

## **Tackling Violence Action Plan: Equality Impact Assessment**

### **Background**

#### **Context**

We have had significant success in tackling violent crime over recent years. Violent crime has fallen by 31 per cent since 1997. Domestic violence has halved in that time. Offences resulting in serious wounding fell by 9% between 2005/06 and 2006/07, and recorded firearms offences fell by 13% in the same period. However, there is still more to do, particularly to tackle more serious violence including homicide and serious wounding, which have reduced at a slower rate than lower level violence, as well as serious sexual offences such as rape and child abuse. We will be taking this work forward within the overarching framework of the Government's new Public Service Agreements, which prioritise reductions in serious violence for the first time.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

The Tackling Violence Action Plan creates an underpinning structure for cross-Governmental work to deliver reductions in serious violence over the next three years. Our work will focus on tackling those offences causing the most harm including homicides, serious wounding, offences involving weapons, domestic violence and serious sexual offences such as rape and child abuse.

The Action Plan is primarily intended for practitioners and describes steps that local partners should take in order to deliver the new Making Communities Safer PSA 23 priority to reduce the most serious violence and prioritise serious sexual and domestic violence. The shift in focus from volume to seriousness is set out in the Crime Strategy (published in July 2007) and the National Community Safety Plan (published in December 2007) as well as the PSA targets themselves (published in October 2007).

In agreeing the new PSA and developing both the Crime Strategy and the Tackling Violence Action Plan, we have worked closely with central and local Government partners, as well as key delivery partners including the police. This has given us a comprehensive picture of the action needed at both local and national level in order to achieve long term reductions in serious violence across multiple crime types.

Our overarching approach is based on identifying and managing those at risk of involvement in serious violence, either as perpetrators or victims, and on supporting victims to reduce the impact of these offences as well as working with them to bring more offences to justice.

The Action Plan will be supported as necessary by further guidance on the key issues, recommendations and actions contained within it.

#### **Scope of EIA work**

This EIA looks at the Tackling Violence Action Plan as a whole, considering its overarching aims and objectives, rather than each individual action or recommendation within it. Existing policies and initiatives referred to within the Action Plan will already have been impact assessed. Additional EIAs will be conducted as necessary on the new policies and initiatives deriving from the Plan.

When developing the Tackling Violence Action Plan, we have considered equality issues both in relation to perpetrators and victims of serious violence. However, it should be borne in mind that violent crime is a highly complex issue and the two are often interrelated.

## **Methodology**

### **Approach to evidence gathering**

As highlighted above, serious violence covers a range of offences, including homicide and serious wounding, offences involving weapons, domestic violence, and serious sexual offences, for example rape and child abuse. There are already a wide range of policies and practices in place to address these issues which we know have been successful.

The Tackling Violence Action Plan builds on these successes to ensure that the good practice we have developed is applied nationally. Evidence of the impact of these existing policies and initiatives has been gathered from multiple sources. This has allowed us to identify what works, what doesn't work and the areas in which we need to do more to tackle serious violence.

### **Results of evidence gathering exercise:**

We know that violent crime affects different groups of people in different ways, either as perpetrators, victims or both. Further, and as mentioned previously, it is important to note that violent crime is a highly complex issue; those who are victims of violent crime may also be, or may become potential perpetrators of violent offences and, similarly, those who are offenders may also be, or may become potential victims of violent offences.

It is also important to note that, because of the complexity of violent crime and the interrelations within it, equality issues will not normally be mutually exclusive, for example gender and age are both significant factors in weapon related offences. However, for the purposes of this Equality Impact Assessment, we have considered each equality strand in isolation.

The key findings of the evidence gathering exercise are outlined below:

#### **Gender:**

Gender is a highly significant factor with regard to perpetrating violent crime or being particularly vulnerable to victimisation.

With regard to victimisation, evidence suggests that this is highly relevant in the sexual and domestic violence context:

- Approximately 77% of victims of domestic violence are women<sup>1</sup>
- 92% of victims of recorded rape are women<sup>2</sup>
- All recorded offences of trafficking for sexual exploitation have been against women and girls.<sup>3</sup>

Although this suggests that women are much more likely to be the victims of sexual or domestic violence, it should not be overlooked that it may be particularly difficult for men to report rape or domestic violence because of societal attitudes to gender relations and a fear of not being believed.

Gender is also a significant factor in relation to victimisation rates within the public space violence context. Evidence shows that:

- 76% of victims of stranger violence are men<sup>4</sup>
- Males between the ages of 16-24 are most likely to be victims of violent crime outside of the sexual and domestic violence context.<sup>5</sup>

With regard to violent crime offending evidence also suggests that:

- Among those aged 10-25 years, males are more likely to have offended in the last 12 months than females (19% compared to 14% respectively).<sup>6</sup>
- Men are more likely to be suspects with regard to homicides: in 2006/07 there were 170 males indicted for homicide compared with 16 females.<sup>7</sup>

## **Age:**

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholas, S, Kershaw, C, and Walker, A, (2007) *Crime in England and Wales 2006/07*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/07. London: Home Office

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> HM Government. Saving Lives. Reducing Harm. Protecting the Public. An Action Plan for Tackling Violence 2008-11

<sup>4</sup> Nicholas, S, Kershaw, C, and Walker, A, (2007) *Crime in England and Wales 2006/07*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/07. London: Home Office

<sup>5</sup> Coleman, K, Hird, C, Povey, D. Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004/05; Nicholas, S, Kershaw, C, and Walker, A, (2007) *Crime in England and Wales 2006/07*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/07. London: Home Office

<sup>6</sup> Wilson, D, Sharp, C, Patterson, A., Young People and Crime: Findings from the 2005 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17/06. London: Home Office.

<sup>7</sup> Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2006/07 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2006/07. Povey, D, (Ed). Coleman, C., Kaiza, P., Hoare, J. and Jansson, K. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 03/08. London: Home Office.)

Age is a significant factor in relation to all violent crime. Males between the ages of 18-25 are most likely to commit a serious offence. Evidence suggests that:

- Young men aged between 10 to 25 years are more likely than females of the same age to commit a violent offence (18% vs. 9% respectively)<sup>8</sup>
- Among those aged 10 to 25 years the prevalence of offending peaked among males between 16- to 19-year-olds, whilst for females the prevalence peaked earlier at age 14 to 15.<sup>9</sup>
- Group offending: Approximately two thirds (63%) of young people aged 10 to 19 who belonged to a 'delinquent youth group' (a self defined group which was involved in some form of criminal activity at some point in time), have, themselves, committed at least one 'core offence' *in the last year*. This proportion was significantly higher (2.4 times) than for non-members (26%).<sup>10</sup>

Age is known to be particularly significant in relation to crimes involving weapons

- In 2006/07 over half (51%) of firearm victims, excluding air weapons and where the age of the victims was known, were under the age of 30.<sup>11</sup>
- Four per cent of young people aged between 10 and 25 said they had carried a knife in the previous 12 months, either 'for protection or in case they got into a fight' (and in the majority of cases for protection) and the incidence was highest at ages 16-17 (7%).<sup>12</sup>

We also know that age is highly significant in the sexual and domestic violence context in relation to both offenders and victims and particularly with regard to prostitution and child abuse.

Evidence suggests that:

- At the time of the most recent incident of serious sexual assault, just over two thirds of offenders were aged between 20 and 39 years (67%)

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<sup>8</sup> Wilson, D, Sharp, C, Patterson, A., Young People and Crime: Findings from the 2005 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17/06. London: Home Office.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Sharp, C., Aldridge, J. and Medina, J. Delinquent youth groups and offending. behaviour: findings from the 2004 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey. Home Office Online Report 14/06. London: Home Office.

<sup>11</sup> Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2006/07 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2006/07. Povey, D, (Ed). Coleman, C., Kaiza, P., Hoare, J. and Jansson, K. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 03/08. London: Home Office.)

<sup>12</sup> Sharp, C., Aldridge, J. and Medina, J. Delinquent youth groups and offending. behaviour: findings from the 2004 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey. Home Office Online Report 14/06. London: Home Office.

and a further 17% were aged between 16 and 19 and 13% between 40 and 59 years.<sup>13</sup>

- Four out of five (78%) of female victims were aged between 16 and 29 years when the most serious incident of serious sexual assault occurred.<sup>14</sup>
- Adolescents probably account for up to one third of all sexual crime<sup>15</sup> and that around half of adult sex offenders report an adolescent onset of sexual deviance.<sup>16</sup>
- There is a greater chance of young people who sexually abuse being convicted for a non-sexual offence with rates varying from 37 to 89%.<sup>17</sup>
- Childhood sexual abuse is most prevalent in the 5 to 14 age group.<sup>18</sup>

Further to this, age is also a particularly significant factor when considering the interrelation between an individual's likelihood of being a victim and an offender of violent crime. Evidence suggests that:

- Young victims of violence are 3-5 times more likely to have offended than other young people. Interviews with fifteen offenders convicted of firearms offences found that all had been victims of crime, with 73% victims of gun crime.<sup>19</sup>
- Findings from qualitative research supports this by indicating that of the 80 offenders surveyed: 40 had previously been threatened with guns, 29 had been shot at, 8 had been shot, 28 had been stabbed, 17 had been injured with other weapons, 34 had been robbed and 3 had been kidnapped. Additionally, 26 reported friends or family members shot and injured and another 26 reported friends or family shot dead.<sup>20</sup>

## **Ethnicity:**

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<sup>13</sup> Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2006/07 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2006/07. Povey, D, (Ed). Coleman, C., Kaiza, P., Hoare, J. and Jansson, K. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 03/08. London: Home Office.)

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Lovell, E. (2002) I think I may need some help with this problem: Responding to children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour. NSPCC. London

<sup>16</sup> Abel, G.G., Osborn, C.A., and Twigg, D.A. (1993) Sexual assault through the life span: Adult offenders with juvenile histories. In the Juvenile Sex Offender. Guildford Press

<sup>17</sup> Caldwell, M. F. (2002) What we do not know about juvenile sexual re-offence. Child Maltreatment., 7:291-302.

<sup>18</sup> Cawson et al. (2002) Child maltreatment in the United Kingdom: a study of the prevalence of child childhood abuse and neglect. London. NSPCC.

<sup>19</sup> B, Webb, B, and Tilley, N. (2005) *Rationalisation of current research on guns, gangs and other weapons: Phase 1*. UCL Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science.

<sup>20</sup> Hales, G, Lewis, C, Silverstone, D. (2006) Gun Crime: the market in and the use of illegal firearms. Home Office Research Study 298. London: Home Office.

Interestingly, after taking age into account, there is little difference in rates of victimisation specifically in relation to ethnicity. Evidence suggests that:

- 0.5% of both white adults and those from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds were victims of domestic violence in 2006/07.<sup>21</sup>
- 1.5% of white adults and 1.6% of those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds were victims of stranger violence in 2006/07.<sup>22</sup>

However, we know that people from non-white groups are more likely to be concerned about violent crime and it is important that action to tackle violence addresses fear of crime as well as actual offences committed.

Evidence suggests that:

- People with black or minority ethnic backgrounds have higher levels of worry about violent crime (35% have high levels of worry compared with 15% of White people).<sup>23</sup>

We also know that there are certain forms of crime that minority ethnic groups experience that need a clear response, particularly racially motivated hate crimes.

Evidence suggests that:

- Nationally, in 2006-07, police reported 5,619 hate crimes in which someone was injured and 28,485 cases of racially or religiously motivated harassment.<sup>24</sup>
- Minority ethnic groups (e.g. Black ethnic groups and Afro-Caribbean) appear to be over-represented in gang-related shootings although this may be due to underlying social exclusion factors such as deprivation (this however, requires further research and analysis).<sup>25</sup>

Evidence suggests that:

Murder, manslaughter and infanticide (collectively known as homicide) are amongst the most infrequent crimes in England and Wales. They are however, the most serious form of violent crime and there are some disparities in the risks for different ethnic groups.

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<sup>21</sup> Nicholas, S, Kershaw, C, and Walker, A, (2007) *Crime in England and Wales 2006/07*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/07. London: Home Office

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> House of Commons. Home Affairs Select Committee: Young Black People and the Criminal Justice System. Second Report of Session 2006-07. Volume 1 06/07

- Figures from the BCS estimate that there were around 139,000 racially motivated incidents in 2005/06, and the police recorded 23 racially motivated homicides in the three years to 2005/6<sup>26</sup>.
- A total of 2,327 homicides (including victims drowned in Morecambe Bay and the London bombings) were recorded by the police in the three years 2003/4 to 2005/6. Just under three-quarters of victims were White (74%), 10% were Black, 7% were Asian and 4% 'Other'. In 5% of homicides the ethnicity of the victim was 'Not Known'.<sup>27</sup>
- The same data shows that Black victims of homicide were more likely to be shot (28%) than Asian (10%) or White (5%) victims.
- Furthermore, Black victims of homicide were more likely to have been killed by a 'sharp instrument' (37%) compared with White (31%) and Asian (29%) victims.

There is also a concern about whether ethnic minority groups are treated fairly by the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

Evidence suggests that:

- Relative to white people, people from BME groups reported higher levels of perceived discrimination within the Criminal Justice System. Thirty one per cent of people from minority ethnic groups feel that they would be treated worse than people of other races by one or more of the five Criminal Justice System organisations.<sup>28</sup>
- Of the 839,977 police recorded stop and searches in 2004/5 14% were of black people, 7% of Asian people and 1.5% of 'Other' Ethnic origin. Relative to the general population, black people were 3 times more likely to be arrested than White people.<sup>29</sup>

## Sexuality

The Home Office and other agencies are seeking to develop measures of victimisation rates according to sexual orientation. Although there is a lack of robust measures of the national prevalence a number of small scale research studies have been conducted and anecdotal evidence has been gathered. We do however know that:

- *Breaking the Chain of Hate*, a survey conducted by the National Advisory Group in 1999 examining levels of homophobic crime and community confidence towards the police service, included these statistics: 66% of 2,500 respondents stated that they had been a victim

<sup>26</sup> Walker, A. Kershaw, C, and Nicholas, S, (2006) *Crime in England and Wales 2005/06*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 12/06. London: Home Office

<sup>27</sup> Jones, A. and Singer, L. (2006) Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System – 2006. A Ministry of Justice Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991

<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Justice (2006) Race and the Criminal Justice System: An overview to the complete statistics 2004-2005. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/s95overview0405.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*

of homophobic incidents. Only 18% of all homophobic incidents were reported. 70% were fearful of reporting future homophobic incidents.<sup>30</sup>

## **Disability / Mental Health**

As with sexual orientation, there is a lack of evidence regarding victimisation rates according to disability. The Home Office and other agencies are currently gathering evidence and data related to disability hate crime. However we do know that:

- Evidence from the *Paying the Price*<sup>31</sup> (2004) consultation suggests a significant number of those involved in prostitution report varied and complex mental health needs.
- The Government's Women's Mental Health Strategy (2002) notes that domestic and sexual violence and abuse contribute greatly to women's mental health and that this is particularly true for women with complex needs, such as those with a dual diagnosis of substance misuse and mental health problems.
- For women having a limiting illness or disability is associated with being a victim of all types of intimate partner violence (7.4% compared with 5.9% of women without a limiting illness or disability).<sup>32</sup>

As for ethnicity, there is concern about whether individuals with a disability are treated fairly by the Criminal Justice System. Evidence also suggests that:

- Confidence in the Criminal Justice System is higher amongst those without a disability or illness than those who reported that they had a limited disability or illness.<sup>33</sup>

## **Socio-economic background**

Social deprivation or poverty in a community can be a contributory factor for involvement in crime and violence; evidence suggests that offenders tend to come from poorer backgrounds, with low family incomes. Further evidence suggests that:

- Crime is not evenly distributed across England and Wales. Whilst geographic patterns and concentrations of offences vary across crime types, crime rates tend to be higher in urban and deprived areas. For

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<sup>30</sup> [http://www.stonewall.org\\_bank/violent\\_hate\\_crime/default.asp](http://www.stonewall.org_bank/violent_hate_crime/default.asp)

<sup>31</sup> *Paying the Price*: a consultation paper on prostitution 2004.

[http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/paying\\_the\\_price.pdf?view=Binary](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/paying_the_price.pdf?view=Binary):

<sup>32</sup> Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2005/06 in (Supplementary Volume 1 to Crime in England and Wales 2005/06) 2007. Coleman, C., Jansson, K., Kaiza, P. and Reed, E. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/07. London: Home Office).

<sup>33</sup> Allen, J. Edmonds. S, Patterson. A, Smith. D; Policing and the Criminal Justice System - public confidence and perceptions: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey

example, the 2006/07 BCS showed that people living in the most deprived areas were more likely to be a victim of violent crime than those living in least deprived areas<sup>34</sup>.

- Unemployed people had a higher risk of being a victim of violent crime than the employed or economically inactive (9% compared with 3.9% and 2.7% respectively).<sup>35</sup>
- In a study of 676 police case files on allegations of rape, 40 per cent of victims aged 16 and over were unemployed at the time of the offence; 17 per cent of all victims were considered 'vulnerable' as defined by the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act.<sup>36</sup>
- Research also shows that family instability is a particular risk factor. A recent qualitative study of 80 convicted and imprisoned illegal firearms offenders found that 59 reported a disrupted family life, including 35 who had grown up in a single parent household.<sup>37</sup>

## Consultation

Significant consultation on the focus on serious violence taken forward by the Tackling Violence Action Plan was conducted as part of the development of the Crime Strategy, the National Community Safety Plan and the PSA targets. This included consultation with other Government Departments, agencies, local government and third sector organisations on PSA 23,<sup>38</sup> as well as the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders including the police, local delivery partners and voluntary organisations in the development of the Crime Strategy Equality Impact Assessment.<sup>39</sup>

Further to this, we have worked closely with key stakeholders throughout the development of the Tackling Violence Action Plan. A specific consultation event on the Action Plan took place on 27 June 2007, to which a range of groups were invited including Victim Support, Mind, the National Youth Agency, the Zito Trust, and the Damilola Taylor Trust. The discussion at this event covered issues of equality, including gender, mental health and socio-economics, and this was used to inform the development of the Action Plan. Ongoing contact was maintained with a number of these groups throughout the drafting process.

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<sup>34</sup> Nicholas, S, Kershaw, C, and Walker, A, (2007) *Crime in England and Wales 2006/07*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/07. London: Home Office

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*

<sup>36</sup> Feist, A. et al, (2007) *Detecting Recorded Offences of Rape*, Home Office Online Report 18/07. London: Home Office.

<sup>37</sup> Hales, G, Lewis, C, Silverstone, D. (2006) *Gun Crime: the market in and the use of illegal firearms*. Home Office Research Study 298. London: Home Office.

<sup>38</sup> PSA Delivery Agreement 23: Making Communities Safer, HM Treasury 2007. Online [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/3/D/pbr\\_csr07\\_psa23.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/3/D/pbr_csr07_psa23.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Home Office (2007) *Crime Strategy: Equality Impact Assessment*. Home Office 2007. Online: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/crime-strategy-07/>

Individual actions included in the Action Plan have been developed in consultation with interested groups with a focus on equality issues, including the Commission for Racial Equality, Communities that Care, Mothers Against Guns, Be Safe, From Boyhood to Manhood, the National Black Police Association and the Prince's Trust. Ongoing dialogue on both policy and equality issues is taken forward via the Guns, Gangs and Knives Round Table which is chaired by the Home Secretary and brings together senior Police officers, community representatives and other Government Departments, and the Stakeholder Advisory Group on Sexual Violence and Abuse. Discussions about the Action Plan and the policies it contains took place at meetings of these groups, and information was disseminated to sexual and domestic violence stakeholders through a series of Regional Roadshows held in Summer 2007 as well as via the Domestic Violence Virtual Unit and Sexual Violence Officials Group. Again, these discussions were used to inform the development of the Action Plan.

### **Action to address these issues**

The above evidence and related issues have been considered extensively in the development of our Action Plan and used to form the basis of its key actions. The following table demonstrates the way in which actions to tackle violent crime address these issues of inequality:

<b>Equality Strand</b>	<b>How we are addressing this?</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<p><b>Evidence shows us that gender is particularly significant in relation to sexual violence. The Action Plan therefore makes a commitment to continue to drive forward our work on sexual violence including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the rolling out of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) to cover every part of the country, to ensure that victims of sexual assault have access to immediate care and support following an attack, and that where appropriate the police gather valuable forensic evidence in order to help secure convictions. This will include the provision of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers.</b></li> <li>• <b>supporting the national roll-out of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers, to ensure they are available for all sexual violence victims.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence also shows us the importance of gender in relation to domestic violence. The Action Plan will therefore tackle this issue through its</b></p>

	<p><b>commitments to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve convictions by ensuring that sensitive domestic violence-related cases can be heard in a safe and protected court environment through roll out of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court programme.</li> <li>• roll out Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) in order to reduce repeat victimisation among victims of domestic violence.</li> <li>• support the national roll-out of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, to ensure they are available for all domestic violence victims.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence shows us that all recorded offences of trafficking for sexual exploitation have been against women and young girls. This Action Plan will tackle this issue by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implementing the Government's co-ordinated Prostitution Strategy, and the UK Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking.</li> <li>• conducting a review of what more can be done to tackle the demand for prostitution, and reforming the law on street offences to support routes out of prostitution and exploitation.</li> <li>• supporting those areas where prostitution is identified as a particular challenge to adopt advisory arrangements for victims of this crime.</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	<p><b>Evidence shows us that age can be a factor in violent offending. It is important to work with young people to prevent violent behaviour from occurring in the first place and developing in seriousness, including education work through schools, diversionary work, and activity through the Youth Justice System. The Government will be publishing a specific Youth Crime Action Plan in the Summer which will deal with these issues in more detail.</b></p> <p><b>Evidence shows us that young people are more likely to be involved in and weapon-related offences. This Action plan therefore makes a</b></p>

	<p><b>commitment to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• crack down on knife crime, in particular involving young people.</li> <li>• work with the voluntary organisation Be Safe to make weapons awareness workshops available to a total of 1.1 million children.</li> <li>• work with schools to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities to address the dangers of carrying weapons within the curriculum.</li> <li>• deliver a national campaign to address knife possession among young people, particularly those who are carrying weapons for fear of being a victim of violent crime.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence shows us that young people are much more likely than older people to be involved in gang violence, and that members of gangs are more likely to commit offences than non-members. This Action Plan therefore makes a commitment to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work with the police and other delivery partners in those communities affected by gang-related violence to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ identify key gang members;</li> <li>○ enhance the use of covert surveillance;</li> <li>○ implement targeted, multi-agency crackdowns; and</li> <li>○ work to develop mediation and mentoring services for young people involved in gang violence, and/or looking for routes out.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence shows us that children are at risk of sexual abuse and that offenders often use the internet to participate in a range of child sexual abuse activity. The Action Plan therefore makes a commitment to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work with the internet industry to ensure that the online protection of children from sex offenders is as robust as possible.</li> <li>• implement actions resulting from the Byron Review on children and new technologies.</li> <li>• continue to implement the recommendations of the 2007 Child Sex Offender Review, including those on the increased disclosure of child sex offenders' convictions to</li> </ul>
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	<p>members of the public.</p>
<p><b>Ethnicity, Sexuality and Disability</b></p>	<p>The majority of work of which addresses Ethnicity, Sexuality and Disability is incorporated in actions on hate crime. Despite the limited data in this area, evidence suggests that each of these strands needs to be addressed which is why the Action Plan makes a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support those areas where hate crime is identified as a particular challenge to adopt advisory arrangements for victims of hate crime.</li> <li>• Pilot the national collection from Police Forces of data on hate crime through the Annual Data Requirement (from April 2008) and additional questions on hate crime have been included in the 2007/08 British Crime Survey.</li> <li>• commission further research into the extent of, and motivation for, hate crime to help inform a comprehensive, cross-Government strategy to be published by December 2008.</li> <li>• continue to share good practice with practitioners in the field of hate crime, enabling them to shape a response appropriate to local circumstances.</li> </ul> <p>Evidence shows that there is a concern about whether ethnic minority groups, as well as those with disabilities, are treated fairly by the Criminal Justice System. The Action Plan will therefore tackle this issue through its commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that suitable support services are available to victims of violence, and will rebalance the Criminal Justice System in favour of all victims.</li> <li>• establish a national working group of government, statutory agencies and the third sector to develop actions and practical tools to assist victims and potential victims of violence within Black and Minority Ethnic communities.</li> <li>• ensure victims from Black Minority Ethnic Groups and those with disabilities have access to the support services they need. We will do this by ensuring that that they receive timely and tailored information, have a voice in the system and are supported and</li> </ul>

	<p>protected in court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to ensure Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) develop appropriate responses to hate crime and increase reporting of hate crime offences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Socio-economic background</b></p>	<p>In recent years, the Government has focussed much effort on reducing social deprivation and improving life chances to reduce the risk of offending and re-offending. 'Reaching Out: An Action Plan on Social Exclusion'<sup>40</sup> sets out the Government's approach to tackling social exclusion, indicating that positive change is possible through early identification, support and preventative action.</p> <p>The Government is developing this work through initiatives such as Sure Start and Every Child Matters. Key actions were also set out in the Children's Plan published on 11 December 2007. These include national commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• halve child poverty by 2010 and eradicate it by 2020.</li> <li>• reduce the number of first time young offenders so that by 2020 the number receiving a conviction, reprimand or final warning for a recordable offence will have fallen by a quarter.</li> </ul> <p>The Tackling Violence Action Plan will build on the work already carried out to tackle the impact of socio economic background on violent crime through its commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide targeted and ongoing support to those areas which face the biggest challenges in terms of serious violence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Changes in equality issues over time</b></p>	<p>We know that issues of equality are highly dynamic and likely to change over time and space. Alongside the above actions in the Plan, we will also ensure that the Government is in a position to respond to such changes and new challenges in violence as they arise. In particular, the Action Plan makes a commitment to:</p>

<sup>40</sup> [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force\\_publication:/reaching\\_out.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force_publication:/reaching_out.aspx)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>work with the Migration Impacts Forum to consider how changes in local demographics may affect violent crime.</b></li> <li>• <b>ensure that local areas understand their priorities in relation to violent crime and develop local action plans for addressing these.</b></li> <li>• <b>continue to work with internet service providers and the industry to address public concern about violent and offensive content on the internet.</b></li> <li>• <b>develop a national action plan for tackling so-called ‘honour based’ violence, including forced marriage, female genital mutilation and ‘honour’ killings.</b></li> </ul>
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## **Monitoring**

Monitoring will play a vital role in ensuring that local delivery partners are accurately targeting their resources and efforts in a way which is sensitive to equality issues, in order to reduce violent crime and victimisation to the benefit of all local communities.

The Government will monitor progress towards meeting the national PSAs and on the full range of national priorities through various means, including use of the new Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) and the establishment of a National Violence Taskforce and a Ministerial Action Group. We are committed to ensuring that equality issues are considered on an ongoing basis within each of these working groups and will be working with the Government Equalities Office to consider how this can best be achieved.

## **Conclusion**

Reductions in violent over recent years have undoubtedly had a positive impact on the entire population. It is clear from the evidence considered as part of this Impact Assessment that some groups may be more affected by violence, and by the actions we are taking forward as part of the Tackling Violence Action Plan, than others. We have taken steps to ensure that this is taken into account in developing and implementing policy in this area and that, where possible, positive action is taken to address these inequality factors. We believe that through the actions outlined in this Plan - in particular those around sexual and domestic violence and hate crime - a range of groups in society, for example women, vulnerable people, and ethnic minorities, will benefit significantly.

We recognise that it is crucial to monitor the relationship between equality and violence over time and address new changes as they arise. We have therefore made a commitment within the Action Plan to do so at a national level.

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