

Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership

working together to make communities safer

Community Safety Partnership Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023

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Foreword

The Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership Strategic Plan 2020-2023 sets out a clear vision of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse, and increase perceptions about safety and well-being in our communities.

Our vision will be achieved through a strong collaboration of agencies. We will work alongside our communities to tackle some of the most complex and persistent problems arising, in order to ensure that the communities of Bedford Borough remain a safe place for all, where a high quality of life can be enjoyed.

In the period since the last plan was produced, the CSP has faced significant challenges in terms of emerging threats and risks. These include increasing attention to the criminal exploitation of vulnerable people, modern day slavery and serious youth violence. These threats to safety are now firmly within the sights of partners, alongside other important issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Abuse and Serious Sexual Offences.

During the same period, the CSP and partner agencies have continued

to face reductions in budget and resources, adding to the challenge of delivering more service with less resource.

The strategic priorities for the Bedford Borough CSP Plan 2020-2023 have been identified through the 2019 Strategic Assessment and analysis of current data and intelligence. These sources have allowed us to refocus the three priority areas which cause the most concern to both local residents and agencies. The plan sets out how we will address the core community safety issues both now and in the coming three years.

Success in addressing the three priorities requires the trust and confidence of the public in our agencies, for this reason there is a strong theme of engagement running throughout the partnership aims. Partnership working, community engagement and empowerment will continue to be the key to tackling crime, disorder and the local priorities identified as strategic issues for the CSP.

John Murphy

Chief Superintendent, Bedfordshire Police

Chair of the Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Vision

The vision of the Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is:

“Tackling crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse and increasing perceptions about safety and well-being in our communities.”

1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the priority areas of action for the CSP and its partner agencies by:

- Introducing *Strategic Community Safety Priorities* for the CSP based on the results of the 2019 CSP Strategic Assessment.
- Describing what the CSP’s strategic aims and priorities are over the period 2020-2023.

1.3. Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was formed in response to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as a statutory requirement. Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership is a joint partnership of five responsible authorities – **Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire Police, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Offender Management Services** and **Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group** – who work together to tackle the crimes and anti-social behaviour that affect our communities.

Every CSP in England is required to produce a three year Plan. This Plan covers the period **April 2020 to March 2023** and establishes the key strategic aims and priority issues of the CSP for the next three years. As well as establishing a three year plan, the CSP also has a statutory obligation to undertake an annual Crime and Disorder ‘Strategic Assessment’ (SA), this will continue to be carried out annually to inform the progress of the Plan 2020-2023, the work of partners and effective delivery of community safety work.



1.4. Profile of Bedford Borough

Bedford is mixed 'urban and rural' Borough, the rural area covers 476 sq km and includes the county town of Bedford, the adjacent urban area of Kempston, and 45 rural parishes comprises the remainder of the Borough. The population is concentrated in the urban area, with almost two-thirds (63%) living in Bedford and Kempston.

According to ONS estimates, the Borough has a population of 171,623 (2018) which has grown by approximately 8.9% since 2011. Much of that growth has occurred in the rural parishes bordering the urban area where there have been several major residential developments, including the large new community of Wixams.

There are an estimated 75,652 households in the Borough mid 2019 (Borough Estimate).

The older population is projected to increase at a much higher rate. Between 2018 and 2025 the 65+ population is projected to rise by 17.4% and the 85+ population by 20.5%

Long term, the population of the Borough is projected to reach 206,400 in 2041, this would represent a 20.3% increase between 2018 and 2041.

The Borough has an ethnically diverse population. The 2011 Census reported that 28.5% of the population was from BME minority ethnic groups (non-'White British') compared to 20.2% nationally. The BAME population has increased by 16,400, between 2001 and 2011. More than 1 in 6 residents (17.6%) was born outside the UK.

The BAME population is concentrated in the urban areas of Bedford and Kempston, with particularly large communities in Queens Park (75%) and Cauldwell (59%) wards. The proportion of BAME residents is highest among younger age groups.

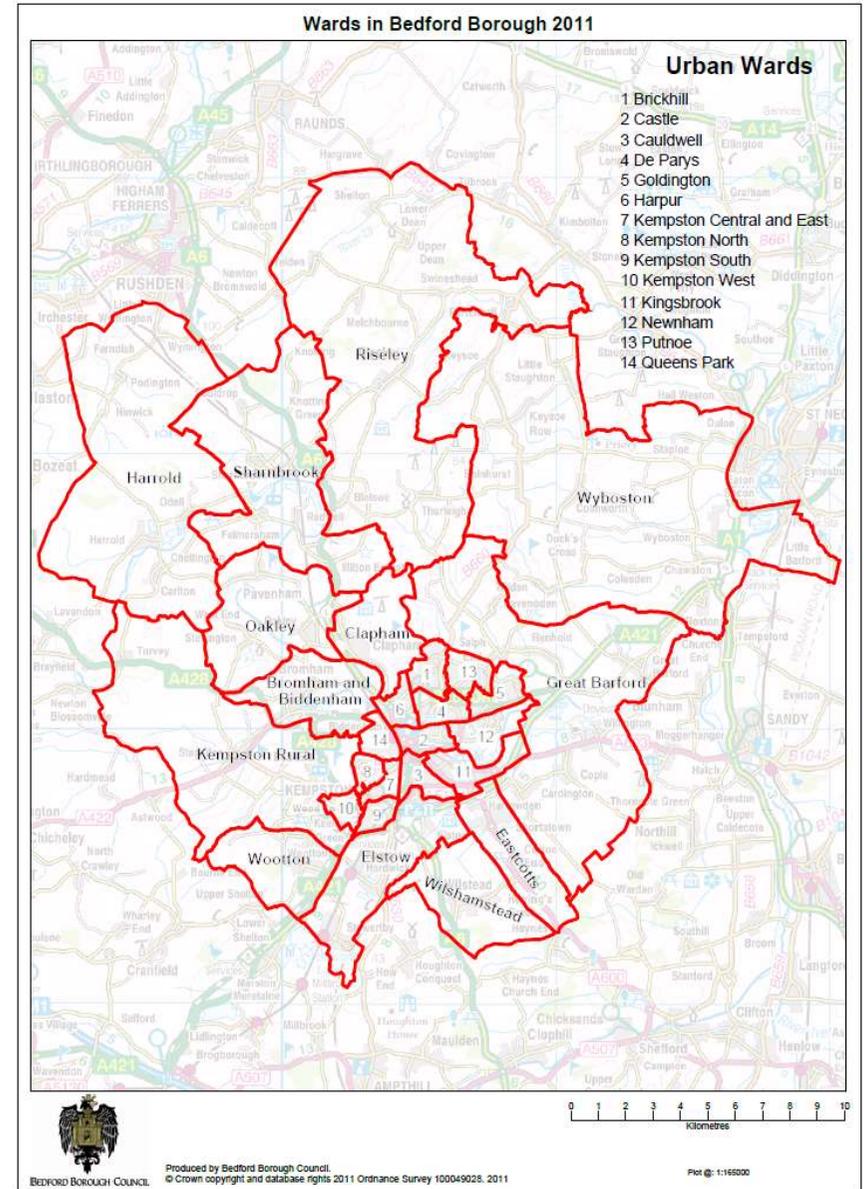
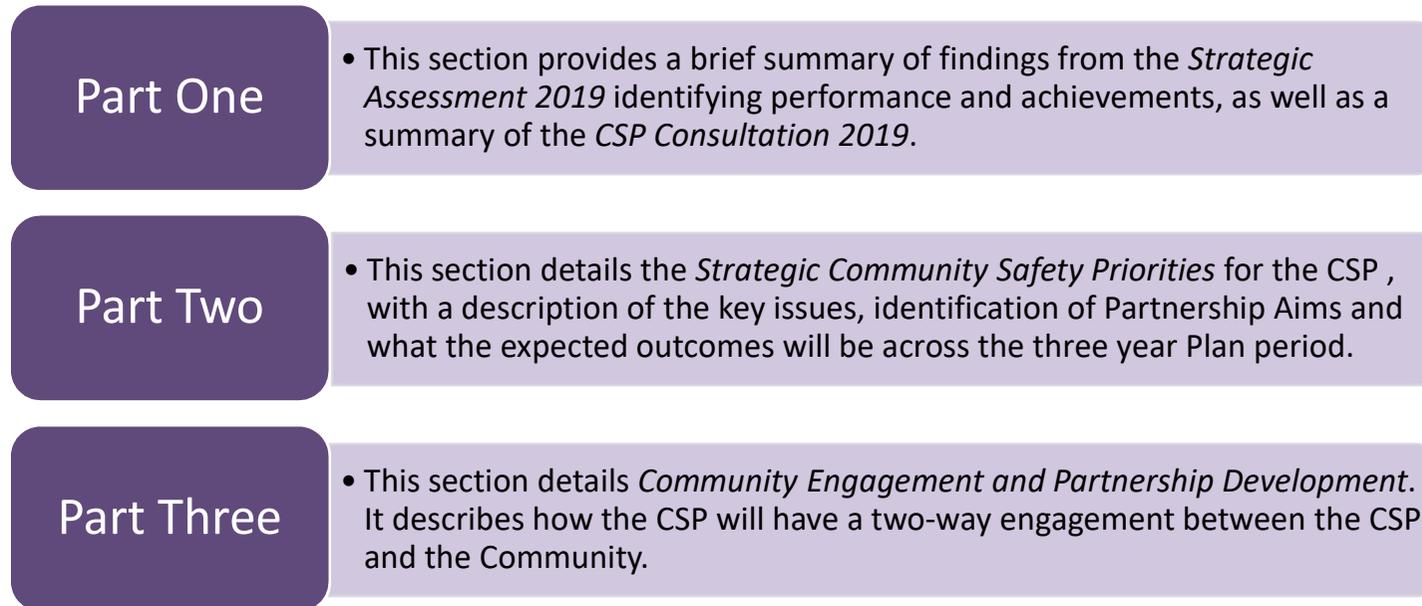


Figure 1 ►

1.5. Plan Structure

The CSP Plan 2020-2023 has been designed to capture the **priorities of partners** and the wider Bedford Borough CSP based on current data and intelligence. Each **Strategic Priority** area will be supported by an **Action Plan** which will be delivered by the Operational Delivery Group (ODG) and tasking group, with performance against the strategic priorities reported back to the Safer Thematic Board on a quarterly basis by the Action Plan lead/owner.



1.6. Equalities Impact Assessment

The Community Safety Plan aims to increase community safety for all individuals who live or work in or who visit Bedford Borough. CSP activities are evidence led, focussed on supporting victims, with the aim of improving the quality of life of victims and ensuring a smooth pathway through the Criminal Justice System. An equality assessment¹ of the Community Safety Plan 2020-23 has been produced to ensure that due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

¹ EIA link: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/community-safety/>

Part One

• Strategic Assessment 2019 and CSP Consultation 2019 Summary

2. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2019

An annual Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment (SA) is produced on behalf of the Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to inform strategic planning and commissioning processes. It is part of an intelligence led process that is used to tackle crime and disorder and improve community safety. The SA considers what needs to be achieved to help improve community safety, including how communities can feel assured and confident that their concerns and fears are being addressed.

The assessment is developed using a standard risk scanning tool which allows partners to contribute recorded data, professional judgement and organisational demands into the assessment process. This process identifies those issues that present the greatest concern to the CSP and require further analysis within the assessment. Areas of interest identified in the 2019 scanning exercise were as follows can be seen in **Figure 2** ►

Each issue has been evaluated from the perspective of both the national and local level; the process of analysis makes use of data from across the partnership and community to develop patterns of emerging issues and significant changes during the last three years. Analysis focuses on a *victim, offender and location (VOL)* approach to ensure that a clear picture of the problem is developed.

The key recommendations within the assessment are made available to the partnership to be used for the development of priority areas.

A full copy of the **Bedford CSP Strategic Assessment 2019** is available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/community-safety/>



3. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION 2019

The CSP Consultation 2019 was designed specifically to:

- ✓ *Understand progress in terms of tackling Crime and ASB against the previous plan period*
- ✓ *Understand what contributes to making people feel safe and unsafe*
- ✓ *Gain an understanding of people's concerns about underlying issues that impact on Crime and ASB*
- ✓ *Gain an understanding of people's awareness of new and emerging issues in the Borough*
- ✓ *Understand the issues that cause the greatest level of public concern*

By collecting and using geographic, equality and diversity monitoring data, the CSP is also able to understand the opinions of different sections of the community. Face to face engagement with the public allows the CSP to gauge levels of awareness and understanding of local issues and concerns. This exercise is also helpful in raising awareness of the CSP and in publicising services that are available.

Partners delivered the survey at a number of community events and through online consultation. A total of 1,533 people completed the survey, from across all the Borough's 27 Wards.

The survey explored two key areas, these were:

a) **"How confident are you that agencies in Bedford work together to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour?"**

Overall the proportion of those that felt 'Very Confident' or 'Fairly Confident' **increased from 35% in 2018 to 41% this year.**

b) **"What makes your local area a safe and unsafe place?"**

There was a consistent message that **positive relationships with neighbours** and **being part of an established community** has the greatest impact on people's feeling of safety. The **physical environment** was also highlighted as important, as is a **visible presence of authority**.

A much wider range of issues contribute to people feeling unsafe. Some talked about very specific concerns around **levels of speeding** or **acquisitive crime**; others talk in more general terms about **drug and alcohol issues**, the **impact of gangs** and a **lack of visible authority** or overall levels of crime.

The complete responses to these and the other questions included in the survey, as well as the open comments provided, will be used to develop the Action Plans that address those areas of high concern. A complete copy of the **CSP Consultation 2019** report is available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/community-safety/>

Part Two

- Strategic Community Safety Priorities for the CSP 2020-2023

4. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020-2023

By reviewing the Areas of Interest and Common Threads identified in the 2019 Strategic Assessment alongside the feedback from our Community Survey, the Bedford CSP has developed and identified the three following Strategic Priority Areas for 2020-23.

Each area has been explored to identify the **Key Issues, Partnership Aims** and **Expected Outcomes** in order to reflect the evidence and themes gathered from the Strategic Assessment 2019 process and the CSP Community Consultation 2019.

To provide a clear understanding of achieving progress in these strategic priority areas, delivery regarding each priority will be managed by a corresponding **Action Plan**, reviewed and updated on an annual basis and over the three year period, each with specific performance objectives and milestones.

It is important to note that the specific Action Plans will seek to reduce the risks around the priorities identified by the Strategic Assessment and Public Consultation. The 'business as usual' elements of reducing crime and disorder will still take place, with these elements managed within the appropriate groups involving the appropriate partners.

The Strategic Priorities identified for 2020-2023 are:

- **PRIORITY ONE – High Harm & Violence**
- **PRIORITY TWO – Hidden Harms & Exploitation**
- **PRIORITY THREE – Building Community Confidence**



4.1. PRIORITY ONE – High Harm & Violence

This priority focuses on the significant impacts of violent crimes on the victims, families and the wider community, recognising the links between Domestic and Sexual Abuse alongside the new emerging patterns of Knife Crime, Youth Violence and Robbery. Whilst the volumes of all these offences have increased in recent years there is still strong evidence to suggest high levels of under reporting, therefore Partners need to work collectively to raise awareness of the issues and support that is available and to build trust amongst affected communities.

PRIORITY ONE – High Harm & Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knife Crime & Youth Violence • Robbery • Domestic Abuse • Serious Sexual Offences
Key Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in recorded offences of Knife Crime • High proportion of victims of Knife Crime aged 16-20 years • Increase in Severity Scores for Serious Youth Violence offences • Increase in the proportion of Robberies that involve the use of a knife or bladed article • Increasing numbers of repeat victims within police recorded data for Domestic Violence • High number of repeat cases heard at the Bedford MARAC • The number of Serious Sexual Offences reported to the Police continue to increase
Partnership Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase engagement with young people and families • Understand the drivers and patterns of violence • Ensure early identification of those involved in violence • Develop a place based model for high harm areas • Coordinate community led initiatives that meet local needs
Expected Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a 'youth voice' in everything that we do • Effective use of partnership powers to disrupt and enforce those that commit violence • Earlier access to support services • Reduction in harm within targeted areas • Sustainable pathways and diversions

4.2. PRIORITY TWO – Hidden Harms & Exploitation

This priority focusses on the identification and protection of some of the most vulnerable within our communities. Whilst awareness off the risks relating to CSE and County Lines have increased in recent years much more work is needed to explore how these themes relate to the wider risks of Criminal Exploitation. The hidden nature of these issues means that levels of reporting for safeguarding and offences in these areas are still low, as a result the local picture and impacts requires more input from Partners to improve clarity, understanding and disruption. Partners should focus on clear and consistent messages, both internally and in the wider community, to ensure that victims are protected as early as possible

PRIORITY TWO – Hidden Harms & Exploitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Lines • CSE and Missing • Cuckooing • Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking • Hate and Extremism
Key Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of crimes reported to Police with a confirmed CSE marker continue to increase • Increase in the proportion of Missing Episodes that have a risk marker for Gangs and County Lines • Increasing number of safeguarding referrals for Vulnerable Adults submitted using the Adult Protection Referral Form. • Increase in the number of Modern Day Slavery Offences recorded in the Borough • High proportion of respondents from CSP Survey said they had ‘No Opinion’ or ‘Didn’t Know’ about levels of Modern Day Slavery in their area. • High numbers of Hate Crimes that took place in public streets and open spaces • Increasing numbers of Prevent referrals relate to individuals that have no clear confirmed ideology. They may present a range of risks and vulnerabilities, which include a risk of radicalisation, but do not have a coherent or single ideology. • Increasing numbers of submissions to the National Referral Mechanism, particularly for young people that may be linked to County Lines activity
Partnership Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a consistent process that identifies those at risk of Criminal Exploitation • Deliver a multi-agency approach to disrupting perpetrators of Exploitation • To understand and respond to the local picture of Criminal Exploitation • Early identification of those most at risk of Exploitation • Raise awareness of ‘The Signs of Exploitation’ to both professionals and the community
Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent recording and sharing of risks • Increase in safeguarding referrals from CSP professionals • A reduction in repeat victimisation of vulnerable adults

4.3. **PRIORITY THREE – Building Community Confidence**

Listening and responding to local communities is vital, it allows us to build the networks and trust that are needed to deliver other key priorities whilst delivering solutions to local issues in a quick and effective manner. It is important to acknowledge the themes that have the greatest impact on the daily life of those that live, work and visit the Borough. These issues are the visible outcomes that have strong links to the issues identified in Priorities One and Two.

PRIORITY THREE – Building Community Confidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug use and distribution • Alcohol related disorder • Gangs and young people • Homelessness and Begging
Key Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents to the CSP Survey raised concerns in a number of key areas that they feel contribute to levels of Crime and ASB in their community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The highest levels of concern were recorded around 'Drug Use' and 'Drug Dealing' ○ More than half felt that the 'Gangs and Groups of Young People contributed to levels of Crime and ASB in their local area ○ The most common factors that made visitors to the town centre feel unsafe were 'Alcohol', followed by 'Drugs' ○ Groups of youths in the town centre, often described as 'Gangs', also made respondents feel unsafe ○ The presence of rough sleepers and people begging in the town centre appears to be a contributing factor to visitors' perception of safety • Young people surveyed at community events suggested that concerns about knife crime, drugs and, gangs affected them and altered where they chose to spend time. Some suggested that their local park was 'A place that made them feel unsafe' • Young People attending 'Youth Voices' sessions felt there is a distinct lack of opportunities and activities for young people within the town centre area. They felt their views or opinions were not being heard or considered in the matters and issues which impacted them • In the last 12 months Incidents of Begging and Vagrancy reported to the police reduced, however begging hotspots remain a concern particularly near to ATM machines and transport hubs or car parks (particularly near to payment machines). • Bedford Borough Council recorded a positive reduction in the number of Rough Sleepers.
Partnership Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a multi-agency communications plan that responds to community concerns • Develop a Town Centre Plan that meets the needs of residents, visitors and businesses • Explore community led initiative to deliver 'Safe Spaces' for young people and adults
Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the reporting of community issues to agencies • Improved levels of community confidence in partnership processes • A clearer understanding of the requirements of 'Safe Spaces' for young people • Evidence of greater community/business involvement in local problem solving • Positive changes in the perception of safety within the Borough

Part Three

• Community Engagement and Partnership Development

5. Community Engagement

The Bedford Borough CSP is committed to making the town a safer, prosperous and more vibrant place for residents, visitors and wider communities. In order to achieve this the CSP regularly engages with our communities through traditional methods, such as attending community events and fetes, undertaking consultations, as well as by other means such as Twitter, Facebook and other social media.

Moving forward partners will explore new ways of reaching and engaging with communities, particularly those not connected to traditional networks. With a number of youth focused priorities, developing and maintaining conversations with young people will be a key aspect to successful outcomes.

With the inclusion of more complex, victim focussed crime reduction measures CSP partners will require a greater awareness of the potential for criminal exploitation and share information more effectively. Information which may be developed into intelligence might be found within large data sets or from frontline staff across the range of partners involved in day-to-day service delivery. Raising awareness through training, team meetings and targeted conversations will allow the CSP and partners respective team make the best use of our resources to ensure Bedford Borough is a safe place to live, work and visit.

The task of the CSP is not only to work collaboratively with the statutory agencies specified within the associated legislation to reduce crime and disorder, but also to support the objectives of third sector agencies such as the Community Voluntary Sector, local Housing Associations and community based charitable organisations that share those common aims.

6. Further information and ways to get in touch

If you would like further information about the work of the Community Safety Partnership, or you have a specific query regarding Community Safety matters, you can get in touch in the following ways:



Visit the webpages online for the Community Safety Partnership:
<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/community-safety/>



Contact the Community Safety Team by email:
communitysafety@bedford.gov.uk



Contact the Community Safety Team by post:
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP



Follow the Community Safety Team on Twitter:
[@safer_bedford](https://twitter.com/safer_bedford)

Corporate Customer Feedback Procedure

Bedford Borough Council has put in place a corporate procedure to deal with compliments and complaints outside of the service area in question.

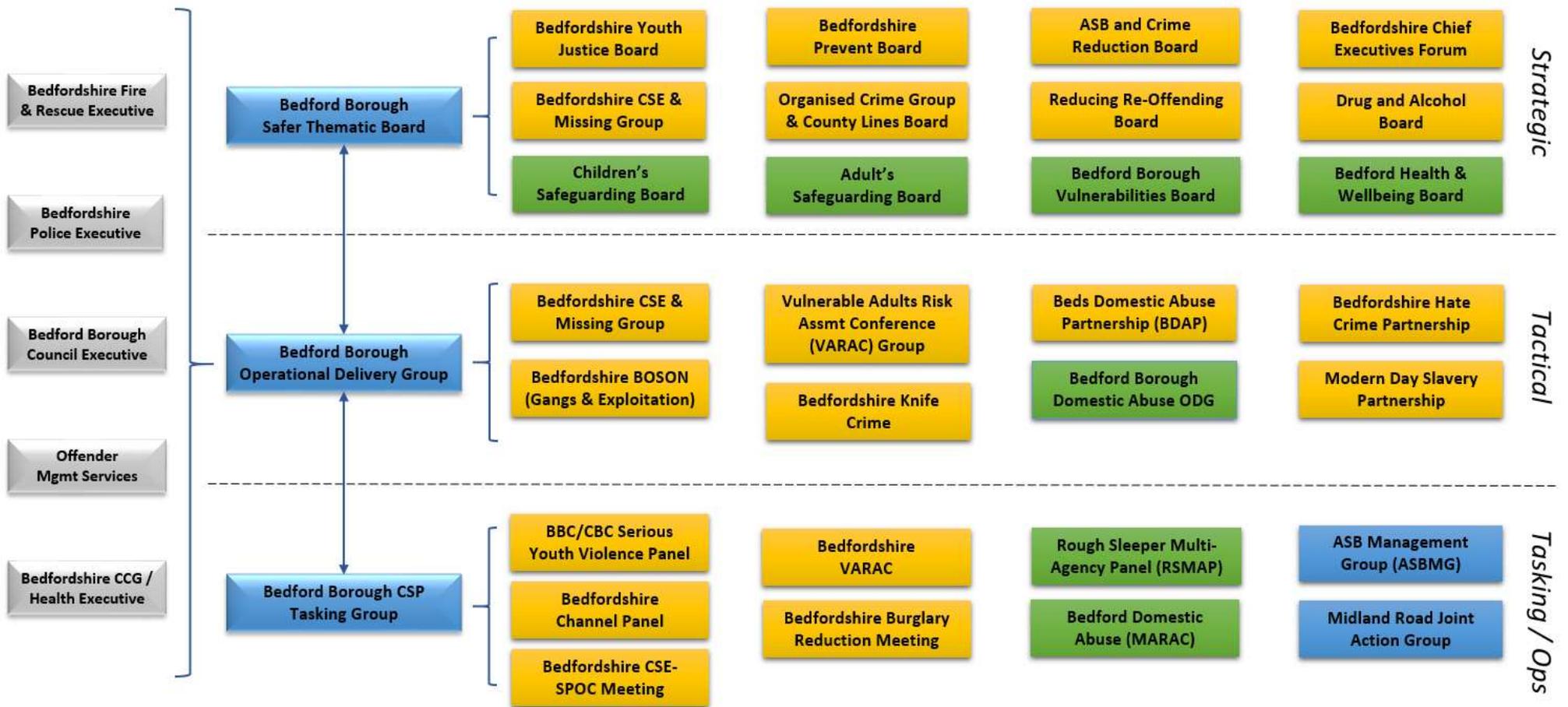
Therefore if you wish to provide feedback in this way please follow the link

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/complaints-and-other-feedback/>

Appendix 1
 Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership Structure
 March 2020



- Denotes Pan-Beds Group
- Denotes Bedford BC Group
- Denotes Bedford CSP Group



Appendix 2

Glossary of Terms

Term	Description	Term	Description
<i>ASB</i>	Anti-Social Behaviour	<i>LRO</i>	Local Responsible Officer
<i>ASBMG</i>	Anti-Social Behaviour Management Group	<i>MARAC</i>	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
<i>BBC</i>	Bedford Borough Council	<i>MDS</i>	Modern Day Slavery
<i>BDAP</i>	Beds Domestic Abuse Partnership	<i>MHST</i>	Mental Health Street Triage
<i>CCTV</i>	Closed Circuit Television	<i>NTE</i>	Night Time Economy
<i>CIP</i>	Cumulative Impact Policy	<i>OCG</i>	Organised Crime Groups
<i>CSE</i>	Child Sexual Exploitation	<i>ODG</i>	Operational Delivery Group
<i>CSP</i>	Community Safety Partnership	<i>OPCC</i>	Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
<i>CTAG</i>	Community Tasking and Action Group	<i>PCSO</i>	Police Community Support Officer
<i>DA</i>	Domestic Abuse	<i>PSPO</i>	Public Space Protection Order
<i>ELFT</i>	East London NHS Foundation Trust	<i>RSMAP</i>	Rough Sleeper Multi Agency Panel
<i>EVA</i>	Environmental Visual Audit	<i>SAC</i>	Serious Acquisitive Crime
<i>FGM</i>	Female Genital Mutilation	<i>SARC</i>	Sexual Abuse Referral Centre
<i>HBV</i>	Honour Based Violence	<i>SPOC</i>	Single Point of Contact
<i>HMO</i>	House in Multiple Occupation	<i>SSO</i>	Serious Sexual Offences
<i>ISA</i>	Information Sharing Agreement	<i>SYV</i>	Serious Youth Violence
<i>LCJB</i>	Local Criminal Justice Board	<i>YJB</i>	Youth Justice Board
<i>LSCB</i>	Local Safeguarding Children Board	<i>YOS</i>	Youth Offending Service
<i>Burglary</i>	Making trespassing entry to a building with intent to steal, intent to inflict bodily harm or intent to do unlawful damage	<i>Robbery</i>	If a person steals, and immediately before or at the time of doing so, and in order to do so, he uses force to subject a person to force
<i>County Lines</i>	A term used when drug gangs from big cities expand their operations to smaller towns, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting children and vulnerable people to sell drugs.	<i>Cuckooing</i>	Linked to County Lines, situation where drug dealers will take over a local property, normally belonging to a vulnerable person, and use it to operate their criminal activity from.