

# Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Missing and Sexual Exploitation Strategy

## Tackling the sexual exploitation of children, young people and adults at risk

We recognise that children and young people are predominantly the victims of sexual exploitation. This strategy, however, **utilises the four national principles**, Prevent, Protect, Pursue and Provide, in our response to child sexual exploitation and promotes their **wider application** to respond to **adults at risk** that have been sexually exploited and **adult survivors** of child sexual exploitation.

*"Child Sexual Exploitation is child abuse and it is a crime. Our efforts need to be directed towards perpetrators in order to detect, prevent and disrupt that abuse at the earliest stages as well as the prosecution of individual perpetrators to ensure that they face the full force of the criminal justice system for their vile crimes."* **Reflections on child sexual exploitation, Louise Casey, March 2015**

In her report Louise Casey makes four points in relation to grooming and child sexual exploitation (CSE):

That **CSE is child abuse and is a crime**. And our efforts need to be directed towards perpetrators in order to detect, prevent and disrupt that abuse at the earliest stages as well as the prosecution of individual perpetrators to ensure that they face the full force of the criminal justice system for their vile crimes. These are **not mutually exclusive activities**.

That the **victims are children** however they present themselves. **They cannot consent to their abuse**, all the more given that grooming itself removes any real sense of self-determination from these children. There should be no scenarios in which victims are viewed as young women or as making choices.

Thirdly that **CSE is squarely a community safety issue** and local government working with police and others need to make use of community safety tactics and action to keep children safe. The regulatory and enforcement functions of the local authority are vital in preventing and disrupting CSE and in building intelligence which can help with prosecutions.

Finally, that local government and the police should not fear seeking out and shining a light on sexual exploitation for fear they may be held to account for what they find. **The failure is not in the existence of CSE but in not recognising it and taking appropriate action.**

The Government have identified child sexual abuse and exploitation as one of the **key crime strands** within **serious and organised crime**. In November 2014, a requirement was created for **Serious and Organised Crime Local Profiles**<sup>1</sup> to be created for each of the crime areas. The aims of the Local Profiles are to:

- Develop a **common understanding** among local partners of the **threats, vulnerabilities and risks** relating to serious and organised crime;
- Provide information on which to base **local programmes and action plans**;
- Support the **mainstreaming of serious and organised crime activity** into day to day policing, local government and partnership work;
- Allow a **targeted and proportionate use of resources**.

Local partnerships are charged with developing the response to these profiles, and in Devon and Cornwall, this role is delivered through the community safety partnerships.

## What is child sexual exploitation?

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly has adopted the **cross-Government definition** of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as defined by Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and shared with the Department of Education (DfE, 2012).

*"Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or another/others performing on them, sexual activities.*

*Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.*

*Violence, coercion and intimidation are common; involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability."*

NB: The definition above also applies to those adults who may be more vulnerable to the risk of sexual exploitation due to their personal circumstances or additional needs, however, nationally the focus has been on widely reported cases of child sexual exploitation.

There are **clear overlaps between child sexual abuse and exploitation** and it is difficult to distinguish between them in recorded crime data. If 'enticing' a

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<sup>1</sup> [Serious and organised crime local profiles: a guide](#) (Home Office, 2014)

child, young person or adult at risk involves offering them something, then this is exploitation; the result of exploitation is often that they are sexually abused. The way in which any individual has been harmed could often be interpreted as either sexual abuse or sexual exploitation or both.

It is therefore **not helpful to consider them as totally distinct** categories. Although these types of criminal behaviour may need different models of intervention, support and investigation, the symptoms and ways in which they are identified are likely to be very similar. Exploitation is a context in which the victim can be sexually abused. Children, young people or adults at risk who are sexually abused are often more vulnerable to exploitation.

## CSE in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly – what the evidence says

The serious and organised crime local profile<sup>2</sup> for child sexual abuse and exploitation identifies the threat, vulnerability and risk from these crime types within a local area. The nature and extent of CSA/CSE is also explored in Safer Cornwall's domestic abuse and sexual violence needs assessment.<sup>3</sup>

We know that child sexual abuse and exploitation is under-reported but successive revelations in the media about historical abuse, in some cases highly organised, indicate that the **extent of the harm caused child sexual abuse and exploitation is far greater** than previously thought to be the case.

It is widely acknowledged that better recording methods are required to **improve the intelligence picture**, in order to prioritise local prevention activity, identify and understand hotspots and strengthen investigative processes.

We have seen the numbers of **sexual offences recorded by the police rise year on year**, locally and nationally, and the wide range of contributory factors means that interpreting actual trends is difficult. The evidence suggests, however, that a **greater willingness of victims to report** and improvements in **police recording and response** are likely to be the key drivers of the increase.

It is estimated that **1 in 20 children** nationally are victims of contact sexual abuse, which equates to around **2,300 young people** in Cornwall.

Although girls and young women report the majority of sexual abuse, **boys** are also victims and may be less likely to come forward. **Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children** are identified as at particular risk of abuse and exploitation.

In the majority of reported cases of sexual exploitation, the offender was known to the victim, indicating that the biggest threat posed to children is by **someone that they know**. Offenders are **predominantly (but not exclusively) male**.

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<sup>2</sup> Available on request from the Safer Cornwall Serious and Organised Crime Partnership

<sup>3</sup> Domestic abuse and sexual violence: A needs assessment for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Amethyst, 2015). This can be viewed and downloaded from the [Safer Cornwall website](#).

**Peer to peer sexual abuse and exploitation is likely to be an underreported area** and there is a danger that both victims and authorities may view an act of abuse as “experimenting” rather than abuse.

Local research indicates that in Cornwall we see a higher than average proportion of exploitative sexual offences committed by an offender under the age of 18 (45% for Cornwall versus 20% for Devon and Cornwall). **Lack of understanding around consent** between peers was common.

The importance of **education about consent and healthy relationships** is clear here.

**On-line environments** are high risk locations for abuse and grooming young victims. Officers working with child victims of CSA/CSE emphasised **the speed at which abuse can escalate online** and how quickly a child can be groomed into sharing indecent images or meeting an offender.

Other “risky places” include **public places** (such as alcohol outlets, carnivals and fairs, car parks, beaches and skate parks), **supervised locations** (such as schools, youth and sports clubs, stores) and **family environments**.

There may be a range of people in these locations who, if they understood more about the nature of abuse and exploitation, could **identify and interact with children at risk**.

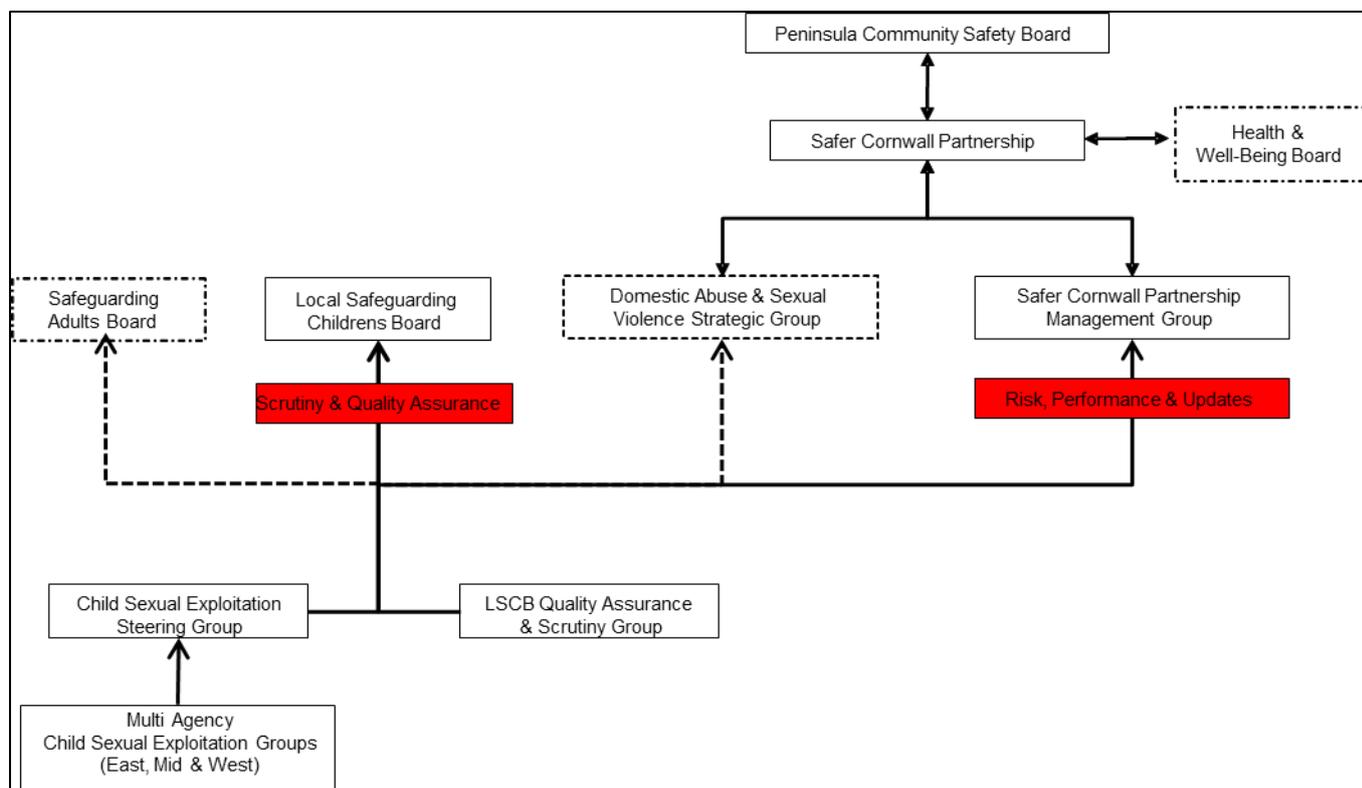
Consideration should be given to the challenges presented by Cornwall’s **dispersed and sparsely populated** settlement pattern – both in terms of its impact on **vulnerability** and **provision of services**.

The findings from **national inquiries**, such as Rotherham, Rochdale and the Jimmy Savile case ([Operation Yewtree](#)), provide valuable learning points for local consideration, particularly in relation to how we identify and respond to individuals and **families with complex needs**. Missing episodes, domestic abuse, mental health and substance use are recurrent themes.

## Governance and scrutiny

Safer Cornwall provides the **strategic lead for implementation of this strategy**, co-ordinating the **delivery plan** and **managing risk and performance** through the partnership's existing governance structure.

The governance arrangements are shown below.



The responsibility of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adults Board with respect to CSE is defined in statutory guidance such as the **Children Act** (1989 and 2004), **Working Together** (2015) and the **Care Act** (2014). In addition there are clear learning points identified within the recent reports of Professor Jay (Rotherham), the DCLG (Louise Casey) and Ofsted.

Section 42 of the Care Act states that local authorities and partner agencies must carry out a safeguarding enquiry in relation to an adult who:

- Has care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of these needs) and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards therefore have a statutory responsibility to **monitor, scrutinise and challenge** all services individually and collectively on their performance in responding to

the sexual exploitation of children, young people and adults at risk. This will be achieved through the **Child Sexual Exploitation Steering Group**.

Practice governance will be delivered through the **LSCB Quality Assurance and Scrutiny group**, chaired by the LSCB Independent Chair. The findings will be reported in the LSCB Annual Report. The Quality Assurance and Scrutiny group will receive, scrutinise and challenge regular reports about individual agency or multi-agency policy and practice on CSE.

By this means there can be assurance for the LSCB, SAB, Elected Members and Safer Cornwall that agencies are able to articulate awareness and understanding of CSE and the levels of risk faced by our children, young people and adults at risk and the effectiveness of our response. The analysis of available information and intelligence will be used to inform strategic planning across the partnerships.

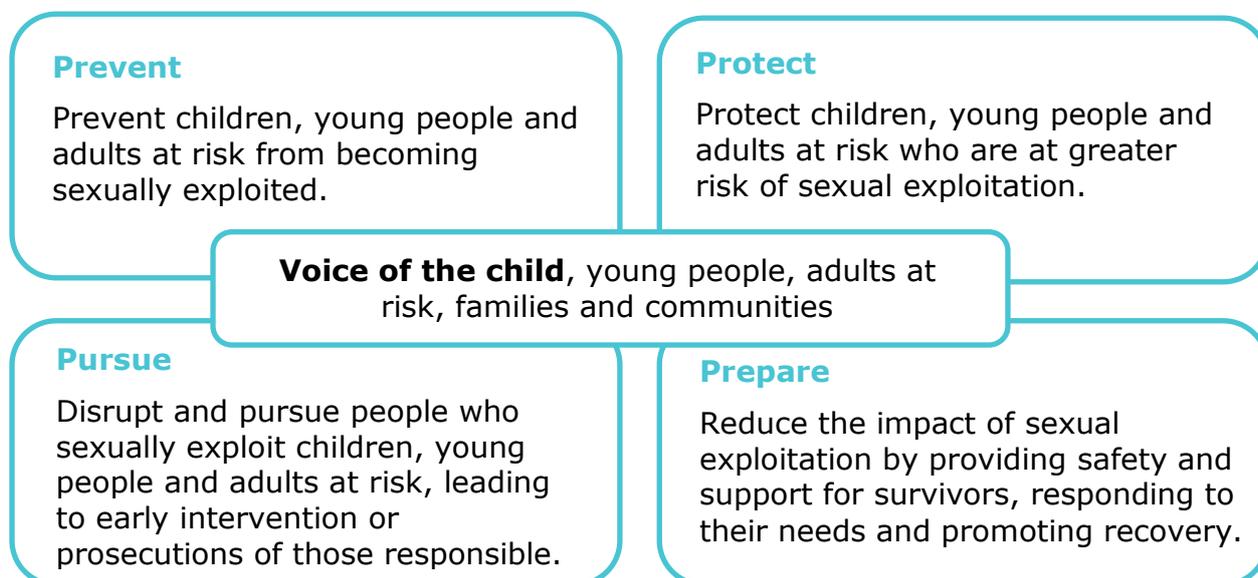
The Police will take responsibility for chairing the joint Sexual Exploitation group. Partners will be held to account through the sub-group and through tracking progress on the delivery plan and ensure implementation is achieved to required timescales.

The sub-group will co-ordinate a **six monthly audit of multi-agency practice**. This will include an analysis of how agencies have used their data to promote service improvement for vulnerable children and families, including in respect of sexual abuse. It will be an expectation that any judgement about the quality and effectiveness of sexual exploitation services will take account of the extent to which the participation and engagement of children, young people, adults and their families can be evidenced. Ultimately, the focus of any audit or review work will evaluate the impact on outcomes for victims or potential victims.

The East, Mid and West **Multi Agency Child Sexual Exploitation Groups (MACSEs)** will provide an operational response. These will be multi-agency groups and chaired by Detective Inspectors from Devon and Cornwall Police Public Protection Units.

# Strategy framework

This strategy sets out how we will tackle the sexual exploitation of children, young people and adults and risk, following the **four national principles**, Prevent, Protect, Pursue and Prepare, and at the centre is ensuring that the voices of children, young people and adults at risk are heard and responded to.



PURSUE: prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime;

PREVENT: preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime;

PROTECT: increasing protection against serious and organised crime;

PREPARE: reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place

The strategy will follow 12 key areas of work under the four principles:

## Prevent

- **Early Identification and Help** – ensuring early identification, promoting a culture of 'ask and tell' and enabling an early response thereby reducing the risk of escalation and long term harm
- **Workforce Development** – ensuring responding to CSE is recognised and embedded as core business for all statutory, private and voluntary sector organisations
- **Intelligence, Quality Assurance and Performance Management** – ensuring a strong evidence base with robust management of performance and risk to support the development of the highest quality services

## Prepare

- **Commissioning and Service Delivery** – ensuring service delivery from crisis intervention through a continuum of support to independent living for all impacted and affected by CSE
- **Funding and sustainability** – ensuring long term responses to long term issues are supported in a financial sustainable way

- **Complex needs** – ensuring an integrated response to complex needs where CSE co-exists with other issues such as domestic abuse, problem use of drugs and/or alcohol and mental health problems

## Pursue

- **Processes** (MACSE, MARU, Safeguarding) – ensuring where specialist forums or processes exist, they are effective and provide measurable outcomes that demonstrate real difference for victims, their families and perpetrators
- **Lessons Learnt** (SCRs and SUIs) – ensuring 'lessons to be learnt' are translated to 'lessons learned' through realising lessons in operational reality, practice and policy
- **Perpetrator Identification, Management and Support** – ensuring that the identification of perpetrators shifts from a 'criminal justice only responsibility' to core business thereby enabling early intervention, co-monitoring and reducing risk

## Protect

- **Digital Infrastructure and Interoperability** (IT, Case Management and Databases) – ensuring services are enabled through technology and systems can communicate
- **Interfaces** (MACSE, MARU, MASH, Safeguarding Adults, Early Help Hub, Victim Care Unit) – ensuring we break down barriers between systems, processes and geographical boundaries thereby enabling a coordinated and effective response to protect and support people enduring complex issues
- **Community Based Intelligence and Response** – ensuring we engage with communities, utilise their offer and support development where gaps are identified to move towards independent living.

The views of **children, young people and adults at risk, their families and communities** will be sought at all points throughout service design and delivery, to assure agencies that lessons have been and continue to be learned.

## Models of best practice

- Pan London Child Sexual Exploitation Operating Protocol (March 2015, best practice example) [http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/child\\_sexual\\_exploitation/](http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/child_sexual_exploitation/)
- Pan Cheshire/Merseyside CSE Strategy <http://www.seftonlscb.co.uk/media/6827/Pan-Cheshire-and-Merseyside-CSE-Strategy.pdf>
- Association of Independent LSCB Chairs [http://www.lscbchairs.org.uk/Child\\_Sexual\\_Exploitation](http://www.lscbchairs.org.uk/Child_Sexual_Exploitation)
- Blackburn with Darwen Council: Engage Team <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/Pages/Child-sexual-exploitation.aspx>
- Calderdale Council: Co-located specialist CSE team and daily intelligence sharing meetings
- Essex Safeguarding Children Board: CSE champions <http://dnn.essex.gov.uk/escb/Professionals/ChildSexualExploitation/Champions.aspx>
- Greater Manchester: Project Phoenix, It's not okay campaign <http://www.itsnotokay.co.uk/>
- Portsmouth: CSE strategy and awareness raising campaign [http://ipc.brookes.ac.uk/publications/pdf/Hampshire\\_Supporting\\_CYP\\_at\\_risk\\_of\\_sexual\\_exploitation\\_July2015.pdf](http://ipc.brookes.ac.uk/publications/pdf/Hampshire_Supporting_CYP_at_risk_of_sexual_exploitation_July2015.pdf)
- Slough Council: Licensing 'splinter' group [http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/\(S\(34io4tj1yw5yy445th41hk55\)\)/documents/s38375/Licensing%20Ctee%2022.07.15%20Safeguarding%20Training%20App%20A.pdf](http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/(S(34io4tj1yw5yy445th41hk55))/documents/s38375/Licensing%20Ctee%2022.07.15%20Safeguarding%20Training%20App%20A.pdf)

## References

- Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Serious and Organised Crime Local Profile: Peninsula Overview (Devon and Cornwall Police 2015)
- Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Serious and Organised Crime Local Profile: Cornwall (restricted circulation, Devon and Cornwall Police 2015)
- Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence – a needs assessment for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Amethyst 2015)
- Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (Alexis Jay commissioned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, 2014) – **15 recommendations** [http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent\\_inquiry\\_cse\\_in\\_rotherham](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent_inquiry_cse_in_rotherham)
- National Child Protection Inspections: Devon and Cornwall Police (HMIC, September 2015) – **11 recommendations** <http://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/devon-and-cornwall-national-child-protection-inspection/>
- Reflections on CSE (DCLG, Louise Casey 2015) – **4 key areas** for action [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418394/Louise\\_Casey\\_report\\_into\\_CSE\\_template\\_format\\_4\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418394/Louise_Casey_report_into_CSE_template_format_4_.pdf)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education, 2015) – statutory guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- Health Working Group: Report on CSE (Department of Health, 2014) – **13 recommendations** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-working-group-report-on-child-sexual-exploitation>
- The sexual exploitation of children: It couldn't happen here, could it? (Ofsted, 2014) – **25 recommendations** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-exploitation-of-children-ofsted-thematic-report>
- Home Affairs Select Committee: Child sexual exploitation and the response to localised grooming (House of Commons, 2013) – **36 recommendations** <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/68/68i.pdf>
- Report from the Joint Inquiry into Children Who Go Missing from Care (All Party Parliamentary Groups, 2012) – **31 recommendations** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-from-the-joint-inquiry-into-children-who-go-missing-from-care>
- Puppet on a string (Barnardos, 2011) – **4 priorities** for a national action plan [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf\\_puppetonastring\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf_puppetonastring_report_final.pdf)
- Tackling CSE: National Action Plan (Department for Education, 2011, updated in 2012) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-action-plan>

## Operations

- Operation Bullfinch (Oxfordshire SCR, 2012)
- Operation Mansfield (Torbay SCR, 2013)
- Operation Retriever (Derby SCR, 2010) – 100 police, 27 victims and 9 perpetrators
- Operation Deters (Preston SCR, 2010) – 2 perpetrators, 2 victims
- Operation Span (Rochdale SCR, 2012) – 9 perpetrators
- Operation Rockferry (Reading SCR, 2012)

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