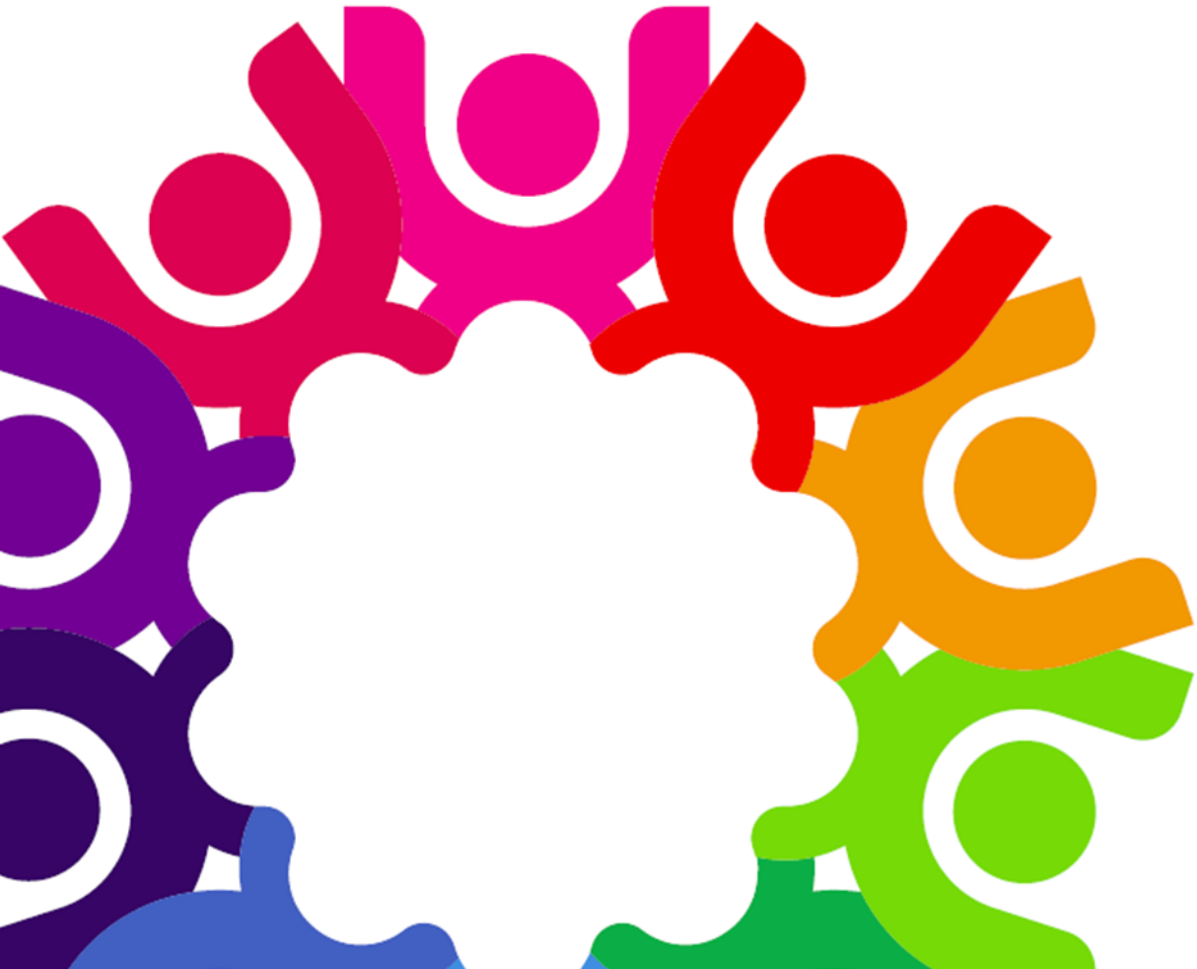
Cheshire West & Chester
Community
Safety
Partnership

Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership

Annual Report 2023/24



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Introduction

Welcome to 2023-24 Annual Report for the Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

Total crime volumes over the past 5 years in Cheshire West and Chester were at their lowest in 2023, there has been a 12% reduction since 2019, with 2019 & 2020 being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Decreases were observed in offences for, Alcohol Related Crime (-8.1%) Malicious Communications (-33.3%) and Harassment (-19.9%) all recorded notable decreases in volumes. In addition, Vehicle offences (-16.1%) recorded double the decrease than what was seen for the Force (-6.7%). Violence without Injury offences recorded their first reduction (-3.3%) following year on year increases since 2019.

Several crime types however recorded increases in the comparable years, most notably increases were seen in Shoplifting (+27.7%), Bicycle Theft (+13.7%), Burglary Business (+20.9%), Robbery (+42.2%), in particular Robbery of personal property (+51.4%) and Drug offences (+52.2%). Changes in crime volumes could be attributed to changes to Crime Recording rules or an increased proactive policing.

Incident demand across Cheshire West and Chester increased in the 2023 year by 2.8%, this following 4 years of decreases prior, and when compared against the Force increase of 0.9%. Increases were most notably observed in Drug related incidents (+13.2%) and Missing Person incidents (+20.5%). Decreases were however seen in Anti- Social Behaviour (-6.5%), particularly Personal Anti-Social behaviour (-33.6%), Alcohol related incidents (-22.8%) and Youth related incidents (-31.4%), all recording their lowest volumes when compared over the 5-year period.

This annual report sets out the work that has taken place within each of the priority areas shown in the table below:

Priority 1	**Prevent and Reduce Reoffending**
Priority 2	**Serious Organised Crime (SOC)**
Priority 3	**Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**
Priority 4	**Substance Misuse**

Priority 5	**Domestic Abuse (DA)**
Priority 6	**Serious Violence**
Priority 7	**Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)**

Priority 1: Reducing Re-offending.

Lead Agency: Probation Service

Context:

The purpose of this priority is for partners to contribute positively to projects designed to promote and encourage change in individuals so that their risk of reoffending reduces.

Achievements 2023/24:

- ✓ Maintained a weekly Police and Probation joint pre-release risk management meetings group to more effectively plan and manage high risk of harm offenders being released into the community.
- ✓ Continued commitment to established quarterly integrated offender management (IOM) governance meeting to review the management of IOM nominals and look to ensure appropriate reducing reoffending pathways are in place and being utilised. The scheme is demonstrating good levels of performance with an average monthly desistance rate of 74%.
- ✓ Probation officers coordinate in conjunction the Harm Reduction Unit in Cheshire Police for stalking and harassment perpetrators.
- ✓ Re-commissioned restorative justice serviced for victims being supported by Probation and provide restorative awareness sessions and interventions for people open to probation.
- ✓ Commissioned women's centre provision for women subject to probation supervision and moved to a co-location model in Chester.
- ✓ Developed enhanced housing pathways for those being released from Prison at risk of homelessness through regular contact with the local authority (LA) housing team and the development of probation specific accommodation contracts with providers to provide short term accommodation (CAS3).

- ✓ Established prison leavers accommodation meetings working alongside the LA and housing specialists to ensure those leaving prison have the best possible opportunity to source appropriate accommodation.
- ✓ Commissioned a range of services to support people open to probation including employment training and education, accommodation support, and personal wellbeing.
- ✓ Developed semi specialist teams to manage sexual offenders & domestic abuse perpetrators and established a multiagency process to identify the highest risk Serial Domestic Abuse Perpetrators (SDAP) for each local policing unit (LPU) area.
- ✓ Commissioned Mental Health specialist workers to support the management of offenders with mental health needs.
- ✓ Enhanced awareness opportunities for and the subsequent use of Community Payback / unpaid work by CSP partners.
- ✓ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) continues to be delivered effectively to enhance risk management, multi-agency work and reduce re-offending.

Current picture:

There have been a number of organisational changes within HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) which have been shared with CSP, including prison capacity pressures, probation reset and the introduction of the Standard Determinate Sentences 40% (SDS40).

Probation Reset - is an organisational policy that has been implemented to alleviate probation workload pressures. The measures aim to target our limited resources where they have the most impact.

SDS40 - The Secretary of State amended the automatic release point for eligible adult standard determinate sentences and certain sentences in the young adult and youth estate. This came into effect on 10 September 2024 and from this date all new sentences that were in-scope were calculated to the 40%. Revised release plans were produced Probation/Youth Offending Teams (YOT) to accommodate releases that were earlier than planned.

Emerging challenges

- Ensure those subject to SDS40 are released on a robust risk management plan and transitioning this change and the probation reset to business as usual.
- An evaluation has commenced into the specialist probation / police approach to the management of registered sex offenders & domestic abuse perpetrators.
- To recommission an enhanced substance misuse service for people on probation with a dual diagnosis, meaning that prisoners can get fast track assessments and referred into the most appropriate mental health team in community.
- To recommission a mental health support provision for people on probation.

- Increase the numbers on Mental Health Treatment Requirements (MHTRs) as a sentencing option following their launch this year.
- Support NHS Reconnect to get people into health care following prison release to support people accessing substance misuse services, mental health services and registering with a GP.

Next steps

To take on the challenges identified above.

Priority 2: Serious Organised Crime (SOC)

Lead Agency: Cheshire Police

Context:

The purpose of including this priority is for partners to work together to tackle Serious and Organised Crime (SOC).

Achievements 2023/24:

- ✓ Cheshire Police Cyber Crime team were commissioned by the SOC board to deliver training workshops with partner agency employees, elected members, residents, and businesses to reduce vulnerability to online risks and harm.
- ✓ Snap Trap Primary School Tour was re-commissioned for a second time through the CSP to help children recognise the risks associated with online activity and the use of social media including apps and reduce vulnerability.
- ✓ Op Performed was re-commissioned through the CSP to deliver anti-social behaviour activity and drugs dog deployments which detect and deter those carrying or transporting controlled substances in west Cheshire.
- ✓ Operation Expel (cuckooing) practitioner information was developed, including a briefing sheet, awareness video was created and referral process. These inputs have been published on the CSP website and have been shared with agencies to increase knowledge and reporting.
- ✓ Further operations to dismantle Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) such as County Lines operating in West Cheshire.
- ✓ Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) renewed for SOC board to formalise information sharing and increase partners ability to work together to target SOC.
- ✓ A refreshed SOC Board workplan was produced.

- ✓ Tactical SOC meeting process has been developed and embedded across the multiagency workforce to enable partners to act quickly and detect, disrupt and stop SOC quickly.
- ✓ CSP plans were transitioned into the 4 P's (Pursue, Prepare, Protect and Prevent) format.
- ✓ Cheshire Police delivered a multiagency County Lines Hydra training in conjunction with partners across Cheshire.

Emerging challenges

A continuing challenge is preventing those 'at risk' from becoming involved in SOC activity and diverting those already involved onto a different pathway. The links between vulnerabilities and the pathways into SOC are well established, as is the fact that partnership working is fundamental to achieving the desired outcomes for individuals and communities. CSP partners will all continue to play our part in making our communities safer from the threat of organised crime.

Next steps

- To enhance partnership awareness of Operation Expel for 'Cuckooing' activity.
- Continue to embed the use of '4 P' plans (Pursue, Prepare, Protect and Prevent) within the SOC and multiagency arena.
- To support the use of drug dog deployments within communities to detect and deter SOC activity on the streets and public transport.
- To deliver cybercrime awareness session(s) to raise the profile of online risk and support communities.
- To understand how the Serious Violence Duty and associated commissioning impacts on the vulnerability of people to SOC.

Priority 3: Anti-Social Behaviour

Lead Agency: Cheshire West and Chester Council (Community Safety) & Cheshire Police

Context

The purpose of including this priority is for partners to work together to increase community confidence through the prevention, detection, and reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour within our communities.

Addressing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) remains a priority for the CSP. ASB activity is coordinated and delivered locally through the partnership ASB Board, which has continued to meet quarterly. The ASB Board leads on the development and delivery of multiagency ASB activity and oversees the work of the three local multi-agency Problem-Solving Groups (PSGs).

PSGs bring together statutory and non-statutory agencies to work together to share information and address local ASB within communities. PSG meet monthly and operate on the same footprint as the three local policing units (LPUs) and associated ASB units which are embedded within police stations.

ASB units include resources from both the Council and Police including Community Safety Officers (CSOs) and dedicated Police Officers who work in close partnership to lead on interventions. ASB Units also have dedicated Community Safety Wardens (CSWs) who are uniformed and accredited with additional powers under the National Community Safety Accreditation Scheme so that they can directly address anti-social behaviour within communities.

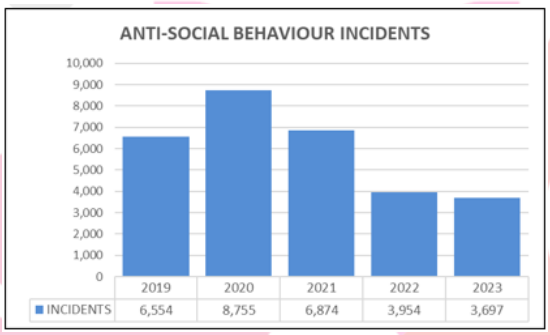
Achievements in 2023/24:

- ✓ The borough wide alcohol control Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) was renewed in October 2023 for a further period of three years. The measures in the PSPO include requirements to surrender alcohol when in a public place to officers if consumption is considered to be causing, or likely to cause, ASB.
- ✓ Fourteen individual alleygating PSPOs were reviewed and renewed in October 2023 to restrict access to alleyways where persistent ASB has occurred by installing and maintaining alley gates.
- ✓ 'Operation Performed' was funded by the CSP enabling additional multiagency resources to be deployed to detect and disrupt ASB and drugs during peak periods of demand, including during the summer holidays / race dates and the lead up to Christmas and New Year.
- ✓ ASB Awareness week was supported by CSP partners in July 2023 to raise the profile of ASB within communities and its associated harm.
- ✓ A 'Residents guide to reporting issues' was developed to support and encourage communities to report crime and ASB using the available partnership reporting mechanisms to enhance partners ability to detect issues and resource interventions.
- ✓ Multiagency Operation Treacle was delivered for the Bonfire Night and Halloween period to challenge ASB and prevent harm to communities.
- ✓ Support provided to the pan Cheshire Water Safety Partnership and local public engagements completed to raise the profile of water related risk in targeted areas.

- ✓ Task group established to review reported ASB issues at White Friars, Chester and evaluate the options to reduce harm.
- ✓ Multiagency data set created for ASB data including inputs from Registered Providers (RPs) and the local authority (LA) to better understand ASB demand and trends.
- ✓ Task group established to review and reduce ASB at the Old Bank Buildings, Chester due to it being identified as the most prevalent ASB location across Cheshire in 2023-24.
- ✓ Funding was secured through the CSP to install an additional CCTV camera on Leadworks Lane, Chester in response to reported ASB and partnership action to reduce harm being delivered in the area.
- ✓ Safer Streets 5 funded further CCTV installations in Ellesmere Port for ASB and offroad motorcycles and the governance for the investment was secured through the CSP and ASB Board.
- ✓ Our 'You're Safe Here' initiative secured a two-year funding package through the CSP to develop a safe space venue accreditation scheme and build a network of safe spaces across west Cheshire.
- ✓ Target hardening to vehicle related ASB was delivered at Cumberland Car Park, Northwich following reports from the community and partnership problem solving activity, funded by the CSP.

Current ASB picture:

Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents -Cheshire West and Chester



During the last twelve months there has been a further annual decrease of 6.5% (minus 257 incidents) of ASB recorded in Cheshire West and Chester. Across the Cheshire Police area over the last twelve months there has been a decrease of 6.4% in ASB incidents, which means Cheshire West and Chester has recorded a slightly higher percentage decrease.

The following table provides a breakdown of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents by sub-category, LPU and Beat Team Cluster (BTC). Analysis of incidents by Local Policing Unit indicates that during 2023 46.4% (1,716) of all ASB occurred in Chester LPU; 31% (1,147) in Northwich LPU and 22.6% (834) in Ellesmere Port LPU. With the highest volumes of ASB incidents by BTC have occurred in Chester City (20%); Winsford (14%); and Ellesmere Port East (12%).

Local Policing Unit (LPU)	Police Beat Team Cluster (BTC)	Enviornmental ASB		Nuisance ASB		Personal ASB		Total ASB		
		Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	% per LPU	% per total ASB
CHESTER	Chester City	30	33.0%	628	46.6%	69	24.9%	**727**	42.4%	20%
	Chester North	13	14.3%	239	17.7%	58	20.9%	**310**	18.1%	8%
	Chester Rural & Frodsham	27	29.7%	285	21.1%	83	30.0%	**395**	23.0%	11%
	Chester South	21	23.1%	196	14.5%	67	24.2%	**284**	16.6%	8%
	Total Chester LPU	**91**	**42.1%**	**1348**	**46.7%**	**277**	**46.4%**	**1716**	**46.4%**	46%
ELLESMERE PORT	Ellesmere Port East	29	52.7%	361	57.3%	58	38.9%	**448**	53.7%	12%
	Ellesmere Port West & Neston	26	47.3%	269	42.7%	91	61.1%	**386**	46.3%	10%
	Total Ellesmere Port LPU	**55**	**25.5%**	**630**	**21.8%**	**149**	**25.0%**	**834**	**22.6%**	23%
NORTHWICH	Northwich North	16	22.9%	288	31.8%	51	29.8%	**355**	31.0%	10%
	Northwich South	15	21.4%	206	22.7%	39	22.8%	**260**	22.7%	7%
	Winsford	39	55.7%	412	45.5%	81	47.4%	**532**	46.4%	14%
	Total Northwich LPU	**70**	**32.4%**	**906**	**31.4%**	**171**	**28.6%**	**1147**	**31.0%**	31%
CWaC Grand Total		**216**	**5.8%**	**2884**	**78.0%**	**597**	**16.1%**	**3697**	**100%**	100.0%

Emerging challenges

Preparations for the review of the Chester City Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) need to commence in 2024-24.

Peak periods of demand such as school breaks, races, Halloween, bonfire night and the festive period continue to stretch ASB resources.

ASB incidents reported to Cheshire Police are continuing to decrease annually, however the Governments recently published ASB Action Plan indicates that people's experiences of ASB are increasing. Partners need to better understand ASB demands and harm so that suitable resources can be secured to mitigate demand, and we need to continue to encourage reporting.

ASB cases are often becoming more complex and the risk of harm to victims is often difficult to evaluate consistently.

Local multiagency problem-solving groups (PSGs) are the cornerstone for complex ASB casework; they ensure there is coordination and deliver targeted interventions (including preventative orders) to those who engage in ASB. Capacity at these meetings is being challenged and needs to be protected to maintain a robust multiagency response to complex ASB. Safeguards for ASB activity that can be delivered on a single agency basis need to be established and embedded within PSGs.

Next steps

- Develop a partnership Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM) for ASB casework.
- Adapt the multiagency Problem-Solving Group (PSG) process to ensure partner resources have the capacity and are targeted where they are likely to have the greatest impact.
- Develop a multiagency dashboard using partner data to enhance our ability to understand local ASB demands.

- Reform the ASB Case Review process and continue to encourage its use by victims of ASB.
- Explore funding opportunities for additional ASB resources to meet peak periods of demand and deliver multiagency activity to deter and disrupt ASB across west Cheshire.

Priority 4: Substance Misuse

Lead Agency: Cheshire West and Chester Council - Public Health

Context:

This priority aims to prevent and reduce the harm caused by substance misuse and understand the drugs profile for Cheshire West and Chester.

Achievements in 2023/24

Strategic Priority 1 - Continued Improvement of treatment and recovery services

- 1,907 adults were in structured treatment with Via, a 3% increase from last year.
- A total of 1,001 new adults started structured treatment.
- 87 young people under 18 were in structured treatment with Via, a 16% increase from last year.
- Treatment began for 53 new young people, reflecting a 10% increase from last year.
- 90% of adults in treatment were living in stable and suitable accommodation, higher than the national average of 86%.
- 64% of prison leavers with ongoing treatment needs accessed Via within three weeks, higher than the national average of 50%.
- 52% of prison leavers with ongoing mental health needs accessed services in the community within three weeks.
- Inpatient detoxification was accessed by 19 individuals,

Strategic Priority 2 - Reduce drug related crime and drug supply

- Operation Apollo led by Cheshire Police shut down 68 County Lines across Cheshire West between April ’23 and April ’24.
- A total of 78 County Line-related arrests were made by Cheshire Police across Cheshire West between April 2023 and April 2024

Strategic Priority 3 - Reduce drug and alcohol related deaths and harm

- Hepatitis C testing was completed for 100% of service users at Via, leading to micro-elimination of the virus.

- Buvidol injections, a long-acting opioid dependency treatment, saw a 50% increase from the previous year.
- The Level 2 Peer Mentoring Training Programme has had 100% completion rate.

Via have recruited 30 volunteers and peer mentors to date.

Capturing the voices of living and lived experiences of residents in Cheshire West and Chester.

Cheshire West and Chester Combating Drugs Partnership commissioned Healthwatch Cheshire West to publish a report on the experiences of residents in Cheshire West and Chester affected by drug and alcohol use.

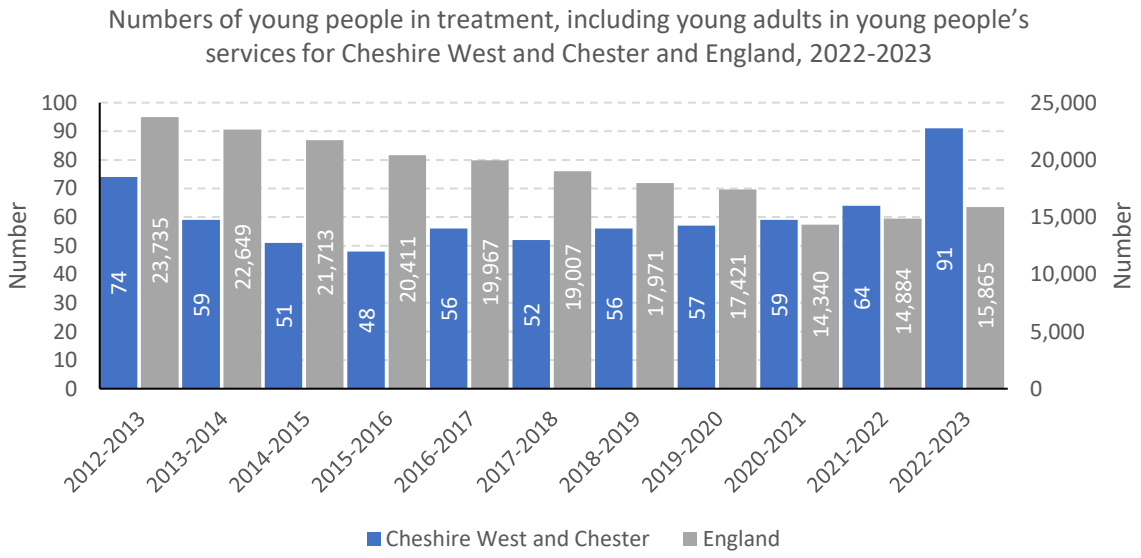
The report highlighted key themes, trends and threads weaved through many people's lived and living experiences, both from those directly impacted and others observing from a family, friend or community viewpoint. The report is now published on the Cheshire Healthwatch website

Current picture:

Young People in Treatment

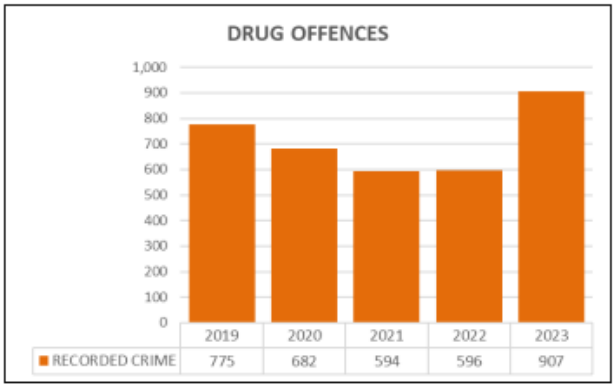
In recent years numbers have been increasing in contrast to the England trend which has seen numbers consistently falling

2022-2023 has seen the largest number of young people start treatment since 2012-2013.



Drug Offences

In the last twelve months there has been an increase of 52.2% (311 more offences) in Drug offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester; a notably larger increase than the previous year.



Volumes of Drug offences recorded across Cheshire Constabulary have increased by 47.8% during 2023, meaning Cheshire West and Chester recorded a larger percentage increase. When comparing Drug offences by Local Authority, Cheshire West and Chester recorded the percentage largest increase for 2023.

Emerging challenges

- Reported increases in the use of ketamine particularly amongst young people.
- Preparing for the threat caused by the increase nationally in the availability of powerful synthetic opioids.
- Drug and alcohol related deaths continue to rise.

Next steps

- **Peer Led Recovery Community**, composed of peers and volunteers, plays a crucial role in supporting individuals on their recovery journey. This community enhances service delivery and ensures accountability by incorporating the voices of those with lived or living experience
- In April 2024 **Individual Placement Support** (IPS) Service was launched, with three employment specialists recruited to help individuals on their recovery journey secure meaningful employment.
- The development of a **Ketamine Harm Reduction Plan** in response to the growing recreational use of ketamine, a dissociative anaesthetic, particularly among young people. This plan aims to understand the local prevalence of ketamine use and its associated risks
- Preparation to support the upcoming **Prison Releases** tied to changes in Standard Determinate Sentences. With the reduction of custody time from 50% to 40%, prisoners will be eligible for early release. The CDP will focus on ensuring smooth

reintegration by coordinating with Via, Probation, Prisons and housing to provide necessary support.

- Preparation of a partnership response plan for the event of incidents involving powerful synthetic opioids
  Regional **Community Sentence Treatment Requirement (CSTR) steering group** was established in 2023. This group, composed of **Judges**, **Magistrates**, and **treatment providers**, focuses on increasing the use of CSTRs across the region

Priority 5: Domestic Abuse

Lead Agency: Cheshire West and Chester Council – Early Help and Prevention Service

Context

This priority aims for agencies to intervene to prevent or reduce repeat experiences of Domestic Abuse (DA).

Achievements in 2023/24

- Continued delivery of the 'engage' programme across children's services; continued delivery of the programme direct to people who harm.
- Secured continued funding for additional Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) capacity through Police Crime commissioner (PCC).
- Ongoing communications campaign adapted including police webchats and the 'You are not alone' campaign - Open the Door.
- Weekly multi agency risk management meetings in place.
- IDVAs continue to support Safeguarding Children Partnership DA Training.
- Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) v DA training to children's services rolled out.
- DA Strategy action plan monitored and reviewed.
- Continued delivery of the Open Access Groups and implementation of a Survivor Subgroup at the DA Board.
- Continued delivery of the commissioned Perpetrator Programme.
- Repeat incidents remained below the corporate KPI of 38%
- Bespoke offer for over 60s in place.
- Performance and Data Subgroup to the DA Board established.
- Identification & Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) increase in referrals.

Current picture:

There were 2666 enquiries to the domestic abuse team at Cheshire West and Chester Council in 23/24. 70% of these were medium risk, 27% were high risk, and 3% were standard risk.

It was reported to the DA Board in May 2024 that in 23/24 there were 4,761 domestic crimes reported to Cheshire Police. Of those 67% were female, 28% male, and 5% unknown.

Safe Accommodation

The safe accommodation model in Cheshire West and Chester is refuge, dispersed properties, and sanctuary schemes. Provision of Safe Accommodation is a legal duty placed on the Local Authority following the implementation of the DA Act.

We achieved 34 safe accommodation places plus 51 Sanctuary Schemes in 23/24.

Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DA Board)

The DA board is a subgroup of the Community Safety Partnership and is responsible for supporting Cheshire West and Chester Council in meeting its duty under Section 57 of the DA Act, namely that men and women harmed by domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support within safe accommodation services.

In order to manage its work, the DA Board provides strategic leadership to supporting subgroups and specific areas of focus, including task and finish group as required. The terms of reference are reviewed every year in August.

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

One DHR was considered in 23/24, on advice from the Home Office this will progress to a DHR which will be completed in 24/25.

All DHRs, once approved by the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel are published online at Domestic Homicide Reviews.

The Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024

The DA strategy is due to expire in 2024 and sets out that we want to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and their families who experience domestic abuse, by creating an environment that supports disclosure and recovery for those who are harmed and provides challenge and support for those who harm.

There are 5 priorities in the strategy that support delivery of the vision:

1. Assessing risk
2. Intervening earlier
3. Providing services for those who are harmed
4. Providing services for children and young people
5. Challenging those who harm and giving them effective support to change

Emerging challenges

- Funding contributions for IDVA's and New Burdens Funding is only confirmed until 2025. There is no commitment beyond this date.
- New Statutory Guidance for DHRs will impact on how they are considered and managed.
- Domestic Abuse Intervention and Prevention Service (DAIPS) offer will need reviewing due to significant increase in demand.
- Higher volume of referrals into service.
- General Practitioner data at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) remains a significant risk.

Next steps

- There will be a refresh of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Needs Assessment and the Domestic Abuse Strategy in 2024/25
- The Open the Door Campaign continues to be shared and rolled out
- Review Practice Standards
- Review MARAC Steering Group

Priority number 6: Serious Violence

Lead Agency: Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

Context

The purpose of this priority is for partners to implement the Cheshire Serious Violence strategy as required under the Serious Violence Duty (Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022). A statutory responsibility is placed specified authorities, being police, fire and rescue authorities, local authorities, specified health authorities and criminal justice agencies and organisations work collaboratively, to share data and information, understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention and put in place plans informed by evidence to prevent and reduce serious violence.

Achievements 2023/24

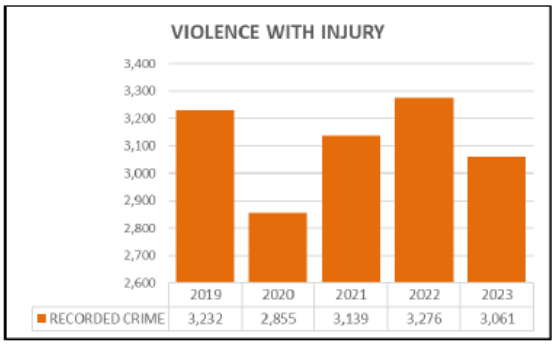
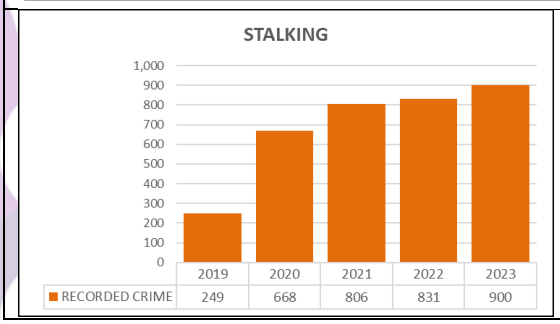
- ✓ Serious Violence statutory guidance reviewed.
- ✓ Detective Inspector and Assistant Chief of Probation appointed by the OPCC to co-ordinate the implementation of the duty and grant allocation.
- ✓ Readiness assessment for implementation of the SV duty by Crest on behalf of the Home Office.
- ✓ Strategic and operational task groups established to support creation and delivery of the duty within the 2023/24 implementation period.

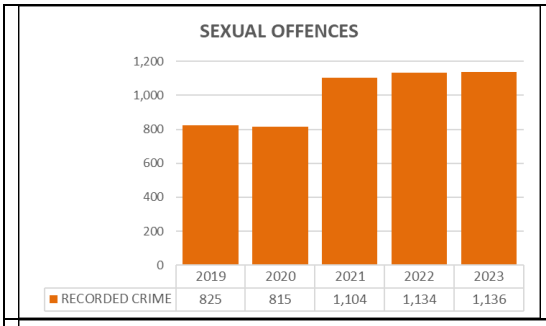
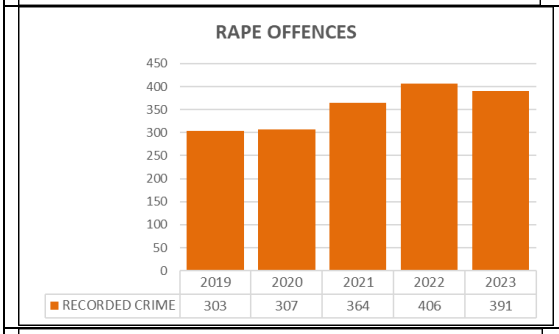
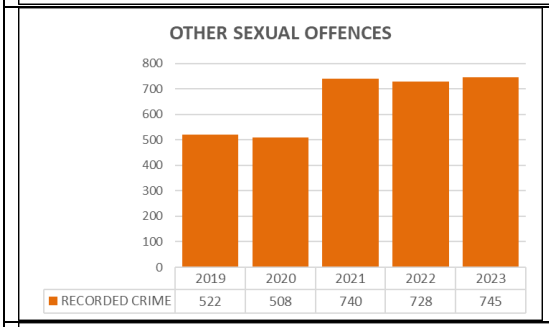
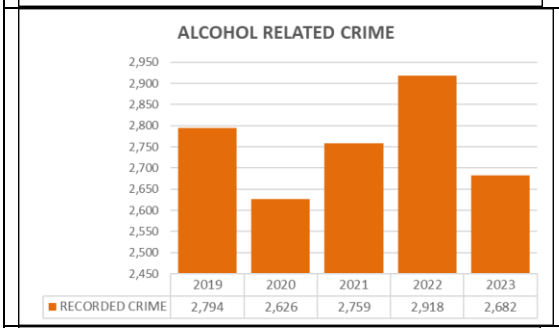
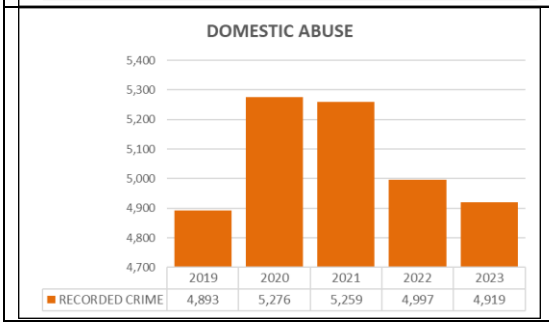
- ✓ Cheshire Serious Violence Strategy published January 2024.
- ✓ Implementation of Serial Domestic Abuse Perpetrator (SDAP) co-ordinators roles to target high harm perpetrators.
- ✓ Introduction of analytical software to support partnership understanding of serious violence and commissioning opportunities.
- ✓ Launch of a Community sport and serious violence dashboard to support the development of sporting interventions to tackle serious violence.
- ✓ New Integrated Care Board (ICB) Cheshire Violence and injury dashboard.

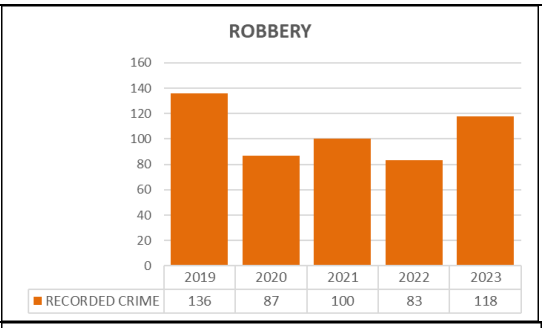
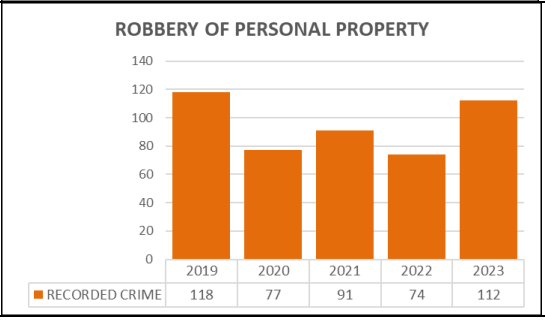
Current picture:

Serious violence is a broad term that typically incorporates those crime types that result in significant physical or psychological harm to the victim. However, we recognise that we must also consider offending that drives violence within our communities and the impact of exposure to this violence on individuals.

There are several offence types that are included within the local definition of Serious Violence within West Cheshire:

	In the last twelve months there has been a decrease of 9.5% in Violence Against the Person in Cheshire West and Chester (1,198 less crimes).
	In the last twelve months there has been a decrease of 6.6% in Violence with Injury in Cheshire West and Chester; this decreasing by 215 crimes when compared to the previous year (2022).
	In the last twelve months there has been an increase of 8.3% (69 more offences) in Stalking offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.

		During the last twelve months there has been an increase of 0.2% (2 more crimes) in Sexual offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.
		In the last twelve months there has been a decrease of 3.7% (15 less offences) in Rape offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester; recording the first decrease in offences since 2019.
		In the last twelve months there has been an increase of 2.3% (17 more offences) in Other Sexual offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.
		In the last twelve months there has been an 8.1% decrease (236 less offences) in Alcohol Related offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester. This is the first decrease in offences since 2020.
		In the last twelve months there has been a decrease of 1.6% (78 fewer offences) in Domestic Abuse offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester, volumes falling to similar levels seen in 2019 (4893 offences).

		During the last twelve months there has been an increase of 42.2% (35 more offences) in Robbery offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester, volumes being the highest seen since 2019.
		During the last twelve months there has been a 51.4% increase (38 more offences) in Personal Robbery offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.

The local definition of Serious Violence is wide reaching and although there have been increases including robbery, sexual offences stalking offences and Robbery over the last 12 months there have also been decreases in Violence Against the Person, Violence with injury, Rape offences, Alcohol Related offences, Domestic Abuse.

Emerging challenges

- Some areas across England and Wales have funded and established Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) due to the prevalence of serious violence in these areas. Unfunded areas (such as Cheshire) are currently reliant on grants from the Government to fund activity. There was a commitment of £75 million to fund serious violence activity under the former government, however this is yet to be confirmed by the new government.
- A Strategic Assessment, and a five-year Response Strategy with solutions to reduce local serious violence for this new priority / duty has been produced in January 2024. Further work is required to explore strategic alignment across the partnership to improve understanding of how a public health approach can reduce and prevent serious violence.
- The use of data across the partnership to aid the understanding of the causes of serious violence.

Next steps

- Reflect on best practice from areas with established and funded VRUs.
- Renew a Strategic Assessment based on the evidence-based analysis.

- Explore and commission relevant services.
- Develop a strategic sports partnership to support violence prevention.
- Build on existing data sharing agreements to expand understanding of serious violence prevalence and causes.
- Expand remit of data reporting to CSP to include homicide / gun / knife crime/ offences weapon / child exploitation. And include demographics to aid understanding or target groups and locations for interventions.
- Workforce development

Priority 7: Violence Against Women & Girls

Lead Agency: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Context

The purpose of including this priority is for partners to prevent and reduce the number women and girls subject to violence within west Cheshire.

A Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls commission was formed to build upon the notice of motion to end public sexual harassment approved by Council on 15th July 2021. The cross- party Commission brings together representatives from the Council, Police, Health and Voluntary and Community Sector.

The accepted definition of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life".

Achievements in 2023/24:

- Following consideration of the national evidence and policy landscape with regard to VAWG the commission has agreed the key topics of focus as:
  - Support available for women and girls.
  - Empowering Women and changing culture (including engaging men and boys).
  - Creating safe places (physical and online).

- Initial mapping of current service provision within the borough has been completed.

- Engagement activity is underway to understand the key issues, experiences, priorities and perceptions around including focussed sessions and drop in events.

- The Council has agreed to participate in the Cooperative Council Innovation Network (CCIN) Policy Lab working as a collaboration of local authorities to collectively

challenge the network and partners on how we can share learning and expertise about tackling VAWG. CCIN funding for the project has been agreed and a programme of learning events, visits and creation and use of communication tools to promote what works and share accessible materials including videos, case studies, podcasts are underway. There will also be a funded programme of skilling up, training and educating leads and partners across the Network on what they can do at a policy and practical level.

Current picture:

VAWG offences recorded by Cheshire Constabulary across Cheshire West and Chester decreased by -8.1% in 2022, which is a larger percentage decrease than across the broader Cheshire Constabulary area (-6.7%).

Emerging challenges

- Accessing data relating to VAWG for Cheshire West.
- Possible disruption to Commission programme and engagement activity due to local election cycle and associated restrictions.

Next steps

- Regular VAWG Commission meetings.
- Ongoing engagement activity with young women and girls, and boys and young men and stakeholders.

Next steps for the Community Safety Partnership

The CSP will consider the next Strategic Assessment of Crime and Disorder and set priorities and a CSP plan for 2024/25. The partnership will continue to meet its statutory duties and partners will continue to work together to reduce crime and disorder across the borough.

Glossary

ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ABD	Acceptable Behaviour Discussion
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
ATR	Alcohol Treatment Requirement
BID	Business Improvement District
CBO	Criminal Behaviour Order
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group

CFRS	Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CSO	Community Safety Officer
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSTR	Community Sentence Treatment Requirements
CSW	Community Safety Warden
CW&C	Cheshire West and Chester
DAIPS	Domestic Abuse Intervention & Prevention Service
DRR	Drug Rehabilitation Requirements
DRDP	Drug Related Death Panel
DA	Domestic Abuse
DAIPS	Domestic Abuse Intervention and Prevention Service
DVA	Domestic Violence & Abuse
DVPN	Domestic Violence Prevention Notice
DVPO	Domestic Violence Prevention Order
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advocate
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
IRIS	Identification and Referral to Improve Safety
KSI	Kill & Seriously Injured
LDIS	Local Drugs Information System
LA	Local Authority
LSAB	Local Safeguarding Adults Board
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NPS	National Probation Service
PCC	Police Crime Commissioner
PHE	Public Health England
PSPO	Public Space Protection Order
SCP	Safeguarding Children's Partnership
SDAP	Serial Domestic Abuse Perpetrator