# Vale Green community lives in fear three years on from Joe Dix’s murder



Vale Green, situated in Mile Cross, has undergone a profound transformation in its community dynamics since the tragic murder of 18-year-old Joe Dix in January 2022. What was once a vibrant neighbourhood, united by communal barbecues and social gatherings, now finds its residents increasingly cautious and withdrawing into their homes. The atmosphere of fear and unease is palpable, particularly following the stabbing of another local teenager in Aylsham, a mere nine miles from Norwich, further heightening concerns about safety in the area.

Anita Snelling, a long-term resident who knew Joe, has taken personal security measures, installing CCTV and tightening her home’s defences with netting on her balcony to ward off unwanted intruders. “We used to have a community here where we'd all come out and have a barbeque in the yard but we don't do any of that anymore," she laments, indicating a significant shift in the social fabric of the estate. Her husband, Anthony, echoes her sentiments, noting that while added security brings them peace of mind, it is disheartening that such measures are now necessary.

The feelings of insecurity extend across the community. Linda Hewitt, a 77-year-old resident with decades in Vale Green, admits to keeping her doors locked at all times. “It’s just not safe beyond this area. Of course if anyone needed help we would but otherwise we just keep ourselves to ourselves,” she expresses, revealing a tragic shift from communal support to individual isolation. For Said Guenaoui, a father of two, the fear has fostered a protective instinct over his children, while others like Lynn Gillon perceive their sense of safety as dependent on their neighbours.

Behind the alarming rise in community fear lies the harrowing story of Joe Dix, who was tragically exploited by county lines gangs before his murder as part of a violent inter-gang conflict. The perpetrators—Cameron Palmer, Hans Beeharry, and Benjamin Gil—received over 60 years in prison for their roles in his death. Following this, Joe's parents, Phil and Emma Dix, established the Joe Dix Foundation to combat issues surrounding child exploitation and knife crime. Their journey, marked by personal loss, underscores an urgent mission to raise awareness and implement strategies to protect vulnerable youths from the clutches of gangs.

Recent statistics from the Office for National Statistics indicate a troubling trend in knife crime, which saw a total of 50,500 offences involving sharp instruments recorded in the year ending March 2024. While Norfolk has reported a 6.6 percent decrease overall, incidents still persist, affecting public perception of safety. The community remains scarred by past events, with violent incidents like the stabbing of Oliver Payne and a recent attack that left a 17-year-old facing attempted murder charges. In response to increasing youth violence, Norfolk police have initiated operations aimed at addressing and disrupting gang-related activities while focusing on prevention and early intervention strategies.

The Joe Dix Foundation, together with local authorities and community support networks, aims to combat these prevalent issues through education, awareness campaigns, and direct assistance to families affected by gang violence. This past month, Emma Dix shared their experiences and concerns at a community meeting, further galvanising local efforts to reduce knife crime. Furthermore, new legislation introduced in 2025 seeks to reinforce protections against child exploitation by criminal gangs, illustrating a concerted effort by lawmakers to address these urgent issues.

As the Vale Green community grapples with its shattered sense of security, the legacy of Joe Dix’s tragic story continues to inspire vital conversations around safeguarding the youth. The path forward will require collective awareness, community cohesion, and robust interventions to ensure that no child faces the same fate as Joe and that the spirit of the community can be restored.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25184248.people-vale-green-live-fear-three-years-joe-dix/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-norfolk-67009571)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25184248.people-vale-green-live-fear-three-years-joe-dix/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://joedixfoundation.co.uk/), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2024-03-02/grieving-family-warns-any-child-vulnerable-to-gang-exploitation)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25184248.people-vale-green-live-fear-three-years-joe-dix/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://joedixfoundation.co.uk/), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/feb/22/new-laws-england-wales-children-exploited-gangs-county-lines), [[6]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8jl40g8d33o.amp)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25184248.people-vale-green-live-fear-three-years-joe-dix/?ref=rss), [[7]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24519915.new-report-murder-norwich-teenager-joe-dix/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://joedixfoundation.co.uk/), [[6]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8jl40g8d33o.amp)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25184248.people-vale-green-live-fear-three-years-joe-dix/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://joedixfoundation.co.uk/> - The Joe Dix Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness about child criminal exploitation, knife crime, and gang culture in the UK. Established in memory of Joe Dix, who was tragically murdered in 2022, the foundation aims to educate young people on the dangers of these issues and provide support to those affected. Their mission includes promoting awareness, offering support to parents and carers, and providing first aid training to help prevent knife crime-related injuries. The foundation also organizes events and collaborates with other organizations to combat youth violence.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/feb/22/new-laws-england-wales-children-exploited-gangs-county-lines> - In February 2025, new legislation was introduced in England and Wales to protect children from exploitation by criminal gangs, particularly in the context of county lines drug operations. The law makes it a specific offence to use a child to commit criminal activity, with perpetrators facing up to a decade in prison. Additionally, child criminal exploitation prevention orders can be imposed to restrict the activities of suspected groomers. This legislative change aims to address the growing concern over the exploitation of vulnerable children by organized crime groups.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2024-03-02/grieving-family-warns-any-child-vulnerable-to-gang-exploitation> - The parents of Joe Dix, an 18-year-old who was murdered in a gang-related stabbing in Norwich in January 2022, have warned that any child could be vulnerable to exploitation by gangs. They emphasized that children from all backgrounds are at risk and highlighted the need for increased awareness and intervention to prevent such tragedies. Their message underscores the widespread nature of gang exploitation and the importance of community vigilance and support systems to protect young people.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-norfolk-67009571> - The BBC reported on the tragic case of Joe Dix, an 18-year-old from Norwich who was exploited by county lines drug dealers and subsequently murdered in January 2022. His parents, Emma and Phil Dix, have since established the Joe Dix Foundation to help others whose family members are exploited by drug gangs. The article sheds light on the challenges families face when dealing with the exploitation of their children and the importance of support systems and awareness in combating this issue.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8jl40g8d33o.amp> - In September 2024, Emma and Phil Dix, parents of the late Joe Dix, were invited to 10 Downing Street to participate in a roundtable event focused on tackling knife crime. As a result, they became part of the government's anti-knife crime coalition, aiming to halve knife crime rates within ten years. The coalition includes families affected by knife crime, experts, and campaign groups, working together to develop strategies and policies to address and reduce knife-related violence in the UK.
7. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24519915.new-report-murder-norwich-teenager-joe-dix/> - A report published by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) highlighted systemic failures in preventing serious youth violence following the murder of 18-year-old Joe Dix in Norwich. The review revealed missed opportunities and challenges faced by services in addressing the criminal exploitation of children. It emphasized the need for improved support systems and interventions to protect vulnerable young people from gang involvement and violence, underscoring the importance of coordinated efforts among agencies to safeguard children.