

# LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT 2004



November 2004



Lambeth **NHS**  
Primary Care Trust



METROPOLITAN POLICE *Working for a safer London*



SaferLambeth  
crime reduction partnership

NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE  
for probation services



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IN LAMBETH

  
**Lambeth**

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Photographs supplied courtesy of Clive Sherlock, Jane Airey, 3rd Avenue and Lime House Design.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Lambeth Community Safety Partnership would like to acknowledge the support of the following people in the production of this audit:

Scott Buchanan, Environmental Services  
 Anthony Millinship, Housing  
 Irene Carbin-Smith, Education  
 Kevin Sheedy, Youth Offending Team  
 C. I. Sean Wilson, Lambeth Police  
 Paul Uncle, Lambeth Fire Service  
 Georgia Johnson, I.L Probation  
 John May, Consultant  
 Cheryl Sealey, LCPCG  
 Rev. Ivelaw Bowman, LCPCG  
 Rachel Heywood, Chair B.A.F  
 Rosario Munday, C.E.N  
 Ian Jackson, Community Renewal  
 Lee Parker, Y.A.P  
 Andy Hewlett, Police LGBT Officer  
 Andy Hamflett, Youth Council  
 Peter Sheppard, Environment  
 Denise Chandy, Social Services  
 Emma Robinson, Lambeth PCT  
 Harriett Smith, LCPT  
 Jean Carpenter, LCPT  
 Joanna Wood, Victim Support  
 Keith Naish, Environment  
 Iain Boulton, Environment  
 Paul Randall, Emergency Planning  
 Ching Wah Wong, Clapham Park NDC  
 Stine Hoegh, LCPCG  
 Ronald Holder, L.A.T.  
 Mick Pettifer, Clapham Park NDC  
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 Paul McCann  
 Rachel Gailey  
 James Priestman  
 Nabil Mezoughi  
 Nicole Terrieux  
 Sgt. Sandy Pepper, Lambeth Police  
 PC Martin Rackauskus, Lambeth Police  
 Sgt. Jeff Jenkinson, Lambeth Police  
 Richard Cunningham

And Helen Slinger, Government Officer Advisor, who has assisted us throughout the process.

We would particularly like to pay tribute to our Crime Analysts

Deborah Oates  
 Andrew Beland  
 Vince Wakfer  
 Colin Gardner

Whose analytical expertise and commitment has resulted in this comprehensive report.

Finally we would like to thank all of those people who facilitated and contributed in the focus groups, completed surveys, face-to-face interviews or drew us pictures. We hope that your views and opinions are reflected in this document. You can comment on the report by completing the attached form 'Have We Got It Right?' Alternatively, comment through our website [www.saferlambeth.org.uk](http://www.saferlambeth.org.uk) or telephone the Community Safety Team on 020 7926 2733.

**Jonathon Toy, Project Lead Officer  
 Head of Community Safety**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every three years the Lambeth Community Safety Partnership carries out an audit of crime and the fear of crime in our borough as required by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

This is our third and most comprehensive Community Safety Audit carried out in Lambeth. The following were undertaken and assessed to from this document:

- A statistical review of community safety partnership data
- 796 face-to-face interviews
- 1,200 replies to a residents questionnaire
- 850 replies to a Council Staff Survey
- 36 Focus Groups including minority groups and young people
- 350 replies to a young persons questionnaire
- 81 drawings by young people aged 2-10 on what/where makes them feel safe/unsafe

### Lambeth Overview

There are very close links between crime, community safety and the priorities of the Community Strategy. Those links are echoed in the findings of the audit and the emerging priorities but also, when we consider what causes crime, in our 'Crime Generators' chapter on page 74.

However issues such as population, housing, employment, education and health place clear pressures on the borough and act as determinants of crime and the fear of crime.

### Crime Overview

Lambeth's profile has changed considerably over the last three years in relation to other London boroughs

- Total Notifiable Offences (TNOs) in Lambeth has reduced by 12.5% in Lambeth over the last three years, the highest reduction of any inner London borough
- In Financial Year (FY)2003-4 Lambeth was ranked 8th highest London borough for TNO's (per 1,000 population) compared to 3rd in FY2001-2
- The estimated cost of crime for Lambeth fell by £111m between the period FY2001-2 and FY2003-4

### Priority Wards

Looking at all the data and focus group information the following priority wards have been identified:

**Coldharbour Ward** in association with Brixton Commercial Town Centre, it came out in the top three priority wards for Crimes Against The Person, Property Crime, Motor Vehicle Crime, Environment/ Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), Drugs and Alcohol.

**Vassall Ward** features in the chapters of Crimes Against The Person and Motor Vehicle Crime. It was frequently referred to in the focus groups and in particular in relation to guns and gangs culture.

**Clapham Town Ward** came out as a priority in terms of Property Crime and Motor Vehicle Crime.

**Bishops Ward** was among the highest ranked wards for Property Crime and was in the top three wards for Environment/ ASB. It is also the borough's focal point for threats of terrorism (refer to Awareness of Terrorism chapter on page 68).

### Crimes Against The Person

Key information

- In FY (Financial Year) 2003-4 Lambeth mappable ward totals of Crimes Against The Person have increased by 2.7% (431 offences) since FY2002-3
- In Lambeth 11 murders took place in FY2003-4 compared to 15 in FY2002-3 and 17 in FY2001-2
- In FY 2003-4 Personal Robbery offences have decreased by 49% (3166 offences) since FY2001-2
- **Priority Wards** for Crimes Against the Person are Coldharbour, Vassall and Ferndale
- For the priority wards, key times for incidents across the borough are Saturday and Sundays, 19.00 - 21.00 hours. The month of May recording the highest levels for FY2003-4
- For the priority wards, 33% of victims are aged between 20-29, 47% are male and 53% female. Where the ethnicity was known 43% were white-skinned Europeans and 43% were African-Caribbean (This indicates that our African-Caribbean community are over represented compared to the population data for Lambeth which calculates an African-Caribbean population of 25.8%)
- Of those known ages for suspects: 26% were between the ages of 15-19, 86% were male and 81% were African-Caribbean

- Gun crime has two peaks between 14.00 – 18.00 hours and 21.00 – 23.00 hours. Summer months and Christmas are key periods
- In FY2003-4 there were 1572 specified investigations of Domestic Violence recorded by the MPS, Coldharbour Ward having the highest number
- In FY2003-4 there were 11 specified investigations of homophobic incidents (a rise of 38% (3 cases) since FY2002-3) and 103 'flagged' investigations relating to homophobic incidents (a rise of 5% since FY2002-3)
- In FY2003-4 there were 28 specified investigations of racial incidents recorded by the MPS (a decrease of 10% (3 less cases) since FY2002-3) and 438 flagged investigations (a decrease of 16% (86 less cases) since FY2002-3). The highest numbers of flagged cases were recorded in Bishops and Coldharbour wards
- 55% of respondents to our residents survey cited feeling unsafe because of gangs in an area
- The top the Property Crime offences are Other Theft, Burglary To A Dwelling and Criminal Damage To A Dwelling, accounting for 65% of Property Crime
- In FY2003-4 victim referrals received from property crime decreased by 28% (a total of 4480 referrals) since FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 deliberate domestic property fires decreased by 4% (11 less offences) since FY2002-3
- 70% of prolific burglars arrested in FY2003-4 were white males aged 30-38 years with a drug dependency
- **Priority Wards** for FY2002-3 and FY2003-4 were Bishops, Clapham Town and Coldharbour
- There are peaks in offending between 09.00-09.59 hours and 18.00-18.59 hours however incident levels generally start to rise from 08.00 hours to 00.00 hours
- In FY2003-4 Thurlow Park Ward recorded the highest level of burglary
- For the three priority wards 58% of the known victims are female. The most common age of victims are 25-29
- 12% of respondents to the face-to-face survey had experienced residential burglary in the last five years

### Emerging Priorities

- There remains under reporting of Crimes Against The Person
- There is a need for a broader community based victims and witness service
- Improve referral process from the Police and other agencies to Victim Support services
- Arterial routes and transport hubs were commonly found within the hotspots of the three priority wards
- Guns and gangs were a constant concern amongst our communities from our surveys

## Property Crime

### Key information

- In FY2003-4 Lambeth mappable ward totals for Property Crime have decreased by 8% (1559 less offences) since FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 Dwelling Burglaries have decreased by 17% (725 less offences) since FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 Robberies Committed Against Commercial premises have decreased by 32% (79 less offences) since FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 Theft & Handling offences have decreased by 4% (361 less offences) since FY2002-3

### Emerging Priorities

- Residential Burglary hotspots are becoming more prevalent in non-estate areas
- There is a lack of support for victims of Property Crime
- Opportunity crime around entertainment/ tourist areas to reduce Other Theft
- Vulnerable businesses in secondary locations (i.e. outside of major town centres)

## Drugs and Alcohol

- Of the 40 Prolific Offenders in Lambeth currently 35 are drug dependent
- Residents rated the issue of drugs as the biggest problem in Lambeth – 60% claimed that drug dealing or drug use were fairly or very serious problems in their area
- In FY2003-04 Drug and Alcohol related incidents have increased by 3.3% (181 incidents) since FY2002-3 (5,653 incidents FY2003-4, compared to 5,472 FY2002-03)

- In FY2003-4 Drug Possession offences accounted for 75.9% (2335 offences) of total drug-related offences
- In FY2003-4 Drug Trafficking and Prostitution (including Kerb-Crawling) accounted for over 20% of offences (10.7% (330 offences) and 12.2% (375 offences) respectively)
- In FY2003-4 Cannabis related offences accounted for 66.7% (2052 offences) (similar to FY2002-3)
- In FY2003-4 Crack (excluding Cocaine) related offences increased by 5.3% (total offences 239) since FY2002-3 (total offences 227)
- In FY2003-4 Heroin (excluding other opiates) related offences decreased by 39.8% (total offences 80) since FY2002-3 (total offences 133)
- Drug Misuse-related Hospital Admissions increased from 264 to 382
- In total there were 79 council properties closed as a result of identified drug activity
- The profile of a drug offender in the criminal justice process is African-Caribbean male aged 20-29
- However, the profile of a drug user accessing treatment is white male aged 35-39
- **Priority wards** are Coldharbour, Larkhall and Brixton Hill
- The peak month was October. Peak days were between Tuesday and Friday and the peak times were between 21.00 and 22.00 hours
- Health Data shows numbers of Alcohol-Related Hospital Admissions has increased by 22% (774 to 944)
- Residents rated the issue of drugs as the biggest problem in Lambeth

### Emerging Priorities

- Better data needed and data to be collected more consistently
- More research on young people and drugs
- Review the impact of legislative changes on the borough, particularly the Licensing Act 2004
- More detailed analysis on mental health issues and the impact of drugs and alcohol on crime
- Closer working between the Serious Crime Unit and local partnerships on drugs trafficking
- Better information on the changing drugs market
- Better understanding of the significant influence of drugs, alcohol on crime related issues, including the fear of crime on the health agenda

### Young People and Crime

- In FY2003-04 the number of young people referred to Victims Support decreased by 15% (a drop of 127 referrals compared to FY2002-3)
- A significant percentage of young people carry weapons to protect themselves
- Young people use gang culture as a means of self-protection and to resist peer pressure
- Young people within the borough feel that a lack of facilities (boredom factor) is a key contributor to anti social behaviour and criminal behaviour
- Young people are the most sceptical group with regards to the effectiveness of statutory agencies. They feel that there is insufficient opportunity for them to be part of the solution of youth crime
- Young people felt that CCTV did not improve their safety
- Police were seen positively in keeping people safe, yet young people felt safer in a gang or group
- Young people felt strongly that the music and media industry play a vital role in setting cultural trends and behaviour
- Young people feel victimised by stop and search
- Young people expressed the view that 'being young in itself was a significant risk factor in Lambeth'
- Territory was a key issue in making young people feel safe or unsafe

### Emerging Priorities

- Better access needed to data and more resources for analysis
- A common definition of young people that can be applied across all agencies and which promotes seamless service from a young persons perspective
- Further work with young people to gain an understanding of the dynamics of gangs, gun culture and the development of programmes that challenge perverse concepts of 'respect'
- A significant increase in youth provision that meets the needs of young people and involves them in planning and delivery
- There is a lack of support for young people as victims of crime (indicated by lack of referrals and restorative justice options)
- There is little education about the consequences of crime and in particular drug related crime, role models for young people, especially black & minority ethnic groups or positive alternatives to crime

- Risk factors included peer pressure, media (including hip-hop/ rap & bling-bling culture), TV and negative press

### Anti Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime

- In FY2003-04 calls to the Police regarding disturbances in a public place reduced by 9% since FY2002-3 (9342 calls for FY2003-4 compared to 10,246 calls for FY2002-3)
- In FY2003-04 ASB and Environmental crime related fires increased by 4% (47 fires) compared to FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 there were 6932 noise complaints, a 5% decrease compared to FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 Street Care attended to 770 fly-tips or dumped items either on the public highway or private land an increase of 12% since FY2002-3 (686 offences)
- In FY2003-4 graffiti removed on a square metre basis increased by 31.7% since FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 all types of street trading offences decreased by 32% since FY2002-3
- In FY2003-4 the total weight of sex and drug paraphernalia collected was 474 kg, this equated to approximately 9,480 needles
- **Priority Wards** were Coldharbour, Bishops and Princes
- For the three priority wards the victim profile is male and aged between 25-29 and 40-44 years
- For the three priority wards the suspect profile is male 15-29 male
- There are peaks in offending during the winter months, especially December and February. Peak days are Mondays to Thursdays, with peak times between 21.00-22.00 hours
- More people have been victims of ASB than any other crime. 17% respondents from our ethnic groups are more likely to have experienced ASB, in particular Asian or Asian British people

### Emerging Priorities

- Better and more consistent data
- Better support for victims and witnesses of ASB
- Further investment in the Reassurance Programme including wardens and PCSOs
- More joined up legislation which is consistent with tackling the problems

- Increased awareness with residents & businesses, neighbourhoods & communities about their responsibility to take pride in their area
- Closer involvement with young people to tackle anti social activity

### Motor Vehicle Crime

- Figures taken from the MPS website show that categories of Motor Vehicle Crime account for 17% of the TNOs in Lambeth during FY2003-04. (A decrease of 19% from FY2002-3 following a 12% decrease from the financial year before that)
- In FY2003-4 numbers of abandoned vehicles on the highways and roads has decreased by 54% since FY2002-3
- **Priority Wards** were Vassall, Coldharbour and Clapham Town
- For the three priority wards the victim profile was male, 25-29 year old
- For the three priority wards the suspect profile was male, 15-19 year old
- The peak month was May, the peak day Friday and peak time 22.00-23.00
- When asked how serious car break-ins/ vandalism was, nearly 20% of respondents classed it as 'a very serious problem' and 36% saw it as 'a fairly serious problem'
- Abandoned vehicles were considered a particular problem for people living in Vassall and St Leonard's wards

### Emerging Priorities

- Under-reporting
- Anti-social use of mopeds, vandalism and abandonment of cars are concerns expressed by community
- Better and more consistent standards for data collection in relation to Vehicle Crime across all agencies
- Further publicity for car owners around their responsibility to reduce theft from vehicles

### Awareness of Terrorism

- In FY2003-4 there were 36 separate incidents related to suspect packages/ bombs threat in Lambeth. Ten of these were reported to the British Transport Police and related to underground or overland stations
- Seven of these incidents were around Waterloo Station
- A minority criminal element is using religion as a front, which allows them to further their illegal activities
- 9/11 has had an impact on terrorism and as a result on community cohesion

### Emerging Priorities

- Ensuring that the public are aware that systems are in place for an appropriate multi-agency response to a terrorist incident
- The international issues that we currently face are being used to a negative effect on community cohesion in our borough and in the London region
- The positive element of faith and religion needs to be more positively portrayed

### Fear of Crime

- Most of the people asked felt most unsafe in the Brixton Town centre area
- Gangs and the reputation of the area where the two highest polled reasons that made people feel unsafe
- During the day, however, 83% felt safe in Lambeth, with 93% feeling safe in their local area
- 98% felt safe in their homes during the day and 90% felt safe there at night

### Emerging Priorities

- Improve communication, understanding and appreciation between different communities, especially between young and older residents, religious groups, Police and our communities
- Encourage active citizenship and communities playing a central role in finding and delivering solutions to local crime issues in partnership e.g. third party reporting and neighbourhood watch schemes

- Robust media strategy – focusing on geographic issues and solutions and criminal justice success
- Re-align policing and other community reassurance initiatives to times when communities feel vulnerable particularly around transport hubs, evening and night times
- Build on improved cleaning and environmental enforcement services
- Significantly expand the provision of facilities for young people and support to families and carers
- Improve services for victims and witnesses including Hate Crime

### Crime Generators

The audit data and consultation highlighted the following issues as the key contributors to the 'cause of crime' in Lambeth:

- **Deprivation** - the link between the most deprived wards and those with the highest crime levels
- **Transport** - crime hot spots in virtually all categories are focused around transport hubs, underground stations and arterial routes
- **Drugs, Alcohol** - drugs and alcohol constantly reoccurred as an underlying cause of crimes being committed and the community's fear of crime
- **Choice and opportunities** - looks at the limiting choices, role models and peer pressure but also how crime itself limits people in their choices and opportunities
- **Taking responsibility** - this includes commercial responsibility, personal and community responsibility, responsibility of public bodies
- **Image and reputation** - how the image of the area and reputation are causes of crime

### Emerging Priorities

- The physical and social regeneration of key areas of Lambeth would have a significant impact in reducing offending in the borough
- A greater partnership emphasis on safety on public transport and the environments around transport hubs to improve accessibility is a key priority
- The lack of choice and opportunities, including positive role models, causes crime and increases vulnerability

- There is a clear need for those visiting, working, living and providing services in Lambeth to create a culture of 'responsibility' and to clarify their role in preventing crime and improving the environment
- Image of the area or the individual undermines community cohesion and is detrimental to how people feel safe and to the effectiveness of crime reduction compared to community perceptions

Having reviewed the emerging priorities the following messages were recurring throughout the chapters:

- Despite consistent and considerable falls in crime levels the community still feel unsafe
- Transport and transport hubs remain a focal point of concern
- There needs to be a greater investment in community based reassurance programmes
- There needs to be a greater investment in victims and witness programmes
- There needs to be a greater and more focused youth provision delivered by young people and with the involvement of positive role models
- Violent Crime is the key concern in terms of crime levels and fear of crime
- More investment is required to address the causes of crime (Crime Generators) particularly from a health perspective
- There continues to be challenges in relation to the way that agencies collect data, retain data and manage data. There is a need for more consistency across all of the key agencies and in particular with regards to the impact of crime on health providers, victims and young people

OPENING STATEMENT

Every three years the Lambeth Community Safety Partnership carries out an audit of crime and the fear of crime in our borough as required by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The audit looks at a range of information over the last three years from agencies that are working to tackle crime and prevent crime occurring. We have also asked our community, those who live, work and travel in our borough, what they think.

In 2004 the Lambeth Community Safety Partnership has undertaken an extensive review and consultation building on the previous two audits of 1998 and 2001. We have sent out 130,000 questionnaires to each household, key locations, forums and committees in the borough. We have carried out 796 face-to-face interviews with residents, carried out specific interviews with young people, business forums and held over 30 focus groups. We have done this because we know just how important being safe and feeling safe means to our community. The audit gives us a chance to look at:

- What are the key issues for our borough?
- What does our information tell us about these issues?
- What have the community told us?
- What have we done to tackle these in the last three years?
- What do we intend to do?

We cannot include every comment or issue raised in the process, but this document reflects the overall view and opinions that we have gathered from our audit process. If you wish to comment on it, please contact us via our website on [www.saferlambeth.org.uk](http://www.saferlambeth.org.uk) or complete the attached form at the back of the document: 'Have We Got It Right?' (page 83).

What happens next? Well, the outcome of our audit has given us the foundations on which to base our Lambeth Community Safety Strategy for 2005-8, which will be published in April 2005. This strategy will set out our key objectives for the next three years and what we need to do to meet those objectives.

Most importantly we intend to use the audit and the Lambeth Community Safety Strategy for 2005-8 to make a difference in Lambeth. To tackle crime, tackle those issues that generate crime and reduce the fear of crime, not only for our communities but also with the support and help of our communities.

In partnership, Lambeth has the best opportunity to make that difference and improve the quality of life for our communities and we are determined to achieve this.

Signed



**Faith Boardman**  
Chief Executive  
London Borough of Lambeth



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Borough Commander  
Lambeth Met. Police



**Kevin Barton**  
Chief Executive  
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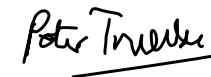
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