

**SERIOUS
VIOLENCE
INCIDENT
TOOLKIT**

**TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY SAFETY
PARTNERSHIPS RESPONDING TO A SERIOUS
INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE**

1. SERIOUS INCIDENT CHECKLIST

The serious incident toolkit has been designed in partnership with community safety partnerships across London. It provides tools, resources and guidance to support those responding to an incident of serious violence.

For those accessing the toolkit, this checklist can be used prior to an incident as a planning tool, to explore existing processes, stakeholders and resources so they are ready if an incident takes place. When an incident has occurred, this checklist has been designed as a quick guide to highlight key areas of consideration. It can help shape your approach while in an emergency situation, and is designed to complement the processes and procedures that you already follow.

**DOWNLOAD
WORD
VERSION**

More information about what these areas could include, or support in preparing for future incidents or providing longer-term support, is included in the before, during and after sections of the toolkit.

Incident reporting	Assigned to
Where has the critical incident notification come from - police including British Transport Police, fire brigade, children or adults social care, voluntary sector or community	
Ensure all key stakeholders have been/are being informed	
Ensure immediate response is in place	
Scene management	
Ensure the scene(s) identified are being managed	
Ensure appropriate messages are being shared with partners and relevant communities	
Ensure safety measures are in place	

1. SERIOUS INCIDENT CHECKLIST

Incident categorisation	Assigned to
Does the incident require an Incident Management Meeting?	
Is the incident a Serious Violence Incident? See page 8 for definition	
Ensure incident has been categorised appropriately	
Who is leading the incident response?	
Has the appropriate lead been identified?	
Have all partners been identified?	
Has a response been coordinated across key partners, including community representatives?	
Does the response need to be cross-borough?	
Hold critical incident/key partners meeting	
Attendees, format and timing of meeting varies depending on incident categorisation	

1. SERIOUS INCIDENT CHECKLIST

Develop and implement response plan	
	Assigned to
Develop plan and assign responsibilities	
Put in place mediation, deploy patrols - consider outreach engagement work	
Undertake appeals for witnesses	
Brief CCTV control to support incident - monitor and review CCTV footage and ensure it's preservation and ensure it is supplied in a timely manner	
Provide victim support/bereavement support as appropriate	
Review progress and update plan as needed	
Communications planning and implementation	
Identify the lead agency for communications	
Ensure clear, consistent, factual messaging about the incident, from all partners	
Develop ongoing press/social media statement	
Ensure phased communications plan is developed - with weekly updates etc	
Agree key communication channels	
Monitor social media	

1. SERIOUS INCIDENT CHECKLIST

Health planning	Assigned to
Identify key health partners (hospital, GP and public health)	
Discuss discharge plans	
Consider victim's visitors needs	
Community liaison	
Liaise with community leaders	
Hold community meeting/community hub	
Visit local businesses, community organisations and faith organisations	
Offer support services to those affected	
Monitor tensions and call for support in prevention work	
Manage memorials and tributes	
Keep alert to signs of trauma amongst victims, family, wider community and staff	
Relationship mapping	
Appoint Family Liaison Officer or equivalent - if necessary	
Identify friends and family	
Identify and address safeguarding concerns	
Consider implications relating to social care, housing, friendship groups	

1. SERIOUS INCIDENT CHECKLIST

Education engagement	Assigned to
Alert schools of victims, perpetrators, witnesses etc	
Support schools with critical incident plan	
Deploy therapeutic services to schools	
Review and ongoing management	
Evaluate impact of response	
Develop plan for managing birthdays, anniversaries, court proceedings etc	
Move from response to management	

2. FOREWORD FROM THE MAYOR AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

London is one of the safest cities in the world. Despite this, serious violence is still a significant issue.

There is a huge cost to individuals, families and communities through loss of life, and the trauma caused through both the physical and psychological injuries suffered.

As Mayor of London, I am determined to lead from the front in tackling this problem - with a focus on both arresting violent offenders and tackling the root causes. But I can't do this alone.

I am committed to working with partners to do all that we can to break the cycle of violence. I have already put in place a range of strategies, initiatives and interventions to address this issue. I have also made commitments to develop resources to help other partners get involved.

I established the first Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in England and this toolkit is an important resource for use when responding to an incident of serious violence. It aims to break the cycle of violence by putting in place services to support and help individuals and communities.

Please take the time to read it and use it and make our city an even safer place.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

The VRU was set up to bring together specialists from health, police, local government, probation and community organisations to tackle violent crime and the underlying causes of violent crime, and increase feelings of safety in our city.

A number of Londoners already have some of the tools they need to tackle violence and its root causes – but many need additional support to help put their time, expertise or skills to best use.

This toolkit is one of the first resources being published by the VRU. It brings together a range of resources designed to assist in responding to an incident of serious violence. It is specifically aimed at community safety partnerships.

I hope that you find the toolkit useful and I look forward to working with you in developing our public health approach to tackle violence in London.

Lib Peck
**Director of the
Violence Reduction Unit**

3. ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

Knife crime, gun crime, homicide, acid attacks, exploitation. However you define it, serious violence is a significant issue. And the impact of violent crime on society is significant.

Reducing serious violence is a complex issue, requiring significant effort across a range of stakeholders. It is not something that government, the police or local communities can do alone. The reasons for violence are diverse, therefore any strategy to support people in the aftermath of a serious incident of violence must understand these individual differences and have the flexibility to address and respond to them in different ways.

The aim of this toolkit is to provide supporting resources to people who are involved in responding to a serious violence incident. It is specifically targeted at community safety partnerships, due to their key role in coordinating a local response.

The toolkit has been developed to help people prepare for, plan and deliver their response to an incident. It is not designed to be prescriptive. It draws on good practice across London, and provides resources alongside your existing policies and procedures to support you in providing a consistent experience for those impacted and ensuring the best outcome.

What is a serious violence incident?

Any incident in relation to knife crime or serious violence where the effectiveness of the response is likely to have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family and/or the community.

This can be any incident, not just a fatality. It is the impact of the incident that needs to be assessed as 'likely to be significant' before the incident can be considered serious.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit has been developed with the input from a range of people working in the area of community safety partnerships. We have drawn on information from a variety of sources including the College of Policing, Department for Education and the NHS. We thank everyone for their input and assistance.



4. BEFORE AN INCIDENT

4. BEFORE AN INCIDENT

Working in partnership to respond effectively to a serious violence incident can only happen if processes, procedures and relationships are in place well before an incident happens.

If you need to quickly mobilise a team of people in response to an incident, you need to already know who you will involve and why, and everybody needs to understand their role.

Planning

The key to responding to an incident is to plan and prepare - both individually and collectively. It is particularly important that responses are put in place right away, in order to ensure the safety of your communities, stem the flow of incorrect information, support those who need it, reduce

the risk of reactive or retributive behaviour, implement longer-term preventative measures and manage the increased risk around related activities (anniversaries, judicial proceedings etc).

While a joint response must be developed with the specific details of the incident in mind, understanding the steps you might go through and the people who you might engage with is key. So having a general incident plan in place, appropriate to your role, will help you quickly mobilise the people you need to in order to respond in the most effective way. Good planning for the aftermath of an incident makes it easier for people to respond effectively at a time when resilience or confidence may be low.

Incident planning

To enable you to respond to a serious violence incident, you may want to develop a local checklist. All CSPs

have policies and procedures that work really well in responding to an incident, and there's no single approach that should be followed, as the details of the incident and the services available may vary. Therefore, it may be useful to identify the key steps that relate to your specific location. Below is an example of how you might want to do this.

Alongside this, it is important that you ensure that you have communication networks in place, social media processes in place, cross-borough networks and working agreements in place, details for all local trauma/health and support.

**CRITICAL
INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT
-
PREPARATION**

**SERIOUS
VIOLENCE
INCIDENT
CHECKLIST
EXAMPLE**

4. BEFORE AN INCIDENT

ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS

To effectively respond to an incidence of violence, you will need to ensure that you have appropriate relationships in place prior to any incident taking place. These local relationships will likely be beneficial across your wider work.



4. BEFORE AN INCIDENT

In establishing these relationships, and working with them in responding to an incident, the most important thing to ensure is that you are engaging with the right people. If you want community members on a forum, make sure they are representative of the group the forum is representing.

There are many things you can do to ensure that you have the right people involved. Apart from establishing relationship across a range of statutory bodies and services, it is important to be proactive, to invite those from a wide range of organisations/ backgrounds to get involved.

The Violence Reduction Unit is committed to working closely with a wide range of partners, including community groups and grassroots

organisations, whose work span a range of issues from youth violence to social exclusion. They will be a great contact for widening community engagement. Use the link on the right to read more about the VRU's commitment to communities.

**VIOLENCE
REDUCTION
UNIT**

Approach to
Community

**BEST
PRACTICE
PRINCIPLES
FOR
ENGAGEMENT**

**AIMS OF
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

**EXAMPLE
INFORMATION
SHARING
PROTOCOL**

**INFORMATION
SHARING FOR
COMMUNITY
SAFETY**



5. DURING AN INCIDENT

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

When a serious violence incident occurs, the response will vary depending on the nature of the incident. But the process you need to go through to identify and develop the correct response is the same.

While the specific activities are listed sequentially, it is likely that many activities will be happening concurrently. The phasing of all activities would also vary according to the nature of the incident.

Incident reporting

A serious incident can be identified in many different ways. While a police report is most common, an incident can also be picked up via CCTV, via another emergency service, partner agency, community or health service. It can also be identified in a less timely manner via a GP appointment or interaction with another service provider, or through a visible sign of injury.

However the incident is reported, it is key to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and that the immediate response is in place. Here are links to some policing guidance processes which may be of use as guiding principles.

Policing response

**CRITICAL
INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT**

**TYPES OF
CRITICAL
INCIDENT**

**DEVELOPING A
COORDINATED
PARTNERSHIP
REASSURANCE
RESPONSE**

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Scene management

After an incident, it is important to ensure that any scene is being managed. This will usually be led by the police, who will also ensure that all safety measures are in place.

Incident categorisation

When an incident happens, it will be categorised by the police. If the police categorise the incident as requiring a gold group response, this kicks off an extremely well-defined process.

However, an incident that is not categorised this way from the police may still be an incident of note from the Council's or Community Safety Partnership's perspective. This can be for many reasons. It could be how it sits within a cumulative level of activity. It could have led to a minor injury, but raised community concerns or trauma. This may need a similar approach to a gold group, but led by the council.

Policing response

**CRITICAL
INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT**

**TYPES OF
CRITICAL
INCIDENT**

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Response lead

The categorisation of the response will often indicate the lead for the response. Once the lead is identified, it is important to also identify and inform all relevant partners.

At this stage, it is also important to consider cross-borough responses. An incident can happen in one borough, involving people who live, work or attend education in another borough. It is important that the response is consistent across boroughs, so identifying the lead and the partners outside the borough are also important.

At this stage, it is also important to identify key community representatives who should be involved.

Key individual networks

KEY
INDIVIDUAL
NETWORKS
(KINs)

APPLY TO
BECOME A
KIN

Response example

RESPONSE TO
SIGNIFICANT
COMMUNITY
SAFETY
INCIDENTS

Hold critical incident/key partners meeting

Once the key partners are identified, the first meeting is held. This would vary depending on whether it's a gold group/critical incident or incident of note/partners meeting. Attendees, format and timing of meeting varies depending on the incident categorisation as explained on the previous page.

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Develop and implement response plan

The next stage is to develop and implement the response plan. The response needs to be appropriate to the incident and likely impact of it, and should be reviewed and updated as necessary.

The response will likely include a range of activities including witness appeals, analysis of CCTV footage, consideration of increased patrols, outreach engagement, mediation, providing victim's/bereavement support, communications approach, community liaison and contact mapping.

Policing response

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

TYPES OF CRITICAL INCIDENT

Developing a response

DEVELOPING A COORDINATED PARTNERSHIP REASSURANCE RESPONSE

SERIOUS VIOLENT INCIDENT CHECKLIST EXAMPLE

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Communications planning and implementation

One of the biggest challenges during and immediately after an incident is managing the flow and accuracy of information.

When an incident has occurred and police are in attendance, often they are unable to immediately respond to questions, because they are still establishing the facts and they need to be mindful of protecting any future court proceedings. In the meantime, social media footage may already be circulating and media reporting is sensationalising the event.

When responding to an incident, it is important to share accurate information as soon as possible, but not to compete with this other 'noise'. It is particularly important that messages are consistent from multiple sources, and that all messages are

agreed across partners - including community representative, faith groups etc. Regardless of who leads communications, it is important that information is accurate and consistent.

Communications guidance

SERIOUS INCIDENTS
MEDIA MANAGEMENT

SERIOUS INCIDENTS
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

INFORMATION SHARING PROTOCOL

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Health planning

In responding to an incident, it is also important to establish a plan for managing health settings. This could be ongoing liaison with hospitals/GPs, understanding discharge plans and consider issues around visitors to the victim within a healthcare setting.

Resources

NHS
PATHWAYS

VICTIM
SUPPORT

NHS
WEBSITE

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Community liaison

Community liaison will be a key part of any response plan. The scope of this liaison will be defined as part of the response plan. Activities could include community meetings/community hubs, visits to local businesses, visits to community/faith organisations, offers of direct support to those affected (witnesses, friends, family etc).

As part of community liaison, you could also undertake work to monitor tensions and call for support in prevention work, and agree an approach for managing memorials and tributes.

Community engagement

RESTORING
PUBLIC
CONFIDENCE

MANAGING
TRIBUTES
AND
MEMORIALS

MEMORIAL
MANAGEMENT
POLICY
EXAMPLE

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Relationship mapping

As part of the response plan, it may be important to undertake associate/ relationship mapping to understand who may be impacted by the incident. At this stage, a Family Liaison Officer (or equivalent) may be appointed.

At this stage, it will be important to identify and address any safeguarding concerns, and also consider the implications relating to social care, housing and friendship groups.

Social care, housing and impact

LONDON
GOVERNMENT
DIRECTORY

CRIME AND
PUBLIC
PROTECTION

CHILDREN
AND YOUNG
PEOPLE

SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN

Friendship groups

USEFUL
SUPPORT
ORGANISATIONS

Counselling

COUNSELLING
RESOURCE

NHS
PATHWAYS

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Engagement with education settings

Education settings have a key role in supporting the response to serious violent incidents involving or affecting young people - due to their proximity and relationships with those affected.

It is important to alert schools of anybody who may be affected by an incident, and work with them to agree how they will support their students.

It is also important to support schools with a critical incident plan, and deploy therapeutic services to schools where this would be useful.



MANAGING
CRITICAL
INCIDENTS
IN SCHOOLS

5. DURING AN INCIDENT

Review and ongoing management

As the response is developed and initiatives are implemented, it is important to evaluate the impact of the response. Evaluation is a key part of future planning.

While it will be necessary to continue supporting people for different periods of time, there will be a point where the response activity is scaled down and a prevention approach is more appropriate.

However, during this time, it is important to also be aware of key dates - birthdays, anniversaries, court proceedings, and have a plan in place to support these dates.

Signs of trauma

IDENTIFYING
TRAUMA

SUPPORTING
PUPILS

SUPPORTING
YOUR CHILD

Providing support

PTSD
SYMPTOMS

PTSD
SUPPORT

KNIFE CRIME
TOOLKIT

Learning lessons

ADVICE ON
EVALUATION
AND
MEASUREMENT

CRITICAL
INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT
PROCESS



6. AFTER THE INCIDENT

6. AFTER THE INCIDENT

This toolkit contains information about planning and delivering a response over the first days and weeks after an incident. Clearly, depending on the nature of the incident, this support could continue for months or years - however, you will be able to identify this need and plan for it within the initial weeks.

At some stage, the response to an incident is scaled down. While some individuals may still be receiving support, the majority of the community moves to a prevention and community cohesion approach. This could then utilise some of the tools made available through the London Needs You Alive toolkit, published in 2018.

When the response is scaled down, it will also be important to put a plan together to mobilise the response group again at any time that might be useful - for example, around anniversaries or during judicial proceedings.



London Needs You Alive toolkit



7. USEFUL LINKS

7. USEFUL LINKS: KEY POLICIES, PATHWAYS, RESOURCES, ORGANISATIONS

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

KNIFE
CRIME
STRATEGY

LONDON
NEEDS
YOU ALIVE
TOOLKIT

LONDON
COUNCILS

MOPAC
POLICE
AND CRIME
PLAN

VIOLENCE
REDUCTION
UNIT

CODE OF
PRACTICE
FOR
VICTIMS OF
CRIME

PROCESSES

CRITICAL
INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT

MANAGING
CRITICAL
INCIDENTS IN
SCHOOLS

GDPR
INFORMATION
SHARING
AGREEMENT

INFORMATION
ABOUT
ACEs

7. USEFUL LINKS

SUPPORT

Health pathways

The NHS has developed support pathways for staff across NHS systems. The pathways aim to help services and communities respond to the needs of those people who are experiencing distress following incidents in London. Elements of the pathways may be suitable for those involved in other violent incidents. There are seven pathways - for adult victims, bereaved adults, for adult witnesses, for first responders, for children and young victims, for bereaved children and young people, and for children and young witnesses.



The NHS website

Information from the National Health Service on conditions, treatments, local services and healthy living (also includes signposting to support for people who are bereaved).



Victim Support

Victim Support is a charity delivering tailored support to help people recover from the effects of crime and traumatic events. They also speak up for victims' rights, ensuring their needs are met in the criminal justice system.



T 08081 689111

7. USEFUL LINKS

SUPPORT

Child Bereavement UK

Information to support schools, children, families and staff following a bereavement.



T 0800 0288840

Grief support app for young people (11-25) who have been bereaved of someone close to them.



Samaritans

24 hour telephone support, text messaging and email service and time limited drop in facilities available in branches.



T 116 123

Cruse Bereavement Support

Face to face, group, telephone and email support to support people who are bereaved.



T 0808 808 1677

7. USEFUL LINKS

SUPPORT

The Compassionate Friends

Provides support and friendship to parents and families after the death of their son or daughter, at any age and from any cause.



T 08451 232304

SLOW - Surviving the loss of your world

SLOW is here to support parents and families following the devastating loss of their child. They provide an informal, quiet space for parents to meet with other bereaved parents and share experiences.



London Needs You Alive Toolkit

The London Needs You Alive toolkit is being used by schools, colleges, community and faith groups across London to help engage young Londoners on the difficult issue of knife crime and how to stay safe.



Family Liaison & Co-ordination of Support Services

FLACSS is a network of organisations who exist to help those affected serious incidents.