This strategy outlines Hertfordshire’s plans for reducing the harm caused by serious violence to individuals, families and communities in Hertfordshire.

It has been informed by the Hertfordshire Serious Violence Needs Assessment which was completed in 2018 and provided a comprehensive overview of issues relating to serious violence in Hertfordshire.

The strategy and delivery plan will take a whole system approach, from prevention to enforcement with a focus on early intervention.
What are the issues?

Nationally, the term ‘serious violent crime’ covers a wide range of criminal offences including but not limited to knife crime, robbery, homicide, domestic abuse and criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults\(^1\).

In Hertfordshire, the focus of this strategy is on knife crime, gangs and cross border drug dealing known as ‘county lines’.

Committing serious violent crime harmfully impacts on individuals, children, families and communities throughout the county.

Harm include knife related injuries, exploitation of young people and vulnerable adults, increased fear of crime, adverse childhood experiences\(^2\) and breakdown of familial and social relationships.

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\(^1\)HM Government, Serious Violence Strategy, April 2018.

\(^2\)Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s) are events that children are exposed to during childhood including but not limited to abuse (verbal, physical and/or sexual) both experienced and exposed to, early trauma, living with substance misusing parents.
Hertfordshire’s Serious Violence strategy is central to reducing harm:

- Nationally, Police figures show that knife crime is at its highest level for seven years.
- In Hertfordshire, domestic abuse related knife crime accounts for 20% of all recorded knife crimes; alcohol related are 15% and drugs related are 5%.
- Hospital admissions for knife injuries have increased for the over 18’s in Hertfordshire in the last five years.
- The majority of victims and perpetrators are males aged 18-29.
- There is evidence that county lines activity takes place in Hertfordshire and county line operators live in the county.

The general principles of this strategy and delivery plan are:

- All interventions will be based on evidence of effectiveness from national or local research, national guidelines or policy.
- Successful outcomes are dependent on successful joint working.
- Good quality information sharing across all agencies, including those outside of Hertfordshire, is vital in ensuring that priority groups have the necessary intervention at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The Delivery Plan will be reviewed annually.

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In Hertfordshire we will work together to achieve the following five priority outcomes:

1. A reduction in the number of people carrying and using knives in Hertfordshire (Prevention).
2. Young People receive intervention as early as possible to stop them becoming involved in gangs and serious violence (Early Intervention).
3. People (those who are over 18) receive intervention as early as possible to stop them becoming involved in gangs and serious violence (Early Intervention).
4. People already involved in gangs, county lines activity and committing serious violence will receive the right support (Reactive Intervention).
5. Knife crime and county lines criminality will be tackled robustly (Enforcement).
How will we make this happen?

We have senior level commitment to work together to tackle serious violence in Hertfordshire from the following countywide boards who are responsible for achieving the actions in the delivery plan.

• Community Safety Board.
• Domestic Abuse Executive Board.
• Drug and Alcohol Strategic Board.
• Integrated Offender Management Board.
• Safeguarding Adults Board.
• Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Board.

All priority outcomes should be considered to be long term across the whole of Hertfordshire, particularly in relation to prevention and early intervention.
Our Vision and Priority outcomes

We will work together to reduce the harm caused by serious violence in Hertfordshire. We will seek to safeguard children, young people and adults from criminal exploitation and identify victims, to ensure access to appropriate interventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>How will we measure the successes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A reduction in the number of people carrying and using knives in Hertfordshire.</td>
<td>The number of recorded knife Crimes (Data Source: Police)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Young People receive intervention as early as possible to stop them becoming involved in gangs and serious violence.</td>
<td>Number of young people who have received an intervention (Data Source: TBC)</td>
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<td>Number of outcomes for habitual knife carriers (Data Source: Police, Probation, BENCH)</td>
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