

**Working Together to Make Stevenage Safer  
Community Safety Strategy  
2021-24**



**Stevenage Community Safety Partnership**



# **Contents**

Foreword

Introduction to SoSafe

Monitoring and measuring performance

Aims & objectives

DRAFT

## Foreword

I am pleased to present SoSafe's Community Safety Strategy for 2021/24. It outlines some of our successes, our priorities over the next three years and the actions we will take to address them.

Stevenage is a co-operative council that prides itself on collaborative working with partners and the community. SoSafe will continue to address the issues the residents, visitors and those that work in our town see as a priority, by involving you in the decision making and by consulting with you.

In future years, as in the past three years, our priorities are what the people of the town have told us they want to see us focusing on. This has followed a difficult year dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic where we have had to tackle crimes such as domestic abuse and those associated with drugs and alcohol differently and in many cases by meeting with people virtually. Our teams and partners have risen to these challenging times and been able to support residents with many, and sometimes complex, needs whilst at the same time introducing new ways of working and initiatives that we will continue to develop over the next three years.

The town is rapidly changing; it is a growing, exciting, vibrant place with the regeneration in the town centre already taking shape which will attract new businesses to our town and encourage people to invest in the town, its people and its homes. Our population is growing and the town has a broad cross-section of people who have chosen Stevenage to live and work in. Stevenage continues to be a safe place with lowest level of dwelling burglaries in the Hertfordshire. There will naturally be peaks in crime and anti-social behaviour and we are aware that people in certain parts of our town feel troubled by the crime surrounding the use of illegal drugs and how this affects our young people. SoSafe will continue to work co-operatively with the community to address these issues.



**Matt Partridge**  
**Chief Executive**

SoSafe is committed to building on progress made in recent years, and will continue to drive down crime and disorder in Stevenage. Our partnership is unique, and encourages other partners to be part of SoSafe which is passionate about its people, the town, and creating safe environments for our communities. As there continues to be unprecedented pressures on public sector funding; this Strategy will ensure that, as a co-operative council, we are effectively utilising all available resources to achieve value for money.

Our aims for this strategy are to consult with the community and work collaboratively with partners & residents to promote the reporting of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). We will do this by supporting Partners to help decrease crime and improve community safety. Over the following pages, we have captured the actions that we have already completed, those which we are committed to achieving, and how we will do this. I hope that, by reading this strategy, you will see how SoSafe is working for the benefit of all of the Community who live, shop and work in the town.



**Councillor Jackie Hollywell**  
**Portfolio Holder – Community Safety**



## Introduction to SoSafe

SoSafe (Stevenage Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a strategic partnership, working to reduce crime and offending in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. SoSafe is made up of key agencies that each brings their own unique specialism to the partnership. By working collaboratively with partners and our local communities, we have been able to make significant changes to the lives of those people who need support, guidance and advice, whilst tackling crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour.

The CSP includes the following organisations:

- Stevenage Borough Council (SBC)
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- National Probation Service
- East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group (E&NH CCG)
- Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS).
- Hertfordshire Trading Standards

This Strategy provides a framework for the many activities and initiatives that the Partnership aims to deliver to improve community safety and community confidence in the town. Following consultation with members of the public and partners, this strategy identifies the priorities that SoSafe will focus on over the next three years.

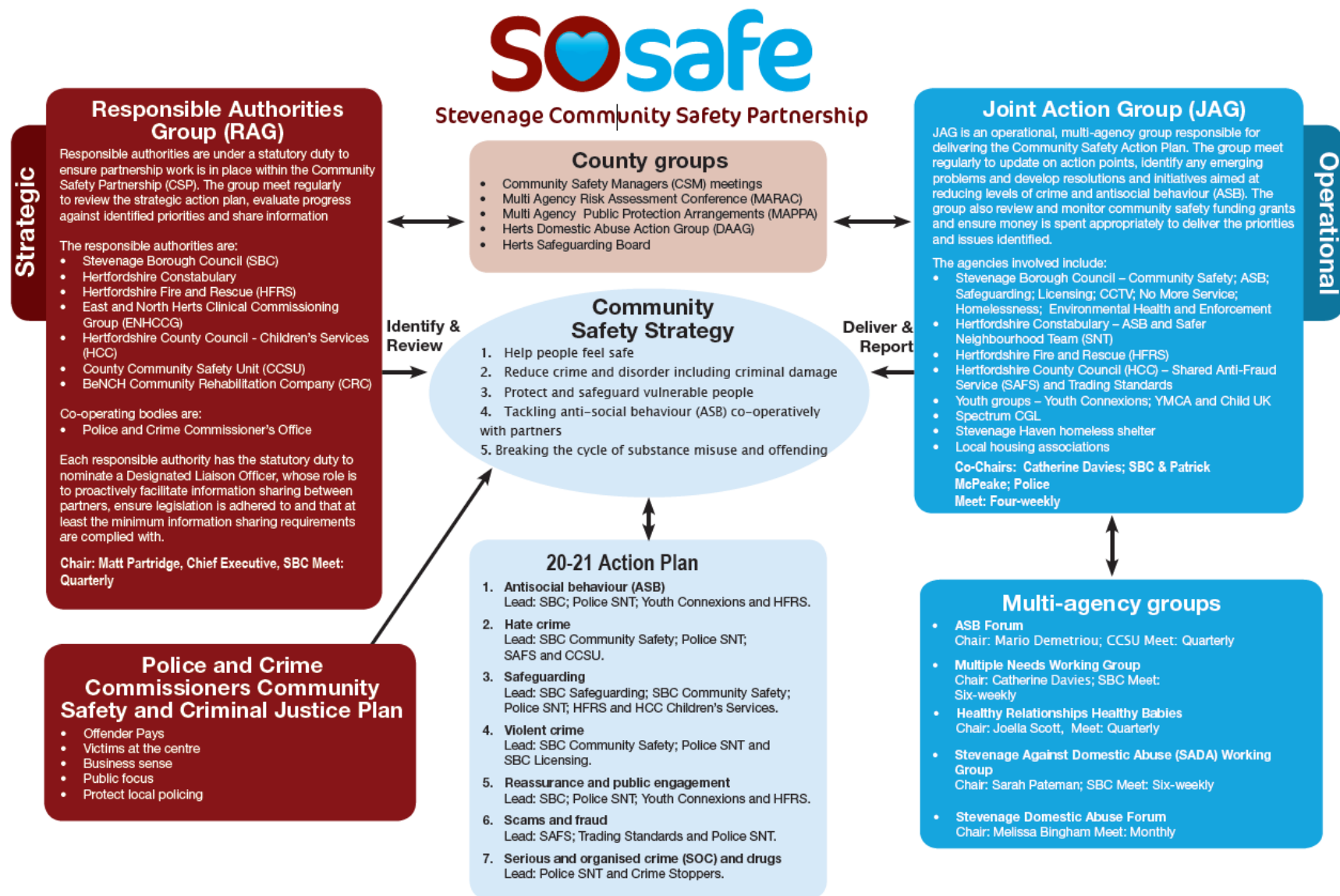
Alongside this Strategy, a detailed action plan is produced each year, which shows how SoSafe will achieve its aim and objectives. It contains specific targets and is monitored, updated and reviewed regularly.

The Community Safety Strategy has been developed with due regard to the following:

- Public consultation
- National developments and changes to legislation
- Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) plan *Everybody's Business*
- Annual Strategic Assessment for Stevenage 2019/20
- County Community Safety Unit (CCSU) domestic abuse strategy and the Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse Strategy
- CCSU drugs and alcohol strategy
- National Probation Service Reducing Offending Strategy
- Historical and Current Crime Data.
- Residents Survey
- Police Echo data

SoSafe could not achieve its objectives without help from the public. It is the duty of all citizens to play their part in making their communities safer. People can contribute by reporting crime and disorder, supporting criminal justice agencies, and by taking responsibility for their personal safety and the safety of others.

For ideas on other ways to get involved, please visit our website: <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/town-and-community/community-safety/sosafe-community-safety-partnership>



## Findings from the Stevenage Borough Council 2020 Community Survey

We asked members of the community: what makes Stevenage a safe place to live, work and visit? Some of the responses were:

- “Clean vibrant environments, communities looking after and taking pride in environments, low crime levels, flow of people, police presence, reduction in anti-social behaviours”
- “Friendly neighbourhoods, knowing your neighbours”
- “Good Policing/CCTV, positive town planning, a cared for community, a Council and volunteers creating a community which supports vulnerable people, development and investment into the area”
- “Good bus routes. Car free shopping centre. Good rail access. Visible police presence. Good communities. Generally good people.”
- “Cycle paths and walk ways are larger well lit up”
- “The open spaces, green city, trees and greenery”
- “The general environment. Park keepers/Street cleaners are so important.”

We also asked members of the community if there was anything that makes Stevenage unsafe. The answers have been ranked by number of responses, highest to lowest:

1. Dark, badly lit areas
2. Drug use/dealing
3. Youth
4. Underpasses
5. Lack of police presence
6. Speeding

The Police have been collecting community views through their anonymous Echo system. The most talked about topic in Stevenage relates to drug use or dealing. This is followed by Anti-Social Behaviour linked to youth, drug use and begging.

We then used social media to ask members of the Stevenage community to vote and comment on the five aims proposed for this strategy. 86% of votes agreed with the priorities proposed:

1. Divert young people from becoming involved in crime and ASB
2. Provide safe reporting and support to domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery
3. Promote reporting of hate crime and equality in the community
4. Tackle the harms caused by drugs and alcohol
5. Work with partners to encourage reporting of crime and address perceptions of crime



These findings, together with talking to residents through surveys and events (including “drop-in’s” and “street meets” in the community) helped us to determine our SoSafe aims and objectives for the next three years.

#### **At a Glance;**

#### **What we did in 2018/21**

#### **What we are going to do in 2021/24**

<b>Introduced our warden provision to the town centre and across the town to engage with the community and partners</b>	<b>Teams will work co-operatively with the community through internal and external partners, including our town wardens, and give them an opportunity to get involved in projects and consultation on their local areas. This is part of the Co-operative Neighbourhoods program which will be developed further over the next three years.</b>
<b>Working in partnership with the community to tackle ASB and crime</b>	<b>Work with partners as early as possible to problem solve concerns raised by the community around ASB and crime.</b>
<b>Exploring the perception of youth crime</b>	<b>To provide targeted youth intervention and support through the No More Service.</b>
<b>We offered safe reporting and support for domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery</b>	<b>Expand our offer of accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse and modern slavery. Introduce further one to one support for perpetrators of domestic abuse.</b>
<b>We focused on safeguarding vulnerable people within the community, our Community Safety youth ambassadors supported North Herts college in becoming a third party reporting centre for Hate Crime.</b>	<b>We aim to help people to feel safe &amp; supported to, as well as knowing where and how to, report Hate Crime.</b>



## **Key differences between 2018/20 and 2021/24 strategies**

We are continuing to take a cooperative approach with partner agencies, volunteers and residents to help make Stevenage a safer place to live, visit and work. The 2021/24 Community Safety Strategy highlights how we work together by using multi-agency problem solving methods and consulting with the community of Stevenage. The aim is to promote effective long term change and to tackle crime and ASB. We have continued to monitor crime rates throughout the last three year period through Police Priority Setting Meetings. These meetings, which take place every 3 months, consider the crime and ASB concerns within local communities and then set the community priorities for the following quarter.

The Joint Action Group (JAG) is the partnership information and problem solving group and the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) which is the strategic partnership, which oversees the Annual partnership Action Plan and other local and national plans and initiatives.

During 2018/21, we focused on helping people feel safe. As part of this we explored the perception of youth crime within the community and discovered that often the view of young people is not a true reflection of this section of our community. In the last strategy we outlined our Student Ambassador programme, which was successful promoting the positive role that young people have in Community. The 2021/24 strategy will focus on providing intervention and intensive support, through our No More Service, YC Herts and Multiple Needs Working Group to young people who are at risk of becoming involved in youth crime. By providing appropriate intervention we can change behaviour and reduce crime and the impact felt by the community.

We continue to prioritise safeguarding people. The Partnership provides safe reporting together with support for domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery. The Safe Space innovative approach will continue to expand as it aims to meet the needs of victims and survivors. We also provide Domestic Abuse perpetrator intervention and 1-1 support to change offending behaviour through the No More Service.

The 2021/24 strategy remains a key component of the Council's Future Town, Future Council Place of Choice theme and its continuing efforts to tackle crime and help people feel safer; this Strategy will be pivotal to the town's wider Covid -19 Recovery Plan.

The Strategy promotes the reporting of hate crime in an effort to reduce inequality and produce inclusive neighbourhoods. We aim to help people feel safe and supported to report incidents where they have been a victim of hate crime as well as promoting community support networks. The Hate Crime Strategy will be available on our website and training for staff, partner and volunteers will be provided. We will also provide information on where the Hate Crime reporting centres are in Stevenage (which includes Stevenage Borough Council offices and North Herts College).

The impact of drugs and alcohol continue to be a concern for the community. We are working cooperatively with residents to encourage the reporting of misuse of drugs and alcohol so we can address these issues. We continue to provide support to our residents with the most complex needs to help them make positive changes to their lifestyle and reduce the disruptive impact that they have on the community.

The strategy will also focus partnership working on the nuisance caused by speeding vehicles and Environmental Crime such as Fly Tipping. Our suite of CCTV cameras support the police and partners in tackling crime and ASB in the town and help to make Stevenage a safer place to live, work and visit.

## **Monitoring and measuring our performance**

The SoSafe Action Plan and the commitment of the partners, including volunteers, are key to delivering this strategy. As a co-operative council we are aware that we can achieve more by working together to deliver all of the activities ensuring that SoSafe achieves its objectives and delivers for the needs of the town.

The SoSafe partnership has to rely on existing resources and making additional funding applications.

### **Below is a list of Successful External Funding Bids:**

<b>SADA</b>	Stevenage/Survivors Against Domestic Abuse	£395,520
<b>No More Service</b>	Tacking drugs alcohol and offending behaviour	£42,500
<b>Rucksacks Project</b>	Providing rucksacks and essential items for rough sleepers	£900
<b>Tacking youth crime</b>	The SOS project working with youths	£15,000
<b>Op educa8</b>	Police and partner funding project in schools in Stevenage	£2,000

## **How we will measure performance**

Performance indicators are agreed annually and reflect the agreed priorities and outcomes whilst taking into account the views of our customers from their engagement with us. We will set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely); challenging targets and measures these four times a year to check that we are making progress. We will report on the progress made at our monthly Joint Action Group (JAG) meetings with partners; at the Stevenage/Survivors (SADA) Domestic Abuse

Board Meeting and the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) (strategic meetings with partners that meet quarterly to discuss the towns' Community Safety priorities).

To understand crime and associated disorder the Partnership needs to work together to address the underlying problems. Effective crime reduction relies on the partnership working with our communities and listening to what, and where, our problems are. This helps us to direct Partnership resources efficiently and effectively and to deliver services in the right place at the right time.

Crime trends are monitored regularly, and performance against our targets is reported to the RAG group. This group includes SoSafe's most senior managers and the elected councillor with responsibility for community safety. Additionally, elected councillors sit on a scrutiny committee which challenges SoSafe's performance.

Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is the elected representative for policing matters who maintains strong links with the county's CSPs.

## **SoSafe Aims**

We have established two overarching aims for the 2021/24 strategy:

- **Consult with the community and work co-operatively with partners and residents**
- **Promote reporting of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

## **SoSafe Objectives**

Within SoSafe's overarching aims, we have established five key objectives:

1. **Divert young people from becoming involved in crime and ASB**
2. **Provide safe reporting and support to domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery**
3. **Promote reporting of hate crime and equality in the community**
4. **Tackle the harms caused by drugs and alcohol**
5. **Work with partners to encourage reporting of crime and address perceptions of crime**

## How our services support the Objectives

Objective one – Divert young people from becoming involved in crime

- **The 'No More' Service**

Objective two – Provide safe reporting and support to domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery

- **Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse**

Objective three – Promote reporting of Hate Crime and promote equality in the community

- **The Hate Crime Strategy**

Objective four – Tackle the harms caused by drugs and alcohol

- **The 'No More' Service**

Objective five – Work with partners to address perceptions of crime and encourage reporting of crime

- **Co-operative Neighbourhoods and working in partnership with our communities**

### The No More



Accessing services for support with:  
Drugs • Alcohol • Adult offenders • Young offenders



Don't suffer in silence  
Put a stop to domestic abuse





## **Objective One – Divert young people from becoming involved in crime**

### **What will we do?**

We are going to continue working closely with partners to take a multi-agency approach to reducing the risk of young people becoming involved in crime. We can work as a partnership to build the correct package of enforcement, intervention and support for each individual. We will use the tools and powers available to the partnership to deter crime from occurring. This includes the use of dispersal orders to address short term peaks of ASB.

We are developing initiatives to help young people make positive choices from becoming involved in crime. We will continue to provide routes out of crime. This includes being involved in knife crime awareness week, the use of knife amnesty bins and support to exit gangs.

We will be bringing the support service for young people, involved in violent crime, under the No More Service. Young people will be given an allocated worker who will build a team around them and who will contribute to developing their support plan. The young person will be assisted to explore the positive outcomes and consequences of their choices. They will be helped to address: homelessness, unemployment/leaving education, finances, offending behaviour, use of time, relationships, vulnerabilities/safety, DA and social choices.

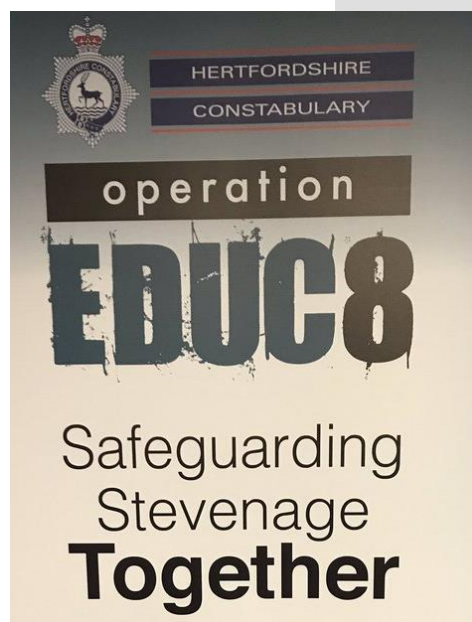
### **What have we been doing?**

#### **Community Safety Ambassadors**

We ran a Community Safety Ambassadors Project. The aim was to engage young people in our SoSafe community safety messages. We had six young people become Ambassadors. They promoted personal safety to other young people during an event at North Herts College to, raise awareness of domestic abuse; attending the Life project run by Herts Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS), and giving personal safety items to members of the public in the Town Centre.

In 2019, we received a contribution to funding for a specialist youth worker from St Giles Trust charity to run the SOS Project in Stevenage as part of a countywide initiative. The SOS project aims to work with young people who are at risk of, or already involved in, violent offending or becoming involved in a gang. The SOS worker provides intensive 1-1 support to assist clients to change their behaviours and make positive choices. Clients are assisted in employment, housing and education. 30 young people have been referred since the start of the project.

To compliment the support offered by the SOS Project, the family are also referred to our multi-agency meeting, the Multiple Needs Working Group (MNWG). The aim is to provide support for any family member due to the young person's behaviour but to also offer support to address issues that contribute towards the young person choices.



Operation EDUC8 is a working group of police and teachers from each of the 8 secondary education facilities across the town. It is supported by ELSA (Education Skills Learning and Achievement) and SADA. The model involves the designing of bespoke lesson plans to deliver year on year to each year 8 pupil across the town as well as students from North Herts College. The aim is to raise awareness and educate the children so they can make informed decisions and prevent further instances of harm should they ever encounter, what we as professionals recognise to be, the 4 main threats to young people:- knife crime, gangs culture, drugs, online safety & sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

In January 2020 Operation Educ8 successfully delivered a keynote assembly on the topic of county lines gangs and knife crime. The speaker was Criminologist and urban youth specialist Craig Pinkney. The assembly went out in all seven secondary schools and North Herts College and a follow up lesson plan was provided where the key themes were explored further. Just prior to lockdown in March 2020 (and the closure of the schools) we delivered two assemblies on the next topic of domestic abuse with follow up pastoral lessons across North Herts College (Hitchin and Stevenage campuses), this element was also supported by SADA.

Following the initial re-opening of schools in September 2020 we have had to rethink our delivery model as, at the time of writing, there is no scope for large scale assemblies. ELSA has now filmed an inspirational keynote talk on surviving domestic abuse and this film is being shown in year 8 classes across Stevenage. The students will then be taken through further lessons (supported by a bespoke lesson plan) where the key themes are explored further. For 2021 we will deliver lesson plans and

supporting materials on Child Sexual Exploitation and Online Safety; and in the future we also want to deliver on topics including the dangers arising from the misuse of drugs as well as repeating the lessons on gangs and knife crime.

YC Herts have been running projects across Stevenage. The Oval project engaged with young people around The Oval and delivered the “Positive Alternatives Programmer” a Friday Night Project for 14-17 years as well as starting the “boys and men project” which looks at personal safety, sexual health and healthy role models.

#### Case Study – The SOS Project

Lucy was never at home and would go missing, since being supported by the SOS project she has been staying at home more and occupying her time by attending a college course which commenced in September 2020 this has helped to prevent her from engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Lucy's support worker supported her to focus on her learning and the importance of talking things through which has helped to her to take the positive steps away from ASB and crime.



## **Objective two – Provide safe reporting and support to domestic abuse survivors and victims of modern slavery**

### **What will we do?**

We will continue to raise awareness by informing the public about how and where they can report domestic abuse; empowering victims to come forward and seek advice from our dedicated Stevenage/Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) Team and the volunteers from the SADA Forum.

We will continue to grow our stock of safe spaces. These are private properties allowing victims to flee their dangerous environment to a safe home setting. These are available to individuals as well as families. Whilst staying in the safe space, SADA provide 1to1 support looking at meeting immediate needs and next step options. We provide food and toiletries - as we are aware some people are forced to flee their homes with nothing. We aim to meet the individual's immediate needs and also support the person to make the choices that are best for them. During the COVID pandemic we grew our safe spaces from two to nineteen (19), including some "move on" accommodation. This was in response to the number of referrals increasing and the refuges having to stop taking people in – in order to manage the COVID transmission risk. Our safe spaces have been full 90% of the time.

We are expanding the intervention offered by the No More Service to Domestic Abuse (DA) perpetrators. The aim of this is to provide intensive 1to1 support to change offending behaviour to work with the No More Service to change offender's behaviour by providing 1to1 support to address offending behaviour and complex needs.

### **What have we been doing?**

We have employed a further two Domestic Abuse specialist Support Officers as we continue to grow the service in Stevenage and surrounding areas. SADA now provides their DA support service to Stevenage, North Herts, East Herts, Welwyn & Hatfield and running a pilot in Hertsmere.

We continue to provide a drop in service as another method for people to engage and grow their own peer support network. This support has been able to continue during the COVID pandemic as the drop-in is running via a group video call. This continues to average at ten people attending per week.

During the COVID pandemic, March 2020 to November 2020 there were 551 referrals into the SADA service, this was a 90% increase compared to the same period in 2019/20.

21 parents have attended our 10 week "You, Me and Mum programme". The course looks at how parenting is impacted by domestic abuse and also looks at it from a child's perspective.

To raise awareness of DA reporting, we gave resource packs to businesses and held a conference to inform professionals of the impact of DA on children, the conference was called "Through Emily's Eye's"

We have appointed a Modern Slavery Champion and all of the Community Safety Team have received “First Responder” Training to help support and signpost victims of Modern Slavery for help and support. Awareness sessions have also been rolled out as part of our commitment to other departmental managers as part of our Safeguarding Service. During 2020 we have supported 2 victims of Modern Slavery.



## Survivors Against Domestic Abuse group carries on its support

**Survivors Against Domestic Abuse dealt with 620 cases between January 1 and December 1 this year - but how did the service begin?**

Formerly known as Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse, the scheme was launched by the borough council in 2012.

The organisation centres around the Domestic Abuse Forum - made up of abuse survivors who get together to share their experiences, support one another and offer help and guidance to others.

Last month, we interviewed one of the first SADA service users, Roxie Chambers, who now works for the organisation - which she credits with helping turn her life around.

Since launching, it has helped women and men - who are usually referred by the police, GPs or other agencies - through

**GEORGIA BARROW**  
[georgiabarrow@hertsmcc.gov.uk](mailto:georgiabarrow@hertsmcc.gov.uk)

counselling and group therapy.

It aims to empower victims of domestic abuse to make positive life choices, provide support around accessing legal advice and provides the provision of 'You, Me and Mum' course - to help parents to support their children after experiencing the effects of domestic abuse.

It is chaired by council leader Sharon Taylor, and is now operational in the Welwyn Hatfield, North Herts and East Herts districts, sparking the name change from Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse to Survivors Against Domestic Abuse.

SADA opened its first Safe House in 2017, and this year opened the 16th Safe

House in Hertfordshire, providing men, women and children fleeing domestic abuse with a safe haven to go to.

Most recently, it was awarded White Ribbon accreditation - which recognises the organisation's work to end male violence against women - and has launched a book, 'SADA Survivor Stories'.

SADA Survivor Stories, headed up by Roxie Chambers, is available to buy in paperback or you can get it free on Kindle via Amazon.

The service is open to anyone, regardless of gender, class, age, race, religion, disability sexual orientation or lifestyle.

The service is also open to families as well as single victims of domestic abuse.

Those in need can call SADA today on 01438 242666 or email [SADAH@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:SADAH@stevenage.gov.uk), or call Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline on 06 008 008 008.

## Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) – “The Safe Space”

Following a local authority referral SADA moved a client and her daughter into the Move On property away from the area she was fleeing. Support was offered including support out of hours provided remotely during the pandemic throughout her stay. The client was able to live in the property which she said felt just like a family home whilst she was supported to access her “forever home”. The client and her daughter have now spent their first Christmas safe in their own home.



## **Objective three – Promote reporting of hate crime and promote equality in the community**

### **What will we do?**

We will embed the Hate Crime Strategy into our Partnership Action Plan and engage with the community in different ways to promote personal safety. This includes attending engagement events, promoting third party reporting centres and support available in the community. As a partnership, we will be holding awareness events to promote what a hate crime is and how to report it. During these events we will have resources available to make sure that this information is as accessible as possible. These events may go ahead in person or virtually. Leaflets will be available in different languages, easy read versions and in braille. We understand it is important to promote the support available to people as much as possible.

We will continue to work with partners and the community to promote reporting of hate crime so the issue can be more understood and addressed. We have encouraged sites to become third party reporting centres for hate crime. This means that members of the community can report hate crime incidents where the professionals can report the incident on your behalf and also give advice. The current third party reporting sites are Stevenage Borough Council, College, Police Station and the Library.

### **What have we been doing?**

During hate crime awareness week, we engaged with different faith groups to find out how safe they felt within Stevenage. We gave out information on how to report hate crime and what information and support is available.

We have continued to promote the use of third party reporting centres and have supported victims of Hate Crime by working co-operatively with partners and residents. The third party reporting centres are accessible in the town and include the Council Offices, North Herts College and the Library. Anyone who feels they have been a victim of Hate Crime can attend the Centres and an officer will be available for support.

Members of the Community Safety Team attended training in 2019 regarding the reporting of Hate Crime and supporting victims who may have been affected by Hate Crime.



## **Objective Four - Tackle the harms caused by drugs and alcohol**

### **What we are going to do?**

We will continue to support people to break the cycle of substance misuse or offending behaviour by putting practical solutions in place to tackle issues that cause or exacerbate this behaviour. By doing this, the No More Service will reduce the impact of drugs; alcohol and crime have on the individual and the community. We work alongside other support and enforcement agencies to take a collaborative approach providing an individually tailored support plan to help break entrenched behaviour. The ethos of the No More Service is to improve the person's self-worth, help them to achieve positive outcomes (such as housing or a role in the community) enabling and motivating them to break the cycle of crime or substance use.

Every year we host Community Awards, where we celebrate the life changing progress our clients make. We will continue this tradition again next year.

We will continue to promote the services to engage as many clients as we can. We will continue with clients who are in prison to start their support plans before their release. We will be making contacts with the NHS, including at Lister Hospital and local GPs to encourage them making referrals to the No More Service for support around the misuse of drugs and alcohol. We will continue to work as a partnership to identify members of the community that needs access to support.

We are developing methods of befriending for our clients. We want to create a drop in, for people to attend for one off support, to reduce isolation by taking part in activities such as chess, classes or hobbies.

### **What have we been doing?**

We have continued to develop an innovative approach to addressing substance misuse and offending behaviour. We now have two Complex Needs Advocates whose role is to provide support and guidance to individuals with complex needs (such as substance use, mental health and homelessness). These Advocates breakdown the tasks by discussing positives and consequences of the choices they can make and navigate the systems to access necessary support.





During the COVID pandemic, our clients have experienced many barriers, including struggling with their mental health and isolation, we have had to change our approach to engaging people. We increased our contact with our clients to help ease the feeling of isolation and the impact this can have on an individual's mental health. We worked with the Housing Options Team to support individuals who were street homeless in the hotel accommodation as this was a good opportunity whilst they had a base to offer them support.

During the Coronavirus pandemic we supported clients by:

- adapting coping skills previously developed to manage with addiction and mental ill-health;
- reducing further isolation for our high risk offenders, who already have restrictions placed on them;
- managing within a situation of isolation and loneliness which can simulate prison, which has potential to trigger individuals and bring about relating behaviour;
- filling the gap where there has been a reduction in other support services, clients seeing a reduction in the existing contact with other agencies and feelings of support;
- changing routines, which have existed for many years;
- changing environment for clients that have been rough sleeping for a prolonged period of time and being able to adapt to rules and regulations attached to this accommodation;
- managing clients' anti-social behaviour whilst in their home for extended time, including conflict between neighbours;
- encouraging harm reduction messages due to change in their substance use methods.

The number of clients we are now contacting every week (and often twice a week) has increased by 157%.



As, for some time, we were not able to see clients face to face, we were able to apply for a grant from Stevenage Community trust to provide phones to clients that did not have them. This meant we could have phone appointments and they could also have contact with other support agencies. We have delivered food parcels to those whose finances were impacted by Covid and discussed their finances so they could become self-sufficient again.

### Case Study – The No More Service

My support worker never lost their temper; they understood my grieving and were always there when I needed them. They spent time to explain things, in terms I could understand, like explaining letters I got sent. When they said they were going to do something, they would make the time to actually do it. They came back to help me even when I got annoyed. Whilst working with the No More Service they would help me access services that I needed to help reduce my addiction. I am now drug free. I still get texts from dealers but I just ignore them. I have completed grief counselling and I am taking my anti-depressants. I know if I need support with anything I can still call The No More Service and they will help me.

### **Objective Five – Work with partners to address perceptions of crime and encourage reporting of crime**

#### **What will we do?**

We will be continuing our “Tower Block Action Plan” which engages the Partnership to address any upcoming issue within any of our residential blocks. We have started to hold “pop-up hubs” in the tower blocks to speak directly to residents and to gather more information on any issues they are facing. We have been holding these at different times of the day to give the greatest opportunity for people to attend around their own schedule.



The Partnership is committed to developing an ongoing dialogue with the town's residents around issues concerning Community Safety. The findings from this survey will be added to throughout the lifetime of the strategy as the council and partners continue to engage with residents in a variety of ways. This will include utilising digital platforms, street meets and engagement exercises linked to the council's co-operative neighbourhood programme. Our aim is always to work on early solutions together.

### **What have we been doing?**

We have engaged with residents to promote personal safety and discuss people perception of ASB and crime. We have attended events including Street Meets, PSPO Events, Operation Night Owl and engagement events in the Town Centre. We have also taken our SoSafe Partnership engagement events to other areas in local shopping precincts to speak to people who do not attend the Town Centre. We attended regular partnership walkabouts to patrol the areas and engage members of the public to raise awareness and encourage reports.



Instead of issuing fines for those suffering financial hardship we used Community Protection Notice Warnings (CPNW). These notices banned the individual from undertaking specific actions that were causing ASB. This could include, for example, not being allowed to sit within ten metres of a cash point, not to have an open vessel of alcohol or to be banned from a certain area they did not need to attend.

The Town Centre, Bedwell, The Hyde, The Oval and the High Street in the Old Town were previously subject to a Public space protection order (PSPO). This has meant an individual could receive a fine if they were drinking alcohol, aggressively begging

or urinating in the public space. The PSPO was reviewed in 2019 as it was due to expire. It was not renewed as the Partnership agreed that the use of Community Protection Notices and Warnings, together with Operation Urbans proactive work with The No More Service and Housing, were managing behaviour more effectively than the use of Fixed Penalty Notices were.

DRAFT

## Some of our SoSafe Feedback Comments -

“I appreciate the daily calls as I have had no credit to call people” \*John - recently moved away from the Town Centre which had recently changed their routine and ability to socialise.

“I am so glad we could do the weekly drug test via video link, as it helps prove to Social Services that I am no longer taking drugs”. \*Louise

“People are clapping for the NHS again tonight but I’m going to clap for you and all the support you give me” \*Sandra – has daily contact due to mental ill health, neighbour disputes and social isolation

“Thanks for everything and sorting out food bank, appreciate it a lot. THANK YOU AGAIN” \*David – Has been in lockdown due to his health and struggled to get food

“I just really want to say thank you for all your help over the past year and more. You’ve done so much to get me where I am today and I would not have been here without you!”

“I really do appreciate the help you have given me and all the support and time you’ve put in” \*Lucy – Is experiencing a mental health crisis, struggling with a change in her routine and struggling to engage with mental health referral services as they require triage over the phone, something that she struggles with immensely.

“I honestly can’t thank you enough for all you have done for me and my family. You are the most amazing woman I’ve met you are amazing at your job and I wouldn’t be where I am without you”

“I am so pleased with my gift bag of goodies and food for Christmas; I am pleased to be working with you.”

“Thank you for finding a safe place to call a home, I can’t thank you enough”

## Appendix

### List of acronyms

ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
A&E	Accident & Emergency
BeNCH CRC	Bedfordshire, Norfolk, Cambridge and Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company (formerly Hertfordshire Probation)
DASH	Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse: domestic abuse, stalking and honour based violence (risk assessment tool)
CCSU	County Community Safety Unit
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
Class A drugs	Heroin, methadone, cocaine, crack, ecstasy, LSD and amphetamines
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPN/W	Community Protection Notice/Warning
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
DA	Domestic Abuse
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
E&NH CCG	East & North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group
HBV	Honour Based Violence
HCC	Herts County Council
HFRS	Herts Fire and Rescue Service
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
JAG	Joint Action Group
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LIFE	Local Intervention Fire Education
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MNWG	Multiple Needs Working Group
NMS	No More Service
NPS	New Psychoactive Substances
NTE	Night Time Economy
OPCC	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
OWL	Online Watch Liaison
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer

RAG	Responsible Authorities Group
RJ	Restorative Justice
SADA	Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse
SARA	Scanning, analysis, response and assessment
SBC	Stevenage Borough Council
SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely
SNT	Safer Neighbourhood Team
SOC	Serious Organised Crime
SoSafe	Stevenage community safety partnership
SoStevenage	Stevenage local strategic partnership
YC Herts	Youth provision in Stevenage

