

Violence Reduction Network Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment Executive Summary 2024 to 2025.

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## Introduction Page 2:

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: "Violence resulting in significant physical injury and other serious harm, including sexual violence. Violence may be committed with or without weapons and may take place in domestic or public places."

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:

1. Police data – Leicestershire Police recorded crime.
2. Healthcare data – Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit (A&E attendances and hospital admissions) and the East Midlands Ambulance Service.
3. Social care data – Leicester City Council.
4. Education data – Leicester City Council and partial dataset from Leicestershire County Council.
5. National data – Data from the Department for Education, Public Health Profiles and the Office for National Statistics.
6. Community and young person insights – An LLR Community Safety Survey administered in 2022 and an LLR Young People's Safety Survey conducted in 2021.

### 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 10th largest city in England and the most populous urban centre in the East Midlands.
- Out of 151 local authorities, Leicester ranks 19th, Leicestershire 137th and Rutland 149th on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

*Image showing map of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.*

## Profile of Serious Violence Page 4:

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.

2.9% of LLR residents were a victim and 2.3% were a perpetrator of serious violence in the last 18 months.

### Extent of Serious Violence:

In the 18 months between April 2023 - September 2024, there were 44,373 serious violence offences recorded by Leicestershire Police. When looking at the last complete financial year, 2023/24, Leicestershire Police recorded 30,633 serious violence offences, which is a decrease of 9.8% compared to the previous financial year (2022/23).

*Diagram: A chart displaying the rate of violence involving any age between the financial years 2020/21 to 2023/24. The data shows an increase into 2021/22, followed by 2 consecutive years of decreases, with 2023/24 showing the lowest rate over this period.*

### Timings:

The chart below shows the trend in serious violence over the four-year period of October 2022 to September 2024 for offences involving all ages.

*Diagram: A chart displaying the monthly rate in serious violence over the four-year period of October 2022 to September 2024 for offences involving all ages. The data shows a downward trend with lower levels reported from November 2023 to September 2024, sitting below the lower confidence limits of the data.*

The chart highlights a higher average rate of offences over the spring months over the last 2 years, and the summer months observed the lowest average rate per 1000 in the last 2 years.

A&E data has shown a downward trend in the last 24 months, whilst Hospital data has increased, with lower volumes recorded and greater fluctuation.

While there has been fluctuation, the last 12-18 months of data has shown a downward trend with September 2024 reporting the lowest volumes in the chart.

Both police and health data show similar trends with increased levels of serious violence at the weekend (and Monday for police data). Monday and Tuesday were the peak days for under 25s.

#### Focusing on the peak times:

- Police data shows serious violence is most frequently committed in the afternoon through to the late evening.
- The most prevalent time of the day for under 25s is 15:00-15:59. This is consistent with previous SNA findings and coincides with the end of the school day.
- 7% of all serious violence, and over a quarter of public-place violence, was committed in the night-time economy (22:00-04:59).
- A&E attendances have a higher rate between the hours of 13:00-13:59, 18:00-18:59, 20:00-20:59, and 21:00-21:59.
- Ambulance data reveals a peak between 21:00-21:59 with a general increase in rates between 18:00-00:59.

#### 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 3pm and 4pm and focuses on offences where the victim or suspected perpetrator is aged under 18.

- The most common offence groups committed by under 18-year olds between 3pm and 4pm were: Assault with injury 78% and Robbery of Personal Property 10%.
- The data shows a greater distribution of offences during the week (Monday to Friday) compared to the weekend with the daily proportions seen on a weekday being approximately three times the proportions seen at the weekend.
- In 2023, peak months of March and June were identified, with a notable decrease seen over the summer months July to August 2023.
- West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley and Blaby and Charnwood make up the greatest proportion of offences at this time of day.

- Peak ages of victims and suspects/offenders is 12 to 15 years old.
- 69% of suspects/offenders were male.
- Victims and suspects/offenders were most likely to reside in West Leicester, East Leicester, Charnwood and Hinckley and Blaby.
- 67% of victims were male.

### Violence in the Night-Time Economy (NTE):

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of police data on public place serious violence in the night-time economy (NTE) using police data. This included offence committed between 10pm and 4:59am between April 2023 to September 2024.

- The most common offences in the night-time economy are:
  - o Assault with injury at 66%.
  - o Affray/Offences against State at 17%.
  - o Robbery of Personal Property at 10%.
- 10pm to 01:59am is the peak time.
- 27% of offences take place on a Sunday followed by Saturday at 25% and Friday at 15%.
- Almost eight in ten perpetrators in the night-time economy are male.
- Victims were most likely to live in West Leicester at 16%, Charnwood at 14% and Hinckley and Blaby at 14%. More specifically, victims commonly reside in New Parks, Westcotes, Stoneygate, Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Riverside, and Hinckley Greater.
- Peak ages of victims are between 18 and 21 years old.
- The majority of perpetrators came from West Leicester at 18%, followed by Charnwood at 16% and East Leicester at 13%. More specifically, perpetrators most commonly reside in New parks, Riverside, Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Enderby and Narborough, Whitwick and Ibstock, and Eyres Monsell.

### Geography of Serious Violence:

Leicester saw the highest rate and volume of serious violence, and is double the rate seen in Leicestershire. By district/borough area, Charnwood saw the highest volume and North West Leicestershire saw the highest rate despite making up only 7.9% of the LLR total.

Looking at the Leicestershire Police Neighbourhood Policing Areas, 14.8% of all serious violence across LLR occurred in East Leicester, closely followed by Hinckley and Blaby (14.6%), West Leicester (14.2%) and Charnwood (13.9%). More specifically, the highest density of offences were seen in City Centre, New Parks, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Whitwick & Ibstock, Beaumont Leys, and Cultural Quarter.

61.0% of serious violence occurred in a dwelling, followed by 23.6% in a public/open place (e.g. street, park etc), hospitality (4.1%) and education settings (2.5%).

### Perpetrators:

The vast majority of people in LLR are not involved in serious violence, with 2.3% of the LLR population being perpetrators of serious violence.

Those aged under 45 are most likely to be perpetrators of serious violence, with the rates increasing between each group to a peak seen for those aged 30-34 years old, closely followed by 15-19, indicating that these groups are most likely to be involved in serious violence.

The data also highlights that those aged 10-19 commit the greatest rates of public place violence and sexual violence.

Under 25s contributed to 32% of serious violence between April 2023 to September 2024.

*Diagram: A chart showing the rate of offences by age of the suspected perpetrator (grouped every 5 years from 10-14 to 90+). The chart shows a peak age group of 30-34, followed by 15-19.*

The majority of offenders are male (70%). Male perpetration is most likely to involve a male victim. Males are considerably more likely to be involved in higher harm offences.

Over three-quarters were identified as White, followed by smaller proportions who were categorised as Asian (13.9%), Black (6.9%), Mixed (3.0%) and Other (1.8%).

Data highlights that the highest volume of suspected perpetrators reside on West Leicester with the most common beats being New Parks, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Abbey, and Beaumont Leys. Other areas across LLR which report the highest number of suspected perpetrators are Eyres Monsell (South Leicester), Whitwick & Ibstock (North West Leicestershire), Market Bosworth (Hinckley & Bosworth), Loughborough North (Charnwood) and Syston (Charnwood).

### Cohort Analysis: Perpetrators of Knife-enabled Violence Under 25 years:

- 90% of suspects/perpetrators were male.
- Over three-quarters of offences occurred in Leicester City.
- The age of suspects/offenders peaks at 16 to 17 years old.
- The greatest proportion of suspects/offenders lived in West Leicester and East Leicester.
- 54% of suspects had previously been a victim, and over.
- 1/3 had witnessed or experienced domestic abuse.
- 41% of victims were a stranger to the perpetrator.
- A third of the cohort had flags for mental-health related concerns.

### Victims:

Police data shows that 30 to 34 year olds are most at risk of being a victim of serious violence across LLR, it is also important to note that those aged 15 to 19 report similar rates. When analysing health data, those aged 20-24 have the highest rates of A&E attendances and for hospital admissions, smaller rates were observed but the peak was identified with those aged 25 to 29, closely followed by 40 to 44.

*Diagram: A chart showing the rate of offences or injuries by age of the victim (grouped every 5 years from 10 to 14 to 90+) across police, A&E attendances and hospital admissions datasets. For police data, it peaks at 30 to 34 and 15 to 19, and for both health datasets, a peak is observed at 20 to 24.*

Females are most likely to be the victim of serious violence based upon police data (55.0%) but health data suggests males are at greater risk at 72.7%.

Over three quarters of victims were identified as White at 77.4%, followed by smaller proportions who were categorised as Asian at 14.1%, Black at 7.4% and Mixed at 3.9%.

It is important to understand the differences in the person profiles when looking at different forms of violence (for example domestic abuse, public place etc). An overview of the key findings from each chapter in the SNA has been summarised on the next page.

*Diagram: A chart showing the following information.*

This page breaks down the key findings of the different themes of violence including all serious violence (as covered throughout the report), public place violence, domestic abuse, sexual violence and violence involving young people. It summarises the extent, nature, timings, distribution and person profiles of each theme.



For public place violence, key findings include:

- A decrease of 10% compared to the previous year
- 9% of offences involve a knife or sharp object
- Higher rates of violence between Friday and Sunday
- The rate of offences in the City is 2.5 times higher than the county, with Central Leicester making up the greatest proportion
- The peak age for public place violence as a perpetrator is seen between 10-14 with over three-quarters being male
- For victims, the peak ages are between 15-19, followed by 10-14 with two-thirds being male

For domestic abuse, key findings include:

- A decrease of 10% compared to the previous year
- Over a quarter of offences were flagged as involving alcohol
- Higher rates of domestic abuse at the weekends (peaking on Sunday)
- The Neighbourhood Policing Areas with the greatest proportion of offences include Hinckley & Blaby, East Leicester and West Leicester
- The peak age for domestic abuse perpetrators is seen between 35-44, peaking at 35-39 with over three-quarters being male
- For victims, the peak ages are between 30-34, with three-quarters being female

For sexual violence, key findings include:

- A decrease of 9% compared to the previous year.
- Higher rates of offences on Saturdays.
- The Neighbourhood Policing Areas with the greatest proportion of offences is Central Leicester, followed by West Leicester and Hinckley & Blaby.
- The peak age for sexual violence perpetrators is 10 to 19 with 85% being male.
- For victims, the peak ages are also between 10 to 19, with over 80% being female.

For violence involving young people:

- A decrease of 11% compared to the previous year.
- Higher rates of offences between 3-4pm between Monday-Friday.
- The Neighbourhood Policing Areas with the greatest proportion of offences is West Leicester, followed by Hinckley & Blaby, Charnwood and East Leicester.
- The individual peak age for suspects or offenders under 25 is 15-years old, with over two-thirds being male.
- For victims, the peak ages are 14 and 15, with just over half (55%) being female.

## Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Violence Page 10:

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.

As covered in previous SNAs, the VRN carried out research to examine the prevalence of some of these known risk factors amongst a cohort of 113 children and young adults from Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland who had 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.

In summary, this 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.

Analysis revealed that this group of children and young adults were likely to have been a victim of crime before committing one, and to have committed on average 12.2 offences before the most recent serious violence offence. The infographic provides an overview of

the crime, education- and social care-related risk factors experienced by this group of children and young adults.

Risk factors in Early life to Adolescence:

There are many risk factors in early life and adolescence. The highest risk factors being:

- 71% were identified as having special education needs.
- 55% have received a suspension or exclusion.
- 51% had committed their first offence by the age of 14.
- 50% were persistently absent from school.
- 37% had a flag for mental health related concerns.

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, and children in the YJS.
- Higher rates of dependent drinkers.
- Higher rates of children on a child protection plan.
- Higher proportion of adults in treatment at specialist drug misuse services.
- Higher rates of economic inactivity and unemployment.

Leicestershire:

- Lower rates of children who have reached a good level of development at age 2 to 2 ½.
- Higher rates of children with learning difficulties known to schools.

Based upon the data which has been shared with the VRN to date, West Leicester, East Leicester, Charnwood and Hinckley & Blaby are the areas in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland 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:

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

*Diagram: Choropleth map showing 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 Page 13:

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.

Preventative strategies and activity should also span the different levels of prevention outlined below with an emphasis on shifting resource increasingly into the primary prevention space:

- Tertiary Prevention: Preventing violence from happening again through rehabilitation and recovery.
- Secondary Prevention: Identifying, intervening and diverting at-risk individuals.
- Primary Prevention: Addressing the root causes to stop violence from happening in the first place.

### 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.

*Diagram: Chart outlining the 24 approaches to preventing young people in becoming involved in violence.*

## Recommendations:

The SNA made 12 recommendations for the core membership to consider when refreshing the VRN's 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.

### 1. Data and Insights

- 1a) Continue to improve access to, quality of and use of data from all partners to improve the local understanding of serious violence.
- 1b) Extend and advance our data work to support the partnership in identifying the cohorts of young people most at risk of public place violence and the associated risk factors.
- 1c) Improve our understanding of how violence is affecting children and young people through designing and rolling out a series of surveys and focus groups.

### 2. Partnerships

- 2a) Continue to strengthen and align partnership working in relation to harm outside the home (e.g. public place violence, knife crime, exploitation etc).
- 2b) Continue to broaden the VRN partnership through engaging with new sectors (e.g. business, faith, charitable foundations etc).
- 2c) Utilise the findings of the SNA to inform local mobilisation for changes in Government policy and priorities (e.g. Safer Streets mission: Prevention Partnerships / Youth Hubs).

### 3. Interventions

- 3a) Review new and emerging evidence and undertake local gap analysis to identify how our prevention and early intervention and diversion strategies can be strengthened.
- 3b) Consider and implement findings and recommendations from independent evaluations (e.g. Violence Intervention Project, The Reach Programme, The Phoenix Programme) with a view to continuous improvement and securing sustainability.
- 3c) Undertake a rapid review of the partnership response to preventing and reducing robberies and identify and pursue opportunities to strengthen it.
- 3d) Consider how the partnership can prevent or mitigate the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, thereby preventing the likely of future offending / victimisation.

#### 4. Evaluation

4a) Widen the monitoring, learning and evaluation framework into wider partnership initiatives including an evaluation model for community-based projects.

4b) Evaluate MVP and consider how the bystander methodology can be transferred into other settings.

#### Final Page:

Violence Reduction Network for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland logo.

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

[vrn@leics.pcc.gov.uk](mailto:vrn@leics.pcc.gov.uk)

You can also find details of our work at: [www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk](http://www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk)

You can keep up to date with VRN developments at: @VR\_Network

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