

**A MESSAGE FROM TIIG**

During August, Liverpool was the focus of national press reporting after we saw four fatalities from gun and knife violence in the city over a weeklong period including a nine year old child and one of our own Environmental Health student alumni. As academic staff working in violence prevention, these four deaths are not only saddening but also disheartening as despite the well evidenced benefits of collecting the data that we do, our work in itself cannot stop tragic incidents occurring.

It is by seeing the work of our local partners who are out delivering interventions, devising new strategies, treating patients, and reaching those most at risk that reminds us of all the positive work which takes place and the impact this work is having. We know that this work takes time, but we also know that we have hardworking, caring and passionate people across Liverpool and beyond who are all working to make a difference.

These four deaths should serve as a stark reminder and strengthen our efforts in adopting a public health approach to violence, focusing on primary prevention and early intervention to ensure these incidents are not repeated.

We are extremely proud to work with so many individuals and organisations who are fighting to tackle violence across England and Wales. Thank you for all the work you do.

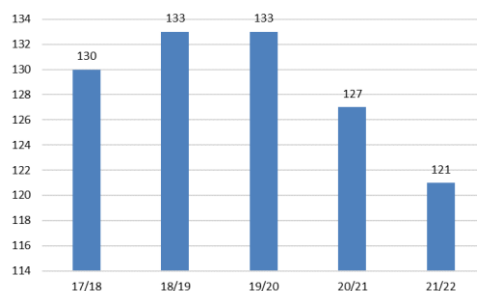
*“Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much”*

**NATIONAL POLICE DATA**

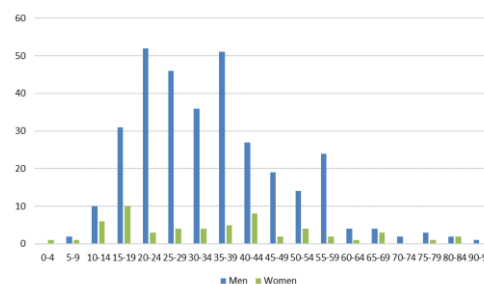
With such high profile media cases, it is easy to fear that gun and knife crime is increasing dramatically. Whilst any number is too high, it is important to note that national figures do not reflect a surge in firearm or knife related violence. Data from the [ONS](#) on recorded firearm offences shows a 1% increase in 21/22 compared to 20/21 but a 13% decrease on pre-Covid (19/20) and overall, police recorded firearm offences have remained lower than pre-Covid levels with knife and sharp object violence showing similar trends. However, this data needs to be considered in context and a reduction may in part have been supported by a large drop in firearm crime in London specifically. Some areas and police forces, particularly those in the North of England and Midlands have experienced increases, with many of our VRU areas having the highest offences per 100,000 population.

**A LOOK AT AMBULANCE DATA**

Between July 2017 and June 2022, we saw 67,260 ambulance callouts across the North West, with 644 (1%) mentioning a gunshot/gunshot wound (including stun guns). The most common reason given for dispatch was central gunshot wounds (66%), followed by the patient not being alert post gunshot (9%). The majority of callouts were flagged as stab/gunshot/penetrating trauma (89%) with 10% recorded as assault/sexual assault. Stun guns were explicitly mentioned in 10% of callouts.



When looking at yearly trends, whilst there were initial increases in 18/19 and 19/20, numbers were lower during 20/21 and 21/22, although figures need to be considered alongside Covid-19 and associated lockdowns. Where known (n=500), 85% of callouts were to men, and for age (n=385), the highest groups were for those aged 35 to 39 years (15%), 20 to 24 years (14%) and 25 to 29 years (13%). The highest proportion of callouts overall was made by men aged between 35 and 39 years (13%).



The top ten areas for gunshot related callouts were all in Merseyside and Greater Manchester, with Liverpool the highest (22%), followed by Manchester (13%), Sefton (6%), and Knowsley (6%). Wigan, Bolton and Oldham all comprised 5% of callouts each, followed by Wirral (4%), Salford (3%) and Bury (3%). Top wards for callouts across the North West were Chadderton Central, County (Liverpool), Anfield, Great Lever, Everton and Princes Park (2% each). Callouts peaked on Sundays (17%) and Saturdays (16%), and between the hours of 10pm and 12am (16%) and 8pm and 10pm (16%). The peak overall time was on Sunday between 8pm and 10pm (4%). Four in ten (40%) patients were conveyed to hospital; men were more likely to be conveyed to hospital (50%) than women (40%).

**GANG RELATED VIOLENCE**

Following high profile media stories of gun related violence across Liverpool, a leading academic from LJMU’s School of Justice, [Dr Robert Hesketh](#) has shared his experience and research working in the field of gangs and violent crime.

Through his piece in [The Conversation](#), Dr Hesketh discusses the role of consumerism and desire for symbols of money and success which can be far harder to reach legitimately in areas of high deprivation, where opportunities are limited. Therefore, opportunities through other, often criminal routes become more attractive, creating career paths for young people. This has direct impacts on those young people, but also indirect impacts on wider communities and families and can create a normalisation of crime. Dr Hesketh advocates for preventative policing, and tackling violence at its root causes looking at the social constructs of communities in order to recognise their needs. A multidisciplinary approach to reduce violence and organised crime is considered essential but it needs to address ground level issues such as homelessness and poverty and should be targeted at those communities which are most deprived and most in need. However, this requires proper investment and early intervention, and action needs to be taken quickly to prevent future avoidable deaths, crime and violence from occurring.

**MEET THE TEAM**



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