Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Portsmouth's Community Safety Plan 2025–28



Foreword

The Community Safety Partnership is proud to present Portsmouth's Community Safety Plan for 2025–2028. Rooted in the priorities identified through the 2023/24 Strategic Assessment and the 2024 Community Safety Survey, this plan supports the Positive Relationships theme of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It also aligns with the City Vision 2040, aiming to ensure that all residents feel safe, included, and able to thrive.

This plan brings together a range of existing strategies and outlines coordinated actions and monitoring for the year ahead. All community safety partners, and council departments share responsibility for delivering its objectives. For over two decades, the partnership has used a public health approach, analysing data, identifying long-term trends, and refining its focus to address the root causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Although police-recorded crime has declined since 2022/23, broader data suggests that overall crime levels have remained stable over the past decade. Key concerns include rising shoplifting and knife-enabled violence, persistent domestic abuse, youth exploitation, and online fraud. Serious violence remains concentrated in public areas, particularly the city centre, and is often linked to the night-time economy and youth activity. While police-reported anti-social behaviour (ASB) has decreased, other sources indicate that ASB levels have remained steady. Drug-related harm and perceptions of



safety, especially in the city centre, continue to be significant community concerns.[1]

Underlying risk factors such as domestic abuse, poor mental health, and drug and alcohol dependence often contribute to individuals becoming involved in crime or ASB. Addressing these issues requires a joined-up approach across council services and partner organisations. By working collaboratively, we can reduce duplication, improve efficiency, and create more opportunities for early intervention and prevention.

This plan complements existing strategies, including those focused on Combating Drugs, Youth Justice, and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), by highlighting how they interconnect and contribute to shared goals. It also recognises the role of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in reaching and supporting communities in ways statutory services cannot.

Equally important is the role of residents. Creating a safer Portsmouth is a shared responsibility. We must continue to empower individuals to report concerns, support one another, and take part in local initiatives. Together, we can build a city where everyone feels safe, connected, and able to flourish.



Cllr Hunt

Portfolio holder for Community Safety



Superintendent Paul Markham



Dr Linda Collie

Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board

1 Executive Summary of the Strategic Assessment of Community Safety 2023/24 **www.saferportsmouth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Executive-Summary-Strategic-Assessment-of-Community-Safety-2023-24.pdf**

Contents

Foreword 2

Introduction 5

Summary of each priority 6

Priority1: Tackling violent crime, focussing on violence against women and girls (VAWG) including domestic abuse and sexual violence, and knife-enabled violence. 7

Priority 2: Tackling drug-related harm with a focus on working to increase access to treatment, to prevent exploitation and offending. 9

Priority 3: Early identification of and interventions with children and young people at risk of exploitation or a buse, of misusing substances and of offending. 11

Priority 4: Working together to identify and support people facing multiple challenges, to address root causes associated with being a victim or perpetrator of crime and ASB. 13

Monitoring impact and using measures 15

Governance 16

Conclusion 17

Introduction

In 2019, the Safer Portsmouth Partnership was formally integrated into the Health and Wellbeing Board, with the Board's constitution updated to include the statutory responsibilities of a local community safety partnership. This role is now supported by the Community Safety Sub-group, formed in 2024, which leads on the delivery and oversight of community safety priorities.

Under sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act, responsible authorities are required to produce a strategic assessment that identifies local priorities and informs the development of a partnership plan. The priorities outlined in this Community Safety Plan for 2025–2028 are directly drawn from the most recent strategic assessment, which can be accessed via the Safer Portsmouth website.

Over time, both local and national evidence have consistently highlighted key risk factors, such as domestic abuse, poor mental health, and drug and alcohol dependence, as major drivers of crime, anti-social behaviour, and reoffending. These complex and interconnected issues also contribute to wider social challenges, including lower educational attainment, unhealthy lifestyles, and safeguarding concerns. Addressing them requires sustained, collaborative action across multiple agencies.

This plan focuses on four priority areas, which reflect both ongoing and emerging challenges in Portsmouth: Tackling violent crime, tackling drug-related harm, early identification and intervention, and working together on complex needs.

Together, these priorities form the foundation of a coordinated, city-wide approach to improving safety, wellbeing, and resilience across Portsmouth.

This plan builds on a strong foundation of existing strategies and partnerships, including the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, Youth Justice initiatives, and the Combating Drugs Partnership. It promotes a whole-system, place-based approach that aligns with Portsmouth's broader Health and Wellbeing goals. By focusing on targeted interventions, multi-agency collaboration, and a commitment to prevention and early help, the plan seeks to reduce crime, support victims, and empower communities.

Rather than duplicating existing efforts, this concise Community Safety Plan highlights how these strategies are interconnected and demonstrates their collective potential to drive meaningful progress across the city's key priorities: tackling violence, addressing drug and alcohol dependence, and strengthening early intervention and prevention.

Summary of each priority

As noted earlier, each of the community safety priorities is already supported by well-established strategies, each with clear objectives, performance measures, and delivery plans. A summary of these is provided below, and full versions are available upon request. The four priority areas identified remain consistent with those from previous years, reflecting the ongoing nature and complexity of the challenges they aim to address.



Priority 1

Tackling violent crime, focussing on violence against women and girls (VAWG) including domestic abuse and sexual violence, and knife-enabled violence.



Priority 2

Tackling drug-related harm with a focus on working to increase access to treatment, to prevent exploitation and offending.



Priority 3

Early identification of and interventions with children and young people at risk of exploitation or abuse, of misusing substances and of offending.



Priority 4

Working together to identify and support people facing multiple challenges, to address root causes associated with being a victim or perpetrator of crime and ASB.

Priority1

Tackling violent crime, focussing on violence against women and girls (VAWG) including domestic abuse and sexual violence, and knife-enabled violence.

Summary of workstream

This is a continuing priority. Whilst violent crime levels in the city have remained relatively stable, there has been marginal increases in possession of a weapon offences, and there is a fear in the community around knife-enabled violence. There have also been increases in sexual offences, although this may be due to increased confidence to report. The serious violence profile for the city, is currently being produced in collaboration with the office police crime commissioner, and once published will further inform the situation. Active work to address youth knife enabled crime is being undertaken through the Youth justice Board. Following the publication of the city's first VAWG strategy, work is underway to establish a VAWG Board that will oversee the co-production of staged delivery plans. The interrelated and gendered nature of VAWG makes it most practical to consider the formation of one rather than multiple groups to oversee the work, and the VAWG Board once formed will supersede the existing Domestic Abuse strategic group.

Strategic planning groups

Violence Against Women and Girls Board (VAWG) Board, Youth Justice Board, Missing Exploited and Trafficked MET Strategy Group, Modern Slavery Working Group

Key personnel

Chief Inspector Kerry Owen; Sarah Daly, Director Children, Families and Education; Caroline Hopper, Strategic Lead for Community Safety, Serious Violence and VAWG; Hayley Webb, Partnerships and Commissioning Manager; Keely Mitchell, Head of Adolescents and Young People.

Objectives

- Ensuring everyone is empowered to work towards ending violence against women and girls.
- Use our partnerships and shared messaging to reach everyone in our diverse communities.
- Calling in and working with those who use unhealthy and harmful behaviours.
- Making our city feel safe, welcoming and equitable to all, specifically women and girls
- To address Serious Violence within the city

Priority1 *continued*

Measures

Domestic abuse

- Increase the number of people engaging in work to address unhealthy/abusive relationship behaviours

Early intervention and messaging

- Numbers of visits to the Safer Together online hub

A place everyone feels safe

- Numbers of businesses and community venues standing up to sexual violence and harassment as We Stand Together Venues
- Numbers of people trained to be active bystanders through the Community in Motion training

Organisational change

- Numbers of key suppliers and/or partners who have been supported to engage in White Ribbon

Knife enabled violence

- Pending from Youth Justice plan

Delivery

- Development of staged delivery plans for VAWG pillars
- Develop new monitoring framework
- Establish mechanisms for hearing lived experience
- Undertake commissioning decisions to ensure the best services for victims and those who harm.
- Remodel 'Is this Love Campaign' to ensure messaging remains relevant
- Position the Safer Together Hub as the primary, trusted source of information and support related to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Develop work around healthy masculinity within education and youth settings
- Roll out of Mentors in Violence Prevention
- Establishment of MARAC Strategy Group aligned to VAWG Board
- Oversee the implementation and impact of DARDR/SAR recommendations
- Serious Harm Action, Reduction and Prevention Panel
- Operation Sceptre Week of Action

Priority 2

Tackling drug-related harm with a focus on working to increase access to treatment, to prevent exploitation and offending.

Summary of workstream

Drug and alcohol dependence not only affects the individual's health and wellbeing but has significant impact on families and the wider community. Drug and alcohol dependence has also been identified as a key risk factor associated with crime and antisocial behaviour and has been a priority of the Safer Portsmouth Partnership for several years. This priority has been refreshed to emphasise a focus on reducing harm and increasing the capacity and quality of treatment services, linked to the priorities of the Combating Drugs Partnership. There are a number of direct criminal justice interventions aimed at reducing re-offending, where the treatment services work collaboratively with the police, Probation and prisons.

Strategic planning groups

Combatting Drugs Partnership, Op Fortress

Key personnel

Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health; Alan Knobel, Public Health Development Manager; Portsmouth Police (DCI)

Objectives

- Support homeless people with complex needs to access drug and alcohol treatment and improve access to more holistic support for issues such as mental health
- Increase the percentage of prisoners who leave prison that engage in community drug and alcohol treatment
- Increase the number of women engaged in treatment
- Aim to reduce drug related deaths working with partners to reduce risks and encourage more drug users in to treatment
- Improve pathways for people with co-occurring drug and alcohol dependence and mental health needs
- Develop and review a synthetic opioid response plan, along with Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight. This will include the drug alert process used across the authorities

Priority 2 *continued*

Measures

- Number of people in drug and alcohol treatment, including rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping, and women
- Number and rate of drug related deaths
- Number of people in treatment who are supported to access specialist mental health services.
- Percentage of prisoners accessing community drug and alcohol treatment shortly after leaving prison.
- Monitor and analyse drug related and acquisitive crime

Delivery

- Disrupting local supply chains and increase reporting of drug intelligence from the community to the police
- Support people within the criminal justice system with a drug and alcohol dependency to access treatment and support services.
- Increase the number of people accessing treatment and making positive progress.
- Project W to deliver a multi-disciplinary dedicated women only service for those with a drug and alcohol dependence.
- Focused work with young people (under 18 and 18-24) who are using drugs or alcohol problematically.

Priority 3

Early identification of and interventions with children and young people at risk of exploitation or abuse, of misusing substances and of offending.

Summary of workstream

This is a continuing priority for the Community Safety plan, and work on early intervention with children and young people continues to be business as usual for Portsmouth Children's Services. This priority is strategically aligned with work to reduce serious violence, Early Help, troubled families, school inclusion, reducing youth crime, preventing violent extremism, and the Safeguarding Partnerships work on criminal exploitation.

Strategic planning groups

Violence Reduction Unit Local Core Group, Portsmouth Youth Justice Board, Serious Violence Strategy Group, MET strategic Group, SHARP Panel, Prevent Partnership Board

Key personnel

Sarah Daly, Director Children, Families and Education; Keely Mitchel, Head of Adolescents and Young People, Nichola Clannachan, Head of Housing and Community Services; Amanda Hales-Owen, Head of Integrated Early Help and Prevention; Charlie Pericleous, Prevent Officer and Channel Panel Chair

Objectives

- Early Identification
- Reduced absence and exclusions
- Reducing first time entrants
- Reducing re-offending
- Reducing use of custody
- Safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism

Priority 3 *continued*

Measures

- Absence and exclusion monitoring
- Number of children who are a NEET
- Number of children whose risk level of either CSE or CCE rises to high (from low or medium)
- Numbers of children flagged at operational MET Group
- Number of arrests linked to CSE and CCE
- Numbers of children that are victim of knife related crime
- Number of Prevent referrals and Channel interventions

Delivery

- Early Help Pathway
- Channel Panel
- Additional support and/or monitoring to prevent offending
- Strong, coordinated whole family support
- Targeted planning
- Youth crime prevention work
- Enhanced interventions
- Workforce development (Safeguarding and Prevent Awareness)
- Improve access to and engagement of post-16 provision
- Restorative approaches
- Diversionary activities
- Community Engagement that builds resilience against radicalisation

Priority 4

Working together to identify and support people facing multiple challenges, to address root causes associated with being a victim or perpetrator of crime and ASB.

Summary of workstream

Links have been identified between young people at risk and issues such as domestic, sexual, and knife-enabled violence, drug and alcohol dependence, and adult reoffending. Strategic assessments highlight cross-cutting themes including poor mental health, homelessness, rough sleeping, and missing episodes. Addressing multiple and complex needs has long been a priority, and its inclusion in the community safety plan aims to build on recent interventions, such as in homelessness services, to reduce offending and reoffending through a more integrated, strategic response.

Strategic planning groups

Managed with Police Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)

Key personnel

Supt Paul Markham, Hampshire Constabulary; James Hill, Director, Housing Neighbourhoods and Buildings Services; Lauren Rackman, Head of Community Safety.

Objectives

- Identify and Engage Early
- Deliver Coordinated Support
- Promote Trauma-Informed Practice
- Strengthen Community Partnerships
- Monitor Impact and Drive Improvement

Priority 4 *continued*

Measures

- Numbers of clients identified with complex needs and referred into appropriate pathways (mental health, housing, drug and alcohol dependence)
- Numbers of Community Protection Warnings (CPNWs) escalating to Community Protection Notices (CPNs)
- Use of Civil Injunctions, CBO's, PSPO's, linked to reduction in offending.
- Use of dispersal powers as required.

Delivery

- Multiagency problem solving and tactical planning through TCG
- City Centre Policing Team
- Partnership work (inc. pub watch, and NTE briefings).
- Develop systems to identify individuals at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of crime and ASB through multi-agency data sharing and community intelligence.
- Strengthen place-based responses by involving stakeholders in designing and delivering tailored interventions.
- Workforce development
- Seek to bridge (children to adults)
- Support wider HWB work in respect of complex needs (holistic assessment and support pathways)

Monitoring impact and using measures

Monitoring systems are already in place for key areas such as serious violence, violence against women and girls (VAWG), drug and alcohol dependence, and early intervention. This plan doesn't set fixed numerical targets.

Instead, Portsmouth's Community Safety Analysts, based within the public health intelligence team, will regularly review police and related data. They'll use a method that tracks patterns over time, helping to identify any unusual changes. This approach allows us to understand what's typical and when something might need closer attention.



Governance

The Health and Wellbeing Board holds overall responsibility for fulfilling the statutory duties of the Safer Portsmouth Partnership. Once the plan is approved, the Community Safety Sub-group will take the lead in overseeing its implementation and will provide regular progress updates to the Board.

Key strategy groups will track progress in their respective areas, and an annual report will be submitted to the Health and Wellbeing Board. Additional task-and-finish groups may be set up as needed to support specific areas of work.

Conclusion

This Community Safety Plan 2025–2028 reaffirms Portsmouth's commitment to tackling crime head-on and reducing the fear it generates within our communities. While the city continues to face challenges such as serious violence, drug-related harm, and the exploitation of vulnerable individuals, this plan sets out a clear, coordinated response rooted in prevention, early intervention, and strong partnership working.

By focusing on four strategic priorities - violent crime, drug-related harm, early intervention with at-risk youth, and supporting individuals with complex needs - the plan aims not only to reduce offending and reoffending but also to restore a sense of safety and confidence among residents. The inclusion of targeted actions, such as knife crime prevention, support for victims of violence, and place-based approaches to antisocial behaviour, reflects our understanding of the issues that most impact on our residents.

Ultimately, this plan is about more than reducing statistics; it's about making Portsmouth a place where people feel safe in their homes, on their streets, and in their communities. Through sustained collaboration, evidence-led action, and a shared commitment, we will work to reduce crime and the fear it causes, ensuring a safer, more resilient city for all.

Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

You can request this information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 023 9284 1780 or emailing caroline.bell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Produced by: **marketing@portsmouthcc.gov.uk** • Published: **November 2026** • Ref: **120.86**

portsmouth.gov.uk