

Knife Angel impact report

Following a successful bid by the North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), the Knife Angel's visit to North Somerset was secured for the month of May 2024 as part of a nationwide tour to highlight the issue of violent crime. The iconic 27-foot-tall statue was created from over 100,000 knives and blades confiscated by 43 police forces across the UK. It was designed by Alfie Bradley at the British Ironwork Centre (BIC) as a national monument against violence and aggression and moves to a new host location in the UK each calendar month.

After securing the dates for North Somerset, planning got underway to host the Knife Angel in the Italian Gardens, Weston-super-Mare. This saw the formation of a working group with partners and community groups from across North Somerset working collectively to identify opportunities to maximise the impact of hosting the statue. Supported by partner agencies, big corporations and small businesses too, costs associated with Knife Angel's time in North Somerset were funded, supported or donated by the generosity of those working and living in North Somerset.

The North Somerset VRP worked to curate a month-long programme throughout the Knife Angel's time in North Somerset to maximise the awareness of key messaging around violence and knife crime. The Knife Angel's time in North Somerset was treated as a catalyst for conversation, with events and projects to engage as many different parts of the community as possible before, during and after May 2024.

In collaboration with Weston College, Level 3 graphic design course students were tasked with designing a logo and brand identity concepts as part of a live client brief for Knife Angel's time in North Somerset. Ryan Abrahams, Level 3 graphic design course student from Weston College, created the winning design. The winning design was used on all communications, literature, social media and later featured on merchandise, giving Knife Angel's visit to North Somerset a true identity.



For more information please scan or visit:
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/knifeangel

  @knifeangelnorthsomerset



In March 2024, North Somerset VRP collaborated with Alliance Homes to establish a metalwork project with young people. Working with WTF Workshops, young people from Voyage Learning Campus in Weston were given the opportunity to design and create a metal sculpture, which has more recently been named the Beacon of Hope. The sculpture was inspired by Knife Angel's then pending visit to Weston and once complete, was put on display in The Sovereign throughout May. The sculpture will be permanently displayed in the Southward area of Weston soon.

In preparation for Knife Angel's visit, North Somerset VRP launched a 'Design a Superhero for Peace' poster competition for primary age young people in year groups 3-6. The competition was sent to 64 primary schools in North Somerset and winners for each year group category were presented with a ride wristband donated by The Grand Pier, along with Knife Angel merchandise. Not only was this an opportunity to engage primary age children in thinking about safety and peace, it also provided the opportunity to inform teachers, parents and carers about the Knife Angel's then pending arrival.

In April 2024, Weston College carpentry students supported North Somerset VRP by creating a wooden memorial sculpture, providing space for members of the public to leave their reflections and messages. Not only did this project provide a live brief for the students involved, it was also an opportunity to brief the students and staff on the wider context of the month of awareness and hosting of Knife Angel, creating conversations and awareness before the statue arrived.

The Knife Angel arrived in Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset before sunrise on 1 May 2024 and was installed in around 90 minutes. Working with Renew, a community group based in Weston, a wooden fence using upcycled materials was secured around the base of the statue and uplighters installed for night illumination. Throughout the month, hundreds of photos of the Knife Angel during the day and during hours of darkness were shared on social media, with visitors coming to see the statue around the clock.

Later that day, the Knife Angel was officially welcomed to North Somerset with a short opening ceremony in the afternoon. The ceremony featured the following speeches:

- Rob Beckley, the High Sheriff of Somerset, spoke about the importance of education and raising awareness in tackling knife crime
- Emma Webber, whose son Barnaby was tragically fatally stabbed, shared her personal story and a powerful message against knife crime
- Councillor James Clayton, North Somerset Council's executive member for safety in the community, told the history of the Knife Angel statue.

The opening ceremony was described as 'moving', with the High Sheriff leading a minute's silence to remember those who have lost their lives to knife crime and violent crime before Emma Webber tied the first memorial ribbon to the fence in memory of her son, Barnaby. Other attendees then followed, creating a powerful visual memorial that was added to over the month, with over 2,100 ribbons, provided free of charge by the volunteer hub, tied by members of the public by the end of May.





The Grand Pier further supported our statue ribbon tie, by hosting their own on the pier boardwalk throughout May. Both ribbon ties provided an opportunity for the public to pay their respects, remember or reflect.

The statue's visit was accompanied by a month of action, delivered by the North Somerset VRP and other organisations. This included educational workshops, school assemblies, community awareness days and art projects – all with the joint purpose to raise awareness and increase conversation and reporting around violence and knife crime.

Throughout the month of May, over 85,000 people passed through Italian Gardens where the Knife Angel stood, with visitors from all over the country and the world including Germany, Dubai and USA.

To best engage and inform members of the public visiting Knife Angel, North Somerset VRP made a pledge to form a volunteer hub throughout the hosting month, successfully forming a pool of volunteers. A total of 23 community volunteers joined the team of 28 'lead' volunteers from our key partner agencies who gave up their time to form the hub, and collectively completed over 800 hours of volunteering throughout the month. Volunteers staffed the hub between 9am and 6pm every day, with security looking after the statue between 6pm and 9am the next day.

Volunteers were asked to capture key conversations, reflections and moments during their shifts, including places visitors had travelled from to see the statue.





- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Bristol | 14 Plymouth |
| 2 Redcar | 15 Trowbridge |
| 3 Torbay | 16 Middlesbrough |
| 4 Leicester | 17 Merthyr Tydfil |
| 5 Cardiff | 18 Shepton Mallet |
| 6 Stratford-upon-Avon | 19 Congresbury |
| 7 Devon | 20 Liverpool |
| 8 Burnham-on-Sea | 21 Radstock |
| 9 Glastonbury | 22 Clevedon |
| 10 London | 23 Swindon |
| 11 Bridgwater | 24 Wiltshire |
| 12 Cornwall | 25 Solihull. |
| 13 South Shields | |



Other visitors came from further afield, including Germany, Dubai and United States.

Volunteers engaged with many members of the public, distributing 2,000 stickers to children visiting with families and an estimated 700 students who visited with their education provision – most from North Somerset, but other areas too including Glastonbury, Bristol and Bridgwater. Below we've shared the stories of some of the visitors who came to see the Knife Angel.

- A young girl from Leicester was told by her teacher about Knife Angel being in Weston and visited to take a photo, to show her teacher on the Monday - she said her school had held a lesson about the statue during the week before her visit.
- Two teenagers from Burnham-on-Sea cycled to Weston to see the statue. When asked why they felt young people currently carry knives, they said they think it's because young people feel they need protection. They were given information by volunteers about Fearless and reporting knife crime.
- One man shared his story having moved from London to Weston for treatment. He is now in a dry house, completing community service and volunteering in his local church supporting others going through treatment. He shared experiences of previous gang and drug involvement in London and how he's changed his life, having seen the consequences of crime and violence first hand including life-changing injuries. He praised Knife Angel's visit to Weston to raise awareness around knife crime.
- One volunteer spoke with a nurse who said the amount of trauma care they are giving in hospitals with regard to knife crime is 'huge'. He said young people who have been harmed in 'trophy-stabbings' are often given stoma bags with life-changing effects.
- One lady travelled on 4 buses over 3 hours to see Knife Angel in Weston and described the statue as amazing, thought provoking and moving.

During Knife Angel's hosting period, North Somerset VRP created a reflection space in The Sovereign, near to where Knife Angel stood. This space held various displays, including entries and winners from the primary poster competition and from the first 'Consequences of Knife Crime' photography competition. The space within the shopping centre also displayed the Knife Torch (owned and created by the British Ironwork Centre alongside the Knife Angel) in a glass cabinet kindly lent to the VRP by local garage, Mercedes. The wooden sculpture created by Weston College also sat here, providing a place for the public to reflect and leave messages of remembrance – a total of 579 tags were written and tied to our Knife Angel memorial sculpture during May.

Knife Angel merchandise featuring the winning logo design was created, including magnets, pencils, keyrings, and trolley tokens. Volunteers sold the items to the public throughout May from a bespoke cabinet made by a local carpenter. A total of £4,074.64 was raised from merchandise sales and donations, forming the North Somerset Knife Angel legacy fund. This funding will be managed by North Somerset VRP and will support projects and education in North Somerset in relation to young people and serious violence.

As well as hosting a poster competition, North Somerset VRP launched two public photograph competitions. The first Consequences of Knife Crime, asked entrants to think about how knife crime affects communities and to capture this in a photograph. The second asked applicants to capture the Knife Angel whilst in Weston, with two categories - under 18 and over 18. Local group A1 Camera Club supported us by writing the briefs and choosing the winners. The winners of all competitions were invited to either the opening or closing ceremonies and were presented with awards, kindly donated by Christopher's House of Chocolates, Mendip Activity Centre and The Grand Pier. Both photography competitions increased the platform for Knife Angel's time in Weston, creating more conversation and raising further awareness around violence and knife crime.

Throughout the hosting month, North Somerset VRP promoted the existing knife surrender bin at Weston Town Hall, less than 500m from where Knife Angel stood. Between 1 May and 20 August, a total of 370 weapons were surrendered a significant increase on previous months.



During May 2024, over 4,000 North Somerset secondary school students were reached through our Knife Angel assemblies, which gave information on Knife Angel key messaging and how to report knife crime, promoted key events throughout the hosting month and encouraged young people and staff to visit Knife Angel.

228 North Somerset secondary school students were reached during May through the Blunt Truth sessions: groundbreaking hour-long sessions, which aim to educate young people on the possible consequences of carrying a knife, what to do if a friend or family member is stabbed and encourages them to report what they know to their school, police or anonymously via Fearless.org. The sessions were attended by professionals from North Somerset VRP, Avon and Somerset Police, Avon Fire and Rescue Service and the Army. Feedback gathered found 87% of students said they would report someone carrying a weapon following the Blunt Truth session.

In collaboration with St Giles Trust, an online parent awareness webinar focused on County Lines and knife crime was held free of charge, with 61 parents and carers registered. This provided an opportunity to engage with and educate parents and carers of young people within North Somerset.

Throughout May, North Somerset VRP offered space next to Knife Angel between 12 and 3pm, as an opportunity to further engage the public. Partner agencies were offered a weekday space as an opportunity to promote their support provision and signpost the public to support.

At weekends, local groups and diversionary projects such as boxing, football and running clubs were offered the opportunity to promote their groups, with the aim of encouraging young people to get involved in diversionary activities.

To further engage more of the public and different age groups, North Somerset VRP co-ordinated an art trail around Weston town centre. Reaching out to members of the community through our social media pages, five volunteers came forward to create 'Window Wings' using glass chalk paint pens in five locations in the town centre, all walkable from the Knife Angel. Weston Town Council kindly supported by creating a trail map which was distributed by local businesses and the volunteer hub. The wings looked beautiful and created additional interest for visitors coming to the town, as well as promoting Knife Angel in North Somerset and associated key messaging.

Whilst the Knife Angel was positioned in Weston, North Somerset VRP wanted to maximise the reach of messaging and information across the district. The VRP held several community days in other parts of North Somerset, to promote Knife Angel in Weston and share key messaging. These events were supported by Avon and Somerset Police neighbourhood teams, Avon and Somerset police cadets and Avon Fire and Rescue Service.





On the evening of Thursday 30 May, a closing ceremony was held to conclude the hosting period and month of awareness; an opportunity to reflect. The ceremony began at a memorial ribbon tie on The Grand Pier's boardwalk, with attendees taking part in a short candlelit procession through The Sovereign to collect the Knife Torch before arriving at the Italian Gardens, where the Knife Angel stood. The crowd heard from four speakers:

- Clare Moody, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, reflecting on North Somerset's month of awareness.
- Inspector Lee Kerslake, Avon and Somerset Police, looking at Knife Angel's legacy in North Somerset and moving forward.
- Jubriel Hanid, brother of Mikhail Hanid, who was fatally stabbed in Weston in 2020, sharing his personal story and the importance of communication.
- James Oakley, Mendip Green Primary School headteacher, sharing his personal story after he gave emergency first aid to a stab victim while on holiday, and the importance of education.

Councillor Mike Bell, Leader of North Somerset Council, said: "The closing ceremony was a really powerful way for the local community to mark the Knife Angel's departure from North Somerset."

Attendees were invited to place LED tealights at the base of the Knife Angel, as a final act of remembrance.





625 129
61 415
1,126 20,400



20,000 79
6 91
532 n/a



6,900 13
7 19
177 n/a



6,200 6
7 12
96 n/a

Social media reach



2,100 5
6 12
58 n/a



4,800 28
10 39
340 n/a



16,000 1
3 13
67 4,100



12,000 568
18 724
3,409 10,800



98,000 381
5 363
1,497 140,000



2,100 5
5 14
81 n/a

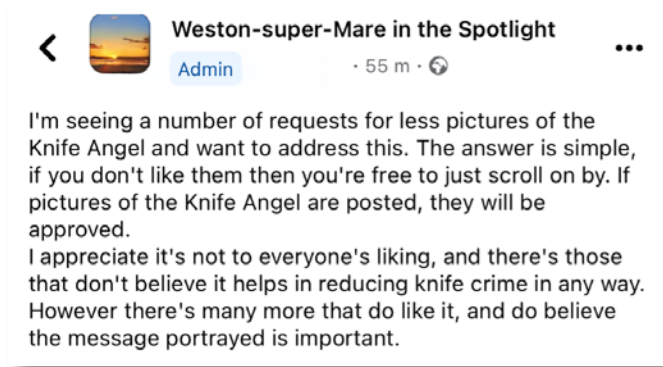


Weston-super-Mare in the Spotlight

47,000 636
17 245
3,475 n/a

Total following	Total posts on Knife Angel	Total positive reactions	Total comments	Total Shares	Total video reach
215,725	145	10,849	1,851	1,947	175,300

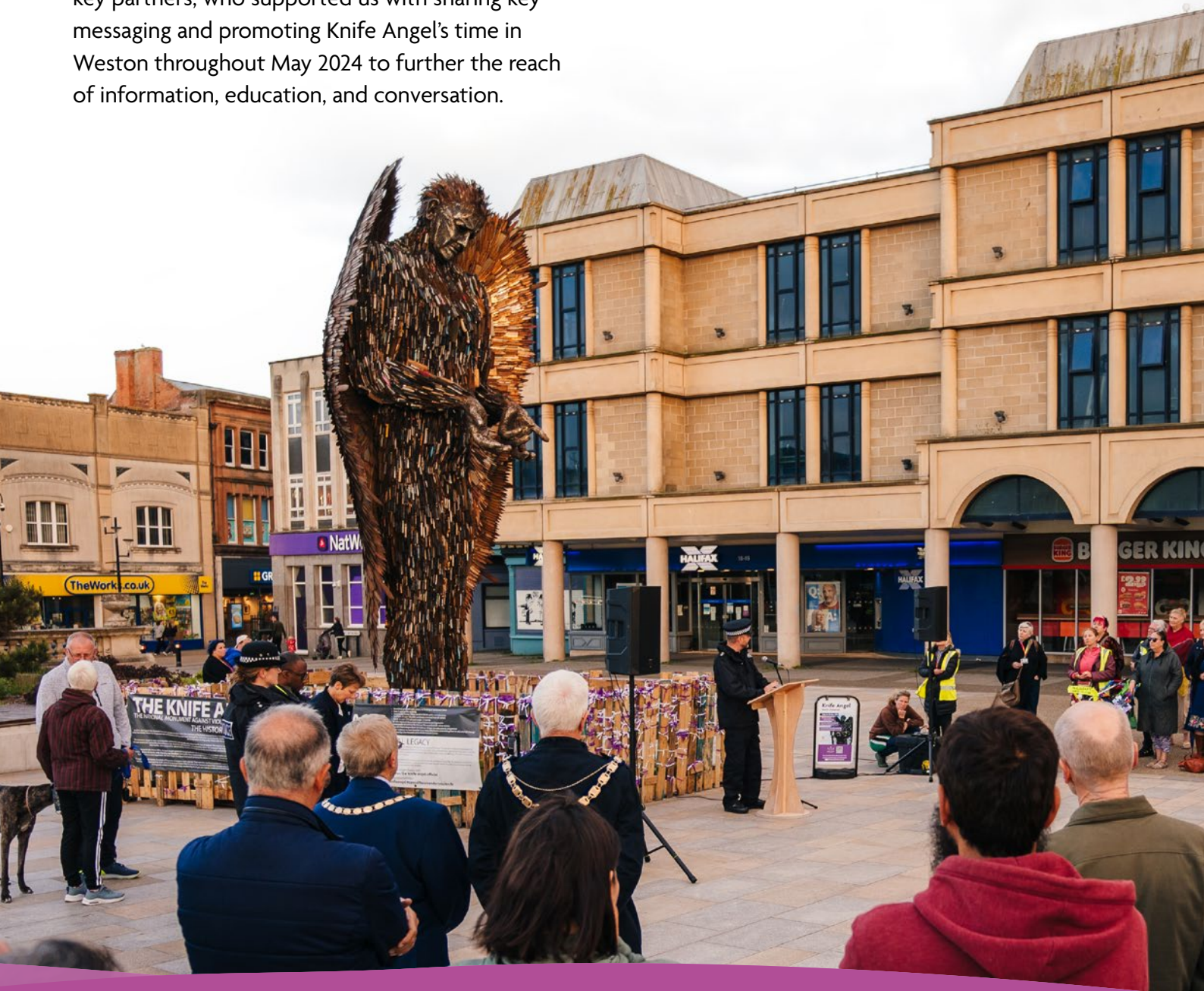
In one post on Facebook group 'Weston in the Spotlight', an admin wrote the following. The post gathered over 100 positive comments and 685 positive reactions:



Knife Angel in North Somerset featured on national TV such as This Morning (29 May). We had seven media enquiries connected to Knife Angel's visit, of which five were interview requests including a radio interview with BBC Radio Bristol on 30 May. Knife Angel's time in Weston generated approximately 44 news stories, from press outlets including BBC Online, the North Somerset Times and the Weston Mercury and featured in approximately 15 radio segments, on stations including BBC Radio Bristol and BBC Radio Somerset.

A dedicated Facebook page was created for the Knife Angel North Somerset and over the month, our posts were shared 415 times.

Social media 'takeover' content was created with key partners, who supported us with sharing key messaging and promoting Knife Angel's time in Weston throughout May 2024 to further the reach of information, education, and conversation.





Reflection, legacy and thank you

Reflecting on our month of awareness and hosting of Knife Angel, Councillor Mike Bell, Leader of North Somerset Council, said:

“During May, around 85,000 people walked past the statue in the Italian Gardens. We had visitors from as far afield as America, Dubai and Germany – as well as many from the south west, too.

“The statue’s visit was accompanied by a month of action, delivered by the North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) and other organisations. Throughout May, they spoke to 4,000 secondary students across North Somerset about the Knife Angel, what the statue represents and how to report knife crime. And 260 local students took part in Blunt Truth workshops, educating them on the dangers of knife crime and how they can report it.

“We also ran a variety of art competitions, such as the Superheroes for Peace poster competition – where local primary school students created their own superheroes for peace. All the artwork created as part of Knife Angel’s visit will be going on permanent display, as part of the legacy of Knife Angel’s time with us.

“Thank you to the over 50 volunteers who worked at the Knife Angel information hub seven days a week throughout May, providing information and support to visiting members of the public.



“Our Violence Reduction Partnership team will continue working closely with partner agencies to raise awareness about knife crime, educate young people and the local community, and provide support to those who need it.”

Using the Knife Angel legacy fund, a new knife surrender bin is being installed in Nailsea Police Station, giving North Somerset residents more opportunities to anonymously surrender weapons. Also funded by the legacy fund, 15 new bleed kits have been installed throughout North Somerset, designed to provide immediate, lifesaving intervention for individuals experiencing severe bleeding due to traumatic injuries.

The 579 messages left on the memorial sculpture and the 2,100 memorial ribbons tied to the fence will be used to create artwork that will be displayed as part of our Knife Angel legacy in North Somerset.

North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership would like to thank everyone involved in the preparation and delivery of Knife Angel and month of awareness throughout May 2024.