



# YOUNG PEOPLE AND CRIME

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**Definition**

One of the key findings from the young people and crime chapter is the fact that there is no local definition of what a young person is. Throughout the data and consultation process we have recognised that many of the agencies and persons consulted consider young people in different ways. Because of this and in terms of data available for this audit, young people are classified as those aged 25 years and under.

Young people are disproportionately represented as both victims and perpetrators of crime in Lambeth. Drugs, violence and theft are the main offences. Improved educational attainment, support for the most vulnerable young people and increasing out of school hours activities can reduce young people's involvement in crime. For example, summer and half term youth activities in 2003 reduced street crime in Lambeth by 20% on the same period in 2002 when these activities were not available.<sup>16</sup>

When considering Youth crime it is important to remember the following:

- Lambeth is a young borough in terms of population as 45% of residents are aged between 20 and 39.
- There are 57,000 children and young people
- This figure is anticipated to rise to 62,000 by 2006.
- Around one in every five<sup>17</sup> of 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training.

**What do our statistics tell us?**

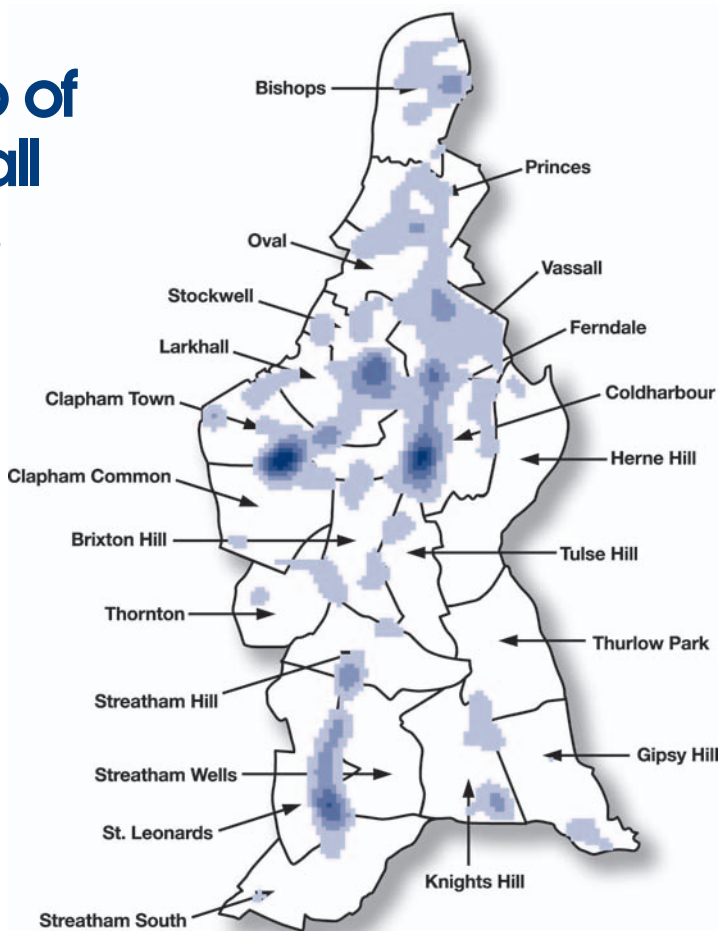
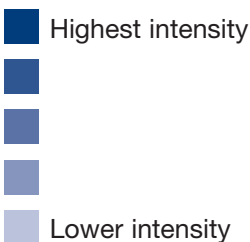
There is limited data available from the MPS that examines youth crime. We have, therefore cross-referenced this chapter against all the others to pick out the key findings that relate to young people. The primary datasets available to us for the purposes of this audit were obtained from Victim Support, Youth Offending Team (YOT) and education.

During a three month period in 2003 a detailed piece of research looking at Youth Crime was conducted using MPS data, which considered those young people aged 21 years and under. The key findings from this were:

# Map 9 Kernel Density Map of Lambeth showing all the crime locations

Of those crimes where the suspects are under 21 years old for the three months of June, July and August 2003

**Hotspots Detective**



<sup>16</sup> Lambeth Community Strategy 2004  
<sup>17</sup> Lambeth Community Strategy 2004

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## Suspects

- Between June and August 2003 there was a total of 9443 offences with a suspect attached for all crime for all ages. 37% (3531), of these offences were suspects under 21. This was an over-representation in figures as the under 21's exclusive population in Lambeth accounted for 25% of the population
- The main wards in which these offences occurred were Coldharbour, Clapham Town and Vassall
- 88% of these suspects were males. When cross-referenced to the population this is an over representation, as males under 21 account for 51% of the population
- 72% of the suspects were African Caribbean, which is an over-representation as only 38% of the under 21's in the borough are from the black or black British ethnic group

## Victims

- Of the known victims of crimes committed by young persons, the 30-34 years and 40-44 years age bracket were highlighted as being the main targets

### Victim Support – Those aged 17 years and under

We do not know the total number of victims of crime that were young people, however we do know that during FY2003-04, there were 738 young people referred to Victim Support, a decrease of 15% (127 young people) when compared to FY2002-03.

- During the CY (calendar year) 2003, 810 young people were referred to Victim Support. Of these referrals, 36% (294 young people) were for Robbery offences and 28% (223 young people) were for ABH & Common Assault
- 58% (466) of the referrals were boys and 42% (344) were girls
- Of the boys referred, 57% (266 boys) were black and 43% (200 boys) were white
- Of the girls referred, 60% (209 girls) were black and 40% (135 girls) were white

### Youth Offending Team (YOT)

The YOT caseload consists of young people usually resident in Lambeth, convicted by the court or warned by the Police. They will be aged 10-17 years at the time of the offence.

- In FY2003-4 there were 1421 offences that were processed by the Police and courts, which resulted in YOT intervention

- The three main offence types that they dealt with were Motoring offences, Theft & Handling offences and Violence Against The Person. These offence types are also identified as the top three when considering the national picture<sup>18</sup>

### Motoring offences account for 25% or (352 motoring offences)

which were processed by the Police and courts during FY2003-4, which resulted in 123 interventions by the YOT. The reason for there being fewer interventions is because often a series of offences will lead to only one intervention. For example if a 16 years old steals a car, they are also likely to be charged for Driving Without A Licence and having no insurance.

- 40% (140) interventions by the YOT in FY2003-4 for motoring offences were males aged 17 years. Only 11 of those referred were female
- 64% (224) of the interventions were black or black British individuals

### Theft & Handling accounted for 17% or 238 referrals

- In FY2003-4 68% (161) of the interventions by the YOT were male. Of these males, 70% (113) were aged between 14-16 years
- 58% (137) of the interventions were black or black British individuals

### Violence Against The Person accounted for 10% or 147 referrals

- In FY2003-04 77% (113) of the interventions by the YOT were male. Of those males 79% (89) were aged between 15-17 years
- 74% (109) of the intervention were black or black British individuals
- In FY2003-4 there were 115 interventions for Robbery, which is a slight increase against the previous year when there were 112
- In FY2003-4 there was an increase in relation to drugs, from 91 in FY2002-3 to 141
- The majority of these interventions were black males aged between 14-17 years
- It is worth noting that these outcomes are based on those young people charged that live within the borough

62% of young people were in full time education, training or employment at the end of their period of intervention by the YOT during CY2003. This compares to 69% for CY2002.

## Education

- Around one in every five 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training. However currently 70% of Lambeth pupils over the age of 16 stay on in education, compared to 75% nationally<sup>19</sup>

## Primary Schools

- The below education data is based on findings from an absence survey, which ran from September 2002 – May 2003<sup>20</sup>
- The number of primary schools in the borough are 61
- There are approximately 19898 pupils in these primary schools (as of Jan 2004)
- The average attendance rate in the borough's primary schools was 93.4%. Of the absences, 5.5% were authorised, leaving 1.1% unauthorised
- There was a wide range of attendance rates between different schools. However in general attendance rates have improved over the last five years

## Secondary Schools

- The number of secondary schools in the borough are 10
- There approximately 7801 pupils in these secondary schools (as of Jan 2004)
- However 53% of secondary school aged pupils attend school outside of the borough
- The average attendance rate in the borough's secondary schools was 92.2%. Of the absences, 7.2% were authorised and 0.6% were un-authorised
- No secondary school had an attendance rate below 90%. Attendance rates in secondary schools have improved over the past six years

## Positive activities for young people (PAYP)

- Lambeth PAYP provide key working and diversionary activity for young people. The PAYP Programme aims to target a minimum of 137 young people at risk of becoming involved in crime during 2004/ 05 through targeted key work
- The key workers will support the young people into diversionary activities and manage their transition back into education, employment or training
- The Diversionary Programme provides a wide variety of structured learning programmes offering young people the chance to gain qualification based training, accreditation and a variety of other learning outcomes

## Youth Advocacy Programme (YAP)

- The Youth Advocacy Programme that manages individuals on Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Orders (ISSPs) has exceeded the targets it has been set
- Between November 2001 – April 2003 their target was to have 72 individuals starting the programme. During this period they actually achieved 124, which is 42% above the target
- From May 2003 to the present day the target has been 80, but already there have been 92 starts

## Profiles of Victims, Accused & Suspects

All chapters of the audit have been examined to identify those themes that highlight young people as being involved in any of the above three categories.

## Drug Crime

During FY2003-04, 38.6% or 422 people accused of drug crimes (Possession, Trafficking & Prostitution) were aged 24 years and under, a slight decrease on the previous year. These figures need to be treated with caution, as they are often a reflection of Police activity in these areas.

- In FY2003-04 44.8% of those accused of Possession Of Cannabis were under 25 years.
- 33% of those accused of Supplying Cannabis were under 25 years
- In FY2003-04, 14% of those accused of possession of Class A drugs were under 25 years. 30% of those accused of supply and intent to supply were under 25 years

## Crimes Against The Person

Young people aged between 15-19 years were identified in the Suspect categories of the Crimes Against The Person chapter.

## Of the suspects

- In just under one in every four cases (1298 offences), the age of the suspects of Crimes Against The Person is unknown. However of those suspects where the age is known (4301 offences), 26% (1137 offences) are between the ages of 15-19 years
- Of the 1137 suspects, the sex was unknown in 26 cases. Where the sex was known, 88% or 974 were male
- Of the 1137 suspects, the ethnicity was unknown in 18 cases. Where ethnicity was known, 89% or 1000 were African-Caribbean

<sup>19</sup> Lambeth Community Strategy 2004

<sup>20</sup> Attendance in Lambeth Schools: Analysis of authorised and unauthorised absence, January 2004

### Anti Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime

Those people aged between 15-29 years were identified in the Suspect category of the Anti Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime chapter. Furthermore the only MPS offence category in this chapter with suspect and accused data available was offences of other criminal damage.

#### Of those Suspects:

- The age of 39% or 46 of the suspects of ASB was unknown. However of those suspects where the age is known 50% or 36 were aged between the ages of 15-29 years
- Of those aged between 15-29 years, 69% of 24 were male
- African-Caribbean and white-skinned European young people both accounted for 47% or 17 incidents

### Motor Vehicle Crime

Young people aged between 15 – 19yrs were identified in the Suspect category of the Motor Vehicle Crime chapter.

#### Of the Suspects:

- There were 77% or 1386 of total suspects where the age was unknown. Of those ages known 28% or 114 suspects of Motor Vehicle Crime were aged between 15-19 years
- Of the 114 suspects, the sex was unknown in 11% or 12 cases. Where sex was known, 93% or 94 were male
- Of the 114 suspects, the ethnicity was unknown in 5% or 6 cases. Where the ethnicity was known, 68% or 78 were African Caribbean and 25% or 28 were white skinned European

### What did you tell us?

#### Young people's Community Safety questionnaire

A questionnaire was completed by a total of 336 young people in the borough aged between 10 and 25 years of age.

- Of those people that completed the questionnaire 172 or 53% were male and 155 or 47% were female
- 209 were aged between 13-19 years, 91 were aged between 8-12 years and 18 were aged 20-26 years
- 73% were of black origin, 13% were white, 11% were of mixed origin, 2% were Chinese or other and 1% were Asian

Young people felt least safe on the underground, trains and on the streets.

Other issues that made them feel unsafe were

- 188 answered they felt most unsafe because of gangs in the area
- 184 felt unsafe due to drug dealers in the area
- 172 felt unsafe because of drug users in the area

When asked about the sorts of things that made them feel safe, responses were

- Two in three respondents felt safer being in a group
- One in four said they carry something to protect themselves

When asked about feeling safer in Lambeth now than you did a year ago

- 170 feel the same
- 52 feel less safe
- 77 feel safer

The three most common crimes experienced by the respondents were

- Robbery/ Mugging
- Car or bike theft
- Bullying

Only 20% of respondents report crime and only 12% of those reported the crime to the Police.

When asked why, the respondents said they do not have much faith in the Police and in their complaint being taken seriously.

- 50% of respondents said they would know where to get help for a drug or alcohol problem
- 70% indicated they thought drug users are more likely to commit crime and 55% that they are more likely to be a victim of crime

#### Report on Young People Aged 2-10 Years

Young people aged 10 years and under were asked to draw pictures describing what makes them feel safe and unsafe and where they feel safe and unsafe.

- Of the drawings for 'What/ Where makes you feel safe', 78% of young people said that they felt safe at home and 8% said they felt safe with their mums/ families
- 16% of young people drew that they felt unsafe being alone and 15% felt unsafe being on the streets
- Six focus groups were held with 61 young people aged between 5 and 10 years and they were asked where they felt safe and unsafe

- All the young people felt safe at home and with their parents and or families
- The majority of the participants felt safe either in the classroom or at school
- Many of the young people also mentioned play schemes, adventure playgrounds, youth clubs, after school clubs and in the park
- All the young people said that they felt unsafe on the street/ road, also mentioned were being in the dark, in dark alleyways, being around people who were taking drugs, drinking and prostitutes
- The majority of the young people also mentioned being alone made them feel unsafe
- Mentioned on several occasions was Brixton and Brixton Road and one participant said Loughborough Road made them feel unsafe

#### **Lambeth Independent Advisory Group – Young People and Guns Survey (March 2003)**

- 860 young people were asked and responded from faith groups, youth clubs, Youth Offending Team, and secondary schools in Lambeth

#### **Key issues**

- 70% of the youths did not expect to live beyond the age of 25
- Lack of youth provision was of concern to the majority of young people
- Young people wanted to see more Police on estates and in the streets
- More CCTV as this meant that crimes would be recorded and they would not have to go to court

#### **Focus Groups**

- Six focus groups were delivered in total
- Young people felt vulnerable for different reasons. Females highlighted sexual assault as a major fear, whereas males spoke of having to maintain an image to other young people to stop them becoming a target
- The issue of young people joining gangs was highlighted as a concern, there are many reasons for this, including: Sense of belonging, identity, profits, vulnerability, territory

#### **Young people felt that the following would reduce youth related crime**

- Increased youth provision and more engaging and innovative activities available in existing youth clubs

- Education – the younger generation need to be educated and shown that there are more positive ways of earning money and gaining respect
- Young people need to be occupied and challenged
- Young people need to be shown the consequences of their actions

#### **What have we done so far?**

- Lambeth Trident IAG have worked with local young people to produce a music compilation CD around positive issues in the community aiming to empower young people and providing them with employable skills
- Successful Peer Inspection Project initiated to access the views of users of Youth Centres and ensure programmes and activities are adequately resourced and relevant to young people's needs. This programme received a Guardian Institute of Public Policy Research Public Involvement Award in 2002
- A Youth Council's Stop and Search project to educate the Police about the community's concerns and to educate the community about their rights and the powers and the responsibilities of the Police. This project received the Windrush Award 2004
- Fully serviced extended schools project, targeting three schools in the borough to provide activities beyond the school day and during the holidays to meet the needs of the pupils, families and the local community
- Ten truancy sweeps were successfully completed during FY2003-04
- Behaviour Improvement Programme, DFES grant funded initiative focusing on raising attendance levels, reducing exclusion therefore impacting on youth crime
- Extended alternative education provision e.g. Pupil Referral Units
- Positive Futures Programme, using sport and other activities to engage and divert young people from drugs and crime
- Setting up young people's Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) to coordinate young people's substance misuse education, prevention and services provision
- Training programmes and development of tools and protocols for practitioners in working with young people around these issues
- Three Junior Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) and 2 Senior YIPs targeting 50 young people in geographic areas at risk of being involved in crime

- Young people's recidivism reduced by 14% (October to December 2001)
- Successful Youth Council created
- Safer Schools Partnership created currently working in five of the ten secondary schools in the borough
- Successful Junior and Secondary Citizenship Programmes established
- Young People's Community Safety Co-ordinator post created as part of the Community Safety Team to co-ordinate services in the borough
- Young People's Community Safety Forum's created allowing young people a platform in order to express views on community safety issues and identify solutions
- Great Expectations in Lambeth employs young people to act as advocates to ensure local regeneration initiatives meet the needs of young people in terms of employment education and training for young people in the borough
- CPP has funded a senior YIP programme and also an extensive youth activities and support programme, focusing on diversionary activities, development group work, life skills training and offering a one stop shop service for young people
- Young people's community safety website created and launched  
[www.youngsafelambeth.org.uk](http://www.youngsafelambeth.org.uk)

### Emerging Priorities

- Better access to data and more resources for analysis particularly in relation to young people and alcohol use
- 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 which 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
- Work to improve relations between young people and the Police needs to be built upon and considered in terms of the impact this has on the reporting of crime
- 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