

# Safer Telford and Wrekin

## Strategy

2021-2024

June 2021







# Introduction from Chair of Safer Telford Partnership

**The last 15 months have been dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic at a global, national and local level and all aspects of our lives have been affected including the work of organisations to promote safe and cohesive communities.**

However, despite the impact of the pandemic the members of the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership have continued to work together to respond to the immediate challenges and also plan for the future. This strategy sets out how we will continue to ensure that through joint working on evidence based priorities we will have the greatest positive impact for the communities of Telford and Wrekin and support the delivery of the Safer West Mercia Plan.

The Safer Telford and Wrekin Strategy identifies three localities that experience the highest harm from crime and antisocial behaviour. This is part of a wider programme that will be delivered through the Building Safer, Stronger Communities Board and is supported by significant investment. The Council has allocated £1m towards delivery of a borough wide safer community programme that will continue to build on the successful partnership with West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner. This programme is supported by £500,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner giving a total project of £1.5m over two years from April 2021. The Council has invested a further £1 million to work in partnership with the voluntary sector to increase support to families in need alongside other third sector agencies and look at asset transfer to sustain the provision of local services. The Building Safer Stronger Communities Board will ensure the delivery of these programmes is co-ordinated, that local communities and organisations are engaged in this work through the development of Neighbourhood Action Plans and also identify opportunities to secure further funding.

In addition to this locality work, we continue our commitment across the borough to address child exploitation and domestic abuse. This strategy shows how both of these issues have been affected by the pandemic but we will work together strategically and operationally to raise awareness, protect victims and survivors, disrupt and prosecute these crimes.

Looking forward, we are also preparing for the introduction of the proposed Serious Violence Duty which will require partners to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. The priorities in this strategy and the evidence base we have used puts us in a good position to demonstrate how we are already working and this strategy may be updated in line with further statutory guidance if needed.

## Chair and Vice Chairs of Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership



# Our Vision

To work together to create  
a safe and confident Telford  
and Wrekin





# Context

The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and subsequent legislation, requires partners that are identified as 'responsible authorities' to work together as a Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The CSP has a statutory responsibility to agree a strategy to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, prevent the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and prevent re-offending. The CSP must also undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews.

In Telford and Wrekin the CSP is called the **Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership** and the member organisations are:

- West Mercia Police\*
- Telford & Wrekin Council\*
- NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin CCG\*
- Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service\*
- Probation Service\*
- West Mercia Youth Justice Service
- West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

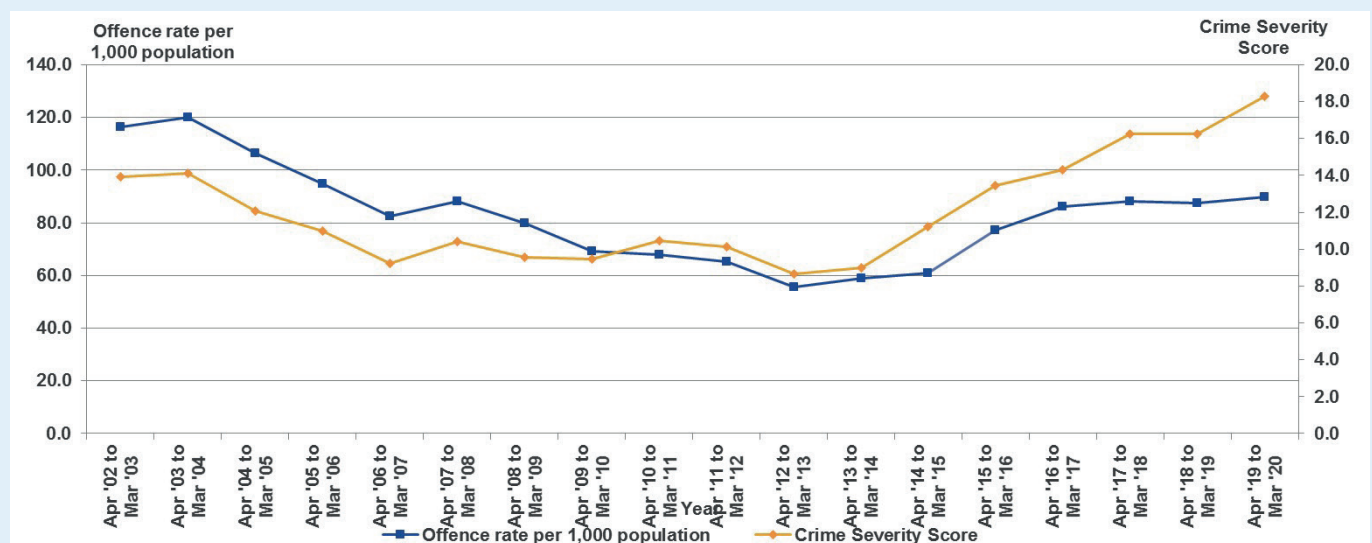
\*Indicates organisations that are Responsible Authorities

Total police recorded crime increased by 3% for the year ending March 2020 in England and Wales, and in Telford and Wrekin there was 4% increase in total police recorded crime.

There were 13,667 offences recorded across the borough during the twelve month period from 1 November 2019 until 31 October 2020. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published Crime Severity Score which provided a means of weighting crimes according to the harm that they cause, or their severity. **Chart 1** illustrates the differences in measuring frequency compared to crime severity, and how the levels of recorded severity are increasing over recent years in Telford and Wrekin.

The most frequently recorded offence category was violence against the person, which accounted for almost half of all offences in the borough. Violence without injury comprised 31.4% of all offences. This crime group includes offences such as: common assault, threats to kill and malicious communications. Violence with injury was the second highest crime group by volume and comprised 13.6% of all recorded crime in the borough.

**Chart 1: Rate per 1,000 population and severity of all crime across the borough, ONS 2019**



Source: ONS

# Safer Telford and Wrekin Priorities 2021/24

Telford & Wrekin has a history of strong partnership working and the Safer Telford Partnership provides strategic leadership across partners and partnerships to address the issues that have been identified as key to improving the safety and wellbeing of communities in Telford. The Safer Telford Partnership was established in 1998 and the Partnership's strategy has been regularly reviewed and builds on the success of Telford and Wrekin's Violence Reduction Board's public health approach to tackling violent crime<sup>1</sup>.

In order to co-ordinate partnership work, the Safer Telford Partnership will tackle the priority issues through a combination of targeted work in three neighbourhood localities, **Sutton Hill, Brookside and Woodside, Dawley and Malinslee** and **Arleston**, and also a thematic approach across the borough on two priority issues, **Domestic Abuse** and **Child Exploitation**. The identification of these issues and neighbourhoods is based on the analysis of data and intelligence from across the partner organisations. The co-ordination of targeted partnership working in these areas will have the greatest impact on reducing harm from crime and antisocial behaviour. The three high vulnerability localities are part of a wider programme that will be delivered through the Building Safer Stronger Communities Board which has a total of 12 priority localities. This approach aims to ensure that issues addressed in the three localities are not displaced to other areas in the borough.

The priorities identified by the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership for 2021-24 are:

- Three areas with highest harm from crime and antisocial behaviour: Sutton Hill, Brookside and Woodside; Dawley and Malinslee; and Arleston
- Child Exploitation
- Domestic Abuse

In addition to this the Partnership will continue to monitor crime patterns and trends to identify issues that require a partnership response. The data has shown that crime patterns have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and it will be particularly important to ensure that as restrictions are lifted, any emerging issues are identified and a co-ordinated response is agreed.

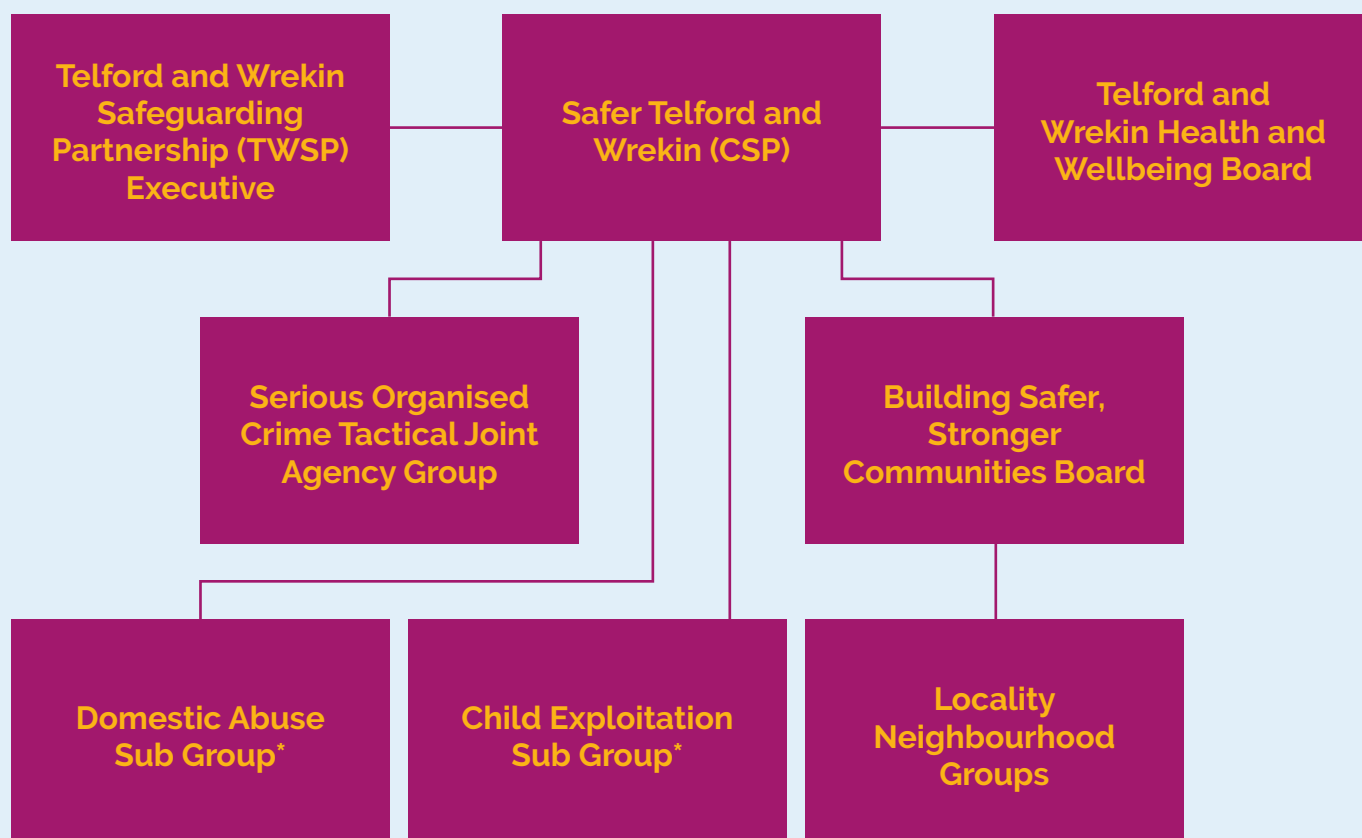
Through this approach, the Safer Telford Partnership continues to apply the underlying principles of a public health approach to include:

- a focus on a defined population e.g. vulnerable children, young people and adults who are known to be most at risk
- a collaborative partnership approach – that is not limited by organisational or professional boundaries
- putting in place long term, as well as short term solutions – e.g. prevention activities, and also more support for those affected now
- an intelligence-led approach – which is based on local data and insight
- using the evidence of what works and best practice – e.g. from Public Health England and Violence Reduction Units around the UK

<sup>1</sup> The Telford and Wrekin Violence Reduction Board developed into the Safer, Stronger Communities Board.

# Governance Arrangements

As set out above, the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership has a statutory function as the borough's Community Safety Partnership. As a strategic body the Partnership co-ordinates the thematic and locality work across the partnership to ensure effective delivery against the agreed priorities. The diagram below illustrates the groups that are accountable to the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership and also two other statutory partnerships that work across the cross cutting themes. (A diagram illustrating the joint arrangements between the Safer Telford Partnership and the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership is shown in Appendix A)



\*The Domestic Abuse Sub Group will also report to the Safeguarding Adult Board within the TWSP arrangements

\*The Child Exploitation Sub Group will report to the Safeguarding Children board within the TWSP arrangements

In order to ensure effective partnership working across the wider system the Safer Telford & Wrekin Partnership ensures that the strategy is aligned with the West Mercia Police and Crime Plan, the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership Strategic Plan, Telford and Wrekin Serious Organised Crime Joint Agency Group, Telford and Wrekin Health and Wellbeing Strategy, West Mercia Youth Justice Plan and the Reducing Re-offending Group. The priorities for each of these strategies / plans is set out below:

Safer Telford and Wrekin Priorities	Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership Priorities	West Mercia Police and Crime Plan	Telford and Wrekin Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Group	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	West Mercia Youth Justice Plan	Reducing Reoffending Group
Child Exploitation	Child Exploitation	Putting victims and survivors first	Child Exploitation	Prevention and healthy lifestyle	Practice development priorities; intervention and risk planning, restorative approaches, embedding a child first approach and resettlement.	Prevent re-offending and addressing antisocial behaviour
Domestic Abuse	Domestic Abuse	Building a more secure West Mercia	County Lines	Early access to information and advice	Partnership priorities; emotional and mental health service provision and improving joint/integrated working	Deliver a local response to local problems
Three areas with highest risk to crime and antisocial behaviour	Adult Exploitation	Reforming West Mercia	Modern Day Slavery / Human Trafficking / Illegal / Immigration	Building community capacity and resilience		



Safer Telford and Wrekin Priorities	Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership Priorities	West Mercia Police and Crime Plan	Telford and Wrekin Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Group	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	West Mercia Youth Justice Plan	Reducing Reoffending Group
Monitoring all crime to identify and respond to new and emerging trends	Adverse Child Lived Experience	Reassuring West Mercia	Cyber Crime	Integrated care and support pathways	Organisation priorities; improving staff engagement, child and stakeholder voice, responding to national standards and reviews and Covid-19 recovery and transformation, including rebuilding teams.	To be publicly accountable for reducing reoffending.
			Prevent Programmes / Initiatives	Emotional and mental wellbeing		
				Driving progress to reduce health inequalities		
				Health Protection		

# Domestic Abuse

The Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership works to the the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse, 2018<sup>2</sup>:

*“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional”*

Domestic abuse can involve a range of behaviours, which are abusive but which would not always be classed as violent. In Telford and Wrekin the definition has also been widened to reflect coercive control, ‘honour’ based violence (HBV), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (FM).

## Why is Domestic Abuse a priority for the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership?

There are 3,304 offences and 2,144 crimed incidents involving domestic abuse within the twelve month period from 1 November 2019 – 31 October 2020.

- 2,207 victims were identified from the 3,304 offences and 2,144 crimed incidents. 604 were victims of more than one offence.
- Of those repeat victims, the average number of victimisations was 2.7 offences or incidents

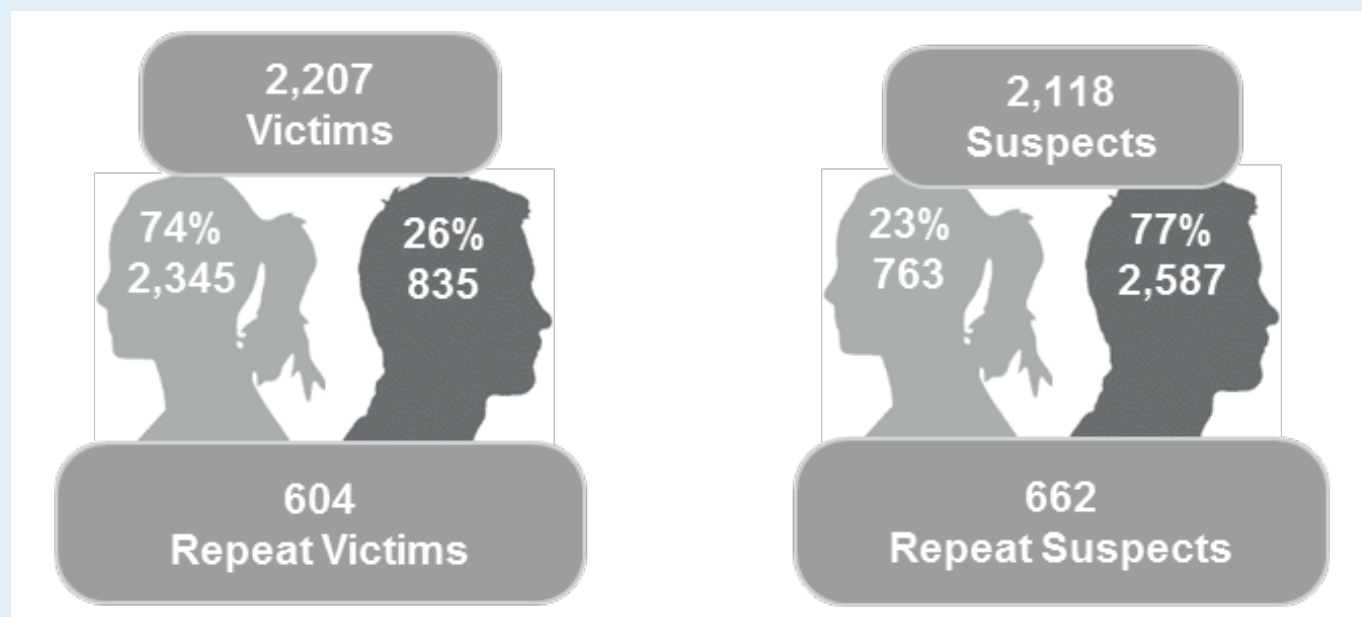
- Of the 2,118 individual suspects identified, 31.3% (n = 662) were the suspect for more than one offence or incident
- A small number of individuals were identified as suspect for as many as 15 incidents or offences
- Victims and suspects primarily fall into the 25-34 year age bracket
- Involved parties and witnesses were primarily children aged under 16 years

The information above highlights both the impact of domestic abuse on the intimate partner or family member and also children under 16 who live in the household. Domestic abuse is recognised as one of a number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) that can limit life chances for children.

<sup>1</sup> HM Government, 2018. Domestic Violence and Abuse [www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse#domestic-violence-and-abuse-new-definition](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse#domestic-violence-and-abuse-new-definition)

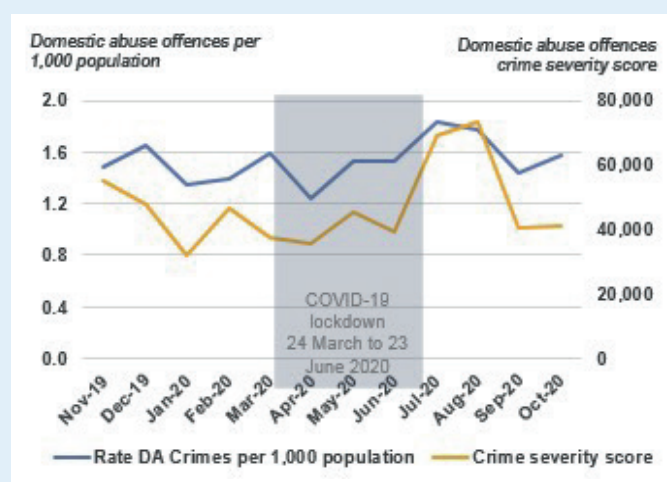


**Chart 2: Repeat suspects and victims, 1 November 2019-31 October 2021**

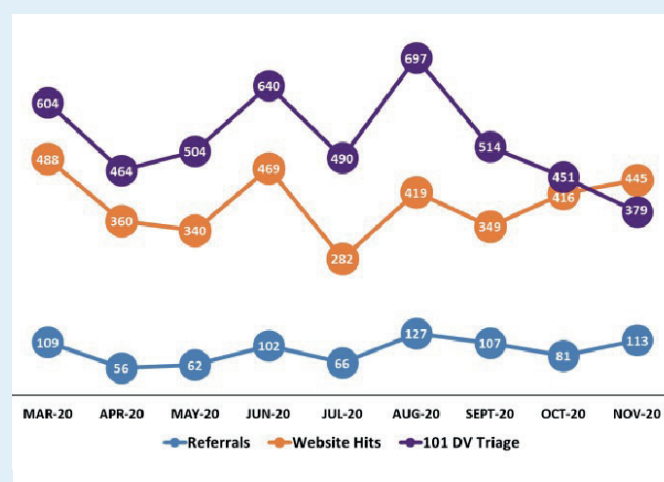


COVID-19 has caused fluctuation in the rates of offending but has also impacted on referrals for domestic abuse services including 101 triaging and website hits for Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service.

**Chart 3: Domestic abuse recorded crime volume vs. severity**



**Chart 4: Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service – breakdown of demands on service, 1 March 2020 to 30 November 2020**

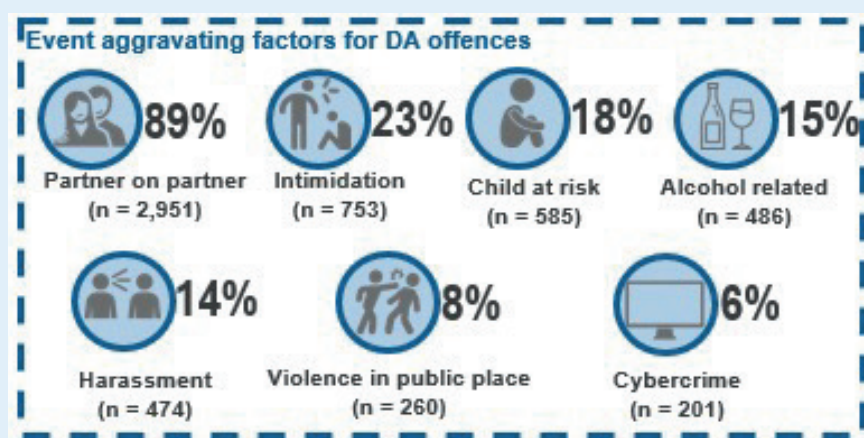


Over the twelve months examined, both rates of offending and the severity of those offences have fluctuated considerably, influenced by COVID-19 and lockdowns which prevented usual reporting routes. Levels of reporting reached peak levels for both agencies in summer 2020 along with the reported severity, suggesting that

lockdown conditions may have intensified the harm experienced by victims.

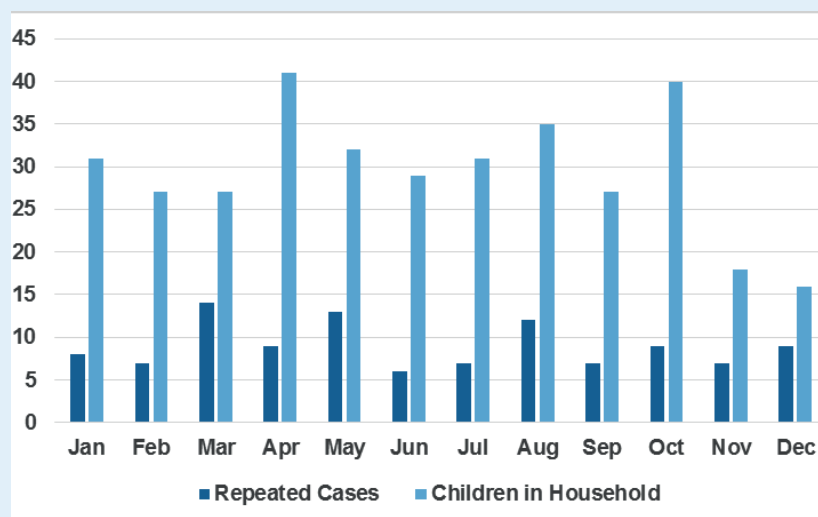
The data and intelligence from partners has also enabled key issues within the domestic abuse offences to be identified. These included children at risk, the role alcohol in domestic abuse and harassment / intimidation.

**Chart 5: A breakdown of event aggravating factors linked to reported domestic abuse offences**



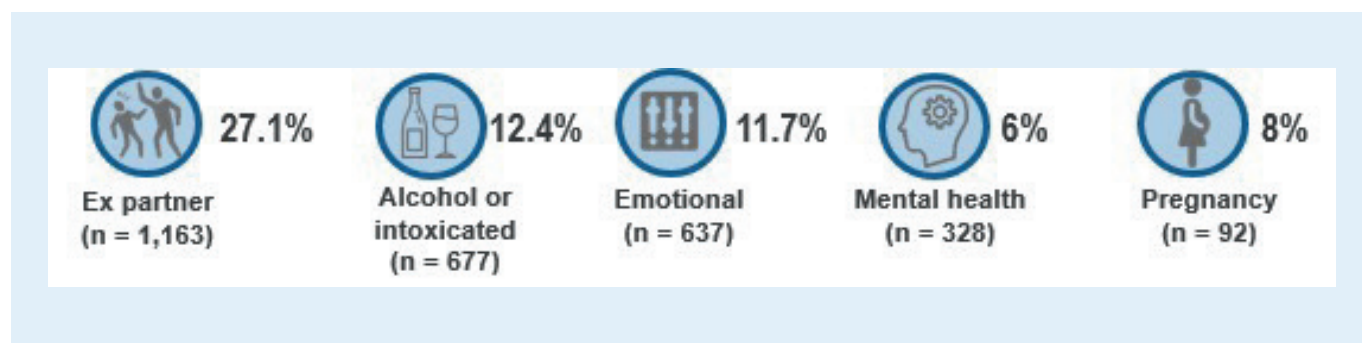
The effect of domestic abuse on children has been further highlighted through the analysis of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) referrals:

**Chart 6: Volume of repeat cases and children identified through MARAC referrals, 1 January to 31 December 2020**





Further analysis of the information identified the following underlying issues relating to domestic abuse incidents.



## What difference will the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership make?

The Domestic Abuse Sub Group is responsible for delivery of the partnership's objectives in relation to domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Sub Group will:

- **Objective 1** Review and develop specialist services and support and implement comprehensive multi-agency pathways, for both victims and perpetrators and children and young people affected by domestic abuse
- **Objective 2** To use intelligence to inform service provision and raising awareness campaigns
- **Objective 3** To develop practitioner's knowledge on the dynamics of domestic abuse on the whole family and provide them with the appropriate training and resources to support the family.

- **Objective 4** To increase awareness in the community of domestic abuse and how to seek support.
- **Objective 5** To review current policies and procedures associated with FGM, HBV and Forced Marriage within the community and across the professional workforce.
- **Objective 6** To embed learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's)

The Domestic Abuse Sub Group will refresh the Action Plan and update these objectives as needed. It is also important to recognise that the Family Safeguarding Model will be implemented in 2021 which will focus on the related issues of parental mental health, substance misuse and domestic abuse.

# Child Exploitation

Child exploitation is not a legal term and there is no government provided definition. It describes any offence in which a child is coerced, deceived or manipulated into taking part in an activity that benefits a stronger, or more powerful, perpetrator. The perpetrator is usually an adult but could be an older or more threatening child; it is that power imbalance that characterises exploitation. By its nature, exploitation describes the method and context of offending rather than an offence itself. Exploitation itself could be sexual, criminal or forced labour, among others.

## What is child sexual exploitation (CSE)?

The Department for Education guidance for child sexual exploitation (2017) defined child sexual exploitation as:

*“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 age 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. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology”.*

## What is child criminal exploitation (CCE)?

According to the Home Office (2018), child criminal exploitation:

*“occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Criminal exploitation of children... includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft”.*

## Why is Child Exploitation a Priority for the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership?

Child exploitation remains a priority for all partners in the borough, and while work continues to address child sexual exploitation the risk to children and young people through criminal exploitation is now also incorporated within this strategy.

142 offences and incidents between November 2019 and October 2020 have been identified with a CSE or CCE marker, representing 1% of all crime in Telford. While this is a small percentage of all crime it is recognised that the harm for victims is severe and that child exploitation nationally remains an under reported crime.

The complexity of the issue of child exploitation is reflected in the data and it is



important to take into account the following issues when considering the data from different partner organisations:

- The Partnership recognises that as a result of the local focus to address CSE, and the support provided to victims through the Independent CSE Inquiry process, that some crimes reported relate to historic offences. The partnership is clear that victims and survivors of CSE will always be supported to report an offence regardless of whether it is recent.
- The nature of child exploitation means that one individual may be a victim on more than one occasion
- Children who are recorded as victims of CSE or CE may not live in Telford and therefore not supported by services. It is

recognised that this is a particular issue for online exploitation where victims may be outside the UK.

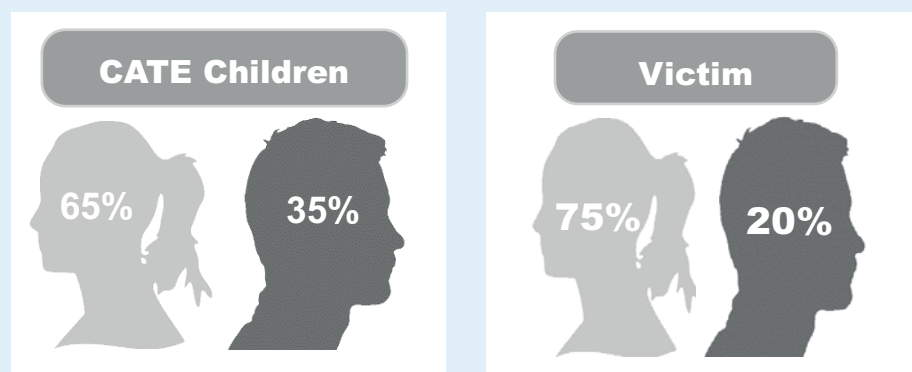
- The timescales for the data available from partners is different

Due to the issues outlined above the number of children supported by a service within a time period will not be the same as the number of victims. However it remains important to provide information on the number of children affected by CSE as set out below:

**101 children were supported by the CATE Team<sup>3</sup> during the period 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020.**

**Police data showed there were 69 children who were victims of CSE and three victims of CCE between 1 November 2019 and 31 October 2020.**

## Chart 7: Comparison of gender breakdown of children supported by the CATE Team to victims of recorded CSE



75% of recorded victims of recorded CSE were female; a higher proportion than the CATE cohort. This is highly likely to be a reflection of the predominance of CSE in the data.

<sup>3</sup> CATE team: This is a team within the Council's Children's Services that specialises in services for children and young people who are affected by child exploitation. The team works within multi-agency pathways (police, social care, health and education) to enable children and young people to stay safe from this type of abuse

Chart 8 below provides information on the age of suspects of CSE from November 2019 to October 2020.

**Chart 8: Age of CSE Suspects**

Suspect Age	Total
Under 18	24
18 to 29	30
30 to 39	18
40 to 49	6
50 to 59	5
60 to 69	4
Total	88

There were 88 suspects linked to offences marked as CSE during the time period. 34% of all suspects were aged 18-29 years. 27% were under 18 years. This peer on peer offending includes the distribution of indecent images.

## What difference will the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership make?

The Child Exploitation Sub Group is responsible for delivering the Partnerships objectives in relation to Child Exploitation.

The Child Exploitation Sub Group will:

- **Objective 1:** To ensure that the child exploitation pathway is developed, implemented and embedded across the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and that all partner agencies are confident in recognising child exploitation and applying the pathway.
- **Objective 2:** A programme of training and a suite of resources is developed to cater for different levels of understanding and practice - universal, operational and professional.
- **Objective 3:** Voice of the child – continuing the culture of listening to children; to ensure the voice of the child is heard and used and is used to inform our practice in relation to CE
- **Objective 4:** Embed the new local Missing Pathway (Level C West Midlands Regional Policies and Procedures)
- **Objective 5:** Revisit the recommendations of both internal and external reviews to ensure they are completed and reflected in both single agency and multi-agency practice
- **Objective 6:** Develop a performance framework and explore how multi-agency data can be used to measure impact of the pathway, training programme and identify factors of exploitation within Telford and Wrekin.

The Child Exploitation Sub Group will refresh the Action Plan and update these objectives as needed.



# Building Safer, Stronger Communities:

## Locality working in three areas in Telford with highest vulnerability to crime

In 2019 partners in Telford and Wrekin established the Violence Reduction Board to ensure a proactive and joined up response to violent crime in the borough. This Board developed a public health approach to tackling violent crime and work across the partners included:

- Steer Clear Programme started for young people at risk of knife crime
- MATES operations and Neighbourhood Action Days become more coordinated
- Raise awareness of the causes behind violence, vulnerability, and exploitation
- CATE Team and Police invest additional resources and staff into Criminal Exploitation
- Knife amnesty bins for public to use under a 'no questions asked' policy
- Serious Violent Crime (SVC) Conference held in November 2019 with 130 in attendance, high profile speakers including people with lived experiences
- Knife Angel in Telford during March 2020

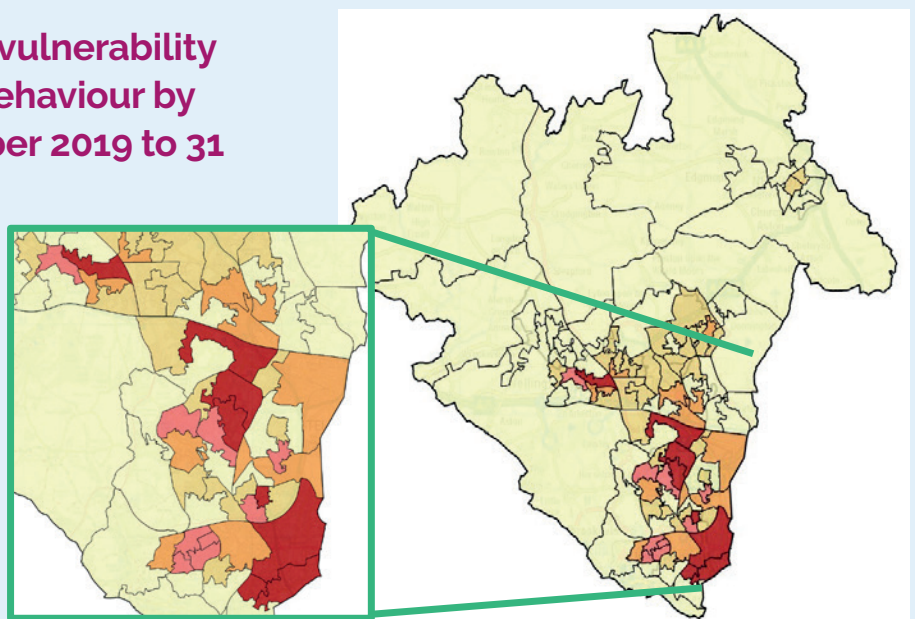
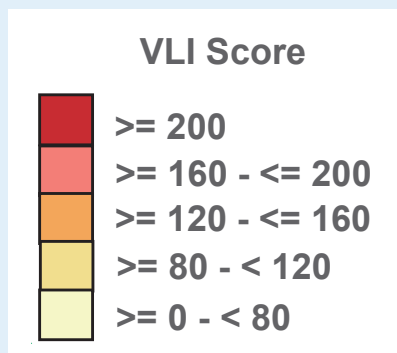
- Secured £550,000 joint investment into enhancing our CCTV infrastructure and new viewing suite in Oakengates
- Secured £550,000 investment for the Brookside Safer Streets project

The role of the Violence Reduction Board has now been incorporated into the Building Safer, Stronger Communities Board which is intended to bring borough wide benefit and has identified 12 priority localities and will develop Neighbourhood Action Plans for each of these. The Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership has used data and intelligence to identify the three localities with the highest vulnerability to crime and anti-social behaviour. This took into account the volume of crimes and the severity of the impact of the crime on the victim and the community.

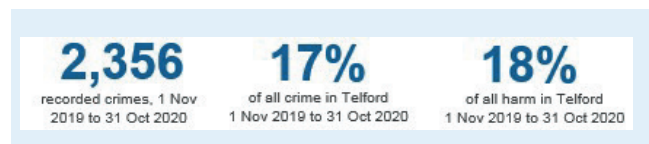
The three high vulnerability areas identified by the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership are:

- Sutton Hill, Brookside and Woodside
- Dawley and Malinslee
- Arleston

**Chart 9: Map highlighting vulnerability to crime and anti-social behaviour by LSOA in Telford, 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020**



## Sutton Hill, Brookside and Woodside

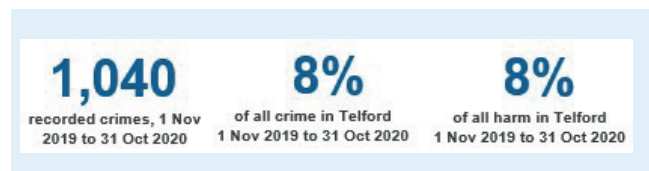


Sutton Hill, Brookside and Woodside forms 3% of the land area in Telford, yet recorded 2,356 crimes within the twelve month reporting period. This contributed 17% of all crime and 18% of all recorded harm in the borough.

This area has disproportionately high levels of violent crime, including sexual violence, and levels are more than double the Telford average. Community crime problems, including criminal damage and arson, are also much higher than borough average. Domestic abuse currently forms one fifth of recorded crime in the area and is highly likely to be a driving factor for the high levels of violence.

Crime levels have fluctuated during the twelve month period, with an obvious decrease in April 2020 (n = 142). This is certainly due to the first national lockdown following COVID-19, which saw reduced crime opportunities as the public remained largely at home. The opportunity to commit crime and recorded levels increased during the summer months of 2020, as restrictions were lifted and school summer holidays commenced.

## Dawley and Malinslee



Dawley and Malinslee form 3% of the land area in Telford, yet recorded 1,040 crimes within the twelve month period which contributed 8% of all crime and 8% of all recorded harm in the borough.

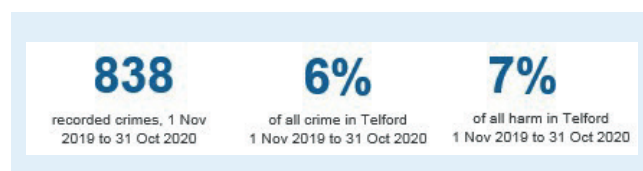
Crime has fluctuated throughout the year with

a significant trough in April 2020 (n = 55) and peak in July 2020 (n = 115). This is highly likely due to the imposition and lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and changing opportunity for crime.

The crime profile for the area shows higher than average levels of violence, both with and without injury. These crime areas increased sharply during July and August, contributing to the peak in crime volume. Domestic abuse is contributes 15% of all recorded crime and is highly likely to be a driving factor for the high levels of violence.

Community crimes including criminal damage and arson, and residential burglary are also above average.

## Arleston



Arleston is the smallest of the 3 vulnerable areas, forming 0.4% of the overall land area of Telford. There were 838 recorded crimes during the twelve month period in this area, contributing 6% of all crime and 7% of all recorded harm in Telford. Recorded crime has fluctuated throughout the twelve month period but shows an overall decline which is almost certainly in part attributable to COVID-19 and restrictions imposed.

Arleston has disproportionately high volumes of violent crime, both with and without injury, when compared to average for the borough. The majority of crime groups are above average, including rape and other sexual offences, criminal damage and arson, and residential burglary.

Violence in a public place markers are attributed to more than one quarter of all recorded crime and domestic abuse markers are linked to 12% of offences.



## What difference will the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership make?

The Building Safer Stronger Communities Board is responsible for delivering the Partnerships objectives to address the root cause of crime, rather than the crime itself.

The Building Safer Stronger Communities Board will:

- Deliver a strong, intelligence-led approach
- Tackle the root causes (primary prevention)
- Manage risk & early intervention (secondary prevention)
- Reduce the effects & impact (tertiary prevention)
- Enforcement & Criminal Justice

# Appendix A

## Joint Arrangements between the Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership and the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership

### Telford Safeguarding Partnership and CSP Arrangements

