



Making our town safer

**Working Together to
Make Stevenage Even Safer**

Community Safety Strategy

2025



2028



Contents

Foreword.....4

Introduction to SoSafe6

Equalities and Data Protection.....8

Findings from the Stevenage Borough Council 2024 Community Survey9

Achievements.....10

Key Differences between 2021/2024 and 2025/2028 strategies.....11

Monitoring and Measuring our Performance12

Aims and Objectives13

How our services support the objectives14

Objective One

Highlight the risks to the community of drug possession and crime15

Objective Two

Provide safe reporting and support to victims of violence against women and girls, including Domestic abuse16

Objective Three

Promote awareness of Cuckooing and the support available to victims17

Objective Four

Divert individuals from becoming involved in Anti-Social Behaviour18

Objective Five

Collaborate with Partners and Young People regarding the risks around County Lines and associated Anti-Social Behaviour.19

Objective Six

Raise awareness around online fraud and the warning signs to the community20

SoSafe Feedback.....21

Acronyms/Glossary22

Foreword Tom Pike

I am pleased to present SoSafe's Community Safety Strategy for 2025/28. It outlines some of our successes and our priorities over the next three years and the actions we will take to address them.

Stevenage is a co-operative council that prides itself on collaborative working with partners and our communities. SoSafe will continue to address the issues our residents, visitors and those that work in our town see as a priority, by involving you in the decision making and by consulting with you.

In future years, as in the past three years, our priorities are what the people of the town have told us they want to see us focusing on. We have refreshed and focused our priorities following a local assessment of safety, crime, disorder and ASB in the town, which was supported by the results of consultation. There have been a number of new government policies and strategies, as well as legislative changes since the last strategy, some of which have placed additional duties on Community Safety partners, and this newsStrategy will ensure that these developments are reflected locally through robust multi-agency plans and joined-up working.

Within this strategy there is an increased focus on violence and anti-social behaviour, setting out what we will do to tackle this, in recognition of the level of harm and fear that these can bring to communities. This reflects the national focus on serious violence and anti-social behaviour as outlined in the government's ASB Action Plan and in the measures around serious violence set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

The SoSafe Community Safety Partnership approaches the next three-year plan from a sound foundation of achievement. However, challenges remain, and we want to do more. By working together in partnership with agencies and local communities we can tackle the root causes of crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour, and break the generational cycle to build a safer, stronger community.

Tom Pike
Chief Executive



“SoSafe will continue to address the issues our residents, visitors and those that work in our town see as a priority, by involving you in the decision making and by consulting with you.”

Foreword Tom Plater

I am pleased to introduce our new SoSafe Community Safety Strategy for Stevenage.

Over the past three years through the strong relationships we have built from working together, the partnership has had successes in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, protecting, and supporting people with vulnerabilities.

We are proud of these achievements, but there is more for us to do. The nature of crime and anti-social behaviour, and the impact upon individuals and our communities, is constantly evolving.

As a partnership we must also evolve in our response, continuing to listen, learn and improve our approach and our ways of working.

Over the next three years SoSafe will be working hard together with partner agencies and the community to continue our work to make Stevenage a safe place for everyone.

Our partnership is strong and benefits from the clear commitment from a range of local organisations. SoSafe remains passionate about supporting the wellbeing of our residents, the town and creating safe environments for all of our communities.

As there continues to be unprecedented pressures on public sector funding; this strategy will ensure that, as a co-operative council, we are effectively utilising all available resources to achieve value for money whilst continuing to effectively tackle crime in our communities.

The values that underpin this strategy are based on co-operation. We will only tackle crime and anti-social behaviour through a shared approach, working hand in hand with our residents and our partners.

Over the following pages we have outlined the activities we have undertaken over the past three years and our plans for the next three. I hope by reading this strategy we can show you how SoSafe is working for the benefit of us all, now and into the future.

Councillor Tom Plater

Portfolio Holder – Stronger Communities



“Over the next three years SoSafe will be working hard together with partner agencies and the community to continue our work to make Stevenage a safe place for everyone.”

Introduction to SoSafe

SoSafe (Stevenage Community Safety Partnership [CSP]) is a strategic partnership, working to reduce crime and offending in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. SoSafe is made up of key agencies that each bring their own unique specialism to the partnership. By working collaboratively with partners and our local communities, we have been able to make significant changes to the lives of those people who need support, guidance, and advice, whilst tackling crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour.

The CSP includes the following organisations:

- Stevenage Borough Council (SBC)
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- National Probation Service
- Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS).
- Local voluntary services

This strategy provides a framework for the many activities and initiatives that the partnership aims to deliver to improve community safety and community confidence in the town. Following consultation with members of the public and partners, this strategy identifies the priorities that SoSafe will focus on over the next three years.

Alongside this strategy, a detailed action plan is produced each year, which shows how SoSafe will achieve its aim and objectives. It contains specific targets and is monitored, updated, and reviewed regularly.

The Community Safety Strategy has been developed with due regard to the following:

- National developments and changes to legislation
- Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) plan Everybody's Business
- Annual Strategic Assessment for Stevenage 2023/2024
- County Community Safety Unit (CCSU) domestic abuse strategy and the Survivors Against Domestic Abuse Strategy
- CCSU drugs and alcohol strategy
- Hertfordshire's Criminal Justice Board Strategy 2022-2025
- Historical and Current Crime Data.
- Customer Surveys
- Police Echo data
- Partnership Consultation

SoSafe could not achieve its objectives without help from the public. It is the duty of all citizens to play their part in making their communities safer. People can contribute by reporting crime and disorder, supporting criminal justice agencies, and by taking responsibility for their personal safety and the safety of others.

For ideas on other ways to get involved, please visit our website:

Community Safety Partnership ([stevenage.gov.uk](https://www.stevenage.gov.uk))





Stevenage Community Safety Partnership

SoSafe Strategic Partners Group (SSSPG)

Responsible authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure partnership work is in place within the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The group meet regularly to review the strategic action plan, evaluate progress against identified priorities and share information

The responsible authorities are:

- Stevenage Borough Council (SBC)
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue (HFRS)
- East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group (ENHCCG)
- Hertfordshire County Council - Children's Services (HCC)
- County Community Safety Unit (CCSU)
- BeNCH Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)

Co-operating bodies are:

- Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

Each responsible authority has the statutory duty to nominate a Designated Liaison Officer, whose role is to proactively facilitate information sharing between partners, ensure legislation is adhered to and that at least the minimum information sharing requirements are complied with.

Chair: Matt Partridge; Chief Executive, SBC
Meet: Quarterly

Strategic

Identify & Review

Deliver & Report

Community Safety Strategy

1. Divert young people from becoming involved in crime and ASB
2. Provide safe reporting and support to domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery
3. Promote reporting of Hate Crime and equality in the community
4. Tackle the harms caused by drugs and alcohol
5. Work with partners to encourage reporting of crime and address perception of crime

Police and Crime Commissioners Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan

- Offender Pays
- Victims at the centre
- Business sense
- Public focus
- Protect local policing

County groups

- Community Safety Managers (CSM) meetings
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Domestic Abuse Risk Management Sub Group
- Herts Safeguarding Board

Youth action Panels

- Drug & Alcohol Networking meeting
- Multi Agency (MACE) Child Exploitation Group

Joint Action Group (JAG)

JAG is an operational, multi-agency group responsible for delivering the Community Safety Action Plan. The group meet regularly to update on action points, identify any emerging problems and develop resolutions and initiatives aimed at reducing levels of crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB). The group also review and monitor community safety funding grants and ensure money is spent appropriately to deliver the priorities and issues identified.

The agencies involved include:

- Stevenage Borough Council – Community Safety; ASB; Safeguarding; Licensing; CCTV; No More Service; Homelessness; Environmental Health and Enforcement
- Hertfordshire Constabulary – ASB and Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue (HFRS)
- Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) – Shared Anti-Fraud Service (SAFS) and Trading Standards
- Youth groups – Youth Connexions; YMCA and Child UK
- Spectrum CGL
- Stevenage Haven homeless shelter
- Local housing associations

Chair: Insp Nick Redfearn, Mel Cucos and Jessica Warren

Operational

Multi-agency groups

- **Multiple Needs Working Group**
SBC Meet: Six-weekly
- **Healthy Relationships Healthy Babies**
Meet: Quarterly
- **Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) Working Group**
Meet: Six-weekly
- **Stevenage Domestic Abuse Forum**
Meet: Monthly

Action Plan Priorities 2024/25

1. Tackling All ASB
2. Serious Violence
3. Cuckooing
4. Drugs, Possession and Associated crime
5. Violence Against Women and Girls
6. County Lines and Serious & Organised Crime

Equalities

Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council has a legal duty to fulfil the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Through this duty and in the application of this strategy, the council will carry out its functions in a way that:

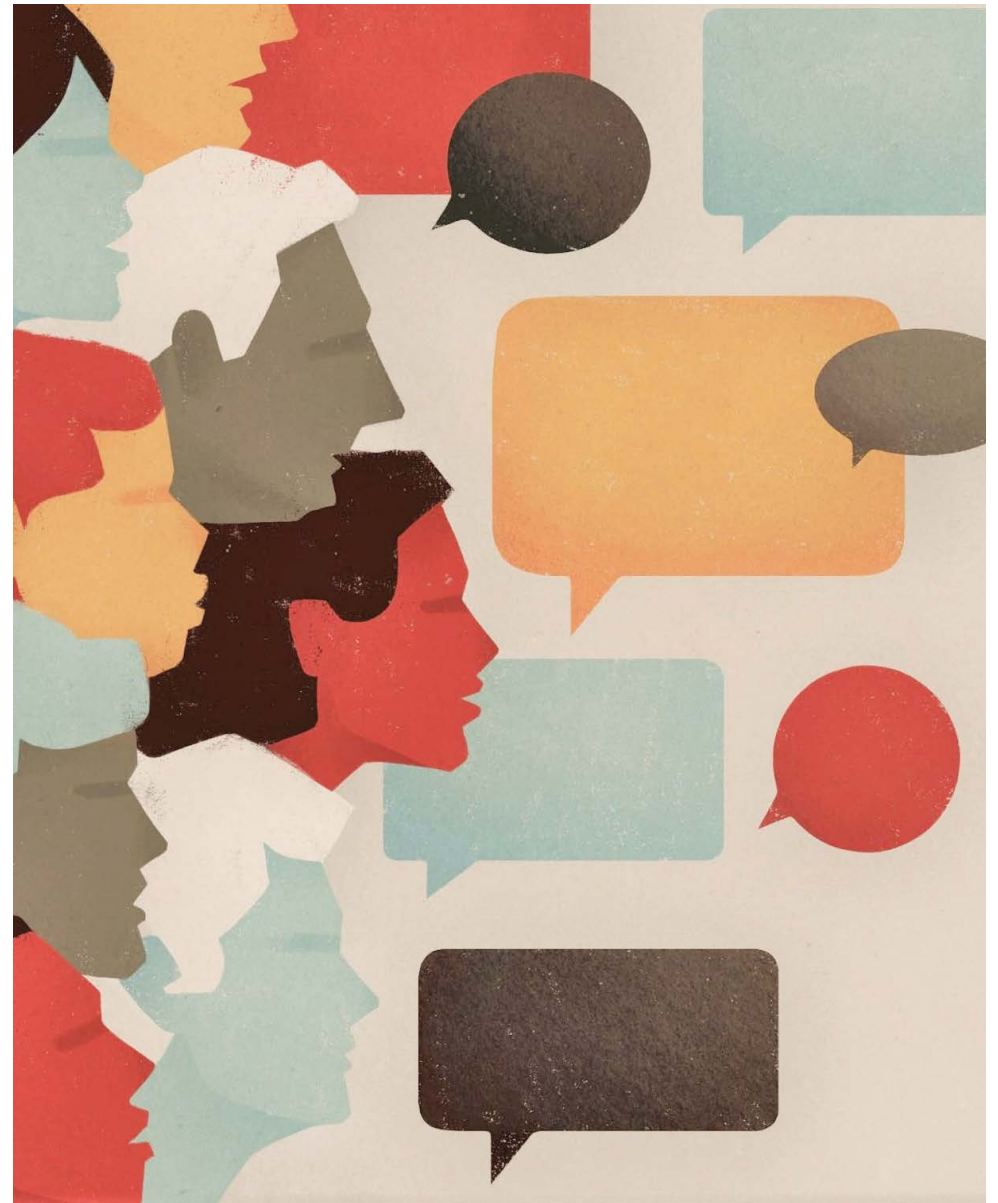
- a.** Removes discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is unlawful under the Equality Act (2010)
- b.** Promotes equal opportunities between people who have a protected characteristic(s) and those who don't
- c.** Encourages good relations between people who have a protected characteristic(s) and those who don't

Further information on the Council's fulfilment of the Equality Act (2010) is set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy (2022) and Reasonable Adjustment Policy (2024).

Data Protection

The council regards respect for the privacy of individuals and the lawful and careful treatment of personal information as very important to delivery of services.

The council will ensure that it treats personal information lawfully and proportionately as set out in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act (2018). For further information on the council's approach to handling information please see **Data Protection Act ([stevenage.gov.uk](https://www.stevenage.gov.uk))**.



Findings from the Partnership Consultation and Customer Surveys

We asked members of the community: what makes Stevenage a safe place to live, work and visit? Some of the responses included:

- Good community spirits
- Strong police presence
- Strong response to anti-social behaviour
- Good levels of CCTV
- Well-lit areas.

We also asked members of the community if there was anything that makes Stevenage unsafe. Some of the responses included:

- Drug use/drug dealing
- Anti-social behaviour
- Youth nuisance
- Cuckooing
- Violence against women and girls

The Police have also been collecting community views through their anonymous Echo system. The most talked about topic in Stevenage relates to drug use or dealing. This is followed by anti-social behaviour including noise and vehicle nuisance, drug dealing and parking.

Using local data, and information received from the public and elected members, we asked members of the community to vote and comment on the six aims proposed for this strategy. 89% of votes agreed with the priorities proposed:

- Highlight the risks to the community of drug possession and crime.
- Provide safe reporting and support to victims of violence against women and girls, including Domestic abuse.
- Promote awareness of Cuckooing and the support available to victims.
- Divert individuals from becoming involved in Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Collaborate with Partners and Young People regarding the risks around County Lines and associated anti-social behaviour.
- Raise awareness around online fraud and the warning signs to the community.

These findings, together with talking to residents through surveys and events have helped us to determine our SoSafe aims and objectives for the next three years and influence our Action Plan. As our action plan is a live document, engaging with residents is an ongoing and key part of our approach as a co-operative council. Throughout 2021 we completed a resident's survey which we will look to do again in Spring of 2025 to develop our understanding of resident views which will help us to update our action plan throughout 2025-2028.

Achievements

The themes for the 2021/2024 strategy and the 2025/2028 were developed through engagement with residents and visitors to the town through social media consultations, surveys with clients and data collected from the police Echo platform. We also analysed data from strategic assessments and information shared at both partnership and client led meetings to develop our strategies and direct our achievements and future aims.

What we did in 2021/2024	What we are aiming to do in 2025/2028
Listened to community and together with partners implemented “build a better bedwell”, supported with funding from the Home Office’s Safer Streets Fund.	Co-operative working with external partners, the No More Service and the Rough Sleeper team to focus on highlighting the dangers of drug and alcohol among vulnerable people.
Worked with survivors of domestic abuse to support key areas, including safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and implementing a direct duty number for customers to contact the SADA service directly.	Implement a Violence Against Women and Girls partnership action plan to highlight the concerns around domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, ‘honour-based’ abuse as well as many others, including offences committed online.
Introduced youth interventions into local schools in Stevenage focusing on peer pressure, County Lines, and the dangers of drug use.	Continue to work with local schools and run awareness sessions with years 6 and 7 classes in relation to peer pressure, County Lines, and the dangers of drug use.
Attended “street-meets” within the local community in partnership with the Police and other agencies.	Further embed the work with partners and the community to encourage the reporting of anti-social behaviour and use social media platforms to inform the community of positive outcomes.
Supported and raised awareness about Hate Crime around the Third-Party reporting centres across the town.	Using our various social media platforms and partner platforms, highlight issues around online fraud and the warning signs to the community.

Key differences between 2021/2024 and 2025/2028 strategies

We continue to take a co-operative approach with partner agencies, volunteers, and residents to help make Stevenage a safer place to live, visit and work. The 2025/28 Community Safety Strategy highlights how we work together by using multi-agency problem solving methods and consulting with the community of Stevenage. The aim is to promote effective long-term change and to tackle crime and ASB. We have continued to monitor crime rates throughout the last three-year period through Police Priority Setting meetings. These meetings, which take place every three months, consider the crime and ASB concerns within local communities and then set the community priorities for the following quarter.

During 2021/24, our focus was on deterring communities away from ASB and crime as well as providing support to those that need it. As part we have implemented schemes to drive out organised crime and improving the quality of life for local residents. These projects have been targeted around supporting children and vulnerable adults to mitigate any risk around exploitation or criminal behaviour.

We continue to prioritise safeguarding people. The partnership provides safe reporting together with support for victims of hate crime, domestic abuse survivors, victims of modern slavery. The Safe Space innovative approach continues to expand as it aims to meet the needs of victims and survivors. We also provide domestic abuse perpetrator intervention through the No More Services; this includes providing 1-1 support to change offending behaviour and housing for perpetrators. This project allows us to safeguard victims of domestic abuse by housing and monitoring perpetrators away from their victims.

The end of 2024 has seen the introduction of transformation at Stevenage Borough Council. Transformation is a journey to alter how the council operates and delivers services to customer to better improve customer experience. Transformation has brought together the Community Advice and Support team, a large team built by a number of services that all have a collective goal – how can we provide advice and support to our customers? For more information about the Community Advice and Support team, please visit our website: [Community Advice and Support \(stevenage.gov.uk\)](https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/community-advice-and-support)

The 2025/2028 strategy remains a key component of the council's focus to continue efforts to tackle crime and help people feel safer. The strategy promotes partnership working to raise awareness and provide support to the residents of Stevenage.

We aim to help people feel safe and supported to report incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour, helping us identify areas of concern so we can focus on implementing supportive measures in the areas that need them most.

The impact of drugs and alcohol continue to be a concern for the community. We are working co-operatively with residents to encourage the reporting of misuse of drugs and alcohol so we can address these issues. We continue to provide support to our residents with the most complex needs to help them make positive changes to their lifestyle and reduce the disruptive impact that they have on the community. The strategy will also focus partnership working to tackle crime and ASB in the town and help to make Stevenage a safer place to live, work and visit.

Monitoring and Measuring our Performance

The SoSafe Action Plan and the commitment of the partners, and volunteers, are paramount to successfully implementing this strategy. As a co-operative council we are aware that we can achieve more by working together to deliver the services that ensure SoSafe achieves its objectives and delivers for the needs of the town.

The SoSafe partnership must rely on existing resources and making additional funding applications.

Below is a list of some of the successful external funding bids secured in 2021-2024:

SADA	Stevenage/Survivors Against Domestic Abuse	£1,423,000.00
Safer Streets	Supporting the work in Bedwell to help make the area safer	£350,000.00
Family Intervention	Supporting families to sustain their tenancies	£72,000.00
Tacking youth crime	The No More youth project	£399,000.00
Op educa8	Police and partner funding project in schools in Stevenage	£3,000.00

How will we measure performance?

Performance indicators are agreed annually and reflect the agreed priorities and outcomes whilst considering the views of our customers. We will set SMART targets and measure these four times a year to check that we are making progress.

We will report on the progress made at our monthly SoSafe meetings with partners, at the SADA Board meetings and the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) meetings.

To understand crime and associated disorder the Partnership needs to work together to address the underlying problems. Effective crime reduction relies on the partnership working with our communities to better understand what and where the issues lie. This helps us to direct Partnership resources efficiently and effectively and to deliver services in the right place at the right time.

Crime trends are monitored regularly, and performance against our targets is reported to the SoSafe group. This group includes SoSafe's most senior managers and the elected councillor with responsibility for community safety. Additionally, elected councillors sit on a scrutiny committee which challenges SoSafe's performance.

Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is the elected representative for policing matters who maintains strong links with the county's CSPs.

So safe Aims

We have established two overarching aims for the 2025/28 strategy:

- Engage with the community and work co-operatively with partners/residents and those that visit the town.
- Work with the community to increase the reporting of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

So safe Objectives

Within So Safe's overarching aims, we have established six key objectives:

1. Highlight the risks to the community of drug possession and crime.
2. Provide safe reporting and support to victims of violence against women and girls, including domestic abuse.
3. Promote awareness of Cuckooing and the support available to victims.
4. Divert individuals from becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.
5. Collaborate with partners and young people regarding the risks around County Lines and associated anti-social behaviour.
6. Raise awareness around online fraud and the warning signs to the community.

How Services Support the Objectives

Objective One - Highlight the risks to the community of drug possession and crime.

Partnership working with No More Service, Adult Offender Protocol, Rough Sleeper team, Op Educa8, Voluntary Sector organisations, Police and Probation Service.

Objective Two - Provide safe reporting and support to victims of violence against women and girls, including domestic abuse.

Partnership working with SADA, Beacon, Herts County Council, Police, and other local authorities.

Objective Three - Promote awareness of Cuckooing and the support available to victims.

Partnership working with Housing Management, Police, Probation, CGL, No More Service, and Rough Sleeper team.

Objective Four - Divert individuals from becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

Partnership working with Police, No More Service, Rough Sleeper team, Housing Management, Probation and Neighbourhood Wardens.

Objective Five - Collaborate with partners and young people regarding the risks around County Lines and associated anti-social behaviour.

Partnership working with Police, Probation, No More Service, Rough Sleeper team, and Modern Slavery Service.

Objective Six- Raise awareness around online fraud and the warning signs to the community.

Partnership working with Police, Hertfordshire County Council, Citizens Advice, Welfare Benefit Debt Advice team and Trading Standards.



Objective One

Highlight the risks to the community of drug possession and crime

There were 1,769 drug possession offences and 272 drug trafficking offences recorded in Hertfordshire during 2023, Stevenage saw an increase in drug possession offences. Drug possession and the using of drugs impacts in several ways including crime, ASB, sleeping rough/homelessness and debt including rent arrears.

It is difficult to quantify exactly how much violence is directly linked to drug supply, as this is also exacerbated by lack of co-operation from victims where a drug link is suspected.

Cannabis use and growing for own use continues to be an issue that is not easy to tackle, with some people not even realising that smoking cannabis is illegal. The cultivation in Hertfordshire is heavily driven by cross-border criminality who exploit the private rented accommodation sector to obtain properties for cannabis grows.

What will we do?

Use social media platforms to highlight the dangers of drug use and associated crime. We will work with partners and the community to highlight “hot spot areas” of drug use and associated crime.

Meet with the community through street-meets and other community engagement events to encourage reporting of crime and anti-social behaviour.

We will continue to promote services to engage as many clients as we can. We will continue with clients who are in prison to start their support plans before their release. We will be making contacts with the NHS, including at Lister Hospital and local GPS to encourage them making referrals to the No More Service for support around the misuse of drugs and alcohol. We will continue to work as a partnership to identify members of the community that needs access to support.

We will continue to support people to break the cycle of substance misuse or offending behaviour by putting practical solutions in place to tackle issues that cause or exacerbate this behaviour. By doing this, the No More Service will reduce the impact that drugs; alcohol and crime have on the individual and the community. We work alongside other support and enforcement agencies to take a collaborative approach providing an individually tailored support plan to help break entrenched behaviour. The ethos of the No More Service is to improve the person’s self-worth, help them to achieve positive outcomes (such as housing or a role in the community) enabling and motivating them to break the cycle of crime or substance use.

Objective Two

Provide safe reporting and support to victim of violence against women and girls, including Domestic Abuse

The term 'Violence Against Women and Girls' refers to acts of violence or abuse that we know disproportionately affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, 'honour-based' abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage), as well as many others, including offences committed online.

Crimes of violence against women and girls are many and varied. While different types of violence against women and girls have their own distinct causes and impacts on victims and survivors, evidence shows that women and girls are disproportionately affected by many of these crimes. These crimes are deeply harmful, not only because of the profound effect they can have on victims, survivors, and their loved ones, but also because of the impact they can have on wider society, freedom and equality.

What will we do?

We will produce a Violence Against Women and Girls action plan feeding into local and national agendas which will raise awareness by informing the public about how and where they can report Violence Against Women and Girls (including domestic abuse), empowering victims to come forward and seek advice from our dedicated Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) team and the volunteers from the SADA Forum.

SADA Drop-in services are currently available to victims of domestic abuse and will be extended to victims of Violence Against Women and Girls. This will provide a method for people to engage with those who are affected by Violence Against Women and Girls and grow their own peer support network. The support is available weekly in both a virtual and face to face capacity.

We will continue to work co-operatively with partners and survivors of domestic abuse to produce services that are customer-led and listen to the voice of the victim and survivor.

The service has been extended to offer support for those that have perpetrated domestic abuse. The aim of this is to provide intensive 1-1 support to change offending behaviour to work with the No More Service to change offender's behaviour by providing 1-1 support to address offending behaviour and complex needs.

The most common offences being assaults with injury, assaults without injury and sending letters with the intent to cause distress or anxiety (this offence type includes the sending of texts, emails, social media).

Objective Three

Promote awareness of Cuckooing and the support available to victims

The most prevalent form of known exploitation is 'cuckooing'. By definition: *"Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. It takes the name from cuckoos who take over the nests of other birds. The most common form of cuckooing is where drug dealers take over a person's home and use it to store or distribute drugs."*

Victims of cuckooing are usually vulnerable either through drug use or other vulnerabilities (e.g., mental health problems, learning difficulties) and are often subjected to other forms of exploitation including financial, psychological, and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and drug-related labour (e.g., working as drug runners). Cuckooed properties and victims are also at risk of aggravated burglary and robbery from rival drug lines attacking occupants in order to steal drugs and money.

In Stevenage we have set up a joint process with the police to try and map who may be "vulnerable" to cuckooing and who may be perpetrators.

What will we do?

We will work with our partnering agencies to encourage all local organisations working with drug users and/or vulnerable adults to routinely record intelligence of cuckooing and drug supply exploitation.

We will develop an awareness campaign for professionals and the public to identify signs of cuckooing and encourage reporting. Campaigning will include the use of social media platforms and community engagement events.

We will encourage regular recording of cuckooing and drug supply exploitation when identified in adult safeguarding referrals.

Through collaboration with local services and Hertfordshire Constabulary we will utilise powers under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 for prosecuting County Lines offenders where the criminal exploitation of vulnerable victims is involved.

The partnership will work with local services, including voluntary organisations to develop a multi-agency response to support the complex needs of victims of cuckooing.

Cuckooing investigations in Hertfordshire usually fall into one of two scenarios, the first being where drug dealers take over a property, usually of one of their customers, to stay and deal from, the second where class A users will take over the address of other vulnerable persons as somewhere to sleep and associate, as well as consume drugs.

Objective Four

Divert individuals from becoming involved in Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is any conduct or activity that causes harm to an individual, to a community or to their environment. Incidents of ASB can range from something that is a mild annoyance (but causing harm) to something that causes fear and insecurity. ASB incidents can be one-off events or recurring situations.

Examples of ASB include neighbour nuisance, youth nuisance, fly tipping, begging, littering and graffiti, noise complaints and rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour.

As a local authority we have a number of powers to tackle ASB, including Criminal Behaviour Orders; Community Protection Notices; Public Space Protection Orders; closure power; dispersal powers; and civil injunctions.

In Stevenage we take a partnership approach to tackling ASB and have joint protocols with the police, this includes Closure Orders, supporting those that need to flee the area and the serving and prosecution of Community Protection Orders.

What will we do?

We will raise awareness in the community and signpost people for support through Prevention programs for young people who are at risk of committing a crime or are involved in Anti-Social Behaviour.

We will work with Hertfordshire Constabulary by using interventions such as behavioural contracts and Community Protection warnings and notices which can be effective for reducing nuisance behaviour.

As a partnership we will introduce more Restorative Justice approaches. This is the practice of victims to meeting or communicating with their offender to explain the real impact of the crime. These approaches can be effective and support community projects.

We will continue with School-based programs, particularly with Year 6 and 7 students to educate young people about the risks of committing a crime or becoming involved in Anti-Social behaviour.

We will signpost vulnerable individuals for support through services such as the No More Service to provide ongoing support to an individual that has previously committed crime/ anti-Social behaviour.

Objective Five

Collaborate with Partners and Young People regarding the risks around County Lines and associated Anti-Social Behaviour

The 2018 Home Office Serious Crime Strategy advises the NPCC definition of a County Line is *“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 drugs and money and will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons”*.

Drug supply in Hertfordshire continues to be dominated by the use of “deal” lines, either trafficking into the county remotely or based within Hertfordshire

What will we do?

We will continue to work with partners to offer a specialist youth service to run the No More Youth service in districts across the county. The project works with young people who are at risk of, or already involved in, violent offending, anti-social behaviour, crime or becoming involved in gang culture.

The No More Youth Support Worker provides intensive 1-1 support to assist clients to change their behaviours and make positive choices. Clients are assisted in employment, housing, and education. 150 young people in Stevenage have been referred to the No More Youth Service since the start of the project in 2021.

To complement the support offered by the No More Youth Service we will continue our work with local schools, partners, and the voluntary sector to deliver educational programs within school settings, to raise awareness about the risks surrounding County Lines and associated anti-social behaviour.

itself. Most known Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) operating in or from Hertfordshire are actively engaged in drug trafficking both Class A and Class B drugs.

In Stevenage we have been running awareness sessions with years 5/6 students in schools and as of 2022 in secondary schools. The aim is to talk to children and young people about peer pressure, County Lines, and gang culture.

Where lines are identified which match the National Crime Agency (NCA) county line definition, these are recorded on the National County Lines Intelligence Collection Matrix (CLICM), which is held by the National County Lines Coordination Centre (NCLCC). In terms of peripheral risk relating to county lines, Hertfordshire has low levels of recorded violence that can be linked or is suspected to be linked to drug dealing.

Objective Six

Rise awareness around online fraud and the warning signs to the community

Fraud is legislated under the Fraud Act 2006. It can be defined as *“when a person demonstrates dishonest conduct with intent to make a gain; or cause a loss or the risk of loss to another”*.

The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) reports that fraud reporting has transitioned back to pre-pandemic levels. National trends have been influenced by new events including the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis in the UK. Overall reporting to Action Fraud decreased between 2022 and 2023 but the level of losses has increased, particularly among business victims. During 2023, Action Fraud received 326,199 reports of fraud with a loss of £2.1bn.

There are 49 fraud classifications designated by the Home Office. The top 10 classifications remain unchanged from 2022.

What will we do?

We want to raise awareness to the community that anyone can fall victim to fraud. We will use social media platforms to highlight the dangers of fraud and associated crime. We will be focusing on the various forms in which fraud can occur including, emails, social media, phone calls or in person. Our social media posts will provide advice and guidance that the community can use to keep themselves safe from fraud.

We will work in partnership with agencies to support victims of crime to report their experiences to Trading Standards, Anti-Fraud Services, Action Fraud, and other supporting services.

Often when discussing fraud, the focus is on the financial impact, not the emotional impact. We understand that falling victim to fraud can leave people feeling embarrassed, unsettled, and unsafe, and it can have a lasting impact on confidence.

We know the importance of talking about what's happened and helping people understand that incidents of fraud are increasingly sophisticated and are purposefully designed to posing as people or organisations you would trust. To ensure people know they are not alone or at fault, we will signpost victims to local services who can offer specialised support.

Online shopping and auction fraud remains the most prevalent, followed by other advanced fee fraud and cheque, plastic card, and online bank account fraud. In general terms, local reporting tends to mirror the national landscape.

So safe Feedback

"I feel so much better after speaking to you, I really didn't think I would get any help. "

"For the first time in 3 years I can sleep without worry and feel safe."

"I can't thank you enough. I was not aware there was support available but I'm glad I got; I needed it. Thank you."

"The ability to share information and work together to help our most vulnerable residents really is something extraordinary."

"Attending MNWG and being able to make referrals has been one of the most positive experiences of my career to date."

"Thank you for getting me and my children to safety."

"Thank you so much, I feel free now thank you so much for all your support."

"Thank you for providing me with support and safe accommodation."

"Thank you for your support. Without you I'm not sure how things would have turned out so from the bottom of my heart, thank you."

"Thank you so much for all the support, I slept and ate well for the first time in months."

Acronyms and Glossary

ASB	Anti-social Behaviour	DA	Domestic Abuse	OWL	Online Watch Liaison
DASH	Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse: domestic abuse, stalking and honour based violence (risk assessment tool)	DHR	Domestic Homicide Review	PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner PCSO
CCSU	County Community Safety Unit	E&NH CCG	East & North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group	PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television	HBV	Honour Based Violence	RAG	Responsible Authorities Group Strategic meetings with partners that meet quarterly to discuss the towns' Community Safety priorities
Class A Drugs	Heroin, methadone, cocaine, crack, ecstasy, LSD and amphetamines	HCC	Herts County Council	RJ	Restorative Justice
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service CPN/W	HFRS	Herts Fire and Rescue Service	SADA	Survivors Against Domestic Abuse
CPN/W	Community Protection Notice/ Warning	IOM	Integrated Offender Management	SARA	Scanning, analysis, response and Assessment
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender	SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely
CSP	Community Safety Partnership	LIFE	Local Intervention Fire Education	SNT	Safer Neighbourhood Team
Cuckooing	Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. It takes the name from cuckoos who take over the nests of other birds. The most common form of cuckooing is where drug dealers take over a person's home and use it to store or distribute drugs	LSP	Local Strategic Partnership	SOC	Serious Organised Crime
		MNWG	Multiple Needs Working Group	SoSafe	Stevenage community safety Partnership
		NMS	No More Service	SoStevenage	Stevenage local strategic partnership
		NPS	New Psychoactive Substances	YC Herts	Youth Provision in Stevenage
		NTE	Night Time Economy		
		OPCC	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner		



