:
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actual Bodily Harm - Attempted Murder - Grievous Bodily Harm - Homicide - Kidnapping - Personal Robbery - Strangulation - Threats to Kill - Wounding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rape - Assault by penetration - Sexual Assault
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The key focus of the Serious Violence Duty is on public space youth violence (under 25). Knife crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing, modern slavery and criminal and sexual exploitation are also included.

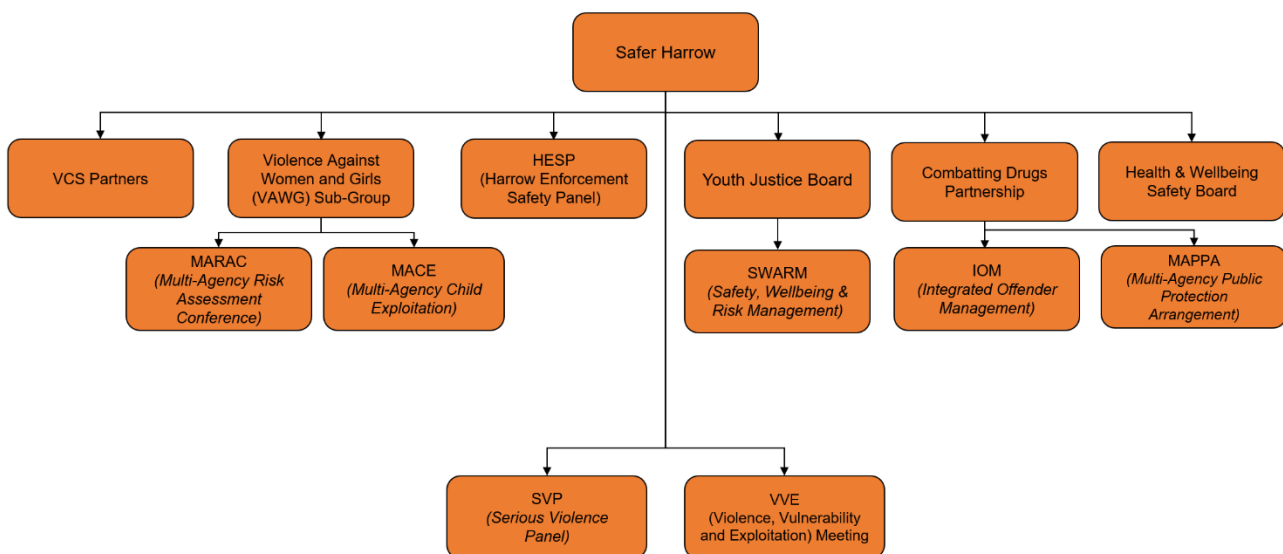
Harrow's strategic assessment also includes data on domestic abuse and violence. This flagged set of offences includes all crime categories where domestic element has been identified by the police (irrespective of age).

Governance, Partnerships, and Interdependencies

Facilitating a collaborative partnership approach to address Serious Violence is imperative for the successful execution of this strategy, recognising that no single organisation can resolve the issue on its own.

In the London Borough of Harrow, we confirm that we are following the London guidance and the Community Safety Partnership, Safer Harrow (see Appendix 1), and this partnership will be the lead in implementing and ensuring compliance with the duty.

Figure 1: Current Governance Structure



The Serious Violence Panel in Harrow will take on the crucial role of ensuring effective supervision of responses to serious violent crime and overseeing the implementation of measures, which integrate prevention, early intervention, and safeguarding into our responses throughout the London Borough of Harrow. This group will supervise the execution of the Serious Violence Duty, employing a public health approach and actively promoting partnership collaboration to ensure coherence in areas such as safeguarding. Oversight of the Serious Violence Panel will be under the purview of Safer Harrow.

There are several established partnerships that interrelate with the priorities of the Serious Violence Strategy. Harrow continue to work collaboratively with partners from Community Safety Partnerships, Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Sub-group, Health and Wellbeing Safety Board, Children’s Safeguarding partnerships and Youth Justice Board to

ensure we align our strategic priorities to reduce the impact of Serious Youth Violence in our communities.

This strategy acknowledges the influence of further key elements on Serious Violence and links to other cross-cutting strategies to which this one is aligned can be found below:

Community Safety Strategy 2023 – 2026 which includes six key priority areas: Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), Burglary and Motor Vehicle Crime, Violence and Violent Incidents, Drugs, Hate Crime and Perception of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Harrow Youth Justice Plan 2022 – 2024 which highlights a 'Child-First' approach with three key focus areas: Disproportionality, Early Intervention and Prevention and Representation (voice of the child).

Combatting Drugs Partnership Delivery Plan 2022 – 2025 which includes three key commitments: breaking the drugs supply chain, delivering a world-class treatment and recovery system, and achieving a generational shift in the demand for drugs.

Harrow Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2030 that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community and reduce inequalities for all ages. It includes the wider issues that influence health and wellbeing such as education and skills, employment, and surroundings.

Serious Violence in Harrow

The Safer Harrow Community Safety Partnership produces a strategic assessment of crime and disorder in Harrow each quarter. This process keeps the Safer Harrow Partnership informed of any crime and anti-social behaviour issues, trends, and emerging themes.

Consultation

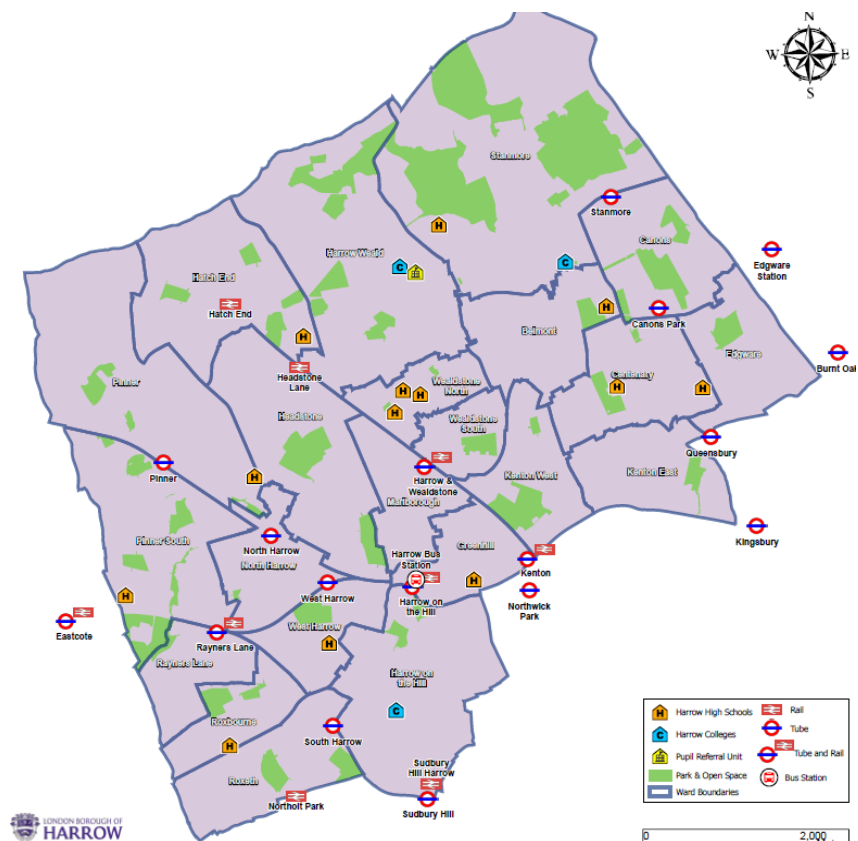
As set out in the Serious Violence Duty, the below statutory agencies were consulted:

- Metropolitan Police
- London Fire Brigade
- National Probation Service
- Youth Offending Services
- Public Health
- Education Services
- Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Organisations

Harrow is divided into 22 wards.

Transport hubs include one main Bus station in Harrow Town Centre, three London Overground stations, ten tube stations and around 430 bus stops. There are also 36 parks and open spaces, which are distributed relatively evenly across the borough and most of which are accessible, within 10-15 minutes of walking from a resident’s home.

Figure 2: Ward Map of Harrow



Harrow's population is growing and aging. The 2021 Census estimated Harrow had 261,300 usual residents with 78,390 (30%) under 25 years old. Across London, rates of population movement are high, especially among younger adults. Data from the 2021 Census shows that 10.0% of Harrow residents had moved into the area in the previous year - 8.6% from other parts of the UK and 1.4% from abroad.

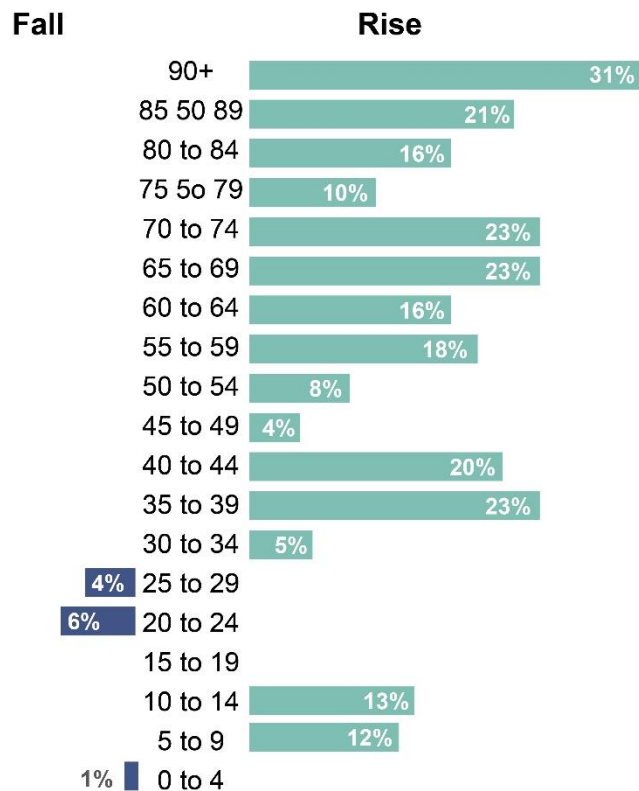
Population movement can influence a resident's sense of belonging in their community. Other data shows¹ that in areas of Harrow, such as parts of Headstone, Greenhill, and Harrow on the Hill, over half the population changed during the period 2011 to 2020.

Harrow is ethnically diverse, with at least 285 different ethnic identities reported in the 2021 Census. In 2021, 45% of the population identified as "Asian or "Asian British", which ranks 3rd nationally; 8.6% identified as "Black, Black British, Caribbean or African"; 3.8% identified themselves within mixed or multiple ethnic groups; 36.5% identified as "White"; 7.2% identified themselves within "Other" ethnic groups.

Nationally, Harrow is home to the largest population of Sri Lankan born (4.1%) and Romanian born (8.1%) communities and has the 4th largest Afghan born (1.8%) population in the country. Compared with other Local Authorities, Harrow has the highest percentage its population reporting Romanian as a main language (7.5%, 19,000) and there are over 155 languages spoken in Harrow schools.

The 2021 Census reports that 12% of people in Harrow are disabled under the Equality Act definition and 18,747 (21%) households include one person who has a disability.

Figure 3: % change in age of population

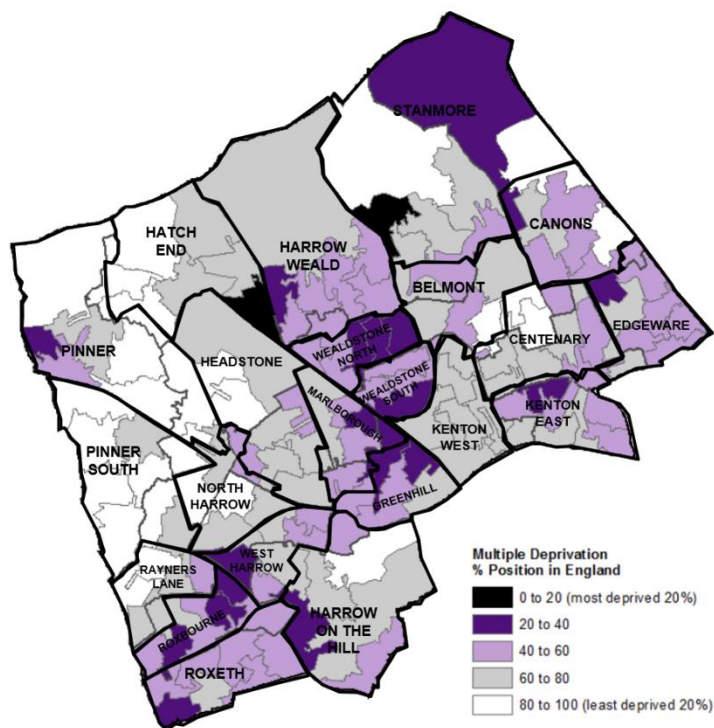


¹ [CDRC Residential Mobility Index | CDRC Data](#)

Schools in Harrow perform well in comparison to national and statistically similar local authorities. The vast majority of primary schools and secondary schools are judged ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted. Harrow also has among the lowest levels in London of young people (aged 16-17) not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Figure 4: Multiple Deprivation % in Harrow

Harrow is the 7th least deprived London Borough in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation². Harrow’s most deprived LSOA is in Stanmore ward (E01002227) and is the area covering the Woodlands and Cottesmore Estates. The second most deprived LSOA is in Hatch End ward (E01002151) and includes parts of the Headstone and Headstone Lane Estates.



Crown Copyright
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Source: MHCLG English Indices of Deprivation 2019

As with London, The London Borough of Harrow faces some economic challenges. Based on an annual gross income of under £15,000 in 2021, Roxbourne (16.1%), Wealdstone (15%) and Marlborough (14.1%) have the highest proportion of households with low incomes at ward level. The rankings remain the same based on a £20,000 low-income threshold, but proportions are considerably higher (Roxbourne (25.9%), Wealdstone (24.7%) and Marlborough (23.7%))³.

Unemployment in Harrow however remains below the London average but has more than doubled since the pandemic. In June 2019, 1.8% of working age residents aged 16 to 64 were out of work, this rose to 3.8% in April 2023⁴.

17.4% of Harrow residents have no qualifications. This is higher than the London average.

² Harrow is ranked 27th out of the 33 London Boroughs in the 2019 IMD

³ 2021 CACI Paycheck Data and 2011 census

⁴ Source: ONS claimant count

Overview of Serious Violence in Harrow



Less than 2% of serious violence in London occurs **in Harrow**.



Harrow has the **3rd lowest** rate of Serious Violence in London



Although the overall rate is low, in the year to September 2023, Harrow had one of the **highest increases** in serious violence in London.



Those involved in '**county lines**' crime in Harrow were more likely to be male and **aged 16 to 17**. Over two thirds showed links to at least one other county.



20% of those committing serious violence were assessed as having a **high mental health need**.



80% of all 10- to 17-year-old perpetrators of serious violence had been **excluded or suspended from school**. 73% had persistent absences.



29% of all 10- to 17-year-old perpetrators have experienced or witnessed **domestic abuse**.



Just under a **quarter** had **gang associations** or associated with others known to have gang associations.

Crime in Harrow

Harrow is one of the safest Boroughs in London. The overall crime levels in Harrow are consistently low when compared to other London Boroughs.

Looking at crime types, although a small reduction (-1%) violence against the person remains the highest volume crime type in Harrow, 28% of all recorded crimes in twelve months up to September 2023. This increases to 44% for offences involving under 25s. Theft, including theft from person, and “other” theft is still the second highest recorded crime type (18% of all recorded crime). Drugs offences are the only crime type to significantly reduce in the 12 months up to September 2023 (down 20%). Possession of weapons has seen slight decrease during this period (down 3%).

There was a reduction in the level of youth offending. From 2021/22, there were 251 offences which fell to 181 offences in 2022/23. Levels of juvenile first-time entrants to the criminal justice system are reducing (27% reduction between 2021 and 2022), and consistently lower than the London average, although this gap is narrower since 2020. Although there has been a downward trend of comparatively low volumes, youth offending has become increasingly complex, more serious and undertaken by young people with higher levels of vulnerability as well as risk.

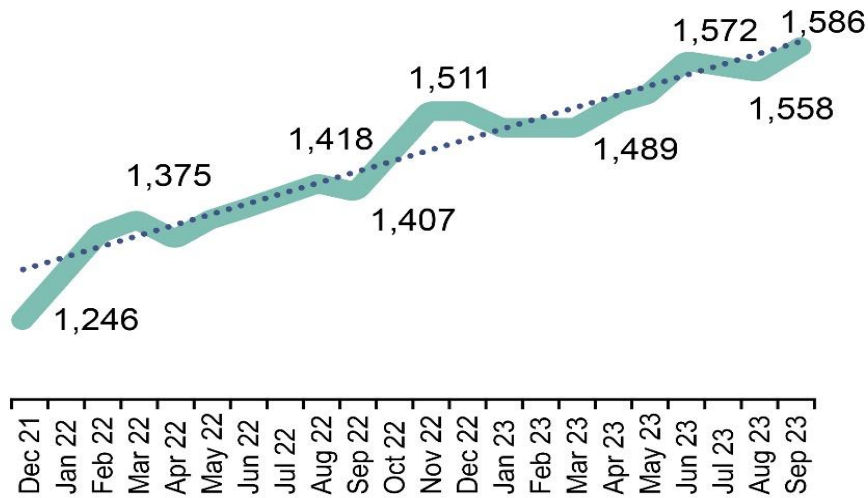
The Nature of Serious Violence in Harrow

The vast majority of residents in Harrow have not directly experienced Serious Violence, with less than 2% of London’s Serious Violence in occurring in Harrow⁵. Although this equates to the 3rd lowest rate, Harrow has had one of the highest rate increases of recorded Serious Violence offences in London in the last twelve months up to September 2023.

Serious Violence is not distributed evenly across the population and significant inequalities exist. Certain groups and geographical areas within Harrow are at higher risk of exposure to and involvement in Serious Violence. There were 1,598 Serious Violence offences recorded in Harrow in the twelve months up to September 2023, this represents a rate increase of 14% from the previous period. This is higher than the year-on-year increase across London (+5%). Police records show that at around one in three of all offences involved a person under the age of 25.

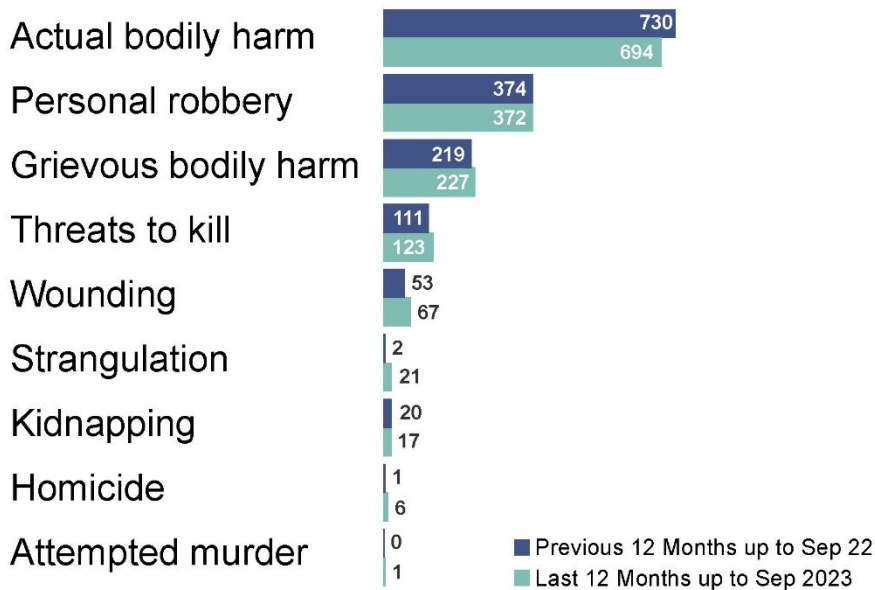
⁵ Source Met Police; October

Figure 5: Recorded Offences (Dec 2021 - Sept 2023)



Nearly 50% of all Serious Violence offences in Harrow are categorised as Actual Bodily Harm (ABH), and 23% as robbery. 220 (14%) of all Serious Violence offences in Harrow, in the twelve months up to September 2023, were identified by the Police as a Hate Crime.

Figure 6: Breakdown of Offence Type



At the time of writing the Serious Violence Strategic Assessment, Harrow had the 4th highest annual homicide rate in London with six homicides involving young people in the twelve months up to September 2023. Accident & Emergency (A&E) admissions due to violence have increased in Harrow from 249 in the 12 months up to August 2022 (rolling year) to

297 July 2023 (rolling year). 36% of these in the twelve months up to July 2023 were under 25 years old,

“Gang flagged” offences have fallen over the last few years with less than 20 recorded in Harrow the twelve months up to September 2023. Knife carrying among young people has anecdotally been linked to self-preservation and fear of victimization, rather than links with gangs⁶.

The proportion of crime in Harrow that is recorded involving a knife is less than 2% (including knife injury, knife threatening or intimidation). However there has been a 48% increase in knife crime offences (between the twelve months ending September 2023 to the previous twelve months) mostly attributed to the possession of knives. During this same period the Police stopped and searched 678 people in Harrow for suspicion of carrying a weapon, finding 48. These are the lowest levels in London.

There has been an upward trajectory in non-domestic Knife crime with injury since March 2021. In the twelve months up to September 2023 there 81 recorded offences compared to 56 in the previous period. Overall, the monthly trends show that non-domestic Serious Violence fluctuates across the year with no significant peak months or seasonality observed. However, data does show that Serious Violence in Harrow commonly occurs in the daytime towards and into the evening (between 9am-7pm and 9pm to 11pm) and more frequently between the hours of 4-6pm.

Offences are not spread around the Borough, and there are many areas where few or no offences have occurred at all. There is however a concentration of offences that have occurred around Harrow Bus Station and Harrow on the Hill train station. There are also higher than average occurrences near Harrow & Wealdstone train station, around South Harrow tube station and the Roxeth/Sudbury Hill area. Over 75% of serious violence in Harrow takes place in a public space or is considered as non-domestic.

High socio-economic costs are associated with serious violence. In the twelve months up to September 2023 homicide, robbery, serious sexual offences, and violence resulting injury, is estimated to have cost over £20,000,000 to the criminal justice system alone

⁶ Youth Select Committee (2019) Our Generation's Epidemic: Knife Crime; UK Parliament

County Lines

County lines is a form of Child Criminal Exploitation. It is a term used to describe the activities of gangs and organised criminal networks who are involved in exporting illicit drugs into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of "deal line". Offences involve the exploitation children and vulnerable adults to move (and store) drugs and money, often using coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

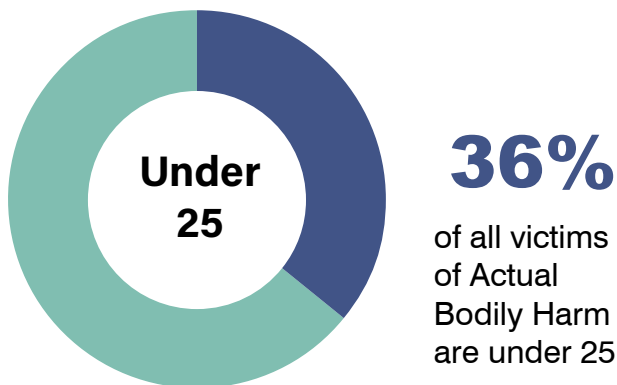
County Lines data shows that across London a total of 339 referrals were received by the Rescue and Response Project between April 2021 to March 2022. This is a 43% reduction when compared to the same period last year (598). During this period, with 26 referrals, Harrow ranked 10th highest out of the 32 London Boroughs (2021/22). Also, 1,301 individuals were identified or suspected as having a link to County Lines. This was a 27% reduction when compared to the same period last year (1,784). Harrow ranked 9th lowest 2021/22 with 24 linked individuals. From April 2022 to October 23 in Harrow a further 17 referrals and 15 individuals identified or suspected as having a link to County Lines. All individuals involved in county lines in Harrow were more likely to be Male and between the ages of 16-17.

Victims



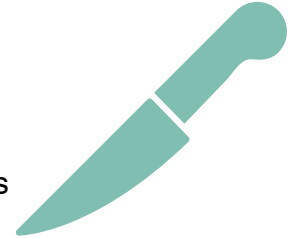
One in three of victims of serious violence are under 25 years old (35%)

67% of victims of non-domestic serious violence were male. This increased to 73% in the under-25s.



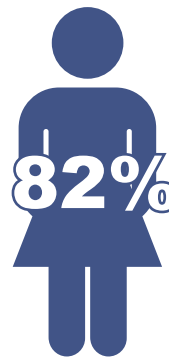
Violence against women and girls

2.2% of violent offences against women and girls involved a knife.



Monthly* data shows that violent offences against women and girls averages at nearly

250 per month



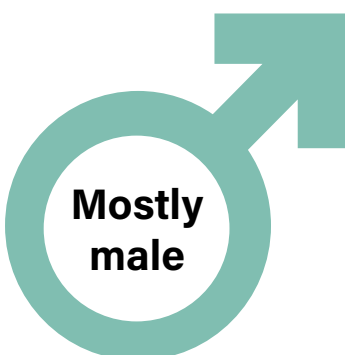
82% victims of sexual offences were women or girls, of these 50% were under the age of 25 (in the 12 months to June 2023).

Around 60 women and girls per year present to Health services in Harrow with female genital mutilation

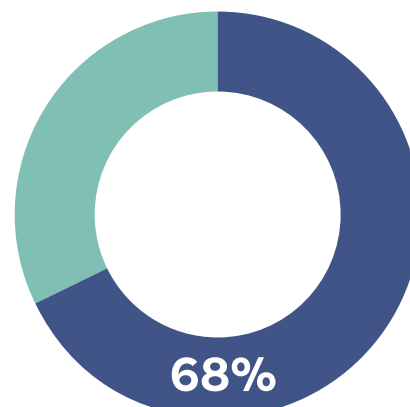


*in the twelve months up to Sep 2023

Domestic violence



Almost all of those accused of domestic abuse were male (98%) (in the 12 months up to June 2023).



Survivors of domestic abuse in Harrow are more likely to be women and girls (68% in the twelve months up to June 23).

Victims of Serious Violence – (In the twelve months up to June 2023)

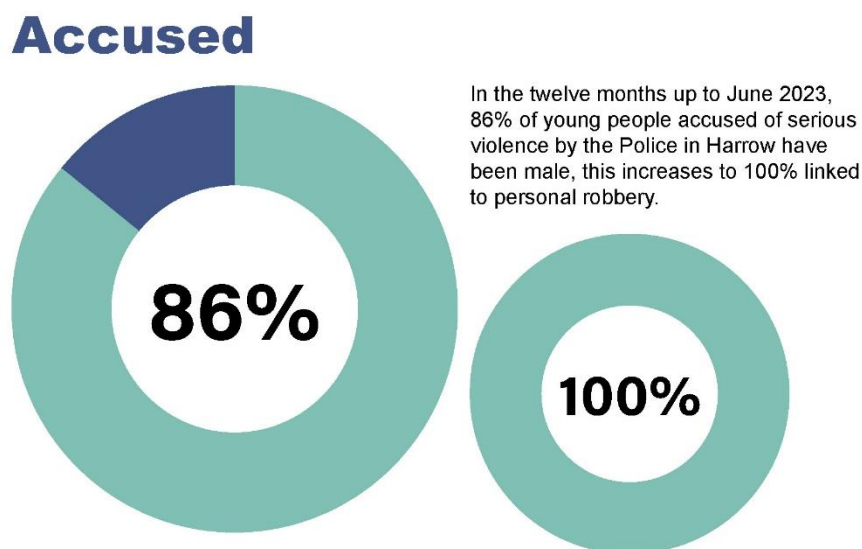
One in three victims of Serious Violence are under 25 years old (35%). 36% of all victims of Actual Bodily Harm are under 25, which matches the proportion of under 25s A&E admissions due to violence.

A higher proportion of victims of Serious Violence were male (67% male, 31% female) and this increases for victims under 25s (73% Male, 27% female).

33% of Serious Violence victims' ethnicity was recorded as White; this proportion increases to 39% for victims under 25. The proportion of victims whose ethnicity was recorded as Black was the same for under 25s as it was all victims (36%). The proportion of victims whose ethnicity was recorded as Asian was less for under 25s (18%) than all victims (23%). The data does not include a breakdown of victims/survivors from mixed or multiple ethnic groups.

Perpetrators of Serious Violence

Figure 7



In the twelve months up to June 2023, 86% of young people accused of serious violence by the Police in Harrow have been male, this increases to 100% linked to personal robbery.

Frequently occupations of those suspected of serious violence were not recorded by the Police (88%), however the second most common occupation status was 'unemployed' (5%),

and the third were occupations in the night-time economy (5%) (in the twelve months up to June 2023).

A significant proportion (56%) of suspects non-domestic serious violence were recorded with a disability (in the twelve months up to June 2023). This proportion increases to 86% for suspects recorded as female. The most common disability was recorded was 'mental health issues' for 39% of all suspects, and secondly 'learning difficulty' for 10% of all suspects.

Youth offending (10-17s)

The proportion of Serious Violence offences shows an upward trend over a 2.5-year period (April 2021- Sept 2023). 73 Serious Violence offences (13% of all offences) were committed by 41 young people, an average of 1.8 offence per offender. 58% of the young people committed only one Serious Violence offence in the 2.5 years, 32% committed 2-3 offences and 10% committed over 4 offences. There were also an additional 114 other less Serious Violence against the person offences, 21.2% of all offences. These offences were committed by 87 young people 36.7% of all offenders.

Youth offending data (10-17s) shows that the youngest age for committing a Serious Violence offence was 12, with the majority of young people being aged between 14 and 16 years old (80%).

Over this 2.5-year period, a higher proportion of young people (10-17s) committing Serious Violence offences were male (88%). All Serious Violence offences for females were Assault with Injury.

There is an observed ethnic disproportionality as for a third of young people who were sentenced for Serious Violence their ethnicity was recorded as Black or Black British despite accounting 7.3% of the population⁷. Just over one fifth of the perpetrators were identified as Mixed (22%) followed by smaller than population proportions categorised White (20%), Asian or Asian British (17%), and Chinese or Other (5%).

Risk factors

Looking at both victims and perpetrators, 14–17-year-old boys are most at risk of being involved in Serious Violence in Harrow. A further look at some of the known risk factors for

⁷ Census 2021 ONS

young people offending was conducted for those 41 young people who committed a Serious Violence offence over the 2.5-year period.

On average each young person had 5.7 risk factors. Within this group for young people classed as the most serious re-offenders, the average number of risk factors increased to 8.8.

Between April 2023 and September 2023, over 80% of all 10–17-year-olds had been excluded or suspended from school, and 73% had persistent absences (although sometimes this was after the offending).

20% of all 10–17-year-olds who committed Serious Violence, were assessed by Youth Justice Service to have a high mental health need.

Just under a quarter were identified as having gang associations or associating with others known to have gang associations.

Other common risk factors amongst this group were children's services involvement, Pupil Referral Unit attendance (46%) missing episodes (34%) and experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse (29%).

Domestic Abuse

The number of recorded domestic abuse offences in Harrow has fluctuated in the last three years. In 2021/22 there were 2,254 recorded offences this reduced to 1,978 in April 2022/23. In the twelve months up to September 2023 the level of recorded domestic offences stood at 2186.

After a downward trend in the proportion of domestic offences resulting in injury – from 26% (July '22) to 20% (June '23) the level of then increased in the twelve months up to September 2023 to 26%.

The main forms of domestic abuse experienced by survivors are violence without Injury, Actual Bodily harm, and other Injury, Stalking and Harassment.

Higher rates of domestic abuse occur in Wealdstone South, Marlborough and Greenhill with around 14 offences per 1,000 population, compared to 7.7 in the Borough as a whole (in the twelve months up to September 23).

Survivors of domestic abuse in Harrow are more likely to be women and girls (68% in the twelve months up to June 23). Domestic abuse however impacts all age groups, with 54% of survivors aged 25-44 and 25% of survivors aged 55-64 recorded as survivors of abuse. A further 7% were aged 65 plus (in the twelve months up to June 23).

The ethnic profile of survivors recorded by the Met Police shows that record Harrow's white population were impacted most by domestic abuse. The second largest group affected were Asian, followed by Black African and Caribbean.

Almost all of those accused by the Police of domestic abuse were male (98%) in the twelve months up to June 2023. Frequently occupations of those accused not recorded by the Police (85%), however the second most common occupation status was 'unemployed' (10%).

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is an umbrella term used to cover a wide range of abuse types that affect more women and girls than men and boys. These include domestic homicide, domestic abuse, sexual assault, abuse experienced as a child, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and harassment in work and public life.

In line with the national picture, in Harrow women are more likely than men to experience domestic and sexual violence. In the twelve months up to June 2023 women and girls were the victims of a proportionate number of violent offences in Harrow (52%). However, this increases to a significantly disproportionate number of violent domestic offences (78%). 2.2% of violent offences against women and girls during this period involved a knife. There have been no domestic homicides recorded in Harrow during this period.

Monthly data shows that violent offences against women and girls averages at nearly 250 per month with peaking in May (266), June (276) and July (296) months and lowest levels in February (172). There was also a peak in November 22 of 270 offences.

Within 2023, the peak days for violent offences against women and girls (including sexual offences) reported to the police within the Borough of Harrow are Friday and Saturday, with higher-than-average levels also on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The peak time for the same offences is between 8am-9am, rising in the afternoon at midday, with another peak from 3pm until 5pm/6pm.

The peak times tend to reflect the busiest times on the streets, with the largest peak being at 4pm, after students are leaving school. These peak times also align with peak times of other types of crime. It is important to note that this data fluctuates and is seasonal, so this does vary throughout the year.

There were 422 sexual offences that took place within Harrow during the twelve months up to June 2023, and for 347 (82%) of these offences the victims were women or girls, of these 50% were under the age of 25. For the 179 rape offences during this period, 91% of victims

were women or girls, 63% was classified as non-domestic rape and 37% was flagged as domestic abuse.

A fifth of all non-domestic sexual offences against women and girls take place in Greenhill or Roxeth. Whereas domestic sexual offences against women and girls are more likely to take place in Edgware (10%) Roxeth (10%) and Greenhill (9%).

NHS digital data shows that during 2021/22 and 2022/23 levels of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) remained the same with 60 women and girls FGM was identified, presenting at around 415 health service attendances. Half of the women and girls in 2022/23 were newly identified. Most frequently the age at which FGM was carried out was not recorded (66%) but most the common recorded age was between the ages of 5–9-year-old (25%).

Views from Harrow's communities

Along with obtaining the views of key partner organisations, it is also important to include the views of Harrow's young people to support and encourage the development and creation by young people of a counter narrative to Serious Violence issues.

Therefore, to assist in the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment, the council engaged with young people across the borough on the subject of violence and crime. This included a discussion on, but not limited to how concerned young people were about Serious Violence in the borough, the effects they think Serious Violence has on the wider borough and their opinions on what interventions may help to tackle Serious Violence in Harrow.

Serious Violence Youth Survey 2023

A survey was conducted in October 2023 and was disseminated across all 17 Secondary Schools/Colleges across Harrow with the purpose of seeking young people's views on the causes and impact of violence.

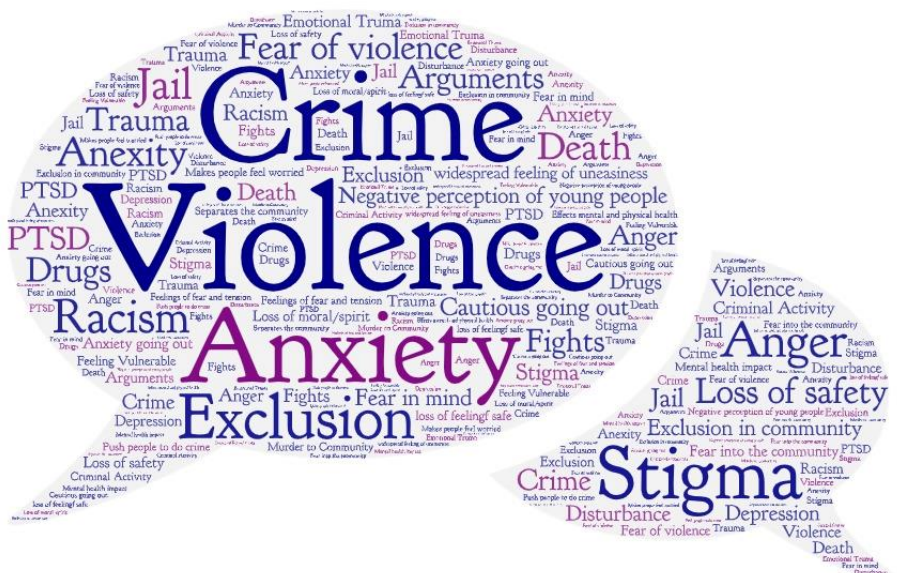
This research consists of the voices and views of over 950 young people across Harrow and sought to understand the drivers of recent increases in Serious Violent crimes. Included in this research was a specific focus on the experiences of young adults and young people (aged 10 – 25) about their perceptions and fears in relation to violence in Harrow.

During this research we found that:

- 10% of respondents reported that they have been subjected to violence or threat of violence in Harrow.
- 13% of respondents were very concerned and 23% were concerned about violence in Harrow. The general trend shows the older the age range, the more concerned the respondents were of violence or threat of violence.



- “Gangs”, “Social Media”, “Race & Culture” and “Bad Influences” were amongst the most common answers respondents provided as the causes of Serious Violence in Harrow.



- “Crime”, “PTSD”, “Stigma”, “Anxiety”, “Fear” was among the most common answers for views on the impact on the community. When asked about how to tackle Serious Violence “Communities taking action”, “Strengthening Young People’s skills...& education”, “support for parents and families” were among the most common answers.

Town Centre Consultation – Nations of Migration Awakening the Diaspora (NOMAD)

Similar feedback around the how to tackle Serious Youth Violence was captured by residents and young people at the recent NOMAD – Town Centre Consultation. This consultation was attended by: Local Council Representatives, NOMAD, Voluntary Action

Harrow (VAH), Harrow College, Young Harrow Foundation (YHF), Ignite Youth, Harrow Law Centre, Harrow Association of Somali Voluntary Organisations (HASVO), Harrows Business Improvement District (ha1BID), the Metropolitan Police alongside over 20 young people who regularly attend sessions run by NOMAD.

Key Highlights from Consultation:

- Young people suggesting the need to build better relationships between parent and children/ younger generations as young people cannot go to their parents and share their worries or concerns. They felt that parents needed support with knowing what is available to them.
- Young people also raised the influence of social media and how it plays a role in exacerbating peer pressure, toxic masculinity, and impetus to react immediately.
- The need for safe places in Harrow for young people to hang out and build relationships in a safe environment.
- Young people also highlighted poverty and employability as causal factors of crime and violence.
- The need to improve relationships between police and communities. Insufficient neighbourhood policing leads to lack of mutual trust, respect, and positive relationships especially for young people. Consequently, young people feel reluctant to report crimes to the police.

In the recent *How Are You Harrow?*⁸ Survey 38% of young people said there are areas of Harrow where they feel unsafe, with 44% saying they felt unsafe in the areas that they some or all or the time. Furthermore, a fifth of the young people said they have been in a physical fight in the last 12 and a third said they had witnessed someone get physically hurt by someone in the last 12 months.

⁸ The *How Are You Harrow?* (HAY) survey is a collaboration between CNWL, Harrow Council and the Young Harrow Foundation, investigating the health and wellbeing of young people living across Harrow. The survey ran from November 2022 to March 2023 with 6809 young people taking part between the ages of 9-18.

Safer Spaces Survey 2023

The London Borough of Harrow's Safer Spaces Survey was designed to give a better understand of the concerns, perceptions and experiences of women and girls in Harrow and identify public spaces of concern, what improvements are needed and to communicate what will be done to alleviate these problems.

During the first tranche of the survey from October 2022 to December 2022, there were 318 responses with over 2,000 people visiting the website. Common themes raised were, unwanted verbal behaviour and feeling intimidated, due to persons loitering (youths, street drinkers, outside betting shops / licensed premises / busy transport hubs); drug dealing and signs of drug use and paraphernalia; and poorly lit and isolated walkways or alleyways.

Since then, until July 2023, 474 people responded with over 4,000 people visiting the website. Analysis over this longer trend shows the key common themes centred around feeling intimidated and the fear of being followed. Since the survey began, the areas where most people said they felt unsafe were, Roxeth, Wealdstone south and Greenhill.

The Public Attitude Survey

The Public Attitude Survey has shown that in London, trust and confidence in the police have seen sustained downwards trajectories over recent years, reaching particularly low levels at the end of 2021-2022. However, trust and confidence measures in Harrow has improved and are consistently above London levels,

In quarter 2 of 2023-24, 82% of Harrow Residents believed the Metropolitan Police Service is an organisation they can trust (69% for London), Whilst 63% of residents felt the police do a good job in their local area, (48% for London) improving by 12 percentage points from the same period last year. 76% of residents felt the Police listen to concerns (57% for London), improving by six percentage points. Also, in Q2 2023/24, Harrow had the highest level of residents in London who agree that the Police treat everyone fairly, regardless of who they are (85%, (London average 63%)).

In quarter 2 of 2023-24, Harrow residents were less confident about feeling informed about local police activities (23%, (London average 28%)), declining by 12 percentage points from the same period last year. Harrow residents were least confident in how to contact their ward

officer (12%, (London average 14%)), declining by 16 percentage points over this same timeframe.

Harrow residents are less likely to feel worried about knife crime and compared with Londoners as a whole. In quarter 2 of 2023-24, 32% of Harrow residents were worried about knife crime compared to 49% of Londoners, ranking Harrow residents' level of concern as the lowest in London.

Key findings from Engagement

The key concerns that emerged from the totality of responses/conversations with young people are as follows:

- There is an urgent need to create safe places and strong relationships to divert young people from Serious Youth Violence.
- Social media is viewed as amplifying and exacerbating violent conflict.
- Vulnerability and fear are important drivers in the increase in young people carrying weapons.
- There is a lack of trust between police and communities.

Summary of Current Provision

Work is already being undertaken by Safer Harrow in response to Serious Youth Violence. As part of the Serious Violence Strategy, a mapping exercise of services working to reduce Serious Youth Violence across the borough was undertaken. This has enabled us to better understand what is currently on offer across the partnership to ensure better co-ordination. The following provision is currently available:

VAWG

Perpetrator Programs:

- Culturally Informed Family Approach (CIFA) Perpetrator 2-year Programme - This project provides a focused & coordinated family & community approach for marginalised groups to identify issues and need through a specialised suitability assessment and interventions.
- DRIVE Pan-London Perpetrator 2-year Programme – 10 spaces made available for Harrow where 12-month support is provided for perpetrators

Harrow Domestic Abuse Offer:

- In 2023, the council invested £431,000 over three years in Domestic Abuse services through the councils' contract with Hestia. This includes Community based support as well as Housing support.
- The service works in tandem with and signposts victims to other services provided by council departments and externally through the voluntary and community sectors.

Complex Needs Program:

- This is a consortium program run with Ealing, Slough, and Hestia. The council received £131,000 over two years to assist 80 victims of domestic abuse with multiple and complex needs across Ealing and Harrow to access safe and appropriate accommodation

VoiceBox

- In 2023, the council collaborated with Voicebox who will offer assemblies and drama-based workshops across 12 schools in Harrow. The goal is to address issues such as misogyny, VAWG and mental health by examining the role of masculinity in these

problems. This hopes to reach 1300 male high-school students in Year 9 and Year 10.

Safer Spaces Survey

- In 2023, the council launched its 'Safer Spaces' webpage where residents are encouraged to tell us not only where they feel safe and unsafe in Harrow, but why. This engagement exercise will help us develop actions to deliver practical, community-led responses based on the key locations, types of activity, environment and violence reported, and what we learn about the experiences of key demographics such as women and young people.
- This is now being rolled out via QR code/app and due to be circulated through to the Harrow residents and visitors through social media, newsletters, and posters. The information collected from the survey will be reviewed at the monthly Police Tactical Tasking Coordination Group (TTCG), quarterly Safer Harrow and quarterly VAWG Sub-Group, as well as shared ad hoc with partners to address patterns of concerns and potential identified hotspot areas.

"Safe Spaces" UK Says No More Campaign

- The Safe Spaces scheme aims to reduce fear by providing a safe space within public and commercial premises for those who feel threatened on the street. In conjunction with Public Protection, our Community Safety teams work to carry out environmental visual audits and make physical changes to minimise the risk of crime and the perception of that risk in an area.

Early Intervention and Prevention

Strong partnerships have been maintained and many service providers already commissioned by the council have been extended. This includes:

- MIND – mindfulness sessions for Harrows young people
- Cedars Youth and Community Centre – offers Premier League funded programme called 'Chances' for young people who are at risk of offending or reoffending
- Street Doctors – provide sessions for young people around life-saving emergency first-aid techniques based on peer associations.
- SPEAR – delivers employability improvements to young people through providing opportunities for acquiring foundational skills and facilitating work placements and apprenticeship opportunities

Other Services:

- Project Engage – Youth Work within Custody + up to 3 Community-Based Sessions
- Turnaround Programme – Up to 12 months of Early Help and Prevention focused work for Youth following on from Project Engage
- Your Choice – (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy interventions) research base for Youth Justice Service
- No Knives, Better Lives – A weapons awareness course run jointly with the Metropolitan Police
- Crime Presentation and Trauma Management presentations – interactive presentations to primary/secondary schools in Harrow delivered by The Josh Hanson Trust
- Early Intervention Youth Project – sports-based interventions delivered by Ignite Youth for young people aged 11 to 18
- Compass Harrow (substance misuse provider) – undertake engagement and educational sessions with schools across Harrow

Key Priorities and Actions

Developing resilience, supporting positive alternatives, and offering timely interventions are essential to prevent people from committing Serious Violence. Prevention and early intervention are at the heart of our approach to tackling Serious Violence and based on the insights and evidence set out in Harrow's Strategic Needs Assessment. This chapter proposes universal and targeted (selective and indicated) interventions to intervene and stop people from getting involved in and committing serious violent offences.

Taking account of the Strategic Needs Assessment, the local partnership has agreed the following strategic objectives for the next 12 months to prevent and reduce Serious Violence.

Harrow's Key Priorities

Through the analysis of the Strategic Needs Assessment and the consultation findings, the following priorities have been agreed:

- To reduce Serious Violent Crime with young people below the age of 25 within Harrow
- To tackle Violence against Women and Girls
- To encourage a Community Approach to tackling Serious Youth Violence in Harrow (under 25)

Priority Area 1: To reduce Serious Violent Crime with young people below the age of 25 within Harrow

Serious violence requires a holistic partnership approach which cannot be effectively tackled in isolation. Our strategy emphasises prevention strategies that target the various risk indicators which can be the causation of violence. While also promoting protective factors to mitigate both perpetrators and vulnerable victims. The Safer Harrow partnership will concentrate on deterrents and protective measures, and will work across individuals, statutory and voluntary services within the community.

Objectives:

- To reduce the number of Serious Youth Violence Incidents
- To reduce incidents of Knife Crime (including possession)
- To increase Early Intervention and Prevention measures

- To strengthen the restorative and rehabilitative approach to our enforcement practice throughout Harrow

Interventions/Actions to be implemented to tackle this priority:

- Positive youth activities (including outreach) for all young people, before and at the point at which they show signs of needing support, with a focus on communities most affected by Violent crime.
- Work with education settings (including primary, secondary, alternative provision, further education, and pupil referral units) to keep pupils safe and reduce the likelihood of fixed term and permanent exclusions
- Mentoring, coaching or other forms of targeted interventions with children and young people at risk of involvement in violence or knife carrying
- Bring about improvements to the use of information and data from a range of sources to enable a more intelligence-led operational response as well as regular mapping and targeting of priority areas and people

Priority Area 2: Tackling Violence against Women and Girls

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) constitutes a fundamental violation of human rights, detrimentally impacting the lives of millions. Recognised as a global issue of epidemic proportions, it is acknowledged that, on a national scale, an average of two women are tragically killed every week by a current or former partner, with one in four women experiencing some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime⁹. However, VAWG is not confined to a national context; it is an issue affecting Harrow, estimated to impact approximately one in three women and girls at some point in their lifetime.

Despite instances of VAWG often remaining concealed and underreported, it is not an inevitable phenomenon, and collectively, we possess the capacity to bring it to an end. This strategy sets out the role each of us can play in ending VAWG, forming an integral part of our coordinated community response.

⁹ [The Facts - Refuge](#)

Objectives:

- The reduction in Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Domestic Abuse (DA) incidents across the Borough
- To increase reporting from Women and Girls on feeling Safe in the Borough
- To increase Awareness of risks to Safety
- To positively change male attitudes towards VAWG through education and awareness raising

Interventions/Actions to be implemented to tackle this priority:

- Collaborate as a partnership to increase the number of safe spaces in Harrow to support victims of VAWG and Domestic Abuse, and share data with partners and publicise key messages to residents
- Work to address perpetrators through the Criminal Justice System or other Preventative Initiatives and programmes
- Ensure Safe reporting and support are available for all victims and survivors
- Enable victims and/or survivors to access support services to receive the required help they need by including the production of a directory of VAWG services for professionals, to ensure awareness of referral pathways as well as adding this onto Harrow's webpage to raise public awareness around all types of VAWG and where to access support.
- Preventative work with young people in Harrow to challenge problematic misogynistic attitudes and behaviour.
- Bystander Intervention campaign to increase public and professional awareness, and training for Council staff and members, especially to target hotspot areas identified within the Safer Spaces survey

Priority Area 3: To encourage a Community Approach to tackling Serious Youth Violence in Harrow (under 25)

Harrow has a rich and diverse voluntary and community sector and there are several organisations delivering outstanding interventions with children, young people, and families across our borough, often in very challenging circumstances and with limited budgets. Any attempts to bring out significant changes to the attitudes and behaviour of our local communities in relation to Serious Youth Violence needs to include Voluntary and Community Sector organisations at its core.

Objectives:

- Ensure that Harrow's Voluntary and Community Sector are fully engaged in contributing to and shape Harrow's strategy to address Serious Youth Violence
- Greater involvement of Voluntary and Community Sector in finding place-based solutions to issues in their communities
- Assist Voluntary and Community Sector partners in attracting financial investment from external sources, including by endorsing programmes with strong evidence of impact on our young people in the Borough.

Interventions/Actions to be implemented to tackle this priority:

- Involve young people within local violence prevention work, through both established forums such as youth councils/parliaments, youth Independent Advisory Groups and informal grassroots pathways including through social media platforms
- Work with communities and other partners in local areas to develop capacity building to support incident response in the community, through robust partnership approach, and to increase trust and collaboration between local communities, stakeholders, key local institutions, and statutory partners.
- Work with children and young people and community members to create opportunities for development and the option to pursue alternatives to criminal activities. Partnerships should help to support positive aspirations and promote positive role-models.
- Re-introduce the Serious Violence Panel - which links in with SWARM/MACE forums but focuses on children nearing 18 and those over 18 and facilitates their transition to adult services.

Measures of Success

Key to the successful implementation of this strategy is ensuring that we connect the strategic priorities and principles with operational staff across the partnership. This will assist in embedding a co-ordinated and effective approach to reduce incidents of Serious Violence.

In order to comply with the Serious Violence Duty, this strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Progress of this strategy and the objectives set out within it will be reviewed quarterly through the Community Safety Delivery Plan and the Safer Harrow Board.

Specifically, in:

Workstream 2: tackling Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Workstream 4: reducing the number of Violent Incidents on the Borough

Workstream 5: perception of crime and ASB and hate crime

This will enable us to respond to any emerging trends or patterns relating to Serious Violence and confirm that our response remains effective.

We will measure the effectiveness of our response by embedding a performance framework focusing on the following areas:

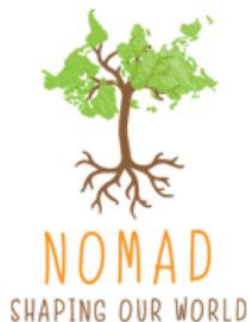
- Harm reduction – we will monitor data (primarily A&E Admissions and MPS) related to rates of serious violent offences and homicides
 - A reduction in hospital presentations and admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object and especially among those victims aged under 25
 - A reduction in knife-enabled serious violence and especially among those victims aged under 25
 - A reduction in all non-domestic homicides and especially among those victims aged under 25 involving knives.
 - A reduction in the severity of Serious Violence incidents
 - A reduction in the fear of knife crime and Serious Violence across all of our communities

- Communities – we will consistently seek the views of young people to understand how safe, supported, respected and hopeful they feel in our communities.
 - This will be done via our annual Residents Survey where individuals will have an opportunity to inform the council on safety and their perceptions of safety across the Borough

- We will also introduce an annual Youth Survey which will be disseminated to all young people in the Borough in order to capture their views on Serious Violence in Harrow
- Safety perception – we will continue to seek people’s views of how safe they feel
 - This will be done via the Harrow Safer Spaces Consultation, which is regularly monitored, with the results being reviewed at the monthly Police Tactical Tasking Coordination Group (TTCG), quarterly Safer Harrow and quarterly VAWG Sub-Group, as well as shared ad-hoc with partners to address patterns of concerns and potential identified hotspot areas.
 - Results from the survey will feed into the VAWG Sub-Group's working action plan, which is reviewed and updated regularly.
 - Partners will work in collaboration to address areas of concern and provide feedback to residents on the actions taken.
- Delivery of our commitments – we will review and report back on how we have delivered our commitments contained within this strategy.
 - The Serious Violence Strategy deliverables will be embedded within the Community Safety Delivery Plan. This will be reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure progress is being made as well as to ensure we, as a council, are being reactive to any changes in the Borough. The Strategy will also be reviewed at the Safer Harrow Board on a quarterly basis where updates will be provided, and progress will be monitored by stakeholders.

Declaration

This strategy has been co-produced and will be co-delivered by the London Borough of Harrow in partnership with required authority partners.



Appendix 1: List of Agencies involved in the Safer Harrow Partnership



Appendix 2: Sources of Funding for Harrow's Serious Violence Strategy

Below is a list of actual and potential funding sources that can be used to deliver on the specific priorities and themes contained within this strategy.

- Youth Offending Team Funding: MoJ / MOPAC
- VRU Funding
- Critical Incident Fund
- Capacity Building Funding