

**COMMUNITY-POLICE  
CONSULTATIVE GROUP  
For LAMBETH**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**1 MARCH 2005**

**LAMBETH ACCORD  
336 BRIXTON ROAD SW9**

**PRESENT: GROUP OFFICERS**

Lee Jasper **Chairperson**; Paul Andell **Vice-Chairperson**; Jim Toohill **Hon. Comptroller**; Rev. Canon Ivelaw Bowman

**AFFILIATED MEMBERS** Doye

Akinlade **Brixton Society**; Wally Channon, Peggy Tyler **Clapham**

**Town N'hood Watch**; David

Corderoy **Chamber of Commerce**;

Gary Dando **CressBrock**

**Neighbourhood Watch**; David

Hart, Ros Munday **Clapham**

**Community Partnership**; Marie

Hennelly **North Clapham Housing**

**Forum**; Dr Brian Mantell **Assoc. of**

**Jewish Ex-Servicemen and**

**Women**; Arulini Velmurugu

**Lambeth Towers & Lambeth**

**Road Residents Assoc.**; Paul

Reynolds **Herne Hill Society**;

George Tuson **Streatham**

**Common Southside N'hood**

**Watch Assoc.**; **INDIVIDUAL**

**MEMBERS** Lena James; Richard

Moore; Ann Savage, Cheryl Sealey,

Fernando Senior; Anna Tapsell

**PERMANENT MEMBERS** Lloyd

Leon **Lambeth ICV Panel**;

Marianna Tortell **Lambeth Crime**

**Prevention Trust**; Susan Jacobs

**Crown Prosecution Service**;

Joanna Woodd **Victim Support**

**Lambeth**; Most Rev'd Dr Bancroft

McCarthy **HM Prison Brixton**

**(Board of Visitors)**; ; Marianna

Tortell **LCPT**; Sue Jacobs **CPS**

**SECTOR WORKING GROUPS**

John Wainwright **Clapham CO-**

**OPTED MEMBERS** Shane Collins,

Gill Kenealy **LAMBETH COUNCIL**

Cllr. Geraldine Evans; Cllr. Lydia

Serwaa; Cllr. Bernard Gentry; Cllr.

Angie Meader; Cllr. Jackie

Meldrum; Cllr. Peter O'Connell,

Jonathan Toy **CST**

**METROPOLITAN POLICE**

**SERVICE** Ch. Supt. Martin Bridger,

Supt. Rick Algar (Streatham); Supt.

Stewart Low (Kennington) Supt.

David Zinzan (Brixton); Det. Supt.

Phil Kaye; Supt. Andy Tarrant

(Community Partnership); Det. Insp.

Dean Haydon; Det. Insp. Charlie

Hodge, Insp. Graham Sutherland;

PC Jason Hitchcock; PC Jack  
Wilson **SECRETARIAT** Ben  
McKendrick

Members of public/press were also  
present

**Apologies** Nic Abengowe; Pauline  
Bower, Greta and Victor Brooks;  
Peter Clapton; Sheila Draper;  
Bushy Kelly; Cllr. Robert S.  
McConnell; Mehmuda Mian  
Pritchard; John Roberts; Wesley  
Walters-Stephenson; Andrew Viner,  
Abdul Sultan Virani, Jane Warwick

**Introduction**

1. Lee Jasper welcomed  
Marianna Tortell, Lambeth  
Domestic Violence Co-  
ordinator, and Sue Jacobs,  
Crown Prosecution Service  
(CPS), to the meeting.

2. Mr Jasper reminded the  
Group that 2 March was the  
fourth anniversary of the  
passing away of Arlene  
Mundle, a former officer and  
member of the Group. In  
terms of being a campaigner  
for social justice, Mr Jasper  
said that Arlene was  
formidable adversary who  
was sorely missed. The  
Group held a minute's silence  
in Arlene's memory.

3. Mr Jasper reported on the  
installation of Rev. Ivelaw  
Bowman as an Honorary  
Canon of Southwark  
Cathedral on 6 February  
2005. The Group offered  
Rev. Canon Bowman its  
congratulations.

**Lambeth Police Report**

4. Mr Jasper explained that  
Ch. Supt. Martin Bridger  
would have to leave the  
meeting after giving his report  
due to important policing  
matters. However, Mr Jasper  
said he was not aware that all  
Mr Bridger's senior staff  
would be leaving the meeting

too. He added that the Group  
very much valued police  
attendance throughout the  
course of meetings.

5. Mr Bridger responded by  
saying that leaving the  
meeting early was a one-off  
occasion due to him being  
involved in particular issues  
that required all the senior  
management team.  
However, he added that in  
future it would be his intention  
for all officers to remain until  
the end of meetings.

6. Mr Bridger gave a  
PowerPoint presentation on  
the statistics for Lambeth  
police during the past year.  
He said that 4,238 less  
victims of crime compared to  
the previous year showed it to  
have been a fantastic  
performance.

7. Mr Bridger said that he was  
unhappy to see the number of  
domestic violence offences  
had increased, although the  
growing confidence in  
reporting such offences could  
be seen as an achievement.

8. Mr Bridger reported that  
from the 1 April 2005,  
boroughs across the country  
would be given government  
targets to reduce crime.  
Lambeth police's target would  
be to reduce crime by 20% by  
2008. As such, police would  
focus on ten categories of  
crime. To reassure the public,  
the police also had to reduce  
the fear of crime and anti-  
social behaviour, and  
increase the number of  
offenders brought to justice.

9. The Metropolitan Police  
Service (MPS) also had a  
corporate strategy that  
identified the types of crime  
that it needed to concentrate

on, such as the increased threat of terrorism, gun crime and organised crime.

**10.** Mr Bridger explained that targets for crime had been set in the context of the national intelligence model and a borough strategic assessment - taking into consideration the Lambeth Community Safety Audit - with the reduction targets agreed at New Scotland Yard.

**11.** In respect of consultation for the setting of local targets, Mr Bridger contended that because the process had only started in December 2004, with tight deadlines, it had been poor. As such, it had not been possible to allow the Group to make a contribution. Mr Bridger acknowledged that the Group had written to the MPS and MPA expressing its dissatisfaction on the matter. He added that in 2005, ***Lambeth police would start looking much earlier at the target setting, around September, which would allow time to consult with the Group.***

**12.** In relation to firearm statistics, Mr Bridger reported on the recovery of 13 guns during February, including the seizure of a weapon capable of firing 350 rounds of ammunition in one minute. The gun was discovered alongside 12 magazines, each containing 250 rounds, and a silencer. He added that the find came as a result of a stop in the street culminating in a very quick follow up operation led by Supt. Dave Zinzan. Two persons had been charged. Lloyd Leon said the community was indebted to

the officers that had taken the weapon off the streets

**13.** Giving an update on 411 Coldharbour Lane, a proposed Police/Community drop in centre, Mr Bridger informed the Group that work had already begun with completion expected by 17 May with a partnership in place the following week. With regard to 236 Coldharbour Lane, the six months work needed was due to start shortly.

**14.** PC Jason Hitchcock informed the Group that Lambeth police had invested in 3,000 kits of Smart Water, a liquid 'DNA' used to mark property. The system would make it easier to identify the owners from whom statements could be obtained. The first rollout of Smart Water to be installed in individual homes would take place in the forthcoming weeks.

**15.** Mr Bridger asked for suggestions from the Group about the kind of police report that people would like to receive, as there were so many aspects on policing he could raise, and different ways of presenting them.

**16.** In relation to domestic violence, Anna Tapsell said that she would appreciate being informed of the number of alleged perpetrators that had been charged.

**17.** Gary Dando asked for crime statistics in relation to neighbourhood watches, while John Howard asked for comparable figures for different crimes from the previous year to the present.

**18.** ***Mr Bridger said that he would be happy to provide statistics in a hard copy,*** such as those for race hate crime as raised by David Hart, while Jim Toohill reminded Group members they had been sent a questionnaire seeking their views about what police reports should contain.

**19.** Cllr. Bernard Gentry asked if hard copies of police reports could be received in advance of the group meeting, and also a brief report on what Safer Neighbourhood teams were doing. Cllr. Gentry also highlighted that the Smart Water initiative was a joint venture between the Council and Police. However, he said that if the Council's Housing Department had not handed over the agreed £20,000 he would chase it up.

**20.** With regard to the terrorist threat to the capital, Mr Bridger said that while politics would always play a part in stories, the threat had increased and the issue for him was the effect it could have on the community and policing on the streets.

**21.** ***Mr Bridger agreed to Lee Jasper's request for a report back on the nature of any increased anti-terrorist police activity in the borough.***

**22.** John Howard expressed his concerns that new powers given to the police under the Terrorism Act, in that police could use them incorrectly against some sections of society. Mr Bridger responded by saying that anti-terrorist activity was intelligence led, while the

level of evidence required to bring persons before the courts was high.

**23.** As a point of clarification on John Howard's assertion that Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (Asbos) were not originally intended to be used against prostitutes, Supt. Andy Tarrant said that there had been no extension in Lambeth of the use of Asbos, and that a panel reviewed a range of options to divert prostitutes away from the streets.

**24.** In response to Richard Moore, Mr Bridger said that the three year 20% reduction in crime would be extremely challenging. However, while he anticipated having enough officers to meet the challenge, he proposed that it would also require working in partnership.

**25.** On the point raised about the police engaging with criminals to help reduce crime, Mr Bridger asserted that there were already many things going on, such as the diversionary work referred to by Paul Andell, who proposed more creative, multi-agency plans and options to counter-balance the detrimental effects of the criminal justice system on young people.

**26.** *Mr Bridger said that at the next meeting he would talk quite extensively about gun crime and his views concerning the way forward.*

**27.** In response to Kelly ben Maimon, Mr Bridger said that his report was not a definitive list of all crimes. In relation to white collar crime, he added that while Lambeth police

dealt with such crimes there were also other specialist units dealing with, for example, organised white collar crime.

**28.** With regard to the fear of crime, Mr Bridger acknowledged that it was a big problem and proposed that one way of reducing such fear was to tell people much more about what was going on and what the police were doing. He added that he would be looking into ways of releasing information quickly to address issues that may be leading to an increase in the fear of crime.

**29.** Richard Moore gave his thanks to officers of Trident for their work and perseverance which had recently led to the conviction of a man at the Old Bailey for a murder committed in West Norwood. He said Trident officers had supported the community throughout the lengthy time it had taken to bring the case to court.

**30.** In response to Arulini Velmurugu, Mr Bridger asserted that specific intelligence leading to the identification of a crack house would ensure its closure. However, he said that even the smallest piece of information should be accepted from the public by police constables in order to help build up intelligence. He added that he would be disappointed if officers did not treat it as possibly meaningful information.

**31.** Supt. Zinzan stated that over the past two years the closure of many crack houses in the borough had led to a drop in crime, leading him to

believe that they were generators of crime.

**32.** Ann Savage said that she wished to congratulate Cheryl Sealey for organising the Anti-Gun Rally on Saturday, 26 February. She added that she would be working with Cheryl to lobby the government to ban replica guns in the country. Mr Bridger said that he could not agree more. The meeting gave its support.

**33.** Shane Collins reported that Lambeth Council had banned the Cannabis Festival at Brockwell Park without going through the Licensing Committee, and therefore giving the organisers no chance to defend their application. However, legal advice they had received showed that the Council could not ban the Cannabis March.

**34.** Supt. Tarrant said that the police would not have sought to ban the march and were not consulted about it. However, the police had been notified by the Council that they were considering not licensing the event to be held at the conclusion of the march. Supt. Tarrant said the police would be quite happy to police the march and ensure there were no dealers on it, which was what both the police and the organisers desired.

**35.** Jim Toohill said that the decision about the Cannabis Festival had not been debated in the Council Chamber, where elected representatives' views could be heard on an issue about which there was a range of views in the community.

Instead, a decision had been made in a purportedly managerial context and yet the police had not been consulted. This, he suggested, raised the concern of the police's proper adjudication being supplanted by political interest.

36. Marie Hennelly reported that Ferndale Safer Neighbourhood (SN) had gone live as of 28 February, with six local residents on the SN Panel. She said that she would be happy to report back to the Group on activities and thanked Community Safety Officers for their work.

37. *Mr Bridger stated that he would give a presentation on Safer Neighbourhoods at a future Group meeting. He added that he had already appointed a chief inspector with the responsibility to introduce the scheme pan-borough.*

38. *Supt. Zinzan said he would look into a report from John Wainwright that a juvenile had been held in custody in Brixton for 40 hours and report back to the Group.*

#### **Information from Group Officers and Members**

39. Group Officers referred to the March briefing paper that had been tabled.

40. *The Group agreed on the Group Officers proposal that a means be found to acknowledge individuals who have made exceptional contribution to the Group.*

**Minutes of the Meeting 1 February 2005 were accepted without amendment.**

**Matters Arising from the Group Meeting on 1 February.**

41. *Following Mr Bridger's offer to the Group to help him deliver the kind of police report Group members wanted, the Group Officers were in the process of devising a prototype to be agreed* [Minute 7, 1/2/05].

42. Mr Bridger had given the overview of targets set for Lambeth police as of 1 April 2005 [Minute 18, 1/2/05].

43. A CPS representative had been invited to the 1 March meeting for the presentation on domestic violence, as proposed by Anna Tapsell [Minute 20, 1/2/05].

44. *A report back on the matter of a police constable's mobile phone bill was still awaited from Supt. Zinzan* [Minute 26, 1/2/05].

45. Figures requested for crack house raids and closures were tabled by Jonathan Toy [Minute 28, 1/2/05].

46. *Richard Moore's request for copies of correspondence from Lambeth Council to Cllr. Gentry, under the Freedom of Information Act was still awaited* [Minute 36, 1/2/05].

47. *With regard to drawing up a list of groups working on crime and community safety issues in Lambeth,*

*Jim Toohill said that Supt Andy Tarrant had indicated that Insp. Graham Sutherland had been tasked with the job* [Minute 38, 1/2/05].

48. Mr Bridger had agreed that the Group should input into priority setting (ahead of the borough's 2006/7 policing plan) in the autumn of 2005 [Minute 41, 1/2/05]

49. *Lee Jasper said that an invitation to Lambeth Council's Director of Education would be sent when the Group had agreed to put youth issues on the agenda* [Minute 61, 1/2/05].

50. Jim Toohill said that Group Officers were appraising a draft Memorandum of Association for the Group, which would be presented to the Group for consideration.

#### **Domestic Violence in Lambeth**

51. Marianna Tortell, Lambeth Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, gave an overview of domestic violence (DV) both nationally and locally.

52. Before beginning the presentation, Ms Tortell responded to Cllr. Gentry's question about whether any Lambeth housing officers had been invited. She said that housing officers had received numerous invitations to attend DV meetings but as yet it been difficult to get them to engage.

53. Ms Tortell said it was her role to co-ordinate a response to DV in Lambeth by helping, supporting and encouraging

multi-agency working across all sectors in the borough, both statutory and voluntary, to help develop and implement DV policies and procedures.

**54.** According to national statistics, Ms Tortell said one in four women would experience DV, while two women were murdered each week as a result of DV. Ms Tortell stated that for every victim there was a perpetrator, and that statistically there was no reason not to think that there were people in the meeting who were either experiencing or perpetrating DV.

**55.** Nationally, she said, police received over 570,000 calls relating to domestic violence last year and that DV accounted for 16% of all crime. During this time, police in Lambeth attended over 5,000 domestic incidents, 2,864 of which resulted in a crime being recorded

**56.** Between July-September 2004, the National Domestic Violence Helpline received 8,581 calls from around the UK, of which 3,317 were made from London, with Lambeth only second to a 'London Unspecified' in terms of calls made.

**57.** Ms Tortell stressed the enormous effect DV on communities, such as family breakdown, child abuse and neglect, mental illness, substance misuse, homelessness and unemployment. She added that DV cost the state around £23 billion each year when taking into consideration the police,

social services, health and education

**58.** In taking a co-ordinated approach to DV in Lambeth, there were plans, soon to be realised, for a DV One-Stop Shop, third party reporting sites for hate crime, a borough-wide audit of statutory and non-statutory DV Services and the development of a DV Strategy for Lambeth, which was a statutory requirement for every borough.

**59.** Ms Tortell said that the DV One-Stop Shop would be located in Coldharbour Lane, already identified as a DV hotspot. The premises would be shared with Lambeth police, although they would have "invisible presence."

**60.** The DV One-Stop Shop would offer services on a roster basis with surgeries provided by outside agencies such as solicitors, housing officers and outreach workers, as well as being a third party reporting site. The Shop would be a tangible and visible community response to DV.

**61.** While the Shop would hopefully pave the way to make it easier and safer to report DV incidents, Ms Tortell identified libraries and housing offices as prospective third party reporting sites where trained staff would make sure that those reporting DV would be treated with respect and be believed. However, Ms Tortell said that it would not be for the staff to make a judgement about whether a crime had occurred, but to pass on to Lambeth police's

Community Safety Unit to follow up.

**62.** With regard to the DV audit, a consultant, Stine Høegh, had been employed. It was expected that the audit would identify the positives and negatives of DV provision and the gaps in support in order to improve services.

**63.** Jonathan Toy said that conducting an audit of what was out there was absolutely vital to improving services. He added that cost of the audit had been restricted so that it was well within the Community Safety Team's tendering guidelines

**64.** Following on from the DV Audit, a DV Strategy for Lambeth would be devised setting out how the borough aimed to tackle DV, and how it would be monitored and evaluated.

**65.** While acknowledging all the good work that has been done and has been proposed to be done, Ms Tortell said that much more was needed to try to reduce the levels of DV incidents in the borough and that this was a shared responsibility of us all.

**66.** Sue Jacobs, CPS, told the Group that she was responsible for all prosecutions in Lambeth and Southwark. Several years ago she said the CPS had introduced its DV policy, which needed to endorse and embrace the views of both victims and survivors, and the faith they had in the criminal justice system (CJS)

**67.** Ms Jacobs stated that the CPS had a key part to play in the CJS alongside police in

relation to its response to DV crimes in the community. The reality, however, was that the CPS could not ensure that every DV victim would be made safer by reporting DV crimes perpetrated against them or the quality of their lives would be enhanced. The CPS had therefore demanded co-ordinated assistance from all manner of agencies.

**68.** Ms Jacobs reminded the Group of the Government's definition of DV: "*Any criminal offence arising out of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse by one person against a current or former partner in a close relationship, or against a current or former family member.*"

**69.** Ms Jacobs added that the definition recognised that DV was not only an issue of physical violence but also the psychological impact of DV in relation to control and behaviour, and the damage to not only to those directly involved but also family members and children.

**70.** Having taken into consideration issues of their own physical and financial security, Ms Jacobs said that it was perhaps entirely understandable why many DV victims did not report crimes.

**71.** The decision to make a statement by DV victims could mean making critical life choices, Ms Jacobs said. As such, police and CPS intervention was crucial in helping to provide DV victims with confidence to make a statement, especially as many cases did not proceed

to court because many victims withdrew their allegations.

**72.** Today, the CPS and police had a service level agreement that recognised that the latter was required to investigate DV incidents with all the investigative skills at their disposal; using interpersonal skills to gain the victim's trust, photographing/re-photographing injuries, gathering medical evidence to support the victim's account, as well as interviewing neighbours for evidence of past violence and making sure any children are safe.

**73.** Ms Jacobs emphasised, however, that it was not just a matter of prosecution, as going through that process alone could cause further violence and intimidation. At the same time many perpetrators made no comment during interviews or claimed self defence.

**74.** Nevertheless, despite victims not being able to support the process, statutory charges could be pressed by a CPS prosecutor working alongside police officers at police stations and being responsible for authorising charges.

**75.** Ms Jacobs said that the CPS's policy demanded that the public question whether the CPS was doing a good job; by making sure that the best evidence was being gathered in order to secure prosecution, and creating trust of victims and witnesses in the CJS, as well as the public, by saying that domestic violence is unacceptable.

**76.** When victims refused to go to court, Ms Jacobs said that the CPS has the option to compel them to attend. However, doing this to somebody who had already experienced disempowerment within a relationship brought with it other issues. Combined with the concerns for victims' safety and well being, there may be housing, child care and health matters to consider, which was why Ms Jacobs insisted that there needed to be a multi-agency response.

**77.** Nevertheless, the more serious an offence, the more likely the CPS would consider compelling reluctant victims and witnesses to attend court. This was because not only did they have to consider the safety of the victims or witnesses at that point, but also the risk of allowing violent persons free to move into other relationships and inflicting their violence on other victims.

**78.** Ms Jacobs said that the paramount issue was the overriding public interest in DV cases together with protecting individuals as best as possible. However, there were no guarantees and it was a balancing exercise between seeking to secure what was right in the circumstances and the safety of others. That was the reason for Lambeth needing a co-ordinated response drawing on all relevant agencies, the key of which was housing.

**79.** Anna Tapsell informed the Group that she had been involved in the training of all Lambeth police officers in DV

crime. Ms Tapsell said that she was mortified and outraged that the senior officers had left the meeting early as some of the issues she wanted to raise were directed at them, such as the miserable environment [Gipsy Hill police station] in which the training was undertaken.

**80.** Ms Tapsell said that police officers who attended DV incidents were meant to spend at least 45 minutes at each one and fill out a 28 page form, much of which would be entered onto police computer systems back at the police station. On this point Ms Tapsell was critical of the incompatibility of police computer systems, a ludicrous situation which she said needed to be rectified.

**81.** Child protection was one of the key reasons for taking so much time at incidents and for taking such detailed notes; the police were expected to see every child at every incident they attended. Ms Tapsell said that the social skills required to deal with such issues were immense and she said she would have much preferred it if the training had started with the most senior officers and worked its way down to the response teams, (rather than the other way round) as well as having the Community Safety Unit (CSU) involved in training from the start.

**82.** One of Ms Tapsell concerns was, she said, the means used to inform social services of the potential risk to children i.e. from information gathered on the Merlin IT systems, which were not user friendly. As a result, there could be children

in the community in need of attention with no sound means of sharing information between the police and social services child protection.

**83.** Ms Tapsell said that she believed the officers were doing a brilliant job filling out the forms but that she doubted whether the CSU was picking up any more information than they were doing before the forms were introduced. The evaluation of any risk could therefore be overlooked and not dealt with, leaving those in the frontline to take the blame if things go wrong.

**84.** Ms Tapsell said that people needed to talk more about DV in public places and that it was an issue which should be dealt with in schools, especially when considering the damage done to children. She added that for many women who experienced DV the first time was during pregnancy.

**85.** On services available in Lambeth for victims of DV incidents, Ms Tapsell said that she was glad that there was going to be an audit, adding that those few services available received no direct public funding while statutory responsibilities of the police, council and health service did not translate into sustainable funding. Ms Tapsell said that she hoped there was going to be a change and that the Group would return to the issue again.

**86.** In response to Kelly ben Maimon, Ms Tortell said that the audit was going to be joint project between the consultant and herself and

would attempt to contact all DV groups in the borough including those working with women, children, men, perpetrators as well as mainstream groups.

**87.** In response to John Howard, Ms Tortell said that the role of DV Co-ordinator was not gender specific in terms of victims or abusers. However, she reminded everyone that the majority of DV was perpetrated by men against women, although that did not mean that there were no male victims or that all men were perpetrators.

**88.** Ms Tortell thanked Cllr. Gentry for apologising on behalf of Lambeth housing for officers not being present at the meeting.

**89.** Det. Insp. Charlie Hodge thanked Anna Tapsell and Sue Jacobs for their involvement in the training of officers. Previously, he said, there had been an inconsistent approach to DV across the MPS but now a standard procedure had been devised. Officers were instructed to be positive in dealing with DV incidents at scenes where there may be a great deal of shouting and upset people.

**90.** In relation to DV training, DI Hodge said that frontline officers were the first to receive it, as they were the ones who had to deal DV out in the community. Although he wished that more new officers had greater life experiences, he said that it was the nature of the job market that recruits were relatively young. However, much was done to train them

to try to use their commonsense.

**91.** With regard to the present system, DI Hodge said that it was being continually reviewed and that it was desirable that officers should spend at least 45 minutes at DV scenes to obtain a proper account of events.

**92.** Of the computer system used to record DV incidents, DI Hodge said that they only used one set up but there were other systems into which it could be input.

**93.** Speaking of the DV definition, DI Hodge said it applied to adults, since child protection officers dealt with under 18s. Information about juveniles was placed on the Merlin system which, he understood, could be accessed by social services from their own terminal. He added that although some people found problems with the system this could be resolved through training or assistance.

**94.** DI Hodge asserted that police focused on the DV incidences for what they were, whether the perpetrators were men or women.

**95.** In response to Lloyd Leon, Ms Tortell said that in relation to male DV victims she had not mentioned any services provided for them in her presentation because there were none. With regard to women's refuges, Ms Tortell said that these were not set up by statutory organisations such as the police and local authority but by women in the community. She suggested that perhaps

men in the community could take responsibility to support each other.

**96.** On the question of funding, Ms Tortell said that her position was funded by Lambeth Council, Lambeth police and health service. Further to this, she said that unless the anticipated DV strategy was backed up by adequate and appropriate material resources then it would be worthless.

**97.** In reply to Arulini Velmurugu, Sue Jacobs said that the presence of children during DV incidents was a big issue, and during a majority of incidents they were present or were in close proximity. Furthermore, in cases of escalating violence, she said that real consideration needed to be given for obtaining witness statements from children and that it was an imperative that they were provided the opportunity, with the right level of support, to give their account in court.

**98.** Ms Jacobs also said that the prosecution also needed to consider how to charge the offence when children were present. Under the Protection From Harassment legislation could be used effectively to apply for an indefinite restraining order with a maximum of five years imprisonment for its breach.

**99.** Ms Jacobs also highlighted the problem many DV victims with children had with reporting DV incidents to statutory agencies, and choosing not to do so through having genuine concerns that their children will be taken away from them and publicly exposing their private lives.

**100.** In response to Rev Canon Bowman, Ms Tapsell said that in relation to ethnicity in DV training of police officers, the thrust of the training was that DV occurred in all cultures all races and all religions so that officers did not stereotype certain groups as being more likely to commit DV offences .

**101.** In response to Jim Toohill, Sue Jacobs said that if there was one thing they that the Group could do to the help CPS for the forthcoming year it would be to support the establishment of a Domestic Violence Court at Camberwell. DI Hodge said that he would wish to see an Advocacy service for victims whilst Ms Tortell said.

**102.** Gill Keneally expressed her concerns about young women suffering violence from young men. She said that a voluntary group, Positive Activities for Young People, was hoping to run a programme with young men around this kind of issue and similar sessions on healthy relationships

**103.** Lee Jasper closed the meeting saying the discussion on domestic violence had not been closed but adjourned to another time. He said the Group would hold another thematic on the subject when senior police officers and housing officers would be present.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**6.00 pm Tuesday, 5 April  
2005**

**St Leonard's Church  
Tooting Bec Gardens SW16**

