

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2021

Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

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Chief Officer:	Lead: T/ACC Glen Pavelin, ACC Andy Pritchard
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1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Chief Officer Group and PFCC Performance & Scrutiny meeting with an update on Homicide Prevention activity since the last report to the May 2022 meeting.

2.0 Recommendations

The Board to note the report and progress updates.

3.0 Executive Summary

This report provides the latest analytical update around homicide in Essex, links to the national Homicide Prevention work and highlights areas where Essex are leading national best practice.

An update on broader prevention activity is provided by exception.

Planning for future developments around the Essex Homicide Prevention Strategy, ongoing cohort work and progress around Mental Health Risk Management is also included.

4.0 Introduction

The Essex Police approach to Homicide Prevention continues to develop strength, underpinned by the focus and priority it is afforded as well as the strong Governance arrangements.

Homicide Prevention encompasses the prevention of serious violence across an array of areas of policing, but by coordinating the oversight of activity through the Homicide Prevention Board, it provides assurance that Prevention is continuing to develop.

Homicide analysis in Essex remains robust, both in terms of understanding the homicide picture in Essex, but also by way of developing cohorts of 'risky individuals' to target prevention activity.

The Essex Police Homicide Prevention approach will be developed into a Homicide Prevention strategy for Essex which will be in line with the emerging national framework, which focuses on four key areas of influencing factors:

1. Drugs – including County Lines and drug enabled violence
2. Serious Violence: including Knife Crime, Serious Youth Violence, alcohol related violence and the Night Time Economy
3. Domestic Abuse
4. Vulnerability - including Mental Health and child related homicide

Essex Police continue to lead the way on Homicide Prevention with initiatives such as the Homicide Prevention Rapid Debriefs now attracting interest both from the NPCC, College of Policing and HMICFRS, as well as multiple other forces who are visiting Essex to gain an insight into the process as it is seen as good practice.

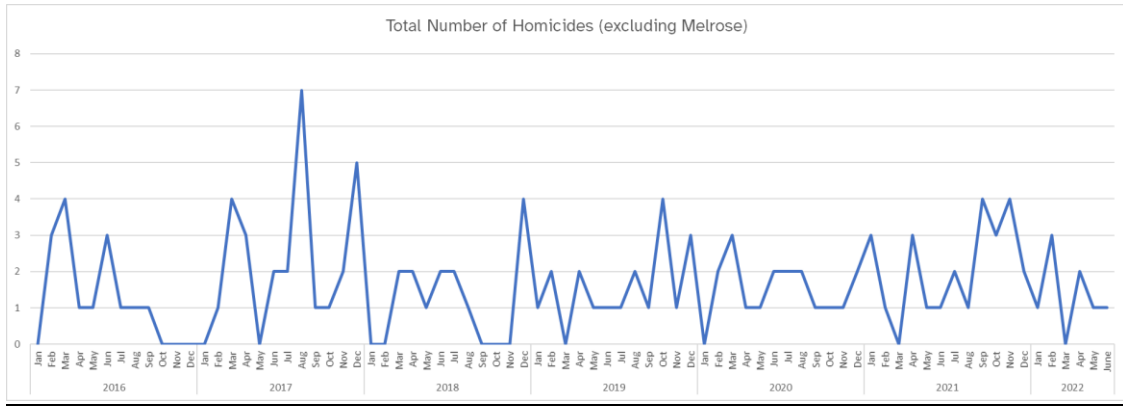
5.0 Current Work and Performance

5.1 Overview of Performance Analysis

There have been 8 homicides in 2022 at the time of writing (as of 20th July 2022), three having occurred since the previous paper. Whilst homicide rates can be unpredictable, in comparison with 22 homicides in 2021, the current trajectory would suggest a reduction in homicide for 2022.

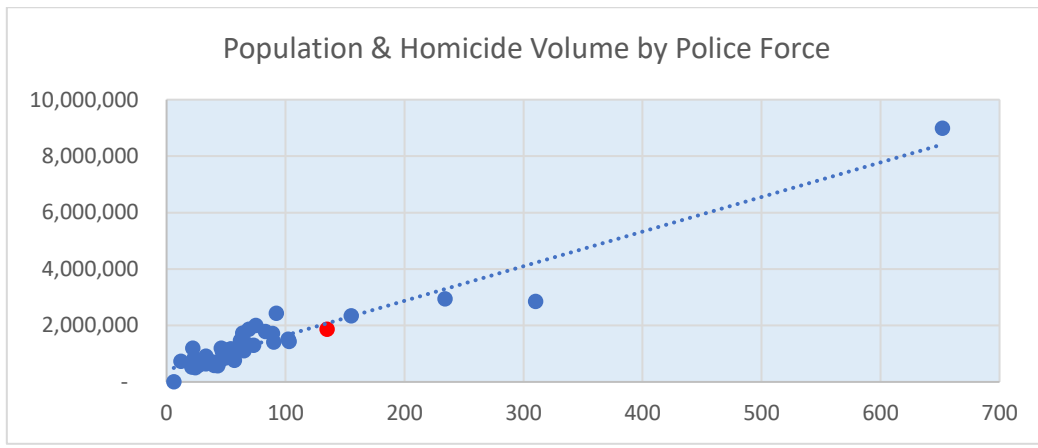
Long-Term Homicide Trends:

In terms of longer-term trends, Essex generally sees two or less homicides per month (78% of the time). Due to variation however, this has been exceeded four times in the last 12 months to a maximum of four per month. This is particularly relevant when considering the Home Office outlier criteria referred to later in this report.



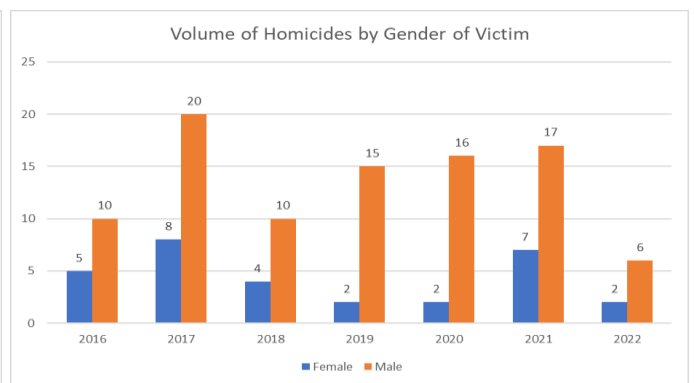
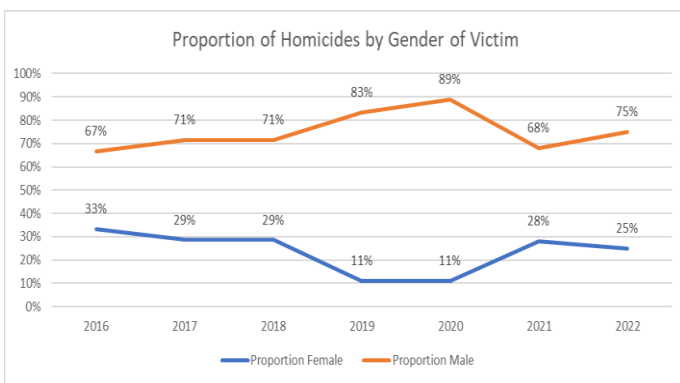
Rate per Thousand Population:

Homicide rates per thousand population remain one of most important measures to track performance in this area. Essex continues to sit almost on the national trend line when comparing this rate as depicted in red in the graph below.



Victim Gender

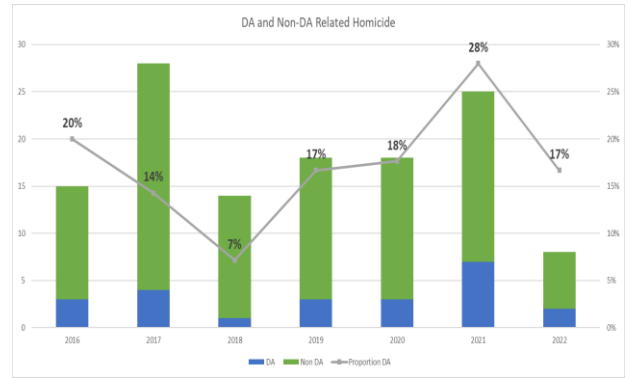
In 2021 the proportion of Male victims decreased significantly from 89% in 2020 to 68% (-21 percentage points). This shift in the ratio of male to female victims, was believed linked to an increase in inter-familial DA homicide during the COVID lockdown periods. 2022 is showing early signs of a re-balancing in line with previous ratios, although the data set is small.



DA Related Homicide

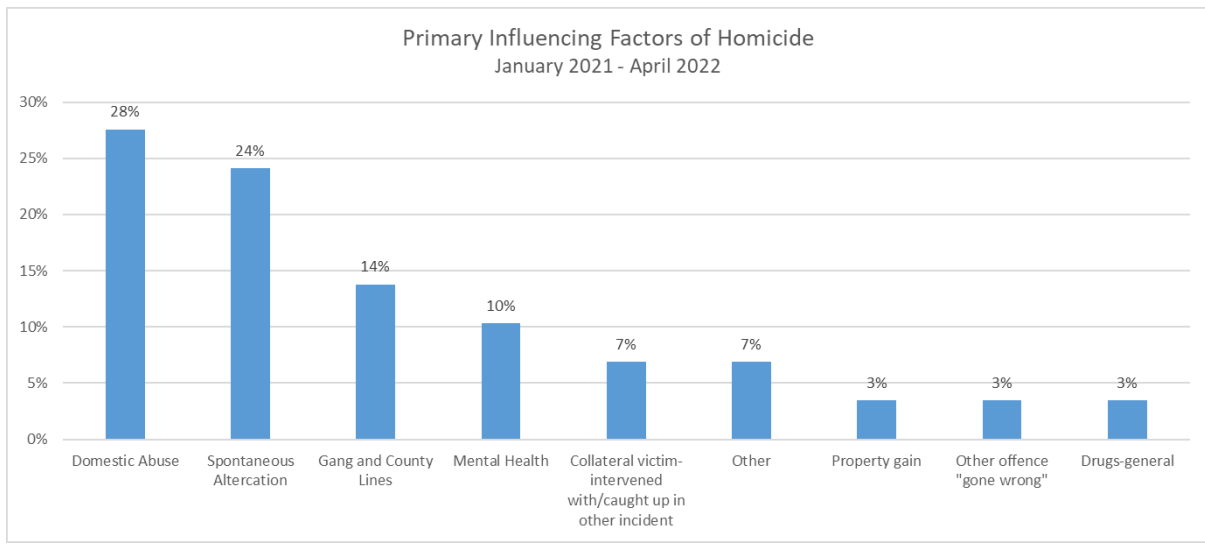
The proportion of Homicides that were DA related increased in 2021 to 28%, which may be due to reasons mentioned above.

In the first six months of 2022, the proportion of DA related Homicides is 17%, having fallen since 2021.



Primary Influencing Factors

The Homicide Prevention processes in Essex continue to develop our understanding of the key influencing factors (previously known as key drivers) behind our homicides. These are captured through a combination of professional judgement and analytical review. In the months between January 2021 to April 2022 the largest influencing factor of Homicide was Domestic Abuse (8 offences) followed by Spontaneous Altercations (7 offences) and Gang & County Lines (4 offences).



5.2 Home Office Homicide Data

As detailed in the last quarterly report, the Home Office have been utilising a number of criteria to identify forces as homicide outliers. There are 4 criteria (comparison against a 12 month 2019 baseline, last 6 months versus same period in previous year, national comparison per thousand population, and MSG comparison), of which forces with 3 flags out of a possible 4 identifying as outliers. Additionally, forces must have seen an increase in volumes of at least 5 offences in the last 6 months, Year on Year, to qualify as an outlier.

The table below shows the recent Essex performance against the criteria. Despite being categorised as an outlier earlier in 2022, mainly due to a low 2019 benchmark and high

incidents of homicide in the preceding 6 month period, it is anticipated that Essex will not flag in the coming months given the outlier criteria listed. This is a positive position which recognises the lower homicide rate in the early part of 2022.

Data as of End of June 2022:

Homicides			
12M April 22	12M June 19	Difference	Outlier Indicator Hit
27	15	12	Y
6M TY	6M LY	Difference	
15	11	4	N
Crimes Per 1000 pop	National Avg	Difference	
0.011	0.011	0.000	N
Crimes Per 1000 pop	MSG Avg	Difference	
0.011	0.009	0.002	N

5.3 Essex Police Homicide Prevention Approach

5.3.1 Homicide Prevention Strategy

The Essex Police approach to Homicide Prevention has continued to mature in the last quarter. A Homicide Prevention Strategy is in the process of being drafted which will set out the Essex Police approach, priorities and Governance arrangements. It is accepted that homicide is the tragic culmination of serious violence in a number of areas and as such the strategy will signpost where prevention work is being coordinated through other strategies and Governance boards.

The national Homicide Prevention framework is being developed through NPCC, and close liaison with the NPCC lead T/ACC Simon Wilson allows Essex Police to maximise the benefits of links to the national strategy and development of the 'whatworks toolkits'. The Essex strategy will focus on the key prevention priorities which have been identified through our detailed analysis and Homicide Prevention profile, and be aligned to the national framework within the following four areas:

- 1) Drugs – specifically including **County Lines** related violence and drug fuelled altercations
- 2) Serious Violence – including **Knife crime**, the **Night Time Economy**, **Gangs** and Youth Violence
- 3) Domestic Abuse
- 4) Vulnerability – specifically **Mental Health**

The strategy will recognise the strong Governance which remains in place, with the Homicide Prevention board chaired by T/ACC Glen Pavelin, holding strategic leads to account around development and coordination of prevention activity. The Homicide Action plan is monitored through this process and helps drive activity.

5.3.2 Homicide Prevention Rapid Debrief Process

Following the conclusion of a pilot phase, T/ACC Pavelin has agreed that the Homicide Prevention Rapid Debrief process will continue on a permanent basis due to the clear value it adds to Homicide Prevention. The process captures both near miss and some homicide offences where the Gold Commander proposes that there will be potential learning and prevention opportunities. ACC Pavelin is the final decision maker on which debriefs will proceed. Nine debriefs have now been conducted at the time of writing.

Debriefs continue to be expertly facilitated by the SCD Review Team who carry out research, coordinate the debrief meeting and facilitate the discussion. A growth bid is being considered to manage the increase in demand brought about by this process.

Coordination and Action Management

D/Supt Rob Kirby as the new Head of Major Crime now leads a subgroup to the Homicide Prevention board which manages the Homicide Prevention Rapid Debrief process. The working group will ensure actions are tracked and progressed in a timely fashion to ensure prevention opportunities are realised. D/Supt Kirby will also identify where actions linked to wider organisational learning need to be managed through an alternative force structure, such as the 'Learning the Lessons Board' or DA Governance processes.

Identified Learning

Early learning and emerging themes which has been identified by conducting a number of Rapid Debriefs include:

- Application of DVDS (Claire's Law)
- Holistic DA Risk Assessment
- Recognition of Coercive Control
- Multiple Offences linked to the same offender/differing OICs

The early identification of these issues has allowed for interventions to be developed with a number of themes already being progressed by the DA Strategic lead. Many of these issues have already been built into Flex training for frontline officers, as well affecting changes to procedures to improve our response.

5.3.3 Homicide Prevention Activity

This paper will provide updates on ongoing Homicide Prevention activity by exception to avoid duplication of existing reporting structures. Since the previous reporting period the following areas of note are being progressed:

Domestic Abuse

DAPST Update

The DA Problem Solving Teams continue to evolve and are moving to a more perpetrator problem solving focus with additional victim support provided from an enhanced IDVA service. Funding has been secured to achieve this and it is due to go live within the next 3 months. This structural change will be launched with a briefing event involving SETDAB partners, coinciding with an external media campaign, and a DAPST officer briefing event.

DA Cohorts

123 High Risk perpetrators were identified from DA cohort work which was developed following a DA homicide in early 2022 (Op Puffin). Many of these are now being proactively managed in DAPST, with more achievable under the new structure.

Building on this initial cohort work, a broader data set continues to be developed. A data engineer in the Performance Analysis Unit (PAU) is working full time on designing this data set which includes over 35 individual data sources which are weighted to provide a cohort score. The College of Policing evidence based policing lead, the NPCC and Home Office are interested in the approach.

The DA Strategic lead has approached the Home Office for funding for formal academic evaluation and the NPCC Homicide Prevention lead is supportive of the potential of additional funding through NPCC Homicide Prevention funding.

DAPO Pilot - Essex Police have now applied to be part of the DAPO pilot as previously reported and await the outcome which is due in September 2022.

DVDS – Claire’s Law - Following the outcome of a number of Rapid Debriefs a working group has been formed to attempt to increase proactiveness around the use of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme.

DA Suicide - There is significant interest at national level around the risk of victim suicide following Domestic Abuse and collation of figures as part of the national Domestic Abuse project. Within Essex Police this is being explored and will be considered through the DA Governance board structure.

DARA Model - A paper regarding the move to the DARA model was recently presented to the Chief Officer Group following which there was a request to expedite the timeline for implementation. The ambition is now to achieve a go live date on or before 30th January 2023.

Serious Violence

Knife Crime Violence Model/Fearless Futures

The Knife Crime Violence Model (KCVM) cohort is still awaiting the academic evaluation from the University of Essex before establishing if it can be expanded across wider parts of Essex. Hopefully a more detailed update can be provided at the next board.

Op Grip

£2.14 million of Op Grip funding has now been secured over the next 3 years to support the wider Op Nightshade serious violence challenge. This will support location-based hotspot policing to achieve greater violence reduction. It will allow focus on those violence flashpoints and a prompt response to concerns around serious violence.

Violence & Vulnerability Unit & SVU Prevent, Protect, Prepare Team (PPPT)

The PPPT continue to work with partners through their multiagency approach, supported by the Essex Violence & Vulnerability Partnership (including Probation, Reroute, Youth Offending Service, STARS (Open Road), YMCA, Justice and Care, and Housing). A new poster and leaflet campaign has been launched to encourage direct referrals into the team.

The Cuckooing procedure has now been rolled out and is live providing a partnership approach between the Community safety network, adult social care, housing, Health and the Police, to cuckooing issues.



LPA Tasking

Tasking leads are being supported by PPPT to identify those caught up in knife crime and serious violence to see where a partnership approach can assist and are being encouraged to submit bids through tasking for additional support.

Alcohol & Night Time Economy

Op Nightshade hotspot patrolling will continue to focus on areas of concern for serious violence, including flashpoints linked to the Night Time Economy.

During the summer period of higher demand, particularly in coastal hot spots, Op Union is being implemented to manage activity in Southend. This commitment to increased resourcing will include response to incidents linked to violence, alcohol and the Night Time Economy.

Vulnerability - Mental Health

Mental Health Cohorts

A paper was recently presented to the Chief Officer Group by D/Supt Natalia Ross regarding the proposed Mental Health Risk Management Board (MHRMB). This new multi-agency board will provide an avenue to discuss cohorts of High Risk Mental Health nominals. The Chief Officer Group were supportive of the concept and work is progressing to move this forward. Partnership engagement has already commenced with positive support at senior manager level and further engagement planned through DCC Prophet and the executive directors of EPUT, to seek strategic support.

The board is due to go live in October 2022 and will receive referrals of cohorts from the Performance Analysis Unit, will take outside referrals and will discuss planned S135 warrants, to ensure information is shared promptly.

In addition, a business case has been presented to the Strategic Change Coordination Board on 12th July 2022 regarding the introduction of a Mental Health Team who will coordinate and support the MHRMB, which will be funded through underspends until a formal growth bid in 2023/24.

5.4 NPCC: National Homicide Prevention Coordination

In early June 2022 the NPCC held a briefing for Heads of Crime to present some of their early work and progress around Homicide Prevention. A summary of the areas covered is included here:

Crime Recording changes - Move to record a homicide if it is “immediately apparent” as opposed to on the ‘balance of probabilities’ to improve data accuracy.

Recording of deaths - Nationally there will be a requirement for all sudden deaths to be formally recorded as a response to the Stephen Port murders in London. Essex is already compliance with this due to recording as non-crime Athena records.

Homicide Prevention Toolkit – Updated plans shared on the Homicide Prevention Toolkit which will be an IT solution accessed by the College of Policing website.

Updates were also provided on the Domestic Homicide Project, County Lines OP Orochi & Project Alpha, the National Drugs Strategy, Serious Violence Duty & Public Health Approach, Rapid Debriefs, including the work being undertaken in Essex.

5.5 NPCC Call for Practice – Visit to Essex Police

T/ACC Simon Wilson (NPCC) led a 'Call for Practice' to collate good practice across forces around Homicide Prevention profiles, analysis, strategies and innovation. As a result of the Essex response, the NPCC are visiting Essex in mid July 2022 to discuss the Homicide Prevention Raid Debrief process. This is an incredibly positive position which reflects that Essex are leading the way in our Homicide Prevention approach. A summary of the visit will be included in the next reporting period.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

6.1 Scrutiny & Governance

The strong Governance processes remain in place through the Homicide Prevention board and quarterly reporting, and has been bolstered in recent weeks with the Rapid Debrief working group.

The Homicide Prevention Strategy will set out the wider arrangements and links to other scrutiny and Governance processes. Future reporting will include the completed strategy.

7.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

Future development will focus on the completion of the Homicide Prevention Strategy, which will provide the framework to set out our Governance arrangements for Homicide Prevention and signpost the relevant prevention work that is being undertaken in key areas in Essex Police.

The ongoing development of cohorts continues with additional rigour around academic evaluation being established in due course.

The ability to use this cohort data to impact on prevention activity will be incorporated into the Mental Health Risk Management board as it continues to evolve, and future reports will provide updates on progress.

8.0 Risks/Mitigation

There are no formally recorded risks in relation to Homicide Prevention. It is however worth noting that there is a residual risk that despite extensive work to prevent serious violence in key areas, homicide numbers can vary. There is a risk that the volume of homicide could continue to fluctuate despite focused efforts on prevention.

It is also of note that the rapid debrief process is generating a vast number of actions and there is a risk around ensuring that there is appropriate resourcing to facilitate and manage the process. This is mitigated by the establishment of the Rapid Debrief working group and consideration of growth for the SCD Review Team.

9.0 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

There are no specific identified impacts on equality, diversity or human rights, however Homicide analysis continues to monitor ethnicity to ascertain any levels of disproportionality on homicide victims. This will be re visited against newer Census material in due course. Likewise, disproportionality in the development of cohorts is also being considered by the PAU.

10.0 Health and Safety Implications

None.

Homicide Investigations 2022						
	Investigation	Date	Location	Influencer(s)	Outcome	Details
1	Op Rain	2 nd Jan 22	Tilbury	Mental Health	Solved - Charged	At 2144hrs Police were called to Basildon hospital for a report of a male with a stab injury to his chest. During the investigation it has transpired that the suspect CURTIN has mental health and had been fixated with the victims 17-year-old daughter and had been sending messages of a sexual and threatening nature to her. CURTIN was arrested and gave a pre-prepared statement stating he was responsible for the stabbing but stated he was acting in self-defence. He has been charged and remanded and the murder weapon seized.
2	Op Puffin	1 st Feb 22	Chelmsford	Domestic Violence Mental Health	Solved - Charged	At 16:13hrs Police were called to an address in Chelmsford following concerns for welfare and possible domestic abuse. Police forced entry and found the victim and suspect at the address. The victim appears to have been stabbed several times and possibly strangled. She is a Canadian national and came to the UK in Sept 21. Suspect has DV history but not with this victim. Suspect has made admission on BWV.
3	Op Chat	12 th Feb 22	Harlow	Alcohol Domestic Violence	Solved - Charged	Relates to the murder of Paul Searing (Bn: 1964) by his wife Rebecca Searing (Bn: 1970). Ambulance reported fatal stabbing of PS at the couple's home address in Harlow. RS had contacted Ambulance

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						advising that she had stabbed her husband during an argument and believed he was dead. RS was subsequently arrested, making significant comments. She was later charged with the murder of PS. Some DA history – last in 2016 when PS was charged (albeit subsequently case dropped) with ABH on RS.
4	Op Noiler	13 th Feb 22	Southend	Drugs	Solved – Charged	Murder of Paul MAY at 488a London Road, Westcliff. The deceased was found under a pile of blankets with catastrophic head injuries caused by a hammer. There was evidence of some drug use at the premises but the exact motive still unclear. Neighbour reports seeing occupant, Abir MIAR, leaving the address by taxi at 5:00am the same morning. He was arrested on 15/02/22. Clothing and the weapon found at his mother's and forensics linked to both suspect and the victim.
5	Op Yarborough	5 th April 2022	Brentwood	Drugs Alcohol	Solved – Charged	Murder of Lee Murrell at 3a Warley Hill, Warley, Brentwood. EP received a call via Police in Ireland from the niece of the suspect. She had received a video call from her uncle who said that he had killed someone and showed her the body. EP attended and found the victim and suspect in the flat which was above a shop in Warley. Suspect - Jevgenijs LAPKOVSKIS (DOB:17/05/1985) made significant comments but refused an account in interview. PM showed a number of head and face injuries. Traces of cocaine and alcohol in the property but no obvious motive to date.

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6	Op Mango	28 th April 2022	Lakeside, Thurrock	Dispute – chance meeting	Solved – charge	Murder of Michael Ugwa at Lakeside, Thurrock. Around 1630hrs Emergency Services were called to the food hall. The victim was with two friends when an altercation took place with a second group consisting of two males and a female. After an altercation with S3, S1 is seen on CCTV to stab the victim once approaching from behind; the victim died at the scene despite medical intervention. There was no previous contact or knowledge between parties and this appears to be a chance altercation.
7	Op Napier	1 st May 2022	Harlow	Dispute – Neighbour	Unsolved – suspect on bail	Manslaughter of Alfred Bates (born 1948). EP called at 21:23hrs to a report of a male who had been punched and gone into cardiac arrest. He died at the scene. The altercation followed a neighbour dispute (only one previous report to EP in Dec 21). 3 others had been arrested for GBH on the suspect who suffered a laceration to his arm.
8	Op Monument	1 st June 2022	Colchester	Domestic Violence	Solved - Charged	Police received a call from a member of the public, stating he has seen the defendant covered in blood, who was saying he believes he has just killed his wife. The victim was found in the kitchen with a fatal knife wound to her neck. The suspect had two stab wounds to his abdomen and was claiming self-defence. The investigation and scene assessment suggests that he was a jealous and controlling partner and that his injuries appeared self-inflicted.