

Strategic Assessment 2015
Technical report: Evidence Base
Public Summary

Community Safety
Health Equity, Welfare & Partnerships
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Strategic Assessment: Public Summary

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Aim

The strategic assessment (SA) is a statutory requirement for community safety partnerships as outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The aim of this SA is to provide an account of long-term issues and threats from crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) across Lancashire¹. This SA is produced on a 3-year cycle, which increases capacity to develop partnership intelligence assessments on significant threats, issues and gaps in knowledge. These assessments provide extensive research and understanding of strategic issues.

Purpose

The purpose of this SA is to highlight significant crime and ASB threats and issues that impact on community safety. It is the key evidence base that supports the community safety agreement, local partnership plans, the policing and crime plan and the Constabulary control strategy. Research, study and analysis draw out key conclusions to aid strategic decision-making in developing control measures to reduce the threat and harm from crime and ASB.

This is a summary of the Pan-Lancashire Strategic Assessment. For further detail the reader may wish to consult the *full* version. The full version is a concise account of key strategic issues impacting across the county. The strategic assessment district profiles and partnership intelligence assessments provide a more in-depth understanding of localised and thematic issues. These are referenced appropriately.

In addition, there is the new serious and organised crime local profile, which provides detail on organised crime groups and gangs and the impact of their activity within the local

¹ Lancashire in this document refers to pan-Lancashire, which includes LCC and 14 local authority areas.

communities. The local profile is a new addition based on Home Office guidance for police and community safety partners. Key conclusions from the local profile are included in this assessment.

This assessment does not provide an exhaustive account of all threats and issues: the Counter Terrorist Unit (at Lancashire Constabulary) produce a separate assessment that details the threats and issues from terrorism and extremist activity.

It is not the purpose of this assessment to provide a commentary on performance or management information.

Method

This SA is the result of 6 months research, analysis, engagement and consultation with key stakeholders, community safety partner agencies and all 14 local authorities. The process commenced with a stakeholder conference (April 2015) and has been followed by 6 area² workshop consultations (held between May and August 2015), project steering group meetings and additional local authority (local CSP) consultation meetings. The assessment has also been through a critical review by its project steering group.

The Living in Lancashire questionnaire has been used to survey the residents of Lancashire as to their concerns regarding crime, ASB and community safety. This has been supported by research from PACT (Police and communities Together) panels.

This assessment is accompanied by 14 local SA district profiles that detail significant issues in each area of the county. The local assessments are supported by a strategic matrix that has ranked threats and issues (based on local research, evidence and consultation).

Existing partnership intelligence assessments, joint strategic needs assessments (JSNA) and local analytical profiles have been used to provide supporting evidence, additional research and analysis. These are listed in the bibliography.

The date parameters for trend analysis are April 2012 to March 2015, unless otherwise stated.

² Police divisional areas (also known as BCU – Basic Command Unit)

Main findings

This assessment provides an evidence base that will help prioritise resources to work with marginalised populations: those who have problematic lifestyles, issues with alcohol and drugs, health problems, incarceration, involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) and other related issues. It is only through multi agency collaboration that services can deliver interventions that are effective and sustained in addressing these complex issues and improving outcomes for people in Lancashire.

The challenging context for this collaborative approach is a period of unprecedented and sustained change across all public services, which is having considerable impact on the capacity to meet the growing demand and needs of vulnerable people in Lancashire.

This assessment highlights some of the key areas and risks across Lancashire that requires multi-agency engagement to improve safeguarding, reduce vulnerability, and ultimately reduce crime and ASB.

1. The top crime and anti-social behaviour categories impacting across the county are:
 - 1.1. **Violence against the person** (predominantly wounding (also known as GBH), assault with less serious injury (ABH), sexual assaults, rape and robbery – all of which account for significant harm to the victim and within the local community).
 - 1.2. **Domestic abuse** (DA) is an issue for all areas of Lancashire. Despite a decreasing trend of DA incidents, the last 12 months have experienced a significant increase in repeat MARAC cases, along with an increasing trend of MARAC cases being discussed.
 - 1.3. **Child sexual exploitation** (CSE). The risk of CSE varies across the county. It is clear from the available data and improving intelligence picture, that social care, education and public health have a key role to play in understanding and tackling CSE. In particular, data from across these key areas can be used to identify potential cases early. Factor analysis was inconclusive and suggests that there are no significant variables that stand out in CSE referral cases, thus, demonstrating the complexities with CSE cases. However, problematic parenting and family structure were noted as significant issues in many CSE referral case notes.
 - 1.4. **Anti-social behaviour** (ASB) continues to be an issue for pan-Lancashire (noise nuisance, problems between neighbours and repeat incidents). Whilst the overall volume has been decreasing (as reported to the police), ASB shows seasonal trends that rise through the summer. Additionally, the volume of ASBRAC (anti-social behaviour risk assessment conference) cases remains high.
 - 1.5. **Road safety**: the last two years have experienced an increase in KSI casualties. The trend in KSI casualties is mirrored by the casualty records for pedal cyclists, 65+ year olds and to a lesser extent by 0-15 year old KSI casualties. The criminal

use of road networks and ASB on roads also presents road safety issues, targeting of which can have a positive impact on collisions.

However, by utilising an alternative approach to analysis through the Cambridge Harm Index³, the key categories causing the most harm in the community are rape, wounding, sexual offences, assault with less serious injury and robbery.

2. The main contributory factors in the commission of crime and for increased risk of victimisation are:

2.1. **Alcohol harm** (particularly in respect of serious violent crime). Alcohol increases the risk of injury in violent crime and alcohol-related violent crime is statistically significant near licensed premises. Alcohol harm has been noted as an issue in families on the Working Together with Families (WTwF) programme, in cases of domestic abuse and for increasing risk of reoffending.

2.2. The harmful effects of **drug use / misuse**. Whilst chaotic opiate use is in decline, there is an increase in cannabis use among young people. Intelligence suggests that there is a significant link between illicit tobacco markets and cannabis cultivation and supply within the county. These two areas are also linked to wider serious and organised criminality issues within the county.

There is a significant threat from new psychoactive substances (NPS). NPS pose a threat due to the lack of intelligence as to how widespread its use is and the impact on health services due to varying chemical composition of NPS, particularly when an individual has suffered adverse effects or an overdose.

2.3. **Reoffending** remains an issue (significant *pathways* include alcohol, drugs and housing). Those most at risk of reoffending are those that are on community orders (particularly within 3 months of being given the order), those who have been on cohort caseloads for less than 3 months and those who have been on short sentences. Interestingly, analysis of the WTwF data showed that households with adults with a proven offence were more likely to have a child with an offence.

3. Research since the last SA has further added the following determinants that influence offending and vulnerability:

3.1 **Deprivation and social inequality**. Analysis of families on the Working Together with Families (WTwF) programme noted that the more deprived wards contained a higher rate of families. This is to be expected based on the initial methods used to determine the number of families that each area had to work with. However, evaluation of local

³ The Cambridge Crime Harm Index or CHI (Sherman, L et al (2015) *The Cambridge Harm Index*) works on the principle that all crimes are not equal in terms of harm, e.g. 1 murder has a greater impact than 1 shoplifting offence. Crime types are given a weighting based on sentence structure for a first offence. To calculate the harm score, the number of offences is multiplied by the harm score for that crime type, e.g. weighting for arson = 33, weighting for rape = 1825.

families found that needs were more complex than the national criteria used to govern which families should be worked with. Parenting difficulties (also a key factor in CSE referrals) were identified in 61% of families. Furthermore, parenting problems were associated with social care issues, education and depression.

- 3.2 **Mental health:** There is a danger of simply listing MH as a risk factor without sound research, as MH issues are broad and complex. However, research has evidenced that those with MH issues are more vulnerable to being a victim of crime or ASB and those who are repeatedly victimised are vulnerable to developing MH issues. In addition, a sample of data from WTWF showed that a quarter of children from families on the WTWF programme were believed to have MH issues. MH issues were noted in families with parenting difficulties, which increased the risk of a child with an ASB intervention.
4. The application of the Cambridge Harm Index (CHI, see page 13 for more details) has been used to improve how this assessment understands the harm from crime. Developing knowledge of crime and harm within local communities has long been a goal for CSPs. CHI research argues that the greatest count of crimes (mostly criminal damage, theft and common assaults) do not create the greatest harm within the community, and only a small percentage of crime is responsible for the greatest percentage of harm (to victims and communities). CHI shows that when using a weighting (based on sentencing structure), the crimes with the greatest harm include: wounding, rape, sexual offences, assaults with injury and robbery. These five categories account for 18% of the *crime count* but equate to 86% of *crime harm*.
 5. The key threats from **serious and organised crime** are the distribution and supply of drugs, violence between organised crime groups / gangs and the exploitation of vulnerable people, the latter of which has a limited intelligence picture, but a growing one. The impact of cross border offending remains a significant issue, especially in relation to the three main threats.
 6. The threat from modern slavery (including exploitation and trafficking of vulnerable people) has been shown as a knowledge gap. There is growing intelligence regarding this type of activity across Lancashire, but the extent of this activity unknown. Work has already commenced to understand the threats and issues from modern slavery within Lancashire.
 7. Census data shows that Lancashire has a growing and aging population with just over 40% of the population in the county over 50 years old. The main age group with an increased propensity towards being an offender of crime is 15-24 year olds. This age group is set to decrease over the next five years. How this impacts on the rate of crime is unclear at present, as there are a number of variables that influence crime rates.

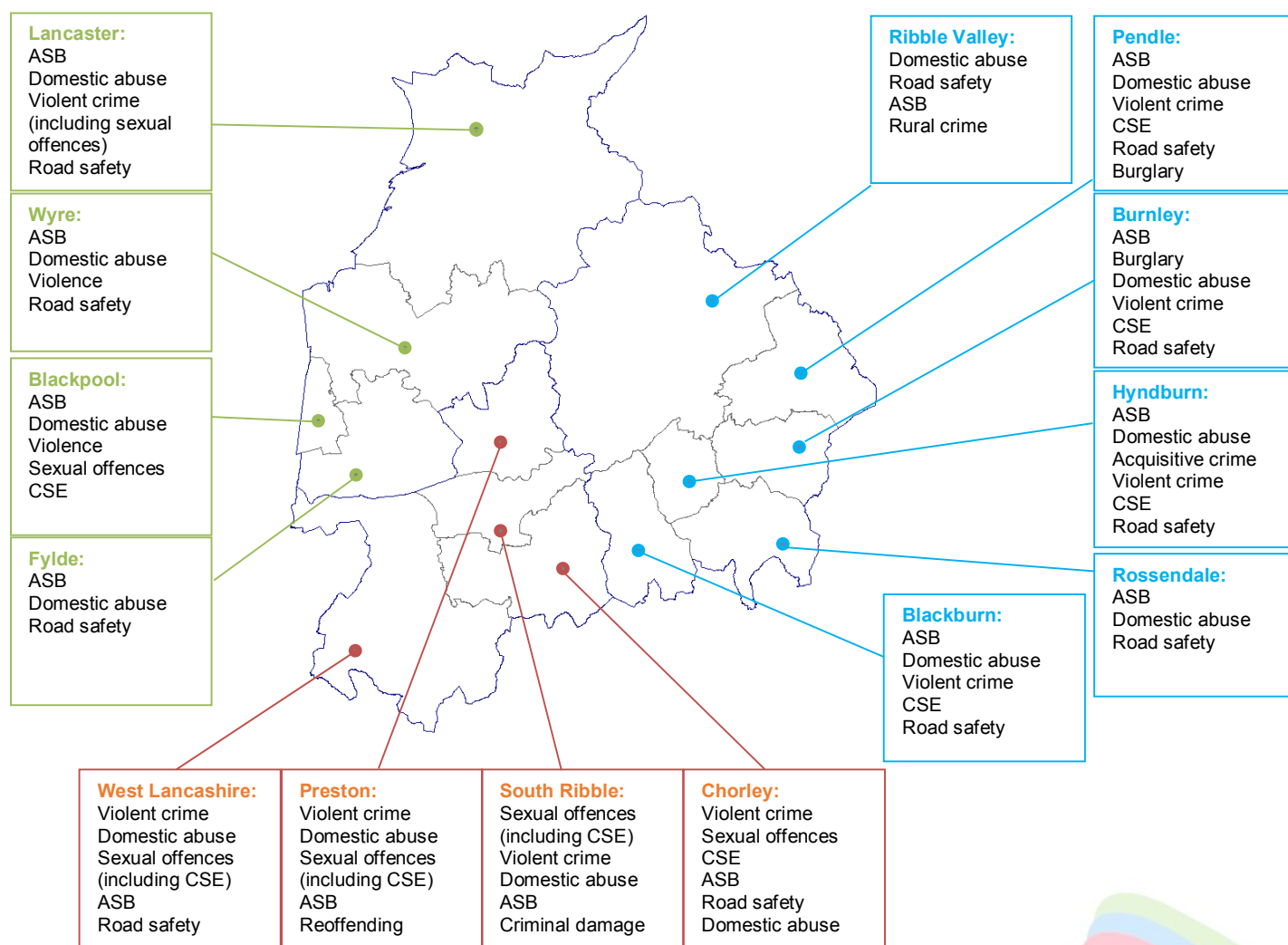
With all age groups over 70 years old expected to increase over the next 5 years, there is potential for an increase in demand from elderly groups.

Please note that there is significant variation of the impact from key age groups as offenders and victims of crime across the county. These variations are detailed in the SA district profiles.

8. The socio-demographic analysis of Lancashire recorded victims were typified by a high financial dependency on the state, low car ownership, above average fear of crime and in poor health.

Strategic assessment district profiles: key issues on a district footprint

The following map and list of local authority community safety issues are taken from the strategic assessment district profiles that support this pan-Lancashire assessment.



Recommendations / areas for further development

1. The strategic assessment has identified a number of areas where evidence is either limited or where there are significant gaps to developing knowledge around threat and risk. Therefore, it is recommended that the following areas are prioritised as part of the partnership intelligence assessment work plan:
 - 1.1. Mental health and the impact on victims and offending behaviour (to improve the use of data and intelligence and support early help and victim services),
 - 1.2. Modern slavery, exploitation and trafficking of vulnerable people: to develop the intelligence picture, understand the impact across the county,
 - 1.3. New psychoactive substances: to develop the picture of the risk and threat from NPS across Lancashire,
 - 1.4. ASB: developing intelligence and targeting of ASBRAC cases on a pan-Lancashire footprint to direct victim services and local CSP activity,
 - 1.5. Sexual offending: understanding the risk, threat and vulnerability to support safeguarding, public protection and early help initiatives,
 - 1.6. Illicit tobacco and links to criminal groups and community harm (this should sit under the governance of the serious and organised crime partnership group),
 - 1.7. Road safety: collisions, casualties, the criminal use of roads and road user behaviour (this should be under the governance by the road safety management board and the work undertaken by the road safety intelligence analyst and coordinator),
 - 1.8. Crime and harm: understanding the key elements of repeat victimisation, recidivism and the most harmful crimes and ASB (this would be completed through local CSP tactical assessments).
2. It is recommended that this assessment is used to evidence and support the following strategies and strategic action plans:
 - The Community Safety Agreement (LCC community safety as part of Health Equity, Welfare and Partnerships),
 - The Policing and Crime Plan (the Police and Crime Commissioner),
 - Lancashire Constabulary Control Strategy,
 - Local Authority Partnership Plans (additionally supported by the SA district profiles).
3. Road safety continues to be identified as a strategic issue across the county. The appointment of a dedicated analyst and coordinator will help improve knowledge on

the risk of collisions and casualties. Road safety and road related issues also feature at PACT (police and communities together) meetings. It is recommended that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) incorporate road safety in to the Policing and Crime plan.

4. Ensuring that key risks are targeted through commissioned services and funded projects will ensure that areas of threat to community safety are improved. It is recommended that the PCC support, through the Policing and Crime Plan, changes / commissioning for alcohol and drug services.
5. It is clear that health and socio-demographic factors play an integral part in increasing the risk of being a victim and offender of crime. Therefore, early help initiatives should use the evidence base within this assessment to direct activity and targeting.
6. The strategic assessment is on a 3-year cycle, which has improved capacity to develop the partnership intelligence assessment work-plan. These assessments improve the intelligence picture of threats and issues across the county and support operational activity. To continually improve this picture it is recommended that the 14 local authorities adopt the strategic matrix as part of the strategic assessment evaluation and maintain an action plan with in the matrix on a 6 monthly basis. This will improve future strategic intelligence and help the writing of local partnership plans.
7. Many threats and issues are shared across Lancashire. Strategic services and commissioning bodies should concentrate on collaborative and coordinated services and strategies to tackle the key risks and issues evidenced in this assessment. This will, in the long-term, target vulnerability, risk and harm to individuals.

Perceptions of crime

The Living in Lancashire survey (wave 48) included a series of community safety questions similar that have been used to survey the residents of Lancashire. This has been compared to similar questions used in 2014 (wave 42). Key findings are included below.

- ▶ Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and gangs of youths are the most cited reasons that make people feel unsafe. As well as this, fewer people think ASB is being dealt with compared to crime. Feeling unsafe has been shown to increase feelings of anxiety and can lead to issues with repeat victimisation. To tackle this, CSPs need to develop methods of developing community spirit and good relations between neighbours (which are reasons that people feel safe in areas) in areas where people feel unsafe. Tackling significant ASB issues will have a positive impact on fear of crime and feelings of safety.
- ▶ Theft from gardens, sheds etc. (burglary other than in a dwelling) is considered as the biggest community safety issue in local areas by respondents. However, interestingly, the volume of burglary other than in a dwelling is significantly decreasing.
- ▶ When looking at respondents' perceptions of the root causes of crime, all aspects⁴ have lowered with the exception of mental health. While there is wider research suggesting that mental health issues can be related to crime, at the time this survey there were a number of media reports linking mental health and crime which may have affected response.
- ▶ Deprived areas in Lancashire have a particular problem with community safety. On the whole people in these areas are less satisfied with their area, more likely to feel unsafe in their area, feel the level of crime is worse in their area than other areas of Lancashire and have bigger issues with ASB. This correlates with research and analysis within the SA district profiles.
- ▶ Signal crimes, disorders or incidents⁵ are those that people may interpret as warning signs about levels of risk in their local community. From a community safety perspective examples of these issues could include dog fouling, fly-tipping, cleanliness of streets, vandalism and deliberate fire setting. The latest survey noted that many districts reported dog fouling, street cleanliness and fly-tipping as issues. This can also impact on feelings of safety but can be used by local CSPs to target specific areas.

⁴ These include drugs, alcohol, unemployment, repeat offending, poverty and gang membership.

⁵ Innes, M (2004) *Signal crimes and signal disorders: notes on deviance as communicative action*

Crime, ASB and key determinants

Significant factors impacting on crime rates:

Alcohol

The cost of alcohol to Lancashire services is £664m, with crime and licensing being responsible for £207m of this. The cost per head equates to £143 in Lancashire compared to £137 against the national average. Alcohol increases the risk of injury in violent crime and alcohol-related violence correlates with the location of licensed premises.

Drug misuse:

Cannabis is prevalent amongst young people, which contribute to over half of drug offences. Numbers in treatment for opiate use have fallen, but opiate (and cannabis) use are the most common drugs contributing to offending behaviour. Hospital admissions for substance misuse are significantly worse than the national average.

Reoffending

Those most at risk of reoffending are those that are on community orders, those who have been on caseloads for less than 3 months and those who have been on short sentences. Significant issues for those at risk of reoffending are: alcohol, drugs and housing.

Inferred issues and risks

Drugs: NPS

There has been an increase in the number of new psychoactive substances across the UK. New substances continue to be introduced on a regular basis. There is a significant intelligence gap in the use and impact of NPS in the county.

Mental Health

Mental health (MH) issues can increase the risk of being a repeat victim of crime and ASB. MH issues in a sample of Lancashire troubled families cohort were double the national rate for adults and children. MH was also been a factor in family histories of CSE referrals.

Key findings for crime and ASB threat

Violence against the person

The most significant harm categories under violent crime (violence with injury), sexual assaults and rape have increasing trends. Only the serious assault categories are decreasing, but these make a large proportion of the greatest harm to victims. There is an increased risk of repeat victimisation for those that suffer significant trauma from violent crime.

Domestic abuse

Overall, domestic incidents are decreasing, but the number of repeat cases and MARAC caseloads are increasing. Domestic abuse remains an issue in all local authorities.

Child sexual exploitation

CSE remains an issue across the county. Research shows that CSE referrals are highly likely to have appeared within social care data at some point; two thirds having been registered as a child in need. Exclusions and unauthorised absence from education feature highly in cases, along with missing from home episodes and poor family structures.

Anti-social behaviour

The trend for ASB is a seasonal one that peaks in summer. The overall volume of ASB has seen reductions. However, ASB remains one of the top ranked issues in all districts. Districts report that the volume of ASBRACs has not reduced in line with ASB levels.

Road safety

Road safety has been highlighted as an issue across most of the districts. There have been annual increases in KSI casualties over the past 2 years (mostly pedal cyclists, older casualties (65+yrs) and younger casualties (0-15yrs).