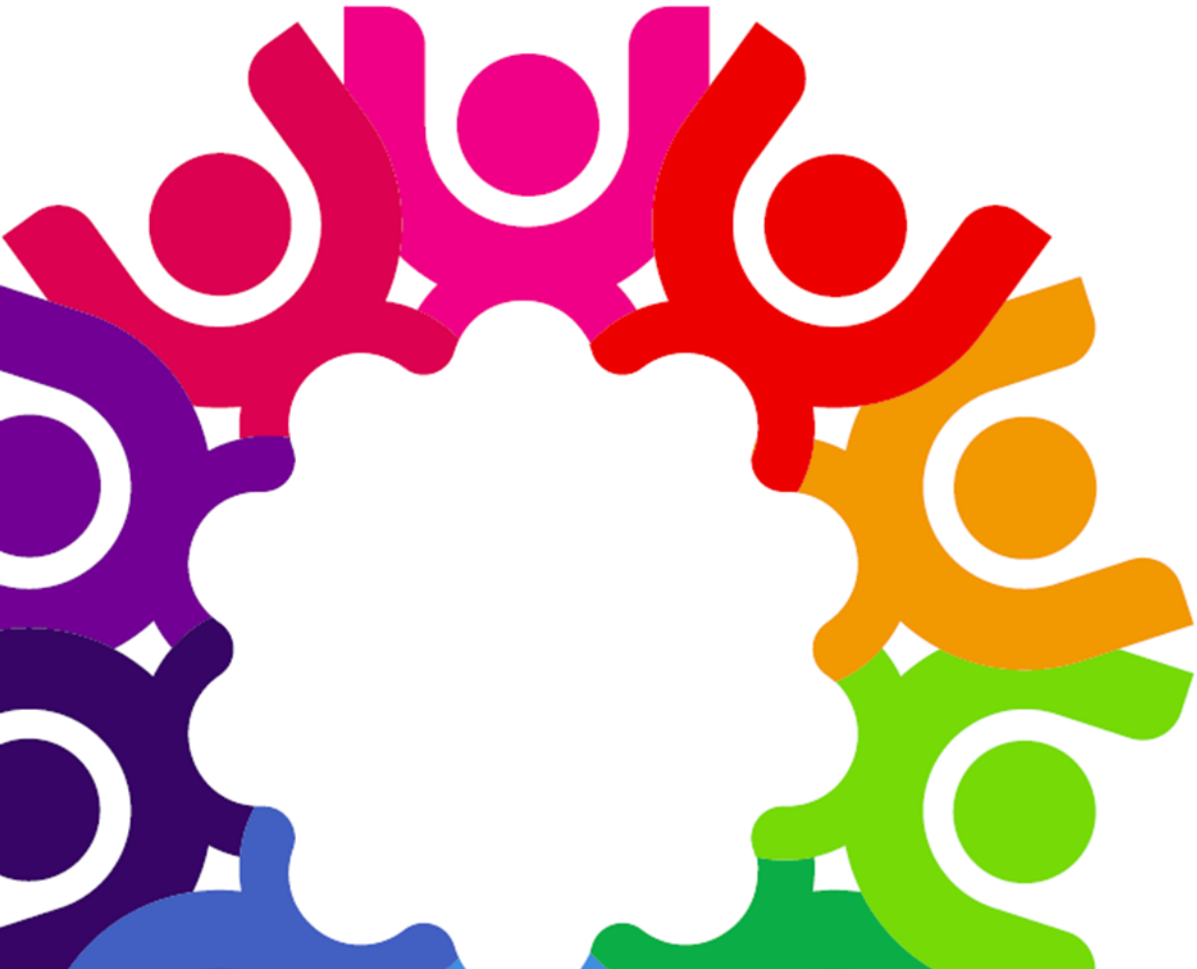
Cheshire West & Chester
Community
Safety
Partnership

Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership

Annual Report 2024/25



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Introduction

Welcome to 2024-25 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 2024, a 4% reduction was recorded from 2023 to 2024, with a slightly larger reduction of 5% recorded over the 5-year period.

Decreases were observed in offences for, Violence with Injury offences (-7%) and Serious Acquisitive crime (-14%) also reduced, with notable reductions in the Home Office groups of Burglary offences (-19%), Vehicle offences (-14%), Theft/Stolen Goods offences (-11%) and Criminal Damage and Arson offences (-12%).

Several crime types however recorded increases Sexual Offences Home Office group however recorded an increase (+10%), Child Sexual Abuse offences (+30%), Knife Crime (+17%), Hate Crime (+12%), Drug related Crime (+15%) and Most Serious Violence offences (+57%).

Changes in volumes could be attributed to legislative changes, such as the introduction of the Principal Crime Recording Rule in 2023 and the creation of the Online Safety Act in 2024. They could also be influenced by changes made by Cheshire Constabulary, such as offence classification types or a drive for increased proactive policing.

Incident demand across Cheshire West and Chester decreased in the 2024 year by 4%, this follows an increase of 3% in the previous year and is a reduction larger than that recorded for the Force (-3%). Notable reductions were recorded for Alcohol related incidents (-15%), Anti-Social Behaviour incidents (-10%), Mental Health incidents (-25%) and Public Order incidents (-18%). Notable increases were however recorded in volumes of Domestic incidents (+9%) and Hate incidents (+30%), the increase in Cheshire West and Chester for Hate incidents in particular was more than double that recorded for the Force (+14%).

This annual report sets out the work that has taken place within each of the partnership's priority areas 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 2024/25:

- ✓ 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 delivery of 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.
- ✓ Probation officers coordinate in conjunction the Harm Reduction Unit in Cheshire Police for stalking and harassment perpetrators.
- ✓ Restorative justice service 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. Delivery site now established in Winsford for the Winsford and Northwich catchment.

- ✓ 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).
- ✓ Continued 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. Commenced a partnership arrangement with Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Job Centre Plus, and Tempus Novus to get those with offending histories into employment.
- ✓ Continued 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.
- ✓ Governance arrangement in place between Probation and Police to agree best practice for the management of registered sex offenders.
- ✓ Commissioned Dual Diagnosis Mental Health Nurse specialist workers to support the management of offenders with complex mental health needs / dual diagnosis.
- ✓ 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 several organisational changes within HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) which the CSP have been updated on, including prison capacity pressures, probation reset, and Standard Determinate Sentences 40% (SDS40) scheme.

Probation Reset - is an organisational policy that has been implemented to alleviate probation workload pressures. The measures aim to target probations limited resources where they are likely to 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

- Dynamically prioritising limited Probation Service resources following government and legislative changes to be the most impactful at reducing re-offending and harm.
- Ensuring that those subject to prison capacity measures continue to have a robust risk management plan and transitioning this change and the probation reset to business as usual.

Next steps

- 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 the community.
- 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.
- Deliver the national sentencing review directions supporting the Probation team in Cheshire West through this change and continue to deliver high quality public protection and rehabilitation work whilst working closely and in partnership with our key stakeholders.
- Continue to promote the greater use of Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATRs), Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs), and Mental Health Treatment Requirements (MHTRs).

Priority 2: Serious Organised Crime

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 2024/25:

- ✓ Operation Performed was commissioned again by the CSP to continue to deliver proactive drugs dog deployments which detect and deter those carrying controlled substances.
- ✓ Operation Expel (cuckooing) practitioner briefing information sheet and awareness video was developed and published on the CSP website, and this information continues to be shared across agencies to increase practitioner awareness and reporting.
- ✓ Targeted activity to dismantle Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) such as County Lines across Cheshire West and Chester continued to be delivered on a multiagency basis.
- ✓ The SOC Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) was refreshed to further formalise information sharing and increase partnership collaboration amongst agencies and registered providers of social housing represented at the local SOC board.
- ✓ The SOC Board workplan was collaboratively refreshed to further develop multiagency SOC practices and address emerging risks.
- ✓ Tactical SOC coordination process continued to be embedded across the multiagency workforce.
- ✓ A multi-agency Safer Business Action Week was delivered across the borough's economic centres to raise awareness of serious and organised crime (SOC) among the local business community and to take action against organised criminals targeting businesses. This resulted in arrests, charges, custodial sentences, and the application of community resolutions.
- ✓ The Proceed of Crime Act (PoCA) was used effectively by agencies to recover money from those making money from organised crime.
- ✓ Age UK were commissioned by the CSP to raise the profile of scams and work with victims of fraud to provide support and reduce vulnerability of communities to financial exploitation.

Emerging challenges

Online enabled criminality including fraud, child sexual abuse, and online exploitation continues to present a developing risk to victims and agencies as criminals are exploiting encrypted messaging apps, social media, to offend, evade detection, and target victims.

Next steps

- Deliver the Age UK Scams and aftercare project to support and reduce the vulnerability of communities to SOC activity.
- To continue to support the use of drug dog deployments across Cheshire West and Chester to detect and deter SOC activity on the streets and on public transport.
- Develop a multiagency Clear, Hold, Build, framework and capability for agencies working in Cheshire West and Chester.

Priority 3: Anti-Social Behaviour

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

Context

The purpose of this priority is for partners to work together to increase community confidence through the prevention, detection, and reduction of anti-social behaviour (ASB) across communities.

Partners coordinate ASB activity strategically through the Partnership ASB Board, which continues to meet quarterly, and operationally through three local multi-agency Problem-Solving Groups (PSGs), which meet monthly and cover each local policing unit (LPU) area. Both the ASB Board and the PSGs bring together statutory and non-statutory agencies to work collaboratively, share information, and address ASB demands within communities.

Each LPU area also has a designated ASB Unit, staffed by specialist ASB practitioners who lead on local interventions. These units are jointly resourced by the Council and Cheshire Police.

The ASB Units are further supported by Cheshire Police beat managers, response officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), and the Councils Community Safety Wardens (CSWs) - who are uniformed resource accredited with additional powers under the National Community Safety Accreditation Scheme - to address ASB within communities.

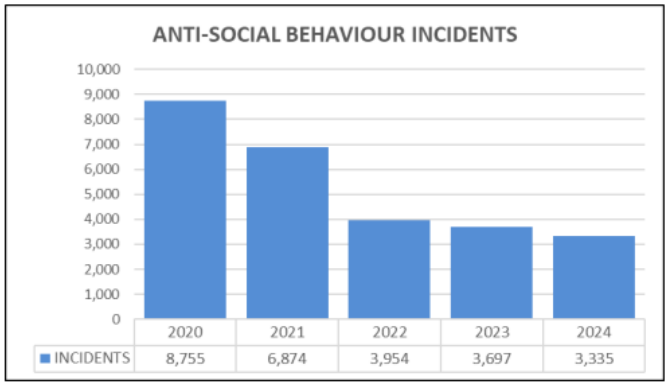
Achievements in 2024/25:

- ✓ Development of an online partnership Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM) for ASB casework across the multiagency workforce.

- ✓ Strategic review and update of the multiagency Problem-Solving Group (PSG) processes to ensure partner resources have the capacity and are targeted where they are likely to have the greatest impact.
- ✓ Development a multiagency dashboard using partner data to enhance our ability to understand local ASB demands.
- ✓ Strategic review and update of the ASB Case Review to ensure compliance with the statutory duties embedded across the Cheshire sub-region to ensure consistency and support victims of ASB.
- ✓ Additional ASB resources commissioned using grant funding provided by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to meet peak periods of demand and deliver multiagency activity to deter and disrupt ASB across west Cheshire.
- ✓ New CCTV camera commissioned for Foregate Street, Chester by the CSP following multiagency problem solving activity targeted at a reported ASB hot spot.
- ✓ New CCTV camera funded by the CSP installed in Leadworks Lane, Chester to deter further ASB demands.
- ✓ Review of the Chester City PSPO commenced and consultation completed on the measures within it, additional measures required to address ASB demands and a review of the area where the PSPO should apply.
- ✓ ASB Awareness week was supported by CSP partners to raise the profile of ASB within communities and its associated harm.
- ✓ A 'Student guide to reporting issues' was developed to support and encourage students 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.
- ✓ A strategic options evaluation completed for reported ASB issues at White Friars, Chester.

Current ASB picture:

Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents -Cheshire West and Chester

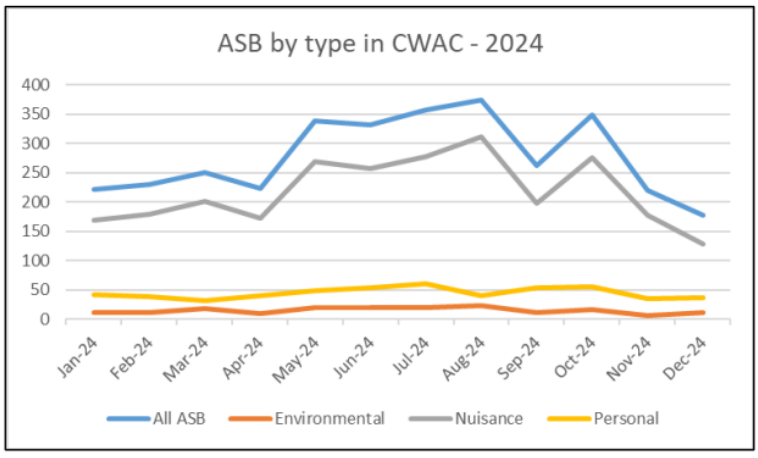


Volumes of ASB incidents across CWAC reduced for the 5th consecutive year to a total of 3,335

incidents in 2024, this was a reduction of 10% (-362 incidents) from 2023 and resulted in the lowest volumes over the comparative period. Reductions were also recorded across the Force with the reduction in CWAC being the largest followed by Warrington (-9%), Halton (-5%) and then Cheshire East (-0.5%). The reduction in CWAC was also larger than that recorded for the Force (-6%).

Reductions were also recorded in each of the subtypes, 'Nuisance ASB' recorded the highest demand and reduced by 9%, 'Personal ASB' recorded the second highest demand and reduced by 10% and lastly the lowest demand subtype, 'Environmental ASB', reduced by 17%.

Monthly volumes show a peak period from May to August (1,401 incidents collectively), with volumes peaking at 375 incidents in August. A peak in October (348 incidents) was also recorded, this is something seen across the Force and is addressed by operations, such as Op Treacle, specifically created for increased demand around Halloween/'Mischief night'.



Emerging challenges

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 partner data monitored at the local ASB Board indicates that some ASB demands, such as environmental ASB, are increasing. Partners will need to continue to monitor demands and equip resources with the training and skills required to address changing demands.

ASB cases are continuing to become more complex, requiring a greater number of actions and inspections to resolve.

Next steps

- Embed the partnership Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM) for ASB casework into multiagency practice.
- Take a paper to Cheshire West and Chester Cabinet to review the PSPO measures in Chester City and across the borough and embed any changes into operational practice.
- Invest in the multiagency workforce to equip resources with the skills and training needed to meet changing demands around mediation and environmental ASB.
- Work with 'Registered Providers' of social housing to develop neighbourhood plans.

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 2024/25

Strategic Priority 1 - Continued Improvement of treatment and recovery services

Data Overview: April 2024 to March 2025

- Adult engagement remains strong, with 2,016 adults in structured treatment, a 5.7% increase from 2023–24 demonstrating continued growth in service demand and access.

- Via has effectively met rising needs, supporting 1,065 new adult presentations, a 6.4% year-on-year increase across diverse substance use profiles, particularly alcohol and mixed alcohol/non-opiates.

- 19 individuals accessed inpatient detoxification (IPD) through the Cheshire and Merseyside consortia block-contract model, maintaining consistent delivery and demonstrating the continued effectiveness of the IPD pathway.

- Continuity of care for prison leavers has strengthened, with 75% entering treatment within three weeks of release, up from 64% last year. This reflects a clear improvement in transitions from custody to community treatment and is above the national average of 57%.

- Young people's outcomes remain positive, with 77 young people engaged in structured treatment. Via continues to perform in line with regional and national benchmarks.

- The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) programme, launched in July 2024, has delivered strong early outcomes, with 164 referrals, 107 individuals starting structured support and 39 job starts to date. Three dedicated Employment Specialists are co-located across Via's hubs in Chester, Northwich and Ellesmere Port providing accessible, borough-wide employment support.

- The Post has become a significant strength within Via's recovery offer, providing a dedicated, peer-led community based at the Chester hub with its own separate entrance. The service delivers peer-led SMART groups, mentoring, and a range of sober social activities, including projects such as *Beauty in the Everyday* and *The Sober Party*. These activities have helped to reduce stigma and strengthen community connections. A growing network of trained volunteers has further enhanced the breadth and depth of peer support available, contributing to improved engagement and more sustained recovery outcomes.

Strategic Priority 2 - Reduce drug related crime and drug supply

- Targeted activity was taken again County Lines groups operating in Cheshire West and Chester and data monitored by the CSP's partnership Serious Organised Crime (SOC) Board.

- Proceeds of Crime Act (PoCA) was robustly used by police and other agencies across Cheshire West and Chester to ensure that criminals don't financially benefit from crime.

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

- The Cheshire-wide Drug and Alcohol Related Death (DARD) Panel continues to systematically review drug and alcohol related deaths to ensure learning is embedded into service improvement.

- Naloxone access has been expanded through widened training for service users, families and professionals. Via has also launched a new pilot to expand access to free naloxone kits by enabling any resident aged 18 or over to order a kit online for discreet home delivery. This approach is intended to reach people who may not come into contact with drug and alcohol services but remain at risk of an opioid overdose or may be supporting someone who is.

- The regional Local Drug Intelligence System (LDIS), commissioned in March 2025 and coordinated by Liverpool John Moores University, delivers real-time drug-related risk alerts and supports proactive intelligence sharing across Cheshire and Merseyside.

- Hepatitis C micro-elimination was formally achieved in October 2025, through Via's partnership with Gilead Sciences eliminating active infection among the local treatment population. A celebration event is scheduled for 18 December 2025.

- A multi-agency ketamine working group, established in 2024, is targeting high-prevalence areas such as Ellesmere Port and bringing together public health, youth services, healthcare, law enforcement, and specialist urology expertise from the Countess of Chester Hospital.

- Over 200 professionals have received ketamine harm-reduction training, developed and delivered by Via in partnership with the Countess of Chester's Urology team, with consistently positive attendee feedback.

- Via has introduced a new young people's ketamine treatment pathway and harm-reduction toolkit, featuring leaflets, videos, web resources and tailored training for adult services to enhance early intervention and consistent practice.

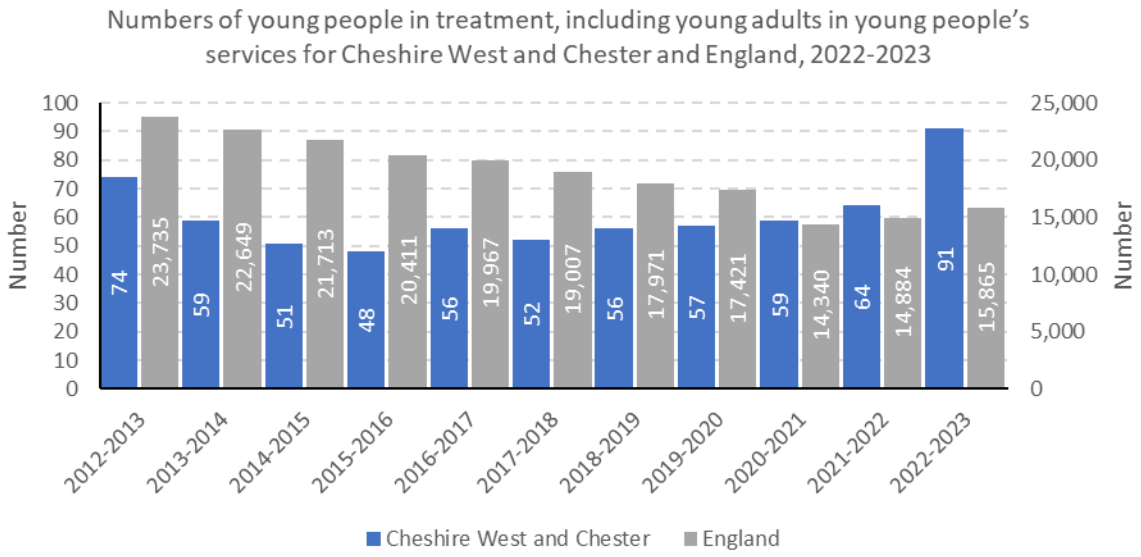
- 'The Post', a peer-led recovery community, offers peer-led SMART groups, social activities and mentoring. Projects such as Beauty in the Everyday and The Sober Party amplify positive recovery stories, reduce stigma, and connect the recovery community.

Current picture:

<u>Young People in Treatment</u>

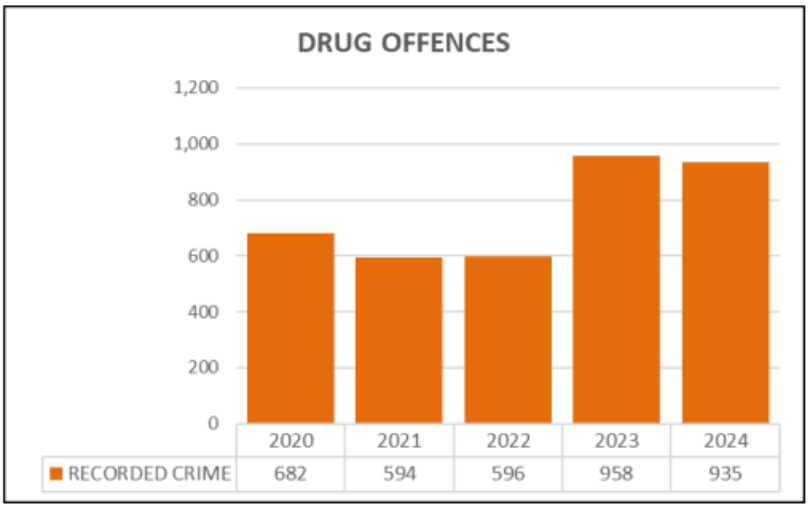
- In recent years numbers have been increasing in contrast to the England trend which has seen numbers consistently falling

- 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 a reduction of 23 Drug offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester. These volumes are however still a 37% increase from 2020 which is due to a 61% increase in the previous year.



Volumes of Drug offences recorded across Cheshire Constabulary have similarly decreased by -3% during 2024. The rate per 1,000 population in 2024 for Cheshire West and Chester (2.6) is still below the rate for the Cheshire Constabulary area (3.0), as it also was in 2023 (2.7 vs 3.1).

Emerging challenges

- Reported increases in the use of ketamine particularly amongst young people

- Preparing for the threat cased by the increase nationally in the availability of powerful synthetic opioids
- Drug and alcohol related deaths continue to rise

Next steps

- Building on the success of 'The Post' in Chester by expanding the peer-led recovery model across all Via hubs, creating a borough-wide offer delivered by trained peer mentors and volunteers. This will extend access to peer-led SMART groups, mentoring, and sober social activities strengthening recovery support, reducing stigma, and enhancing community connection across Cheshire West.
- Continue to implement the Ketamine Harm Reduction Plan in response to increasing recreational ketamine use among young people, improving understanding of local prevalence, associated risks, and service needs.
- Develop a coordinated partnership response to the potential emergence of powerful synthetic opioids, ensuring early identification, preparedness, and rapid intervention to minimise drug-related harm.
- Progress work on a comprehensive Drugs and Alcohol Needs Assessment to provide an up-to-date, evidence-based understanding of local needs and to inform future commissioning and system-wide planning.

Priority 5: Domestic Abuse

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

Context

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

Achievements in 2024/25

- DAIPS received **2,617 referrals** in 2024/25, a **2.2% increase** from the previous year.
- Of these, **39.1%** were assessed as **high risk**, 57.3% medium risk, and 3.6% standard risk.

- Top referral sources: Police (55%), Self-referrals (13.7%), Health (8.7%), Housing (3.8%).
- Demographics: **84.8% female, 15.2% male;** 25.9% aged 35-44; 2.8% had a registered disability.
- **Repeat referrals** stood at **40.4%,** with 57.3% from police and 17.9% self-referrals.
- **Gateway Recovery** Programme received **248 referrals**; 92 completed the course.
- **Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)** received **334** referrals and contributed to 727 cases in Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and risk meetings.
- **Open Access Groups** supported **546 women and 20 men** across 168 sessions, a 54% increase.
- **Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme trained 235** staff and received **175 referrals**, improving GP engagement.
- **Cheshire Police** recorded **4,761 domestic abuse crimes** in Cheshire West and Chester in 2024/25. 66% of those harmed were female; 1,021 cases were alcohol-related and 258 were drug-related.
- **78 Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs)** and **60 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs)** were issued, providing short-term protection for victims.
- **Claire's Law** 'Right to Ask' requests rose to **550**, more than double compared to three years ago.

Current picture:

Domestic abuse continues to impact individuals and families across Cheshire West and Chester, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or background. The Domestic Abuse Intervention and Prevention Service (DAIPS) Annual Report for 2024/25 outlines the progress made in delivering support, safeguarding, and strategic interventions in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021–2025.

This year, DAIPS received 2,617 referrals, a 2.2% increase from the previous year, with 39.1% assessed as high risk. The service also supported 69 Sanctuary Schemes, exceeding the strategic target of 34 safe accommodation spaces. The Gateway Recovery Programme saw 248 referrals, while 546 women attended 168 open access sessions, a 54% increase from 2023/24.

The Hospital IDVA received 334 referrals, an 83% increase compared to 2022/23, and contributed to 727 cases across risk management and MARAC meetings. Meanwhile, the IRIS programme in primary care recorded 175 referrals, with 235 staff trained, a 69% rise from the previous year.

MARAC heard 626 cases, a 32% increase from 2023/24, with 32.6% being repeat referrals. Police data showed 4,761 domestic abuse crimes in Cheshire West and Chester, and 1,606 family contacts to Children's Services where domestic abuse was the presenting issue.

This report reflects the collective efforts of statutory and voluntary partners to provide trauma-informed, inclusive, and accessible services for those harmed by domestic abuse, while also challenging and supporting those who harm. It highlights key developments in safe accommodation provision, service delivery, multi-agency collaboration, and data-driven decision-making, setting the foundation for future strategic planning.

The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment was commissioned in December 2024 and directly shaped and informed the new draft Domestic Abuse Strategy. The new Strategy 2026-30 is currently going through the political approval process and will go to Cabinet in December 2025.

The 5 priorities remain unchanged and support delivery of the strategy.

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

- Increased demand for services, with 2,617 DAIPS referrals and 40.4% repeat referrals.
- DHR Funding.

Next steps

- Develop and launch a new Domestic Abuse Strategy in autumn 2025.
- Review and update the MARAC Operating Protocol.
- Evaluate and restructure the Domestic Abuse Board governance and membership. Implement Strategic Needs Assessment recommendations to improve service delivery.

Priority 6: Serious Violence

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

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.

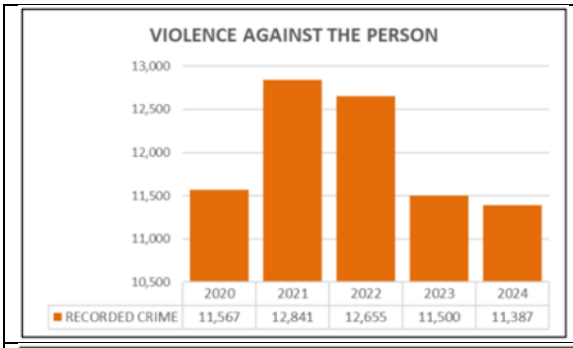
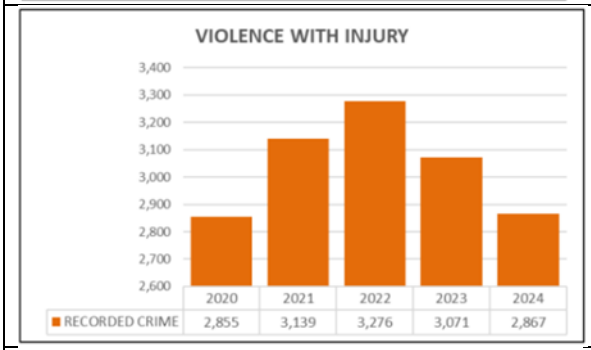
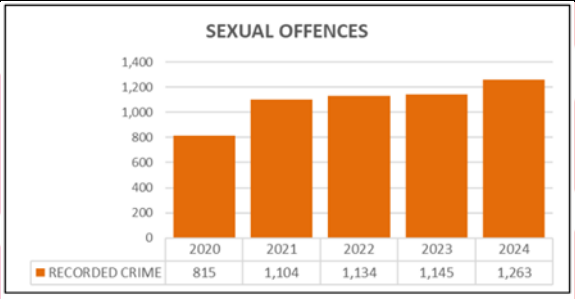
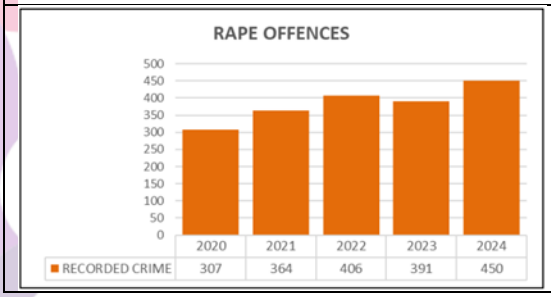
Achievements 2024/25

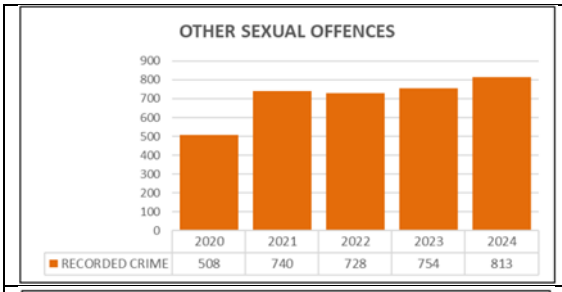
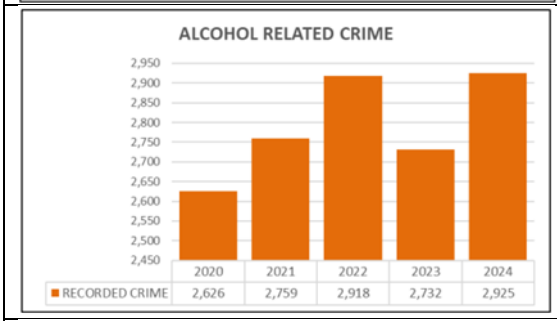
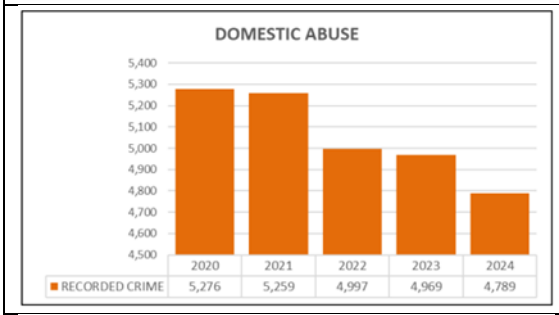
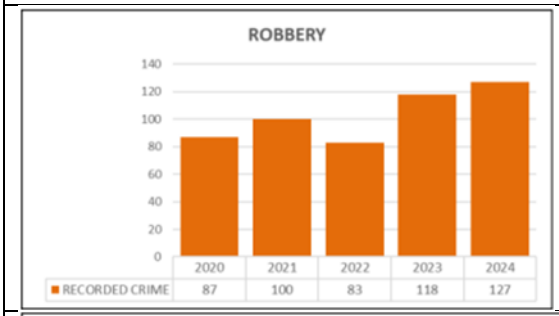
- ✓ Strategic Serious Violence Duty Board continues to support the delivery of the duty.
- ✓ Continuation of Serial Domestic Abuse Perpetrator (SDAP) co-ordinators roles to target high harm perpetrators.
- ✓ Analytical software used to support partnerships to targeted work and interventions at a local level.
- ✓ Funding of community sports for Serious Violence reduction, that supports the development of sporting interventions for vulnerable young people at risk.
- ✓ Commissioned targeted intervention providers for young people at risk in involvement in violent crime and exploitation.
- ✓ Commissioned targeted interventions for victims and perpetrators of Domestic Abuse.

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 2.5% in Violence Against the Person in Cheshire West and Chester (213 less crimes).
	In the last twelve months there has been a decrease of 6.9% in Violence with Injury in Cheshire West and Chester; this decreasing by 204 crimes when compared to the previous year (2023).
	In the last twelve months there has been an increase of 6.8% (63 more offences) in Stalking offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.
	During the last twelve months there has been an increase of 9.8% (118 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 7.5% (59 more offences) in Other Sexual offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.
	In the last twelve months there has been an 6.8% increase (193 more offences) in Alcohol Related offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.
	In the last twelve months there has been a further decrease of 3.7% (180 fewer offences) in Domestic Abuse offences recorded in Cheshire West and Chester.
	During the last twelve months there has been an increase of 7.3% (9 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 1.8% decrease (2 less 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 Stalking, Sexual offences, Rape, Alcohol related crime, Robber, over the last 12 months there have also been decreases in Violence Against the Person and 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. Funding commitments in the final quarter of the year continue to present challenges with decision making and commissioning.
- Ensuring strategic commissioning through the duty doesn't duplicate existing activity commissioned locally or adds value locally.
- Continue to develop an operational understanding of commissioned activity to ensure its utilised effectively.

Next steps

- Workforce development – trauma informed practice.
- Utilise youth endowment fund research to inform all commissioning decisions.
- Develop a multiagency video to raise the profile of the duty, voice of the child, risk factors of violence, and what to do including referring to commissioned activity.
- Continue to commission activity for targeted interventions for young people at risk.
- Continue to commission activity for targeted interventions for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- Continue to co-commission and grant fund sports for violence reduction for at risk individuals.

Priority 7: Violence Against Women & Girls

Lead Agency: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Context

The purpose of including this priority is for partners to work collaboratively 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 2024/25:

Over the past year the Cheshire West Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Commission has been working to understand and address the deep-rooted issues that lead to violence against women and girls with a focus on those aged 16 to 25.

The Commission, set to conclude in summer 2025, considers VAWG as a preventable issue requiring coordinated, early intervention across systems. The Commission recognises that safety and wellbeing are shaped by the environments we live in, the systems we interact with, and the culture around us.

At the heart of this work has been listening to the voices of young women and girls and the role of boys and men as allies. Their insights have guided the Commission’s priorities and helped shape a set of practical recommendations.

The Commission brings together a wide mix of partners from local authorities, Police, Health, Education, and specialist services to grassroots organisations. It has considered what works well, gaps and emerging issues and how things could be better.

The recommendations of the Commission cover:

- Better services: a stocktake of current services make sure support is accessible, consistent, and aligned with national best practice.
- Empowerment and culture change: Resources for schools, families, and workplaces to spark honest conversations about relationships, challenge harmful myths, and give young people tools they can trust, especially when it comes to navigating the online world.
- Safer spaces: From parks to public transport, the Commission wants everyday places to feel safer and more inclusive, shaped by the voices of women and girls.
- Stronger systems: A shared commitment across organisations, with visible leadership, pledges, and champions to keep the momentum going.
- The Commission will provide regular updates to the CSP. CSP partners are encouraged to engage with the Commission through provision of insight. evidence and expertise.

Current picture:

VAWG offences recorded by Cheshire Constabulary across Cheshire West and Chester decreased by 5% (-361 offences/6,829 total offences) in 2024, this resulted in the rate per 1,000 population also reducing from 20.1 to 19.1 which is below the Force rate (19.2).

Volumes of VAWG offences across Cheshire West and Chester peaked in May (623 offences), volumes also reached over 600 in a number of other months (March; 619 offences, July; 615 offences & June; 613 offences); these high demand months are reflected in Force volumes. The lowest volume month of October (513 offences) coincides with the lowest volume month for Domestic related offences.

Emerging challenges

- Challenges to accessing data relating to VAWG for Cheshire West.
- Resources and capacity to deliver and drive forward recommendations of the VAWG Commission and associated projects.

Next steps

- Consideration and implementation of relevant recommendations arising from the Tackling VAWG commission.

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 2025/26. 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