Serious Violent Crime – Services and Interventions
BACKGROUND

The SSP has developed a whole systems approach to tackling crime and anti social behaviour. Our experience tells us that investing in one type of intervention alone does not resolve the problem. For example, enforcement can only be effective if it is supported by local communities and other activity is taking place to change behaviour. The four tiered Southwark triangle approach consists of:

- **Prevention** - providing a network of diversionary and engagement programmes that can identify those at risk of becoming involved in crime and anti social behaviour
- **Early intervention** - providing educational and partnership support programmes together for those that are known to be on the fringes of crime and anti social behaviour
- **Intensive support and intervention** - structured intensive support for those who are or have been involved crime and anti social behaviour
- **Enforcement** - direct intelligence lead enforcement action focusing on those individuals who are committing crime and anti social behaviour

We ensure successful outcomes at each of the four levels of the intervention; the package of options developed and commissioned ensures successful interventions for individuals, areas or groups. The activities within the programme deliver short, medium and long term outcomes.

Prevention

Public engagement

The SSP has recognised the changing dynamics of gang and weapon culture and has taken a positive community leadership role by working with our communities to deliver an ambitious programme focused on the personal responsibility agenda. Our approach has been to work in partnership to encourage all to take responsibility in playing their role as part of the solution.

The aim is to engage with residents and to raise awareness of the work the SSP is doing to prevent violent crime and gang involvement - enabling residents to take an active role and become leaders in their families and communities.

Information roadshow style events are held at many locations, including shopping centres and community spaces. The roadshows also have a presence at key council events, such as The Mix, the council’s youth festival.

The public engagement campaign has been recognised as best practice – the SSP was a finalist in the Local Government Chronicle awards 2009, in the category of local leadership.

For more information contact Angela d’Urso on 020 7525 0800
Awareness raising sessions

We run awareness raising sessions to make sure staff, partners and residents know the reality of the situation in relation to gang and weapon crime and are aware of the services we deliver to tackle serious violence. The awareness sessions aim to:

- Ensure a unified message across staff and partners
- Dispel myths
- Emphasise responsibility
- Raise awareness of support services
- Recognise those who are parents and raise awareness of what to do as parents

These sessions were well received and evaluated positively. We continue to develop them and they are currently being rolled out to residents of the borough, with sessions now organised for each community council area.

We also have a programme of stakeholder briefings to share information with our partners and community leaders.

For more information contact Nikki Morris on 020 7525 0802

Tackling the sale of knives

To reduce the number of illegal sales of knives, alcohol and cigarettes to young people Southwark trading standards carry out test purchasing operations and other related enforcement activity, as well as delivering education programmes.

Knife Charter Plus, a voluntary agreement between the SSP and traders, seeks to protect children from harm, as well as benefiting the wider community. The charter assists traders to understand their social responsibility and prevent underage sales. Key components of the initiative are been to:

- Support business compliance - including a Proof of Age card scheme (SPA), conflict resolution training and a traders’ award scheme
- Involve key local businesses through breakfast events, attended by local politicians, businesses, council officers and police
- Restrict access by removing knives from shelves and placing them in cabinets or behind the counter
- Encourage tagging of knives and other tools to reduce thefts and provide till alerts for staff
- Produce age-check branded best practice packs for smaller retailers.

The Southwark proof of age card – the SPA card –is London's first PASS approved proof of age card The SPA card is free to all Southwark residents aged 16-23. It includes automatic library membership and discounts, including for driving schools. A cinema advert was developed by young people from a local school to promote the card. The advert is continuing to be shown in Peckham Multiplex cinema, before all screenings.

For more information contact Sally Slade on 020 7525 4260
Community wardens

The community warden scheme works closely and in partnership with their colleagues from partner agencies, community organisations and local voluntary agencies identifying and referring young people at risk.

The warden support schools team work closely with young people, youth clubs and on estates delivering educational workshops on a range of issues i.e. consequences of arson, firework misuse, hoax calls, ASB, personal safety and more.

We have a junior warden scheme. The scheme promotes good citizenship and breaks down barriers between young people and those in authority. 75 young people from around the borough are now junior wardens.

The warden service also has young advisors. Young advisors are used across the council to support project development, design and attend events, youth-proof key documents, promote the voice of young people and participate in decision making processes around youth crime and youth issues. Young advisors have assisted with the development and implementation of a successful programme of workshops, including stop and search sessions with the MPA.

For more information contact the community warden service on 020 7525 5850

Community gangs forum

The community gangs forum aims to develop a better understanding of the concerns of the community and intelligence relating to serious gang violent crime in Southwark or affecting Southwark by the sharing of information. It also identifies effective solutions to address serious gang related violent crime, through prevention and reduction programmes as identified by the community. At its monthly meetings members - including voluntary and community sector partners - exchange information between the community and key partner agencies relating to trends and emerging issues concerning gangs and serious violent crime.

For more information contact Angela d’Urso on 020 7525 0800

Early Intervention

Home visits

We make direct personal contact with young people already involved or at risk of becoming involved in gang activity - a pioneering approach. The visits aim to work with the whole family on understanding the consequences of this behaviour. The aim is to divert the young person to prevent them from becoming involved, raise awareness of the parents and deliver a solution for the whole family.

For more information contact the Jackie McGeever on 020 7525 2282
Advocacy

Southwark has long recognised the valuable role that positive role models can have in people’s lives. Our work through the community gangs forum has helped identify and train local people who can help others exit the violent lifestyle of gangs, or who can prevent violent conflicts between groups or gangs from escalating. We have developed three specific programmes that focus on one to one support and mentoring:

- **Independent serious violence advocates** - working with known gang offenders who are exiting prison and providing intensive one to one support into accommodation, employment and independence or working with Operation Pathways identified gang members to support them should they choose to exit their criminal lifestyle.
- **Capital Conflict Management** – see next section for information
- **Community advocates** - we have identified community based advocates who will be trained to work with and support known gang members. The advocates will work with individual cases, referred either through our home visits programme or through personal contact, or in dedicated areas. The advocates will be critical in establishing local community ownership and creating a structure of support.

For more information contact Jonathon Toy on 020 7525 1479

GATES

From our public meetings and our work with the community gangs forum, a free text alert service and advice line called GATES (Gangs Advice Training and Exit Support service) was set up. It is an ideal way to communicate with young people and parents in Southwark on an ongoing basis and to reach those who don’t engage at public events.

The aim of the helpline is to provide information and support to any resident or professional who has concerns over gang or youth related crime. It also targets gang members who are seeking change and need help to exit. GATES co-ordinates all the available services, allowing for a unified and efficient response to young people and adult’s concerns

The text alert service sends out two free text message alerts a week, providing information on training, events, information and gang and personal safety information, as well as providing access to help and support.

To access the GATES service contact:

Telephone: 0800 458 9109
Text GATES and parent to 82055 (you can use this service as a professional or community member too)

Working in schools

In order to support schools we deliver training to schools officers in relation to the options available to us to support or enforce the behaviour of young people, including the family intervention programme and challenge and support.
We also provide more intensive support to schools should they require it. For example in one school we put together a multi agency group to deal with a number of pupils who were causing serious ASB at the school and in the community. A number of acceptable behaviour contracts were signed and intensive support was put in place via the youth inclusion and support panel.

The community wardens carry out school closure patrols in partnership with the Safer Schools officers and local Safer Neighbourhoods Teams. The patrols:

- Deploy high visible resources at school closure times
- Minimise the risk of youth violence
- Significantly reduce the number of youth victims of violence
- Significantly reduce youth ASB
- Increase engagement with young people
- Provide reassurance to young people, parents/carers and the wider community through visible, familiar and guaranteed deployments

The school patrols cover the schools closure period of 3-5pm on a daily basis. The patrols also cover the area around our key transport hubs and main shopping areas to reassure young people, members of the public and local businesses at these key times - reporting and monitoring and crime and disorder. The warden response team is deployed to hotspot locations, based on intelligence.

Information and intelligence received during the closure patrols is fed back to key partners including police, SASBU, YOS, Victim Support, London Fire Brigade, cleansing, CCTV etc. Safeguarding issues are forwarded to children's social care and educational welfare.

For more information contact the Jackie McGeever on 020 7525 2282

**Intensive intervention**

**SERVE**

SERVE (Southwark Rehousing Victims of Violence Enterprise) is a pilot scheme. It provides safe accommodation within 14 days for people at serious risk of violence associated with gang or weapon related crime. It was launched in March 2009 in partnership with a number of registered social landlords (RSLs).

SERVE means people who are in danger in and around their home can move into a safe property in a different area for up to 12 weeks.

SERVE is primarily intended to ensure and provide safety, refuge and support. People using the SERVE scheme are in danger for a variety of reasons – they may be at risk of violence or retribution from a gang because they are, or know, a victim or suspect of gang crime.

During the family’s stay the SSP helps them to plan their next steps and secure a long term housing solution. Victim Support Southwark works with the whole family to help them. Mentoring for perpetrators (if also moved) is provided by specialist agencies.

For more information contact Pauline Campbell on 020 7525 2282
Gangs disruption team

The gangs disruption team provides information and support for pupils, teachers and parents about the consequences of violent behavior. The team’s outcomes include:

- Reducing and preventing young people’s involvement in crime
- Reducing re-offending
- Effecting a sustained impact on youth gang-related offending
- Reducing knife-enabled crime within the borough
- Impacting upon levels of anti-social behaviour by young people.

The gangs disruption team delivers a range of educational and seasonal programmes in schools. Training is provided to school staff to enable them to deliver the workshops in the future. The team was also requested to attend citizenship days at some secondary schools - 378 young people attended the workshops, with a focus on gangs and the issues for young people. The gangs disruption team also worked with parents as part of the parenting programme delivery.

The gangs disruption team also carries out individual work with known offenders and those at risk of offending where there was concern about gang association. Direct work is undertaken by the team with the resettlement and aftercare provision and the intensive surveillance and supervision programme client groups.

For more information contact 020 7525 0900 / 7875

Little Miss Raw

The Little Miss Raw (LMR) programme is an intensive counselling intervention targeted at young women involved or at risk of becoming involved in serious violence. The aim of the LMR programme was to create a space for safe and constructive introspection, allowing participants to develop a strong sense of identity while coaching them towards success.

LMR uses creative therapeutic techniques to demonstrate the connection between feelings, thoughts and actions, and draws on the principles of life coaching in ongoing goal-setting challenges to initiate cycles of achievement. This builds young peoples confidence and motivates them to explore educational and employment aspirations.

For more information contact Angela d’Urso on 020 7525 0800

Captial Conflict Mediation

The SSP supported the establishment of an innovative gangs mediation service, the first service of its kind in London. CCM targets gang or group related serious violence and sends mediators to prevent retribution or retaliation, or prevent any issues developing further into physical conflict.

CCM has trained local community mediators to be able to work between two groups or gangs to stop the escalation of violence, as well as undertake long term proactive work to ensure conflict does not arise in the first place.

For more information contact Asia Bhatti on 020 7525 7246
SOS ‘through the gates’

The SOS project addresses the need for 'through the gates' social support for prisoners aged 18-25 leaving young offender’s institutes or prisons and returning to Southwark. SOS provides support and stabilises offender's lives, thus increasing the likelihood of rehabilitation and reduced re-offending. The project addresses the fact that though many offenders engage well with services in prison this rarely translates to engagement with community based resources upon release.

For more information contact Evan Jones St Giles on 020 7703 7000

Enforcement

Operation Hamrow

Operation Hamrow is a partnership intelligence sharing operation. Partners involved in Operation Hamrow include the police, YOS, SASBU and probation. Information shared by these partners is critical to ensure success.

Operation Hamrow targets individuals who are involved in serious gang or weapon related violence by making overt contact with them and utilising a range of disruption tactics. The aim is to prevent serious violence from occurring as well as strong enforcement where it does.

For more information contact Southwark Police on 020 7232 6654

Operation Pathways

Southwark is one of three pilot boroughs for Operation Pathways in London. Operation Pathways is based upon a model developed in America and used in Boston, Cincinnati and several other states to tackle gang related violence.

Operation Pathways is a community oriented, multi-agency programme of focused deterrence, which aims to reduce gang-related violence. There are three strands to the Operation Pathways model:

1. Community voice (local communities being clear that they do not want gang activity and reinforcing the Operation Pathways approach)
2. Help for those who ask (allowing violent individuals an exit strategy from their current lifestyle)
3. Consequences for violence (identifying and focusing enforcement on those gangs involved in violent offences)

For more information contact Asia Bhatti on 020 7525 7246