

# Violent Crime Action Plan

The Home Office has released the long awaited plan featuring new methods for stopping violent crime. The "Violent Crime Action Plan" as published in February 2008, is the first of its kind to focus solely on crimes involving serious violence. It sets out what the government, together with police and local agencies, intend to do over the next three years to cut homicide, knife crime, gun- and gang-related crime and sexual and domestic violence.

## Key actions to be taken include:

- prosecuting those found carrying knives, and levying tougher sentences for knife crimes
- providing police with 100 portable knife-detecting scanners and 400 search wands immediately, and making more available over the next year
- launching a new £1 million campaign to challenge the idea that weapons are 'glamorous', and address the fear and peer pressure that drive youngsters to carry weapons
- working with Be Safe to offer a million young people access to education about the dangers of weapons
- investing more than £20 million over the next three years on multi-agency interventions and information sharing between police, councils, volunteer groups and health workers to identify people likely to commit acts of serious violence
- more than doubling the number of [sexual assault referral centres](#)
- doing more to protect children from sex offenders – including a pilot in four police force areas (Cleveland, Cambridgeshire, Hampshire and Warwickshire) to allow the release of more information about offenders' convictions to certain members of the public

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said the government is determined not to let violent offenders get away with wrecking lives. In recent years, the government has made progress on the issue, and rates of violent crime have fallen by 31% since 1997. Still, she said, there's more to do, and the government is determined to get those rates down even lower.

'Every shooting or stabbing, every rape, every child sexually abused, every case of someone suffering domestic violence is one too many,' she said.

'Serious violent crime accounts for 1% of all crime, but where it does occur, it devastates lives, blights communities with fear and causes terrible suffering not just for victims, but for their families and friends as well.

'That is why I am today pledging that by 2011 we will have reduced serious violent crime - including gun and gang-related violence, knife crime, sexual and domestic violence - and improved the criminal justice response to these offences.'

## Other key elements in the plan include:

- instituting new controls on deactivated firearms
- working with police to identify top gang members, enhancing the use of covert surveillance and implementing targeted, multi-agency crackdowns
- strengthening legal measures - such as 'live links' and anonymity protection for witnesses - at the earliest possible stage of any criminal prosecution
- working with the technology and communications industries to tackle violence and offensive content on the internet, and in video games, films and other media
- developing a national strategy for addressing so-called 'honour crimes'

**Full details of the Violent Crime Action Plan can be found at;**

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/violent-crime-action-plan-180208>