



LANCASHIRE
VIOLENCE REDUCTION
NETWORK

March 2026

Serious Violence in Lancashire

Strategic Needs Assessment

Lancashire Violence Reduction Network
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Executive Summary

Background and Aims

‘A Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) is a process where local partner organisations work together to assess the current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of a defined population. This assessment then informs decision making and helps partners agree on priorities and allocate resources. A serious violence SNA has a specific focus on violence-related needs within a local area. It helps local partners to identify people and groups who are most vulnerable to being or becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. It also increases understanding of the types, distribution and extent of violence in the local area’ ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), 2021).

This SNA seeks to provide an understanding to the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network (VRN), partners – particularly specified authorities* as defined in Section 11 of, and Schedule 1 to the [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act](#) (2022), as cited in the [Serious Violence Duty Statutory Guidance](#) (2022) – but also other key partners, and the public about the types, distribution and extent of violence in Lancashire, and the prevalence of the underlying risk factors of violence. This assessment will be used by partners to collectively update the Lancashire VRN Strategy and subsequently review and revise the response based on the recommendations from this report.

A public health approach to violence prevention and reduction underpins this needs assessment, taking into consideration best practice and evidence for population-based prevention approaches.

There are a few data sources used in the previous versions of the SNA (available through the lancsvrn.co.uk website) that have not been updated because there is no new data available. Rather than duplicating previous versions of the SNA, any data sources that have not been updated are not included in this 2026 version. Instead, we focus on new, available data sources, to provide an updated picture. The current SNA is an updated version, and follows the same format of, previous [Lancashire VRN assessments](#) produced by Teigan Jenkins & Lindsay Youansamouth.

**Chief Officers of Police, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Integrated Care Boards, Local Health Boards, Local Authorities, Youth Offending Teams and Probation Services.*

Overview

This needs assessment includes the following areas of information:

- Key findings
- A demographic overview of Lancashire
- Epidemiology* of risk and protective factors for violence in Lancashire
- A violent crime problem profile for Lancashire
- Interventions and evidence to prevent serious violence
- Recommendations

*Epidemiology is a quantitative public health discipline which looks at the frequency and patterns of events in a group of people and what the risk and protective factors are.

Risk and Protective Factors

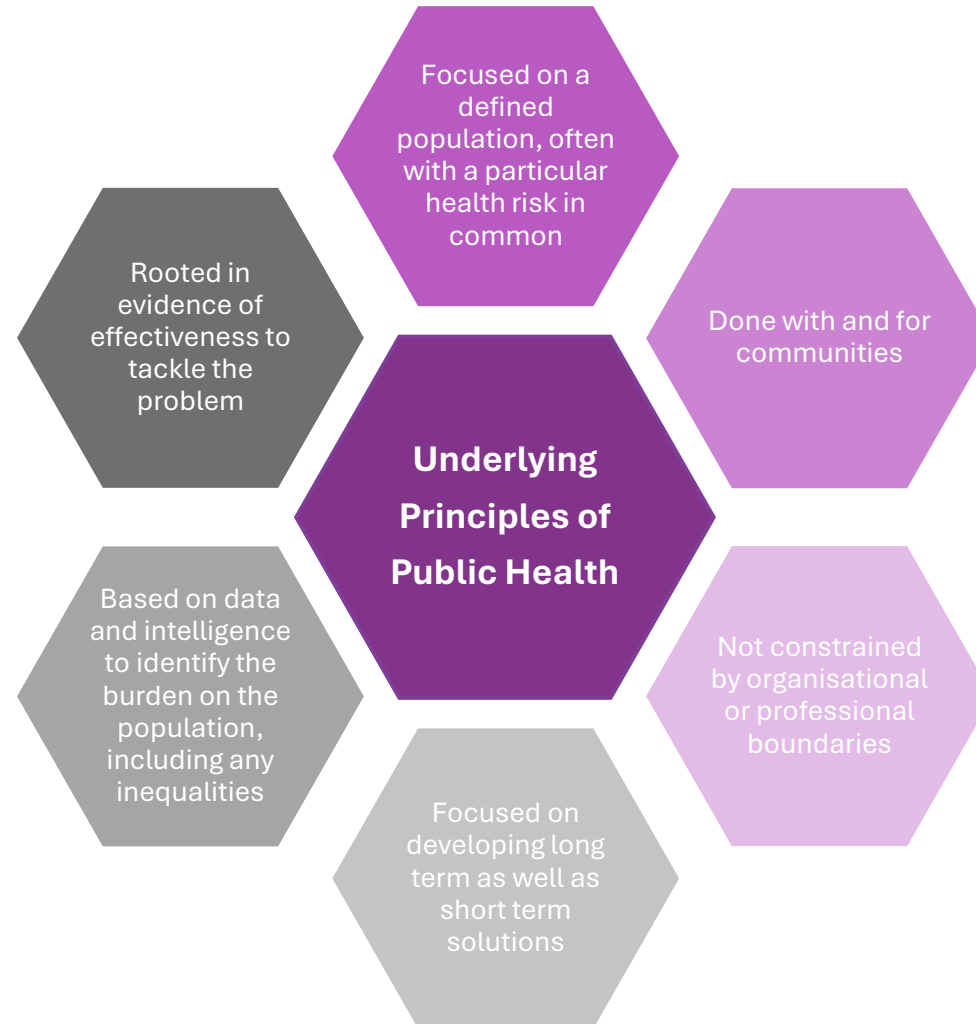
There is growing evidence to show that violence can be prevented. The World Health Organization's report, titled [World Report on Violence and Health](#) (2002), led the foundations for an ever-growing understanding about the risk factors that contribute to violence. The WHO uses an ecological model to understand and explore the relationship between individuals and contextual factors (e.g., families, communities and society), considering violence as the product of multiple levels of influence on behaviour. Similarly, at each of the levels, there are protective factors that prevent victimisation or perpetration of violence. Understanding these risk and protective factors in Lancashire can help us to identify opportunities for prevention and early intervention at each level.

The [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (2024) provides further information on risk and protective factors on youth violence. In addition, the report by the [Early Intervention Foundation](#) (2015) on preventing gang and youth violence reviews the risk and protective factors that practitioners working with children and young adults should look out for when assessing the likelihood of young people becoming involved in youth violence and gangs. See page 13 onwards of this SNA for further information on risk and protective factors for serious violence.



A Public Health Approach to Preventing Serious Violence

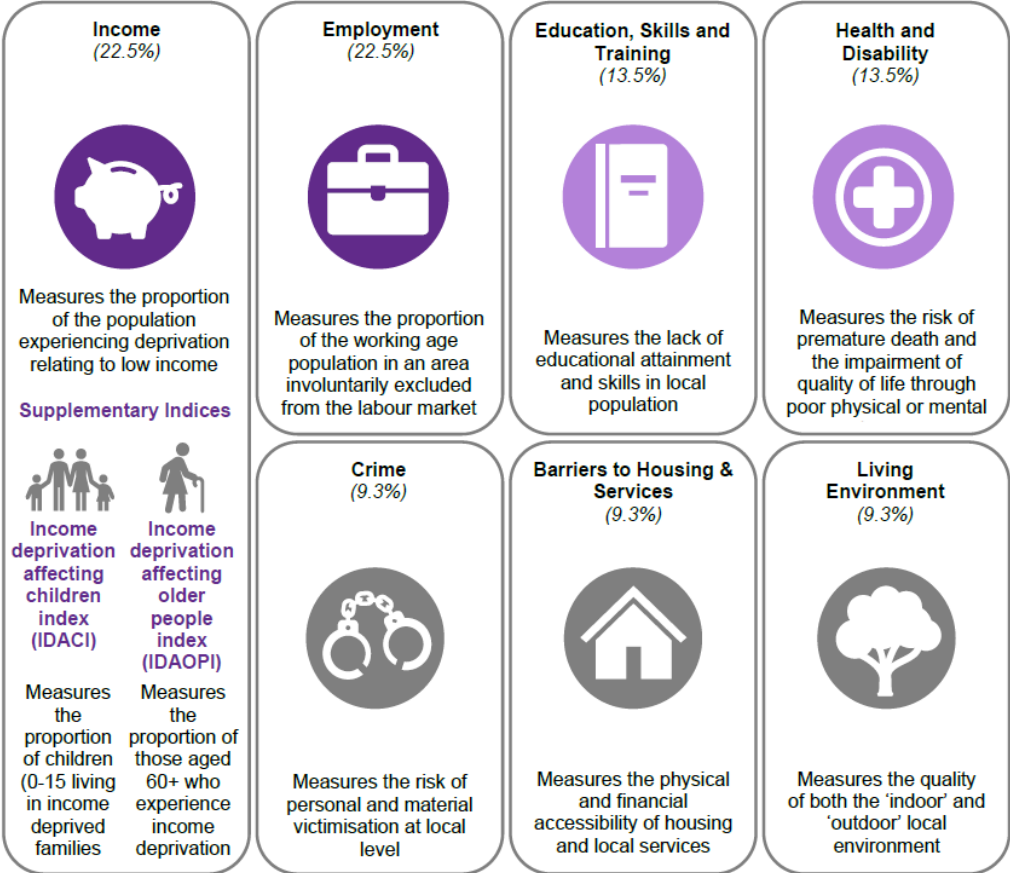
A multi-agency or partnership approach to tackling local health issues is often called a 'public health approach'. There are six guiding principles of public health which use a broader set of skills alongside partnership working ([GOV.UK](#), 2021). The underlying principles of a public health approach are presented below. According to the [GOV.UK Preventing Serious Violence: Summary](#) (2019), violence is a public health issue as it is a 'major cause of ill health and poor wellbeing'. Preventing and addressing violence can improve these issues and have a positive impact on the economy and society.



Health, Social and Structural Inequalities and Serious Violence

Inequalities are determinants of serious violence. The place in which a person is born, and lives matters fundamentally to their life chances. For example, [Coccia](#) (2017) found that socioeconomic inequality negatively affects human functioning and induces high rates of violent crime in society. Such socioeconomic factors can be found in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (Figure 1) which is comprised of seven domains of deprivation ([GOV.UK](#), 2025). This is the official government measure of deprivation in England. The deprivation domains are explored in relation to Lancashire when discussing risk and protective factors for serious violence later in this needs assessment.

Figure 1: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 (IMD25)



(Source: [GOV.UK](#), 2025)

Key Findings

Income & Deprivation

- There is a wide variation in deprivation levels across Lancashire-14. Ribble Valley ranks 273rd out of 296 local authorities, whereas Blackpool ranks 1st, making Blackpool the most deprived area in England
- 12 of Lancashire's local authority areas have an average salary that is lower than the United Kingdom (UK) average
- Across all local and unitary authorities in pan-Lancashire, there is a higher rate of children in low-income families compared to England as a whole

Housing

- Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Preston, Burnley and South Ribble have a rate of homelessness that is higher than the rate of England overall

Health & Social Care

- For the Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool unitary authorities, the rate of children in care is higher than the rate for England overall

Employment

- 6 out of the 14 pan-Lancashire districts have a rate of unemployment that is higher than the rate of the UK overall

Education

- Across all local and unitary authorities in pan-Lancashire:
 - Rate of persistent absentees (secondary school) is worse than the England national average
 - Good level of development in relation to the expected early learning goals at foundation stage is below the England national average
 - Average Attainment 8 score (academic performance) in secondary school is below the England national average
 - The permanent exclusions rate (primary & secondary) is higher than the England national average
- In Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen, 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) levels are worse than the England national average

Crime

- Blackpool, Burnley, Hyndburn and Preston have the highest rate of serious violence across the Lancashire-14 districts
- Lancashire-12 and Blackpool have a higher than national average rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system
- Across all of the local and unitary authorities in pan-Lancashire, there is a higher than national rate of hospital admissions for violence

Table of Contents

- Executive Summary 1**
 - Background and Aims 1
 - Overview 2
 - Risk and Protective Factors 2
 - Public Health Approach to Preventing Serious Violence 3
 - Health, Social and Structural Inequalities and Serious Violence 4
 - Key Findings 5
- Foreword 7**
- Serious Violence Definition 8**
- Data Sources 9**
- Demographic of Lancashire 10**
 - Population 11
 - Deprivation 12
- Risk and Protective Factors 13**
 - Vulnerabilities Map 14
 - Individual Risk Factors 15
 - Risk Factors within Close Relationships and Family Circumstances 18
 - Risk Factors within Communities and Wider Society 21
- Violent Crime 24**
 - Perpetrators and Victims of Serious Violence 25
 - Health Demand 26
- Impacts of COVID-19 27**
- Estimated Cost of Violence 28**
- Evidence Reviews and Resources 29**
 - Further Sources of Evidence 30
 - Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit 31
 - Community Voice 32
- Recommendations 33**

Foreword

As Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, my priority is to ensure that every community across our county is safe and feels safe. Serious violence remains one of the most significant challenges facing our services, and preventing harm requires a long term, coordinated response rooted in evidence, early intervention and strong partnership working. Strategic Needs Assessments are an essential part of this approach. They provide a shared understanding of the factors that increase vulnerability, highlight where support is most needed and guide how we target our collective resources. By bringing together data, professional insight and the voices of communities, an SNA ensures that our response to serious violence is effective, proportionate and grounded in what works.

The Lancashire Violence Reduction Network, which forms an integral part of my office, is central to delivering this ambition. Through its public health model, the Network brings together partners from policing, health, education, local government, the voluntary sector and criminal justice to address the causes of violence and reduce harm. A key development in this work is the rollout of Lancashire's Partnership Prevention Panels, formally MASP panels. These panels bring local agencies together to identify individuals at heightened risk of being drawn into serious violence and to coordinate timely, targeted support. Early implementation has already shown promising results, including improved information sharing, earlier identification of risk and more effective intervention for young people and families. As the panels become embedded across the county, they are strengthening our ability to prevent harm before it occurs and enabling a more consistent, preventative approach. The intelligence gained through assessments such as this one directly informs the Network's activity, from enhancing early intervention and supporting young people to improving pathways away from offending and ensuring services reflect the needs of our communities. This continuous cycle of analysis and action is vital in shaping interventions that deliver meaningful and lasting impact.

Our focus remains clear: to prevent violence, protect those at risk and reduce the long-term harm that serious violence causes to individuals, families and neighbourhoods. Achieving this requires shared commitment, strong partnership and a determination to continually improve how we work together. The Strategic Needs Assessment is a crucial part of that process, ensuring that our priorities are evidence led and our decisions informed by a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing Lancashire. I am grateful to all those involved in producing this assessment, and to every partner across Lancashire who works tirelessly to prevent violence and keep people safe. By continuing to work together through the Network, the Partnership Prevention Panels and our wider collective efforts, we can build safer, stronger and more resilient communities across our county.



Clive Grunshaw

**Lancashire Police and
Crime Commissioner**

Serious Violence Definition

Violence is ‘the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in, or has a high likelihood of, resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation’ - [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

There is no agreed national criteria for which crime types fall under the definition of serious violence. In the [Home Office Serious Violence Duty Statutory Guidance \(2022\)](#) document, specified authorities are encouraged to determine what amounts to serious violence in their area based on the factors listed in Section 13 (6) of the [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act \(2022\)](#). The guidance also highlights several key forms of violence that local partnerships should consider when defining serious violence locally, including homicide, knife crime, gun crime, robbery, violence against the person and sexual offences.

The crime types and descriptors to the right form part of Lancashire’s serious violence definition. These were determined and agreed at the inaugural meeting of the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network leadership board in 2020, following presentation of local data.

The Lancashire definition is intentionally broad. This will result in certain crimes appearing in multiple groups as not all crime categories are independent crime classifications. For example, an assault resulting in injury between two domestically related persons using a knife will be considered in three categories: knife crime, assault with injury and domestic abuse. As a result of this, some analyses in this SNA use a reduced offence subset for statistical purposes.



Data Sources

Data included in this needs assessment have been taken from several sources:

- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) [Fingertips](#)
- Lancashire Constabulary Business Intelligence (BI) dashboards*
- [Lancashire Insight](#) and Multi-Agency Data Exchange (MADE)*
- [Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS)
- GOV.UK: [Home Office Statistics](#)

These data sources (excluding those marked by an *) are public access, population level data and therefore, this needs assessment can be shared with partners across the county, recognising the source of the data when inferences or recommendations are made. This will ensure that any identified data caveats detailed by the source are taken into account. Where data has been extracted from sources marked (*), this refers to restricted/non-public data sources. However, the data used is presented at a high-level, population basis and is therefore able to be shared without risk of identifying individuals.

OHID Fingertips provides a rich data source from across health and wellbeing, including Hospital Episode statistics, Local Authority datasets, and Department of Work and Pensions. Data is available at different levels (ward, district, or upper tier authority) depending on the data source. There are some data limitations due to the diversity in Lancashire which can potentially mask the inequalities prevalent across the area. Further, there is often a time lag on the data available via this source due to the need to quality assure and clean the data. Further information and definitions for data can be found on the Fingertips website.

Lancashire Constabulary BI dashboards, MADE, ONS and GOV.UK include a myriad of data from a range of partners, particularly in relation to crime count and trend, geographical distribution of crime, regional and national comparisons, victim and suspect demographics, and referral pathways. MADE also includes Emergency Department (ED) data provided to local partners via the local Trauma and Injury Intelligence Group ([TIIG](#)) – this data reflects the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence ([ISTV](#)) data requirements.

Additionally, there are a number of other local datasets available such as the Local Authority Interactive Tool ([LAIT](#)) and Department for Work and Pensions, which will be used to produce further deep dives for particular localities and topics alongside this SNA.



When referring to 'Lancashire', this includes all 14 local authority areas within Lancashire. When referring to 'Lancashire-12', this reflects the 12 local authorities covered by Lancashire County Council (LCC) but does not include Blackpool Unitary Authority, and Blackburn with Darwen Unitary Authority.

Demographic of Lancashire



The county of Lancashire is in the Northwest of England. It consists of twelve district authorities (Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre) and two unitary authorities being Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2026).

Lancashire Constabulary comprises of three divisions and fourteen districts. East Division covers Blackburn with Darwen, Ribble Valley, Pendle, Rossendale, Hyndburn and Burnley. South Division covers Preston, South Ribble, Chorley and West Lancashire. West Division covers Blackpool, Fylde, Wyre and Lancaster & Morecambe.



7 National Health Service (NHS) Trusts manage hospital care across Lancashire, including community care and mental health services ([LCC](#), 2026)

Since 2022, NHS [Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board \(ICB\)](#) have been accountable for the health and care services of its residents



5 male only prisons: HMP Garth (Cat B), HMP Preston (Cat B), HMP Kirkham (Cat D), HMP Lancaster Farms (Cat C) and HMP Wymott (Cat C)

There are no female or young offender prisons in Lancashire ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2026)



632 Primary Schools
142 Secondary Schools
125 Special Schools
11 Colleges
([GOV.UK](#), 2025)

4 Universities: Edge Hill, University of Lancashire, University of Cumbria and University of Lancaster ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2025)

Population

In mid-2024 the estimated population of Lancashire was over 1.6 million. 51% of the population was female and 49% was male ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2025). There is national evidence which shows the gender disproportions in victimisation and perpetration for crimes and behaviours such as sexual assault, domestic abuse, stalking and sexual harassment ([ONS](#), 2025). The UK Government's [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy](#) (2025) has been implemented to tackle the overwhelming difference in violence experienced by women and girls and is a local, ongoing priority of the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner.

Lancashire has large rural areas with small populations but numerous towns and cities which accommodate a large proportion of Lancashire's residents. Figures from 2024 estimate that the population density of Lancashire was 522 residents per square kilometre, with Blackpool having the highest population density and Ribble Valley the lowest ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2025).



The age population is completely varied across the county. In 2024 the estimated median age was 42.3 years for Lancashire-12, 42.9 years for Blackpool and 36.2 years for Blackburn with Darwen ([ONS](#), 2025). Blackburn with Darwen had the highest population of 0–15-year-olds, Preston had the highest population of 16–64-year-olds and Wyre had the highest population of people aged 65 or over ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2025).

2024 figures show there has been an increase in population size in Lancashire since 2023. According to the [ONS](#) (2025), the largest contribution to this change was from net international migration. Migrants are vulnerable to trafficking, forced labour, child labour, and modern slavery ([International Organization for Migration](#), 2019) and face issues such as racism and exclusion, language barriers and unemployment ([WHO](#), 2025).



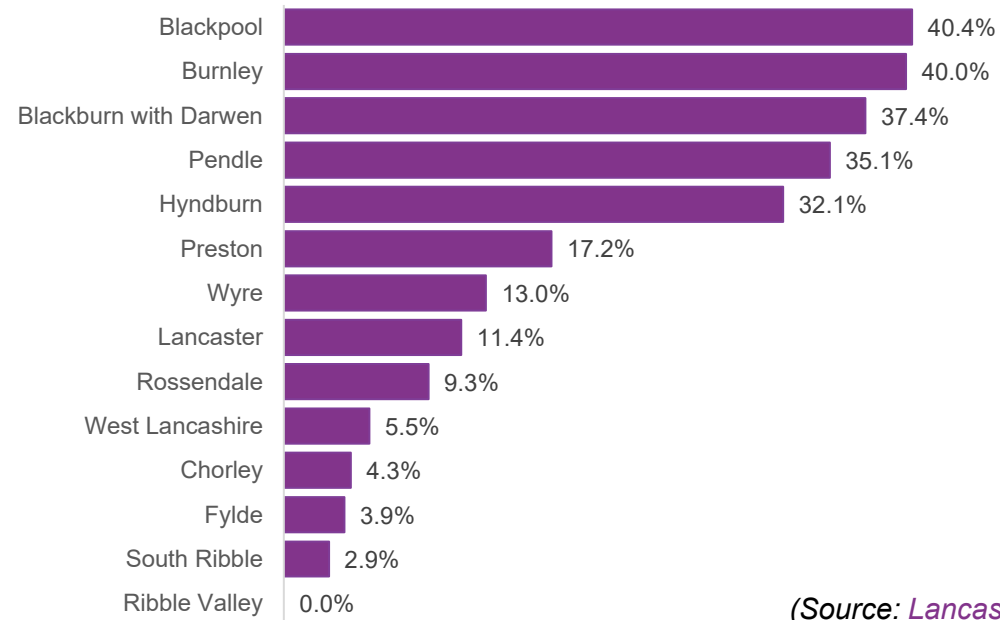
Lancashire's population is predominantly White and of the Christian faith ([ONS - Census](#), 2021). Despite the majority, the county is still a diverse make up of multiple faiths and ethnicities. 9.2% of Blackburn's population identify as Pakistani and 8.1% as Indian ([Blackburn with Darwen JSNA](#), 2023). In 2021, Pendle, Preston and Burnley were the Lancashire-12 districts with the lowest proportion of White ethnicity residents ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2021).

Understanding the makeup of a population is important for targeting and presenting services within the community.

Deprivation

There is evidence to suggest that there is a relationship between deprivation and violence. One example is research by [de Courson et al. \(2023\)](#) which discussed how deprivation can lead to desperation, increasing the risk of exploitation and the need to use violence. Deprivation within Lancashire is explored below.

Figure 2: Proportion of LSOAs in the most deprived 10%



(Source: [Lancashire Insight, 2025](#))

Table 1: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 rankings (per local authority)

Local Authority District	Rank of Average Rank
Blackpool	1
Burnley	4
Blackburn with Darwen	11
Pendle	13
Hyndburn	16
Preston	57
Rosendale	60
Lancaster	135
Wyre	150
West Lancashire	176
Fylde	188
Chorley	190
South Ribble	227
Ribble Valley	273

Figure 2 shows the proportion of Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) per Lancashire local authority area that fall within the top 10% most deprived areas nationally. Blackpool had the highest proportion at 40.4%, closely followed by Burnley (40.0%) and Blackburn with Darwen (37.4%).

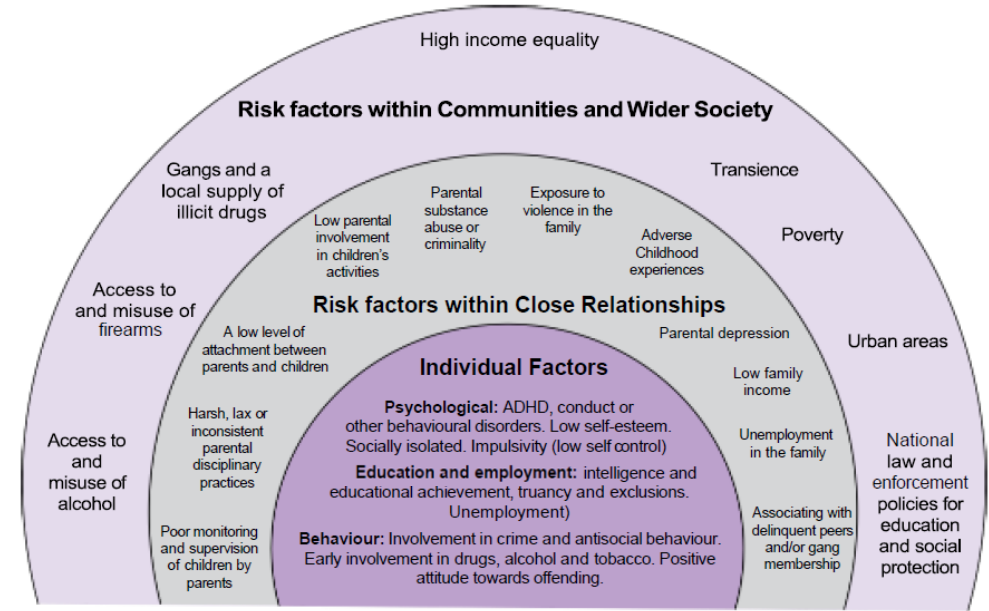
The English [Indices of Deprivation 2025](#) (IoD25) is used to measure relative levels of deprivation in England. It includes seven domains of deprivation which are combined and weighted together to form the IMD25 (see page 4). Table 1 shows the IMD rankings for the local authority districts within Lancashire. Out of 296 local authority districts in England, Blackpool, Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen, Pendle and Hyndburn were within the most deprived 10% of authorities. Ranking 1st, Blackpool was the most deprived area in England in 2025.

Risk and Protective Factors

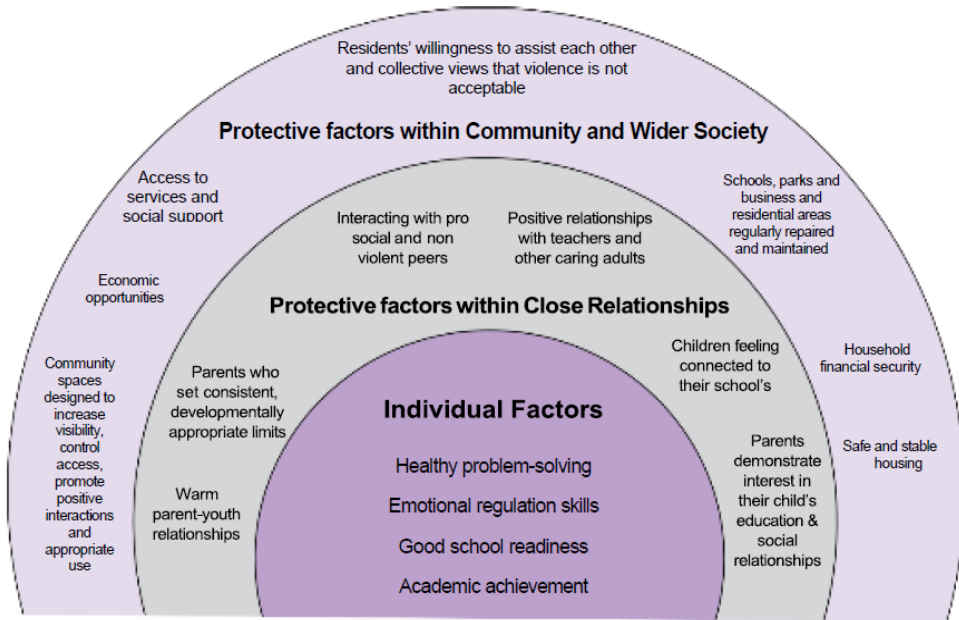
The [World Health Organization](#) (2002) categorises the risk factors for youth violence into Individual, Relationship, Community and Societal Factors. Examples of what characteristics fall within these for both risk and protective factors of serious violence can be seen in the two images taken from the [2020-2025 Lancashire Serious Violence Strategy](#).

Researches such as [Smith and Wynne-McHardy](#) (2019) have conducted analyses into the factors associated with serious violence linked behaviours. This needs assessment considers risk and protective factors in the context of Lancashire.

Risk Factors for Serious Violence



Protective Factors for Serious Violence



Protective factors for serious violence largely reflect the positive converse of the risk factors. Protective factors can act as a buffer to risk factors, with a positive cumulative effect. [Lösel and Farrington](#) (2012) found that several factors had protective effects against the onset, continuation, or aggravation of youth violence.

Developing protective factors in line with the underpinning principles of the [Lancashire Serious Violence Strategy](#) is vital in understanding what approach to take to prevent violence.

Vulnerabilities Map

In relation to risk factors for serious violence, it is important to understand what the overlap is of these metrics across the Lancashire landscape. Each risk metric listed below has been extracted on a ward level for 2025. Based on the scoring or measure for that metric, the ward areas have then been ranked in terms of highest to lowest volume/rate. For example, based on the volume of serious violence per ward area, the ward with the lowest count has been ranked 1, and the highest count has been ranked 257 (reflective of the 257 wards in Lancashire). These ranks have then been added together to produce an overall rank for each ward area, presenting the potential level of vulnerability.

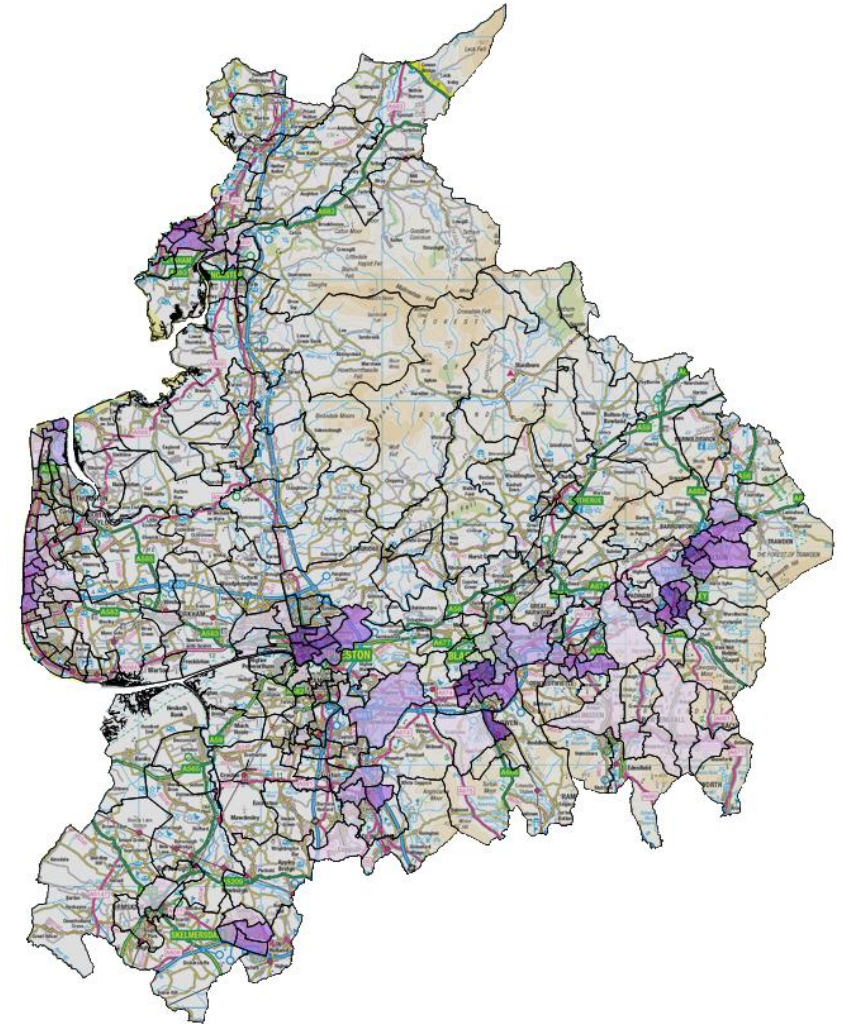
The metrics that have been used to produce this vulnerability map are:

- Ambulance call outs (assault, violence, gunshot, and stabbing or penetrating injury)
- Serious violence (aggravated burglary, robbery, rape, violence with injury and homicide)
- Index of Multiple Deprivation score
- Unemployment (count of 16-64 population claiming out of work benefit)
- Street Safe reports (any concern type)

As shown in Figure 3, the top 10 ward areas for vulnerability are Blackburn Central (Blackburn with Darwen), St. Matthew's (Preston), Daneshouse with Stoneyholme (Burnley), City Centre (Preston), Bank Hall (Burnley), Poulton (Lancaster), Mill Hill & Moorgate (Blackburn with Darwen), Whitefield & Walverden (Pendle), Plungington (Preston) and Darwen East (Blackburn with Darwen). The darker the area, the higher it scored for vulnerability as per the above methodology.

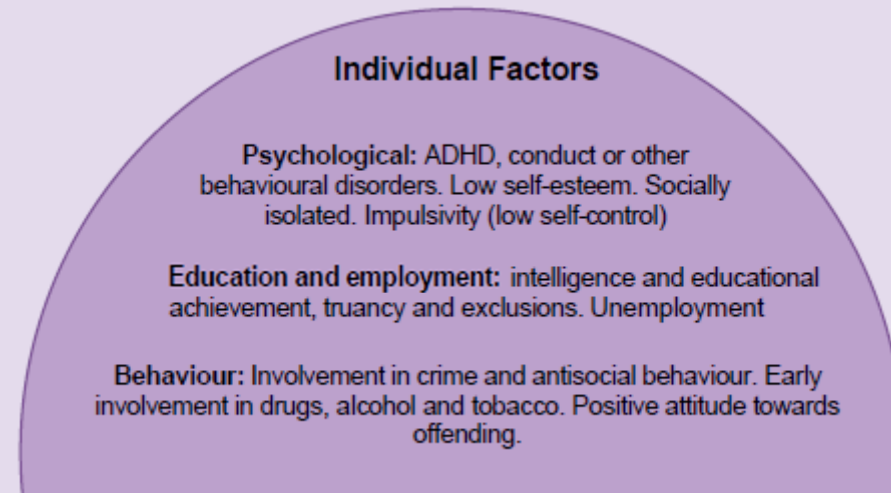
Note – the map highlights areas where multiple indicators co-occur, rather than representing a definitive measure of vulnerability. This methodology assumes equal weighting of each of the metrics in terms of risk, which is not empirically supported, however a methodology to weight these metrics has not yet been established and this is therefore a 'starting place' from which we can further develop our analysis and understanding in the future.

Figure 3: Lancashire vulnerability heatmap



(Source: [Lancashire Insight](#), [Multi-Agency Data Exchange \(MADE\)](#), [Lancashire Constabulary Business Intelligence dashboards](#), & [Knowledge Hub](#), 2025)

Individual Risk Factors for Serious Violence



Education and Mental Health

Education is an important risk factor when looking at opportunities, life outcomes and participation in violent crime. [Steiner et al. \(2019\)](#), for example, found that a higher school connectedness was linked to a lower likelihood of violence perpetration in adulthood. Education can have an impact on future income and employment which provide the resources that people need to maintain good health, such as nutritious food and safe housing. Absences from school can reduce academic performance which could influence access to these future opportunities ([The Heath Foundation, 2025](#)).

Table 2: Education and mental health metrics

	Blackburn with Darwen	Blackpool	Lancashire-12	England
Persistent absentees - primary (10% of sessions)	16.7	19.1	14.1	14.6
Persistent absentees - secondary (10% of sessions)	27.2	33.1	26.3	25.6
Suspension rate	9.7	14.3	10.0	11.3
Permanent exclusions rate	0.15	0.29	0.24	0.13
16–17-year-olds not in Education, Employment or Training (%)	4.0	7.0	3.1	3.2
Average Attainment 8 Score	45.3	37.0	45.0	45.9
% of children with a good level of development at foundation stage	64.4	63.2	64.8	67.7
% of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) - all schools	19.9	21.8	18.1	19.2
School pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs (%)	4.4	3.9	3.5	4.0
Self reported wellbeing: people with a high anxiety score (%)	23.5	29.1	22.1	23.3

Better than England
Worse than England

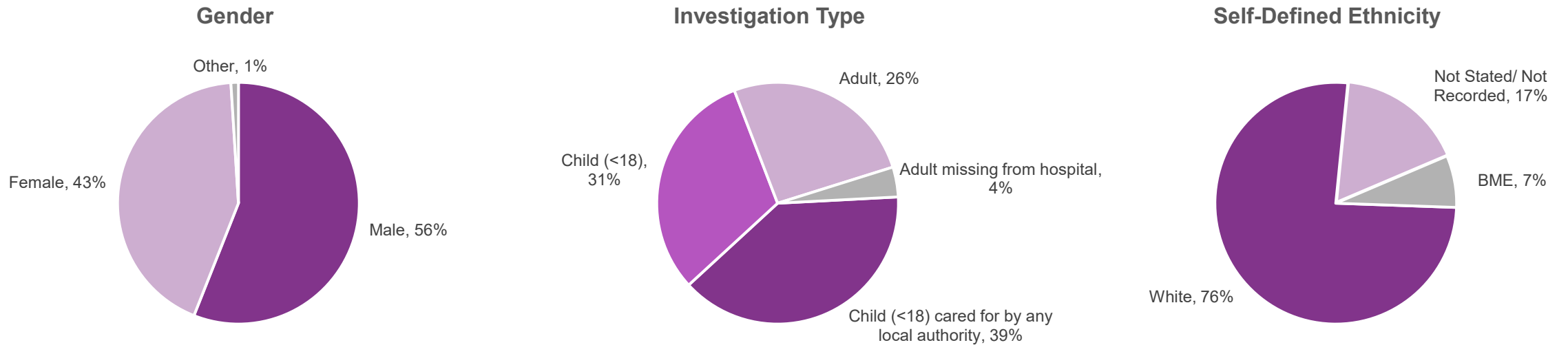
(Source: [GOV.UK](#) & [Lancashire Insight](#), (2023/2024 & 2024/2025) & [Fingertips](#) (2022/2023 & 2024/2025))

Table 2 shows that across Lancashire-14, the rate of persistent absentees in secondary schools is above the rate for England. There is a lower rate of children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage (0 to 5 years-old) compared to England as a whole and the average Attainment 8 Score (a measure of pupils' performance in 8 GCSE-level qualifications) for Lancashire-14 was also lower than that of England.

Missing Persons

The below charts show an overview of the gender, ethnicity and age (sub-divided into missing person investigation type) of the individuals in Lancashire with a recorded missing investigation between January and December 2025. The most common demographic result was white, male and under the age of 18 cared for by any local authority.

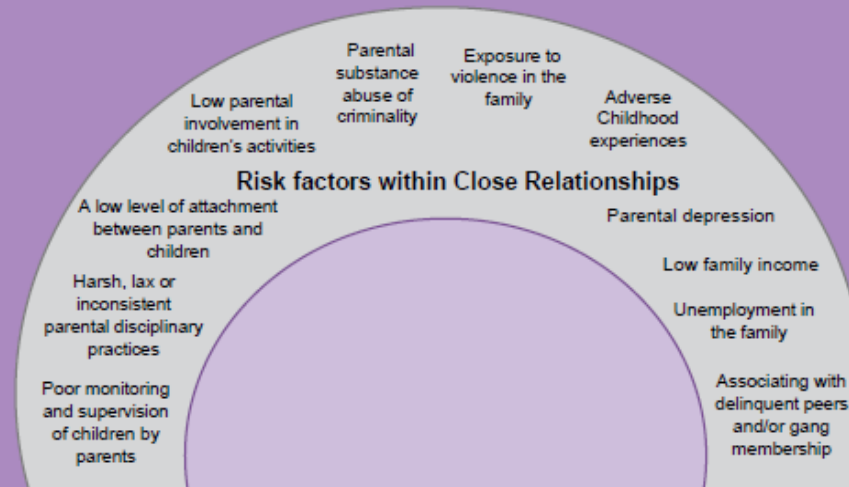
Figure 4: Demographic of missing persons in Lancashire



(Source: *Lancashire Constabulary Business Intelligence dashboard*, 29th January 2026)

[Boulton et al.](#) (2023) analysed 133 return home interviews conducted on under-18s who had been missing from within a police force in England. Out of the sample of missing children, almost three quarters were already known to Children’s Services and almost half had gone missing before. The analysis also found that 41% had been involved in criminal activity prior to the missing episode, 35% reported conflict at home, 32% had used drugs prior to the episode, 32% had behavioural problems and 20% had mental health problems, highlighting the link between individual risk factors and missing episodes in children.

Risk Factors within Close Relationships and Family Circumstances



Contextual Factors

Table 3: Contextual metrics

	Blackburn with Darwen	Blackpool	Lancashire-12	England
Children in care (per 10,000 children)	86.0	181.0	68.0	70.0
Homelessness (per 1,000 households)	21.5	30.3	11.7	13.6
Children in relative low-income families (%)	41.6	35.6	26.9	22.1
Children in absolute low-income families (%)	37.3	30.3	23.5	19.1
First time entrants to the youth justice system (per 100,000)	88.8	316.1	162.0	137.7
Hospital admissions for violence (per 100,000)	60.3	61.9	40.7	34.2

(Source: [Fingertips](#) (Data period for each metric varied between 2021-2025))

Better than England	Worse than England
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Close relationship factors can have large implications on an individual's life choices and opportunities. Table 3 identifies some of these key factors, showing that across Lancashire-14, the rate of children living in low-income families is above the rate for England. Recent evidence shows that lower parental annual income is a risk factor for greater violent offending in childhood ([Wojciechowski](#), 2025).

Table 4: Looked after children

	Looked after children (per 10,000)	Abuse or neglect (%)	Child's Disability (%)	Parental illness or disability (%)	Family in acute stress (%)	Family dysfunction (%)	Socially unacceptable behaviour (%)	Low income (%)	Absent parenting (%)
Blackburn with Darwen	90	87	2	0	3	5	0	0	3
Blackpool	184	82	3	4	5	5	0	0	2
Lancashire-12	65	69	2	1	5	19	*	*	3

(Source: [Department for Education](#), 2025)

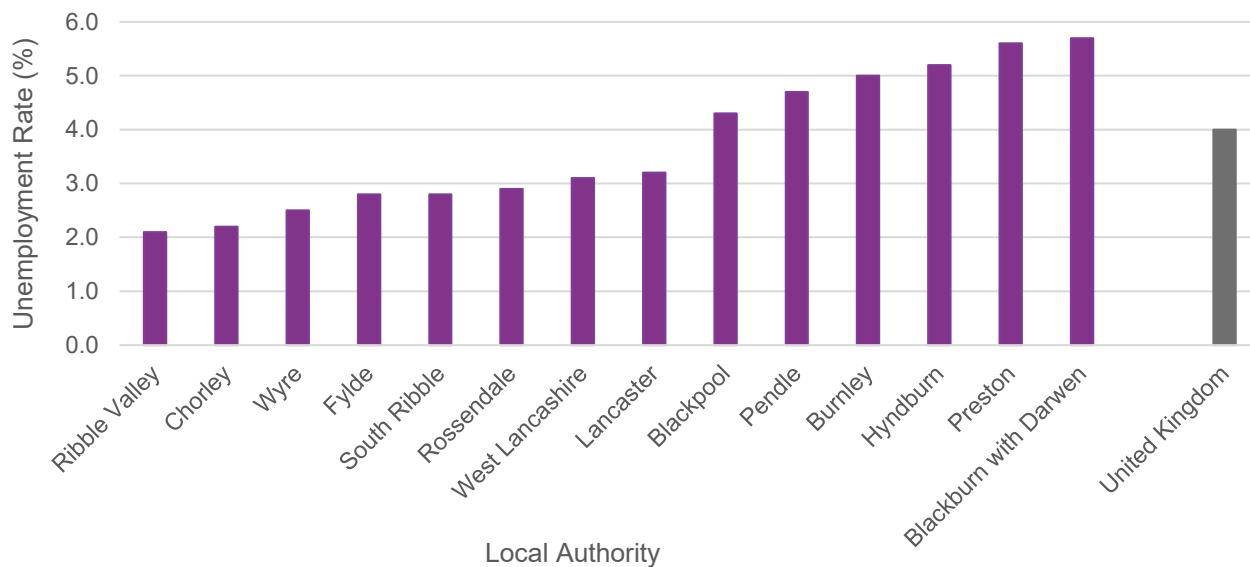
*Suppressed by source to protect confidential information

Table 4 shows the number of looked after children and then a breakdown of category of need per local authority area. Blackpool has the highest number of looked after children, with the reason of abuse or neglect accounting for the largest proportion within that area and across Lancashire. As adults, maltreated children are at an increased risk of perpetrating or being a victim of violence, having lifelong impaired mental health as well as alcohol and drug misuse ([WHO](#), 2024).

Employment

Between September 2024–September 2025, 75.6% of people aged 16-64 in Lancashire were in employment. This is slightly higher than the UK as a whole (75.5%) and an increase from the year prior (74.2%). Most individuals in employment worked in full-time roles (78.0%), with the private sector (76.0%) accounting for the majority of employment in Lancashire ([Lancashire Insight](#), 2026).

Figure 5: Local authority comparison of unemployment rate in Lancashire compared to the UK (2025)



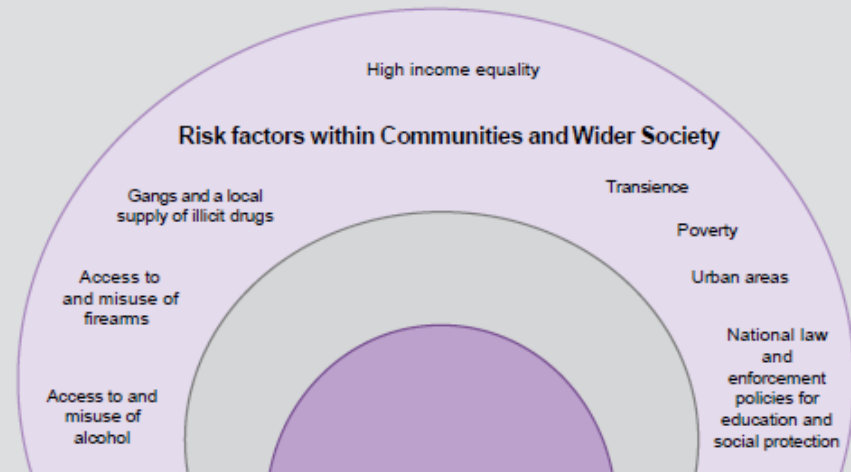
(Source: [Plumpot](#), 2025)

Table 5: Full-time employee average salary in Lancashire local authorities compared to the UK (2025)

Local Authority	Average Salary
Rossendale	£34.0k
Wyre	£34.4k
Pendle	£35.7k
Blackpool	£36.9k
Burnley	£37.4k
South Ribble	£38.6k
Hyndburn	£38.9k
West Lancashire	£39.7k
Lancaster	£40.4k
Chorley	£41.1k
Blackburn with Darwen	£42.7k
Preston	£44.5k
United Kingdom	£48.5k
Fylde	£49.9k
Ribble Valley	£54.8k

Figure 5 and Table 5 show the variation in unemployment rate and salary across Lancashire. Six out of the fourteen pan-Lancashire districts have a higher than national rate of unemployment and twelve districts have an average salary that is lower than the UK average. Blackburn with Darwen, Preston and Hyndburn have the highest unemployment rates with Rossendale, Wyre and Pendle and having the lowest average annual salaries. A study by [Eriksson](#) (2020) identified that as the duration of long-term unemployment increased, violent crime also increased. With these risk factors also being two of the seven deprivation domains, any inequalities in employment and income should be considered in the prevention of serious violence.

Risk Factors within Communities and Wider Society



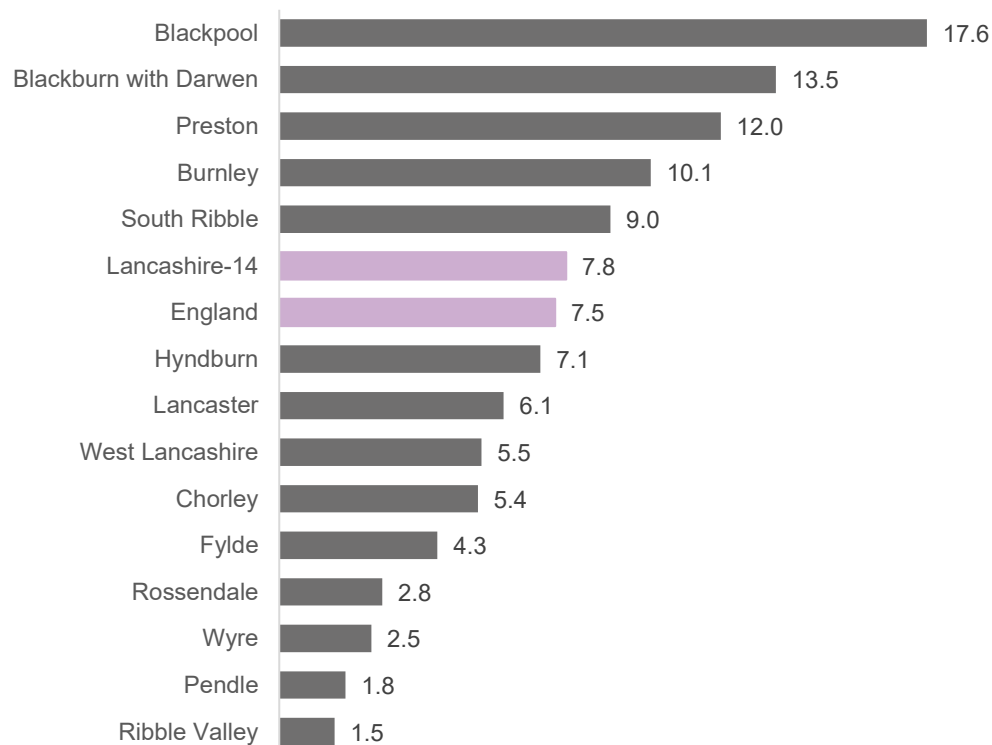
Housing

In 2025, the average property price in Lancashire was £189k and average monthly private rent cost was £739. These are both lower than average for England (£270k & £1,422 respectively). Within Lancashire, Burnley had the lowest average house price and rent cost, Ribble Valley had the highest average house price, and Fylde had the highest average rent cost ([ONS, 2026](#)). [Motevali et al. \(2025\)](#) found that Bristol postcodes with lower property values had higher rates of violent crime, highlighting the importance of considering house pricing within Lancashire as a contributing risk factor for serious violence.



Homelessness

Figure 6: Relief duty owed per 1,000 households (2024/25)



(Source: [Lancashire Insight, 2025](#))

A household is considered homeless if there is no suitable accommodation available to them, such as those who are rough sleeping or are living in unsafe, insecure or overcrowded housing. Figure 6 provides an insight into homelessness within Lancashire in the context of relief duty owed. These are households that are already homeless and require support from local authorities to secure accommodation ([Lancashire Insight, 2025](#)).

These figures show that South Ribble, Burnley, Preston, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool have a higher than the national average rate of households that are considered homeless.

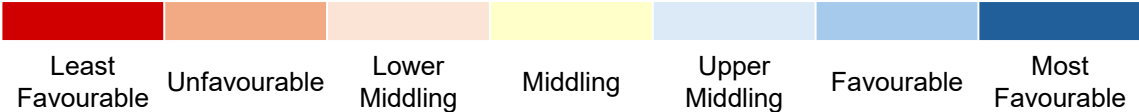
Housing instability has been found to increase the likelihood of youth contact with the justice system ([Almquist & Cusworth Walker, 2022](#)) as well as impact the mental and physical health of children and young people ([Hock et al., 2024](#)). For individuals released from prison, [Nilsson et al. \(2023\)](#) found that the risk of reoffending was higher for those who experienced homelessness after release than those who did not. These are some examples as to why housing instability is an important inequality factor to consider when assessing violent crime.

Social Mobility

The [Social Mobility Commission](#) (2026) defines social mobility as ‘the link between a person’s occupation or income and the occupation or income of their parents. Where there is a strong link, there is a lower level of social mobility. Where there is a weak link, there is a higher level of social mobility. For example, if you have a professional occupation and your parents had a working-class occupation, you have experienced upward occupational mobility. If you have a high income and your parents had a low income, you have experienced upward income mobility’.

Table 6: Social mobility measures for Lancashire

Local Authority	Promising prospects	Conditions of childhood	Labour market opportunities for young people	Innovation and growth
Blackburn with Darwen	Middling	Least Favourable	Lower Middling	Unfavourable
Blackpool	Middling	Unfavourable	Middling	Lower Middling
Lancashire-12	Middling	Middling	Lower Middling	Middling



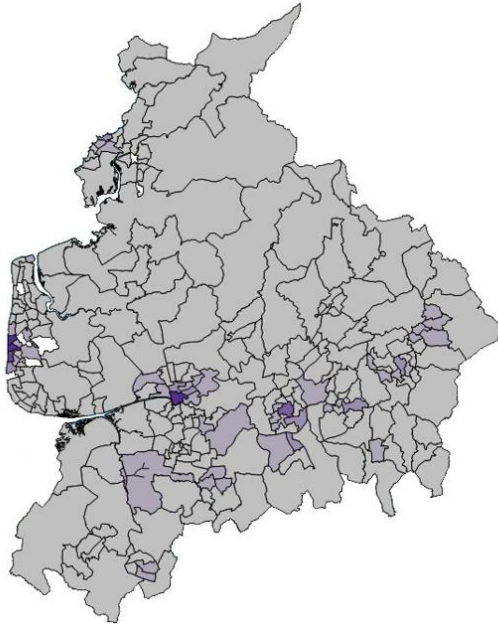
(Source: [Social Mobility Commission](#), 2025)

Table 6 shows how Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire-12 are ranked for four different measures of social mobility. Each measure of social mobility combines data from multiple indicators into a single ‘composite’ score. For each measure (for example, ‘promising prospects’), 205 local authorities in the UK are classified according to their composite scores ([Social Mobility Commission](#), 2025). The classifications vary from least favourable to most favourable. As you can see, none of the Lancashire authorities have a social mobility measure classification that is higher than middling. Notably, conditionals of childhood is classified as least favourable in Blackburn with Darwen and unfavourable in Blackpool.

Violent Crime

The below figures highlight where serious violence had taken place across Lancashire during the period of January to December 2025. To ensure there are no duplicate offences included, only the following crime types have been selected: aggravated burglary, robbery, rape, homicide and violence with injury. Those areas highlighted in purple are those with the highest volume of serious violence and those in grey are the lowest.

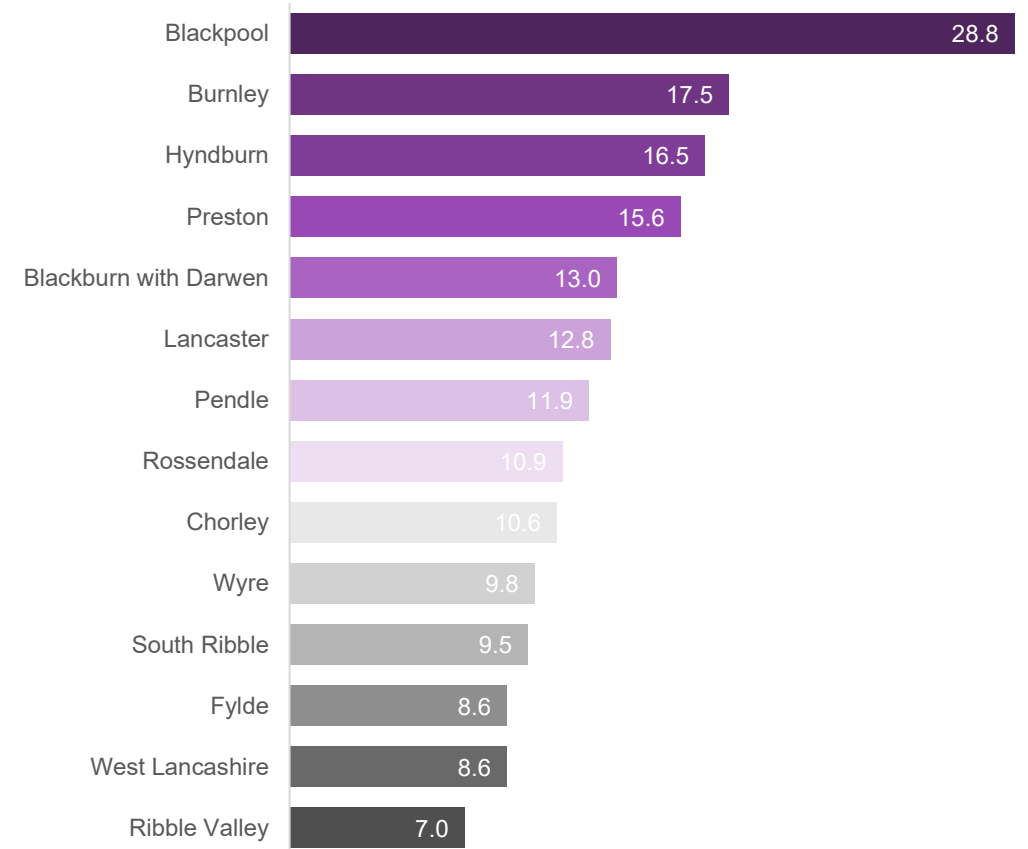
Figure 7: Serious violence heatmap of Lancashire



Comparing 2025 to 2024 there was a:

- 17% reduction in gun crime
- 15% reduction in knife crime
- 10% reduction in aggravated burglary
- 7% reduction in robbery
- 4% reduction in violence with injury
- 2% reduction in domestic abuse
- 0% change in homicide
- 5% increase in rape

Figure 8: Rate of serious violence crime within Lancashire by district (per 1,000 residents)



(Source: Lancashire Constabulary Business Intelligence dashboard, 30th January 2026)

What do we know about perpetrators of serious violence?

14% Repeat offending rate for serious violence offences

Average of 2.5 serious violence offences per repeat perpetrator in Lancashire during this time period.

39% of perpetrators were between 26 and 40-years old.

Followed by 26% aged 41-60-years old, 18% aged 16 to 25, 10% aged 10 to 15, 6% aged 61+, and 1% aged <10.

37%

Domestic Abuse Related

16%

Suspect Intoxicated

9%

Mental Health Related

8%

Youth Related

6%

Weapon Related

5%

Knife Related

What do we know about victims of serious violence?

8% Repeat victimisation rate for serious violence offences

Average of 2.3 serious violence offences per repeat victim in Lancashire during this time period.

34% of victims were between 26 and 40-years old.

Followed by 26% aged 41-60-years old, 18% aged 16 to 25, 11% aged 10 to 15, 7% aged 61+, and 3% aged <10.

Of the serious violence cases referred to victim support:

73%

of victims were White British

55%

were female

40%

were Heterosexual

2%

were Muslim

The data used in this analysis refers to investigations with the crime type of aggravated burglary, robbery, rape, homicide and violence with injury between 01/01/2025-31/12/2025. The Victim Support referrals exclude those where the answer was left blank.

(Source: Lancashire Constabulary Business Intelligence dashboard, 30th January 2026)

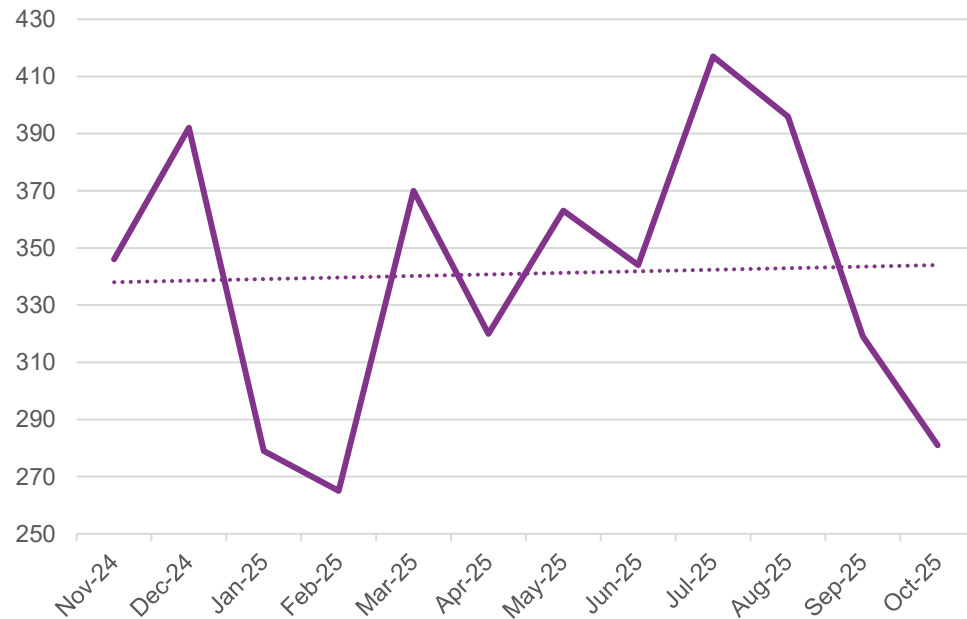
Health Demand

The use of Police data alone is not enough to give the true picture of violence within Lancashire. There are many instances where individuals will attend hospital for treatment because of a violence related injury but choose not to report this incident to the police. Reviewing partnership data alongside police data assists in filling any potential gaps and allows for a better understanding the prevalence of violence in the county. Below are examples of the demand healthcare systems face as a result of violence.

Emergency Department Attendances

Figure 9 shows the number of Accident and Emergency assault attendances in Lancashire by district of residence. There has been a general increase in attendances between Nov-24 and Oct-25, spiking in July 2025 but then reducing thereafter.

Figure 9: Accident and Emergency attendances for assaults in Lancashire

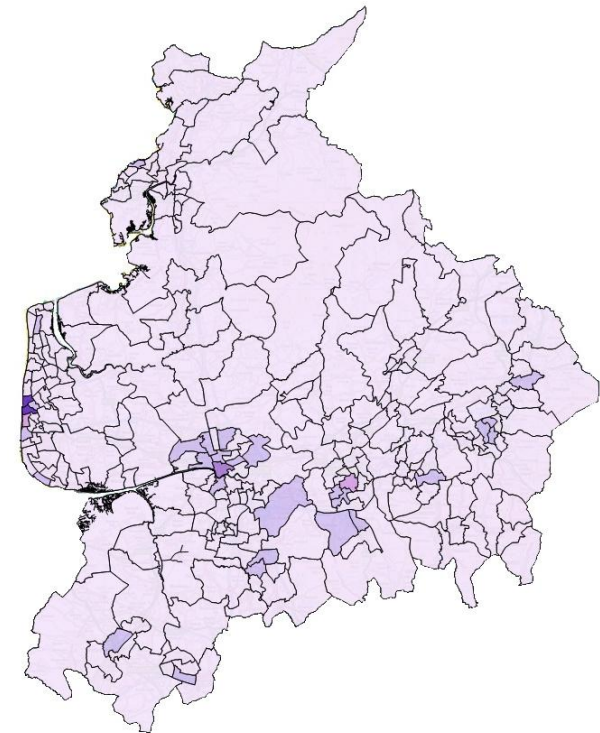


(Source: Multi-Agency Data Exchange (MADE))

Ambulance Call Outs

The below map shows the volume of violence related ambulance call outs (assault/violence/gunshot/stabbing/penetrating injury) across Lancashire, per ward area (Jan - Dec 25). This map flags the most high-volume areas to be within Blackpool, Preston and Blackburn with Darwen.

Figure 10: Ambulance call out heatmap of Lancashire

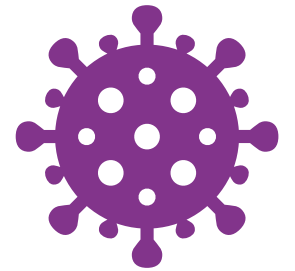


Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic was of global significance for many reasons, namely the health and wellbeing implications on communities through periods of lockdown, illness and bereavement. As stated in [The British Academy](#) (2021) report, the impacts of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing have not been felt uniformly across society, with COVID-19 exacerbating existing structural and social inequalities, particularly negative health outcomes for those already disadvantaged in society. Disadvantaged communities are already the most vulnerable to serious violence and COVID-19 might have contributed an even higher risk. A summary of research suggests that there has been a particular impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and young people as a result of social isolation, reduced educational and social development, and increased exposure to parental mental health difficulties and financial hardship ([The Guardian](#), 2022).

A study by Kings College London titled '[An Isolated Generation: the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people](#)' (2022) found the following:

- 44% of 11-12-year-olds reported an increase in symptoms of **depression** since the start of the pandemic
- 40% of 6-16-year-olds experienced a **deterioration in mental health** during the pandemic compared to before
- There was an increase in children and young people's exposure to **abuse** and **neglect** in the home
- High levels of **loneliness**, **disrupted sleep** and **anxiety** were reported by children and young people during the pandemic
- A predicted 1.5 million children and young people needed **new** or **additional mental health support** as a result of the pandemic



The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on many children, young people and families in terms of presenting new challenges as well as exacerbating existing struggles within families, particularly around adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma. [Mousavi et al.](#) (2025) found that young adults with high ACEs had significantly worse mental health outcomes across the early, peak, and post-peak phases of the pandemic compared to those with low ACEs. Hostility in particular was elevated due to the interaction of ACEs with lifestyle changes and substance use during the pandemic.

The [Buttle 'State of Poverty'](#) (2021) report discussed how practitioners working with families during the pandemic saw an increase in severity of all ACEs, particularly around mental health, parental separation, and verbal and physical abuse. The report highlights that 56% of children and young people were facing challenges in overcoming past trauma during the pandemic, which made it difficult to engage with education, and that two thirds of children were 'falling behind' in education and experiencing problems in peer and sibling relationships.

[Laajasalo et al.](#) (2025) found that exposure to ACEs in childhood is associated with violent offending in adolescence. The increase in children and young people experiencing such events either for the first time, or to an increased extent due to the COVID-19 pandemic, presents as a significant concern in terms of the potential increase in serious violence.

Estimated Cost of Violence

Figure 11 provides an annual breakdown of the estimated cost of violence within Lancashire from 2019 to 2025. These figures were calculated by multiplying the Lancashire Constabulary recorded crime count for each year with the 2015/16 unit costs of crimes estimates produced in the Home Office [Economic and Social Cost of Crime \(2nd edition\)](#) (2018). In line with the Lancashire VRN serious violence definition, only the crime types of robbery, homicide, rape and violence with injury were included (there are no cost estimates for the sub-type of aggravated burglary). The cost per resident was also estimated by multiplying crimes for each year by their unit cost and then dividing by the respective resident population mid-year estimate.

The estimated cost of serious violence in Lancashire has decreased this year, showing a 4% decrease from 2024 to the most recent year, 2025. This trend is reflective of the rate of serious violence overall.

Cost per District

The aside graph (Figure 12) shows the cost of serious violence (in millions) in each district in Lancashire for 2025. Using the same methodology as above, the serious violence recorded crime count for each district was multiplied by the unit cost of crime estimates. Blackpool had the highest cost of nearly £65 million, and Ribble Valley had the lowest, costing £6.6 million.

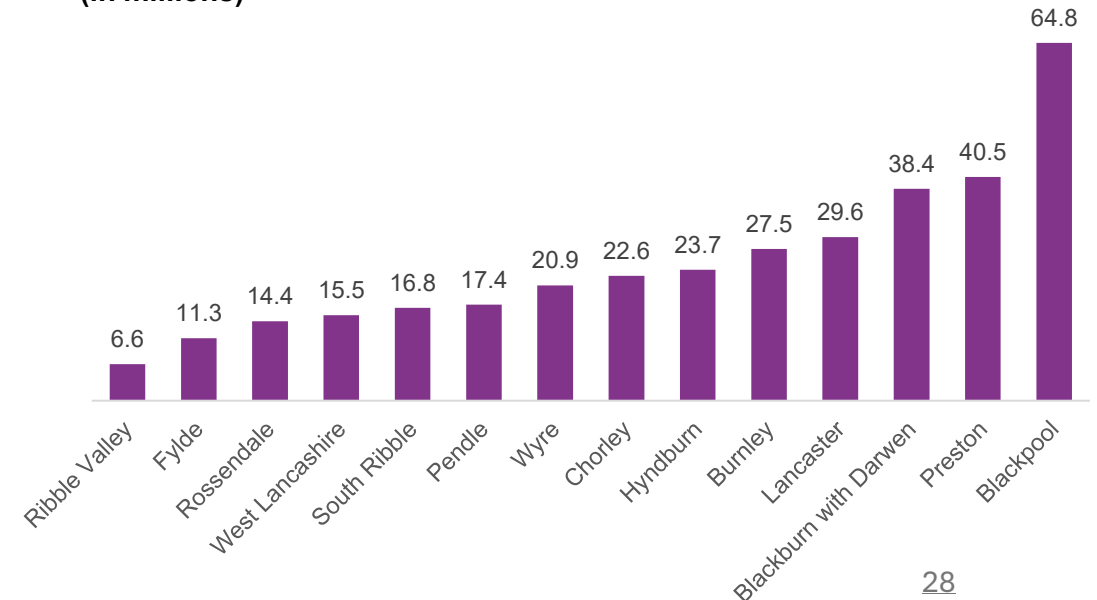
Note – these figures only give an estimate of the costs to the local economy and do not capture those crimes that are committed that go undetected. The 2018 Home Office cost framework is currently the most up to date cost of crime estimate and inflation adjustments were not applied. The total cost unit is a combination of anticipation consequence and response costs.

To see what the cost of serious violence was to the healthcare system in Lancashire, please see the report produced by [Liverpool John Moores University](#) (2021).

Figure 11: Estimated annual cost of violence in Lancashire



Figure 12: Estimated cost of violence in 2025 per Lancashire district (in millions)



Evidence Reviews and Resources

Snapshot of Evidence to Prevent Violence

Author and/or Organisation	Date	Title	Highlights
World Health Organization	2010	VIOLENCE PREVENTION THE EVIDENCE	<p>Strategies for preventing interpersonal and self-directed violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers • Developing life skills in children and adolescents • Reducing availability and harmful use of alcohol • Reducing access to guns, knives and pesticides • Promoting gender equality • Changing cultural norms that support violence • Victim identification, care and support
O'Connor and Waddell Early Intervention Foundation	2015	WHAT WORKS TO PREVENT GANG INVOLVEMENT, YOUTH VIOLENCE AND CRIME? A RAPID REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS DELIVERED IN THE UK AND ABROAD	<p>What works? School based or family focussed programmes, involving skill practice, parent training or therapy, delivered by trained facilitators with had experience of working with children and/or families</p> <p>What looks promising? Mentoring, community-based and hospital-based programmes</p> <p>What is ineffective? Programmes with a military element, using a deterrence (e.g., prison visits) or discipline-based approach</p>
Irwin- Rogers, Billingham, Fraser, Gillon, McVie and Newburn	2025	PREVENTING VIOLENCE THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH	<p>Proposed adoption of the 'Four Is' framework to enhance the public health approach to violence prevention. This calls for simultaneous action at four key levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inequalities - including disparities in wealth, income, opportunity, recognition, and risk distribution 2. Institutions - early childhood support services, schools, youth services, social work, health and mental health services, and youth justice must be adequately resourced and work towards common and consistent goals 3. Interventions - should be timely and targeted, ensuring the right support reaches the right individuals at the right times 4. Interactions - Consistent and high-quality interactions across a range of relationships in children and young people's lives are crucial for preventing violence and fostering high levels of wellbeing, support, and safety

Further Sources of Evidence

As reported in previous versions of the SNA, there is a substantial body of international evidence relating to violence prevention, including documents from the World Health Organization ([2010](#), [2015](#)) and across the United Kingdom. Below is a list of other useful reviews and resources:

The Early Intervention Foundation's (2020) report [Adverse childhood experiences: What we know, what we don't know, and what should happen next](#).

The College of Policing's [Crime Reduction Toolkit](#) summarises the best available research evidence on what works to reduce crime.

[Effectiveness of Violence Prevention Interventions: Umbrella Review of Research in the General Population](#) (Fazel et al., 2024).

Kovalenko et al.'s (2020) study on [What Works in Violence Prevention Among Young People?: A Systematic Review of Reviews](#).

The World Health Organization's [Violence Info](#) website hosts a global evidence database of violence studies.

The Behavioural Insights Team's (2020) report [Violence in London: what we know and how to respond](#).

The Local Government Association's (2018) [Public health approaches to reducing violence](#).

UK Government's [Violence against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy](#) (2025).

The UK Government's [Serious Violence Strategy](#) (2018).



Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit

The YEF aims to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. They seek to understand the causes of violence and develop the research which then assists their evaluation of the approaches to prevent it. Their findings influence the actions taken by organisations such as Violence Reduction Units.

The YEF Toolkit provides an overview of different approaches that aim to prevent children and young people being involved in violence.

Each approach overview includes:

- A description of the approach
- How effective it's likely to be
- How confident you can be in the impact
- Indicative costs
- Links to related resources and programmes

On the right are four examples of approaches that have been rated as having an evidence quality of 4 or 5 and a high or medium estimated impact on violent crime. Please note that the Toolkit is updated on a regular basis as the evidence-base develops.

<p>Focused deterrence A strategy that combines communicating the consequences of violence with support for developing positive routes away from it.</p>	<p>COST £ £ £</p>	<p>EVIDENCE QUALITY QQQQQ</p>	<p>ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME HIGH</p>
<p>Social skills training Aims to develop children's ability to regulate their behaviour and communicate effectively.</p>	<p>COST £ £ £</p>	<p>EVIDENCE QUALITY QQQQQ</p>	<p>ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME HIGH</p>
<p>OTHER OUTCOMES</p> <hr/> <p>HIGH increase in Self-regulation QQQQQ</p>			
<p>Relationship violence prevention lessons and activities Programmes that aim to prevent violence in intimate relationships.</p>	<p>COST £ £ £</p>	<p>EVIDENCE QUALITY QQQQQ</p>	<p>ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME MODERATE</p>
<p>Custody aftercare and resettlement programmes Programmes that seek to address children's needs and support reintegration into the community.</p>	<p>COST £ £ £</p>	<p>EVIDENCE QUALITY QQQQQ</p>	<p>ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME MODERATE</p>

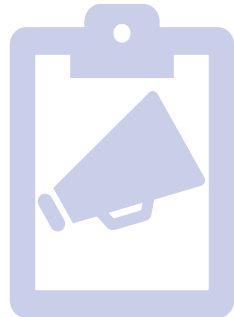
(Source: [Youth Endowment Fund](#), 28th January 2026)

Community Voice

This SNA enables the Lancashire VRN to identify its key priorities for the population of Lancashire. The VRN will continue to build on the place-based approach for a range of their interventions using the local evidence and data in this SNA to allocate resource, along with a range of population wide (secondary and tertiary level) interventions.

The image to the right is an overview of some of the views and experiences on serious violence held within Lancashire. These were collated from 3051 responses to the Lancashire VRN 'Serious Violence Survey' (2024). This information is invaluable for understanding the community's perception of the causes of violence and the effect it has on the area. Action has already been taken as a result of this feedback. This includes the allocation of hotspot policing in targeted areas, running educational workshops in schools and communities, and working with people with lived experience to help educate others on the impact of violence. These findings have been, and will continue to be used towards several strategies, both within the VRN and with partners, as well as supporting local decision-making across each of our 14 districts.

In November 2025 Hope Hack events were delivered by the VRN at HMP Lancaster Farms and HMP Wymott. The events brought together around 80 individuals in custody, facilitators and prison staff to explore practical solutions for improving support and reducing violence. Action trackers were developed following these events, and the VRN returned to prison to provide feedback on progress. Several ideas generated through the Hope Hacks have now been implemented, with impact to be monitored over the next 12 months.



Since 2020, the Lancashire Talking initiative has provided an opportunity for residents to share concerns through a survey, either completed online or with an officer. The community can report on the current issues and give confidence ratings of the policing within their area.

Out of 29,225 surveys completed between January and December 2025, Lancashire residents highlighted violent crime as a top issue 197 times and knife crime 314 times. West Lancashire, South Ribble, Preston and Hyndburn were the districts where knife and violent crimes were highlighted as top issues the most.



Recommendations

Income, Deprivation & Employment

- Consider prioritising areas with higher levels of people experiencing low-income, deprivation and low social mobility
- Support people to develop employability skills, apply for, and secure employment

Education

Across all local and unitary authorities in pan-Lancashire:

- Consider approaches to improving the number of children assessed as achieving a good level of development in relation to the expected early learning goals at the end of reception
- Target interventions to prevent persistent absenteeism within secondary schools
- Further explore opportunities to improve the average attainment 8 score (academic performance) in secondary schools and preventing fixed-term exclusions

In Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen unitary authorities:


- Explore opportunities to reduce the number of young people becoming NEET
- Target interventions to prevent persistent absenteeism within primary schools

Crime

- Allocate resources to fund evidence-informed interventions that prevent young people from entering the youth justice system, escalation of violence and serious violence

Health & Social Care

- Target interventions, across pan-Lancashire to prevent children entering care, including offering support to parents and families
- Explore opportunities to reduce the levels of hospital attendance and admissions for violence-related injuries across the county

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VIOLENCE REDUCTION
NETWORK