

# **Ending Gang and Youth Violence Report: One Year On**

Cm 8493 (Session 2012-2013)

Presented to Parliament on 27 November 2012

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## **CORRECTION**

### Page 3

In the paragraph beneath the bullet points, the third sentence which reads, “The work of the UK Border Agency to tackle foreign national offenders has resulted in the extradition of seven of the most dangerous gang members.”, should read as follows:

**The work of the UK Border Agency to tackle foreign national offenders has resulted in the removal of seven of the most dangerous gang members.**

*November 2012*

LONDON: THE STATIONERY OFFICE

# Ending Gang and Youth Violence Report: One Year On





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Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department  
by Command of Her Majesty

November 2012

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## Home Secretary



The riots of 2011 saw some of the worst violence on our streets in decades. In response, the Government launched its Ending Gang and Youth Violence report in November 2011.

Our report was based on input from the police, health workers, local authorities, academics, former gang members and young people. It dealt with the effect of gang violence on communities and the causes behind it. We worked closely with other Government departments, and I would particularly like to thank the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Iain Duncan Smith, for his continued hard work in tackling this issue.

A year ago, we set out measures to support work to deal with gang and youth violence. Law enforcement will always exist as a key deterrent, but it is important that we tackle the problem at its root. That's why we have supported local areas to introduce a number of preventative and early intervention measures like mentoring for young people, support for parents and families, and raising awareness in schools about the risks of gang membership.

In addition, new legislation will be introduced to improve the law enforcement response so that those middle men who import and supply guns and those who carry knives and threaten others receive the punishment they deserve. We have dedicated funding aimed at helping young women and girls vulnerable to gang-related sexual violence. This is ensuring that specialist training is available where it is needed, in local organisations working with vulnerable individuals in the most gang-affected areas across the country.

During the past year, the Government has offered funding and support to 29 local areas across the country facing serious challenges like knife and gun crime. And we have set up a team of experts to work alongside the police, local authorities, health agencies and others to tackle gang and youth violence. One year on, this document reflects our achievements, and sets out our commitments for the next year and beyond. The report also sets out opportunities for further improvement, such as more information sharing between health and other bodies to help those working on gang and youth violence to get a better grip of this problem.

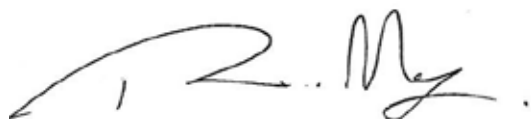
We can be proud of good progress in a range of areas. One year on, we have:

- made gang injunctions available for under 18-year-olds;
- introduced new offences of threatening with a knife in a public place or school;
- announced our intention to introduce a new offence of possessing illegal firearms with intent to supply, with a tough maximum penalty of life;
- announced our intention to increase the maximum penalty for importation of firearms, also to life; and
- dedicated £1.2 million over three years to fund a network of 13 support workers for girls vulnerable to or suffering from gang-related sexual violence

This work is making a difference to the lives of young people across the country. In the last year, Jobcentre Plus has taken 74 former London gang members off the streets and put them into education, training or employment. The work of the UK Border Agency to tackle foreign national offenders has resulted in the extradition of seven of the most dangerous gang members. And at least 80 gang injunctions have been taken out across the country, imposing conditions on gang members to prevent violence.

But we need to go further.

This report sets out the ways in which the Government will continue its work in tackling gang and youth violence by supporting people working in health, education, Jobcentre Plus, community safety teams, the police, community organisations and the criminal justice system.



**Right Honourable Theresa May MP**  
Home Secretary



## Secretary of State for Work and Pensions



It is a year since the Government published its report into Ending Gang and Youth Violence. In the report we made it clear that, while intensive police action to tackle the effects of gang activity and serious youth violence is important, you cannot simply arrest your way out of the problem. We know that when young people join gangs, it is both a symptom and a cause of deeper social breakdown.

In the Government's Social Justice Strategy, we set out an approach which addresses the root causes of disadvantage. The same approach must apply here, too. Early intervention is crucial to preventing young people joining gangs in the first place. But we must match this with support to exit gang life, offering meaningful pathways out, particularly through employment.

For our initiatives to have a real impact, strong local partnerships are key – a year ago, we highlighted the importance of working across different agencies to end Britain's gang culture, harnessing expertise and best practice at a local and national level.

We are now pushing ahead with a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach. In local authorities, health and education, employment and welfare, policing, safeguarding and community engagement, we are working to pool our knowledge and insights, joining up with community leaders and voluntary organisations to develop effective local solutions. By looking across the board at the many factors that drive gang membership – spanning domestic violence and relationship breakdown, educational failure and poor employability – we can turn around lives that could otherwise be wasted.

One year on, this report demonstrates that good work is underway. For example, in Jobcentre Plus, dedicated gang advisers are in place in the nineteen most affected London boroughs, opening up new pathways to those involved in gang activity by providing the support and tools to find work. And we are now enabling health workers, welfare officers, the police and others to share data in a risk-aware rather than risk-averse manner so that those starting to get involved with gangs are identified early, and opportunities to change the path that gang members are taking are not missed.

It is vital that we maintain progress on tackling gangs and serious youth violence. Whilst it is clear there is still more to be done, the One Year On report outlines the steps we have already taken. But it also renews the impetus for the further action needed. Only through a meaningful, long-term commitment across Government can we transform the lives of gang members and those who risk being drawn into their destructive cycle.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iain Duncan Smith', written in a cursive style.

**Right Honourable Iain Duncan Smith MP**  
**Secretary of State for Work and Pensions**



## Context

The cross-government *Ending Gang and Youth Violence* report was published in November 2011, following the August riots. It recognised that, whilst gangs did not orchestrate the riots, they did play a significant part. Moreover, the riots shone a spotlight on youth violence and the impact it has on communities. The report contained a number of cross-government actions in key areas including women, girls and gangs; data sharing; and gangs, knives and firearms legislation.

The Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme which emanated from the report was designed to provide peer support to the 29 areas across the country facing the biggest challenges in relation to youth violence and gangs. £10 million of Home Office funding was re-prioritised for 2012-13 to help these areas build their capacity to respond effectively to their particular local issues.

The programme built on the work already underway to reduce youth violence in three police force areas – London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands – under the Communities against Guns, Gangs and Knives programme.

This report sets out our collective achievements since November last year – both in terms of national, cross-government policy, and in terms of particular actions in local areas, facilitated or otherwise supported by our frontline Ending Gang and Youth Violence team. It also signals our intention in terms of building on this success over the next year and beyond. Decisions about the support we will offer to local areas after April 2013 will be made in the context of Government budgetary considerations following the Winter Statement in December.

## Making it happen locally

The Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme was designed to support local partnerships to respond effectively to the particular problems in their areas. In the last year, we have:

- Given funding and support (from April 2012) to the 29 areas across the country facing the biggest challenges around gangs and youth violence.
- Formed the Ending Gang and Youth Violence frontline team to offer peer support to 29 priority areas. The team draws on the expertise of over 60 independent advisers from a range of backgrounds including safeguarding, health, education, youth justice, policing and community engagement.
- Conducted over 20 peer reviews in our priority areas, with the rest scheduled before the end of the calendar year. The reviews consist of discussions with community members and local partners on issues such as health, safeguarding, and employment. They conclude with a report to the local partnership identifying strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations.
- Identified local barriers and challenges that need national resolution, and used these to inform the development of the programme. New actions have been agreed across government, and feature throughout this report.
- Worked with the Department for Work and Pensions to include a strong employment focus within the peer reviews. The majority of Jobcentre Plus Districts involved in the peer review process now have dedicated Ending Gang and Youth Violence leads. A one day training programme for Jobcentre Plus frontline advisers and voluntary sector workers working with gang members has also been developed.
- Made the links with wider reforms, including educational reforms. For example, through a practitioners' workshop to discuss the current work to strengthen early intervention for pupils at risk of exclusion and improve the educational outcomes for those who are excluded.
- The Department for Work and Pensions has introduced the Innovation Fund, a £30million investment over three years into social investment projects. Ten projects have been set up in different communities, supporting up to 12,000 of our most vulnerable young people aged 14 and over. These include projects specifically focussed on those involved in, or at risk of gang and youth violence, offering innovative solutions to help individuals forge positive futures away from gang violence.

Early findings from the assessment of our support to local areas are positive. Areas have found the peer reviews and 'critical friend' perspective they offer valuable. Local partners have also told us that they have welcomed the chance to shape the programme in their own area, rather than conform to a centrally-directed approach. They recognise the programme as promoting change "from the ground up."

*"Thanks for all the useful and positive feedback and discussions during our recent peer review. We really enjoyed working with the team."* Assistant Director, Planning, Commissioning and Partnerships, Ealing

*"Southwark found the peer review an extremely useful exercise in reflecting on our progress so far in tackling gangs and serious youth violence. The recommendations from the peer review team and their role as critical friends has been valuable to us."* Cabinet Member, Finance, Resources and Community Safety

## Local progress over the past year

With the support of the frontline team, our priority areas have taken significant steps forward since April. For example:

The **London Borough of Ealing** has included a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) worker within the Youth Offending Service. This facilitates speedy access to mental health assessment and referral for gang members. To date the CAMHS worker has consulted on or assessed around 20 young people involved in gangs and serious youth violence. The effectiveness of this post will be evaluated, and will be mainstreamed if the evaluation points to positive outcomes.

The Community Safety Partnership in **Birmingham** has commissioned a number of gender-specific projects addressing the needs of gang-associated young women. These include mentoring support to girls, one to one support for women up to the age of 29 who have suffered gang-related abuse, and awareness raising and skills development amongst staff in frontline organisations.

In the **London Borough of Enfield**, gang and youth violence has been prioritised within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Strong links have also been made to local Troubled Families work, and a housing benefit fraud investigator is working with community safety partners to tackle fraud by gang members.

The **London Borough of Hackney** has recently included a Jobcentre Plus adviser within its Integrated Gangs Unit. He is currently providing bespoke employment and training support to around 35 gang members ready to leave their gang lifestyle. Seven young people are now ready to be placed into employment.

**Merseyside Police** obtained 12 gang injunctions during the first half of 2012, and have recently obtained 14 more interim injunctions. They have pioneered the use of a single statement setting out the chronological history of a gang rather than a statement for each gang member. Six gang members have been put in prison for breaching their gang injunctions.

The **London Borough of Southwark** has set up a multi-agency Anti-Violence Unit. The unit has worked with 97 gang members since May 2012. It has supported four into full time employment, 19 onto supported work placements, two into an apprenticeship, and 11 into education. Eleven gang members are also being supported into emergency re-housing.

Jobcentre Plus in **London and the Home Counties** has introduced dedicated gang advisers in the 19 most affected boroughs, making links with the voluntary sector, Youth Offending Teams, and other partners. 336 gang members or people at risk of gang membership have been referred to Jobcentre Plus in London, and 172 have actively agreed to work with them. Of these, 74 are now in employment, education or training.<sup>1</sup>

Across the country Jobcentre Plus has used Flexible Support Funding in innovative ways to help those involved in gang activity. In Tottenham, for example, funding was provided to help 50 young people to design and start up businesses over the summer holidays including gardening and car washes – to keep them off the streets and to give them entrepreneurial experiences. In **Lambeth and Southwark** a project was set up to equip 18-24 year olds involved in gangs with employability skills, training and support to raise aspirations and promote sustainable employment.

We are now focused on sustaining and building on the progress made in local areas, and leaving a lasting legacy beyond the end of this financial year. A sustained focus on youth violence and gangs is important. This needs to encompass broader social outcomes for young people affected by gang violence, including health and education or employment measures. Recently elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will play a central role in shaping the agenda in the future, and strong partnership working will be essential to success.

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1. Figures from June to October 2012.

## Partnership working and information sharing

The Government's Social Justice Strategy highlighted the need for strong leadership at both national and local levels to deliver for those individuals and families facing multiple disadvantage. It also highlighted the need for close partnership between private, public and charitable sectors. Strong strategic and operational partnerships, underpinned by effective information sharing arrangements, are central to a successful response to youth violence and gangs. Community safety teams, housing, schools, health, social services, Jobcentre Plus, youth offending teams, prisons, probation and the voluntary and community sector all have a role to play. Police and Crime Commissioners and Health and Wellbeing Boards present opportunities to cement this partnership working, but these significant changes also present challenges. It is vital that existing relationships are strengthened within the new local landscape.

Since November last year:

- The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has mapped gangs across the country using the following standard definition:

A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

- (1) See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, and
- (2) Engage in a range of criminal activity and violence.

They may also have any or all of the following features:

- (3) Identify with or lay claim over territory
- (4) Have some form of identifying structural feature
- (5) Are in conflict with other, similar, gangs.<sup>2</sup>

- The Ending Gang and Youth Violence team has supported local partners to enhance their partnership working and information sharing arrangements around gangs and youth violence.
- We have made the links with the Troubled Families programme, with several of our priority areas including the families of gang members within their Troubled Families cohorts.

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2. This is based on the definition suggested by the Centre for Social Justice in the *Dying to Belong* report (2009)



- The Youth Justice Board has established youth and gang violence forums across the country. These are attended by Youth Offending Teams, the police, prison officers, and voluntary and community sector organisations. They facilitate cross-agency working showcase effective and innovative interventions.
- The Department for Work and Pensions has worked with partners in Bradford, Leicestershire, and Greater Manchester on the Improving Information Sharing and Management (IISaM) project. This project has tested a range of products to enable practitioners to data share in a 'risk aware' rather than 'risk averse' manner. The website is now live, and hosts a toolkit to help local practitioners resolve their information sharing issues: [www.informationsharing.co.uk](http://www.informationsharing.co.uk)
- The Department for Health will shortly publish the results of the 2012 Audit of A&E department/ community safety partnership information sharing on violent assaults.

Over the rest of this year, we will build on the foundations laid by the IISaM project and the work of our frontline team to continue to support local areas to improve their partnership and information sharing arrangements:

- Developing and refining the IISaM toolkit, based on feedback from practitioners. The toolkit is in its testing phase, and the IISaM project would welcome feedback – by [email](#), or via the [feedback survey](#). We will be disseminating the toolkit across the country and embedding its use with practitioners across the statutory sector.
- Offering further targeted support to priority areas via the IISaM dissemination strategy, and actively encouraging users to engage with the IISaM toolkit.
- Continuing to identify and share good practice in relation to data sharing, including that highlighted by the A&E data sharing audit.
- Working with ACPO, the Department of Health and the Department for Education to improve our understanding of the different local models in place to support information sharing around safeguarding, notably Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs.
- As set out in last year's report, we will also develop a simple evidence-based tool that every agency can use to identify the young people most at risk of violence.

### Case study: Wolverhampton

The IISaM project supported local partners in Wolverhampton through an event in October which included a number of practical workshops to enable them to identify their information needs, examine risks and privacy implications, understand when it is okay to share information, and share the information appropriately. The day resulted in a clear identification of the key issues and agreed action plan.

*"Huge thanks again for all your efforts today and the planning that went into the event. I found the session particularly successful in bringing all partners up to speed with where we are at the moment and what our plans are for taking this forward collectively."* Head of Community Safety, Wolverhampton City Council.

## Youth violence and health

There are a range of risk factors that increase the propensity of young people to be violent and the likelihood of young people becoming the victims of violence. Violence is a major cause of poor health and wellbeing, and creates a huge cost for health services. However, the right interventions, especially in early childhood can prevent individuals becoming violent and help address violent behaviour in perpetrators. They can also improve educational outcomes, employment prospects, and long-term health outcomes.<sup>3</sup> The new local health and policing landscape presents opportunities and challenges for developing integrated approaches to violence prevention.

Since November last year, we have:

- Included a violent crime indicator (including sexual violence), and one on domestic violence within the Public Health Outcomes Framework, which sets out the desired outcomes for public health and how these will be measured.<sup>4</sup>
- Included reference to the NHS Commissioning Board's role in violence reduction within the first mandate to the Board from the Secretary of State for Health, as required by the Health and Social Care Act 2012.<sup>5</sup>
- Published the *Protecting people, Promoting health* report, commissioned by the Department of Health and produced by the North West Public Health Observatory.<sup>6</sup> The report is aimed at policy makers, commissioners and practitioners. It describes the risk and protective factors for violence and gives details of effective interventions in preventing violence.
- Worked with the NHS Confederation and the National Learning Network for health and wellbeing boards to produce a resource to support Health and Wellbeing Boards and Police and Crime Commissioners to build local working relationships.

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3. See *Protecting people, Promoting health* (NW Public Health Observatory: October 2012) [www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/11/violence-prevention/](http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/11/violence-prevention/)

4. [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_132358](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_132358)

5. The NHS Commissioning Board will take up its full statutory duties and responsibilities on 1 April 2013.

6. See footnote 3

- Worked with experts in the field to develop the health elements of the Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme; ensure that the peer reviews include discussions with Directors of Public Health and others; and identify strengths and areas for improvement in respect of health.
- Supported gang and youth violence leads in our priority areas to understand the role that public health and other health partners can play in youth violence prevention, briefing them on the changes to the health landscape and making specific recommendations following the peer reviews.
- Brought senior health and criminal justice practitioners together with leading experts in this field for a national conference focused on the role of health in youth violence prevention.

The next year is critical. We need to maximise the potential of the new landscape by providing national bodies and local commissioners with information about the benefits of health involvement in youth violence prevention. Over the next year:

- From its establishment in April 2013, Public Health England will promote an evidence-based approach to address risks to young people's health and well-being. As the Department of Health develops Public Health England's first programmes, it will consider the contribution Public Health England may best make to support local areas to tackle violence effectively.
- The Home Office and Department of Health will support the production of a sector-led publication on violence prevention in the new localised health and care system, in particular supporting health and wellbeing boards to be aware of the impact violence has on the health and wellbeing of their community.
- The Home Office and Department of Health will facilitate further practice sharing and awareness-raising within our 29 priority areas, including through a health workshop in January 2013.
- The Department of Health and our frontline team will provide targeted, intensive support to priority areas on particular issues relating to health data sharing for example, arising from the peer reviews.

#### **The role of health in violence prevention: key statistics<sup>7</sup>**

- In 2010-11, there were approximately 13,000 emergency hospital admissions for assault among 13-24 year olds. One in seven involved a knife or sharp object.
- Across England, emergency hospital admission rates for violence are around five times higher in the most deprived communities than the most affluent.
- Personality disorders are highly prevalent among violent offenders.
- There are strong associations between childhood conduct disorders, adult psychiatric disorder and violent behaviour.
- Interventions that work with high risk young people to change their behaviour – such as cognitive behavioural therapy or family therapy – can be important in preventing future violence

7. *Protecting people, Promoting health* (NW Public Health Observatory: October 2012).

## The criminal justice response

Early intervention and prevention is essential to an effective partnership response to youth violence. However, the reality is that some young people are already involved in gangs, knife crime or other forms of violence, and already in the criminal justice system. We need to ensure that the system is responding optimally to catch and convict violent offenders, and to reduce re-offending and further victimisation.

Over the last year, we have supported the police and their criminal justice partners to take appropriate enforcement action against violent young offenders and the organised criminals who facilitate their actions, by:

- Making gang injunctions available for 14 to 17 year olds. Gang injunctions allow the police and local authorities to apply to the court to place a range of prohibitions and requirements on an individual involved in gang-related violence.
- Introducing new offences in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 of threatening another with a knife or offensive weapon in public or on school premises. These offences carry a mandatory minimum sentence of six months in custody for adults, and a four month Detention and Training Order for 16 and 17 year olds.
- Announcing our intention to strengthen firearms legislation, which is already tough, by increasing the maximum penalty for illegal importation of a firearm to life imprisonment, and creating a new offence of 'possession with intent to supply', with a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.
- Announcing our intention to ensure that criminals convicted of a second serious violent or sexual crime will face a mandatory life sentence.

We have also supported our criminal justice partners to manage young violent offenders in custody or in the community:

- The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is piloting a gangs intervention programme, developed by London Probation Trust and adapted for under-18 year olds, across five London boroughs. Up to 60 young people are expected to benefit from the 6 month pilot.
- HMPYOI Feltham and Islington Youth Offending Team have partnered to deliver a specialist programme to gang members in custody. Two rounds of this programme have been delivered so far to twenty young people, with a third to start this month.

- ACPO and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) have strengthened their information sharing arrangements through a new National Strategic Partnership Agreement and National Statement of Common Principles of Information Sharing.
- NOMS have worked with the Metropolitan Police Service on sharing police data on gang nominals with prison establishments.
- NOMS is developing interventions with violent offenders within the adult custodial estate, including the Self-Change Programme for high risk, repetitively violent men. NOMS is also piloting a specific intervention to address group or gang-related violence.
- Finally, the Department for Work and Pensions, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, has introduced changes to the Work Programme so that prison leavers who claim Jobseekers Allowance are mandated onto the Work Programme on day one of release. This ensures that prison leavers receive the immediate specialist support needed to get them work-ready, find and sustain employment. In addition, we are piloting a new approach to joint commissioning in two Work Programme contract package areas in England and Wales – paying providers for the results they achieve both in terms of employment outcomes and reducing re-offending.

In the next year, we will continue to work with criminal justice partners to make sure that the response to youth violence is effective. In particular, we will:

- Work with ACPO and particular police forces to increase our understanding of the links between urban street gangs and organised crime groups.
- Continue the joint UK Border Agency (UKBA)/Metropolitan Police Operation Terminus, removing the highest harm foreign national gang offenders, and look for opportunities to replicate this in other force areas. Seven individuals recognised as high harm gang nominals and prolific offenders have been removed since the Operation began in late summer 2012.
- Work with ACPO, NOMS and the YJB to ensure that information about gang associations (and involvement in organised crime) in custody is shared regularly between the police and secure establishments. We will underpin this by work with NOMS and ACPO to improve the effective and consistent use of prison intelligence.
- Ensure that prison governors are able to commission programmes tailored to the needs of their prisoners, including programmes or modules to address gang violence, and that they can do this based on an understanding of what works.
- The Director for Public Prosecutions is producing guidance for prosecutors to clarify how charging decisions are to be approached in cases involving the doctrine of Joint Enterprise.
- As set out in last year's report, we will also publicise the use of Joint Enterprise in cases of gang violence, making young people aware of the additional risks of being involved in gangs; and
- Promote the use of Community Impact Statements to enable the courts to take account of the impact of youth violence on local communities when sentencing.

**Case study: Operation Nexus<sup>9</sup> (UKBA and Metropolitan Police)**

X was a Trinidadian national who came to the UK in 2009. He was identified as an overstayer in 2010 when he was arrested by the police. After that, he came to police attention on numerous occasions for serious offences including GBH and possession of firearms. The police considered him one of the highest harm gang members in London. He had never received a significant custodial sentence as most of his victims were uncooperative: because they feared reprisals or were gang members themselves. X's case was tasked at a joint UKBA/police meeting, and UKBA prioritised his removal. X claimed to have a strong family life in the UK, but information from the police and social services showed that this was not as claimed. This work overcame the legal challenge and bar to removal, allowing UKBA to return X to his country of origin.

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8. Previously Operation Terminus

## Women, girls and gangs

Women and girls who are associated with gangs are at risk of violence, particularly sexual violence. However, this problem still remains under-reported and largely hidden. We need to increase reporting, improve the targeting and quality of interventions for gang-associated girls and women, and reduce victimisation. The Office for the Children's Commissioner interim Report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups and the University of Bedfordshire's *Research into Gang-Associated Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence* interim Report provides more evidence of the scale and nature of this problem.<sup>9</sup>

Over the last year, we have:

- Dedicated £1.2 million over three years to improve services for young people at risk or victims of sexual violence and exploitation by gangs. This is funding a network of 13 Young People's Advocates to provide direct support to young people.
- Provided funding to AVA (Against Violence and Abuse) and the Women and Girls Network, to develop specialist services and deliver specialist training to 58 practitioners working with girls and young women affected by gang-related sexual and domestic violence, including the 13 Young People's Advocates.
- Integrated issues around gang-associated women and girls into the peer review process in our priority areas.
- Hosted a practitioners' workshop for over 80 practitioners across the ending gang and youth violence areas and an academic roundtable to explore these issues in depth, and influence policy and practice on support to gang-associated women and girls.
- The CPS held an event for girls and young women from London communities affected by gangs in March 2012, which provided an opportunity for CPS staff to encourage young people to support prosecutions and give evidence at court.

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9. *I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world*, the interim report for the Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups (Nov. 2012): [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content\\_636](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_636)

The University of Bedfordshire interim report *Research into gang-associated sexual exploitation and sexual violence* (Beckett, H, et. al., Nov 2012): [www.beds.ac.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/215873/GASV\\_Interim.pdf](http://www.beds.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/215873/GASV_Interim.pdf)

Over the next year, we will maintain a specific focus on the needs of gang-associated women and girls, and respond to some of the particular issues raised with us by practitioners, including:

- Working with ACPO to define and map gang-associated women and girls against identified gang-nominals, to enable appropriate risk assessment and case management. This work is already underway within Greater Manchester Police.
- Incorporating key actions pertaining to gang-affected young women and girls into the Government's updated Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan, to be published in March 2013.<sup>10</sup>
- Updating the *Safeguarding Guidance on Children and Young People at risk of Gang Activity* so that it addresses the complex issues and needs of gang-associated young women and girls.<sup>11</sup>
- Ensuring that gang-associated girls and young women can access youth and criminal justice services without risk to their safety, through disseminating best practice on 'safe spaces' to Youth Offending Teams and Probation Trusts.
- Building work with boys and young men into our policy development and support and advice to the 29 priority areas, so that issues around harmful attitudes towards women and girls are addressed.
- The CPS will continue to work with the Home Office to develop policy and influence local delivery to prevent and reduce the impact of gang violence on girls and young women. The CPS will also use its Violence against Women and Girls Strategy to provide a framework to improve co-ordination and performance in sexual violence cases, including sexual violence by gang members.

### Case Study – Young People's Advocate, Croydon

The Young People's Advocate (YPA) in Croydon started in post in September under the Safer London Foundation's Empower project. She spends two days a week in the youth offending team's gangs unit, which allows her to identify and act upon information on young women and girls linked to gang members, and spends three days in Croydon's sexual exploitation and missing persons unit. By embedding herself in both teams, the YPA can encourage them to develop their processes around gang-affected women and girls, open up dialogue between the two and ensure better coordination of cases.

10. [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-end-violence-women-girls/action-plan-new-chapter?view=Binary](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-end-violence-women-girls/action-plan-new-chapter?view=Binary)

11. [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguarding/safeguardingchildren/a0072289/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguarding/safeguardingchildren/a0072289/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity)



## Understanding what works

Those commissioning services locally need to understand what works in terms of reducing youth violence, and which programmes generate the best outcomes and ensure value for money. This will be even more essential within the new landscape of Police and Crime Commissioners and Health and Wellbeing Boards.

Over the last year, we have focused on:

- a) sharing information on good and promising practice from practitioners, who know what seems to be working locally; and
- b) identifying best practice, and enabling success to be replicated in other areas.

### a) Sharing promising practice

- We have facilitated local discussions and identified promising practice through the peer review process, helping local partnerships to improve their response to gang and youth violence.
- We have encouraged our priority areas to share information about the services they are commissioning locally via an online Knowledge Hub.<sup>12</sup>
- The Ending Gang and Youth Violence community within the Knowledge Hub has grown to a membership of over 180 so far, and features a library of almost a hundred documents flagging promising practice case studies.
- The Knowledge Hub also hosts discussion forums where members have started threads on a wide range of topics including data sharing, the role of faith in addressing gang violence, and interventions for gang-affected young women.

### b) Identifying best practice

Whilst innovation is important, we also need to build our evidence base around what works. Identifying the interventions that work will enable successful local practice to be recognised and replicated in other areas. Over the last year, we have:

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<sup>12</sup>. Hosted by the Local Government Association.

- Shared information about established programmes with an evidence base with those who commission services, through the Centre for Analysis of Youth Transitions for education providers, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's Project Oracle in London and the Youth Justice Board effective practice site.<sup>13</sup>
- Hosted a practitioners' workshop with our priority areas which considered what further advice and effective practice could be shared with education providers.
- Included a specific gang and youth violence theme for this year's Tilley Awards. The Tilley Awards reward successful examples of crime reduction work that has demonstrated a problem solving and partnership approach. This year's winner in that category was the Tackling Gangs and Youth Violence project in Enfield.

Over the next year, we will:

- Explore how the promising practice flagged up via the Knowledge Hub might be assessed to identify what constitutes good or best practice.
- Assess the Communities Against Guns, Gangs and Knives fund, looking at the participation of young people in the wide variety of projects receiving funding. This will also provide an opportunity to collate evidence of good practice through case studies and any local evaluations that have been completed.
- Develop guidance to help those who commission services to understand what constitutes robust evidence of effectiveness, and promote successful local projects nationally. This will be informed by the workshop on advice to commissioners and education providers.
- Work with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service to update the Safer Colleges website to reflect the good practice and lessons learnt from the first year of activity under the Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme.
- Look for ways to work with Police and Crime Commissioners and the new College of Policing to promote knowledge-sharing and understanding of what works, both in relation to enforcement and prevention of youth violence.

### Case study: HEART programme, Safer London Foundation

The Healthy Relationships Training (HEART) programme is designed to support vulnerable young people and improve the relationships they have with peers and prospective partners. The primary focus is to reduce the risk of young women becoming victims of sexual violence, particularly gang-related sexual violence. The programme is running in three London Boroughs and consists of group training, mentoring, a website and a helpline. Around 200 young people have been supported through mentoring, 360 through the targeted group work programme, and 300 through the universal group work programme so far. The programme has recently been subject to an interim evaluation. While it was not possible to definitively attribute effects to the HEART programme, the report highlighted indications of short-term positive attitudinal and behavioural change among the young people involved. [www.met.police.uk/heart\\_programme/documents/heart\\_interim\\_evaluation.pdf](http://www.met.police.uk/heart_programme/documents/heart_interim_evaluation.pdf)

13. [www.ifs.org.uk/centres/cayt](http://www.ifs.org.uk/centres/cayt); <http://www.project-oracle.com/>; [www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/effective-practice-library](http://www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/effective-practice-library)

## Summary of actions set out in this report

<b>Partnership working and information sharing</b>	
Develop and refine the IISaM toolkit based on practitioner feedback, and disseminate and embed the IISaM toolkit across the statutory sector	DWP, in partnership with other Government Departments
Offer further targeted support to priority areas via the IISaM dissemination strategy, and actively encourage users to engage with the IISaM toolkit	DWP, in partnership with other Government Departments
Continue to identify and share good practice in relation to data sharing, particularly A&E data sharing	DWP, in partnership with other Government Departments, particularly Home Office and DH
Work with ACPO, DH and DfE to improve our understanding of different local models to support information sharing around safeguarding	Home Office, with DH and DfE
Develop a simple evidence-based tool that every agency can use to identify the young people most at risk of violence	Home Office
<b>Youth violence as a public health issue</b>	
In developing Public Health England's first programmes, consider the contribution that it can make to support local areas to tackle violence	DH
Support the production of a sector-led publication on violence prevention in the new localised health and care system	DH
Facilitate further practice sharing and awareness-raising within our 29 priority areas	Home Office and DH
Provide targeted, intensive support to priority areas on particular issues arising from the peer reviews	Home Office and DH

<b>The criminal justice response</b>	
Work with ACPO and particular police forces to increase our understanding of the links between urban street gangs and organised crime groups	Home Office, ACPO
Publicise the use of Joint Enterprise in cases of gang violence	Home Office
Promote the use of Community Impact Statements to enable the courts to take account of the impact of youth violence on local communities when deciding sentencing	Ministry of Justice
Ensure that intelligence and information about gang associations (and involvement in organised crime) is shared regularly and effectively between the police and the secure estate	NOMS, ACPO, Home Office
Underpin the above by work with NOMS and ACPO to improve the effective and consistent use of prison intelligence	Home Office, NOMS
Ensure that prison governors are able to commission programmes tailored to the needs of their prisoners, including programmes or modules to address gang violence, and that they can do this based on an understanding of what works	NOMS
<b>Girls and gangs</b>	
Work with ACPO to define and map gang-associated women and girls against identified gang-nominals, to enable appropriate risk assessment and case management	Home Office
Incorporating key actions pertaining to gang-affected young women and girls into the Government's updated Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan, to be published in March 2013	Home Office
Update Safeguarding Guidance on <i>Children and Young People at risk of Gang Activity</i>	Home Office
Ensure that gang associated girls and young women can access youth and criminal justice services without risk to their safety through disseminating best practice on 'safe spaces' to Youth Offending Teams and Probation Trusts	Home Office, YJB, NOMS
Build work with boys and young men into our policy development and support and advice to the 29 priority areas	Home Office
Continue to work with CPS to develop policy and influence local delivery to prevent and reduce the impact of gang violence on girls and young women	Home Office, CPS

Understanding what works	
Explore how the promising practice flagged up via the Knowledge Hub might be assessed to identify what constitutes good or best practice	Home Office
Carry out an assessment of the CAGGK fund and collate evidence of good practice through case studies and local evaluations	Home Office
Develop guidance to those who commission services to understand what constitutes robust evidence of effectiveness and to promote successful local projects nationally	Home Office
Work with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service to update the Safer Colleges website to reflect the good practice and lessons learnt from the first year of activity under the ending gang and youth violence programme	BIS
Look for ways to work with Police and Crime Commissioners and the new College of Policing to promote knowledge sharing and understanding of what works, both in relation to enforcement and prevention of youth violence	Home Office











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