

# Cardiff Without Violence

Violence Prevention Strategy

2025 – 2028







Imagine a Cardiff  
without violence.

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# 1. Foreword



As a Capital City we are proud of our vibrant culture, diverse communities, a growing economy, and eventful nightlife.

Cardiff is home to approximately 360,000 people and welcomes thousands of visitors each year. Our Cardiff Community Safety Partnership is responsible for coordinating our partnership approach to violence prevention, keeping Cardiff a safe place, free from the fear and threat of violence.

Violence is a complex public health issue and in its many guises, disrupts the very fabric of our communities. It casts long shadows over families, neighbourhoods, and public spaces, hindering our collective ability to thrive. This is why it is so important that across public services, alongside our partners in the private and voluntary sector, we work together effectively to prevent violence in our city in all its forms.

The Violence Prevention Strategy for Cardiff is a testament to our city’s commitment to address the symptoms of violence and confront the root causes head-on, through education, engagement, and empowerment. This Strategy outlines a comprehensive, multi-agency approach that emphasises prevention as the cornerstone of our collective efforts. It calls for an unprecedented level of collaboration between specified authorities, third sector organisations, community groups, and individuals.

Through 2023–2024 partners have researched the causes of violence, who is affected by it and where and when it is most prevalent. A profile of evidence was developed and has shaped our key priorities to target interventions towards our most vulnerable communities.

Through our priorities we will continue to challenge ourselves to ensure we are evidence-led, trauma-informed, engaging with our communities, and furthering our opportunities with partners. Our initiatives range from enhancing youth engagement and support, delivering community policing, and fostering environments where every individual can be safe.




This Strategy serves as a call to action for everyone to come together in a concerted effort to prevent violence in all its forms.



# 2. Purpose of the Strategy

Violence is a significant criminal justice and public health problem which can have a devastating impact on individuals, communities and the wider population and society.

In January 2023, the Government introduced the Serious Violence Duty to ensure that serious violence is a recognised priority for Community Safety Partnerships. The Duty has set out the following requirements:

-  To work together to create a strategic needs assessment, to identify the types of violence experienced in our communities, and to understand the causation of violence and identify those at risk.
-  To develop and publish a partnership led Strategy, which outlines how we tackle the issues identified in the strategic needs assessment.
-  To review the progress of the Strategy on an annual basis.

This document is Cardiff Community Safety Partnership’s Violence Prevention Strategy. It sets out our assessment of local violence and the framework of our response. It is accompanied by an annual delivery plan which identifies the specific actions we will deliver to reduce the harm of violence in our city.





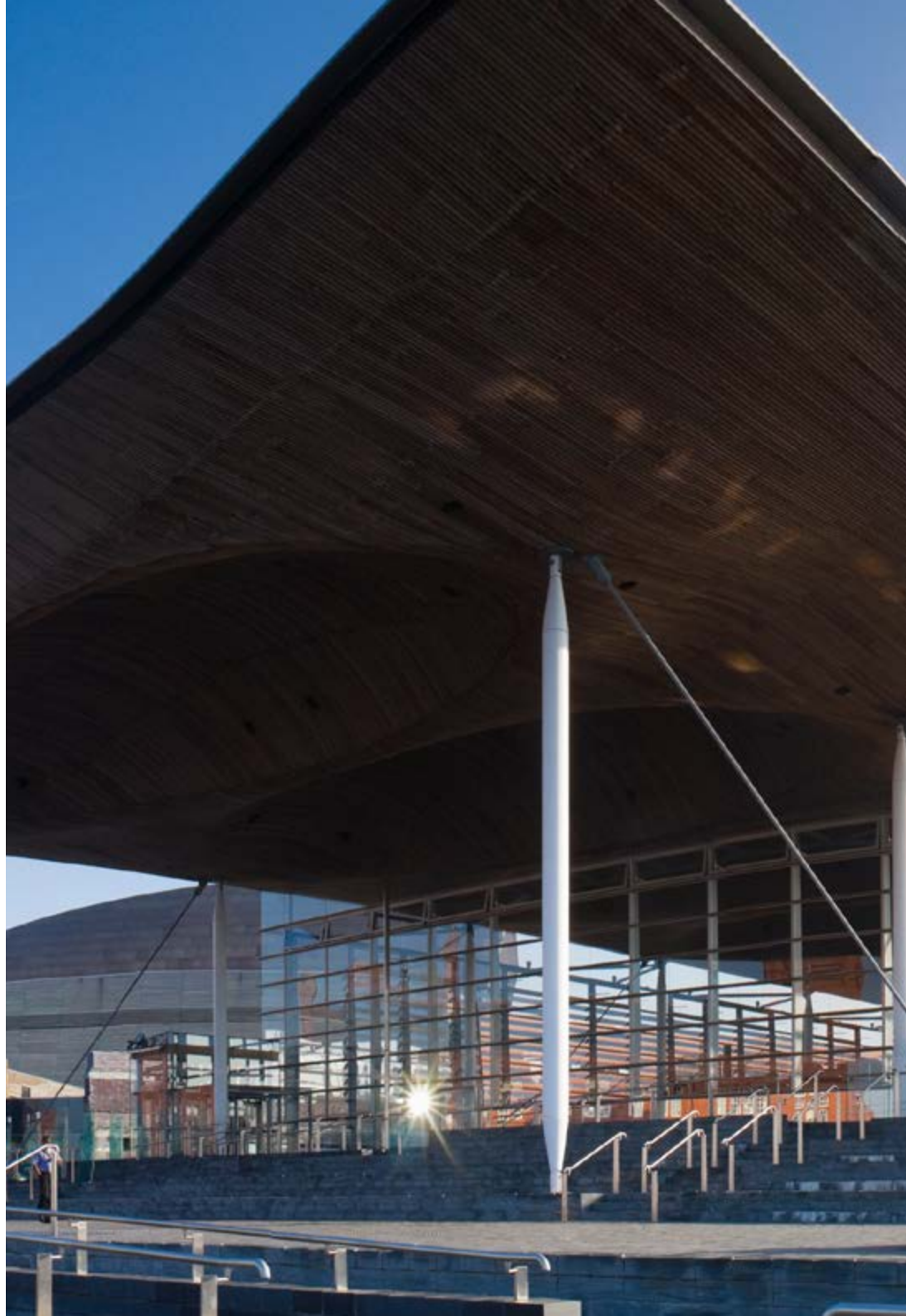
Leadership & Governance

**Cardiff’s Public Services Board** brings together the City’s public service leadership and decision-makers to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Cardiff. The Board has delegated the responsibility for delivering the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty to Cardiff’s Community Safety Partnership, who are made up of organisations from across the public, private and third sectors, including:

- Cardiff Council
- South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office
- South Wales Police
- His Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service
- Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
- South Wales Fire & Rescue Service
- Safer Wales

The **Community Safety Partnership** develops and implements strategies to tackle crime, disorder, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and to safeguard people from abuse, exploitation and harm.

The Partnership currently holds four core priority area meetings; Street Based Lifestyles (homelessness and substance use, mental health), Local Problem Solving (anti-social behaviour), Prevent (Counter- extremism) and Violence Prevention (violence relating to organised criminality and exploitation, night-time economy violence, and violence against women and girls). The Community Safety Partnership governance structure will be pivotable in delivering the priorities of this strategy.



Cardiff Community Safety Partnership Governance



Scope of the Strategy

The Serious Violence Duty requires specified authorities to identify and reduce forms of serious violence within their communities (Home Office, 2022).

Within Wales it has been agreed that the response to the Duty would include all types of violence, as it is recognised that the early signs and manifestations of violence is often a pre-cursor to more serious violence in the future. For the purposes of the strategy the following police reporting offence categories have been considered, as a means of defining our scope of ‘violence’.

- Violence with injury (Assault with injury, assault with intent to cause serious harm, racially or religiously aggravated assault with injury)
- Violence without injury (Assault without injury, Racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury, threats to kill)
- Stalking and harassment (Harassment, Racially or religiously aggravated harassment, stalking)
- Rape
- Sexual offences
- Possession of weapon offences

As the Cardiff and Vale ‘It’s in our hands’ Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy already has significant focus on delivering a programme of objectives to tackle this specific type of violence, this strategy will focus on other forms of violence, whilst acknowledging the links and impacts to domestic abuse.

Therefore, the Cardiff Public Services Board and the Community Safety Partnership are committed **to tackling all types and manifestations of violence** and the impact upon our communities.



3. Understanding Violence in Cardiff

3.1 Evidence Based Profile of Serious Violence in Cardiff

To end violence, we must firstly recognise that violence is a public health issue which can be preventable. This means that violence can be prevented before it occurs and responded to more safely when it happens, to limit future harm. By identifying the types of violence that occur in Cardiff, we can best respond to the causation.

An evidence-based profile of violence has been conducted by Cardiff Council’s Community Safety Team using various partnership data sets, to provide a baseline of what types of violence occur, where they occur, who is involved, and when violence takes place in Cardiff. It also acknowledges the current limitations of our data and provides recommendations to improve the data quality, to conduct further research into emerging patterns of violence, and to improve the ability to share information between partners, all so we can progress our response to tackling violence.

Data Limitations and Cautionary Observations

An important observation to make at this point is that the following statistics are primarily based on police reported incidents/occurrences of violence. It is widely known that a significant number violence goes under-reported to the police, therefore effecting the overall picture of violence in Cardiff.


Another significant limitation has been the lack of context or qualitative understanding behind the incidents recorded, creating difficulties in identifying the root causes behind the violence. Therefore, this Strategy will utilise the ‘Wales Without Violence – A shared framework for preventing violence among Children and Young People’ (Snowdon, et al, 2023), which is based on extensive research and exploration behind the root causes of Violence across Wales.

A cautionary note is applied in the interpretation of the following figures, increases and decreases can be due to a number of reasons for example; an increase in possession of weapon offences could be due to increased police presence following a police led operation; a decrease in A&E attendance could be seen as both positive (less violent incidents occurring) and negative (possibility of under-reporting). The analysis has utilised data mainly from January 2022 to December 2022. The reason for this was to assist in partnership collation of data, making it easy to collate. Whilst also acknowledging and avoiding the impact that COVID had on patterns of crime and Anti-social behaviour.

This strategy seeks to further examine this information and use it to inform our partnership approach to tackling violence.



3.2 What types of violence are there in Cardiff?



Whilst South Wales Police (which covers the Cardiff Region) report the highest rates of violent offences in contrast to the other Welsh Forces.


The Home Office (iQuanta) crime recording figures, show Cardiff as having the **lowest number of Violence with Injury figures** (per 1,000 population) when compared to 14 of the most similar policing forces across the UK (1st January to 31st December 2022).




Offences of assault with injury, assault without injury, and stalking and harassment continue to make up the majority of violent offences in Cardiff. **There has been a notable increase from December 2022 to June 2023 (332 to 443 offences).**



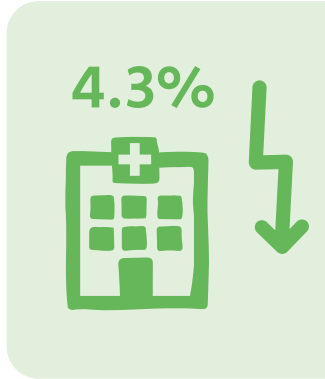
Rape offences showing a downward trend from April 2022 to June 2023 (27 to 19 offences), whilst **‘other category sexual offences’ are showing an upward trend over the same time period (10 to 34 offences)**. The ‘Other serious sexual offences’ have remained consistent.



South Wales Police have reported an overall reduction in knife and sharp instrument offences from 2019 to 2023 (801 to 628 offences).



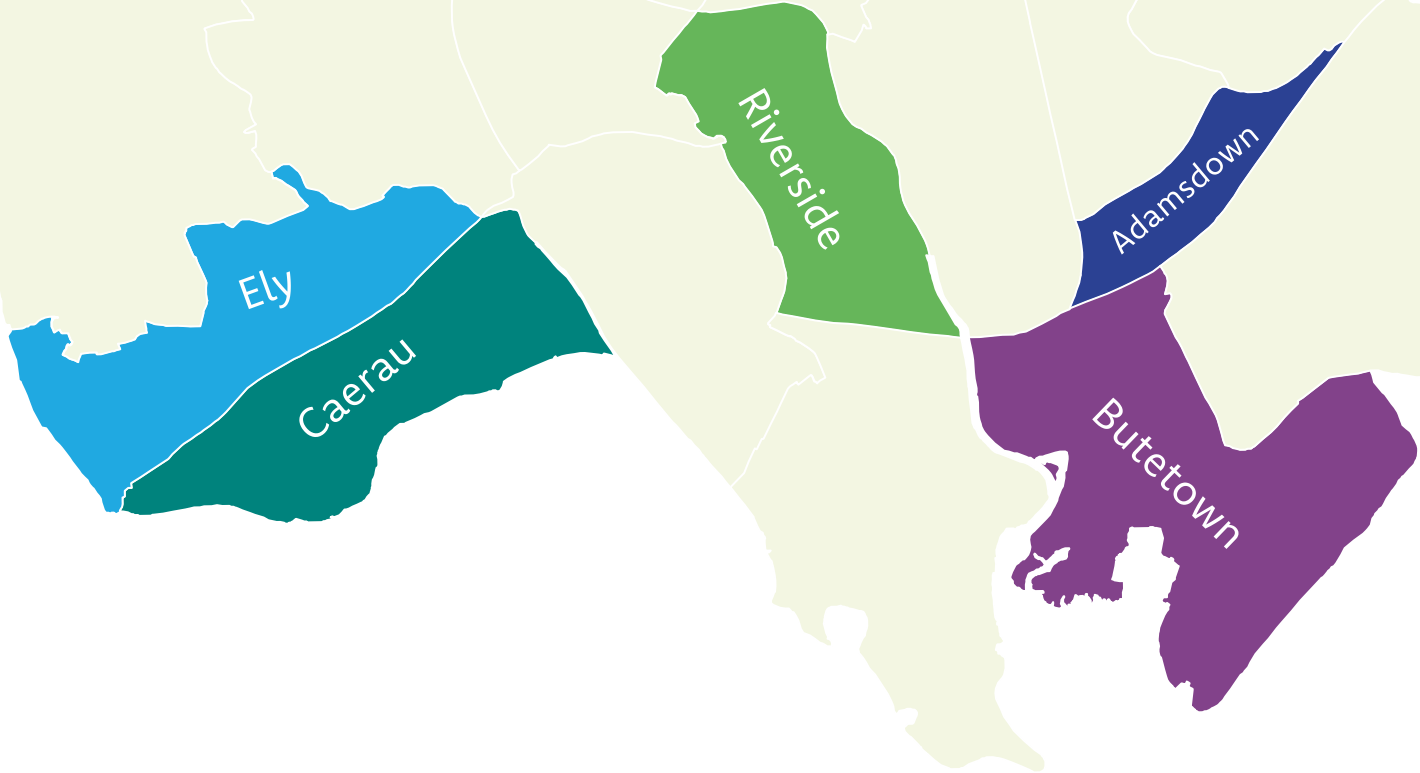
The possession of weapon offences trend showing a **slight increase over** April 2022 to June 2023 (19 to 26 offences).



From April 2022 and January 2023, there has been a **4.3% decrease in A&E attendance for assault**, when comparing with the previous year (1,274 to 1,219).

3.3 Where is violence most prevalent in Cardiff?

Cardiff City Centre records the highest incident rates for violent offences from July 2022 to May 2023 (Average of 206.1 per 10,000 population), which includes Violence With injury, violence without injury, public order offences and serious sexual offences. Other high reporting wards include **Butetown, Adamsdown, Caerau, Ely and Riverside.**



**Adamsdown, Careau and Ely** record the highest rate of stalking and harassment offences from July 2022 to May 2023 (per 10,000 population), compared to the other wards across Cardiff.

**Careau and Ely** wards have seen a marginal increase in reported offences from April and 2022 to January 2023 (a total of 14 offences). In comparison to the other wards, 41.0% (**Careau**) and 45.4% (**Ely**) of violence with injury offences recorded were domestic related and 27.1% (**Careau**) and 27.0% (**Ely**) were hate crime related.

**Riverside** ward has shown an increase of 21.5% of violent offences from April 2022 to January 2023. 23.8% of the violence with injury offences recorded are classed as being domestic related and 13.4% as being classed as a hate crime.

In contrast to other wards, **Adamsdown** has seen a decrease of 22.2% of violence offences from April 2022 to January 2023. 23.4% of the offences being domestic related and 12.0% being hate crime related.

**Butetown** has seen a 15.6% increase in violence with injury offences in April 2022 to January 2023.

A breakdown of City Centre locations of demand appear to be linked with the heart of the City Centre and the night-time economy as there are a high number of licenced premises, other areas are linked to travel routes in and out of the city.

A priority problem solving methodology has been developed by South Wales Police and the Violence Prevention Unit, known as Operation Sentinel. This has involved utilising police and public health data, along with the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CCHI), which is a system that measures the seriousness of crime and harm to victims (Sherman, Neyroud and Neyroud, 2016). This methodology provides us with a geographical analysis of priority areas or ‘micro-beats’ to focus our response to violence.

The following wards have identified using this methodology:

- City Centre
- Canton and Ely
- Llanedeyrn and Llanishen
- Rumney and St Mellons
- Cardiff Bay
- Fairwater
- Roath and Cathays

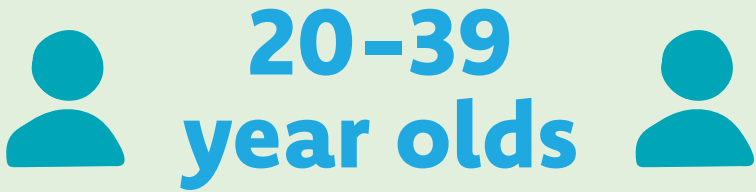
City Centre and Cardiff Bay violence can be attributed to the night-time economy, high transient population, and residential space combined in one location. Whilst the other wards in Cardiff are residential areas, some of which are identified in the WIMD (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation), where there are highest concentrations of several types of deprivation.

The Wales Without Violence Framework research has shown a strong association between poverty and violence. Social inequalities relating to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and gender increase the likelihood of violence taking place. The Framework draws upon various national statistics to illustrate the link between inequalities, personal characteristics and the likelihood of being affected by violence (Snowdon, L., Parry, B., Walker, A., Barton, E., 2023, p.25). The Public Health Wales Strategic Needs Assessment highlights that deprivation was found to be a significant risk factor for involvement with violence in Cardiff (2022; Cresswell-Jones., P, 2023).



3.4 Who is involved or affected by violence in Cardiff?

In January 2017 to September 2022 the most common age groups for violence against the person offences were between



A significant proportion of 15 to 19 years offences occurring (over 2,000), including secondary school age children to working age adults. (Violence Prevention Unit Portal Data).

The University Hospital of Wales A&E attendance data (January 2022 to July 2023) for assault shows, from the age of:



Attendance continues to decrease after this age category.

Overall the number of males attending A&E due to assault is consistently higher than females.



In 2002, 86% of patients attending A&E with violence related injuries were male, however this has decreased to 77% in 2023.

Whilst female attendance increased by 9% in 2023.



It is important to recognise and understand the vulnerability of those with ‘street based lifestyles’, which increases the risks of violence and equally becoming a victim.

The term ‘Street based lifestyles’ is used to refer to vulnerable people that spend all or a significant amount of time in a street setting and have complex needs stemming from traumatic backgrounds, substance use and mental health issues.



### 3.5 When is violence most prevalent in Cardiff?

Whilst the patterns of violence can in some part be attributed to seasonality, there are a number of other factors that contribute to trends and patterns of violence. The following statements are based on initial observations of A&E data from January to December 2022, but more thorough analysis would be required moving forward.



A&E attendance data for assaults in January to December 2022 shows that 20 to 24 year old attendance remains quite consistent throughout the year, with a peak in May and July.



Whilst 30-39 year old attendance to A&E, could be attributed to a seasonal trends with an increase in the warmer spring to summer months and a decrease into the autumn and winter months.



For 15-16 year olds, March and October had the highest number of A&E attendance. Interestingly, A&E attendance lowers from March to July 2022 and then starts to increase from August to October 2022.



In contrast, 10-14 year olds see an increase through May to July 2022 and then a decrease September to December 2022.

(It is important to note here that the data covers University Hospital of Wales attendance which could see attendance from other localities, not just Cardiff residents).

South Wales Police data which looked at A&E assault-related attendances from multiple hospitals across Cardiff & Vale BCU between January -June 2023, indicates that:



**May** (21%) and **June** (18%) were the months that recorded the highest number of assault related A&E visits.



The busiest days were **Saturdays** (16%) and **Sundays** (18%). The lowest was Wednesday (11%).



The most common times were during the evening between **6pm and midnight** (29%) and the lowest was during the morning between 6am and midday (18%). (Bryant., H, 2023).



A temporal analysis of violent crime reported to South Wales Police in the City Centre shows an increase between the hours of 11pm and 2am, which can be attributed to the night-time economy. Whilst in more residential areas the profile reported violence tends to be between 11am to 5pm. This therefore demonstrates the different context in which violence can occur and the need for a different response in tackling violence.



### 3.6 What are people's perception of violence in Cardiff?

It is important to capture and understand the perceptions and feelings of safety in our communities, as this will help us monitor our strategic impact. It will also assist with our understanding of where crime and antisocial behaviour could be under- reported to the police.

This strategy seeks to engage with the public to capture their views and co-produce solutions for long-term change. By analysing responses to existing surveys and consultations delivered by partners, we will harness our ability to respond effectively to the concerns raised by our communities.

Examples, of public engagement work include ASK Cardiff Survey, The South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner's Annual Community Survey, Child Friendly City Survey, South Wales Police Street Safe Mobile App, South Wales Listens, and the co-production and consultation findings of the development of the Wales Without Violence framework.

The [Cardiff Public Service Board Consultation Overview report](#), which provides an overview of the various consultations that have taken place in Cardiff throughout 2022, highlights the key issues identified by citizens that relate to 'Safe, Confident and Empowered Communities'.

The South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner's Annual Community Survey (2022), reports the following views of policing in Cardiff:



**39.34%** agree that the police treat people fairly



**50%** agree that the police are friendly and approachable



**59.14%** have respect for the police in their local area



**36.80%** have trust in the police in their local area



**20.05%** agree that the police are doing a good job in their local area

As part of the public consultation on the Local Delivery Plan (LPD, 2021), respondents were given a list and asked what would make their neighbourhood a good place to live. 61.5% of respondents stated low crime rates (safety). Respondents were then asked what could be done to improve their local neighbourhood and 40.1% wanted their neighbourhoods to be made safer.


In the Ask Cardiff Survey (2022) residents were asked "How do you think violence could be prevented?" and they suggested:

- More police presence
- Taking action against offenders
- More youth services
- Services for homeless with complex needs
- Education and a community culture change




# 4. Supporting Partnership Policy and Strategy

It is important to recognise the significant number of strategies, policies and frameworks that have been developed by members of the Community Safety Partnership, key organisations and Government, which are working to address some of the root causes and emerging themes of violence across Cardiff. (A full but not exhaustive list can be found in Appendix A1). They all contribute to what Public Health call the Spectrum of Prevention; the ‘three tiers of violence prevention’, which are:




**Primary prevention**

Stopping violence before it happens, by transforming social conditions such as racial or gender inequity that excuse, justify or promote violence.



**Secondary prevention**

Supporting people at the earliest opportunity when they have experienced violence, taking a trauma informed approach, and making sure people know where to go for support.



**Tertiary prevention**

The response, treatment and rehabilitation after violence has occurred, as well as the prevention of long term harm, including repeat victimisation or perpetration.

When all three tiers of prevention are used together, they create a comprehensive response to violence. This strategy will ensure connectivity and create an opportunity to strengthen and pursue additional objectives, to contribute to the overarching aim – A Cardiff Without Violence.



# 5. Our Approach

## 5.1 Literature Review

In order to take an early intervention and preventative health-based approach; our approach has been based on existing partnership research and an evidence based analysis of violence in Cardiff.

This included a Strategic Needs Assessment carried out by Public Health Wales, the development of a data profile of violence in Cardiff, recognising the Cardiff University Model of Violence Prevention, and adopting the Wales Violence Prevention Unit: ‘Wales Without Violence’ framework, which evidence approaches to preventing violence among children and young people. The Community Safety Partnership came together on several occasions to discuss the relevant data, frameworks and research to develop a response to tackling violence in Cardiff.

### The Cardiff Model for Violence Prevention

The Cardiff Model for Violence Prevention, was established by Cardiff University, and sets out a public health approach

to violence prevention. It follows a multi-agency approach that relies on the strategic use of information from health and law enforcement to improve community prevention programmes. Interventions such as plastic drinkware which had a massive impact on the number of glass related assaults were established. Our partnership strategy will continue to support this approach through sharing information between partners, to respond to emerging issues.

### Cardiff and Vale Public Health Strategic Needs Assessment

A Cardiff and Vale Public Health Wales Strategic Needs Assessment was conducted in July 2023, bringing all specified authorities within the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty together, to provide a baseline assessment of serious violence affecting Cardiff, and the Vale of Glamorgan. The aims of the assessment were as follows:

- To provide an overview of the evidence relating to serious violence, including the policy and strategic context
- To provide a baseline assessment (current picture) of serious violence

- with epidemiology and views from local professionals
- To provide a strategic assessment of public need relating to serious violence, with recommendations to inform local strategy development in line with the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty

It is important to note that that the terminology of ‘Serious Violence’ was not defined by the Serious Violence Duty, which allows for local areas to tailor the needs assessment and subsequent strategic delivery plans based on local needs. For this Strategic Needs Assessment, partners agreed to include specific sections on knife crime, gun crime, homicide, county lines and exploitation, gang and public space youth violence, and any other emerging themes. Violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) was not excluded, but not covered in totality due to the already existing Cardiff and Vale VAWDASV Strategy.

The full list of recommendations can be found on the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board publication website. A summary of the recommendations are as follows:

# Cardiff and Vale Public Health Strategic Needs Assessment Recommendations

Trauma informed approach

Consideration of Equality Impact

Increase link with support service knowledge

Collaboration on partnership programmes

Take a wide age range focus, not just young people

Evidence based approach to tackling priority areas

Improved data collection and sharing

Improve understanding of perceptions vs reality

Visibility of the consequences of crime

Increase partnership information sharing

Evaluation of existing programmes – ‘what works’ approach



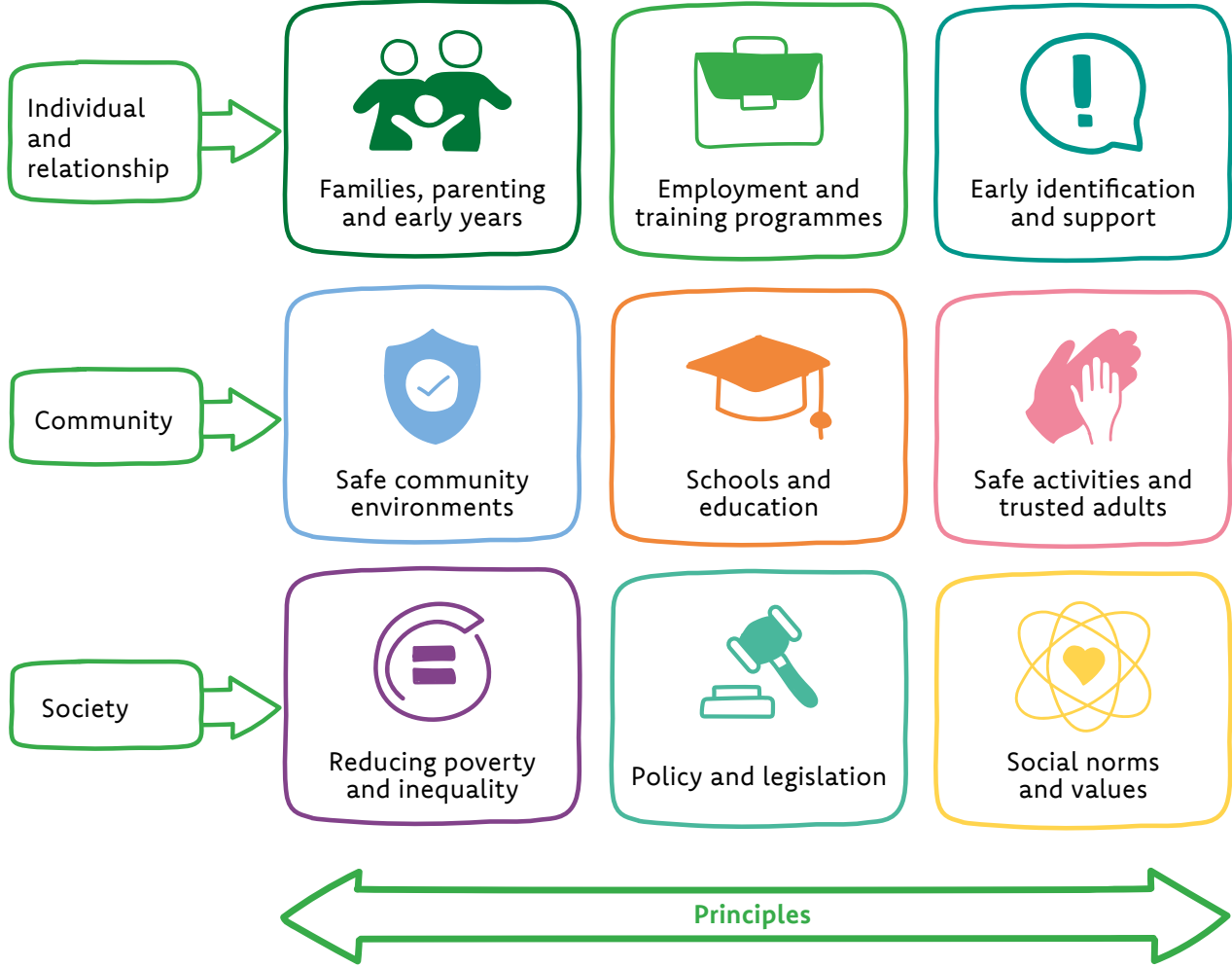
## ‘Wales Without Violence’ – A Shared Framework for Preventing Violence among Children and Young People, 2023 (developed by the Violence Prevention Unit and Public Health Wales NHS Trust)

Public Health Wales NHS Trust and the Violence Prevention Unit partnered with the Peer Action Collective, a team of young people designing and conducting research about children and young people’s experience of violence. A number of listening exercises were conducted with children and young people in order to create a guide for agencies and organisations to address violence and protect those affected by it.

The listening exercises identified the following key themes affected children and young people who just want to feel safe and be themselves.

- Bullying in schools and online
- Gender-based violence
- Sexual harassment
- Knife crime
- Physical violence
- Hate crime (trans abuse, racial abuse, homophobia)

A whole system, public health approach was developed for supporting partners in Wales to make sure valuable time, money and resources are spent on implementing strategies and activities to prevent violence among children and young people. This strategy utilises this framework involving the 9 strategies identified, across 3 levels of approach; individual and relationship, community and society, which are as follows:





# 5.2 Our Guiding Principles

The contributing elements of research and evidence has led us to develop guiding principles to steer our partnership commitment – A Cardiff Without Violence.



## Data Led

Our approach to preventing and tackling violence must be driven by an evidence-led approach, to ensure we are understanding the issues communities are facing, and supporting the areas that need it the most. Programmes and interventions need to be evaluated and have robust evidence to demonstrate their effectiveness. This will allow partners to develop best practice and strengthen the opportunities to sustain programmes of violence prevention and intervention.

### Therefore, we will:

- Establish **information sharing arrangements** with partners, to ensure valuable information can be used to develop and shape our response to violence
- Seek opportunities to capture qualitative and quantitative information, to shape our **development and evaluation of interventions**, through community engagement or organisational mechanisms.
- To ensure we are using evidence to **provide a targeted response** with our projects, interventions and campaigns, so that he helps the communities that need it the most.



## Trauma-Informed

The Wales Trauma Informed Framework established by Public Health Wales, is a Societal Approach to Understanding, Preventing and Supporting the Impacts of Trauma and Adversity which is inclusive of all ages, from children and young people to older adults. This strategy will adopt these aims, by developing a whole systems approach to supporting the needs of people who have experienced adversity and trauma.

### Therefore, we will:

- Take a **universal approach**: which proactively supports and encompasses community-led approaches, prevention initiatives and specialist therapies
- Take a **person centred approach**: the person is always at the centre of a trauma-informed approach. It takes a co-productive, collaborative cross-sector approach to identifying, understanding and supporting the person's needs
- Take a **relationship-focused approach**: safe, supportive, empathic, compassionate and trusting relationships are central to a trauma-informed approach
- Take a **resilient and strength focused approach**: building on the natural resilience of individuals, families and communities
- **Be inclusive**: understand the impact of cultural, historic and gender inequalities and is inclusive of everyone in society.



## Community Engagement

By involving our communities in the development of solutions to tackle violence we can ensure the interventions are socially and culturally relevant, involve the whole community, so to contribute to challenging social norms and values.

### Therefore, we will:

- Create opportunities to **co-produce interventions** with our communities, involving them in decision making, so they are relevant to those they are intended to support
- Adopt the **Children's Rights Approach** into decision making, policy and practice
- Be proactive in involving the **broader communities** in the prevention of violence, involving existing services and/or charities
- Raise awareness with communities on the impacts and consequences of violence, to **challenge social norms and values**.



## Partnership Working

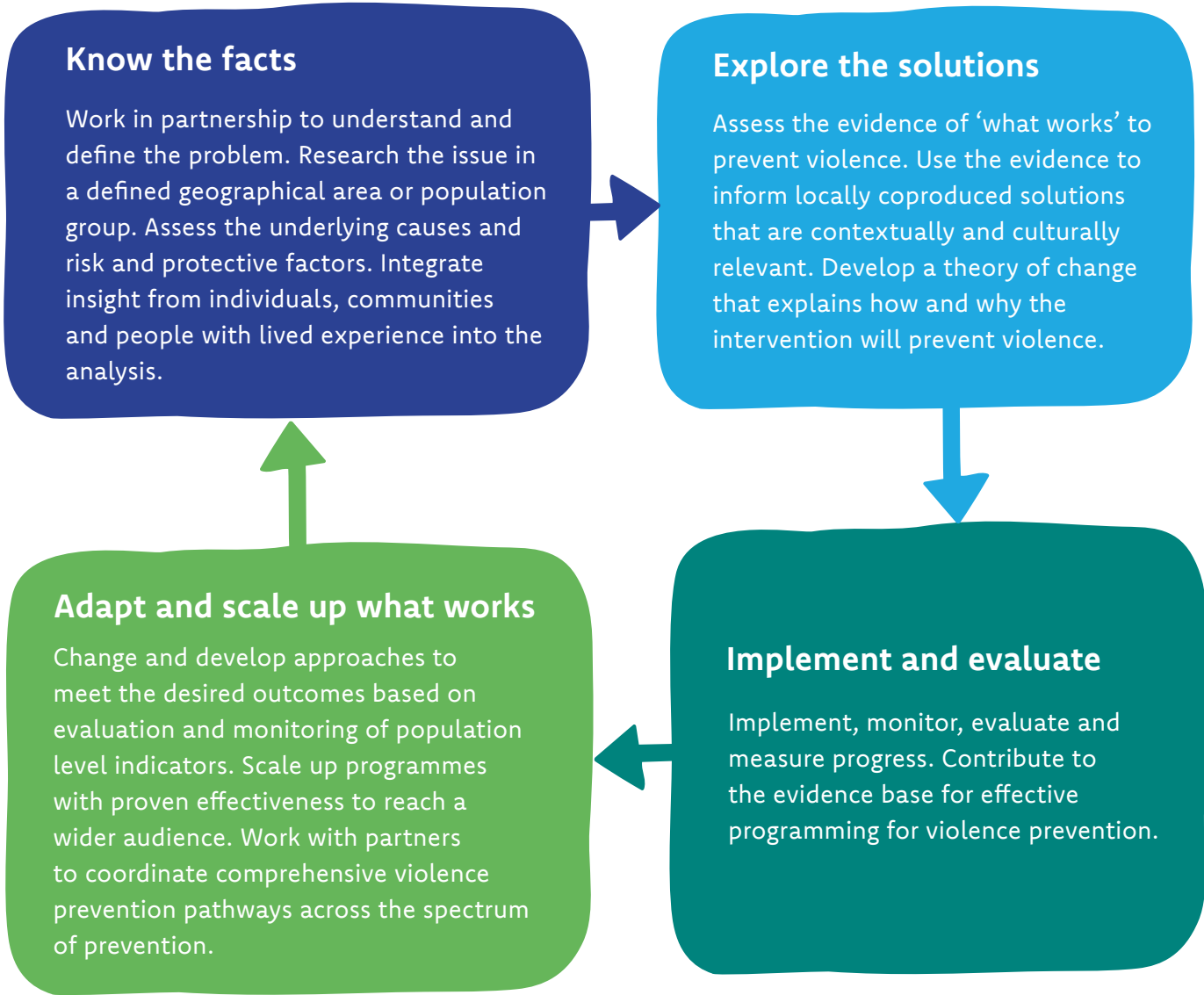
Partnership working is essential in ensuring a public health approach to preventing violence. Together, we can benefit from a broader range of expertise and knowledge, share information to better our response, expand our awareness of resources and networks, increase our options to prevention violence and work more efficiently in our response.

### Therefore, we will:

- Continue to drive **information sharing opportunities** with partners, to strengthen our understanding of violence, target the areas who need the most support and evaluate our progress
- Continue to reflect on our partnership landscape and **governance arrangements** to ensure they are fit for purpose and enable us to work efficiently and effectively
- Continue to **collaborate and evaluate projects**, interventions and campaigns, identifying best practice
- Continue to identify **funding opportunities** and establish opportunities to align with partners, to offer more sustainable support for our communities.



### 5.3 Our Model



The World Health Organization’s public health approach to violence prevention is often used as a framework of reference for developing a systematic and evidence-informed process for violence prevention. Our approach utilises this framework whilst building in our guiding principles.

‘Wales Without Violence’ – A Shared Framework for Preventing Violence among Children and Young People, 2023

## 6. Our Priorities

The following partnership priorities have been developed by holding workshops with partners at the Violence Prevention Strategy Development Day and by carefully considering our profile of violence in Cardiff. This event brought all specified authorities under the Serious Violence Duty together, along with trusted partners and experts working in this field. The partnership utilised the Wales Without Violence framework for shaping our approach, and partners were able to identify good practice and areas for development. The following priorities have therefore been established to outline our response to tackling violence in Cardiff. Our public survey confirmed that residents of Cardiff agree with our guiding principles and our six priorities which are:

1. Violence that affects children and young people.
2. Knife crime and the possession of offensive weapons.
3. Organised crime and exploitation.
4. Violence in the night-time economy.
5. The safety of women and girls in public spaces.
6. The vulnerabilities and increased risk of violence of those with street-based lifestyles.



## Priority 1 Violence that affects children and young people

The Wales Violence Prevention Unit co-produced a definition of violence among children and young people with children, young people and professionals in Wales, which is as follows:

*Violence among children and young people is an umbrella term for acts of, or the threat of, violence and abuse between those under the age of 25. It can be physical, verbal, psychological, sexual or economic. It can occur in the home, education settings, workplace, community or online.*

A significant amount of research has gone into understanding the effects of violence among children and young people and how to prevent it. The Wales Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) have produced several reports which provide an assessment of violence amongst children and young people under 25 and they have created a ‘Wales Without Violence – A shared framework for preventing violence among Children and Young People’ (Snowdon et al. 2023a). This research demonstrates that violence does not affect people equally, children living in the poorest areas of the UK are seven times more likely to be involved in violent crimes as young adults. Children and young people who experience physical violence or neglect early in their lives are at greater risk of experiencing violence later in life. It is also acknowledged that prevention approaches are most effective when implemented with children and young people.

The Wales Without Violence Framework will underpin our strategy so that we embed a public health, early intervention and prevention approach. This could involve providing support for families living in poverty, such as access to affordable housing, education and healthcare. It could also involve providing young people with

positive role models and opportunities to engage in activities that promote self-esteem and confidence, such as sports, music and art.

### Our Priority:

- To be a place where children and young people are safe and are living free from the effects of violence.

### We will:

- Develop activities for parents and carers that promote positive family relationships and create a safe supportive space for connecting with others.
- Identify the support services offered to targeted groups of children and young people who are affected by violence.
- Support a variety of cohesive community programmes that engage children and young people in positive activities with trusted adults.
- Deliver a variety of interventions and resources to support schools and other educational settings in their response to violence and possession of weapons
- Engage with children and young people about their experiences and involve them in community-based solutions to tackling violence.
- Support children and families that are affected by the impact of relatives being incarcerated, by providing support and guidance to strengthen their family relationships.



## Partnership in practice

### School of Hard Knocks



A rugby development programme that is healthy, fun, challenging and enriching. Their team of coaches and behavioural specialists, mentor and develop young people through a combination of rugby, personal development workshops and 1:1 sessions every week of the school year.

In 2023 Cardiff Council secured continued funding in Mary Immaculate High School; where children will develop five life skills: Confidence, Communication, Commitment, Cohesion and Control. It has also been seen to improve school attendance, physical health and mental wellbeing.

**“School of Hard Knocks has been a once in a lifetime opportunity for me.”**

**Year 10 Pupil**



**“It’s a good way for me to feel confident about myself by playing rugby.”**

**Year 9 Pupil**

## Priority 2 Knife crime and the possession of offensive weapons

Whilst the number of offences involving a knife and sharp objects have been decreasing since 2020, the number of police referrals for possession of weapon offences have slightly increased in the last 12 months. This increase could be in part due to more awareness of the harms of possessing weapons and more availability of support services. Either way, there is a clear connection between possession of a weapon and the likelihood of violence occurring, therefore it is important that we keep developing effective community messaging about the consequences of carrying a weapon, without or without a violent incident taking place.

The ‘Not The One Campaign’, led by South Wales Police and the Violence Prevention Unit is a campaign to educate 11–16 year olds on the consequences of carrying a knife, by providing teachers, parents, friends and family with an educational pack of information. The aim being to reduce the number of knife crime offences and perpetrators.

This strategy will look to build upon the existing work with supporting organisations such as the St Giles Trust, Media Academy Cymru and Action For Children, to educate and support those at risk and to help them make better life choices.

### Our Priority:

- To work together in tackling knife-crime and the possession of offensive weapons within the community, by raising awareness of the significant impact and harms associated with this form of violence, on all involved.

### We will:

- Support campaigns and interventions that actively deter people from carrying or possessing offence weapons and raise awareness of the consequences and impact on the community.
- Work with children and young people at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System, encouraging their engagement with diversionary and supportive programmes.
- Increase public confidence in reporting violent offences and encourage victims and witnesses to access trauma-informed services to support their recovery.
- We will focus on specific communities that need more protection and support, by conducting additional police patrols and supportive outreach, to reduce violence in our communities.



## Partnership in practice

### Media Academy Cymru: Braver Choices

Braver Choices is a bespoke package of one-to-one interventions for young people identified as at risk of or already engaging with weapons. The 12 week programme is designed to help young people challenge the narrative on knife crime and weapon carrying, empowering them to create a positive self-identity and make positive life choices.

**“I realise now, it’s just not worth it. I thought I was protecting myself but really I was just making myself and my friends more likely to get hurt.”**

**Male, 15 years old**

Braver Choices





### Priority 3 Organised crime and exploitation

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

South Wales Police have successfully disrupted a number of ‘county lines’ through several police operations, and we have worked in partnership to identify any victims, siblings and families so they can be offered trauma informed support.

This strategy will focus on the violence linked to disorder between rival gangs or organised crime groups, and the criminal and sexual exploitation of vulnerable people. It will also work proactively with partners to identify those areas and individuals most at risk of being exploited, via our SAFE (Safeguarding Adolescents From Exploitation) partnership forum.

#### Our Priority:

- To embed a multi-agency and strategic approach to the prevention and disruption of exploitation linked to organised crime, which will reduce the number of people being exposed to the associated violence and hidden harms.

#### We will:

- Develop a variety of resources that will raise awareness of the signs of exploitation and how to report concerns in the community. With the aim to ensure that safeguarding children, young people, and adults from exploitation is ‘Everybody’s Business’.
- Identify specialised organisations who can work with targeted groups of vulnerable people to prevent them from being exploited or drawn into organised crime.
- Identify accessible support for victims and families impacted by exploitation to recover and rebuild their lives to prevent further exploitation.
- Work in partnership to gather and share relevant intelligence to disrupt the activities of organised criminal groups/gangs and protect those who are being exploited.



### Partnership in practice

#### Cardiff Youth Service: Virtual Decisions Gangs

This is an 8 minute immersive film and virtual reality (VR) experience that looks at tackling gang culture, youth violence and risk taking behaviours. Through the 8 minute film, young people will get to choose their own path. This is followed up with interactive and creative workshops where there is an opportunity to understand where young people’s experience and their levels of understanding around this issue.

- 90% of the young people said they sessions made them think about the consequences of their actions.
- 85% said they can now recognise early signs of grooming.
- 81% said they learnt something new.
- 89% enjoyed the sessions

Some quotes from young people were:

“Absolutely wicked I would definitely do it again.”

“It was fun and it helped me learn that I do not want to be in a gang.”



“I have learned about knife crime and violent issues.”

## Priority 4 Violence in the night-time economy

The City Centre Nighttime Economy is a significant demand for all partners in terms of community safety related issues, due to high footfall of public, attractive night-life, major sporting and music events and developing transient populations.

Over the years there have been a wealth of supportive interventions which respond to the demand emerging from community safety related issues. For example, to support those heavily intoxicated and potentially vulnerable there is the Public Health’s Alcohol Treatment Centre, and safeguarding volunteer groups such as Street Pastors and the Student Bus Scheme.

### Alcohol Treatment Centre

A Cardiff and Vale Health Board facility, which can help support those who would otherwise have to go to A&E for help. The Police along with the Street Pastors and Student Safety Bus can bring individuals to the facility for help.

### Street Pastors

In partnership with South Wales Police, Cardiff County Council, University of Wales, South Wales Health Board and local businesses. Street pastors are trained volunteers from local churches that care about our community. They patrol from 10pm to 4am each Friday and Saturday night to care for, listen to and help people who are out on the streets.

There have been a number of campaigns to highlight safety messaging and safeguarding narratives, such as the Drink Aware Campaign, OktoAsk campaign, #DrinkLessEnjoyMore, the creation of a Women’s Safety Charter in partnership with ForCardiff. This strategy will look to build upon these campaigns promoting the safe ways to enjoy a night out.

### Our Priority:

- To work in partnership to prevent violence occurring in the nighttime economy by identifying potential risks and vulnerabilities, ensuring that everyone is safe in the city after dark.

### We will:

- Deliver and raise awareness of various support services and safe spaces that are available to users of the night-time economy when they are vulnerable or feel unsafe. For example, the Alcohol Treatment Centre, the Night Marshals, the Safe Places App, the Street Pastors and the Student Safety Bus.
- Develop a harm reduction approach to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol and other substances. Building this approach with key partners such as licenced premises, police, health, colleges and universities.
- Support all organisations that operate in the night time economy with their workforce’s knowledge of issues such as, but not limited to, sexual violence, drink spiking and exploitation, by providing them with opportunities to access Vulnerability Awareness Training.



## Partnership in practice

### South Wales Police : Safety Bus

The Cardiff Safety Bus is a partnership intervention, safeguarding vulnerable people on the streets of Cardiff during the evening and night-time.

The buses, which are staffed by police officers and student volunteers, carry essentials such as First Aid kits, phone chargers, and water. In the past few years, the initiative has helped hundreds of people whose personal safety was at risk of to be taken to their homes or another place of safety, such as the Alcohol Treatment Centre.

Whilst the Safety Bus has a focus on student safety and operates more heavily in peak times of the student calendar, such as the Freshers period and Christmas, the service is available to all members of the public.

The bus does not operate every night but on nights of peak activity in the city centre. In 2023, on average, the bus and staff help about 20 people each night the service operated.



Student liaison officer PC Michael Neate, from South Wales Police, said:

**“The buses help an average of 20 people each night. Some are highly intoxicated, and their personal safety is at obvious risk. This initiative enables us to identify those in vulnerable circumstances and most at need and get them safely back to their homes or the Alcohol Treatment Centre.”**



## Priority 5 The safety of women and girls in public spaces

The VAWDASV 2015 (Wales) Act is a core piece of legislation that sets the stage for VAWDASV in Wales. It promotes the principle that preventing and addressing violence and abuse is ‘everyone’s responsibility’, fostering a collective approach across communities, professionals and services. While the Act relates to ‘relevant authorities’, by embedding these principles in community safety practices we can strengthen multi-agency collaboration to facilitate earlier intervention, support and protect victims, and hold to account those who cause harm. Furthermore, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, recognises children as victims of VAWDASV in their own right.

**CEDAW** – the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Known as the **Bill of Rights for Women**, CEDAW is a global agreement that champions **women’s rights and equality**, guiding cities like Cardiff to build **fairer and safer communities**.

The Cardiff and Vale VAWDASV Strategy 2023 to 2028 identifies how these duties are being addressed in the region and how it will support the national strategy to prevent, protect and support those affected by VAWDASV. The Crime Survey for England and Wales provides statistics on the number of domestic abuse-related incidents recorded by police force area. South Wales Police recorded 15,709 incidents in April 2021 to March 2022, this is an increase of 345 incidents when compared to the previous year. However, it is widely known that domestic abuse is widely under-reported.

While the existing Cardiff and Vale ‘Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence’ (VAWDASV) Strategy has laid a robust foundation by focusing on domestic settings, our focus shifts to the public domain. Through collaboration, community engagement, and targeted interventions, we aspire to create safer spaces for women and girls in Cardiff.

### Our Priority:

- To ensure women’s safety in public spaces in Cardiff by working with partners to identify key locations where interventions, projects and campaigns that help to raise awareness need to be implemented.

### We will:

- Embed training and multi-agency collaboration, to strengthen early intervention, improve victim support, and ensure a consistent and informed response to VAWDASV within communities.
- Seek the voice of women and girls to understand where they feel most unsafe and use their voice to inform our partnership services.
- Raise awareness and provide consistency in the use of the women’s safety campaigns such as, Ask Angela, Ask ANI and the Safe to Say Campaign.
- Work with specialist partners to identify those at most risk of criminal and sexual exploitation and develop our trauma-informed approaches to support those in need.
- Support those exploited for sex, by identifying their needs and providing the necessary support to help them live healthier and safer lives.



## Partnership in practice

### Safer Wales: SWIS Project



Safer Wales Inclusive Service (SWIS) is a project for young females aged between 12 and 16 years old. SWIS provides one-to-one and group work focused on encouraging positive lifestyle choices.

The activities are structured within the term timetable and include healthy eating, minimising stress, healthy relationships, child sexual exploitation and sexual health. These sessions are facilitated by Safer Wales staff and volunteer mentors.



“I know it can be hard to get to see me or to get in contact with me but I really do appreciate what you do for me”.



Priority 6

The vulnerabilities and increased risk of violence of those with street-based lifestyles

Street Based Lifestyles refers to vulnerable people that spend all or a significant amount of time in a street setting. Their behaviour may involve begging, ‘rough sleeping’, open drug taking or dealing, open alcohol consumption, sexual activity linked to exploitation. Individuals from these cohorts commonly present complex needs, have experienced traumatic backgrounds and require support from a range of services.

Unfortunately, this lifestyle can be unsafe and increases the risk of violence and exploitation, largely due to the vulnerability stemming from drug and alcohol dependency. It is important to recognise that not all individuals who lead street-based lifestyles are violent or engage in criminal activity and be mindful that our partnership approach does not contribute to the stigma and criminalisation of this group in our community.

Cardiff’s supported accommodation provides a crucial response to those who need extra support in maintaining a stable living situation and lifestyle. This service has been instrumental in significantly reducing rough sleeping, a major contributing factor to a person’s vulnerability to violence and exploitation, and improving health outcomes for those using substances across Cardiff. They also provide additional support with mental health and substance use if required. Through the evidence-based profile it has been reported that violence occurs within locations of supported accommodation, which is largely acknowledged due to the associated risks identified.

This strategy will focus on the associated risks and harms that are experienced by this group of vulnerable people whilst recognising the impacts this has on the wider community.

This could include improving the security at certain supported accommodation to protect those accommodated. It would target supportive outreach services to improve engagement with health services. It would also tackle drug litter in order to improve community perceptions and feeling of safety.

Our Priority:

- To understand the complex needs and vulnerabilities attributed to people who are living in temporary or supported accommodation, who are more at risk of violence.

We will:

- Focus on safeguarding those who live in supported accommodation, identifying those most at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation and offering support.
- Explore training opportunities for partners working in supported accommodation on issues relating to contextual safeguarding, exploitation, and trauma-informed practices.
- Establish engagement programmes which are supportive of complex needs and promote community cohesion.



Partnership in practice

Cardiff and Vale Drug and Alcohol Service (CAVDAS)



Launched on the 1st August 2022, CAVDAS is now the main service within the Cardiff and Vale area, supporting people affected by substance use. CAVDAS is an alliance between Barod, Recovery Cymru, and Kaleidoscope, with strategic partners G4S and Pobl.

Kaleidoscope: Dyfodol



Dyfodol offers support in custodial settings and communities, to anyone being supported by criminal justice services such as probation.

The project covers a large area, including Western Bay, Cardiff and the Vale, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr. Kaleidoscope delivers this project in partnership with G4S, WCADA and HMPPS.

“I suppressed it [my OCD], I never spoke to anyone about it, and drugs really masked those anxieties for me. It’s easy to fall down a slippery slope, but now I’ve put my life together”

Cullan, Cardiff



# 7. Acknowledgements

This Violence Prevention Strategy has been developed by the Cardiff Community Safety Partnership, with the support of our wider partnership.

The foundation of this Strategy is the Wales Without Violence ‘A Shared Framework for Preventing Violence among Children and Young People’. Our special thanks for this research goes to Lara Snowdon, Bryony Parry, Dr Alex Walker and Emma Barton from the Wales Violence Prevention Unit (Wales VPU). The Wales VPU is a multi-agency team taking a public health approach to preventing violence in Wales. It was also co-produced with the Peer Action Collective Cymru Team who is an innovative social action research project led by children and young people aged 16 to 25.

Additional evidence to support this strategy was developed by the Public Health Wales Cardiff and Vale Strategic Needs Assessment. Our thanks go to Penny Cresswell-Jones and Lorna Bennett, in coordinating and developing this piece of research. The assessment explores a public health approach to the root causes of violence within Cardiff and provides valuable recommendations to focus our partnership efforts.

A profile of violence in Cardiff has been conducted in response to the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty, written by Cardiff Council’s Community Safety Team (Eluned Evans, Clare Yeoman, Max Bonar-Law, and Jenny Rogers). This evidence profile sets out clear themes for the Community Safety Partnership in order to achieve a Cardiff Without Violence.

Our thanks go to South Wales Police and the Violence Prevention Unit who have provided various contributing data and analytical reports (Hannah Bryant, Dave Munting, Vicky Lee) and further analysis from a priority problem solving methodology known as Operation Sentinel (Jason Herbert). This uses police and public health data, along with the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CCHI), which is a system that measures the seriousness of crime and harm to victims.

Our thanks also go to the members of the Cardiff Violence Prevention Group, chaired by James Dunn (A&E Consultant) and Dan Jones (Deputy Director of Violence Prevention Unit and Head of Community Safety for South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner). All have contributed to the development of this strategy, through research, meetings, workshops, and analysing and interpreting data.



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# 9. Appendix

## A1: List of Supporting Strategies

The following Strategies and frameworks have been identified:

- Cardiff Corporate Strategy: Stronger, Fairer, Greener
- Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board's Annual Plan
- Cardiff & Vale's Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-26
- National CONTEST Strategy
- Cardiff Commitment
- Cardiff SAFE (Safeguarding Adolescents from Exploitation) Framework
- Cardiff 2030 Education
- Cardiff Children's Services Strategy 2022
- Early Help Strategy
- Cardiff Child Friendly Cities Strategy
- Cardiff Homelessness Strategy 22-24
- Cardiff Corporate Parenting Strategy
- University Health Board – Healthier Wales – Shaping Our Future Community
- University Health Board –Shaping Our Future Wellbeing
- ACE Hub Wales and Traumatic Stress Wales – Trauma Informed Wales: A Societal Approach to Understanding, Preventing and Supporting the Impacts of Trauma and Adversity
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner's Crime Reduction Plan 2022-26
- Welsh Government: All Wales Youth Justice Blueprint
- Youth Justice Board – Business Plan 2022-23
- Violence Prevention Unit –Wales Without Violence Framework
- Youth work strategy for Wales
- South Wales Substance Misuse and Harm Reduction Strategy



## Resources

[The Cardiff Model for Violence Prevention – Cardiff University](#)

[Knife crime campaign 'Not The One' launched to educate young people of dangers of carrying a knife | South Wales Police \(south-wales.police.uk\)](#)

['Wales Without Violence' – A Shared Framework for Preventing Violence among Children and Young People, 2023](#)







Cardiff Community Safety Partnership Board,  
c/o Community Safety Team  
Room 512, County Hall  
Cardiff CF10 4UW  
[CardiffPSB@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:CardiffPSB@cardiff.gov.uk)