

# Building safer neighbourhoods

Our approach to focusing our place-based work

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## Summary

Over the past few years there's been a significant increase in serious violence. Between 2014 and 2018, the number of knife-related offences committed by children rose. And as knife-related crime grew, so did the number of children being recorded as victims.

We know that a lot of violent crime happens in very specific local areas. That's why we've launched our Neighbourhood Fund. We'll work in small areas to understand the challenges and opportunities communities are facing, then co-design, test and evaluate solutions that respond to their local needs and context. We want to learn whether this type of approach can work, particularly in areas where there are higher numbers of children involved in crime and violence.

This report sets out how we've identified the areas we'll invest in through the first round of the Neighbourhood Fund. Because of a lack of information on crime and violence in small areas, we've looked at data at the local authority level. We'll then work with those authorities and the local community to find the neighbourhoods where the need for support is greatest.

We've tried to find out where, across England and Wales, there are higher numbers of children involved in crime and violence. However, there's no single way to do this. We explain what data we've used, some of the judgements and trade-offs we've made and the final methodology we've settled on.

We have considered multiple approaches and data sources for ranking local authority areas. Our preferred methodology uses data on violent offences committed by children. As a result, the five areas we've chosen for the first round of the Neighbourhood Fund are:

- Birmingham
- Manchester
- Norfolk
- Bradford
- Cardiff

These areas are those that have both the highest absolute numbers of violent offences, as well as high rates per head. We also chose our methodology to ensure we picked a range of different areas across England and Wales. This means we'll be able to test what works to address a range of local issues.

If we had selected a different approach to rank local authorities there would have been some differences in which came out on top. But, of the five approaches considered, there was a large amount of overlap. As a result we're confident in our results.

We hope that, by publishing our methods, we'll provide transparency in the thinking behind our decisions.

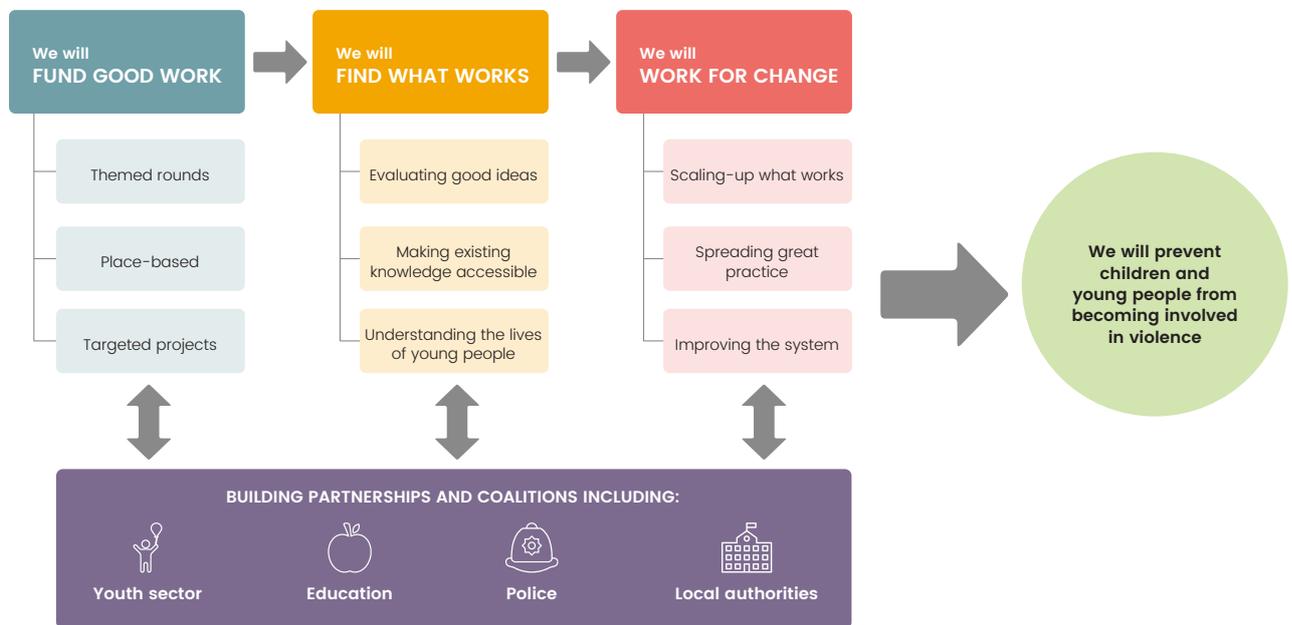
We look forward to working with local partners to better understand how we can work together to keep the children who live in their areas safe.

# About us and this report

## About us

The Youth Endowment Fund is a charity with a mission that matters. We're here to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

We know that to make a lasting difference we must do more than just fund and evaluate promising programmes. We need to establish consensus about what works and build a movement around making sure that children get the very best support possible.



Our strategy sets out how we'll do it:

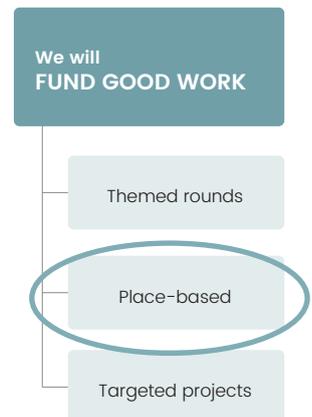
## About this report

One core part of our strategy is our place-based work. We've committed to focus on specific areas where violence is more common. One part of our place-based work (alongside working with Violence Reduction Units and delivering our Agency Collaboration Fund) is through our Neighbourhood Fund. Through this, we will create and test approaches aimed at addressing very local challenges.

This report explains how we've selected the areas we'll work in through the first round of our Neighbourhood Fund. We recognise that there's no single way of identifying which areas of England and Wales need the most support.

Here we set out some of the trade-offs and decisions we've taken.

This is our first attempt at identifying areas and this approach may change in the future. We look forward to working with our partners to develop our Neighbourhood Fund in the coming years.

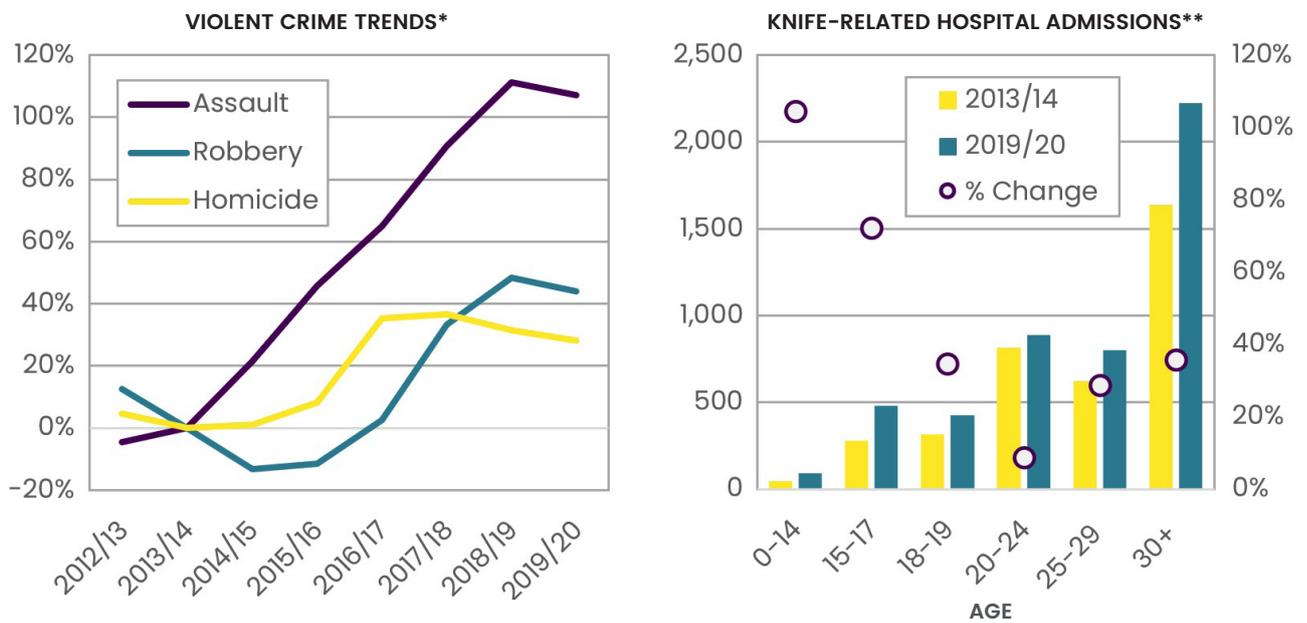


# Why place matters

## Trends in crime and violence

Overall, crime is falling – down 70% over the past two decades.<sup>1</sup> However, since the mid-2010s there have been big increases in recorded crime that causes serious harm. Between 2013/14 and 2019/20, homicides increased by 28%, robberies by 44%, and serious assaults by 55%

Chart I: Recent trends in violence



\* Source: Police Record Crime statistics, taken from ONS Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables, year end March 2020 ([here](#)). Chart shows the percentage change compared to 2013/14.

\*\* Source: Hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object in England. Data from NHS Digital, various years ([here](#))

While violent crimes committed by children are rare, there have been particularly worrying increases. Children being admitted to hospital due to knife-related assault are up 77% since 2013/14. While total crimes committed by children have fallen, as a proportion, violence against the person<sup>2</sup> offences are on the increase. A decade ago, around one in five crimes committed by children were recorded as violence against the person. Latest data shows that violence against the person now makes up over a third of the crime committed by children. The way criminal networks are operating is changing, leading to new risks such as County Lines<sup>3</sup> drugs activity, which is exposing children and vulnerable young people to violent exploitation.

1 ONS Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending March 2020 ([here](#))

2 For a defining of crimes against the person see [here](#).

3 Gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into importing areas, using dedicated mobile phone lines. They exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons ([here](#))

COVID-19 has reduced overall levels of crime. However certain forms, such as domestic abuse and drugs crime,<sup>4</sup> have increased significantly. As social restrictions lift, we have a duty to make sure children, their families and their communities get the support they need and prevent violent crime returning to pre-pandemic levels.

## What do we mean when we talk about our place-based work?

In order to find out what works, we need to find out how to make a difference in the specific areas where violence is more common. We'll do this through our place-based work, which we define as:

*“organised effort across a defined geography to prevent and reduce youth violence in a way that is responsive to local need and context”.*

There are three main strands to this:

- **Our Neighbourhood Fund:** To make a difference, many believe that it is essential to work with the people and organisations who live and work there as they know their communities best. The Neighbourhood Fund will test different models and approaches to community engagement to better understand how, where and why it supports improved outcomes for children at risk of becoming involved in violence. Through the Neighbourhood Fund we want to learn whether this type of approach can work in areas where there are higher numbers of children involved in crime and violence.
- **Agency Collaboration:** We know that many children at risk of becoming involved in violence are known to local agencies. Yet this knowledge is often fragmented across multiple organisations, with different people holding different pieces of the puzzle. Opportunities where agencies could and should work together are sometimes missed. To help understand where those opportunities are, we're investing in our Agency Collaboration Fund. We'll run evaluations to find out the most effective ways agencies can work together to identify and support the children most at risk.
- Support **Violence Reduction Units (VRUs)**, to help them make sustainable, evidence-based change in their areas.

There are three main reasons why we think a place-based approach is important:

### 1. Disproportionate impact

We know that a lot of violent crime happens in very specific local areas. For example, in London: nearly 70% of knife-related homicides happen within just 1% of small geographic areas;<sup>5,6</sup> 42% of youth victims of knife crime are reported to be within 22% of local authorities;<sup>7</sup> and, 62% of violent offences within Westminster occur within just 12% of small geographic areas in the borough.<sup>8</sup> This means that, to make the biggest impact, we need to work in the areas most affected.

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4 ONS Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2020 ([here](#))

5 Measured at the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level.

6 Massey, J., Sherman, L. W., & Coupe, T. (2019). Forecasting Knife Homicide Risk from Prior Knife Assaults in 4835 Local Areas of London, 2016–2018. *Cambridge Journal of Evidence-Based Policing*, 3(1-2), 1-20. From BIT (2020) *Violence in London* ([here](#)).

7 Data from the Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) between September 2018 and August 2019 *Weapon-enabled Crime Dashboard* ([here](#))

8 MOPAC (2020) *Recorded Crime: Geographic Breakdown* ([here](#))

## 2. Local knowledge and buy-in

Local residents' knowledge and buy-in is likely to be important in securing lasting change. People who live and work in an area may be best able to help decide what their community needs. They may also be able to help make sure that interventions reach the people who need them.

## 3. Sharing data and power

We know that many children at risk of becoming involved in violence are known to local agencies. By getting agencies to work together to share information, data and power, we could make an impact in preventing children becoming involved in crime. Successful initiatives in Glasgow<sup>9</sup> and Cardiff<sup>10</sup> have demonstrated the impact of intelligence gathering, data sharing and multi-agency collaboration in tackling serious violence.

## Our analysis

The rest of this report presents our approach to selecting the areas we'll work with through the first round of our Neighbourhood Fund. It covers:

- The data that's available for us to use.
- Some of the trade-offs and decisions we made to develop a methodology for ranking areas.
- The results we got when we used different methods for ranking.
- A final list of areas.

Our approach to identifying areas may change in the future. And we'll update our analysis with the latest data on crime committed by children. We'll share what we learn and work with local areas to better understand how to help them prevent violence in their communities.

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9 Williams, D. J. et al. (2014) "Addressing gang-related violence in Glasgow: A preliminary pragmatic quasi-experimental evaluation of the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)," *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 19(6), pp. 686–691. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2014.09.011>.

10 Florence, C. et al. (2011) "Effectiveness of anonymised information sharing and use in health service, police, and local government partnership for preventing violence related injury: Experimental study and time series analysis," *BMJ*, 342(7812). doi: [10.1136/bmj.d3313](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.d3313).

# What is the data and what does it show us?

## What levels of geography have we looked at?

Table 1: Types of publicly available data by level of geography (from highest to lowest)

GEOGRAPHICAL UNIT*	TYPES OF DATA AVAILABLE BY LOWEST LEVEL OF GEOGRAPHY**
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) – a survey where households are asked about their experiences of a range of crimes in the 12 months prior to the interview. The survey sample size makes it too small to use for local area analysis.
<b>POLICE FORCE AREAS</b>	Police recorded crime and outcomes Stop and search Arrests
<b>UPPER TIER LOCAL AUTHORITIES</b>	Children in care statistics Schools data (free school meals, exclusions, absences) Youth Justice Board data on the youth justice system (e.g. number of offences committed by children by the type of crime, number of children who offended, etc.) <sup>11</sup>
<b>LOWER TIER AUTHORITIES</b>	Knife-related hospital admissions Police data at the community safety partnership level (CSP) – unlike police-force area data, these figures have no breakdown by age and limited information by crime type.
<b>WARD</b>	Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) – crime recorded in London, with broad age breakdowns of victims of weapons-enabled offences
<b>LOWER SUPER OUTPUT AREA (LSOA)</b>	MOPAC – London recorded crime with no offender or victim characteristics Street-level police data (available from police.uk). Limited breakdown by the type of offence.

\*Police Force Areas: there are 43 in England and Wales. Upper tier local authorities (173) are unitary authorities, metropolitan boroughs, London boroughs (single tiers) and the “upper tier” administration of 36 counties. The lower tier authorities (339) are administrative districts and include the single tier authorities and the “lower tier” administrations of the further counties. Upper tier and lower tier authorities are responsible for different aspects of council functions. Wards (8,425) are electoral divisions and LSOAs (c34,700) are small geographical boundaries with an average population of 1,500.

\*\*Police forces and other organisations may have more granular data, however this is not nationally reported or made available publicly.

<sup>11</sup> Youth Justice Board data is reported at YOT level, which do not map perfectly onto upper tier local authorities. Some YOTs cover multiple authorities. In our analysis we divide data published at the YOT level into their respective local authorities using the numbers of children in each local authority area.

While we know a lot of crime happens in specific local areas, our ability to identify the specific streets where it happens is limited by the data we can access.

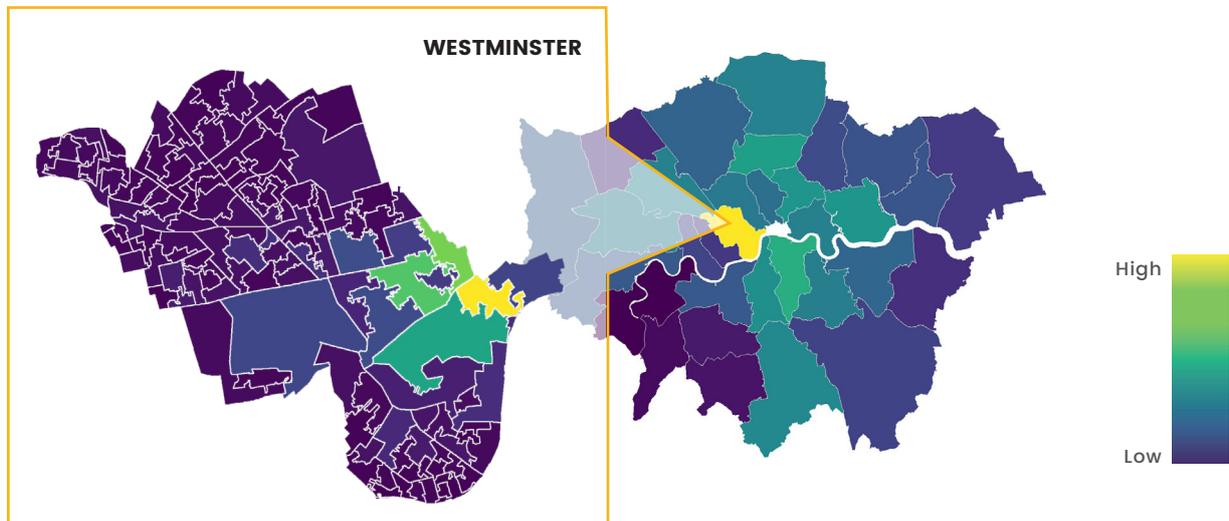
The table on the previous page summarises some of the different types of data that's available. These datasets relate to crime, violent offences committed by children and wider contextual issues like school exclusions. In general, the more detailed a dataset is (i.e. the more it tells us about the ages of victims and perpetrators or the type of crime that's been committed) the less likely it is to present information at a highly local level (for example, a ward rather than a whole council area).

For our purposes, the most relevant data is that published by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). The YJB data contains information about offences committed by children specifically. And it includes detail about the types of offences committed. This is at Youth Offending Team (YOT) level, which broadly maps onto upper tier local authority boundaries. However some YOTs cover multiple authorities. We've had to adjust the data to ensure it maps directly onto local authorities.

There are some limitations in doing this. The size of local authorities varies quite significantly. The smallest local authority is Rutland, with a population of just under 40,000,<sup>12</sup> while the largest authority by population is Kent, with a population of over 1.5 million.<sup>13</sup> In larger areas, there could be pockets of need that aren't reflected in the data when we analyse it at local authority level.

For example, as the map below shows, Westminster appears to have the highest overall amount of violent offences in London. However, when we look at offences at a more local level, we see that this is highly concentrated in a handful of wards.

Figure 1: Number of Violent Offences in London (2019)\*



\*Total number of police recorded violent offences (violence with injury, rape, robbery and homicide) by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in London 2019. Data from MOPAC Recorded Crime: Geographic Breakdown ([here](#)).

Using local authority level data means that, once we've identified the areas the first round of our Neighbourhood Fund will work in, we need to work with local partners to identify the small, specific areas where violent crime happens.

12 Excluding the Isles of Scilly and City of London

13 Population estimates from ONS mid-year population estimates 2019 ([here](#))

# Issues we've thought about

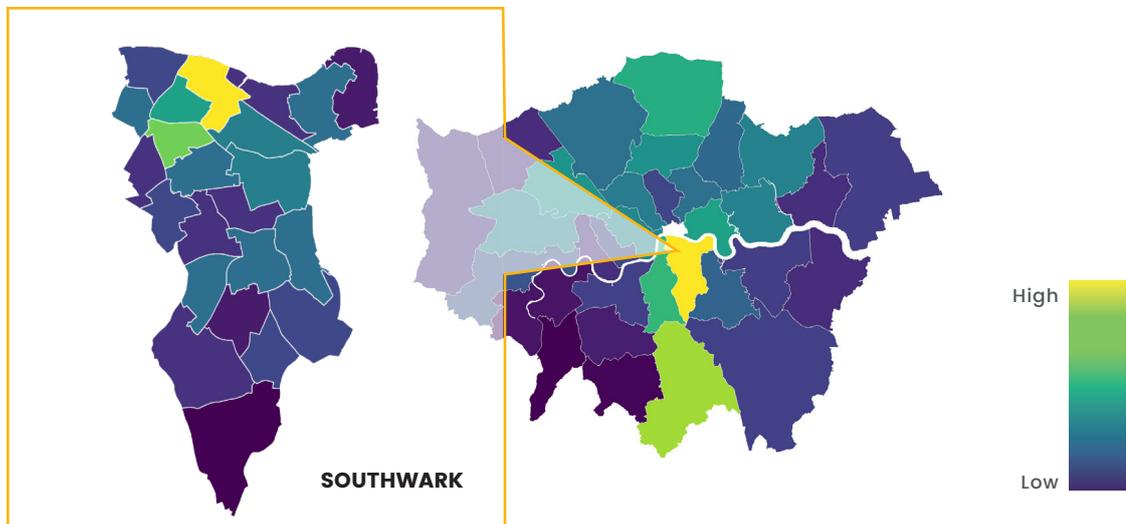
## Definition of crime

Our definition of crime has had a big impact on the areas we've identified.

For example, the map on page 9 shows all violent offending in London, across all age groups. In contrast, the map below shows victims of knife crime aged under 25.

In the first example, we find hotspots in Westminster that are likely linked to high footfall in Central London and the impact of the night-time economy. Where in the second, knife-crime hotspots are found in South London and in Bermondsey in particular.

Figure 2: Distribution of Knife Crime Victims in London Aged Under 25\*



\*Ward level knife crime victims aged 1-24 in London between September 2018 and August 2019. Data from the Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) Weapon-enabled Crime Dashboard ([here](#))

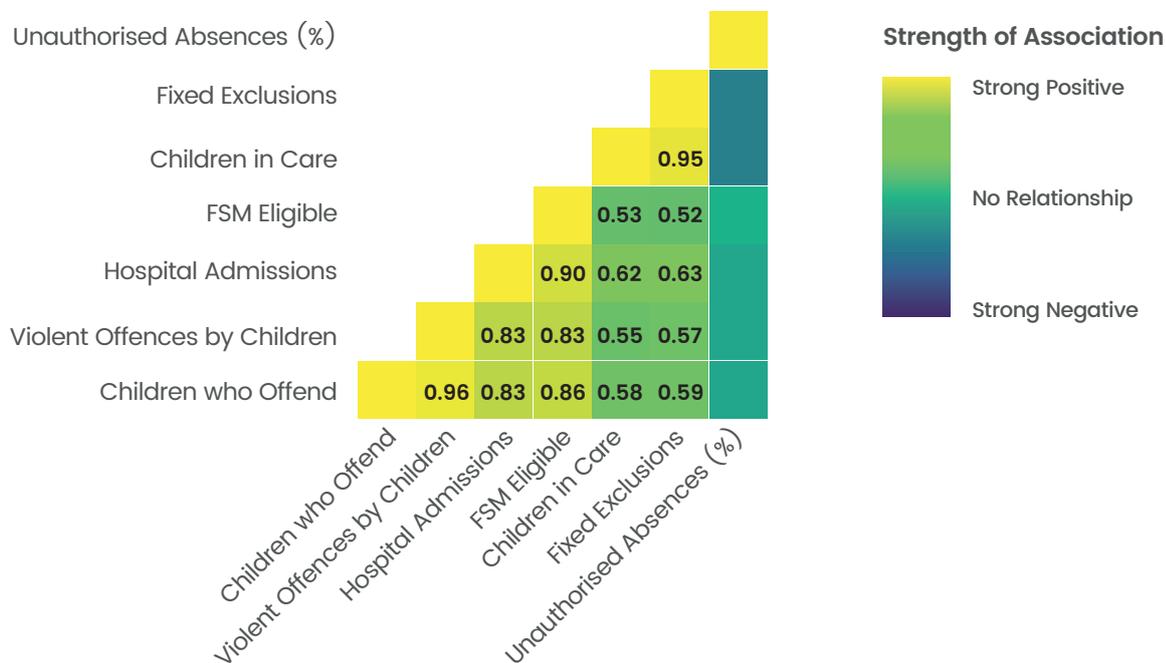
The difference between the two maps shows just how important it is to choose a measure of offending that is most relevant to the children we want to support.

## Using a single measure or multiple contextual factors

We could use an approach that just uses a single measure of offending. Alternatively, we could incorporate lots of different factors that are associated with the likelihood that children become involved in crime (for example, school exclusions). The advantage of doing something simple is that it's transparent and directly related to the outcomes we want to address. The downside of using a simple approach is that official crime statistics don't tell us everything about the children who have committed offences or other factors in their lives that put them at greater risk.

We've considered using a range of contextual factors (for example, school exclusion rates in an area). In chart 2, we measured the relationships between different contextual factors at the local authority level and the level of offences committed by children in that area. Because the factors are so highly correlated, we don't think taking this approach adds additional insight.

Chart 2: Strength of relationship between contextual factors\*,\*\*



\*Chart shows the strength of association between different contextual factors. Values can sit between 0 and plus or minus 1. A value plus 1 shows two inputs have a perfectly positive correlation (i.e. a one unit increase in one input is associated with a 1 unit increase in another variable). We've highlighted only values of plus or minus 0.5 or greater, as this shows only those variables with a moderate to high degree of association.

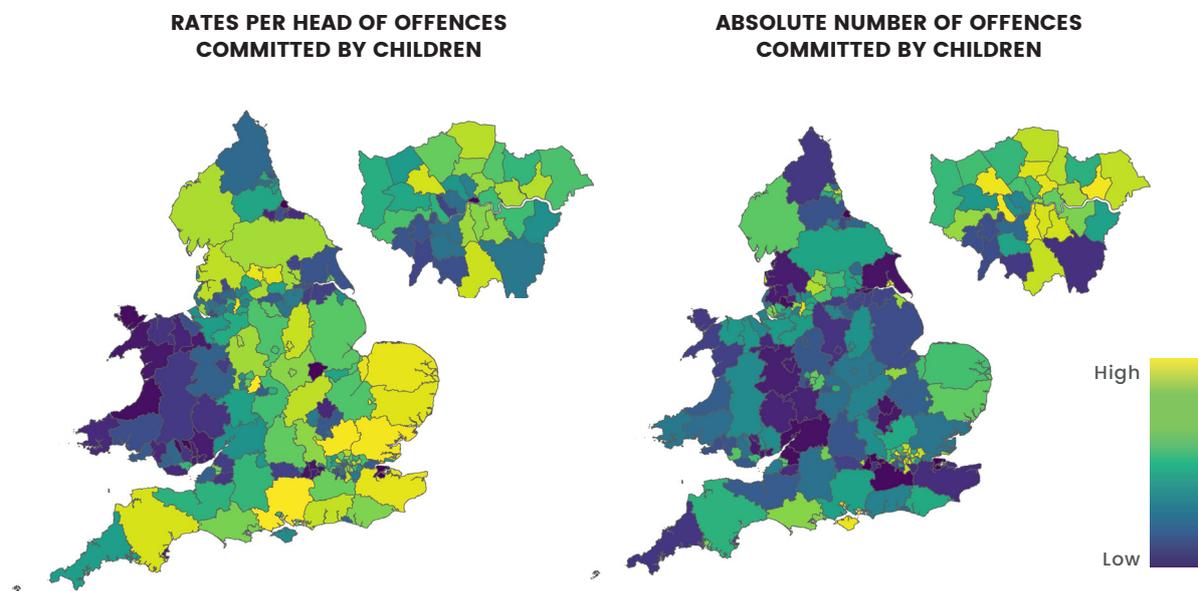
\*\*Sources: children in care (available [here](#) and [here](#)), unauthorised school absence (available [here](#) and [here](#)), fixed-term school exclusions (available [here](#) and [here](#)) proportion of pupils taking free-school meals (available [here](#) and [here](#)).

### Rates or absolute numbers

We want to work in areas that have high levels of violence and where violence is concentrated into small local areas. If we chose local authorities that are large but where violence is spread out, it will be harder for our Neighbourhood Fund to invest in small, local areas where there's a real need. There will also be some local authorities where rates of violence don't seem high, but there are a handful of places within those larger areas where there are very high concentrations.

The maps below illustrate this point. When we look at total numbers of violent offences, larger geographic areas seem like they have most need. In contrast, when we look at rates per head, many smaller areas appear to have a greater level of need.

Figure 3: Comparison of rates per head and absolute numbers of violent offences committed by children, by local authority (2019)\*



\*Source: Maps based on authors calculations. Underlying data on offence statistics from Youth Justice Board statistics 2019–2020 ([here](#)). Violent offences defined as violence against the person and robbery. Rates per head derived from ONS mid-year population estimates 2019 for 10–17-year-olds ([here](#)).

Note: YJB data is published at the YOT level. YOTs do not map perfectly onto local authorities. To account for the small number of YOTs that span several LAs we divide these YOTs offender totals by the respective 10–17-year old population weights for each of the LAs that sit within their boundaries.

## Data quality

Published police recorded crime figures do not give us the information we need about the age or location of where violence happens at a sufficiently local level. Also, police statistics are susceptible to changes in recording practices over time and there is some variation in how crimes are reported by different forces. For these reasons, our approach has not relied on policed recorded crime figures.

The YJB data provides information on how ‘proven’ offences (i.e. offences for which children have been formally convicted or cautioned) compare across areas.

It’s important to note that there have been big reductions in the numbers of children in the criminal justice system. This is partly due to increases in diversions for children committing less serious offences. It’s also likely to be due to falls in the actual number of offences committed.<sup>14</sup> These falls shouldn’t affect our ability to compare areas consistently. However, using this data to make comparisons relies on local approaches to diversions being the same. We recognise that this may not always be the case. However, for our purposes, we believe using YJB data provides us with the best way to compare areas.

<sup>14</sup> Sutherland, A., et al (2017). An analysis of trends in first time entrants to the youth justice system ([here](#))

# Methodologies we considered

## Overview of the methodologies we tested

We've considered five approaches for selecting areas.

Table 2: Description of methods

METHODOLOGIES EXPLAINED	
<b>METHOD 1</b>	Total numbers of children convicted or cautioned.
<b>METHOD 2</b>	Total numbers of violent offences committed by children in the Youth Justice System.
<b>METHOD 3</b>	Knife-related hospital admissions.
<b>METHOD 4</b>	A combination of violent offences committed by children and knife-related hospital admissions.
<b>METHOD 5</b>	A combination of violent offences committed by children, knife-related hospital admissions and a selection of broader measures associated with youth crime and violence.**

\*Data used for these methodologies are all from 2018/19.

\*\*The broader list of measures included are: children in care ([available here](#) and [here](#)), unauthorised school absence ([available here](#) and [here](#)), fixed-term school exclusions ([available here](#) and [here](#)) proportion of pupils taking free-school meals ([available here](#) and [here](#)) and children cautioned or convicted ([here](#)).

Methods 1 and 2 use data from the Youth Justice Board (YJB).<sup>15</sup> Method 1 uses numbers of children within each Youth Offending Team (YOT) area that have been convicted or cautioned. Method 2 uses the total number of violent offences committed by children.

## Our definition of violent offences

In our definition of violent offences, we've used 'proven' offences defined by the YJB as 'violence against the person' (which include offences ranging from common assault through to murder.<sup>16</sup> It also includes possession of weapons offences). We also include 'robbery', which is theft combined with force or the threat of force and is a separate offence category.

We considered using 'gravity scores' published by the YJB, to further focus our definition on serious violence. Gravity scores rank offences based on their relative severity, measured as the proportion of offences that lead to a custodial sentence. We haven't done this. This is mainly because we're interested in working with children before they commit serious offences. We also haven't done this because there are relatively few children committing the most severe offences. The numbers are so small we wouldn't be able to accurately rank local authorities.

<sup>15</sup> Youth Justice Board Statistics for year 2018-19 ([here](#))

<sup>16</sup> See definition of violence against the person [here](#).

Method 3 uses data from NHS Digital<sup>17</sup> on the total number of hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object across all ages. Data is available at the local authority level split by age. There are small numbers of children admitted to hospital in many areas and figures are often suppressed to make sure patients' confidentiality is protected. This means there's a lot of missing data, which means we couldn't look at hospital admissions for under-18 year olds. The Home Office used total numbers of knife-related hospital admissions for all ages at police force level when they selected areas for Violence Reduction Unit.<sup>18</sup>

Method 4 combines data on violent offences committed by children and knife-related hospital admissions. This methodology aims to identify areas with high serious violence. Each measure is given equal weight.

Method 5 combines data on the number of violent offences committed by children, knife-related hospital admissions and a broader range of factors associated with a high level of violence. Equal weight is given to each of the violent offences, hospital admissions and the combined range of community level risk factors.

## Combining rates and numbers

Using rates of violence per head or absolute numbers of violent incidents has a big impact on which areas rank highest. To reflect this, our approach does two things:

- Firstly, all local authorities are ranked from highest to lowest based on the rate per head for the relevant measure being used.<sup>19</sup> From this, we select the top third of authorities (i.e. the top third of authorities with the highest rates per head for youth crime, knife-related hospital admissions etc.).
- We then rank these 57 remaining authorities by the absolute number of offences, hospital admissions etc., so we can determine the final list of local authority areas.

This means that we're selecting areas that have both high numbers of children involved in crime and areas where violence is highly concentrated.

## Timing of data

In the next section of the report, under 'analysis', where we compare results from each of the methodologies we use data from 2018 across all the methods. This is to allow for a fair comparison across the results. We appreciate that more recent data is available in some cases (e.g. Youth Justice Board data on children who offended). We will use these to update the results for the final selected methodology once we've chosen our preferred approach.

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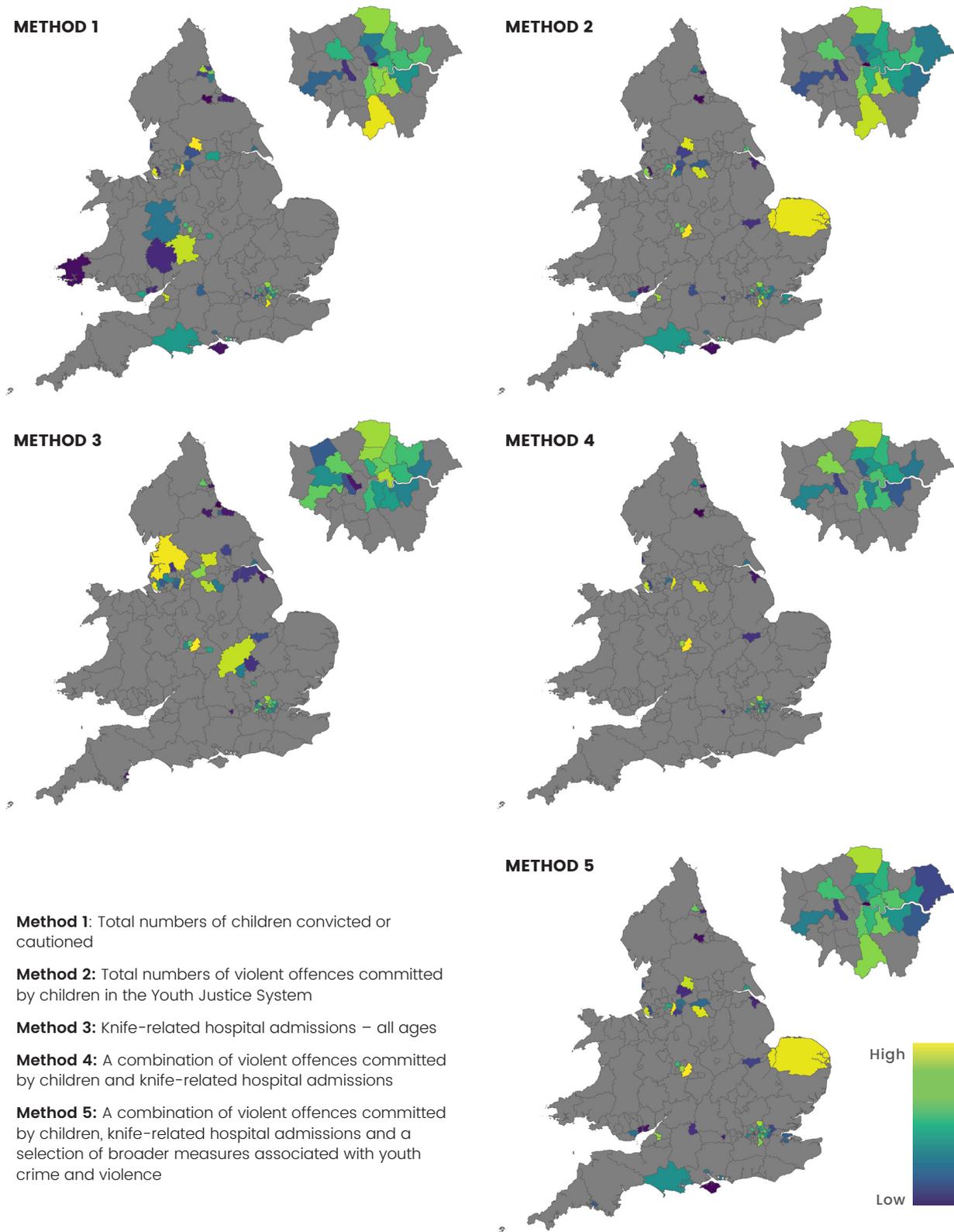
<sup>17</sup> NHS Digital (2020). Hospital admissions for assault by sharp object from 2012 ([here](#))

<sup>18</sup> Home Office (2020) Process evaluation of the Violence Reduction Units ([here](#))

<sup>19</sup> For methods 4 and 5, authorities are ranked based on the rate per head for violent offences committed by children.

# Results

Figure 4: Maps of areas from low to high for each of our methodologies\*



\*Heat maps reflect low to high levels of need for each of the methodologies. Areas shown in grey are those that are not in the top third of areas measured by rate per head. All data is from 2018/19.

## What does the analysis show?

The table below show the top ten list of local authorities for each of the five approaches.

Table 3: Top 10 local authorities for each methodology\*

METHOD 1	METHOD 2	METHOD 3	METHOD 4	METHOD 5
Bradford	Birmingham	Birmingham	Birmingham	Birmingham
Manchester	Manchester	Lancashire	Manchester	Manchester
Croydon	Norfolk	Liverpool	Sheffield	Norfolk
Liverpool	Bradford	Manchester	Liverpool	Sheffield
City of Bristol	Sheffield	Leeds	Enfield	Liverpool
Worcestershire	Croydon	Northamptonshire	Sandwell	Bradford
Nottingham	Nottingham	Sheffield	Brent	Nottingham
Newcastle	Lewisham	Tower Hamlets	Nottingham	Enfield
Lewisham	City of Bristol	Enfield	Lambeth	Sandwell
Enfield	Enfield	Haringey	Tower Hamlets	City of Bristol

\***Method 1:** Total numbers of children convicted or cautioned

**Method 2:** Total numbers of violent offences committed by children in the Youth Justice System

**Method 3:** Knife-related hospital admissions – all ages

**Method 4:** A combination of violent offences committed by children and knife-related hospital admissions

**Method 5:** A combination of violent offences committed by children, knife-related hospital admissions and a selection of broader measures associated with youth crime and violence

Table 4: Geographical spread of areas selected under our different methodologies\*

	COVERED BY VRU		% OF REGIONS COVERED		% OVERLAP WITH THE OTHER APPROACHES**	
	Top 10	Top 30	Top 10	Top 30	Top 10	Top 30
<b>METHOD 1</b>	90%	83%	70%	90%	60%	77%
<b>METHOD 2</b>	90%	83%	70%	80%	70%	90%
<b>METHOD 3</b>	90%	97%	50%	70%	50%	60%
<b>METHOD 4</b>	100%	90%	50%	80%	60%	77%
<b>METHOD 5</b>	90%	83%	70%	80%	80%	97%

\*Figures based on author's calculations.

\*\*Percentage of local authorities in each method that appear in at least 3 of all the top 10 or top 30 lists from the other methods

The results show that:

- **There are strong similarities in authorities selected under each method.** Around a third of the same authorities appear in the top 30 across all methods. Between 50%-80% of the same authorities appear in at least three of the other methods in the top 10 and between 60%-97% in the top 30.
- **Adding wider contextual factors doesn't significantly change the areas selected compared to a simpler approach.** When comparing methods 2 and 5, the top three areas are identical and 8 local authority areas appear in both top 10 rankings.
- **Method 3, which is based solely on knife-related hospital admissions, has the largest difference in authorities compared to the other methods.**<sup>20</sup> The list of local authorities generated using method 3 has the least overlap with the lists created using other methods. This was the only method that did not focus on offending by children, which may in part explain the difference in results.
- **There's a big overlap between authorities we choose and areas previously identified as having high levels of serious violence or drug exploitation.** Between 90% and 100% of authorities in the top 10 across all approaches are in areas supported by a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). Areas supported through other violence reduction related initiatives, such as project ADDER<sup>21</sup> also feature in our methods. For instance, Norwich (targeted via project ADDER as the most 'popular' town for County Lines and drug exploitation)<sup>22</sup> is in Norfolk, which is ranked highly in both methods 2 and 5.
- **Not all regions are well represented across our methodologies.** Authorities from London, the West Midlands, the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber consistently feature in the top 10 authorities. Areas such as Wales and the South East do not. Welsh authorities are particularly underrepresented. Within Wales, Cardiff consistently features as the area with the highest level of need.

## Preferred approach

Our preferred approach is method 2 - ranking authorities by number of proven violent offences committed by children (violence against the person and robbery). This is our preferred approach because:

- It's relatively straightforward and transparent, as it uses one primary measure of offences committed.
- The focus on violent offences committed by children aligns with our core mission to prevent children becoming involved in violence.
- The comparison of results shows broad consistency with analysis used to identify areas with high levels of serious violence, such as the Home Office's work to identify VRU areas.
- It also shows relatively good geographical coverage.

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<sup>21</sup> We checked the sensitivity of method 3 by pooling data on knife-related hospital admissions over three years, the resulting list did not significantly change, with 90% of the top 30 authorities being the same when we conducted the pooled analysis and when just using data from 2018. For this reason, we're confident the differences between this method and the other approaches isn't just driven by using one year's data.

<sup>22</sup> Project ADDER is a place-based approach using a combination of policing and treatment to reduce drug misuse ([here](#))

<sup>23</sup> MOPAC (2020) Rescue and Response County Lines Project ([here](#))

The table below shows our final list of top 10 authorities. This is based on the latest 2019–20 data so won't have exactly the same results as shown in table 3, which was based on 2018–19 data. Below that we show the highest ranked local authorities from the regions that do not appear in our top 10.

Table 5: Final top 10 list of authorities

LOCAL AUTHORITY	REGION	NUMBER OF VIOLENT OFFENCES COMMITTED BY CHILDREN*	RATE OF VIOLENT OFFENCES PER 1,000 CHILDREN**
Birmingham	West Midlands	497	4.04
Manchester	North West	319	6.50
Bradford	Yorkshire and the Humber	304	4.88
Norfolk	East of England	293	3.89
Suffolk	East of England	287	4.18
Leeds	Yorkshire and the Humber	257	3.72
Brent	London	238	7.70
Nottingham	East Midlands	226	7.99
Croydon	London	222	5.55
Enfield	London	196	5.48

\*Number of convictions and cautions for violence against the person and robberies committed by children in the Youth Justice System (2019–20). Source, Youth Justice Board Statistics (2019–20) ([here](#))

\*\* Violent offences per head of population for 10–17-year-olds. Source: Authors calculations – population figures from ONS Mid-year population estimates 2019 ([here](#))

Note: The results here are different to those presented in table 3 as these are based on the latest 2019–20 data.

Table 6: Additional authorities – highest in regions outside the top 10

LOCAL AUTHORITY	REGION	NUMBER OF VIOLENT OFFENCES COMMITTED BY CHILDREN*	RATE OF VIOLENT OFFENCES PER 1,000 CHILDREN**
Dorset	South West	157	4.81
Portsmouth	South East	151	8.14
Cardiff	Wales	119	3.77
Newcastle upon Tyne	North East	105	4.30

\*Number of convictions and cautions for violence against the person and robberies committed by children in the Youth Justice System (2019–20). Source, Youth Justice Board Statistics (2019–20) ([here](#))

\*\* Violent offences per head of population for 10–17-year-olds. Source: Authors calculations – population figures from ONS Mid-year population estimates 2019 ([here](#)).

# Conclusions

## Areas selected

Through our Neighbourhood Fund, we want to test whether working with residents to co-design and implement solutions can work to keep children safe, particularly in areas where there are higher numbers of children involved in violence.

There is no one single way to select areas for initial investment through our Neighbourhood Fund. All methods require trade-offs and a degree of judgment. By sharing the detail behind our approach, we hope we've been transparent about the decisions we've made. We're keen to hear feedback on our method, so that we can improve our work.

To make sure we're funding activity in both England and Wales, we've chosen the four highest ranked area in England and the highest in Wales.

We've now started to work on our Neighbourhood Fund in the five areas we identified:

- Birmingham
- Manchester
- Norfolk
- Bradford
- Cardiff

The selection of these local authority areas demonstrates our aim to focus on areas where there are higher numbers of children involved in violence. Choosing these five areas also means we're working in a range of different places across England and Wales, to see if co-designing solutions with local residents leads to change across a variety of different contexts.

We recognise that many places will be disappointed not to have been selected for our first Neighbourhood Fund round. We'll review our commissioning approach for future rounds of the Fund, to make sure we're investing in different areas, representing a range of geographies, demographics and contexts. We'll also think about working in London, where we know lots of violence happens in small, concentrated areas.

In the meantime, there are lots of other ways to get involved in our work:

- **Through our themed rounds.** In 2021, we are launching two themed rounds: Diversion from the Criminal Justice System (Spring 2021) and Supporting Families (Autumn 2021). We will use robust types of evaluation (like a randomised control trial) to find out what works to prevent children from becoming involved in violence. If you have a project that fits in either theme, find out more by reading [our prospectus](#).
- We're going to announce more information about our **Agency Collaboration** fund soon. If you're looking for better ways to share information and data to meet the needs of children, [sign-up to our newsletter](#) to be the first to learn more.
- If you are currently delivering an existing place-based intervention and **want to have it evaluated**, please get in touch with us at [hello@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:hello@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)
- We've launched our criteria for **targeted projects** funding. If you're running a programme that aims

to prevent children from becoming involved in violence and want investment in evaluation, [read our guidance](#).

- In June 2021, we'll launch the **YEF Toolkit**. In a single, accessible online resource, the Toolkit will bring together existing information on the effectiveness of different approaches that aim to prevent children becoming involved in violence.

## What we've learnt from doing this analysis

Different choices over methodology did lead to some variation in the areas that ranked the most highly. However, there are also lots of similarities:

- Across methods, over a third of authorities were the same across all top 30 lists.
- Across years, the top four authorities were the same for 2018 and 2019 when we used our preferred method.
- There are lots of similarities between the areas we identified and the areas where the Home Office has invested in place-based initiatives for offending and drug exploitation.

This has given us confidence that we're approaching areas with high levels of need.

Our method gives us a list of areas with high levels of crime committed by children. However, we don't yet have a 'hyper-localised' understanding of the streets and areas we'll target with the Neighbourhood Fund. To find those small areas and focus our efforts, we'll work closely with local authorities and local communities.

# Annex

## Sensitivity testing

We're concerned that our results might be driven in small changes in certain areas from year to year. This might mean that the areas we select don't turn out to have the highest rates of offending by the time we work with them. To check the sensitivity of the results to the years of data used, we've re-run the analysis based on the past three years' worth of data and on combined data for 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Table 7: Top 20 authorities using different years data

2019	2018	2017	COMBINED 2017-2019
Birmingham	Birmingham	Birmingham	Birmingham
Manchester	Manchester	Croydon	Manchester
Bradford	Norfolk	Norfolk	Norfolk
Norfolk	Bradford	Lewisham	Bradford
Suffolk	Sheffield	Manchester	Croydon
Leeds	Croydon	Bradford	Lewisham
Brent	Nottingham	Lambeth	Nottingham
Nottingham	Lewisham	Nottingham	Lambeth
Croydon	City of Bristol	Liverpool	Enfield
Enfield	Enfield	Leicester	Liverpool
Barking & Dagenham	Liverpool	City of Bristol	Sheffield
Newham	Lambeth	Enfield	City of Bristol
Cumbria	Sandwell	Haringey	Brent
Kirklees	Wolverhampton	Southwark	Leicester
Lambeth	Brent	Sandwell	Barking & Dagenham
Liverpool	Leicester	Plymouth	Sandwell
Hackney	Kingston upon Hull	Wolverhampton	Kirklees
Lewisham	Barking & Dagenham	Kirklees	Southwark
Haringey	Portsmouth	Southampton	Portsmouth
Southwark	Salford	Portsmouth	Haringey

\*Ranking based on authors calculations

Overall, the results are fairly stable. The top 4 authorities from the pooled years are identical to those identified by the 2018 and the 2019 data. This provides some reassurance that we are targeting authorities with higher numbers of children involved in violence. The results are not being affected by significant outliers in any one year.

