

# Your Shout!

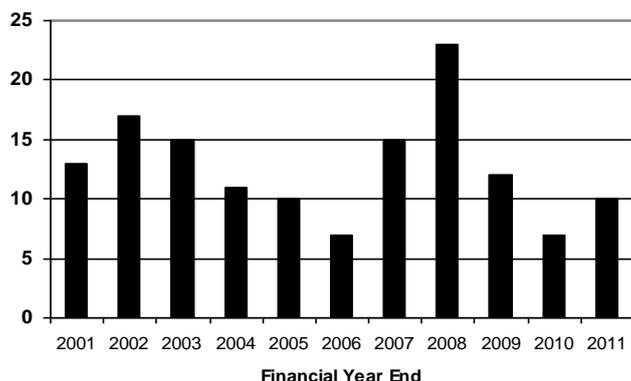
NEWSLETTER OF LAMBETH COMMUNITY POLICE CONSULTATIVE GROUP  
SUMMER 2011



## Violent Crime – What’s Going On?

Lambeth has suffered a series of tragic murders in recent months, a number of them involving young people. And we know that it is the skill of our surgeons, at Kings and at Guy’s and St Thomas’ hospitals, that is stopping that number being larger. At the same time, we’re told that crime is coming down, so what is going on.... and what’s being done about it?

Lambeth Murders



Source: MPS Website

Lambeth has indeed seen a substantial reduction in *overall* crime over the last decade – by some 46%. In fact, murders have not shown any particular trend over the period. Nor has Violent Crime overall

But the nastier end of more violent crime has – Grievous Bodily Harm is up by more than 75% over the decade, for example. Lambeth is now top of the league table of London boroughs for

this offence and also for Robbery (theft with violence or the threat of violence).

## Top 10 Boroughs for Violent Crime and for Robbery – 2010/11

Borough	GBH per 100,000 pop
Lambeth	225
Westminster	200
Newham	187
Tower Hamlets	170
Islington	168
Southwark	151
Brent	151
Hackney	143
Haringey	133
Greenwich	130

Borough	Robbery per 100,000 pop
Lambeth	969
Newham	946
Southwark	823
Brent	791
Waltham Forest	777
Westminster	775
Lewisham	612
Camden	547
Barking and Dagenham	534
Islington	507

### Sources:

Notified Offences per 100,000 of population.

Offences – MPS website

Population – Greater London Authority

That doesn’t mean we should all lock ourselves away, afraid to leave our homes. Those figures are per 100,000 of the population so that, even allowing for under-reporting, it’s likely that over 95% of people in Lambeth will not have been victims of Robbery, for example.

But it does mean that there is a serious problem to address, especially amongst young people. The causes and factors

playing into violent crime and many and varied – alcohol, the night time economy, domestic violence, youth gangs for example – and an in depth analysis can be found in the Safer Lambeth Partnership’s recent Strategic Assessment.

<http://www.lambethfirst.org.uk/00,document,4252,138,00.htm>

If you want to find out what is being done to address this problem, and to have your shout, then come to one of our public meetings (**the next is on September 5, at 6 pm, at Lambeth Town Hall**), or sign up for our regular monthly briefings – details at the end of the newsletter.

## **New Deal for Detainees with Mental Illness**

Lambeth has one of the highest incidences of mental illness of any of the 152 Primary Care Trusts in England and Wales. People with mental illness are over-represented amongst those entering the criminal justice system – some estimates put the incidence in prisons as high as 90%. Not surprisingly, Lambeth’s police cells – amongst the busiest in the country - see a lot of people with mental illness and other additional needs.

This has been a long standing problem and one on which Lambeth CPCG has campaigned and lobbied over many years. It causes distress for detainees but also for police officers – they are not mental health professionals and police cells are not hospitals. In addition, there is a drain on police resources as officers are diverted to watch over detainees who are deemed to be at risk.

This is set to change in Lambeth as a result of an innovative new project which has grown out

of an important report produced by Lambeth CPCG in 2005 and following on from the death of Sean Rigg in 2008.

Intensive research by a team of mental health professionals from the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Mental Health Trust estimated that up to 70% of a sample of detainees entering custody had mental health or other additional needs, but that the Risk Assessment tool available to the police was only picking up some of them, which would result in the detainees not getting the care and support they need.



**Independent Custody Visitors – volunteers who check on the well-being of detainees – had a big role in lobbying for change. Could you do this role? See details at the end of the Newsletter.**

Under the project, which started in April this year, a multi-disciplinary team of health professionals will be available 24/7 at Brixton Custody Suite to assess detainees. They will be able to ensure people who are ill will get the support they need – which may mean referral straight to hospital or support from an Appropriate Adult during interviews, for example – and also the team will make sure that the courts are alerted the detainees circumstances.

As the project develops, links will be made with health care in the prison system to try

and avoid the revolving door syndrome whereby mentally ill people are recurrently arrested for minor offences, incarcerated and released, only to find their way back into the system some little while later.

The project is set to run for three years and will be evaluated – considerable interest has been shown in it at national level and, if successful, it could benefit people far wider than Lambeth. The project has been funded to the tune of £1.8m, from Lambeth Council, NHS Lambeth and the Probation Service with half the funding coming from The Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals Charitable Trust. It is being steered by a group on which both CPCG and Lambeth Independent Custody Visitors have representatives, to ensure that the community voice is heard.

## **A New Broom – Or A New MOPC?**

Heard of MOPC – the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime? Chances are that, like most Londoners, a MOPC is something you keep in the utility cupboard. In fact, under the Policing Bill going through Parliament, MOPC will replace the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) sometime around the end of the year.

Whereas the MPA is made up of elected members of the London Assembly, together with a number of Independent Members appointed under Nolan Rules, the head of MOPC will be appointed by the Mayor. Under the current draft of the Bill, the head of MOPC doesn't need to be elected.

Of course, there are arguments for and against. Currently, the MPA is scrutinised by the London Assembly – but 16 of the MPA members are also members of the Assembly.

Equally, fears have been expressed (by the Association of Chief Police Officers, for example) of too close a relationship between so political a figure as the Mayor of London and operational policing.



**The MPA in session – it will be MOPCeed away in the autumn.**

Many of the details are still being debated in Parliament – currently in the House of Lords. Questions being raised include:

- Shouldn't the head of MOPC have to be an elected person?
- Should the Assembly not be able to call senior police officers and papers for scrutiny (or just the head of MOPC)?
- Should MOPC be required to hold meetings in public and publish its papers?

Ordinary Londoners have had very little say in this, in fact no-one has asked them, and so the umbrella body for borough CPCGs across London has put up a quick survey questionnaire where you can have your shout. It takes only a few minutes to fill in.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TGYGVJ9>

## 101 – Not a Room but a Telephone Number

Older readers will remember Whitehall 1212 as the non-emergency number for the Met – or at least listeners to Dick Barton will.

But from July 11<sup>th</sup> a new non-emergency number has been introduced – **101**. This follows research which showed that over 80% of calls to 999 were non-emergency. Calls to 101 will cost 15p flat rate, whether from land-line or mobile and regardless of the length of call. More details are at:

<http://www.met.police.uk/101/>

In the event of an Emergency, such as a crime in progress, always call **999**

## Safer Neighbourhood Sergeants Cut – Hannah to the Rescue?

At its June Authority meeting, the MPA narrowly agreed to a plan to remove 150 Safer Neighbourhood Sergeants from Wards across London. This will be achieved by combining the remaining Sergeants' supervisory duties across more than one Ward.

In Lambeth, Operation Hannah – a reorganisation which has transferred officers from Response Teams to Neighbourhood Policing – has given the borough some protection from this cut.

But how has Operation Hannah performed and

**DIAL 101**  
TO CONTACT THE POLICE

will Lambeth have to lose Sergeants from somewhere else? Come to our September meeting – **Tuesday 6 September, 6pm, Lambeth Town Hall** – to find out.

## It's in your genes – but is yours on NDNAD?

That's the National DNA Database to you. A lot of people are fearful of the 'database society' and even more so when it involves our genetic fingerprints.

The MPA Civil Liberties Panel has issued an useful report on the DNA database which, as well as making important recommendations, sets out what the database is and how records are kept, in plain English. It can be accessed at: [www.mpa.gov.uk](http://www.mpa.gov.uk)

## Get involved.....have your shout!

To join our mailing list for monthly briefings and community news, just email:

[admin@lambethcpcg.org.uk](mailto:admin@lambethcpcg.org.uk)

To comment on or query anything you've read in this newsletter, or seen or heard at the events in our Marquee at the Country Show, visit our blog:

[www.blog.lambethcpcg.org.uk](http://www.blog.lambethcpcg.org.uk)

To find out about becoming an Independent Custody Visitor, visit:

[www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships/icv/](http://www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships/icv/)

To find your Safer Neighbourhood Team and Panel, visit:

[www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods/](http://www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods/)

In an emergency  
always call 999