



# **Serious Violence Duty**

## **Strategic Needs Assessment**

**High-level overview of the type of serious violence occurring in Suffolk, where it occurs, who is most affected and the prevalence in Suffolk of key risk factors.**

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**Serious violence is a complex and serious issue that is not unique to Suffolk. It has devastating consequences for survivors, victims, perpetrators and their families as well as the wider community.**

Suffolk’s crime rate tends to be below both regional and national averages, with Suffolk under-indexing against all types of offences, except for Violence without injury, Sexual offences and Possession of weapons offences, which are in-line with England averages. Knife and firearms related crimes were proportionally lower across Suffolk than both regional and national averages in 2022.

Over the past five years the following number of serious violent crimes have been recorded by Suffolk Police:

	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	Total
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	19,115	21,575	20,491	21,544	22,274	<b>104,999</b>
SEXUAL OFFENCES	2,344	2,541	2,134	2,716	2,717	<b>12,452</b>
DRUG OFFENCES	1,407	1,808	1,948	1,793	1,599	<b>8,555</b>
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS	475	549	373	513	625	<b>2,535</b>
ROBBERY	483	485	274	270	278	<b>1,790</b>
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	227	214	228	242	239	<b>1,150</b>
VEHICLE OFFENCES	54	71	64	69	56	<b>314</b>
ARSON & CRIMINAL DAMAGE	25	35	43	39	40	<b>182</b>
BURGLARY	15	28	21	34	25	<b>123</b>
MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	2		5	2	7	<b>16</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,147</b>	<b>27,306</b>	<b>25,581</b>	<b>27,222</b>	<b>27,860</b>	<b>132,116</b>

- **3,979** of the 132,116 crimes have been classed as a knife crime. On average, 40% being committed as part of Possession of Weapons offences, 26% as part of Violence with injury and 18% as part of Violence without injury.
- **38,080** of the 132,116 crimes have included Domestic Abuse. 39% of offences that include DA were part of the Violence without injury sub-category, 29% were part of Stalking & Harassment, 25% were part of Violence with injury.

**In general, the highest number of serious violent offences occur in the more urban areas of Suffolk, such as Ipswich, Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds, Sudbury, Brandon, Haverhill and Newmarket.**

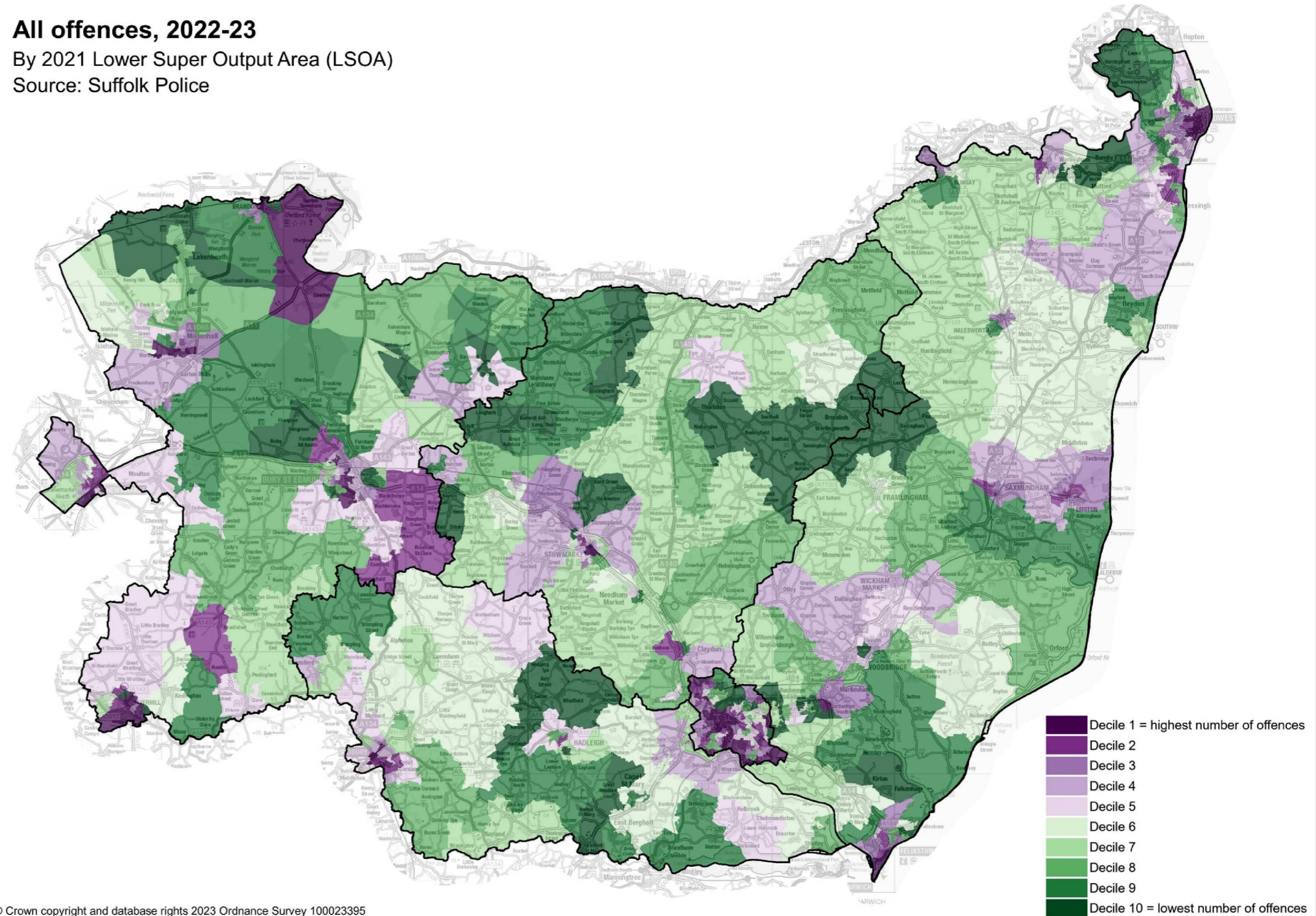
The wards with the highest number of offences are

- Babergh: Great Cornard and Sudbury NW & SE
- East Suffolk: Eastern Felixstowe, Harbour & Normanston, Kirkley & Pakefield, Martlesham & Purdis Farm
- Ipswich: Alexandra, Bixley, Bridge, Gainsborough, Gipping, Priory Heath, Stoke Park, Westgate, Whitehouse, Whitton
- Mid Suffolk: Combs Ford
- West Suffolk: Abbeygate, Brandon Central & East, all four wards in Haverhill, Mildenhall, Kingsway & Market, Newmarket East, Southgate, St Olaves

**All offences, 2022-23**

By 2021 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

Source: Suffolk Police



# There are many risk factors in a person’s life that can threaten development, limit social and economic opportunities, increase the likelihood of mental and physical health problems, criminal involvement, substance misuse, or exploitation or abuse in later life.

These risk factors exist at three different levels: **INDIVIDUAL**, **INTERPERSONAL**, and **COMMUNITIES / SOCIETY** – and a whole range of factors have been linked with both perpetration and victimisation of violent crime and violent behaviour.

## Risk factors at the individual level

Individual factors emerged as the most powerful risk indicators for serious violence for children and young people (ages 7-25). Risk factors are age specific and change over time. For example, substance misuse was a strong risk factor for youth violence for children aged seven to nine years, but this decreased as children got older.

- Early involvement with alcohol, drugs & tobacco
- Low intelligence & educational achievement
- Low commitment to school & school failure
- Involvement in crime
- Unemployment
- Exposure to violence in the family

Individual level risk factors for serious violence also include some demographics, i.e., **gender, age and ethnicity.**

## Risk factors at the interpersonal level

Young people aged 15 and under were more vulnerable to family level risk factors of family disruption and poor supervision. The most powerful risk factors for serious violence for children and young people aged 7-15, were poor relationships with peers or having delinquent peers. Though caution is needed against adopting a 'dysfunctional family' stereotype. The absence of family supervision and/or boundary setting may not constitute neglect but rather socio-economic factors, such as work commitments or difficulties monitoring children’s activities away from the home environment

- Poor monitoring & supervision of children by parents
- Harsh, lax or inconsistent parental disciplinary practices
- A low level of attachment between parents & children
- Parental substance abuse or criminality
- Parental depression
- Low family income
- Unemployment in the family
- Associating with delinquent peers and/or gang membership

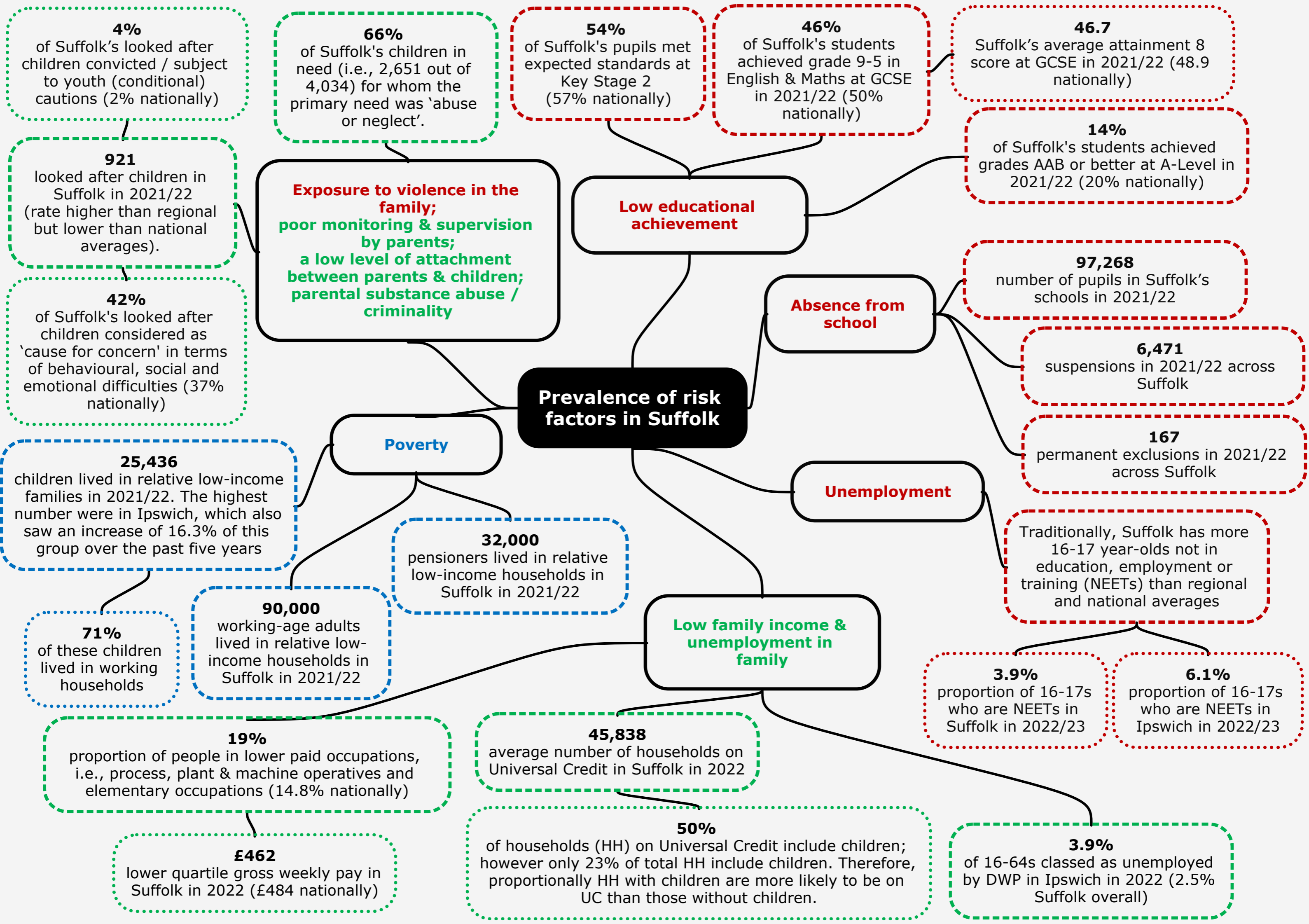
## Risk factors at the community & wider society level

Poverty serves to marginalise young people with violence used as a way of retaining feelings of self-worth. However, while low deprivation can be a protective factor, living in an affluent household did not protect a young person with a high level of other risk factors.

- Access to & misuse of alcohol
- Access to & misuse of firearms
- Gangs & a local supply of illicit drugs
- High income inequality
- Poverty
- Quality of governance, incl. laws & policies, e.g., education, social protection

Local data has its limitations and is not available for all of the risk factors for Serious Violence outlined above.

The following pages provide the local prevalence of risk factors for which data is available.



Overall, between 2018 and 2023, there were 195 outcomes for young persons between 10 and 15 and 162 for 16-18 year-olds. Proportionally, out-of-court outcomes are handed out more often to those under 16. First-tier court outcomes make up 78% of court outcomes for under 16s, and this drops to 63% for those between 16 and 18.

There were a total of 79 youth justice outcomes in 2022-23, of which 39 (49%) were out-of-court outcomes (see page 141 for explanation). 16 of the latter were youth conditional orders, which are a mandatory rather than voluntary outcome. Of the 40 youth justice outcomes in 2022-23, the vast majority (80%) were referral orders. The other 20% were youth rehabilitation orders

Between 2018 and 2023, there were 357 outcomes/disposals relating to 319 10-18-year-olds

### Serious Violence within Suffolk Youth Justice Services

Age is a risk factor at individual level for serious violence, with self-reported violence and weapon carrying peaking at the age of 15, and a minority of chronic offenders continuing their offending.

In 2022-23, 317 (33%) probation disposals were for 18-29 year-olds, and 349 (36%) for those 30-39 (however, both these age groups only represent 16% and 15% of the total adult (18+) population in Suffolk, respectively).

0-15-year-olds make up 17.1% of Suffolk's population (compared to a national average of 18.5%). However, Ipswich's under 16s make up 19.9% of its population, with West Suffolk having the second highest proportion with 17.7%.

## AGE

18-24s are proportionally classed more often as very high risk of violent reoffending than any other age-group (2.8% vs. 1.6% average). And, proportionally, more 30-39s are predicted to be of high risk to reoffend (14.1% vs. 10.1% average).

### Serious Violence cases within Suffolk Probation Service.

### Serious Violent crimes recorded by Suffolk Police

Proportionally, the younger population is more ethnically diverse, this is true for Suffolk's Districts and Borough, Suffolk overall and England & Wales. For example, in Ipswich, 24.3% of all under 16s are from an ethnic minority group, while this reduces to 12.1% amongst those 30 and over.

Victims and suspects of DA are disproportionately from the 25+ age groups

Overall, the under 30s are especially over-represented for drug offences, sexual offences and robberies and all knife crimes

Those under 30 are over-represented as victims for all crimes compared to their proportion in the total Suffolk population – they make up 46.3% of all victims vs. 32% of Suffolk's population. This is particularly true for drug offences, sexual offences, possession of weapons offences and robberies.

The under 30s make up 43% of all suspects (though they are only 32% of total population). They are proportionally most over-represented for vehicle offences, robberies, drug offences, and possession of weapons offences.

The over-representation for all offences and violence against the person offences of suspects from a White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background is even more pronounced amongst the under 19 age group compared to the overall police cohort. Equally, the over-representation of those from Black backgrounds amongst suspects for drug offences, robberies and possession of weapons is more pronounced amongst this age group compared to the average. Under 19s from Black backgrounds and those from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British backgrounds are over-represented for knife crimes – in all types of roles.

**ETHNICITY**  
*note that evidence is unclear on whether ethnicity is a predictor of offending or victimisation*

**Serious Violence within Suffolk Youth Justice Services**

Those from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British backgrounds are under-represented compared to their proportion in Suffolk's 10-18 population. Those from White: Other, Asian and Black backgrounds are all over-represented.

Those from Black or Mixed ethnic backgrounds are proportionally more likely to be taken to court than those from any other ethnic background.

Locally, as well as nationally, proportionally those of background other than white (except for those from Mixed backgrounds) are less likely to be at a good level of development or expected levels of learning at Foundation Stage

Individuals from White backgrounds are more likely to miss school sessions and receive suspensions. And they are also over-represented amongst those who have Special Educational Needs and those with an Education, Health & Care Plan

Amongst 16-17-year-olds, those from any other ethnic background (other than White) are under-represented amongst those that are not in education, employment or training, but also amongst those that are in education, worked-based training or work with study.

Amongst children within social care, it was the Mixed and White British groups being over-represented between 2019 and 2022. However, there was a shift in 2022-23, with those from any background other than White proportionally increasing and being over-represented.

While those from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background are also over-represented as suspects overall (all offences) and as suspects for violence against the person offences, they are under-represented for robberies, drug offences and possession of weapon offences. Persons from Black backgrounds are also over-represented vs. their proportions amongst Suffolk's population (3.3% vs. 1.3%). They are specifically over-represented for drug offences, robberies, and possession of weapons. Those from White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White backgrounds are over-represented amongst suspects of robberies, possession of weapons and drug offences.

**Serious Violence cases within Suffolk Probation Service.**

Proportionally, those from an Asian background and a White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British are under-represented compared to Suffolks' 18+ population.

Those from White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White, Black or Mixed backgrounds are especially over-represented within Probation Services.

At a total level, between 2018 and 2023, 80% (2,313 persons) of Suffolk's probation cohort came from a White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background.

Compared to the average, those from Black, Mixed or White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British Backgrounds are proportionally less often classed as low risk for reoffending. Those from Mixed backgrounds are proportionally more often categorised as (very) high risk of reoffending

While those from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British backgrounds are proportionally more likely to be involved in offences that include Domestic Abuse (in any type of role), this may be due to cultural differences, where those from other ethnic backgrounds are less likely to report DA.

**Serious Violent crimes recorded by Suffolk Police**

Overall, those from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background are over-represented compared to their proportion in Suffolk's population against all SV crimes.

Persons from Black backgrounds are over-represented amongst both victims and suspects of knife crimes. While those from White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White backgrounds are also over-represented as suspects.

Victims from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background are over-represented in all offence types, except robberies compared to their proportion in the overall population. Those from an Asian or a Black background are proportionally more likely to be a victim of a robbery. And those from a Black background are also over-represented as victims of possession of weapon offences

**Serious Violence within Suffolk Youth Justice Services**

The vast majority (89%) of children and young people dealt with by the youth justice system between 2018 and 2023 were male.

Proportionally, females are more likely to be dealt with out-of-court than males.

Amongst the female probation cohort, the proportion of those from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background is in line with that of the overall 18+ female population in Suffolk – which is not the case for males, where this group is under-represented. Amongst both females and males, those from White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White, Black or Mixed backgrounds are over-represented.

89% of Suffolk’s total probation cohort is male. It is highest amongst the 60+ age group (94%) and lowest amongst those aged 30-39 (86%).

Gender has also been identified as a potential risk factor, with males committing most of the serious violent crime.

In Suffolk and nationally overall, females make up 51% of the population. This does not differ greatly within Suffolk’s Districts and Borough.

**GENDER**

**Serious Violence cases within Suffolk Probation Service.**

On average, males score higher on the Offender Violence Predictor score than females and are hence proportionally more likely to reoffend.

Proportionally there tend to be more males in the younger age groups (24 and under).

**Serious Violent crimes recorded by Suffolk Police**

Females under 30 make up 49% of the police female cohort, while they only make up 31% of Suffolk females. Males under 30 are also over-represented in the police data vs. their proportion in Suffolk (51% of the police male population is under 30 vs. 33% across Suffolk).

Suspects are proportionally more likely to be male, which is true overall and for all offence groups.

Males are over-represented in knife crimes (in any kind of role).

Proportionally, victims are more likely to be female, most significantly for sexual offences.

Females are over-represented compared to their proportion in Suffolk’s overall population as other involved roles (e.g., witnesses, reporting party, etc.)

Probably unsurprisingly, females are more likely to be victims of DA with males more likely being the perpetrators.