

Kimberley Lamb

Head of Bedfordshire's
Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit



My background



- Born in London, moved to Luton, Bedfordshire with my family 19 years ago. Children went to schools in Luton.
- Both my husband & I work within Bedfordshire area.
- Have worked largely within schools and the criminal justice system for the last 25+ years
- Champion for the Violent Crime Prevention Board in London
- Seconded from role as Head of victim services and Early Intervention Lead at Bedfordshire Police

Kimberley Lamb.

- An experienced youth justice professional.
- Former Vice Chair of Bedfordshire Police's Stop & Search Scrutiny Panel.
- Head of Bedfordshire's Violence and Exploitation unit (VERU).
- Recently appointed Board Trustee for the Criminal Justice Alliance.
- School Governor for a mainstream school and alternative provision - both in Bedfordshire.

Bedfordshire's Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit



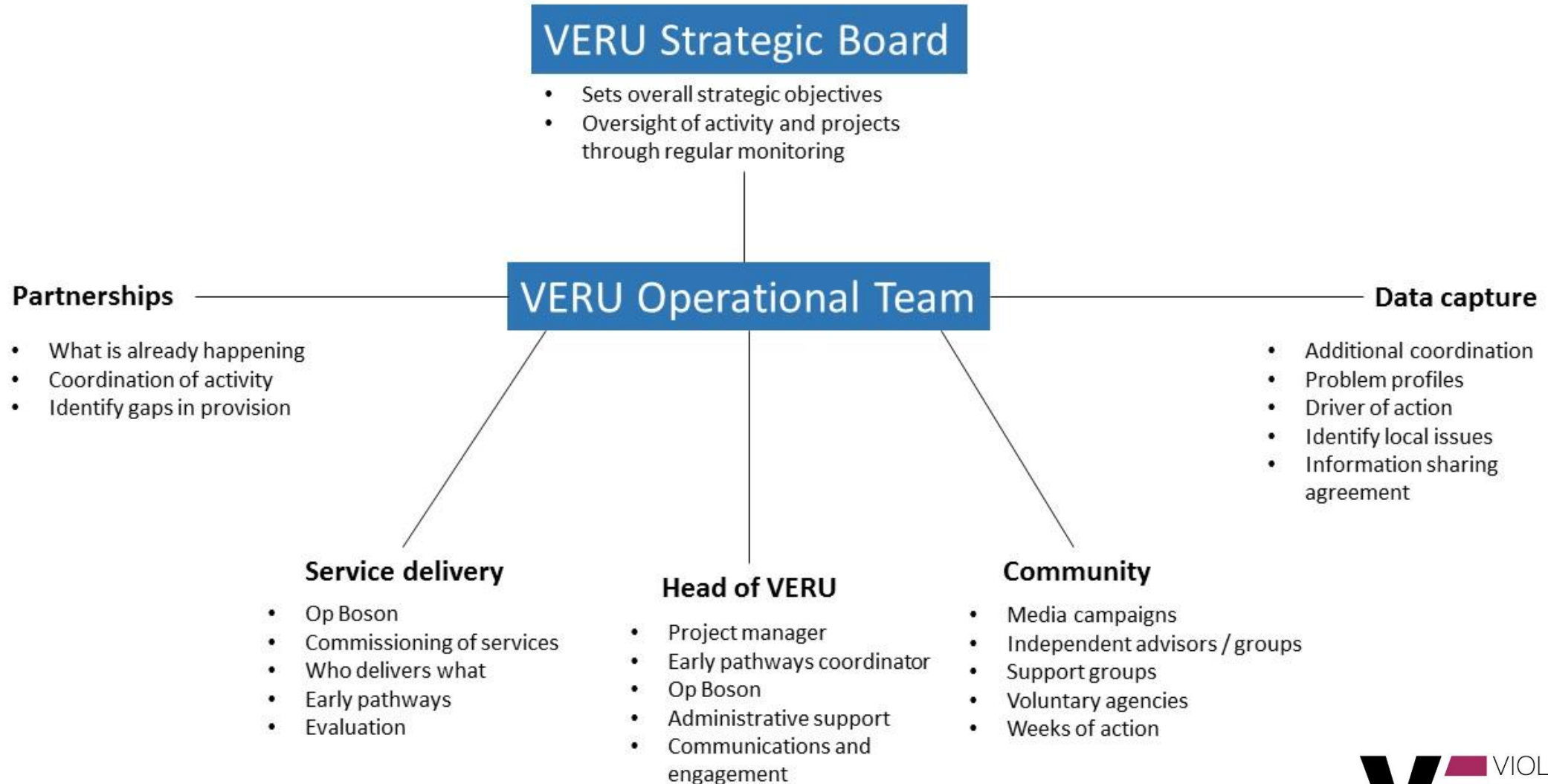


About the VERU

The Bedfordshire **V**iolence and **E**xploitation **R**eduction **U**nit (VERU) has been established to create a network of different agencies and groups to tackle the root causes of things like gang membership and prevent young people becoming involved in all aspects of gang criminality and exploitation.

- ▶ Funded by the Home Office
- ▶ Funded over 73 community projects across Bedfordshire
- ▶ Offers a Youth Intervention Service – with lived experiences

Original Structure



***NOW* Strategic/Oversight Board**

Local Authority Chief Executive Officer, Chief of Staff from OPCC,
Assistant Chief Constable Bedfordshire Police, Director of Children's services, Chief Nurse BLMK Commissioning Collaborative,
Public Health, Youth Offending services manager, Officer for VERU, Academic Advisor, Head teacher representative from a Pupil
Referral Unit.

Operational/Tactical Board (TBC)

Youth Offending Service Manager, Community Safety Partnership, Community member(s) Third
Sector Organisation, housing, policing, education, VERU Project Lead, VERU Youth Panel

Operational Team

Partnerships

- OPCC
- Local Authority x 3
- Youth Offending
Servs
- Education
- Health
- Third Sector
- Housing (TBC)

Service Delivery

- Police partnership work
- Commissioning of
Services
 - CSPs x 3
 - Alternative provisions
 - YOS
 - Third Sector
(Community Groups,
charities, voluntary orgs
etc)
- Early Pathways
- Evaluation

VERU – 14 staff members

- Head of VERU
- Exploitation Project Lead
- Public Health Analysts
- Early Pathways Co-
ordinator
- VERU/Police/YOS Team
- Administrative Support
- Communication and
Engagement

Data Capture

- Additional coordination
- Problem profiles
Driver of actions
- Identify local issues
- Information sharing
agreement
- Mapping

Community

- Media Campaigns
- Independent
advisors/groups
- PRUS – Anti-Knife
Crime
- Voluntary agencies
- Week of action

VERU Strategic Board

- **Local Authority Chief Executive Officer - Chair**
- **Chief of Staff from OPCC**
- **Assistant Chief Constable Bedfordshire Police Vice Chair**
- **Director of Children's services**
- **Chief Nurse BLMK Commissioning Collaborative**
- **Public Health**
- **Youth Offending Services Manager**
- **Project Lead Officer VERU**
- **Academic Advisor**
- **Regional Lead – Department for Education**
- **Head teacher representatives from 2 x Pupil referral unit**

Primary Objectives

- To review and evaluate the current approach to managing serious violence and criminal exploitation in Bedfordshire (CCE, missing, violence and gangs)
- To build upon the current approach to disrupting perpetrators of serious violence and criminal exploitation
- To develop a sustainable Bedfordshire Violence and Exploitation Reduction Partnership, building on the existing CCE, MAGPan (Multi-Gang Panel) and SV Panel Partnerships
- To develop and deliver a multi-agency and community prevention and early intervention offer for children and young people who are at risk of serious violence criminal exploitation in Bedfordshire
- To develop and deliver a multi-agency and community response for children and young people between involved in serious violence and criminal exploitation in Bedfordshire
- To develop a consistent approach to data-sharing between partners

Comprises of **three unitary local councils**, and has a total population of 669,338. Central Bedfordshire has the highest population of the three councils. Bedfordshire has **more young people under 14 and in their 30s** than compared to England and also the East Region. It is **affluent overall**, but 13% of small areas are in the most deprived quintile in England, and are mainly located in Luton.

Uses **the WHO and the HO Strategy definitions**, and broadens this with an additional list of scope for other crime types (including exploitation and sexual assault).

Data used includes Police Recorded Crime data, NHS admissions data, and CSEW and survey data. They also mention the use of police.uk data – this links to PRC

Prevailing serious violence crime

- Almost **half of all violence-related hospital admissions are in Luton** (1055 for the whole of Bedfordshire: 505 from Luton, 290 from Bedford, and 260 from Central Bedfordshire)
- Crime proportions: 22% violence and sexual offences, 26% ASB, 10% vehicle crime, 8% criminal damage and arson, 8% burglary, 8% other theft; **percentage of homicide, possession of weapons etc. not presented due to small numbers**

Hotspots and hot times

- Hot spots are determined by certain crime types at different levels. Generally **wards are provided** for overall serious violence, but for drugs there is also the use of **specific roads**.
- NHS admissions shows **seasonal variation**, with July as a particularly high month. Days of the week with highest admissions are Sundays as highest (mostly from late Saturday night into Sunday morning), and then Saturdays. A&E data shows peak arrival time as 4am
- Serious violence data using Bedfordshire schools study found **peak time 3-5pm during the school term**

Priority crime types

The profile specifies **violence with injury, violence without injury, knife crime, possession of weapons offences, exploitation, sexual assault, organised crime, drug related violence and county lines**

Local community perceptions of SV

Drug dealing the most common area of concern, followed by residential burglary. Knife crime and violence was the fourth highest concern, but this was stronger in younger age groups. Gangs were also a concern, again more so with younger people. Area specific work showed that Serious Violence was the highest concern in Luton

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)



- ▶ Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a worryingly widespread form of child abuse that encompasses county lines gangs, child trafficking and modern slavery. The scope of child criminal exploitation is vast but, put simply, criminal exploitation is where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.
- ▶ The Children's Commissioner estimates that there are **at least 46,000 children** in England who are involved in gang activity, with 4,000 teenagers in London alone being victims of child criminal exploitation. The number could be even higher than this, as CCE is often a hidden form of abuse. If you have a responsibility for safeguarding children, it's essential that you know about child criminal exploitation and are able to recognise and take action when it may be occurring.



Children are being exploited by gangs involved in drug crime.
Know the signs to spot.

County lines gangs use children and vulnerable people to courier drugs and money. A young person who is involved in county lines activity might exhibit some of these signs:

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
|  Persistently going missing from school or home, or being found out-of-area |  Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones |  Exclusive receipt of texts or phone calls |  Relationships with controlling, older individuals or gang association |  Leaving home or care without explanation |
|  Suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries |  Parental concerns |  Significant decline in school performance |  Significant changes in emotional well-being | |

Further advice - www.talktofrank.com
To give information anonymously - crimestoppers-uk.org, 0800 555 111
Hampshire Constabulary - www.hampshire.police.uk

Home Office

Working in partnership with
CrimeStoppers.



YOUTH INTERVENTION SPECIALIST TEAM

VERU Youth Intervention Specialist Team



- ▶ The Youth Intervention Specialist (YIS) team is an innovative partnership initiative between the VERU, specialist providers of emotional counselling and practical support, and Bedfordshire Police. It has been designed to help and support the community, children and young people involved in and/or at risk of child criminal exploitation (CCE).
- ▶ The YIS team specialises in youth interventions. The team comes with a wealth of both lived and professional experiences, ready to support and work with victims, witnesses and those involved in criminal activities - to include our specialist area around gang associations and gang mediation

Youth Intervention Specialist (YIS) Team



- ▶ **SAFEGUARDING & EDUCATION PRACTITIONER** – Experienced safeguarding practitioner, supporting and safeguarding young people and their families
- ▶ **TRAUMA COUNSELLOR** – Personal knowledge and experience of exploitation as well as fleeing a war-torn country. Dedicated to supporting child victims of crime.
- ▶ **EX-GANG MEMBER/CONSULTANT** – Consultant to the Mayor of London on Gangs and Serious Youth Violence. Trainer and workshop facilitator. Experienced youth intervention specialists, dedicated to educating young people, communities about gang life, young peoples perception, reality and risks.
- ▶ **YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILY SUPPORT/MOTHER** - Dedicated to supporting families and individuals experiencing adversity following the loss of her son to knife crime.

Youth Intervention Specialist (YIS) Team



- ▶ Aim is to encourage the reduction of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and violent activities impacting our Bedfordshire community.
- ▶ Provide a supportive service for Educators, children, young people and their families - some of whom may be currently disengaged with services.
- ▶ Work with some young people and families who may not wish to engage with services
- ▶ Ensure that the community knows that there is a supplementary support service available for them, and anyone they are concerned about

Youth Intervention Specialist (YIS) Team



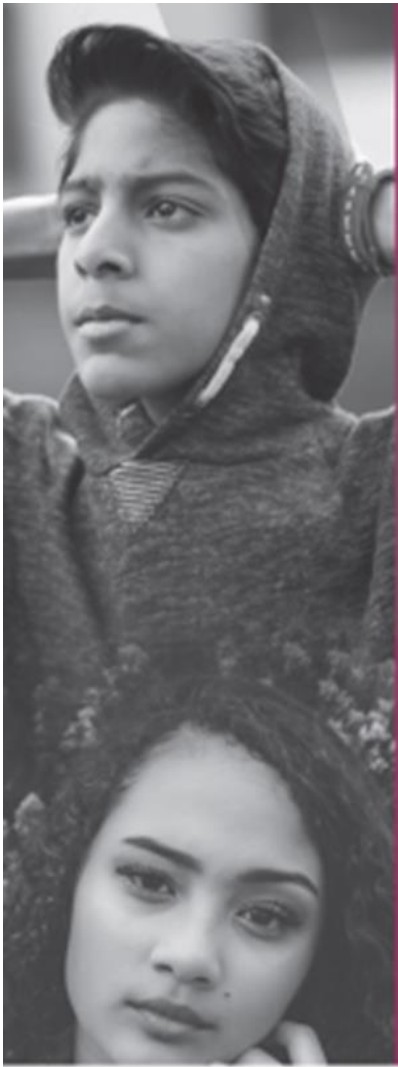
The service offered includes;

- ▶ 1-2-1 Targeted Support
- ▶ Specialist Counsellor to the VERU & Therapeutic Service
- ▶ Group Advisory Sessions
- ▶ Support for School Inclusion Units & Alternative Provisions
- ▶ County Lines Awareness
- ▶ Gang Intervention
- ▶ Personal Safety Planning
- ▶ Family Support
- ▶ Multi-Agency Support/Signposting
- ▶ Mediation/Community Resolution
- ▶ Practitioners Workshops/Talks & Training
- ▶ Community Talks
- ▶ Educational Workshops/Talks & Assembly's

Our Community Projects

Year 2020 – 73 VERU funded community projects.

- ▶ Main VERU Fund
- ▶ Town and Parish Council Fund
- ▶ Micro Charities Fund



Creating a network to tackle the root causes of violence and end exploitation of our children and young people



VERU in View

VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION REDUCTION UNIT

BEDFORDSHIRE

In house Youth Intervention Specialist (YIS) Team
YIS Project Initiative – an innovative partnership initiative between the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU), Bedfordshire police and specialist providers of emotional counselling and practical support.

Team Coordinator
Experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead. A background in building strong relationships with diverse multi-cultural groups. Experience in team leadership and training, events and workshop management. As well as educational and Alternative Provision experience. Extensive knowledge around school exclusion processes and a voluntary member of a number of community cohesion panels.

Ex-gang member
dedicated to educating young people about the dangers of gang involvement and negative life impacts.

5 Workers with lived experience
A variety of spoken languages including: English, French, Yoruba, GA-Ghana, Bengali, and Croatian (Croatian covers 4x countries - Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro & Slovenia)

Professional
with personal experience of sexual exploitation and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)

Trauma counsellor
with personal knowledge and experience of exploitation as well as fleeing a war torn country

Mother
who lost her son to knife crime and is now dedicated to supporting families and individuals experiencing adversity.

MARY SEACOLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Information Against Exploitation

Hear Our Voice



The VERU Youth Voice (VYV) Project A Bi-Weekly Podcast & Monthly Radio Show

Capturing the voice's of young people across Bedfordshire.
Live interviews with the Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit
(VERU), Beds Police & Community Representatives!



COMPETITION TIME!

ARE YOU CREATIVE? CAN YOU DESIGN A LOGO? HAVE
YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO CREATE A JINGLE?

If you got what it takes & want to find out more, go to
your student hub for more information. The creator of
the logo/jingle will win a Amazon voucher & receive a
certificate!

Your college will also receive a certificate & will featured
in our VERU in View monthly newsletter.

In summary - VERU

- A Bedfordshire-wide approach to reducing violence
- A specialist unit which brings together different organisations including police, local government, health, community leaders and other key partners
- Allowing us to work much closer with partners in a 'public health' approach to preventing gun and knife crime
- With a focus on a specific population, using shared data to identify Inequalities – for example
- Being for and delivered with communities, giving them voice, especially for young people

Not being constrained by organisational or professional boundaries. Offering short and long-term solutions, and being evidence based.

Launching Soon – **VERU VILLAGE** *(A Community & Youth Led Initiative)*



The VERU Village is primarily a place of Safety and Inclusion. Inspired by the old African proverb, **“It takes a village to raise a child”** – The VERU Village has been established to house a collection of supportive, early intervention and diversionary hubs across Bedfordshire. Hubs which support countywide activities and initiatives, designed to tackle serious youth violence and CCE.-We have created these HUB/HUTs to ensure that support and guidance can be easily accessible by our Bedfordshire residents and practitioners alike.

The Concept

The VERU Village is community and young person led initiative – with the support and provision of free training from VERU employees and partners.

All Bedfordshire residents and workers are welcomed to become members of VERU Village. Where they will help to raise awareness of available projects and supportive services.

Provide community support, using a multi-agency approach to safeguarding all young and vulnerable people throughout Bedfordshire

– **Remember it takes a Village to raise a child!**

THE HUBS/HUTS



- ❖ Education provision contacts
- ❖ Training & workshop opportunities
- ❖ Learning mentors and coaches

THE HUBS/HUTS



- ❖ Support & Online resources for parents & carers
- ❖ M.A.R.J – **M**others **A**greeing to **R**estorative **J**ustice
- ❖ Parents forums/webinars/conference

THE HUBS/HUTS



- ❖ A HUB for everyone in the village to engage in a safe environment sharing knowledge, and support for those who require specialist support.

THE HUBS/HUTS



- ❖ Multi-Faith Network
- ❖ Support & Guidance for those of faith & those with non-religious beliefs
- ❖ Promotion of events/activities

THE HUBS/HUTS



- ❖ Agencies/organisations who provide interactive early intervention, prevention and diversionary activities for children and young people and the community
- ❖ List of VERU Funded projects/ with contacts
- ❖ VERU Village led events and activities

THE HUBS/HUTS



- ❖ Prevention, Diversionary and Rehabilitative training and opportunities for the frontline
- ❖ Medical, prison, police, fire, ambulance, teaching staff,

Thank You!

Bedfordshire's Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit



VERU Contact Information



- ▶ VERU@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk
- ▶ VERU in View – newsletter
- ▶ <https://bedsveru.org/>
- ▶ Twitter: @BedsVERU