

Knife crime hotspots to see surge in police operations

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High knife crime hotspots to see surge in police patrols, knife arches and Live Facial Recognition to catch perpetrators.

The vast majority of knife crime happens in the same place and same street, over and over again. The government is investing over £26 million into the Knife Crime Concentrations Fund to support these surges in activity in the 27 police forces whose areas account for 90% of knife crime in England and Wales.

To enable this, the Home Office has shared new national mapping technology which identifies the highest knife crime hotspots down to a precision of 0.1 square kilometres. Using micro-geography, the police can pinpoint the specific streets and times when knife crime occurs.

These areas will see a dramatic surge in police activity to catch these criminals, such as increased police patrols, new CCTV cameras, Live Facial Recognition deployment and the installation of knife arches.

This comes as earlier this week, the government launched its plan to halve knife crime within a decade. Titled "Protecting Lives, Building Hope", it will save lives, transform the futures of young people and protect communities across the country.

To tackle knife crime, the government will support young people so they get the best start in life, stop those at risk from turning to knife crime and police our streets to catch and punish perpetrators.

Crime and Policing Minister Sarah Jones said:

Knife crime devastates lives and families across the country – and the majority of it takes place on just a small number of streets across the country.

We will deploy state of the art mapping to identify these hotspots and target them with police patrols, Live Facial Recognition and knife arches to catch these criminals.

This government will halve knife crime within a decade, saving lives and protecting communities.

Patrick Green, CEO of the Ben Kinsella Trust and member of the government's Coalition to Tackle Knife Crime said:

This targeted, data-driven approach represents a crucial part of the government's response to tackling knife crime and protecting young people from its devastating impact.

Knife crime creates a profound and often location-based fear among young people, shaping how they move, socialise and experience their own neighbourhoods. Tackling

these issues at source is vital, and that is why the Hex mapping approach is so important; it will pinpoint the exact areas where fear and harm are most concentrated. By coordinating action with partners on the ground, it can focus efforts where they are needed most, reducing knife crime, restoring confidence and improving public safety.

Shanine Wright, knife crime campaigner, and Bristol-based member of the government's Coalition to Tackle Knife Crime said:

I really welcome funding and a more targeted approach to tackling knife crime, especially here in Bristol, especially with better data, like the use of Hex mapping. I've seen first-hand the difference this can make on the ground. That's why it's encouraging to see knife crime down by 8%, which shows that progress is being made.

I truly believe this is an opportunity to keep building on that progress by continuing to invest in prevention, youth support, and community-led work so we can reach young people sooner and create safer futures.

The government has also announced a range of measures to better support young people and divert them away from knife crime.

Among the interventions outlined in the plan are:

- plans to launch 50 'Young Futures Hubs' by the end of this Parliament in areas impacted by knife crime in England and Wales. The first of the initial 8 opening last week
- committing to continuing the good work of Violence Reduction Units by investing £66.6 million in the Serious Violence Reduction Programme in the new financial year
- rolling out 50 Young Futures Panels, which help to identify vulnerable children earlier and deliver rapid, coordinated support
- providing £1.2 million for the Safety In & Around Schools Partnership which will see up to 250 schools in knife crime hotspots receive specialist training and support to divert children away from violence and improve pupils' safety on their way to and from school
- £26 million in the Knife Crime Concentrations Fund which builds on the hyperlocal approach to tackle knife crime hotspots. The funding will go to 27 selected police force areas, which make up 90% of the total knife crime in England and Wales
- providing £1.75 million in funding for the Knife Crime Coordination Centre, launched on 2 April 2026, with further funding of £1.75 million confirmed for 2026/27. The centre will support national policing in identifying and tackling offenders who sell and distribute weapons online, a key part of Ronan's Law
- more than £34 million in funding for the County Lines Programme this year. This includes more than £28 million for policing, ensuring forces have the resources they need to disrupt organised drug networks, close down lines and safeguard those at risk of exploitation
- £15 million for the Ministry of Justice's Turnaround Programme to provide bespoke interventions and for children who are on the cusp of the youth justice system away from further crime and violence, including knife crime
- £5.5 million to focus on technological solutions to knife crime funded through UK Research and Innovation, published today

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/knife-crime-hotspots-to-see-surge-in-police-operations>