Rescue and Response County Lines Project

Supporting young Londoners affected by county lines exploitation

Strategic Assessment (August) 2019

Protective Marking	OFFICIAL
Referral Date Parameters	01/09/2018 – 30/06/2019
Research Date Parameters	01/01/2018 – 31/03/2019
Research Criteria	Data extracted from the R&R Referral Platform EC Connect.
	Research carried out on the MPS intelligence system.
	Information obtained from R&R service providers and project co-ordinators regarding themes observed and insights gained during the project's period of operation.
Authors	Rescue and Response Project Analysts
Date Created	August 2019
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Contact	Operational Manager Megan Hatton, Megan.Hatton@brent.gov.uk

Foreword

This document has been created in order to review the first year of the Rescue and Response County Lines Project, and to share the findings identified through the initial work undertaken during this time. This document provides an early understanding of county lines exploitation, and of the reach and type of county lines activity that London individuals are experiencing.

The findings laid out in this document have been limited through the lack of data access available to Rescue and Response Analysts, and through the general lack of data capture relating to county lines activity. As a result, some findings are based on limited or anecdotal information, and during the project's second year these findings will be developed further.

Contents

Year 1: Project Key Findings

568 young people were referred to the Rescue and Response (R&R) project during year 1, the majority aged 15 to 18 years old (70%), and male (83%).
The main referring agencies were Children's Social Care (CSC) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). In addition, the R&R Outreach Team lead by St Giles Trust (SGT) conducted **11 'Rescues'** of young people from the counties following arrest, ensuring their safe return home and the provision of suitable ongoing support.

53% of young people allocated to one of the R&R service providers (130 of 243 allocated) have engaged with their caseworker. Of those young people that have had their R&R case closed following engagement, **63% reported a reduction in county lines involvement** and harm (22 young people). Our evidence shows however, that despite young people being willing to engage and leave exploitation, external factors relating to gang pressure are often the biggest challenge to overcome and can supersede the progress they make through working with the R&R project. In addition, the **re-housing** of young people and the **debt bondage** that young people become trapped in are significant challenges faced by them and the professionals trying to help them.

Our evidence indicates the factor that puts young people most at risk of county lines exploitation is the association with someone that is already involved; whether that be directly through association with a gang, or indirectly through a friend of a friend. In addition, access to **social media is also a key facilitator of grooming and recruitment** onto county lines. Snapchat and Instagram are being used by networks to advertise for county lines jobs and for **money laundering**. The latter is referred to as 'squares' and 'deets', with young people providing networks with their bank card and account details in exchange for money.

Young people are being **exploited from a young age**, with the youngest person identified by R&R aged 11 years old. Networks look to exploit certain circumstances in a young person's life, including poverty, family breakdown, exclusion from school, drug addiction and learning difficulties. Networks use several methods to groom young people and vulnerable adults, often through the **offer of money or drugs**, and often through the use of other young people. **People are approached in venues** are such as schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), youth clubs and food outlets, and promised a lifestyle that motivates them.

Young people reported a range of different experiences working on a county line. Young people engaging with R&R service providers show **signs of trauma and fear**, and their experiences of working on a county line involve a high level of harm. There are also young people that don't want to engage with R&R; this may be because they are making a lot of money, or because they fear reprisal from the network. It has been reported to the R&R services that **many young people do not recognise themselves as victims** and are unaware of the grooming methods used by networks to recruit them.

Networks are continually adapting the way in which they operate their county lines in order to avoid detection. This includes developed ways of concealing items during transport, for example the use of empty games console shells, the strapping of cash and drugs to peoples' bodies and the use of female passengers in cars to avoid suspicion. Networks have also developed ways to **avoid triggering missing episodes and truancy**, which means that it is becoming harder for families and professionals to spot the indicators of county lines activity. In addition, networks are **reportedly recruiting differently,** by targeting young people from London who fit the demographics of the county town, in order to avoid unwanted police attention.

Year 1: Project Key Findings

In addition to the referrals received, research conducted by **R&R analysts identified a wider set of individuals linked** (or suspected to be linked) to county lines activity, ranging in age from 11 years old up to 62. The total number of London based individuals identified for the period of January 2018 to April 2019 is **4,013**, with 83% linked to county lines activity, and 17% suspected to be linked. The most prominent London boroughs for these individuals have been identified as **Lambeth, Newham and Croydon**, each home to between 200 and 300 individuals linked (or suspected to be linked) to county lines activity. **Lambeth and Newham are also the top referring boroughs**, with each making 37 referrals into the R&R project during year 1. Overall, **South and East London account for the majority** of the top boroughs for county lines individuals, and several of them have dedicated units focussing on county lines activity.

The most prominent counties for London individuals linked (or suspected to be linked) to county lines have been identified as **Norfolk, Hampshire and Essex**. Generally, with the exception of Norfolk, the counties based closest to London are most heavily linked to R&R individuals, with the average distance travelled to the top 10 county towns being 69 miles. The most prominent towns of **Norwich, Brighton and Portsmouth** directly correlate with the top counties identified, and generally **coastal towns** account for nearly half of all town links recorded for individuals identified by R&R. This is disproportionate to the number of coastal towns named, indicating coastal towns to be a preferred location for county lines activity. The same is true for **university towns**, accounting for nearly 80% of all town links recorded.

We found networks are exploiting the vast National travel links afforded in London in order to transport drugs, cash and people between London and the counties. They are **using central train stations to travel on National Rail lines**, and further to this, correlation is seen for outer boroughs between their top counties and their local rail stations. There is evidence of **airports being used** by young people, in particular Heathrow and Gatwick, to utilise National Rail and National Express links. Airports are also noteworthy in relation to the use of **hire cars**, with networks reportedly taking advantage of cheaper rental rates. The use of hire cars allows a regular change of vehicle, and reduces the risk of unwanted police attention. Other transport methods include the use of **taxis**, and the **use of vulnerable adults as drivers.**

London is known as an exporter of county lines, with drugs and young people being transported out to the counties, but some of our county lines research highlights that a small number of young people are also **travelling to London** from the counties to sell drugs for networks **locally in the London area**.

The **recording of county lines involvement is inconsistent** and this leads to incomplete reporting of the issue and its reach. This is in part due to county lines not being flagged as such, and in part due to confusion between local and county drug lines. In addition, the significant **knowledge held by frontline professionals is not being captured** to the extent that it could be, and this further contributes to the intelligence gap. As a result, the number of London based individuals identified by R&R as being involved in county lines activity is believed to be a **significant under-representation.**

Whilst working within the London boroughs and liaising with the relevant professional teams there has been a **noticeable difference observed in the way each borough is set-up to identify and support young people**. This is also true for the systems being used and the level of local provision available. This has provided a challenge for R&R coordinators in finding alternative signposting routes and in co-ordinating support. ECINS was implemented to help combat this issue however has been **underused** in year 1.
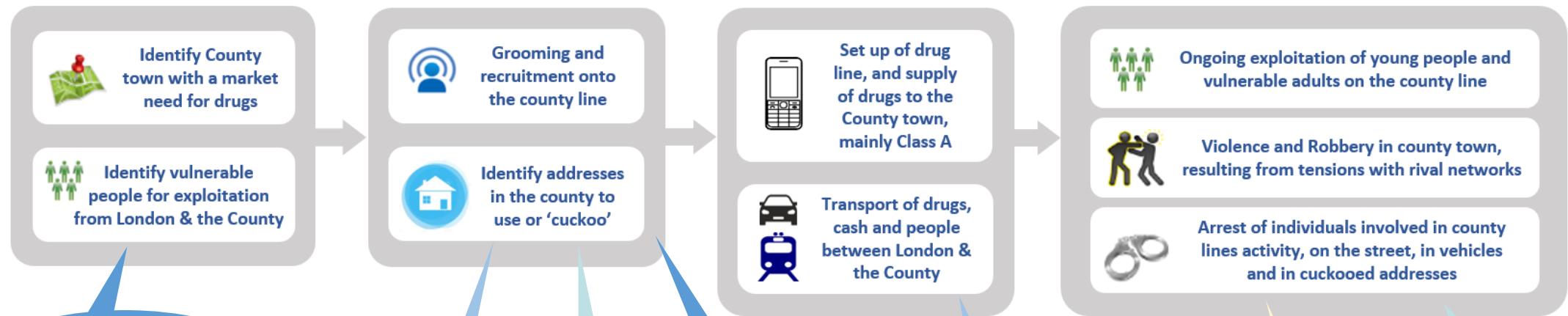
What is a County Line?

> " *County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons* "
>
> - UK Government

Identify County town with a market need for drugs

Identify vulnerable people for exploitation from London & the County

Grooming and recruitment onto the county line

Identify addresses in the county to use or 'cuckoo'

Set up of drug line, and supply of drugs to the County town, mainly Class A

Transport of drugs, cash and people between London & the County

Ongoing exploitation of young people and vulnerable adults on the county line

Violence and Robbery in county town, resulting from tensions with rival networks

Arrest of individuals involved in county lines activity, on the street, in vehicles and in cuckooed addresses

As well as exploiting London individuals, networks are believed to be using people from the county in order to exploit local knowledge and associations. They are also reportedly using people from London that specifically fit the demographics of the county town.

Young people refer to county lines activity as 'going country', 'cunch', 'going OT', 'out there' and 'O'.

'Cuckooing' refers to the takeover of a vulnerable person's address, usually a drug user, for the purpose of drug supply. These addresses are also referred to as 'traphouses' or bandos', and young people suffer trauma whilst kept in them.

Venues such as hotels, B&Bs & Air BnBs are being used.

Access to social media, and association with someone linked to county lines activity, are two key factors facilitating grooming and recruitment onto county lines.

Young people go missing for differing periods of time, some spanning weeks and some only a day, with 'daytrippers' and 'commuting' referring to a young person travelling to and back from a county in one day, and 'holiday' referring to a weekend trip.

The loss of drugs and/or cash usually leads to young people falling victim to debt bondage which is often enforced by the gang through forced labour on the county line.

Due to the risk of violence, young people will carry weapons for their protection.

What are the Indicators of County Lines Activity?

The experiences of young people on county lines varies, and as a result so do the indicators. This may be dependent on the way the network operates, or the way in which the young person is linked to the network, for example, whether they're actually a member of the gang, a partner of someone in the gang or linked to the gang through a sibling. These factors may lead to different working roles on a county line and/or preferential treatment.

Changes to the Young Person's Routine

- **Missing episodes**. However, the movement towards 'commuting' to and from a county in one day means there will not always be missing episodes, especially if the young person is NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

- **Truancy.** However, young people that are 'daytripping' across a weekend will not be reported as truant

- **Missed appointments** with professionals working with the young person. However, this will not always be the case whilst networks are reportedly ensuring that young people work for them around these appointments so as not to attract attention

- Change in their **friendship** group

- An increase in **visitors** or vehicles/taxis to the young person's address

Changes to the Young Person

- **Change in mood** and a reduced interest in school aspirations

- **Unexplained injuries**. Some boroughs have reported the slashing of young people's hands by networks. In addition, the 'cutting' of drugs can cause small cuts across young people's hands

- **Substance misuse**. With young people being offered cheap or free drugs by networks during the grooming process

- **Decrease in personal hygiene**. Some young people return from the counties unwashed and unkempt following time spent in traphouses

Many indicators for county lines activity also correlate with that seen for young people involved in local drug supply in London. This can be a precursor to county lines activity, with information suggesting some networks test young people at a local level before sending them to work in a county.

Items found on the Young Person

- **Drugs**, **cash** or **phones** found stored within their room or belongings
- **New unaffordable items**, such as phones and clothing. This is not always the case however, or potentially only short lived, with many young people **not benefitting** financially from county lines exploitation
- **Possession of unexplained items** such as railway tickets, cash deposit receipts or other receipts from county shops & food outlets
- **Possession of drug paraphernalia** including Vaseline, digital scales, snap bags and condoms

Project Overview: Aims and Objectives

It was identified in 2017 that nearly a third of 'County Lines' originate in London, making London the major exporter of this high harm model of drug distribution. County Lines drive gang related violent crime, criminal exploitation of young people and exploitation of vulnerable adults in London and beyond. MOPAC recognised London's leading role in tackling County Lines exploitation and, through London Crime Prevention Funding, has funded the Rescue & Response Project to put in place a comprehensive programme of work to better understand, target and respond to County Lines. The project has been funded for 3 years, to run from 2018 to 2021, and is led by a coalition of London boroughs with additional support from MPS Special Commands and the Voluntary Sector. The project model consists of three key functions that aim to deliver the objectives set out.

(1) Analytical Function
Intelligence Development

Research and analysis provided by four Intelligence Analysts assigned by London quadrant to North, East, West and South:

- Ongoing **identification** of vulnerable and exploited young people
- **Development** of the London county lines intelligence picture
- The development of our understanding of the various **cross cutting themes** and trends impacting on young people

(2) Support Function
Rescue and Response

Rescue and Response has three key Service Delivery partners, providing tailored support to the young people referred into the project:

- **St Giles Trust:** Provides one-to-one support to young men; manages an out of hours phone support service; and operates an outreach 'rescue' team
- **Abianda:** Provides one-to-one support to young women
- **Safer London:** Provides one-to-one support to young people through the LGE project

(3) Training Function
Breaking the Cycle

The project aims to ensure there is continual learning and that this is used to effect positive change:

- To provide **training to professionals**, to ensure that county lines exploitation and its **indicators** are recognised and reported effectively
- To develop and **share good practice** based on experiential learning
- Engagement with local and national politicians, and with front line expertise to **help shape policy and legislative change**

Rescue & Response Referral Criteria

Rescue and Response provide support to any London based young person aged up to and including 25 years that is impacted by any of the following:

- Known, or suspected, involvement in county line activity
- Known or suspected association with others who are involved in county line activity or being coerced and controlled
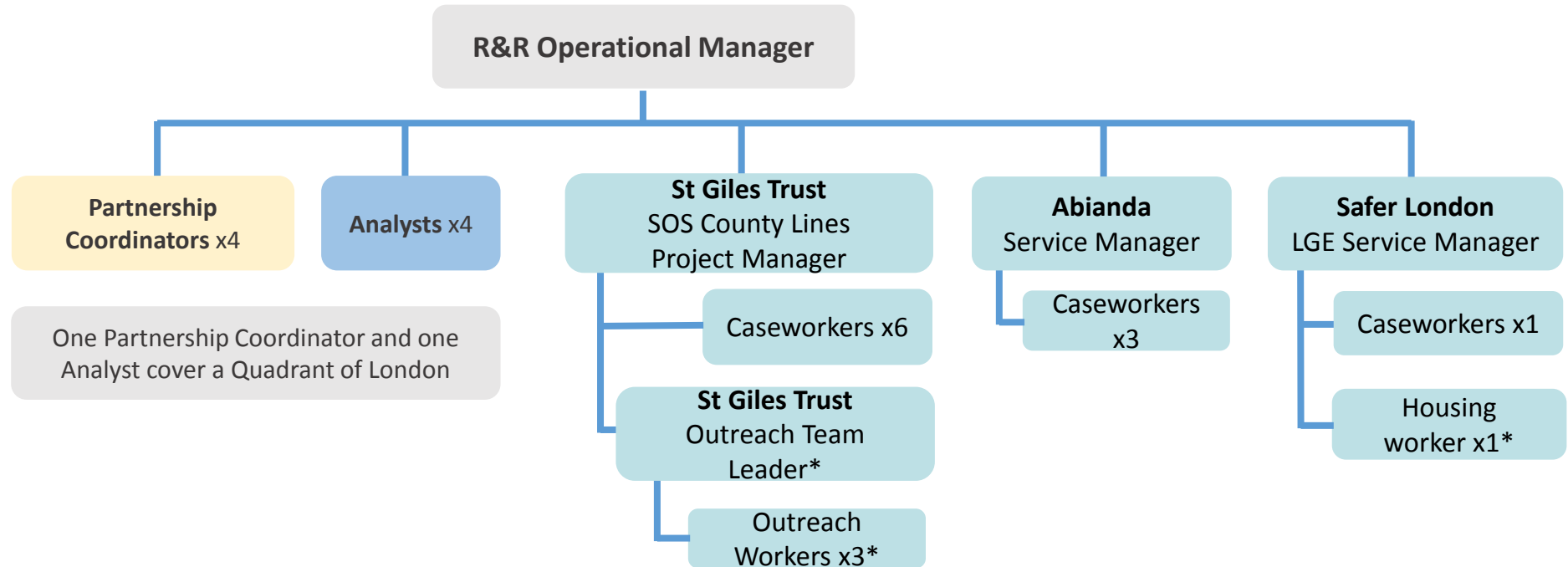
- Known, or suspected, experiences of CSE, Sexual violence coercion, control or victimisation in the context of county line and/ or gang activity
- Multiple missing episodes suspected to be linked to any of the above

Project Overview: Rescue and Response Structure

OFFICIAL

R&R Operational Manager

Empowering Communities
Referral Dashboard (EC Connect) and Case Management System (ECINS) Partner

University of Bedfordshire
Project Evaluation Partner

AVA
Open Source Research Partner

Partnership Coordinators x4

Analysts x4

One Partnership Coordinator and one Analyst cover a Quadrant of London

St Giles Trust
SOS County Lines Project Manager

Caseworkers x6

St Giles Trust
Outreach Team Leader*

Outreach Workers x3*

Abianda
Service Manager

Caseworkers x3

Safer London
LGE Service Manager

Caseworkers x1

Housing worker x1*

*Funded until March 2020

Rescue & Response works collaboratively with various external partners, and has raised awareness of the project in organisations across London and beyond

Local Authority

Community safety units (CSUs) Children Services (CIN, LAC & Leaving care teams), Youth Offending Services (YOS) Multi-agency panels including MASE and vulnerable adolescent, head teachers and PRUs

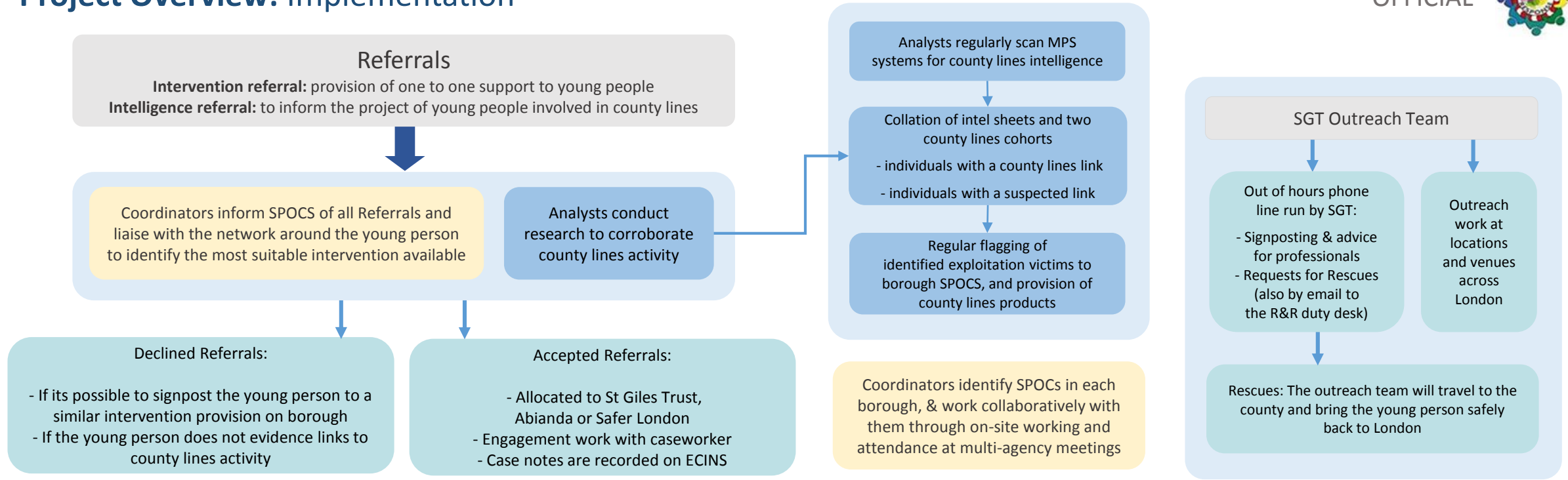## Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice

Metropolitan Police Service (Intelligence units, Sexual Exploitation Teams, Gang Units, Missing Teams, Trident Partnership) British Transport Police, ROCUs, NCA National County Lines Coordination Centre, Probation and CRC teams
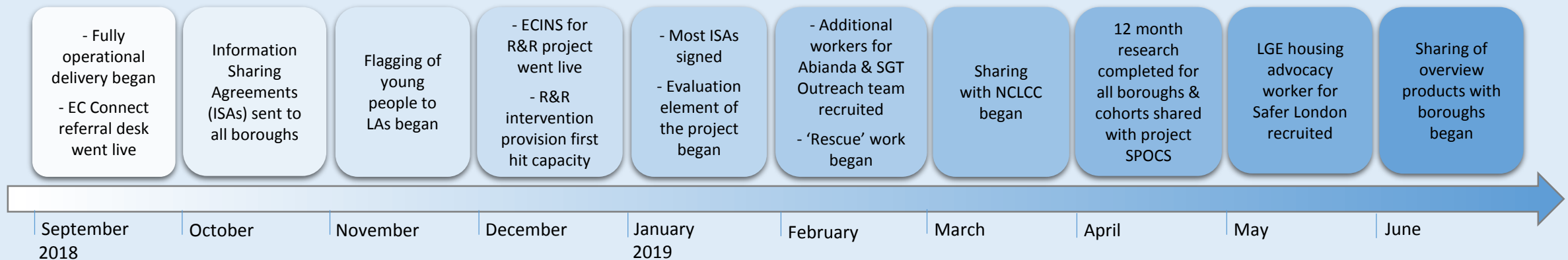
Other Organisations

The Children's Society Centre Point, Redthread National Youth Advocacy Service The Somali Foundation NSPCC, Footsteps NHS

Project Overview: Implementation

Referrals

Intervention referral: provision of one to one support to young people
Intelligence referral: to inform the project of young people involved in county lines

Coordinators inform SPOCS of all Referrals and liaise with the network around the young person to identify the most suitable intervention available

Analysts conduct research to corroborate county lines activity

Analysts regularly scan MPS systems for county lines intelligence

Collation of intel sheets and two county lines cohorts
- individuals with a county lines link
- individuals with a suspected link

Regular flagging of identified exploitation victims to borough SPOCS, and provision of county lines products

SGT Outreach Team

Out of hours phone line run by SGT:
- Signposting & advice for professionals
- Requests for Rescues (also by email to the R&R duty desk)

Outreach work at locations and venues across London

Rescues: The outreach team will travel to the county and bring the young person safely back to London

Declined Referrals:

- If its possible to signpost the young person to a similar intervention provision on borough
- If the young person does not evidence links to county lines activity

Accepted Referrals:

- Allocated to St Giles Trust, Abianda or Safer London
- Engagement work with caseworker
- Case notes are recorded on ECINS

Coordinators identify SPOCs in each borough, & work collaboratively with them through on-site working and attendance at multi-agency meetings

Rescue and Response Implementation Timeline

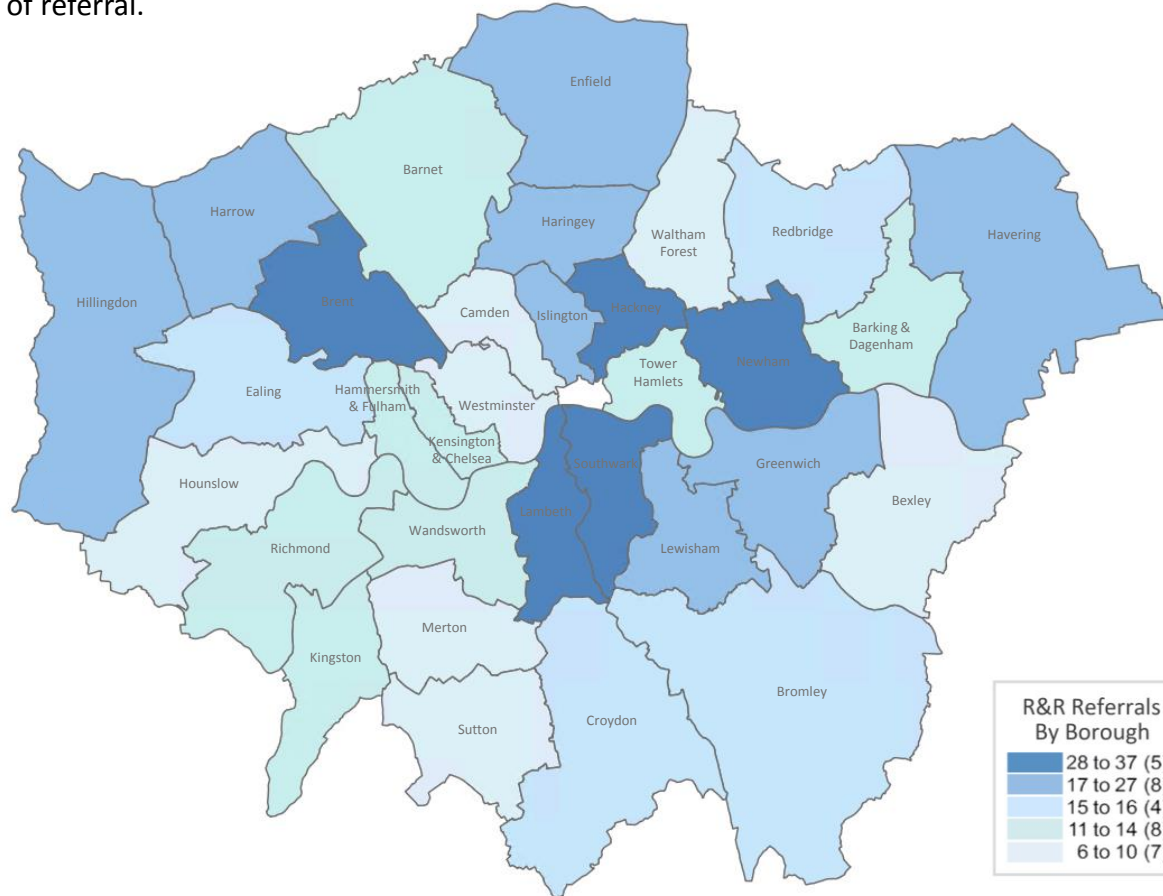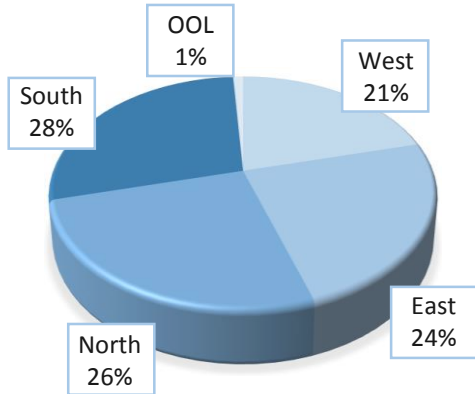| September 2018	October	November	December	January 2019	February	March	April	May	June
- Fully operational delivery began - EC Connect referral desk went live	Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs) sent to all boroughs	Flagging of young people to LAs began	- ECINS for R&R project went live - R&R intervention provision first hit capacity	- Most ISAs signed - Evaluation element of the project began	- Additional workers for Abianda & SGT Outreach team recruited - 'Rescue' work began	Sharing with NCLCC began	12 month research completed for all boroughs & cohorts shared with project SPOCS	LGE housing advocacy worker for Safer London recruited	Sharing of overview products with boroughs began

Project Referrals: Borough Breakdown and Demographics

A total of 589 referrals were received by the Rescue and Response Project from June 2018 to June 2019. There were a small number of duplicate referrals, with some young people being referred in by two separate agencies. As such, across the 589 referrals were 568 young people. These are represented below, according to the borough that held statutory responsibility for them at the time of referral.

The top boroughs were Brent (North), Lambeth (South) and Newham (East), with each of these LAs holding statutory responsibility for 37 young people

Quadrant	No. of Referrals
South	160
North	148
East	138
West	116
Out of London	6
Total	568

The young people referred to the project have ranged in age from 12 years old up to the age of 24, with a predominant age range of 15 to 18 years (70%). The majority of referrals have been male (83%). 20% had LAC status at time of referral.*
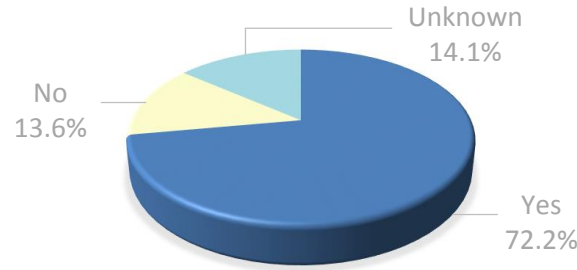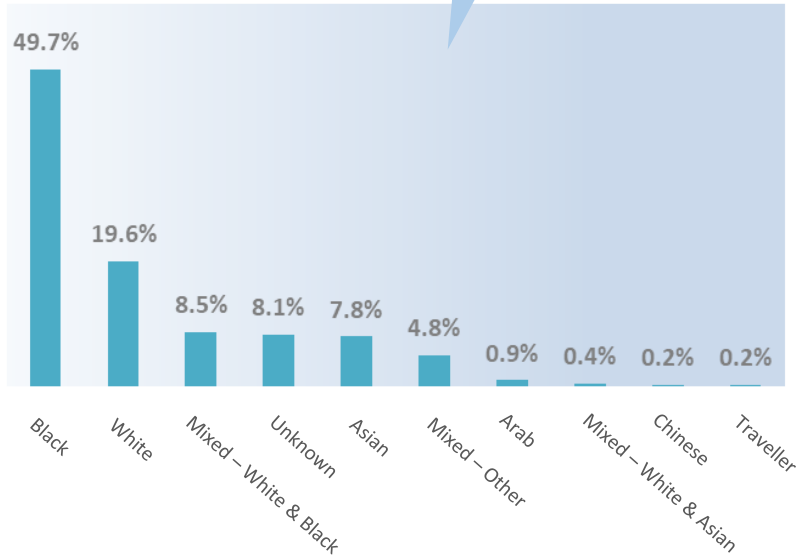
*See Appendix 1 for further breakdown

Borough	No. of Referrals
Brent	37
Lambeth	37
Newham	37
Southwark	35
Hackney	28
Enfield	25
Haringey	25
Lewisham	25
Havering	23
Islington	22
Harrow	18
Hillingdon	18
Greenwich	17
Ealing	16
Bromley	15
Croydon	15
Redbridge	15
Barnet	14
Tower Hamlets	14
Kingston Upon Thames	13
Richmond Upon Thames	13
Hammersmith and Fulham	12
Kensington and Chelsea	12
Barking and Dagenham	11
Wandsworth	11
Bexley	8
Camden	8
Hounslow	8
Sutton	8
Waltham Forest	8
Westminster	8
Merton	6
Out of London (not mapped)	6

R&R Referrals By Borough

28 to 37 (5)
17 to 27 (8)
15 to 16 (4)
11 to 14 (8)
6 to 10 (7)

Pie chart:
OOL 1%
West 21%
South 28%
North 26%
East 24%

Project Referrals: Demographics

Additional demographic information is recorded at point of R&R referral by the referrer, and the accuracy and availability of this information is dependent on what information may or may not be known to them at the time of referral. As such, the breakdowns shown are a guide only, and will be developed in Year 2 through further information gathering.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	%
Black	49.7%
White	19.6%
Mixed – White & Black	8.5%
Unknown	8.1%
Asian	7.8%
Mixed – Other	4.8%
Arab	0.9%
Mixed – White & Asian	0.4%
Chinese	0.2%
Traveller	0.2%

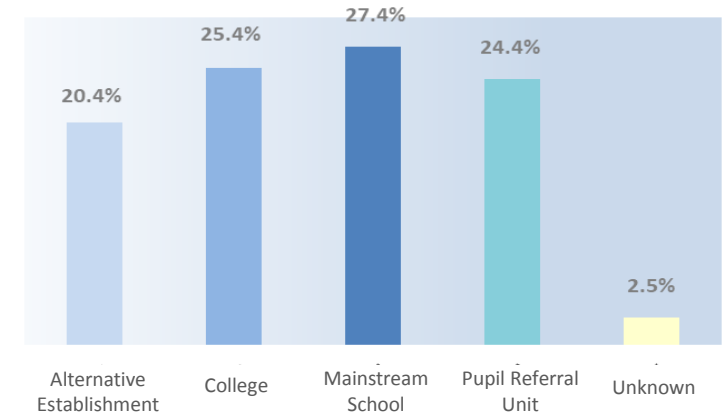Unknown 14.1%
No 13.6%
Yes 72.2%

72.2% of young people had at least one reported missing episode believed to be linked to county lines prior to referral.

Of this 72.2%, the number of days missing was recorded for 37% of these young people; the most common being 1 day (25 young people), followed by 2 days (20). Overall, 1 to 7 days was the most common period of time spent missing, but ranged up to 6 months.

Missing Episodes

School Attendance

42.8% of school aged young people were not in education at the time of referral.* Of those that were in education, their attendance at a mainstream school, college or PRU was a close split.

Attendance	%
Alternative Establishment	20.4%
College	25.4%
Mainstream School	27.4%
Pupil Referral Unit	24.4%
Unknown	2.5%

Social Care Status

58.3% of young people had a Social Care status at time of Referral (LAC, CIN or CP)*

Disability

10.2% of young people had at least 1 disability at time of Referral. The most common reported was ADHD (25 young people), followed by Autism (14) and learning difficulties (13)

Gang Association

36.4% of young people had a Gang link recorded by the referrer at time of Referral

Child Sexual Exploitation

49.8% of young people had a known or suspected experience of CSE or sexual violence at time of Referral
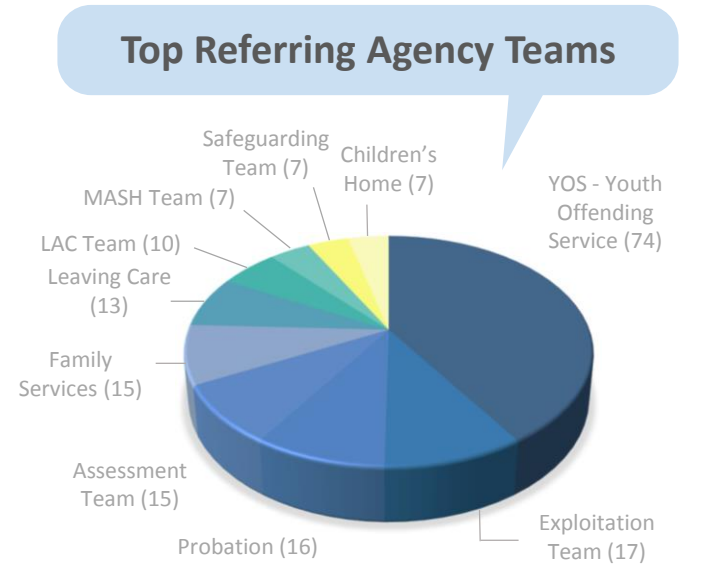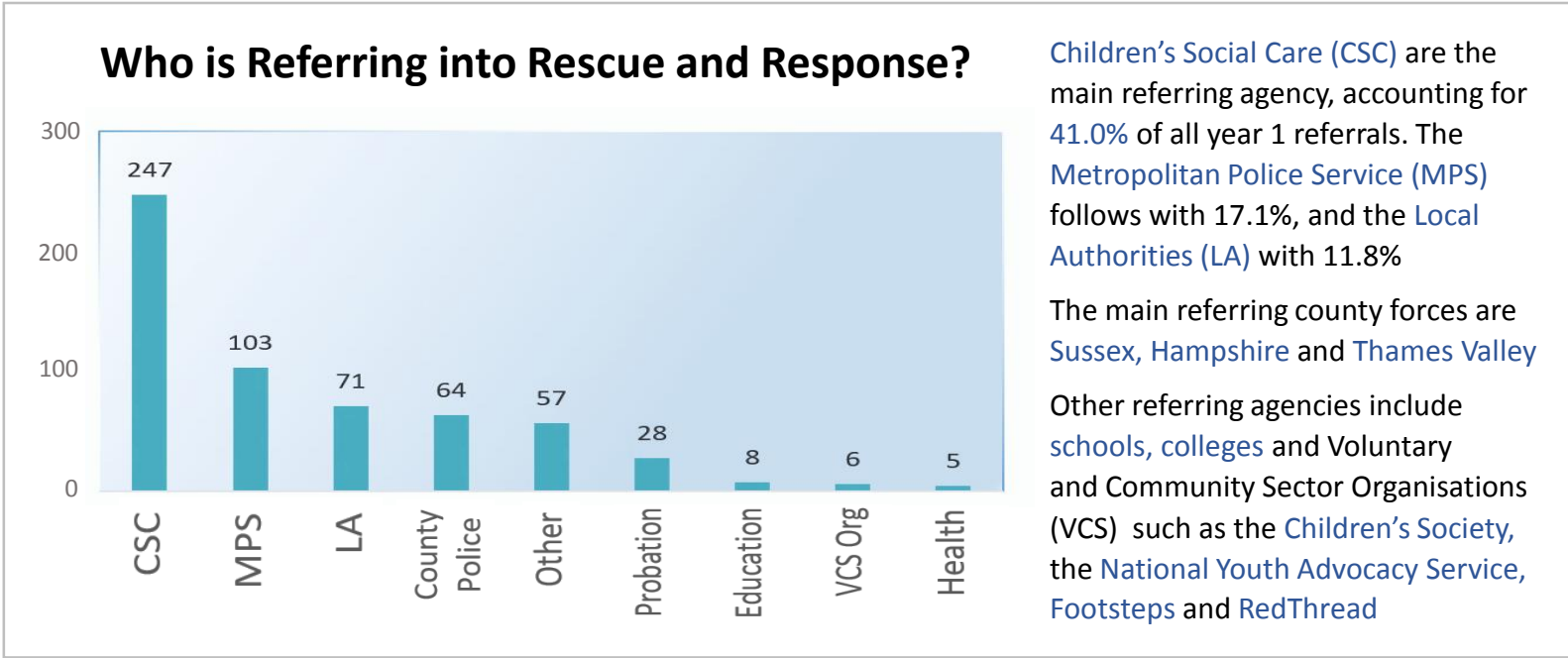
*See Appendix 1 for further breakdown

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The 589 referrals received by the project during year 1 have been received from a variety of agencies and project partners, not only from within London but also from the counties. Joint working is continually taking place between the referring agency and the Rescue and Response project, from point of referral all the way through to case allocation and engagement. This ensures that the network of professionals surrounding each young person is working collaboratively, and the appropriate level of support is provided.

Who is Referring into Rescue and Response?

Bar chart values:
- CSC: 247
- MPS: 103
- LA: 71
- County Police: 64
- Other: 57
- Probation: 28
- Education: 8
- VCS Org: 6
- Health: 5

Children's Social Care (CSC) are the main referring agency, accounting for 41.0% of all year 1 referrals. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) follows with 17.1%, and the Local Authorities (LA) with 11.8%

The main referring county forces are Sussex, Hampshire and Thames Valley

Other referring agencies include schools, colleges and Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCS) such as the Children's Society, the National Youth Advocacy Service, Footsteps and RedThread

Top Referring Agency Teams

Pie chart labels:
- Safeguarding Team (7)
- Children's Home (7)
- MASH Team (7)
- LAC Team (10)
- Leaving Care (13)
- Family Services (15)
- Assessment Team (15)
- Probation (16)
- Exploitation Team (17)
- YOS - Youth Offending Service (74)

An agency 'team name' was provided in 57% of referrals. The main referring team was the YOS (12.6% of all cases)

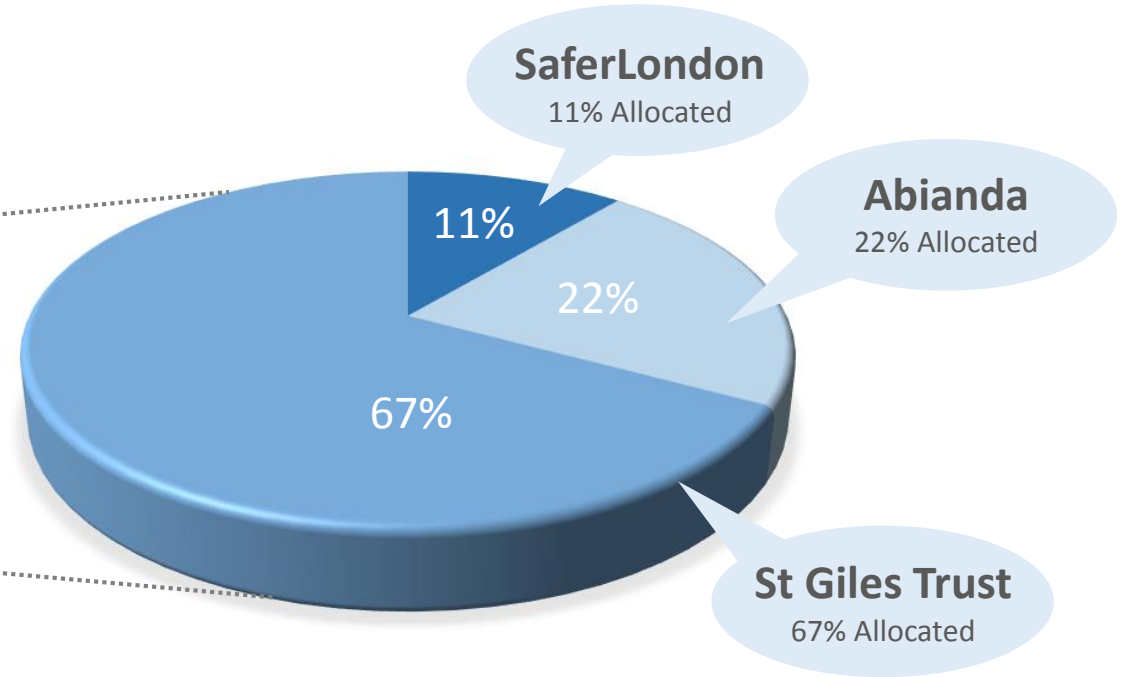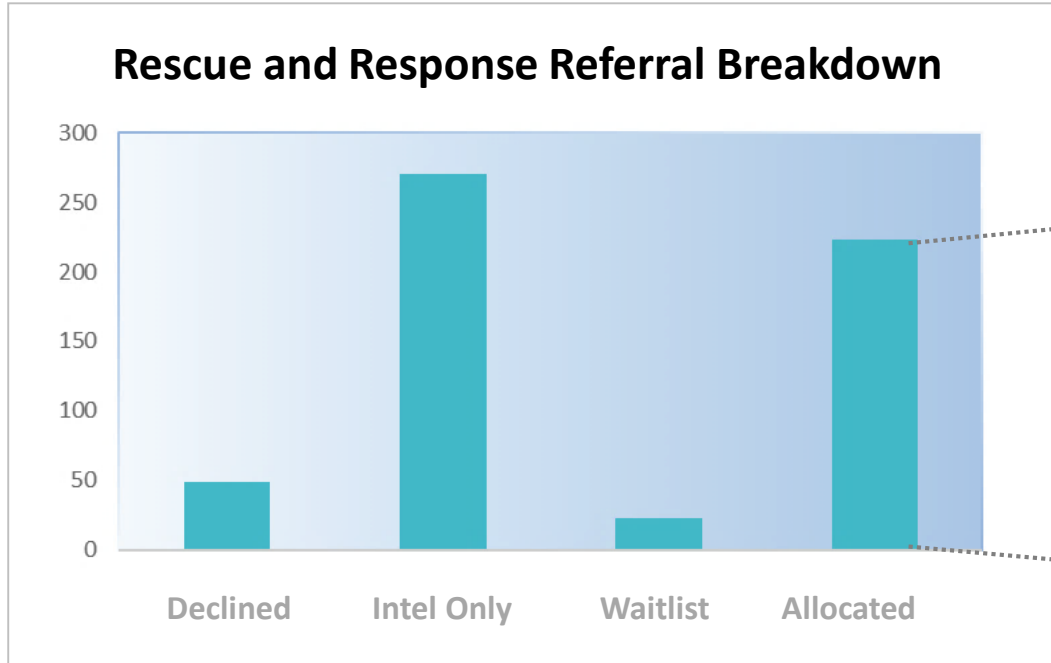## R&R Case Study: Intervention Referral received from Hampshire Police

*In 2019 **Hampshire police** made an **intervention referral** into R&R following the arrest of a 15 year old boy for **PWITS**. The R&R analyst completed **intelligence checks** and identified that this young man was believed to be working on a county line to help **pay off a friend's debt**. The **risk** associated with debt bondage was **flagged** to the coordinator, as were concerns regarding his own debt that likely resulted from arrest. The R&R coordinator has then **bridged the gap** between Hampshire police and the young man's local borough SPOCs, by providing; the **circumstances of arrest**, the **significant risks** posed to him, the **consent** he provided to engage, and the details of the **relevant SPOCs** involved in the young man's investigation, to enable an **ongoing dialogue** between borough professionals and Hampshire police.*

*During this process the coordinator identified available **local provision** and, as a result, the young man was successfully **signposted** for intervention with the local **support service** with which he is now **engaging well**. The young man was also added to the LAs **Multi Agency Panel Meeting**, ensuring that his progress is **regularly reviewed** by the wider **network of professionals** involved.*

Project Referrals: Referral Breakdown and Engagement

Of the 568 young people referred to Rescue and Response 42.8% were Intervention referrals allocated to one of the project's three service providers and this brought the project to full capacity during December 2018 of year 1. Of the remaining cases, the majority were submitted as Intelligence Only referrals. In addition, a small number of referrals were declined due to not meeting the project's criteria and a smaller number were added to the R&R waitlist. When a young person is referred into the project they are signposted at every opportunity by R&R coordinators to local provision, ensuring that those available interventions are being utilised wherever possible to provide appropriate support.

Rescue and Response Referral Breakdown

(Bar chart, vertical axis 0 to 300)
- Declined
- Intel Only
- Waitlist
- Allocated

SaferLondon
11% Allocated

Abianda
22% Allocated

St Giles Trust
67% Allocated

Pie chart: 11%, 22%, 67%

53% Engagement Rate*

Three or more sessions with an R&R caseworker

63% Reduction in County Lines Involvement and Harm following R&R case closure

67 Young People Signposted to local provision

44 Young People Supported through an NRM process

R&R SGT have been allocated 167 cases, with 90 of these young males engaging during year 1 (54%). In the context of county lines it can take time to engage with a young person suffering criminal exploitation for a multitude of reasons, including missing episodes and fear of reprisal.

The R&R SGT Outreach team work in youth exploitation hotspots identified through police and local intelligence, engaging with young people who are on the cusp of involvement in county lines. This can be on the streets, based in youth provision or in cafes and shopping centres, and will also lead to ongoing one on one engagement.

The R&R SGT Outreach team completed 11 Rescues of young people from the counties from January to June 2019. Caseworkers liaise with local authorities, transport young people home, and complete follow up visits to carry out an assessment. They ensure appropriate support is then offered moving forward, by R&R or local provisions. This process has ensured a safe return home and provided an opportunity to support/engage young people following what has likely been a traumatic experience.

R&R SGT targets for year 2 of the project include the training of 300 frontline professionals; contextual safeguarding training with the University of Bedfordshire; case-work of 129 young people, TIP (Trauma Informed Practice and the National Referral Mechanism); increase in use of the out of hours service.

11 Rescues by R&R Outreach

Sussex (5), Suffolk (2), Norfolk (1), Cambridgeshire (1), Dorset (1), Wales (1)

40 front line staff trained by R&R SGT

R&R Case Study

St Giles Trust

" Both professionals and the family have extended their gratitude and thanks on more than one occasion. He is constantly stating that he or his parent would not be where they are without the support of the R&R project "

*A young teenage male was referred to R&R following a **county lines missing episode** that lasted several days. During this time he suffered severe **trauma** whilst kept in a **trap house**, and returned home with a stab wound.*

*One motivation for going 'country' was to **escape his home life** where he lived with an alcohol dependent parent.*

*Over the following months the young male **engaged openly** with his R&R SGT caseworker who began by sharing their **own experiences** of trap houses. The building of trust, and the ongoing work between the caseworker and the wider **network of professionals** surrounding this young male resulted in a significant **improvement** in his situation and his personal **wellbeing**.*

*He was supported by his caseworker in **reducing his cannabis** use, increasing **physical activity**, and in improving his **educational aspirations**. Working with his school the caseworker eased the pressure of GCSE's and **supported enrolment** onto an apprenticeship course.*

*The young male's **parent** also began to engage with the SGT caseworker, leading to a **supported referral** into SGTs in-house addiction support service, the **Outliers Project**.*

*Overall this young male now has more **belief** in himself and continues to make steps to achieve his goals, **free from exploitation** on county lines.**

*See Appendix 3 for Full Case Study

Project Referrals: Abianda Engagement

R&R Abianda have been allocated 46 cases, with 32 of these young women engaging during year 1, accounting for a 70% engagement rate. Caseworkers are providing tailored support with significant understanding of the specific risks and challenges faced by young women exploited on county lines. Caseworkers are reaching across a range of policy priorities, services and resources in each local authority in order to provide a holistic response to young women's needs.

Home Office

Half of the young people engaging with R&R Abianda have been supported by their caseworker in an NRM referral (National Referral Mechanism), ensuring they are safeguarded appropriately as a victim of exploitation during the investigation process following an arrest.

Abianda have ongoing engagement with those young women we support so are continuously informed by the realities of their lives and the developing challenges they face. This insight feeds into the R&R project and into the training and professional development packages that Abianda deliver to national audiences including, Police, Children's Social Care, Probation and VCS.

R&R Abianda targets for year 2 of the project include the training of professionals specifically relating to the experiences of exploited young women; contextual safeguarding training with the University of Bedfordshire; case-work of 47 young women (subject to review).

70% R&R Abianda Engagement Rate

3 R&R Abianda Caseworkers

R&R Case Study

" I fully regret the stress I have put on the people around me, myself and my future. I have realised that being in a gang is not worth it, and definitely not what I deserve in life. I now know that I am worth so much more than that "

*A **young woman** was referred to R&R by her **social worker** following concerns around **criminal exploitation** and a **history of CSE**. She was regularly going **missing** for long periods and being **found in the counties** with an **older male**. On one of these occasions drugs were found in the vehicle and the young woman was placed in **secure accommodation** on safeguarding grounds.*

*During the **several months** following R&R referral the young woman **engaged openly** with her R&R Abianda caseworker, demonstrating **assertiveness** and a **willingness** to be a partner in her own **safeguarding** efforts, meaning that the changes in her life are more likely to be **sustainable**.*

*The R&R Abianda caseworker **advocated** for the young woman, attending LAC and **secure accommodation reviews**, as well as **court proceedings**, ensuring the young woman's **voice was heard**.*

*The young woman was **supported in transitioning** to her new residential care home and will soon be starting her **new school**. The young woman initially had **poor relationships with the professionals** that were trying to keep her safe, but she now has **trusting and open relationships** with all those involved in her case.*

*In addition, during court proceedings she was **praised by the judge** for her **hard work and progress**, and her case has now been removed from the court team. She is much **happier** and **confident** in herself and is beginning to think about her **future, dreams** and **aspirations,** free from exploitation.**

*See Appendix 4 for Full Case Study

R&R Safer London have been allocated 30 cases, with 8 of these young people engaging during year 1. This engagement rate (27%) is reflective of the challenges encountered in gaining consent before engagement can begin. Safer London relaxed the LGE referral guidelines for the R&R project, however this has lead to allocations of young people that are not yet motivated to engage.

All 8 of the young people engaging with R&R Safer London have been supported by their caseworker in an NRM referral (National Referral Mechanism), ensuring they are safeguarded appropriately as a victim of exploitation during the investigation process following an arrest.

The rehousing of young people can pose a significant challenge. As a result, a new R&R dedicated referral pathway has been created following the recruitment of a housing worker by LGE Safer London. The LGE housing worker will ensure that young people and families referred to the R&R project receive the specialist housing support needed to reduce the risk posed to them in their current home.

R&R Safer London targets for year 2 of the project include contextual safeguarding training with the University of Bedfordshire; case-work of 24 young people; an increased number of young people and families supported with housing.

Specialist LGE housing worker recruited*

2 young people relocated out of London, reducing the risks posed to them and family

saferlondon
R&R Case Study

" *The partnership working has been exceptional. The young person has received very strong and consistent support, especially around his emotional wellbeing* "

*A young male was referred to R&R following **arrest in a county**. He disclosed that he was engaging in county lines activity **under duress** from a gang, and he was deemed by professionals to be very **susceptible** to negative **peer pressure**.*

*This young man had suffered **traumatic experiences** at an early age as a result of domestic violence, and began to associate with a **gang***

*Following referral, the R&R caseworker met with the young man and his **social worker** to introduce the project, and he agreed to engage. A **support plan** was put in place to offer support around his Emotional Wellbeing, Employment and Education. A referral was also made to **NRM** and it was concluded that there were reasonable grounds to believe he is a **victim of modern day slavery**.*

*The young man expressed that he did not have any **positive male role models** to discuss the emotional strains he was experiencing. As a result, the R&R caseworker conducted a **joint session** with a Mental Health Specialist within Safer London and this lead to ongoing **psychotherapy sessions** that he said he enjoyed.*

*Despite this young man's **willingness to engage**, he continued to be at **significant risk** from the gang he associated with. During his period of engagement with R&R he was **kidnapped** and forced to **'work off' the debt** he owed as a result of his arrest. This lead to another arrest, and **further debt**. The **control** held by **gangs**, and the **debt bondage** victims are **trapped** in, is consistently one of the **hardest cycles to break.***

See Appendix 5 for Full Case Study

# County Lines Intelligence Picture: Borough Breakdown and Demographics

OFFICIAL

A total of 4,013 London based individuals have been identified during year 1 of the project as having a link to county lines (83%) or a suspected link to county lines activity. Individuals have been identified in various ways; through the scanning of MPS intelligence systems, information shared by Local Authority or Social Services, research of existing Local Authority and Police cohorts, the receipt of referrals and additional names that are identified whilst researching them. All 4,013 individuals are represented below, by borough and by quadrant, based on their residence at time of identification.

The top borough was Lambeth (South), with 271 identified individuals residing here. Newham (East) and Croydon follow with 265 and 264 individuals respectively
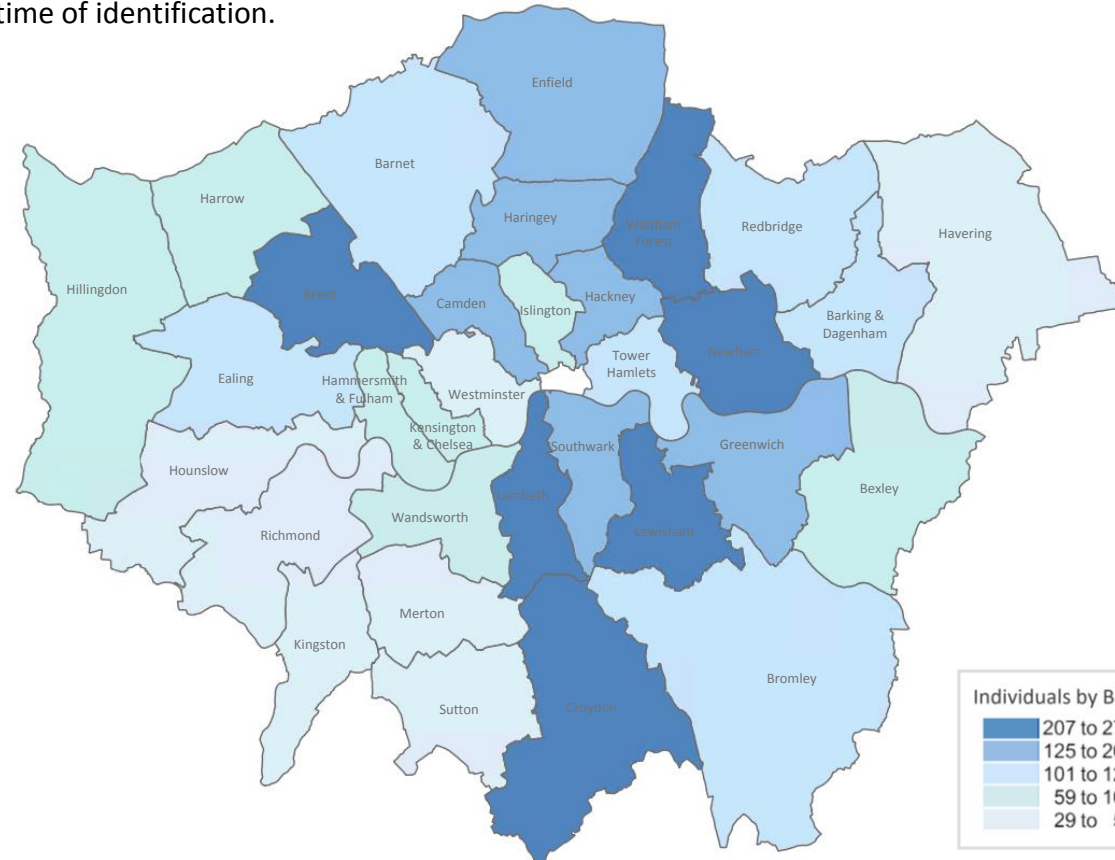
Borough	No. of Individuals
Lambeth	271
Newham	265
Croydon	264
Brent	237
Lewisham	217
Waltham Forest	207
Hackney	196
Southwark	193
Haringey	176
Enfield	166
Greenwich	165
Camden	125
Redbridge	123
Bromley	121
Tower Hamlets	119
Ealing	117
Barnet	111
Barking and Dagenham	101
Islington	99
Hammersmith and Fulham	85
Hillingdon	83
Harrow	76
Bexley	64
Wandsworth	63
Kensington and Chelsea	59
Hounslow	58
Westminster	56
Sutton	51
Havering	48
Merton	38
Kingston Upon Thames	30
Richmond Upon Thames	29

Individuals by Borough
- 207 to 271 (6)
- 125 to 206 (6)
- 101 to 124 (6)
- 59 to 100 (7)
- 29 to 58 (7)
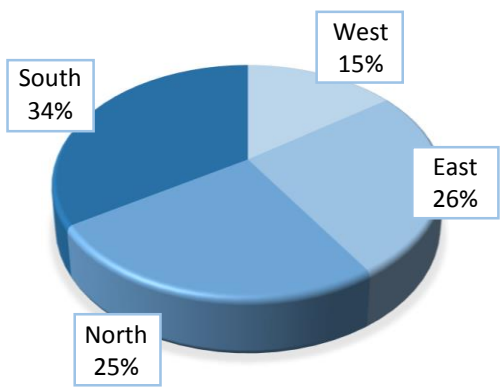
Quadrant	No. of Individuals
South	1346
East	1059
North	990
West	618
Total	4013

See Appendix 2 for further breakdown

The individuals identified range in age from 11 up to the age of 62, with a predominant age range of 15 to 19 years (46%), followed by 20 to 25 years (29%). Generally, under 18s account for 34%, and the majority of individuals identified have been male (89%).*

See Appendix 1 for further breakdown

19

Of the total 4,013 individuals identified as having a link or suspected link to county lines, we have county name recorded for 71% of them. These links are shown mapped below by county police force area. 15% of individuals with a county link also showed links to at least one other county, and further research on R&R individuals may identify more.

County Links
No. of Individuals

282 to 416	(4)
155 to 281	(3)
91 to 154	(6)
38 to 90	(4)
6 to 37	(15)
1 to 5	(9)
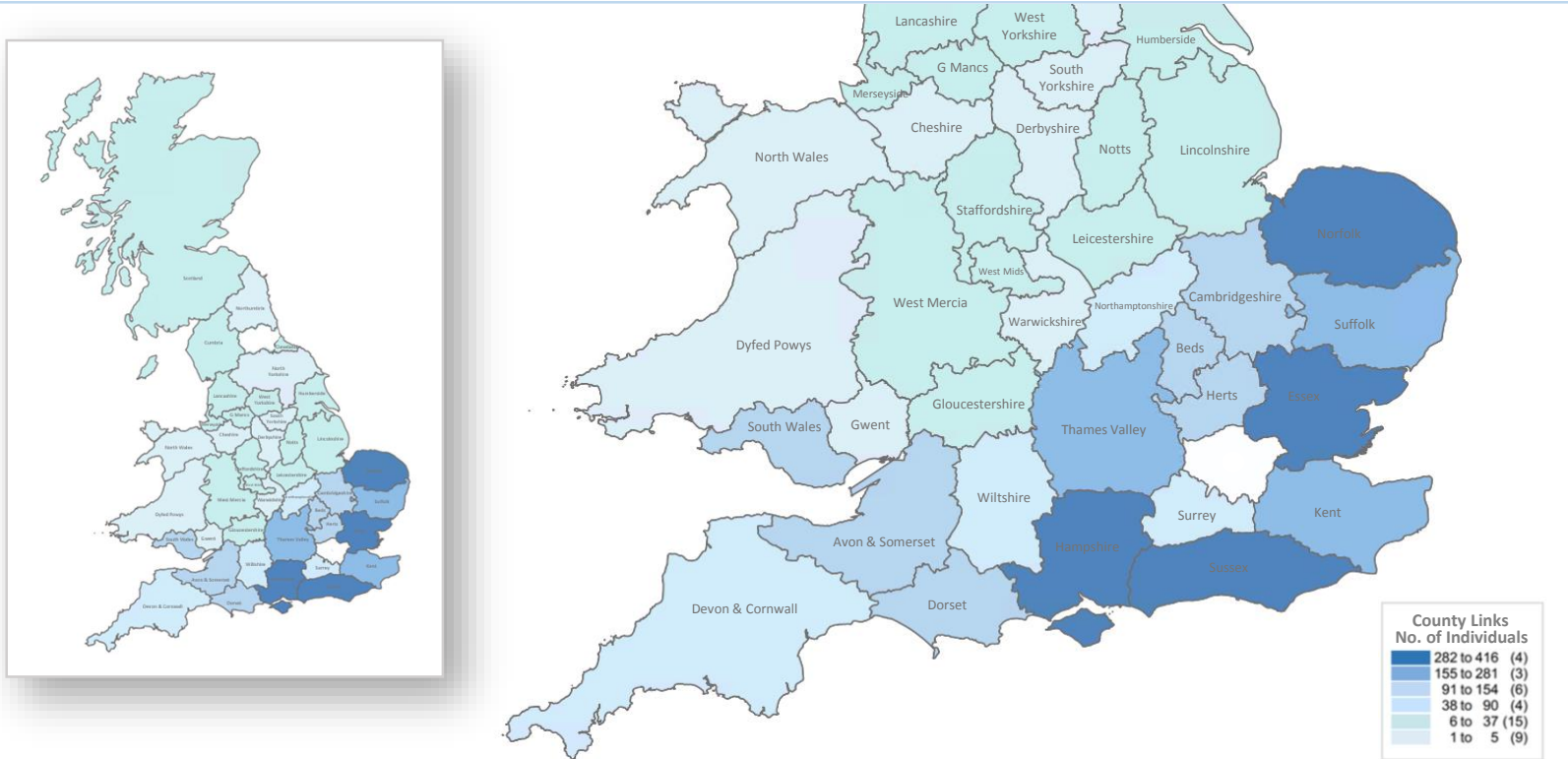
Which are the most popular county areas?

Generally the county areas closest to London have the highest recorded links to individuals identified by R&R, in particular those on the coast. The top county however is Norfolk, despite its location over 100 miles from London.

Hampshire is ranked a close second, being closer in proximity and home to several coastal towns.

Top 10 County Forces		Individuals linked
1	Norfolk	416
2	Hampshire	369
3	Essex	336
4	Sussex	332
5	Thames Valley	251
6	Suffolk	238
7	Kent	232
8	Avon & Somerset	153
9	Dorset	134
10	Hertfordshire	106

All of the top 4 county forces sit on the UK's south or east coast

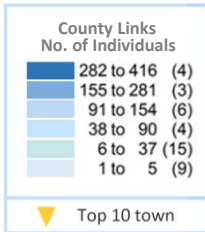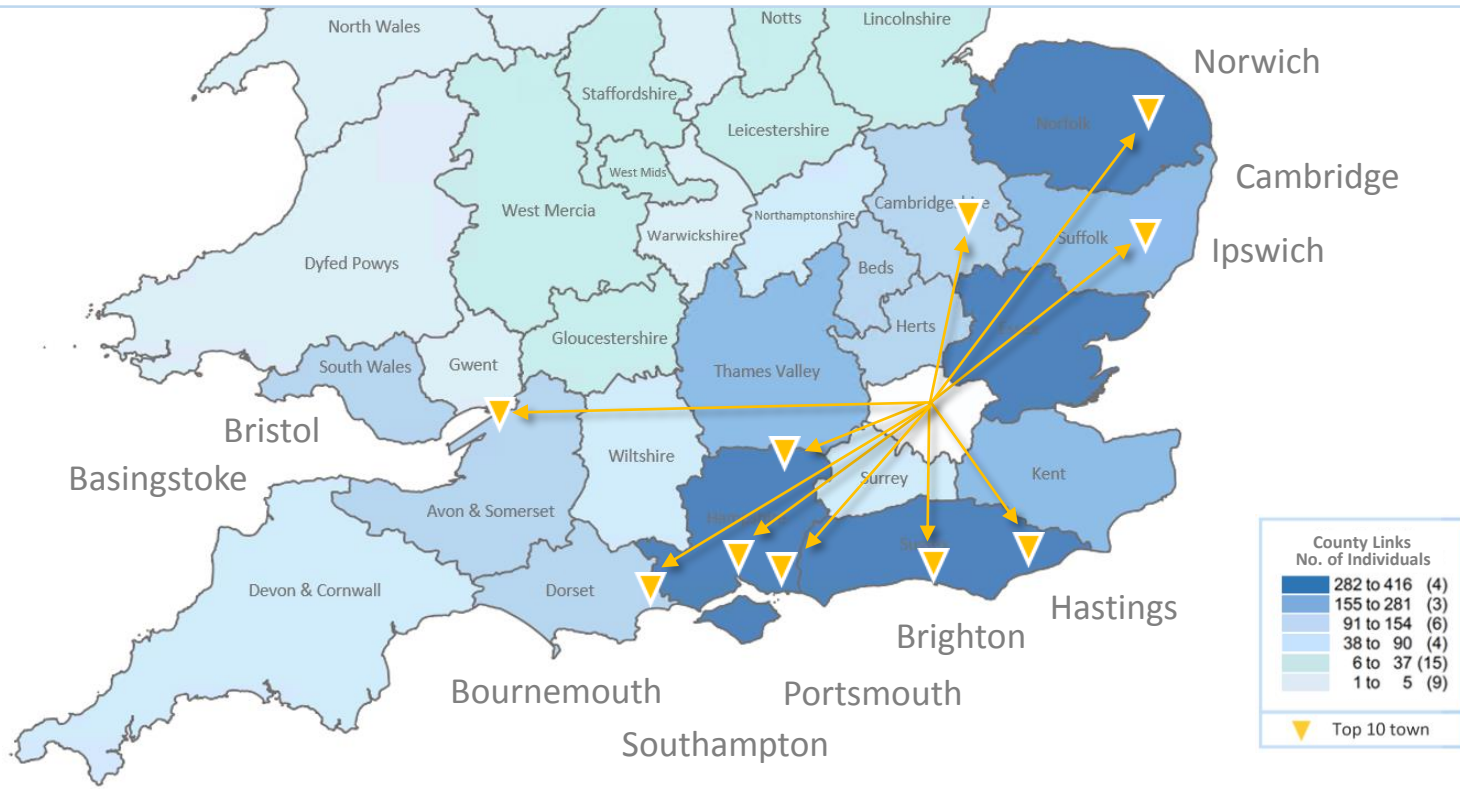R&R individuals are linked to 41 county force areas

See Appendix 2 for further breakdown

County Lines Intelligence Picture: County Towns

Of the total 4,013 individuals identified as having a link or suspected link to county lines, we have specific county towns recorded for 44% of them. The links have been identified through basic intelligence scanning and gaps in the data are a result of limited research capacity or unrecorded data. The top ten county towns are reflected below.*

County Links No. of Individuals
- 282 to 416 (4)
- 155 to 281 (3)
- 91 to 154 (6)
- 38 to 90 (4)
- 6 to 37 (15)
- 1 to 5 (9)

▼ Top 10 town

How far are young people travelling?

The average distance travelled to the top 10 county towns is 69 miles

The top town of Norwich correlates with the top county of Norfolk, with Norwich accounting for 78% of all Norfolk town links identified. Another featured Norfolk town is Great Yarmouth, with 33 individuals linked.

Top 10 County Towns		Individuals linked
1	Norwich	167
2	Brighton	121
3	Portsmouth	78
4	Bournemouth	71
5	Southampton	70
6	Ipswich	65
7	Hastings	56
8	Cambridge	52
9	Bristol	51
10	Basingstoke	49

Over a quarter of towns recorded are coastal, and they account for 48% of all town links recorded for R&R individuals

A third of towns recorded are university towns, and they account for 79% of all town links recorded for R&R individuals

See Appendix 2 for further breakdown

21

Cross Cutting Theme 1: Transport

County Lines networks are using several modes of transport to travel between London and the counties, and are using various methods to reduce the risk of interception.

What is being transported?

Drugs

Money

Phones

Young People

Weapons

How are they being transported?

Train
- Use of National Rail lines
- Arrests of young people on trains and at stations
- Networks believed to be exploiting their local train links

Car
- Use of hire cars and the regular changing of vehicles. Reduced hire rates are reported at airports
- Use of cars checked in to parking/valet services at airports
- Use of vulnerable adults, such as drug users, to act as drivers
- Use of Uber and other taxi services
- Use of female passengers

Bus
- Use of National Express buses, particularly from Victoria Coach Station & London airports
- National Express tickets are cheaper than train travel, particularly with a child ticket (up to 15 years old)

How are items being concealed?

Strapping of packages to peoples torsos and inner thighs using cling film and duct tape

Plugging of packages in their anus or vagina

Concealment of packages in underwear

Swallowing of packages

Concealment of packages in magnetic boxes fixed to the underside of vehicles

Concealment of packages in hidden compartments or fixtures within vehicles

Concealment of packages inside empty games consoles such as PlayStations

Cross Cutting Theme 2: Grooming and Recruitment

Association is believed to be the factor that most increases the chance of involvement in county lines, and gangs use several grooming methods to exploit specific vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilities

Certain circumstances in a young person's life make them more susceptible to grooming for county lines involvement, and gangs look to exploit these

Exclusion from school, or part-time attendance, is seen by exploiters positively, as the young person has more time to work on a county line and will not trigger LA action through truancy.
One young person was set-up purposely for exclusion from school by his exploiters.

Family breakdown can be a catalyst for gang and county lines involvement, and practitioners feel more attention needs to be paid to vulnerable adolescents at such moments of crisis.

Young people who are on the cusp of being taken into care are believed particularly vulnerable by practitioners. Further intelligence indicates that exploiters view a young person living at home to be less likely to trigger LA or police action through reported missing periods.

People with drug habits, learning difficulties or naivety are specifically exploited by networks. As are those not yet known to police - 'clean skins'.

Methods

The gang lifestyle is glorified on social media. Young people are promised cash, clothes and acceptance, however specific grooming methods are also reported

A 'Hook' - young people are used to recruit other young people, with the recruiter being known as the hook. Young women are specifically used to recruit other young women.

A 'Honey trap' – a young woman is used to entice young men as part of the grooming process. There is also evidence of young men being promised a girlfriend by the exploiter.

'Broadcasts' are put out on social media, offering young people the opportunity to make a lot of money. Snapchat is the most notable platform used, and evidence suggests it is used by networks throughout the grooming process.

Food is reportedly bought for young people in chicken shops as an early step in the grooming process.

Young or vulnerable people are offered drug 'freebies' in order to gain control of them. This can lead to regular drug use and debt bondage.

Venues

Several venue types have come to notice however there is limited recorded intelligence available naming specific grooming or recruitment venues

Pupil Referral Units & Schools

Social Media & Gaming platforms

Youth Clubs

Chicken Shops & other Fast Food Outlets
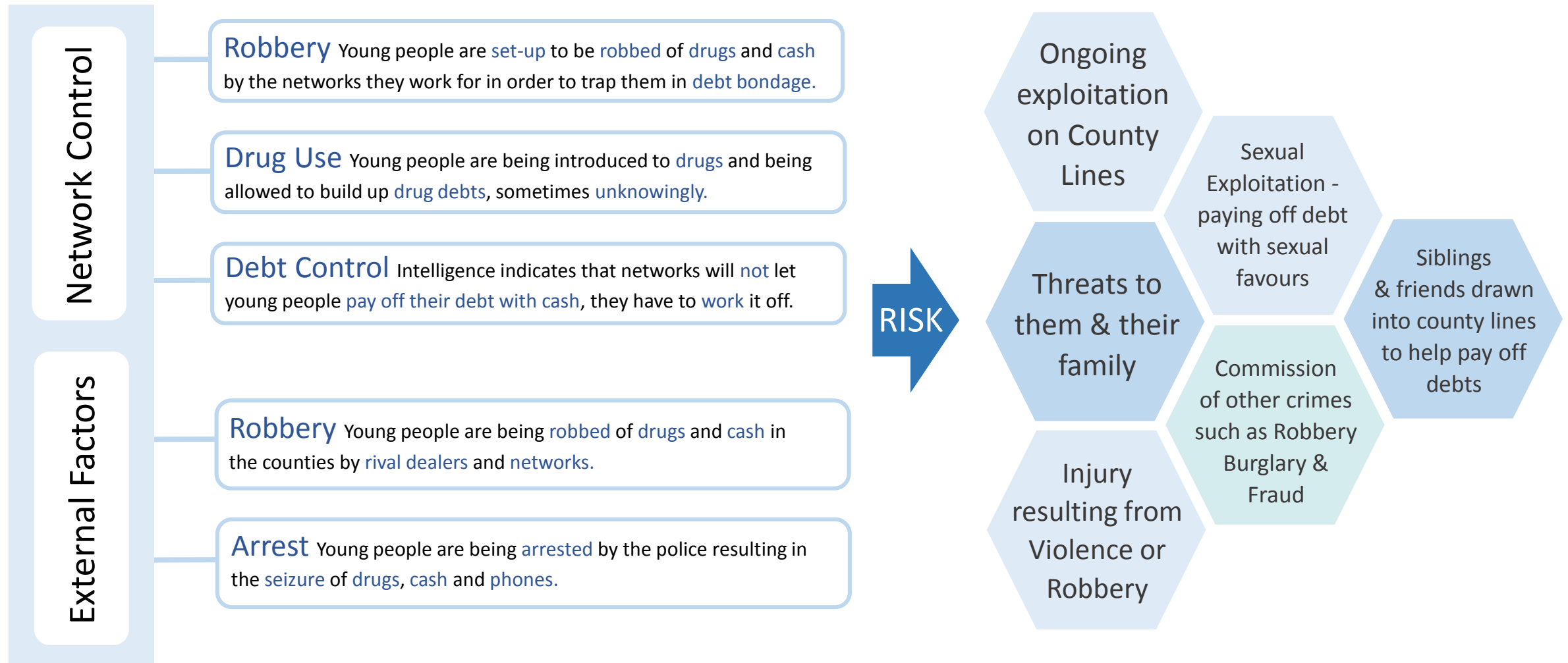
Bus Stops

Parks & Skate Parks

Cross Cutting Theme 3: Debt Bondage

Debt Bondage has been reported across London in relation to County Lines, and proves a serious challenge for young people that are seeking to escape exploitation. County lines networks use debts to retain control of the young people they've recruited, and they use various methods to ensure that these debts are accrued and sustained.

How are young people drawn into debt bondage and what are the risks?

Network Control

Robbery Young people are set-up to be robbed of drugs and cash by the networks they work for in order to trap them in debt bondage.

Drug Use Young people are being introduced to drugs and being allowed to build up drug debts, sometimes unknowingly.

Debt Control Intelligence indicates that networks will not let young people pay off their debt with cash, they have to work it off.

External Factors

Robbery Young people are being robbed of drugs and cash in the counties by rival dealers and networks.

Arrest Young people are being arrested by the police resulting in the seizure of drugs, cash and phones.

RISK

- Ongoing exploitation on County Lines
- Sexual Exploitation - paying off debt with sexual favours
- Threats to them & their family
- Siblings & friends drawn into county lines to help pay off debts
- Commission of other crimes such as Robbery Burglary & Fraud
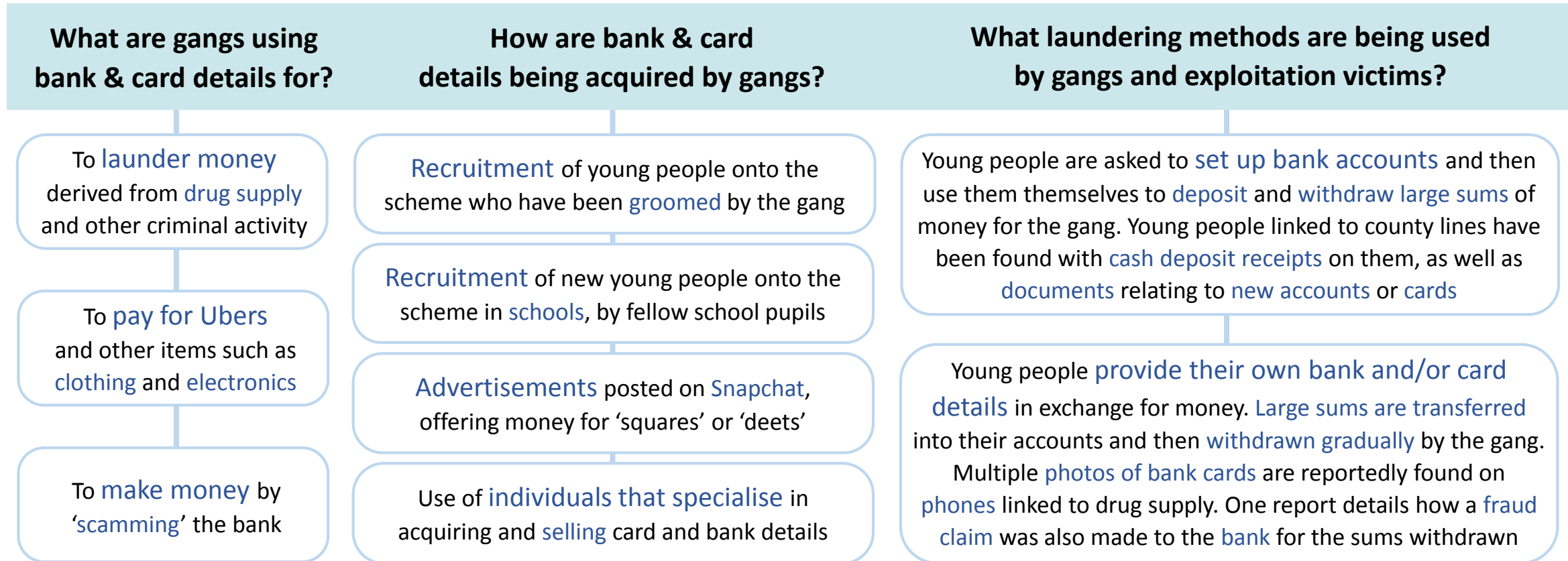- Injury resulting from Violence or Robbery

Cross Cutting Theme 4: Money Laundering

The initial research stage of the project has uncovered a small amount of intelligence relating to the methods used by networks to launder their proceeds. It is widely known that organised criminal networks will launder money through businesses set up and owned by their members and associates, however because our initial research has focussed predominantly on the young people being exploited by these networks, we have identified other methods being used to launder money.

Intelligence indicates that young people are being used as 'money mules', through the illegal use of their bank cards and bank accounts, to facilitate the cleaning of large sums of money. This type of activity has been observed in relation to young people linked to county lines but is not confined to it. Reports recorded in 2019 evidence this happening across all four London quadrants, with it being referred to in a variety of ways, mainly as 'Squares' or 'Deets', but also as 'Clicks' or 'Swipes'. These terms relate to the use of a bank card (a square) or bank account (deets) to launder money and commit fraud. The methods are sometimes referred to as schemes or scams, and are perpetrated in a number of ways.

What are gangs using bank & card details for?	How are bank & card details being acquired by gangs?	What laundering methods are being used by gangs and exploitation victims?
To launder money derived from drug supply and other criminal activity	Recruitment of young people onto the scheme who have been groomed by the gang	Young people are asked to set up bank accounts and then use them themselves to deposit and withdraw large sums of money for the gang. Young people linked to county lines have been found with cash deposit receipts on them, as well as documents relating to new accounts or cards
To pay for Ubers and other items such as clothing and electronics	Recruitment of new young people onto the scheme in schools, by fellow school pupils	
	Advertisements posted on Snapchat, offering money for 'squares' or 'deets'	Young people provide their own bank and/or card details in exchange for money. Large sums are transferred into their accounts and then withdrawn gradually by the gang. Multiple photos of bank cards are reportedly found on phones linked to drug supply. One report details how a fraud claim was also made to the bank for the sums withdrawn
To make money by 'scamming' the bank	Use of individuals that specialise in acquiring and selling card and bank details	

Data Access

Lack of police systems access. Rescue & Response analysts do not have access to the Police National Database (PND) or Police National Computer (PNC). This means that analysts have not been able to utilise county arrest data unless recorded independently on MPS intelligence systems.

Lack of access to County Police force and BTP intelligence. The project has been reliant on intelligence that has been shared by other police forces with the MPS. This can be limited and is likely to exclude those young people on the cusp of exploitation.

Lack of access to LA systems. This has meant that analysts do not have access to LA data, third sector RHIs or minutes from panel or strategy meetings unless provided to them directly.

GDPR has created challenges around information sharing between MPS, Local Authorities and the Rescue & Response Project, leading to a lack of access to some LA borough cohorts relating to exploitation and gangs.

Phone data downloads facilitated for high risk missing people is not retrospectively recorded on MPS intelligence systems. As a result we have not been able to utilise this data.

Data Capture

County lines involvement is sometimes undeterminable as the indicators for county lines activity present similarly to that for local drug supply. As a result, the project may not be capturing all individuals linked to county lines during Rescue & Response research processes.

County lines activity and its indicators are not being recorded consistently on police or LA systems. As a result, some young people linked to county lines will not have been captured by the Rescue & Response analysts.

Lack of soft intelligence captured by borough professionals on ECINS. Project service providers have provided analysts with information relating to county lines trends and risks, however there is still a wealth of knowledge that needs recording on a case by case basis.

Those young people on the cusp of county lines exploitation are often recorded solely on Merlin missing reports which in turn is dependent on family or professionals reporting them missing. Those young people with short term absences are less likely to trigger a missing report and may not be captured during Rescue & Response research processes.

Project Review: Intelligence Gaps

Who are the main exploiters? Further work is required to identify the most harmful networks and their set-ups.

How many county lines are currently active, and which R&R individuals and networks are linked to them?

At which locations is grooming and recruitment taking place? There is limited intelligence naming venues.

How many young people are involved in local drug supply before being involved in county lines?

How do networks identify a town for county lines drug supply and what local factors facilitate them?

How are young people being recruited in the counties? Are cross county associations being formed in prison which facilitate this?

Next Steps

Use of wider Intel Sources

Network Analysis

Increased use of Local Authority data

Increased Capture and use of Soft Intel

Regular County Force Liaison

Open Source Research

Analytical Function

The inconsistency in data recording for county lines has impacted data accuracy. This includes instances where local drugs supply is confused for county lines, or county lines activity is not recognised or recorded as such.

The project's analytical capacity means that analysts are unable to act as dedicated borough analysts. Expectations around the provision of bespoke analytical products has needed managing.

Often a high level of time-intensive research is required in order to find links to county lines, and sometimes only indicators are recorded.

There is a lack of existing analytical products looking solely at county lines activity.

Information sharing with other police forces has not fully commenced, resulting in intelligence gaps.

ECINs is being under-utilised, leading to a lack of information sharing between key agencies that form part of the professional network.

Lack of buy-in by some London boroughs has lead to barriers in information sharing with R&R.

Support Function

Obtaining consent from young people when they don't consider themselves as victims has been difficult, especially when they are not already open to borough services.

Intervention referrals are at capacity and the project is operating a waitlist. As a result, acceptance of 'suspected' cases of county lines has been affected. Young people with only indicator behaviours are likely to be in the early stages of grooming, and although the project set out to offer support to these young people, the demand experienced during year 1 has meant that R&R have had to allocate based on risk.

A number of young people referred to R&R are victims of exploitation on local drug lines, not county drug lines. As this does not meet the project criteria, signposting is required but not always available.

Each LA has a different process around county lines and criminal exploitation, and several different teams at a local level work with young people linked to county lines. A significant amount of time has been spent exploring the local processes, and the R&R project has needed to adapt to meet the specific needs of each local borough.

When young people are moved from addresses across borders or counties, a higher level of coordination is needed by R&R. It is also difficult to keep accurate records of young people's addresses with the current analytical capacity.

Over 18s are sometimes not considered as victims because they are legally adults. The language used usually refers to them as perpetrators despite the likelihood of grooming. In addition, the safeguarding processes for over 18s is not as clear as that for under 18s. As a result, the coordination of support for over 18s is more challenging.

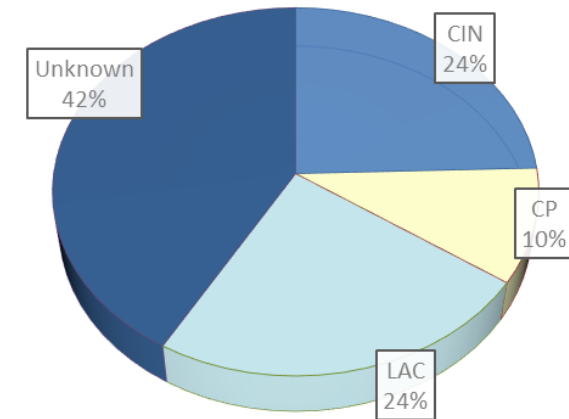| 1	Continued development of referrals in to the project to ensure that appropriate support is in place for young people in need that are experiencing exploitation on county lines.
2	Increased identification of exploitation victims and exploiters by developing the understanding of the networks linked to the R&R cohort; through the use of network analysis, open source research and the increased recording of soft intelligence.
3	Further development of the strategic picture surrounding R&R individuals; in particular by increasing the demographics data available to R&R analysts, and by identifying the common factors and venues that link R&R individuals.
4	Development of the project's engagement with wider partners, to increase awareness and the sharing of relevant information. Including but not limited to; Education, Health, Youth Services, Probation, County forces.
5	Training by R&R in order to continue to raise awareness of county lines and its indicators, and to increase the reporting of soft intelligence through the promotion of R&R intelligence gaps.

Further Reading

Agency / Report	Web link
Rescue and Response Referral Pathway	https://randr-london.ecconnect.org/form/Rescue%20and%20Response%20Referral%20Form
St Giles Trust	https://www.stgilestrust.org.uk/
Abianda	http://abianda.com/
Safer London LGE	https://saferlondon.org.uk/
SGT Evaluation of the Kent County Lines Pilot Project	https://stgilestrust.org.uk/general-attachments/view?id=18
Home Office County Lines Guidance 2018	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741194/HOCountyLinesGuidanceSept2018.pdf
NCA County Lines Violence and Exploitation Reports 2016/17/18	https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking/county-lines
Children's Society – County Lines specific information for professionals	https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/tackling-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/county-lines-resources
Children's Society – Responding to Children who are Criminally Exploited	https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/resources-and-publications/counting-lives-report

Appendix 1

1.1 Project Referrals: Demographics

Age
- Blank 7%
- 12-14 14%
- 19-24 9%
- 15-18 70%

LAC status
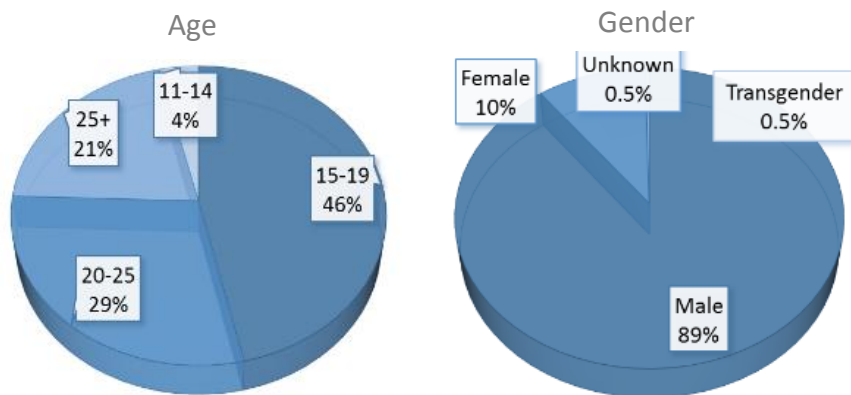- LAC 20%
- Non-LAC 80%

Gender
- Female 17%
- Male 83%
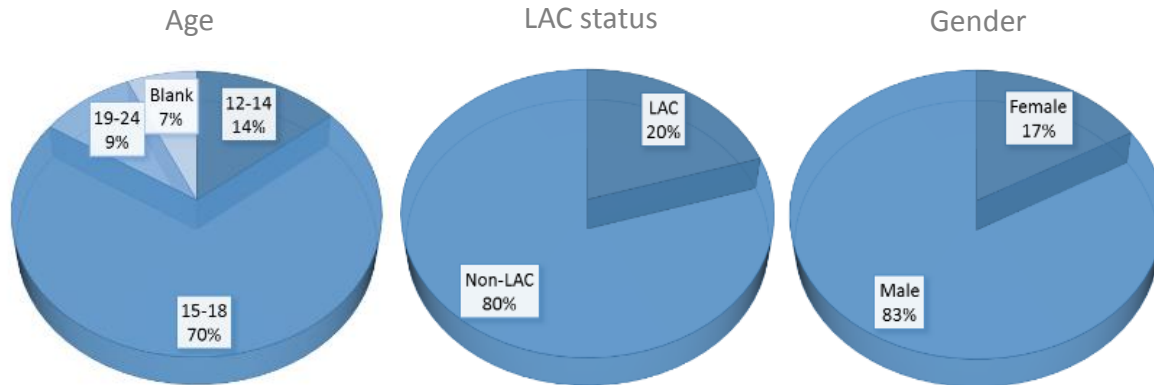
1.2 Project Referrals: Demographics

Social Care Status

(CIN – Child in Need
LAC – Looked After Child
CP – Child Protection Plan)

- Unknown 42%
- CIN 24%
- CP 10%
- LAC 24%

School Attendance

(%s calculated from the total number of school aged young people referred to R&R)

- Unknown 20%
- No 43%
- Yes 37%

1.3 County Lines Intelligence Picture: Demographics

Age
- 11-14 4%
- 25+ 21%
- 15-19 46%
- 20-25 29%

Gender
- Female 10%
- Unknown 0.5%
- Transgender 0.5%
- Male 89%

31
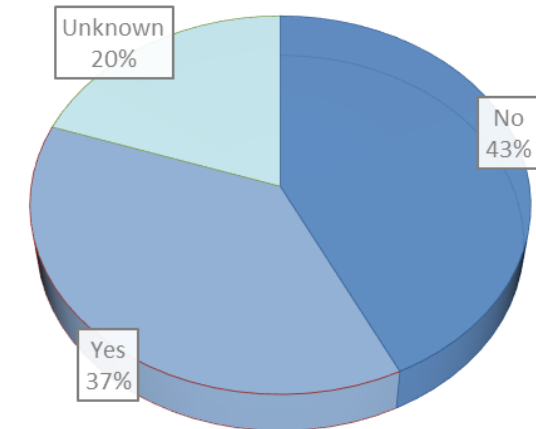
2.1 Quadrant Boroughs and Totals

Quadrant	Boroughs	County Lines link	Suspected link	Total
North	Barnet, Brent, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Harrow, Islington	768	222	990
East	Barking & Dagenham, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest	986	73	1059
South	Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Sutton	1080	266	1346
West	Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Wandsworth, Westminister	463	155	618
Total	London	3297	716	4013

County Lines link: individuals who have been arrested for an offence linked to county lines activity, or found in drug addresses in county forces; there is one or more pieces of intelligence linking an individual to county lines activity; or the individual has disclosed to a professional or family member that they're involved in county lines.

Suspected link: individuals who show indicator behaviours that suggest exploitation or involvement in county lines activity; or if a professional suspects that the individual is involved in county lines.

2.2 Top Counties

County Force	Total
Norfolk	416
Hampshire	369
Essex	336
Sussex	332
Thames Valley	251
Suffolk	238
Kent	232
Avon & Somerset	153
Dorset	134
Hertfordshire	106
Bedfordshire	101
South Wales	92
Cambridgeshire	91
Devon & Cornwall	81
Wiltshire	75
Surrey	72
Northamptonshire	47
West Midlands	28
Gloucestershire	22
Greater Manchester	18
Lincolnshire	17
Humberside	16
Leicestershire	15
Scotland	11
Cumbria	10
Nottinghamshire	9
Staffordshire	9
West Mercia	8
West Yorkshire	8
Cleveland	6
Lancashire	6
Merseyside	6
Cheshire	3
Northumbria	3
South Yorkshire	3
Warwickshire	3
Derbyshire	2
Dyfed-Powys	2
North Wales	2
Gwent	1
North Yorkshire	1

2.3 Top 30 County Towns

County Town	Total
Norwich	167
Brighton	121
Portsmouth	78
Bournemouth	71
Southampton	70
Ipswich	65
Hastings	56
Cambridge	52
Bristol	51
Basingstoke	49
Colchester	43
Eastbourne	42
Oxford	39
Swindon	39
Luton	37
Southend on Sea	36
Great Yarmouth	34
Swansea	33
Reading	32
Basildon	30
Northampton	28
Clacton-on-Sea	27
Exeter	27
Margate	25
Bracknell	24
Yeovil	24
Milton Keynes	23
Stevenage	22
Banbury	20
Canterbury	20

Appendix 3

St Giles Trust Full Case Study

The young man had previously stated to his social worker that he would like support; he was referred to the R&R project due to a missing episode, whereby the young man went 'country' for several days, during this time he was stabbed and witnessed rape and violence perpetrated towards females and drug addicts. It became apparent that there were many more underlining issues and not just the missing period.

Upon meeting the young man it was clear that he had low self-esteem, unconfident, overweight for his age and had no hopes for the future. The young man highlighted a number of issues that he wanted support with during our first meeting; obtaining his GCSE's, gaining a college place in September, finding employment when he turns 16 and family support, with particular regards to a parent, who was alcohol dependent. This was one of the biggest factors leading to this young person going 'country'.

I began by sharing my own experiences with the young man, regarding my own offending history and regarding the situation that had occurred in the 'trap houses' which he was working from. He was genuinely horrified at the abuse and the desperation of the situations he witnessed, which confirmed that nothing positive came of this situation. The young man may have returned home with a small amount of cash but he also returned with a stab wound, and hideous memories and trauma that may never be erased. Several months on and we are still discussing the trauma which occurred during this time – although I am constantly encouraging the young man in accessing further support, he states that he does not need to see or speak to anyone else regarding this situation – this is still work in progress, I would like for him to access some form of therapy.

The young man's coping mechanism is smoking cannabis, and although this has reduced, the ultimate goal is for the young man to cease smoking cannabis completely. I have encouraged the young man to take up sport. The first few sessions we did together and for the first time I saw the young man really enjoying himself. This activity has reduced his cannabis intake, the young man has lost a stone in two months, and his self-esteem has risen.

I have built a close relationship with the young man's educational network (head teacher, mentor, teacher's). Due to the young man missing so much of his education, he is not on course to obtain many GCSE's. I have suggested to his teachers that we focus on his strong points, and strive to support him in gaining at least one GCSE. The teachers have agreed with this, which has removed a huge amount of pressure off of the young man – his attendance levels have increased, he is a lot calmer at school, and is on track to gaining a C grade in his English exams. The young man has always stated that he wants to embark on either a plumbing or carpentry course/apprenticeship in September. We signed up for, and attended, an open evening at his local college, which was extremely informative. The young man applied for a course and has been accepted! After a discussion with the tutor, the young man is able to re-take one of his GCSEs if his not successful the first time around. He is absolutely ecstatic.

The young man is concerned that he will be bored during the summer holidays and has stipulated that he would like to look for part-time employment. We have recently compiled his CV and the young man has signed himself up to several employment websites. I want to provide the young man with tools he is able to use throughout his journey, I try to set him tasks each week, which he generally engages in and completes. All professionals in his life have tried to support his parent around the alcohol issues, they have referred and signposted him, however, his parent has been in complete denial, despite such complex issues led to the young man going 'country'. His parent recently contacted me, stating that he wanted help. I believe that his parent addressing his issues will have a monumental and positive affect on the young man and his hopes and goals for the future. The young man has changed in so many ways since we first began engagement – his has hopes for the future, he is on-course to gain a GCSE in English, there have been no missing episodes, he has secured a college placement and feels confident to engage in employment during the holidays. the young man is aware that his parent is now open to support which will release a huge amount of pressure off of his shoulders.

The young man's self-esteem has increased dramatically, mainly due to him having a little more belief in himself. He now has realistic expectations and has more understanding as to how to obtain such goals. There is a reduction in his cannabis intake and his increase in physical activity has had a monumental effect upon his emotional well-being. His mind set and attitude has also changed dramatically, with regards to all aspects of his life. Following a referral to our in house addiction project, his parent has been accepted onto the project and we are currently waiting for a caseworker to be allocated. The caseworker will be able to support his parent in a number of different ways. Both professionals and the family have extended their gratitude and thanks on more than one occasion. The young man is constantly stating that he or his parent would not be where they are without the support of the R&R project. The young man's relationship with his parents has dramatically improved. The young man has stated that he is enjoying the change in their relationship.

Appendix 4

Abianda Full Case Study

The young woman was referred into Rescue and Response by her social worker as she was thought to have been criminally exploited through county lines and to have experienced child sexual exploitation. She had been missing for long periods of times and had been found in rural areas with an older male. Police had stopped a car she was in where drugs were found. She was placed in a secure unit on safeguarding grounds as professionals around her deemed she as unable to acknowledge her risk and that she was coercively controlled by the older male.

During our work together we have met 16 times so far. Our work together has included the delivery of Abianda's structured programme and our specialist advocacy work. So far, our sessions have explored relationship, contextual relationship mapping, gender roles and expectation of males and females in gangs/county lines, and the role and risks for girls in gangs. When I first met the young woman, she was quiet and felt vulnerable as she had little control over the decisions which were being made in her life. She agreed to engage and she explained that her best hopes from our work were: to have confidence, to say what she felt and to communicate confidently with professionals. She also expressed she wanted to implement boundaries and keep herself safe. She stated that "I want everyone around me to recognise that I am trying to be a better person, for me and my family"

As a Result of our work so far, the young woman has: Has been able to; voice her hopes and needs, begun to lead her own advocacy, is able to identify why boundaries will be good for her and the difference they would make in her life. Before we began the work, she told professionals around her "I won't change", and believed the people she was associating with to be her friends. She now explains "these people are not my friends." and how her life has been put on hold for the benefit of others and the negative impact it has had on her family. The young woman had poor relationships with professionals who were trying to keep her safe and now has trusting and open relationships with all those involved in her case. When we began our work together 16 weeks ago the young woman scaled a 4/10 in regards to her best hopes, she now scales 8 or 9.

Through our work together, she has significantly increased her critical thinking. She has shown insight and awareness into her circumstances and been able to identify unhealthy relationships, risk, and harm. She has flourished as a result of Rescue and Response. She is now able to see how particular relationships have had a damaging impact on other relationships in her life. She now understands the relationship she has with her boyfriend and associates are unhealthy. She has shown courage and strength each week as she shares her expertise and views on power, risk, barriers and reasons young women may become caught up in exploitative circumstances. She explained that the reason young women get involved with gangs is that they are looking to be accepted and just want some kind of attention. She explained to me that she was associating with harmful peers because she wanted to be listened to and understood. After two months of working together she realises that she never really had a voice in those relationships and that now she is achieving her best hopes, she has a voice and an opinion and is less gullible.

During our work together, I worked shoulder to shoulder with her to respond to her complex needs and to ensure her voice was heard during safeguarding and statutory processes. This included: Sharing the young woman's concerns and hopes for upcoming care plan reviews and court proceedings; Attending LAC and secure accommodation reviews, court proceedings and supporting her when transitioning in to a new care home; managing expectations for the young woman and other professionals, ensuring that the young woman had clarity on proceedings and timings. As a result of Abianda's specialist approach to advocacy, the young woman has developed skills which means she can advocate for herself and become more independent of service support in this regard. She is now confidently sharing her views with the professional network around her and being heard by those in statutory decision-making roles. She has demonstrated assertiveness and a willingness to be a partner in her own safeguarding efforts which means the changes in her life are more likely to be sustainable.

Most recently the young woman prepared a very powerful statement that she read to the judge during her court proceedings where she chose to share her views on gang affiliation. She said:
"I fully regret the stress I have put on the people around me, myself and my future. I have realised that being in a gang is not worth it, and definitely not what I deserve in life. I now know that I am worth so much more than that." She has displayed maturity and confidence. The judge praised her for her hard work and progress and her case has now been removed from the court team. Her guardian' explained the changes she has seen in the young woman, and her ability to both express her needs and display her emotions. The young woman was very proud of herself and feels her life is moving forward. In this young women's case we see her journey from preparation with support and guidance, moving to independently creating documents for herself, critically thinking and creating dialogue with professionals while understanding their views.

The young woman has completed a transition to her new residential care home. She will her new school soon and I am working closely with her to make sure she has a great support network for after our work comes to an end. She is much happier and confident in herself and mostly is beginning to think about her future, dreams and aspirations. She says: "I am not the same girl I was when I entered secure, I have honestly changed and changed for the better, I truly believe that I now have boundaries to keep myself safe. I am also still learning how to navigate myself away from negative influences, I just want to be given the chance to live a normal life with my family where I belong."

Safer London Full Case Study

The young person was referred to R&R in 2018 following arrest in a county. He admitted that he was involved in County Lines under duress. This young person is very susceptible to negative peer pressure and was associating with gangs. This young person has had traumatic experiences from an early age when he witnessed domestic violence which resulted in the family being moved.

The R&R caseworker contacted the young person's social worker and arranged to see the young person with them present in order to introduce the R&R service, to which the young person agreed. A support plan was then put in place by the R&R caseworker to offer this young person support around his Emotional Wellbeing, Employment and Education. A referral was also made to NRM to which he received a letter in January that concluded that they had reasonable grounds to believe he is a victim of modern day slavery.

The R&R caseworker made a referral to a Mental Health Specialist within Safer London who did a joint session to introduce the service and what that support would look like. This young person was happy to engage as he currently didn't have any positive male role models to discuss the emotional strains he was experiencing. The psychotherapist was seeing this young person every week to support him and the R&R caseworker would check in with the young person via phone every two weeks where he expressed that he was really enjoying his sessions with the psychotherapist.

This young person has a wide range of professionals supporting him, both voluntary and statutory services. The partnership working has been exceptional. The young person has received very strong and consistent support especially around his emotional wellbeing. This young person has had a close knit professional support network around him and not exclusively to him but also his family.

The strengths of this case also reflect this young person's resilience despite the negative experiences he has gone/and is going through, he is still willing to be persistent in his pursuit of a better future. This individual is not a 'hard to reach' young person and is open to as much support he can receive.

The biggest barrier for this young person throughout his engagement has been his safety. Since engaging he has had two incidents of violence and/or threat of violence due to him racking up a debt from being arrested when he was last involved in County Lines. Due to this, he was found by the previous individuals who exploited him, kidnapped and forced to pay off his debt and was told that he would be stabbed if he didn't comply. Once again, this young person was arrested by the police and therefore owes further debt from what was confiscated from him.

Upon reflection, this young person's risks have increased as he cannot leave his house as he is fearful of what might happen if those individuals exploit him again. This leaves this young person very vulnerable and desperate with no other option than to hope he can leave the country. Professionals have acknowledged that managing this young person's safety is very difficult and moving him out of the area would also have an impact on his family. Further to this, moving him on his own would also have an impact on his emotional and mental health due to that being the only family that he has.