

## More than 600 organised crime groups disrupted by ADDER projects

Over 600 organised crime groups have been disrupted and more than 13,000 people supported in drug treatment interventions delivered by outreach workers just one year on from the launch of the Project ADDER programme, which was set up to cut drug-related crime and harm in England and Wales.

The Home Office has revealed some early successes of the trailblazing project as the Minister for Crime, Policing and Probation, Kit Malthouse, gathered Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) representing ADDER areas from across England and Wales, at a meeting to underline the importance of cracking down on drug misuse and ensuring this threat receives the resource and focus it needs locally.

The Minister highlighted the successes of the 13 Project ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery) sites, a year after the first projects launched. He urged PCCs to continue to work with local authorities and support police in both cracking down on drugs gangs, rolling up county lines and helping those addicted to drugs with treatment and recovery services.

The Home Office can reveal that between January and December 2021, across all sites, Project ADDER has boosted activity and contributed to:

- over 600 Organised Crime Group disruptions
- over £3.5m in cash seized
- almost 10,500 arrests (including drug trafficking, acquisitive crime, criminal damage/arson etc)
- over 4,300 Out Of Court Disposals started by police
- over 13,400 drug treatment interventions carried out by outreach workers

So far £59m in investment has been committed to Project ADDER until 2023 and the government pledged to extend the funding of the programme to 2025 as part of its flagship Drugs Strategy last month. The strategy will see £300 million invested in pursuing and closing down the ruthless gangs who exploit and threaten our most vulnerable in society for financial gain through the illegal drugs trade and £780 million invested in treatment and recovery.

Crime, Policing and Probation Minister Malthouse said:

Drugs degrade society – they drive crime, destroy families, and their illegal use claims more lives each year than all stabbings and road traffic accidents combined.

This government is committed to eradicating this scourge and I am pleased to see our approach is working, with over 10,000 arrests

and 13,000 people encouraged into treatment in the last 12 months through Project ADDER.

Our 10-year Drugs Strategy will tackle both the supply and demand for narcotics and see the government commit to the largest ever single increase in investment in treatment and recovery.

All Project ADDER sites are now live, spanning across 13 local authorities in England and Wales. These are: Blackpool, Hastings, Middlesbrough, Norwich, Swansea Bay, Bristol, Newcastle, Wakefield, Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Liverpool City, Knowsley and Wirral.

The Project ADDER approach combines co-ordinated and targeted law enforcement with expanded diversionary programmes, such as Out of Court Disposal Orders, and enhanced treatment and recovery services, including housing and employment support.

The Drugs Strategy builds on the government's progress in driving down crime and delivering safer streets for all.

So far the government has delivered:

#### A drop in crime

1. Between June 2019 and June 2021, there was an 14% fall in overall crime (excluding fraud and computer misuse). And in the year to June, we saw continuing falls in neighbourhood crime – including robbery and burglary – as well as falls in knife crime (excluding possession) and firearms offences, reflecting the impact of lockdown restrictions.
2. In particular, neighbourhood crime decreased by 31%, homicides were down 7% and knife crime dropped by 10%.
3. Overall crime has been falling in recent years. According to the Crime Survey, between 2009-10 and 2019-20, overall crime fell by 41%, with violence falling by 33% and theft by 34%.

#### More police on the streets

- 11,053 additional officers have been hired across England and Wales – meaning we're 55% of the way towards our target of 20,000 extra officers by March 2023.
- Our police forces are more diverse than ever – we are recruiting more female officers and have the highest number of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic officers since records began.

#### Getting weapons off our streets

- Every knife seized is a life saved, which is why we've given police more stop and search powers. And it's working – last year almost 16,000 dangerous weapons were seized.
- Our Offensive Weapons Act has also banned a wide range of knives,

weapons, and firearms, and the surrender scheme saw almost 15,000 knives and offensive weapons removed from the streets.

#### Safer communities

- We've funded 159 local areas across England and Wales to deliver crime prevention measures through the Safer Streets Fund. This has resulted in increased CCTV, street lighting, and enhanced home security.
- Since 2019, we've invested £242m to zone in on serious violence and homicide hotspots. This includes £105.5m funding for our Violence Reduction Units, which have reached 300,000 at risk young people so far.

You can read the most recent [press release on the Drugs Strategy](#).