

Serious Violence Duty
Engaging as a partner in the Duty
Supplementary Guidance

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Context

This guidance document helps partnerships to understand and engage in the [Serious Violence Duty](#) (Duty), seeking to build on existing Serious Violence Duty statutory guidance.

This supplementary guidance aims to clarify how partners can contribute to the Duty and the benefits of doing so. It is intended to illustrate how you, as a Duty partner, can meet the Duty. If you are looking for more detailed guidance, please read the [Serious Violence Duty statutory guidance](#).

This guidance is split into two main sections:

- **Part 1: How to engage as a Duty partner.** This section sets out what engaged and actively participating Duty partners look like.
 - As an **engaged partner**, it is likely that you are contributing to the core elements of the Duty, aiming to make the most of the opportunities that the Duty and partnership working present. The core elements of the Duty are outlined on pages 18 and 19 of the existing Serious Violence Duty statutory guidance.
 - As an **actively participating partner**, you are likely taking more ownership or leadership in meeting the core elements of the Duty and demonstrating best practice whilst doing so.
- **Part 2: Sector-specific ways to engage in the Duty for specified and relevant authorities.** This section supports partners from specified and relevant authorities to understand who needs to be involved in the Duty and how they can meet the Duty from the perspective of their own organisation.

[What is the Serious Violence Duty?](#)

The Serious Violence Duty (Duty) requires named public sector organisations called ‘specified authorities’ to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence in their local area. They may do this with the cooperation of other organisations, ‘relevant authorities’, and they may also engage with wider stakeholders, including the voluntary and community sector and local communities.

Why was the Serious Violence Duty introduced?

Serious violence encompasses high-harm crimes that have a significant impact on victims, their families and our communities. Serious violence also places a demand on public and community services. The Duty was introduced in recognition of this, and to formalise the known benefits of

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a partnership response to serious violence, particularly where there are opportunities to intervene earlier to prevent serious violence.

Who must comply with the Serious Violence Duty?

The Duty is placed on six 'specified authorities':

- Police
- Justice (Probation and Youth Justice Services)
- Fire and rescue
- Health (Integrated Care Boards in England and Local Health Boards in Wales)
- Local authorities

The Duty also mentions 'relevant authorities' - partners who can cooperate with specified authorities as required:

- Prisons (both the adult and youth estate)
- Education

Local policing bodies, e.g. Police and Crime Commissioners and Mayoralities, may also be involved in the Duty as a 'convenor' and the Duty confers powers on local policing bodies to require any authority within their police force area to supply it with information for the purpose of its functions relating to the Duty, primarily monitoring and oversight.

Who has formed partnerships to deliver the Serious Violence Duty?

All partnerships are different, and the Duty has been drafted to ensure there is flexibility in the delivery of the Duty. This recognises the complex and layered nature of local partnerships which operate at strategic and operational levels.

Some local areas have chosen to meet the Duty at the Local Policing Body level. This aligns with police force areas in England and Wales. This has been achieved by either utilising existing regional governance arrangements, such as pre-existing Violence Reduction Units, or creating new ones.

Some local areas have chosen to meet the Duty at the local authority level, which normally aligns with Community Safety Partnerships. In some areas, there has been a hybrid approach with governance for the Duty sitting at both the Local Policing Body and local authority level.

What are the specified authorities expected to do?

Specified authorities must agree on a local definition of serious violence, prepare a strategic needs assessment, develop, update and review a response strategy over time. These are the

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core elements of the Duty. But other additional elements describe the collaborative nature of the duty, which may also help you to understand what you can do as a partner and make the most of the opportunities afforded by the Duty and your local partnership.

How does the Serious Violence Duty align with other duties or partnerships?

The Duty is one of many responsibilities placed on local partnerships. Many of these other responsibilities are integrated into one partnership, such as Community Safety Partnerships; others are separate, such as Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Boards.

Preventing and reducing serious violence is an important priority and integrating the Duty into an existing partnership may make the most of engaged and motivated partners in a local area and the existing resources available. Equally, there is a risk that integrating serious violence into existing partnerships may dilute their focus. It may be more effective to establish a dedicated partnership focused on serious violence and the Duty.

The guiding principle is to ensure that the Duty can be met, while identifying opportunities to align with relevant local initiatives to maximise resources and partner engagement, and add value to the local landscape. As a Duty partner, you may wish to consider the resources, governance, and commitments associated with existing partnerships and initiatives before deciding the most appropriate approach. Two reflective questions to ask are:

1. Is there an existing partnership arrangement that can lead, oversee and administer the core elements of the Duty? If not, what new partnership arrangement is required?
2. Are there other partnerships which afford opportunities for added value and alignment to the delivery of identified strategic and operational priorities and ensure there is no duplication? If so, how will you engage with these partnerships?

Relevant partnerships and initiatives may include:

- Community Safety Partnerships: alongside the introduction of the Duty, Community Safety Partnerships are also required to consider a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence.
- Violence Reduction Units: 20 Home Office-funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) exist nationwide, tasked with preventing and reducing serious violence in a police force area, particularly focusing on young people under the age of 25. While VRUs are not subject to the Serious Violence Duty, they can be valuable in helping local areas meet their requirements.
- Duty to collaborate: introduced by the [Victims and Prisoners Act 2024](#). This will require certain partners to collaborate in the commissioning of victims' services for domestic abuse, sexual abuse and serious violence.

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- National policy initiatives and changes: there have been a number of related policy areas relevant to the response to serious violence, including the 10-year drugs strategy, Young Futures and the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy.

Part 1. How can you engage as a Duty Partner?

As a Duty partner, you are asked to work with others and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence in your local area. This guidance is intended to help you understand what this might look like. Proactive data sharing, contributions to governance meetings, embedding the Duty within their organisation, and supporting engagement with communities and the voluntary and community sector are all attributes of good engagement in the Duty.

As an **engaged partner**, you are likely contributing to the core elements of the Duty or making the most of the opportunities that the Duty and partnership working present.

As an **actively participating partner**, you are likely taking more ownership or leadership in meeting the Duty and demonstrating best practice whilst doing so.

Reflective questions:

- What resources (staff time, expertise) does your organisation have to engage as a Duty partner, and how sustainable is this level of engagement?
- What is the current level and extent of your organisation's engagement in the Duty and any other local initiatives related to serious violence?
- What opportunities exist to take more ownership or leadership in your local partnership? Is there any best practice that can support your partnership to adopt?
- Are there other partnerships which afford opportunities for added value and alignment to the delivery of identified strategic and operational priorities and ensure there is no duplication?

Identifying a Duty partner (for partnership leads and conveners)

The following reflective questions have been developed to support partnership leads and conveners to identify the right individuals to act as a Duty partner. Sector-specific advice has also been given in part 2 of this supplementary guidance.

Reflective questions:

1. Organisational knowledge: Are they able to speak with confidence about what the organisation does and how this aligns with the local response to serious violence?
2. Organisational links: Are they able to be the conduit from the partnership to their organisation by engaging with senior leadership and with operational staff?

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3. Authority: Do they possess the seniority necessary to make decisions, commit resources and direct funding on behalf of the sector? If not, are they able to easily facilitate decision-making within their organisation to achieve this?
4. Strategic oversight: Are they able to see how the partnership aligns with organisational commitments, local partnership working and wider policy agendas? If not, are they able to facilitate conversations with colleagues who do?
5. Operational understanding: Are they able to understand the current response to serious violence and any gaps? If not, are they able to facilitate conversations with colleagues who do?
6. Data sharing: Are they able to facilitate data sharing in their organisation, including setting out data requirements and working with colleagues to share data?
7. Motivation: Is this partner a willing participant in the partnership? If not, is someone else who is more motivated able to take their place or support them in assisting the partnership?

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Quick reference guide: How do I engage as a Duty Partner?

Table 1: A summary of ways to engage as a Duty partner, highlighting the distinction between ‘engaged’ and ‘actively participating’

Element of the Duty	Enablers	Engaged	Actively Participating
Strategic needs assessment (SNA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data inputs Capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine definition Share organisational data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit capacity to drafting and reviewing the SNA Conduct qualitative research on serious violence Map local provision
Response strategy (RS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategic priorities Align response to best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic alignment (see below) Effective commissioning (see below)
Review and revise the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing monitoring Reflective practice Commitment to evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track the delivery of actions Share monitoring data Support strategy review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Theory of Change Commit resources to evaluation
Collaboration and co-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity and motivation Clear governance Relationship building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop governance arrangements Attend and contribute to meetings Establish leadership and accountability Engage relevant authorities and wider stakeholders, including communities (see below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate on the SNA and RS (see above) Promote Duty within your organisation Engage the voluntary and community sector Engage frontline staff Collaborate with other SVD partnerships
Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the availability of relevant data Share data to support partnership (hotspots and vulnerable cohorts) Facilitate the adoption of legal frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the adoption of legal frameworks Share data to support partnership (identification of at-risk individuals) Provide qualitative research Share data for evaluation
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assets and levers Capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map key assets in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate engagement Publish and disseminate key documents
Organisational commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand national and local priorities Establish senior commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing priorities/ activities Understand gaps organisationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align gaps with the serious violence strategy Engage with colleagues Build senior-buy-in Consider opportunities for operational practice
Strategic alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand other partnership priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map other partnership priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness of SNA and RS with other partnerships Identify joint opportunities

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Effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioning levers• Commissioning framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the commissioning process to others• Review opportunities to commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt the commissioning cycle• Develop a commissioning framework• Facilitate engagement with commissioning colleagues
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Table 1 above provides a reference guide for partners on how to engage as a partner. It sets out the elements of the Duty, the enablers to achieve each element of the Duty, along with further details highlighting the distinction between a partner demonstrating being engaged or actively participating. These are covered in more detail below.

1.2 Core elements

How do you contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment?

A strategic needs assessment is a data-led, evidence-based profile that supports strategic decision-making on serious violence. Its purpose is to draw out local needs by understanding the issues, risks, and gaps that emerge from the evidence, so that partners share a common and agreed understanding of local challenges and can prioritise their collective response.

As a Duty partner, you will be expected to support the development of the strategic needs assessment to ensure it is a useful tool in informing the strategic response.

The key success factors of a strategic needs assessment are data inputs from partners and sufficient capacity to complete the SNA. There is a strategic needs assessment template that accompanies this supplementary guidance, which will help you understand what kind of data might be shared. Our sector-specific guidance in part 2 also references key data sets held by specified and relevant authorities.

How can you contribute to the strategic needs assessment?

You can engage in the strategic needs assessment at two levels, depending on your organisational capacity and expertise. Table 2 provides a summary of the two contribution levels (engaged and actively participating) and specific actions required to support the SNA. Ultimately, your contribution should aim to fill the gap between identified needs and local service provision.

Table 2: Summary of contribution levels and specific actions - strategic needs assessment

Level	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Inform the development of the local definition of serious violence, using pre-existing definitions and insight● Share data proactively from your organisation to support the development of the SNA and facilitate conversations with data and information governance leads within your organisation● Share pre-existing analytical and insight products that might support the SNA and reduce duplication, such as surveys and problem profiles

Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lead on the development of all or part of the SNA, including the commitment of resources to achieve this ● Provide access to support qualitative research, such as to practitioners, service users and/ or members of the public ● Support an understanding of gaps in local provision aligned to needs identified in the SNA, including reference to other local priorities and commitments
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How do you contribute to the development of the response strategy?

A response strategy (RS) sets out how a local partnership will address the needs identified within their strategic needs assessment. It should show clear links to the evidence base and use the evidence to set out the priorities of partners, acknowledging realistic goals that can be achieved and managed within the circumstances of the partnership.

As a Duty Partner, you will be expected to support the development of the strategy and, where identified, support the delivery and development of the strategy by taking responsibility for strategic priorities and/or associated actions.

The key success factors of a response strategy are following a collaborative process to agree on strategic priorities linked to identified needs. Table 3 provides a summary of the contribution levels and actions associated with the levels to support the development of the response strategy.

Table 3: Summary of contribution levels and specific actions to develop the response strategy

Level	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform the development of strategic priorities based on the evidence in the strategic needs assessment ● Align the response strategy to best practice, looking at ‘what works’
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supports an understanding of strategic alignment locally ● Supports effective commissioning linked to the response strategy

How do you contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy?

The Duty requires that a strategy must be reviewed and revised accordingly, with the partnership reviewing it at least annually. Particularly, considering the impact of the strategy, local partnerships should be able to robustly demonstrate the change and impact made as a result of

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their strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence that allows other local areas, regionally and nationally, to follow best practice and adopt ‘what works’.

As a Duty partner, you will be expected to contribute to reviewing the impact of the strategy, understand what is working well and, where appropriate, suggest changes to the strategy.

The key success factors of reviewing and revising the response strategy are setting up regular monitoring processes, reflective practice and committing to evaluation.

Table 4: Summary of contribution levels and specific actions to review the response strategy

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Regularly review the delivery and implementation of the strategy● Monitor data trends aligned to the definition of serious violence and key drivers● Support the collaborative process of reviewing and revising the strategic direction of the partnership
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop a Theory of Change or equivalent framework to support a robust understanding of impact● Commission evaluation, where resources allow, to understand the impact of key activities

1.3 Additional elements

How do you collaborate and co-produce with partners?

This is a collaborative Duty; therefore, local areas should be aiming for open and engaged partnerships that understand their role in the Duty and how to work together to do so, including co-producing the strategic needs assessment and the response strategy.

As a Duty partner, you will be expected to play an active role in the partnership, working with other partners to understand and respond to serious violence.

The key success factors of collaboration and co-production are capacity, motivation, clear governance and relationship building. Table 5 provides a summary of the contribution levels and specific actions to collaborate and co-produce with partners.

Table 5: Summary of contribution levels and specific actions to collaborate and co-produce with partners

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the development of clear governance arrangements which allow partners to hold each other to account and named strategic representatives who can facilitate change within their organisation ● Attend and contribute to key governance meetings as a strategic lead ● Ensure each organisation has an identified leader to provide accountability and oversight of the delivery of the Duty - this leader should have the authority to make decisions, commit resources and direct funding ● Lead engagement of relevant authorities and wider stakeholders where relevant
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support or lead on the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment with other partners ● Support or lead actions to implement the Response Strategy with other partners, including designing and implementing activities that prevent and reduce serious violence ● Link the partnership with wider stakeholders, either organisationally or externally, such as the voluntary and community sector, to ensure wider consultation and engagement ● Facilitate collaboration between frontline staff in your organisation with others, where it is necessary to deliver and implement the Response Strategy ● Engage counterparts in other areas and national leads to ensure consistency and learn from emerging/ best practice

How do you support data sharing?

A key enabler to the Duty is data sharing - local areas should be looking to create a culture of data sharing to support the Duty, including in developing the strategic needs assessment, and supporting the development of processes that enable this culture.

As a Duty partner, you should be supporting data sharing, particularly facilitating data sharing from your organisation where required.

Ensuring that the legal frameworks are in place supports effective data sharing. Table 6 provides a summary of the contribution levels and specific actions to support partners on data sharing.

Table 6: Summary of contribution levels and specific actions to support data sharing

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate to other partners the data you hold and how that might support the development of the definition and the Strategic Needs Assessment ● Share data, information and knowledge relevant to the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment and identify hotspot locations/ vulnerable cohorts ● Support the partnership to unblock data sharing concerns within your organisation, facilitating contact with data and information governance leads
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide resources to support improving data sharing locally, such as drafting data sharing arrangements ● Share data, information and knowledge relevant to the better identification of individuals at risk or at high risk of being involved in serious violence, or based on identified risk/ protective factors, that might make them eligible for intervention programmes ● Share information collected qualitatively, including through interviews, focus groups and surveys ● Support data collection to support the evaluation of impact, either by providing monitoring data or supporting evaluations commissioned by the partnership ● Review ways to improve data collection and quality in the organisation to ensure better data is shared in the future

How do you facilitate community engagement?

Serious violence has a significant impact on communities and partners should be seeking to work meaningfully with affected individuals, families and communities to build the local response.

As a Duty partner, you should be supporting the use of assets and levers you have as an organisation to ensure appropriate engagement with local communities that support the development and delivery of an effective response. This should seek to engage a diverse range of voices and should focus on those most affected, including existing service users.

The key success factors of data sharing are establishing what assets and levers you have to engage with the community and the capacity to engage the community meaningfully. Table 7 below outlines the collaboration levels and specific actions you can take to facilitate community engagement.

Table 7: Summary of collaboration levels and specific actions to facilitate community engagement

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an understanding of key assets and levers to engage in the community locally
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate engagement through key assets with individuals, families and communities to support the development of key elements of the Duty, such as the definition, the strategic needs assessment and the response strategy • Support the publication and dissemination of the strategic needs assessment and response strategy, including with key audiences

How do you demonstrate organisational commitment to the Serious Violence Duty?

Each specified authority has a role to play in preventing and reducing serious violence. The statutory guidance says that both existing and new actions can fall within the strategic response, meaning that actions that you, as an organisation, already take could be used to show how you are addressing identified needs locally.

As a Duty partner, you should seek to understand what your organisation does that might directly or indirectly respond to serious violence, supporting an understanding of gaps in provision and where there might be opportunities in the future for your own organisation.

The key success factors of demonstrating organisational commitment are understanding national and local priorities and establishing commitment within your organisation. Table 8 outlines a summary of the contribution levels and specific actions to demonstrate organisational commitment.

Table 8: Summary of contribution levels and specific actions to demonstrate organisational commitment

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review which existing priorities/ activities in your organisation might align with • Review gaps organisationally that might support the prevention and reduction of serious violence
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how gaps organisationally could be met through the local strategy • Engage colleagues within your organisation to shape resource

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	<p>planning to align with gaps in provision, including establishing senior buy-in with colleagues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider how the Duty might apply operationally within the organisation, such as opportunities to engage frontline staff to understand the problem and/or looking at opportunities to deliver a more effective response
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How do you demonstrate strategic alignment locally?

The Duty is one of many responsibilities on local partners - strategic alignment means avoiding duplication in local actions and spending by understanding the other local strategies and commitments, and adding value where opportunities arise aligned to the evidence base and identified need.

As a Duty Partner, you should seek to ensure that joint opportunities are identified and duplication avoided, using engagement with other partnerships and other stakeholders.

The key success factors of demonstrating organisational commitment are understanding the partnership landscape and engagement with those partnerships. Table 9 provides a summary of the collaboration levels and specific actions on how you can demonstrate your strategic alignment locally.

Table 9: Summary of collaboration levels and specific actions to demonstrate the strategic alignment locally

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with Duty partners to map the local strategic landscape, including reviewing other strategies and commitments
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with other statutory and non-statutory partnerships to promote awareness of the local SNA and response strategy and identify joint opportunities

How do you support effective commissioning?

Commissioning is the process by which needs are identified and services are planned and designed to meet them. The use of commissioning opportunities to build and adapt a more effective provision of services locally helps deliver an effective response to serious violence. You, as a Duty Partner, should seek to use commissioning to better design and deliver services that respond to the needs identified in the strategic needs assessment, particularly by making time

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for the planning stage, where service provision is reviewed in line with identified needs.

Effective commissioning can be enabled by understanding how organisations commission and having a commissioning framework. Table 10 provides a summary of the collaboration levels and specific actions to guide you on how to support effective commissioning.

Table 10: Summary of collaboration levels and specific actions to support effective commissioning

Levels	Actions
Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Explain your organisational commissioning process to partners to create awareness of key requirements and dependencies● Review opportunities to use the organisational commissioning process to support the delivery of the Response Strategy
Actively participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Support or lead the partnership to adopt the commissioning cycle, including developing a commissioning framework● Facilitate partners to engage with key commissioning colleagues, where appropriate, to design and deliver activities and interventions

Part 2. Sector-specific ways to engage in the Duty

In addition to the core elements of engaging as a partner in the Serious Violence Duty, the [Serious Violence Duty statutory guidance](#) also outlines sector-specific obligations for all specified and relevant authorities. This guidance elaborates on this and provides tailored information on how to engage in the Duty for each of the specified and relevant authorities. We have categorised partner involvement mainly using the following definitions:

- **Accountable:** an individual who is ultimately answerable for meeting the Duty, ensuring that the partnership meets the core elements of the Duty and its strategic objectives
- **Responsible:** an individual, or individuals, who regularly represents their organisation, supports and leads the work to implement the Duty, and supports the accountable representative with ensuring the partnership meets the core elements of the Duty and its objectives by coordinating data and frontline delivery activities
- **Data lead:** an individual, or individuals, responsible for overseeing, and in some instances executing, data-related tasks, including preparing the strategic needs assessment or supporting monitoring and evaluation
- **Frontline:** professionals who are delivering the authorities' operations and exercises (e.g. firefighter, youth justice practitioners) as directed by the responsible and ultimately the accountable representative.

Below, we have provided sector-specific guidance to support partners to engage in the Duty. For each sector, the following information is included:

- Who from the authority should be involved?
 - How can the authority effectively engage in the Duty?
 - What are the benefits to the authority and the benefits to the wider partnership of engaging in the Duty?
 - Best practice examples of the authority engaging in the Duty
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2.1 Fire and Rescue Services

Who from Fire and Rescue Services should be involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

Fire and rescue are a specified authority in the Duty, which means they are expected to work together with other specified authorities and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence.

The Fire and Rescue Authority, including Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners, metropolitan Mayors and the London Fire Commissioner, as the Duty holder, is responsible for compliance with the requirements of the Duty. However, the Duty guidance states that the Authority can identify a representative with the greatest local knowledge, which may be the operational fire and rescue service for the area (this tends to be the usual arrangement in local partnerships). Each Fire and Rescue Authority should identify and nominate suitable lead individual(s) to represent fire and rescue in the partnership, as well as how to engage other colleagues within fire and rescue.

- **Strategic lead (accountable and responsible):** it is recommended that the representative is a **Principal Officer** with strategic responsibilities for prevention. Alternatively, the **Area Manager** may be suitable. The strategic lead should be able to make decisions on behalf of the organisation. In addition, they should have the motivation and capacity to engage with the partnership.
- **Data lead:** it is recommended that they engage in intelligence or analytical roles within the fire and rescue service, which should ensure a comprehensive understanding of data, analytical capacity and what it means to produce a strategic needs assessment.
- **Frontline:** gaining the support of frontline officers and staff is also important because the Duty applies to identify opportunities to prevent and reduce serious violence through business as usual.

How can fire and rescue engage in the Duty?

As a specified authority under the Duty, fire and rescue are required to actively participate in and contribute to the prevention of serious violence in the local area. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised in Table 11 below. These are not prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Table 12 provides further elements of the Duty and examples of ways to engage.

Table 11: Ways to engage — core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Provide community insight on serious violence and perceptions of safety from Fire Cadets, youth

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	<p>engagement, and home safety visits to identify risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share insights from deliberate and vehicle fire data, home fire safety visits, and operational experience to evidence risks
Contribute to the development of the Response Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jointly design community interventions with partners, informed by data
Contribute to reviewing and revising the Response Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide feedback on intervention outcomes, including working with education on educational engagement and attendance

Table 12: Ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participate in multi-agency panels, such as Prevention Partnership panels, to coordinate prevention and early intervention ● Share operational insights
Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share risk indicators from home fire safety visits, such as hoarding, mental health issues and substance misuse, with partners ● Support partners to overlay datasets, including deliberate fires and vehicle fires, to identify high-risk areas
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver programmes such as Fire Cadets in areas identified as high risk of serious violence ● Conduct educational and outreach home visits to engage with community members, while collecting data on vulnerabilities which could indicate risk of serious violence
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Embed the Serious Violence Duty into fire and rescue organisational strategies and policies ● Allocate staff and resources to participate in multi-agency prevention activities with other duty partners
Demonstrate strategic alignment locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that some fire and rescue interventions complement the Serious Violence Duty aims
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect and provide evidence of the impact of

	interventions and programmes such as Fire Cadets to inform commissioning decisions
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What are the benefits of the fire and rescue being involved in the Duty?

All police forces will have command structures that target serious violence and understand the threat profile of serious violence across the force - the benefit of working in partnership enables them to support initiatives that are more preventative, improve their public protection response and/or allow them to target hotspots/ offending cohorts more effectively.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging fire and rescue:

- **Access to local intelligence:** this includes data relating to indicators of vulnerability to serious violence in the local area, including arson and vehicle fires.
- **Trusted community presence:** fire and rescue services are visible and widely trusted in local communities. This can support the serious violence partnership to engage with a range of community members, including children and young people who may be reluctant to engage with other services, such as the police.
- **Prevention and engagement expertise:** fire services already deliver preventative programmes such as Fire Cadets. Fire services are also experienced in delivering education and training to local communities, for example, through fire awareness. This expertise can be mobilised by the partnership to address risks associated with serious violence, such as school absence and anti-social behaviour.
- **Local knowledge:** firefighters frequently engage with the public through home visits.

The benefits for fire and rescue:

- **Strengthened community relations:** by supporting the partnership to work proactively with children and young people and families, fire and rescue services can reinforce their role as a trusted and approachable community organisation.
- **Improved safety outcomes:** preventing serious violence reduced the likelihood of fire-related incidents linked to serious violence, helping to protect communities and reduce emergency call demand.
- **Delivering measurable impact:** participating in partnership interventions driven by data-informed needs (e.g. from the SNA) provides measurable impact, which can support inspections and gaining funding.

Fire and Rescue: Example

Example

[A Fire and Rescue Service using partnership data to inform targeted intervention delivery](#)

In one partnership, fire and rescue sits on the Prevention Partnership panel, a group which is designed to tackle serious violence and antisocial behaviour through prevention and multi-agency collaboration.

Through the Prevention Partnership panel, the police shared data identifying a local hotspot of children and young people with persistent school absence and concerning behaviours indicating vulnerability to serious violence. In response, the fire and rescue service launched a targeted Fire Cadets programme in the hotspot area. Delivered by firefighters, the programme offers structured, positive activities designed to engage children and young people constructively.

The [United Kingdom \(UK\) Fire Cadets programme](#) has been highly effective at reducing vulnerability to serious violence. Participants have demonstrated improved school attendance, improved educational engagement, and positive relationships with parents and carers.

This example demonstrates the value of sharing partnership data and working with fire and rescue as a key partner in implementing early intervention programmes to prevent and reduce the escalation of serious violence.

2.2 Police

Who from the police should be involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

The police are a specified authority in the Duty, which means they are expected to work together with other specified authorities and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. The Serious Violence Duty specifies that the **Chief Officer of the police force** is the Duty holder within the police. However, in practice, the responsibility for engaging in the partnership will be delegated by the Chief Officer. They must ensure that there is appropriate representation from the police within all partnerships contributing to the Serious Violence Duty and operating under their force area. Each Chief Officer should identify and nominate suitable lead individual(s) to represent the police in the partnership, as well as how to engage other colleagues within the force.

- **Strategic lead (accountable):** it is recommended that the representative is at an Assistant Chief Constable or Chief Superintendent rank, which should ensure buy-in to the Duty from the Chief Officer and their team.
- **Strategic lead (responsible):** it is recommended that the representative is at a Superintendent or Chief Inspector rank, which should ensure a comprehensive understanding of what can be and should be delivered to meet the Duty and the governance processes around serious violence in the police force area.
- **Data lead:** it is recommended that they engage in intelligence or analytical roles within the police force, which should ensure a comprehensive understanding of data, analytical capacity and what it means to produce a strategic needs assessment.
- **Frontline:** gaining the support of frontline officers is also important because there may be opportunities to change practice that supports prevention and early intervention, as well as better understand crime trends in local areas.

How can the police engage in the Duty?

As a specified authority under the Duty, the police are required to actively participate in and contribute to the prevention of serious violence in the local area. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised in Table 13 below. These are not meant to be prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Table 14 below provides further examples on ways to engage depending on the additional elements of the Duty.

Table 13: Ways to engage – core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the force definition of serious violence to inform the development of the partnership definition ● Use existing insight and analytical products to inform the definition of serious violence and the strategic needs assessment ● Provide access to police data to understand key trends in serious violence as part of the strategic needs assessment ● Provide access to officers and staff who can contribute to qualitative research as part of the strategic needs assessment
Contribute to the development of the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the policing role in responding to needs identified in the SNA, such as key crime types, hotspots and cohorts of offenders, and the relevance of police patrols, hotspots policing and problem-oriented policing in response ● Integrate relevant police activity and operations under relevant strategic priorities
Contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allocate resources to enable the monitoring of trends using police data that align with the definition of serious violence and key drivers

Table 14: Ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actively participate in multi-agency governance and delivery arrangements to tackle serious violence, including Community Safety Partnerships ● Contribute to the co-production of strategies and interventions, ensuring there is shared ownership and accountability across the

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	<p>partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support a coordinated response across specified and relevant authorities and voluntary and community partners
Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with partners to agree on data sharing, and lead by example by sharing information in a timely manner. ● Facilitate engagement with force analytics and performance functions (e.g. Head of Analytics, Head of Performance) to set out data requirements.
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use insights from frontline police officers, police community support officers, and other community-embedded teams to inform the partnership's understanding of local concerns, risks and protective factors related to serious violence. ● Support consistent messaging with the community on how the partnership is addressing serious violence. ● Ensure policing is targeted to communities most impacted by serious violence to strengthen trust and confidence.
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate organisational awareness of the Serious Violence Duty and strategy.
Demonstrate strategic alignment locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the Duty commitments are aligned to a policing strategy or action plan, avoiding duplication.
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with partners to ensure that commissioned services are complementary to policing responses. ● Use frontline and neighbourhood policing intelligence data to identify risks, unmet needs, and gaps in provision, particularly for high-risk cohorts and places.

What are the benefits of the police being involved in the Duty?

All police forces will have command structures that target serious violence and understand the threat profile of serious violence across the force - the benefit of working in partnership enables them to support initiatives that are more preventative, improve their public protection response and/or allow them to target hotspots/ offending cohorts more effectively.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging the police include:

- **Data:** access to intelligence and data relating to serious violence in the local area, including crime data, trends in serious violence and emerging risks
- **Problem-solving approach to serious violence:** expertise around how to take a problem-solving approach to preventing serious violence
- **Early intervention and disruption:** support early intervention and disruption through coordinated police enforcement action — the police have powers that other partners do not have
- **Policing knowledge:** provide knowledge around police powers and legislation relevant to the Duty

The benefits for the police in being involved:

- **Data:** access to partner data that shapes their understanding of key hotspots and offending cohorts
- **Alignment with the mission and values of policing:** a key element of the policing mission, as set out in the [Policing Vision 2025](#), is “to make communities safer by upholding the law fairly and firmly”
- **Accountability:** ensures police activity is effectively targeted and contributes to improved public safety and reduced harm
- **Increased collective capacity:** enables a shared, multi-agency response to preventing serious violence, rather than responsibility resting solely with the police. This should create more resources, time and efficiencies in the police response to serious violence

Police: Example

Example

[Cleveland Police: Multi-agency response to firearms discharges](#)

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In response to a rise in violence involving firearms, Cleveland Police conducted a comparative case analysis of all firearms discharges in the police force area over a defined period of time. The analysis identified a number of precursor events associated with the firearms discharges, such as a suspect driving a vehicle into a property or smashing a relative's window.

Based on these findings, Cleveland Police introduced a process whereby, in response to a precursor event, they held a multi-agency suppression meeting, involving partners from safeguarding, youth services, community safety, and other relevant agencies, depending on the nature of the risk. These meetings aim to implement preventative actions before a firearms discharge occurs.

An internal evaluation by Cleveland Police has shown that there is 83% confidence that the intervention is effective, demonstrating the value of intelligence-led, collaborative approaches using police data.

2.3 Health (specified authority)

Who from health should be involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

Health is a specified authority in the Duty, which means they are expected to work together with other specified authorities and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. The Serious Violence Duty specifies that **Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)** are the Duty holders within the health sector. Within the health sector, ICBs are responsible for planning health services for their local population. Their responsibilities include planning, coordinating and commissioning activity across the local health care system.

Each ICB should identify and nominate a suitable lead individual to represent the health sector in the partnership - they should be able to operate at a strategic level and be able to liaise with other parts of the health sector to ensure a sector-wide contribution to the Duty.

In terms of data, you should also be looking to work with the ICB representative to engage business intelligence, engaging Heads of Analytics to facilitate data scoping, including locating data which might reach out of the ICB and into other parts of the health system.

Whilst all ICBs are required to engage with serious violence partnerships, if there are multiple ICBs in one area, a lead ICB may be nominated for input into the serious violence partnership. This lead should ensure input from all ICBs in the area.

It is important to be aware that the ICB does not encompass the entire local health system and therefore, any individual identified to represent the ICB needs to be able to facilitate conversations with wider partners, including Integrated Care Partnerships, Primary Care Networks, service providers and public health (which sits within local authorities).

How can health engage in the Duty?

As a specified authority under the Duty, health is required to actively participate in and contribute to the prevention of serious violence in the local area. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised below (Table 15). Table 16 outlines further ways health can engage, considering additional elements of the Duty. These are not prescriptive, but illustrative of the contributions that would be helpful.

Table 15: Ways to engage – core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform the development of the definition of serious violence, specifically addressing what serious violence means in a health context, such as demand in care settings (admissions for assaults and knife crime injuries) ● Share data on hospital admissions and health inequalities that support an understanding of need ● Work with public health colleagues to use insight from joint strategic needs assessments to inform the serious violence SNA (JSNAs typically look at the current and future health care needs of local areas to inform planning and commissioning) ● Map health provision for key risk factors to understand gaps in provision, in line with evidence of what works
Contribute to the development of the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform the development of the strategic priorities, particularly where the strategy seeks to address health-related needs ● Consider examples of best practice in the response to serious violence within the health sector and share these with the partnership as evidence of “what works”
Contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide monitoring data on key trends such as hospital admissions for knife injuries

Table 16: Ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
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Engaging as a partner in the Duty

<p>Collaborate and co-produce with partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actively participate in multi-agency governance and delivery arrangements to tackle serious violence ● Contribute to the co-production of strategies and interventions, ensuring there is shared ownership and accountability across the partnership ● Support a coordinated response across specified and relevant authorities and voluntary and community partners, including engaging with wider health system (ICP, Primary Care Networks, service providers and public health)
<p>Support data-sharing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate the sharing of anonymous health data between health services and the partnership. This data will be used to inform the strategic needs assessment
<p>Facilitate community engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate engagement with patients and community consultation where appropriate
<p>Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review your integrated care strategy and 5-year joint forward plan (JFP) to understand how they might align with the Duty and identify any gaps in your current organisational response to serious violence ● Consider how your duty under the Health and Care Act 2022 aligns with the Duty
<p>Demonstrate strategic alignment locally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review how to align the Duty to Collaborate and the response to serious violence
<p>Support effective commissioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitating the commissioning or co-commissioning services within the local health system, informed by the serious violence SNA

What are the benefits of the health sector being involved?

This section describes the benefits to both the partnership and the health sector of active involvement by health in the Duty.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging health:

- **Data:** access to local population health data enables the partnership to take a robust, public health approach to preventing serious violence and an evidence-based approach to decision-making
- **Early identification:** frontline health professionals often have contact with individuals at an early stage in the risk pathway, which supports the early identification of risk, vulnerability and emerging trends in serious violence
- **Access to key cohorts:** the target group for commissioned health services is often those individuals and groups that are at higher risk of serious violence
- **Understanding of the impact of serious violence on health:** improves the partnership's understanding of how serious violence contributes to physical ill-health, mental ill-health and long-term health inequalities in the local area
- **Coordination and collaboration:** strengthens relationships between the health sector and other partners, enabling a whole system approach to preventing serious violence

The benefits for health in being involved:

- **Contribution to the NHS's key strategic priorities:** one of the key ambitions of the NHS's [10 Year Health Plan for England](#) is to shift from sickness to prevention. Given that serious violence is a major cause of ill health and poor well-being, any efforts to address serious violence will also directly contribute to achieving this preventative goal
- **Increased funding and resources for health services:** provides opportunities for health services that contribute to the prevention of serious violence to obtain funding and/ or additional resources
- **Opportunity for health priorities to be heard:** given that health has distinct priorities compared with the other specified authorities, participation in the Duty provides an opportunity for these priorities to be heard and understood by partners
- **Coordination and collaboration:** strengthens relationships within the health sector, encouraging collaboration across different health services and enabling a sector-wide approach to preventing serious violence

Health: Example

Example

[The London NHS Violence Reduction Academy](#)

The London NHS Violence Reduction Academy has been established to identify, synthesise and promote evidence-based models of violence reduction in health and social care, sharing the latest research and supporting wider implementation across London. It also brings together professionals from a range of sectors outside of health to enable a partnership approach to serious violence reduction. It involves a number of initiatives that show how health can lead and develop services to support the prevention and reduction of serious violence.

The London NHS Violence Reduction Academy has a range of initiatives aimed at reducing serious violence. One example is the [National Health Service \(NHS\) England social prescribing model](#). This model supports both clinical and non-clinical staff to identify vulnerable individuals who may be affected by or susceptible to serious violence and creates referral pathways to community support. The referral pathways can connect individuals with other partners, such as the voluntary sector and education, and can thereby facilitate multi-agency engagement.

In-hospital violence reduction services organised by the London NHS Violence Reduction Academy also enable a collaborative approach, specifically to reduce serious youth violence. These services provide support to individuals accessing emergency care for violence-related injuries or other needs that put them at risk of serious violence involvement, including signposting them to other community services. In-hospital violence reduction services are run in 15 out of 29 London hospitals. A [In-Hospital Violence Reduction Services: A guide to effective implementation](#) has been published by the NHS.

The [London Vanguard Community Multi-Systems Violence Reduction Model](#) aims to improve outcomes for young people affected by serious violence through the provision of psychological support and mentorship. Its delivery model involves partnership with both mental health services and voluntary organisations to facilitate access to the programme for young people.

2.4 Prisons and Children and Young People's Secure Estate (relevant authority)

Prisons and the children and young people's secure estate are relevant authorities part of the Justice system.

Who is involved in the Serious Violence Duty from prisons and the children and young people's secure estate?

Prisons and the children and young people's secure estate are both relevant authorities in the Duty, which means that they are not core duty holders but may choose, or be requested, to actively collaborate with the partnership.

The Serious Violence Duty specifies that within prisons and the children and young people's secure estate, those responsible for complying with the Duty are:

- Governor or Director of the prison
- Governor of Young Offender Institutions
- Registered Manager of Secure Children's Homes
- Head of Secure Schools

In practice, the responsibility for engaging in the partnership will be delegated by the duty holder. The duty holder should identify and nominate suitable lead individual(s) to represent the prison and the children and young people's secure estate in the partnership, and to engage other colleagues within the prison estate. If you are struggling to identify a representative, your probation representative will be well placed to facilitate contact through existing forums. As such, we further recommend:

- **Strategic lead (accountable):** for the adult estate, engage a member of the Senior Management Team within the prison, such as the Head of Reducing Reoffending. This should ensure buy-in to the Duty at a senior level. An equivalent could be engaged in the children and young people's secure estate
- **Strategic lead (responsible):** It is recommended that the partnership nominates a representative responsible for ensuring that prisons are actively involved in Duty partnerships and can support the delivery of key priorities in prison settings
- **Frontline:** engaging frontline staff within the prison estate is also important because custodial settings are key points of intervention for offenders involved in serious violence

How can prisons and the children and young people’s secure estate engage in the Duty?

As a relevant authority under the Duty, prisons and the children and young people’s secure estate are able to co-operate with specified authorities. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised below (Table 16). These are not meant to be prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Finally, Table 17 outlines further guidance on ways to engage, considering additional elements of the Duty.

Table 16: Ways to engage – core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform the development of the definition of serious violence, using relevant data and information about violence in the prison estate ● Shape an understanding of violence in local communities, with violence in prisons and the flow of violent offenders in/out of local communities, including the needs of this cohort ● Map gaps in provision to target violent behaviour and needs within violence offending cohorts that could be addressed in prison settings
Contribute to the development of the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform strategy development where there is a focus on the management of violent offenders, with the potential to intervene in prison settings, such as rehabilitative, educational or vocational interventions
Contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide monitoring data on violence in prisons

Table 17: Ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Map and share best practices from across the estate and build awareness with partners ● Work with other prisons to discuss how to meet the Duty and how to work with local areas ● Work with probation colleagues to align response to serious violence and map gaps in the provisions for offenders

Engaging as a partner in the Duty

Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate the sharing of data on violence in prisons and about relevant offending cohorts
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support service user engagement where required
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review opportunities to align provision in prisons with serious violence priorities
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review opportunities to commission provision in prison in line with the serious violence strategic objectives

What are the benefits of prisons being involved?

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging prisons:

- **Data:** access to prison intelligence and incident data provides insight into the drivers of serious violence and risk and protective factors, specifically around reoffending. This enables a comprehensive understanding of serious violence, supporting evidence-based decision-making
- **Enables a whole-system response:** ensures the response to serious violence includes preventing reoffending, therefore supporting individuals who are further along the risk pathway
- **Risk identification and management:** helps to identify individuals at high risk of being victims or perpetrators of serious violence on release from custody, strengthening multi-agency risk assessment and planning

The benefits for prisons in being involved:

- **Data:** access to partner data can help frontline staff to better identify and manage risks within the prison estate, such as county lines or gang affiliations, therefore improving safety for prisoners and staff
- **Alignment with the priorities of HMPPS:** the [mission of HM Prison and Probation Service \(HMPPS\)](#) is to ensure that prisons are safe and supportive environments that reduce reoffending and help people to prepare for a positive future
- **Reduce demand on the prison estate:** reduces the demand on the prison estate, particularly violence in prisons, in the long-term by decreasing offending and reoffending
- **Stronger links with community services:** encourages collaboration with community partners, enabling better provision and support for individuals prior to and on release from prison, including through the delivery of targeted interventions

Prison: Example

Example

[Strength Inside and Out: A Lancashire prison programme for fathers in custody](#)

Five Lancashire prisons have collaborated with the [Lancashire Violence Reduction Network \(VRN\)](#) and [TRAC Psychological](#), an organisation that designs and delivers behaviour change programmes, to develop and deliver Strength Inside and Out, a programme for fathers in custody who want to develop better relationships with their families.

Using Cognitive Behaviour Therapy techniques, the programme helps fathers to develop better ways to manage stress and engage with family life. The programme also strengthens links with local schools to provide further support to the children of incarcerated parents, many of whom

Engaging as a partner in the Duty

will be at risk of serious violence involvement themselves, thereby serving a further preventative function.

2.5 Youth Justice Services (specified authority)

Who from youth justice is involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

Youth Offending Teams, known as youth justice services, are a specified authority in the Duty, which means they are expected to work together with other specified authorities and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence.

The Serious Violence Duty specifies that each youth justice service should identify and nominate a suitable lead individual to represent them in the partnership; they should be able to operate at a strategic level and be able to liaise with other parts of the youth justice service to ensure a sector-wide contribution to the Duty.

- **Strategic lead (accountable and responsible):** it is recommended that the representative is a member of the Senior Management Team within youth justice services, such as the Head of Service. This should ensure buy-in to the Duty at a senior level
- **Data lead:** it is recommended that they engage in information management or analytical roles within youth justice services, which should ensure a comprehensive understanding of data, analytical capacity and what it means to produce a strategic needs assessment.

How can youth justice engage in the Duty?

As a specified authority under the Duty, the youth justice services are required to actively participate in and contribute to the prevention of serious violence in the local area. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised below (Table 18). These are not meant to be prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Finally, Table 19 provides more ways to engage, considering additional elements of the Duty.

Table 18: ways to engage — core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share data on youth offending cohorts, including offences in line with the SV definition and the needs profile of these cohorts ● Consult case workers to understand the trends among offenders ● Consult young people and their families ● Develop useful case studies to support future learning, e.g. as a jumping off point to develop the SNA and strategies and also can support partnership buy-in to working together
Contribute to the development of the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share information on what is working within youth justice to prevent offending and reoffending ● Highlight the gaps in the current service provision for children and young people involved in serious violence, to help inform how the partnership uses their resources ● Deliver interventions that are linked to identified needs where resources allow ● Advise partners on how resources could be used upstream with children and families to more effectively address serious violence by intervening early
Contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share evidence on what is working within YJS practice to prevent serious violence and reoffending, including effective interventions, diversionary approaches and multi-agency pathways ● Contribute to the ongoing review of the strategy by drawing on the most up-to-date insights collected by YJS practitioners

Table 19: ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involved in multi-agency work, e.g. children and young people in case work ● Facilitate engagement and partnership working with the VCS, e.g. joint delivery of interventions ● Ensuring the partnership is up to date with Child First approaches and the assessment of risk
Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing data on children and young people who have committed an offence for the SNA, including the needs profile of young people offenders
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mobilise relationships with young people and families to inform partnership understanding of the community impact of serious violence and develop and maintain trust with communities ● Access to target cohorts. This is especially important as in many situations, young perpetrators of violence involved in the YJS are also victims
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote awareness and understanding of the Duty across the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and frontline staff ● Ensure that the Duty responsibilities of the YJS are reflected in service planning and operational priorities
Demonstrate strategic alignment locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Align YJS activities such as interventions with wider local strategies, including those related to community safety, safeguarding and public health approaches.
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contribute insights on children and young people’s needs from YJS data, assessments and practitioners’ professional experience to commissioning decisions ● Identify effective interventions for children and young people which can reduce serious violence

What are the benefits of youth justice being involved?

This section describes the benefits to both the partnership and to youth justice of active involvement in the Duty.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging youth justice services:

- **Data:** access to data on the specific cohorts of children and young people who are affected by serious violence, including those who are involved in offending/ reoffending
- **Improved safeguarding of children and young people:** increase collaboration between the police and youth justice, enabling better support for children and young people who are known to the police
- **Access to key cohorts:** the target group for commissioned interventions within youth justice is often children and young people who are at higher risk of serious violence
- **Expertise:** provide expertise in engaging with and diverting children and young people from involvement in serious violence and in applying a child-first approach to preventing offending
- **Specialist workforce:** YJS can dedicate resources and time to working specifically with children and young people who are involved in or at risk of being involved in serious violence
- **Strong relationships with families:** YJS have strong, trusting relationships with local families and/ or communities. This can provide valuable insight as to the impact of serious violence, perceptions of safety and the risk and protective factors
- **Knowledge of local service provision:** have a comprehensive understanding of the local service provision for children and young people and can help to identify gaps/ opportunities in the local response to serious violence

The benefits for youth justice services in being involved:

- **Data:** access to wider partner data will support youth justice to better understand how serious violence affects the children and young people they support, enabling them to support them in the best way they can
- **Better understanding of service provision in the local area:** increase understanding of the provision of services in the local area aimed at preventing serious violence, providing an opportunity for youth justice to collaborate with new services and obtain additional support for the children and young people they are supporting
- **Commissioned interventions:** provide opportunities for youth justice to trial new interventions and carry out evaluations of existing interventions. This will help to ensure that support is effective at responding to the needs identified

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- **Early intervention:** provide opportunities for youth justice to support children and young people at an earlier point in the risk pathway, allowing youth justice to use their skills and expertise to de-escalate risk and divert children and young people from serious violence
- **Data standards:** promote consistency in the way that data is collected, analysed and shared and how children and young people are referred to youth justice services at a national level

Youth Justice Service: Example

Example

[Thames Valley Operation Deter Youth](#)

The Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit's Strategic Needs Assessment identifies knife crime as a core focus. In response, Operation Deter Youth - funded by the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner - is a youth violence prevention programme delivered through local Youth Justice Services. It provides rapid engagement with young people arrested for knife, weapon, or violent offences, contacting them within 90 minutes of arrest and conducting home visits within 48 hours.

The programme is delivered through multi-agency partnerships involving police, education, health, and social care, ensuring coordinated support and diversion from reoffending.

Pilots in Milton Keynes and Slough reported that only about 6% of young people engaged in the programme went on to reoffend, compared with a much higher national average reoffending rate of 25-30% in similar cohorts of young offenders. Following the successful pilots, Op Deter Youth has been rolled out across all nine Thames Valley YJS areas.

2.6 Probation (specified authority)

Who from probation is involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

Probation is a specified authority in the Duty, which means they are required to work together with other specified authorities to plan and take action to prevent and reduce serious violence.

The Serious Violence Duty specifies that the **Local Delivery Unit (LDU) Head** who represents the Probation Service at the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is the Duty holder within probation. This role is intended to provide strategic leadership, ensure effective engagement with local partners, and support the delivery of the Duty at the local level.

As such, we recommend the following distribution:

- **Strategic lead (accountable and responsible):** suggested roles are the Local Delivery Unit (LDU) Head or Head of Community Integration (HOCl), as these roles are often already representing probation at Community Safety Partnerships.
- **Data lead:** staff in analytical or information management roles within a Local Delivery Unit (LDU) or similar probation team. The data lead should be responsible for providing accurate, timely data on offenders, trends and risk profiles relevant to the SNA and strategy.
- **Frontline:** operational staff should be supported by strategic leads and supervisors to provide insights on emerging risks, practical challenges and service gaps. They should be engaged to translate the strategy into deliverable action.

How can probation engage in the Duty?

As a specified authority under the Duty, probation are required to actively participate in and contribute to the prevention of serious violence in the local area. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised below (Table 20). These are not meant to be prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Finally, Table 21 provides more information on how to engage, considering additional elements of the Duty.

Table 20: ways to engage – core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share offender and reoffending data to inform the SNA, including offences, level of risk and any criminogenic needs identified, ● Provide insight from frontline probation supervision on emerging trends of serious violence, high-risk individuals, and operational challenges to be addressed through the strategy ● Develop anonymised case studies to illustrate local pathways into serious violence and support this shared understanding across partners ● Map the provision of interventions to offenders to understand gaps
Contribute to the development of the Response Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the design and implementation of multi-agency responses involving probation, including rehabilitative options and tailored responses to manage violent offenders ● Provide operational feedback from frontline staff on the feasibility of planned interventions and consider this feedback in finalising the strategy actions
Contribute to reviewing and revising the Response Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use data to monitor trends, such as reoffending data ● Draw on probation data, including practitioner experience and feedback, to adjust priorities and interventions ● Highlight emerging trends or local pressures that may require future changes to the strategy

Table 21: ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Engaging as a partner in the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participate in multi-agency meetings to ensure coordination with partners ● Co-produce interventions with partners, ensuring strategic alignment and operational feasibility ● Share practical knowledge from casework to support partnership development and decision-making ● Work with prisons to consider how to support offenders on release
Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide offender, reoffending, and risk data to support the SNA, Strategy and to monitor progress against the strategy ● Contribute analysis on high-risk cohorts in contact with probation and share emerging trends ● Support partners to interpret probation data
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage with people on probation and the wider community to understand experiences of serious violence ● Share insights from the supervision of people on probation to inform best practice
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Embed the Duty in the planning of probation activities
Demonstrate strategic alignment locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that probation activity is reflected in local strategies, including integrating with CSP priorities ● Provide leadership to coordinate frontline activities with the strategic priorities of the strategy
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advise on evidence-based interventions to prevent reoffending

What are the benefits of probation involvement?

This section describes the benefits to both the partnership and probation of active involvement by probation in the Duty.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging probation:

- **Managing risk in the community:** Probation brings specialist knowledge of offenders, including those at risk of committing serious violence. Therefore, probation can support effective risk management and safeguarding.
- **Operational insight:** frontline probation staff can provide intelligence on emerging trends, pathways into serious violence, and challenges in delivering interventions. This can inform partnership prioritisation of resources and interventions in the Strategy.
- **Data and analysis:** probation can share information for the SNA and Response Strategy, ensuring these are informed by operational realities of probation work.
- **Delivery of interventions:** probation can contribute to a multi-agency response and co-deliver interventions with partners.

The benefits for probation in being involved:

- **Shape local strategies:** participation enables probation to shape local priorities and have a say in the commissioned services, helping to ensure that this complements ongoing probation practice.
- **Identify relevant interventions:** probation may be able to identify interventions that target identified needs and deliver them to the relevant cohorts
- **Improve operational effectiveness:** Probation may be able to identify interventions which could support its caseload and thereby reduce demand on frontline staff through a multi-agency approach

Probation: Example

Example

[The Phoenix Programme in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland](#)

The Phoenix Programme was established by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Violence Reduction Network (VRN) as a focused deterrence intervention aimed at reducing serious violence among children and young people involved in group-related violent crime.

Analysis of multi-agency data from police and youth justice services showed that a small cohort of young people connected through their involvement in crime were driving the local serious

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violence problem. In response, the Phoenix Programme was designed to be delivered by a multi-agency team including probation practitioners, police, and youth justice services.

Probation practitioners play a key role in undertaking risk assessments, supervision and tailored support for participants under probation orders or community supervision. They work directly with young people to build trusting relationships, address offending behaviour, and connect them to interventions such as mentoring and housing support.

Programme delivery and outcomes are scrutinised by the Community Oversight Group, which consists of members from local communities who have an interest and experience in violence prevention.

2.7 Local authority (specified authority)

Who is involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

Local authorities are specified authorities in the Duty, which means they are expected to work together with other specified authorities and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. The Serious Violence Duty specifies that Chief Executives should delegate to an appropriate representative within the authority.

- **Strategic lead (accountable and responsible):** it is recommended that you consider a representative from children's services or community safety directorates at a senior level, who should ensure buy-in to the Duty at a senior level. This person should have good links to or represent the local authority on the Community Safety Partnership
- **Data lead:** it is recommended that this representative supports contact with a team or individual who oversees analytics in community safety teams or wider data analysis, performance or business intelligence teams

How can local authorities engage in the Duty?

As a specified authority under the Duty, local authorities are required to actively participate in and contribute to the prevention of serious violence in the local area. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised below (Table 22). These are not meant to be prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Table 23 provides further ways to engage, considering additional elements of the Duty.

Table 22: ways to engage – core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the definition of serious violence in the local authority, usually set in the Community Safety Partnership, to inform the development of the partnership definition • Using existing insight and analytical products, i.e. Strategic Assessments, to inform the definition and the strategic needs assessment • Provide access to local authority data to understand trends on community safety (residents' surveys), risk and protective factors (data from education, children's services and youth justice teams) • Use the local authority demographic and socio-economic profile to contextualise findings made by the SNA • Map local provision, especially youth provision
Contribute to the development of the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the role of youth provision, including prevention and early intervention, in responding to needs identified in the SNA, such as addressing risk and protective factors or cohorts of children and young people
Contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate resources to enable the monitoring of trends using the local authority that aligns with key risk and protective factors

Table 23: ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleagues in the local authority across business areas to understand serious violence and identify opportunities to respond

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work within the Community Safety Partnership to align serious violence to the wider community safety strategy • Work with service providers, including the voluntary and community sector, to understand and map local youth provision
Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share data with partners held by the local authority
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support engagement in local communities, including local authority residents and service users • Support engagement with families
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align serious violence to local authority business areas
Demonstrate strategic alignment locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align to wider local authority priorities and commitments, including other key local partnerships and multi-agency boards/ panels
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support commissioning to fill gaps in youth provision, including leading on public health commissioning

What are the benefits of local authorities being involved?

This section describes the benefits to both the partnership and to youth justice of active involvement in the Duty.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging local authorities:

- **Data:** access to data on a range of areas, including children's and adult services, safeguarding, schools and youth services
- **Improved safeguarding of children and young people:** increasing collaboration with local authorities can help the delivery of a multi-agency safeguarding response
- **Access to key cohorts:** the target group for commissioned interventions is often known to the local authority in some way
- **Knowledge of local service provision:** have a comprehensive understanding of the local service provision for children and young people and can help to identify gaps/opportunities in the local response to serious violence

The benefits for local authorities in being involved:

- **Data:** access to wider partner data, such as police and health data, to better identify needs
- **Better understanding of service provision in the local area:** increase understanding of the provision of services in the local area, aimed at preventing serious violence, and providing an opportunity for the local authority to commission more effectively
- **Commissioned interventions:** provide opportunities for local authorities to fund and trial new interventions that meet gaps in local youth provision
- **Early intervention:** provide opportunities to prevent serious problems by intervening earlier

Local authority: Example

Example

[Croydon residents' surveys: Residents' views on crime and safety informing partnership action](#)

Croydon Council commissions an annual residents' survey to gather community views on key issues, including crime, community safety, and neighbourhood conditions. The survey was designed using Local Government Association (LGA) guidance to enable benchmarking with other councils. Results of the survey were used to help shape local priorities and support partnership action by the local authority and also partners, including the police and Safer Croydon Partnership.

Engaging as a partner in the Duty

Through the Safer Croydon Partnership, which brings together the local authority, police, fire, health and probation services, resident feedback helped to share ongoing community safety priorities, including work by the Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams. Other initiatives implemented as a result of resident feedback through the survey are improved street lighting and increased police patrols.

This use of the Croydon residents' survey demonstrates using resident insight to drive service delivery across multiple agencies and shape strategic priorities across the partnership.

2.8 Education (relevant authority)

Who is involved in the Serious Violence Duty?

Education authorities are relevant authorities in the Duty, which means that they are not core duty holders but may choose, or be requested, to actively collaborate with the partnership.

Education authorities include governing bodies of state schools, proprietors of independent schools, academies, free schools and non-state special schools and the management committees of pupil referral units. In practice, the responsibility for engaging in the partnership should be delegated to one or more strategic representatives to represent the voice of education authorities.

- **Strategic lead (accountable):** These representatives could be through local Headteacher and Safeguarding groups - these forums will not always replicate across all local authorities in England and Wales. Headteachers and their Deputies are a useful entry point, and they will also rely on their Designated Safeguarding Lead. You may also choose to approach education through education teams in the local authority who will have experience with two-way flows of information with education authorities in their local area. These teams will also be well-connected with wider children's services teams
- **Frontline:** engaging teachers within schools is also important because they will be able to understand and relate issues affecting pupils, including violence in schools and risk and protective factors

What is the expected contribution to the partnership?

As a relevant authority under the Duty, education authorities are able to co-operate with specified authorities. Ways of engaging with the Duty are summarised below (Table 24). These are not meant to be prescriptive, but illustrative of the sorts of contributions that would be helpful. Finally, Table 25 provides further examples of ways to engage while considering additional elements of the Duty.

Table 24: ways to engage – core elements of the Duty

Core elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Contribute to the development of the strategic needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use violence in/ associated with schools to shape the local definition of serious violence, such as peer-on-peer conflict ● Share aggregate data on pupils (attendance, attainment, exclusions) to understand the prevalence of risk and protective factors ● Provide access to safeguarding leads and teachers who can contribute to qualitative research as part of the strategic needs assessment
Contribute to the development of the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the role of education in responding to needs identified in the SNA, such as supporting inclusion in education and reducing violence in/ associated with schools. This might encompass: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Curriculum ○ Staff training ○ Support for pupils ● Integrate existing education initiatives under relevant strategic priorities
Contribute to reviewing and revising the response strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the partnership to monitor key trends, such as exclusion rates or violent incidents

Table 25: ways to engage – additional elements of the Duty

Additional elements of the Duty	Ways to engage
Collaborate and co-produce with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appoint a representative, or representatives, to represent the views of education authorities in a local area ● Collect feedback from the education authorities you

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	<p>represent and ensure this is presented to the Duty partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the dissemination of the SNA and RS to support awareness among education authorities • Collaborate with the local authority to connect education and local youth provision
Support data-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate data sharing requirements as required in conjunction with the local authority • Support the consistency of recording practices among local schools
Facilitate community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate engagement with teachers and pupils as required to support the development of the SNA and RS • Facilitate engagement with parents and carers as required
Demonstrate organisational commitment to the Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review opportunities to meet gaps in service provision in local schools and ensure this is fed into the development of the SNA and RS
Demonstrate strategic alignment locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share what is working in schools to engage pupils, improve attendance and behaviour and reduce serious violence
Support effective commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight gaps in provision, working with the local authority and other commissioners to plan how to meet these gaps

Engaging as a partner in the Duty

What are the benefits of education authorities being involved?

This section describes the benefits to both the partnership and to education authorities of active involvement in the Duty.

The benefits for Duty partners in engaging education:

- **Access to key cohorts:** Education is the Duty partner (despite being a relevant authority) with the most contact with children. Schools are well-positioned to understand the needs of children and families in local areas
- **Early intervention:** Schools can support moving the response to serious violence upstream, supporting prevention and early intervention
- **Access to data:** Sharing education data helps to build the violence locally, especially by better understanding risk and protective factors

The benefits for education in being involved:

- **Shape youth provision:** schools can shape youth provision by working with partners to understand gaps and support children and young people

Education: Example

Example

[The Education Partnership: Humber Violence Prevention Partnership \(VPP\)](#)

In Humber, partners launched the education Partnership to support crime-related education and safety learning for children and young people by bringing together a range of agencies, including police, fire and rescue, children's services, and education. The initiative aims to give teachers and youth workers access to resources and support that help to reduce young people's vulnerability to serious violence.

Education works alongside partners to collectively inform what is taught in classrooms and delivered through assemblies and workshops. Police and Fire and Rescue services contribute expertise on violence prevention and weapons awareness, while education partners shape delivery to ensure it is age-appropriate and responsive to the needs of students.

This initiative supports prevention, improved information sharing and consistent messaging across partners to children and young people, helping to strengthen protective factors against serious violence across the local area.