

Press release: Offensive Weapons Act receives Royal Assent

The Offensive Weapons Act has today (Thursday 16 May) received Royal Assent, bringing in tough new measures that strengthen law enforcement's response to violent crime.

The Act will make it illegal to possess dangerous weapons in private, including knuckledusters, zombie knives and death star knives, and will make it a criminal offence to dispatch bladed products sold online without verifying the buyer is over 18.

The Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, is also providing additional support to the police through Knife Crime Prevention Orders. These Orders will act as a deterrent to those vulnerable to becoming involved in knife crime. They will also enable the courts to place restrictions on individuals to help the police manage those at risk in the community.

Guidance on the process for Knife Crime Prevention Orders will be published, including operational guidance to police forces, ahead of a pilot in London.

Sajid Javid, Home Secretary said:

As Home Secretary, I'm doing everything in my power to tackle the scourge of serious violence. Our new Offensive Weapons Act is a central part of this.

These new laws will give police extra powers to seize dangerous weapons and ensure knives are less likely to make their way onto the streets in the first place. The Act will also see the introduction of Knife Crime Prevention Orders – a power the police called for.

As well as tough law enforcement, it's hugely important we continue our work to steer young people away from a life of crime in the first place.

The Act includes a number of other measures to tackle serious violence, including:

- a ban on the possession, manufacture and sale of rapid firing rifles and bump stocks, which increase a rifle's rate of fire. The ban on the manufacture and sale of these weapons has now come into force with immediate effect
- a ban on selling bladed products to a residential address without age verification
- updating the definition of flick knives to reflect changing weapon designs and banning private possession of flick knives and gravity

knives

- changing the legal definition for threatening someone with an offensive weapon to make prosecutions easier
- banning the sale of corrosive products to under 18s
- making it an offence to possess a corrosive substance in a public place

The government will also consult on guidance for some of the new measures in the Act and engage with businesses and industry on how the legislation will affect them before it comes into force.

The Offensive Weapons Act and strong law enforcement form part of the government's Serious Violence Strategy, which combines tough action with the vital need to steer young people away from crime in the first place.

Recently the government launched a £200 million 10-year [Youth Endowment Fund](#) to create a generational shift in violent crime. There is also an ongoing consultation on a new 'public health duty' which is intended to help spot the warning signs that a young person could be in danger.