

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP23/52**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –  
17 NOVEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report details the current performance, demand, and activity in relation to Serious Violence. It provides an update in respect of activity being carried out within policing to tackle and prevent serious violence.
2. The period of reporting refers to the date range of 01/09/2022 – 31/08/2023, the previous 12 months refers to 01/09/2021 – 31/08/2022, the 2019 baseline is the full 2019 calendar year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is asked to consider the progress made by the Constabulary and raise issues with Chief Constable as appropriate to the PCC's role in holding the Chief Constable to account.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tackling serious violence features as a Constabulary commitment within the Police and Crime Plan 2022-2025 [Police-Crime-Plan-2022-2025.pdf \(suffolk-pcc.gov.uk\)](#) and as a priority within the Chief Constable's Force Strategic Plan 2023-2028. [Chief Constable's Delivery Plan 2023-2028 | Suffolk Constabulary](#).

1.2 It is recognised that the Constabulary's response to offences involving serious violence is imperative to keeping people safe, protecting people from serious harm supporting victims and establishing wider trust, confidence, and satisfaction in our service.

1.3 The Home Office serious violence strategy defines serious violence as specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. It also includes emerging crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon.

1.4 **The primary offences and themes this report refers to are:**

- **Violence with injury** includes the following sub-categories:
  - *ASSAULT WITH INJURY*
  - *ASSAULT WITH INJURY ON A CONSTABLE*
  - *ASSAULT WITH INJURY ON AN EMERGENCY WORKER*
  - *ASSAULT WITH INTENT TO CAUSE - HARM*
  - *ATTEMPTED MURDER*
  - *CAUSE OR ALLOW DEATH ETC TO CHILD OR VULNERABLE*
  - *DEATH BY CARELESS OR INCONSIDERATE DRIVING*
  - *DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY BY DANGEROUS DRIVING*
  - *ENDANGERING LIFE*
  - *RACE OR RELIGIOUSLY AGGRAVATED ASSAULT WITH INJURY*
- **Violence Without Injury**
- **Knife Crime**
- **County Lines**
- **Prevention Activity**

1.5 Whilst Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and domestic abuse could be included within the Serious Violence criteria, these offences are reported on separately in the 'Supporting Vulnerable Victims' report. Some reference is, however, made to actions we are taking to tackle broader offences involving violence against women and girls (VAWG).

## 2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 Serious violence is a national priority due to its growing prevalence and impact. There has been a significant rise in serious violence, with increases in homicide, knife, and gun crime in virtually all police force areas since 2014. Robbery has also risen significantly since 2016. The violence is often gang related and the association with drugs markets, particularly crack cocaine, is evident. Too frequently, children are the victims of gun crime, knife crime and exploitation, in many cases by organised criminal groups running 'county lines.'

2.2 In response, the government published 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence: Community Engagement' in 2014, and its Serious Violence Strategy in 2018. Both documents advocate an end-to-end approach, from prevention and early intervention to law enforcement, and a strengthened partnership response involving statutory and non-statutory partners, including the local community and businesses.

### 3. SUFFOLK CONTEXT

3.1 A Suffolk Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) is being produced by The Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics (SODA) as part of the County Serious Violence Duty Strategy. Further detail on the Serious Violence Duty is outlined at section 11.

3.2 The [Suffolk Statistics – Key Focus Areas for Suffolk](#) (July 2023) produced by SODA highlights the following key points in regards to what data is telling us about Suffolk which should be considered:

- Suffolk's population is growing and
- Suffolk is less diverse than other areas nationally.
- Many health outcomes remain good – but some indicators relating to children (mental health, obesity) are less good.
- Deprivation affecting children is particularly high in some areas.
- Suffolk's wages have traditionally been lower than national averages. This is due to a lower-skilled workforce, with school attainment levels and adult skills levels tending to be lower in Suffolk than nationally.
- Crime rates relatively low.
- Inequalities remain deep and entrenched in some areas and are likely to be exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis.
- Regional, national, and international data suggests that socio-economic disparity can be associated with poor outcomes, lack of aspiration and the 'politics of envy.'

3.3 Office of National Statistic (ONS) Data Summary for the 12 Months ending Jun 2020 to 12 Months ending Jun 2023– Violence with injury:

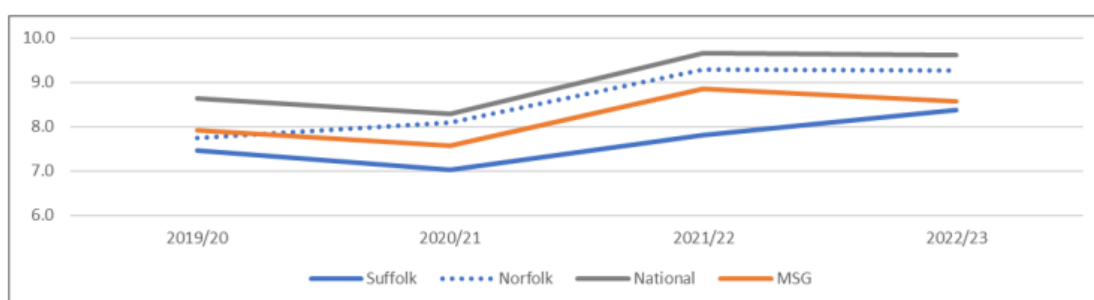


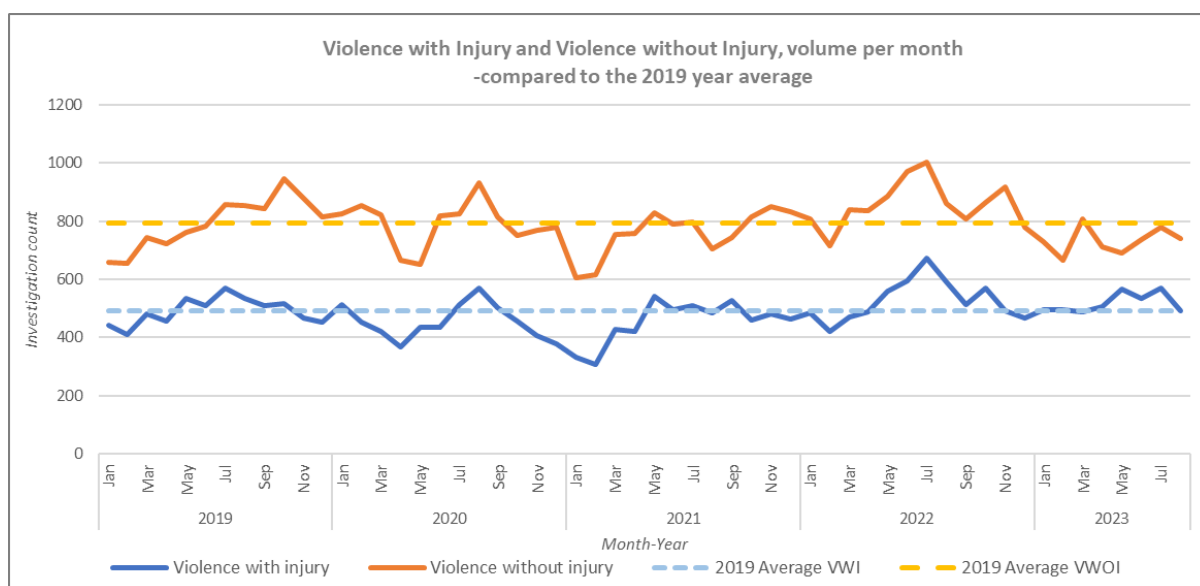
Chart compares the crimes per 1000 population for Suffolk with Norfolk, the MSG and nationally over the last four years.

3.4 The ONS data shows that, to the year ending June 2023, whilst Suffolk continues to have one of the lowest rates of Violence with Injury (VWI) offences it has experienced an increase in that period of 7.4% compared to the year ending June 2022. However, it is likely this increase may change as local data for July and August is showing a decrease in investigations recorded. Data released for the year ending June 2023 shows Suffolk as having the 13<sup>th</sup> lowest Violence With Injury crime rate per 1,000 population.

#### 4. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

4.1 Volume of Violence With Injury (VWI) & Violence Without Injury (VWOI) Investigations - The period of reporting refers to the date range of 01/09/2022 – 31/08/2023, the previous 12 months refers to 01/09/2021 – 31/08/2022, the 2019 baseline is the full 2019 calendar year.

4.2 The below chart shows the volume of offences from January 2019 to August 2023, per month broken down into Violence with Injury and Violence without Injury groupings. The average from the 2019 baseline year has also been presented on the chart. Both offence types increase and decrease across the months often in symmetry to one another. In the last 12 months VWI and VWOI volumes peaked in July (this can also be seen in previous years), the volume has since decreased. This mirrors the ONS data which shows an increase between March 2023 and June 2023.



4.3 Table 1 - Volume of offences compared to the previous 12 months and the 2019 baseline.

Violence Type	L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)	2019 Baseline	Percent Difference (to L12M)
Violence with injury	6191	6224	-0.5%	5880	5.3%
Violence without injury	9231	10159	-9.1%	9524	-3.1%

4.4 Table 1 shows the volume of crime over the last 12 months, compared to the volume from the previous 12 months and the 2019 baseline. Violence with Injury – over the last 12 months the volume has decreased by 0.5% (-33 investigations) and increased +5.3% (+311 investigations) compared to the 2019 baseline. Violence without Injury - over the last 12 months the volume has decreased by 9.1% (-928 investigations), and -3.1% (-293) compared to the 2019 baseline.

4.5 Table 2 - Proportion of Repeat Victims

<b>REPEAT VICTIMS</b>		
<b>Violence with Injury</b>	<b>L12M</b>	<b>P12M</b>
Unique Victim Volume	5,515	5,512
Repeat Victim %	8.9%	14.2%
<b>Violence without Injury</b>	<b>L12M</b>	<b>P12M</b>
Unique Victim Voume	7,716	8,489
Repeat Victim %	13.1%	13.0%

Repeat Victim is where a victim has been recorded as a victim more than once in that 12month period.

4.6 Table 2 shows the volume of victims related to the number of offences recorded. It is important to consider number of victims and not simply investigations recorded as one incident may result in more than one crime being recorded, this is particularly the case in Domestic Abuse related investigations. In the Last 12 months the volume of victims in respect of VWI investigations has remained almost static. In comparison the volume of repeat victims has reduced to 8.9%.

4.7 Table 3 - Proportion of Investigations that are Domestic Abuse Related

<b>DA PROPORTION</b>	
<b>Violence with injury</b>	
2019 Baseline	31.5%
P12M	32.2%
L12M	32.6%
<b>Violence without injury</b>	
2019 Baseline	31.5%
P12M	31.6%
L12M	29.5%

4.8 Table 3 shows that the volume of VWI and VWOI offences that are Domestic Abuse related remains relatively unchanged. Over the last 12 months the volume of VWI investigations has increased by +4.3% (+85 investigations) and the volume of VWOI investigations has decreased by -13.9% (-442 investigations).

## 5. IMPACT OF CHANGES IN HOME OFFICE CRIME COUNTING RULES APRIL 2023

- 5.1 The Home Office introduced changes to Home Office Counting rules which will likely see the number of investigations recorded reduce and therefore the gap between number of investigations recorded and number of victims reduce. All reported crimes for a single incident will now consistently be recorded under the 'principal offence,' rather than as multiple entries on a database that effectively re-records the same incident.
- 5.2 The police will continue to pursue all offences involved, understanding how they are linked, as part of their thorough investigative work. For example, under these changes, where a victim has experienced an assault with criminal damage occurring to their property, police will now put the assault at the forefront of their investigation. The changes will assist in standardising counting rules with the 'principal offence' approach across the board, to record the crime which has the most impact on a victim.

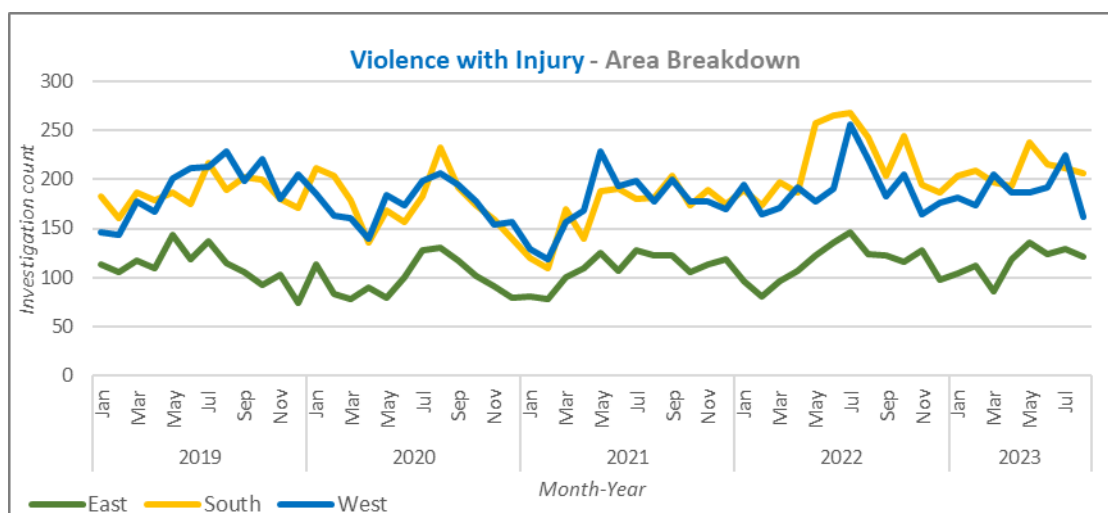
## 6. VOLUME OF VIOLENCE WITH INJURY (VWI) & VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY (VWOI) BROKEN DOWN INTO OFFENCE CATEGORY

*The period of reporting refers to the date range of 01/09/2022 – 31/08/2023, the previous 12 months refers to 01/09/2021 – 31/08/2022, the 2019 baseline is the full 2019 calendar year.*

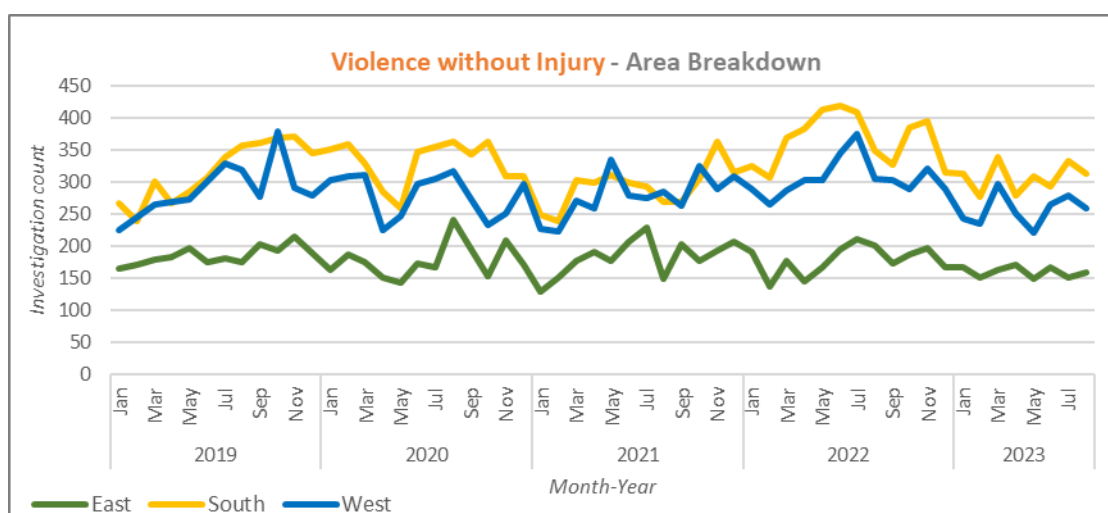
Sub Sub Group	L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)		2019 Baseline	Percent Difference (to L12M)	
<b>Violence with injury</b>							
<b>Assault with injury</b>	5268	5730	-462	-8.1%	5459	-191	-3.5%
Assault with intent to cause serious harm	234	264	-30	-11.4%	308	-74	-24.0%
Assault with Injury on a Constable	109	111	-2	-1.8%	80	29	36.3%
Assault with Injury On An Emergency Worker (Other Than A Constable)	27	51	-24	-47.1%		27	
Racially or Religiously Aggravated Assault with Injury	13	16	-3	-18.8%	14	-1	-7.1%
Endangering Life	8	15	-7	-46.7%	10	-2	-20.0%
Attempted Murder	9	8	1	12.5%	5	4	80.0%
Causing Death or Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving	6	11	-5	-45.5%	1	5	500.0%
Causing Death by careless or inconsiderate driving	2	1	1	100.0%	3	-1	-33.3%
Cause or Allow Death or Serious Physical Harm to Child or Vulnerable Person	1	2	-1	-50.0%		1	
<b>Violence without injury</b>							
<b>Assault without Injury</b>	7462	9080	-1618	-17.8%	8566	-1104	-12.9%
Assault without Injury on a Constable	366	426	-60	-14.1%	386	-20	-5.2%
Threats to Kill	187	249	-62	-24.9%	259	-72	-27.8%
Cruelty to Children/Young Persons	211	207	4	1.9%	112	99	88.4%
Kidnapping	75	94	-19	-20.2%	81	-6	-7.4%
Modern Slavery	62	109	-47	-43.1%	50	12	24.0%
Racially or religiously Aggravated Assault without Injury	46	50	-4	-8.0%	59	-13	-22.0%
Child Abduction	14	7	7	100.0%	11	3	27.3%
Conspiracy to commit murder	1	1	0	0.0%		1	

- 6.1 Two offence titles have been identified in the above table (highlighted in yellow), these have recorded both the largest decrease from the previous 12 months and the 2019 baseline, both in terms of the volume of numbers and the percentage difference:
- 6.11 **Assault with Injury (ABH)** – Over the last 12 months has decreased by 8.1%, this is a volume decrease of 462 investigations. When compared to 2019, this is a 3.5% decrease with 191 less investigations.
- 6.12 **Assault without Injury (Common Assault)**– Over the last 12 months has decreased by 17.8%, this is a volume decrease of 1618 investigations. When compared to 2019, this is a 12.9% decrease with 1104 less investigations.

## 7. VOLUME OF VWI & VWOI PER AREA



7.1 The above chart shows the South and the West fluctuate over the months with recording the highest number VWI investigations. All areas peak in the month of July every year throughout the period. With the South and West peaking in July 2022, recording the highest volume the areas have recorded. The East consistently records the least VWI investigations.



7.2 The above chart shows the South generally records the highest volume of VWOI. All areas saw an increase of investigations in both July and November for the last 12 months. The East consistently records the least VWOI investigations.

7.3 *Volume of offences compared to the previous 12 months and the 2019 baseline – area breakdown.*

Area Breakdown		L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)	2019 Baseline	Percent Difference (to L12M)
Violence with Injury	East	1394	1371	1.7%	1334	4.5%
	South	2500	2519	-0.8%	2229	12.2%
	West	2240	2291	-2.2%	2293	-2.3%
Violence without Injury	East	1999	2199	-9.1%	2217	-9.8%
	South	3872	4218	-8.2%	3804	1.8%
	West	3244	3650	-11.1%	3447	-5.9%

**The East has had the only increase in the L12M:**

- VWI, 1.7% (+23 investigations) compared to P12M.

**The South has decreased in volume in the L12M:**

- VWI, -0.8% (-19 investigations) compared to P12M.
- VWOI, -8.2% (-346 investigations) compared to P12M.

**The West have also decreased in volume in the L12M:**

- VWI, -2.2% (-51 investigations) compared to P12M.
- VWOI, -11.1% (-406 investigations) compared to P12M.

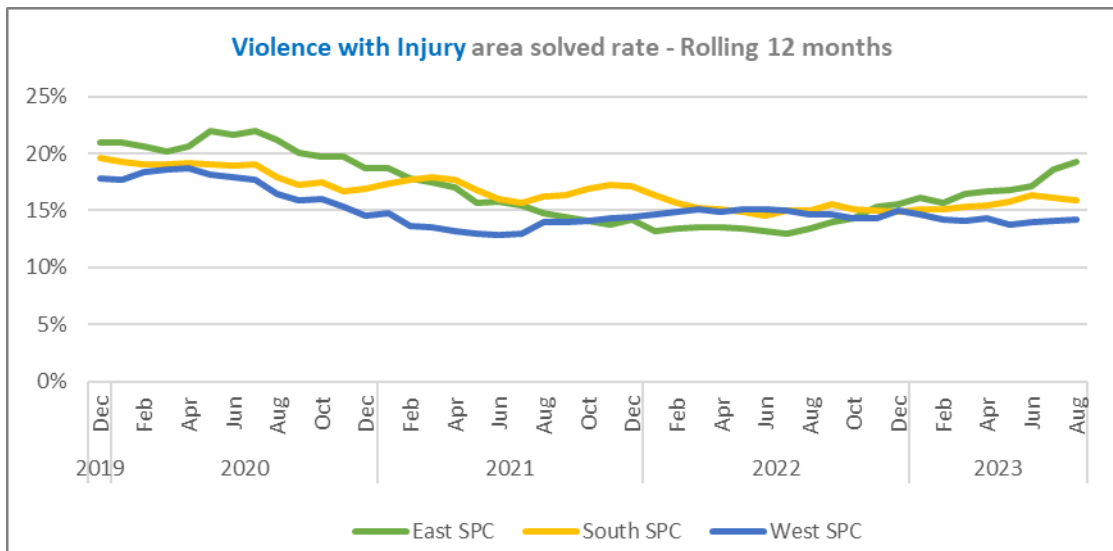
**8. SOLVED RATE**

8.1 Solved Rate for Violence with Injury compared to the previous 12 months and the 2019 baseline. (See Appendix 4 for Outcome Type 1- 8 description)

Solved Rate		L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)	2019 Baseline	Percent Difference (to L12M)
Violence with injury	Created Count	5677	6209		5880	
	Type 1 - 8 count	908	926		1127	
	Solved Rate	16.0%	14.9%	+1.1p.p	19.2%	-3.2p.p

8.2 Increases in solved rate have been seen in both Actual Bodily Harm (ABH) and Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) offence categories. In the last 12 months 31.2% of GBH offences were solved an increase of 2.3pp compared to the previous 12 months. In the last 12 months 14.2% of ABH offences were solved an increase of 1.4pp compared to the previous 12 months.

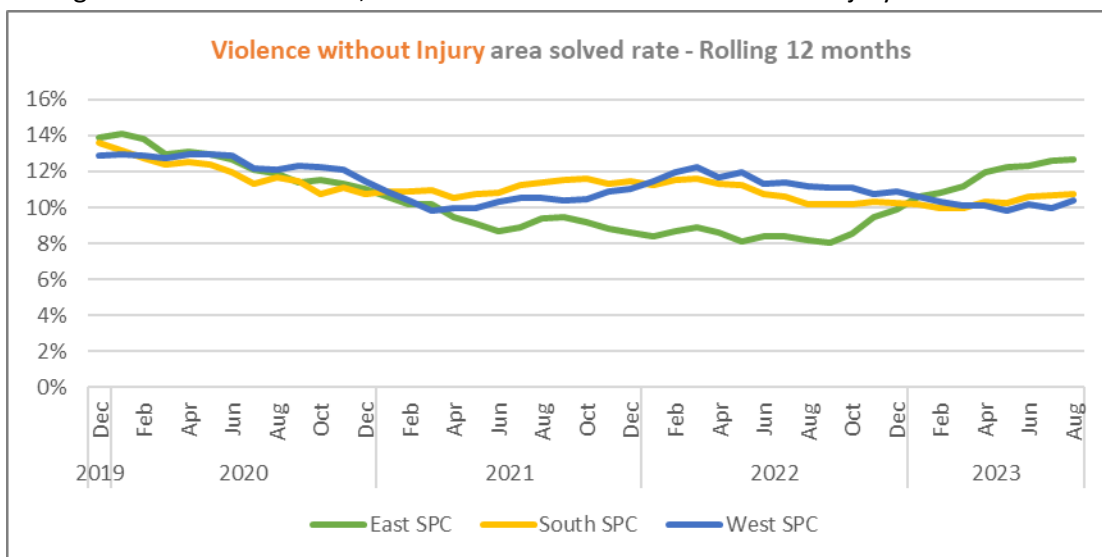
8.3 Rolling 12 months solved rate, area breakdown for Violence with Injury



8.4 Solved Rate for Violence without Injury compared to the previous 12 months and the 2019 baseline.

Solved Rate		L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)	2019 Baseline	Percent Difference (to L12M)
Violence without injury	Created Count	8424	10223		9524	
	Type 1 - 8 count	950	1035		1281	
	Solved Rate	11.3%	10.1%	1.2p.p	13.5%	-2.2p.p

8.5 Rolling 12 months solved rate, area breakdown for Violence without Injury



8.6 In the last 12 months there has been a slight improvement in respect of solved rates across VWI and VWOI offences. The need to tackle growth in demand and to improve solve rates, tackling serious violence has been identified as a key priority for the constabulary’s Local Policing Command and work has continued to improve the quality of investigations alongside preventative activity.

8.7 The recently published HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Police Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection 2023-25 noted that;

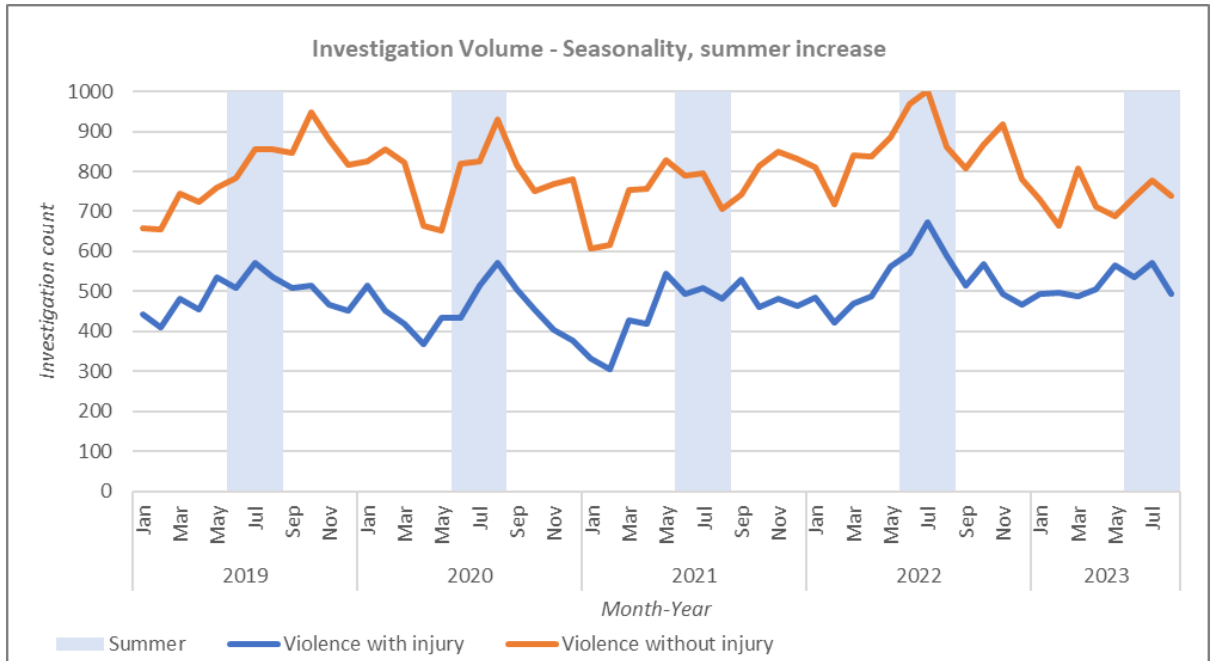
*‘The constabulary has made improvements to the way it supervises and reviews investigations, clearly defining responsibilities and expected standards.’*

*‘The constabulary achieves good results for victims by pursuing evidence-led prosecutions in our audit, we found that the constabulary considered evidence-led prosecutions where appropriate in nine out of ten cases. During our inspection, investigators spoke positively about their experience of evidence-led prosecutions, portraying a strong positive culture within the constabulary. The constabulary has developed an 8-point plan, which encourages both investigators and supervisors to explore whether the constabulary can pursue prosecution if victims don’t support police action’.*

**9. PREDICTIVE/ SEASONALITY**

9.1 The Summer months (July, June, August) record the largest volume of both Violence with injury and Violence without injury offences. The exception being 2021 where the increase is not so prominent, this can be seen for both crime types.

9.2 Investigation volume per month, seasonality highlighted.

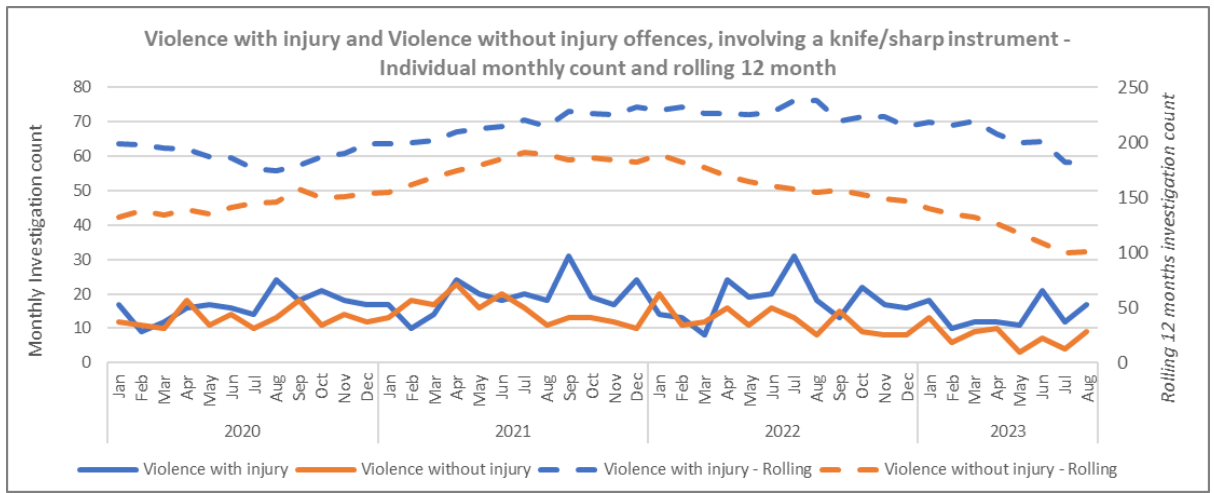


**10. KNIFE CRIME**

*The methodology for the below knife crime data – A Violence with Injury or Violence without Injury investigation with a Keyword of Knife/Sharp instrument recorded.*

*The period of reporting refers to the date range of 01/09/2022 – 31/08/2023, the previous 12 months refers to 01/09/2021 – 31/08/2022, the 2019 baseline is the full 2019 calendar year.*

10.1 Knife Crime volume, per month and rolling 12 months, for Violence with Injury and Violence without Injury.



10.2 The above chart shows data in two different ways. The smooth lines at the bottom show the volume of Violence with Injury and Violence without Injury offences per month over time, this fluctuates month to month, Violence with Injury peaked in September 2021, and July 2022. Violence without Injury has not recorded such a steep peak. The monthly volume makes direction of travel harder to identify. The dotted lines have been provided above, these show the rolling 12-month count, allowing for the direction of travel to be presented more clearly. It can be seen since the rolling 12 months of September 2022; the volume of Violence with Injury and Violence without Injury knife crime has decreased.

10.3 Knife Crime volume, Last 12 months compared to the Previous 12 months and 2019 baseline by Area.

		L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)	2019 Baseline	Percent Difference (to L12M)
Violence with injury	County	181	238	-23.9%	199	-9.0%
	East	40	47	-14.9%	30	33.3%
	South	73	105	-30.5%	78	-6.4%
	West	68	85	-20.0%	89	-23.6%
Violence without injury	County	101	155	-34.8%	135	-25.2%
	East	26	37	-29.7%	19	36.8%
	South	39	53	-26.4%	57	-31.6%
	West	35	64	-45.3%	59	-40.7%

10.4 The above table shows for Violence with Injury investigations when comparing to the previous 12 months all areas have seen a decrease in volume. Violence without Injury has also recorded a decrease when comparing to the previous 12 months.

10.5 Knife Crime volume all crime types, L12M compared to P12M.

	L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)
Violence with injury	181	238	-23.9%
Violence without injury	101	155	-34.8%
Possession Of Weapons	356	357	-0.3%
Public Order Offences	113	148	-23.6%
Arson and Criminal Damage	103	149	-30.9%
Robbery	51	60	-15.0%
Burglary	15	22	-31.8%
Sexual Offences	8	21	-61.9%
Theft	10	14	-28.6%
Drug Offences	8	12	-33.3%
Misc Crimes Against Society	6	4	50.0%
Other	17	28	-39.3%

#### 10.6 Tackling Knife Crime - Operation Sceptre

10.7 As in previous years, Suffolk continues to support and participate in the national weeks of action to tackle knife related crime, Operation Sceptre. During this year's national weeks of action to tackle knife crime, forces were requested to conduct enhanced enforcement, engagement, and education, deploying a range of tactics to suit local knife crime profiles.

10.8 The first week of action in 2023 was held between the 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> May 2023. Suffolk police worked with partners to use a whole range of tactics including but not limited to, engagement with communities with particular focus on retail premises where knives can be purchased, education delivery in schools and colleges, weapons sweeps in areas highlighted by intelligence and enforcement activities such as execution of warrants and appropriate use of Stop and Search legislation.

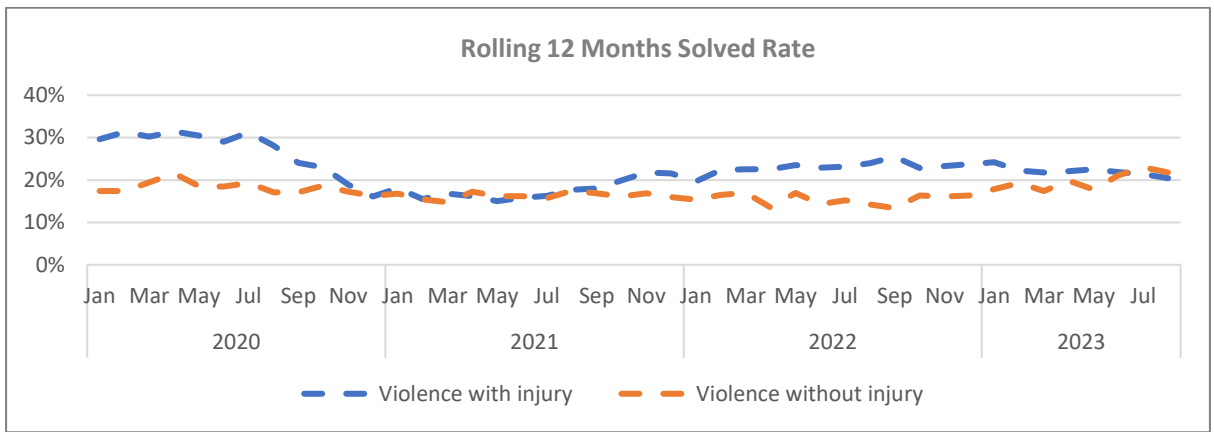
10.9 The results from this week are summarised below:

- 9 knife related warrants executed with 8 arrests;
- 15 knives recovered from warrants including machetes, samurai swords and zombie knives;
- 9 additional knife related arrests;
- 19 Stop and Searches with a further 9 knives recovered;
- Focused engagement with those identified through intelligence as carrying a higher risk of being involved in knife crime;
- Comprehensive media and social media plan developed and implemented with the Local Authority and police engagement officers;
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Schools Liaison Officers and Community Engagement Officers attended events at 29+ schools, reaching in excess of 3000 young people;
- Targeted weapons sweeps;
- Joint operation with British Transport Police using Project Servator trained officers.

10.10 The next Op Sceptre week of Action will commence on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023, and we look forward to supporting the initiative and tackling more knife crime within our communities.

#### 10.11 Knife Crime - Solved Rate

10.12 Knife Crime rolling 12 month solved rate.



10.13 The last 12 month solved rate for Violence with Injury is 20.4%, -3.5p. p lower when compared to the previous 12 months. For Violence without Injury the last 12 months solved rate is 21.8%, this is 7.6p.p higher than the previous 12 months.

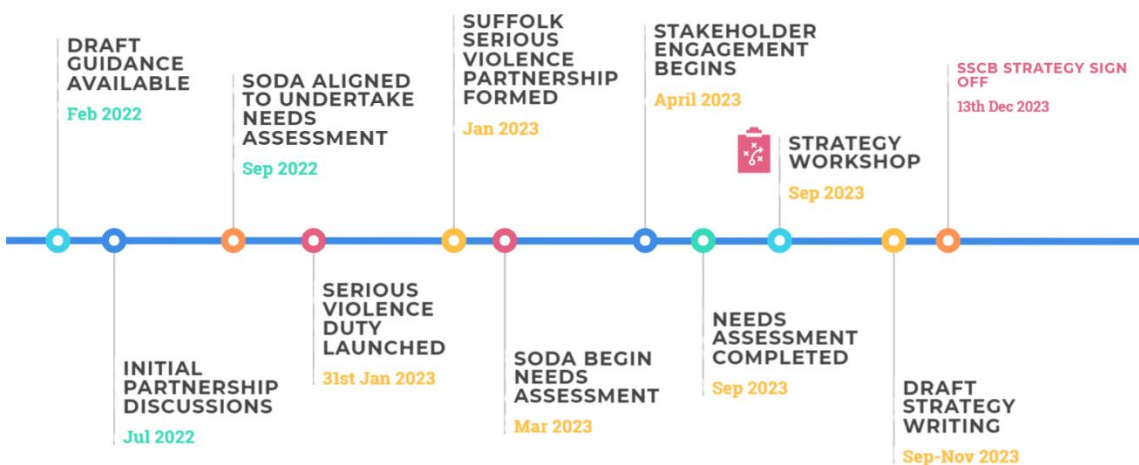
	L12M	P12M	Percent Difference (to L12M)
All Knife/Sharp Crime	25.9%	23.1%	2.8p.p
Violence with injury	20.4%	23.9%	-3.5p.p
Violence without injury	21.8%	14.2%	7.6p.p

## 11. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP - SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY (SVD)

11.1 Suffolk Constabulary is a statutory duty holder with regard the Serious Violence Duty (SVD) legislation enacted in January 2022. An SVD Overview, including which other agencies are compelled by the legislation, can be found in Appendix 3.

11.2 Work in respect of the SVD has continued with the County Strategy due to be published in January 2024. Following a successful Strategy Workshop held in September a draft Strategy is currently being prepared using the Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) prepared by SODA.

11.3 Key Milestones:

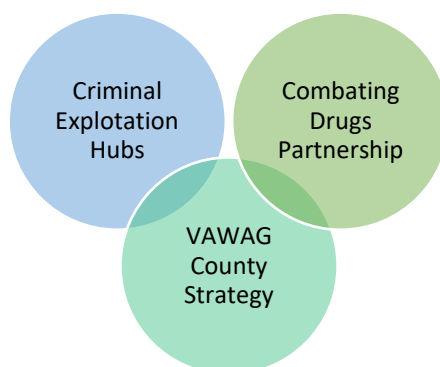


11.4 The SNA has been shared with Duty Holders and will be published in the December with the Strategy. There are some clear themes emerging from the SNA:

- *Low educational achievement is a risk factor at individual level – though attainment has improved across Suffolk over the past few years, it still lags behind national levels at Key Stages 2 & 4 and A-levels.*
- *Absence from school (missed attendance as well as suspensions and permanent exclusion) not only impacts students’ attainment but is also associated with involvement in violence. In 2021/22 there were 167 permanent exclusions in Suffolk.*
- *Not engaging with education or the labour market can have lasting effects on young people’s mental and physical health and there is evidence that lack of qualifications and job opportunities are linked to crime. In 2022/23 Suffolk had relatively more 16–17-year-olds not in employment, education or training (NEET) than England overall. And while Suffolk overall had a lower proportion of unemployed 16-24s than England in 2022, Ipswich over-indexes against both the local and national averages.*
- *SODA plotted police offences where suspects are under 19 (based on home postcode of suspects as well as incident postcode) against educational attainment, school exclusions and adult unemployment rates. These maps show a link between areas of lower attainment and higher exclusions and unemployment rates and concentrations of where under 19 suspects live or where offences with under 19 suspects occurred.*

11.5 It would seem that Education has a very large role to play – school attendance and low attainment levels are two key factors for Serious Violence. This has also been a finding in [SODA’s Criminal Exploitation \(CE\) Programme Evaluations](#)).

11.6 The below diagram highlights work programmes that are currently tackling Serious Violent Crime in Suffolk. The new Duty does not expect local areas to reinvent the wheel. The SVD Partnership has agreed to use part of the Home Office funding to build on previous work programmes to tackle Criminal Exploitation in Suffolk. The funding will ensure that Suffolk continues its successful track record of delivery whilst developing and evolving its response to this complex, ever changing issue.



## 12. PREVENTION

### 12.1 County Licensing Activity

12.2 In this reporting period there were 505 incidents recorded at licensed premises within Suffolk. This is a decrease on the previous quarter (Q4 22/23) which recorded 554 incidents and a slight decrease on the number of recorded incidents in the previous year (Q1 22/23), which recorded 598 incidents.

12.3 Theft, ABH and Criminal Damage are the most frequently recorded incident types during the period, accounting for 39.6% of all incident types. 52% of incident demand sits in the South, 38% in the West and 10% in the East.

12.4 Localities provide a focused approach to individual night-time economy needs, particularly those who are identified as a hot spot premises for criminal offences (and VAWG). Force Licensing Officers work with Safer Neighbourhood Teams and partners to deliver long term resolutions.

12.5 Premises are Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rated based on a number of factors that drive demand. High priority (red) premises will be adopted by the Licensing Team as a priority premises and a Licensing Officer allocated to each premises to reduce policing demand and prevent potential harm to the public. These premises have been selected based on the volume, nature or increase of incidents identified at the location. A Prevention Activity Log (PAL) is recorded and allocated for local ownership supported by the licensing officer, working closely in partnership to resolve long term issues.

12.5 A successful BID for Serious Violence Duty (SVD) funding has been granted. A SVD licensing officer is currently in place for 31 weeks from September through to March. Premises to focus on intervention have been identified. There is ongoing work around enhancing safer spaces within premises including a welfare officer policy being created.

12.6 A Night Time Economy community survey has been launched which will establishing a baseline for the communities feeling of safety within the NTE and consulting the community on what aspects of the NTE make them feel less safe. This will assist in steering the work carried out by the serious violence licensing officer. This has been distributed through social media, scannable QR codes and Officer engagements. Link to survey is here> <https://forms.office.com/e/B9k6UXtmaW>.

12.7 Examples of other ongoing activities:

- Increase in proactivity, including visiting licensing premises, executing NTE operations including impact nights and conditions of entry operations, using ION Track machine, and Using project Servator trained officers (See Appendix 1)
- External Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement training (WAVE) given to local authority, designated premises supervisors and management agencies and police to upskill industry providers in identifying those who are vulnerable
- Continue to promote the use of national campaigns such as '[ASK ANGELA](#)'

### 13. CHILD EXPLOITATION AND GANGS TEAM (CEGT)

- 13.1 Throughout this reporting period the Child Exploitation & Gangs Team have continued to work closely with partners from Youth Justice Services, Social Care, Education and the third sector to build closer relationships between policing and young people. The team has been involved in targeted multi agency engagements, seeking to identify, support and divert young people at risk of exploitation, serious youth violence and gang criminality.
- 13.2 The CEGT work with partners through the Multi Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) Panels (see Appendix 5) framework, conducting investigations to identify perpetrators of exploitation and ensure victims are appropriately safeguarding.
- 13.3 The Team is now working at full establishment and demonstrating a high level of productivity having recorded over 160 investigations connected directly to exploitation concerns and children. The team has responsibility for the ongoing investigations linked to adopted MACE referrals in the Southern area.
- 13.4 The CEGT is a key contributor to Operation Hull (as referenced in the paper to the Panel in May) proactively working with partners to identify, and disrupt, associated criminality seeking early opportunities for partnership intervention and diversion.
- 13.5 There are links to children and young people, and further detail on the Multi Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) Panels and the work of the Child Exploitation & Gangs Team is included in the Supporting Children and Young People Paper being considered by the Panel.
- 13.5 Example of GEGT work – Child B

A 16-year-old female living in care was being reported missing by care home staff almost daily, there were 184 missing episodes. Child B would return to the address during the early hours of the morning, but the circumstances suddenly changed, and she would not return until the following afternoon. It was not known where she was going or who she was spending time with. Police would attend following her return to conduct return safe and well checks but she would persistently refuse to engage. She refused to share her phone number with police or care staff at the home. This was a big stumbling block in being able to help safeguard Child B officers and staff were unable to call Child B during her missing episodes and further checks and enquiries could not be conducted by police.

CEGT officers attended the address and made attempts to engage with Child B, but again, although polite, she would refuse to say where she was going or who she was spending time with. CEGT officers made regular contact with staff at the care home as well as holding regular information sharing meetings with other professionals including the Social Worker, Make a Change worker and support staff. During one of these meetings, information was passed to CEGT which enabled officers to identify a contact of Child B who was previously unknown. This in turn led to enquiries with this contact who willingly provided Child B's phone number. Targeted enquiries and patrols by CEGT officers identified a possible boyfriend who was reporting dealing drugs and involved in violent offences.

Information briefing slides were produced by CEGT and disseminated amongst patrols officers, requesting they assist to build intelligence. Owing to these briefing slides, patrol officers were able to use the recent information to consider their powers under stop and

search legislation. This resulted in officers conducting two stop searches of Child B where an amount of Cannabis, phones and cash were located.

Information sharing channels between police and partner agencies, which had been developed by CEGT, were instrumental in the care home support staff advising police that they had seen Child B on the in-house CCTV counting an amount of bank notes and hiding a bag of drugs on the outside of a windowsill. Police attended and Child B was processed for a third time in relation to drugs offences. Although it appears as if she was being targeted as a possible suspect, Child B was clearly a victim of exploitation.

At this point, CEGT requested an urgent professional meeting and shared concerns that Child B had now had high value of drugs, phones and cash seized from her and that the concern was that she would now owe this money to someone else as part of a drugs debt and that her safety was now possibly at serious risk of harm. Police strongly recommended that Child B be moved out of Suffolk in order to keep her safe from those who were clearly exploiting her.

Child B was moved to another county and fully supported within her home to focus on her future and education. After a few months, Child B was slowly integrated back into the County by her support staff. She was supervised whilst visiting Suffolk and appropriate friends whilst still living out of Suffolk. She is currently now living back in Suffolk at a different care home and been successful in securing an apprenticeship, earning her own money.

## **14. AREA ACTIVITY**

14.1 The following summarises recent Activity in the Southern Area.

- Police have been working in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council Community Safety Team and delivered WAVE training to licensees.
- A number of planned joint licensed premises visits have been conducted throughout 2023 involving uniformed officers from the Kestrel Teams.
- Operation Drawbridge involved a number of teams including the SNTs and Gangs Team focussing on both engagement and enforcement activities during a weekend within Ipswich town Centre to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Project Servator trained officers, conducting weapon searches and high visibility proactive engagement in partnership with the Town Pastors, (with feedback sought via a community survey linked to a dedicated QR code). The result of the operation involved vulnerable persons identified and transport home facilitated, disruption of potential incidents and arrests for violent offences. In addition, 39 licensed premises were visited.

14.2 The following summarises recent Activity in the Eastern Area:

- Op FOLSTONE targeting youth related ASB, predominantly in town centre area.
- The Night Time Economy (NTE) Vulnerability briefing (PowerPoint) was delivered to all SNT and Response officers in May, prior to the commencement of the peak summer period.

- Deployment of Ion-Tracker device to licenced premises identified as being hot-spot for NTE related ASB, disorder and criminality. A positive result at one particular premises, which had already been identified as an emerging problem premises, has now been followed by enhanced intervention by the SNT and the Licencing Officer.

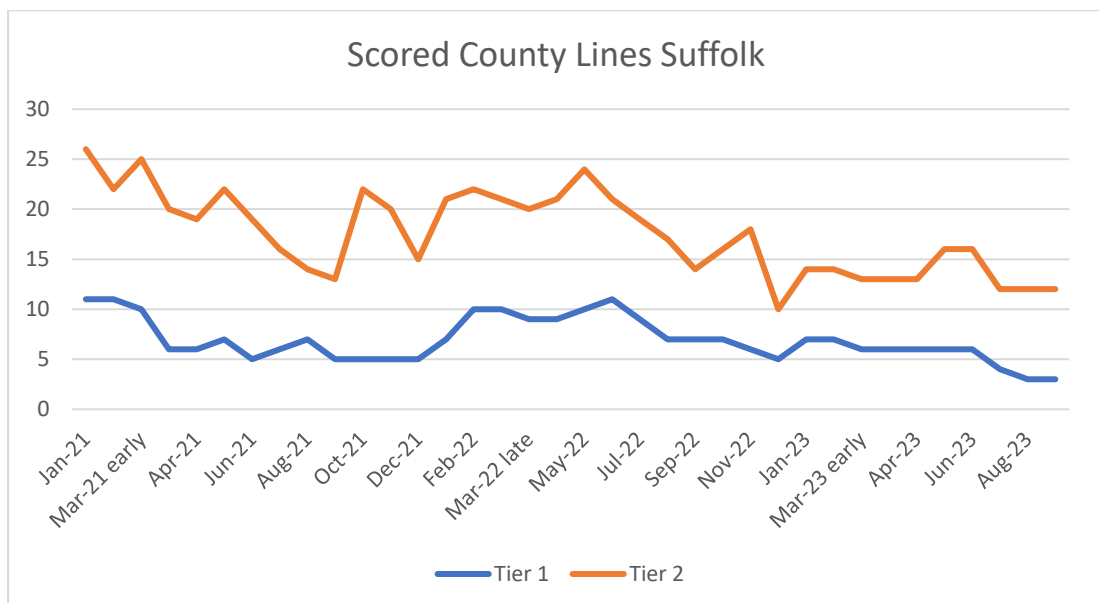
14.3 The following summarises recent Activity in the Western Area:

- Joint police and West Suffolk Council closure of address in Haverhill (drugs and ASB);
- July - Three people arrested for being concerned in supply of controlled drugs following reports of a “bad batch.” Ongoing work with partners such as NHS / Local Councils to mitigate the risk. This operation identified the source out of County and saw early actions to engage with some of the most vulnerable members of the drug community to develop the investigative links;
- Criminal Exploitation Hubs are being more proactively deployed across the West, namely Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket – this is targeting those on the cusp of criminality and also providing increased intelligence in relation to Child Criminal Exploitation. There has also been an increase in child referrals to MACE to support earlier interventions;
- Highpoint prison - Joint working with partners to ensure that offences within the prison are allocated to a suitable resource and have suitable oversight – violence levels are rising as the population grows. Joint work ongoing in respect of demand reduction.

## 15. COUNTY LINES

15.1 The definition of County Lines is shown at Appendix 2.

15.2 Currently in Suffolk there are 3 tier 1 County Lines with Ipswich being the top impacted location and the popular drug type being crack cocaine and heroin. There are 9 tier 2 lines in Suffolk. Tier 1 one lines are assessed as the highest risk. For comparison in September 2022 there were 7 Tier 1 lines and 7 tier 2 lines, there is a general trend downwards on lines operating in Suffolk.



15.3 Whilst the number of county lines has reduced, it remains a constant threat and one that can change rapidly if we do not continue to actively tackle the issue. As we have tragically witnessed, gang feuds can escalate quickly, resulting in loss of life.

- 15.4 There is a continuing effort targeting county lines and supporting those most vulnerable to exploitation. There are makers in place using Police National Computer (PNC) to highlight offenders and victims, so any police interaction is appropriate. Suffolk is measured in respect to these markers and during the last period was 3<sup>rd</sup> nationally in the use of such markers.
- 15.5 Op Forte was an investigation into a significant Ipswich drug line linked to gang violence. The Serious Crime Disruption Team led the investigation that has been ongoing for 16 months and have now arrested several people including the principle. A four-week trial is set for February 2024.
- 15.6 Sentinel Officers went to a hotel in Ipswich, following the arrest of 20-year-old after seeing him supplying cocaine to a woman out of his car window in Ipswich. When the vehicle was searched, officers found a key to a room at the hotel, as well as 15 wraps of cocaine and cash. The room was empty but when police went to the room next door, which was occupied, they found a further 65 wraps of cocaine and more cash. Both males admitted possessing cocaine with intent to supply, being concerned in the supply of cocaine, and possessing criminal property and received sentences of 28 months and 30 months.

## **16. OPERATION OROCHI**

16.1 The Constabulary continues to support disruption activity under Operation Orochi. This is Metropolitan police led initiative, involving the sharing of information and tactics with county forces. The aim is to identify and arrest the individual controlling the dealer's mobile phone. Suffolk Constabulary's Serious Crime Disruption Teams (SCDT) lead operational delivery of Orochi in Suffolk and since January 2023 they have continued to achieve significant successes including:

- 16 County Lines disrupted;
- 16 Line Holders of County Lines arrested and charged;
- 85 years in prison sentences for Line Holders;
- A 26-year-old man from London was jailed for 5 years after the running the 'Junior' drugs line into Ipswich in 2021. They pleaded guilty at court;
- A 38-year-old man from Ipswich was sentenced to 40 months in prison after pleading guilty to supplying drugs in Ipswich in 2022. It was established that during a 3-month period 3,000 messages were issued by the suspect offering drugs across South Suffolk, very much following a County Line model;
- A 19-year-old man from London was sentenced to 2 years 8 months for supplying crack cocaine and heroin in Ipswich I 2022, running the 'Starry' line.
- A 34-year-old man from Newmarket pleaded guilty to supplying drugs in West Suffolk known at the Trigger line. They were sentenced to 32 months in prison.

## **17. OPERATION PESTER**

17.1 Operation Pester is a tactic used in partnership with service providers and public health, where mobile phone numbers found on mobile phones seized from county lines holders are sent a text offering health advice, Crimestoppers details and awareness from a police perspective that their number was found on a supplier's phone. This has been deployed once in Suffolk following a drug related death, with some positive early results provided from Turning Point reporting users seeking support.

## **18. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 18.1 The Home Office has allocated funding to support the local implementation of the Serious Violence Duty until 31 March 2025. The SVDP Board has already approved a number of bids in respect of interventions, this included the bid from the Constabulary to support a SVD licensing officer for 31 weeks from September through to March.

## **19. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 19.1 The delivery of a comprehensive Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) and associated strategy in relation to the Serious Violence Duty are significant requirements that must be completed by January 2024. The Strategy is currently being drafted following completion of the SNA and will be presented to the county's Safer Stronger Communities Board in December 2023 for formal sign off.

## **20. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION**

- 20.1 This paper provides understanding of the Suffolk performance for serious violence data set against both local and national context. Serious violence remains a priority workstream for the force, working in partnership to ensure we deliver against the serious violence duty. This has resulted in the early commissioning of a Strategic Needs Assessment by SODA which will be completed at the end of this year.
- 20.2 Under the heading of tackling serious violence the Constabulary has been focussing on the three priority workstreams of criminal exploitation, combatting drugs and VAWG; all of which have direct influence on and incorporate serious violence criminality, and have requisite Constabulary governance, partnership engagement and accountability.
- 20.3 Partnership, prevention and problem solving are a core themes in supporting the longer-term reduction of serious violence. The paper provides some positive examples of the work being undertaken and the positive, longer lasting impact these initiatives have.
- 20.4 The Constabulary recognises the need to focus on continuous improvements and adopting best practice with a view to ensure for longer term reduction in serious violence and improved outcomes for victims.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Project Servator**

Policing tactic designed to disrupt a range of criminal activity, including terrorism, while providing a reassuring presence for the public.

The deployments are led by the three Kestrel teams and are designed to make the environment as uncomfortable as possible for criminals to plan or carry out their activities and increase their fear of detection.

The deployments can happen anywhere and at any time and include police officers specially trained to spot the tell-tale signs of individuals who may be planning or preparing to commit a crime. The officers involved have to demonstrate a nationally recognised level of competency before they can become operational.

The approach, which sees police, businesses, community partners and the public working together, is in use in various parts of the UK, including across the whole of London after it was pioneered by the City of London Police in 2014. It is also in operation in Norfolk.

Project Servator sees the deployment of both highly visible and plain clothed police officers, supported by other resources such as dogs, firearms officers, vehicle checkpoints, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and CCTV.

A big part of Project Servator focuses on the engagement between officers and members of the public who will work together to act as an extra set of eyes and ears to any suspicious activity or behaviour.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Definition of County Lines**

The Home Office has defined County lines as a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line." They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Suffolk Constabulary has a clear governance structure for maintaining accountability and delivery of drug related activity in tackling supply and harm caused, this is through the Suffolk Drugs Board, chaired by Chief Superintendent (County Policing Command) and a specific County Lines Board which is headed by a Detective Chief Inspector (CSIM) focusing on enforcement activity.

In Suffolk County Lines are identified through both intelligence and evidence-based activity. Tier 1 lines are then scored through a Matrix which considers risk and harm, including serious violence and weapons.

Overview of Serious Violence Duty

# SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY



**What is the Serious Violence Duty?**  
Following public consultation in July 2019, the Government announced that it would introduce a new **Serious Violence Duty** on public bodies which ensures relevant services work together to share data and knowledge allowing them to target interventions to prevent serious violence.

**Why has the duty been introduced?**  
Serious violence has a devastating impact on victims and their families, instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society. Incidents of serious violence have increased in England and Wales since 2014 and we all have challenges and opportunities to prevent and reduce serious violence.

## What needs to happen in Suffolk?

**1**  
Statutory duty holders must form a partnership group to steer activity and ensure engagement from the wider Suffolk system of statutory and third sector partners

**2**  
The partnership group must undertake a Strategic Needs Assessment, sharing data and knowledge to understand the root causes of serious violence and where resources are best placed to have the biggest impact

**3**  
The partnership group must produce a Serious Violence Strategy for Suffolk, published by 31st January 2024

**Who are the duty holders?**  
Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Youth Justice Service, Probation Service, Ipswich Borough Council, West Suffolk Council, Babergh & Mid Suffolk Council, East Suffolk Council, Integrated Care Boards and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service.  
  
In addition to the duty holders, other organisations are expected to be involved in decision making, including police and crime commissioners, educational settings, prisons and secure estates, the voluntary sector, businesses and communities.

**What are we doing in Suffolk?**  
The Suffolk Serious Violence Duty Partnership formed in late 2022 and has been meeting monthly to develop a response to the new duty.  
  
The Strategic Needs Assessment is being undertaken by the Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics (SODA). This includes setting a definition of serious violence which currently includes offences relating to weapon use, homicide, robbery, aggravated burglary, assaults, arson endangering life, modern slavery, sexual assault, exploitation & disorder.  
  
If you would like to be part of this group or know more about the work of the partnership please contact [community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk)

## **Appendix 4**

### **Home Office Counting Rules Outcome Crime Types**

Source: [crime-recording-rules-for-frontline-officers-and-staff-july2023.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/crime-recording-rules-for-frontline-officers-and-staff-july2023.pdf)

### **Outcome Types**

For full information refer to your force local requirements for applying outcomes at the conclusion of your investigation.

For Home Office purposes, all recorded crimes will be assigned one of the following outcome types.

- Outcome 1 Charge or summons
- Outcome 1A Charge with alternative offence
- Outcome 2 Youth Caution
- Outcome 2A Youth Caution with alternative offence
- Outcome 3 Adult Caution
- Outcome 3A Adult Caution with alternative offence
- Outcome 4 TIC (taken into consideration)
- Outcome 5 Offender has died
- Outcome 6 PND (penalty notice for disorder)
- Outcome 7 Cannabis or Khat warning
- Outcome 8 Community resolution (with or without restorative justice)
- Outcome 9 Prosecution not in the public interest (CPS decision)
- Outcome 10 Prosecution not in the public interest (Police Decision)
- Outcome 11 Suspect below age on criminal responsibility (under 10)
- Outcome 12 Suspect too ill or died before crime was reported to police
- Outcome 13 Victim or key witness dead or too ill
- Outcome 14 Suspect not known – victim does not support or does not engage
- Outcome 15 Suspect known but evidential difficulties
- Outcome 16 Suspect known – victim does not support or does not engage
- Outcome 17 Prosecution time limit has expired
- Outcome 18 – Suspect not known
- Outcome 19 NFIB – Fraud case
- Outcome 20 Other agency dealing
- Outcome 21 Not in the public interest to investigate further
- Outcome 22 Diversionary, educational or intervention activity has been taken

## Appendix 5

**The Criminal Exploitation (CE) Hubs is an initiative building on the success of the Suffolk Against Gangs and Exploitation (SAGE) Team.**

The team works with key partners, voluntary groups, communities, children, and families to support, disrupt, protect, and empower children and communities from the risk of criminal exploitation in hot spot locations.

Locations are identified through police and community led intelligence, and the **Multi Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) panels**.

There are two teams, one based in the South and one in the West of Suffolk. The teams adopt a targeted outreach approach to work with children, families, and communities, supporting the work of those already working in the community and partner agencies.