



# VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR  
GREATER MANCHESTER'S COMMUNITIES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



# FOREWORD

In the last 12 months in Greater Manchester, there were **fewer than 90 hospital admissions due to assault by sharp object among victims aged under 25** (down by 17% compared to 2021, and down by 26% compared to the year pre-covid), and a **significant decrease in homicides** (down by 27% compared to 2021), and **knife enabled homicides** (down by 19% compared to 2021).

These figures clearly show the impact of the work of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), partners, and local communities, in reducing violence and keeping people safe.

Despite the progress made, sadly there have been several lives tragically lost to serious violence and knife crime in the last 12 months, including young people. Evidently there is more work to do.

As a VRU we continue to work closely with our communities to inform our work, including people and families directly impacted by violence. Our flagship community-led programme is now working in all 10 districts of Greater Manchester, and I am particularly proud of our close work with 10GM and the wider Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to make this happen. Through the programme, we have now awarded **over £1.6 million** to VCSE organisations across Greater Manchester.

Thanks to the work of our Education Lead, we're now working in more educational establishments than ever before. This year we launched a project working in 10 primary schools in North and East Manchester that is already showing great results, and mentoring and supporting large numbers of children.

In terms of policing, great progress has been made in taking knives and other weapons off our streets through Operation Venture, a dedicated team of proactive officers tackling knife crime and violence. Between 1st January and 31st March, **85 arrests were made, 35 weapons seized, and 124 pieces of intelligence submitted, thanks to the Operation Venture team.**

Finally, a recent independent assessment of our work from Crest Advisory, appointed by the Home Office to support implementation of the Serious Violence Duty across the country, rated Greater Manchester "Mature" in terms of partnership working and co-production. The VRU's community-led work was rated as best practice nationally. This is testament to the strong partnership work led by the VRU across Greater Manchester.

**Damian Dallimore**

Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit Director



# INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2022/23, the Greater Manchester VRU has continued to work with partners, organisations and individuals representing the diversity of Greater Manchester and its communities. **The VRU has worked with parents, carers, children, teachers, voluntary groups and people enriched by their lived experiences, bringing together the perspectives of those who are invested in making life across the city region a safer and more positive experience.**

The VRU has remained steadfast in working collaboratively to deliver on the commitments set out in the [GM Serious Violence Action plan](#). Our core principles remain unchanged: **that we are community-led, evidence and multi agency led; that we are centred around the voice of the young person, seeking their lived experience in the co-creation of VRU content; and that we are driven by the public health approach to violence reduction.** The VRU has continued to play host to various professionals across statutory authorities across Greater Manchester including health, probation, and policing, which has served to enrich the skill base and levels of expertise readily available across the programme.

**Services and interventions for children and adolescents will always be a high priority for the VRU, and the last 12 months has been no different.** The VRU has taken a fresh look at education and building on the achievements to date, is excited to see meaningful progress and engagement with senior leaders across the education landscape. The VRU has also invested in pioneering work across several Greater Manchester boroughs to improve and develop service pathways for adolescents in need of additional support, whilst championing Greater Manchester Police's (GMP) Child Centred Policing strategy.

Year four of the programme saw the rollout of a three-year funding settlement which enabled the Violence Reduction Governance Board to sign-off an ambitious scheme of work, both longer-term and further reaching in its approach, particularly with regard to areas of high need such as the 'Primary Schools Transitions' programme, as well as universal programmes, such as our Community Sports offer which was launched in 2022/23.

As we look back across the successes of our interventions over the last 12 months, we are mindful of the challenges and barriers to our approaches as we move into 2023/24. Ongoing societal pressures such as the cost of living crisis are driving additional contributing factors to the causes of violence across Greater Manchester. We are looking to address this via the creation of a refreshed Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Strategy, due for completion later in 2023. We will also use this report to take stock of our successes and challenges in the delivery of our programmes thus far, informing delivery in 2023/24.



# RESEARCH & EVALUATION

**The VRU strives to be evidence led and threads innovative research and robust evaluation through all our work streams.**

As a multi-agency and public health focused partnership, **the VRU draws on data and evidence from a variety of sources, including police, fire and rescue services, probation, prisons, voluntary sector, local authorities, children's services, youth justice, primary care and other health services, housing and education.** We use national, regional, and local intelligence, incorporating data, information and the voices of our communities. Bringing together intelligence on violence into one place ensures a multi-agency lens approach and to allow us to better understand the levels of violence across the city-region. In doing so, strategic priorities and direction of planning can be refreshed and re-focused, enabling collaborative solutions to be found.

Our focus on maximising outcomes for the public extends into our approach to commissioning and evaluation. Our approach to investment in interventions includes a mixture of commissioning Youth Endowment Fund recommended (and other evidence based) interventions whilst also recognising that some interventions are harder to study and there may be merit in piloting and evaluating pioneering new approaches to reducing serious violence. We evaluate our work both by drawing on the expertise of our research and evaluation team within the partnership, as well as external and independent evaluation from our academic partners.

Greater Manchester experiences high levels of violent crime. We are within the top five police force areas for levels of violent crime and sexual offences.

However, we are beginning to be able to demonstrate the impact of VRU work on longer term trends in violence.

There were around 40 homicides in 2022, a **27% decrease compared to 2021. Knife enabled homicides were also down 19%**, whilst there were over 4,000 crimes in Greater Manchester in 2022 that involved a knife, a **3% decline** from the previous year.

**88.4% of Greater Manchester residents feel safe in their local area.** This compares to 87.7% for the year before. Those under 25 are less likely to feel safe with 87.2% feeling safe in their local area.

Confidence in GMP in an emergency has stayed the same at 61.4% for the last two years. There has, however, been **an increase in confidence amongst under 25s of 3.7%.**

Although the number of violent crimes recorded by GMP has increased by 7% in the last year, our health data suggests that there has been a **decrease in violent crime across Greater Manchester**, which may be more accurate as it is not affected by changes in recording practices.



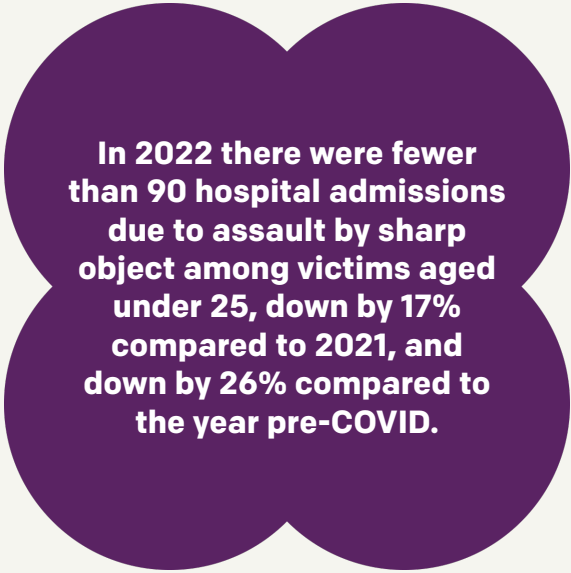
**27%**  
**decrease**  
**in homicides**



**19%**  
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**in knife enabled**  
**homicides**



**88.4%**  
**of Greater**  
**Manchester**  
**residents feel**  
**safe in their**  
**local area**



**In 2022 there were fewer than 90 hospital admissions due to assault by sharp object among victims aged under 25, down by 17% compared to 2021, and down by 26% compared to the year pre-COVID.**

The VRU is committed to being evidence led and our partnerships and multi-agency approach are integral to this.

In collaboration with NHS England and the Greater Manchester VRU, The Trauma Audit and Research Network (TARN) carried out an audit of the Greater Manchester Trauma Network which includes major trauma centres, trauma units and local emergency hospitals. This two week sprint looked at all patients arriving at hospital with an injury as a result of any assault caused by either bodily force, blunt, or penetrating object. Previous years have found that 23 patients on average arrived at emergency departments every day as a result of an assault. The largest group was those aged 26-35 accounting for 29% of patients and injuries without weapons accounted for two thirds of the cases.

Manchester Metropolitan University continue to be the evaluation partner of the Greater Manchester VRU and provide analytical, research and evaluation support. Their ongoing evaluations of some of the key interventions include the community-led programme, hospital Navigators, Primary Schools Transitions. Their academic expertise ensures that our programmes of work target the right people and are continually improving.

For example, recommendations from their community-led programme evaluation have influenced delivery. It became clear that more support was needed for service providers around evaluation and monitoring which led to a training package and further resource being allocated.

As a VRU, we know that workforce development and system change are crucial to sustainability. The VRU is undertaking a resource audit to understand what services and interventions exist within Greater Manchester aimed at preventing and managing violent crime. This piece of work, led by MMU, will provide an assessment of the capabilities and capacities of Community Safety Partnership (CSP) services and interventions.



# EDUCATION

**The VRU continues to work hard to secure its ambition of engaging with every Greater Manchester school.**

As part of the VRU's strategy to further develop relationships with schools, VRU leaders have established an Education Strategy Board (ESB), chaired by Dame Kathy August. This strategy board is represented by a headteacher or senior leader from each of the 10 local authorities and meets every half term. The ESB helps to shape the strategic direction of education within the VRU.

We want young people across Greater Manchester to:

- **show character and enthusiasm.**
- **care for others and their well-being, as well as for themselves.**
- **recognise risks in the outside world and know how to avoid these.**

Specifically, through the education strand we want to educate youngsters about

- the dangers of knife crime;
- the value in walking away from misogynistic behaviour and any other action which degrades girls and women, and;
- engaging meaningfully with community resources, such as school engagement officers.

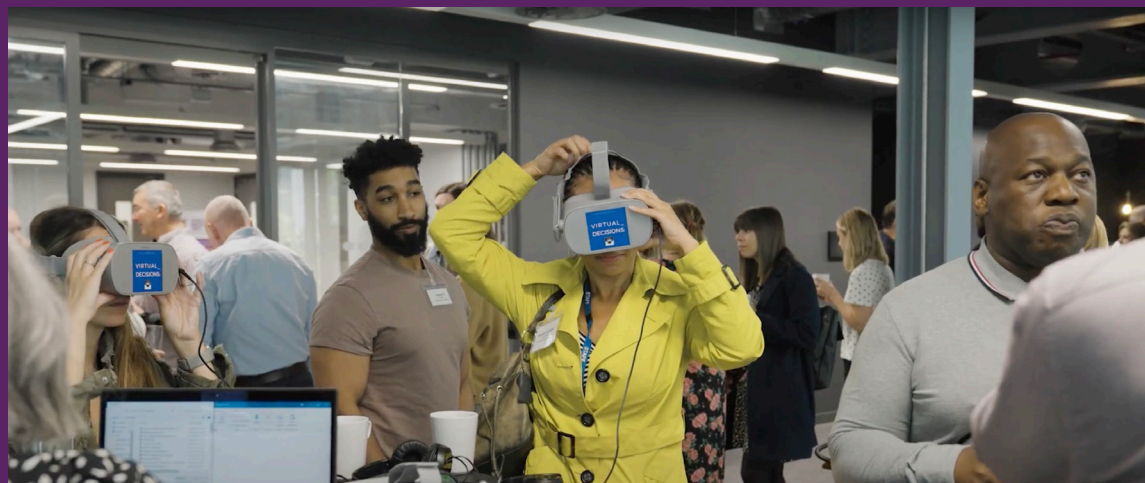


In 2022/23, we identified that there was a need for Greater Manchester schools to access staff for training and programme support for their young people in tandem with effective parental engagement and whole community approach to online protocols. There has been a great deal of media publicity and topical debate related to school - pressures faced by the native digital generation impacting on mental health. Schools are well placed to support young people to use technology safely, however given the 24/7 nature of digital communications they cannot do so efficiently in isolation. Therefore, we commissioned a third phase of our [Social Switch project](#) in 20 schools to support over 4,000 pupils in online safety interventions.

Meanwhile, Greater Manchester will pilot the country's first 'Stop the bleed' day across Year 6 and Year 7 in 14 schools - a collaboration between the VRU and first aid charity citizenAID. Students will learn how to identify a life-threatening bleed, how to apply pressure, pack a wound, and use a tourniquet.

Over the next 12 months, we will develop the use of school engagement plans. These plans will record the VRU's work with an individual school. The plan will populate the school's basic biographical data and key contact details. The plan will include detail of the VRU activities the school has, or would like to engage in. We will be looking for stronger engagement with schools, better engagement with, and success of, youngsters with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and a VRU champion in every school.

In this academic year, VRU colleagues have focused on resourcing larger scale projects. For example, the funding for Gender-Based Violence will support two projects, each receiving an equal amount of funding. One project will service the primary phase and one the secondary phase across the entire Greater Manchester region. Ideally, a voluntary sector organisation (or similar) will lead at least five schools (each from a different local authority) in the planning, designing and implementation of a project that addresses our Greater Manchester Gender-Based Violence strategy.







# CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

We are committed to leadership that listens to the voices of young people.

In October 2022, the VRU hosted Greater Manchester's Hope Hack event in partnership with the Hope Collective, to provide young people with an opportunity to share their views, thoughts and ideas on how to make the city-region a safer and fairer place for all. Over 100 young people from schools, pupil referral units, and youth organisations, joined a series of workshops covering topics like education, social media and mental and physical health.

Young people told us that they want more education on the signs of exploitation and dangers and positive uses of social media, and to build a better relationship with the police.

Recommendations from young people were presented to leaders at the Hope Hack and at Greater Manchester's second violence reduction roundtable. They will also be included in the 'Reimagined report', produced by the Hope Collective, alongside the recommendations gathered from young people at other Hope Hacks across the country.

**Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said:**



"We're really proud to be hosting a Hope Hack here in Greater Manchester. It's crucial that young people have a voice and that we, as decision-makers, listen to them.

"This event is a great way for us to understand the challenges young people face, and for them to work with us to discover how we can make the changes needed to reduce inequalities and create opportunities for all from an early age.

"Each young person taking part has valuable insight into how we can make Greater Manchester, and the UK, a fairer and safer place, and I am thankful that by working with the Hope Collective we have been able to provide a platform for young people."



**To read the full Hope Hack summary report, click here**



# COMMUNITY SPORT



In 2022/23 we have comprehensively refreshed our community sports strategic analysis tool. This has captured all community sport activity delivered with the intentionality of meeting the needs of young people at risk of exposure to violence/exploitation. It allows us to integrate multiple data sources to support our locally trusted organisations to better understand how to meet local need and deliver evidence based provision.

During 2022/23 we have co-created with partners our Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Strategic Sports Plan, which sets out our three visions for our work between 2022/25. These are:

- **More sport in more places** - Grow the number of high-quality sport provisions in Greater Manchester's most deprived and vulnerable communities which contribute to the prevention of violence.
- **More workforce with more competencies** – Enhance the confidence, competence and capacity of the sport workforce to ensure high quality delivery which is pro-social in its approach and embeds the principles of trauma informed practice.
- **More vulnerable young people referred, engaged and retained** – Increase the number of vulnerable/at risk young people meaningfully, and successfully, referred into sport through evidence-based, multi-agency referral pathways.

We have continued to invest into evidence based community sport and have continued to influence other funding streams to align to our approach across Greater Manchester.

## Bolton Violence Reduction Summer Engagement programme - YouTube

StreetGames have also undertaken an audit of the community sports activity that exists in Greater Manchester that meets the needs of young people at risk of exposure to violence or exploitation. This new community sports strategic analysis tool will give partners better information on what the needs of local people are, and how to meet these needs whilst strengthening the evidence base.

**1,129 young people** (under 25) took part in community sport in 22/23, through the work the VRU and Greater Sport have commissioned with StreetGames and other providers.



# COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS – VRU FUNDED ACTIVITY

**Greater Manchester has 10 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), representing the 10 local authority areas. Membership of each CSP include representation from the police, fire, probation and youth justice services and they work closely with communities to consider local priorities and reduce offending, reduce victimisation and improve support services for anyone impacted by violence.**

The VRU devolves approximately a third of its overall budget to the CSPs each year, so the money can be directly used to support local initiatives and improve the quality of life within the community. In 2022/23, this funding supported over 60 initiatives across Greater Manchester.

## **How does the VRU specifically support community safety partnerships across Greater Manchester?**

- £1.55 million devolved in 2022/23
- CSPs submit and carry out VRU approved action plans to access and spend this funding
- All aligned to the VRU's Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Action Plan
- Consideration of Youth Endowment Fund toolkit interventions and requirement for improved monitoring and evaluation (with a mid-year and year end full report)
- Increased focus on vulnerability and 'at risk' individuals

## **Range of projects across CSPs:**

- Dedicated (full and part time) Violence Reduction Facilitators in all 10 districts of Greater Manchester
- Mentoring Programmes
- School based educational activity
- Restorative Justice approaches
- Family Interventions
- School transitions support
- Mental Health early interventions
- Early risk of violence identification and intervention (PPIED programme)

## **Outputs April 22-March 23:**

**Over  
10,000 young people  
involved in universal activity across groups/  
schools/colleges**

**Over  
1,000  
longer term bespoke interventions with  
individuals, and in some cases, their wider  
families**

**18 specialist posts  
(mentors/mental health/therapists/youth workers)**

**10 dedicated  
Violence Reduction Facilitator posts**



# COMMUNITY- LED PROGRAMMES



**1,789**

**Number of young people aged  
24 and under reached**

**368**

**Number of young people aged  
over 25 reached**

The community-led approach to violence reduction, means the VRU works closely with communities to understand the strengths, challenges and needs of the community and determine how local investments will be made.

Several boroughs across the city-region have received funding from the VRU as part of its investment in community-led programmes, outlined in Greater Manchester's Serious Violence Action Plan. Alliances made up of local voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations will ensure holistic provision targeted at individuals, families, schools and communities of highest need.

A community-led violence reduction programme is one of the VRU's flagship projects and is in line with the ambitions of the Greater Manchester Strategy and Public Service Reform programme to involve communities at a place level to identify priorities, problem solve and direct investment and interventions accordingly. Analysis undertaken by the Big Data Centre at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) enabled the VRU to identify sites across Greater Manchester for community-led programmes to be implemented.

## Key Highlights across 2022/23

The CLPs continue to make good progress following on from last year. All 10 districts of Greater Manchester are now fully engaged in the programme. The final two areas of Rochdale and Stockport have been approached and plans are firmly in place to engage these locations, meeting stakeholders and participants.

CLPs in Bolton, Manchester and Salford have now progressed into year two and building on their work from last year. Community interventions in Oldham and Bury are at the midway point in year one and progressing well. Meanwhile, Trafford, Tameside and Wigan are at the community engagement stage.

This year the VRU have recruited a part time post in each local authority area. Known as Violence Reduction Alliance Facilitators, these roles will support with community engagement, co-production and sustainability aspects of the programme.

# CASE STUDY – STEER, SALFORD

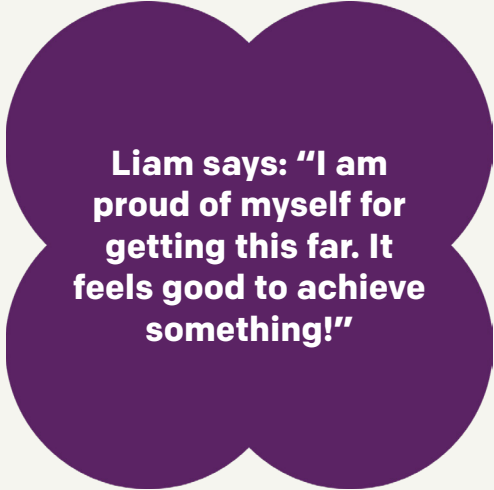
## Part of the Salford community-led alliance

Liam was referred to Steer as there were concerns regarding conflict in the family. He moved in with his father as his mother was struggling to cope with his behaviour around his family. However, in recent months his relationship with Dad was becoming extremely hostile. Because of this, Liam was spending a lot of time on the streets, taking drugs with friends. Although Liam attended alternative provision, he lacked positivity when thinking about his future. He had no aspirations of going to college or gaining qualifications.

At the start of the intervention, Liam seemed hesitant to engage and confide with us during sessions. Both he and Dad were very sceptical about service involvement as they had felt let down by support in the past. It was apparent that he was experiencing low self-esteem and had issues surrounding trust with professionals. In addition, violence within the home was becoming more frequent. The police were called several times to de-escalate issues between them, with Liam often going back to his Mum's home and taking his frustrations out on other family members.

We adapted the focus of our sessions to work around any issues he was experiencing that week. Primarily managing his emotions effectively as he struggled dealing with confrontation, both in school and at home. He confided that he had a lot of anger built up as he felt a burden to his family in the past, and that he never received recognition from family when he achieved something. We looked at addressing his self-confidence and empowerment. We also focused on his substance misuse, and the effects it has as a chronic smoker to his physical and mental health. We explored the legal implications surrounding substance misuse and the penalties for possession and distribution as he was not aware of the consequences of this.

The main goal we focused on was building Liam's confidence regarding his future. We researched options for further studies or apprenticeships within areas of interest to him that he didn't know how to train for or begin a career within. We supported him with college applications and bursaries. He successfully gained a place for training towards a qualification that he went on to attain independently. We praised him for being successful in his interview and he is now committed to gaining additional qualifications required for the role.



**Liam says: "I am proud of myself for getting this far. It feels good to achieve something!"**



# NAVIGATORS

The Greater Manchester Youth Navigator Service is entering its third year – and has gone from strength to strength.

Established in May 2021 for a 12 month pilot period and **with just five Navigators servicing four major trauma hospitals, the service is now commissioned until March 2025, with 12 Navigators, including education, domestic violence and community development specialists.**

The team of Navigators can now accept referrals from other settings and organisations within the community (schools / clubs / police / North West Ambulance Service / GP Surgeries), in addition to self-referrals.

Since the start of the service there have been **over 800 referrals, with over 250 hospital referrals and 150 community referrals in the last 12 months.**

Activities include:

- Educational events for professionals
- Delivering violence prevention and first aid training to young people engaged with Prince's Trust
- Outreach work in the community following serious incidents
- Youth engagement events and workshops
- Partnership School roadshows
- Social media campaigns

Over  
**800 referrals**



# COMMUNICATIONS

## Content creation

During 2022/23, over **100 pieces of content**, including press releases and blog posts have been shared, creating numerous pieces of news and media coverage.

A series of community-led spotlights have shone a light on organisations from across Greater Manchester that are part of our community-led programmes and highlight the positive work going on in local communities.

## Social media

**2,461,857**  
total social media impressions

**15,616**  
total website views

The campaign video  
has been viewed over  
**500,000**  
times

## #SOCSAL

The #SpeakingOutCouldSaveALife campaign launched in February 2022 in response to three tragic fatal stabbings. The campaign brings together a diverse and varied group of people including those affected by violence, young people, teachers, leaders and front-line workers. Speakers share their own personal story of the impact of serious violence and appeal for others to speak out.

Messaging was co-designed with victims and families based on their own personal experience.

Campaign advertisements were included across the Transport for Greater Manchester network, in shopping centres and local hospitals – all with a QR code linked to the campaign web page where support services and information on how to report concerns are included.



## Community-led spotlight series:





# 'I am Greater'

Launched in May 2021, the 'I am Greater' campaign encourages young people to be greater than violence by thinking about their hopes and aspirations for the future.

The campaign aims to contribute to a reduction in offending behaviour by increasing social unacceptability towards violence, decreasing perception of violence and promoting positive alternatives to violence.

Young people shared their stories in a series of powerful videos, including individuals who have personally experienced the impact of serious violence. A series of videos for parents and school resources were also created.

[iamgreater.co.uk](https://iamgreater.co.uk)

Over  
**8 million**  
Video impressions

Over  
**100**  
School resource downloads

Over  
**56,000**  
Website views



# CRIMINAL JUSTICE & PROBATION

**Criminal Justice, incorporating police, probation and youth justice, is one of the VRU's core delivery groups and seeks to improve the lives of those who may be leaving custody, involved with or leaving Youth Justice services, or have involvement with His Majesty's Probation Service.** We know that young people in any of these categories are at a higher risk of becoming involved with violence, so the VRU seeks to deliver meaningful programmes to bring about positive change in the lives of these individuals.

## Dignifi

Two programmes of work delivered in 2022/23.

**Care Leavers programme:** a specialist support service for care leavers moving from Youth Justice to adult services to reduce the likelihood of offending (in particular, becoming involved with violence) at a critical transition point.

We have worked to provide 17 care leavers with specialist support across Greater Manchester this year through this programme of support.

**Positive Relationships Training:** a bespoke training programme to raise practitioners' (for example Youth Justice Workers or Probation Officers) awareness and use intervention skills to reduce the risk of violence in young people/adults who have witnessed domestic violence.

We have been able to offer 250 training places to Youth Justice Services and a further 90 places were offered to the Probation service.

**17 care leavers**  
provided with specialist support

**250 training places**  
offered to Youth Justice services

In the coming year, the VRU will commission and implement the delivery of a programme for young adults in the criminal justice system with parental and caring responsibilities. Match funded by the Greater Manchester Probation service, this will provide a specialist support service for young adults who are a parent or live with/have contact with children or siblings to empower them to positively contribute to their families. A second programme for young girls and women, designed to address vulnerabilities and empower young girls and women to move away from violent offending will also be delivered.





# CASE STUDY – RESTORATIVE LIVES PROJECT, HM PRISON HINDLEY

## Project delivered by Magistra

Participant B is 30 years old, from Salford, and serving a prison sentence for violence offences and also an armed forces veteran. When discussing his circumstances Participant B confirmed he had been diagnosed with ADHD and PTSD and had actually joined the Army to avoid being involved in crime, which he described as “the norm” in the community where he grew up. This individual had also been involved in serious violence in the Prison environment including multiple assaults on staff.

Participant B initially referred himself to the Restorative Lives programme and subsequently completed all three programmes successfully. During the programme, he frequently commented on feeling it was a **“safe space to talk”**. He also disclosed details about his traumatic childhood involving significant domestic abuse and his mother being involved in illicit sex-work.

As a result of these disclosures, facilitators encouraged Participant B to engage with CGL, the drug service provider at the prison, which he did and continues to do so, with evidence that he has been ‘clean’ since December 2022 and has not been involved in any violence since completing Magistra’s programmes. In addition, Participant B has also engaged with the education Provider. **As a result of his improved behaviour and outcomes, will be due for release back into the Greater Manchester area.**





# POLICING

## School Engagement Officers

School Engagement officers (SEOs) have been an important part of the Greater Manchester wide strategy and Greater Manchester Police's violence reduction framework since May 2021, and continue to be part of the wider neighbourhood policing offer across each district in Greater Manchester. SEOs are one of the commitments listed in and supported by the Greater Manchester Serious Violence Action Plan.

An important difference from the earlier Schools Based Officers is SEOs aren't used to police schools nor the students within; they are employed in wider problem solving across schools and policing districts identifying the causes of violence, and working with partners to remove those driving factors. The SEOs will be central to the delivery of GMP's Child Centred Policing Strategy.

**The 21 dedicated full time SEOs have undertaken enhanced training in Trauma Informed Practice, safeguarding and exploitation as well as learning from inputs from the Commission for Racial Equality.** This enhanced trauma training allows the SEOs to make any decisions with the young person at the heart of every interaction.

SEOs have regular development sessions and work is underway with VRU's Education Lead to promote the role in preventing exclusions and working with young people on the cusp of exclusion. The SEOs are encouraged to work wherever the need is across their district.

The development sessions were initiated to raise levels of understanding about the wider VRU Community Pilots, Navigator scheme, the work and role of Prince's Trust and commissioned services such as the Children's Society.

## Operation Venture

Operation Venture is a team of dedicated officers established to patrol areas of Greater Manchester that are suffering from violence. The team consists of 10 constables and is led by an Inspector and two Sergeants.

The team was established in December 2022 and have achieved:

**85**  
arrests

**33**  
weapons  
seized

**26**  
partnerships  
referrals

**124**  
intelligence  
submissions

# VISION AND NEXT STEPS

The VRU has worked hard in 2022/23 to create meaningful interventions across the diverse communities of Greater Manchester to reduce violence. The programmes summarised throughout this report show that we are committed to ensuring that every programme we commission is as effective, reaching the greatest number of young people possible and that ultimately every decision we take incorporates the community perspective where appropriate.

In 2023, the Greater Manchester VRU will continue to strive to its aim of making our city-region a safer place to live, work, grow up, and grow old in, ultimately continuing to seek reductions in violence.

The VRU will look to put community-led approaches at the centre of its thinking in order to achieve delivery of this, ensuring that community views constantly guide and transform all decision making. In particular, the 'I am Greater' campaign has been given the green light for a third phase, which will seek community involvement in the creation of violence reduction content for public facing use across Greater Manchester, whilst the VRU's Experts by Experience programme will see members of the community with lived experience of violence team up with the community alliance 'Violence Reduction Facilitators' to further look at how the community led aspect of the VRU can be improved.

The VRU has welcomed the opportunity to lead on the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty in Greater Manchester, and recognises the significance of this legislation to enable and enhance existing collaboration between partners. A regular pan-Greater Manchester meeting led by the VRU resulted in a model where each of the 10 Local Authority areas will produce their respective local needs assessments. The VRU will continue to support Greater Manchester districts with themed workshops and data support.

**The VRU and district partners were pleased with the recent Home Office Joint Readiness Assessment, which rated Greater Manchester as “mature” in partnership working and co-production and “mature with best practise” for community-led work.**

Expanding on our 2020 Serious Violence Action Plan, we will seek to refresh and deepen this by writing a full Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Strategy to mirror other strategies, such as the Greater Manchester Gender-Based Violence Strategy, ensuring the VRU's action plan is responsive for all future challenges. This strategy - informed by the community, our delivery partners, those with lived experience of serious violence and voluntary sector organisations across Greater Manchester - will be supported by our political leadership, namely the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester. This wider strategy will seek to govern the VRU's delivery in 2023/24 and 2024/25 and will integrate the learning outcomes and recommendations of our refreshed Strategic Needs Assessment.

**We are delighted that in 2022, violent crime statistics were lower in Greater Manchester than previously; as per our report, a 27% decrease in violence resulting in death was recorded compared to 2021, whilst our health data has shown a general decrease in violence across Greater Manchester.**

We know that there is more to be done, but as we look ahead to the future throughout 2023 and beyond, we are filled with confidence that via the programmes we have already commissioned, and yet to commission, and the work we wish to carry out in support of communities and public authorities across Greater Manchester, we will continue to see a reduction in violence across the city region and create positive change for all those that call Greater Manchester their home.