



COMMUNITY SAFETY
for Aberdeenshire



ABERDEENSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

2020-2023

www.aberdeenshirecommunitysafety.org.uk

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INTRODUCTION

The Aberdeenshire Community Safety Partnership is fundamentally about improving people's quality of life and sits within the broader context of enabling communities to be inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.

The Partnership is made up of statutory organisations as well as other public sector, voluntary, community and private organisations including Aberdeenshire Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Prison Service, and NHS Grampian.

As a partnership we are committed to working together to do all that we can to ensure that everyone who lives, works or visits Aberdeenshire can do so in security and safety. Achieving safer communities depends on everyone working together to find local solutions to local problems.

Community safety has moved on significantly in recent years, namely with a decisive shift towards prevention, tackling 'failure demand' and empowerment, driven by locally led decision making.

In 2019 the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) held a series of discussions with national policy leads and local practitioners working in community safety and related policy areas and a renewed definition of community safety was agreed.



**Our Mission:
Make Aberdeenshire a safer place to
live, work and visit**

‘A safe community is a liveable community, where people can go about their daily activities in an environment without fear, risk, harm or injury. Community safety is about building strong cohesive, vibrant, participatory communities, where homes, the roads, public spaces and the workplace are safe, and feel safe for everyone to enjoy.’

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Christie Commission Report of 2011 placed a specific focus on prevention, early interventions and equalities,

‘All public services need to reduce demand in the system through prevention and early intervention to tackle the root causes of problems and negative outcomes.

This means tackling persistent problems of social and economic inequality and intergenerational cycles of deprivation and disadvantage’

In practice this means:

- A decisive shift towards prevention
- Greater integration of public services at a local level, driven by better partnership, collaboration and effective local delivery
- Greater investment in people who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership
- A sharp focus on improving performance through greater transparency, innovation and use of digital technology.



NATIONAL CONTEXT

Scotland's revised National Performance Framework (NPF) was published in June 2018, with a purpose of *‘creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through sustainable and inclusive growth’*. The framework focusses on eleven national outcomes. The Community Safety Partnership contributes to many of the outcomes and particularly *‘We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe’*.

In 2017, the Scottish Government set out its Justice Vision and Priorities for Scotland, with a vision for a safe, just and resilient Scotland. This plan is intended for all of those working to keep communities safe and those who deliver civil, criminal and administrative justice. Aberdeenshire Community Safety Partnership supports the delivery of a number of outcomes within the Justice Vision and Priorities, in particular *‘We live in safe, cohesive and resilient communities’* as well as *‘Prevention and early intervention improve wellbeing and life chances’*, *‘Our systems and interventions are proportionate, fair and effective’* and *‘We deliver person-centred, modern and affordable public services’*.

LOCAL CONTEXT

In 2017, the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership agreed the priorities in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), these are

- Changing Aberdeenshire's Relationship with Alcohol
- Reducing Child Poverty in Aberdeenshire
- Connected and Cohesive Communities

The Community Safety Partnership, through its existing information sharing and coordination processes, is ideally situated to contribute to the LOIP. These priorities have a direct relationship with the work of the Aberdeenshire Community Safety Partnership and inform our strategic direction.

THEMES



The following cross-cutting themes will run through everything we plan and do as a partnership:

Prevention & Early Intervention

Collaborative Problem Solving

Place

PREVENTION & EARLY INTERVENTION

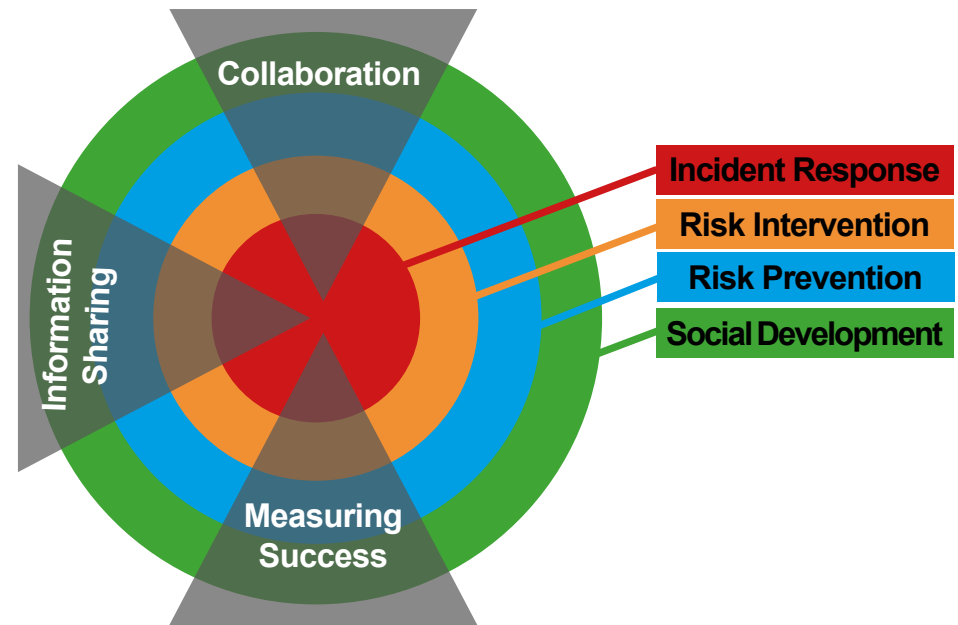
Prevention underpins all of our work as a partnership. All of the community safety partners are involved in responding to issues in the community, but the demand on services is often the last stage of a problem as it reaches crisis point.

'Reactive approaches are heavily resource intensive and represent a lost opportunity to have a more transformative impact.'

Christie Report 2011

As a partnership, we will work with communities to understand the underlying causes of problems and target our resources in a way that tackles issues before they have reached crisis point. The focus on prevention and early intervention means that we recognise the need to take action at an early stage – supporting people to change their behaviours and reducing risk, and working closely with communities to help them find solutions to local problems.

The diagram to the right shows how responding to issues (the centre circle) is a narrow part of what services can do and how the opportunities to intervene (the outer circles) are where the Community Safety Partnership has a role in leading early intervention activities that reduce harm in the community and subsequent demand on resources.



Incident Response - Where an accident, crime or other issue for the community has occurred and services respond. Reactive approaches are heavily resource intensive and do not change the fact that harm has already occurred.

Risk Intervention - Where a heightened risk is identified, services intervene with steps that increase safety and mitigate the risk of harm.

Risk Prevention - Where identified risks are eliminated from the community, preventing people from experiencing risk.

Social Development - Where community safety and well-being is promoted and maintained, supporting communities to be connected, cohesive and resilient.

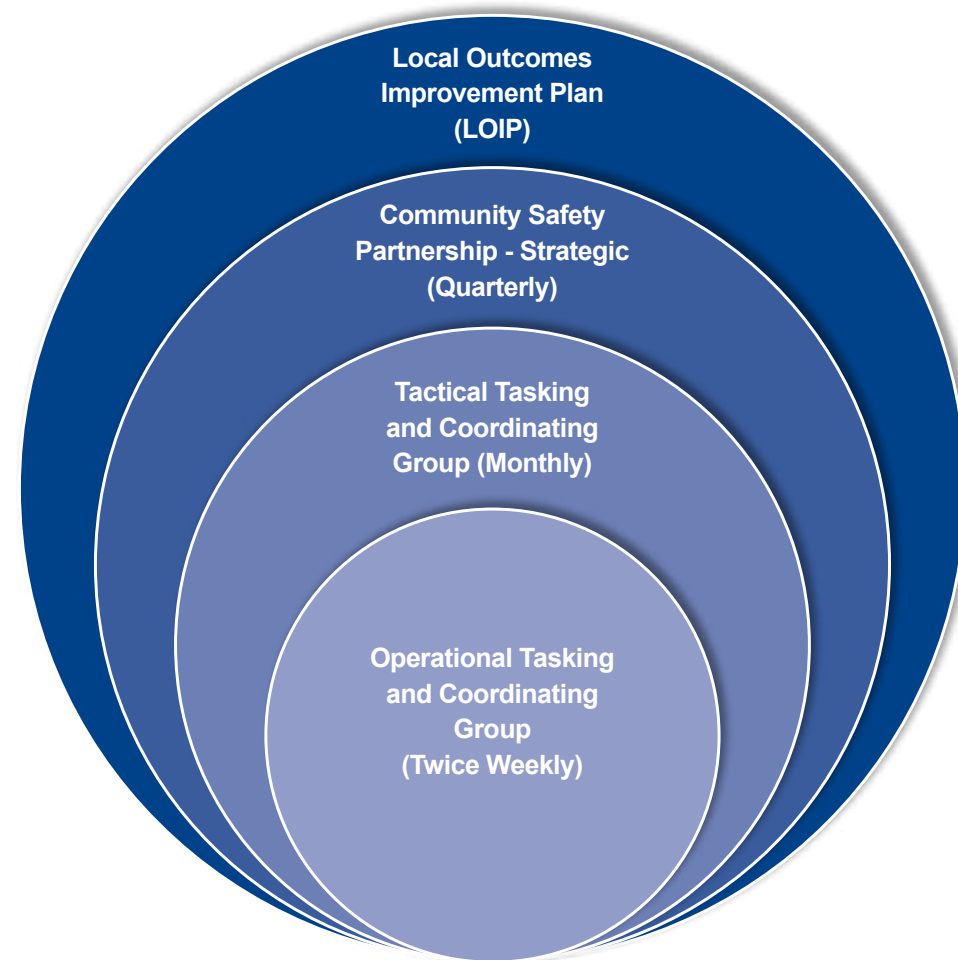
COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

When the underlying causes of a problem are understood, partners will pool resources and work together on sustainable solutions. This collaborative approach recognises that no single organisation has the resources or ability to resolve complex issues.

The framework for this collaboration is the Community Safety Tasking and Coordinating process. This involves a process of regular information sharing and coordination meetings. There are three tiers of coordination; strategic, tactical and operational. Each level reviews different types of information and is responsible for organising the appropriate joint response between partners. The regular coordination meetings at all levels enable the Community Safety Partnership to respond quickly to issues in an informed way.



Third sector organisations and community groups have a key role in bringing services and local people together. They also have a crucial role in bringing the right people together and have the flexibility to work across services to do this.



PLACE

Aberdeenshire is made up of a number of strong, individual communities and understanding the local context of each place is key to improving safety. The place in which an issue is experienced is a significant factor in how members of the community are affected, and what the correct responses should be from partner services. As a partnership we will work to build the confidence, capacity and connectedness of communities. We will combine our resources and experience to help communities be resilient to challenges connected to our priorities and help services to resolve issues locally.

This can involve focussing on an entire community or smaller communities within a place to address issues that exist at neighbourhood level. Coordination through the Community Safety Partnership can identify gaps and duplication of effort at a local level and provides a framework to initiate and support joint working.

Making the most of assets and capabilities already available in local areas is key to developing strong resilient and safe communities. Increased ownership of issues within the community will enable public services to become catalysts and facilitators rather than simply providers of services.



PRIORITIES



Three priorities have been identified for the period of this strategy.

Antisocial Behaviour and Violence

Unintentional Harm

Safeguarding Communities

Due to the changing nature of communities and the risks they face, the Community Safety Partnership will keep these priorities under review and respond to any new or emerging issues that could impact communities.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) and VIOLENCE

Outcome – There is less Antisocial Behaviour and Violence in our communities and people feel safer.

The definition of anti-social behaviour set out in the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 states a person engages in anti-social conduct if they: **“Act in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress; or pursue a course of conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress, to at least one person who is not of the same household.”**

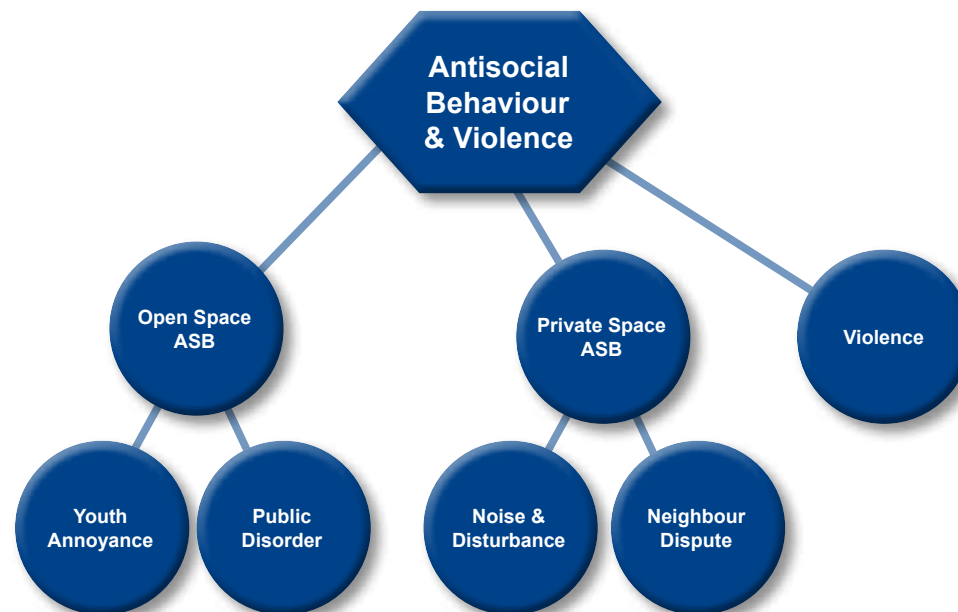
Antisocial behaviour (ASB) can very broadly be broken down into two areas - open space and private space.

There are many types of open space ASB, such as graffiti, damage to property or shouting or swearing or general rowdy behaviour.

Private space ASB is connected to a home or premises and can include noise nuisance from stereo equipment, noisy neighbours, drug taking or drunkenness in or around premises. These can often be felt more intensely for those nearby homes that are affected whilst the wider community may be unaware. Without directed intervention, minor issues can undermine local communities and increase a perception that residents live in areas of high crime.

The key to achieving long term benefits, however, is understanding the underlying factors that led to the behaviour and this in turn allows the partnership to intervene at an earlier stage to address these issues.

Whilst Aberdeenshire continues to have falling rates of violent crime, the partnership believes that tackling violent crimes is key to making people feel safe. It will work closely with internal and external partners to promote public awareness of violence and support through messaging and influence. We will also seek to identify and assist projects or groups which help to address this issue.



Following the partnership theme of collaborative problem solving, the partnership has a process for sharing information on problems in the community and coordinating a joint response.

The partnership has developed a number of processes and interventions that address antisocial behaviour (ASB) and violence which encourages pro-social behaviour in a supportive and positive manner, but which can lead to restrictions or legal interventions where the ASB continues.

For more serious or persistent ASB issues, Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBO) are sought which can restrict behaviour, associations or locations for offenders, to keep the community safe and preventing escalation to more serious offences.

It is always preferable to prevent ASB occurring, and through operational and tactical meetings, the partnership will collaborate on identifying emerging issues and trends, and providing appropriate intervention and prevention methods to do this.

Before any ASBO is considered, there will always be a multiagency meeting to discuss the case and ensure that all measures have been explored to allow ASB offenders the opportunity to alter their behaviours.

The Aberdeenshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan identified 'Changing Aberdeenshire's Relationship with Alcohol' as a priority. Given the existing partnership working frameworks, the Community Safety Partnership will have a clear role to play through community intervention, prevention and messaging, to promote a safe drinking culture, and thereby assist with the LOIP priority.

Why is ASB & Violence a priority?

Communities report a high number of incidents relating to antisocial behaviour and violence. Whilst the types of incidents and reports are decreasing they would still benefit from the focus of the partnership as each report represents a victim and harm to the community. Each incident can also be an opportunity for intervention where escalation and further harm can be prevented.



Our Aims:

- Bring a renewed focus on alcohol related antisocial behaviour and violence, prioritising interventions that tackle alcohol use as an underlying factor
- Bring together a multi-agency Community Safety, Prevention and Intervention team in co-located premises
- Improve tasking and coordination for relevant partners, using data and analysis to inform joint activities and target resources
- Support national campaigns and deliver local initiatives that provide reassurance to communities
- Work closely with Aberdeenshire Alcohol & Drug and Community Justice Partnership, contributing to their respective agendas by focusing on prevention of offending and harm in communities.

How do we measure our impact

- Post-intervention analysis to identify and evaluate reduction in community harm.
- Reduction in the number of public space ASB complaints.
- Reduction in the number of private space ASB complaints.
- Reduction in the number of incidents of damage and vandalism.
- Reduction in levels of environmental ASB, fly-tipping, littering, dog fouling.
- Reduction in the number of wilful fires.
- Reduction in the number of assaults.
- Reduction in the number of victims of assault.

UNINTENTIONAL HARM

Outcome - People are less likely to come to harm through preventable incidents in the home or outdoors.

Unintentional Harm is defined as - '*Predictable and Preventable Unintentional Physical or Psychological Harm*'

Building Safer Communities, Phase 2 Report

Home Safety - Almost a third of unintentional harm occurs in the home. This is higher for children under the age of five and for those aged over 65 years. Most harm results from a slip, trip or fall but burns, scalds and poisoning are also high for under 5s.

Fire Safety - Fires in the home are a major cause of unintentional harm. The majority of fire casualties occur in dwelling fires and can result from a lack of simple preventative safety measures.

Outdoor & Water Safety - The increase in recreational pursuits in the outdoor settings and open water mean there are increased risks of people coming to harm outdoors. The risk of drowning in Aberdeenshire is relatively low but remains a cause of preventable harm. Reducing the risk of accidental drowning is underpinned in the both the [UK](#) and [Scottish drowning prevention](#) strategies.

Road Safety is a key area of concern for communities in Aberdeenshire. Work in this area is led by Road Safety North East Scotland and the strategy for Aberdeenshire is detailed in the [Aberdeenshire Road Safety Plan](#).



Why is this a priority?

Physical unintentional harm kills about 14,000 people across the UK every year. It is the main preventable cause of death up to the age of 39 and is the main cause of death for children post-infancy. Death and serious injury result from unintentional harm but also the number of years lost to disability, time off work, and the impact on those injured and their family and friends. For public services it can also be a burden in terms of emergency response, unscheduled care costs and reducing the amount of time that can be dedicated to prevention.

Our Aims:

- Raise awareness of trends and emerging issues linked to safety in the home and outdoors. Develop a communication plan to coordinate messages through media and events.
- Use data and analysis to identify trends, risk groups and locations where there is a higher incidence of unintentional harm and develop interventions.
- Develop effective pathways and referral mechanisms (Improve awareness of Home Fire Safety and increase the number of people receiving Home Safety visits from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.)
- Support and develop water safety action plan and associated activities through the drowning prevention working group.
- Develop and deliver interventions aimed at the most in need.
- Highlight the effects alcohol and substance misuse can have on increasing the risk of harm and work with health and social care partners to provide effective interventions, including education and support.

How do we measure our impact?

- Evaluate the impact of small projects, implemented to test change and measure the safety benefit.
- Increase in the number of high risk households identified through home fire safety visits.



SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITIES

Outcome - Communities are resilient and able to resist and reject harmful behaviours and activities.

The levels of crime and exploitation in Aberdeenshire remain relatively low, nevertheless there are a small number of people who would cause harm to others. The capacity of communities to resist these threats can be increased with support. Increased awareness and understanding in the community, increases community cohesion and builds resilience. It increases the community's ability to see harm that is happening and encourage ownership while coming together with services to collectively reject the harmful behaviours.

Example

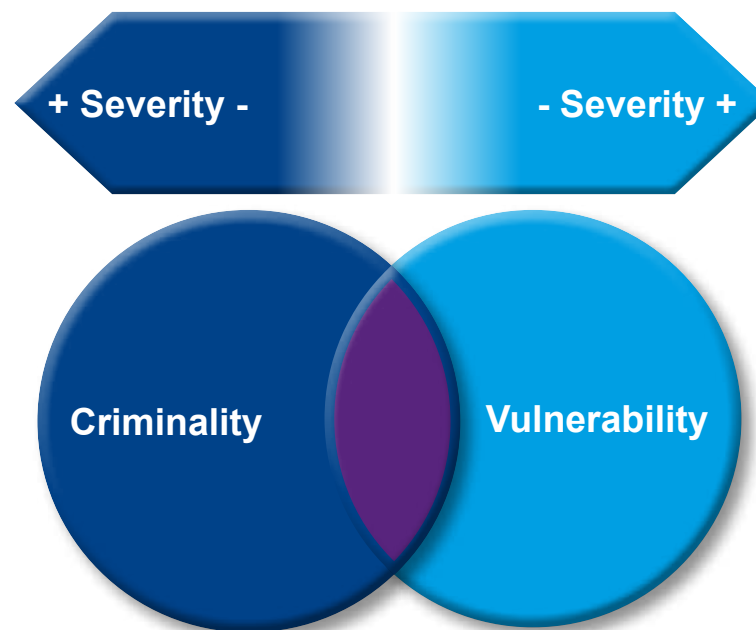
An individual linked to an English based organised crime group involved in drug trafficking, a tactic commonly known as County Lines. This individual exploited vulnerable people in Aberdeenshire and used them and their properties in furtherance of drug supply.

Via the Community Safety Partnership, information was exchanged between Police Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council services including Housing, Children Services Social Work and Community Justice and other partners.

An action plan was developed which reduced the risk to individuals through support, an ASBO was granted which prevented the individual from entering Aberdeenshire.

Exploitation - The below diagram represents how lower level criminality can overlap with people who have vulnerabilities. The most serious crimes are targeted with the most enforcement resources and the most at risk are assisted with high level support. There is need for early intervention where the lower end of each spectrum cross over, where the comparatively less vulnerable can be exploited. Exploitation may not be immediately understood or reported so services rely on information from the community and early information sharing.

Through consistent information sharing and analysis, the Community Safety Partnership has a key place in early recognition of risk and facilitating partner support, particularly focusing on issues such as financial harm, exploitation and organised crime. These often target those with multiple vulnerabilities, who are at higher risk of exploitation and/or safeguarding concerns.



Online Safety - People continue to spend more of their time online and share personal information through transactions and social networking. Communities form online and it is as integral part of modern life for most people but the potential for exploitation of children, young people and adults, mainly by adults, is well understood. The Community Safety Partnership has a key role in publishing information and developing public awareness products which can increase understanding of the risks and help people protect themselves.

Violence Against Women - Significant progress has been made in tackling Violence Against Women but it remains an issue that causes considerable harm within our communities. Violence against women is predominantly carried out by men and can only be understood in the context of the norms, social structure and stereotypes about roles within the community. Attitudes and assumptions about women and a culture of male entitlement and misogyny are at the root of violence against women.

Central to the development of work under this priority is the LOIP priority 'Connected and Cohesive Communities'. This priority encapsulates concerns around; supporting our communities to become stronger and build their own capacity; supporting vulnerable individuals; and how to address issues like social isolation and loneliness. The importance of supporting our communities to build their own capacity and also focus heavily on reducing inequalities within and between them has been highlighted by legislative and policy changes. Building this capacity, encouraging positive relationships regardless of background, and tackling inequality, results in stronger, more integrated and inclusive communities – or cohesive communities.

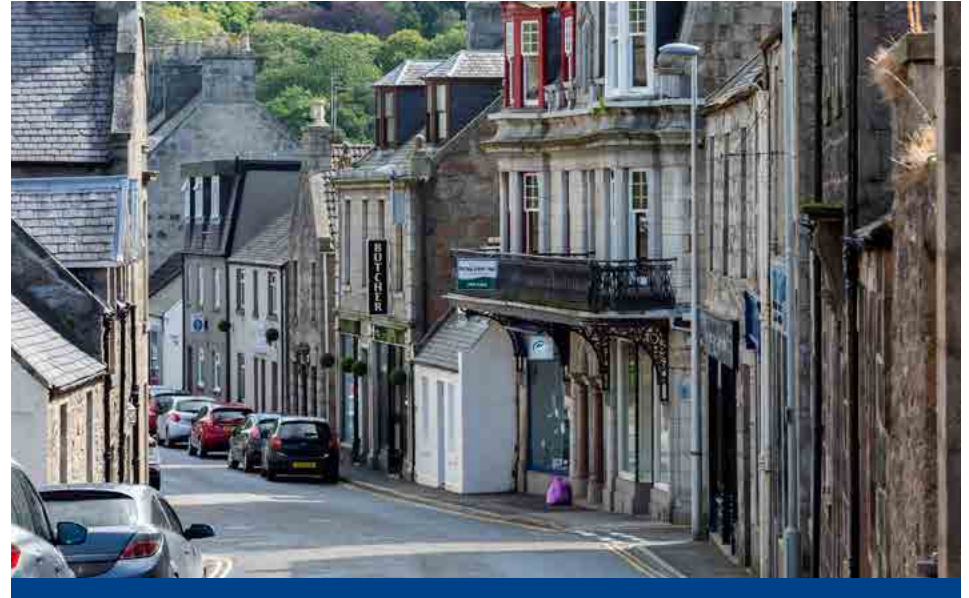


Why is this a priority?

Protecting people means being able to protect everyone, no matter what age, when they need it. The Aberdeenshire Child Protection Committee, Adult Protection Committee, Violence Against Women Partnership and Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements are working together across Aberdeenshire to protect people and keep them safe. The multi-agency groups coordinate services but there a place for communities and services to come together and work on the early identification of issues and intervention.

Our Aims:

- Share information to identify vulnerability and by working with others, reduce threat, risk and harm to individuals and communities.
- Engage with communities to raise awareness of scams, bogus callers and exploitation methods.
- Focus on the highest risk offenders and take steps reduce the harm they pose to the community.
- Support community policing initiatives bringing together relevant partners to maximise the impact of proactive work.
- Work with communities to break down the barriers that exist to prevent, identify and report crimes that can be hidden because of victim fear and intimidation.
- Coordinate with partners and communities to raise awareness of online safety issues, including the development of training and awareness raising events.
- Contribute to the work of the Violence Against Women Partnership, focus on preventative work around healthy relationships and attitudes towards women.



How we measure our impact?

- Reduce the overall number of victims of crimes
- Reduce the rates of group 1-4 crimes
- Increase the number of people feeling safe in their community (Citizens Panel/Scottish Household Survey)

LINKED STRATEGIES

- Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership - Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
- Aberdeenshire's Health Improvement Delivery Plan
- Improving Scotland's Health – Alcohol Framework 2018
- Police Scotland – Aberdeenshire Local Policing Plan
- GIRFEC Aberdeenshire Children's Services Plan (Whole System Approach)
- Scotland's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy

SOURCE MATERIALS

- Building Safer Communities Phase 2: Unintentional Harm
- Scottish Crime and Justice Survey
- Locality Plans (Community Planning)
- Aberdeenshire Youth Forum Survey





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