

# **Appendix 5 – PSPO Evidence Pack 2 – All Measures London Borough of Lewisham Public Space Protection Order**

April 2024

# Introduction

- The council undertook a scoping exercise at the end of 2022 which included analysis of anti-social behaviours (ASB) across the borough over 2020 and to September 2022. This included discussion with multiple council departments, stakeholders and Councillors, and a review of complaints from the public logged by Lewisham Council and data from the Metropolitan Police and London Ambulance Service.
- The following issues were identified:
  - **Alcohol-related anti-social behaviour and disorder**
  - **Consumption of drugs and psychoactive substances**
  - **Amplified speech or music in open spaces**
  - **Dog-related anti-social behaviour in public spaces and parks**
  - **Illegal encampments**
  - **Public urination and defecation**
- The public were consulted on the proposed borough-wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) measures in May 2023.
- Subsequent analysis in October 2023 led to the Alcohol and Drug-related measures being restricted to specific wards while other measures remained Borough-wide.
- **The purpose of this document is to verify that all identified issues have persisted.**

# Summary of Findings

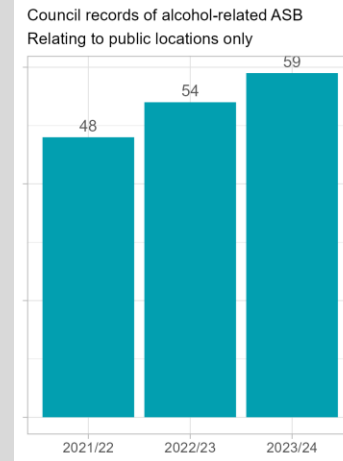
- This review shows that, in general, there is evidence that **anti-social behaviours previously identified have persisted, or indeed increased**, since the original evidence pack was compiled:
  - There were 161 complaints to the council which explicitly mentioned **alcohol** in a public place over the last three financial years, with a year-on-year increase observed leading to a 22.9% change from 2021/22 to 2023/24. This trend was also seen in London Ambulance Service data.
  - There were 323 complaints to the council over the last three financial years which explicitly mentioned evidence of **drug-use** or related disturbance in a public location. There was an 44% increase between 2021/22 and 2022/23 but a marked increase to 2023/24 due to changes in recording methods. Police data on Drug Trafficking also showed year-on-year increases, although Drug Possession offences decreased.
  - Over the three years 2021-2023, the council has seen a year-on-year increase in **dog attacks** and dogs reported to be out of control. There were 47 incidents reported in 2021 and 74 incidents reported in 2023, a 57.4% increase. This trend was reflected in Police data as well.
  - There were 2,839 complaints of **dog fouling**, doubling from 600 in 2021/22 to 1,263 in 2023/24
  - Complaints to the council of **illegal encampments** have recently become easier to identify due to the introduction of a new category in the environmental reporting tool, Love Clean Streets. This has led to the increase of reports to 58 in the most recent financial year.
- The only issue which showed a consistent decrease was **amplified music**, although reports of noise-related ASB calls logged by the police remain high with 962 reports in 2023 alone.

# Data Sources & Limitations

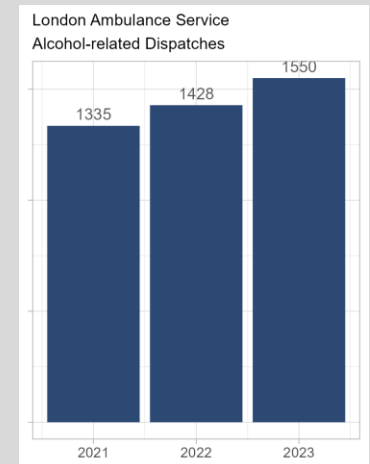
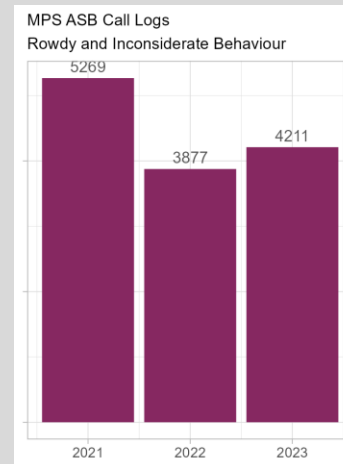
- Records of anti-social behavior across the borough are kept by a multitude of agencies. This evidence update includes data gathered from the sources below using the most recent 3 years of data available.
  - Lewisham Council Love Clean Streets (April 2021 to March 2024)
  - Lewisham Council Complaints Team (April 2021 to March 2024)
  - Lewisham Council Enforcement Team (April 2021 to March 2024)
  - Lewisham Council Dog Unit (2021 to 2023)
  - London Ambulance Service (2021 to 2023)
  - Metropolitan Police Service Offences (April 2021 to March 2024)
  - Metropolitan Police Service Anti-Social Behaviour records (2021 to 2023)
- There are about 220,000 records from the combined Council sources. To identify each type of ASB mining methods were used. This will mean that some records may not be identified while others are falsely identified, although measures have been taken to limit this as much as possible.
- There may be a minor variation in numbers from the original evidence pack due to improvements in the data mining method applied and/or because Lewisham Homes data have since been removed.

# Alcohol-related ASB

- The number of complaints regarding alcohol-related antisocial behaviour are likely to be underestimated: An accurate record relies on the person reporting the behaviour knowing that this is linked to alcohol, communicating that fact to the recipient and this then being noted.
- There were 161 complaints to the council which explicitly mentioned alcohol in a public place over the last three financial years, with the observed year-on-year increase leading to a 22.9% change from 48 reports in 2021/22 to 59 in 2023/24.
- The London Ambulance Service also show a year-on-year increase for dispatches relating to alcohol, with a 16.1% change from 1,335 in 2021 to 1,550 in 2023.
- Metropolitan Police call logs for Rowdy and Inconsiderate Behaviour (used as a proxy) show a decrease in reports from 2021 to 2022 (perhaps linked to post lockdown changes) but an 8.6% increase to 4,211 reports in 2023, still a substantial number.



*"[At Riverdale Park] each morning/ evening/ night I'm greeted by the sight of couples engaging in s\*xual acts and drug-taking, people drinking alcohol, throwing the aforementioned alcohol bottles and cans into the greenery at the park, masturb\*ting and urinating.... I could go on."*  
Received January 2024

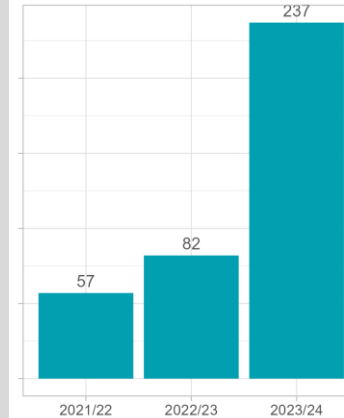


All MPS and LAS data are considered as a proxy as there is no way to distinguish ASB occurring in a public space

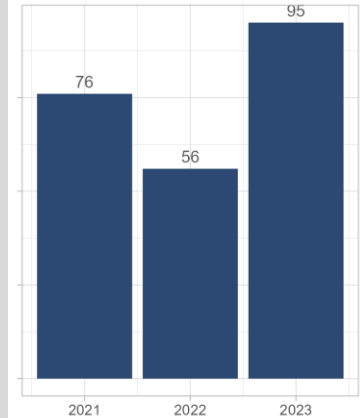
# Consumption of Drugs & Psychoactive Substances

- The number of complaints regarding drug-related anti-social behaviour are likely to be underestimated: An accurate record relies on the person reporting the behaviour knowing that this is linked to drug-use, communicating that fact to the recipient and this then being noted. Litter reports are therefore also used to help identify activity.
- There were 376 complaints to the council over the last three financial years which explicitly mentioned evidence of drug-use or related disturbance in a public location. There was an 44% increase between 2021/22 and 2022/23 but a marked increase in 2023/24 of 189% to 237 reports. While increases were observed across all council datasets, the majority was due to the introduction of a specific category for drug-related litter which has helped more accurately identify drug-related activity.
- The London Ambulance Service reported 227 incidents from 2021-2023. While there was a dip in 2022 there was a large increase to 95 incidents in 2023.
- Possession of Drugs offences have decreased over the last three years although totals remain high, while Drugs Trafficking offences consistently increased (as they have across much of London).

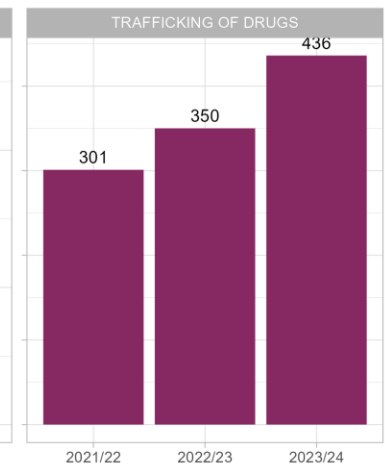
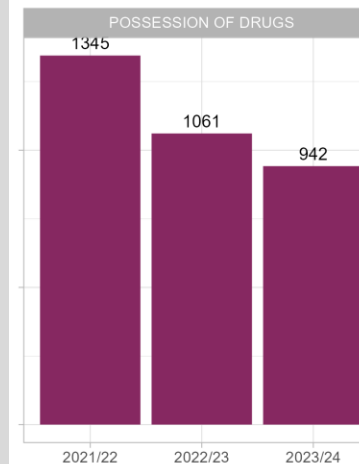
Council records of drug-related ASB  
Relating to public locations only



London Ambulance Service  
Substance-related Dispatches



MPS Drug Related Offences



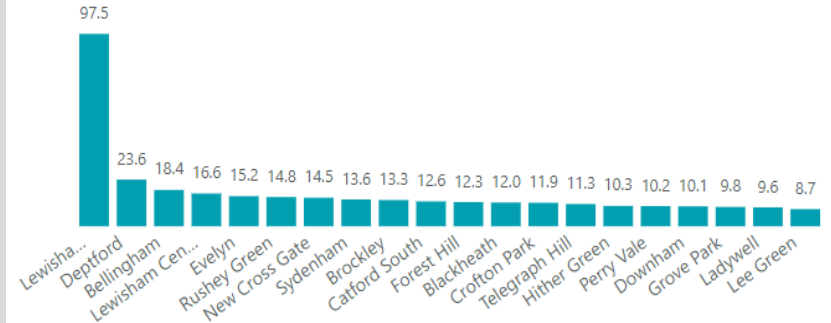
# Drug and Alcohol-related ASB Ward Designation

- The increases and overall numbers observed across all data sources indicate that **the issues of alcohol-related and drug-related anti-social behaviour have persisted.**
- The MPS data provided two sources of information which led to the ward designation. The areas shown to the right still align relatively well with the proposed ward designation (shown in green below).



ASB Report Rate by SNT (per 1,000 residents)

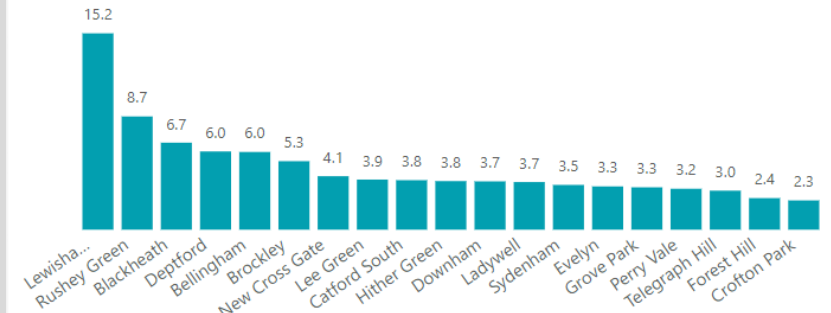
SNT population derived from the MPS dashboard



Note the *Lewisham and Catford Town Centre* Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) area has the highest ASB rate and total. This area lies within Lewisham Central, Ladywell and Rushey Green wards.

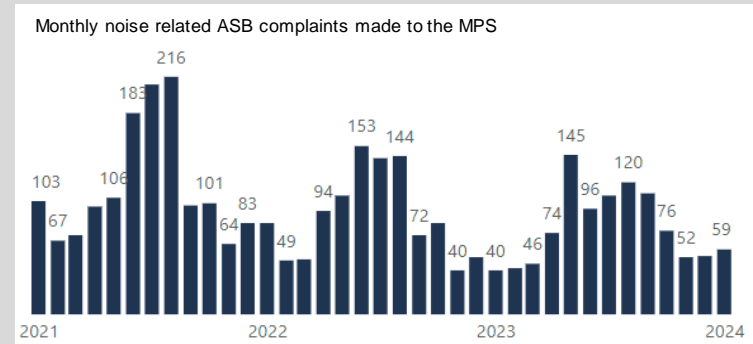
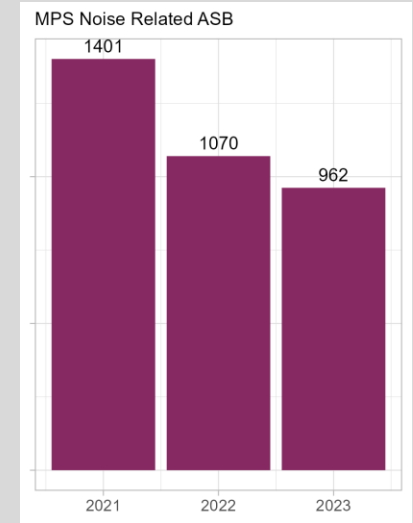
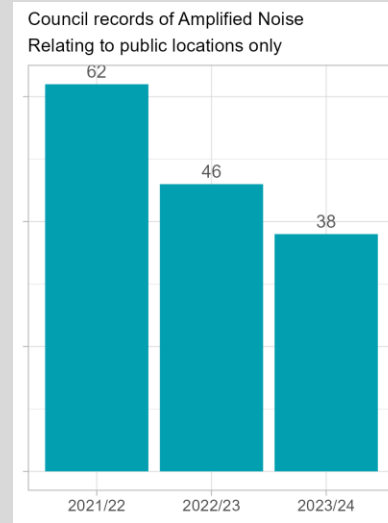
Possession of Drugs & Drug Trafficking Offences, FY 2023/24

Offence Rate by Ward (per 1,000 residents)



# Amplified Noise

- The use of amplified music and speech may cause offence to many members of the public when persistent and unreasonable, having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the vicinity.
- Lewisham Council recorded a 26% increase in complaints relating to noise in a public place between 2020 and 2021. This includes noise from buskers, noise using amplification for music or preaching, noise from car speakers, noise from disruptive congregations and noise from loudspeakers.
- The number of complaints has since decreased, which may be a sign of behavioral changes post-lockdown and/or the influence of factors such as weather (known to correlate with complaints).
- This decrease is also observed in MPS Noise related ASB calls, although **overall numbers remain high**, with 962 cases recorded in 2023.
- The monthly total of complaints to the police is shown the right. Seasonal fluctuation is clearly observed with more complaints occurring in dry, warmer weather. This needs to be considered when monitoring future impacts of a PSPO.

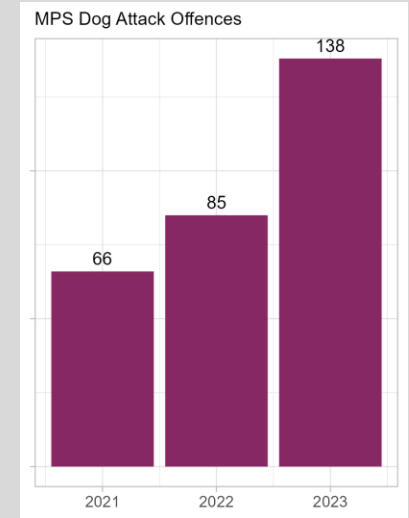
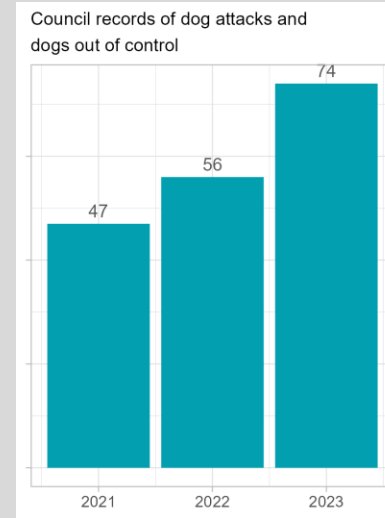


*Incident logged regarding loud music and shouting from regular gatherings in park located Evans Road & Crutchley Road, including illegal raves every weekend at the children's playground with loud music from 10pm until 6am. Complainant very frustrated. Received August 2023*



# Dog Attacks & Control

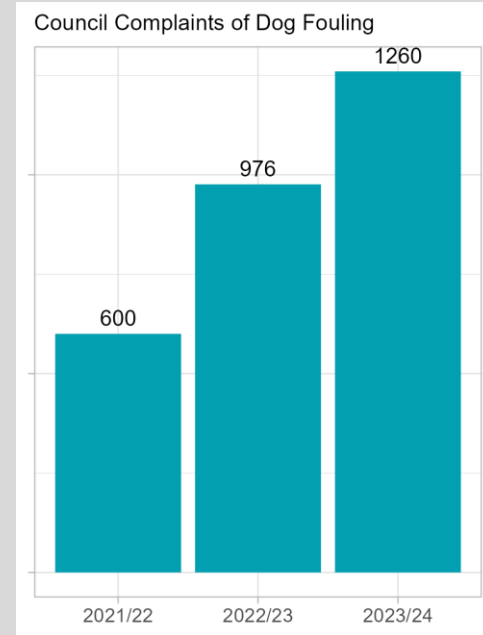
- Over the three years 2021-2023, the council has seen a year-on-year increase in dog attacks and dogs reported to be out of control.
- There were 47 incidents reported in 2021 and 74 incidents reported in 2023, a 57.4% increase. Some complaints received relate to reoccurring issues with the same dogs.
- The MPS also recorded a year-on-year increase in any offence in Lewisham involving Dog Attacks.
- There were 66 offences recorded in 2021 and 138 incidents reported in 2023, a significant 109% increase.
- There were an additional 38 reports of dispatches to 'animal bites / attacks' logged by LAS over the same period. These represent the most serious consequences of an animal attack, with reports recording most victims as "Bitten with serious haemorrhage" or "Not alert after animal bite".



*"I am contacting you in regards to loose dogs running amok in Deptford park. Owners of these dogs allow them to run all over the park harassing other dogs and their owners. There was recently a dog killed by another dog which was not on a lead. There is also a lot dog fouling which is not being picked up." Received March 2024*

# Dog Fouling

- The council continues to receive a significant number of complaints about dog fouling. In fact, there has been a substantial increase observed over the last three financial years.
- There were **2,839 complaints from the public over this period**, doubling from 600 in 2021/22 to 1,263 in 2023/24.
- Review of the complaints made show issues persisting around pavements, streets (particularly around schools) and parks (particularly where children play).
- Council workers and volunteers in Beckenham Place Park continue to report: Stepping in dog mess; dog mess in the gardening beds and close to the cafe facilities; a large amount of dog poo in the southern grassland areas of the park; bagged dog mess hung from a branch or dropped in the undergrowth; and unpicked dog mess around the entrances to the park with the smell of faeces creating an unpleasant welcome.
- Council workers also continue to report issues when strimming long grass within the cemeteries, with dog poo often caught up in the process and splattering clothes and nearby surfaces.

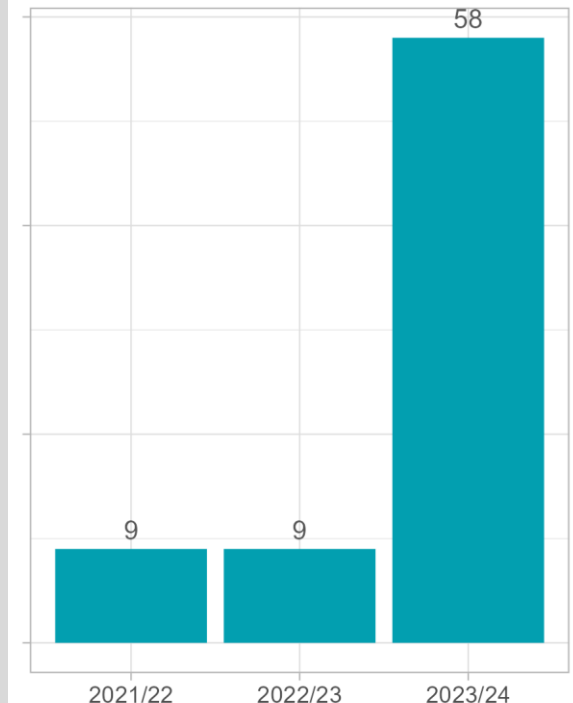


*“On the corner of Sydenham Park and Whittell Gardens, there is always dog mess and there is again. Please can you clean up and put more notices up. There are very irresponsible owners that continually mess the whole area of Whittell Gardens, Sydenham Park, Sydenham Park Road. There is a school very close by, St Bartholomew’s, and children have to walk this every morning and every afternoon.” Received June 2023*

# Illegal Encampments

- Unauthorised encampments occur relatively infrequently to other forms of ASB but have a high impact in the areas they are located.
- The main issues include health hazards due to lack of sanitary facilities for human waste; issues of disposing of rubbish illegally; noise; alcohol or drug-related ASB; and open fires.
- Complaints to the council of illegal encampments have recently become easier to identify due to the introduction of a new category in the environmental reporting tool, Love Clean Streets. This has led to the increase of reports to 58 in the most recent financial year.
- Where possible, reports of people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping in tents have been removed from the data considered. However, it is not always possible to distinguish these from reports of encampments. It is not the intention of the PSPO to penalise anyone who is homeless or sleeping rough.

Council records of illegal encampments

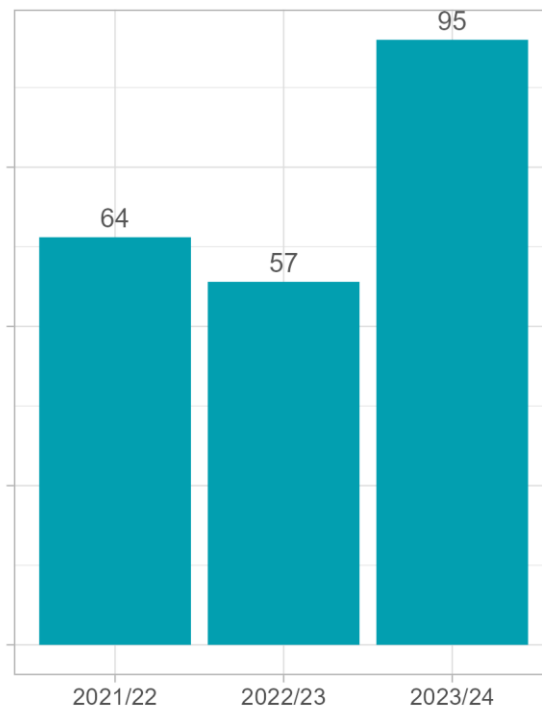


# Public Urination and Defecation

- There were 216 identified complaints to the council over the last three financial years.
- There was a slight decrease from 64 in 2021/22 to 57 in 2022/23. However, there has been a significant rise in the last financial year to 95 complaints, an increase of 66.7%.
- Review of the complaints suggest public urination is more common where groups congregate, where rubbish has been dumped previously and raises concerns about the smell and potential impact on health.

*“This well loved community park is being taken over by selfish groups of people who are treating the space as their own. Some of the behaviour has been atrocious, drug taking, lighting fires and BBQs despite the notices and the tinder-dry conditions, openly urinating, erecting sound systems, staying in the park until the early hours, noise and leaving piles of rubbish in the park and surrounding roads.” Received March 2023*

Council records of urination and defecation





**Lewisham**