



**SaferCentral**

Community Safety Partnership

# CSP Strategy 2019 -2021

# Contents

Glossary of Terms	Page 2
Introduction	Page 3
Our Visions and Aims	Page 4
Central Bedfordshire Overview	Page 5
Legislation, Requirements and Acts	Page 7
Achievement Against Our Priorities	Page 9
Issues for Consideration	Page 12
The Community Safety Partnership	Page 13
What You Told Us	Page 14
Safer Central Priorities 2019-2021	Page 16
Priority One – Ending Exploitation	Page 17
Priority Two – Tackling Domestic and Sexual Abuse	Page 19
Knowledge Gap	Page 21
Appendix 1	Page 23
Appendix 2	Page 24

# Glossary of Terms

Acronym	Description
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
BDAP	Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership
CAP	Community Alcohol Partnership
CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DA	Domestic Abuse
DCLG	Department of Communities & Local Government
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
MARAC	Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference
MDS	Modern Day Slavery
SAC	Serious Acquisitive Crime
SOC	Serious Organised Crime
THB	Trafficking of Human Beings
VAP	Violence Against Person
YOS	Youth Offending Service

## Introduction

We are pleased to introduce Central Bedfordshire's Community Safety Partnership's Strategy for 2019-2021.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) brings together the five responsible authorities; Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Bedfordshire Police, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and Offender Management Services. The CSP also works closely with partners from the Youth Offending Service (YOS), Public Health and the voluntary and community sector. Collectively we work together to make Central Bedfordshire a safe place to live.

The CSP published its first Community Safety Plan in 2011, and over the last 8 years we have worked together to tackle crime and disorder in Central Bedfordshire, to make our residents feel safe and to protect and support the vulnerable within our communities. We are proud of our achievements and are committed to preventing crime, disorder, protecting our communities and bringing offenders to justice.

This strategy reflects the outcome of a detailed consultation, which along with partnership data has enabled us to identify the priorities which we will focus on over the next two years. Understanding what matters most to our residents and what makes them feel safe is at the heart of our strategy. Together we want to build safer and stronger communities where our residents feel included and listened to.

We will focus on our most vulnerable residents and communities, on the things that matter most to our residents and on the crimes, which cause the most threat, harm and risk to our residents and we believe that the best way to tackle community safety issues is by agencies working together, with our communities, putting the emphasis on early intervention and prevention.

Over the next two years we will see further changes in legislation and policy change which will influence how we work. In Central Bedfordshire we will see further economic growth and increases in our population. It is within this ever-changing environment that the CSP must prioritise its work to ensure that Central Bedfordshire is a safe place to live and work.

This strategy sets out the community safety priorities we will focus on over the next two years.

# Our Vision and Aims

## The Community Safety Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of five responsible authorities;

- Bedfordshire Police
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Offender Management Services
- Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

It has a statutory responsibility for reducing crime and disorder, tackling substance misuse and reducing re-offending in Central Bedfordshire.

## Partnership Strategy

Each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is required to produce a strategy which builds on the Partnership Strategic Assessment<sup>1</sup>, it sets out the crime and disorder in the local area and identifies the priorities which the CSP will focus its efforts into addressing. This strategy covers the period between April 2019 to March 2021 and sets out the expectations of the CSP, what we will deliver and how we will work with partners and the community.

This Partnership Strategy will help to develop and plan our activities and projects to meet the needs of our residents. It is about providing an intelligence led approach to community safety, ensuring that we get the right resources in the right place at the right time, to sustain reductions in crime and disorder.

## Our Vision

**“Working together to make Central Bedfordshire a safer place to live”**

Community safety is an area of concern for all communities. It is consistently a high public priority and one that can affect the quality of life for individuals and entire communities.

Partnership approaches to tackling crime and disorder are largely built on the principle that no single agency can deal with, or be responsible for dealing with, complex community safety and crime problems. This is why we work as ‘Safer Central’, a partnership that tackles issues together, for sustainable improvements and improved outcomes for the communities.

## Our Aims

Safer Central aims to reduce crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and other behaviour affecting the local environment, as well as reducing the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, reducing the fear of crime and increasing public confidence.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Partnership Strategic Assessment is an annual statutory requirement of every CSP. Using partnership data, information and intelligence, risks and vulnerabilities are highlighted, priority areas identified and recommendations made.

# Central Bedfordshire Overview

## Demography

Central Bedfordshire is a mainly rural location in the East of England and is a desirable place to live and work. It covers 716 square kilometres and is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest unitary<sup>2</sup> local authority in England and the 15<sup>th</sup> largest by population size. The most recent population estimates indicate that there are approximately 280,000<sup>3</sup> people living in Central Bedfordshire. The population is forecast to increase to approximately 295,800 by 2021 and 309,200 by 2025.

Overall, levels of deprivation in Central Bedfordshire are low with many areas in the least deprived in England. Out of a total of 157, five lower super output areas (LSOA)<sup>4</sup> are in the most deprived 10-20% in England and a further eight are in the most deprived 20-30%. However, the number of people living in the most deprived areas in Central Bedfordshire is much lower than the England average.

The majority of the population in Central Bedfordshire is 'White British'<sup>5</sup>, with a slightly larger proportion of 'White Irish' and 'White Gypsy' when compared with the England average. Central Bedfordshire has a lower 'black, minority ethnic' (BME) population (10.3%) compared to the England average (20.2%).

## Crime & Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

In 2017-18 there was a 14% increase in police recorded crime in Central Bedfordshire compared to the previous year, nationally there was an 11%<sup>6</sup> increase.

Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)<sup>7</sup> has increased by 30% over the last three years, however, it should be noted that a large proportion of this increase is due to a change in the way in which domestic burglary is recorded and not an increase in actual offences.

Violence Against the Person (VAP) offences, have increased by 22% between 2015-18, this increase is in line with levels seen nationally.

There has been a significant increase in the number of police recorded serious sexual offences, the 'Crime Survey for England and Wales' suggest that the rate of sexual offences is not increasing, and the data reflects a greater willingness to report sexual offences. Sexual offences continue to be under-reported nationally, with less than 30% of victims reporting crime to the police.

---

<sup>2</sup> A type of local authority that has a single tier and is responsible for all local government functions within its area

<sup>3</sup> Office of National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates 2017

<sup>4</sup> Lower super output area – a geographic area used by the Office of National Statistics for the purpose of reporting small area statistics. Each LSOA will have a population of around 1,600

<sup>5</sup> OCSI (2018) Local Insight Profile for Central Bedfordshire area – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018

<sup>6</sup> ONS (2018) Statistical Bulletin: crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018

<sup>7</sup> Serious acquisitive crime includes Domestic burglary, robbery, theft from motor vehicle and theft of motor vehicle offences

Reported incidents of ASB have decreased by 11% over the last three years, with the most significant decrease in environmental ASB, which includes graffiti, vandalism and fly-tipping.

Central Bedfordshire suffers with seasonal crime patterns, such as increases in domestic burglaries during the winter months, increases in violent crime when large sporting events take place and increases in ASB during the summer months. Due to its geographical make up, rural crime in smaller villages, hamlets and around farms causes our residents concern.

We also know that there are still crimes that remain considerably under-reported such as domestic abuse, sexual abuse and modern-day slavery. There are many reasons for under-reporting which may include the victim not identifying themselves as a victim, the victim not having the confidence to come forward or they may feel that they will not be believed.

## Substance Misuse

According to data estimates there continue to be significant numbers of people who are dependent on drugs or alcohol that are not in treatment, as well as groups who appear to be under-represented in the treatment population.

The 'hidden harms' to families and young people, caused by drug and alcohol use, continue to cause concern. The misuse of drug and alcohol on those 'affected others' also has implications on a range of residents. Nationally, the level of alcohol-related health harms continues to rise and there is nothing to suggest that Central Bedfordshire is experiencing anything different.

## Mental Health

Mental health is everyone's business and good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our physical health, relationships, education, training, work and achieving our potential. In Central Bedfordshire approximately 26,200<sup>8</sup> residents are estimated to have a common mental health disorder (anxiety, depression, obsessional compulsive disorder) and 11,700 to have two or more mental health disorders. As the population of Central Bedfordshire increases so will the number of those with mental health issues.

---

<sup>8</sup> Central Bedfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – [www.jsna.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.jsna.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

# Legislation, Requirements and Acts

## 2016-2019

There are key pieces of legislation and statutory requirements that impact the work of the CSP such as the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Police Reform Act 2002, the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Policing and Crime Act 2017. In addition to these the national policing landscape has been changing rapidly. The key legislative changes that have impacted or influence the CSP over the last few years are:

**HM Government Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-2020<sup>9</sup>:** This strategy follows on from the 2010 strategy and states that no woman should live in fear of violence, and every girl should grow up knowing she is safe, so she can have the best start in life. They advise that tackling this issue is everybody's business from health providers and law enforcement to employers and friends and families. The strategy aims to enable women to disclose abuse, to improve confidence in the criminal justice system and to bring more perpetrators to justice. To do this they want to see a reduction in the prevalence of abuse, an increase in reporting and in successful prosecutions, earlier identification and intervention and a partnership approach in tackling the issue.

**Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) 2018<sup>10</sup>:** This new strategy has updated and strengthened the previous CONTEST strategy and reflects the findings of a fundamental review of all aspects of counter-terrorism, to ensure the best response to the heightened threat in coming years of all forms of terrorism.

The strategy has four strands:

- Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

**Serious and Organised Crime Strategy – November 2018<sup>11</sup>:** This Central Government strategy recognises that Serious Organised Crime (SOC) is the deadliest national security threat faced by the UK.

The strategy has the following overarching objectives:

- Relentless disruption and targeted actions against the highest harm, serious and organised criminals and networks;
- Building the highest levels of defence and resilience in vulnerable people, communities, businesses and systems;

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-2016-to-2020>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2018>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-and-organised-crime-strategy-2018>

- Stopping the problem at source, identifying and supporting those at risk of engaging in criminality;
- Establishing a single, whole-system approach.

**Homelessness Reduction Act 2017<sup>12</sup>:** This act came into force on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 and placed an increased duty on local authorities to assess an applicant's need for housing and to prevent and relieve homelessness.

**Policing and Crime Act 2017<sup>13</sup>:** The purpose of the Act is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces, including through closer collaboration with other emergency services, enhancing the democratic accountability of police forces and fire and rescue services, building public confidence in policing, strengthen protection for persons under investigation and ensure that the police and other law enforcement agencies have the powers they need to prevent, detect and investigate crime and further safeguard children and young people from exploitation.

**Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018<sup>14</sup>:** Central Government is committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. This strategy is backed by £100 million of funding. Ending rough sleeping starts with secure and affordable housing.

**Psychoactive Substances Act 2016<sup>15</sup>:** The act makes it an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, import or export psychoactive substances. It includes provision of civil sanctions to enable the police and local authorities to respond and provides powers to stop and search.

**Offensive Weapons Bill 2018<sup>16</sup>:** This act was brought in to tackle the increase in serious violence. It bans the delivery of knives and corrosives bought online to residential addresses. It also bans possession of weapons such as 'zombie' knives, knuckle dusters and death stars.

## 2019-2021

**Preventing and Tackling Forced Marriage:** Review of mandatory reporting duty. Requiring certain professionals to report cases of forced marriage.

**Improving Access to Social Housing for Victims of Domestic Abuse in Refuges and Other Temporary Accommodation:** New statutory guidance for local authorities, making it clear that local authorities are expected to disapply residency test for those victims who have fled another area due to domestic abuse. Setting out how local authorities can give appropriate priority to support victims to remain safely in their own home.

**Powers for Dealing with Unauthorised Development & Encampments:** The government is looking for more evidence on the impact of unauthorised developments and encampments and reviewing current tools and powers available to deal with the issue.

---

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/3/contents/enacted>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rough-sleeping-strategy>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/2/contents/enacted>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offensive-weapons-bill-2018-overarching-documents>

# Achievement Against our Priorities 2016-2019

Priority One
Protecting the Vulnerable – including Modern Day Slavery (MDS), Trafficking of Human Beings (THB), Prevent and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
What we achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unseen<sup>17</sup>, a leading national charity, funded by the Police Crime Commissioner delivered MDS training to over a 1000 frontline staff in Bedfordshire. This training increased practitioners understanding of MDS, advised how to spot the signs, how to report and what support is available.</li> <li>• CBCs Community Safety team has established strong links with the Adult Safeguarding Team and have worked closely on a number of suspected MDS cases. This has seen an improvement in data sharing between the two teams and also an increase in intelligence submissions to Bedfordshire Police.</li> <li>• Operation MAKESAFE visits have regularly taken place. This is a national scheme developed to raise awareness of CSE in the business community, such as hotels, taxi companies and licensed premises. This has been extended further to fast food outlets in our area, with CBC Public Protection Officers being trained to deliver a CSE awareness input to retailers whilst carrying out routine visits.</li> <li>• A review of CSE in Bedfordshire took place which identified strengths, weaknesses and gaps in our Pan Bedfordshire approach to CSE. Recommendations from this report will be taken forward by the CSP over the next two years.</li> <li>• In Spring 2018 a Serious Youth Violence Panel was established to coordinate intelligence-led and evidence based multi-agency interventions with individuals who are involved in, at risk of involvement in or directly affected by serious violence and gang related activity. Its overarching purpose is to safeguard communities, to prevent association/involvement in gang behaviour, disrupt criminal behaviour and provide support and exit strategies where appropriate.</li> <li>• The Central Bedfordshire Prevent Group was established in May 2017, the group is chaired and coordinated by CBC and has representation from a number of key partners, including statutory authorities and third sector agencies.</li> <li>• A Central Bedfordshire Prevent<sup>18</sup> Protocol has been created, this informs professionals across Central Bedfordshire of their duties and roles under Prevent, how to spot signs of radicalisation, how to make referrals and what support is available.</li> <li>• Prevent training is available for all front-line professionals, with many partners making the training mandatory.</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> Unseen is a national charity working towards a world without modern slavery through supporting victims, training and awareness activities – [www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org)

<sup>18</sup> Prevent is the Governments Counter Terrorism Strategy

## Priority Two

Dealing with Domestic Abuse (DA)– including black and ethnic minority groups, under 18s and medium risk victims

### What we achieved

- The multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) has been reviewed and an action plan formulated.
- The Bedfordshire Learning Academy has taken the lead for all domestic abuse training. A full review of training courses was undertaken in September 2018.
- The Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership (BDAP) website has been reviewed and social media accounts launched.
- A new voluntary perpetrator programme has been commissioned. In addition to perpetrator casework, the service provides an outreach worker who will support professionals in their knowledge, case queries and assist in upskilling officers who work with perpetrators.
- A successful bid to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has enabled specialist accommodation-based support and service for domestic abuse victims. Support will be to those clients currently living in refuge and are ready to move on and those who do not currently have access to refuge provision.
- A Domestic Abuse Champions scheme was established. These champions are advocates within their own teams/departments for those who require domestic abuse information and to raise awareness.
- In January 2018, a local charity Stepping Stones launched the Stepping Out Project for women aged 16+ with or without children. Dedicated workers have provided face to face case support, group work and local drop in sessions.
- From November 2017, CBC started working with a national charity on the Toy Box service. Toy boxes are for 0-15-year olds and are made available for children and young people fleeing domestic abuse or who are in refuge.
- A DA aide memoir card has been created and printed for GPs. This guides a GP through key questions they should be asking patients who may be affected by DA, together with a referral pathway and key contacts.
- A Bedfordshire DA Service Directory has been created that details all available services and their contact detail.

### Priority Three

Protecting our Communities – including Environmental ASB and nuisance motorcycles

#### What we achieved

- Operation METEOR, Bedfordshire Police’s initiative to target off-road nuisance motorcycles, continues to target hotspot areas in Central Bedfordshire
- CBC and Bedfordshire Police worked together to obtain an injunction against seven named persistent street drinkers in Leighton Buzzard. The individuals are prohibited from having open containers of alcohol without a lawful reason and from urinating/vomiting in the street.
- In response to the increase in reports of alcohol related ASB a Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) was set up in Biggleswade. The CAP model brings together local retailers, licensees, Trading Standards, police, health service, education providers and other local stakeholders. To date the CAP has seen a reduced number of attempted sales of alcohol by under 18s, an improved relationship with licensees and statutory authorities and a 9% decrease in alcohol related ASB.
- Best Bar None, a UK wide programme designed to improve standards within licensed premises through partnership working between trade, the police, local authorities and other partners was launched in Central Bedfordshire in 2014. The scheme continued and has grown over the last three years, expanding from Dunstable to Houghton Regis and Leighton Linlade.
- The number of nuisance motorcycle ASB incident reported to Bedfordshire Police has decreased by 51% over the last three years
- The proportion of ASB incidents that relate to nuisance motorcycles have reduced from 29% of all ASB incidents to 16%.

## Issues for Consideration 2016-2019

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse was identified as an emerging issue in our previous Strategic Assessment due to a concerning decrease in the number of recorded offences. In 2018 a Sexual Abuse Profile was completed which aimed to improve knowledge and understanding of the nature and scale of sexual abuse in Central Bedfordshire, to share this knowledge with partners and together increase awareness and reporting of offences.

The profile estimated that the reporting rate of sexual abuse among adults may be as low as 2% in Central Bedfordshire, much lower than the national average of 27%. A second phase of the profile is planned for 2019, which will aim to understand the under reporting in greater detail and build up a more detailed picture of both the victims and perpetrators in Central Bedfordshire.

### Cyber Crime

Cyber-crime continues to be an issue of significant concern and an area which we have little knowledge. Due to the sheer scale of all forms of cyber-crime, and that much goes undetected and unreported, there is no reliable data available to reveal the true extent of this crime. We will continue to work with Bedfordshire Police to try to understand this complex crime and its impact in Central Bedfordshire.

### Unauthorised Encampments

This was identified as an emerging issue last year. Unauthorised encampments are an emotive topic in the community given the impact on the environment and the influence on perceptions of crime and safety by the community. The rural nature of Central Bedfordshire means that the area suffers with a larger number of unauthorised encampments than Luton and Bedford.

In 2017 there was a large number of encampments in the south of the area, considerable target hardening took place in vulnerable locations and so far in 2018 there has been a reduction in the number of unauthorised encampments.

This year Central Bedfordshire Council has been successful in obtaining an injunction which prevents 11 named people and five families from setting up encampments within specified areas and protects 15 parcels of land for the next two years.

# The Community Safety Partnership

## Safer Central

In late 2017 a full review of the CSP was completed, this review identified, from both partners and residents feedback, that work was needed to increase our residents awareness of the CSP. In March 2018 it was agreed by the CSP Executive Group that the CSP would be branded as 'Safer Central', alongside the name change a new website, social media pages and community survey were launched. The aim of this branding was to increase awareness of community safety and the work of the CSP whilst enabling our residents to provide feedback on community safety issues and having an influence on the work of the partnership.

## Website & Social Media

The [Safer Central](#) website was launched in July 2018 and provides visitors with an overview of the work of the Community Safety Partnership and acts as a signposting tool providing links to relevant partners and support agencies.



In May 2018 Safer Central launched on social media sites, Facebook and Twitter, providing followers with regular updates on community safety issues and accounts. Since launch our posts on both sites have reached almost 100,000 social media accounts.

## Safer Central Survey

It is essential that as well as analysing data and consulting with our CSP partners, that the views of our community about community safety issues are understood and addressed. In Spring 2018 a new an improved survey was designed and launched – [Safer Central Community Survey](#).

The survey contains a number of multiple response questions covering a variety of community safety topics, in addition there are several opportunities to provide further detail. Since its launch we have received more responses than we had in the previous three years collectively, including an extremely large number of comments which have provided us with a valuable insight into residents views.

The survey will be one method for us to determine to our residents' views going forward, it will be refreshed annually, and responses reviewed regularly.

## What you told us

The Safer Central Survey has been open to residents since late May 2018 and by the end of November we had received just under 700 responses.

What you have told us so far:

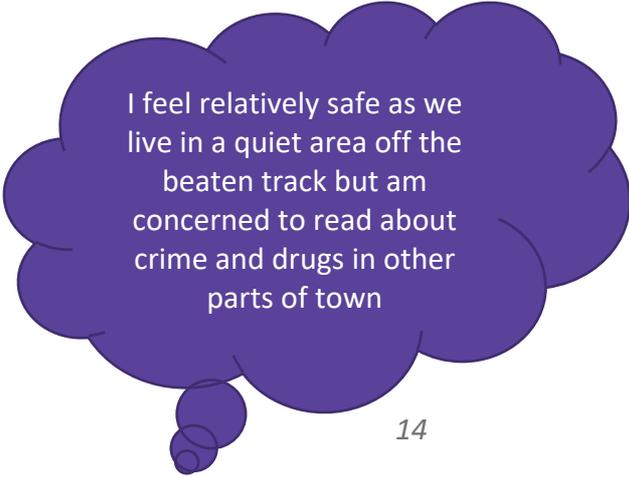
- 88% of residents feel that people in their local area get on well together
- 90% of residents are concerned about crime in their area
- 54% think Central Bedfordshire is a safe place to live
- 83% think that fly-tipping is an issue
- 45% think people drinking and being rowdy in a public place is an issue
- 80% think dog fouling is an issue
- 59% think violent crime is an issue
- 86% think vehicle crime is an issue
- 92% think burglary is an issue



Burglary, stolen bikes and theft from cars has definitely increased over the last 12 months



Fairly safe as a place to live, generally low crime date and good community spirit.



I feel relatively safe as we live in a quiet area off the beaten track but am concerned to read about crime and drugs in other parts of town

## What can we do to make you feel safer?

One of our main aims is to make our residents feel safe, so we ask the question “what can we do to make you feel safer?”. Below are a few quotes from our residents, which highlight some common themes from our survey.



More community participation, looking out for individuals and one another



Greater visibility, more proactive steps to engage with the community.



Improve communications!  
What crimes have happened in your area this week? As locals what we can do to help. What we need to look out for.



Simple things – signs up where dogs aren't allowed, empty litter bins, follow up on drug dealers.

## What we will do in 2019-2021

- We will increase our communications with our residents. We will use a variety of communication tools and methods to deliver key message on community safety issues and activities in your local area.
- We will actively seek opportunities to directly engage with local residents, providing information, listening to residents' concerns and offering suitable advice and support.
- We will continue to promote the Safer Central Survey, increasing its accessibility to maximise the opportunities for our residents to provide feedback.

# Safer Central Priorities – 2019-2021

## How we decide

The CSP Strategic Assessment is an intelligence led process that identifies key crime, disorder and ASB issues affecting the residents of Central Bedfordshire. It considers what needs to be achieved to help improve community safety, including how the local community can feel assured and confident that their concerns are being addressed.

Part of the Strategic Assessment process involves horizon scanning<sup>19</sup> to understand the overall community safety environment, both locally and nationally and any changes or issues that could affect community safety in the next few years. A variety of sources of information are used in the process including new/amended legislation, government publications, research publications, local or national plans, trends in community views and local and national policies and strategies.

To ensure a targeted approach, a risk matrix is used to identify the most significant community safety issues in Central Bedfordshire. It uses a variety of data sets to identify the great demands and considers the harm to individuals, the community, the environment and the economic and financial implications. The likelihood of each issue is also considered in terms of the frequency and volume.

By using the matrix and the results of the Safer Central Survey we can identify those issues which are high risk as well as addressing public perceptions on crime and community safety.

The process has identified there are two priorities for Safer Central for the next two years and has identified one key knowledge gap:

## Priorities 2019-2021

<b>Priority One</b>	<b>Ending Exploitation</b>
<b>Priority Two</b>	<b>Tackling Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse</b>
<b>Knowledge Gap</b>	<b>Prevalence and Impact of Substance Misuse</b>

<sup>19</sup> Horizon scanning – a formal process of gathering, analysing and sharing information to support decision making

## Priority One – Ending Exploitation

Both national and local awareness of the prevalence of exploitation has increased over the last three years. The number and variety of cases being identified has increased as a direct result of this improved awareness. Due to the hidden nature of exploitation, the increase is more likely to reflect greater awareness than an increase in actual instances.

Although prevalence of exploitation appears to be lower in Central Bedfordshire than in the other two local authority areas in Bedfordshire, the large geographical and rural nature of Central Bedfordshire make it a prime location to be targeted. Exploitation is a cross cutting issue, it encompasses County Lines<sup>20</sup>, cuckooing, MDS, THB, CSE, serious youth violence and domestic extremism.

Ending Exploitation
<p>Exploitation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern Day Slavery</li> <li>• Trafficking of Human Beings</li> <li>• Child Sexual Exploitation</li> <li>• County Lines</li> <li>• Knife Crime</li> <li>• Domestic Extremism and Terrorism</li> </ul>
The issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 there has been an increase in recorded offences of MDS both locally and nationally. This increase is a direct result of greater awareness, increased reporting, activities and operations targeting these offences.</li> <li>• County Lines relates to the supply of Class A drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) from an urban hub into rural towns or country locations. This is facilitated by a group who have developed networks across geographical boundaries to access and exploit existing drug markets.</li> <li>• The exploitation of young and vulnerable people is a common feature in County Lines, whether for the storage or supply of drugs, the movement of cash or to secure the dwellings from which the drugs are sold.</li> <li>• High levels of violence are associated with County Lines nationally, including the use of weapons to threaten and intimidate.</li> <li>• Cuckooing involves forcing or coercing vulnerable people to allow their homes to be used for storing and/or selling drugs. Common vulnerabilities include those who misuse drugs or alcohol, elderly, those with mental health issues, disabilities or physical health problems. Victims often do not see themselves as vulnerable and may be receiving payments or substances in return for the use of their property.</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> For County Lines definition please see Appendix 1

- Nationally cuckooing was a feature of 77% of County Line offences. Cuckooing offences have been identified in Central Bedfordshire.
- As with many forms of exploitation, CSE is a hidden and under-reported issue, and the increased number of identified cases is strongly linked to improved awareness, insight and professional curiosity.
- The number of knife crime offences in Central Bedfordshire remains quite low, however, the Serious Violence Strategy 2018 identified that Bedfordshire Police Force area has one of the highest rates of increase since 2014.
- Knife related incidents are strongly linked to County Lines, Organised Crime Groups, Serious Youth Violence and CSE.

### **What we will do**

- We will work with partners to ensure that frontline staff across the Partnership are trained on the early identification of potential victims.
- We will raise awareness with professionals and the community on how to spot the signs of potential exploitation, how to report concerns and what support services are available.
- The Partnership will work together to ensure that information is shared on current issues in a timely manner to ensure a fast response to known issues.
- Deliver a robust communication plan, using a variety of communication tools and methods to raise awareness of all forms of exploitation.

### **Outcomes**

- Earlier identification of those who are vulnerable
- Earlier intervention with those who may/are being exploited
- Earlier access to relevant support services
- Strengthened partnership relationships and enhanced partnership working
- Targeting resources and support services to areas who need additional support
- Earlier identification and intervention should reduce the demand on public services
- Improved public confidence
- Increased feeling of safety

## Priority Two – Tackling Domestic & Sexual Abuse

Domestic abuse was identified as a priority for the CSP in the 2016-2019 Strategic Assessment and it continues to be an issue of concern, our previous assessment also identified sexual abuse as an emerging issue and further research has highlighted the strong links between domestic and sexual abuse.

Both offences are known to be highly under-reported, both nationally and locally, and it is essential that the Partnership works together to raise awareness of both issues and the support that is available. We need to enable those affected by domestic and sexual abuse to be able to come forward and ensure that suitable support services are available.

<b>Tackling Domestic &amp; Sexual Abuse</b>
<p>Domestic abuse includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forced Marriage</li> <li>• Honour Based Violence</li> <li>• Stalking &amp; Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>The issue</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One in four women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, and each week in England and Wales two women will be killed by a current or former partner.</li> <li>• In 2016/17 nationally, 13 men died at the hands of their partner or ex-partner.</li> <li>• On average a UK police force will receive 100 calls per day reporting domestic abuse.</li> <li>• Over the last three years there has been a 33% increase in the number of domestic abuse crimes recorded in Central Bedfordshire.</li> <li>• In the last 12 months there has been a 10% increase in repeat victims of domestic abuse in Central Bedfordshire.</li> <li>• Central Bedfordshire’s Health and Wellbeing Survey 2017 found that almost half of those young people interviewed had experienced shouting and arguing at home between adults.</li> <li>• In England and Wales, approximately 85,000 women and 12,000 men are raped and nearly half a million adults are sexually assaulted each year.</li> <li>• 1 in 5 women aged 16-59 have experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16.</li> </ul>
<b>What we will do</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work closely with the Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership (BDAP) and CBCs Domestic Abuse Corporate Board to deliver community safety actions.</li> <li>• The CSP, working closely with others, will look to identify opportunities to raise awareness within marginalised groups and look to increase reporting and access to support services.</li> </ul>

- We will ensure that all opportunities to raise awareness are used, including Community Safety events.
- We will support the work of BDAP and ensure that any campaigns are promoted through the community safety network.
- The Partnership will use its established relationship with Town & Parish Councils and other community groups to raise awareness of domestic and sexual abuse and the support services available.
- We will work closely with partners including Bedfordshire Police, Public Health and The Emerald Centre<sup>21</sup> to increase awareness of sexual abuse and to promote support services available.
- We will review and update all CSP Domestic Homicide Review procedures and policies.

### Outcomes

- Earlier identification of those who are vulnerable
- Increased reporting
- Earlier intervention with those who are vulnerable
- Earlier access to relevant support services
- Strengthened partnership relationship and enhanced partnership working

---

<sup>21</sup> The Emerald Centre is Bedfordshire's Sexual Assault Referral Centre – offer free and practical help to anyone in Bedfordshire who has experience sexual violence and/or abuse.

## Knowledge Gap

Substance misuse is linked to a variety of community safety issues from the illegal use and supply of drugs, the committing of crime to fund drug or alcohol dependency through to behaviour seen on our streets by those under the influence. The impact of substance misuse on community safety issues can be complex, given that it affects both victims and offenders, and some people may be both. Due to the complex nature of this subject it is not clear what direct impact substance misuse is having on community safety issues in Central Bedfordshire, for this reason the partnership needs to focus on increasing its knowledge and understanding.

<b>Prevalence &amp; Impact of Substance Misuse</b>
Includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal use/supply of drugs</li> <li>• Alcohol</li> </ul>
<b>What we know</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drugs and alcohol are linked to a number of community safety issues including ASB, CSE, County Lines, MDS, Street Drinking, Homelessness and violent crime.</li> <li>• The impact of drugs and alcohol misuse on community safety issues can be extremely complex.</li> <li>• A significant number of people who are dependent on alcohol and drugs are not currently receiving any treatment or support.</li> <li>• It is estimated the social and economic cost of drug supply nationally is £10.7 billion per year.</li> <li>• Individuals with substance misuse issues often have other complex vulnerabilities and needs.</li> <li>• Drugs and drug dealing are a significant concern to Central Bedfordshire residents.</li> <li>• The higher frequency of alcohol consumption is strongly linked with higher levels of drugs use across all types of drugs.</li> <li>• Our residents do not feel enough is being done to tackle drug use and the ASB associated with it.</li> </ul>
<b>What we don't know</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trend in drug use locally and the implication of usage.</li> <li>• Lack of clarity of the roles and responsibilities of partners.</li> <li>• Clear messages which encourage low risk drinking or support the reduction of alcohol harm.</li> <li>• The nature and extent of problematic drug and alcohol use among those accessing mental health services.</li> </ul>

### What we will do

- We will work closely with Bedfordshire Police to tackle drug related issues in Central Bedfordshire.
- We will continue our Community Alcohol Partnership and explore opportunities to extend this into other areas of Central Bedfordshire.
- We will extend the Best Bar None scheme into other areas of Central Bedfordshire.
- Establish an effective partnership approach to enable early identification of problematic drug and alcohol misuse and a shared understanding on local service pathways.
- Improve communications with the community on substance misuse, it's impact and harm caused.
- We will work closely with Public Health to deliver the community safety recommendations within their Drug & Alcohol Health Needs Assessment 2018.

## Appendix 1 – Definitions

<p><b>Human Trafficking</b></p> <p>The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms or coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payment or benefits to achieve the consent of person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour, or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.</p>	<p><b>CSE</b></p> <p>Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the aged of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.</p>
<p><b>County Lines</b></p> <p>County Lines is the supply of drugs from urban cities to market towns, coastal areas and rural locations by young people, using a branded mobile phone line. The group, including exploited victims, travel regularly to move money and drugs between the urban hub and the locations where the drugs are sold. County Lines are often linked to gangs, criminal networks, violence and weapons.</p>	<p><b>Cuckooing</b></p> <p>County Lines groups will target new premises by pursuing vulnerable individuals. They will seek a relationship with the individual to gain access to their home. Once they gain control over the victim, whether through drug dependency, debt or part of relations the group will move in and set up their drugs business.</p>
<p><b>Modern Day Slavery</b></p> <p>Modern slavery is the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or by other means of exploitation. Individuals may be trafficked into, out of or within the UK, and they may be trafficked for a number of reasons including sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude and organ harvesting</p>	<p><b>Honour Based Violence</b></p> <p>Honour based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture.</p>
<p><b>Forced Marriage</b></p> <p>Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or more of the parties is married without his or her consent or against his or her will.</p>	

## Appendix 2 – Safer Central

### Contacts

The Safer Central Team can be contacted at:



[Community.safety@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Community.safety@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



0300 300 8301



[www.facebook.com/safercentral](https://www.facebook.com/safercentral)



[www.twitter.com/safercentral](https://www.twitter.com/safercentral)

Website – [www.safercentral.org](http://www.safercentral.org)

**Have your say**





---

**SaferCentral**

Community Safety Partnership