

Scottish Violence Reduction Unit

10 Year Strategic Plan

Violence is preventable, not inevitable

Scotland working together

Reduction in violence and crime

Increase in quality of life

We know Scotland is better now, we know Scotland is safer now, but we are not there yet. Too many lives are still blighted by violence, there can be no complacency. We must keep trying, all of us, for we are presented with the opportunity to make some real change – to change the destiny of some of the most excluded in our country and to improve their outcomes and those of their children.

**This is
within
our grasp.**

When we wrote our last plan in 2007, we allowed ourselves to reimagine a Scotland where we worked tirelessly to prevent violence, where our murder and violence levels were continuing to fall and where Scotland was leading the way in demonstrating that great things can be achieved when we work together to tackle a wicked problem.

Sometimes, when we consider the complexity of the society we live in, and the tremendous challenges we face, it becomes overwhelming. When we speak about preventing violence, there were many who thought it couldn't be done, that we lacked the capacity to change the really big challenges that face us - and yet we have. Together. We are at the lowest levels of violence in 41 years, our investment in early years and in our schools mean that the generations growing up now will have more skills, knowledge and resilience to thrive in 21st century Scotland.

We need to be bolder, more determined to drive violence down even further, but we will need to implement solutions that keep pace with society and tackle some of the most intractable problems, like our prison population and our relationship with alcohol. At the heart of this is involving those most affected - involving them in defining the outcome and how we get there.

We will need to live by our deepest values, listen to each other and be curious about what the future will bring. In the next 10 years, Scotland should aspire to be the safest country in the world.

Our Beliefs

Violence remains a serious public health problem. From young children to the elderly, it can affect people across all stages of life. Many survive violence but suffer physical, mental, and/or emotional health problems throughout the rest of their lives.

We are committed to stopping violence before it begins. By approaching violence as a public health problem we aim to deliver sustainable reductions in violence and improve the health and quality of life of all people in Scotland.

We do this through surveillance of injury and addressing risk factors that increase the likelihood of an individual becoming a perpetrator or a victim. Prevention is at the core of this.

It will require the commitment of a range of agencies and of the people of Scotland themselves to prevent the loss of life and permanent physical and psychological damage that violence can cause in our country.

Pathway to success: 5 key areas

1. Primary Prevention

Seeking to prevent the onset of violence, or to change behaviour, so that violence is prevented from developing.

2. Secondary Prevention

To halt the progression of violence once it is established – this is achieved by early detection or early diagnosis followed by prompt, effective treatment.

3. Tertiary Prevention

The rehabilitation of people with established violent behaviour or affected as a victim.

4. Enforcement and Criminal Justice

Developing innovative criminal justice practices that reduce offending behaviour and recidivism.

5. Attitudinal Change

Changing attitudes and behaviours towards all types of violence at a societal, community and personal level.

The Journey

2005

The VRU was established by the then Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police Sir Willie Rae, QPM, to address the problem of violence in the Strathclyde area.

A review of policing tactics and processes was conducted resulting in the DNA testing and finger printing of all knife carriers.

2006

A year-long Safer Scotland campaign commenced, with a sustained focus on knife crime.

The VRU become a national unit.

Remand guidelines and sentencing changed for knife carrying.

The then Scottish Executive established their own Violence Reduction team to influence policy and practice.

2007

The VRU hosts the World Health Organisation's global conference on violence at the Scottish Police College at Tulliallan Castle in Alloa.

Violence is declared a public health issue by the Cabinet Secretary for Health.

Injury surveillance launched in Lanarkshire.

2011

The Scottish Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme is piloted in a school in Edinburgh.

The Community Assets approach is started in Kilmarnock.

The VRU goes into partnership with the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo to provide employment for young men with convictions.

2010

The VRU bring alcohol-monitoring bracelets to Scotland from America to test.

Injury surveillance begins in Fife.

2009

AVDR (Ask, Validate, Document, Refer) domestic violence intervention is rolled out to dentists.

Parentline start a phone line service to support the parents of children involved in gangs.

2008

Brief Motivational Interviewing trials for alcohol and violence commence.

The multi-agency gang intervention programme (CIRV) begins in Glasgow.

Violence prevention charity, Medics Against Violence (MAV), is launched.

2012

St Andrews University begin trials of remote alcohol monitoring technology with students.

The remote alcohol monitoring technology is approved for court use in the UK.

2013

Domestic violence training programme AVDR, is expanded to vets.

Rape and sexual assault training highlights the importance of evidence gathering for medical professionals.

2014

The Scottish Government announce the Building Safer Communities approach to reduce the number of victims in Scotland.

Brief Violence Intervention is tested in a medical environment.

People with convictions are recruited to support the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

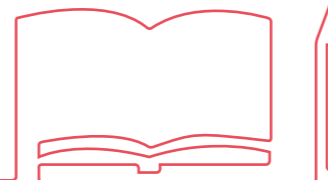
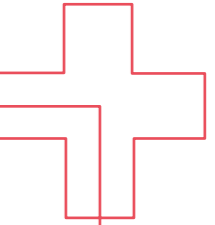
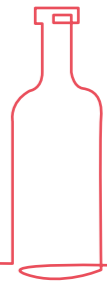
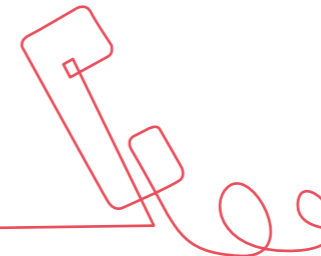
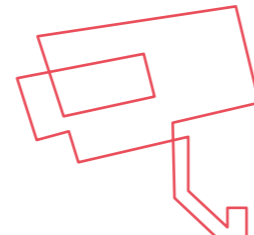
A Community in Motion (ACIM) project is launched in four primary schools in the East End of Glasgow.

2015

MVP to be expanded to the rest of the country.

The Scottish Government agree to provide funding for a food truck social enterprise, creating employment for people with convictions.

Domestic violence training (AVDR) is expanded to both the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and the beauty industry.



Primary Prevention

Our ultimate aim is to prevent violence before it ever occurs. Gathering surveillance data to identify new trends is core to prevention and changing outcomes long term. However, let's be clear, critical to primary prevention is support for the development of a range of programmes which help children to be the best they can be.

What we plan to do...

By 2017

We will have violence as a stated strategic issue on every health board and council throughout Scotland and a plan to achieve reductions.

We will continue to educate and passionately advocate for early years support across Scotland as crucial to preventing violence and to make Scotland the best place to grow up.

We will work in tandem with our colleagues from other disciplines in supporting parents and children from our most deprived areas in changing services and improving the life chances of their children.

We will work together with parents and communities in designing and delivering safer communities in Scotland. We will strive to give those with no voice, a platform to change their outcomes.

We will disseminate training and best practice about the role of every man in preventing violence against women, and the critical importance of equitable, respectful relationships. We will raise the bar about what it is to be a good man in Scotland.

We will encourage more men to seek careers in early years education.

By 2020

We will educate and work with colleagues across policing about the role of parenting and early years in the prevention of crime and where the police can support this.

We will relentlessly advocate for Scotland to lead the world in creating a more equal society. We will demonstrate our values in the work that we do.

We will have consolidated our learning in a number of health boards on injury surveillance and data sharing as a mechanism to prevent violence. We will install injury surveillance in hospitals, which serve areas where violence is most persistent.

We will continue to work on the implementation of Minimum Unit Pricing of alcohol. We will continue our work in gathering crime and incident data that is alcohol-related, to support future evaluations.

We will work with the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, the World Health Organisation and health colleagues to further our public health approach to violence prevention in Scotland.

We will engage with the private sector to support long-term violence prevention in Scotland.

By 2025

We will have clear and concise data from injury surveillance across Scotland that supports changes in crime and enables prevention.

We will have examined the impact of Minimum Unit Pricing on alcohol-related harm in Scotland.

By 2020

We will have supported men and fathers in recognising the role of Dads in improving their children's outcomes, regardless of the family set-up.

We will have worked with colleagues to show that the huge effort around early years education is translating into fewer behavioural problems and exclusions.

We will have cemented our work with colleagues around the importance of attachment and its role in preventing violence.

**“
In supporting the emotional growth of children through parenting and early years education, we will create a more equal, less violent society.
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Secondary Prevention

By developing prevention mechanisms that specifically target those at risk of either committing violence, or being the victim of violence, we will reduce both the number of future assaults and make a sustainable positive change to Scotland.

What we plan to do...

By 2017

- We will have rolled out the 'Who Are You?' training programme across the licensed trade to help reduce sexual assaults.
- We will work with Police Scotland and education authorities to have a standardised and agreed approach to campus officers in a number of schools across Scotland.
- We will have evaluated our work on asset based policing as a way of co-producing better outcomes in communities. We will focus on our most at risk groups.
- We will have embedded the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme in four regions throughout Scotland and passed the wider roll-out of Mentors in Violence Prevention to colleagues around the country.
- We will work with higher education establishments on the prevention of sexual assault.
- We will have supported the work in education around reducing exclusions from school, recognising that keeping young people engaged in education is core to reducing the risk of violence and victimisation.

By 2020

- We will develop the evidence base for partners around changing the outcomes for children of both victims and perpetrators of violence, to stop the intergenerational cycle of violence from continuing.
- We will work with voluntary and faith groups in developing and supporting the mentoring of our most at risk young people as a way to change behaviour and reduce knife carrying.
- We will have developed education and intervention for older groups at risk of knife carrying. We will design more targeted pro-social media to address this specific group.
- We will have evaluated our work with 'Second Step' in a primary school setting as a way of teaching socio-emotional skills to younger children to reduce impulsive and aggressive behaviour and to increase social competence and resilience.
- We will have evaluated innovative methods of reducing drunkenness in the night-time economy.

By 2025

- MVP will be in more than 75% of the high schools in Scotland.
- We will have evidenced the long term changes in behaviours and attitudes towards masculinity in our young people who have come through the MVP programme.

By 2020

- MVP will be embedded within half of the high schools in Scotland.
- The bystander training programme will be part of core probationer training within Police Scotland.
- We will identify the best options for the long-term sustainability of MVP.
- We will develop an operational resource to provide best practice for services on breaking the cycle of intergenerational violence.

“ We will have evaluated innovative methods of reducing drunkenness in the night-time economy. ”

Tertiary Prevention

Providing support for victims and interventions for those who have previously committed violence will reduce re-victimisation and re-offending. We must capitalise on 'teachable moments' in order to change behaviour.

We recognise that reducing the prison population will have the greatest impact long-term in Scotland and that we need more constructive crime prevention alternatives – if nothing else is offered, the law and our prisons will continue to be used as the primary shield against crime.

What we plan to do...

By 2017

We will have rolled out the 'train the trainer' approach to AVDR (directed enquiry for domestic violence) in multiple public-facing organisations.

We will have established a sustainable social enterprise to provide employment and mentoring to those outside the jobs market with convictions.

We will have evaluated the 'Violence Brief Intervention' programme and begin training appropriate staff in delivering it.

We will have established and evaluated the 'Navigator' programme in two A&E departments as a way to interrupt violence and prevent further injury.

We will work with partners around the challenge of reducing the prison establishment.

We will build up our network of women and men with 'lived experience' who volunteer to mentor and support those who seek to change their lives.

We will have completed and published further research on the efficacy of alcohol monitoring in changing behaviour and preventing violence.

We aim to evidence further reductions in facial injury based on the work of professionals in clinics and schools.

We will work with homelessness organisations to look at the provision of alternative models of accommodation, in order to support a stable environment for those most at risk of violence and victimisation.

By 2025

We will increase the number of well-evidenced intervention programmes for domestic violence perpetrators.

We will have conducted trials and published research on constructive crime prevention alternatives.

By 2020

We will have established a network of diverse social enterprises and employers who provide jobs, mentoring and training to those with convictions.

We will have worked with health colleagues to evidence the reduction in Emergency Room attendance as a result of violence.

We will have aided research through the work (already in progress) around changing behaviour and future offending of perpetrators of domestic abuse.

We will work with Sheriffs on innovative and alternative methods of reducing offending.

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We will have completed and published further research on the efficacy of alcohol monitoring in changing behaviour and preventing violence.
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Enforcement and Criminal Justice

Robert Peel wrote that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it. Whilst prevention must be our core ethos, we remain committed to swift, visible justice for those who commit violence and outstanding victim services.

What we plan to do...

By 2017

Scotland will lead the way by embedding a public health professional at a strategic level in policing to join-up prevention across health, police and other agencies.

We will work with Scottish Government colleagues to explore opportunities for electronic monitoring and alcohol monitoring to reduce the prison population and to prevent crime.

To fully adopt MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) principles for dealing with high risk violent offenders.

We will work to provide in-depth analysis and information to enable a sound, evidenced-based licensing policy, incorporating the public health perspective.

We will have developed a long-term joint public health/police prevention plan to tackle alcohol and violence together with prevention performance indicators.

By 2020

We will support policing around Scotland to undertake enforcement and innovative practice to tackle emerging or persistent violence.

We will support training of police officers around Building Safer Communities and delivering long-term crime reduction through co-production.

We will continue to process map the 'no proceedings' and 'no further actions' decisions in cases of violence to ensure that victims receive outstanding service and justice is not challenged by procedural or training issues.

We continue to work with colleagues in prisons to develop and change outcomes for those with violent offending histories.

We will continue to advocate for an increase in the criminal age of responsibility in Scotland and better outcomes for our young people within the criminal justice system.

By 2025

To work towards Scotland having the lowest rates of violence, the lowest number of victims and the lowest number of offenders in the world.

To have significantly improved the rate of conviction versus reported crime.

Reduce prison numbers for violence related offences.

We will advocate for a review of licensing boards to include other professionals with specialist knowledge.

By 2020

Promote for an increased range of effective, evidence-led, sentencing options for the judiciary.

We will have supported the implementation of the findings on the review of electronic monitoring, including alcohol monitoring.

Support Police Scotland to adapt the community policing model based on the latest evidence and a dynamic approach to changing criminogenic behaviour.

We will have further reduced the under reporting of violence.

We will advocate that licensing boards include other professionals.

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We plan to work towards Scotland having the lowest rates of violence.
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Attitudinal Change: Changing Social and Cultural Norms

We must keep each other safe. If we are to lead the world in reducing violence, it will take all of us – in our professional life and in our private life. We want Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up – that means we have to lead the world in reducing violence. So we need to change all of our mindsets and believe that violence is preventable.

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We aim to fight tirelessly on the issue of equality as a way of reducing violence.
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What we plan to do...

By 2017

- We will continue to inform and educate to help change Scottish society's views about the nature and causes of crime and the way ahead.
- We will seek to influence public opinion and the role of the media – engaging them to retain a sober and reasonable attitude to violence reduction.
- We will work to facilitate a more positive relationship between communities (members and leaders) and the service providers, in particular the police.
- We will continue to work with victims and the families of victims, keeping them at the heart of our prevention work.

- We will develop an improved and more widely accessible knowledge base for injury and violence prevention and control.
- We will engage with both the traditional and non-traditional media to promote a positive image of Scotland, highlighting the reducing levels of violence as well as promoting young people more positively.
- We will have worked with a range of different organisations to involve them in changing social norms around Domestic Abuse and gender equality.
- We will monitor trends in violence in Scotland and internationally, so that we can quickly adapt and address emerging problems.

By 2025

- We will have narrowed the gap between reported crime and actual levels of violence as a measure of community confidence.
- We will have embedded a new positive narrative for Scotland worldwide.

By 2020

- We aim to fight tirelessly on the issue of equality as a way of reducing violence.
- We aim to empower communities, through bystander and other tactics, to take a stand against all forms of violence.
- We will create a media portal for sharing positive news stories on prevention.



See how we are delivering our objectives at:

www.actionviolence.org.uk

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