

## 4.8 Current debates and reforms

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LAST MODIFIED ON: 13/08/2020 - 12:49

### **New Youth Charter**

In April 2019, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) announced the development of a [New Youth Charter](#) to set the vision for young people over the next generation and beyond. It aims to give young people a voice in decision making, and reaffirm the Government's commitment to youth policy.

This charter focuses on issues relevant to social inclusion such as 'combating serious violence and knife crime and addressing mental and physical health challenges'.

### **Loneliness Strategy**

Based on information provided by the [Office of National Statistics](#), the strategy on loneliness will target all groups experiencing loneliness, but the strategy will also specifically target groups that were highlighted in the analysis, which includes young people. The ONS [found](#) younger people (16 to 24 year olds) were significantly more likely to report feeling lonely. The Strategy's aim is to 'reduce the risk, prevent loneliness or intervene early, before loneliness becomes entrenched'.

Currently, DCMS and the Office for Civil Society are in the consultation process, requesting specialist organisations in tackling loneliness to provide their opinions and expertise knowledge to help shape and develop the strategy framework and develop indicators of loneliness.

Additionally, DCMS [announced](#) new funding of £20 million available to charities, organisations and community groups, it consists of:

- An £11 million 'Building Connections Fund', available for those who can help bring communities together, and local businesses and services that contribute to tackling isolation;
- A £5 million fund by the Big Lottery Fund and the government, and £1 million by the Co-op Foundation, available specifically those who tackle loneliness among young people;
- A £5 million fund by the People's Postcode Lottery, which will be used to further contribute towards existing grants given to charities that address loneliness;
- And the Health Lottery contribution of £4 million, for charities that work to improve social links in disadvantaged areas across England.

Future updates on their strategy development and announcements can be found on [their GOV.UK page](#).

## Serious Violence Strategy

In April 2018, the Home Office announced the government's plans to address the recent increases in serious violence: knife crime, gun crime and homicide, in the [Serious Violence Strategy](#). To tackle the root causes of serious violence, the Strategy emphasises law enforcement is not sufficient, but a cross-departmental approach (which includes education, social services, and health for example), is required.

The Strategy is structured on four key themes:

- tackling county lines and misuse of drugs;
- early intervention and prevention;
- supporting communities and partnerships;
- and an effective law enforcement and criminal justice system.

The Strategy identifies risk factors for serious violence: the individual, family, school, community and peer group. Hence, the Strategy emphasises on early intervention and prevention for young people to tackle the root causes of serious violence. The Strategy describes the government next actions and commitments:

- The Home Office will provide £11 million through the [Early Intervention Youth Fund](#). This fund will be used to support young people by providing them with skills and tools to have the opportunity to live violent-free lives. This funding will be used for 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020. In July 2018, the Home Office revised this fund, and have decided to [double it to £22 million](#).
- Provide more funding for young people's advocates, who work with gang-affect young women and girls.
- Build partnerships between schools and the Police.
- A collaborative effort between the Department of Education, Home Office and Ofsted to explore what can be done to support schools with potential crime risks.
- Provide £13 million over the next four years (pending the next Spending Review) through the Trusted Relationships Fund, to trial approaches that support at risk children and young people. It will provide them with the opportunity to develop trusted relationships with adults that support them. Some of the funding has been allocated to projects and have been to be [successful](#).
- Continuation of the Troubled Families Programme till 2020. (More information can be found in section '[Programmes for vulnerable young people](#)' in the article 'Inclusive programmes for young people'.)
- The launch of a media campaign, [#knifefree](#), to raise awareness about the risks of carrying knives to young people.