

**RESEARCH SPECIFICATION
AUGUST 2020**

**Understanding serious violence in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire: A qualitative,
exploratory study.**

£50,000 funding available (including VAT where applicable)

1. Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit (NNVRU) is a partnership bringing together specialists from Local Government, Health, Education, Policing and Criminal Justice to work with communities and the third sector to reduce serious violence and tackle its underlying causes. We are committed to ensuring that our work will be underpinned by evidence of what works, expanding that evidence base and creating new evidence where none currently exist.

NNVRU takes a public health approach to reducing violent crime, focusing on what will make a difference to whole populations, communities and groups. In practice this means we look beyond the statistics about incidents of crime and its causes to research and evidence that explains why people behave in certain ways and what contributes to this behaviour. For NNVRU, a public health approach means intervening through education and policy change before violence has chance to take hold, much in the same way as other population level health issues. These interventions are aimed at building community resilience to violent crime and changing social norms, using local intelligence to interrupt the transmission of violence by analysing where it may occur and intervening with those at higher risk.

2. Background to the research specification

NNVRU completed a strategic needs assessment (SNA) in April 2020 which gave us a comprehensive overview of violence in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County. We found that:

- There are important contextual factors for serious violence, in particular the deprivation and inequality experienced by some communities; contextual safeguarding is an essential part of understanding and reducing harm for children and young people.
- Males are over-represented as perpetrators and victims of serious violence.
- There are particular patterns of violence in relation to the Night Time Economy (NTE)
- There is substantial variation in the risk factors and observed violence across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County and place-based approaches are indispensable in addressing these.

- The evidence base emphasises the importance of early years and childhood, the value of early intervention with children and young people and addressing the underlying issues that contributed to offending behaviour. Further work is needed to understand the influence of domestic violence on violence in other contexts.

The data and intelligence in the SNA provided an overview and we have an ambition to develop this further including insights into the observed patterns for our next iteration of the SNA in 2021.

To read the SNA go to <https://www.nottsNNVRU.co.uk/information> the executive summary is included as an appendix to this document.

Responding to the lived experience of those affected by violence is a key strategic priority for NNVRU. Whilst we incorporated these experiences in the SNA we want to hear more through working with a research partner and local communities.

3. Research Specification

The focus for this research is on the experience of serious violence in communities in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County. The NNVRU is commissioning this research study to inform how we can work better with partners, using a systems approach, to reduce serious violence and commission projects and services who could reduce violence. The research must build on, and not duplicate, recent engagement work including that referenced in the SNA.

Specifically, the research we commission will provide recommendations that guide NNVRU action planning and commissioning. It is important to us that the research generates new observations which could then be tested nationally, thus influencing the thinking of other VRUs and direction of national policy.

NNVRU anticipate the research will be qualitative using a variety of methodologies to engage with those who have experienced violence as victims and/or perpetrators. NNVRU is not specifying methodology for this research as we're keen to see submissions that describe innovative and novel approaches and participatory methods that contribute to capacity building in, and value the voice of, local communities. We specifically expect potential research partners to demonstrate how they would engage with:

- Less heard voices including those from BAME and new and emerging communities.
- Children and young people including those excluded from schools and those with special educational needs and disabilities who are more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of violence.
- Multi-generational voices in recognition that the violence can be cyclical and affect generations in families and communities

NNVRU recognises the impact of COVID-19 on reaching these groups and that they are likely to have been most impacted by COVID-19 and may have become 'harder to reach'. Thus we're seeking research methodology that specifically considers the impact of COVID-19 in study design.

Whilst engaging the groups above is of particular interest to NNVRU we are open to submissions that propose research beyond these specifics.

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County are not homogenous. Research should be location specific and demonstrate the different experiences of violence across the city and county.

The SNA generated a number of questions NNVRU would like to explore in this research including:

- What gives rise to violence in local communities?
- What is the perception of safety local communities?
- What enables and/or could prevent or reduce serious violence?
- What actions could NNVRU take to support communities experiencing violence?

The research will include differences in experience of violence including, but not limited to, geographical location, ethnicity, culture, language, faith, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

The NNVRU is commissioning a separate study with a focus on girls and young women's experience of violence thus this will not be a focus in this research.

4. Outputs

- Monthly email updates on study progress
- Convene a steering group to lead the project, organising meetings at appropriate time points in the project
- Draft reports at agreed stages and a detailed final report which should include commissioning recommendations for the NNVRU on how to take forward the learning from this research as part of their response strategy.
- An easy read summary of the findings for stakeholders.
- A presentation of the findings to local stakeholders with feedback from stakeholders influencing the final report
- Dissemination of findings via public engagement and publication.

5. Timescales

12 month research study expected to commence in October 2020 with emergent findings available in January 2021 in order to provide recommendations to feed into future commissioning plans.

6. Funding

£50,000 (including VAT where applicable)

- The total maximum cost is £50,000 including VAT where applicable.
- Reasonable costs of disseminating the findings can be included in the total maximum cost.
- The tender is open to all organisations.
- Academic institutions should note that overheads should be explicitly stated in the application and will be limited as a proportion of the funding awarded. The funding cannot be used to support PhD studentships or to pay course fees or meet the costs of research associated with a PhD.

7. Application process

The deadline for applications is Wednesday 16th September at 4pm (6 weeks from invitation to tender). The steering group will shortlist on the 21st September and shortlisted applicants will be invited to a Microsoft Teams interview on Tuesday 29th September. Please send you bids to Andrew.Towning@nottinghamcity.gov.uk. Please limit your word count to 1000 words per answer (3000 words for the whole bid).

In your application NNVRU asks that you:

- Demonstrate your track record in:
 - Engaging with communities and groups whose voices are less often heard
 - Conducting research on sensitive topics using methods that don't re-traumatise individuals as they share their experiences
- Describe how you will reach individuals and groups not already engaged with services NNVRU and partners commission
- Identify your milestones and deliverables including how you will flex your approaches to meet the restrictions of COVID-19. Specifically, potential future, local lockdowns and a recognition that not everyone we might like to engage will have reliable access to the internet.

Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria

All criteria are essential	Scoring (max 5 for each criteria). Total score out of 40
<p>Please describe your proposed approach. We will score submissions as to whether they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a clear well-articulated detailed description of the methods, sampling strategy, sample size, data collection (including piloting), analysis plan and timetable recognising the challenges of traditional methodologies during the COVID-19 pandemic. • Include details of how research ethics and governance standards will be applied and maintained e.g. identification of participants, consent, confidentiality, data security etc. 	<p>/5</p> <p>/5</p>
<p>Please demonstrate your understanding of serious violence, nationally and in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. We will score submissions as to whether they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of serious violence coupled with an understanding of how that will translate to this study • Outline an appropriate plan for how people who have previously, and/or are currently, experiencing violence will be identified, engaged with and supported to take part in the research 	<p>/5</p> <p>/5</p>
<p>Please include information on the experience of the researcher/s. Short CVs of each member of the team should be submitted with the application form. We will score submissions on the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and experience of researcher/s including experience of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conducting qualitative research ○ Engaging groups and communities whose voices are less often heard ○ Working in a range of community settings ○ Innovative research methods 	<p>/5</p>
<p>Finances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown of costs with allocation of time and personnel to specified tasks including proposed spend on community engagement. • Value for money 	<p>/5</p> <p>/5</p>

Assessment	Score	Interpretation
Excellent	5	Exceeds the requirement. Exceptional demonstration by the supplier of the relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services. Response identifies factors that will offer potential added value, with evidence to support the response.
Good	4	Satisfies the requirement with minor additional benefits. Above average demonstration by the supplier of the relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services. Response identifies factors that will offer potential added value, with evidence to support the response.
Acceptable	3	Satisfies the requirement. Demonstration by the supplier of the relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services with evidence to support the response.
Minor Reservations	2	Satisfies the requirement with minor reservations. Some minor reservations of the supplier's relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services with little or no evidence to support the response.
Serious Reservations	1	Satisfies the requirement with major reservations. Considerable reservations of the supplier's relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services, with little or no evidence to support the response.
Unacceptable	0	Does not meet the requirement. Does not comply and/or insufficient information provided to demonstrate that the supplier has the ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services, with little or no evidence to support the response.

Appendix: VRU SNA Executive Summary

Purpose of the Strategic Needs Assessment

The purpose of the Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) was to contribute to an understanding of what causes violence in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit (NNVRU) area and the causes of those causes, to inform evidence-based prevention, early intervention and 'treatment' interventions and approaches.

Specifically, the SNA has:

- Explored the prevalence of serious violence in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County and the context in which this violence arises, using multiple data and information sources to describe who is affected as victims and/or perpetrators.
- Appraised and synthesised evidence related to violence including interventions to reduce violence identifying gaps and limitations in the evidence.
- Explored the issue of serious violence as experienced by local people through engagement with individuals and communities.
- Identified local assets, including services in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors that aim to reduce violence, tackle the causes of violence and the causes of these causes.
- Made recommendations that will inform commissioning of services and projects to reduce violence in order to make the best use of available resources needed to reduce violence and the causes of violence.

Summary of the Main Findings

1. There are important contextual factors for serious violence, in particular the deprivation and inequality experienced by some communities; contextual safeguarding is an essential part of understanding and reducing harm for young people.

- There are important risk factors for serious violence that can be described at individual level. Health data, particularly related to mental health, points towards increases in the risk factors which increase vulnerability to violence, particularly amongst young children. Environmental and social factors have a substantial influence on violence and describing these is important in developing a shared and broad understanding on the determinants and violence, in minimising stigmatisation of local communities and in developing effective responses: too often efforts to reduce violence are disconnected

from the underlying causes and fail to appreciate the complexity of the system.

- National and local evidence suggests that the risk factors associated with violence tend to be more prevalent in deprived communities. The same communities have less access to some of the key protective factors which mitigate against violence, particularly given reductions in services due to austerity. The crime data included here suggests a link between deprivation and the volume of recorded crime at district level and future analysis will seek to test this association at Ward level. There is a strong relationship between repeat A&E attendances and level of deprivation indicated by a five-fold difference in numbers between the most and least deprived quintiles.
- Reported crime under estimates actual crime. Evidence and local intelligence suggests that this is particularly true for victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Victims/survivors are not always willing to name a perpetrator which prevents the perpetrator being brought to justice and may increase the likelihood of further offences being committed. The current narrative around a victim's/survivor's reluctance to name a perpetrator often cites the issue in the individual rather than the broader context.
- Violence can be framed as 'fighting' and seen as normal for young people; this is an example of a perceived norm and highlights the importance of place-based responses. Commonly cited risk factors in relation to young people and violence (as victims and/or perpetrators) include substance misuse and the impacts of social media. Detailed case studies of young people in the criminal justice system highlight multi-layered vulnerabilities for young people and the importance of contextual safeguarding. Interestingly, the young prisoners in the focus group cited responsibility for violence and their subsequent prison sentence with themselves; they focussed on personal traits and their own difficulties in managing anger or impulse control, although the evidence points to particular risks and vulnerabilities.
- There were clear findings in the stakeholder feedback and lived experience of young people on how some areas of the public realm in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County feel safer than other areas; the relationship between visible police presence and perceived safety is complicated by perceived racial discrimination, mistrust and the use of 'stop and search' powers. For example, practitioner intelligence applied to the crime data on *Possession of Articles With Blade or Point* suggests observed increases in 'possession' data can be linked to specific Police activity, for example the 2019 *Operation Lumination* involving stop-and-search in the Forest Recreation area of Nottingham City. Interpreting the effectiveness of local approaches requires situating the activity data in relation to lived experience and an ongoing emphasis on community engagement.

2. Males are over-represented as perpetrators and victims of serious violence.

Males are over-represented in the crime and the health data throughout the SNA and descriptive analysis has identified the extent to which this is observed locally:

- Males are more likely to have an A&E attendance for assault than females, particularly young males aged 20-29 who are responsible for 25.7% of attendances.

- A&E attendance rates in males are on average twice as high as rates in females.
- More than half of visits to A&E for assault related injuries in males occurred in a public place particularly in the 20-29 age group. Assaults at home is the second most common location more so for females than males. Due to limitations of this dataset, it is not possible to conclude that assaults which occur in the home environment are domestic violence related.
- Males aged between 20-29 years are more likely to attend A&E multiple times in a day; the reason behind this is unclear and warrants further exploration.
- Males aged 20-29, from the most deprived quintile of the NNVRU area, are four times more likely to be admitted for violence related injuries than females.
- One in four admissions for assault were found to have some influence of alcohol. The proportion of alcohol involvement in males aged 20-29 is nearly double that in females in the same age group.
- Approximately 33% of 599 cases of admissions for violence, where illicit drug use was noted, were in males aged between 20-29 years.
- The proportion of mental health diagnosis, alcohol and illicit drug use in males aged 50-59 years admitted for assault is double that in females.
- Of 74 deaths in the NNVRU area between 2014 and 2019, 66.1% were males, 45.9% from the most deprived quintile within the NNVRU area and 63.1% aged between 20-49 years with the highest proportion (28.8%) in the 20-29 years age group.

A broad range of local organisations are assets in working with and engaging men. There is an incomplete evidence base on the effectiveness on diversionary activities such as sports and music, which can often be targeted at young males; there is clear evidence for always available adults and examples of effective mentoring schemes locally and lived experience of the benefits of vocational skills and training. A further review of evidence in relation to reducing violence in males would help to inform local approaches.

3. There are particular patterns of violence in relation to the NTE

Overall, the long-term trend in the UK has been a reduction in serious violence. 'High harm' offences involving guns, knives and sharp objects have increased in recent years, although they still remain a relatively small proportion of the overall crime figures. These offences are not evenly distributed across the week nor across the NNVRU area. The crime and health data in this SNA has drawn attention to violence particularly occurring in the urban environment (Nottingham City and Mansfield) during evenings and weekends.

- Nottingham City and Mansfield show a higher proportion of recorded *Homicide and Violence With Injury (excluding DV and ABH)* occurring on Saturday night/early hours of Sunday, this contrasts with other districts in Nottinghamshire, where a higher proportion of crime occurs in the afternoon and early evening (12:00–17:59). The violence in Nottingham City has

associations with the NTE and particularly with alcohol consumption, though also with illicit drugs.

- More than two thirds of hospital attendances for assault occur between 11pm and 4am and more than one third occur over the weekend. Whilst the temporal profile for crime shows higher frequency of reported crime on Friday and Saturday night, suggesting the link to the NTE, further analysis is needed in this area. Future work should explore the use of offence summary notes, to better distinguish between the offences that occurred on a 'night out' and those that occurred at night.
 - More than 35% of assaults presenting at the Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) Emergency Department occurred between 6pm on Friday evening and 6am on Saturday morning or between 6pm on Saturday evening and 6am on Sunday morning. The usefulness of the Injury Surveillance data (from NUH) is currently limited by the lack of detail on the Location of Assault. Improvements in the data collection could enable the NNVRU to replicate the 'Cardiff model' which led to reductions in violence in the NTE in South Wales.
 - 22.7% (10,407/45,830) of *NNVRU Serious Violence* can be classed as alcohol-related crime, however the data does not distinguish what role the alcohol played in the crime (e.g. was the offender under the influence of alcohol or targeting victims in the NTE). Other datasets have been identified such as test on arrest outcomes, which will be accessed in order to explore this area further.
 - Evidence suggest that there are specific, strong links between alcohol and domestic violence and violence in the NTE and this is echoed in the SNA findings. Further work should explore the overlaps between Domestic Violence and NTE Violence, e.g. DV that occurred at night and in licensed premises. Practitioner intelligence suggests that DV element takes priority in recording of such occurrences; future analysis can explore this hypothesis and assess how big the overlap is.
 - The trade in illicit drugs is linked to a variety of violent crimes including assaults, acquisitive crime, sexual abuse and the criminal and sexual exploitation of children. Whilst there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that the use of cocaine and alcohol together has a cumulative impact and increases violent behaviours, few services routinely ask whether perpetrators and victims of violence have used alcohol and cocaine which reduces the ability to establish local prevalence.
- 4. The data sourced and analysed here provides an overview and there is ambition to develop this further; there is not yet sufficiently detailed and shared insight to address some of the broader questions nor explain some of the observed patterns.**
- Data and intelligence is a specific asset locally and there are detailed programmes of Joint SNAs and intelligence accessible on the Insight websites. A broad range of intelligence sources have been brought together within this SNA. The methodological limitations and data sources that have not yet been accessed have been recognised.

- Data is collected for differing purposes. The development of a local predictive model to identify 10-18 year olds within the city who may be at risk of involvement in knife crime, included in the assets section, is an example of producing information that can directly inform targeted engagement. The results of the model will be used as an additional resource for front line staff to evaluate cases and provide preventative intervention.
 - It has not been possible to look at longer term changes for some outcomes due to inconsistent data recording and mixed data quality. Changes in recording are a particular issue, for example, the addition of new offences or changes to national guidance on crime recording for the police. Another challenge is the inconsistency in recording protected characteristics, or shared indicators (e.g. alternative education providers). This limits some of the comparisons and conclusions that can be drawn.
 - Differences in recording practices can also obfuscate particular needs. For example, stakeholders suggest that attendance and exclusions from local schools underestimates the true picture. Specifically, that unofficial policies such as managed moves and off-rolling are used by some schools to 'manage' poor attendance and challenging behaviour. A report is expected by the Children's Commissioner which may give further insight on unofficial school exclusions. However, more consistency is needed in data collection to allow vulnerable children to be identified and supported.
 - Where possible, the data available has been triangulated to support interpretations but there remain specific, unexplained peaks in the data. For example, the peak in the number of *NNVRU Serious Violence* crimes observed between March and July 2018, is an example of a current knowledge gap, as it does not appear to be related to a change in recording rules or a change in practice. Practitioner intelligence does not suggest an increase in police activity taking place in the period. Interestingly, a similar spike in A&E attendances and hospital admissions is not observed for the same period. Further analysis of NNVRU crime data showed that, the increase was driven mainly by ABH offences which won't all require A&E treatment and/or a hospital admission.
 - Further understanding of this difference may be gained from analysis of East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) call out data, as by having more information of the patient's journey could help 'plug' the information gap between crime and hospital data. The NNVRU looks to explore this further and include findings in the next iteration of the SNA.
- 5. There is substantial variation in the risk factors and observed violence across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County and place-based approaches are indispensable in addressing these:**
- Some of the data included in this SNA pertains across the NNVRU area and broader conclusions can be drawn. For example, employment rates across the NNVRU area are lower than the national average as are average wages. Residents of Nottingham City tend to have lower levels of employment and pay than residents in Nottinghamshire County. More than four in ten children in the NNVRU area live in low-income households. Despite increases in the

employment rate, more than half of these low-income households contain a working adult.

- There is important variation across the lower tier authority areas. For example, while the proportion of *Children in Need* or who are Looked After/Children in Care across the NNVRU area is broadly in line with the average for England. This hides a wide degree of variation across the area with higher than average rates in Nottingham City, Ashfield and Mansfield and the lowest rates in Rushcliffe and Gedling.
- Nottingham City and Bassetlaw have significantly higher A&E attendance rates for assault than the NNVRU average for both males and females.
- Triangulating locations where serious violence occurs including using police, injury surveillance and EMAS data will enable a better understanding of geographical context and support the targeting of activity. This can also be linked to data on risk factors. Mapping of hotspots such as those in the hospitality industry and fast food takeaways will inform licencing, policy, regulatory and enforcement activity and support a contextual approach to safeguarding.
- Some of the inequities in access to services is not solely related to difference in need. Some stakeholders feel that the larger, more diverse population and higher population density in the City supports both a wider range of services related to violence reduction and more specialist services.

6. The evidence base emphasises the importance of early years and childhood, the value of early intervention with young people and addressing the underlying issues that contributed to offending behaviour. Further work is needed to understand the influence of domestic violence on violence.

- National evidence suggests that early intervention schemes, aimed at improving the parenting skills of expecting and new parents, have the best evidence in terms of reducing harmful behaviours and generate the largest savings in future costs. The impacts on violence are seen over the longer term, but short-term impacts can be seen on other behaviours (health, attainment, attendance etc) that are risk factors for violence.
- Interventions before the age of 11 can have the most impact on reducing violence. More training is needed to spread best practice amongst primary schools and to better integrate them into the wider public sector offer. Significant increases in funding are also required to increase the availability of support for children, families and schools.
- Research into Adverse Childhood Experiences has generated both a great deal of enthusiasm into the potential for creating a framework to understand childhood adversity, but also a degree of caution that it should not be interpreted as providing '*...quick fixes to prevent adversity*'. (EIF, 2019).

- There is also relevant information from the citizen and stakeholder feedback and narratives included. In particular that mentors, or 'consistent trusted adults', are vital for young people.
- Developing the understanding of choices and consequences and real-world life skills are recognised as key priorities for supporting local young people by both practitioners and young people.
- Reflective learning from the Youth Inclusion Project also emphasises the importance of whole community response and local credibility in achieving change.
- One in three (31.1%, 2,120/6,812) offenders associated with *NNVRU Serious Violence* are in the 20-24 and 25-29 age brackets. The literature review suggests that once people get past their late teens or early 20s most people 'grow out' of crime, but some become persistent offenders. Future work should explore this and try to identify the differences between the two groups.
- Crime data does not, in isolation, offer insights into offender motivations and precursors to offending and violent behaviour such as growing up in a household with Domestic Violence and/or drug and alcohol use. Triangulation of such information at adult offender level has not been possible due to the restrictions of information sharing. Domestic Violence Practitioner intelligence suggests there is a strong link between domestic violence and other criminal behaviour. Whilst the domestic violence has not been the main focus of this assessment, it is important to explore this in the future, as domestic violence is likely to be part of an offender's journey and potentially a precursor to other violence.
- Interventions that address any underlying issues which led to violence being used should continue throughout an offender's time in custody and into their release and reintegration back into the community.

7. The NNVRU approach aligns with the needs and insight in this SNA; and local consideration should be given to building forward over a long time frame.

A broad range of NNVRU activity is described in the assets section with planning for delivery in 2020/21 to address locally identified opportunities such as the incubation hub for voluntary and community sector organisation, as well as further work to develop the intelligence within the SNA.

There are several key findings that identify constraints in developing the NNVRU approach:

- Much of the evidence related to preventing serious violence is considered 'emerging or preliminary' which limits NNVRU's ability to consistently commission based on strong evidence.
- And in developing effective strategic approaches to reducing violence, stakeholders stated strongly that short term funding remains an issue for many organisations, statutory, voluntary and community, as it restricts long-

term planning and fosters a competitive environment which works against collaboration.

Mitigation measures for these constraints will include cross-sectoral engagement and joint strategic planning on a longer time frame and ensuring the robust evaluation of local interventions to contribute to the evidence base for feasibility of implementation.

Recommendations

Scope

Whilst recognising that ABH offences provide important context in which serious violence arises the Strategic Violence Reduction Board should give consideration, in 2020/21, to focussed attention on the most serious violent crimes.

The evidence base is evolving and the NNVRU will continue to review new publications and, where appropriate, use the learning from these to inform local action. Further literature review(s) on specified topics within violence prevention, using well defined questions and appropriate appraisal of evidence, may be necessary to provide further detail and fully inform strategic local actions including the commissioning of evidence-based services.

The NNVRU should support an in-depth review on the evidence related to assessing ACEs, including whether routine enquiry into childhood experiences (REACH) supports and/or enhances trauma informed practice.

In recognition of the lack of robust evidence in some areas of violence reduction, NNVRU should consider commissioning a research partner to support the evaluation of locally commissioned services, projects and programmes and contribute to the national evidence base.

Data and Intelligence

- Not all demographic information is consistently recorded by local services and projects, limiting conclusions regarding equity of access and outcome. The NNVRU will support existing work to increase the recording of protected characteristics, including ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation, across all local services ensuring that service users and those collecting and collating data understand why the data is collected and how it's used.
- A violence reduction focused analytical group should be established, early in 2020/21. This will lead on the development of regular, timely, joint analytical products that triangulate contextual factors with data from the police, education and health services, to inform strategic decision making and guide local action. To minimise duplication this group could support the anticipated new requirements of Community Safety Partnerships to produce a SNA as part of serious violence duty.

Contextual Data

- The conclusions that can be drawn around exclusions data is limited by inconsistent reporting. NNVRU should consider, through its Local Authority Board Members, whether it can support existing work to improve the quality and consistency of exclusion data across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County.
- Data on school-aged young people attending alternative education provision is not consistently shared and the data quality is inconsistent limiting the ability to interrogate the data received by Local Authorities. The NNVRU should consider whether it can support work with alternative education providers to provide data that enables analysis of the progress of young people attending such provision, with those attending mainstream schools.
- Data from further education colleges is not routinely shared although it is a potential rich source of information on the needs of local young people. The NNVRU team will work with further education colleges, through the Strategic Violence Reduction Board members, to understand what data is collected and collated and how it can deepen understanding of those affected by serious violence as victims and/or perpetrators. Richer quality data from colleges will allow better tracking of the educational status of 16-17 year olds, allowing NEET support to be targeted.
- National evidence suggests that young people who are NEET are more likely to become victims and/or perpetrators of violent crime but local intelligence suggests that the level of support offered in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County is based on available funding rather than young people's need. The NNVRU to consider whether it can support Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City, to reduce the number of young people whose destination post-secondary education is 'not known'.

'Health Data'

Injury surveillance data collected by NUH is currently not high quality. NNVRU will work with A&E departments to improve the quality of information collected as part of injury surveillance and consider strategies adopted by Cardiff to improve data capture and enable hot spot mapping. If appropriate, the NNVRU will work nationally to influence data capture including advocating for:

- Clearer recording of demographic characteristics.
- Reduction of free text in favour of fixed fields to enable meaningful analysis. For example, using 'location of incident' to link into contextual safeguarding work.
- Including a question regarding whether the incident was alcohol or illicit drug related and/or whether the individual is in drug or alcohol treatment.

Once it is established whether injury surveillance data is collected by Kings Mill and Bassetlaw hospitals, the NNVRU team will either work with these units to commence data collection or ensure the data is shared so the proposed dashboard and quarterly reports reflect need across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County.

NNVRU will work with the providers of walk-in centres in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County to explore, if appropriate, how the walk-in centres can participate in violence surveillance.

Crime, Probation and Youth Justice

- Reported crime under-estimates actual crime and this is particularly true for victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The NNVRU will draw on the University of Nottingham's work on victims/survivors of crime in partnership with domestic violence service providers and local communities to better understand why victims/survivors don't identify perpetrators and what actions can be taken to increase the number of perpetrators named and ultimately brought to justice.
- Police recorded crime figures are significantly affected by changes in recording requirements, such as addition of new offences or changes to national guidance on crime recording. Any analysis and conclusions using police recorded crime data must, whenever possible, fully recognise the impact of crime recording changes and the limitations this can place upon such data.
- The NNVRU, like other VRUs, has been unable to access data from probation services which means no local level data on reoffending is included in the SNA. This is a specific gap in terms of describing the characteristics of individuals. The NNVRU will work with the Leicestershire Violence Reduction Network not only to seek a joint approach to data access, but to also support in shaping their prevention offer/interventions as part of a whole system approach.
- The NNVRU team will work with Youth Justice Service colleagues undertaking analysis and managers to better understand the differences in the reporting across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County and provide a clearer picture of the Youth Justice offer across Nottinghamshire and its contribution to reducing serious violence including work beyond statutory requirements.
- The NNVRU will work with local Youth Justice Services to better understand the needs of this client group, including SEND, speech and language and what additional evidence-based interventions can result in positive outcomes including the effectiveness of different orders.
- Local intelligence suggests that Youth Justice clients' with SEND and adult prisoners, specifically autism, ADHD and conduct disorder (including those with a diagnosis and those without who could anticipate a diagnosis), are over-represented as victims and perpetrators of violence. NNVRU to consider 'journey mapping' some of these individuals to identify missed opportunities for support, e.g. to prevent involvement in county lines and inform future service provision.
- NNVRU to consider whether it can support a review of Youth Justice cases where young people were excluded from school, including alternative methods of exclusion such as 'off-rolling' and whether such a review usefully informs local action on an ongoing basis.

Triangulating Data

- To understand better, offender motivations and/or precursors to violent behaviour, data sources should be triangulated at a more granular level. This will build on

- Nottingham City's work through *the Supporting Families Against Youth Crime* project. Barriers to obtaining such data through information sharing agreements should be overcome including with the support of the Strategic Violence Reduction Board.
- Triangulating locations where serious violence occurs including using police, injury surveillance and EMAS data will enable a better understanding of geographical context and support the targeting of activity. Mapping of hotspots such as those in the hospitality industry and fast food takeaways will inform licencing, policy, regulatory and enforcement activity and support a contextual approach to safeguarding.
- The NNVRU will design a dashboard and provide a quarterly report, accessible to partners, that triangulates data including injury surveillance, ambulance and police data. This will encourage partners to make more effective use of the data and highlight the important contribution of this data in Nottingham City and the districts in Nottinghamshire County's response to violence including through a place-based approach.
- Whilst the SNA provides a broad description of serious violence in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County, time constraints have prevented focused work on specific hypothesis. The NNVRU will consider setting up a process for ongoing hypothesis testing crime analyses¹, where necessary through access to nominal information, with the support of the Strategic Violence Reduction Board, data groups and other stakeholders. The proposed process would capture practitioner intelligence, turn it into workable hypotheses and then identify appropriate data to test the hypotheses. This co-productive approach would provide richer, more explanatory analysis of specific issues.
- The NNVRU and the Leicestershire VRN will collaborate in guiding the agenda for the East Midlands Violence Reduction Information Network (VRIN), which is being set up with other forces in the East Midlands to share learning and best practice as part of a regional whole system approach.

Qualitative Research and Lived Experience

- Whilst the SNA has engaged with a broad range of stakeholders and those affected by serious violence, the ambitious deadline for the SNA has limited meaningful qualitative research. NNVRU will commission qualitative research with individuals, families and local communities affected by serious violence across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County including those from new and emerging communities and those whose voices are seldom heard. NNVRU will ensure that the support of local community organisations in identifying and facilitating research participants is recognised.
- The focus groups and engagement that took place to inform the SNA suggests there is increasing concern around the exploitation of young women linked to young men involved in illicit drug related crime and violence. NNVRU will consider commissioning qualitative research that further explores

¹ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jdibrief/analysis/hypothesis-testing-crime-analysis>

the exploitation of young women linked to young men involved in illicit drug related crime and violence to inform the development of gender-based work.

Adverse Childhood Experiences, Resilience and Trauma-Informed Approaches

- Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County have different approaches to using an understanding of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) to inform service delivery. The NNVRU will consider whether an agreed local methodology to assess the prevalence of ACEs across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County is appropriate. Specifically, whether a robust prevalence estimate would result in more effective targeting of trauma-informed and trauma-smart interventions and the ambition to become 'trauma-informed Nottinghamshire'.
- Whilst there is evidence to support interventions that increase children and young peoples' resilience, stakeholder feedback suggests that, locally, there are inequities in access. NNVRU should give consideration to how it can support and/or extend current activity to increase children and young people's resilience including by reducing inequities in access that are not determined by differences in local need.
- The impact of ACEs on serious violence in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County is poorly understood. NNVRU to consider qualitative work to explore the impact of ACEs on violence within communities as a response to trauma (perpetrator) and as an ongoing risk (victim) including interventions to break the cycle of violence within communities.

Contextual Safeguarding and Whole Systems Approaches

As understanding of contextual safeguarding develops and, in this instance the link to serious violence, there will be a need for training and appropriate policy in core provision. NNVRU will work with safeguarding partners and others to develop a 'contextual safeguarding network area' in order to access peer support from other areas working to develop a response.

Drawing on national expertise, NNVRU will consider system mapping the underlying causes of violence and efforts to reduce violence using a whole systems approach.

Local Initiatives, Services and Projects

- The NNVRU recognises that long-term funding is key to successful provision and has committed to working with communities in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire to ensure sustainability. NNVRU will highlight nationally the issues short-term funding places on providers.
- An incubation hub could support providers to develop skills including demonstrating outcomes as part of meaningful evaluation including, where possible, an assessment of value for money. The development and implementation of a standardised NNVRU evaluation framework would support consistency. Local services and projects commissioned by the NNVRU and partners should be a particular focus.

- Young people's drug treatment services for Nottingham City receive few referrals from local agencies despite local intelligence suggesting a considerable number of young people are using illicit drugs. NNVRU will work with local services and projects to understand the barriers to referring young people who use illicit drugs to drug treatment services, challenging when illicit drug use by young people is accepted as the norm and potential harms not recognised. NNVRU will make the 'number of referrals to drug treatment services' a mandatory part of the data return for the services and projects it commissions.
- People who experience trauma, loss and bereavement due to serious violence report inconsistent access to appropriate support. The NNVRU will work with commissioners to increase access to appropriate trauma, loss and bereavement support as part of broader local mental health support.
- There is strong evidence around interventions that support and develop parenting skills but stakeholders suggest there is unwarranted variation e.g. not related to differences in need. NNVRU should consider how it can support and enhance current work in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County to support parents including those parenting children and young people with specific needs such as ADHD, autism and conduct disorders who are over-represented as victims and perpetrators of violence.
- Local intelligence suggests there are challenges in meeting multiple and complex needs including people who are victims/survivors of domestic violence. NNVRU should support DV and other networks to better understand the gaps in local services for individuals with multiple and complex needs who are victims/survivors of violence.
- Stakeholders identified the multi-agency *Ending Alcohol Harm* programme of work was an asset in Nottingham City. NNVRU will consider how it can support the *Ending Alcohol Harm* programme in Nottingham City and consider if it is appropriate and adaptable to Nottinghamshire County or areas of Nottinghamshire County.
- Awareness of the evidence describing the links between simultaneous alcohol and cocaine use and violence appears low outside specialist services and reduces the ability to establish local prevalence. NNVRU will work with local services including the police to encourage practitioners to ask victims and perpetrators of violence whether they were using alcohol and cocaine at the time of the incident.
- Local service providers and community members suggest that services aren't joined up and that it is difficult to find organisations who provide services in different areas. *Ask Lion* and *Notts Help Yourself* have experienced difficulties in fully capturing the range of local services and community groups in their respective areas. NNVRU to consider engagement with local projects and service providers to understand better the perceived challenges in accessing and navigating information on *Ask Lion* and *Notts Help Yourself*. Targeted engagement with projects and services whose information is not on these platforms, could yield useful information on the perceived barriers to listing information.

- The assets in local communities are not fully understood and this lack of understanding could limit community capacity building. NNVRU will consider collating existing mapping and working with the VCS to identify gaps and omission and the commissioning of a joint strategic assets assessment to complement the SNA and Youth and Community Engagement Strategy and inform the delivery plan. Specific areas of focus could include:
 - Capacity in community groups to evaluate interventions and demonstrate evidence of effectiveness and support future funding applications.
 - Access to meaningful diversionary activity which can move people away from crime and support skills development for those the furthest away from work.
 - Understanding the effectiveness of youth services including youth outreach models and how, if appropriate, they might be augmented in the City and County.

Workforce Development

Stakeholders suggest there is insufficient and inequitable access to local mentoring provision, specifically equity of access to accredited mentors that can offer informed information, advice and guidance and support towards employment. The NNVRU and Leicestershire VRN will work together to explore evidence around mentoring models for young people impacted by serious violence and collaborate on establishing an evidence-based, standardised training approach.

The Mentors in Violence Prevention programme was identified as an asset. A collaborative workshop will be held during 2020/21, in partnership with Leicestershire VRN, aimed at rolling out training of the bystander approach to frontline workers, for example Prison Officers and DV practitioners.

Some youth and community workers would benefit from additional training and skills development including developing their understanding of the role of social media in violence and 'self-reflective' youth work.

The Serious Violence Duty

- There is no nationally agreed definition of serious violence for the Serious Violence Duty. NNVRU will work at national level to develop a shared definition of serious violence as identified in the Serious Violence Duty. If no national agreement is reached, NNVRU will seek consensus of definition across England's VRUs.
- The proposed new duty on Community Safety Partnerships to complete a serious violence needs assessment arguably duplicates the same responsibility placed on VRUs. NNVRU will support Community Safety Partnerships, the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and Nottingham City's Crime and Drugs Partnership to develop a SNA as part of their serious violence duty and to ensure synergy with the NNVRU SNA and response plan.

Throughout our engagement with stakeholders, including community members, young people and those who were perpetrators or victims of violence, we offered an opportunity to make recommendations to reduce serious violence. Many of their recommendations echo those recommendations identified throughout this SNA. The points below highlight the perspective of local citizens and local practitioners in relation to their lived experience.

- **Diversions activity:** Across all of the engagement work there has been a frequently expressed view that there needs to be additional positive and meaningful activity for young people within communities. In particular, the existence of youth clubs and the roles of community centres (premises) and youth workers (skilled practitioners) within these are essential, alongside a broader offer of diversionary activities.
- **Knife crime awareness:** Young people need more education and awareness on carrying blades and the risks and consequences associated with their choices and behaviour, this was a recurring theme across community engagement and raised by young people themselves. They feel that schools and education providers, in particular, should be providing education on this, as well as through youth clubs and projects.
- **Neighbourhood safety – visibility of police and youth workers on the streets:** Attention should be paid to contextual safeguarding and safety for young people across local communities; there was recognition of improvements within the city centre (more neutral and more police presence) but safety in other areas remains a concern where there are no patrols and some young people said they wanted to see more youth workers out on the streets.
- **Opportunities and provision for diverse groups of young people:** Young people have emphasised that commissioners and decision makers should recognise the diversity and the needs of particular individuals and groups of young people, including young people with disabilities, educational needs and LGBT young people. Specific actions within this include more activities where people with abilities and people with disabilities can come together, earlier diagnosis and support for dyslexia and special educational needs and prevention work for vulnerable young people in relation to gangs and county lines.
- **Tackling normalisation of drug taking:** An audit of referral of young people in drug services to help identify unmet need and to help target with responses with communities and services in addressing the perception of drug taking as normal behaviour.
- **Motivating and mobilising community buy-in across the Ending Youth Violence network:** Learning from the Youth Inclusion Project in St Ann's emphasises the strength of broad local community support and that local buy-in increases the credibility and impact of the local offer.
- **Extending skills and horizons of young people:** Creative pursuits have their place, but we need to avoid instilling 'pipe dreams' in young people and

help them in developing in real world skills, trades and employment opportunities.

- **Long term strategic approach in working with community and voluntary sector organisations:** Short term competitive funding does not enable the scale of change nor the building of trust that is needed for transformation.

A range of targeted engagement work and reviews were commissioned by NNVRU and the PCC to inform an understanding of the context of serious violence in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire including on the role of social media. These reports, currently draft, have a range of recommendations some of which align with the SNA recommendations and some which are outside its scope. Consideration will be given to referencing their recommendations in the next iteration of the SNA.

Dissemination

A number of actions are planned to disseminate the findings of the SNA including:

- Submission to the Home Office as part of our commitment as a Violence Reduction Unit.
- Presentation to the Strategic Violence Reduction Board with an expectation that Board members will support dissemination in their respective organisations.
- Feedback to stakeholders through tailored presentations as well as sharing a copy of the SNA.
- Publication on the NNVRU website.
- And the production of an 'easy read' version of the SNA to share with local communities.