

Serious Violence

Strategic Needs Assessment 2022/23

Executive Summary

#PreventionThroughConnection

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Introduction



The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) produces a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) on an annual basis to provide a comprehensive assessment of serious violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). This document is a publicly accessible summary aimed at providing an overview of the main findings and recommendations.

The aim of the SNA is to increase understanding of the types, distribution and extent of serious violence in the local area and to help local partners to identify the people and groups who are most vulnerable to being or becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. The full SNA should be used to inform strategic planning including resource allocation.

The definition of serious violence used within the SNA is the one adopted by the VRN partnership which is **'public place violence resulting in significant physical injury with or without weapons'**.



The SNA aligns with the World Health Organization's four-step process for implementing a public health approach to violence which includes:

1. Defining the local problem of serious violence through systematic data collection
2. Identifying the risk and protective factors through evidence and research
3. Developing and evaluating interventions
4. Scaling up effective policy and programmes



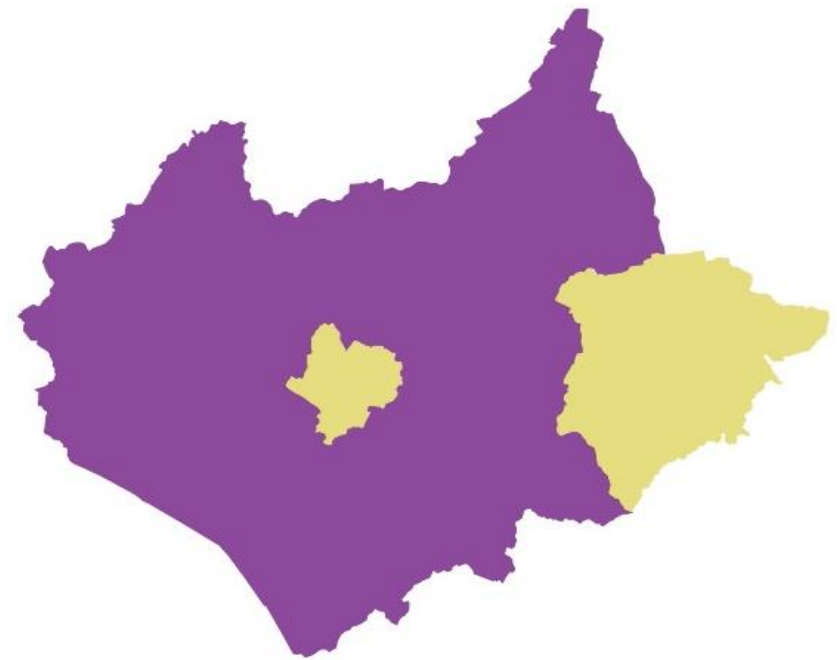
The following data sources are used in this document:

- **Police data** – Leicestershire Police recorded crime
- **Healthcare data** – Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit (A&E attendances and hospital admissions) and the East Midlands Ambulance Service
- **Social care data** – Leicester City Council
- **Education data** – Leicester City Council and partial dataset from Leicestershire County Council
- **National data** – Data from the Department for Education, Public Health Profiles and the Office for National Statistics
- **Community and young person insights** – An LLR Community Safety Survey administered in 2022 and an LLR Young People’s Safety Survey conducted in 2021, along with targeted surveys in ‘hotspot’ areas

Population Profile of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

- Leicestershire and Rutland are counties within the East Midlands with approximately 1.12 million residents
- The main urban area in Leicestershire is the city of Leicester
- There are significant cultural, economic and political disparities between the more rural areas of Leicestershire and Rutland and the urban and densely populated city of Leicester
- Almost 60% of Leicester’s population are from a minority ethnic background compared to less than 13% of Leicestershire’s and 5% of Rutland’s population

- Leicester has a comparatively younger population than the national average largely as a result of have two universities situated in the City. This is similar to Charnwood in Leicestershire which is also home to a university
- Leicester is the 9th largest city in England and the most populous urban centre in the East Midlands
- Out of 152 local authorities, Leicester ranks 14th, Leicestershire 136th and Rutland 148th on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation



Map of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Profile of Serious Violence

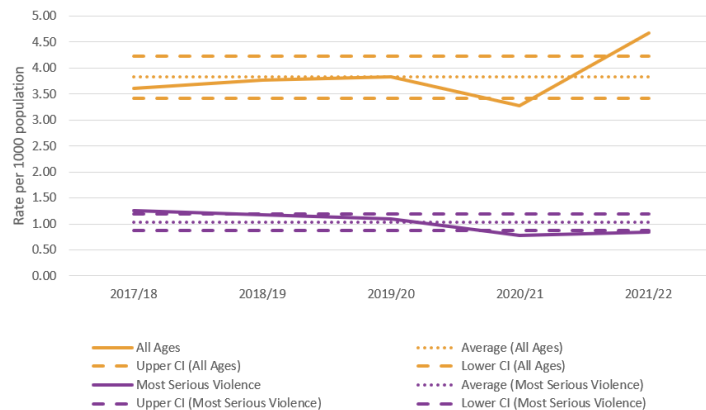


The vast majority of residents in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) have not directly experienced serious violence over the past four years. However, serious violence is not distributed evenly across the population and significant inequalities exist. Certain groups and geographical areas within LLR are at much higher risk of exposure to and involvement in serious violence.

Understanding the local profile of serious violence is key to ensuring that responses are targeted and tailored in a way which tackles disparities and secures sustainable reductions.

Extent of Serious Violence

5,241 offences were recorded in 2021/22 which is an increase of 44.6% compared to the previous financial year. While the significant decrease in the volume of public place serious violence in 2020/21 coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown restrictions imposed, the most recent figures exceed rates seen across the past five financial years.



Rate (per 1000 population) of all reported serious violence offences and the 'most serious violence' offences in public places across LLR (2017/18 - 2021/22) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

0.5% of LLR residents were a victim and 0.3% were a perpetrator of serious violence in the last 18 months

While the volume of serious violence committed by those aged under 25 increased by 44.0%, the volume involving over 25s has increased by 29.3%.

65.4% of offences committed by under 25s were against a person also aged under 25.

In 2021/22, there were 650 assault-related attendances to A&E recorded for residents from LLR (a decrease of 52.9%) and 178 assault-related hospital admissions (a decrease of 24.3%). Rates for patients under 25 and over 25 are very similar.

Nature of Serious Violence

Police data shows 'Assault with Injury' has the highest rate across all areas and makes up 81.6% by volume of the total number of serious violence offences across LLR which is an increase compared to last year's SNA.

The majority of offences within the 'Assault with Injury' group were 'S47 - AOABH assault occasioning actual bodily harm' (ABH) (91.2%).

Changes in police recording practices - including the re-classification of common assaults to ABH - is likely to have contributed to the notable increases in ABH. The purple line in the chart to the left demonstrates that the 'most serious violence' has decreased over this period.

The next highest offence group was 'Robbery of Personal Property', followed by 'Assault with Intent to Cause Serious Harm'.

The greatest variation in rates between under 25s and over 25s is seen with 'Attempt Murder' and 'Robbery of Personal Property' where the rates for under 25s are 2.9 and 2.8 times the rate for over 25s.

The rate for under 25s is double the rate for over 25s - an increase from previous years

Profile of Serious Violence



For under 25s, the volumes of ‘Robbery of Personal Property’ and ‘Knife-enabled Serious Violence’ have decreased by 11.1% and 8.4% respectively.

Less than 1 in 10 offences involved a knife or sharp object

The majority of serious violence offences did not involve a weapon. Police data indicates that just 8% of public-place serious violence involved a knife or sharp object with 69% of offences occurring in Leicester City (April 21–September 22).

The Table below shows the rate (per 1000 population) of the five most frequent diagnosis descriptions for assault-related admissions for LLR residents.

Diagnosis Group	All Ages	Under 25	Over 25
Assault by bodily force	0.099	0.080	0.107
Assault by sharp object	0.045	0.057	0.039
Assault by unspecified means	0.026	0.017	0.030
Assault by blunt object	0.012	0.000	0.018
Assault by other specified means	0.012	0.014	0.010

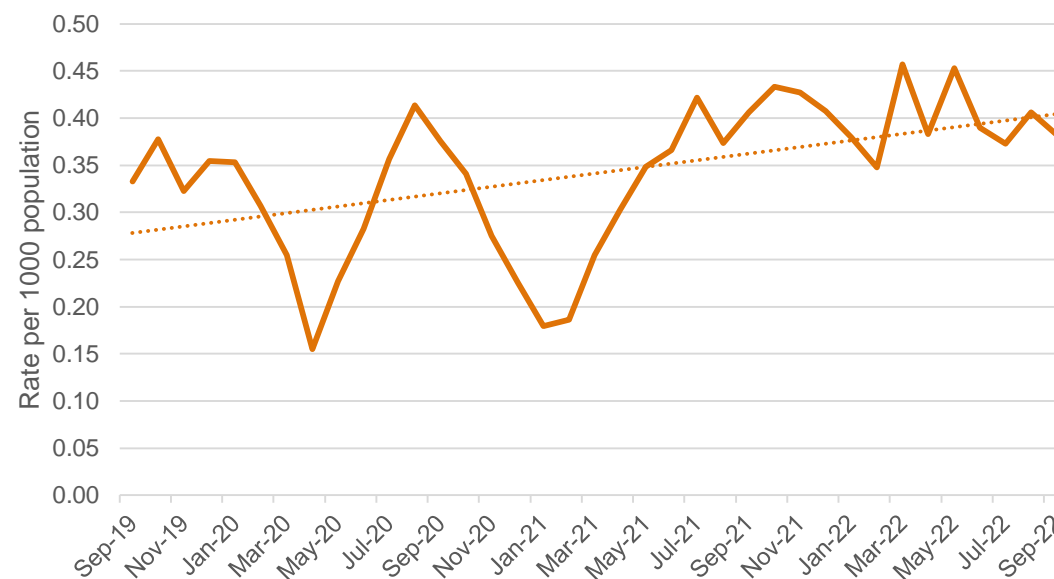
Comparing the rates for the three cohorts, the data shows that under 25s report a smaller rate of ‘Assault by bodily force’ and a greater rate of ‘Assault by sharp object’ diagnoses.

Ambulance service data shows that the most common chief complaint was ‘Stab / Gunshot / Penetrating Trauma’ with patients under 25 reporting a rate of 38.6% lower than seen with over 25s despite reporting similar rates in last year’s SNA.

71.1% of ambulance callouts for under 25s with a violence-related injury resulted in conveyance to A&E compared to 64.9% for over 25s. This could suggest that a greater proportion of injuries involving under 25s are more serious in nature and need further treatment in hospital settings.

Timings

The chart below shows the trend in public-place serious violence over the three-year period of September 2019 to September 2022 for offences involving all ages.



Rate (per 1000 population) of serious violence in public places across LLR defined by all ages (September 2018 - September 2021) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

While March and May were identified as peak months in 2021-22, longer-term trends show that public-place serious violence fluctuates across the year with no significant peak months or seasonality observed in recent years.

Trends in monthly A&E attendances, admissions and ambulance call outs were similar with fluctuations across this period.

Profile of Serious Violence



Both police and health data show similar trends with increased levels of serious violence at the weekend although it is more evenly spread across the week for under 25s.

In terms of peak times:

- Police data shows public-place serious violence is most frequently committed in the afternoon through to the late evening.
- The most prevalent time of the day is 15:00-15:59. This is consistent with previous SNA findings and coincides with the end of the school day.
- A third of all public-place serious violence was committed in the night-time economy (22:00-04:59)
- A&E attendances have a higher rate between the hours of 21:00-21:59.
- Ambulance data reveals a peak between 22:00-23:59 with a general increase in rates between 19:00-00:59.

Preventing Serious Violence After-School

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of crime data on serious violence which took place between 3-4pm and focuses on offences where the victim or suspected perpetrator is aged under 18.

The most common offences experienced by under 18s between 3-4pm are:

- Assault with Injury (86%) (mostly ABH)
- Robbery of Personal Property (12%)
- Assault with Intent to Cause Serious Harm (2%)

Prior to Covid, peak months of January 2020, November 2019, October 2019 and March 2019 were identified, with a notable decrease seen over the summer months (June 2019 – August 2019).

The data shows a greater distribution of offences during the week (Monday – Friday) compared to the weekend (Saturday – Sunday) with the daily proportions seen on a weekday being roughly double the proportions seen at the weekend.

West Leicester, East Leicester, Charnwood and Hinckley & Blaby made up the greatest proportion of offences at this time.

Peak ages of victims: **11-15 years**

Peak ages of suspects/perpetrators: **12-15 years**

68% of victims are male

73% of perpetrators are male

The majority of perpetrators came from West Leicester (28%), followed by Charnwood (16%) and East Leicester (15%).

Victims were most likely to live in West Leicester (19%), East Leicester (19%), and Charnwood (15%).

Cohort Analysis: Serious Violence in the Night Time Economy

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of police data on serious violence in the night-time economy (NTE) using police data. This included offence committed between 22:00 and 04:59 between October 2021 to September 2022.

The most common offences in the NTE are:

- Assault with Injury (84%)
- Robbery of Personal Property (10%)
- Grievous Bodily Harm (6%)

Almost 60% of offences take place on a Saturday (29%) and Sunday (29%) followed by Friday (14%)

22:00 – 00:59 is the peak time

69% of perpetrators were identified as White, 16% were Black and 13% were Asian

Over eight in ten perpetrators in the NTE are male

Age Range	Frequency
0-4	0.0
5-9	0.0
10-14	0.3
15-19	2.8
20-24	3.0
25-29	1.8
30-34	1.7
35-39	1.3
40-44	0.7
45-49	0.4
50-54	0.3
55-59	0.2
60-64	0.1
65-69	0.1
70-74	0.1
75-79	0.1
80+	0.1

Peak ages of victims are between 18 – 24, particularly 19-years old

70% of victims are male

The majority of perpetrators came from West Leicester (18%), followed by East Leicester (16%) and Charnwood (15%). More specifically, perpetrators most commonly resided in New Parks, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Abbey, Whitwick & Ibstock and Stoneygate.

77% of victims in the NTE were identified as White, followed by Asian 16% and Black 8%

Victims were most likely to live in Charnwood (17%), followed by East Leicester (16%), West Leicester (14%) and Hinckley & Blaby (13%). More specifically, victims commonly reside in Loughborough Town, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Riverside, Westcotes, Loughborough North, New Parks and Beaumont Leys.

Profile of Serious Violence



Geography of Serious Violence

Leicester saw the highest rate and volume of serious violence involving all ages which is over 2.5 times the rate seen in Leicestershire. Charnwood saw the highest volume and Melton saw the highest rate despite making up only 3.8% of the LLR total.

Area	Rate per 1000 population	% of LLR total
Leicester	12.03	56.0%
LLR	7.06	100.0%
Melton	5.77	3.8%
Charnwood	5.73	13.3%
North West Leicestershire	5.08	6.7%
Hinckley and Bosworth	4.87	7.0%
Leicestershire	4.69	42.2%
Oadby and Wigston	3.92	2.9%
Harborough	3.72	4.6%
Rutland	3.59	1.9%
Blaby	3.03	3.9%

Rate (per 1000 population) and proportion of serious violence offences across LLR and district/borough areas for all ages (April 2021 - September 2022) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Looking at the Leicestershire Police Neighbourhood Policing Areas, 18.4% of all under 25 public-place serious violence across LLR occurred in Central Leicester, followed by West Leicester (15.3%) and Charnwood (14.3%). More specifically, the highest density of offences were seen in City Centre, Beaumont Leys, Loughborough Town, Cultural Quarter and New Parks.

66.9% of public place serious violence occurred in a public/open place (e.g. street, park etc) followed by hospitality settings (13.4%) and shops (5.4%).

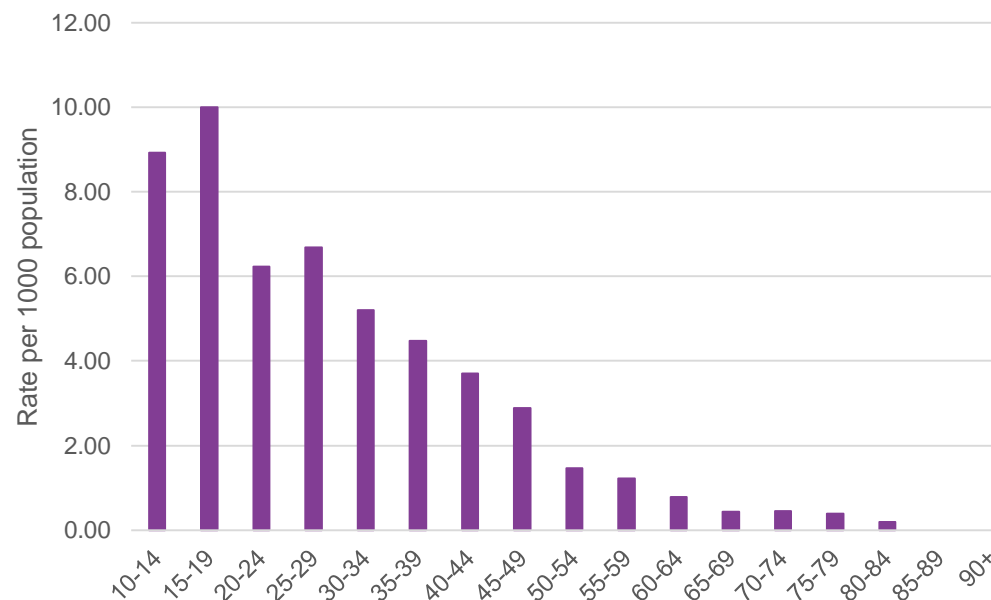
Perpetrators

The vast majority of young people in LLR are not involved in serious violence, with just 0.3% of the LLR under 25 population being perpetrators of serious violence.

However, 15-19 year olds are the age group most at risk of being involved in serious violence across LLR – this is the same peak age group as identified in previous years.

In a notable change to previous SNA's, the rate of 10-14 year olds committing public-place serious violence has increased.

10-19 year old boys/men are most at risk of being involved in serious violence across LLR



Rate (per 1000 population) of offences by suspected perpetrator age (at date of offence) of serious violence in public places across LLR (April 2021 - September 2022) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Profile of Serious Violence



The majority of offenders are male (75.0%). Male perpetration is most likely to involve a male victim. Males are considerably more likely to be involved in higher harm offences.

Whilst they represent a minority, women and girls make up a significant proportion of the cohort. Analysis highlights several notable differences. For example, 10-14 girls are the age group most at risk followed closely by 15-19 years. Female perpetration is most likely to involve a female victim (79.2%).

Over three quarters of perpetrators were identified as White (79.6%), followed by smaller proportions categorised as Black (10.5%), Asian (8.7%), and Other (1.2%).

The highest volume of suspected perpetrators reside on West Leicester with the top beats being New Parks, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Beaumont Leys and Abbey. Other areas across LLR with high numbers of suspected perpetrators are Freeman (South Leicester), Whitwick & Ibstock (North West Leicestershire), Syston (Charnwood), Earl Shilton (Hinckley & Blaby) and Humberstone (East Leicester).

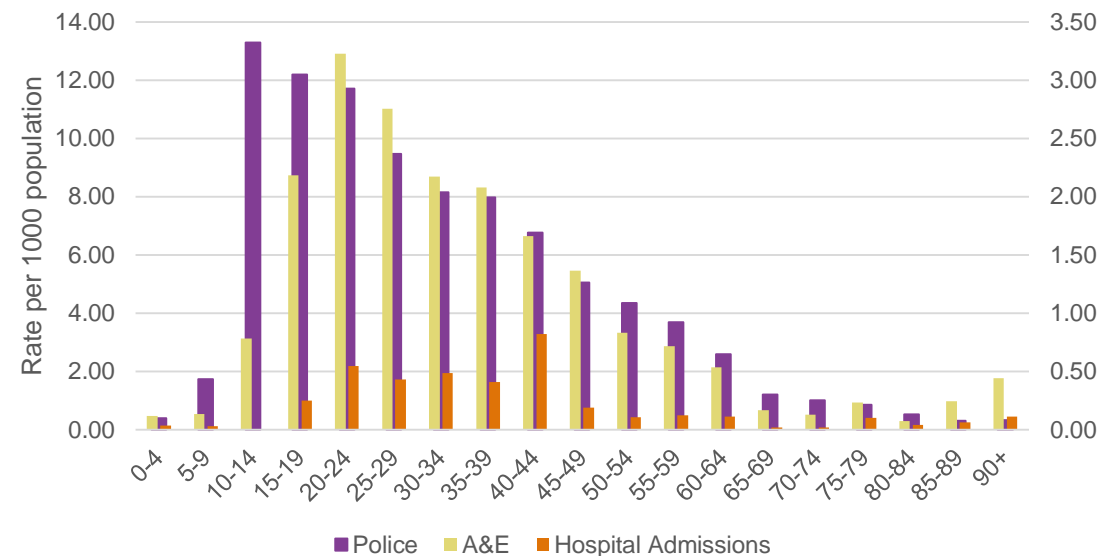
Cohort Analysis: Repeat Perpetrators of Serious Violence (all ages)

- Nearly four in ten repeat offenders live in West Leicester and two in ten live in East Leicester
- 78% were male and 79% were under 25 years old
- 47% were suspected of being habitual knife carriers
- Over half have a flag for having a mental disorder and for being involved in drugs
- 95% have been a victim of crime with nearly a third experiencing victimisation before committing their first offence
- Average age at the first offence was 13 and it was most commonly ABH

Victims

Police data shows that 10-14 year olds are most at risk of being a victim of public-place serious violence across LLR which is a notable difference to previous SNAs in which 15-19 year olds were identified as being most at risk.

Health data reveals that A&E attendances are higher for 20-24 year olds and inpatient data shows a peak for 40-44 year olds.



Rate (per 1000 population) of victims of serious violence offences or assault-related injuries based on LLR residents by age - police recorded crime, assault-related A&E attendances and hospital admissions (April 2021 – September 2022) (Source: Leicestershire Police and Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit)

Males are most likely to be the victim of public-place serious violence.

Almost three quarters of victims were identified as White (77.7%), followed by smaller proportions who were categorised as Asian (13.0%), Black (6.4%) and Other (1.6%).

Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

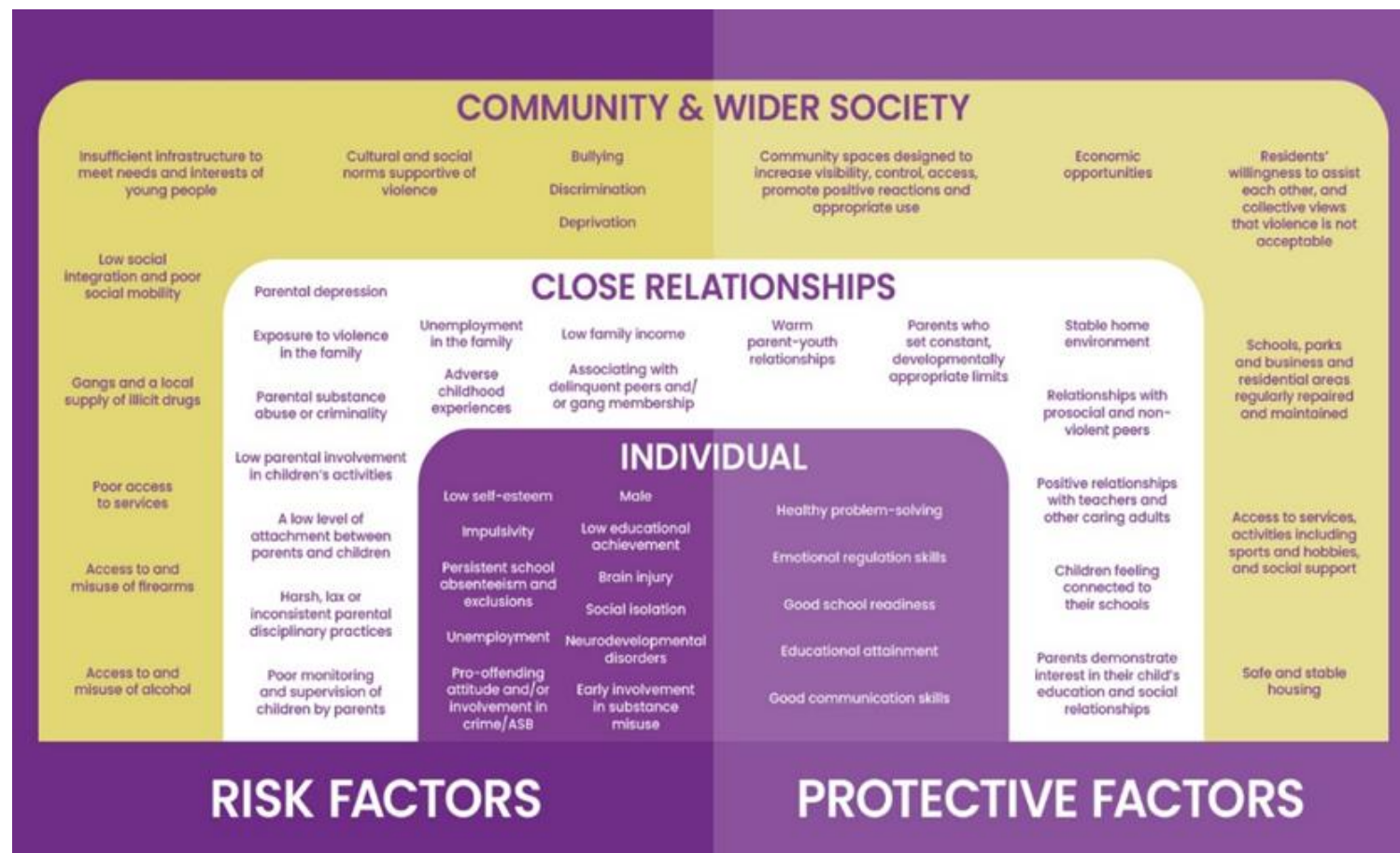


The SNA examined the known risk and protective factors of serious violence and their prevalence across LLR. The causes of violence are multiple and complex. It is important to understand that there is no single cause of serious violence – it arises from a complex interplay between a wide range of risk factors operating within and across individual, relationship, community and societal domains. The following diagram provides an overview of some of the risk and protective factors across the different domains.

Individual and contextual risk factors occur across an individual's life course and are subject to change. They can be cumulative, additive and sometimes multiplicative in impact. The more risk factors that accumulate in an individual or in a particular setting, the higher the likelihood that the individual will become involved in violence as a victim and/or perpetrator. Importantly, risk factors are not deterministic and should not be used diagnostically at an individual level.

A risk factor is a characteristic that increases the likelihood of a young person becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

A protective factor is a characteristic that decreases the likelihood of a person becoming a victim or perpetrator of youth violence or buffers against the effects of risk factors.



Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

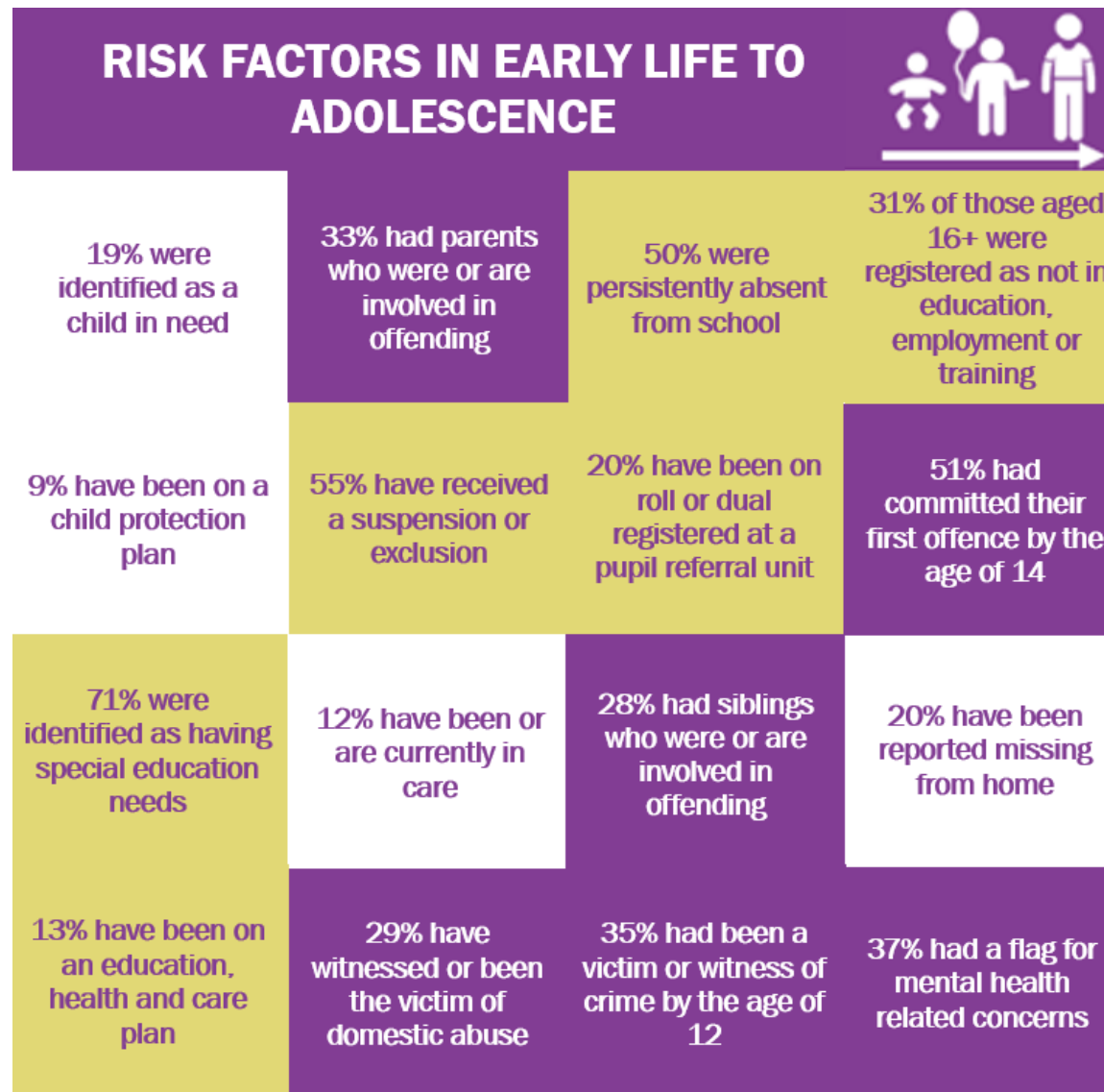


We have conducted research to examine the prevalence of some of the known risk factors amongst a cohort of children and young adults ($n=113$) from LLR who recently committed high-harm serious violence including Grievous Bodily Harm, Attempt Murder or Murder.

This project involved linking data from Leicestershire Police to education and social care data from Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council – a recommendation included in last year’s SNA.

In summary, the research highlighted that this group of children and young adults experienced a wide-range of individual- and relationship-related risk factors. Based on the data available, each individual had an average of 4.8 risk factors recorded and when looking at those who had committed the highest harm offences (Murder & Attempt Murder) the average number of risk factors increased to 5.1.

The visual to the right provides highlights of crime, education- and social care-related risk factors within this group of children and young adults.



Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

The following provides a summary of the prevalence of key risk factors in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland where we have data available. Rates are compared against the national average.

LEICESTER

- Amongst the most deprived geographic areas in England and the top 10% for income deprivation affecting children
- Children have poorer SEM health and below the expected level of development and attainment
- Higher rates of young people who are NEET
- Higher rates of children who are looked after
- Higher rates of first-time offenders, entrants and children in the YJS
- Higher rates of admissions for alcohol-related conditions and dependent drinkers
- Higher number of children who are habitual knife carriers
- Higher proportion of adults in treatment at specialist drug misuse services
- Higher rates of economic inactivity and unemployment

LEICESTER-SHIRE

- Lower rates of children who have reached the expected levels of development at age 2
- Higher rates of children on an education, health and care plan
- Fewer people who use services feel safe
- Higher rates of anti-social behaviour involving young people
- Higher number of County Lines

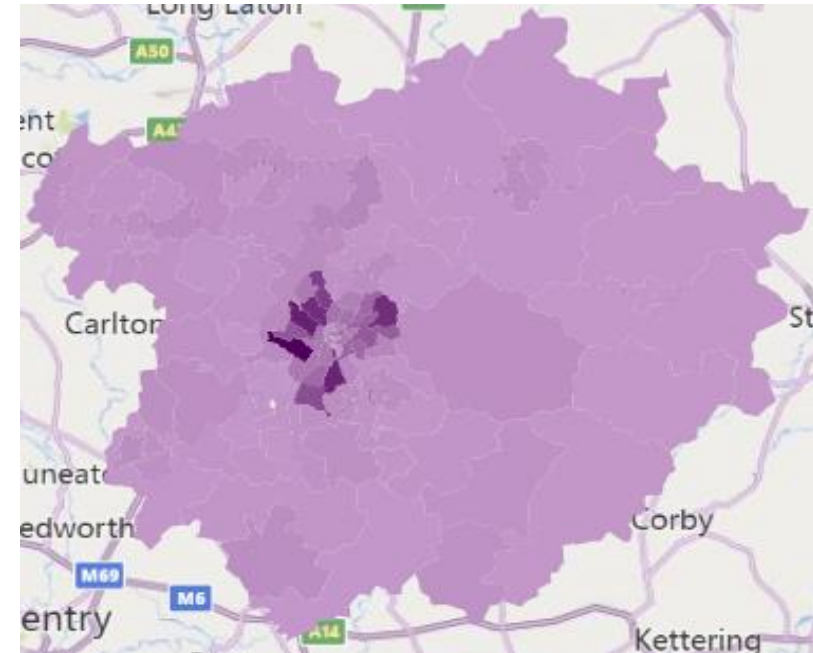
RUTLAND

- Higher rate of 10 to 24-year olds being admitted to hospital as a result of self-harm
- Higher rates of hospital admissions for mental health conditions for those under 18

Based upon the data which has been shared with the VRN to date, West Leicester, East Leicester and Charnwood are the areas in LLR which have the higher concentration of risk factors. These are also the areas which have the highest rates of serious violence.

More specifically, the following areas are highlighted from the analysis of individual, relationship and community risk factors:

- Beaumont Leys
- Braunstone
- New Parks
- Humberstone
- Spinney Hill
- Loughborough and the surrounding areas



Choropleth map by postcode sector of social care and education risk factors experienced by young people in LLR (Source: Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council)

Preventing Serious Violence

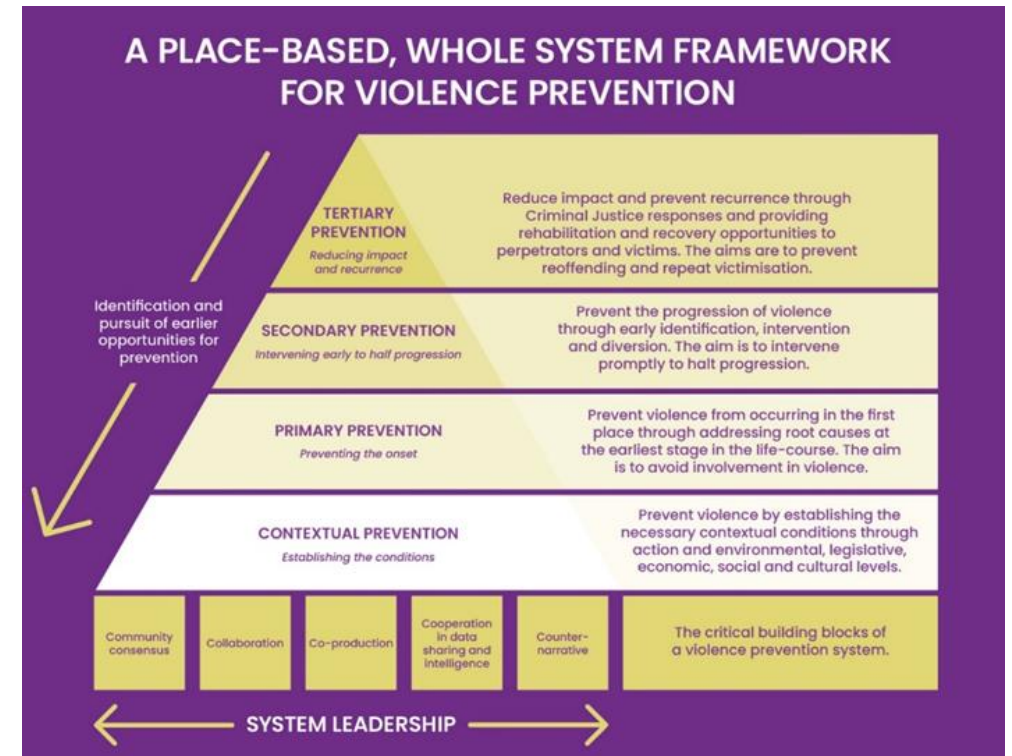
Central to a public health approach is the core belief that violence is preventable; that it is possible to prevent and reduce modifiable risk factors and to strengthen protective factors. The SNA synthesised the growing body of evidence, drawn from research, on the approaches and interventions which have demonstrated effectiveness in preventing and reducing serious violence.

Drawing on resources provided from Public Health England (2019), the VRN has developed a framework to support the design and delivery of comprehensive, evidence-based prevention programmes which tackle the complex and multi-layered nature of risk and protective factors. The 5 C's framework represents the critical building blocks of a violence prevention system and includes:

Community consensus	At the core of an effective approach to preventing violence, local responses should be 'with and for communities' to build trust and confidence and ensure that they are relevant and responsive.
Collaboration	Tackling serious violence requires system thinking and collaboration between a wide-range of groups, organisations and sectors often beyond organisational boundaries.
Co-production	Strategies and interventions should be co-produced with young people, their families and communities.
Co-operation in data	A key enabler to preventing violence is the commitment of organisations to identify, share and analyse all relevant data.
Counter-narrative	Concrete and credible alternatives to involvement in violence are critical as is promoting hope rather than deficit-based approaches which can often perpetuate the problems we're seeking to address.

For prevention activity to be effective in the long-term, it should adopt a life-course approach which considers the critical stages, transitions and settings in which there are opportunities to reduce and manage risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

The following framework embodies the life-course approach and is used by the VRN to understand, plan and take action to prevent and reduce serious violence:



Preventing Serious Violence



Interventions and Approaches

Implementing high quality, evidenced-based interventions is key to preventing and reducing serious violence. The SNA, whilst acknowledging the gaps in the evidence-base, highlighted the strategies and interventions which are most likely to be effective.

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) has identified six strategies for preventing violence involving young people which are underpinned by the best available evidence. They are presented alongside the key interventions and approaches which fall within these strategies.

1. **Promote family environments that support health development** – this includes parenting programmes, family nurse partnerships and therapeutic approaches to trauma
2. **Provide quality education in early life** – this includes bullying prevention, school-based programmes and classroom management
3. **Strengthen young people’s skills** – this includes universal school programmes (e.g. social skills training) and behavioural / skills-building interventions
4. **Connect young people to trusted adults and activities** – this includes mentoring programmes, after-school programmes and recreational activities
5. **Create protective community environments** – this includes limiting alcohol and weapon access, data sharing, hotspot and problem-solving policing, environmental design and community norm change
6. **Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk** – this includes therapeutic and cognitive-behavioural approaches for perpetrators, hospital-based interventions and substance misuse programmes

The Youth Endowment Fund’s (YEF) Toolkit summarises the best available research evidence about different approaches to preventing young people from becoming involved in serious violence.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENCE	APPROACHES	EVIDENCE QUALITY	
		Low	High
High	Focused Deterrence	High	High
	Social Skills Training	High	High
	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy	High	High
	Sport programmes	High	High
	A&E navigators	High	High
	Trauma-specific Therapies	High	High
Moderate	Pre-Court Diversion	High	High
	Mentoring	High	High
	Restorative Justice	High	High
	Hot Spots Policing	High	High
	Multi-Systemic Therapy	High	High
Low	After-School Programmes	High	High
	Interventions to Prevent School Exclusions	High	High
	Anti-Bullying Programmes	High	High
	Adventure and Wilderness Therapy	High	High
	Parenting Programmes	High	High
Unclear	Police in Schools	High	High
	Knife Surrender Schemes	High	High
	Media campaigns	High	High
	Trauma-informed Training and Service Redesign	High	High
Harmful	Boot Camps	High	High
	Prison Awareness Programmes	High	High

Recommendations

The SNA made 16 recommendations for core membership to consider when refreshing the VRN Response Strategy. These build on previous SNA recommendations and do not represent a change in focus or direction but rather a strengthening of work underway. However, as our understanding of the data improves and the evidence-base evolves, it is important to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the populations most at risk and that all interventions are developed and delivered in a way which is consistent with the evidence base.

Strategic-level recommendations

The strategic recommendations are those which will require cross-sector collaboration and chief officer/senior manager support.

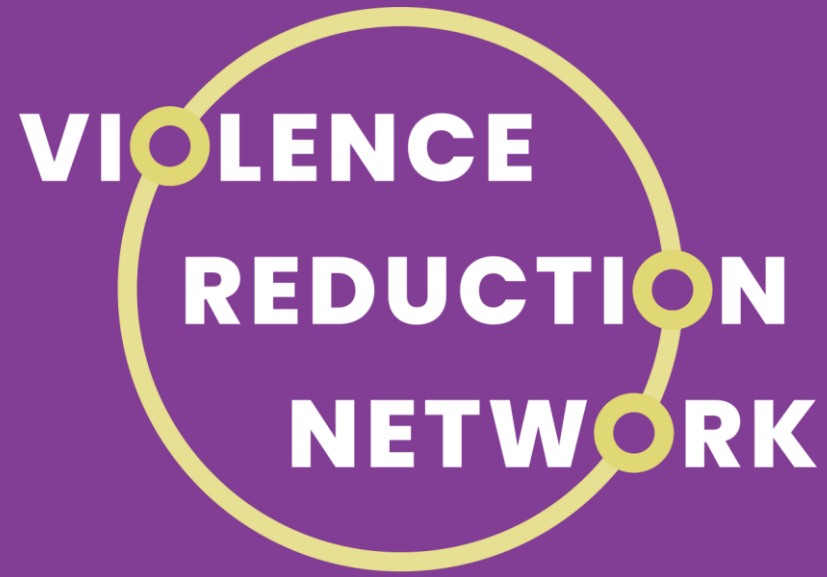
1. Continue to discharge the VRN's core function in ensuring it operates across the system and connects and collaborates with other relevant strategic and operational developments.
2. Continue to improve both access to and quality of multi-agency data particularly in relation to known risk and protective factors.
3. Work with the Strategic Partnership Board to increase future capability in data sharing through improving connectivity between systems.
4. Increase the use of VRN data and evidence products in strategic planning and operations within partner organisations and Community Safety Partnerships.
5. Continue to prioritise the under 25 age group and the geographical areas identified as most at risk of serious violence (City: East, West and Central, and County: Charnwood).
6. Strengthen the focus on preventing and reducing serious violence within the existing partnership work around the Night-Time Economy (NTE).

7. Continue to enhance understanding around serious violence occurring during the after-school peak and strengthen the VRN's partnership with schools to address known education-related risk and protective factors.
8. Strengthen strategic and operational work to tackle the higher prevalence of risk factors identified in the cohort analysis (e.g. mental health, substance misuse and early involvement in offending).
9. Ensure that the importance of gender and the associated cultural norms are understood and factored into prevention activity across the partnership.
10. Strengthen strategic and operational work to tackle the harmful effects of social media.
11. Continue to embed evaluation and learning across the system.

Intervention-level recommendations

The intervention-level recommendations build on the evidence-informed approach that the VRN is already taking in relation to intervention design and delivery.

12. Continue to design and test primary and early intervention approaches.
13. Continue to invest in 'teachable moment' interventions and progress to the evaluation phase.
14. Build on evaluation findings to strengthen local out of court/diversionary interventions across the partnership.
15. Provide specialist education, training and employment support and sport/recreation opportunities.
16. Design, implement and evaluate a focused deterrence intervention.



LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE
& RUTLAND

If you would like to find out more about the Violence Reduction Network, you can contact us at:

vrn@leics.pcc.gov.uk

You can also find details of our work at:

www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk

You can keep up-to-date with VRN developments at:

[@VR_Network](https://twitter.com/VR_Network)