



i This document intends to provide a summary overview of the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) that will be operated in Coventry and Wolverhampton. The contents of this document are accurate at the time of writing (24/11/22) but will be subject to change over time. Please check with Chief Inspector Daryl Lyon (daryl.lyon@westmidlands.police.uk) for any changes and the latest version reference.

Introduction

The CIRV programme has been refined over several areas globally starting with the Boston Ceasefire programme (USA) in the 1990's in response to high levels of firearm homicides perpetrated by gang and youth violence. In the Boston programme, academics and law enforcement officials came together to deliver a group centric programme which resulted in significant (over 50% reduction) in firearm homicides and associated violence. The intervention was termed "group violence intervention (GVI)" and focussed entirely on the consequences to groups engaged in gang criminality but didn't deal with individuals in isolation. This type of intervention has many different possible operating models and is grouped under the term 'focussed deterrence'.

The programme later moved to Cincinnati where it became the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) this time the programme was refined to include both group work as well as individual support for those engulfed in gang violence. Both Cincinnati and Boston saw sizable reductions in gang violence during the intervention period.

With the emergence of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in the mid 2000's the East End of Glasgow was subject to a CIRV styled intervention. This was again refined for use in the UK from the USA model and ran for several years, was independently evaluated and shown to produce large reductions in violent offending and homicides with reductions over 40% observed. The programme was different again however as there was a focus on multi-agency collaboration, group and individual working. All of the above programmes whilst different, share similar principles in that (with the exception of Boston) there is a focus on pulling the various levers that lead to change in terms of both deterrence and opportunity. There is also a strong group focus so for instance when a gang attack occurs a message is perpetuated to the group that the matter will not be tolerated as well as the individuals directly connected.

In 2019 Northamptonshire Police took on the CIRV methodology for the first time in England embedding it successfully. The programme is still in operation at the time of writing and has several additional innovative functions such as a 24/7 on call, embedded psychological understanding and application, a base within a Community Interest Company (CIC) and a real focus on connection to opportunity via a teachable/ reachable moment. These aspects of the programme are unique to Northamptonshire CIRV. This programme has seen a 40% reduction in offending (when compared 6 months before vs 6 month after intervention) and has been independently evaluated by the College of Policing as being a successful intervention. (1)

In its purest sense, CIRV is a mechanism for identifying risk accurately, being there when it matters (reachable moment) and then sequences interventions that are more often than not already commissioned and then to place the young person into an actual opportunity. The programme is holistic and focusses on the needs of the referred person as opposed to that agency's obligations to that person (such as an education or criminal

justice need). This factor is again unique and furthermore the programme helps make sense of the complex partnership world around the referred person and makes best use of statutory and non-statutory services.

CIRV West Midlands



CIRV West Midlands will be operated over at least a 28-month period from circa April 2023 – August 2025 and is supported by a £2m Home Office Fund with approximately £4m in match funding from West Midlands Police as well as an additional £1m for evaluation.

Coventry and Wolverhampton have been selected to run a CIRV in each city. The programme structure will be identical in design in each locality but will be evaluated independently from each other. The Home Office (via the Youth Endowment Fund) has commissioned a 3 – 5 year evaluation of the programme which will be very detailed and provide long term outcomes of this type of programme, something which is missing internationally. These programmes therefore will be the most intensively evaluated programmes of any focussed deterrence model anywhere internationally.

Programme Outline

CIRV is primarily designed to engage anyone of any age and connect them to an exit pathway from gangs, violence and county lines. It also coordinates disruptive functions for those who are primarily adults who have been referred, who are criminally active yet fail or refuse to engage.

Step 1: Referral

CIRV is uniquely accessible and unlike any other programme of support. It can be accessed via an online portal (the website is standalone and not linked to any statutory agency in order to promote neutrality), a mobile phone by voice, via text or WhatsApp facilities 24/7 – 365. The phone is staffed at all times so a referral can be made to an actual person anytime. In terms of who can refer this can be anyone. A concerned parent, the individual at risk themselves, schools, police, partners, whomever has a concern about an individual.

After the referral has been received, if the individual referred is under the age of 18 then a family support worker (who works for CIRV) is dispatched to visit the home address of the individual referred so that consent can be obtained for the intervention, so the intervention can be explained to family and to triangulate any concerns from the referrer. This visit will be tasked within 24 hours of receiving the referral. In 85% of occasions consent is obtained when the family are spoken to by the family support workers. The message is one of support, not challenge and wanting to get a better future for the person referred.

Step 2: Multi-Agency Triage

As soon as the family has consented (or in some cases where there is an absence of consent but an overriding safeguarding need) the individual is then discussed at this triage meeting with the objective to discover as much relevant information as possible to make an informed decision reference programme requirement. As part of the triage discussion we will have systems access to social care, early help services, education inclusion, health and police data as well as the initial referral form and the family support worker in the discussion who has actually met the family.

The meeting then rich pictures the position the referred person and their family. A collective decision is made with regards to overall risk by those in attendance and whether or not CIRV is required. If CIRV is not required the outcome is either referral to a single agency to manage or an NFA outcome if the risk is sufficiently low although the latter option is very rare.

Step 3: CIRV Offer

Next a Navigator is assigned who will approach the referred person and try to engage them with CIRV. More often than not, the referred person is not receptive to this offer due to previous experiences with professionals and or not being ready to or accepting of life change at this stage. The Navigator is a Police Officer who is uniquely trained and experienced in advanced psychological techniques from hostage and crisis negotiation as well as themes from the Chimp Paradox. The job of the navigator is principally to develop and establish a mutual trust-based relationship with the referred person. If the offer is refused then CIRV will place a marker on the Police National Computer (PNC), the hospital system (if available) and the police intelligence system with these systems flagging in real time where they come to any of those systems attention.

Step 4: Teachable/ Reachable Moment

CIRV forensically scans in real time for teachable and reachable moments and it does this 24/7, 365. Anyone referred into CIRV where a decision has been made to support, then if they are for instance arrested anywhere in England or Wales at any time of the day or night then by virtue of the marker on PNC the officer arresting/ coming into contact with that person will call the phone number on PNC which is the on-call phone. An assessment will be made by the on-call officer and in most cases, this will necessitate a visit to the person arrested whilst in custody at the appropriate moment (usually nearing the conclusion of the period in custody so we may convey them back). The same will be true in the event of a visit to hospital with a suspicious injury and or new intelligence coming into the police. The navigator visiting will then outline to the young person an alternative plan out of their circumstances (but CIRV will not interfere with the criminal justice outcome). This is by working with the navigator to work towards a positive future, that they themselves as the referred person dictates. To maximise the opportunity of success the navigator is selected on their ability to effectively communicate, form genuine trust-based relationships and problem solve. As mentioned previously, Navigators are also trained in the application of advanced psychological techniques to encourage and support engagement. This process of visiting at a reachable or teachable moment is repeated until engagement is established. This method of engaging in a reachable moment is extremely effective and will be repeated as many times as is necessary over months if not years to achieve engagement.

Step 5: Relationship Building

The primary job of the Navigator is to now establish a relationship with the referred as they are now engaging. This is a crucial stage and can not be rushed. It is important that in the beginning, that the Navigator goes above and beyond to prove they are reliable and there for the referred person. They must do this through swift and effective action to social proof that they are there to support them and they will do things not just talk about it. We will use techniques from police negotiators as well as the Chimp Paradox to develop the relationship in an effective and consistent way. Only once a relationship is established can we move to the next phase. This can take time and the Navigator has to be patient and understanding. Eventually, the referred person does what is asked of them, by their navigator because there is a relationship between the two. The programme is relatively unique in this aspect as there is a focus on human to human interaction to initiate and maintain change not just process. The Navigator makes it clear at all times that they are a Police Officer (although always in plain clothes) and that their role is to work with them to help them make their own decisions, not to make decisions for them. The Navigators job therefore is to lay out their choices for them.

Step 6: Progress Towards an Identified Objective

When ready, the Navigator will arrange for the referred person to see one of CIRV's in house specialist careers advisors. The purpose of this meeting is to identify what the referred person may want to do with their life and set some clear objectives and direction. Once this has happened, the 'Opportunities Finder' which is again a CIRV position, will then seek to find that actual job or opportunity for the young person. For example, if the referred person wants to be a mechanic, the Opportunities Finder will then work with local business leveraging on their corporate social responsibility to offer an actual job to that person (when they are ready for it). They may be at this stage some way off being employment or education ready however if they meet the requirements of the vacancy in time then that job will be theirs. This then becomes the mandate for the referred

person and Navigator to work on whatever may be required to get them to be ready for this position/opportunity (which may be in an education or work setting or some other objective relevant to the referred person). It is important however that the objective is one that the young person themselves sets.

Step 7: Sequencing

One of the most crucial roles of CIRV is to sequence the various interventions and make sense of them for the referred person and ensure that they are consistent with and pursuant of the objective set. For instance, there is often conflict in terms of being consistent towards an objective when several agencies are involved. The school may be looking to apply a therapeutic intervention at the same time housing may be pursuing an eviction and the police may be doing something entirely different again. All of these aspects are operating independently (unless a social worker is perhaps already involved) and so a primary role of the Navigator is to identify all those involved with the family and take ownership to ensure they are all aware of each other and their role in the young persons life. The Navigator must influence and lead where appropriate to ensure that there are no presenting obstacles from the agencies involved. The Navigator may also need to decide when and why to bring in certain intervention's dependant on any set backs or relationship issues with providers. The stage is one of the most crucial as there are many different interdependencies and relationships to manage for this to be effective. The referred person needs to understand their journey and need to feel that effective progress is being made towards their objective if they are likely to continue to work with the Navigator. Progress is regularly checked with the young person and how they feel about progress, including effective diagnostic measuring tools. It should be noted that no matter what the young person needs it is the job of the Navigator to resolve that need *with* the young person, not to or for.

Step 8: Placement and Deselection

The Navigator will work to then place the referred person into their chosen and identified opportunity as identified by the opportunities finder and confirmed by the referred person. This handover may take some time as the Navigator will ensure that the client is settled and happy before stepping back and it is only when the client is happy that we will do this. Once all parties are content that the transition into the placement is successful the referred person is voluntarily deselected from the programme but will remain supported for as long as is required. There are no arbitrary time scales for this to happen it will vary person to person and only happen at the right time.



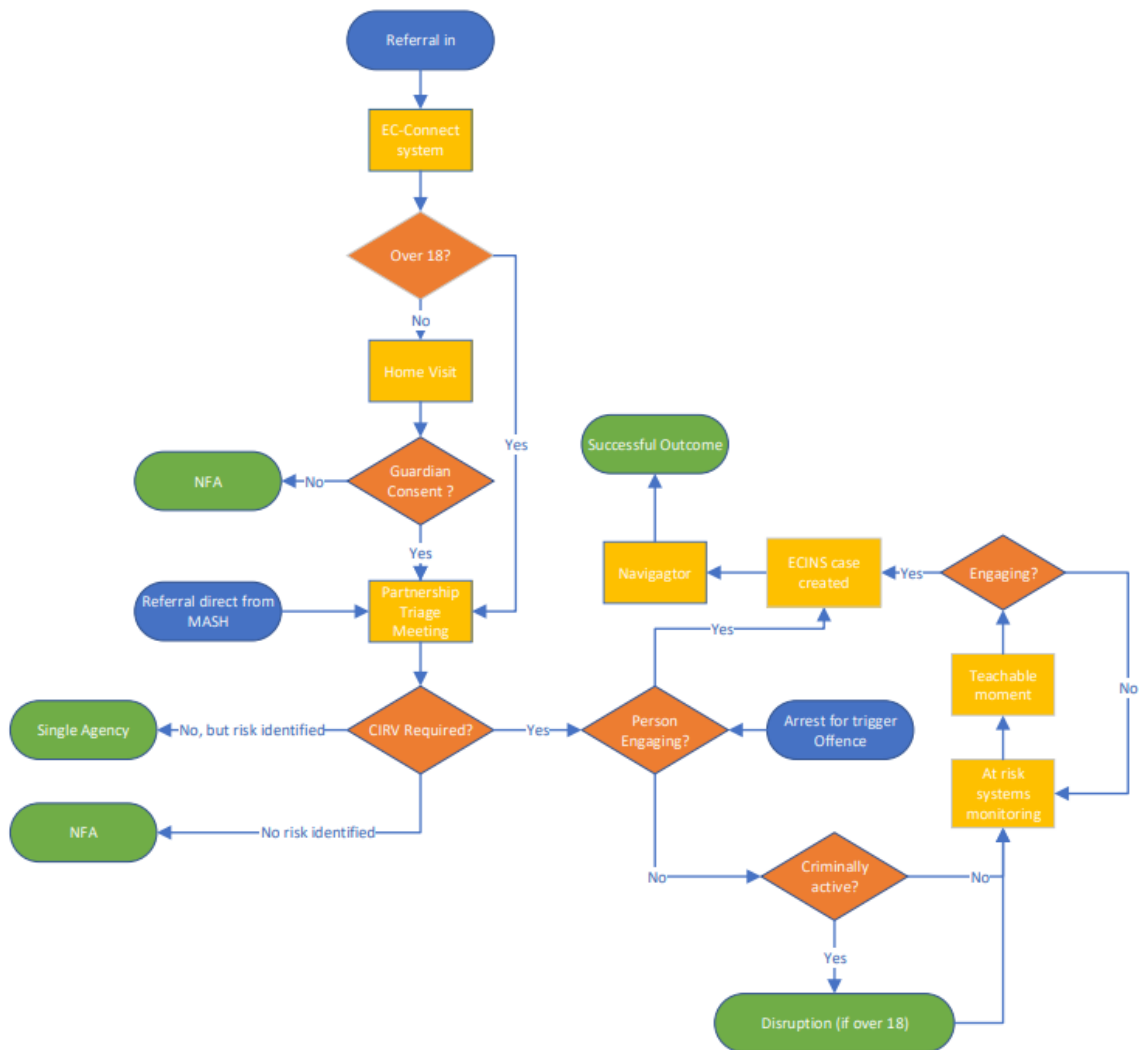
Where an adult refuses to engage with the programme they will be handed over to the proactive policing teams where they will be disrupted as they are choosing to continue to engage in criminality. CIRV always remains open to them as a choice providing they are willing to comply to GPS tagging as this is an entry requirement for an adult but discretionary for a young person.

Independent Evaluation

Several CIRV programmes internationally have been independently evaluated as per the appendix 1 and 2 on this document. However, there is a gap in long term and detailed evaluation which examines cause and effect of the programme. The various evaluations nationally however point to an outcome rate of approximately 40% reductions in violence when comparing 6 months pre to 6 months post intervention (NB: Northamptonshire Police who continue to run this programme still sees these outcomes even today). The independent evaluation from Glasgow can be found under appendix 2 at the end of this document. The Home Office via the Youth Endowment Fund is evaluating 5 sites nationally (Coventry and Wolverhampton being 2 of these) over 3 – 5 years with a significant investment of time and expertise to definitively prove the effectiveness of the CIRV approach. The exact detail of the content and methods of the evaluation criteria are at the time of writing yet to be refined and confirmed. The programme hopes however to prove long term recidivism and reductions in costs for statutory agencies amongst other outcomes. Appendix 3 details the Youth Endowment Funds website which references several of the programmes afore mentioned including Northamptonshire.

Process Flows

i The below diagram details the envisaged process flows for a child or adult entering the programme



Appendices

- (1) [Community Initiative to Reduce Violence \(CIRV\): Key findings and implications for practice \(college.police.uk\)](https://college.police.uk)
[Vulnerability and Violent Crime Programme: Independent evaluation of Community Initiative to Reduce Violence \(CIRV\) \(college.police.uk\)](https://college.police.uk)
- (2) https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi5xKvokrv7AhVSUMAKHR2eDUsQFnoECA4QAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.svrucollege.police.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2020%2F02%2FCIRV_2nd_year_report.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0vkWOimeXWav_ZlbBLi3et

(3) Focused deterrence - Youth Endowment Fund