



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

# Violence Prevention Framework for Scotland



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# Ministerial Foreword

Violence of any kind will not be tolerated within our society. All violence is highly gendered, with men perpetrating the majority of violent crime, and is caused by social factors, including gender inequality and harmful norms about masculinity; and is thus preventable and not inevitable. Violence can affect anyone, anywhere – but it does not affect people and communities equally. People living in communities with high levels of poverty are more likely to both perpetrate and be victims of violent crime, while women and marginalised groups are more likely to be victims of some forms of violence.<sup>1</sup>

The fear of violence is also experienced differently and unequally and can have a highly negative impact on people's lives.<sup>2</sup>

This Government is committed to ensuring everyone lives free from violence, in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.<sup>3</sup>

Our Vision for Justice in Scotland<sup>4</sup> sets out our roadmap for the future justice system for Scotland, with a focus on creating safer communities and addressing the attitudes and behaviours which lie behind crime and harm.

We support justice partners to keep the public safe and deal with offenders where necessary, through a variety of disposals including community justice and prison, prioritising effective rehabilitation and recovery to prevent reoffending and re-victimisation.

Over the last decade or so, Scotland has made significant progress in reducing violence.<sup>5</sup> Scotland's homicide rate is down; the number of admissions to hospitals due to assault is down; knife crime has decreased; as have levels of violent crime.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, there have been increases in some forms of violence and we know that violence can be very much a part of life for some people and groups within our communities.<sup>7</sup> Sexual crimes recorded by the police have been on an upward

1 [The Vision for Justice in Scotland 2022 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#); [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](#)

2 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](#)

3 [National Performance Framework – Communities – nationalperformance.gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

4 [The Vision for Justice in Scotland 2022 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

5 [Non-Sexual Violence in Scotland: report – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

6 [Violence Prevention Framework: Evidence Supplement – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

7 [Violence Prevention Framework: Evidence Supplement – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

trend since 1974. Men's violence against women and girls is abhorrent and unacceptable which is why we will continue to take robust action to tackle sexual offending and domestic abuse through Scotland's Equally Safe Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls - focussing on prevention, improving support, and modernising the law. It is also essential that perpetrators of sexual violence are held to account and the onus for change and action is focused on the perpetrator and not the victim. We also know that some forms of violence are increasingly becoming concentrated on a small group of people who are repeat victims of violence.<sup>8</sup>

Our vision is to prevent violence from happening in the first instance – and, when it does occur, in reducing further harm. Across all our public services, we must do more to address the deep-rooted inequalities which can give rise to violence in our communities. We must target interventions towards those most at risk of experiencing violence.

There is no easy solution to these complex challenges, and it is important that this Government leads collaboration and partnership working between many organisations to collectively achieve this vision.

We are committed to addressing all forms of violence. This Framework recognises there are many different forms of violence and these are often related and require different approaches. Therefore, this overarching Framework will strengthen our response to tackling gender-based violence in line with Equally Safe<sup>9</sup>, Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating men's violence against women and girls. The Framework will also support the more targeted work to tackle hate crime, youth offending, poverty and inequalities such as those related to gender and race.

Alongside these wider activities being taken forward across government, implementation of this Framework identifies four main aims to be achieved through a variety of activities within an Action Plan to address some specific areas of violence.

Implementation of this Framework will be undertaken through the public health approach<sup>10</sup>, which has been championed so successfully by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit<sup>11</sup> and Medics Against Violence.<sup>12</sup> One of the strengths of the approach, is that it recognises that violence comes in many forms, from self-directed harm and suicide through to interpersonal violence and collective violence; and that its effects can be physical, emotional, psychological and economic.

Everyone has a part to play to prevent violence in Scotland, and, by working alongside our partners, we will ensure there will continue to be a focus on prevention and in intervening early to help more people and communities to live safer lives free from violence.



**Siobhian Brown**  
Minister for Victims  
and Community Safety

<sup>8</sup> [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2019/20: Main Findings – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-and-justice-survey-2019-20-main-findings/pages/100_to_109.aspx)

<sup>9</sup> [Equally Safe, Scotland's strategy to eradicate violence against women and girls – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotland-s-strategy-to-eradicate-violence-against-women-and-girls/pages/100_to_109.aspx)

<sup>10</sup> [Public Health Scotland's Health and Justice Programme Strategy \(publichealthscotland.scot\)](https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/publications/public-health-scotland-s-health-and-justice-programme-strategy/pages/100_to_109.aspx)

<sup>11</sup> [Public Health Approach to Violence | Scottish Violence Reduction Unit \(svru.co.uk\)](https://www.svru.co.uk/)

<sup>12</sup> [Medics Against Violence – prevention is better than cure \(mav.scot\)](https://www.mav.scot/)

# The Purpose of the Framework

The development of the Framework has been informed by engagement with various partner organisations and existing research and evidence on violence. It also draws on official national statistics on police recorded violent crime, hospital admissions data and the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey findings, which are the main measures by which we gauge levels of violence in Scotland.

As a government we already work – within our devolved competence – across a range of related and complementary areas. For example, we are committed to incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children<sup>13</sup>, through implementation of Getting It Right For Every Child.<sup>14</sup> We also work to support people who self-harm and to prevent suicide; to address misogyny and the inequalities facing women and children; to tackle sectarianism; and to protect our communities and country from terrorism.

This Framework sets out some of the work we are taking forward across government with our partners which will contribute towards preventing

and reducing the harm caused by violence. It also outlines areas for future development and will support a coordinated approach to the proposed activities within the Action Plan, which we will develop and deliver in collaboration with key partners over the coming year and beyond. We will report on the progress of implementation of the Framework's Action Plan on an annual basis.

This Framework is supported by an evidence supplement<sup>15</sup> and has been informed by a wide range of existing research and evidence related to violence and its prevention – particularly police recorded crime statistics on non-sexual violence, a summary of which is highlighted on the following page. The supplement brings together social research evidence from a range of Scottish Government and other sources, in addition to findings from Official Statistic sources, including the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. The Framework has also been informed by many practitioners, including academics, and through the voices of people with lived experience of violence.

Implementation of the Framework's Action Plan will require a collaborative approach and will be taken forward by our violence reduction partners including the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, Medics Against Violence, Education Scotland, YouthLink Scotland and Police Scotland; and by working in collaboration with local authorities and CoSLA, justice, health, education, and community-led third sector organisations, as well as with local communities.

<sup>13</sup> [UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, The Children and Young People's Commissioner website \(cypcs.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Getting It Right for Every Child – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

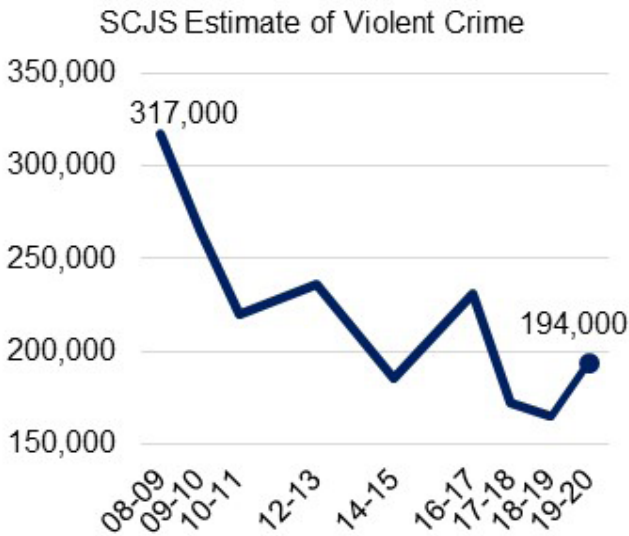
<sup>15</sup> [Violence Prevention Framework: Evidence Supplement – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)



**A Summary of the Evidence of Non-Sexual Violence in Scotland**

## How has non-sexual violence changed in Scotland?

► The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) estimates there has been a **39% reduction in the volume of violent crimes** from 2008-09 to 2019-20.



► 1 in every 100 adults were victims of repeated incidents of violence.

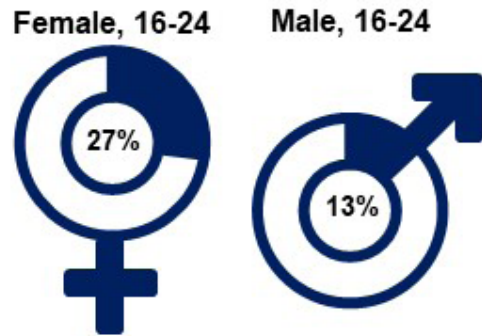


However, the experiences of these people accounted for almost two-thirds (or 65%) of violent crime in 2019-20.

► People worried about being **physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public place** has fallen over time.

Overall: **31%** In 2008-09 **16%** In 2019-20

However, differences between groups still remain. In 2019-20, young women aged 16-24 were twice as likely to feel worried about being physically attacked than young men.

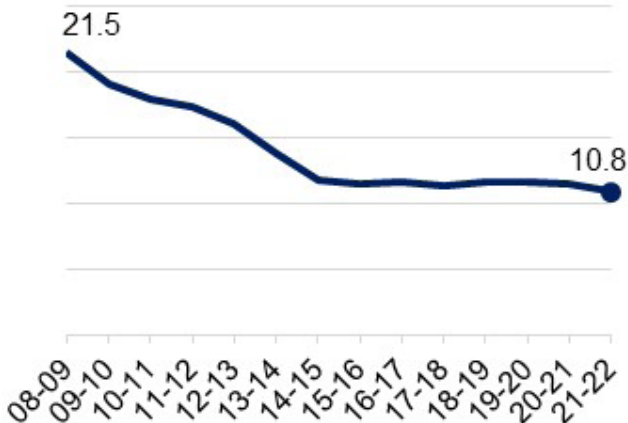


► People living in Scotland's most deprived areas are more likely to experience violence.

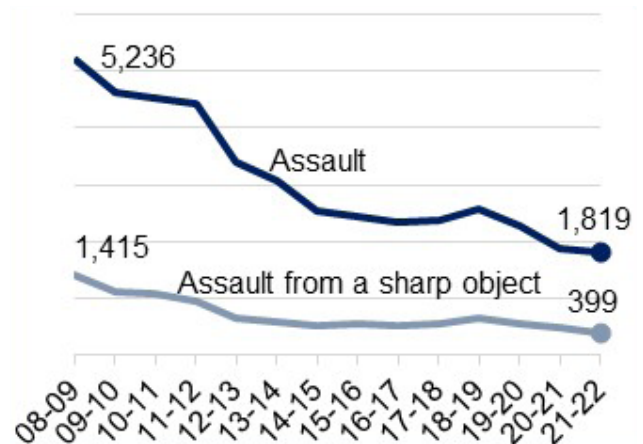


In 2019-20, 5% of people in the 15% most deprived areas were the victim of a violent crime, compared to 2% for the rest of Scotland.

► The homicide rate in Scotland has halved since 2008-09. The three year moving average reduced from 21.5 victims per million population in 2008-09 to 10.8 in 2021-22.



► Hospital admissions due to assault from a sharp object have fallen by 72% from 2008-09 to 2021-22.



Sources: [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#), [Homicide in Scotland 2021-22](#), [Unintentional injuries - Hospital admissions Year ending 31 March 2022](#)

# Our Approach and Aims

**Across Scotland, we must prevent violence and, when it does occur, reduce its harms. We recognise that violence is like a disease, both visible and hidden, with potential for the harm to escalate affecting our families and communities for generations if left untreated.**

For well over a decade, the Scottish Government and its partners have focused on the prevention of violence through the public health approach.<sup>16</sup> This means that we are drawing on the approach health professionals use to tackle disease. Public health is all about prevention – and, just as it is better to vaccinate against a disease than it is to treat the disease, it is better to prevent violence happening in the first place than to react once it has occurred.

Whilst across a range of measures, non-sexual violence has fallen in Scotland since 2008, it is important to acknowledge that people experience other forms of violence not included in this definition. In particular, sexual crimes recorded by the police have increased by 96% over the past ten years.<sup>17</sup>

The ground-breaking preventative work of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit<sup>18</sup> and third sector partners such as Medics Against Violence<sup>19</sup> and Youth Link Scotland<sup>20</sup> has been central to Scotland's approach to violence prevention, which has been praised by the World Economic Forum<sup>21</sup> and is now championed by other areas across the UK.<sup>22</sup>

Over the years, we have supported various activities to prevent violence and reduce its harm across Scotland, including our work in schools and communities with young people so they can become part of the solution to preventing violence, such as:

- **The establishment of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit and its gang intervention Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV).**
- **The national Youth Link Scotland No Knives Better Lives programme, which has led in providing anti-violence messaging and activity.**
- **The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) schools programme for young people, which has challenged attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence.**

<sup>16</sup> [Scottish Public Health Network – Violence Prevention Framework \(scotphn.net\) About Us | Scottish Violence Reduction Unit \(svru.co.uk\)](https://scotphn.net/About-Us/)

<sup>17</sup> [Violence Prevention Framework: Evidence Supplement – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/violence-prevention-framework-evidence-supplement/)

<sup>18</sup> [Scottish Violence Reduction Unit \(svru.co.uk\)](https://svru.co.uk/)

<sup>19</sup> [Medics Against Violence – We believe prevention is better than cure \(mav.scot\)](https://mav.scot/)

<sup>20</sup> [Home - NKBL \(noknivesbetterlives.com\)](https://noknivesbetterlives.com/)

<sup>21</sup> [How Scotland's public health approach to tackling violence is reaping rewards – Place2Be \(place2be.org.uk\)](https://place2be.org.uk/)

<sup>22</sup> [Funding for Violence Reduction Units announced, Home Office News Release - GOV.UK \(gov.uk\)](https://gov.uk/news-releases/funding-for-violence-reduction-units-announced)

- The establishment of Medics Against Violence, a group of healthcare professionals who have delivered violence reduction messages to young people in schools and train other professionals to spot the signs of domestic abuse and signpost those affected towards specialist help.
- Navigator-style approaches, which were initially delivered in hospital Emergency Departments to engage with people living with multiple complex needs, often involving violence and its associated harms such as addiction, mental ill-health and trauma – empowering and supporting people to access the help they need. The learning from this is being used in different settings, including delivery of a hospital Youth Navigator pilot<sup>23</sup>, and within a community and police custody setting to help vulnerable people turn their lives around.

It is essential that we continue to support these, and related activities. We must work across our society to tackle the deep-rooted inequalities which can lead to violent behaviour. We must continue to take a person-centred approach, which involves providing the information people need to be fully involved in decision making, ensuring services are organised around individual's needs as far as possible. We must support people if they experience violence and prevent others from becoming offenders of violence.



23 [Medics Against Violence - Youth Navigator \(mav.scot\)](http://mav.scot)

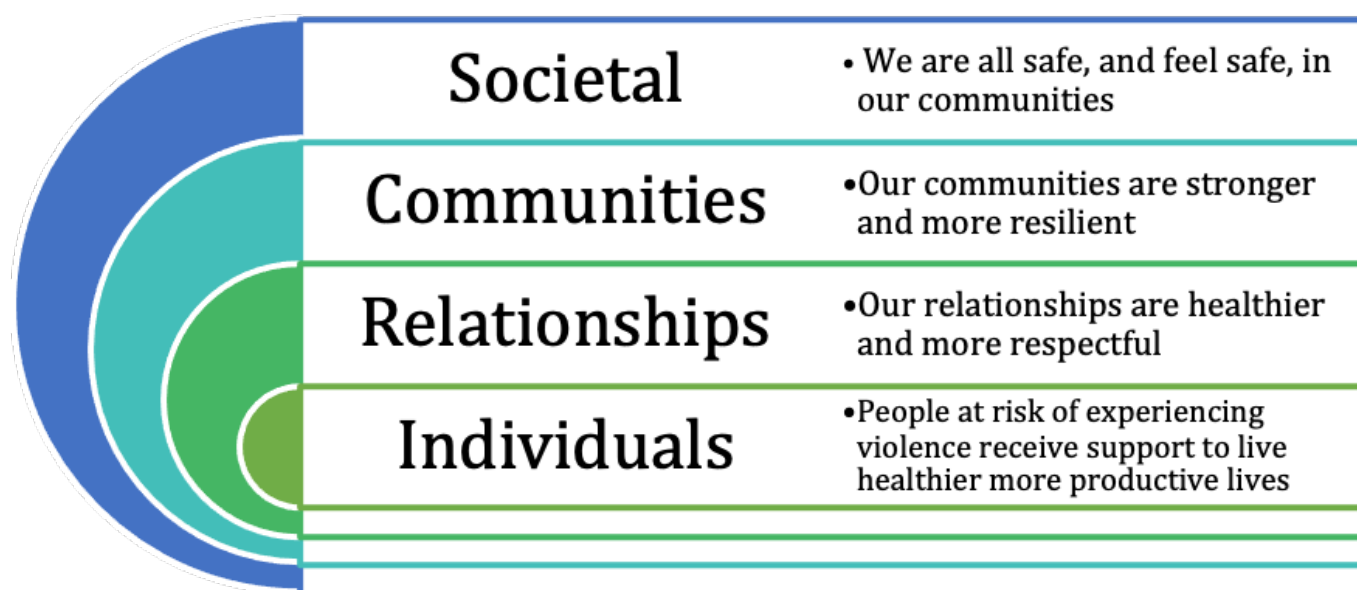


The following diagram highlights this Framework’s overarching Vision and Aims:

## Vision

To prevent violence from happening in the first instance – and, when it does occur, to reduce its harm

## Our Aims



The following public health prevention levels provide us with a framework for action to help us achieve our aims:

- ‘Primary prevention’ – preventing violence before it occurs by addressing the underlying causes.
- ‘Secondary prevention’ – preventing further escalation of violence by identifying opportunities to intervene and enable change.
- ‘Tertiary prevention’ – focused on reducing the harm from violence by concentrating on care, rehabilitation and safety.

This approach has been informed by the World Health Organisation’s social ecological model<sup>24</sup>, which encourages focus on reducing risk and increasing protective factors at the individual, relationship, community and societal levels, each of which influences and is influenced by the others.

24 [Violence Prevention Alliance Approach, World Health Organization \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int)

# Aim: Societal

We are all safe, and feel safe, in our communities

We know that not everyone feels safe across our communities, and recognise different crimes are experienced differently by different groups. Violence and the fear of violence are closely linked and experienced more acutely in some communities than in others.<sup>25</sup> Perceptions of not feeling safe, including the fear of violence, are not felt equally by everyone,<sup>26</sup> and can have a debilitating impact on people's lives.<sup>27</sup> For example, some people often report being unable to access facilities or activities due to the threat or fear of violence, sometimes leading to social isolation.<sup>28</sup> People have also voiced their fears about violent crime happening to them, with around one-in-six adults in 2019/20 reporting<sup>29</sup> worries of being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public place.

Through this Framework, we want to prevent violence and reduce harm but also reduce the associated fear of violence within our communities. Our planned actions – such as our commitment to work with our partners, including the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, to identify opportunities and develop approaches to ensure that

our evening economy remains safe and free from violence for all that live, work and visit our town and city centres – are outlined in the Action Plan at the end of this Framework. These activities will support the delivery of this Aim and build on the approach we are already taking to ensure that we are all safe, and feel safe, within our communities.

## **We are tackling societal inequalities for women and preventing men's Violence Against Women and Girls.**

This overarching Framework will complement and support the more focused work we are doing with our partners to implement Equally Safe, Scotland's strategy<sup>30</sup> for preventing and eradicating men's violence against women and girls. This includes making improvements for women and girls in schools, universities and colleges, the workplace and the criminal justice system. Our Delivering Equally Safe Fund supports the delivery of Equally Safe by providing £19m per year to support 121 projects from 112 organisations that focus on early intervention and prevention as well as support services.

25 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](#)

26 [The Vision for Justice in Scotland 2022 – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\); Taking-Stock-of-Violence-in-Scotland 2019 Final Report \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](#)

27 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](#)

28 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](#)

29 [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2019/20: Main Findings – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

30 [Equally Safe, Scotland's strategy to eradicate violence against women and girls – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Moreover, we have legislated to protect women from violence, including through the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018. Further measures that have already been progressed include:

- **Establishing a Victim-Centred Approach Fund, awarding £48m to provide practical and emotional support to victims, including £18.5m for specialist advocacy support for survivors of gender-based violence.**
- **£42.2m for justice recovery in 2023/24. That builds on the Justice Recovery Fund of £53.2m, allocated in 2022/23 and the £50m in 2021/22 for recovery, renewal, and transformation activity across the justice system as we emerge from the pandemic.**
- **Funding the Caledonian System, a programme which seeks to change the behaviour of domestically abusive men.**
- **Increasing use of Police Scotland's Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse, helping to safeguard more people who have been harmed or are at risk.**

We know from lived experience research<sup>31</sup> that people who sell or exchange sex are at higher risk of violence. We are committed to develop a model for Scotland which effectively tackles and challenges men's demand for prostitution and are taking this forward through the development of a Framework for Scotland.

### **We are tackling hate crime and addressing discrimination and prejudice in our society.**

The Framework supports activity to address hate crime. We know that hate crime and prejudice threaten community connectedness and have a deeply corrosive impact on Scotland's communities, as well as broader society. Our new Hate Crime Strategy<sup>32</sup> sets out our priorities for tackling hatred and prejudice in Scotland and supports implementation of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021. Our vision is for a safe, resilient and inclusive Scotland where everyone lives free from hatred and prejudice, and our new strategy sets out how we will collectively work towards that goal.

### **We are working to keep people safe from harm.**

As this Framework highlights, the causes of violence are deep-rooted and often involve a complex interplay of factors that are beyond the reach of any single organisation. In conjunction with the role of Police Scotland and the criminal justice system in protecting the public from harm, we will continue to work collaboratively to ensure more people are and feel safe within their communities.

The complex nature of violence makes it challenging to establish a robust evidence-base of effective interventions.<sup>33</sup> We will continue to work with our partners to share the learning, and build the evidence base, on what works to prevent and reduce the harm caused by violence.

31 [Lived Experience Engagement: The experiences of people who sell or exchange sex and their interaction with support services - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2022/06/20220620_Lived-Experience-Engagement-The-experiences-of-people-who-sell-or-exchange-sex-and-their-interaction-with-support-services.pdf)

32 [Hate Crime Strategy for Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2022/06/20220620_Hate-Crime-Strategy-for-Scotland.pdf)

33 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](https://www.sccjr.ac.uk/research-reports/taking-stock-of-violence-in-scotland-2019-final-report)

The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022, provides the commitment that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) will contribute to the wider safety of Scotland's communities. Through the current Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) programme and wider community engagement work, officers will continue to identify and support vulnerable and high risk people in their homes and communities.

### **We are working to reduce Child Poverty.**

As set out in our 'Vision for Justice in Scotland'<sup>34</sup>, published in February 2022, crime and victimisation are intrinsically linked to poverty and deprivation, and those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland are more likely to experience crime.

Tackling child poverty is a national mission for this Government and we remain committed to doing our utmost, within the scope of our powers and limited financial resources, to break the cycle of child poverty in Scotland. Over the course of our first Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan *Every Child, Every Chance*<sup>35</sup> [2018-22], we invested an estimated £8.5 billion supporting low-income households, of which £3.3 billion benefitted children.

In March 2022, we published *Best Start, Bright Futures*<sup>36</sup>, our second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, for the period 2022-26. *Best Start, Bright Futures* is a Plan for all of Scotland and sets out how we will work in partnership with the public, private and third sectors, together with people and communities,

to deliver progress against the targets set in statute through the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.<sup>37</sup> This includes action designed to influence the three key drivers of child poverty reduction: increasing income for work and earning; reducing household costs; and maximising income from social security and benefits in kind.

Through direct efforts to get more cash in the pockets of families now, alongside a person-centred package of family support, we can help to ensure families receive the right support at the right time, for as long as they need it, creating the conditions for families to navigate their way out of poverty.

### **We are reducing reoffending, promoting reintegration to keep the public safe.**

We firmly believe that while prison will continue to be the best option for some, in many circumstances keeping individuals out of custody is the most effective way to prevent further offending, reduce victimisation and keep our communities safe. Evidence<sup>38</sup> shows that community-based interventions and sentences can be more effective in reducing reoffending and assisting with rehabilitation than short-term custodial sentences, while still protecting the public and robustly managing risk.

A National Strategy for Community Justice<sup>39</sup> published in June 2022 reflects our longstanding aim to take a person-centred, rehabilitative approach to community justice, encouraging a shift in the balance between custodial and community interventions.

34 [The Vision for Justice in Scotland 2022 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/vision-for-justice-in-scotland-2022/pages/introduction/)

35 [Every Child, Every Change: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-22 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/every-child-every-change-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/pages/introduction/)

36 [Best Start, Bright Future: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/best-start-bright-future-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2022-26/pages/introduction/)

37 [Child Poverty \(Scotland\) Act 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/11/section/1)

38 [National Strategy for Community Justice - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-strategy-for-community-justice/pages/introduction/)

39 [National Strategy for Community Justice - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-strategy-for-community-justice/pages/introduction/)



## We are disrupting Serious Organised Crime across our communities.

For communities where Serious and Organised Crime is deeply embedded, fear and violence form part of the background to everyday life.<sup>40</sup> While incidents of serious violence can be relatively rare<sup>41</sup>, research shows that the underlying threat of violence and the secondary trauma from high profile events such as homicides can allow groups to exert coercive control over communities.<sup>42</sup>

A wide range of partners are working together as part of the Serious Organised Crime Taskforce to address the threats highlighted in the Scottish Multi Agency Strategic Threat Assessment<sup>43</sup>, to improve intelligence and the use of threat assessments with the aim of reducing the harm caused by serious organised crime.



40 [Community Experiences of Serious Organised Crime in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

41 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](https://www.sccjr.ac.uk)

42 [Community Experiences of Serious Organised Crime in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

43 [Scottish Multi Agency Strategic Threat Assessment - 2022 Overview. \(scotland.police.uk\)](https://www.scotland.police.uk)

# Aim: Communities

## Our communities are stronger and more resilient

Communities can mean many things to many people. Traditionally we view a community as a place; however, it is just as likely to be based on other factors including interest, identity, organisation. While place is important, communities can be much more fluid than specific geographic locations.

Some forms of crime and victimisation are linked to poverty and deprivation – violence in Scotland is concentrated in some communities more than it is in others.<sup>44</sup>

Our drive to support these communities to be stronger and more resilient is critical if we are to prevent and reduce violence. The activities outlined in the Action Plan at the end of this Framework – such as the targeting of weapon carrying amongst some young people, and older people with histories of violence – are aligned toward the achievement of this Aim. We will work with our violence reduction partners to produce, test out and measure possible solutions to address challenges early to reduce the prevalence of violence in our most deprived communities.

### **We are reducing crime, including violence in our communities.**

Removing dangerous weapons off the streets can be an important factor in not only keeping our communities safe – but feeling safe too. Scotland has some of the

toughest gun control laws in the world, with firearm crimes at an historic low, and Scotland being the only part of Great Britain to licence air weapons.<sup>45</sup> With the exception of air weapons, firearm legislation is reserved to Westminster.

Similarly, reducing knife crime is an important factor in keeping our communities safe, and feeling safe. Education-based interventions have been found to offer the most promise for effectively addressing knife crime.<sup>46</sup> YouthLink Scotland's *No Knives Better Lives*, is one example of an education-based intervention. This work will continue, to ensure young people are fully informed about the dangers and consequences of violence, tackling the perceptions of knife crime and challenging the thinking that can lead a person to picking up a sharp weapon.

Our partners at Neighbourhood Watch Scotland and Crimestoppers Scotland support local communities to report crimes, raise awareness of the risk of crimes, and promote preventative work to reduce local neighbourhood crime and increase both the assurance and evidence of feeling safe from crime in the community. Crimestoppers and Fearless Scotland run regular campaigns targeting drug-related crime in Scotland. Since 2020, this has included a focus on 'County Lines', helping to tackle criminal gangs which exploit children

44 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019 Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](https://www.sccjr.ac.uk)

45 [Air Weapons and Licensing \(Scotland\) Act 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

46 [Knife Crime Interventions, what works? October 2013 Report. Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](https://www.sccjr.ac.uk)

and vulnerable people by using them as 'runners' to transport drugs and money, or taking over their homes through 'cuckooing' to establish a base in the local community for storing and distributing drugs. Such exploitation can leave many victims feeling trapped in this criminal underworld, experiencing violence, intimidation, and threats.<sup>47</sup> Crimestoppers and Fearless allow people to speak up anonymously to help prevent and solve crime.

### **We are strengthening Scotland's communities.**

We have taken positive action to tackle sectarianism, investing £16m since 2012, to take forward a comprehensive set of activities in response to this pernicious issue which can in the worst cases lead to violence. We are continuing to support further community-based work to tackle sectarianism by delivering interventions in schools, workplaces, prisons and communities. We are also supporting the Centre for Good Relations to facilitate dialogue in relation to marches, parades and demonstrations.

At the same time, we are investing to support improvements in communities: to the physical place, to the environment, and to socio-economic factors. This

is delivered working with and for communities through our Place Based Investment Programme, Town Centre Actions in the new Town Centre Action Plan 2<sup>48</sup> and the Empowering Communities Programme.<sup>49</sup> Our programmes target our least advantaged and most vulnerable communities where the complexity of disadvantage and inequality can be an underlying cause of violence.

### **We are working to prevent antisocial behaviour.**

Although public perception about the prevalence of antisocial behaviour has fallen over the last decade,<sup>50</sup> we know that where issues arise, these can have a very serious impact for many people in our communities. We want everyone to be, and feel, safe in their home and community and we aim to ensure that Police Scotland and local authorities, working in partnership, have appropriate powers and options to prevent and tackle antisocial behaviour. Together with the Scottish Community Safety Network, we have been engaging with stakeholders and community groups across the country to establish a clear overview of the range of antisocial behaviour that is being experienced in communities so that we can look at how this could be addressed.<sup>51</sup>

47 [Impact Report 2021/22, Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](#)

48 [Town Centre Action Plan Review, Joint response from the Scottish Government and COSLA - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

49 [Empowering Communities Programme - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

50 Percentage of adults who thought 'People behaving in an anti-social manner in public' was very or fairly common in their local area down from 46% in 2008/09 to 33% in 2019/20. [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2019/20: Main Findings \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

51 [Let's talk about anti-social behaviour - Scottish Community Safety Network \(safercommunitiesScotland.org\)](#)

# Aim: Relationships

Our relationships are healthier and more respectful

To prevent violence, we want to support the development of healthy relationships for those at risk of being affected by violence at all ages and stages of life, to help create a more resilient, inclusive, compassionate and safe society. We want people to be better equipped to manage conflict without resorting to violence and have more opportunities to experience healthier, more respectful relationships.

By ensuring that we are targeting the right intervention at the right time we can reduce the likelihood that support, and more intensive intervention, is needed at a later date.

The activities outlined in the Action Plan at the end of this Framework – such as the extension of the Bystander programme – will seek to address underlying beliefs or prejudice, to support the development of positive relationships based on respect and understanding. They will build on, and extend, the approach we are already taking.

## **We are supporting Children and Young People to develop positive relationships.**

We know that children and young people must have access to safe, stable, emotionally available, consistent, nurturing relationships and environments

that enable them to reach their full potential.<sup>52</sup> These early life experiences are highlighted as important in shaping an individual's life chances and their likelihood of becoming involved in offending.<sup>53</sup>

There are a number of opportunities to prevent and reduce the harm caused by violence. These include recognising the importance of the early years, by providing very early support with parenting skills, both across whole populations as well as more targeted support and help for those that need it most.<sup>54</sup> Our national Parenting Strategy<sup>55</sup> provides a firm foundation for how we support parents and families across Scotland. School-based programmes can be particularly effective in promoting positive relations and preventing youth violence.<sup>56</sup>

Our anti-bullying guidance 'Respect for All' supports our ongoing work to ensure children and young people are able to build strong and positive relationships, as well as our work to promote positive behaviour in schools throughout Scotland. We have recently begun a review of Respect for All. Among the issues that will be considered as part of the review are the guidance on online bullying, and the distinctions between bullying and violent behaviour.

52 [The Promise, Independent Care Review \(Carereview.scot\)](https://www.carereview.scot)

53 [Justice Vision – Evidence Supplement – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

54 [Understanding Childhood Adversity and Crime – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

55 [National Parenting Strategy – Making a positive difference to children and young people through parenting – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

56 [The Justice Vision for Scotland – Evidence Supplement \(www.gov.scot\); What Works To Prevent Youth Violence – Summary of the evidence – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)



Education settings have an important role in challenging all forms of violence, including gender inequality and harmful norms about masculinity, and the underpinning attitudes that perpetuate and condone such violence, through teaching children and young adults about healthy relationships, consent and gender stereotypes which drive gender-based violence. We are funding the Equally Safe at School programme to support secondary schools to embed a whole school approach to preventing gender-based violence, and we are committed to ensuring all pupils receive high quality relationship, sexual health and parenthood (RSHP) education, which is an important part of the health and wellbeing curriculum. The RSHP education supports pupils to learn about safe and healthy relationships and it is for schools to decide how they deliver RSHP education, based on the needs of the pupils in their classroom.

We have developed the Mentors in Violence Prevention<sup>57</sup> (MVP) schools programme. This programme is delivered across all Scottish local authorities by a peer learning model to explore and challenge attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. The success of this programme, based on positive staff and pupil feedback, has seen MVP be exported across the UK.

Alongside this, the CashBack for Communities Programme<sup>58</sup> takes monies recovered through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and invests them into local community programmes and activities largely, but not exclusively, for young people most at risk of antisocial behaviour and violence. Ongoing evaluation of the programme<sup>59</sup> confirms that, along with supporting people, families and communities affected by crime, the CashBack programme has equipped

young people with a range of skills and attributes, supporting them to contribute to their communities and into positive destinations. The next phase of CashBack for Communities third sector funding for 2023-2026 will provide opportunities for young people to be diverted away from antisocial and criminal behaviour. The programme will deliver a range of trauma-informed and person-centred activities to help them build their personal skills and resilience, benefit from strengthened relationship support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour. We expect some 30 national, regional and local organisations to deliver CashBack-funded opportunities across Scotland's 32 local authority areas, utilising investment of up to £20m over this 3 year period.

The Youth Justice Vision and action plan,<sup>60</sup> published in June 2021, is also aimed at ensuring that children and young people feel safe, protected, loved and supported. This seeks to prevent children from ending up in conflict with the law and supporting them constructively and effectively if they do. Where possible, this is through a multi-agency approach to preventing offending by children.

The changes to the Scottish Sentencing guidelines<sup>61</sup> for young people (under 25) have meant that as well as the statutory elements to sentencing, the personal characteristics and circumstances of the young person must be considered, especially trauma, age and maturity levels. The aim of this is to make rehabilitation the primary objective when dealing with younger people involved in the criminal justice system.

We are also working with partners to produce a new national youth work strategy. It aims to improve outcomes for young people in Scotland through a stronger, better connected system that offers improved opportunities for young people within their communities.

57 [Mentors in Violence Prevention – An Overview \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)

58 [Cashback for Communities Website \(Cashbackforcommunities.org\)](https://www.cashbackforcommunities.org)

59 [Cashback for Communities – 2021-22 Impact Report \(cashbackforcommunities.org\)](https://www.cashbackforcommunities.org)

60 [Justice for children and young people - a rights-respecting approach: vision and priorities - action plan – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

61 [Sentencing young people guidelines, \(scottishsentencingcouncil.org.uk\)](https://www.scottishsentencingcouncil.org.uk)

## We are working to reduce the negative impact of social media.

The use of social media in-game communications, and other forms of messaging applications have increased the ways in which we interact with each other. There have been many benefits from this, in helping people connect across the world. However, there are significant threats and challenges with personal information (including location) being easily available to those that want it. The increased opportunity for grooming of young people, by preying on their insecurities and vulnerabilities, can drive some young people towards gangs and county lines.<sup>62</sup>

As with all forms of violence, online harm – and different forms of online harm – can impact people differently.<sup>63</sup> Viewing online pornography can, for instance, impact upon young people's attitudes and behaviour towards sex and relationships<sup>64</sup>, and early exposure to pornography and frequent consumption have also been shown to significantly increase the likelihood of viewing violent content.<sup>65</sup> Online pornography can, furthermore, have negative impacts on girls, including the reinforcement of negative gender stereotypes and negative impacts on girls' own body image. At the same time, viewing and/or sharing self-harm and suicide online content may exacerbate self-harm behaviour and suicidal ideation and promote a wide range of negative emotional responses.<sup>66</sup>

The impact of social media goes beyond the overtly criminal; the filming and sharing of horrific violent assaults re-traumatizes victims and their families, it feeds fear and encourages further violence. The use, and the negative impact, of social media to bully, harass and control is well established and increasing as technology and the use of technology increases.<sup>67</sup> Evidence consistently suggests that cyberbullying has a wide range of negative emotional consequences for children and young people, ranging from feeling upset and having a damaged self-esteem, to depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicidal ideation. Evidence also suggests that cyberbullying can impact education and social relations.<sup>68</sup> The impact from this is potentially more deep-rooted and traumatising, and can spill out into physical violence, with significant impact on mental health. The impact of social media is complicated and whilst it is a significant risk factor in violence, it can also be a protective factor if used differently.<sup>69</sup>

We are monitoring and engaging with the UK Government as it navigates the Online Safety Bill through the UK Parliament<sup>70</sup>, which proposes to make provision for the regulation of certain internet services; for and in connection with communications offences; and for related purposes. We are committed to ensuring that the Bill delivers on the UK Government's stated ambition to make the internet a safer place for everyone.

62 [Parental experiences of the impact of grooming and criminal exploitation of children for county lines drug trafficking | Journal of Public Health | Oxford Academic \(oup.com\)](#)

63 Online harms research publications: December 2022 – gov.uk ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)); Abuse and anonymity ([publishing.service.gov.uk](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)); Online abuse of women widespread in UK – Amnesty International UK ([amnesty.org.uk](http://amnesty.org.uk))

64 [Content and activity that is harmful for children within the scope of the Online Safety Bill \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

65 [cc-a-lot-of-it-is-actually-just-abuse-young-people-and-pornography-updated.pdf \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

66 [Content and activity that is harmful for children within the scope of the Online Safety Bill \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

67 [Is being a victim of bullying or cyberbullying in secondary school associated with subsequent risk-taking behavior in adolescence? A longitudinal study in secondary schools - Shah - 2022 - Journal of Adolescence - Wiley Online Library](#)

68 [Content and activity that is harmful for children within the scope of the Online Safety Bill \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

69 [Social media and online safety – NSPCC Learning \(learning.nspcc.org.uk\)](#)

70 [Online Safety Bill – Parliamentary Bills – UK Parliament \(bills.parliament.uk\)](#)

### **We are focused on Keeping the Promise.**

Our vision for Scotland is that our children grow up loved, safe and respected so they realise their full potential. We published the Keeping the Promise Implementation Plan<sup>71</sup> on 30 March 2022, which sets out the actions and commitments we are taking to Keep the Promise made to care experienced children and young people by 2030. Key commitments include investment of £500 million over the course of this Parliamentary session, with £50 million in the financial year 2023-24 in preventative spend through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund. This funding will focus on the system changes required to shift investment towards early intervention and prevention partnership activities, to ensure families can access support before they reach crisis point, improving outcomes for children and young people and families.

### **We are supporting work to help adults have healthier relationships.**

The harm caused by negative behaviours and violence cannot be underestimated.

As indicated earlier, this overarching Framework is targeted at preventing and reducing the harm from violence wherever it appears. However, it will also complement the implementation of Equally Safe, Scotland's Strategy, which is the principal approach for preventing and eradicating men's violence against women and girls. The strategy recognises gender inequality as a cause and consequence of violence against women and girls. As such, its vision to prevent violence from occurring in the first place

means Equally Safe places emphasis on challenging gender inequality and norms, and the underpinning attitudes that perpetuate and condone such violence. We acknowledge that policy making which does not address gender and men's violence against women can reproduce gender inequality and exacerbate violence and abuse. Through our Delivering Equally Safe fund, Engender has been funded to explore primary prevention policy approaches and create a toolkit to enable policy makers to embed primary prevention in policy making.

### **We are supporting work to address harm or the risk of harm from violence.**

Restorative Justice is a means of addressing harm or the risk of harm through engaging all those affected in coming to a common understanding and agreement on the impact of the harm, how the harm or wrong-doing can be repaired, and how justice can be achieved. Restorative Justice is a process of facilitated contact between a person who has caused harm and someone who has been harmed through an offence or an alleged offence. It must always be entirely voluntary for all parties involved and be facilitated by trained specialists in accordance with published guidance.

We are committed to the vision of the Restorative Justice Action Plan.<sup>72</sup> Work is underway on an initial pilot project to develop services in one Regional Hub covering Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders. This will test how the restorative justice approach can best work and what is required to establish regional hubs more widely.

<sup>71</sup> [Keeping the Promise implementation plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/keeping-the-promise-implementation-plan/pages/1-introduction.aspx)

<sup>72</sup> [Restorative Justice Action Plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/restorative-justice-action-plan/pages/1-introduction.aspx)

# Aim: Individuals

People at risk of experiencing violence are supported to live healthier, more productive lives

To prevent violence, we want to help people at heightened risk of violent victimisation, including those who have been violent in the past, to access the support and services they need. People are often at heightened risk of being affected by violence as a result of multiple social and environmental circumstances, including poor wellbeing and mental health, trauma, adverse childhood experiences and problem alcohol and drug use.<sup>73</sup> We also know that experiences of repeated violent incidents<sup>74</sup> (where someone has been a victim of more than one violent incident) accounted for almost two-thirds (65%) of violent crime in 2019/2020.<sup>75</sup>

The activities outlined in the Action Plan at the end of this Framework – including our commitment to working with Medics Against Violence and NHS partners to extend the hospital Navigator programme and develop an approach to tackling experiences of repeat violence, informed by the Scottish Government Repeat Violence Victimization research<sup>76</sup> – are aligned to the achievement of this Aim. This builds on the work we are already doing to help people live healthier, more productive lives.

## **We are preventing and reducing alcohol and drug related harm and violence.**

Over two-fifths of non-sexual violent crimes in 2019/20 involved offenders under the influence of alcohol.<sup>77</sup> Alcohol use is therefore a major risk factor in many forms of violence. Changing Scotland's relationship with alcohol will take time and early intervention through education, as well as by reducing access to alcohol and reducing affordability. These interventions could, in turn, reduce the risk of violence.<sup>78</sup>

Our Alcohol Framework (published in 2018)<sup>79</sup> sets out our priorities for reducing consumption to minimise alcohol-related harm arising in the first place. It contains 20 actions building on existing measures to change Scotland's relationship with alcohol, including a review of the minimum unit pricing level on alcohol harm. We are consulting on potential restrictions on alcohol advertising and promotion in Scotland to protect children and young people, giving consumers useful health information on product labels. We are also working collaboratively with Alcohol and Drug Partnerships across Scotland to support ways to improve waiting times, so people can access help earlier.

73 [Violence Prevention Framework: Evidence Supplement – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/violence-prevention-framework-evidence-supplement/pages/1-100.aspx)

74 [Repeat violent victimisation: evidence review – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/repeat-violent-victimisation-evidence-review/pages/1-100.aspx)

75 [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2019/20: Main Findings – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-and-justice-survey-2019-20-main-findings/pages/1-100.aspx)

76 [University of Glasgow – Research project – Repeat Violent Victimization \(gla.ac.uk\)](https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/projects/academic-staff-research-projects/repeat-violent-victimisation/)

77 [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2019/20: Main Findings – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-and-justice-survey-2019-20-main-findings/pages/1-100.aspx)

78 [SAFER – alcohol initiative. World Health Organization \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/initiatives/safer)

79 [Alcohol Framework 2018: Preventing Harm – next steps on changing our relationship with alcohol – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/alcohol-framework-2018-preventing-harm-next-steps-on-changing-our-relationship-with-alcohol/pages/1-100.aspx)



While the link between drug use and violent crime is less clearly defined, there is a strong association between the illicit drugs trade and violence.<sup>80</sup> It is important to note, however, that violence and drug dependence do not necessarily go hand in hand with each other. Substance dependency is a health condition which requires a health response. The drug death crisis in Scotland is being treated as a public health emergency, with an additional £250 million being invested to improve and save lives. We have maintained funding to Alcohol and Drug Partnerships across Scotland who receive £106 million a year to support delivery.

We published our cross-government response<sup>81</sup> to the Drug Deaths Taskforce final report, *Changing Lives*<sup>82</sup> earlier this year. The response highlights the wide range of areas across government which have mobilised to support the National Mission to save and improve lives, from employment programmes, to justice, transport to education, and across the health and social care sector.

**We are preventing and reducing the harm caused by Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and poor mental health and wellbeing.**

As highlighted in *Taking Stock of Violence Report*, the links between trauma and violent offending are well evidenced internationally.<sup>83</sup> There is also research within a Scottish context which points to childhood adversity and trauma amongst young violent offenders.<sup>84</sup>

Research consistently shows a strong association between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and crime. People who experience multiple ACEs<sup>85</sup> are more likely than those who do not to come into contact with the criminal justice system as victims, witnesses or perpetrators of crime. While this evidence does not prove causality,<sup>86</sup> we also know that young people and adults with care experience are overrepresented within the criminal justice system in Scotland.<sup>87</sup>

We are currently developing a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to be published in 2023. The new strategy will allow us to look ahead to make sure we are doing the right things to meet changing Mental Health needs over the coming years; and will set out a clear vision for future population mental health, wellbeing and care, and our priorities to help us get there.

In partnership with CoSLA, we have a shared ambition for a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive workforce, and services supported by the National Trauma Training Programme.<sup>88</sup> This will seek to raise awareness and improve our understanding of the prevalence and impact of trauma and adversity, including violence.

80 [Addiction, Aggression and Violence? Here's What You Need To Do \(therecoveryvillage.com\)](https://therecoveryvillage.com)

81 [Drugs Death Taskforce Report - A Cross Government Approach - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

82 [Drugs Death Taskforce Report - Changing Lives: Scottish Drug Deaths 2022 \(drugdeathstaskforce.scot\)](https://drugdeathstaskforce.scot)

83 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019\\_ Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](https://sccjr.ac.uk)

84 [Taking Stock of Violence in Scotland 2019\\_ Final Report. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research \(sccjr.ac.uk\)](https://sccjr.ac.uk)

85 The 10 most commonly measured ACEs are: Abuse- verbal, physical and sexual. Neglect- physical and emotional. Household adversities- mental illness, incarcerated relative, domestic violence, parent separation, and substance abuse.

86 [The Vision for Justice Vision in Scotland 2022 - evidence supplement - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

87 [The Vision for Justice in Scotland 2022 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

88 [Nation Trauma Training Programme, NHS Education for Scotland \(nes.scot.nhs.uk\)](https://nes.scot.nhs.uk)

# Action Plan

Over and above the cross government activity highlighted within this Framework, to help ensure the Vision and ambition of this Framework and the associated Vision for Justice are realised, work will be taken forward by our funded partner organisations to implement activities based on the three violence prevention levels:

- 'Primary prevention' – preventing violence before it occurs by addressing the underlying causes.
- 'Secondary prevention' – preventing further escalation of violence by identifying opportunities to intervene and enable change.
- 'Tertiary prevention' – focused on reducing the harm from violence by concentrating on care, rehabilitation and safety.

As part of implementation, we will develop a Measurement Framework to identify a clear set of indicators we can use to monitor ongoing progress towards the Aims of this Framework. We will ensure implementation of the Framework continues to reflect and adapt to any changing trends in violence and new emerging evidence, including the future refresh of Equally Safe.

Working closely with our delivery partners, we will report annually on the progress of the actions within this Action Plan.

## **We are all safe, and feel safe, in our communities**

1. We will fund the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit to lead on work with partners to identify opportunities to ensure that our evening economy remains safe and free from violence.
2. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to monitor and improve their service engagement processes and procedures to identify and support vulnerable and high risk people in their homes and communities to help keep people safe from harm.
3. To complement implementation of this Framework, we will work with Police Scotland to support the development of their Violence Prevention Strategy during 2023/2024.

### **Our communities are stronger and more resilient**

4. The Scottish Violence Reduction Unit will lead on work with partners to use the learning from their place-based pilot in Wallacetown, Ayr, to share the learning and, through 2023-2024 and beyond, develop the approach into further additional areas of need in Scotland.
5. During 2023, the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit will lead work in partnership with YouthLink Scotland, Police Scotland and other partners, to deliver possible solutions specifically aimed at targeting weapon carrying amongst some young people, and older people with histories of violence.
6. The Scottish Violence Reduction Unit will lead work with YouthLink Scotland and with other partners to identify opportunities over the next year to develop a collaborative plan with actions for harm reduction and violence prevention specifically targeting the effects of social media on violence.
7. By August 2023, we will review the findings from our stakeholder engagement with the Scottish Community Safety Network, to consider the next steps for work to prevent and tackle antisocial behaviour.

### **We participate in healthier more respectful relationships**

8. We will consider the findings from our forthcoming Behaviour in Schools Research, which is due to be published in late 2023, and will work with partners to develop a response to any emerging issues relating to violence.

9. During 2023-2024, we will fund the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit to work with partners to explore further roll out of situational Bystander training to more organisations and communities, to improve the effectiveness of the approach and promote existing resources for wider use across Scotland.
10. The Scottish Violence Reduction Unit will deliver a pilot, based on our Suicide Prevention principles of Time, Space and Compassion<sup>89</sup>. This will be in place in 2023 and will help connect people and reduce the risk of harm and violence.

### **People at risk of experiencing violence are supported to live healthier, more productive lives**

11. In 2023-2024, we will fund the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit and Medics Against Violence to extend their Navigator-style approaches, to help support more people with multiple complex issues, including problematic drug and alcohol use, to access and engage with appropriate services, to stop the revolving cycle of harm. In partnership between Medics Against Violence and the NHS, this will include further roll out of the Hospital Youth Navigator pilot, to ensure more young people will be able to access the help they need at an earlier stage in their lives.
12. During 2023-2024, Medics Against Violence will lead work, co-ordinating with other partners, to test out delivery of a new model of support for young people based within the community to prevent harm from violence escalating.

<sup>89</sup> [An overview of findings - Time, Space, Compassion Three simple words, one big difference: Recommendations for improvements in suicidal crisis response - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2023/06/An-overview-of-findings-Time-Space-Compassion-Three-simple-words-one-big-difference-Recommendations-for-improvements-in-suicidal-crisis-response-2023-06-20.pdf)

13. We will fund the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit during 2023-2024, to work with partners to develop an approach to tackle repeat violent victimisation, linking in with the Victims Task Force. This will be informed by the findings from the Scottish Government funded Repeat Violent Victimization Research<sup>90</sup>, which is being conducted by researchers at the University of Glasgow and is due to be published later this year.
14. During 2023-2024, the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit will lead work to identify opportunities to intervene earlier to reduce and prevent harm by those that have been, or at risk of being, care experienced.



90 [University of Glasgow - Research project - Repeat Violent Victimization \(gla.ac.uk\)](https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/research-projects/repeat-violent-victimisation/)



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