

THAMES VALLEY

**VIOLENCE
PREVENTION**

PARTNERSHIP

Thames Valley
Violence Prevention
Partnership

Highlight Report

Delivery year 2023 – 2024
Q4 Jan/Feb

Published April 2024

Figures do not include March

Foreword

by Jules Bottazzi, Head of the Thames Valley Violence Prevention Partnership

Colleagues,

Welcome to the April quarterly report, produced to coincide with our Strategy Board – and, for the very first time, I’m able to call this document the **Violence Prevention Partnership Highlight Report**, as we complete and launch our rebrand.

I’d like to thank all of you who responded to our consultation in December when we democratically decided on a new name, and gave our thoughts on a revised vision statement, core function, underpinning principles and operating model. We have collated your feedback and with consideration have adjusted the wording to reflect these views, all of which has now been approved by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

I’m delighted with our new name as it gives a better reflection of who we are: a partnership across the whole of the Thames Valley, dedicated to using a public health, preventative approach to tackle the root causes of serious violence, all enabled and evaluated by a core programme team housed in the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner.

It will take some time to get used to, but I ask that as members of the VPP, you try to help reinforce the rebrand by updating any local resources and your own language too.

In January, the PCC’s new Thames Valley System Leaders’ Summit met for the first time and members agreed to continue to meet twice a year. This will give a top level of governance to the Serious Violence Duty oversight, ensuring that this vital work is kept on the radar of our most senior leaders.

Since the last Strategy Board meeting, we’ve met the deadline for submitting the 2024–25 delivery plan to the Home Office; this is the third year of the previously agreed three-year plan which nevertheless needs to be resubmitted annually to account for minor changes, such as the cessation of the Custody Volunteers programme.

Many of you will have seen the Chancellor’s announcement that £75million over three years was earmarked for VRUs in the Spring Budget. It appears this would be split between existing VRU areas and to set up VRUs in new areas, so it is unclear exactly what proportion might come Thames Valley’s way. I will, of course, update the partnership as I hear more.

Best wishes,

Jules Bottazzi

Head of the Thames Valley
Violence Prevention Partnership



VPP interventions & wider programme activities

| Intervention | Summary | Area |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hospital Navigators | Trained volunteers offer support in A&E to those admitted in risky circumstances | All Thames Valley through the five A&E sites |
| Custody Coaches | Youth workers work with those in police custody, offering ongoing mentoring and support | Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Berkshire (not Buckinghamshire) |
| Custody Navigator Volunteers | Volunteers work with those in police custody to offer short-term support & signposting | Oxfordshire (Abingdon) and Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury) |
| Schools Navigators | Youth workers in schools provide 1-2-1 mentoring and social skills support to children at risk of exclusion | Milton Keynes |
| Focused Deterrence | Support-first, social care-led model of diversion, supported by police enforcement | Milton Keynes |
| Sports & Inclusion | “Sports Plus” activities, providing positive sports and inclusion activities accompanied by mentoring and education | Six projects in Oxford, Milton Keynes, Reading, Slough and High Wycombe |
| Operation Paramount | Partnership between Thames Valley Police and charity Children Heard & Seen, improving support for families following parental imprisonment | Rolling out to all of Thames Valley |
| ‘Stay True to You’ behaviour change resources | Research and development of new behavioural change approaches and resources for practitioners, parents, young people | All Thames Valley |
| Family Drug & Alcohol Court | Working with the Centre for Justice Innovation to establish an FDAC in Berkshire | Berkshire |
| Sustainable Training | Supporting partners with training needs associated with violence prevention | All Thames Valley |
| Thames Valley Together | A partnership programme working to develop a multi-agency data-sharing platform and analytical products | All Thames Valley |







At a glance – all VPP intervention delivery

1643

Total individuals engaged
so far in 2023/2024

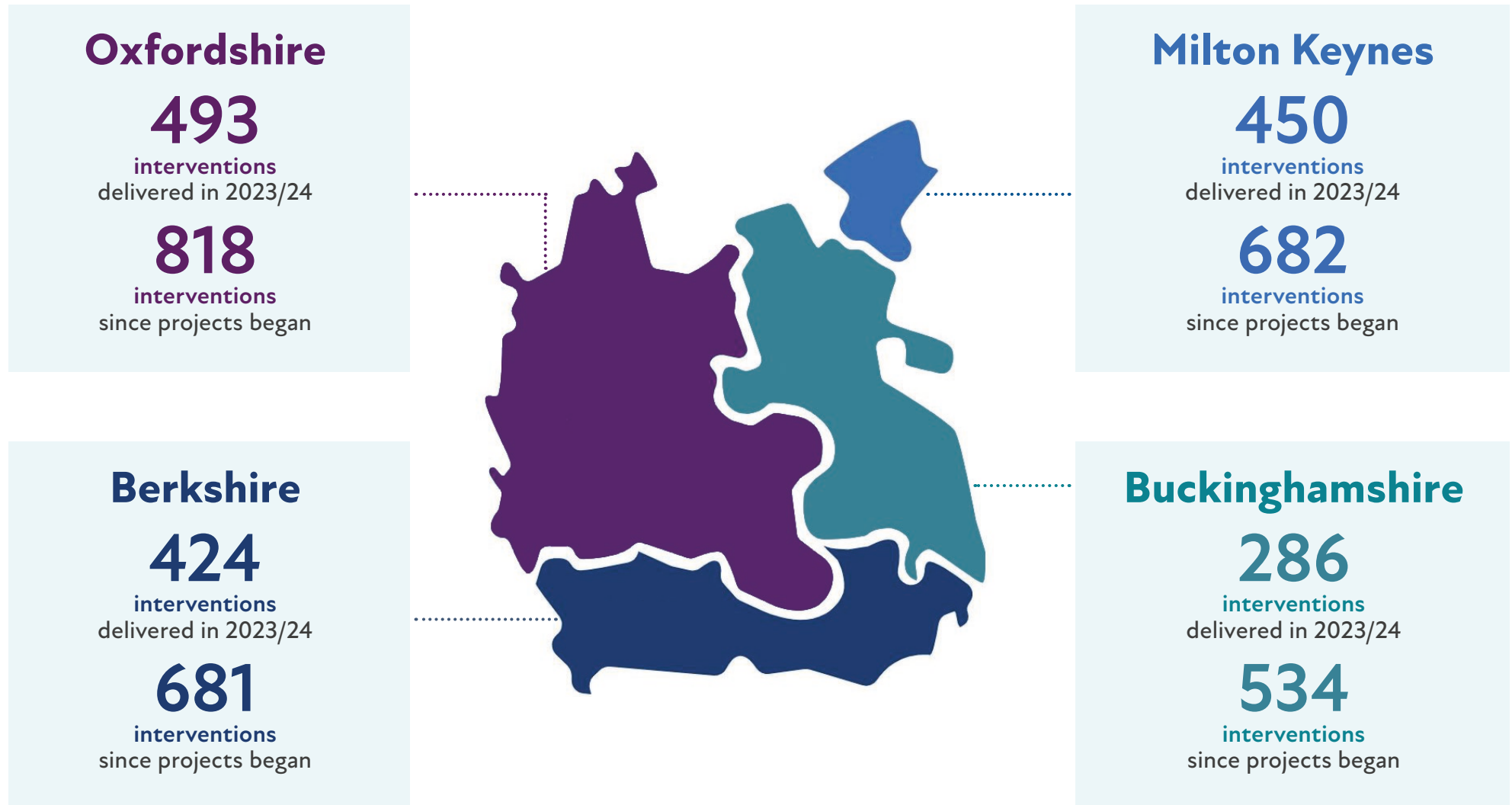
2723

Total individuals engaged
since projects began

| Intervention | Delivery 2023/2024 | Since projects began |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|  Hospital Navigators | 693 | 1181 |
|  Custody interventions | 580 | 858 |
|  Schools Navigators | 99 | 303 |
|  Focused Deterrence | 65 | 65 |
|  Sports & Inclusion | 127 | 208 |
|  Operation Paramount | 155 | 236 |

Note: Count is of individuals engaged. Custody is both Coaches & Volunteers counts combined. Sports and FD programmes retain individuals over time. Paramount is count of referrals made to Children Heard & Seen.

At a glance – VPP intervention delivery in local areas



VPP intervention updates

The following pages provide updates on those interventions funded by the VPP from the Home Office grant.



Intervention update

Hospital Navigators

Our longest running VPP intervention, covering the whole Thames Valley through the five A&E departments.

We work with five voluntary sector providers to deliver the schemes in their local hospitals, including:

- YMCA MK (Milton Keynes)
- 7Roadlight (Aylesbury)
- Oxfordshire Youth (Oxford)
- Starting Point (Reading)
- Together As One (Slough)

| By hospital site | Delivery 23/24 | Delivery since project began |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Milton Keynes | 163 | 239 |
| Buckinghamshire | 211 | 445 |
| Oxfordshire | 21 | 73 |
| Berkshire – Reading | 66 | 150 |
| Berkshire – Slough | 232 | 274 |

The Hospital Navigators intervention continues across the four established hospital sites in Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, Reading and Slough.

Oxfordshire Youth, having recently taken on the service at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, is now recruiting a coordinator to lead the recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers. It is hoped that the scheme will be operational in April.

Oxford Brookes University has completed its evaluation of the intervention and the report will be published after the April Strategy Board meeting.

Discussion continues with key partners on the longer-term sustaining of the individual schemes, including a positive meeting with representatives of the BOB ICB and public health colleagues.

On 12 June, Oxford Brookes University will host an event to present the findings of their evaluation, celebrate the achievements of the scheme and discuss sustainability. Further details available from Inspector Kelly Read, project coordinator. Kelly.reed@thamesvalley.police.uk



Intervention update

Custody interventions

Two separate interventions use the point of arrest and detention to create a “reachable moment” when support is offered which aims to address any wider circumstances that may drive offending.

Custody Coaches are trained youth workers offering immediate support to address harmful behaviours and life circumstances, providing an enduring mentoring role.

Coaches from MK Dons Sports & Education Trust and Reading FC Community Trust are operational in three custody suites covering Milton Keynes and Berkshire.

Due to challenges in meeting the requirements of the contract, Aspire is no longer in a position to deliver the Custody Coaches intervention in Oxfordshire. We will not be seeking an alternative provider and will reinvest the funds into other VPP intervention activity.

| By custody suite | Delivery 23/24 | Delivery since project began |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Milton Keynes | 35 | 35 |
| Berkshire – Loddon Valley | 59 | 78 |
| Berkshire – Maidenhead | 48 | 53 |

Custody Navigator Volunteers and their coordinator offer short-term, immediate support and signposting into appropriate services. While the VPP will no longer fund the intervention next year, Thames Valley Police will be continuing to employ the scheme’s coordinator and will move the project under its Criminal Justice / custody portfolio, allowing it to continue in Abingdon and Aylesbury.

| By custody suite | Delivery 23/24 | Delivery since project began |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Oxfordshire – Abingdon | 397 | 651 |
| Buckinghamshire – Aylesbury | 41 | 41 |



Intervention update

Schools Navigators

The original concept to the Schools Navigators programme began with a model implemented in 2022-2023 and included four schools in Reading and six in Milton Keynes through two providers, Starting Point and SOFEA.

It has since been re-designed to allow for a more robust randomised-control trial evaluation and is being delivered only in Milton Keynes by SOFEA, working with four new schools, chosen for the programme in liaison with the local partnership.

Data from Milton Keynes shows that 70% of children suspended go on to be suspended again, with clear links between exclusion from school and wider vulnerabilities and poor outcomes.

Schools Navigators are working to prevent additional exclusion or a reduction in frequency. Since the start of the academic year, SOFEA's four youth workers continue to offer up to six weekly mentoring sessions for young people referred by the school at their first suspension.

With nearly 100 young people now worked with across the four schools SOFEA have remarked on the strong support and engagement from all of the schools.

Mentors have seen a significant need in schools for those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). For those with mild ADHD or similar, the mentors have found ways to help them improve their concentration such as using mazes etc.

A youth work approach, breaking down barriers, removing any disciplinary perceptions and offering support with self-esteem and realistic goal setting continue to have a positive impact.

It is hoped that the evaluation will provide evidence from the first academic year in the late summer.

| 2022/2023: | Number of young people engaged: |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Reading (Starting Point) | 100 |
| Milton Keynes (SOFEA) | 104 |
| Total | 204 |

| 2023/2024: | Number of young people engaged: |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| St Paul's Catholic School | 33 |
| Leon Academy | 16 |
| Watling Academy | 30 |
| Radcliff School | 20 |
| Total | 99 |



Intervention update

Focused Deterrence

First launching in February 2023, this Milton Keynes partnership project targets those under 25 who habitually carry a weapon/knife and have also committed violent or sexual offences. Primarily implemented by the Milton Keynes Council's Contextual Safeguarding Team, working with Thames Valley Police.

The two case workers continue to design a tailored support offer, drawing on a range of different programmes/activities. Alongside this, the young person is notified that there will be police intervention if they continue offending despite the level of support they are receiving.

Running alongside is Thames Valley Police targeted disruption and enforcement activity. This takes place concurrently to the support/diversion, but weighted to be felt more should an individual fail to engage with support. The key part of this programme is that it is support offer-first, led by social care, with procedurally-just police support, rather than being a police-led, threat-first model.

Since the project started, 45 individuals have either been through the programme or are still being supported on it. All were offered some form of support package and the engagement levels have been high – with 30 of those individuals accepting one or more support offer, or 67 percent. From the 20 individuals who were aged 11–17 when they started on the project, 19 of them have accepted one or more support offer.

10 new individuals aged 18–24 are also starting the programme at the end of this month so hopefully there will be more positive engagement to come.

This now means that interim evaluation results based on that first full six months can be produced, likely to be shared with partners in May.



Intervention update

Sports & Inclusion interventions

in partnership with StreetGames

The Thames Valley Sports & Inclusion intervention programme has two components; the first is to support system change and embed sport as a prevention and diversion measure. We host a VPP Sports & Violence Impact Manager post, part-funded by the VPP and by StreetGames UK.



Chelsea Piggott

Sports & Violence
Impact Manager

Chelsea continues to promote the use of the [StreetGames Community Sport Dashboard](#) by local partners, providing information locally available sports programmes and tools to visualise demographics.

The data gathered here in the Thames Valley informs StreetGames' work at the national level. New recommendations have been made in response to the audit:

- Extend existing primary tier provision being delivered for 10–14-year-olds and 15-17 year olds to accommodate a secondary level cohort, better meeting the needs of these young people. Concurrently, take a place-based approach to identify communities where vulnerability is greater and work across system partners to invest in new secondary level community sport sessions.
- Investigate reasons why the level of female engagement remains low across the network.
- Develop intentionally designed opportunities to engage black and mixed-race young people at all three tiers of intervention.

Engagement with local partnerships continues, with Chelsea available to attend local meetings. The intention remains to form Local Sports Partnerships. The Thames Valley annual conference championing the role of sport in violence prevention will be held Monday 22 April at the University of Reading. [Click here to book your place.](#)



Intervention update

Sports & Inclusion interventions

in partnership with StreetGames

The second component to the intervention is VPP funding provided to StreetGames for the commissioning of local “Sports Plus” activities that provide positive activities alongside support such as mentoring, education sessions, help with accessing employment etc.



Six local projects have been funded - some commenced in 2022/2023 delivery year and have continued, others began this year. Each project provides an enduring engagement for those referred. While inevitably some drop out for a variety of reasons, new referrals enter as capacity allows.

In 2022/2023, there were four local projects. By the end of March 2023, these four projects had engaged with 127 individuals, split as follows across local areas:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| The Project PT (project 1) – Oxford | 9 |
| Reading FC – covering mainly Reading | 71 |
| Slough | 5 |
| Milton Keynes | 42 |

During the 2023/2024 delivery year the number of funded projects increased to six. In total, the six projects have now engaged 236 individuals since the projects first started. In the majority of cases, they have retained and continue to work with the same individuals throughout this time, giving them access to multiple sport and support sessions through an enduring intervention.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| The Project PT (project 1) – Oxford | 21 |
| The Project PT (project 2) – Oxford | 18 |
| High Wycombe | 31 |
| Reading FC – covering mainly Reading | 71 |
| Slough | 15 |
| Milton Keynes | 80 |
| Total: | 236 |



Intervention update

Operation Paramount

A partnership between Thames Valley Police and the charity Children Heard & Seen, Operation Paramount is the name of a brand new data-sharing process which is speeding up the offer of support to families affected by a parent being imprisoned, with the VPP also funding a dedicated support worker for the charity.

Families are provided an holistic offer including parenting support, financial advice, navigating the prison system and overcoming stigma and trauma for child and parent. They become part of a wider social network of other families, and receive support in building trust in authorities and policing.

Through this, the whole family – but particularly children and young people – receive protective support to prevent risk of offending or wider vulnerability and improve outcomes.

The Chief Constable has committed to a force-wide roll-out with all areas to deliver the initial support offers. This continues, with only the Local Policing Areas in east Berkshire yet to adopt.

The programme continues to be celebrated as a nationally significant innovation, with nine other police forces exploring how they can adopt these approaches.

Operation Paramount has led to the following numbers of referrals of individual children for support made by police. Families may also have declined the police offer but then gone on to contact Children Heard & Seen at a later date, which is not recorded.

| 2022/2023 | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Oxfordshire | 13 |
| Milton Keynes | 10 |
| Slough | 2 (area not yet live but circumstances allowed support to be offered) |
| High Wycombe | 4 (area not yet live but circumstances allowed support to be offered) |
| Total | 29 |

| 2023/2024 | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Oxfordshire | 36 |
| Buckinghamshire | 3 |
| Milton Keynes | 8 |
| West Berkshire | 4 |
| Total | 51 |

Wider programme activities updates

This section provides updates on some of the wider activities being delivered by the VPP's programme team, working with local partners.

Programme activities update

‘Stay True to You’ Behavioural change product development

The VPP has undertaken research with young people to inform an exciting behavioural change approach and campaign which all partners across the Thames Valley can use to effectively engage with young people, promote safety and positive behaviours.

Stay True to You is in part a campaign, aiming to deliver positive messages to young people via social media and through a new standalone website providing advice and signposting.

The research with young people also told us how important practitioners, parents, teachers and other trusted adults in the community are in helping reach and engage young people. As a result, these are our priority audiences and resources are being finalised for a launch in May, coinciding with Operation Sceptre, the national knife crime awareness week (13 May – 19 May).

We are excited to be partnering with the Ben Kinsella Trust who will be designing and delivering a training programme as part of the ‘Stay True to You’ approach for front-line practitioners, teachers and parents.

Programme activities update

Thames Valley Together multi-agency data-sharing

The VPP is working closely to support the ongoing development of the Thames Valley Together multi-agency data-sharing platform. Hosted by Thames Valley Police's ICT infrastructure, we are working with the wider partnership in what is seen as a nationally significant innovation that will assist multi-agency data sharing and compliance with the Serious Violence Duty.

The last few months have seen the programme progressing rapidly towards our “go-live” in April, where we will start feeding live data from Thames Valley Police and Buckinghamshire Council into the Thames Valley Together data-sharing platform for the first time. This means that every day, updated data from a number of police systems and from Buckinghamshire Council will flow into the shared platform, accessible to those with approved access and where the data can be worked on using the range of analytical and visualisation tools the system provides.

This will mark the culmination of years of hard work and effort to get to this stage, and is the point at which we can start to see the benefit from our collective investment.

We are also looking forward to launching our first two product offerings, with the initial “VPP Performance Pack” due to go live at the beginning of April. This will provide a single picture of what is going on around Serious Violence and Knife Crime, and will be followed later in Q1 by a virtual “Strategic Needs Assessment” offering.

On 11 April, we are inviting those who have been involved in our TVT journey so far to come together for our first in person extraordinary programme board meeting. At this session, we will review our proposed strategy for the year ahead, which will steer our priorities and our engagement with partners.

**THAMES VALLEY
TOGETHER**

Programme activities update

Pluggin – driving social value funding

Pluggin is a company providing a service to drive social value contributions or sponsorship from private sector business into local voluntary sector projects.

Large public sector bodies which partner with Pluggin are able to use their procurement processes to invite their private business suppliers to sponsor specific local projects as a contribution to social value and impact.

As all public sector organisations must consider social value within their procurement, the Pluggin system is an easy way to meet this, while also helping direct sponsorship toward activity which directly meets the organisation's own aims.

As a result of Thames Valley Police connecting its procurement process into the Pluggin framework, one of its suppliers has recently donated £1,000 of funding to the Safe! Project which delivers victim support services to young people across the Thames Valley. This is an example of how social impact can support important local services.

Four of the VPP intervention projects are also highlighted to Thames Valley Police suppliers via Pluggin and it is hoped that this could attract new funding which will contribute to the sustainability of the Hospital Navigators, Custody Coaches, Schools Navigators and Sports programmes.

Local partners are encouraged to consider their own approaches to social value, partnering with Pluggin in a similar way to Thames Valley Police opens up the opportunity for greater sponsorship for local projects which seek to prevent violence.

Paul Gresty, VPP Programme Manager will be making contact with partner Heads of Procurement to offer support and encourage their consideration of the Pluggin social value model.

The VPP will continue to explore options to develop social value as part of our wider work to secure the cultural and financial sustainability of our work.



Programme activities update

Sustainable training

Since November 2023 the VPP has been developing a number of courses and presentations focusing on awareness of exploitation of children. These programmes of work, detailed below are designed to support our partners in developing, improving and delivering sustainable training products for the future. These will include off-the-shelf training packages, as well as 1-2-1 and train-the-trainer materials.

Given the capacity we have, we will focus on two or three projects at a time, to ensure quality and focus of delivery. If you have a training need/idea **contact us** to discuss how the VPP can support.



We have supported the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) to deliver new child exploitation training across the district partnerships. The first of these training sessions was delivered in early March, with 30 delegates. Content included presentations by colleagues from health, social care, education as well as our own. This programme was oversubscribed and a number of future dates are being considered for the remaining financial year.

Our partnership with Oxfordshire Youth continues. Three programmes will be delivered throughout March and April, highlighting the links between child exploitation and girls and gangs within south Oxfordshire. This training was also oversubscribed and future dates are being arranged for partners and voluntary and community sector organisations across Oxfordshire.

Future plans include working with schools working with children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across Thames Valley to promote awareness of exploitation risks to both staff and parents of these schools. Discussions are underway with some pilot schools to prepare content and delivery models.

New areas of work being explored

The VPP is working with local partners to explore some new areas of work, with further updates to follow.

Family Drug & Alcohol Court

We continue to work with the Centre for Justice Innovation and our local partners in Berkshire on the development of an FDAC model which serves Berkshire. We also held some positive discussions with Oxfordshire.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) process mapping

The VPP has funded the recruitment of a Value Stream Mapping post on a 6-month contract to work within the Thames Valley Police Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. The role will examine the force's processes and ways of working, aiming to identify ways to be more efficient/impactful, and may inform further projects in this area.

SEND project – Oxfordshire

The VPP is exploring with Oxfordshire whether there is the potential to invest into a summer activities programme to support children with SEND.

Employability for ex-offenders

The VPP has provided funding to the Department of Work & Pensions to support a post working in close partnership with the HM Prisons & Probation Service. They will explore how to provide increased support with training and employability to ex-offenders. Merseyside has a similar project which has had good early results. There may be opportunities to connect with the Focused Deterrence project in Milton Keynes, and the OPCC's Restart pilot.

Keep in touch

This is the second highlight report created by the VPP for our partners and we welcome your feedback.



If you have any questions
please contact the core
programme team via
vpp@thamesvalley.police.uk



The VPP website is being updated
to provide more detailed project
summaries to accompany this report.
www.tvvpp.co.uk



You can also follow
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