

Strategic Assessment 2025/26: Key Themes

The **new Safer Cornwall Partnership Plan 2025-2028** went live in April 2025.

Priorities were identified based on the evidence presented in the 2024/25 Community Safety Strategic Assessment and consultation with partners, residents and other stakeholders.

Autumn 2025 sees our **first refresh** within the three year cycle, ensuring that it keeps pace with any emerging trends and remains up-to-date and fit for purpose.

Updating the evidence

The strategic assessment brings together key themes from analysis of a broad range of **partner data**, augmented by extensive **desktop research**, insight gathered from **multi-agency workshops** and the views of residents gathered through Safer Cornwall's **public survey** 'Have Your Say'.

In July and August 2025, we held a series of **10 thematic workshops** – covering everything from town centre anti-social behaviour to serious violence. These workshops were used to gather **expertise and insight from across the partnership**, including subject experts, practitioners and service providers.

The combined output provides a strong multi-agency narrative around **vulnerability** factors, **community** impacts, local and national **drivers** and **effectiveness** of local services.

The refresh of the community safety strategic assessment also referenced the series of **thematic strategic needs assessments** that have been completed.

These include:

The 2024/25 [Drugs Needs Assessment](#) to direct local delivery of the national 10-year plan to combat illegal drugs.¹ This is accompanied by an updated [Young People's Substance Use Needs Assessment](#) and an [Alcohol Needs Assessment](#)

A comprehensive [Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Needs Assessment](#) to support the tri-partnership strategies and the statutory [Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment](#)² We have just completed a refresh of the **Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Needs Assessment**, with an update for Safe Accommodation included within it. This is not yet published but the key findings have been considered for this assessment.

The statutory [Strategic Needs Assessment](#)³ to inform Cornwall's approach to preventing violence is scheduled to be refreshed in 2025.

¹ [From harm to hope](#): A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives, HM Government 2022

² The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) introduced specific duties on local authorities to provide safe accommodation, including a local needs assessment and a strategy.

³ The [Serious Violence Duty](#) requires specified authorities to work together to understand and tackle serious violence through a shared strategic assessment and strategy.



Have Your Say

The 2025 survey was **available on-line during July and August** and responses were gathered at **face-to-face events** over the summer.

The survey closed at the end of August, with **857 responses**. This was a healthy return, although **fell short of the 1,000 target**.

The area with the highest number of respondents was **Truro** (106, 12%), followed by **St Austell** (90, 11%) and **Newquay** and **Penzance** (60/7% each). There was a **more even geographic distribution** than in previous years – with better representation particularly from areas in the East of Cornwall.

In line with previous surveys, **women** were over-represented, making up 57% of respondents.

Younger age groups were under-represented when compared with the population of Cornwall. Middle age groups 45-54, 55-64, and 65-74 were all over-represented.

Most respondents identified as White British at 64%, followed by 26% as Cornish. **2% of respondents were from Black, Asian, or other non-white minority ethnic groups**.

The 2025 survey highlighted **similar concerns** to previous years – **environmental issues** such as litter, parking and speeding and **anti-social behaviour**, including feeling intimidated by people hanging around on the streets, public drug use and dealing, vandalism and street drinking.

Feelings of safety were also fairly similar to last year overall:

- The **majority** (76%) of respondents felt either **very safe** (37%) or **fairly safe** (39%) in their local area **during the day**.
- **40% felt safe** in their local area **after dark**.

There is a marked difference between feelings of safety for women and men after dark. **Women are more likely to feel unsafe after dark** than men (48% v 30%) and this shows a **further decline** compared with 2024 (45%) and 2023 (39%).

Witnessing **drug use and drug dealing** in their local area, particularly around their home, and feeling **intimidated by people behaving anti-socially** (often perceived to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs) were the most commonly cited reasons by women for not feeling safe.

17% of respondents felt that crime and anti-social behaviour was a **very big problem** in their local area. Another 37% felt that it was a fairly big problem. Almost 50%, however, said that it was not a big problem (38%) or not a problem at all (8%).

Public confidence that the police and Council are tackling the right issues has stayed the same for the last couple of years. Concerns continue to be expressed about **police capacity and lack of visibility** in communities.

- **20%** of respondents agreed that the **Police and Council are dealing with ASB and crime** in their local area effectively.

What does the evidence say?



Cornwall's crime rate is **6% lower than the national average** for similar areas, with 34,563 crimes recorded by the police in the last 12 months.⁴

Recorded crime is up by 6% on the same period last year. The increase is mostly accounted for by increases in shoplifting, stalking and harassment offences, violence without injury, criminal damage and public order offences.



A significant proportion of the rise in recorded crime is a result of **changes implemented** by [Devon and Cornwall Police](#) to improve recording and investigation standards alongside improved call handling. The impact of these changes have started to stabilise.

Violence makes up just over 30% of all recorded crime and has increased by 2% overall, with the rise coming from violence without injury offences.

Violence with injury has seen a reduction overall and has reduced in some of the larger towns where we have delivered targeted initiatives.



Domestic abuse makes up just over a third of violent crime, and we continue to encourage more people to report these crimes to us.

Just over **11,500 domestic abuse incidents** have been reported to the police in the last 12 months. Of this number, just under two-thirds resulted in a crime being recorded.

In Cornwall, the **level of domestic abuse crimes reported is still increasing**, whereas nationally police recorded domestic abuse crimes have

started to fall for the first time in a decade. Reported domestic abuse crimes have **risen by 6%** compared with last year, with the increase seen mainly in **stalking and harassment** and **sexual offences**.

People experiencing domestic abuse often find it **difficult to report** what is happening to them, so the police data shows us only one part of the picture. Our domestic abuse and sexual violence service is seeing a **rise in people seeking help**.

People seeking support from community services have an **increasingly complex mix of vulnerabilities** and need longer, more resource **intensive interventions**. Childhood sexual abuse is a common factor, with the unresolved trauma resonating through all aspects of later life.

Half of all recorded crime occurs in **ten major towns**. Some of our towns have **persistent issues** with a complex mix of anti-social behaviour, criminality and vulnerable populations **exacerbated by deprivation** and health inequalities.

Each of our towns poses **different challenges** when providing interventions, but **consistent and assertive multi-agency approaches** have been successful in managing risk. High visibility patrols are deployed in key areas to **address local concerns and provide public reassurance**.

Acquisitive crimes make up just over 1 in 5 reported crimes. **Shoplifting** has increased by 20% across the country and continues to rise in Cornwall.

⁴ Police recorded crime, 12 months to 30 June 2025 compared with the previous 12 months.

We have undertaken **proactive work with retailers** in the most affected areas. Businesses are now using **third party reporting systems** such as DISC and UK-PAC allowing them to report shoplifting in an easier way.

Rates of **burglary and other types of thefts remain very low** compared with similar areas across the UK.

Criminal damage makes up 12% of all recorded crime and has increased by 9%. **Public order offences** make up another 7% and have increased by 13%. Along with anti-social behaviour these types of offence, are **visible signs of disorder** in our communities, which can **negatively affect public perceptions** of crime and feelings of safety.

After a long period of reduction, we are now seeing a **rising trend in Anti-Social Behaviour** reported to the police. 7,936 incidents were reported in the last 12 months, **up by 10%** on last year.

Concerns about **groups of young people behaving anti-socially** has been constant theme over the last 12 months. This includes some more serious elements such as **peer-on-peer violence** amongst young people and a perceived increase in **weapon carrying**, contributing to a **raised fear of violence** within peer groups.

Like other parts of the UK, we have seen an **intensification of hostilities** towards refugees and asylum seekers and the trans community and this is driving up **community tensions**.

Although we are seeing **more hate crime** being reported, **fear of violence** drives people to change their behaviours to avoid being harmed and acts as a **barrier to reporting**, alongside a lack of confidence in public services to respond.

This is a significant risk for the safe placement of **refugees and asylum seekers** as part of the national resettlement programme.

The **harms of drug trafficking** continue to present a significant threat across all areas of Cornwall. These include **violence, weapons** and the exploitation of **vulnerable people** (including 'cuckooing'), particularly by Organised Crime Groups.

Both **County Lines and local drugs networks** are the focus of police and partner disruption activity. **Online supply routes** have increased and are a feature in increased availability for a broad range of illicit drugs.

Use of **crack cocaine** is a major driver of crime and health harms, and users are harder to engage in support. We are seeing more **ketamine** use, particularly amongst young people, with consequences for their **physical and mental health**.

We have an **effective and responsive community treatment service** in place for adults and young people, including outreach and support for those hardest to reach.

Highly potent synthetic substances are being found in all drugs in Cornwall's illicit drug market. Synthetic drugs present a **very high risk of overdose** to users.

Drug-related deaths continue to rise – there were 57 deaths in 2024 compared with 41 in 2023 (up by 39%). The number of deaths have doubled compared with ten years ago.



The issues that impact most on communities

Our 2024/25 assessment identified the following **high risk themes** for the Partnership Plan in 2025/2028:

What causes the most harm?

- Problem drug use and drug-related deaths
- Dependent drinking and harms to health
- Domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Exploitation, including County Lines
- Anti-social behaviour
- Hate crime
- Serious violence, including knife crime

2025 - has anything changed?

Increases in reported crime were the main factor in changes to risk scores, and some issues moved up or down risk bands as a result.

- Rowdy/nuisance anti-social behaviour and anti-social behaviour involving young people and rape were assessed as increasing in risk from **moderate to high**.
- Other types of anti-social behaviour, drug trafficking and faith related hate crime were assessed as increasing in risk from **standard to moderate**.
- Other types of issue assessed as increasing in risk since last year but **remaining in the standard risk band** include criminal damage, public order offences, stalking and harassment offences and other sexual violence.
- Knife crime (excluding possession of a knife or bladed article) and robbery reduced in risk level, down from **moderate to standard risk**.

The next section describes the **emerging issues highlighted for each theme** – there are some cross-cutting findings.

- Online space - the impacts of **social media** misinformation and a gap for practitioners around **digital awareness**, particularly when managing risk for young people.
- Growing understanding of the prevalence of **childhood sexual abuse** as a component of multiple vulnerabilities, and the impacts on survivors, their families and services supporting them.
- **Schools' critical role in prevention** and support – including a strengthened role for VCSE organisations and whole family approaches.
- **Capacity pressures across the system** are identified as impeding our ability to manage many of the high risk issues effectively; there has been **no positive change** in this regard since last year.

Understanding crime increases

Devon and Cornwall Police are focused on **keeping communities safe** and delivering justice for victims through:

- **Improved access for victims** via increased front offices and improvements in 101 call wait times
- Effective **hotspot policing** initiatives
- **Improving response times** to incidents
- **Pro-active operations** focused on serious and organised criminals
- **Securing more positive outcomes** for victims through improved investigation quality

It is estimated that these improvements **increased recorded crime by 8%** in 2024/25.

Threat, Risk and Harm Assessments – emerging issues

Alcohol and the Brain

The workshop focussed specifically on Alcohol and the Brain, including fluctuating capacity and Alcohol Related Brain Damage or Injury (ARBD/ARBI). We have chosen this theme due to increasing evidence of local impact.

Risk and harm	Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARBD is known to be underdiagnosed and is often misdiagnosed as Alzheimer’s Disease. • In 2021 local primary care data revealed that very few people (64) are formally diagnosed. Estimates place the potential number affected in Cornwall at 2388. • Those at risk or living with ARBD are often frequent hospital attenders with complex health and care needs and may not engage with alcohol treatment. They face risks to their health, safety and wellbeing including self-neglect and may be at risk from others through domestic abuse, and exploitation • ARBD can cause financial hardship due to impaired ability to work or manage money and places a significant burden on health and community services- especially when undiagnosed or untreated. • Anecdotal evidence that alcohol is often involved in suicide deaths. • ARBD can be difficult to identify so people may live with it for a long period of time before receiving treatment. • ARBD is often misdiagnosed as dementia so people may not receive the appropriate treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local case studies have illustrated that a lack of legal literacy around the Mental Capacity Act 2005 leads to delays in assessing capacity. • More training is needed about Mental Capacity Act. • There is a need for a reduction in stigma around ‘addiction’ and a better understanding of ‘intoxification’ and capacity. • Improved engagement at a primary care level with GPs is necessary to improve prevention and harm reduction. This could be in the form of ARBI specialist nurses working alongside GPs. • Individuals with ARBD only appear to services at crisis point. There is a feeling that services are ‘putting out fires’ and that a prevention and harm approach is needed. • There is no clear cut path for diagnosis and practitioners are reliant are bringing other staff along with them. • ARBD cases require intense input by staff leading to a high level of compassion fatigue • No residential options in Cornwall with individuals having to travel out of county and away from what is familiar to them.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Having completed a **comprehensive needs assessment** in 2025, the workshops focused on specific themes that required a deeper dive.

Risk and harm

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

The **Young People's workshop** explored the links between domestic abuse and child sexual abuse, coercive control through child contact post-separation and Looked after Children.

- It is estimated that **1 in 4 children** in Cornwall live in households where an adult is or has been affected by domestic abuse; for around **4,000 children** domestic abuse co-occurs with mental ill health and drug/alcohol dependency.
 - Child sexual abuse often **coexists** with domestic abuse, but remains **hidden** – strong correlation between childhood sexual abuse and later victimisation through DA
 - **Children exposed to coercive control** and unresolved abuse through contact arrangements may experience **continued trauma**, with limited access to safe spaces for recovery.
 - **Young people** experience the **highest rate of domestic abuse** in their relationships but have one of the **lowest reporting rates** and are **under-represented** in support.
 - **Intergenerational trauma** is increasingly recognised as a critical factor **complicating care placements**, with fractured family networks, delayed disclosures of historic abuse, and unsafe kinship arrangements contributing to long-term harm and socio-economic disadvantage.
- The **family court system is not consistently trauma-informed** and can be misused by abusers to maintain control. Limited access to legal aid and advocacy leaves victims and children vulnerable to further harm.
 - **Schools are a vital point of contact for children** navigating parental separation, but overstretched staff and limited awareness of family dynamics can hinder their ability to provide meaningful support.
 - **Systemic change is needed to tackle child sexual abuse** —moving away from a referral culture, embedding multi-agency expertise, and addressing capacity issues (especially in education) are critical to protecting children and breaking cycles of harm.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Having completed a **comprehensive needs assessment** in 2025, the workshops focused on specific themes that required a deeper dive.

The **Adults Workshop** focused on the exploitation of domestic abuse victims, the rising trend in non-fatal strangulation and Interfamilial abuse and Adult Family Homicide.

Risk and harm

- Victims with histories of childhood sexual abuse, violent relationships, and substance use often face **repeated exploitative relationships**. Abusive people target them due to their vulnerabilities, creating a persistent cycle of control and abuse.
- **Hidden homelessness and lack of suitable accommodation** heighten **exploitation risks**. Victims may remain with abusers due to housing shortages, while those with complex needs often struggle to maintain tenancies without intensive support.
- Since **non-fatal strangulation** was made a specific standalone offence, the number of these crimes recorded has steadily increased.
- Strangulation presents a **serious risk** and must be understood both as a **violent and coercive act**—often part of wider patterns of abuse—and as a behaviour increasingly normalised within the sexual experiences of young people.
- **Victim-shaming** and uncertainty around **understanding consent** are significant **barriers to disclosure**. Building trust and creating safe, non-judgmental spaces for victims is essential.
- Services report an increasing trend in **child on parent abuse**; this type of abuse has varying and different

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- Rising complexity in victim presentations is placing significant **strain on services**. Healthcare and social care teams report **longer engagement times** and **increased demand**, with younger adults requiring more **advocacy** to access support.
- Sustained support is hindered by limited resources. Practitioners highlight the need for wraparound, **multi-agency approaches to mitigate long-term harm**, particularly for families, but this requires **increased capacity and secure funding**.
- Urgent need for **wider education**—both within schools and across the general public—to raise awareness of the **risks associated with strangulation**, challenge harmful behaviours, and support safer, informed relationships.
- The **online environment** presents an increasing threat as an enabler of stalking, harassment and abuse.
- Findings from the Domestic Abuse Related Death reviews that featured **Adult Family Homicide** highlighted several systemic issues for AFV:
 - A **lack of holistic approaches** to risk identification, assessment, and intervention—often focusing on individuals or incidents rather than cumulative family risk.

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Risk and harm

- complexities to intimate partner abuse and victims tend to be very reluctant to report.
- 4 Domestic Abuse Related Deaths in Cornwall have featured **Adult Family Violence**.
- Adult family violence is often **overlooked, misclassified** as intimate partner violence, or **dismissed** as part of broader family dynamics. **Victims may underreport or minimise the abuse** due to the complexity of their relationship with the perpetrator.
- **Lack of suitable housing increases the risk** of Adult Family Violence if family groups remain living in the same property, limiting options for safe separation.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- **Siloed working**, with mental health concerns considered in isolation from patterns of domestic abuse. Agencies often **failed to collaborate** or engage in multi-agency discussions.
- The local system has **significant gaps** in identifying and responding to **honour-based abuse**, particularly affecting young adults.

Drug Supply

Having updated the population needs assessments in 2024/25, the workshop held by the Drug Strategy Partnership focused on **Drug Supply**. The discussion **focused on specific drugs** believed to be causing/have potential to cause greater harm.

Risk and harm

- **Drug-related deaths continue to rise** and have doubled compared with ten years ago (57 in 2024).
- **Synthetic opioids continue to pose a growing threat.** Four deaths in 2024 involved synthetic opioids, none of whom were engaged in treatment at the time. **Testing for synthetic opioids is not routinely undertaken**, raising concerns about under-reporting.
- **New synthetic substances** are being found in all drugs in Cornwall's illicit drug market and this is confirmed in police drug testing. Synthetic drugs present a **very high risk of overdose** to users.
- We are seeing **increased ketamine use**, particularly amongst young people. Ketamine is being mentioned frequently in referrals to multi-agency panels and **more young people are seeking help for ketamine** as a problem substance.
- **Online supply routes** have increased and are a feature in increased availability for a broad range of illicit drugs. **Local user-dealers are a key supply route**, buying large quantities to share/sell on. It was noted that this type of user-dealer **may not recognise themselves as dealing**.
- Intelligence has increased regarding **groups of young people and links to drugs threats** and associated violence and other crime.
- Community services working with young people report seeing **younger people getting caught up in challenging behaviour** (aged 10-12). They are vulnerable

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- Our capability to respond to synthetic drugs is hampered by **limitations in timely, accurate and routine testing**.
- There is a gap in our knowledge in **how young people use the internet and social media** in order to communicate with each other. This includes using smart phone applications to acquire drugs and alcohol.
- **Formal routes to share intelligence** – the police partner agency portal and Local Drug Information System – are **under-used**; this means that information sharing is frequently ad-hoc and missing key pieces to provide a good quality intelligence picture. More training for practitioners is needed to build confidence in the systems – **target key services** such as housing and use a simple, accessible format such as 'Lunch and Learn'.
- We do not fully understand the extent that **violence, ASB, acquisitive crimes and firearms are driven by the drugs trade** and which groups represent the greatest risk.
- The police have raised an **Intelligence Requirement** regarding use and supply of ketamine to help understand this trend better and inform our local response.

Drug Supply

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Risk and harm

- to being exploited by older young people who are being exploited to deal drugs.
- **Crack use** continues to escalate, and independently from opiate use. Strongly linked to Organised Crime Group activity, weapons and violence.
 - The Drug and Alcohol Action Team are aware of increasing community intelligence regarding **crack cocaine being aggressively marketed to vulnerable** people (such as street drinkers) and involved in **sexual exploitation and abuse**. The latter has also come to the attention of the MARAC⁵ as a feature of coercive relationships.
 - Crack users are treatment averse and **hard to engage** so we are seeing “the tip of the iceberg”. The Hospital Outreach Team is seeing more presentations for **crack-related health harms**, particularly psychological issues.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

⁵ Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) involves the active participation of all of the key statutory and voluntary agencies who might be involved in supporting a person(s) experiencing domestic abuse. It is used primarily to manage high risk cases.

Exploitation

Following the publication of [Baroness Casey's report](#), the focus of this workshop was Child Sexual Exploitation

Risk and harm

- The level of **group-based CSE offences** recorded in the Southwest is **lower than** expected based on population.
- Nationally a rise in child sexual abuse and exploitation offences is predicted, including an **increase in offences committed by children**.
- Significant and rising concerns about young men who are effectively **radicalised by exposure to online pornography**.
- Concerns about a lack of oversight for **young people from the Isles of Scilly** when they attend secondary education on the mainland.
- **Online harms can be as impactful as those in the real world** – it is important not to see these as separate from each other.
- Agencies need to understand what young people are doing **online and through which platforms** to address the threats more effectively. Use of **AI is a recognised risk factor** and has been linked to blackmail and bullying.
- **Girls** in particular **may not understand** that they are being exploited. They may become involved in what they consider '**consensual**' activities but practitioners would deem that not to be so; there may be blurred boundaries around pornography and sharing sexual images.
- **Professional curiosity** around an individual disclosing CSE is vital as often they are **linked to** a potentially **extensive, established network**. Furthermore, understanding specific behaviours as potential flags for

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- There is a knowledge gap around **online CSE and generative AI** and this is likely to be **widely underreported**.
- There is potential for unknown/hidden risk of CSE proliferating in **holiday accommodation and Air B&Bs**.
- Because our understanding of the experience of CSE is skewed towards females, we may be **less adept at recognising CSE in boys**.
- The **extent to which CSE-related concerns are recorded** within agencies other than police and Children's Services (Multi-Agency Referral Unit) is a **mixed picture**.
- **Very little information relating to offenders is recorded** and recording of ethnicity is absent/inconsistent. There is perceived **lack of confidence** in police officers and practitioners around asking people about their ethnicity. Accurate recording is important to **challenge assumptions**.
- Perceptions persist that **some young people are 'streetwise'** and this can affect the quality and empathy of response received from services. Despite amazing work being carried out to support young people, it was acknowledged that **compassion fatigue exists** particularly when there are repeated contacts for the same young people.

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Risk and harm

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

CSE is paramount (e.g. school absence and or/difficult behaviour).

- Awareness raising of CSE and the responses to it should be **inclusive** rather than gender specific, with **continuous opportunities for disclosure** facilitated through open and curious conversations built in.
- National **legislative changes around consent** are required to reinforce that young people are not complicit in their exploitation. **Appropriate language** plays an important role in embedding this into service culture.

Hate Crime

The impacts of **hate crime** were assessed by individual strands to provide a more nuanced understanding of risks and harms for different groups. Due to increased hostilities, there was an extra focus on **racist and transphobic hate crime**.

Risk and harm

- Most reported hate crimes relate to verbal, written or physical **harassment**.
- Most reported hate crimes are **race-related**; reports of **racist, disablist and homophobic** crimes have increased.
- Highest **rates** of hate crime are for people who identify as **transgender** and the **Jewish** community.
- **1 in 5 people** told us they had seen/experienced discrimination, harassment or abuse in their local area.
- Hate **incidents reported in schools have doubled** in the last couple of years.
- **Intensification of hostilities** towards refugees and asylum seekers and the trans community – expected to intensify further.
- **Behaviours in schools reflect societal trends** – schools have a key role to play in challenging behaviours and supporting young people.
- **Fear of violence** drives people to change their behaviours to avoid being harmed and acts as a barrier to reporting; cumulative impact of **microaggressions erode feelings of safety**.
- **Misinformation in the online space** impacts on real events and increases risk of harms.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- Reported crime is affected by police **reporting practice** and **community confidence** to report.
- **Hidden harms in rural areas**, particularly for international workers that may be isolated in communities.

Reoffending

Alongside a review of the reoffending priorities, there was an extra focussed discussion in relation to women who reoffend.

Risk and harm

- **Mental Health Treatment Requirements** are now **managed** by Devon Partnership Trust **out of county** which makes delivery more problematic and disjointed.
- The consequence of not processing people through the CJS swiftly can be **escalation of, or repeat, offending**.
- More **entrenched complex need** is evident, particularly amongst women, with an increase in people released from prison **No Fixed Abode or street homeless**.
- Women particularly suffer a lack of **move-on accommodation**. Those not housed frequently have **problematic alcohol use** which results in a higher proportion of **Criminal Behaviour Orders**, perpetuating a revolving door cycle.
- The **age at which young people reoffend appears to be dropping** (previously around 16 and now 14) – small numbers at this stage but needs to be monitored.
- Types of **crime young people commit** have not changed over time however they are **notably more violent and visible** largely as a result of being recorded, shared and evidenced via **social media**.
- It is **harder for women to complete community sentences** because of the **wider commitments** they have, particularly around children/family, and in light of other factors such as prevalence of **domestic abuse**.
- **Short sentences are ineffective** for women and preclude them from valuable interventions. There also appears to be a **gender bias** in sentences given.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- **Challenges around wait times** and processing individuals remain an ongoing concern. Lack of legal advisors, court capacity, time implications associated with investigations (e.g. digital forensic queues) and CPS backlogs result in significant delays making it **difficult** to keep **victims of crime engaged**. Young people often come to services attention for a subsequent crime, whereupon the first comes to light, and this is attributable to processing times.
- The fact that there are **no prisons in Cornwall** makes visitation problematic, particularly for mothers.
- There is **only one bail hostel** in Cornwall so if evicted from here there is nowhere else to go. There is **up to a 12 week wait** for supported accommodation which often does not accept those with most complex need.
- As a result of **housing building targets not being met** at County level, supporting those with significant challenges is very difficult.
- **Young people** are **subject to housing constraints indirectly** through challenges their family unit faces.
- **New police officers** recruited to return the force to a full complement, **require significant time and training** to build competence and capability in order to carry out their roles effectively.

Town Centres

The workshop focused on anti-social behaviour and public order; shoplifting, robbery and other thefts; criminal damage; violence linked to the night-time economy

Risk and harm

- **ASB on the high street** has become normalised with businesses and residents used to experiencing it every day. **This means that it is often going un-reported.**
- **Youth ASB** is an issue in many of our towns - **alcohol use** is increasing amongst young people in Truro city centre which leads to more ASB. Some young people are also **travelling between towns** and behaving anti-socially.
- **Street drinking** is still a problem in some towns and is seen as being **displaced from one town to another** rather than being resolved. Better communication between town centres would help to manage this better.
- **More support is needed** to break the cycle of ASB and tackle the **underlying issues** of behaviour. Some people with complex needs are drawn to street life despite having housing, and this can be challenging to manage.
- **Alcohol thefts** continue to be a big issue in our towns and only **a few individuals** are responsible for a large proportion of crimes. Some offenders are shoplifting from the same shop four times a day which can be distressing for shopkeepers. Some shops **will not report shoplifting due to rising insurance costs.**
- Town centres are using **different systems to report shoplifting offences** and some towns do not have this facility at all. Many towns use DISC, but some are now also trialling UK-PAC, which potentially costs more long term.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- **Unauthorised encampments** cause significant disruption in some communities. This requires **better preparedness** between Police and Council and an **agreed process**, including **communications messages** to reassure the public and address inaccurate messages spreading on social media.
- **Dispersal notices issued by the police** could be used more to break up ASB as it is happening, whilst being careful that issues are not being displaced to another area.
- Some **people with complex needs** are being passed backwards and forwards between services and not receiving the right help.
- **Better preparation for people leaving prison** would help to ensure people are engaged with services and getting the **right support on their release.**
- **Shoplifting offences are time consuming** to bring to court with the right evidence to secure a conviction. Court judgements are **not acting as a deterrent** with some prolific offenders given suspended sentences and £100 fines. This is negatively impacting on capacity and has very little effect in the long-term.
- Other Local Authorities have set up '**Business Crime Reduction Partnerships**' which would help to provide a more coordinated response to crimes such as shoplifting from our towns. This could be explored in Cornwall, ideally

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Risk and harm

Whilst there are plus and minus points for both systems, a more coordinated approach would support retailers better.

- **Pubwatch is working effectively** with responsible licensees and night time economy doing well. Newquay is very busy during the Summer and Falmouth doing well due to all-year-round trade.
- **Issues with violence and assaults on security staff need to be escalated** so that they are managed effectively. Criminal Behaviour Orders can be imposed to manage this issue.
- This year saw **increased tensions around Pride events**, particularly online, further to the Supreme Court Ruling and increased hostilities towards the transgender community.
- **Graffiti is a recurrent issue** in many towns which is difficult to fix. Private businesses need to take more responsibility to remove from their properties.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

across multiple towns, if there is capacity to help implement it (and fund it).

Violence

Further to information shared by Education Effectiveness about the impact of exclusions, the workshop focused on a review of the impact of **school exclusions and persistent non-attendance through a violence lens**.

Risk and harm

- Nationally, numbers of suspensions and permanent exclusions **increased rapidly after the pandemic** but local rises for both were much greater. Rates of permanent exclusions and suspensions (per 100 pupils) **are well above national rates**.
- **Being excluded**, with no alternative support in place, increases the risk of going **missing**, being **exploited** or involved in **violence**; it leads to a feeling of being outside of the system. Excluded children are **4 times more likely to go to prison** as an adult.
- Exclusions **disproportionately affect vulnerable groups**, including students with special educational needs (SEND), those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and ethnic minorities.
- **Behaviour policies** can penalise students with learning disabilities or who are neurodivergent; for example, uniform rules that conflict with sensory needs can lead to repeated suspensions.
- One agency gave examples of **how quickly behaviour can escalate** from a minor infraction.
- Violence is an **increasing factor** in school exclusions for the **youngest children** (primary age).
- Young people who have **experienced violence in school**, including sexual assaults, may **self-exclude** to protect themselves and perceive a lack of consequences for the person committing the abusive behaviour.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- Alternative Provision Academies (APAs) have been **over-subscribed** - at the peak last year, **60 students were waiting** for APA places. This is now 3 students but will increase again as the school year progresses. APAs are **less able to fulfil their secondary role** of preparing a child to reintegrate into mainstream school.
- Recording practice should **avoid criminalising or labelling unwanted behaviours** unnecessarily. For example, something may be labelled as an assault when a child is simply **reflecting behaviour** they see at home and need support.
- Previous and often **undiagnosed trauma within the family** of children and young people who are repeatedly excluded was highlighted as being an **important area for development** among professionals. Links to whole family approaches.
- Trauma awareness should be **part of school culture**, not rely on one trained person. **Cost and staff retention** are significant barriers to this being standard practice.
- Workshop members reflected on the **difficulty of engaging** young people and families who already feel a **lack of belonging** and have been **failed by professionals** and processes in the past.
- One agency noted a **reduction in referrals** for a young women's project when **pastoral care was reduced** - young people had no one to tell or ask for help.

Violence

Further to information shared by Education Effectiveness about the impact of exclusions, the workshop focused on a review of the impact of **school exclusions and persistent non-attendance through a violence lens**.

Risk and harm

- Rates of **children missing from school** through absence, suspension and permanent exclusion, correlate with **multiple deprivation factors**, and with incidence of **domestic abuse**.
- The role of **poverty and deprivation** has been identified as being a key factor in young people engaging in violence and driving their behaviour (a **new Public Health report** on child poverty is imminent).
- APAs can provide opportunities for **young people with similar vulnerabilities to form alliances** and go on to commit anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviours.
- The impacts of children being out of school span **a range of harms** – from anecdotal reports in one area about involvement in **shoplifting** to more serious concerns about involvement in **violent crimes and County Lines**, with regular access to a vehicle, and **mixing with older peers**.
- **Reparative work**, and work with the wider community to try and address the issues young people face, would benefit from further development so that *“schools aren’t trying to solve issues on their own”*. The network of **VCSE programmes, funding and pathways** could be utilised to positive effect to work with the whole family. Children need **advocacy** to get back into education.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- Schools may not have **separate safe spaces and suitable support** for children who are repeatedly removed from class.
- Evidence around the needs of children who are in **home education** is limited. There are concerns that some children registered as ‘home educated’ may be **out in the community** instead, without any supervision, and could be drawn into **anti-social behaviour**.

Youth Issues

This workshop focuses on young people involved in crime and anti-social behaviour and young people's drug and alcohol use. Due to escalating concerns, the main topics discussed were ketamine use and anti-social behaviour.

Risk and harm

- **Cannabis is still the most used** substance amongst our young people but we are seeing **increased ketamine use** and the **use of solvents and aerosols re-emerge**. This increase reflects a national trend, not limited to Cornwall, with widespread concern across the UK.
- **Ketamine is widely available** in Cornwall and tolerance has developed in some young users, leading to escalating use. There have been a small number of cases with **young adults with bladder issues and nasal complications** from prolonged use of ketamine. **Polydrug use** is a major characteristic of ketamine use amongst young people known to treatment.
- **Aerosol use carries a high risk of accidental death**, making it a critical area for monitoring and intervention. The **communal nature of use** increases exposure and normalisation among peer groups.
- YZUP have seen **referrals increase for 'affected others'** with most referrals coming from children's social care – these are young people impacted by familial substance use, and don't necessarily use substances themselves.
- We continue to see **multiple vulnerabilities** in the young people engaged with treatment services, particularly when there are other people using drugs at home or when they have been excluded from school.
- There is a trend in young people **shoplifting spirits** to facilitate getting drunk quickly, rather than trying to obtain alcohol through older friends and siblings. This **links to**

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

- There is a gap in our knowledge in **how young people use the internet and social media** in order to communicate with each other. This includes using smart phone applications to acquire drugs and alcohol.
- **Training is needed for services that work with young people** about ketamine and aerosol use to raise awareness about the risks. There is a **misconception** amongst many young people that these are **'lower harm' drugs**.
- YZUP are operating a **waiting list** and piloting an **online support model** that may help manage demand in the future.
- Despite some additional investment linked to the national Drugs Strategy following the Dame Carol Black Review, there are concerns that current and future resources may still fall short of **meeting the growing needs of young people** in Cornwall.
- There is a **statutory responsibility** for much of the work undertaken by the Youth Justice Service. The service also has a **strong prevention and diversion offer** and this is **more at risk** due to a lack of resources to deliver.

Youth Issues

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Risk and harm

criminal and anti-social behaviour, as well as increased vulnerability through this pattern of use.

- Over the summer **local events have attracted very large groups** of young people, with associated issues of anti-social behaviour, including alcohol-related.
- In the last year, **624 offences** were recorded as linked to 271 children, up by 18% from the previous 12 months. This has been skewed by a small number of young people with high levels of offending.
- Children who come to the attention of Youth Justice Services present with **high levels of need** relating to neurodiversity, education, mental health and wellbeing. **Adverse childhood experiences** are highly prevalent amongst this cohort of children. Our local Youth Justice partnership, therefore, aims to provide **holistic and trauma-informed interventions** that address the underlying causes of offending behaviour.

Capacity/Capability/Organisational Risks

MoRiLE - understanding threat, risk and harm

The **Management of Risk in Law Enforcement** (MoRiLE) programme was created in 2014 through the National Police Chiefs Council's Intelligence Innovation Group.

The programme developed a process for all law enforcement agencies that provides a **common framework and language** for understanding risk, involving more than 300 UK and international agencies.

In October 2016, MoRiLE became a **nationally accredited**⁶ way of working for all police Forces and other law enforcement agencies such as National Crime Agency, to inform their Strategic Assessments.

Safer Cornwall was the lead on the national programme for developing the process to work for CSPs and now advises other CSPs in implementing it successfully.

How it works

The process is **easy to use and understand** and allows a range of different issues to be compared fairly against each other.

The process uses a **simple scoring tool** to combine a range of individual scores given in the following areas:

- **Impacts** on the victim, the local community, and the environment
- **Likelihood** – how often the issue happens, how much and whether it is getting better or worse
- **Organisational position** – risks to the partnership's reputation if the problem isn't addressed well, any political pressure (locally or nationally), and how effective the local response is (costs, the right

number of people with the right skills).

The list of **community safety issues** assessed includes specific **crime groups** and offence types, local **priorities** and wider **community safety issues** such as problem use of drugs and alcohol-related hospital admissions.

The process is delivered by **community safety analysts** in collaboration with a broad cross-section of specialists and community safety practitioners to provide **balance and insight**.

The resulting scores are grouped into **High, Moderate, Standard** and **Low** level risks.

This identifies a **specific list of high risk issues** for the Partnership to focus on. It also to identify cross-cutting themes around which our **priority outcomes** can be developed to impact positively across all of the highest risk areas.

The full matrix is available on request from Amethyst.

⁶ Police Authorised Professional Practice