

## Introduction

Tackling violence is one of the four priorities in my Police and Crime Plan, because we continue to have unacceptable levels of inherent violence across our communities, including serious violence and violence against women and girls (VAWG). Whilst Devon and Cornwall remains one of the safest areas in the UK to live, levels of reported violence have continued to rise nationally and locally and now exceed the levels seen before the pandemic.

We know that supporting families and young people affected by violence reduces the chances of those people becoming victims or perpetrators of violence later in life. Working with the Chief Constable I have established the £4m Serious Violence Prevention Programme which adopts a public-health approach to tackling violence, treating it as a preventable consequence of a range of factors, such as adverse early-life experiences, harmful social or community experiences and influences.

Alongside this, my office has invested in both victim and perpetrator programmes to prevent future crimes and ensure that the needs of victims are understood and met. As Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board, I am focused on securing improvements across the criminal justice system to bring more offenders to justice, provide meaningful rehabilitation of offenders and support victims throughout their journey.

## Police and Crime Plan Measures and Indicators

- ✓ Actively tackle violence against women and girls through Safer Street approaches and by continuing to address both the causes and consequences of domestic and sexual violence.
- ✓ Break the cycle of violence by focusing our efforts on prevention and early intervention and building on innovative support programmes like Operation Encompass and Turning Corners.
- ✓ Provide high quality support to victims of violence through commissioning specialist services and helping more victims remain within the justice system.
- ✓ Prepare the Serious Violence Prevention Programme to support local authorities and partners to fulfil their forthcoming Serious Violence Duty through sharing accountability, data and expertise.

Direction of Travel	Variance compared to baseline
▽ △	2.5%+/- than baseline
▷	= to baseline or less than 2.5% higher or lower than the baseline
Change from last Panel	
↑ = increase    ➡ = no change    ↓ = decrease	

Interpretation of trend	
	Indicative of positive trend
	Indicative of stable trend
	Indicative of negative trend
	Trend status not assigned

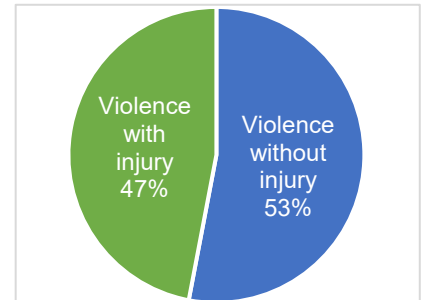
Performance Measure	Baseline	Preferred direction of travel	Change from last Panel	Change from Baseline
Homicides (NM)	20	▽	↓	▼
Hospital admissions of under 25s for assault with a sharp object (NM)	15		➡	▼
Offences involving the discharge of a firearm (NM)	66	▽	↑	▼
Violent crime (all)	30,866	▽	➡	▲
Violent crime (DA)	10,859		➡	▲
Victim satisfaction (DA)	85.3%	△	➡	▶

## Understanding Violence

Violent crime is when someone physically hurts or threatens to hurt someone and covers a variety of offences, including ‘violence with injury’ and ‘violence without injury’ offences (but not sexual violence which is counted separately).

In the last year, 34,408 violent offences were recorded in Devon and Cornwall, which is around 3,500 more crimes than the year before the pandemic. This is consistent with national trends, which show 2.1 million violent crimes were recorded by the police in England and Wales - up over 20% on pre-pandemic levels.

- Of the 34,408 violent offences recorded, 53% related to violence without injury and 47% to violence with injury.
- Devon and Cornwall’s violence with injury crime rate is similar to the national average, with 9.1 crimes per 1,000 resident population, compared to 9.7 across England and Wales. Violence without injury is lower than nationally, at 10.0 crimes per 1,000 resident population, compared with 13.9.
- The majority of offences are assault – nearly 90% of both violence with and without injury reports.



**35%**  
of violence is  
alcohol related

- Alcohol is a factor in 35% of all violent offences.
- Violence rates vary across the peninsula: in the largely urban areas of Torbay and Plymouth, the rate of violent crime is much higher, with rates of violence almost double what is recorded in the local authorities of Devon and Cornwall. The Isles of Scilly records the lowest rate of violent crime in the peninsula.



[Rates of violent crime per 1,000 population across the peninsula]

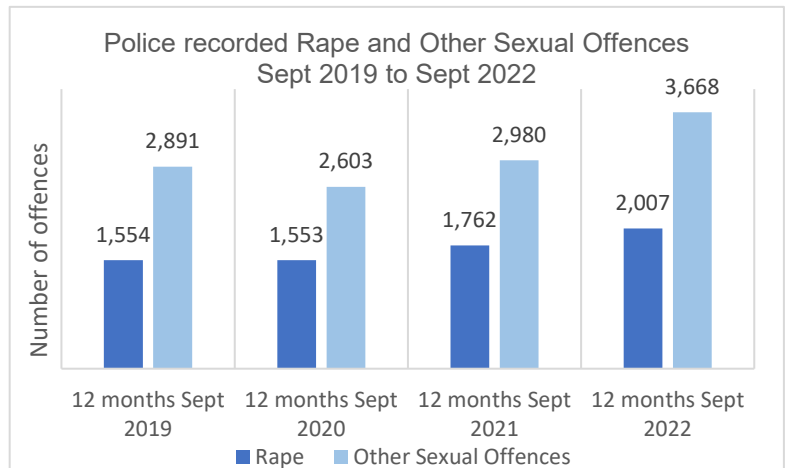
## Sexual Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The number of sexual offences reported to the Police has increased by 28% since 2019 and reported rape offences increased by 29%.

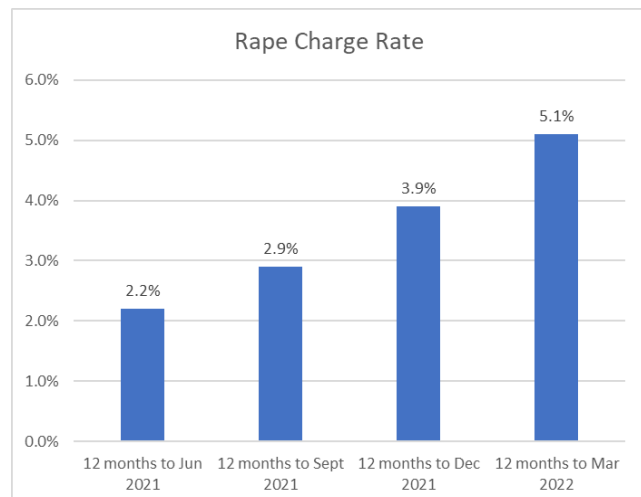
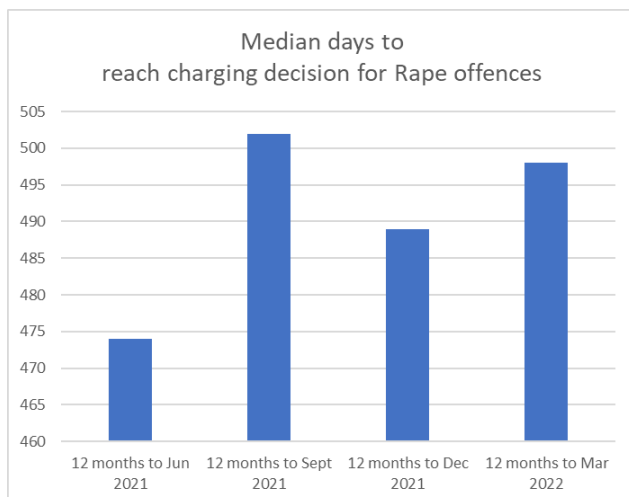
Other sexual offences increased by 27% to 3,668, compared with 2,891 in the 12 months to September 2019.

The charge rate for rape offences is increasing, with recent data showing 5.1% of reports resulting in a decision to charge - higher than the national average of 3.7%.

However, the median number of days to record a charge is higher than the national average – at 498 compared to 349 days.



Source: Devon and Cornwall Police Qlikv 1



## Domestic Violence

In the 12 months to September 2022, 12,050 violent offences were flagged as related to domestic abuse and accounted for 35% of all violent crime recorded. Since 2019 there has been a 11% increase in police recorded domestic violence which equates to an additional 1,191 crimes.

**54%** of all domestic abuse crimes were violent offences

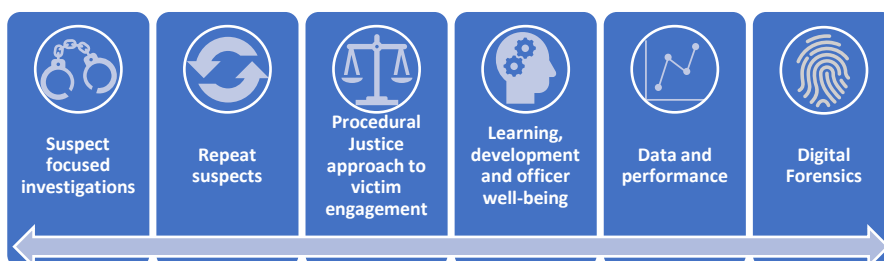
In the last year 54% of all domestic abuse crimes were a violent offence - 47% of which related to violence with injury offences and 53% related to violence without injury offences. This increasing trend in police recorded domestic violence is consistent with the national picture. The latest national data shows that 723,164 violence against the person offences were flagged as domestic abuse-related - a 15% increase compared with 2020.

## What are we doing?

### Supporting the Devon and Cornwall Police Violence Against Women and Girls delivery plan

In June 2022, Devon and Cornwall Police published its Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Plan, which had been developed in consultation with stakeholders<sup>1</sup>. It's focused on building trust and confidence, relentless perpetrator pursuit and creating safer spaces - in public, online and at home.

**Soteria Bluestone** is an approach pioneered by Avon and Somerset Police and is now being rolled out in our area. It aims to bring together criminal justice agencies and academics, in order to deliver a more victim focused and responsive approach, based on six key pillars of action.



Ahead of the introduction of Soteria Bluestone, D&C has launched Operation Gemstone in Plymouth. This six-month pilot is based on the findings of Soteria Bluestone, which provides four specialist investigative teams focused on rape and serious sexual offences within the city. The specialist teams have received bespoke additional training, benefitted from improved supervision and undertaken enhanced engagement with the CPS and partners, including Independent Sexual Violence Advocates.

### Addressing perpetrator behaviours in domestic abuse

- We've secured £417,000 in funding from the Home Office for 2022/23 to support projects across the peninsula, working with people who cause harm to address their offending behaviours and prevent future victimisation. This funding is enabling us to continue to support Community Safety Partnerships to deliver behaviour change programmes, working closely with people who cause harm, to help them address their own behaviours and to ensure they can access vital support, e.g. for mental health issues, drug and alcohol addiction or financial stress.
- We've recruited a new-Domestic Abuse Behaviour Change Strategic Lead to deliver an 18 month project developing a new partnership strategy. This will bring together partners in collaboration and improve the peninsula-wide approach to working with people who cause harm by domestic abuse.

### Work to prevent sexual offending

We currently commission two services that work with sexual offence perpetrators

- We've funded Circles SW since 2015 to work with those individuals considered most at risk of reoffending. Circles SW provides an internationally acclaimed community approach to work with sex-offenders by creating a team (circle) of community members who support and challenge the referred individual as they move post-conviction to being reintegrated into society. 75 circles have been funded to date.
- The SW Community Chaplaincy service work with sex offenders who no longer fall under the auspices of the National Probation Service. This is a mentoring service which provides practical help, as well as behavioural challenge to these individuals, who are referred directly by Devon and Cornwall Police. the force.

<sup>1</sup> [Violence against women and girls | Devon and Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](https://devon-cornwall.police.uk/violence-against-women-and-girls/)

## Taking a Safer Streets Approach

Since 2020 over £4.7M in investment by the Home Office has been secured for 11 Safer Streets Fund and Safety of Women at Night Fund Projects. This includes:

- **Safer Streets Fund 3:** Projects operating in Plymouth City Centre and Falmouth have delivered a range of bespoke local initiatives, backed by £600,000 in Home Office funding. These have included new CCTV and street lighting, innovative new help-points in Plymouth and bystander awareness training in the night-time economy.
- **Safety of Women at Night Fund:** Exeter University worked with partners across the city supported by £72,000 in Home Office funding. Its work included bespoke training and awareness projects with both night time economy workers and women and girls, plus development of a new Safety Charter.
- **Safer Streets Fund 4:** Five bids to the Home Office were successful across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, delivering over £3M in funding, focused on addressing VAWG and anti-social behaviour. Projects are now live in Torquay, Truro, Barnstaple, Exeter and Plymouth. Initiatives include increased CCTV and street lighting, a new VAWG rapid response police car in Torquay and development of new safety charters for venues in our night-time economies.

Commitments met -

- ✓ Actively tackle violence against women and girls, through Safer Streets approaches and by continuing to address the cause and consequences of domestic and sexual violence.

## Supporting victims of violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence through investing in high quality support services

In 2022/23 a total of £4.9M has been invested in securing high quality support services to assist victims of crime.

The Commissioner's new ten year, £20 million, strategic partnership with Victim Support is focused on delivering long term stability for victims and for the sector - identifying gaps and investing to meet those needs. This year work has included the recommissioning of a new child and family victim of crime service and transforming the service model to ensure every victim of crime can access an Independent Victim Advocate (IVA). This will put victims front and centre - delivering the right support, at the point of need.

In 2021/2022:

**6,455** victims of  
sexual violence  
supported

**27,028** victims  
of domestic abuse  
supported

**3,429** victims of  
child sexual abuse  
supported

Over this period:

**41.5%** increase in the number of referrals to therapeutic support services for **sexual violence**  
= 380 extra referrals over the year

**89.4%** increase in the number of referrals to therapeutic support services for **Domestic Abuse**  
= 11,505 extra referrals over the year

- ✓ Data shows that fewer DA victims disengaged from support in 2021-22, compared to the previous year



# Police and Crime Plan Violence Profile

In 2022/23 local investment in support services for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse has been increased and totals just over £3.7 million. This investment is helping to secure access to ensure trauma informed, therapeutic services for victims of reported and non-reported crimes, including:

**£1 Million +**

for ISVA and IDVA provision

**£883,000**

to support medium and high-risk victims of domestic abuse

**£687,000**

to support victims of sexual violence

This year's investment also includes new services to support children and young people who are victims of sexual violence and to enhance therapeutic and peer support services for adult victims, through bespoke commissioned services from Barnardo's, CLEAR, First Light, Women's Centre Cornwall and the Children's Society. This investment is for three years and is supported by an additional £612,000 per annum in funding from the Ministry of Justice.

In its role as Strategic Delivery Partner, Victim Support has commissioned **'We Matter'** - a new digital service providing specialist support to children and young people who've experienced and witnessed domestic abuse in the home. This service provides an eight-session group programme for 8–17-year-olds, who are no longer living with the alleged perpetrator.

## Commitments met -

- ✓ Provide high quality support to victims of violence through commissioning specialist services to help them cope and recover, plus help more victims remain within the justice system

## Serious Violence Prevention

**"The key to success with Devon and Cornwall's Serious Violence Prevention Partnership is the collective will and ambition"** (Temporary Chief Constable, Jim Colwell)

This £4m programme, established in 2020, is overseen by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable in alliance. The overarching objective is to break the cycle of intergenerational violence through an evidenced programme of specialist early-intervention schemes that aim to keep young people out of the criminal justice system and improve safety in our local communities.

The Serious Violence Prevention Partnership directly delivers and externally commissions a range of services aimed at supporting vulnerable young U25 aged people, to help break the cycle of violence and improve our communities. Since launch:



**1,400** young people have been supported

**140** parents and wider family engaged

**42** projects run – all focused on serious violence prevention in under 25s

The SVP Partnership is also supporting new and enhanced local services, including:

- Award nominated restorative work in Plymouth and Torbay with Restorative Justice Family Practitioners, using family group conferences to work with families who are seeking change.
- The U+ programme in Cornwall led by Elemental UK and the Dracaena Centre, who work together to provide a preventative and aspirational youth interventions for vulnerable young people.
- Healing Together programme in Torquay where Operation Encompass is leading trauma informed programmes in schools, day care settings and pre-schools for children affected by domestic abuse.

## Case study: Turning corners

Turning Corners in South Devon is an example of a successful specialist service, delivering ground-breaking youth intervention work, and providing the blueprint upon which the original SVP vision was founded nearly three years ago.

### Turning Corners - key achievements

- ✓ **Zero permanent exclusions** in Year 7 from either school participating in the Moving Up Together scheme
- ✓ **Parental peer support:** Parents have started to run independent support groups and are introducing new parents to structured PSGs
- ✓ **Communities are responding positively to young people** engaging in structured activities through the outreach team



**Commissioner's visit to Turning Corners  
November 2022**

The SVP Programme has provided £640,000 of additional funding to Community Safety Partnerships for 2022/23 and 2023/24, to help them deliver new projects aimed at reducing serious violence and protecting young people in their local communities.

<b>Safer Cornwall</b> <b>£160,000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children affected by parental imprisonment (CAPI) referral pathway</li> <li>Co-designed youth violence reduction project</li> <li>Serious violence local provision scoping</li> </ul>
<b>Safer Devon</b> <b>£195,200</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic violence and abuse family recovery interventions</li> <li>Lived experiences work with young people</li> <li>Mentorship programme for violence prevention (closely aligned with Torbay)</li> <li>Let's Talk Teenagers, a Devon CSP led project</li> </ul>
<b>Safer Communities Torbay</b> <b>£121,600</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentorship programme for violence prevention (closely aligned with Devon)</li> <li>Serious violence scoping and partnership development project</li> <li>Young person's substance misuse project worker (co-funded with Public-Health)</li> <li>Domestic abuse and risk assessment for children partnership training (DARAC)</li> <li>Young person's violence advisor, hosted within the youth justice system</li> </ul>
<b>Safer Plymouth</b> <b>£163,200</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family support for young people known to the youth justice system</li> <li>Referral pathway via the youth justice system for YP vulnerable to exploitation</li> </ul>

### Commitments met -

- ✓ Break the cycle of inter-generational violence by focusing our efforts on public health prevention and early intervention, including building on existing innovative support programmes like Operation Encompass and Turning Corners.

# Police and Crime Plan Violence Profile

## Supporting peninsula wide preparations for the new Serious Violence Duty

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022, places a legal obligation on specified agencies, namely local authorities, health and criminal justice bodies, to work together in order to reduce serious violence. Police and Crime Commissioners play a vital role in supporting partners in their preparations. The duty is expected to come into law in early 2023 and a range of activities are already underway, including:

- Leading peninsula wide preparations with a dedicated Task and Finish Group bringing together health, local authorities and CSPs to collectively prepare for the new duty and explore co-commissioning opportunities
- Providing £160,000 in seed funding to Community Safety Partnerships in 2022/23 to help them prepare for implementation of the new duty in their local areas
- Developing, with partners, a wider programme of work to deliver the duty via stewardship of £1M in additional Home Office funding, until 2024/25.

### Commitments met -

- ✓ Prepare the Serious Violence Prevention Programme to support local authorities and partners to fulfil their forthcoming Serious Violence Duty through sharing accountability, data and expertise.

## Plymouth Violence Against Women and Girls Commission

In November 2021 Plymouth Council announced a multi-agency Commission to tackle male violence against women and girls. My office will be joining Plymouth Council's conference on 29<sup>th</sup> November with other stakeholders to discuss how we are collectively responding to the recommendations made by the Commission. This profile sets out the many activities being led by my office which contribute to the specific Plymouth recommendations:

<b><i>To drive the culture change needed to challenge male violence against women and girls</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Secured new funding to support DV perpetrator projects (p.4)</li><li>✓ Continuing to fund Plymouth Community Safety partnership to deliver behaviour change programmes (p.4)</li><li>✓ Development of a new peninsula wide DV perpetrator strategy (p.4)</li><li>✓ Funding Circles SW and SW Community Chaplaincy service work with sex offenders (p.4)</li><li>✓ Altered not Defined campaign present to Plymouth VAWG commission and adopted by Plymouth Herald journalists</li></ul>
<b><i>To better support women and girls who have been subjected to male violence and abuse</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Continued provision of victim support services through the Victim Support Partnership (p.8)</li><li>✓ Continued investment in SARCs and support services including ISVA and IDVA resources (p.6)</li><li>✓ New services for victims of child sexual abuse and the provision of therapeutic and peer support for victims backed by an extra £612,000 per year for 3 years (p.6)</li></ul>
<b><i>To create safe places and spaces</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Supporting delivery of Safer Streets Fund 3 and 4 projects in Plymouth backed by over £1M in government funding (p.5)</li><li>✓ Working with Police to deliver the VAWG delivery plan (p.4)</li><li>✓ Delivery of Operation Gemstone pilot in Plymouth (p.4)</li></ul>
<b><i>To ensure the building blocks are in place to enable real change to happen</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Delivery of the Serious Violence Prevention Programme (p.6)</li><li>✓ Supporting preparations for the new Serious Violence Duty (p.8)</li><li>✓ Sponsoring the West Country Women's award Violence Against Women and Girls awards in Plymouth category (December 2022)</li></ul>