

Joint Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Communities

Author: Karen Brown/Katharine Doherty (Community Safety Team Leaders)

Telephone: 01235 422592

Textphone: 18001 01235 422592

E-mail: karen.brown@southandvale.gov.uk

Cabinet member responsible: Georgina Heritage

Tel: 07983 396498

E-mail: Georgina.Heritage@southoxon.gov.uk

To: Joint Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 16 September 2024

Cabinet member responsible: Helen Pighills

Tel: 01235 534446

E-mail: Helen.Pighills@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

To: Joint Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 16 September 2024

South and Vale Community Safety Partnership – performance report

Recommendation(s)

(a) To note the progress that the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) made in 2023-24 in delivering its priorities and statutory functions

(b) To support the CSP's view that the 2022-25 plan will continue to deliver core priorities and statutory functions and focus on these four key priorities:

- domestic abuse
- modern slavery/exploitation
- serious violence
- rural crime

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the scrutiny committee on the progress that the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is making to reduce crime and support vulnerable people.

Strategic Objectives

2. The CSP helps to deliver the corporate objectives of "Improved economic and community well-being", "building healthy communities" and "working in partnership" by bringing local organisations together to tackle crime, protect vulnerable people and help people feel safe.

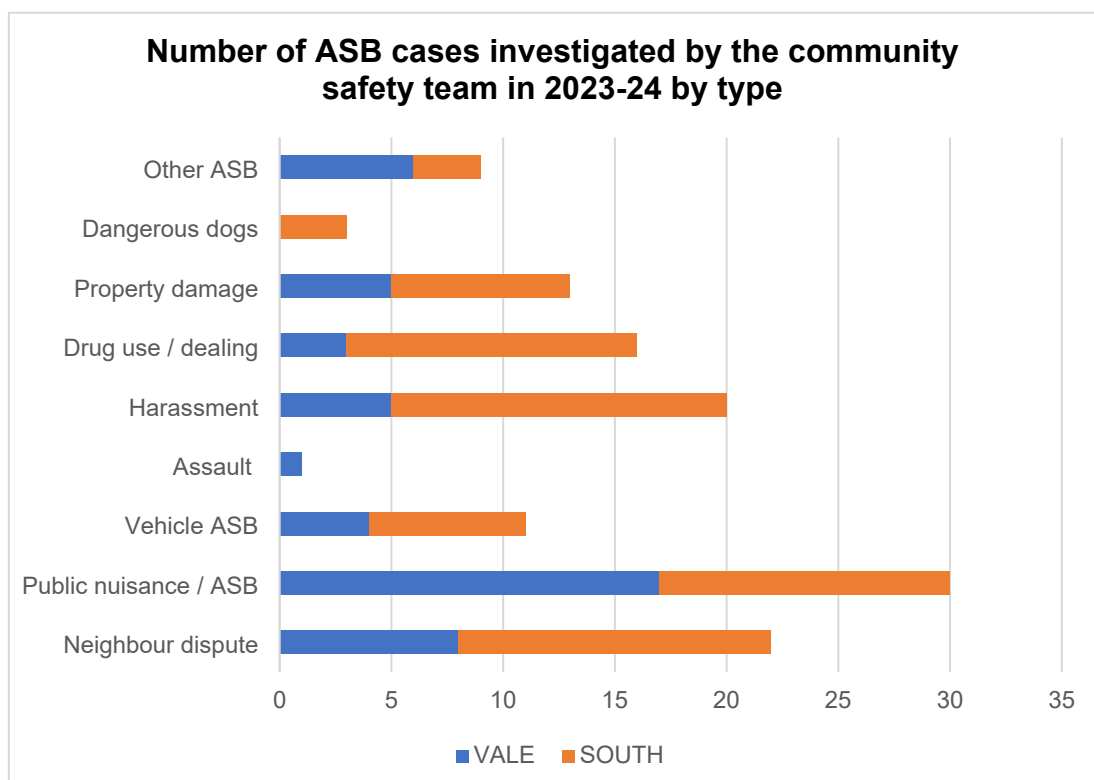
Background

3. The CSP was formed in April 2011, bringing together the two existing district CSPs that were created in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This was done so that the partnership was coterminous with the local police area and mirrored the shared working across the district councils.
4. Under the umbrella of the CSP, a wide variety of local agencies work together to maintain low levels of crime and protect vulnerable people in both districts to ensure residents feel safe and stay safe.
5. The CSP involves the community safety portfolio holders from both district councils and officers representing:
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council
 - Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board
 - Oxfordshire County Council (OCC):
 - Public Health
 - Youth Justice Service
 - Adult Social Care
 - Children Social Care
 - Fire & Rescue Service
 - Thames Valley Police (TVP)
 - Thames Valley Probation Service
 - Sovereign Housing Association
 - Soha Housing
 - Office of the Police Crime Commissioner
6. The CSP has a statutory duty to develop and publish a plan which sets out its priorities, actions, and measures. To align with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Criminal Justice Plan we have introduced a three-year plan. The 2022-25 plan is attached as Appendix A. When drafting the plan and to meet our statutory duties, we review information from the Oxfordshire Strategic Intelligence Assessment along with the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) plan. The Oxfordshire Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2024 is attached as Appendix B.
7. The CSP has a statutory duty to monitor the effectiveness of its plan which is done through quarterly performance reports that are reviewed at quarterly meetings.
8. The Partnerships Fund is a grant provided by the PCC to upper tier local authorities to help CSPs deliver their priorities and statutory duties. We can apply for funding via Oxfordshire County Council which is allocated to each agency based on evidential need.
9. The CSP financial summary for 2023-24 can be found in Appendix C.

Delivering the community safety partnership's Four key priorities – summary of key areas of work in 2023-24

Anti-social behaviour

10. The councils' community safety team always encourages residents to report anti-social behaviour (ASB) directly to the police and/or their housing provider (if appropriate). However, we also provide an alternative reporting option if people don't feel comfortable doing so. In 2023-24, the team investigated 125 reports of ASB across the two districts. This compares to 122 reports in the previous year. The graph below shows the range of ASB issues that residents reported to the community safety team between April 2023 and March 2024:



11. When the community safety team investigates these reports, we always work very closely with members of the CSP to ensure that all appropriate action is being taken to try and resolve the problem(s).

An example of an ASB report that the community safety team investigated in 2023-24:

The community safety team were contacted by a councillor about a group of young people who were causing trouble for local residents by riding their bikes irresponsibly around a village in the Wantage area.

The young people were allegedly riding both bicycles and electric scooters in the dark and being generally abusive to members of the community when confronted. It seemed that they were posing both a risk to themselves and others by riding on

the wrong side of the road and in the middle of the road. The councillor had received multiple reports from residents regarding this problem, and it was being posted on social media pages.

Having worked with the local councillor to identify the individuals involved and establish when and where the issues were happening, our community safety officer shared this information with the police and a local youth service provider. The youth service provider agreed to regularly visit the area to engage with the group and the neighbourhood policing team added the location to their regular patrol plan.

In addition, a PCSO began accompanying the youth group on their detached outreach work to build rapport with the young people, which resulted in them successfully engaging with representatives from both organisations. The young people were encouraged to be respectful towards residents and given appropriate road safety advice, including the potential implications for riding dangerously or without lights. The youth provider bought some bike lights which they handed out to the young people, on the provision that they would keep them on their bikes and ride safely.

Since this partnership intervention, the community safety team have received no further reports of this anti-social behaviour in the area. The young people's service provider is also currently working on developing a targeted intervention programme to engage this group in the longer term and our community safety team will be supporting this work.

ASB cases reviews

12. Partners of the CSP aim to respond to and resolve ASB cases at the earliest possible stage before the issues escalate. However, there are times when residents report ASB to agencies on numerous occasions and do not feel satisfied with the response they've received. When this happens, they can request an ASB case review (formally known as a community trigger) in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

13. On behalf of the CSP, the community safety team manages this process, which includes:

- taking receipt of requests for case reviews;
- checking that requests meet the threshold for a case review to be carried out (a person needs to have reported the same ASB issue on three or more occasions to a relevant authority within a six-month period);
- arranging case review meetings for those requests that have met the threshold, where an independent chair discusses the case with relevant agencies to review what has been done and what else needs to be done to tackle the reported ASB;
- taking the draft action plans to South and Vale Joint Tasking Meetings (JTM) for consideration and sign-off;
- monitoring delivery of the action plans and keeping both the requester and JTM informed of progress;
- publishing key data about case reviews on the councils' websites.

14. In 2023-24, we received four case review requests. All four requests were in South Oxfordshire and related to neighbour disputes/ASB. Three met the threshold and case review meetings were held. Although the actions already taken by the agencies involved were considered to have been reasonable, the case reviews did identify additional actions to help address the persistent ASB. These included:

- identifying opportunities for joint agency visits to help provide more comprehensive support and/or enforcement action to those involved in ASB;
- referring people to free mediation;
- exploring escalation powers within a Registered Social Landlord, specifically for cases where mediation or ABCs are refused;
- signposting people to additional, relevant enforcement and support services.

15. The one case review request that did not meet the threshold was still investigated by the community safety team who provided appropriate advice.

Mediation service to tackle ASB

16. In 2023-24, the CSP successfully bid for funding to enable Mediation Bucks to provide a mediation service to help agencies including the councils, the police and housing providers tackle neighbour related ASB. Any resident who was in dispute with their neighbour and struggling to resolve the issue could access the service, free of charge. Mediation brings both parties together with an independent person to listen to everyone involved in the dispute and help them to find a solution. If either party is reluctant to meet with the other party, Mediation Bucks can provide 'shuttle mediation' as an alternative where information is relayed via the mediator.

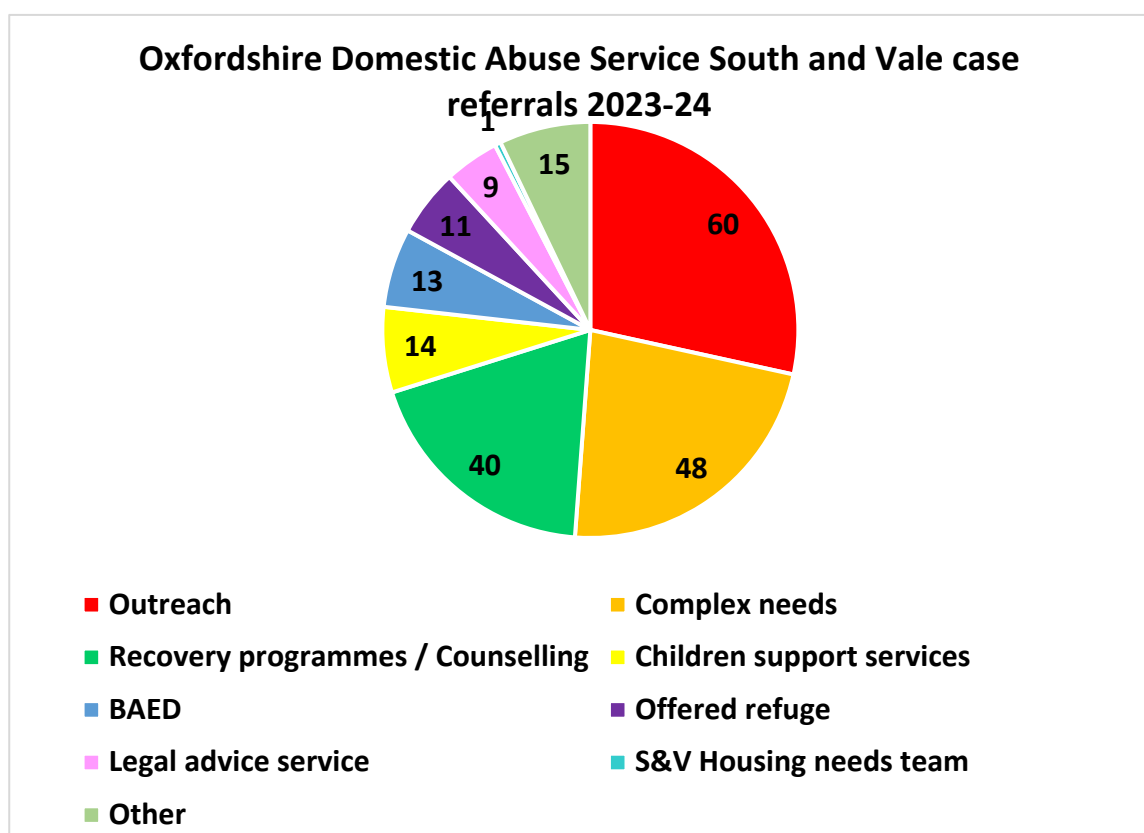
17. In total, the service received and managed nine referrals. Parties that accessed mediation to address neighbour related ASB were much less likely to report further incidents to relevant agencies: seven of the referred cases (78 per cent) did not generate any further repeat reports of the neighbour related ASB to the referring agency. This may be because the mediation had resolved the conflict, or the complainant had realised that the issues did not warrant agency intervention.

18. Due to the positive impact that this South and Vale pilot project had on helping agencies respond to neighbour related ASB, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has now set up a contract with Mediation Bucks to provide the service across the whole of the Thames Valley.

Domestic Abuse

Supporting victims of domestic abuse

19. The district councils provide funding to the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service (ODAS) to deliver outreach and support for women, men, and children whose lives have been disrupted by domestic abuse in South and Vale. In 2022, A2 Dominion and Reducing the Risk were awarded the contract to deliver this service for the whole county. In addition to outreach, they set up and run support groups and enable those in need to draw upon a range of resources, for example, providing a local help-line service (0800 731 0055) and refuge accommodation. Every helpline call receives safety planning, emotional support, help to access emergency orders and signposting to relevant services (housing, legal support, counselling). In 2023-24, the service accepted a total of 211 referrals for case management in South and Vale compared to 386 in 2022-23, 341 in 2021-22 and 406 in 2020-21.



20. Of those 211 referrals, 60 clients received outreach support, 48 complex need referrals were made for support, 40 were referred to recovery programmes and counselling. 13 BAED (Black, Asian, Ethnicity and Diversity) clients received specialist support, nine clients received support via legal advice services, and one referral was made to South and Vale Housing Needs Team. An additional 14 referrals and signposting was made to children support services. 11 South and Vale clients were offered refuge or a place of safety. 15 were classed as other which includes referrals for foodbank, resettlement, and high-risk referrals for MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) and IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate).

21. The main objective of outreach is to support people to reduce the risk towards them and to help them achieve independence, either through orders or going to refuge/places of safety. The total number of referrals for outreach support in 2023-24 was 60 compared to 102 in 2022-23, 90 in 2021-22 and 85 in 2020-21. Outreach

support is provided by the client's preferred method of contact, such as Zoom, Teams, telephone and in person.

22. Most of these referrals came from victims themselves, which highlights the importance of the continued need to raise awareness of domestic abuse services to ensure victims and families know who to contact for help and support. The community safety team promote the helpline number on the district councils' webpages and through social media.

South and Vale Case Study

Background/Risks

- Client self-referred after experiencing 16 years of domestic abuse.
- The client's youngest son (aged 4 years) has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The second eldest child has been diagnosed with dyspraxia.
- Client has limited financial income.
- Client has medical condition requiring specific medication and has experienced anxiety and low mood and the impact of domestic abuse upon her mental well-being. (Previously hospitalised for Anorexia Nervosa)
- Client has 2 family pet cats that the children would struggle to separate from.
- Client is estranged from the family and has limited support.

Interventions

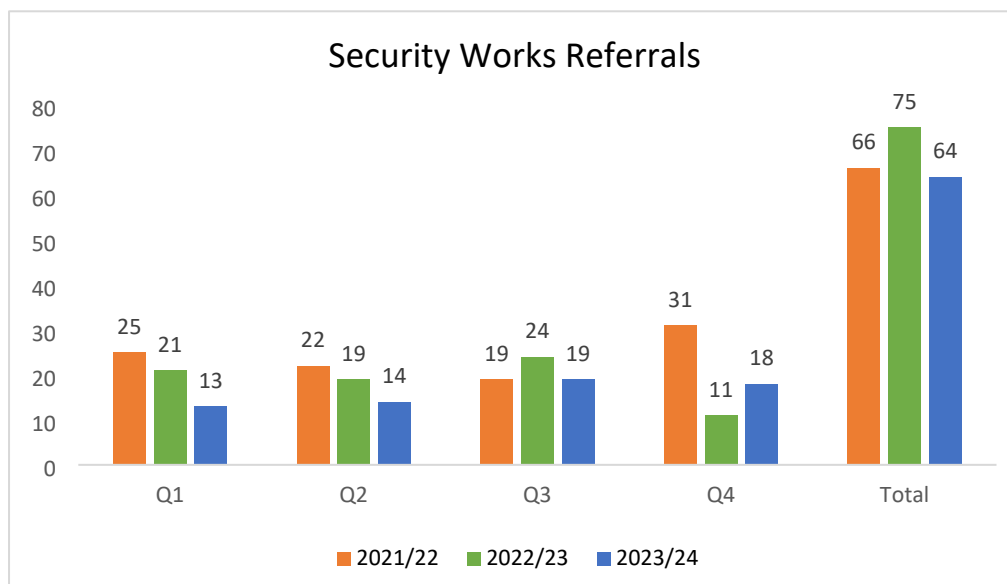
- Client was supported to move to a Place of Safety.
- Client is being supported with getting all relevant benefits into place (Housing benefit, Universal Credit, Child benefit, Council Tax Reduction, and a change of circumstances).
- Client and children are now registered with local GP.
- Client is receiving emotional support during weekly key working sessions with Support Officer.
- Client has been offered 8 weeks of Counselling within ODAS for further emotional support if required.
- All four children have been referred to the Safe Space Project.

Outcomes

- Client feels safer and supported.
- Client has a better understanding of the cycle of abuse and is starting to regain control over her life with space to talk through her experiences.
- Client is engaging with weekly key working sessions and telephone support.
- Client is receiving weekly Counselling sessions over the phone.
- Client has been supported to focus more on herself and children since living in a more peaceful environment.
- All four children are attending the Safe Space Project.
- The family have been able to keep their two pet cats with them.
- Move on process has secured an offer of a new build Housing Association property located close to the client's support Network.

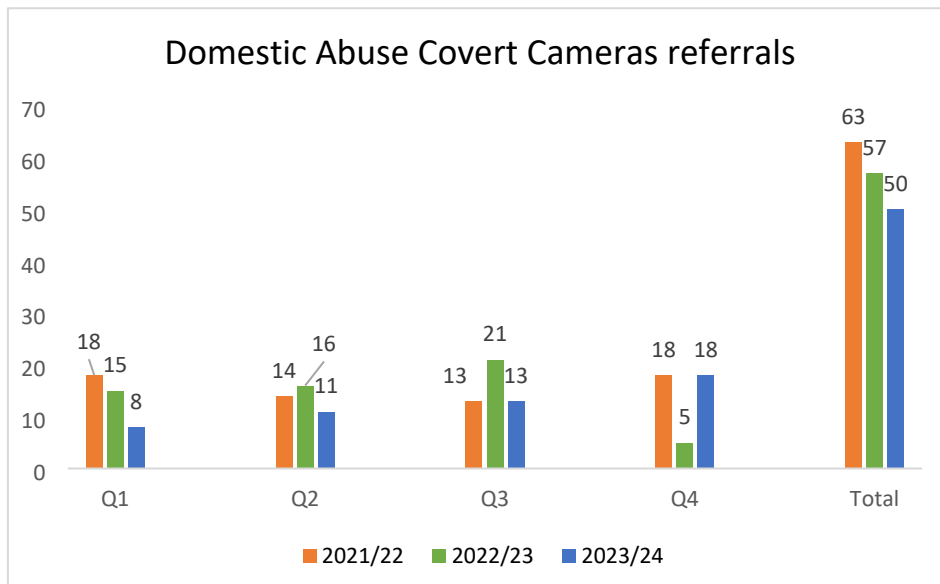
Domestic Abuse Sanctuary Scheme

23. The community safety team continue to provide support to victims of domestic abuse by co-ordinating sanctuary scheme works to help vulnerable victims of crime stay and feel safe in their own homes. In 2023-24 the community safety team co-ordinated 64 referrals compared to 75 in 2022-23, 97 in 2021-22 and 60 in 2020-21.



24. The CSP fund small repairs/security works under the sanctuary scheme to help private tenants/owner occupiers at risk of domestic abuse stay and feel safe in their own home. Security works can include a change of locks, bolts and chains, fire-proof letter boxes, and covert cameras. Ten properties received security works in 2023-24. The work was provided by Home Improvements Agency, formally known as Mears and the average cost was £85. In 2022-23, 11 properties received work and the average cost was £167, 24 properties in 2021-22 at an average cost of £163 and 11 properties in 2020-21 at an average cost of £90. Please note this sum does not include the cost of purchasing, installing, or removing covert cameras/devices at the property.

25. The community safety team co-ordinate referrals for guard-cams and digital door views (covert cameras) in response to not only domestic abuse but other crimes such as burglary, ASB and exploitation. The device is normally put in place for up to six months to capture future incidents and provide additional security and reassurance. After six months the situation is reviewed with the referring agency and resident. Unless there is a particular need to keep the camera in place, the resident can purchase the device from the CSP, or it will be removed for use at another property. A total of 64 cameras (44 guard cams and 24 digital door viewers) were installed in 2023-24 compared to 85 cameras in 2022-23, 115 cameras in 2021-22 and 72 in 2020-21. Nine people chose to retain their cameras and purchased them in 2023-24, the same number as in the previous year. In relation to domestic abuse, 50 covert cameras were installed in 2023-24 compared to 57 in 2022-23, 63 in 2021-22 and 35 in 2020-21. Feedback from one of the residents who purchased a camera described how she was grateful for the support and felt safe knowing the camera was there.



Domestic Homicide Reviews

26. The CSP has a statutory duty to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) is a multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse, or neglect by a person to whom they were related or with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as themselves. The main aim of a review is to establish what lessons can be learned regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims. The community safety team is responsible for managing the DHR process and providing administrative support.

Summary of Domestic Homicide Reviews in South and Vale:

DHR	Year	Update
Thame (two murders, one attempted murder)	2012	Review approved by Home Office. Action plan completed
Joint Serious Case Review (SCR) and Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Didcot	2013	Review approved by Home Office. Action plan completed
Hales Meadow (manslaughter)	2014	Home Office requested further amendments to this review. Report resubmitted to Home Office in August 2020
Didcot (three murders)	2015	Review approved by Home Office. Action plan completed

Watchfield (suicide)	2017	Review approved by Home Office. Action plan completed
Kennington (suicide)	2021	In progress
Drayton (suicide)	2022	In progress
Wallingford (murder)	2022	In progress

27. Since their introduction in 2011, there have been 17 DHRs in Oxfordshire, five of these have taken place in South Oxfordshire and three in Vale of White Horse. Oxford City has carried out five reviews, one has taken place in West Oxfordshire and three in Cherwell.

Raising awareness of domestic abuse

28. The district councils received funding from OCC in 2022 for a domestic abuse support officer (DASO) to help improve the response and housing pathway for people affected by domestic abuse. The DASO has supported the housing team in 179 cases and with the completion of 27 Domestic Abuse Stalking Harassment and Honour Based Violence (DASH) risk assessments. The DASO liaises with partners to understand the current risk, gathering information to agree a level of priority for housing needs and support. The DASO has also reviewed and promoted the South and Vale Sanctuary scheme helping victims and their families to remain and feel safe in their own homes.

29. The DASO has led two domestic abuse campaigns across the districts; “Walking on Egg Shells” and promoting “Clare’s Law” that enables the police to disclose information to victims about their partner’s or ex-partners offending. The community safety team continue to promote domestic abuse messages to raise awareness of local support available, for example White Ribbon Day on 25 November that aims to engage men and boys to end violence against women and girls. The community safety team arranged domestic abuse walks across the districts which were attended by partners, councillors, and staff to raise awareness of support available to anyone who may need it.

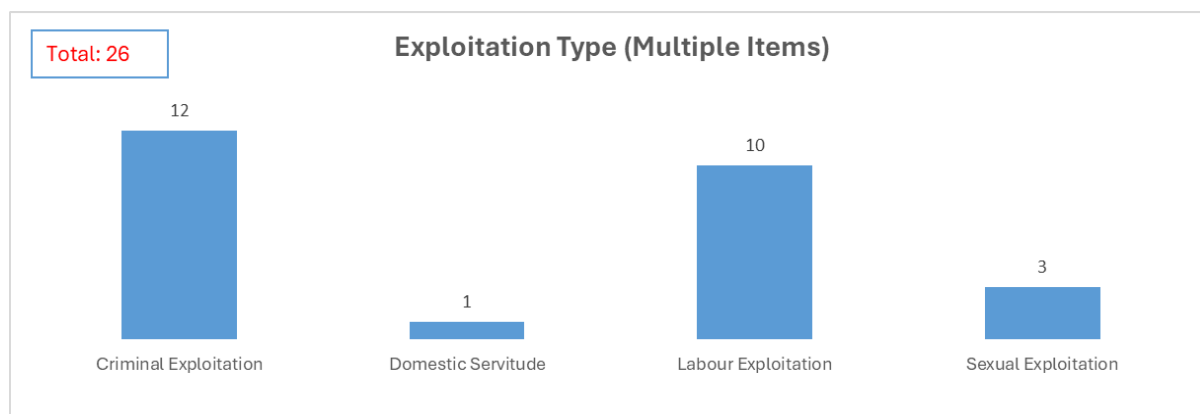
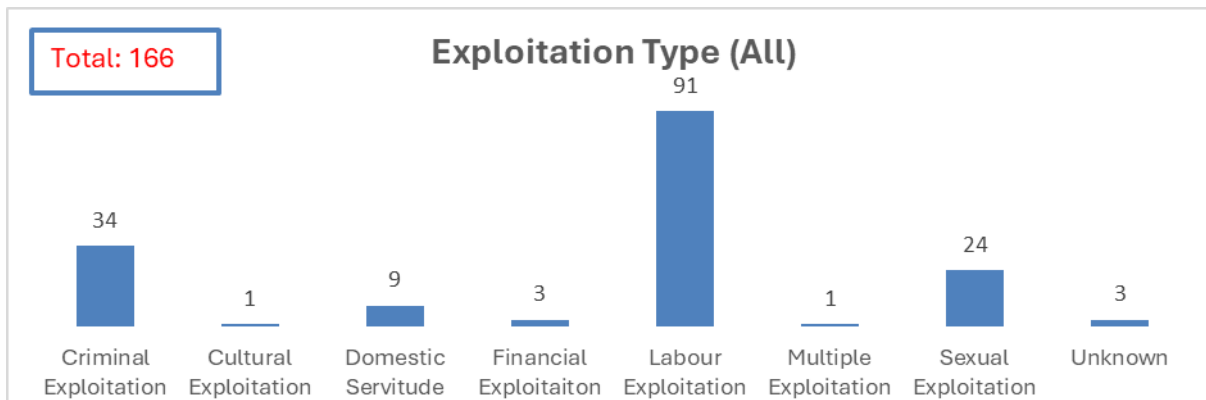
30. The community safety team promote domestic abuse training courses provided by Oxfordshire safeguarding boards throughout the year to staff to support them when dealing with victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse. This year the team worked with Reducing the Risk, a domestic abuse charity, to deliver training on the Domestic Abuse Act and the statutory duty on local authorities relating to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children residing within refuges and other safe accommodation.

Exploitation/Modern Slavery

Multi-agency approach to tackling exploitation/modern slavery

31. Specific public authorities, including partners of the CSP have a duty to notify the Secretary of State of any person identified in England and Wales as a suspected victim of slavery or human trafficking. An Oxfordshire Anti-Slavery Coordinator was appointed in 2022 and is funded through the partnerships fund. She acts as a central point for all agencies dealing with adult victims of exploitation, modern slavery, and

trafficking. There were 166 cases of exploitation recorded across Oxfordshire from January to December 2023 of which 26 were recorded in South and Vale. In 2022, 102 cases were recorded for Oxfordshire of which 17 were in South and Vale. The graphs below show the types of exploitation identified in Oxfordshire and in South and Vale.



32. All modern slavery/exploitation concerns are reported to and recorded by the Oxfordshire Anti-Slavery Coordinator who will assess each case and co-ordinate an effective response. This involves a [multi-agency approach and referral pathway](#) that supports victims and disrupts activities.

Raising awareness of child sexual exploitation

33. The community safety team have been working on projects to prevent children from being exploited. They co-ordinated performances of 'Chelsea's Story' and 'Crashing', hard-hitting plays over the school academic year to show how young people can be groomed by adults for the purposes of sexual exploitation using various methods, ensnaring young people, and eventually taking complete control and dominating their whole lives. Chelsea's Story focusses on sexual exploitation from a female perspective and Crashing from a male viewpoint. These plays were offered to 17 secondary schools across South and Vale. Eight schools participated in the project and paid a contribution towards the cost of each performance. Seven 'Chelsea Story' performances were delivered, and three 'Crashing' performances.

Feedback received from students and a teacher:

- *"I think it is much more useful and educational that it was a play and not just a presentation".*

- *“I think the performance was very informative. I found out more on how CSE could happen and how you can recognise it if it happens to someone else.”*
- *“I watched it today and watched it a few years back. It was very good, and enlightening. When I looked at the audience it was amazing the intensity that they were watching. Some had that look about them, that this was changing them”. **Teacher***

Serious Violence

Tackling violence against women and girls

34. The community safety team support the licensing and responsible authorities multi-agency group that pools resources to tackle premises of concern, reduce late night violence and associated crime and disorder. The team continue to promote ‘Ask for Angela’ and encourage venues to support the scheme. ‘Ask for Angela’ helps those who feel unsafe or at risk of sexual violence in the night-time economy access support discreetly.
35. We provided funding to Didcot Train to deliver a project to empower young participants with a deeper understanding of issues surrounding violence against women and girls, healthy relationships, and personal advocacy. Through engaging workshops and assemblies with Aureus School, the project encouraged discussion, challenged negative behaviours, and provided a platform for young people to share experiences without fear of judgement. Ultimately, it equipped them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to intervene in instances of harassment and advocate for themselves and others, creating a safer and more inclusive community environment.

Young Person Reflections

H was one of the young people we worked with over the seven weeks. At the start of the project, he was very sceptical about the reliability of accusations made against men made by women. H told us that “before these sessions, I didn’t really know how bad some of these situations were... now this program has helped me learn more.” At the end of the programme, he said, “I think it’s quite shocking, some things that happen in the world... they brought up some statistics that I didn’t think were that high and turns out they are.” H said that the project “helped me learn a lot more about things I didn’t know in the world”, such as “domestic abuse, consent, healthy relationships.” We asked H if he would challenge street harassment and he said, “probably, yeah because you never know what’s happening in someone’s life and it could be like, they’re being abused, taken advantage of, you just need to like help people.” H also told us that “it’s impacted me quite a bit because I didn’t know much of this stuff, before like I kind of just brushed past it.”

R was one of the young people involved in the safer streets project. She said that before she started the sessions “my view on a healthy relationship was a lot different, I wasn’t actually like aware of what they actually are. But having this programme has showed me what it is and what is needed to be a healthy relationship.” R told us after the programme that “my views on a healthy relationships is that it’s like two ways, it’s like a teamwork. You’ve both got to be respectful, both got to be honest, both got to respect each other’s boundaries.” When we asked R how the programme has impacted her, she said, “it’s definitely helped show me what healthy relationships are,

even if it's with romantic or family. Which has helped me a lot and it will help me further into the future as well." R said that if someone wasn't on the programme "I would go through everything with them, and I'd definitely recommend this programme to them."

[Interviews \(youtube.com\)](#) created by the young people.

Supporting vulnerable people with Safe Places

36. The community safety team co-ordinate the Safe Places scheme in partnership with agencies, such as the Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire fire and rescue service, Oxfordshire Family Support Network, and local businesses. The scheme helps vulnerable people feel confident and safe whilst out in the community. If someone feels they are being abused or harassed whilst they are out in the community, they have a safe place to go. Window stickers are displayed in public places such as shops, libraries, community, and leisure centres to identify themselves as Safe Places.
37. We currently have 99 Safe Places across Abingdon, Faringdon, Wantage and Grove, Botley, Didcot, Wallingford, Henley, Thame and in the villages of Goring, Woodcote, Sonning Common, Wheatley and Chinnor. 12 new places joined in South Oxfordshire in 2023-24 and five in Vale of White Horse. There are more details about safe places on the [national website](#). The community safety team continue to review our safe places, to ensure the businesses signed up are still open for business and importantly, willing to continue their participation. We are extending the scheme to include restaurants, cafés, and hotels to ensure safe places are available during all hours and we will work with the councils' communications team to promote the scheme across the districts.



Feedback received from review a safe place - *"Someone was worried they were being followed so sat in our waiting room, called a friend to come and walk home with and waited in our waiting room, visible by receptionists so felt safe"*.

Using Environmental Visual Audits to make our communities safer for all

38. Some places in our communities can become 'no-go' areas where people feel unsafe because of ASB and wider criminality – one way of tackling these issues is to carry out a multi-agency Environmental Visual Audit (EVA) to identify the things that can be improved in the physical realm to improve levels of safety.
39. Our community safety officers organise site visits with key stakeholders to identify where practical improvements could be made to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. These are then presented to the relevant responsible authorities as recommendations for them to action. We have carried out this work with support from the Oxfordshire Problem Solving Officer, a post funded through the Partnerships Fund to provide guidance on additional security measures.

40. In 2023-24, the community safety team carried out EVAs across both districts in locations which they and partners had identified as being key areas for attracting ASB. These included the Charter and Abbey Meadows in Abingdon and Watlington recreation ground and the surrounding area.

Case study - our EVA in Watlington, carried out in 2023-24:

Problem

- Vandalism/criminal damage to community areas and parish council property (toilets, recreation ground, car park)
- Behaviour of some young people in the town, relating to drugs and anti-social behaviour

Impact of the problem

- Residents reluctant to use some community facilities
- People being unable to use damaged local facilities
- Cost to parish of repairing damaged property

Partners involved

- Watlington Parish Council
- Local secondary school
- Thames Valley Police
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Local businesses
- Oxfordshire Problem Solving Officer

Recommendations resulting from the EVA included:

- installing locked gates/doors to the public toilets so they can be secured at night;
- setting internal lights to timers which turn off at night;
- installing additional lighting in the alley way leading to the recreation ground;
- protecting existing security cameras around the pavilion;
- improving surveillance on the High Street;
- improving partnership working to address community issues relating to young people.

Actions already taken as a result of the EVA include:

- the Parish Council ordering gates for the public toilets so they can lock them at night;
- the Co-op store on the High Street upgrading its CCTV;
- the police carrying out proactive community patrols (resulting in young people being apprehended for cannabis possession);
- the Parish Council putting the lighting issue for the recreation ground on their priority list (it will be included in this year's budget or in a CIL project);
- Oxfordshire County Council setting up a partnership (CASO) with Icknield Community College and other agencies to look at how to help local young people stay safe and steer away from risky/criminal behaviour;

- the community safety team working with Icknield Community College to deliver performances of the 'Chelsea's Story' production to raise awareness of exploitation amongst pupils.

Diversionsary projects to deter young people from criminality

41. The community safety team in partnership with the Active Communities Team and housing providers delivered 17 skate park sessions for young people in 2023-24 across both districts to prevent anti-social behaviour and criminal activity an increase from 12 sessions in 2022-23. The skate park sessions were delivered by ATB Skate Warehouse offering tuition, games, competitions, and prizes. In several locations, additional activities were held by local young people service providers to encourage further participation with their youth services for those young people who are typically hard to reach. The total of young people who attended this project was 522 compared to approximately 200 in 2022-23. 84 young people fully completed the feedback survey in 2023-24 with only 23 completing the survey in 2022-23. 100 per cent of young people who provided feedback rated the session 'good' or 'very good' the same as in 2022-23. 95 per cent said they would attend a skate session again and 75 per cent said there isn't anything that could have made the events better. There were several occasions the team witnessed or were informed that young people had attended the sessions without having water or eaten breakfast or lunch. It was agreed that if this project was repeated, water and healthy snacks would be made available to them at the events. This did occur over the summer of 2024 as the project has been delivered again.
42. To support vulnerable young people across South and Vale, the community safety team supported young people service providers to provide positive activities for young people.

Didcot Train – engage disadvantaged young people in positive activities, whilst empowering and providing young people with opportunities and tools to make the right decisions, rather than becoming involved in criminal activity and being disengaged with the local community.

Case study - April 2023, a noticeable increase in the presence of young people congregating around the steps between the Cornerstone and the old Prezzo restaurant had captured the attention of our detached youth workers. This shift had not gone unnoticed within our community, as regular complaints have flooded local social media platforms. Furthermore, the staff at the Cornerstone have maintained frequent contact with us to voice their concerns. These concerns primarily revolve around issues such as underage drinking, substance misuse (primarily cannabis), the use of abusive language towards passersby who dare to challenge their behaviour, and the unsightly litter left in their wake. Regrettably, these circumstances have led many people in the community to actively avoid this area whenever these young people are present. In an effort to address and alleviate these mounting concerns, our detached youth workers proactively embarked on a mission to establish meaningful connections with these young individuals. While some were already familiar to TRAIN through other provisions, many were entirely new faces. Initially, our approach was as simple as a friendly greeting and an introduction of ourselves. Over time, these interactions evolved into conversations about the support and services we provide, often accompanied by the offering of bottled water and occasional snacks. This led to these young people beginning to seek us out for water as we

passed by which was an encouraging sign that they were gradually building trust in the positive intentions of our youth workers. This foundation of rapport opened doors for discussions about our youth club and the various opportunities we offer. As the summer holidays drew to a close, it presented an ideal opportunity to extend a warm invitation to these young people to join us at "The Base" during a youth club session. While out in the town during their detached work, our youth workers, Alex, and Charlotte, invited the young people to the session, which was set to begin shortly. To foster a welcoming atmosphere, this open-access session encouraged a safe space, granting young people the freedom to participate as they saw fit, without any pressure. This approach made them feel not only welcome and secure but also provided a constructive diversion from their previous activities. Since their initial introduction to the youth club, these young people have continued to attend on an ad hoc basis, demonstrating interest in our other provisions such as drop-in sessions and Shout! This has marked a significant step forward in building relationships and reducing antisocial behaviour. Without the provision of this open-access session and a safe space, such progress would have remained out of reach. While this endeavour remains an ongoing commitment, we have made remarkable strides so far and recognize the continued need for support among this group of young individuals.

YoCO (Youth Challenge Oxfordshire) support young people to develop personal resilience and confidence.

They provided support to a cohort of young people in the Vale of White Horse who were identified by the police as being involved in violence including the carrying of knives. YoCO initially worked with the young people via the schools and through home education. Some of the activities included a local music recording session where young people engaged in writing lyrics. The lyrics were personal to them. They spoke/rapped their lyrics that was spliced together to form an impactful sound clip. They attended a residential weekend to experience outdoor activities without mobile phones and family and social pressures. They confided in the adult mentors and trust was built which continued when they returned home.

Three-month gym memberships for eight young people were provided. At their gym induction, the group had to confront the impact of their previous anti-social and intimidating behaviour towards staff at the leisure centre. They were told the staff were willing to give them a chance and on hearing this, without prompt, they went to reception to apologise for their past behaviour. As a group, they attended six weeks of sessions at the gym taking it in turns to lead the sessions, always with a YoCO leader present. This had a positive impact on both their physical and mental health.

Case Study - B is a 16yr old male who has 277 police occurrences logged on the police systems. The first of these is from January 2019 and these are numerous domestic incidents involving his estranged parents who separated in 2018-2019. This is so often the precursor to young people regularly coming to police attention. The more recent occurrences from 2023 are shopliftings, assaults, intimidation, and public order offences. YoCO have been able to engage with B in this project where he has actively participated and he confided that he is adversely affected by his dad not being actively involved in his life,

and by his mum getting a new partner. Before and after the residential trip, YoCO leaders spent time with B and his mum both separately and together to try and help rebuild their relationship. B loved being a part of YoCO for the short duration of this project and he attended the gym for all six of the group sessions on their return. B was supported by YoCO to share information with the police around an adult male who was exploiting him and thanks to this, the police were able to arrest this male and protect B (and other young people) with some stringent bail conditions.

Rural Crime

43. In October 2023, residents, farming communities and businesses/organisations were invited to have their say on how rural crime is affecting their communities in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. A total of 406 responses were received and a summary of the results can be found on our [Rural Crime Survey Summary report](#). The most common rural crime concerns were fly-tipping, machinery theft, thefts from beauty spots, damage to buildings and historical places and hare coursing. Findings from this survey helped to prioritise the work of the [Rural Crime Partnership](#).
44. The Community Safety Team have been involved in setting up the Rural Crime Partnership to tackle rural acquisitive crime. Officers from Thames Valley Police, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and West Oxfordshire District Councils have come together to tackle crimes such as fly-tipping, burglaries, and theft in rural areas. The partnership has received £156,000 funding for 2023-2025 from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley and the Home Office's Safer Streets initiatives. In 2023-24 funding has been spent on:
- Surveillance equipment to tackle illegal fly-tips
 - DNA marking kits for agriculture machinery
 - Promotion of rural crime prevention and engagement
 - Police off-road bikes to target criminals in hard-to-reach areas.

Residents can continue to have their say on this project through [The Rural Crime Survey](#) to help shape further work and more information is available on our council websites.

Anticipated direction of travel for the CSP in 2024-25

45. The CSP receives funding to support the delivery of the

[Thames Valley Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021 - 2025](#)

It is therefore important that we ensure that we take the PCC priorities into account when setting our own plan. The South and Vale CSP 2022-25 plan was signed off by CSP members in October 2022 and is reviewed annually.

Financial Implications

46. The CSP receives funding from the Office of the Police Commissioner via Oxfordshire County Council for delivery of local community safety priorities.

Legal Implications

47. There are no legal implications.

Climate and ecological impact implications

48. There are no climate and environmental impact implications.

Equalities implications

49. This report is for information only and therefore there are no equalities implications.

Risks

50. There are no risk implications

Other Implications

51. None

Conclusion

52. The CSP continues to deliver projects to meet the needs of local communities and ensure that statutory functions are delivered. The CSP will continue to focus on protecting and safeguarding vulnerable people.

Background Papers

- Appendix A – South and Vale CSP Plan 2022-25
- Appendix B - Oxfordshire Strategic Needs Assessment 2024
- Appendix C – South and Vale CSP financial summary 2023-24