

Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan 2023-2024

London Borough of Lewisham

Safer Communities



Contents

	Page
Introduction	
Context	
Crime in Lewisham	
COVID-19	
Crime Reduction Achievements	
Consideration for the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan	
Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan 2023	
Priority One: Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women & Girls	
Priority Two: Community Engagement	
Priority Three: Public Health Approach to tackling Violence, with a focus on Youth Violence	
Appendix	

Introduction

The Safer Lewisham Partnership is the statutory Community Safety Partnership in Lewisham, which is a statutory requirement of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Partnership seek to address local issues including antisocial behaviour, hate crime, domestic abuse, violence against women and girls, substance misuse, violence, and re-offending. The multi-agency strategic group is built on the premise that no single agency is able to manage, or be responsible for dealing with, complex community safety issues and that these issues can be addressed more effectively and efficiently through working in partnership.

The Partnership is made up of both statutory agencies and co-operating bodies within the borough (known as the ‘responsible authorities’), including:

- The Metropolitan Police
- Lewisham Local Authority
- London Fire Brigade
- National Health Service Integrated Care Boards (NHS ICB), and
- The Probation Service

Co-operating bodies include the London Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) as well as key local partners with a vested interest in community safety.

Additional Partners include the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Chair of Safer Lewisham Partnership Board), and colleagues from the Youth Offending Service, the Ministry of Justice, the Safer Neighbourhood Board, Housing, Children Social Care, Adult Social Care and Safeguarding Boards.

New statutory requirements from the Police and Justice Act (2006), introduced additional duties, which were updated by subsequent legislation that includes the Crime and Disorder Regulations 2011. The requirements included the production of a Strategic Assessment and a Partnership Plan.

It should be noted that it is not the intent nor function of this Plan to include or cover all areas of business and service delivery, across the partnership, but to highlight the priority areas that we have identified to focus on as a Partnership for Lewisham.

Context

The Councils Corporate Strategy 2022 – 2026, sets out the Council’s ambitions for Lewisham, detailing the values that will shape the authorities priorities and the subsequent decisions. These values will underpin the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan for 2023/24, as follows.

- We put service to the public first - we exist to serve and support the residents of Lewisham, and everything we do must always have residents’ interests first and foremost

- We respect all people and communities - we have a proud history of actively working to tackle inequalities, both across the borough and within the Council, and we will continue to build on this in everything we do
- We invest in our employees - we want to be considered a top employer in local government. We will always ensure we provide opportunities for staff at all levels to learn new skills and progress their career
- We are open, honest and fair in everything that we do - we will be transparent in the decisions that we take, both with each other and with the residents of Lewisham. Robust governance procedures will ensure that our decisions are honest and fair

It is vital to note that Lewisham is one of the country's most diverse boroughs. Whilst all local authority service delivery will be impacted by ongoing challenges, the impact of Covid-19, the climate emergency and the cost of living crisis will exacerbate inequalities as will the systemic issues that these communities already face. When considering the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan it is important to consider the people, families, and communities that are impacted by crime.

The most recent census (2021), recorded a population of 300,553 in Lewisham with 157,820 residents identifying as female and 142,733 identifying as male. Over the last 20 years, Lewisham has seen its population increase by 51,677; nearly half of this increase (24,715) was in the past decade.

The age breakdown of residents in Lewisham is relatively in keeping with the London average, but it is noticeable that Lewisham has more young people aged under 15 in comparison to the national percentage for England. It also has far fewer people aged over 64 compared to the national average, almost half the percentage for England.

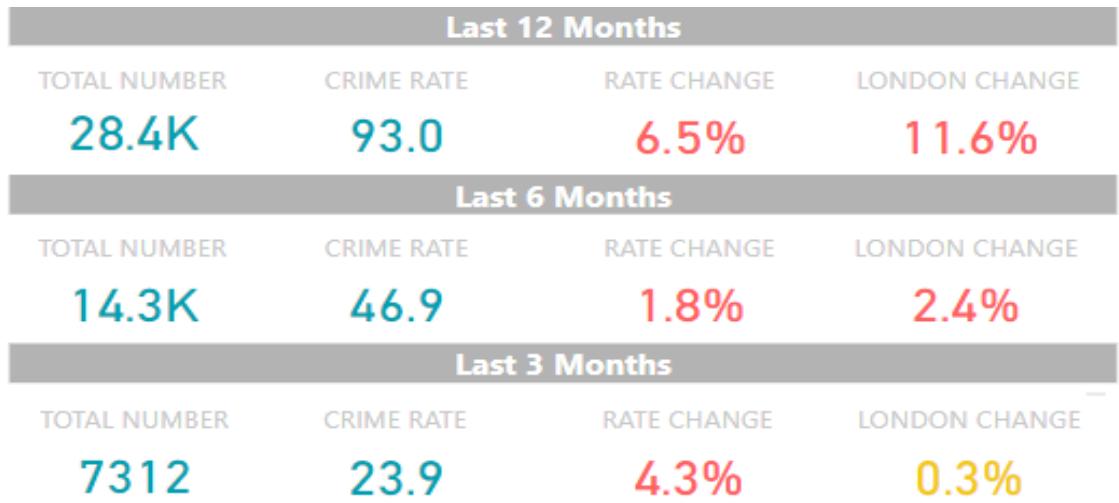
Language is a defining characteristic of people's identity. 83.5% of residents in Lewisham speak English, which is higher than the London average. The most common European languages are French, Spanish, and Portuguese. 2.3% of Lewisham residents speak a South Asian language, with 2% an East Asian language and 1.7% an African language.

Nationally, numerous reports note that specific groups are impacted by structural discrimination within education, the health system, and the criminal justice system. Data gathered to inform the Plan has highlighted areas where disproportionality exists within Lewisham. It is critical that the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan along with the wider partnership acknowledges the inequality and the subsequent impact and consistently and effectively seeks opportunities to address this.

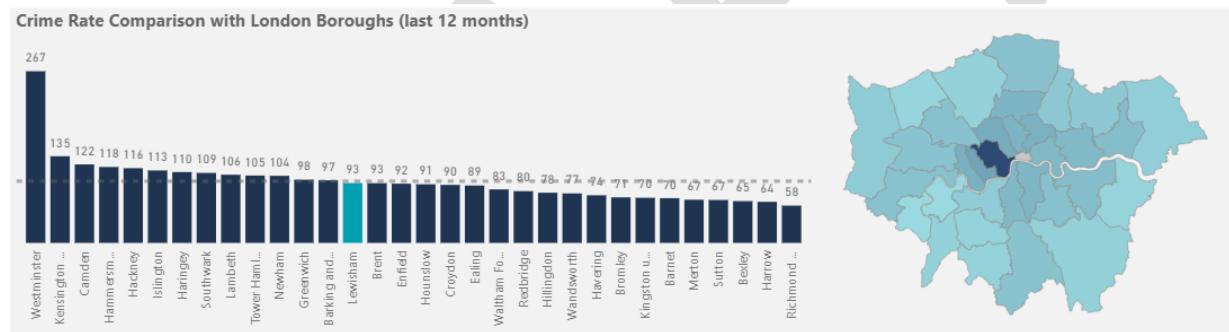
Crime in Lewisham

The crime statistics in Lewisham indicate a mixed picture across the borough and London as a whole. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) reported 28.4 thousand crimes in Lewisham over the 12 months to September 2022. This represents a 6.5% increase on the previous 12 months, but this is less than the 11.6% increase observed across London.

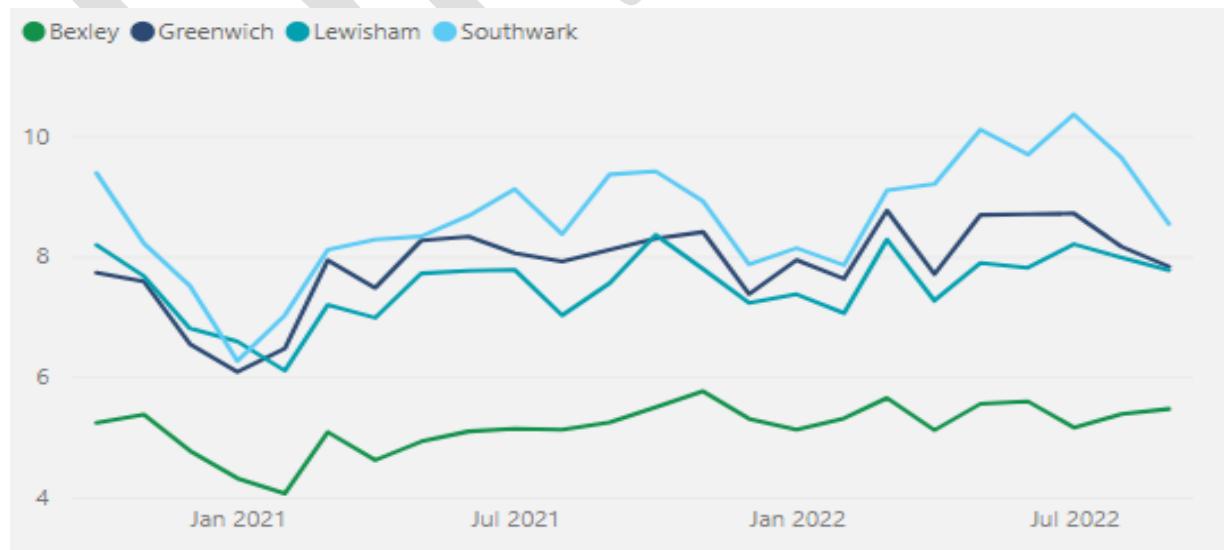
Lewisham has the 14th highest crime rate across the 32 London boroughs, however in comparison, the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Southwark, which neighbour Lewisham, have an overall higher rates of crime.



Source: MPS data, Lewisham crime dashboard. MPS overall crime data August 2021- September 2022



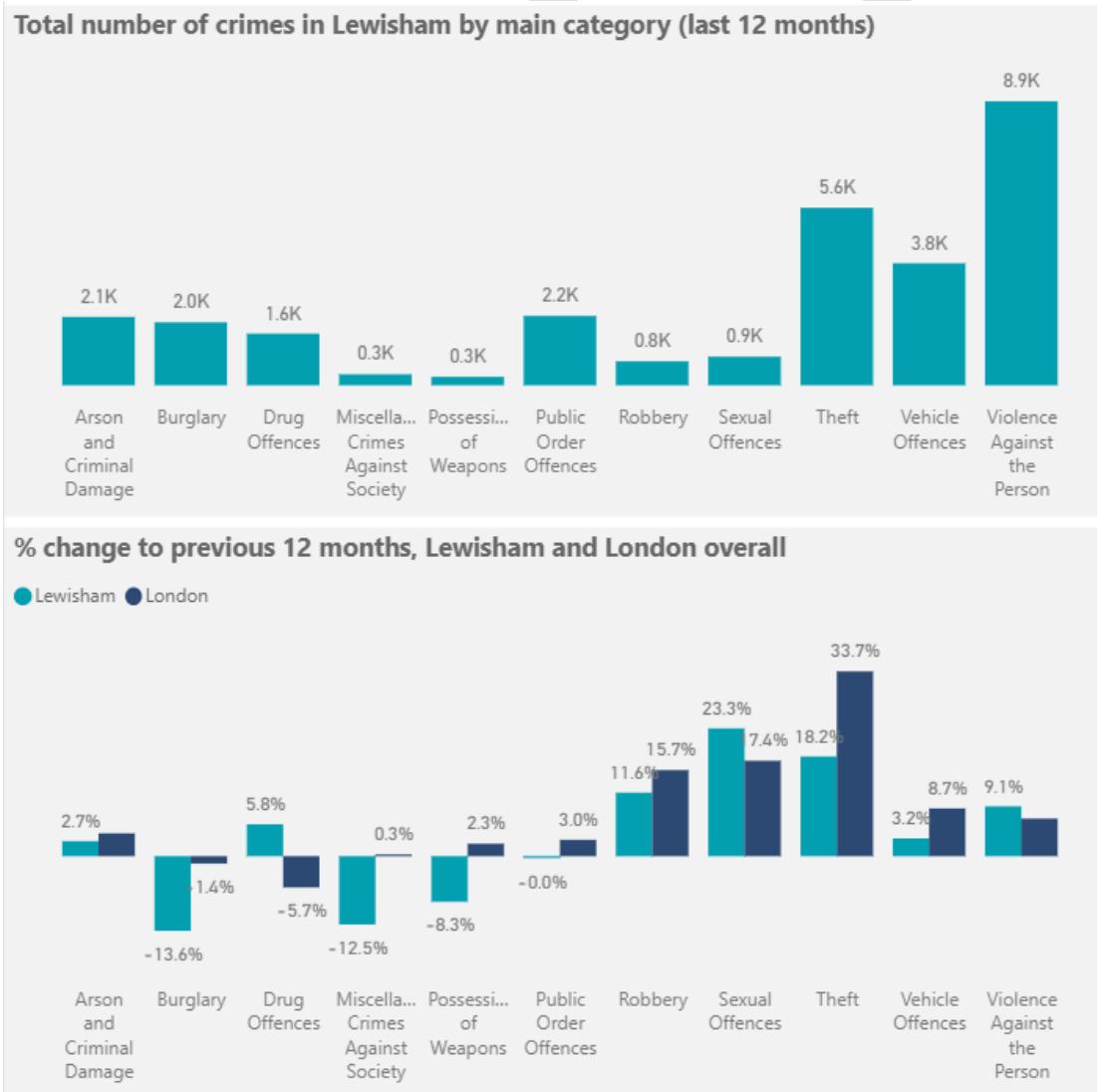
Source: MPS data, Lewisham crime dashboard. MPS overall crime data August 2021- September 2022



Source: MPS data, Lewisham crime dashboard. MPS overall crime data August 2021- September 2022

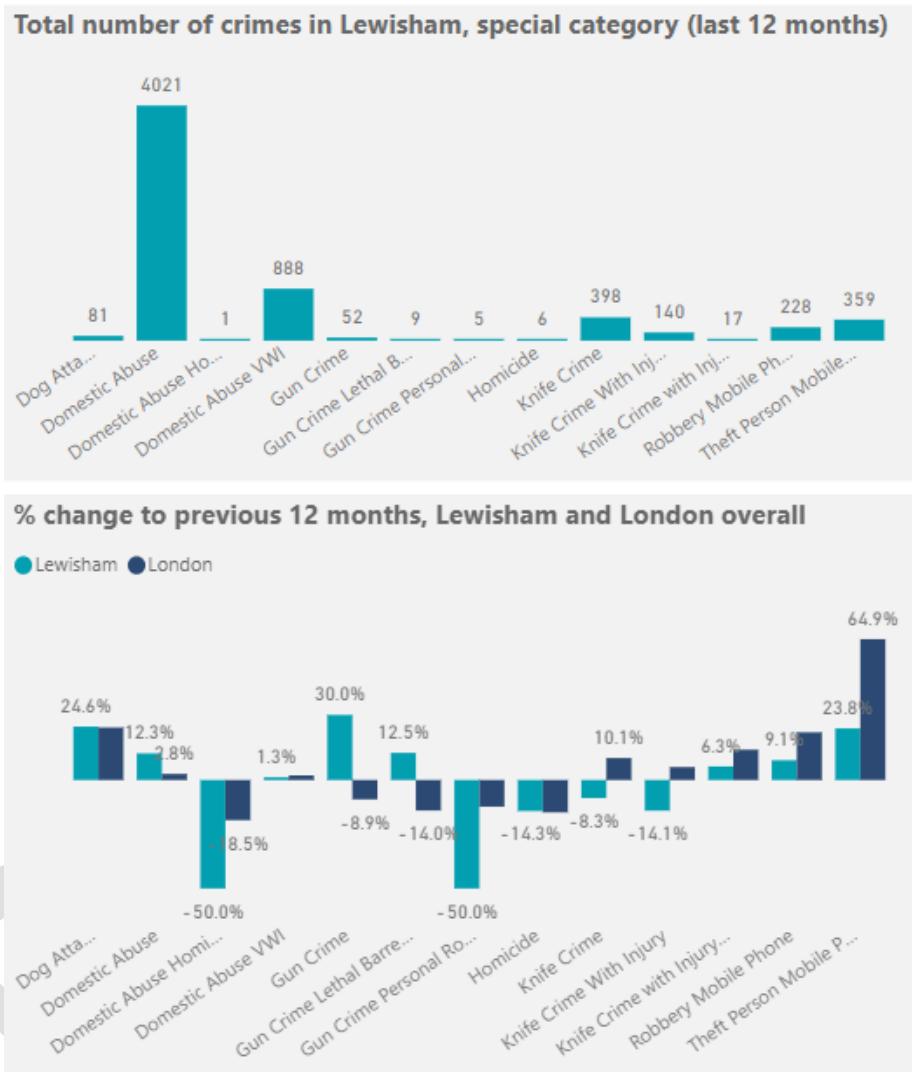
Violence against the person is the most common crime type in Lewisham with 8.9 thousand incidents recorded. This is an increase of 9.1% compared to the previous 12 month period, which is higher than the 6.9% compared to London, and was the 12th highest rate in London.

The largest crime type increase observed in Lewisham under the main crime categories was sexual offences at 23%, which was higher than the increase observed across London (17.4%) and the 15th highest rate in London. There were over 4,000 Domestic Abuse offences recorded in the year to August 2022. This was a 12.3% increase in Lewisham compared to a 2.8% increase across London, and the 5th highest rate of all London Boroughs. The reason for the increase is unclear and could reflect a number of factors, which include media campaigns that encourage the reporting of incidents, the impact of high profile incidents, and/or the increase in the number of victims. What must be noted is the fact that a significant number of victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse and/or sexual violence do not report what has happened to them to the Police. Therefore, further exploration is required and this data will not be considered in isolation.



Source: MPS data, Lewisham crime dashboard. MPS overall crime data August 2021- September 2022

There have been 52 incidents of gun crime in Lewisham in the 12 months to August 2022; a 30% increase compared to an 8.9% decrease across London. In the same period, 538 knife crime incidents were recorded, 140 of which involved an injury. Both categories have seen a decrease in the borough of 8.3% and 14.1% respectively, compared to a rise of 10% for overall knife crime across London.



Source: MPS data, Lewisham crime dashboard. MPS overall crime data August 2021- September 2022

COVID-19

The full cost of the pandemic, in relation to crime and antisocial behaviour in Lewisham is unknown. Therefore, it would be ineffective to compare crime data before the pandemic and conclude with any certainty the long-term impact. However, we can use the data known to inform the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan.

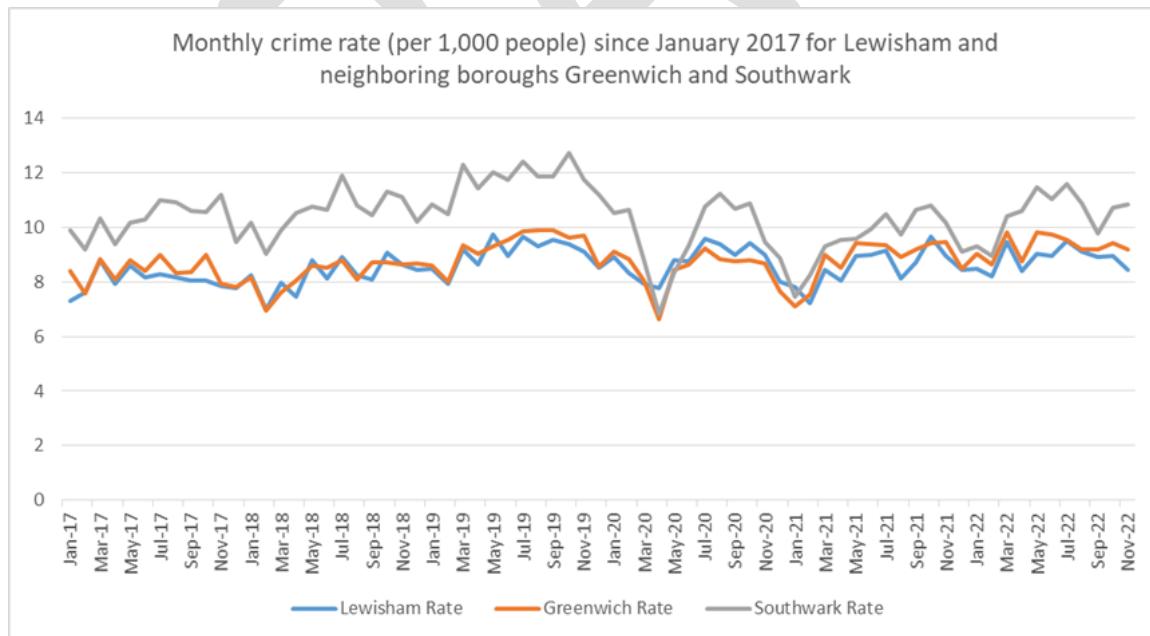
The Office for National Statistics data indicates a downward trajectory for overall crime in line with the past decade. Individual crime types see a significant decrease in theft, which is now 19% lower than pre-pandemic. Across other crime types, there has been no significant change in the levels of crime recorded in the survey. This includes fraud,

which had shown significant increases during the pandemic, but has now returned to pre-pandemic levels. This suggests that the increase observed may have been specific to the pandemic, rather than a sustained change in trends.

Additional insight can be gained from Police recorded crime, especially crime deemed low volume, high harm. Such crime types have seen decreases when compared to March 2020 levels. This includes, burglary, robbery, vehicle offences, knife crime, firearms and homicide, which have all decreased compared to March 2020 levels.

Some crime types have seen large increases, such as rape, sexual offences, stalking and harassment. However, these increases could be impacted by several factors including improvements in identifying and recording offences and an increased confidence in victims coming forward to report these offences, as previously noted. The Partnership will utilise newly available crime data to further analyse these changes and suggest appropriate actions to address them.

The table below displays the crime rate between January 2017 to November 2022, for Lewisham, alongside neighbouring boroughs Greenwich and Southwark for comparison. The data notes a slow, but steady increase of crime, with an expected decrease during the pandemic, with fluctuations most notable where stricter pandemic restrictions were observed. However, overall crime levels appear to have increased to pre-pandemic levels by November 2022. It should be noted that whilst an increase has occurred and Lewisham's crime rate is higher than the national average for England, the authority is below the London average for overall crime.



Source: MPS dashboard. Monthly crime rate from January 2017 to November 2022

Achievements since the previous Plan

Since the implementation of the 2019 Plan, Lewisham's Public Health response to Serious Violence has been revised and parallel to this the Safer Lewisham Partnership implemented a Local Violence & Vulnerability Reduction Action Plan. The aim of all, to understand, identify and address the causes of crime, seeking to reduce impact and prevalence, considering opportunities to intervene and/or prevent crime occurring.

Several work streams sat across this work, a summary of achievements as follows

Governance

- The Multi-agency Child Exploitation (MACE) operating protocol is being fully utilised to manage Child exploitation and violence concerns. The Child Exploitation Strategy and Strategic plan has now been agreed by the executive

Analysis and Enforcement

- More frequent (twice a week) Violence assessment partnership meetings are now being held. Operation Nightingale (policing operation) is targeting three areas in Lewisham with high levels of violence with injury

Safeguarding and Educating children and young people

- Managed moves have been endorsed in the revised Department of Education (DfE) Guidance on Exclusions and is continued practice in Lewisham to support children at risk of exclusion. This may include a fresh start at another school or an intervention placement within an appropriate alternative provision.
- Published DfE data for 2020/21 shows the permanent exclusion rate for Lewisham primary schools remained at zero per cent which was better than England at 0.01 per cent and on par London and Inner London at zero per cent. The permanent exclusion rate for Lewisham secondary schools continued to improve at 0.07 per cent better than England at 0.10 per cent, on par with London. It is important to note that 2020/21 figures reflect a Covid year when schools were not fully open.
- There is a named Safer Schools officer for each secondary school and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). There is also a single point of contact (SPOC) for each primary school.
- There is an extended mentoring programme with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to support children and young people back into education. There is also support from the special educational needs (SEN) Advisory Service supporting children at risk of exclusion who are experiencing barriers to learning.

Working with communities and neighbourhoods to reduce violence

- The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Youth Engagement Team continue to engage with young people on a daily basis. Engagement events are ongoing.
- Information is shared on a regular basis. A redacted community impact assessment (CIA) will be shared from critical incidents.

- Stop and Search and body-worn video scrutiny is ongoing. Public Encounter Panels are now active.

Positive diversion from violence

- Knife Crime Prevention Orders (KCPOs) are an established tactic. Bespoke interventions are considered on a case by case basis.
- Local schemes are ongoing, managed by the MPS Youth Engagement Team.

Some of the updates and achievements from the public health approach, a priority from the Safer Lewisham Plan 2019, recorded under different themes include

Domestic Abuse/Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

- Communications campaign to promote and raise awareness of 16 days of activism.
- Poster campaign to promote and raise awareness of coercive control.
- Increase in social media campaigns
- Development of behaviour change programme for perpetrators
- Transition from monthly to bi-weekly Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to reduce single sitting case numbers and bring about safe hearing practice
- Independent audit of accommodation based commissioned services and development of an action plan to ensure service improvement, including contract review and performance management framework.
- Development of resources to support agencies to implement routine enquiry for VAWG
- Develop a model Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Policy for schools and pilot
- Develop tools and training for primary and secondary schools to strengthen their delivery of healthy relationships education as part of the Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum
- Agreement of the Domestic Abuse, Violence Against Women and Girls strategy 2021 – 2026.

Community Engagement

- Stop Hate UK are now a commissioned partner in Lewisham
- Establishment of a community engagement forum
- Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding has been made available to community partners for projects
- Community Champions project is providing a clinically/ therapeutically informed staff team within the community

- Funding has been secured for Borough Capacity Building
- Funding for tackling robberies during school journeys has been secured with community engagement with partners already being delivered
- Delivery of parent engagement sessions
- Support and partnership with the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) and development of SNB sub-groups.

Reducing Disproportionality

- Youth Offending Service (YOS) have been undertaking work to better ‘understand the problem’ in relation to race and the criminal justice system. It was acknowledged that over representation and disproportionality exists within the system and some of the issues that compound this include unemployment and racism
- There has been learning from recent incidents, including Child Q, and terminology such as ‘adultification’ to inform practice and to ensure we treat, engage, support, and speak about children as children
- Training has been delivered within the criminal justice system with courts and partners
- The YOS have produced their best practice statement in relation to anti-racism and their anti-racist strategy.

Child exploitation

- Moved from the Concern Hub model to Multi-agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Exploitation also includes sexual and criminal exploitation. MACE model commenced in February 2022
- Lewisham MACE operates on 3 levels. Strategic MACE (meets quarterly) - monitoring and implementation of Lewisham Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP), exploitation plan and governance of Pre-MACE. Tactical MACE (meets monthly) - oversight of high risk cases and data trends. Ensuring a tactical response to locations of concern and that all agencies are working effectively to protect young people. Pre-MACE (meets monthly) - operational oversight, process to ensure effective running of MACE
- Developed clear MACE referral pathways for lead professional
- Lewisham have retained a bespoke approach to addressing exploitation and youth violence up to the age of 25
- Development of MACE Data set. Production of quarterly data sets which has highlighted over representation, in relation to referrals, but under representation in relation to missing persons
- Home Office has National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals which can take up to 500 days. Successful Home office funding to run NRM decision

making pilot. A pilot in 2023 will localise decision making designed to reduce time.

- Creation of heaven via a pan London approach, Child Sexual Abuse pathway.
- Undertaken an audit of pathways. A Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) audit was undertaken in May 2022, which outlined the need for a CSA Pathway, which was implemented in June 2022.
- Creation of an action plan with schools.
- Utilise Brooke traffic light tool in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- Set up a Basic Command Unit (BCU) exploitation team.
- Tri-borough steering group has been establish with shared learning.
- A systems-wide contextual safeguarding approach has been developed.

Reducing exclusions

- For the school year 2020/2021, there were no exclusions in primary schools in Lewisham and lower suspensions were recorded
- There was a 65-70% decrease in exclusions in secondary schools. This puts Lewisham on a par with England but behind London. Last year there were 23 secondary exclusions (school academic year 2020/2021)
- Weapons and knife offences in schools are lower, however physical assaults remain high
- There were no sexual misconduct cases and no racial abuse cases recorded
- No child with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) has been excluded
- Enrichment days are carried out with the violence reduction team
- We are now able to have a 'live' track and monitor of school attendance.

Considerations for the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan

The Partnership are aware that at the time of writing the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan 2023, further consultation will need to be given to the Serious Violence Duty and the formation of the Lewisham Combatting Drugs Partnership both of which will have an impact on the delivery of the Plan given their relationship and links to crime and violence in the borough. Both will require separate Strategic Needs Assessments, which will inform the Partnership direction and most notably the revised Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan for 2023/24.

Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan 2023

Since the initiation of the Plan, we have engaged with Stakeholders in numerous ways. Through multi-agency professional and strategy meetings, community engagement events, the Safer Neighbourhood Boards and Ward Panels. We have undertaken Strategic Assessments, Reviews and Audits, and most recently conducted bespoke Plan engagement sessions across the Partnership.

We have access to data from those that reside and/or have a stake in the community such as business owners as well as those that frequent the Borough all of which have informed the Plan.

The priorities outlined in the 2023/24 Plan for the Safer Lewisham Partnership are

- Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Girls
- Community Engagement
- A Public Health Approach to tackling violence, with a focus on Youth Violence

The Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan should be considered in conjunction with the Corporate Strategy 2022 – 2026, which sets the priorities aligned to Safer Communities as:

- We will work with the Police to implement our Domestic Abuse Violence Against Women and Girls strategy 2021 - 2026.
- We will continue to support the Mayor of London's Have a Word campaign, which encourages men to reflect on their own behaviour and the way they see, treat, and talk about women.
- We will reduce the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system, focusing on prevention and expanding our trauma-informed approach, championed by our Youth Offending Service.
- We will continue to focus and develop our successful Public Health Approach to youth violence, aiming to tackle knife crime and reduce sexual exploitation across the borough.

How are these priorities chosen?

The three priorities that form the Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan 2023, have been identified through a review of the data and consultation across the Partnership.

Violence (against the person) is the highest recorded crime in Lewisham and has seen a 9.1% increase in the past 12-month reporting period. This is higher than the London average. It must also be noted that stakeholders and the wider community have continually raised violence as a concern in Lewisham, which is corroborated by data and informs this priority.

Domestic abuse/ violence has the highest number of crimes recorded (as a category) in Lewisham and has a much higher percentage increase (12.3%), compared to the London average over the past 12-month reporting period. Again, both stakeholder and the wider community have raised concern about the frequency of violence most notably, but not exclusively, towards women and girls. This is also illustrated

throughout the Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls 2021 - 2026 strategy, which demonstrates our commitment to tackling this.

Finally, Community Engagement is critical to how we as a Council, but also as a Partnership value the importance of a whole community approach to tackling and addressing crime and violence in Lewisham. No single agency or group can solve crime and in keeping with the values and philosophy of our public health approach to violence and the associated trauma, its aims are to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people, and to extend better care and safety to entire populations.

The Public Health Approach to Violence Reduction Strategy was launched in 2019 and underpins this Plan. Whilst a substantial amount of work had been undertaken, Covid-19 had a significant impact on the development of progress. Therefore, it is right that the Council use this Plan as an opportunity to accelerate the Council's position of managing violence through a public health approach.

Priority One: Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women & Girls

Priority One: Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women & Girls	
The vision	Working in partnership across agencies and with the community, to ensure our response to abuse is integrated, innovative and inclusive.
The objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Perpetrators held to account▪ Justice for those impacted▪ Enhanced service offer of Prevention and Intervention▪ Everyone living and working in Lewisham is able to contribute to making the borough safe
What's required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Training and development for staff and teams▪ Improved multi-agency response▪ Development of evidence based programmes▪ Campaigns to raise awareness
The outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reduced harmful behaviour in Lewisham▪ Increase referrals for services▪ The voice of those impacted is heard▪ Those impacted are supported effectively
What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Enhanced services across Lewisham▪ Services are co-designed▪ Shared model of delivery regionally▪ An increased Awareness▪ A safer place for victims and survivors of abuse

As highlighted in the Corporate Strategy 2022 – 2026, Lewisham will work with the stakeholders to implement our Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls strategy 2021 - 2026. The priorities will complement the Plan and should not be considered in isolation.

- Prevent – preventing violence and abuse through early intervention and education
- Protect - providing support that keeps individuals and their families safe from harm
- Recover - providing longer term support to enable recovery following abuse
- Pursue - holding perpetrators to account whilst providing opportunity for change and support
- Partnership - working in partnership across agencies and with the community, to ensure our response to abuse is integrated, innovative and inclusive

We want to ensure that everyone living and working in Lewisham knows where to go to get help if they are experiencing violence and abuse, at the earliest opportunity. Our aim is that family, friends, and the wider community can recognise abuse in all its forms and know how to support victims.

We will continue to ensure that all victims of violence and abuse have access to a high quality integrated Domestic Abuse and VAWG service, including safe accommodation and we are committed to improving the co-ordination of our multi-agency response to those impacted by violence and abuse.

We want to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions, whilst building capacity to change and will lead a coordinated response to domestic abuse and VAWG, creating opportunities for better partnership working and support, encouraging continuous learning and innovation and sharing accountability in reducing the impact of violence and abuse.

We recognise the long-term harm caused by VAWG and understand the lasting impacts experienced by individuals beyond the incident of abuse. We will aim for agencies across Lewisham to be trauma-informed in their response to violence and abuse, particularly for survivors with multiple vulnerabilities.

Priority Two: Community Engagement

Priority two: Community Engagement	
The vision	Resident/community led, co-design of services
The objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Resident focused services▪ Increased Community Participation▪ Shared Ownership▪ Sustainable Change
What's required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Raising awareness of services▪ Greater collaboration from across the Partnership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Engagement Strategy ▪ Use of existing Resource and Expertise ▪ Consultation with Purpose
The outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced fear of crime in Lewisham ▪ Reduced disproportionality ▪ Engaged residents through the co-design of services
What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pan-London recognised programmes ▪ Resident/community approved services ▪ Community Resilience ▪ An increased Awareness ▪ Improved Trust and Relationships

As highlighted in the Corporate Strategy 2022 – 2026, community includes safer neighbourhoods, good schools, thriving businesses, active community groups, responsible stewardship of the environment and services that are designed for the convenience of those who use them.

We want to work more closely with community groups and others with reach and influence in the local area. Across Lewisham, we recognise that there are communities whose voices are seldom heard and others who may feel as if they are not heard at all. We will develop an approach to engage our community that is fairer, accessible, and even more inclusive, acting as a listening organisation and working in tandem with our residents to improve the services we deliver for them.

Our corporate values shape and guide our priorities and decision making, and they underpin how we work and what we do, most notably the following

- We put service to the public first - We exist to serve and support the residents of Lewisham, and everything we do must always have residents' interests first and foremost
- We respect all people and communities - We have a proud history of actively working to tackle inequalities, both across the borough and within the Council, and we will continue to build on this in everything we do.

One of our key partners in our work with our communities across Lewisham is the police and the Council has supported and collaborated with them to carry out community conversations through their innovation hubs.

Good work has already been carried out in Lewisham, but there is always more that can be done. Lewisham held a Visioning Event, designed, and delivered by Mutual Gain in November 2021. The event was an opportunity to bring the community planning group together with the Council, its Partners, and young people from the Young Mayor and Young Advisory Group. Themes such as what does violence in Lewisham mean to you; why do you think we have violence in Lewisham; and what could we do, as a community, to reduce violence were explored.

Feedback is invaluable as it helps to shape our plans and strategies in Lewisham. Feedback such as recognising the role of drugs in violence and crime; Police tactics,

their perception versus the reality, and how that might impact on violence; the acknowledgement of how your environment may have an impact, for instance deprivation and lack of community connectors; the role and place of role models and culture; along with the role of services, for example, school exclusions and lack of support and services.

Training for young people, parents and families was seen as an opportunity to reduce violence along with improved mental health support and services. The need to challenge stereotypes, develop coping mechanisms for residents, in the aftermath of violence, and to see mental health as both a possible cause but also an effect of violence (trauma) was shared. Engaging the community and organisations to address violence and other related crimes was seen as an essential ingredient to successful problem solving.

Lewisham has partnered with Stop Hate UK, a charity providing independent and confidential support to people affected by hate crime 365 days a year. Lewisham recognises that local groups and organisations are often well placed to provide local support. The Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding has been made available to partners to apply for funding to support our communities. Which recognises this.

With MOPAC funding, Lewisham Council have formed a partnership hub made up of internal and external partners, who will partner with communities to understand their local issues and challenges, allow for the development of trauma informed approaches, the provision of clinical support and in turn more strengthened and cohesive communities.

Lewisham has identified Community Champions who are undertaking meaningful work to improve the outcomes of young people within their communities affected by violence and or exploitation. This is achieved by providing a clinically and therapeutically informed staff within the community who understand the cultural context and adopt a flexible, relational, joined up, whole systems approach.

Support is also provided to the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) and development of SNB sub-groups, which the Council works in collaboration with to tackle issues of safety and crime in Lewisham.

Priority Three: Public health approach to tackling violence, with a specific focus on Youth Violence

Priority Three: Public health approach to tackling violence, with a specific focus on Youth Violence	
The vision	Lewisham has a clear understanding of the nature of violence and its drivers
The objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create an evidence based culture in Lewisham

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inform and enhance future practice in Lewisham and across the partnership ▪ Create a sustainable model for change
What's required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote and raise awareness of the public health approach across the Council ▪ Promote and raise awareness of the public health approach amongst residents and communities ▪ Organisational development and learning across agencies ▪ Multi-agency partnership approach ▪ Data analysis and information sharing
The outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce the impact and level of actual violence across Lewisham. ▪ Identify the causes of violence in Lewisham, and act to deliver short and longer term reductions. ▪ Stronger and resilient communities. ▪ A learning environment for continuous improvement. ▪ Positive impact on social, economic and health outcomes for our residents.
What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regionally/nationally recognised model of good practice ▪ Body of evidence to support public health approach ▪ Notable increase in trust and confidence

It must be acknowledged that a public health approach to tackling violence requires a long term and sustained commitment from Lewisham and the wider partnership. The true impact of the approach may not be seen for several years if we are to address and unpick deep rooted issues.

Defining a public health approach, one that all of the partnership, communities and residents understand can be challenging. Violence ruins lives, not just those of the victims, but their families, friends, colleagues, and communities. Therefore, we all have a role to play in finding a solution. This is why Lewisham is taking a public health approach to the problem. It puts the community at its core, bringing people together to have conversations and find solutions.

Lewisham's public health approach to violence reduction uses the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, developmental impact, or deprivation". The Lewisham approach will be to consider and address all aspects of violence across the borough.

To help with this approach, Lewisham has been working with and will continue to work with a range of partners and stakeholders, including but not limited to the Police; Schools and education establishments; Religious and Faith groups; Community groups; the Voluntary sector; Charitable organisations; Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime; NHS and other statutory and non-statutory groups.

The public health approach is a science-driven, population-based, and interdisciplinary, cross sector approach which emphasises primary prevention. Rather than focusing on individuals, the public health approach aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people, and to extend better care and safety to entire populations.

The public health approach is an evidence-based and systematic process involving the following four steps

- Defining the problem conceptually and numerically, using statistics that accurately describe the nature and scale of violence, the characteristics of those most affected, the geographical distribution of incident, and the consequences of exposure to such violence
- Investigating why the problem occurs by determining its causes and correlates, the factors that increase or decrease the risk of its occurrence (risk and protective factors) and the factors that might be modifiable through intervention
- Exploring ways to prevent the problem by using the above information and designing, monitoring and rigorously assessing the effectiveness of programmes through outcome evaluation
- Dissemination information on the effectiveness of programmes and increasing the scale of proven effective programmes

There is a relationship between violence and factors such as poverty, income and gender inequality, the harmful use of alcohol and drugs, and the absence of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between children and parents/adults. Violence cannot be attributed to a single factor. Its causes are complex and occur at different levels.

The first level identifies biological and personal factors that influence how individuals behave and increase their likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. The second level focuses on close relationships, such as those with family and friends. The third level explores the community context – i.e., schools, workplaces, and neighbourhoods. The fourth level looks at the broad societal factors that help to create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited.

In adopting a public health approach, the aim is to

- Reduce the impact and level of actual violence across Lewisham
- Identify the causes of violence in Lewisham, and act to deliver short and longer term reductions
- Listen and work with communities to build on their strengths and deliver solutions together
- Create a learning environment for continuous improvement

- Impact positively on wider social, economic and health outcomes for our residents.

It should be noted the term ‘serious youth violence’ can be complex and challenging when used. Professionals and practitioners working in Children Services may recognise a youth or a young person up to the age of 16 or 17. Others in different fields may recognise a young person up to the age of 24, as defined by the World Health Organisation.

The Safer Lewisham Partnership has a responsibility to all of our residents in the borough, whilst recognising there may be some crime types and behaviours that involve younger people, at the same time recognising they may also be the victim of peer related crime, crime, exploitation, and abuse by others.

Gangs, gang affected and gang related crime is also a term often used, but again it must be recognised that this is not exclusive to young people. Adults will be involved in organised crime, be part of crime syndicates or gangs and young people may be exploited and coerced to become involved.

It is essential that we work with the London Mayor’s office for policing and crime (MOPAC) to ensure Lewisham are learning from and feeding into the work of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) for London. We recognise our communities are affected by what occurs across London and that crime and violence are not restricted to boundaries, indeed boundaries can be a factor in violence with individuals and groups crossing boundaries to inflict violence.

Lewisham’s priorities are closely aligned to MOPAC priorities which will

- Reducing and preventing violence - in all its forms, such as knife crime, gang violence, violence against women and girls and terrorism.
- Increasing trust and confidence - making sure that all Londoners feel that the police treat you fairly, provide a professional service and are dealing with the local crime and antisocial behaviour issues that matter to you.
- Better supporting victims of crime - providing the services victims of crime need to cope and recover from their experiences; and supporting more people to pursue cases through the justice system all the way to trial.
- Protecting people from being exploited - reducing the number of young people and adults who are exploited or harmed; keeping young people in the justice system supported and safe; and ensuring that Londoners are protected in public, in private and online.

Making Lewisham a trauma informed borough

Lewisham YOS has previously been recognised by the Department for Education as ‘a trauma informed service’, meaning it is a relationship and trauma-based model delivered as a direct intervention and as a workforce development programme.

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that are experienced by an individual as harmful or life threatening. While unique to the

individual, generally the experience of trauma can cause lasting adverse effects, limiting the ability to function and achieve mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. It should further be acknowledged that trauma can affect individuals, groups, and communities.

Trauma-informed practice is an approach to health and care interventions, which is grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological, and social development.

Trauma-informed practice aims to increase a practitioners' awareness of how trauma can negatively impact on individuals and communities, and their ability to feel safe or develop trusting relationships with services and their staff.

It aims to improve the accessibility and quality of services by creating culturally sensitive, safe services that people trust and want to use. It seeks to prepare practitioners to work in collaboration and partnership with people and empower them to make choices about their health and wellbeing.

Trauma-informed practice acknowledges the need to see beyond an individual's presenting behaviours and to ask, 'What does this person need?' rather than 'What is wrong with this person?'

There are six key principles of trauma-informed practice

- Safety - the physical, psychological, and emotional safety of service users and staff is prioritised
- Trust - transparency exists in an organisation's policies and procedures, with the objective of building trust
- Choice - service users are supported in shared decision-making, choice, and goal setting
- Collaboration - the value of staff and service user experience is recognised in overcoming challenges and improving the system
- Empowerment - efforts are made to share power and give service users and staff a strong voice in decision-making
- Cultural consideration – look beyond cultural stereotypes and biases-based gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, race, or ethnicity for example

The Safer Lewisham Partnership will seek to ensure that the Plan is informed by the six key principles.

The Safer Lewisham Partnership Plan 2023, as informed by Committee recommendations was heard at the Safer Lewisham Partnership Board.

Post the Board, and informed by further recommendations, the Safer Lewisham Partnership representatives will gather to finalise the Performance Management Framework, which will include clearly defined and measurable objectives. The Framework will also include an Action Plan 2023/24, and delivery mechanisms.

The finalised Plan was be presented to the Safer Lewisham Partnership Board in April 2023.

An Appendix will be created, which will include

- A glossary,
- Further detail on Serious Violence Duty, Combatting Drugs Partnership,
- Bibliography/Resource Links,
- Consideration of further data