



# Serious Violence Duty Strategic Needs Assessment

Technical Document

January 2023

**NOTE: THIS VERSION IS A DRAFT**

# Executive Summary

- Lewisham faces multifaceted challenges contributing to vulnerability and violence: **High deprivation levels**, ranked 35th in England and 6th in London, correlate with serious violence. Socio-economic factors such as poverty and unemployment are prevalent, with increased free school meal eligibility and a high share of economically active but unemployed residents.
- Education-wise, the borough experiences higher rates of student exclusions and NEET status.
- Mental health disparities are evident, particularly in areas like Rushey Green, Bellingham, and Sydenham. Substance misuse treatment numbers have surged, emphasizing the prevalence of opiate and alcohol users. Additionally, factors associated with increased cost-of-living, such as economic conditions and inequality, compound community challenges. A holistic approach involving collaboration and community resources is essential to address these interconnected issues.
- It is clear from the data contained within this report that Lewisham has relatively high levels of serious violence when compared with other London boroughs. This document and the tools described within provide a base to monitor violence across Lewisham and review remedial actions and strategy, in-line with the Serious Violence Duty.
- Nearly a third of all crime in Lewisham is classified as serious violence, with domestic abuse accounting for almost half of this. In comparison with other London Boroughs, Lewisham is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> for serious violence (compared with 12<sup>th</sup> for overall crime). Detailed police data are only available from 2021 so long-term trend analysis is not possible (including comparison with pre-covid crime levels), however we know Lewisham has experienced a 9% increase in serious violence between the 12 months up to and including October 2023 and the previous 12-month period. This is much higher than the 3.9% increase observed across London as a whole. Increases are particularly high for specific crime types, including Drug Trafficking (21.2%, although lower than the 45% increase across London) and Personal Robbery (16.4%, similar to the 17.4% increase across London), and Threats to Kill (27.2%, compared with a 16.1% increase across London). However, importantly, increases were observed across all offences examined except for Possession of Weapons.
- The involvement of young people in violence, particularly around robbery and weapon-related crime, is particularly concerning. Positive steps by the YJS to address FTE and Reoffending, but concerns around the sustainability of these services (etc)

## Location detail:

- There are different location profiles between domestic abuse and non-domestic serious violence.
- For non-domestic serious violence, hotspots tend to concentrate in town centres and transit hubs. Lewisham Central ward stands out for highest rates followed by Rushey Green and Deptford, while more specific areas with high concentrations include Catford town centre, the area around Lewisham Hospital and Lewisham town centre; Deptford High Street and New Cross Road also have high levels.
- The distribution of domestic-abuse related violence is more widespread across the borough, in both town centres and residential areas. Bellingham ward stands out with the highest rate of domestic abuse – notably, the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of any ward in London. Rushey Green, Deptford and Downham also have high levels.

# Thematic analysis - Weapon carrying and use by young people

Focus area	Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<p><b>Weapon carrying and use by young people</b> – there appears to be a link between weapon carrying and the use of weapons in personal robberies, almost two-thirds of which are committed by those under 25.</p>	<p>Engagement with the public showed personal robbery was a big concern. It was the most commonly experienced type of serious violence in Lewisham.</p> <p>Feedback also suggested that residents feel that personal robbery is not taken seriously by enforcement agencies and not enough is done to investigate these crimes.</p>	<p>There is a relatively <b>high sanction detection rate</b> of 48% for possession of weapons compared to other offences, presumably because many cases are identified when a person/property is searched by the police. This suggests that there is a lot of weapon carrying which is unknown about and unrecorded.</p> <p>47.8% of suspects for weapon carrying were less than 25 years old (<b>1.6x</b> the population).</p> <p>26.7% of personal robberies involved a knife. Personal robberies have <b>increased by 16.4%</b> in the 12 months to October 2023.</p> <p>74.6% of suspects of personal robbery were less than 25 years old (<b>2.5x</b> the population).</p>

# Thematic analysis - Mental health and substance misuse as a driver and cause of domestic abuse

Areas of focus	Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<p><b>Mental health and substance misuse as a driver and cause of domestic abuse</b> - Higher levels of mental health and substance misuse in cases of repeat victimisation and/or perpetration of domestic abuse are likely to add to the complexity of the cases.</p>	<p>The most common response to our survey question of what the cause was of serious violence in Lewisham was substance misuse, with 78.5% of respondents stating this.</p> <p>The second most common answer was mental health, with 65% of respondents to our survey stated they thought mental health issues was the cause of serious violence in Lewisham.</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse makes up <b>46% of the serious violence</b> offences in Lewisham, compared with 41.8% London-wide.</p> <p>The <b>highest rate of domestic abuse occurred in Bellingham</b> (24.9 per 1,000 population). Bellingham is in the worst 1% of all London wards with the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate in London.</p> <p>4 of the SLOAs in Bellingham are the worst 40% in the country for poor mental health.</p> <p><b>Drug misuse is a high risk in Bellingham</b> for parent/carers assessed by CSC where child was at risk of domestic violence (10.5% of assessments).</p> <p>MARAC cases, which are those with the highest risk of harm to the victim, showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19.6% of victims and 31.9% of perpetrators were noted to have substance misuse problems.</li> <li>34.2% of victims and 26.8% of perpetrators were noted to have mental health concerns.</li> <li>12.3% of victims and 17.2% perpetrators had co-occurring mental health and substance use concerns.</li> </ul>

# Thematic analysis - Exploitation in sexual violence

Areas of focus	Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<p><b>Exploitation in sexual violence</b> – it appears that perpetrators of sexual violence use exploitative tactics and imbalance of power to perpetrate sexual violence.</p>	<p>Unsurprisingly, we did not receive a lot of direct feedback on sexual violence in our public engagement efforts.</p>	<p>Lewisham has <b>8<sup>th</sup> highest rate</b> for sexual violence of all London boroughs. There was a 7.9% increase in the 12 months to October 2023, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in London.</p> <p>For non-domestic abuse related offences, the abuser was most commonly an <b>acquaintance of the victim</b> (31.8% of known relationships).</p> <p>There are clear gender and age differences in suspects and victims - Victims were more often female (83.3%) and under 25 (46.9%, 1.6x the local population) and suspects more often male (92.4%) and older (72.9% over 25).</p>

# Thematic analysis - Hotspot based interventions

Areas of focus	Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<b>Hotspot based interventions</b> – there are clear hotspots for each type of violence.	Residents expressed that there is a need for more local community-based interventions to bring people together and give people a sense of belonging and together-ness.	Bellingham – hotspot for domestic abuse Lewisham Central – hotspot for sexual violence Deptford and Rushey Green– hotspot for possession of weapons, personal robbery and other weapon related offences.

# Thematic analysis - Criminal exploitation and drug trafficking

Areas of focus	Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<p><b>Criminal exploitation and drug trafficking*</b> - criminal exploitation appears to be the most prevalent type of exploitation / modern slavery in Lewisham with drug trafficking on the increase, the two likely to be interlinked. Data shows that young men are overrepresented as victims as are those who are not in education, employment or training.</p> <p><small>*Majority of the NRM referrals will be CE because they mainly relate to children and SW/police identify these cases more easily than other forms of exploitation and do not need consent to refer (as you do for adults). So this data may not be a true reflection of the full picture.</small></p>	<p>One of the key themes which came out of the public consultation was the need for more employment and training opportunities as a way to reduce serious violence. Respondents to our survey thought the local community would benefit the most from <b>positive activities for young people, safe places for young people to meet and socialise and employment opportunities</b>.</p> <p>The public would like to see the provision of more opportunities for young people to positively engage, without the additional costs that often come with extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>Lewisham has the <b>3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate</b> for exploitation of all London Boroughs. There was a 13.9% increase to the previous 12-month period, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest increase in London.</p> <p>The majority of National Referring Mechanism referrals related to Criminal Exploitation (67%).*</p> <p>The most common primary risk category of MACE referrals was criminal exploitation (43.7%). 38% of referrals were categorised as NEET.</p> <p>There was a 21.5% increase of drug trafficking to the previous 12-month period. Every London borough observed an increase over this period. Lewisham Central was the ward with the highest rate in Lewisham and amongst the worst 10% in London. Lewisham also has another six wards amongst the worst 20% in London: Rushey Green, Deptford, Forest Hill, Evelyn, Catford South and Downham.</p> <p>Over a this (23, 39%) of referrals to the Violence Reduction Team were NEET.</p>

# Executive Summary

*To be completed in due course*

Our commitments as a result the community engagement and quantitative data analysis completed are as follows:

1. XXX
2. XXX
3. XXX



# Index

- [Introduction](#) - an overview of the Serious Violence Duty and purpose of this document
- [Lewisham - population demographics](#)
- [Voices of Lewisham](#) - results from the community survey and conversations
- [Protective and Risk Factors](#) – deprivation, socio-economic pressures, education, mental health, substance misuse and cost of living impacts.
- [Serious Violence](#), with a focus on crime data
  - [Definition and Overview](#)
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# Introduction

# The Serious Violence Duty

The Government has introduced a new Serious Violence Duty which ensures that public bodies work together and share data and knowledge, to target interventions to reduce and prevent serious violence.

## Responsible Authorities



## Consulted Authorities



## The Requirements

- ✓ Identify and define serious violence locally
- ✓ Agree the geographical coverage and local partnership model for delivering the duty
- ✓ Produce a partnership agreement outlining how specified authorities and partners will work together
- ✓ Produce a Strategic Needs Assessment
- ✓ Produce, publish and implement a strategy
- ✓ Review the strategy annually

# Purpose of the Strategic Needs Assessment



Identify and quantify the extent of serious violence that takes place.



Examine potential causes and drivers of violence



Highlight the types of individuals most at risk of violence



Identify hotspot locations



Highlight any gaps in information or lack of data in particular areas

# Governance

Mayor and Cabinet

Borough Command Unit (BCU)

**Safer Lewisham Partnership Board**

Domestic Abuse and VAWG Board

Domestic Abuse and VAWG Strategy

Serious Violence Strategy & Strategic Needs Assessment

Serious Violence Action Plan

Serious Violence Performance Framework

All work underpinned by a public health approach

**Lewisham**

# Population



**300,600**  
residents

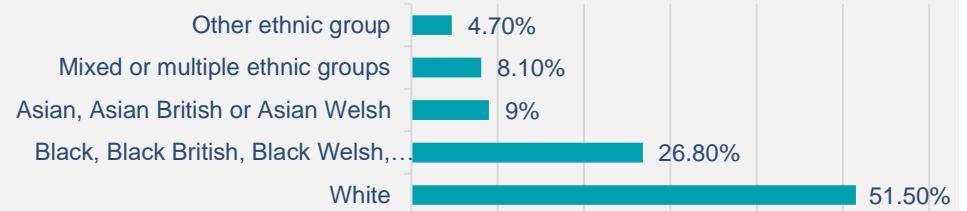
The population  
of Lewisham  
increased by  
**+9%**  
since 2011

**52.5%**  
Female

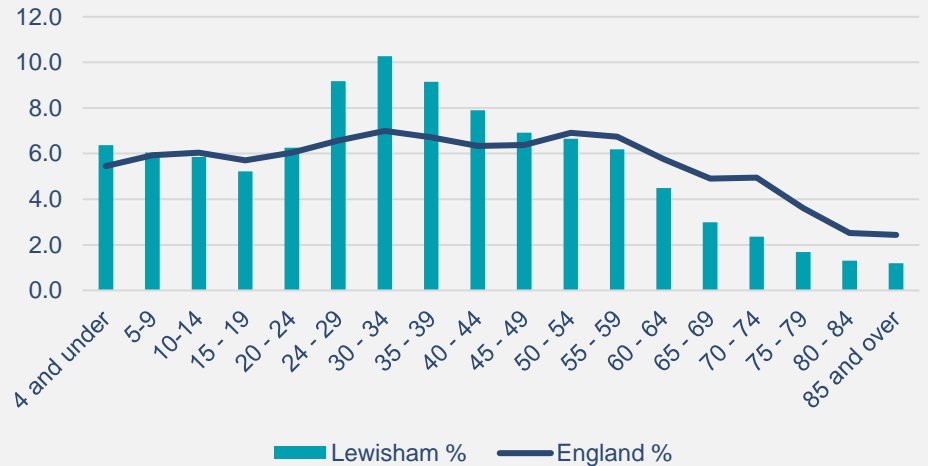
**47.5%**  
Male



## Ethnicity



## Population Age



# Voices of Lewisham



# Collective conversations about reducing violence in Lewisham – 2021 findings

What does violence in Lewisham mean to you?

- Violence against the person
- Youth crime and violence (drugs/gang culture)
- Gang influences
- Individual roles and influences
- Community impact and responses
- Mental health (as a cause of effect)
- Drugs (drug related crime)
- Police perceptions v reality

Why do you think we have violence in Lewisham?

- Place (legacy of deprivation and lack of community connections)
- People (role models, ethnicity and culture)
- Role of Service (exclusions from schools, lack of activities and lack of support)

What could we do as a community to reduce violence?

- Support and training (for young people, for the community and support for parents and families)
- Harm reduction and mental health (more support for mental health, improved mental health services)
- Roles of services (schools, police, Youth services and activities)

# Collective conversations about reducing violence in Lewisham – 2023 findings

What does violence in Lewisham mean to you?

- It takes many forms, and cannot be put into one particular box.
- Antisemitism and racism.
- Robbery and mugging – sounds minor but has great impact.
- Attacks on homeless people
- Gang violence – you do not have to be involved yourself, it is enough that you know someone who is involved.

Why do you think we have violence in Lewisham?

- Adverse childhood experiences and adverse community experiences
- Language barriers/communication issues impacts on access to support
- Lack of community culture

What could we do as a community to reduce violence?

- More visual awareness of support
- Sensitise the community to violence and its impact
- Preventative work – address trauma early
- Creating opportunities that promote wellbeing, build confidence and help create a rapport/ trust
- Create spaces for young people to spend time together in a fun and safe way, ie youth centres.
- Support for parents to provide them with knowledge and skills to become more equipped parents
- More community events to bring people together

# Who we spoke to

- Community conversations project – residents and visitors to the Borough, including young people aged 10-12 years old and their families;
- Community engagement forum – community leaders and voluntary services;
- Honor Oak Community Engagement event – residents and visitors to the Borough;
- Lewisham College and Goldsmiths University– students in Lewisham
- London Fire Brigade Community Space at Lewisham Shopping Centre - residents and visitors to the Borough.
- Sip and Talk group – discussion led by James Ross Hunter Foundation with parents/carers/communities at the TNG Sydenham
- Deptford Christmas Market - residents and visitors to the Borough;
- Deptford Family Event – local residents.
- Family Hubs – families with young children in the Borough.
- Public survey – open for 6 weeks to anyone who lives, works or visits the Borough.



# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

- We spoke with local residents, visitors and those who work in Lewisham to find out about their experiences and concerns in relation to serious violence. Overall, we received **386** responses.
- Our first question related to the types of serious violent incidents experienced in Lewisham in the last six months. Most commonly experienced (in person, witnessed or heard about from a friend, family member or associate) were **mugging, physical assault and violence related to drugs**.

## Mugging / personal robbery

- 6.2% experienced
- 36.3% witnessed

## Physical assault

- 5.7% experienced
- 39.6% witnessed

## Violence related to drugs

- 3.6% experienced
- 34.5% witnessed

# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

Whilst for all types of serious violence listed, the majority of respondents had not experienced it in any way, we still saw large proportions have some level of exposure.

## Homicide

- 2% experienced
- 20.2% witnessed

## Use of knife or gun

- 2.6% experienced
- 31.4% witnessed

## Threats to kill

- 4.9% experienced
- 19.9% witnessed

## Domestic abuse

- 2.6% experienced
- 23.6% witnessed

## Sexual assault/rape

- 1.8% experienced
- 14.8% witnessed

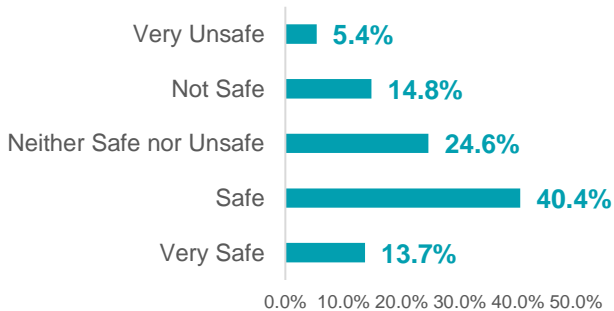
## Arson/property damage

- 6.2% experienced
- 23.3% witnessed

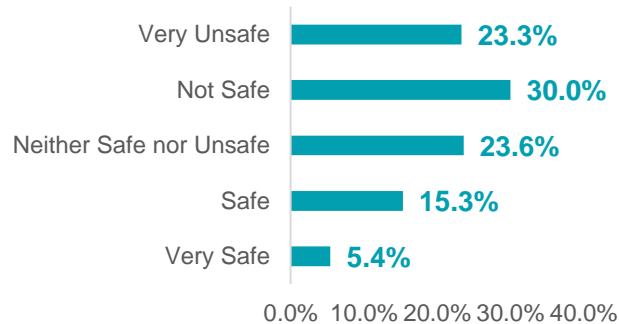
# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

Respondents indicated that they felt safest in their homes, and least safe **after dark**.

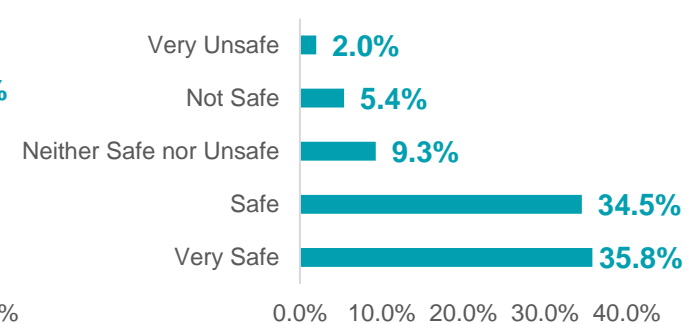
How safe do you feel in the daytime?



How safe do you feel after dark ?



How safe do you feel inside your home?

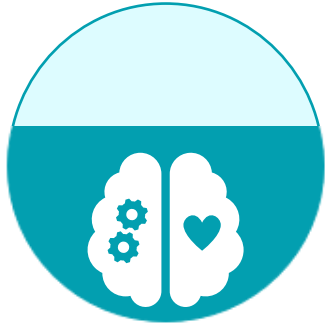


# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham



78.5%

Use of drugs /  
alcohol



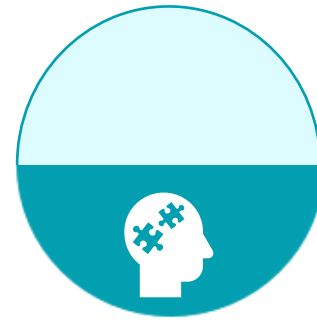
65%

Mental health  
issues



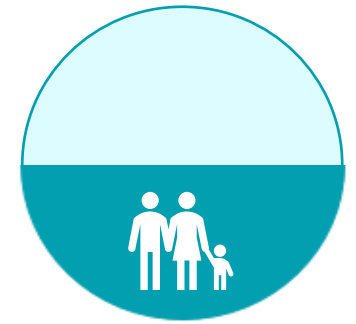
63.5%

Poverty



59%

Poor behaviour  
control



59%

Lack of parental  
supervision

When we asked about what was the **cause** of most serious violence in Lewisham, the most common responses received were use of **drugs/alcohol, mental health issues and poverty**.

# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

We gave the respondents an option to tick 'other' and provide their personal views on causes of serious violence in Lewisham.

*'Lack of police presence or enforcement of crimes. Dirty streets, shops with broken windows/empty, all contributed to the feel of a place, if no one cares then it's a perfect place for criminals'*

*'Police and the council failing in their duties'*

*'Failure of police patrol at night, ineffective CCTV cameras on outside and around buildings, not enough police, failure to investigate with CCTV footage and prosecute'*

## Lack of policing and enforcement

*'Where teachers, police etc are not allowed to do any thing on bad behaviour.'*

*'Not enough policemen walking around'*

*'Lack of police patrols & presence on foot'*

*'Knowing that they can and will get away with it without consequence.'*

*'Lack of pre-emptive action from the local council and police, for example, community engagement and basic safety monitoring and measures, such as street lights in residential areas and public parks.'*





# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

We gave the respondents an option to tick 'other' and provide their personal views on causes of serious violence in Lewisham.

*'Spending cuts imposed on the local authority in the last 13 years. People do not have the same levels of support and inequality has risen'*



*'Absent fathers'*

## Cultural / societal factors

*'Fatherlessness'*

*'Poor culture without deterrents and boundaries, internet access to porn and other violent images, failure to recognised sex based risk factors e.g. violent male behaviour cultivated by porn'*

*'High rates of domestic abuse and a lack of social response that holds perpetrators accountable'*

*'Social deprivation, endemic misogyny'*

*'Lack of strong father figure, broken families'*

*'Capitalism and the Patriarchy'*

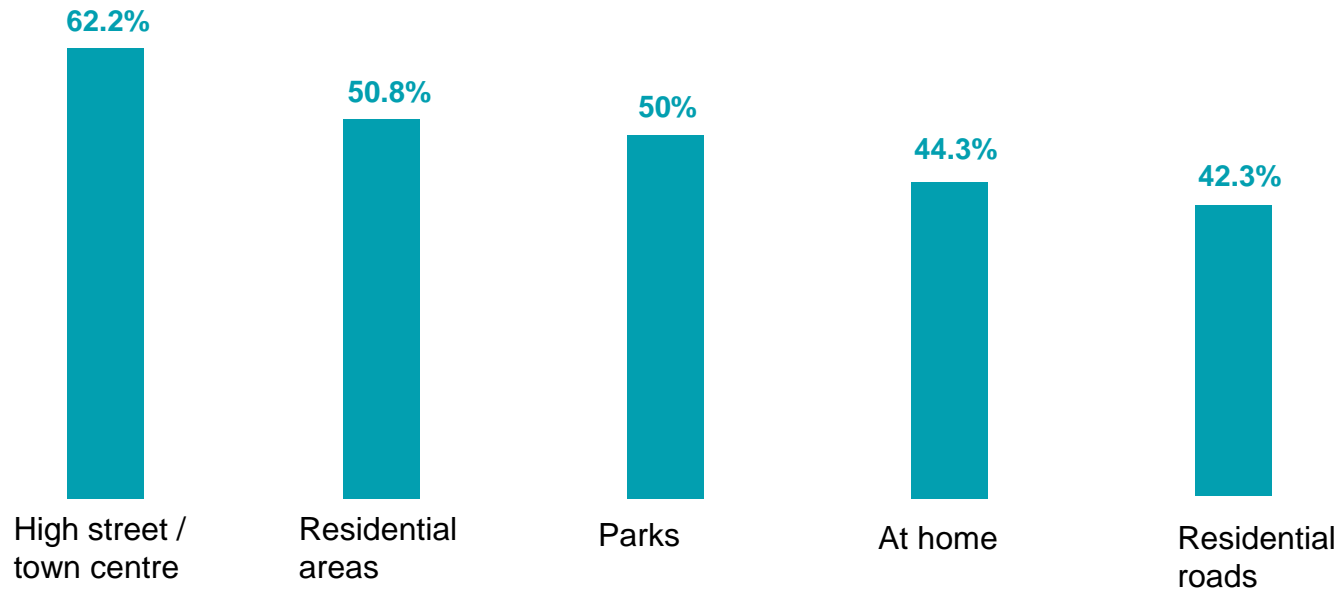
*'Hypermasculinisation and misogyny; homophobia; racism and xenophobia'*

*'Most of these issues are trauma related and poverty, lack of opportunity, desperation.'*

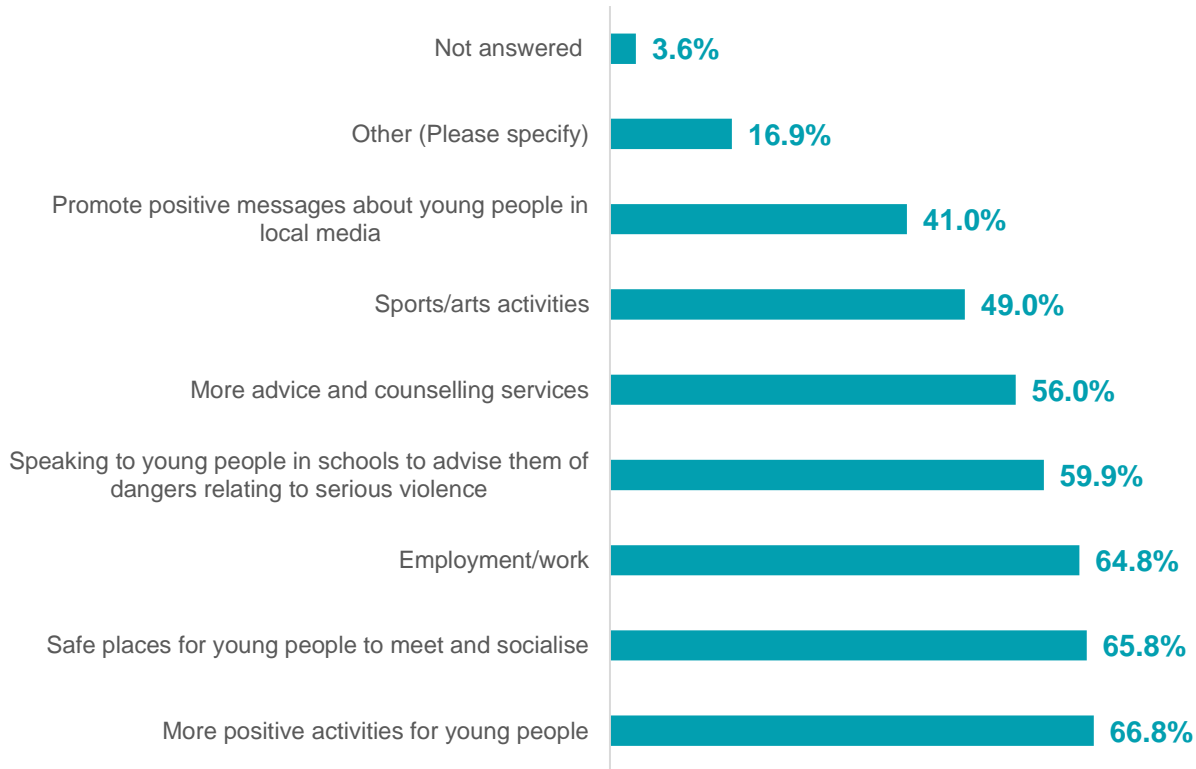


# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

- Lewisham residents think most crime happens in **high streets/town centres, residential areas** (such as car parks, new build complexes, housing estates etc) and **parks**.



# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham



Respondents to our survey thought the local community would benefit the most from **positive activities for young people, safe places for young people to meet and socialise and employment opportunities.**

# Survey of anyone living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

In relation to reducing serious violence, what support do you think your community would benefit from?

## Enforcement

*Harsher penalty for doing wrong.*

*More visible and expecting policing.*

*More police presence in the community*

*A more strict approach and less tolerance.*

*Better Policing in the area. Visual Police presence in the area.*

*Serious crime prevention methods and better follow up by police for adult behaviours.*

*Better correctional facilities and some sort of law and order.*

*Removal of drug addicts and alcoholics from Catford town centre.*

*Harsher sentencing for offenders.*

*More police, and stricter justice.*

*More police and action against offenders. There is little to no policing at present.*

## Family/social

*For the people in power to create ways of bringing about a more just and equal society.*

*Parental control and family unit. It's all about how children are raised and parents being responsible.*

*Parental control/example*

*Can't stress the importance of better community infrastructure*

*More race relations work*

*Providing positive role for young males, addressing the glamorising of crime and the equating fear with respect.*

*Greater services for men - especially fathers*

*More community engagement from the local council and police, such as positive outreach and presence, engaging in conversations with community and making everyone feel safe.*

*Better whole family support - children without parental supervision or monitoring don't feel cared for, or that they should care about anyone else.*

# Survey of anyone living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

In relation to reducing serious violence, what support do you think your community would benefit from?

## Support services

*More mentoring in schools, support groups for families with issues, proper assessments relating to SEN in schools*

### *DRUG / SUBSTANCE MISUSE SUPPORT*

*You close down all of the youth clubs so basically no one has nowhere to go but cause criminality and get high and get drunk put the use services back in place.*

*Benefits people can live from. More social housing. Entry-level jobs with dignity.*

*More youth clubs and youth workers.*

*More help and support for the homeless and adults who have mental health and problems with substance misuse.*

*More responsive mental health services.*

*Improved outreach mental health services including for rough sleepers. E.g. START team with SLaM*

*Earlier mental health intervention and support*

## Employment and training opportunities

*Opportunities for career development - due to closure of Careers Connexion, a lot of youths e.g. 17 & over, do not know where to turn to for careers' advice and just wander from college to college for 2 to 3 days a week, spending the rest of the week idling in the street.*

*Creating more job opportunities ie. Apprenticeships*

*More opportunity for parents to be able to financially support there children to engage in extra curricular activities.  
Diversionary activities to support young people into education, training and employment.*

*Working much harder to prevent poverty and deprivation.*

# Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

Throughout the survey, we received many comments about serious violence not being strictly committed by young people. Many felt that those **over 25 years old** should be considered when developing interventions and addressing serious violence.

*These solutions seem to be targeted towards youth, however majority of the crimes in my area are being committed by adults with poor mental health, drug use and poverty.*

*It's not just young people who need facilities for sport activities or advice and counselling.*

*More positive activities for people generally. It is not only young people who require positive outlets.*

*There is focus of the answers in young people. I think its adult that are as if not more likely to be perpetrators of violence.*

# Protective and Risk Factors

Risk factors can predict an increased likelihood of violence occurring. These include poverty, deprivation, homelessness, absences from education, substance abuse and mental health issues.

Protective factors reduce the likelihood of violence occurring in the first place. This include academic achievement, employment opportunities and positive role models and supportive family structure.

# Risk & Protective Factors Section Summary

The factors below highlight the interconnected nature and influence of vulnerability and violence in Lewisham, spanning economic, educational, mental health, substance misuse, and cost-of-living dimensions. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a holistic and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders and community resources.

## Deprivation and Poverty

Lewisham, ranked 35th most deprived in England and 6th in London, exhibits high levels of deprivation in areas like the Living Environment and Barriers to Housing and Services. Bellingham stands out as the only London area severely deprived across all seven dimensions.

## Socio-economic Factors

Poverty is identified as a risk factor for serious violence, with a considerable portion of Lewisham residents living in households with incomes below 60% of the UK median. Unemployment rates are higher than the national and London averages. Free school meal eligibility, an indicator of lower incomes, has seen a significant increase.

## Education

Higher rates of student exclusions and suspensions than Inner London are noted, though the rates remain lower than pre-COVID levels. The rate of those Not in Education, Employment, or Training among 16- and 17-year-olds is more than double that for London, and higher still for vulnerable groups.

## Mental Health

The Small Area Mental Health Index (SAMHI) reveals pockets of poor mental health (within the worst 40% nationally), particularly in Rushey Green, Bellingham, and Sydenham.

## Substance Misuse

Numbers in drug or alcohol misuse treatment have increased since 2019, reaching the highest in six years. Opiate users constitute a significant portion, and there has been a notable increase in alcohol users in treatment.

## Cost of Living

Factors associated with increased cost-of-living, including economic conditions, affordability, and inequality, impact the community. Lewisham Council's support programs aim to address challenges such as increased demand for food aid, rising rental possessions, and energy prices.



# Deprivation

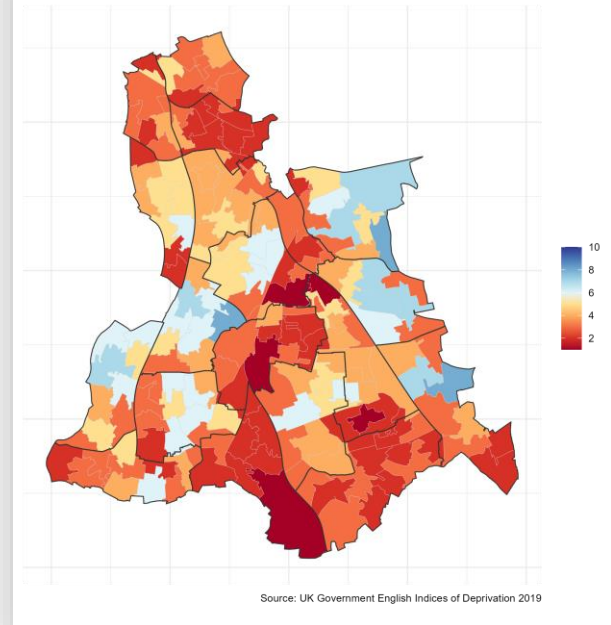
‘Deprivation’ is defined as people’s unmet needs (such as diet, clothing, housing, education etc), whereas ‘poverty’ refers to the lack of financial resources required to meet those needs. High levels of deprivation are linked to increased levels of serious violence.

According to the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019, Lewisham was the **35<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in England** and the **6<sup>th</sup> most deprived London Borough**.

Lewisham was also ranked as having relatively high levels of deprivation with respect to the **Living Environment** (the local outdoor and indoor living environment), **Barriers to Housing and Services** (the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services), **Health** and **Income** related domains.

**One area within Bellingham was deprived across all 7 of the deprivation dimensions, the only area within London to be so.**

Deprivation across Lewisham: Index of Multiple Deprivation  
1 is the most deprived 10% in England; 9 is the least deprived 10%



Source: UK Government English Indices of Deprivation 2019

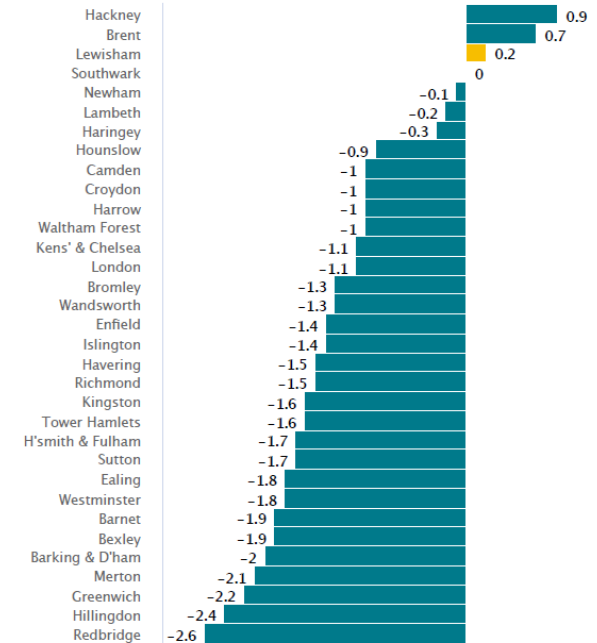
Deprivation Type	Rank of 32 London Boroughs	Rank of 317 England Authorities
Overall Index	6	35
Income	6	28
Employment	4	76
Education, Skills and Training	14	223
Health Deprivation and Disability	7	115
Crime	12	50
Barriers to Housing and Services	11	13
Living Environment	4	11

# Socio-Economic Factors

Poverty is a known risk factor of Serious Violence. Trust for London produces poverty profiles for each London Borough:

- In 2021/22, **32% of people in the borough** lived in households with an income less than 60% the UK median after housing costs have been subtracted. This was around the same as the average London Borough.
- **33% of children** in the borough lived in households with an income of less than 60% the UK median after housing costs have been subtracted in 2021/22. This was around the same as the average London Borough.
- In Lewisham, **15.6% of residents were estimated to be earning below the Living Wage in 2022**. This was around the same as the average London Borough.
- Pay inequality as measured by the ratio of wages at the 80th percentile to the 20th percentile in 2022 was around the same as the average London Borough at 2.37.
- The proportion of 19-year-olds without **a level 2 or level 3 qualification** in 2021/22 was 35.2%, **worse than the average London Borough**
- **Unemployment change** in 2023 Q1 at 0.2 percentage points from 3 years ago was **worse than the average London Borough** (see right).

Unemployment rate 1 year change  
2023 Q1



Source: Model-based estimates of unemployment, via NOMIS, ONS

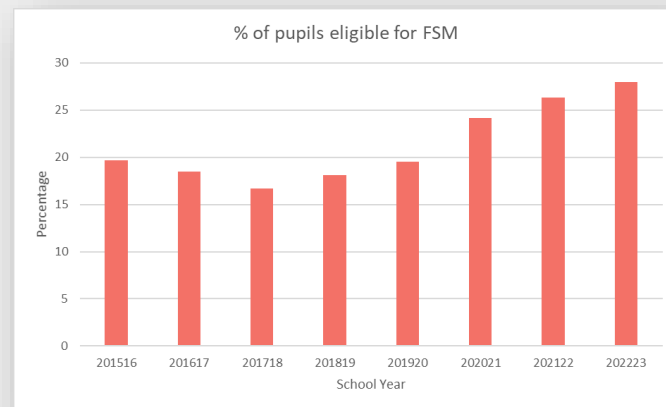
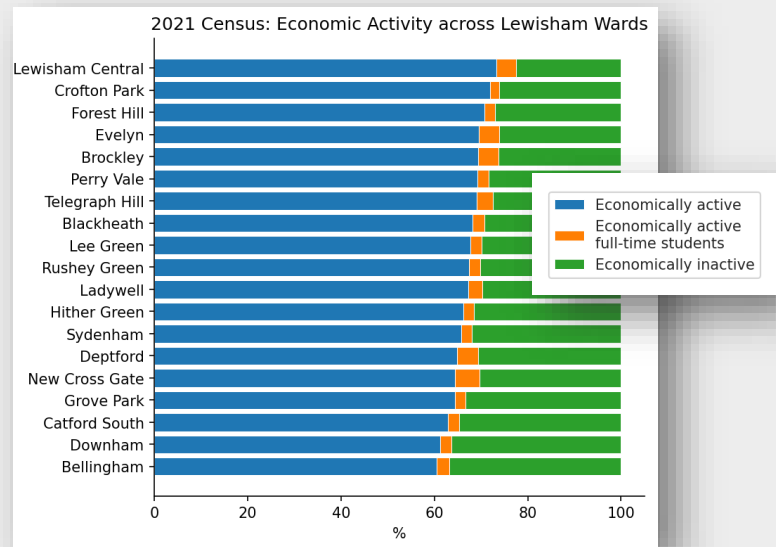
# Socio-Economic Factors

Compared to England & London, Lewisham has a high share (67%) of residents either currently employed or unemployed but seeking work ('economically active') and a low (30%) share of residents who are unable to work ('inactive'). This ratio is wider in Lewisham Central ward and lower in Bellingham (see right).

Of the people economically active there is **high unemployment**: 4.9% of total compared with 2.9% in England and 4.1% in London (Census 2021).

**Free school meals** are provided to children from families with lower incomes. The aim is to ensure that all students, regardless of their economic background, have access to nutritious meals during the school day.

In school year 2022-23 9,983 pupils were eligible for Free School Meals (see right). That is **30% of the total number of pupils and the highest proportion of the last eight years.**



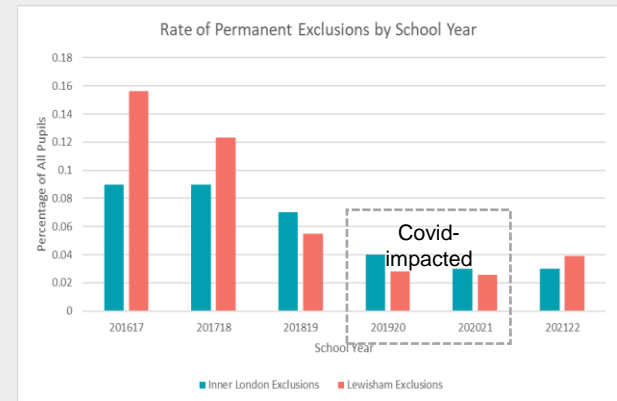
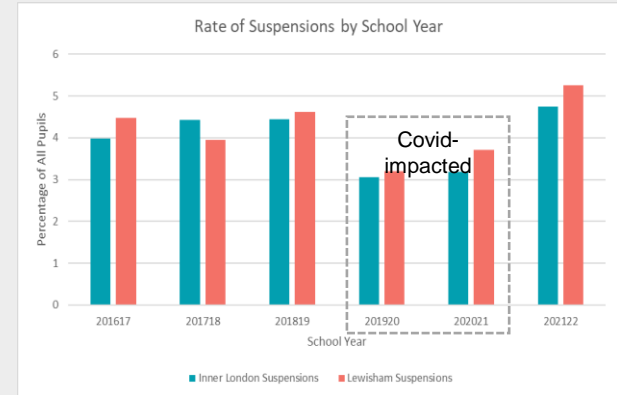
# Education

Higher educational attainment levels are associated with lower rates of criminal involvement while disruptions to education, such as absenteeism, can contribute to a lack of skills and opportunities and increase the probability of being drawn into violence and exploitation. Exclusions also often reflect underlying factors, such as traumatic home experiences, which are linked to involvement in violence.

During the most recent academic year available (2021-22) there were **higher rates of student Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions in Lewisham than across Inner London**. However, the rate of Exclusions remained at a lower rate than pre-covid levels.

At the end of 2022, **7.8% of 16-17 year olds were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)** or had an unknown status (London, 3.4%), an increase of 2.8 percentage points to the end of 2021 **and amongst the worst 20% in the country**.

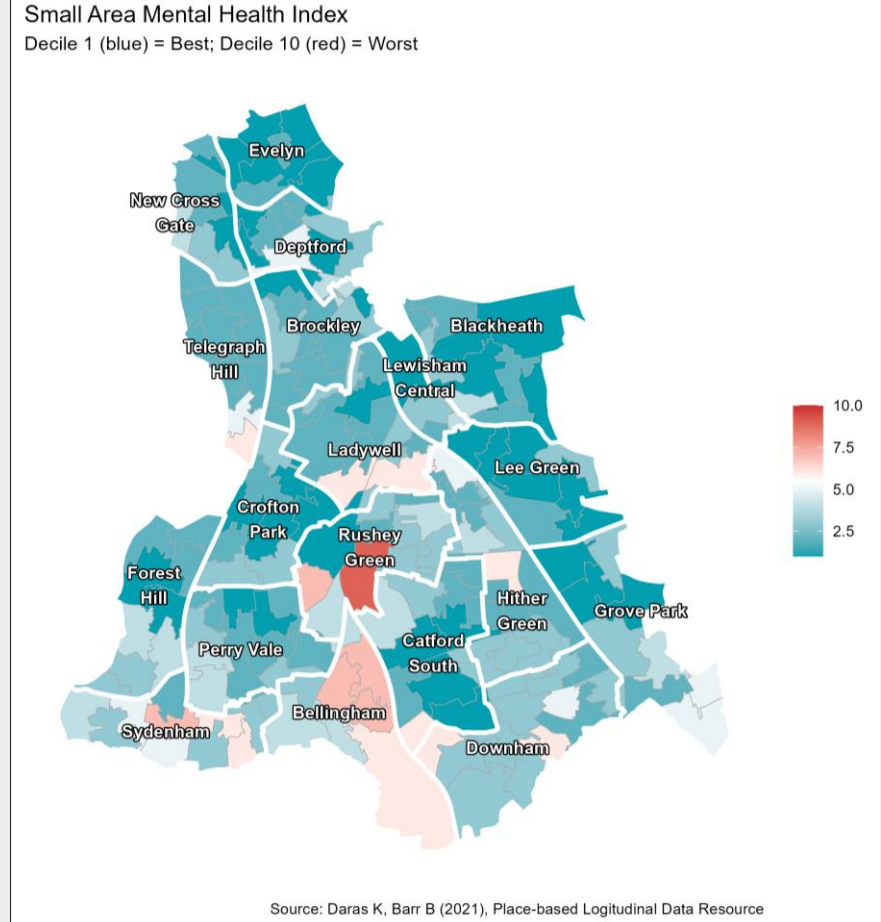
For **vulnerable groups**, which made up 1.5% of the 16-17 year old cohort, this **increases to 30.2%** (London, 21.3%). Vulnerable groups include those in Looked after/In care, Refugee/Asylum seekers, those with disclosed substance misuse, Care leavers, Supervised by YOT (Youth Offending Team) and those with mental health flags; they may be under-reported.



# Mental Health

The Small Area Mental Health Index (SAMHI) is a measure of population mental health for small areas called Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England. The SAMHI combines data from multiple sources into a single index: NHS – Mental health related hospital attendances, Prescribing data – Antidepressants, Quality and Outcomes Framework - depression, and Department of Work and Pensions - Incapacity benefit and Employment support allowance for mental illness.

The index is split into deciles where 1 has the best outcomes and 10 has the worst. Levels of poor mental health are low in London when compared nationally. In Lewisham, one LSOA in **Rushey Green** lies within decile 9 (the worst 20% in the country), and 14 LSOAs lie within deciles 6 and 7 (the worst 40% in the country); 4 of these are in Bellingham and 3 in Sydenham.



# Substance Misuse

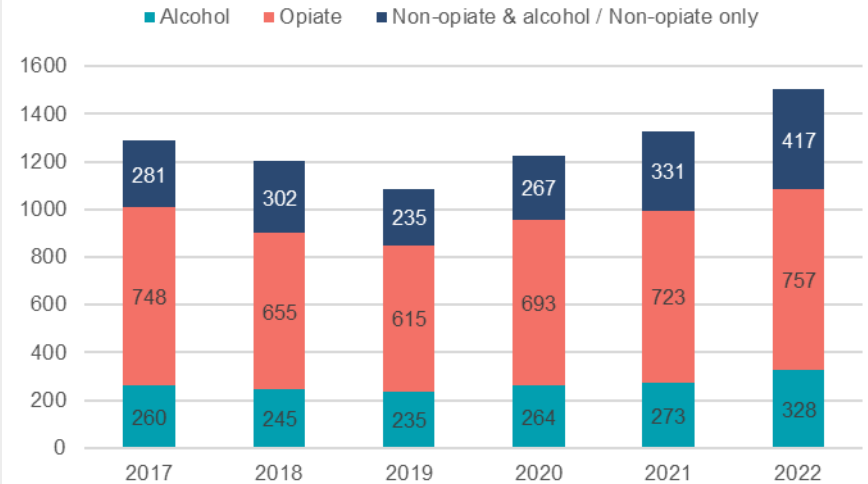
The **National Drug Treatment Monitoring Service** (NDTMS) reports the number of individuals receiving treatment from a drug or alcohol misuse service.

In Lewisham, numbers have been increasing since 2019 with **1,502 people reported to be receiving treatment** in December 2022, the highest in 6 years.

Opiate users account for the highest proportion of those in treatment than non-opiate or alcohol users (50%). Alcohol users made up 22%, and 28% were categorised as having 'Alcohol and Opiate or Non-opiate' treatment.

Between December 2021 and December 2022, there was an **overall increase of people in treatment of 13%**: the number of alcohol users receiving treatment grew by 20% and opiate users by 5%.

Number of People Receiving Treatment in Lewisham as at December each year. Source: NDTMS via SafeStats



The recent Substance Use Needs Assessment found:

- There are likely **high levels of unmet need** in Lewisham.
- There are high rates of **co-occurring mental health and substance use** in the treatment population.

# Cost-of-living Impact

Various factors associated with increased cost-of-living (economic conditions, affordability, and inequality) can contribute to patterns of violence within a community. In response to the current crisis, Lewisham council created a program of support to help residents vulnerable to the crisis, including investment in advice services, Warm Welcome spaces, and fuel and food poverty partnerships, however broad-scale observations on the impact to residents include the following:

---

Demand for **food aid** in Lewisham has reached a **new peak**

---

**Citizens Advice** referrals to onward support are at a **record high**

---

Social and private rental **possessions are increasing** year-on-year

---

**Rental prices are increasing** and mortgage rates causing more uncertainty

---

**Energy prices still higher** than pre-crisis

---

An **increasing number** of households are experiencing **negative budgets** – and **vulnerable groups continue to be disproportionately impacted** by changes in circumstance

---

# Serious Violence

In this section, Serious Violence is defined according to police crime categories, with crime statistics presented for each category. While the Domestic Abuse section incorporates information from supporting services, further details on supporting data for other crime categories are presented in the subsequent section.

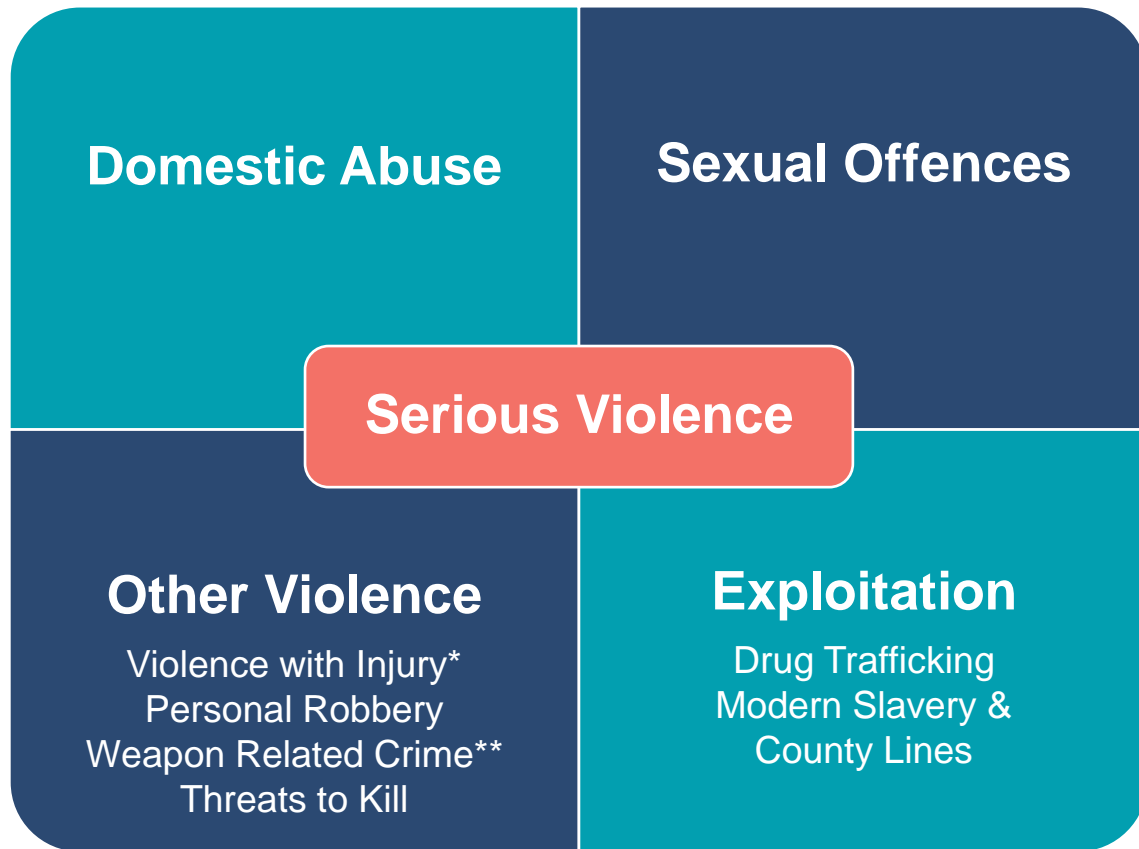


# Serious Violence Definition

The crime types or offence flags included in our definition of serious violence fall under the four categories shown to the right. These were chosen in line with MOPAC guidance which was supplemented to include other crimes or age ranges considered important to Lewisham.

Data are presented for the 12-month period up to and including October 2023, with comparisons made to the previous 12-month period, unless otherwise stated.

Domestic Abuse data are also presented separately to other offences due to different patterns observed.



\*Includes a particular focus on victims and suspects under 25 years old.

\*\* Includes Possession of Weapons and weapon-related crime

# Serious Violence Overview

**Serious violence constitutes a significant portion (30%) of all reported crimes in Lewisham.** Notably, offences related to Domestic Abuse make up almost half of this figure (46%), while Violence against the Person accounts for 35%.

In comparison with other London Boroughs, Lewisham is ranked **9<sup>th</sup> for serious violence** (12<sup>th</sup> for overall crime).

Detailed data from the Metropolitan Police Service are only available from January 2021, so long-term trend analysis of overall Serious Violence is not possible (including comparison with pre-covid crime levels). However, Lewisham has experienced a **9% increase in serious violence** between the 12-months to October 2023 and the previous 12-month period. This is **much higher than the 3.9% increase observed across London** as a whole.

**This trend was observed across all categories except Possession of Weapons offences.** Increases were **particularly high** for **Drug Trafficking** (21.2%, although lower than the 45% increase across London), **Personal Robbery** (16.4%, similar to the 17.4% increase across London), and **Threats to Kill** (27.2%, compared with a 16.1% increase across London).



**8,986** serious violence offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023

**9**

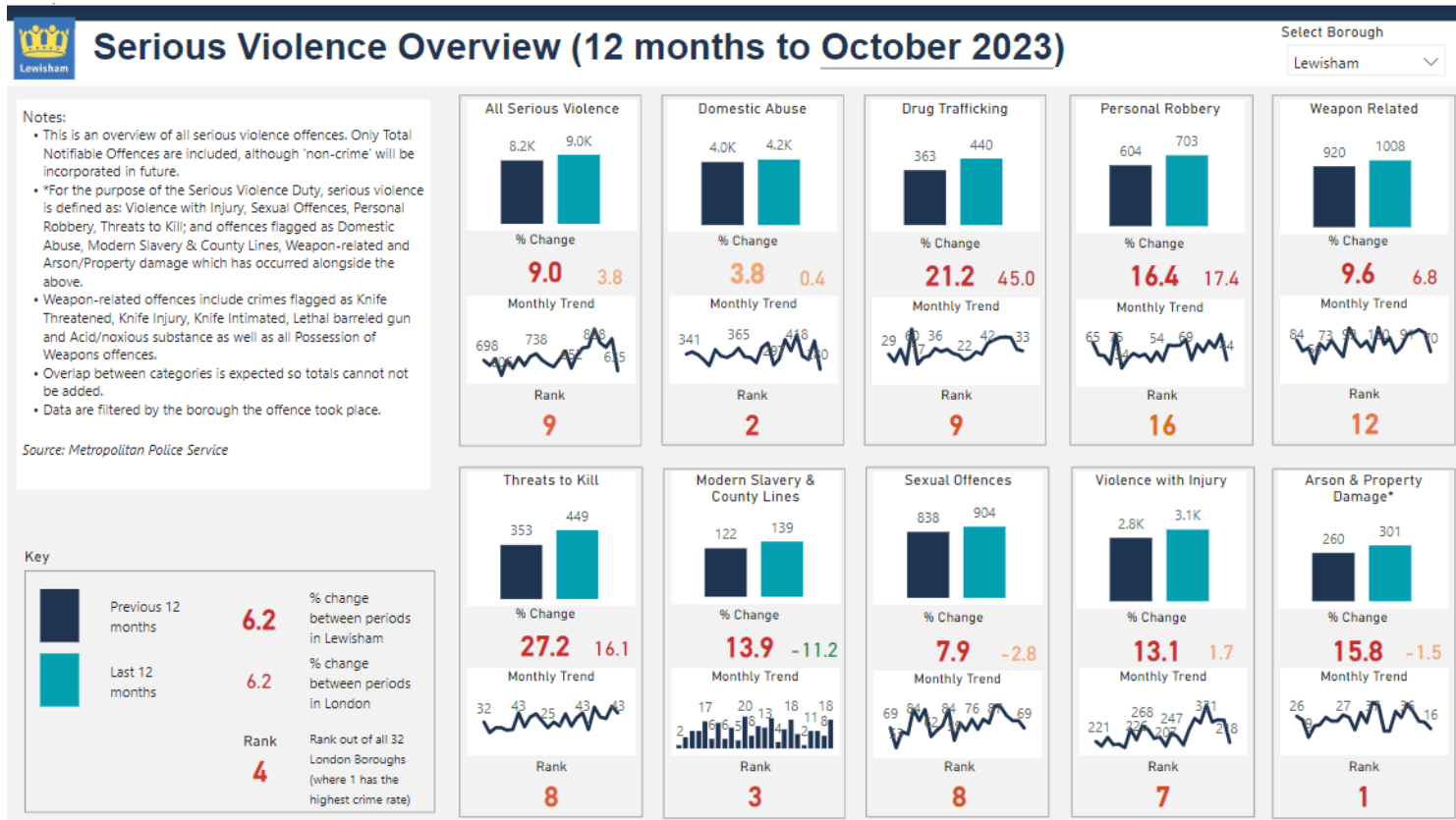
This is 29.9 per 1,000 population; the **9<sup>th</sup>** highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a **9.0% increase** to the previous 12-month period; the **3<sup>rd</sup>** highest increase of all London Boroughs

# Serious Violence Overview

Serious Violence crime categories are monitored monthly via the Lewisham Council Crime Dashboard. This includes a summary of each crime category with comparisons against London trends, as shown below:

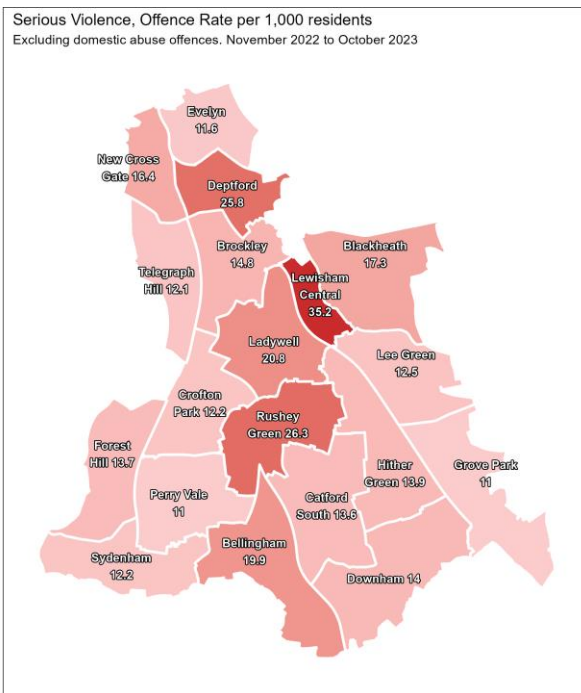


# Serious Violence Locations

Offences rates per ward show broad concentrations of serious violence within the borough.

Although locations tend to vary per crime type, overall, **non-domestic serious violence** hotspots tend to concentrate in larger town centres and transit hubs. **Lewisham Central** ward stands out for highest rate followed by **Rushey Green** and **Deptford**, wards amongst the worst 10% in London.

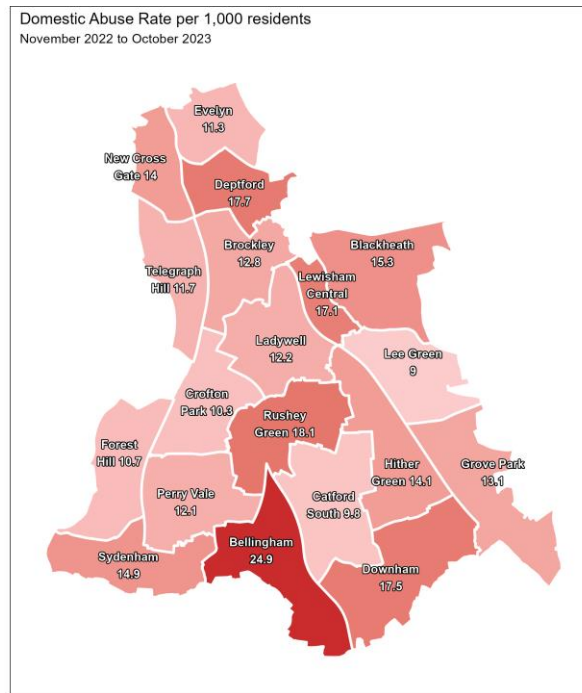
More specific areas with high concentrations include Catford town centre, the area around Lewisham Hospital and Lewisham town centre; Deptford High Street and New Cross Road also have high levels.



The distribution of **domestic-abuse related violence** is more widespread across the borough, in both town centres and residential areas, as expected. Bellingham ward stands out with the highest rate of domestic abuse – notably, the **7th highest rate of any ward in London**.

Rushey Green, Deptford, Downham and Lewisham Central also have high levels.

Along with Bellingham, these **five wards are amongst the worst 10% in London**.



# Victims of Serious Violence

Domestic violence disproportionately affects women (by 1.4x the local population) and people aged over 25 years (by 1.1x), while other serious violence disproportionately affects men (by 1.2x) and people under 25 years (by 1.2x). There is no significant disproportionality with respect to the ethnicity of victims at this level.



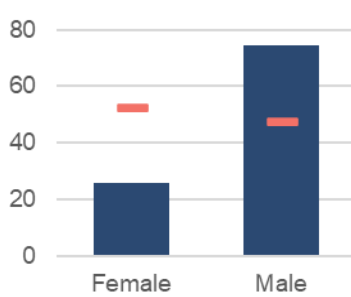
*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality against the local population.*

# Suspects of Serious Violence

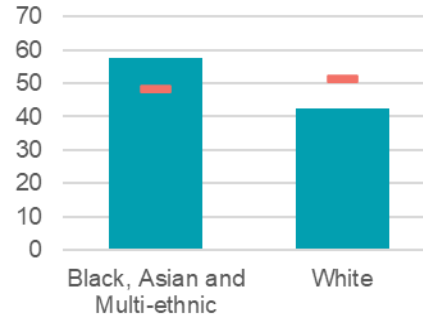
Both domestic and other serious violence are disproportionately committed by men (by 1.6x and 1.7x the local population); and Black, Asian and multi-ethnic groups (by 1.2x and 1.4x). Suspects 25+ years are over-represented in domestic abuse (by 1.2x) and suspects <25 over-represented for all other violence (by 1.5x).

## Domestic Abuse

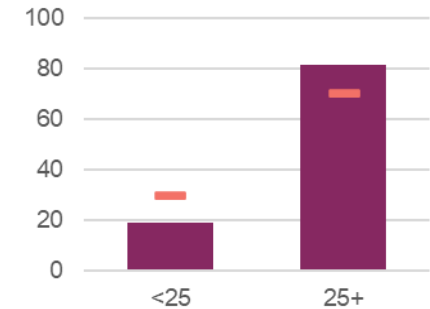
### Gender (%)



### Ethnicity (%)

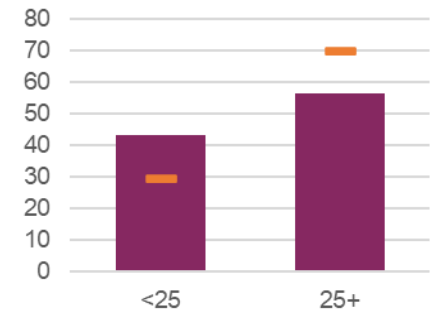
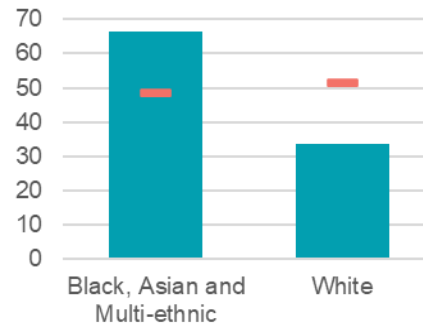
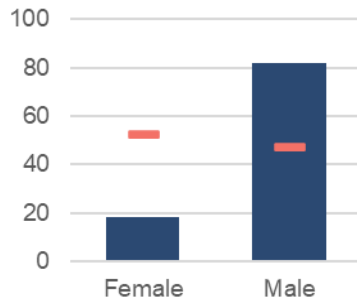


### Age (%)



A comparison with the local population is shown in pink

## All other Serious Violence



Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality against the local population.

# Domestic Abuse

# Domestic Abuse Section Summary

## Disproportionately high rates of domestic abuse in Lewisham

- Compared with other London Boroughs, Lewisham ranks 12<sup>th</sup> for all crime and 8<sup>th</sup> for Serious Violence, but much higher at 2<sup>nd</sup> for Domestic Abuse related offences. Even considering various risk factors and drivers of violence it is still not well understood why this is the case and further investigation will be undertaken.

## Hidden-abuse, under-reporting

- The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), considered the most reliable source of national crime statistics, indicated in November 2023 that only 42% of domestic abuse incidents were reported to and recorded by the police in the year to March 2023. Specific areas suspected of under-reporting include familial abuse and male-victim abuse.

## Earlier identification of victims/survivors needed

- Linked to the above point, data suggests that victims/survivors are being identified only when their risk of serious injury is high. Consideration should be made to how professionals can be better supported on spotting signs of domestic abuse earlier and encouraging victims and perpetrators to engage with specialist services. This could also help to **increase the engagement with specialist services**, which is currently lower than expected.

## Observed link between domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health

- The link between mental health and substance misuse, both as a driver and result of, domestic abuse, is well established. Higher levels of mental health and substance misuse in cases of repeat victimisation and/or perpetration of domestic abuse are likely to add to the complexity of the cases. This is particularly evident in Bellingham.



# Context

Forming an accurate picture of DA across Lewisham is challenging. One reason is under-reporting: The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), considered to present the most accurate figures of domestic abuse nationally, reported in November 2023 that in the year to March 2023 only **42% of domestic abuse was reported to and recorded by the police.**

There are also **multiple sources of information** where details of domestic abuse may be recorded including Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) crime data, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) referrals, Athena referrals and Social Care records. Most of these are disparate sources and cannot be cross-referenced. The best possible picture has been presented here by gathering available sources of information and comparing the commonalities.

## Domestic Abuse Act 2021

*Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if*

- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other, and*
- (b) the behaviour is abusive.*

*Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following*

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;*
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;*
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;*
- (d) economic abuse;*
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;*

*and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.*

# Crime Overview

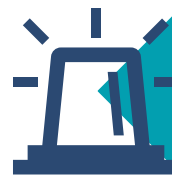
Lewisham consistently has one of the highest rates of offences linked to domestic abuse in London. Levels are **disproportionately high** when compared with other crime types.

For overall crime in the year to October 2023, Lewisham was ranked 12th; for domestic abuse it was 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Domestic Abuse makes up **46% of the serious violence** offences in Lewisham, compared with 41.8% London-wide.

There was a **4.9% sanction detection rate** over this period, slightly lower than London sanction detection rate of 5.3%.

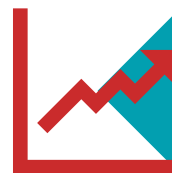
There were 253 offences where the victim had serious or moderate physical injuries, and 2 fatalities; the **highest rate in London** for these type of offences.



**4,175** serious violence offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023



This is 13.9 per 1,000 population; the **2<sup>nd</sup>** highest rate of all London Boroughs



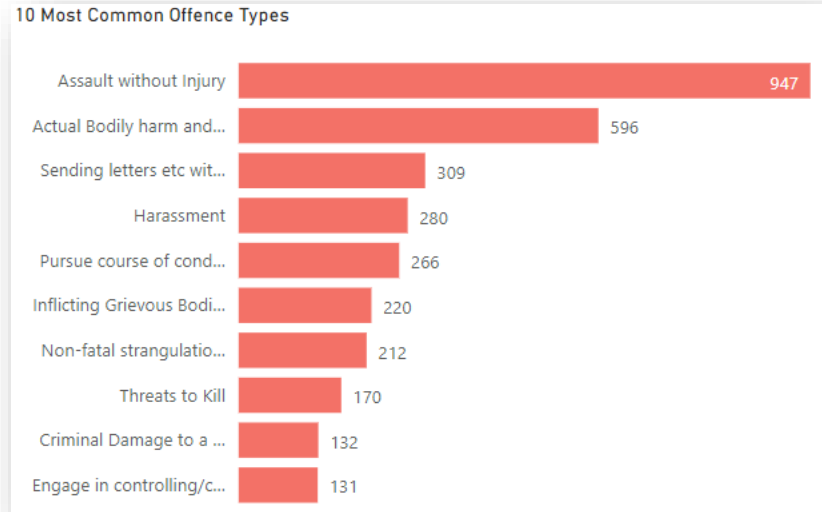
There was a **3.8% increase** to the previous 12-month period; the **6<sup>th</sup>** highest increase of all London Boroughs

# Crime Types

Over the 12-month period to October 2023, just over half the offences flagged as relating to domestic-abuse were categorised as **'Violence without Injury' (52.4%)** and a quarter as **'Violence with Injury' (25.7%)**.

Compared with the previous 12-month period, levels of Violence without Injury remained similar, **but levels of violence with injury increased by 18%** (higher than the London-wide increase of 5%). Much of this was due to a rise in GBH by 12% to 220. Non-fatal strangulation reports increased however this offence was introduced in 2022 so it is not possible to track overtime.

The most common and more detailed offences were: **Assault without Injury** (22.7%), **Actual Bodily Harm** (14.3%), **Sending letters with intent to cause stress/anxiety** (7.5%), Harassment (6.8%), Stalking (6.5%), GBH without intent (5.2%), Non-fatal strangulation (5.0%), Threats to Kill (4.1%), Criminal Damage (3.3%), Coercive control (3.1%).



# Location of Offences

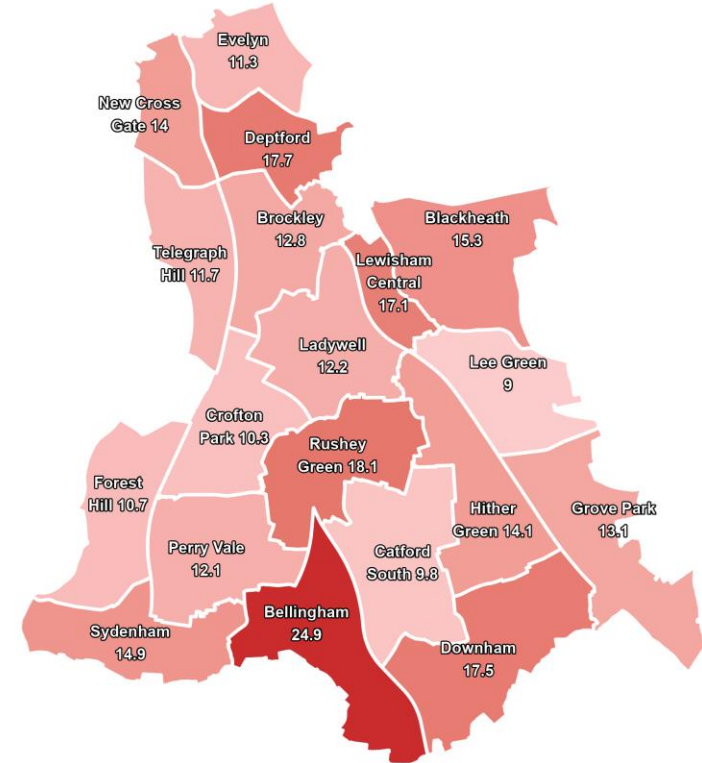
The ward map shows the rate of domestic abuse across the borough. In the 12-month period to October 2023, the **highest rate occurred in Bellingham** (24.9 per 1,000 population).

This was a substantially higher rate than the next highest: Rushey Green, Deptford, Downham and Lewisham Central (18.1, 17.7, 17.5 and 17.1 per 1,000, respectively).

**When rates are compared across 679 London wards, there are 9 in the worst 20% overall and 5 in the worst 10%; Bellingham is in the worst 1% with the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate in London.**

The high rates observed in Bellingham warrant further investigation. As seen in the Risk Factor section, it is also one of the most deprived wards in Lewisham and has some of the highest levels of poor mental health.

Domestic Abuse Rate per 1,000 residents  
November 2022 to October 2023



# Relationship between Victim and Suspect

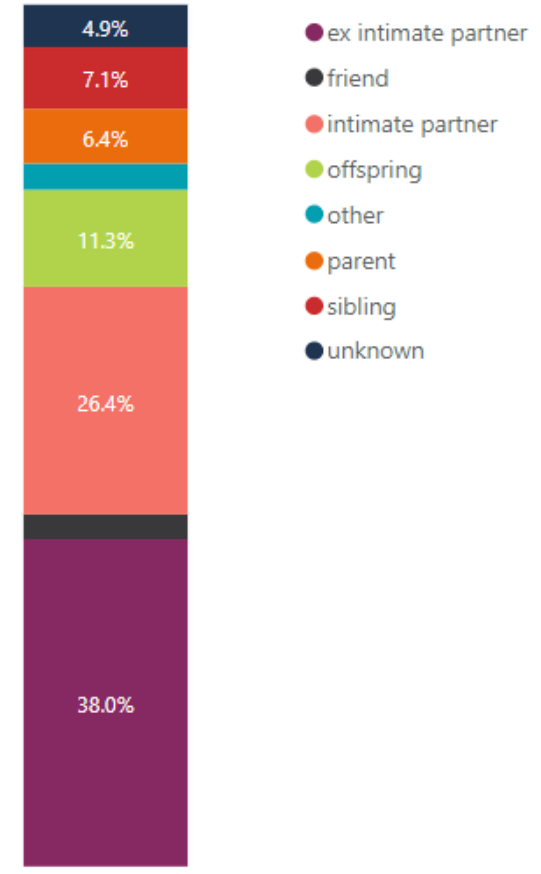
The CSEW reported that a higher percentage of people aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse by a partner or ex-partner (3.0%) compared with a family member (1.8%) in the last year.

In Lewisham, 64.4% of reported crime related to a partner or ex-partner; **familial abuse accounted for a quarter** of all cases (24.8%). The latter is **less than expected** based on the public survey results indicating likely under-reporting.

The most common police sub-categories of the suspect were:

- Ex-boyfriend (27.2%)
- Boyfriend (13.0%)
- Son (7.7%)
- Ex-girlfriend (7.4%)
- Husband (5.9%)

**Two thirds** of victims of domestic abuse crime were noted to live at the **same address** as the suspect.

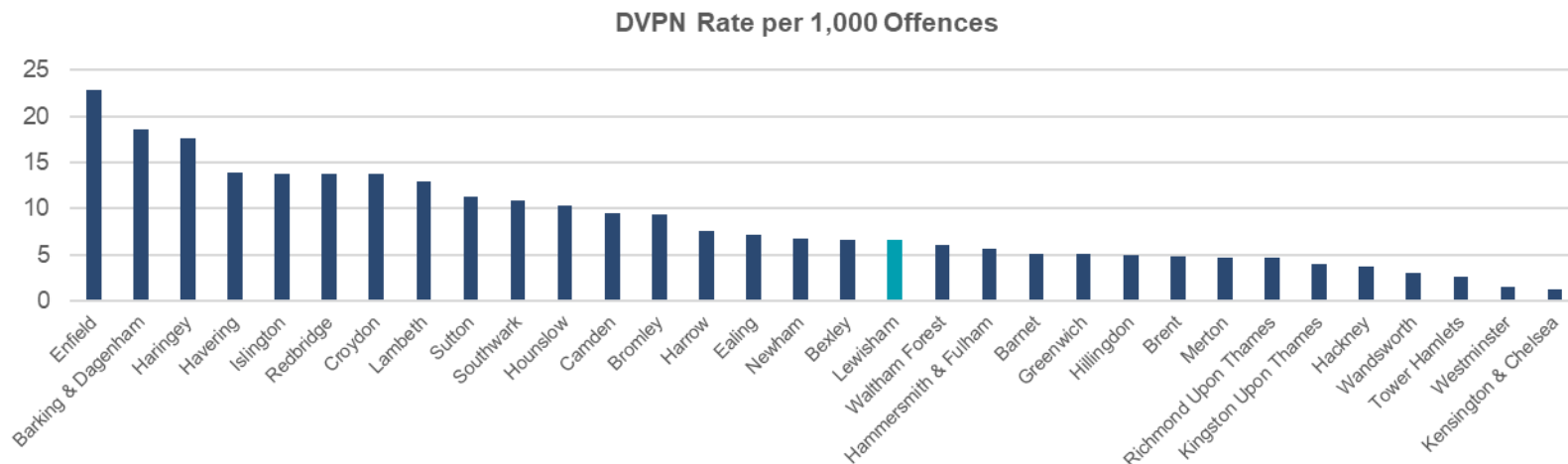


# DVPOs and DVPNs

## Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs)

enable the police and magistrates' courts to put in place protective measures in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident where there is insufficient evidence to charge a perpetrator. In Lewisham, the police applied for and were granted **180 DVPNs** and **191 DVPOs** in 2022, a similar amount to 2021.

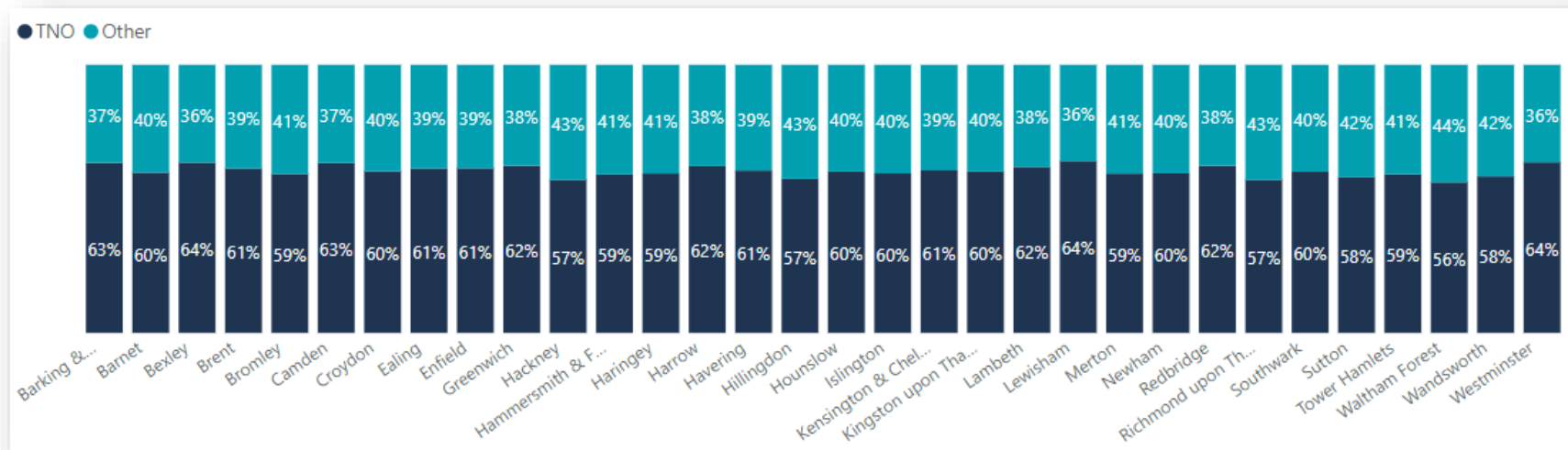
Compared with other boroughs across London, Lewisham's DVPN rate to 1,000 offences is a relatively low rate but similar to SE BCU boroughs, Bexley and Greenwich.



# Notifiable Offences and Incidents

One theory proposed for the high level of domestic-abuse related crime in the borough is that a higher proportion of all police recorded incidents in Lewisham are classified as a crime. The ratio between Total Notifiable Offences (TNO) and 'Other' incidents are shown by borough below for the period to October 2023. **64% of all incidents are classed as a crime in Lewisham**, the highest level with Bexley and Westminster.

However, when these reports are combined with crime totals, Lewisham still has the **3rd highest rate** in London of 21.7 incidents per 1,000 people. This includes 2,335 incidents, most classified as Domestic Incidents.



# MARAC Referrals

The highest risk domestic abuse cases are referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) who share information to safeguard victims and their families.

There were **669 cases** discussed at MARAC over 12 months to October 2023, a **13.3% reduction** to the 12 months ending October 2022.

There were 570 unique individuals discussed and 172 people discussed who had been referred to MARAC more than once (**30.2% repeat referral rate**, see table on right). This is higher than the London repeat referral rate of 26% but lower the national rate of 33%. 15 people had been referred more than 5 times.

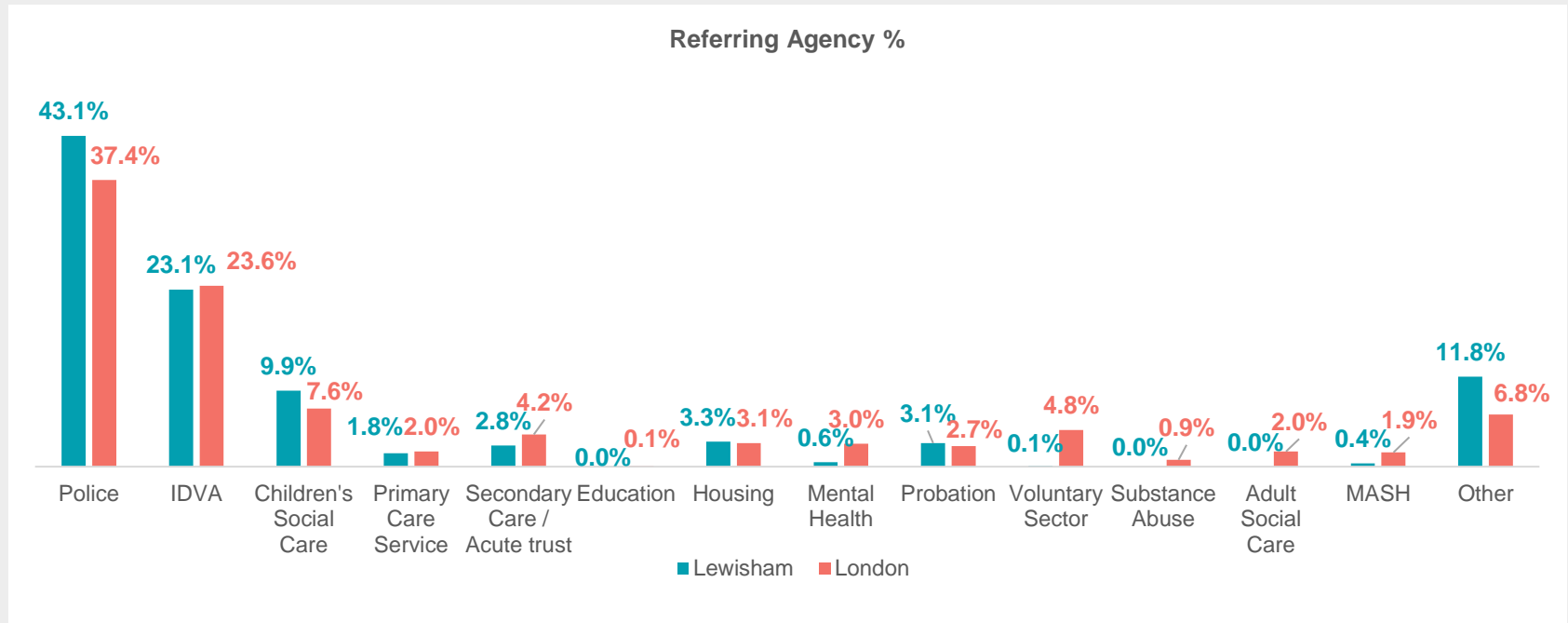
According to SafeLives which gathers MARAC data nationally, Lewisham discussed approximately 59 cases per 10,000 adult female population, **higher than London-wide value** of 52 cases and the recommended rate of 40 cases per 10,000 adult female population.

#Times Discussed	#Cases
1	398
2	89
3	31
4	22
5	15
6	5
7	2
8	4
9	1
11	1
12	1
45	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>570</b>



# MARAC Referral Agency

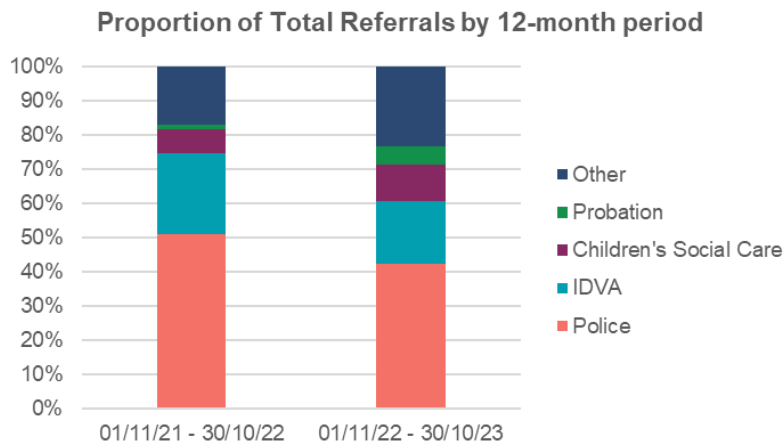
The below graph shows a comparison of the proportion of referral agencies for Lewisham MARAC and across London for 2022/23. We can see a higher proportion of referrals in Lewisham from police, Children's Social Care, and 'other' services. We also see a lower proportion of referrals being made by the voluntary sector, mental health services, secondary care and IDVA services.



# MARAC Referral Agency

In the 12 months to October 2022, the largest referral source into the MARAC was the **police (60%)**, followed by specialist IDVA services (23.8%) and other frontline services.

However, in the following 12 months to October 2023, there was **a reduction in the proportion of referrals from the police to 42.4%, in contrast to trends seen in the increasing number of offences**. There was also a decrease in IDVA referrals to 18.3% while **the proportion of referrals from CSC, Probation and other frontline services increased** from 25.3 to 39.3% raising questions as to why this dynamic has changed.

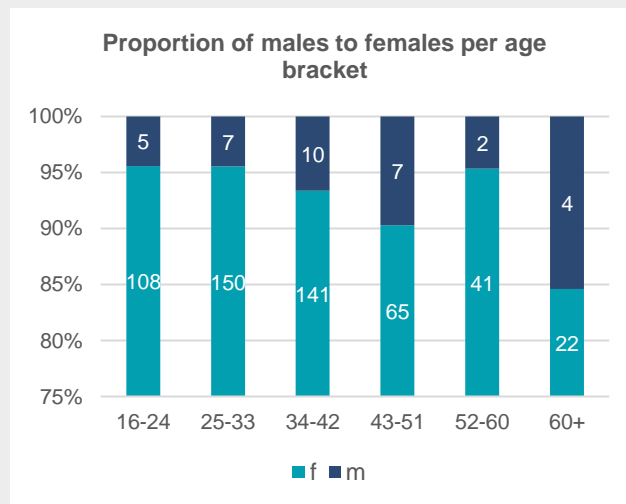
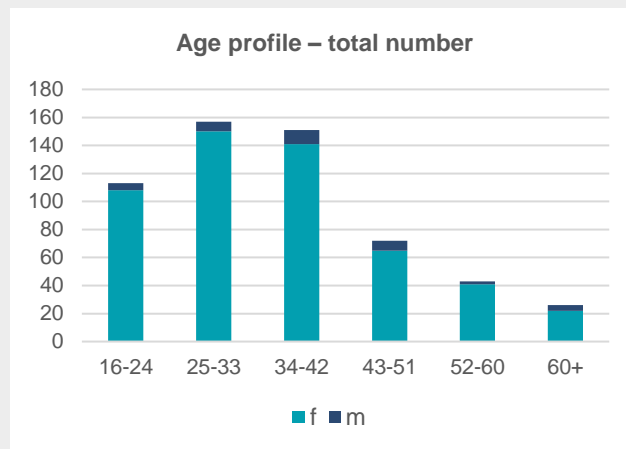


# MARAC Gender of Referrals

In contrast to the offence data, **a higher proportion of women** are referred to the MARAC (93.5% vs 72.6%). This is also much higher than the CSEW estimate that 64.7% of domestic abuse victims nationally are women.

This is not surprising, as research consistently shows that men and women tend to experience victimisation differently. Women experience higher rates of repeated victimisation and are much more likely to be seriously hurt (Walby & Towers, 2017) or killed than male victims of domestic abuse (ONS, 2020A; ONS, 2020B). Further to that, women are more likely to experience higher levels of fear and are more likely to be subjected to coercive and controlling behaviours (Dobash & Dobash, 2004; Hester, 2013; Myhill, 2015; Myhill, 2017).

The **proportion of male victims generally increases with age**, with 5.2% of victims between 16-42 and 9.2% of victims over 43 years being male.



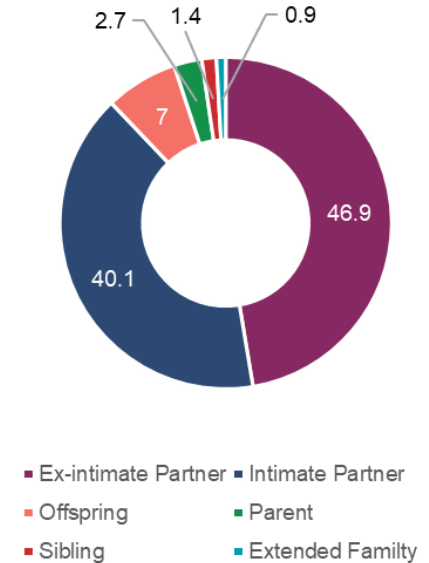
# MARAC Relationship to Victim

In the majority (85.8%) of cases the perpetrator was an **ex or current partner**, and in 14.2% of cases the perpetrator was a family member.

The proportion of familial abuse cases referred to MARAC is a much lower than for offences reported by the police. A report into **barriers to reporting Adult Family Violence** found that:

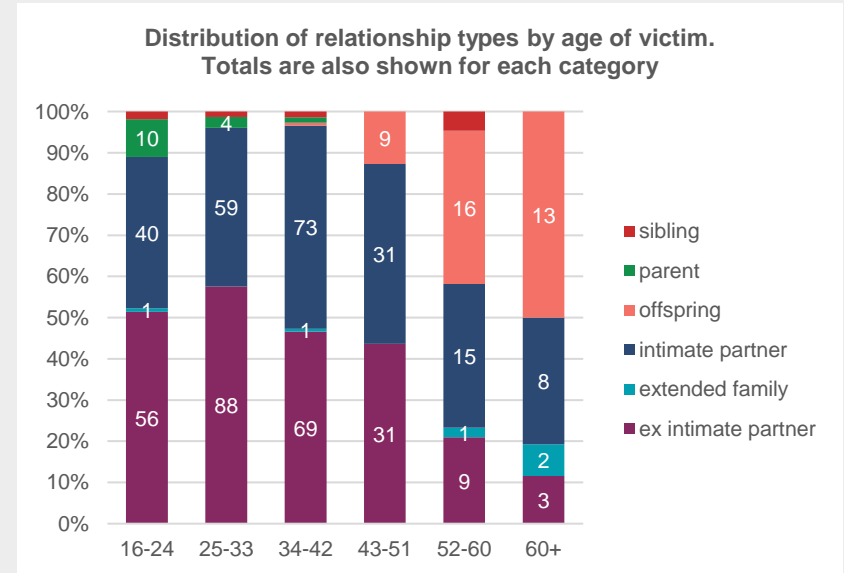
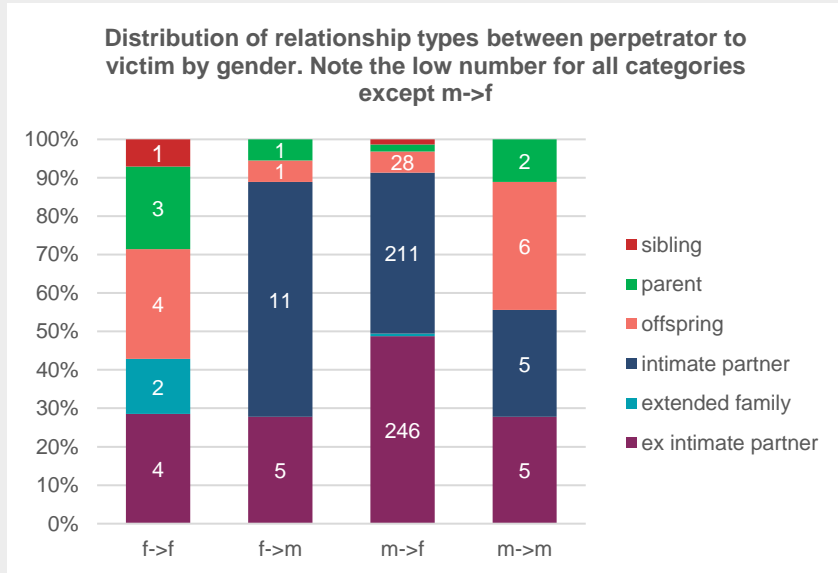
- Victims may be parents (principally mothers) caring for mentally unwell or substance dependent adult children (principally sons), mostly in an informal capacity and **do not want their child to be prosecuted**.
- Victims may be elderly, vulnerable parents with care and support needs who are being cared for by their adult children and **rely on support from others, including their perpetrator**.

Perpetrator relationship to victim (%)



# MARAC Relationship to Victim

- **Most cases (91.3%) have a male perpetrator and female victim** ('m->f'). There is a much higher proportion of familial abuse in referrals between same-sex genders (56.1%) although overall numbers are far lower so caution should be used when interpreting these results (see left-hand chart below).
- The proportion of partner abuse decreases with victim age while offspring abuse increases; as may be expected there is **more parent abuse towards younger victims** (see right-hand chart below).

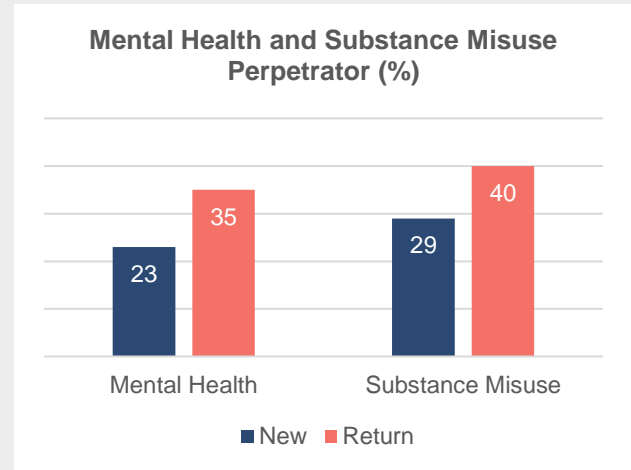
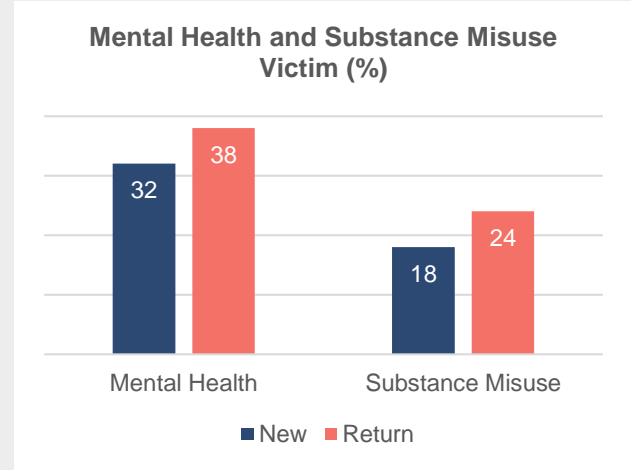


# MARAC Referrals

Mental Health and Substance Misuse flags are recorded for both victims and perpetrators.

- **19.6% of victims and 31.9% of perpetrators** were noted to have **substance misuse** problems.
- **34.2% of victims and 26.8% of perpetrators** were noted to have **mental health** concerns.
- **12.3% of victims and 17.2% perpetrators** had **co-occurring** mental health and substance use concerns.

When split between new and repeat referrals there is a distinct difference, with **a higher proportion of repeat referrals noted to have substance misuse / mental health concerns than new referrals**, for both victims and perpetrators (see right).



# Athena Referrals

The Athena service provides confidential support to those living in the London Borough of Lewisham who are experiencing domestic abuse or gender-based violence.

- There were **1,531 referrals** in the year to September 2023 however only **38% were admitted to the service**.
- Overall, **most people were referred to the service by MARAC (22%)**, via self-referrals (21%) or by the police (11%). The fact that MARAC is the biggest referral source suggests that victims are not being identified at earlier stages, where the risk they are experiencing is lower.
- Of the people admitted into the service, **self-referrals were the largest referral source indicating the levels of engagement are higher** with this cohort.
- **13% of all referrals indicated they had mental health issues and 17% of all referrals indicated they struggle with drug addiction**. These are likely **underestimates** due to under-reporting.
- 17% of admissions were referred to a specialist, 9% were referred to a mental health specialist.
- 35.7% of admissions were supported with a **new tenancy**.
- 19.3% of victims reported **psychological abuse**; 15.7% reported **physical abuse** and 8.3% **reported sexual abuse**.

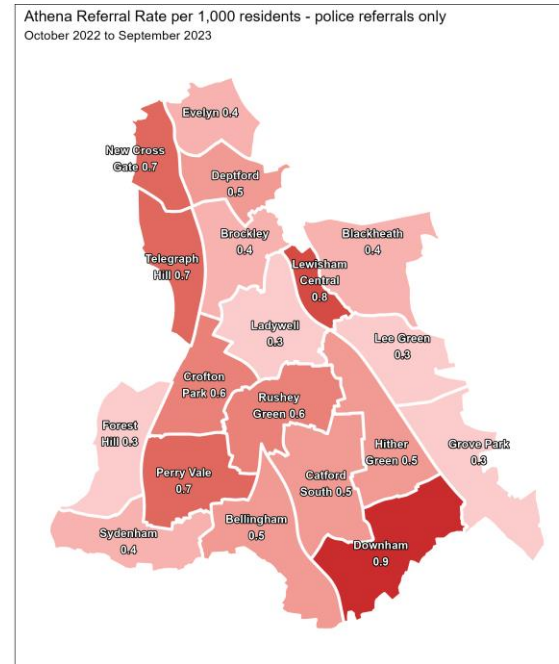
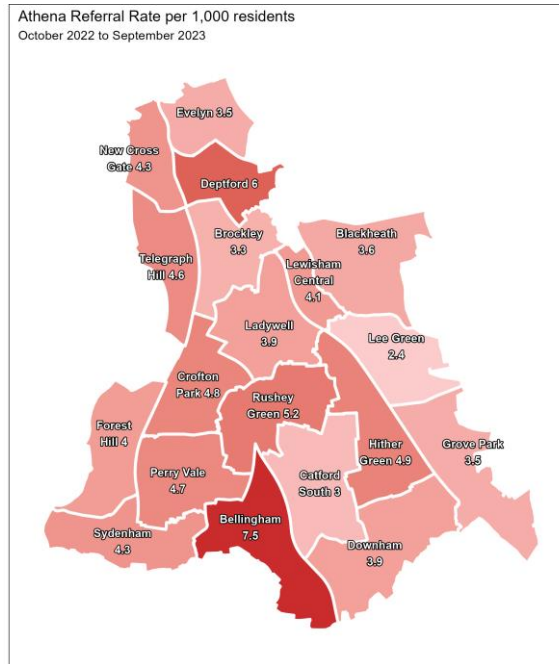
# Athena Referrals

- **95% of referrals were female**, a similar proportion to the MARAC cohort. Although, as observed in the MARAC data, there was an increase in the proportion of male referrals as age increased: 3.7% <44 years and 7.9% 44+ years.
- **15% of referrals were <25 years**. This is a **lower proportion than MARAC referrals and police data and an under representation of the population**, particularly given the CSEW report that a significantly higher proportion of people aged 16 to 19 years were victims of any domestic abuse (8.0%) than other age groups. This group also made a **lower proportion of self-referrals** which may be due to a lack of awareness in younger people that they are experiencing abuse or knowledge of services available.
- 44% were from White ethnic groups, 36.7% were from Black ethnic groups, 8.6% were from Asian ethnic groups, 6.4% were Dual Heritage, and 4% were from Multi-Ethnic groups.
- Most referrals (where known) were UK nationals (78.3%), while the remaining referrals came from a total of **70 different nationalities**.



# Athena Referrals

Overall, there are similarities to police offence data in terms of location of victim: **Bellingham** stands out as having the highest rate of referrals followed by Deptford and Rushey Green (left hand map below). However, looking at referrals to Athena from the police in isolation (right hand map below) the wards with the highest referral rates are Downham and Lewisham Central, in contrast to the police offence data. The **referral pathways for each area** warrants more investigation when more data are available.

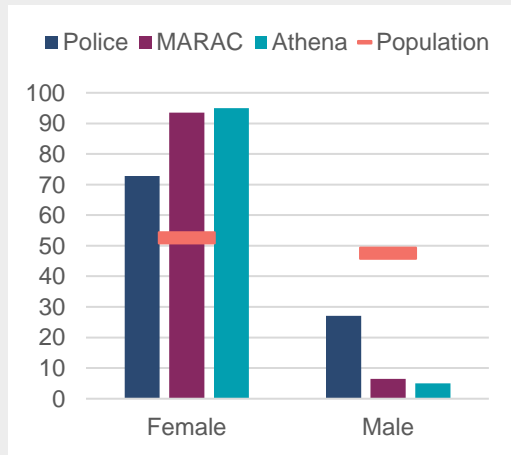


# Victims/Survivors

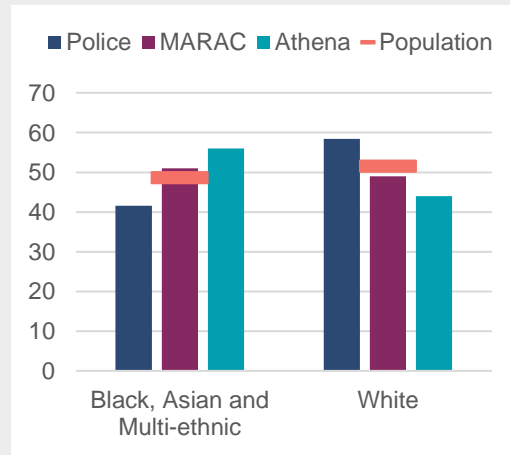
A comparison of the demographics for police survivors/victims, and MARAC and Athena referrals is shown below.

The **disproportionately high number of female victims** effected is evident across each data source, but much higher for MARAC and Athena referrals; as previously discussed, high-risk cases are more likely to affect women. The **ethnicity of victims varies** across sources with Black, Asian and multi-ethnic groups slightly under-represented in police data but over-represented in Athena data (by 1.1x), and vice-versa for white ethnic groups. The **slightly disproportionate number of people over 25 years** is also similar across sources, although, again, this is stronger in the Athena referrals.

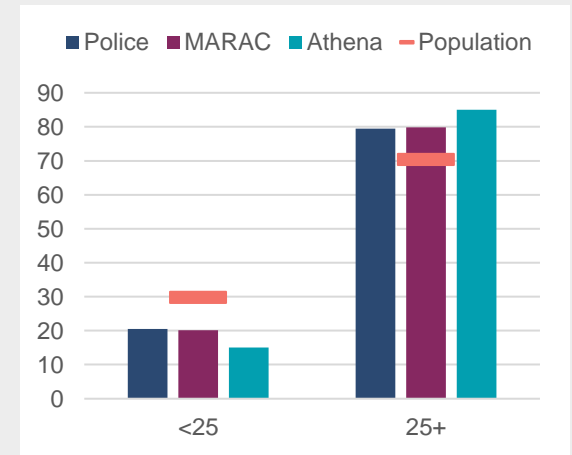
## Gender (%)



## Ethnicity\* (%)



## Age (%)



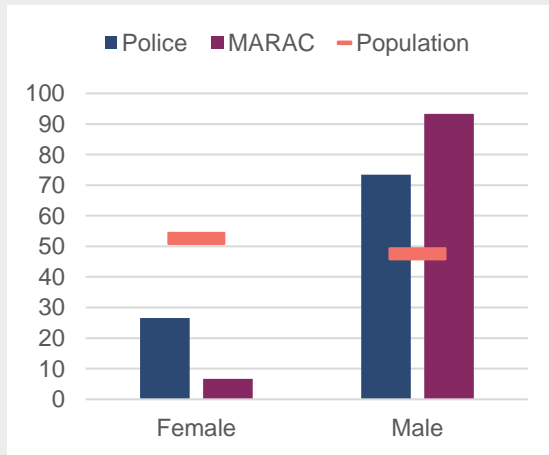
\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality against the local population.

# Suspects/Perpetrators

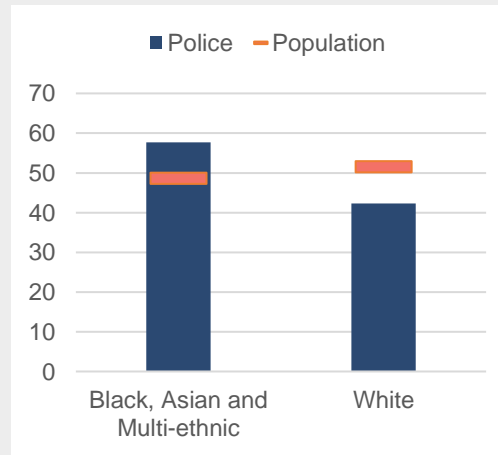
A comparison of the demographics for police suspects and MARAC perpetrators is shown below; there are no details for Athena referrals available.

The **disproportionately high number of male perpetrators** is evident across both data sources, but much higher for MARAC referrals (1.5x vs 2x). The police data show a slightly higher proportion of Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic suspects to the local population (by 1.2x). There is a **slightly disproportionate number of people over 25 years (x1.2 on average), slightly higher than for victims.**

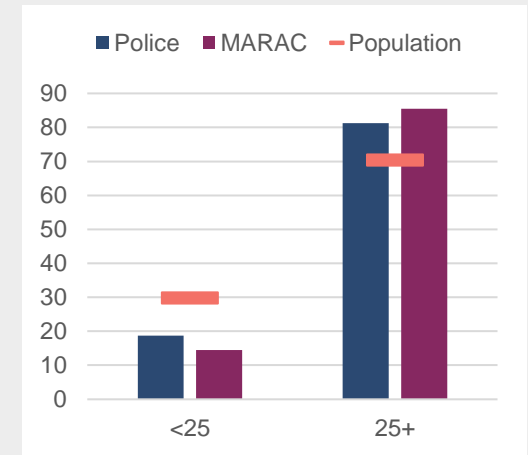
## Gender (%)



## Ethnicity\* (%)



## Age (%)



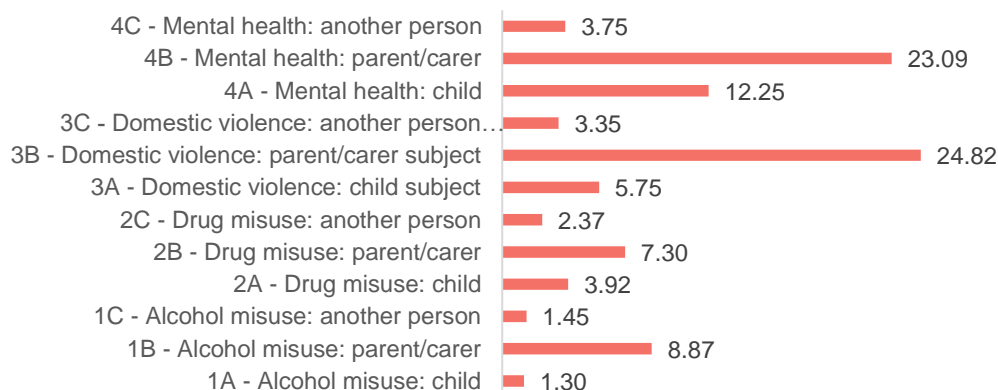
\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality against the local population.

# Children's Social Care Assessments

There were 4,001 assessments carried out by CSC in 2022 which assessed various risk factors including alcohol and drug misuse, domestic violence and mental health.

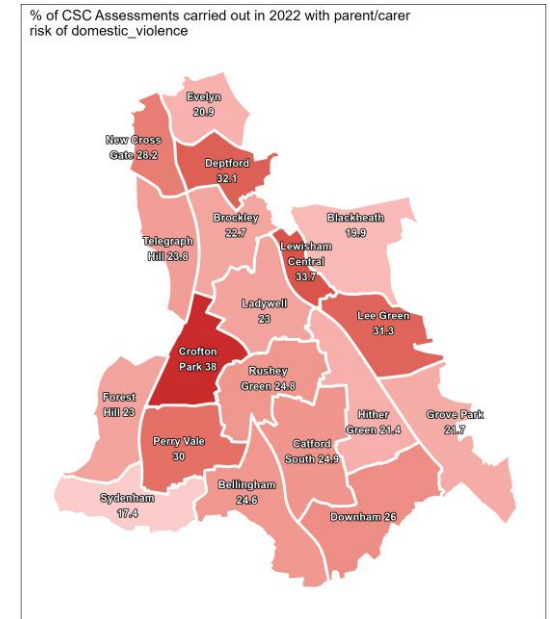
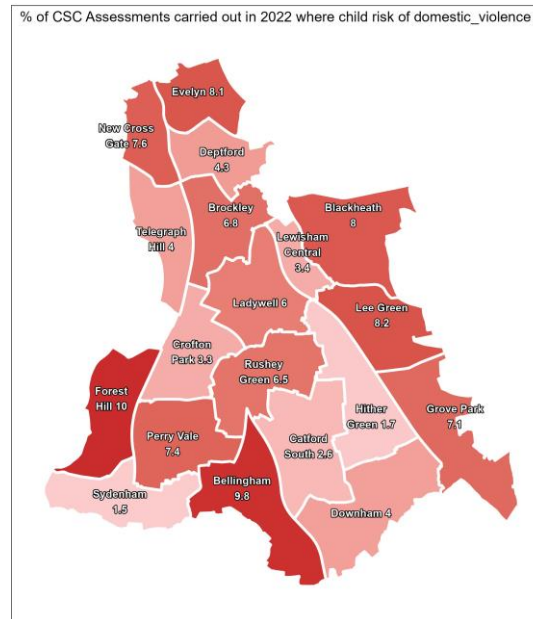
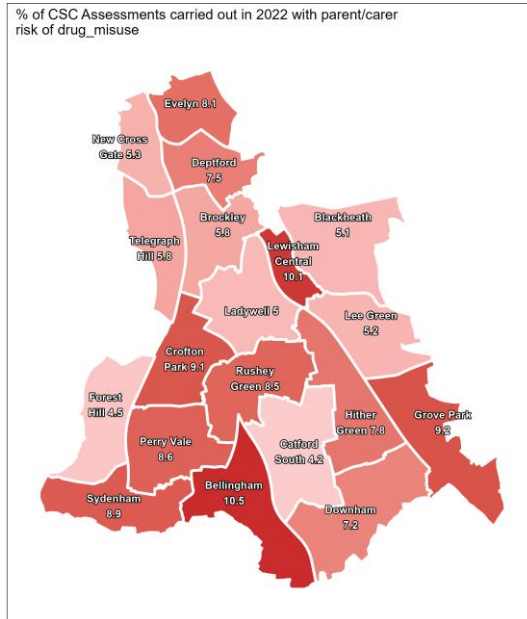
In nearly a **quarter (24.8%) of cases a parent/carer was reported to be the subject of Domestic Violence**; in 5.8% of cases the child was the subject. **Mental Health** was a concern for **23.1% of parent/carers and 12.3% of children**. Alcohol misuse was a concern for 8.9% of parent/carers and drug misuse was a concern for 7.3% of parent/carers. Co-occurrence of these risk factors could not be examined, and this is an area for further exploration.

Risk Factors at Assessment (% of total)



# Children's Social Care Assessments

The wards with the highest proportion of assessments where a child was at risk of **domestic violence** were **Bellingham**, which agrees with previous observations in police and Athena data, and Forest Hill which is unexpected, as is the high proportion of parent/carer domestic violence risk in Crofton Park. **Drug misuse was also a high risk in Bellingham** for parent/carers (10.5% of assessments).



# Sexual Offences

# Sexual Offences Section Summary

## Exploitative dynamics in sexual violence

- Under 25s are highly over-represented as victims of sexual violence. At the same time, we do not see the same pattern for offenders. This is suggestive of a power imbalance created by an age difference and elements of exploitation being used in sexual violence offences in Lewisham. This is further supported by the finding of an acquaintance being the most common offender in non-domestic abuse related offences.

## High offences rates in central wards

- The wards with the highest rates of sexual offences were Lewisham Central, Rushey Green and Ladywell. These wards are amongst the worst 10% in London.

## Low sanction detection rate

- The sanction detection rate for all sexual offences reported in the year to October 2022 was 3.2%. This is the lowest of all crimes we have reviewed in this needs assessment. Low sanction detection rates may lead to underreporting of sexual offenses, perpetuation of rape culture whereby perpetrators who have no consequences feel a sense of impunity, negatively impacting on survivor well-being and overall diminishing of public trust in the police.

# Sexual Offences

The Crime Survey for England and Wales provides the best measure of victimisation. In the most recent release (March 2023) it reported an estimated 2.3% of adults (3.3% women and 1.2% men) aged 16 years and over were victims of sexual assault (including attempts) in the year ending March 2022.

The volume of sexual offences recorded by the police has been increasing over the last decade although the numbers remain well below the number of victims estimated by the survey; the latest figures for the year ending March 2022 show an increase of 31%, to 193,566 police recorded offences, compared with the previous year.

The impact of high-profile incidents, media coverage, and campaigns on people's willingness to report both recent and historical incidents to the police are likely to result in annual variations in the number of offences recorded by the police.

Sexual offences recorded by the police do not provide a reliable measure of trends. Improvements in police recording practices and increased reporting by victims have contributed to increases in recent years. The figures do, however, provide a good measure of the crime-related demand on the police.



# Sexual Offences



There were 904 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023. This included **396 cases of rape (43.8%)** and **508 other sexual offences (56.2%)**.

8

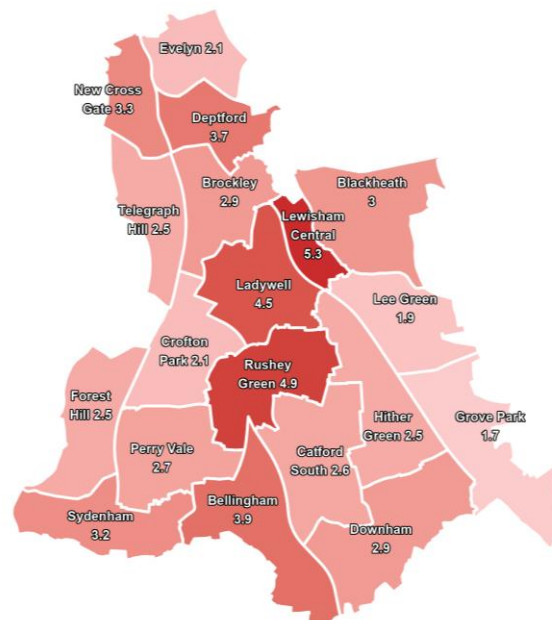
This is 3.0 per 1,000 population; the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs. There was a 7.9% increase to the previous 12-months; the 4<sup>th</sup> highest increase of all London Boroughs.



The increase was 10.5% for non-domestic abuse related offences – the highest in London. This was attributed solely to an **increase in rape offences** reported.

**18%** of offences were related to **domestic abuse**. In these cases, the most common abuser was the **ex-boyfriend of the victim** (37.9% of known relationships). For non-domestic abuse related offences, the abuser was most commonly an **acquaintance of the victim** (31.8% of known relationships). Overall, 39% of victims lived at the same address as their abuser.

Sexual Offences, Crime Rate per 1,000 residents  
November 2022 to October 2023. Total number of crimes = 904



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

Over the 12-months to October 2023, the wards with the highest rates of sexual offences were Lewisham Central, Rushey Green and Ladywell. These wards are amongst the worst 10% in London.

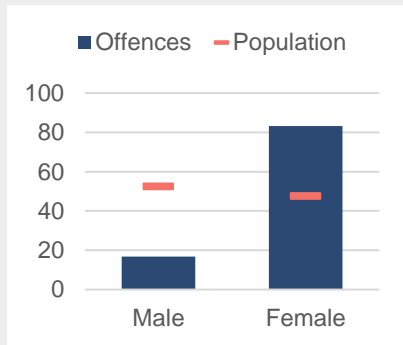
The **sanction detection rate** of all sexual offences reported in the year to October 2022 was **3.2%**.

# Sexual Offences

The disproportionate number of female victims and male suspects is evident in comparisons with the local population (by 1.8x for both). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are over-represented slightly in victims and suspects (by 1.1x and 1.3x, respectively) and while the age of suspects is proportionate to the population for these age groups, victims under 25-years are over-represented by 1.6x the population.

## Victims

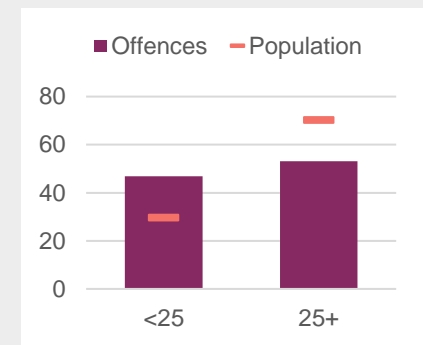
### Gender (%)



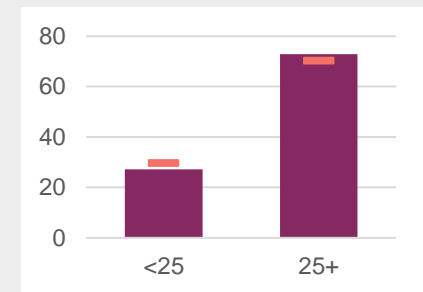
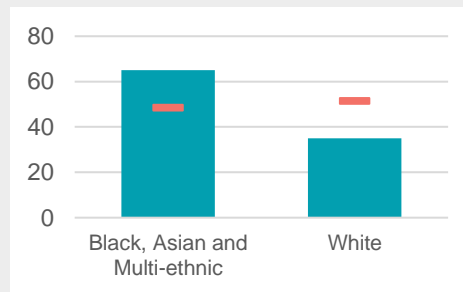
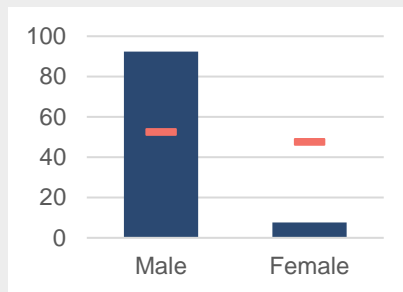
### Ethnicity\* (%)



### Age (%)



## Suspects



\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality against the local population.

# Other Violent Offences

Violence with Injury

Personal Robbery

Weapon-related Crime

Threats to Kill

# Other violent offences section summary

## Weapon carrying and use by young people

- Data shows under 25 are overrepresented for carrying and use of weapons, especially knives. Weapons are often used in personal robbery offences, the majority of which is committed by under 25s. Almost a third of suspects of violence with injury offences under 25, were under 14 years old. This is especially seen in **Deptford**. This suggests that a sizeable proportion of young people becoming involved in knife carrying at a really young age. This may be suggestive of an unsupportive family structure or lack of role models for young people, the need for which came out strongly in our consultation with the public.

## Reaching young people where they are

- Data shows that **peer-on-peer violence** and offences amongst young people are committed at school times and in and around schools. Any new interventions aimed at tackling violence amongst young people should be based in that knowledge.

# Homicide

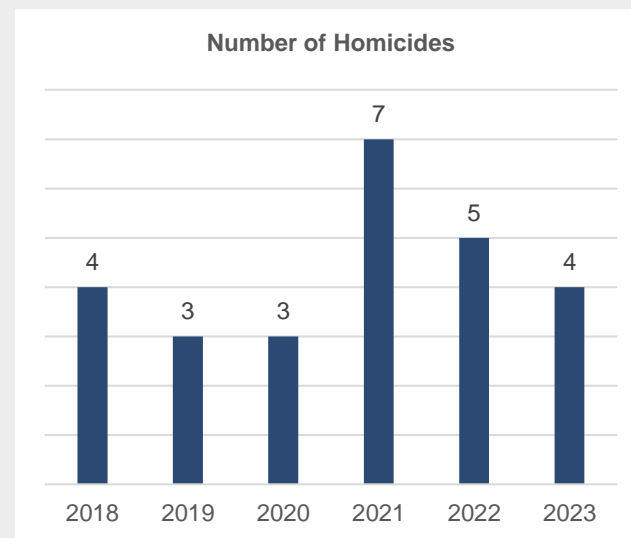
Any homicide has a significant impact on both the immediate family and friends of the victim, as well as the broader community.

Lewisham recorded seven homicides in the 12 months leading up to October 2023.

The demographic breakdown indicates that six victims were black, while one was white; four victims were male, and three were female. Two were victims of domestic abuse.

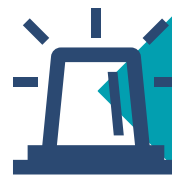
Of the seven homicides, four involved the use of a knife.

Although this represents the second-highest rate among all London boroughs, a closer examination of the longer-term trend since 2018 reveals that Lewisham held the 14th highest rate in London.



# Violence with Injury (excluding Domestic Abuse)

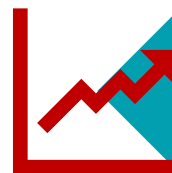
- Violence with Injury is the **largest crime category** included in the Serious Violence definition.
- Excluding offences which relate to domestic abuse, there were 2,053 offences in the 12 months to October 2023.
- This was the 10<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs.
- There was a 10.6% increase to the previous 12 months which was the highest increase of all London Boroughs.
- **62%** offences relate to **Actual Bodily Harm** and **21%** to Inflicting **Grievous Bodily Harm without Intent**.



2,053 offences recorded  
in the 12 months to  
October 2023

10

This is 6.8 per 1,000  
population; the 10<sup>th</sup>  
highest rate of all  
London Boroughs

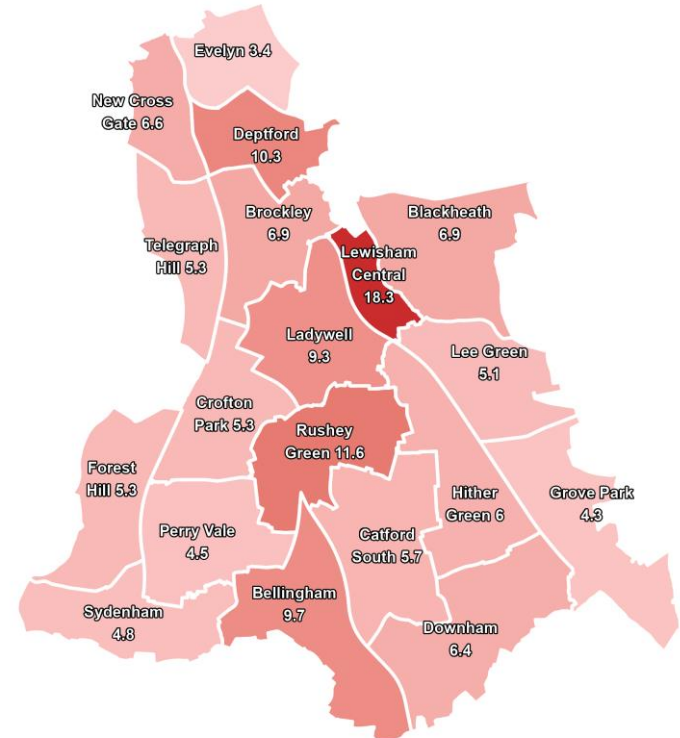


There was a 10.6%  
increase to the previous  
12-month period; the  
highest increase of all  
London Boroughs

# Violence with Injury (excluding Domestic Abuse)

- The ward with the highest rate of violence with injury is **Lewisham Central** (18.3 per 1,000 residents).
- This is the highest rate by a substantial margin, with the gap between the ward with the next highest rate (Rushey Green: 11.6 per 1,000 residents) widening over the last year as levels increased at a faster rate (31.9%).
- Both these wards, however, are amongst the 10% of wards in London with the highest offence rates.
- The highest concentrations of incidents appear to occur around the police station (within Lewisham Central) and Lewisham University Hospital (Ladywell).

Violence with Injury, Crime Rate per 1,000 residents (excluding Domestic Abuse)  
November 2022 to October 2023. Total number of crimes = 2053



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

# Violence with Injury (excluding Domestic Abuse)

## Victims



Victims were more often **male** (62.2%)



29.3% of victims were less than 25 years old (similar to the local population)



50.8% were from White ethnic groups, 38.5% from Black ethnic groups, and 9.2% from Asian ethnic groups\*

## Suspects



Suspects were more often **male** (71%)



36.3% of suspects were less than 25 years old (**1.2x** the population)



38.4% were from White ethnic groups, 55.8% from Black ethnic groups, and 5% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.3x** the population.

*\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Global Majority ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality; where this is not provided there is no significant difference.*



# Violence with Injury, suspects under 25 years



465 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023 where a suspect was <25 years (excluding domestic abuse)

6

This is 1.3 per 1,000 residents; the 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a 9.4% increase to the previous 12-month period



58.5% were ABH offences and 23.2% were GBH

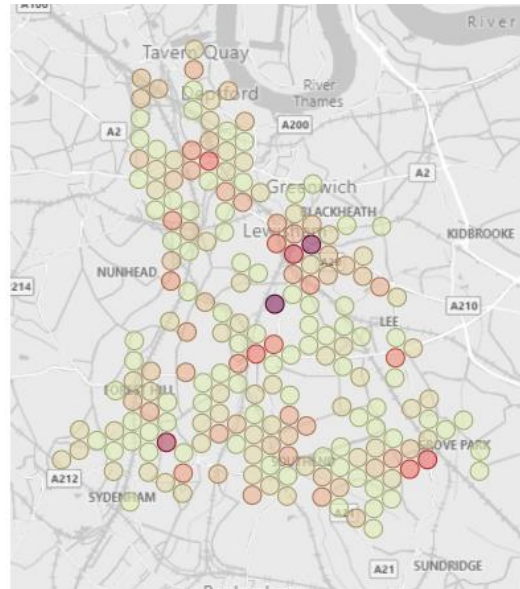


44 involved a weapon (9.5%): 6 involved a gun, 38 a knife.

Suspects were more often **male** (61%)

41% of suspects were aged 18-24 years, 28.4% 15-17 years and 30.3% <14 years.

67.7% were black, 29.5% were white, 2.4% Asian, 0.4% other ethnicities; Global Majority groups were over-represented by 1.1x local population <25 years (less than for all ages).



Lewisham Central, Bellingham and Downham wards have the highest rates in the borough, a slight variation to all Violence with Injury.

# Violence with Injury, victims under 25 years



633 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023 where a victim was <25 years (excluding domestic abuse)

12

This is 2.1 per 1,000 residents; the 12<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a 2.8% increase to the previous 12-month period



63.8% were ABH offences and 21.8% were GBH

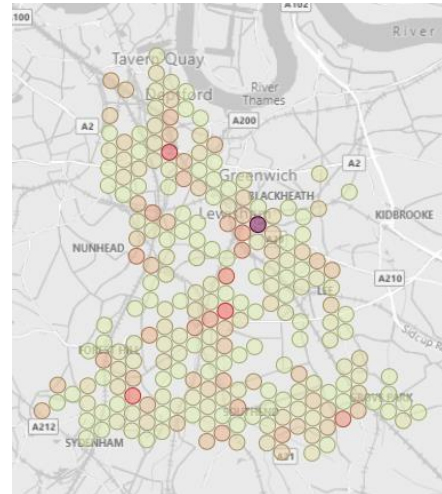


49 involved a weapon (7.7%): 1 involved a gun, 48 a knife.

Suspects were more often **male** (56.3%, 1.1x local population <25 years)

41.8% of suspects were aged 18-24 years, 18.8% 15-17 years and 39.4% <14 years.

50.3% were Black, 40.9% were White, 7.3% Asian, 1.5% other (white victims were over-represented by 1.1x local population <25 years)



Lewisham Central, Bellingham and Rushey Green wards have the highest rates in the borough, a slight variation to all Violence with Injury.

# Violence with Injury, victims & suspects <25 years



226 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023 where the victim and suspect were <25 years (excluding domestic abuse)

The most common time for an offence to be committed when both suspect and victim are <25 years is 3-4pm; they are more common during Monday-Friday. Concentrations occur near schools and Lewisham town centre.

9

This is 0.8 per 1,000 residents; the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs



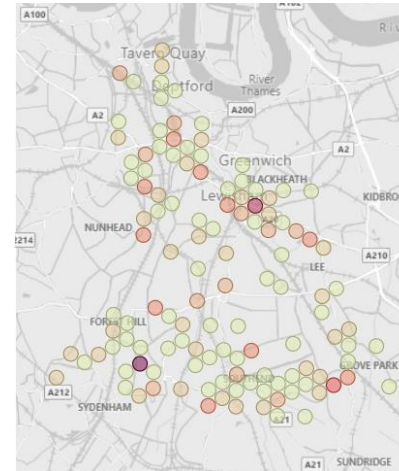
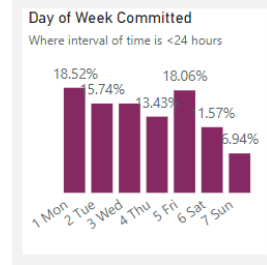
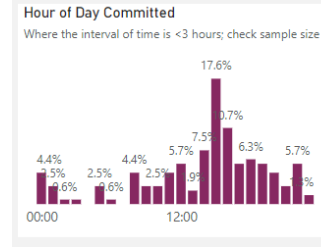
There was a 0.4% increase to the previous 12-month period



67.7% were ABH offences. This is higher than for offences involving older people 25+ years (60%). 23% were GBH offences.



20 involved a weapon (8.8%): 1 involved a gun, 19 a knife.



Lewisham Central, Bellingham and Telegraph Hill wards have the highest rates in the borough

# Personal Robbery

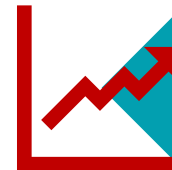
- Robbery is theft with the use of force or a threat of force. It does not include snatch theft.
- There were 703 Personal Robbery offences recorded in the 12-month period to October 2023.
- **188 (26.7%) involved a knife**, i.e. crimes flagged as knife intimidated, injury or threatened – a similar proportion to the previous 12-month period.
- **15 occurrences involved a gun**, although 9 of these were in July at one location so data quality uncertain.
- **85 were enabled with a cycle, moped or e-scooter**; a **62% increase** to the previous 12-month period.
- The **most common time** for personal robbery offences to be committed was around **4 o'clock** in the afternoon.



703 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023



This is 2.3 per 1,000 population; the 16<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs

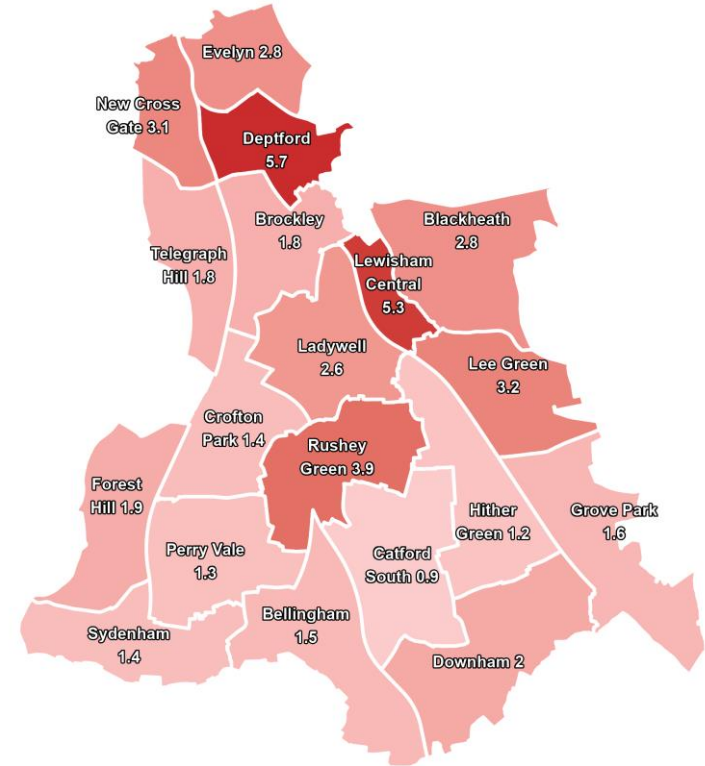


There was a 16.4% increase to the previous 12-month period

# Personal Robbery

- The wards with the highest rates were **Deptford and Lewisham Central** (5.7 and 5.3 per 1,000 residents, respectively). Both these wards were amongst the 20% of wards in London with the highest offence rates.
- Hot spot analysis shows the highest concentration occurred in **Rushey Green around Catford** town centre.
- The highest rate of **knife-related personal robbery occurred in Deptford with 27 offences**. These were around Deptford High Street and New Cross Road.

Robbery of Personal Property, Crime Rate per 1,000 residents  
November 2022 to October 2023. Total number of crimes = 703



# Personal Robbery

## Victims



Victims were more often **male** (74.3%, **1.4x** the local population)



47.2% of victims were less than 25 years old (**1.6x** the local population)



31.1% were from White ethnic groups, 55.2% from Black ethnic groups, and 12.2% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.4x** the population.

## Suspects



Suspects were more often **male** (91.9%, **1.9x** the local population)



74.6% of suspects were less than 25 years old (**2.5x** the population)



23.5% were from White ethnic groups, 71.3% from Black ethnic groups, and 4.3% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.6x** the population.

*\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Global Majority ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality; where this is not provided there is no significant difference.*

# Possession of Weapons

- There were 252 Possession of Weapons offences over the 12 months to October 2023
- Lewisham is ranked 8th for Possession of Weapons; rates have decreased by -5.8% to the previous period. This may be due to the number of stops and search decreasing over the same period (by 29.6%).
- There is a relatively **high sanction detection rate** of 48% compared to other offences, presumably because many cases are identified when a person/property is searched by the police.



252 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023



This is 0.8 per 1,000 population; the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a -5.8% decrease to the previous 12-month period

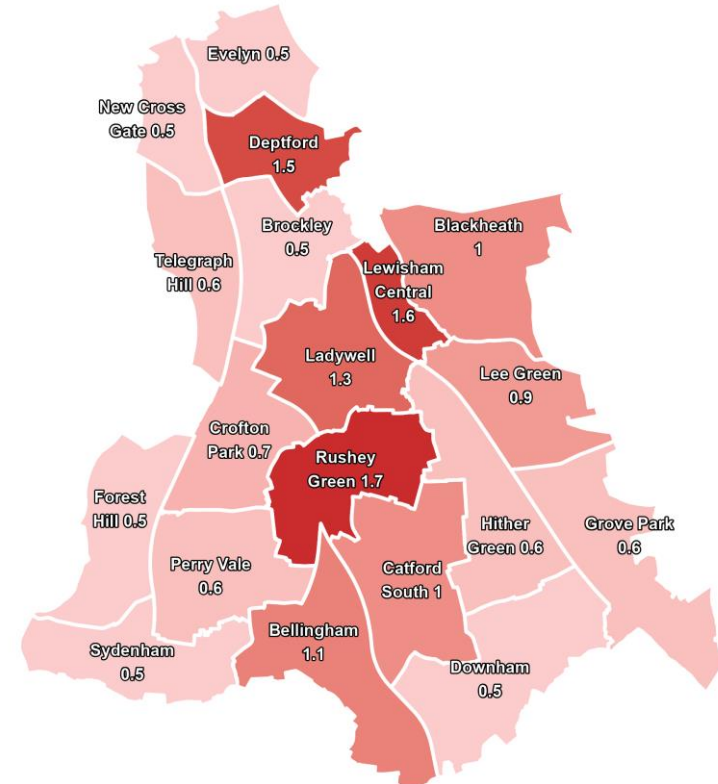
# Possession of Weapons

Possession of Weapons offences in the 12-months to October 2023 were concentrated around the **town centres of Lewisham Central and Catford** (Rushey Green), the connecting part of the A21 through Ladywell, and Deptford.

This is where most stop and searches take place.

These 4 wards were amongst the 10% of wards in London with the highest offence rates.

Possession of Weapons, Crime Rate per 1,000 residents  
November 2022 to October 2023. Total number of crimes = 252





# Possession of Weapons

There are relatively few victims due to nature of the offence.

## Suspects



Suspects were more often **male** (88.6%, **1.9x** the local population)



47.8% of suspects were less than 25 years old (**1.6x** the population)



32.1% were from White ethnic groups, 62.4% from Black ethnic groups, and 5.1% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.4x** the population.

*\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Global Majority ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality; where this is not provided there is no significant difference.*



# Other Weapon-Related Offences

## Victims



Victims were more often **male** (73.9%, **1.6x** the local population)



47.2% of victims were less than 25 years old (**1.3x** the local population)



44.6% were from White ethnic groups, 42.2% from Black ethnic groups, and 11.6% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.1x** the population.

## Suspects



Suspects were more often **male** (86.9%, **1.8x** the local population)



50% of suspects were less than 25 years old (**1.7x** the population)



25.8% were from White ethnic groups, 69.1% from Black ethnic groups, and 4.4% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.5x** the population.

*\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Global Majority ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality; where this is not provided there is no significant difference.*

# Threats to Kill

This is the only Violence without Injury offence that has been specifically included in our definition of serious violence.



Excluding 170 domestic abuse-related crimes, there were 279 offences recorded over the 12 months to October 2023

6

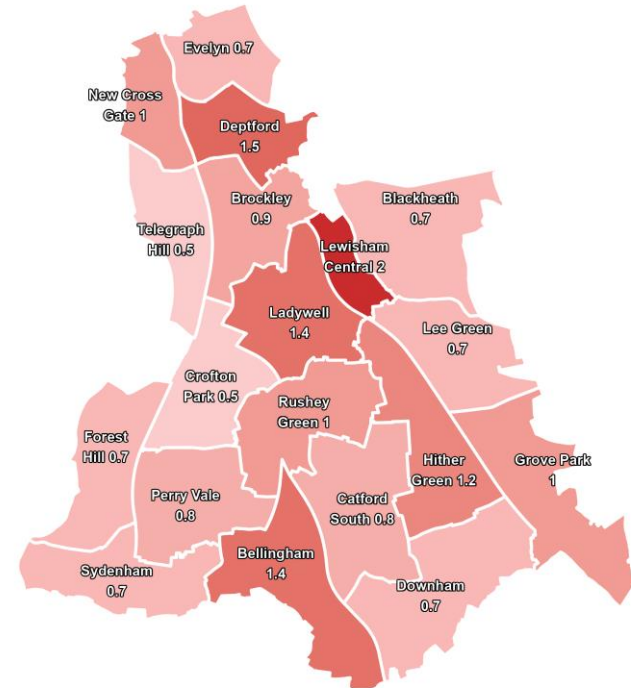
This is 0.9 per 1,000 population; the 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a 52.5% increase to the previous 12-month period, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest increase in London

The ward with the highest rate was Lewisham Central. This is amongst the highest London wards.

Threats to Kill, Offence Rate per 1,000 residents  
Excluding domestic abuse offences. November 2022 to October 2023



# Threats to Kill

## Victims



Victims were more often **male** (60.5%, **1.2x** the local population)



76.3% of victims were aged 25 years and over (**1.1x** the local population)



49.8% were from White ethnic groups, 35.3% from Black ethnic groups, and 12.2% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Proportion of white and global majority groups were similar to the local population.

## Suspects



Suspects were more often **male** (74.6%, **1.6x** the local population)



76.3% of suspects were aged 25 years and over (**similar to the local population**)



39.8% were from White ethnic groups, 55.4% from Black ethnic groups, and 3.2% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.2x** the population.

*\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Global Majority ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality; where this is not provided there is no significant difference.*

**Exploitation**

# Exploitation summary section

## Some wards are disproportionately affected

- **Lewisham Central, Deptford and Rushey Green** are hotspots for exploitation, as well as violence with injury, personal robbery and weapon carrying/use. These wards are also some of the most deprived in not only Lewisham, but all of London.

## Younger people appear to be disproportionately victims of exploitation

- As Lewisham has a younger population (in comparison to other London boroughs), this may feed into the high levels of exploitation in Lewisham when compared with the rest of London.

## Criminal exploitation and drug trafficking

- Criminal exploitation appears to be the most prevalent type of exploitation / modern slavery in Lewisham with drug trafficking on the increase, the two likely to be interlinked. Data shows that young men are overrepresented as victims as are those who are **not in education, employment or training**.

# Impact of Covid on Exploitation

In March 2020, the UK was placed into a lockdown which restricted the public's abilities to leave their homes. This led the illicit drug trade to adapt their supply models so they could continue their illegal operations and reduce the likelihood of being caught by the police.

Patterns of crime have been affected by the pandemic and subsequent national restrictions. The first lockdown in 2020 triggered a sharp rise in reported anti-social behaviour and an immediate drop in reported crime rates across England and Wales, with two notable exceptions: Domestic abuse and drug offences. However, it is likely that exploitation also increased but less was identified due to limited safeguarding capacity of frontline professionals. A study (Brewster et al, 2021) examining the impact of COVID-19 on criminal exploitation found the following:

- **Adaptations of county lines distribution:** Professionals saw a range of changes following the first lockdown, such as quicker cycles of cuckooed homes and those involved in county lines putting in more effort to disguise themselves, for example, by using delivery drivers and supermarket uniforms to make their journeys seem legitimate. Supply tactics became more localised, using drones and canal barges; supply routes changed from trains to private cars, using individuals with no previous criminal history and/or females to rent vehicles.
- **Ability of law enforcement to effectively detect and enforce against exploitation activity:** Police felt more confident to detect and carry out enforcement against exploitation activity. However, there were areas which became more challenging, such as police capacity to interview suspects at the speed at which it should be conducted due to a reduction in personnel (shielding, working from home or sick). Existing backlogs to court processes have been exacerbated by the pandemic, raising concerns about the long-term management of offenders.
- **Capacity of frontline professionals:** Frontline organisations were the agencies most affected by the pandemic. For many, resources were already stretched before the pandemic, and impediments of lockdown had only exacerbated this. However, the move to online working provided an increased opportunity to engage and communicate with children and young people as well as with other professionals in multi-disciplinary forum. On the other hand, the move to online also meant that perpetrators had increased opportunity to engage and groom vulnerable people online.



# Drug Trafficking

According to the National Crime Agency, drug trafficking is a major source of revenue for organised crime groups, many of whom are involved in other forms of serious crime such as firearms, modern slavery and immigration crime. Action against drug trafficking therefore has a wider disruptive impact on organised criminal activity.



440 offences were recorded over the 12 months to October 2023

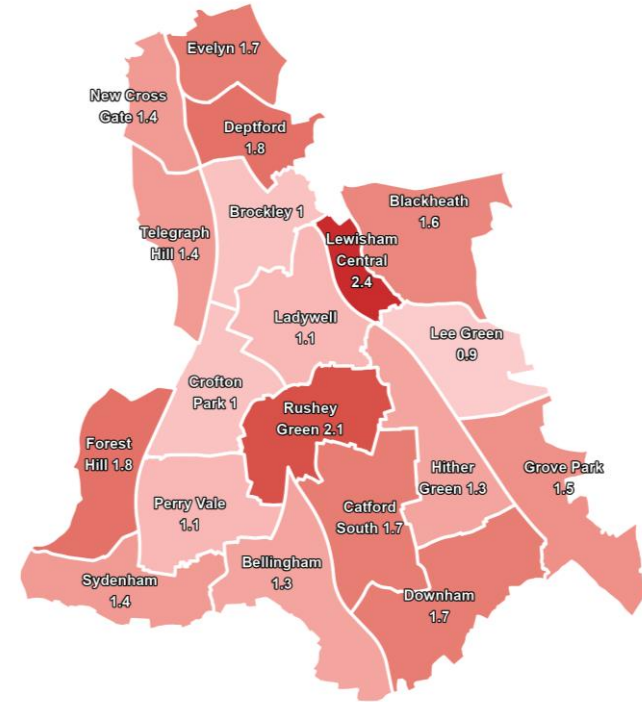
9

This is 1.5 per 1,000 population; the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a 21.5% increase to the previous 12-month period. Every London borough observed an increase over this period

Drug Trafficking, Crime Rate per 1,000 residents  
November 2022 to October 2023. Total number of crimes = 440



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

Lewisham Central was the ward with the highest rate in Lewisham and amongst the worst 10% in London. Lewisham also has another six wards amongst the worst 20% in London: Rushey Green, Deptford, Forest Hill, Evelyn, Catford South and Downham.

# Drug Trafficking

There are very few victims due to nature of the offence. It should be noted that a lot of information for suspects was unknown.

## Suspects



Suspects were more often **male** (92.1%, **1.9x** the local population)



35.6% of suspects were **less than 25 years old** (**1.2x** the population)



27% were from White ethnic groups, 64.3% from Black ethnic groups, and 6.1% from Asian ethnic groups\*. Global majority groups were over-represented by **1.5x** the local population.

*\*Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Global Majority ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality; where this is not provided there is no significant difference.*

# Exploitation

This includes any offence flagged as Modern Slavery or County Lines.



There were 139 offences recorded over the 12 months to October 2023.

3

This is 0.5 per 1,000 population; the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate of all London Boroughs

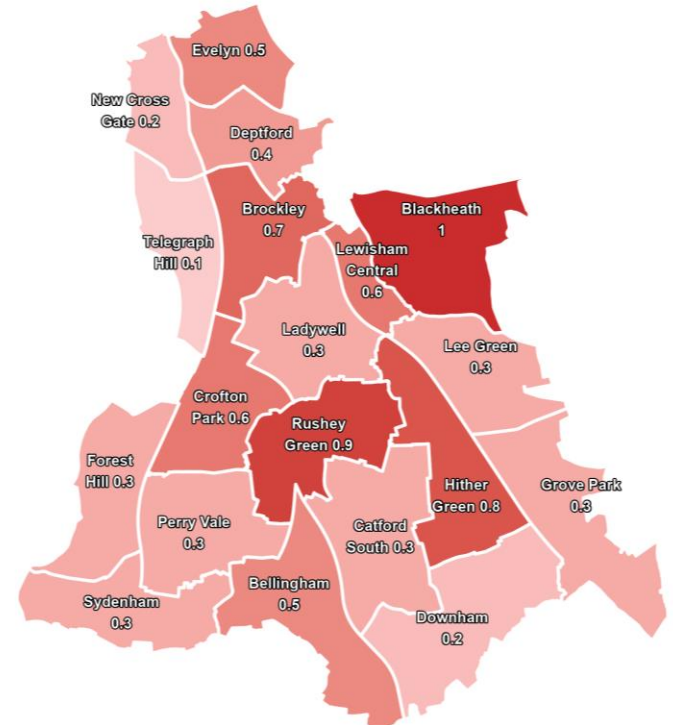


There was a 13.9% increase to the previous 12-month period, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest increase.

There are limited demographic information available: Victims were more often male (66.7%, 1.4x local population) and disproportionately younger than 25 years (36.7%, 1.2x local population).

## Exploitation Related Offences

Rate per 1,000 residents; November 2022 to October 2023



The wards with the highest rates were Blackheath, Rushey Green and Hither Green, these were also in the worst 10% in London. There are **6 wards amongst the worst 20% in London.**

# Other Violence-Related Datasets

This section will analyse data from sources other than reported crime data, such as:

- Violence Reduction Team
- National Referral Mechanism
- Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Referrals
- Information Sharing to Tackle Violence

# Other Violence-related Dataset summary section

## Additional risk factors

- The most common risk factors / vulnerabilities identified from datasets were Older/Riskier Peers, Involved Criminality, Not being in Employment, Education or Training, Family Breakdown, Substance Concerns and Mental Health issues. This supports the feedback we received from local communities, who identified the need for stronger and more supportive community links, family structure in the home, positive role models and specialist services to support those with mental health/ substance misuse issues.

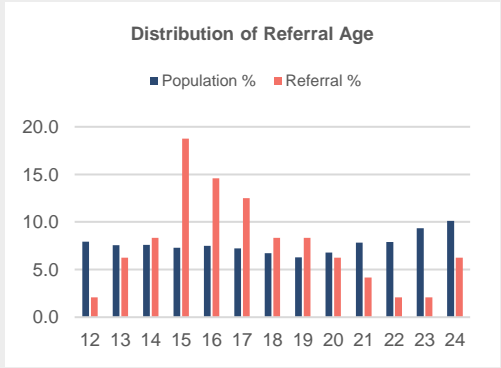
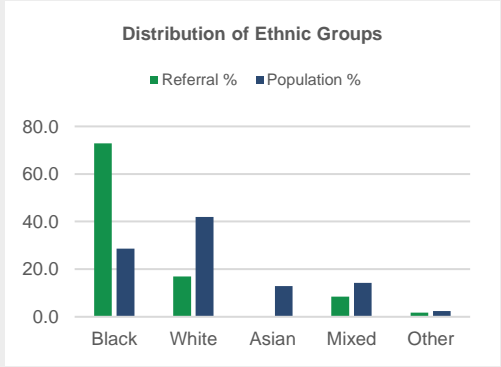
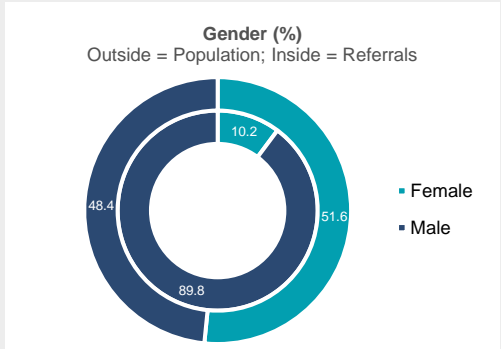
## Domestic abuse is the most prevalent type of serious violence

- LAS data shows majority of service users are women and girls. This is likely linked to domestic abuse. Health professionals are often more trusted by victims/survivors of VAWG and this data should be expanded on and utilised more often to identify areas of underreporting and develop a more complete picture of VAWG in the borough.

# Violence Reduction Team

The Violence Reduction Team (VRT) provides direct support to individuals aged up to 25, employing various methods such as working directly with the person and their family, coordinating with services for protective measures, offering advice on substance misuse, violence, and housing challenges, and providing guidance on violence and exploitation prevention using a trauma-informed, contextual safeguarding approach.

- Since February 2023 there have been **59 referrals to the VRT**, primarily sourced from the Serious Youth Violence panel and the Youth Justice Service.
- **90% of referrals were male** (1.9x the local population of 12-24 year olds).
- Ages spanned 12 to 24 with the **most common age being 15 years**. Ages 15 to 17 are particularly over-represented when compared to the population, and those between 21-24 are under-represented.
- Most referrals were from Black ethnic groups (73%, **2.5x the local population**).



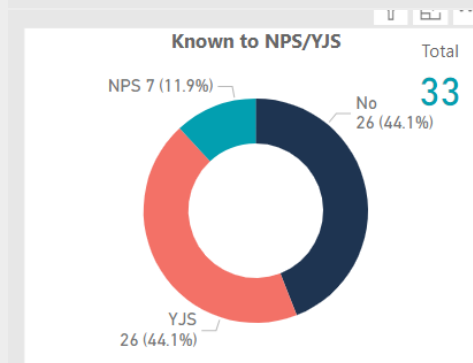
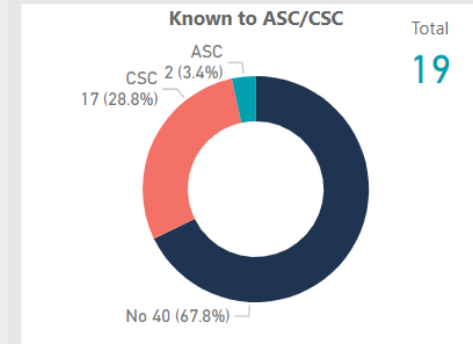
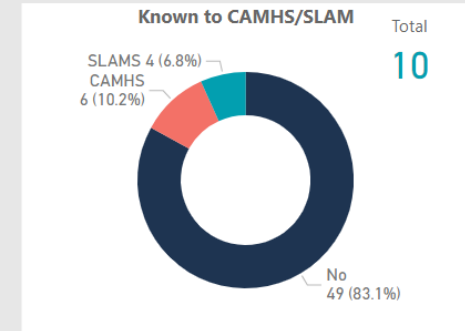
# Violence Reduction Team

The VRT are currently undertaking an exercise to **improve the quality of referral data** and ensure under-reporting is limited. The next iteration of this SNA will be able to examine trends and the link between collated vulnerabilities in more detail.

Currently:

- Over a third (23, 39%) of referrals were Not in Education, Employment or Training.
- 7 people were reported to be involved with a gang.
- 5 people were reported to be involved in criminal exploitation.
- 10 people are known to CAHMS/SLAM; 21 have mental health concerns.
- 19 people are known to ASC/CSC.
- Over half (33) of referrals are known to the NPS/YJS.
- 13 (just over a fifth) had substance misuse concerns.

The VRT report that the **online threat** of violence (i.e. via social media) has increased and is also an increasingly popular medium for grooming and exploitation.



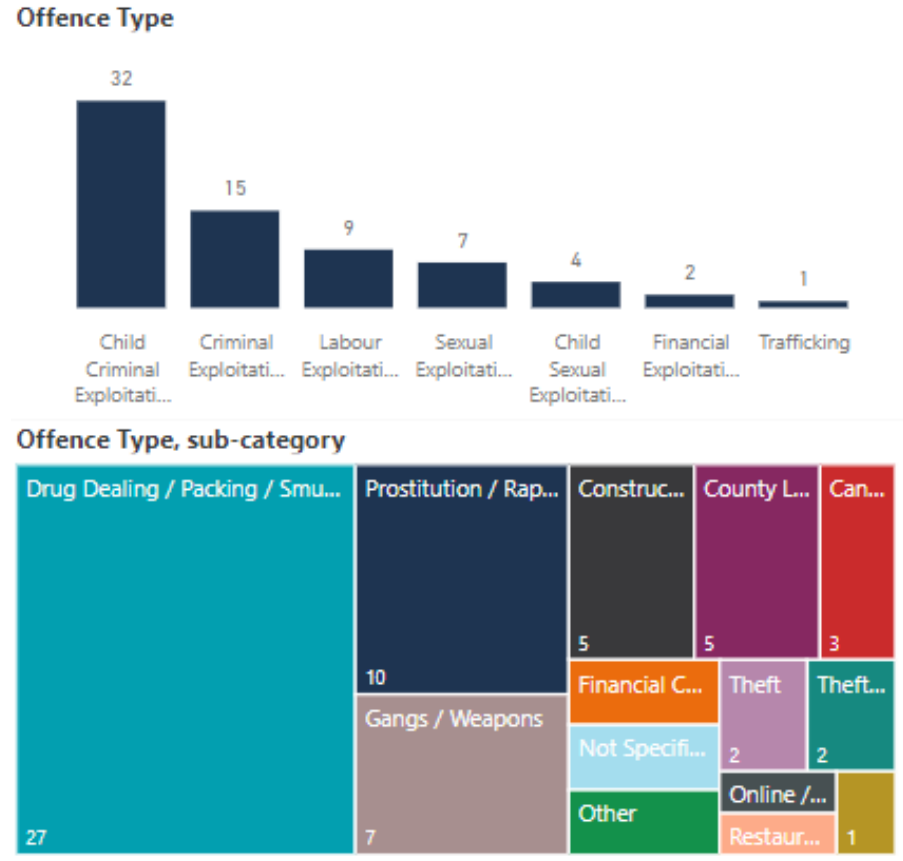
# Exploitation – National Referral Mechanism

- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. If the potential victim is under 18, or may be under 18, an NRM referral must be made; consent is required for an adult to be referred to the NRM. Consequently, most referrals relate to children.
- NRMs and reported Modern Slavery offences are monitored by the Lewisham Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking network.
- In January 2023 changes were made to making decisions for potential victims of modern slavery to implement, NABA required victims to be able to provide “objective evidence” which meant a person’s own account of their experiences would not be enough on its own for them to receive a positive initial decision (reasonable grounds decision). This new higher threshold for making ‘reasonable grounds’ decisions resulted in more victims receiving negative decisions and therefore being denied vital support under the NRM. In June 2023, Home Office agreed to withdraw and revise these changes.
- In the year to October 2023, there were **70 NRMs submitted** where Lewisham was listed as the borough of exploitation, **an increase from 51** over the previous 12-month period. This is the 4th highest total of all London boroughs.



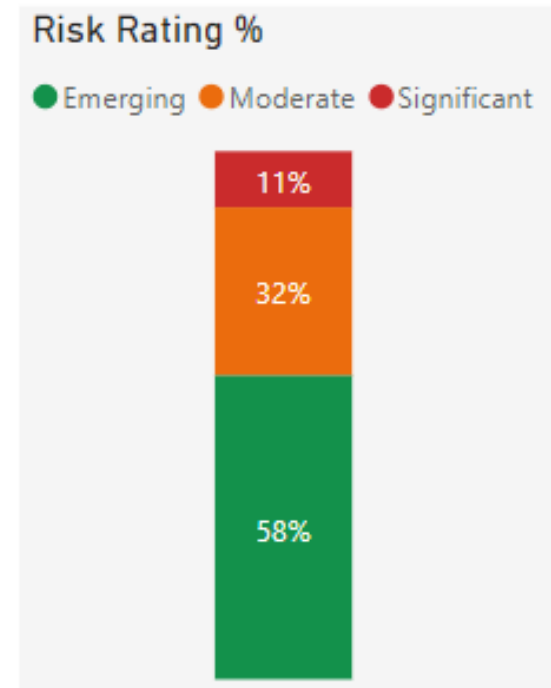
# Exploitation – National Referral Mechanism

- The majority of referrals related to **Criminal Exploitation (67%)**. This includes Drug dealing / packing /smuggling, County Lines and Gangs/Weapons.
- 76% of victims were male, 24% were female. 50% were <18 years, 72% were <25 years old and 28% were 25+ years. 60% were British. There is no ethnicity data available.
- Lewisham Council is part of a pilot project to review cases locally to expediate the NRM decision-making process. 27 cases were reviewed from March to October. 75% of these related to Child Criminal Exploitation; 17 were also a Child in Need and 8 were a Child Looked After. There is significant over-representation of males (78% of cases) and people from Black ethnic groups (74%).



# Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Referrals

- The Lewisham Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) provides a strategic, tactical and operational response to extra familial harm to children and young people across Lewisham. The definition of extra familial for the purpose MACE includes sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation (CE), county lines, serious youth violence (SYV) and harmful sexual behaviour.
- There have been **151 referrals to MACE** since April 2022. 11% were assessed to be at a significant risk, 32% a high risk and 58% an emerging risk.
- The most common primary risk category was CE (43.7%) with an another 11% classified as County Lines; SYV was the second largest risk (25%), followed by CSE (21%).
- The most common risk factors / vulnerabilities recorded were **Older/Riskier Peers, Involved Criminality, Family Breakdown and Substance Concerns**, and there were mental health concerns for at least 40 referrals. This evidences the known risk and protective factors discussed previously.
- About half of referrals (where known) were identified as **Children In Need**, just under a quarter were Children Looked After.
- The education status categories have been broadened recently and more will be understood in the next iteration of this report. We know that 57 (**38%**) referrals were categorised as **NEET**. One school was particularly prevalent amongst referrals.
- In terms of demographics, **young black men were disproportionately represented**: 67.5% were male (1.4x population to 21 years); 55.5% were black (x1.6 population to 21 years); 25.3% were white; 86.8% were 14-17 years old, inclusive.



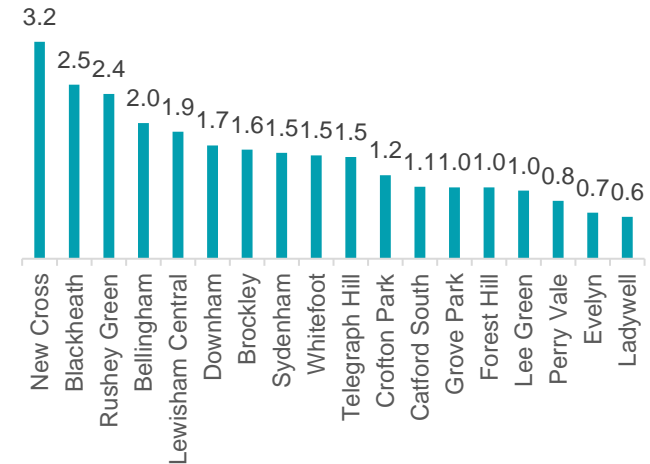
# Information Sharing to Tackle Violence

- Information Sharing to Tackle Violence (ISTV) is a small anonymised dataset collected by Emergency Departments and covers attendances resulting from violent incidents. The purpose is to enrich existing knowledge that has been gathered using police data.
- However, the numbers of incidents reported by London NHS trusts vary and there are a large proportion of incidents missing location data.
- During January 2022 to October 2023 there were 46 cases where Lewisham was listed as the location of a violent incident, the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest in London; 20% were flagged as knife-related.
- Separately, Lewisham University Hospital reported 180 violent incidents with no location provided. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest number reported of all hospitals across London.
- These patterns are contrary to volumes observed in policed data. This leads to some uncertainty in the quality of the data when viewed by borough with more investigation and partnership working necessary to understand and improve where necessary.

# London Ambulance Service

- The dataset provided by the London Ambulance Service (LAS) shows details on incidents responded to across Lewisham. These may be flagged as violence-related when relevant.
- There were **465 violence-related incidents** in Lewisham in the 12-months to October 2023 (excluding self-harm), a similar number to the previous year. 43 (9.2%) of these involved weapons; 2 of these were gun-related, 41 knife-related.
- 2011 ward names are provided with the dataset. The wards with the highest rates were **New Cross, Blackheath and Rushey Green**. Although a direct comparison with police location data is not possible, it does appear that there are more incidents presenting to the LAS from Blackheath than reported to the police.
- Overall, **62.8% victims were women**. For knife related incidents the proportion of men increases to 85.4%.

Rate of Violence Related Incidents that the London Ambulance Service Attended in Lewisham. Rate per 1000 residents. 2011 ward names provided.



# **Probation and Youth Justice Services**

# Probation and Youth Justice Services Summary Section

## Impact of community resolutions

- A decrease in First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System reflects the partnership commitment to prevent criminalisation and diversion. The implementation of **community resolutions for lower-level offences** (possession of cannabis) was a key factor in this reduction.

## Violence-related offences

- Both in the NPS and YJS we see the **most common** reason for entering the service is due to violence-related offences. Reducing the levels of violence in Lewisham is likely to have a significant impact of individuals entering those services.

## Criminogenic needs

- We found **differing levels of additional needs** for different types of offenders. This suggests that interventions for perpetrators will likely need to be tailored in order to address the underlying need and potential causes of offending.

# Youth Justice Service

The Youth Justice Service is dedicated to addressing and rehabilitating young offenders, promoting their welfare, and preventing reoffending through age-appropriate interventions and support.

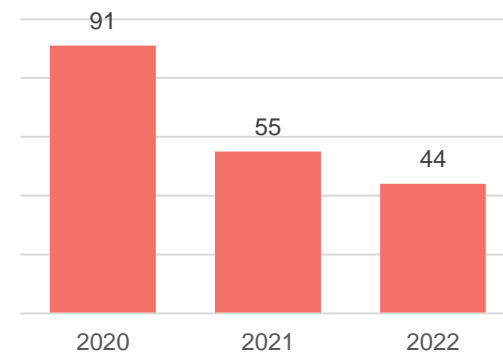
## Young people offending for the first time:

- In 2022 there were 44 First Time Entrants (FTEs), a **20% decrease from 55 the previous year**. This was a greater decrease than London overall (-11.2%) and **in contrast to the national trend (+2%)**. It was also **part of a longer-term trend** which has seen a reduction since 2020.
- The decrease in FTEs reflects the **partnership commitment to prevent criminalisation and diversion**. The implementation of **community resolutions for lower-level offences** (possession of cannabis) was a key factor in this reduction.

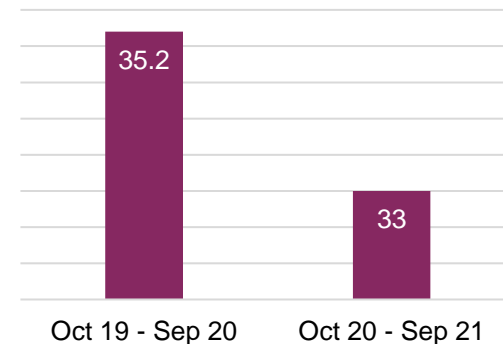
## Reoffending:

- There was a **33% reoffending rate** of 112 entrants in the 12-month period October 2020 to September 2021, a **decrease** from the previous 12-month period of 2.2 percentage points.
- The reoffenders committed 121 offences (**3.3 per reoffender**).

Number of First Time Entrants



Reoffending Percentage



# Youth Justice Service

## Nature of offences:

- A **third of offences** committed in 2022 related to **Violence** (70, 33%). The next most common were **Drug-related** (35, 16.5%), Theft and Handling of Stolen Goods (34, 16%) and Robbery (25, 11.8%).

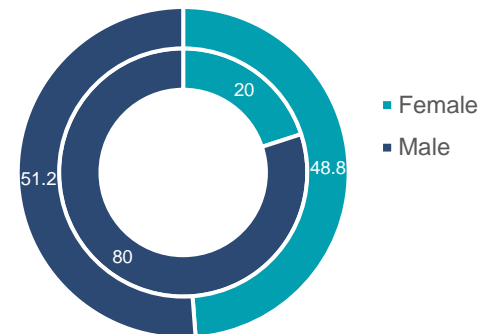
## Demographics:

- Most young offenders were **male** (80%, 1.6x the population).
- Just over half the females were from black or multi-ethnic groups; 13% were white. Just over half the males were from black or multi-ethnic groups; 20% were white.
- Highlights the **disproportionate representation of men and people from black and multi-ethnic groups**.

## Education:

- For interventions ending in Aug 2023, there were 17 School Age children; **13 (76%) were in Education, Employment and Training** (EET, within target) and 3 (18%) had Special Educational Needs (SEN) identified.
- For the 21 people older than 16, 6 (29%) were in EET (below target), **15 (71%) were not in EET**. A third (7) had SEN identified.

**Gender (%)**  
Outside = Population; Inside = Referrals



## GP Registration:

Two thirds (67%) of the young people have verified GP registration (as at August 2023).



# Youth Justice Service

## Successes reported in 2022 include:

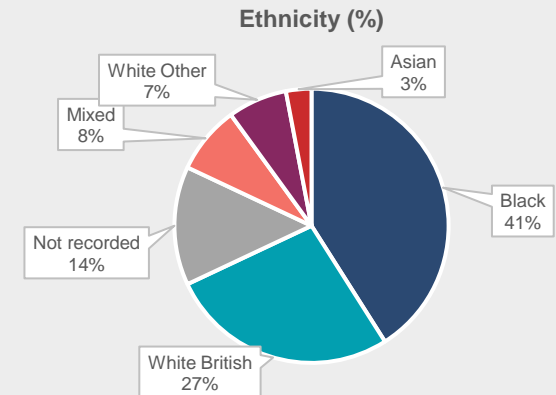
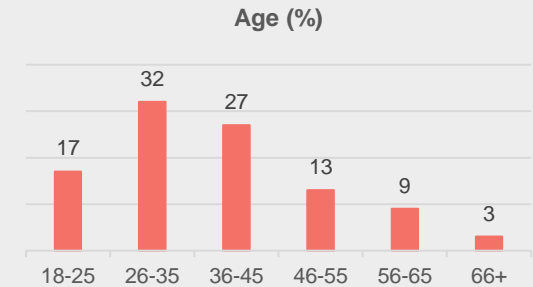
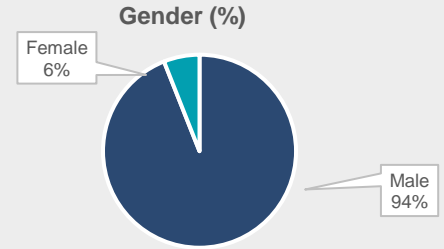
- Strengthening the **prevention** of children and young people entering the youth justice system.
- A revised vision to meet needs of children based on **'Child first' principles** and practice to further reduce first time entrants, re-offending rates and use of custody
- An evolving **anti-racist strategy** to reduce over-representation and racial disparity centered around recognized best practice as identified by HMIP's Thematic inspection (best practice guidance for Black and Mixed heritage boys 2021)
- Local and national interest in the 'TIARRA' (trauma informed, anti-racist and restorative in approach) model integrating established **trauma-informed and restorative practice** with our vision to become an anti-racist service.

Despite notable achievements in youth justice progress in Lewisham, such as reductions in FTEs, convictions, and use of remands and custody, there are **underlying challenges**. Issues include **growing racial disparities, over-representation of children with special educational needs or in care, and concerns about the sustainability of successful preventative efforts**. The complexity of cases, highlighted by the HMIP team during the remands inspection, poses unprecedented challenges. While Lewisham has made positive strides in system changes for adolescent services, there is a need for a shared vision, clear ethos, and acknowledgment of tensions, particularly in areas like child exploitation and serious violence, where the evidence base is emerging, complex, and risks are high.

# Probation Service

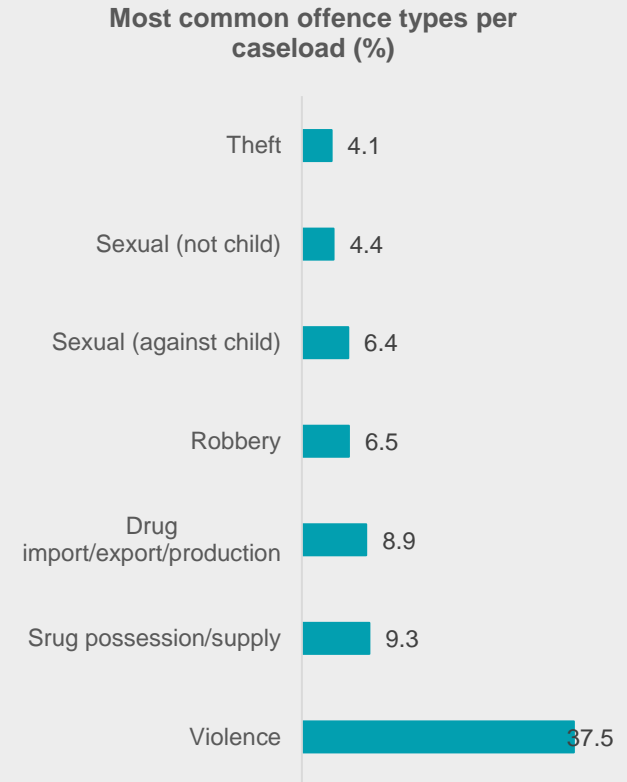
The Probation Service is a statutory criminal justice service that supervises high-risk offenders released into the community.

- In October 2023, the Bromley and Lewisham Probation Delivery Unit managed **1,777 individuals**; 86% were from Lewisham.
- The **overwhelming majority were male** (94%, twice the local population).
- 41% were from Black ethnic groups, 27% were White British, 8% were mixed ethnicity, 7% were from White – Other ethnic groups, and 3% were from Asian ethnic groups.
- **17% were between 18-25 years**. This is disproportionately high compared to the local population. It has been reported that **this cohort are more likely to commit further violent / sexual offences**.
- **40% were reported to have a disability**.
- 65 people (3.68%) were recorded to be a Care Leaver / have Care Experienced Personal Circumstance; 145 (8.2%) were at risk of suicide or self-harm. These **vulnerabilities are likely to be under-reported**.



# Probation Service

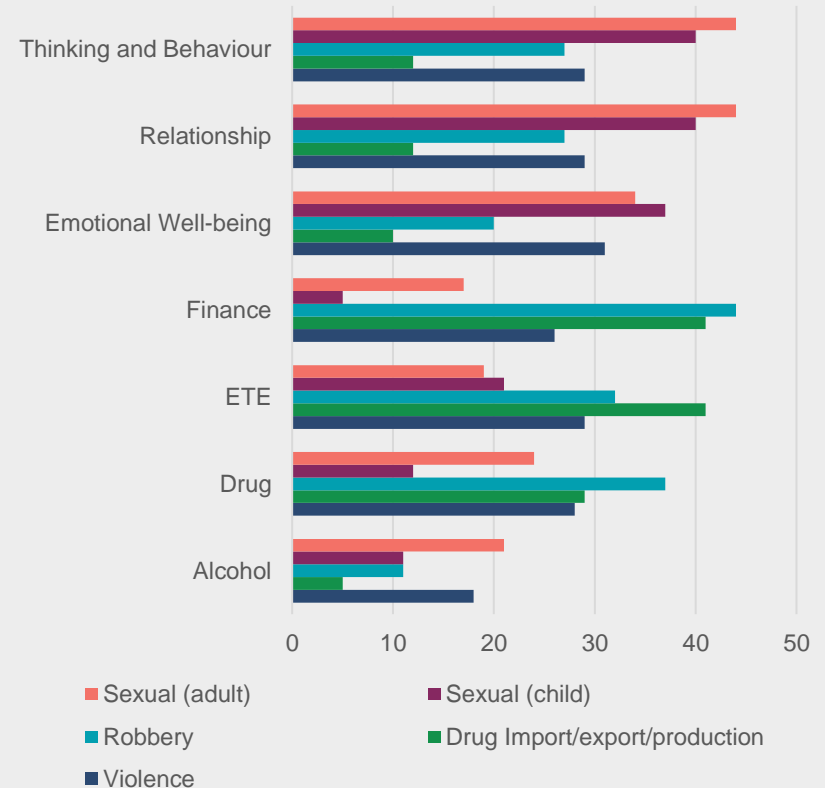
- **The majority of individuals supervised had committed violence-related offences (38%).** The next common offences were Drug possession (9%), Drug import/export/production (9%) and Robbery (6%) (see right).
- Individuals are assessed for the **risk of serious harm**: Most were assessed to be a Medium Risk (54.5%) **while 29.5% were High Risk and 0.7% were Very High Risk.**
- A larger proportion of Sexual, Robbery or Violence offenders were rated a very high/high risk of serious harm than other crimes.
- Multi-agency public protection arrangements are in place to ensure the **successful management of the highest risk** violent and sexual offenders. **This applies to 42% of the total caseload.**
- The **Offender Personality Disorder** pathway programme is a jointly commissioned initiative that aims to provide a pathway of **psychologically informed services for a highly complex and challenging offender group** who are likely to have a severe personality disorder and who pose a high risk of harm to others, or a high risk of reoffending in a harmful way. **36% (642 people) of the caseload** are registered with this programme.



# Probation Service

- **Criminogenic needs** were provided by offence type. These are shown to the right for five key offences.
  - **More sexual offenders** had **Thinking/Behaviour, Relationship and Emotional Well-being** needs.
  - **More offenders of Robbery and Drug** offences had **Financial needs**, pointing towards motivation of the crime.
  - A higher proportion of **Robbery offenders** had **drug-needs**; while child sexual offenders had the least.
  - **A higher proportion of Drug-related offenders had a ETE** need than Sexual Offenders.
- For Violence offenders, 21% were noted as a **Domestic Abuse Perpetrator**, 1.4% were the victim of Domestic Abuse. 9% had been referred to the MARAC.

% of Individuals with selected Criminogenic Needs, by key offence types



# Current Interventions

What are existing interventions, programs, and strategies for preventing or addressing serious violence?

- Metropolitan Police
- Lewisham Council
- Youth Justice Service
- National Probation Service

# Current interventions in Lewisham – Metropolitan Police

Intervention	Aims and target audience	Locations of the intervention
<b>Walk &amp; Talk Engagement Strategy</b>	Improve Visibility of Policing Teams, Rebuild Trust in Policing and provide Intelligence to address issues by providing a safe space for discussion, questions and opportunities to speak about issues from Street Harassment, or feeling unsafe to what to expect if reporting Domestic Abuse.	Any and all Public spaces, any place or route that an individual wishes to address point of feeling unsafe that can be later addressed by partnership working.
<b>Girls and Women's Engagement Network</b>	Workshop for discussions to assist in completing STREET SAFE Surveys and raising areas of concern where Street Level Harassment or environmental issues cause fear of crime. It is particularly aimed at Seldom Heard Communities and Women in Education.	Community based Engagement visiting existing women's groups. Can be run in Any College, Social group or regular meeting.
<b>Operation Verona</b>	High Visibility policing reassurance. Foot patrols / use of MET Volunteers / Pop ups. Aimed at Women and Girls or other vulnerable individuals.	Town Centres, Open spaces such as parks and Transport Hubs (Bus and Railway stations)
<b>Project Vigilant</b>	Combination of plain clothed officer trained in Behaviour Detection and Uniform presence. Perpetrator focussed to identify and disrupt predatory behaviours.	Night Time Economies, Transport Hubs and Parks. Deployments will be arranged as resources and intelligence suggest appropriate.
<b>Women's Night Time Safety Charter</b>	Mayor's office pledge to improve the general safety of Women in London after 5pm – promoted by SNT and Town Centre Teams. Aimed at Business' of all types who operate after 5pm.	Business open after 5pm
<b>Welfare And Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) Training</b>	Providing training to licensed premises on how to recognise vulnerability, take steps to prevent crime or exploitation and offer welfare support and interventions. In partnership with LBL Licensing and Joint Engagement Tasking Teams to reach all licensed venues and extend training over 2023 onwards to as many business as possible.	Bars, Pubs, Clubs and restaurants
<b>Ask for Angela</b>	Discrete way of asking for help for anything from Domestic Abuse to a date that feels wrong. All new licenses since the scheme's inception in 2021 have carried a requirement to provide this service. Training is provided within WAVE input and on provision of the posters.	Bars, Pubs, Clubs and restaurants
<b>Operation RANA</b>	3 pronged spiking awareness campaign on how to recognise, seek help and expect when reporting a case of spiking. Business Back of house advice on how to recognise, treat	Bars, Pubs, Clubs and restaurants

# Current interventions – Lewisham Council

Intervention	Aims and target audience	Locations of the intervention
<b>Sip and Talk</b>	Sip and Talk provides support to parents, carers and families affected by violence.	James Ross Hunter foundation deliver Sip and Talk in Sydenham and Honor Oak.
<b>Community Capacity Building</b>	The project allows for the continuation of therapeutic/trauma informed interventions in an area that is impacted by violence, deprivation and exploitation.	The project takes place on Pepys Estate.
<b>Street Robberies Project</b>	Aim is to deliver workshops to young people on safety and crime prevention (focusing on robberies) with a young persons lens. Workshops are delivered in schools and youth centres. Due to end in January 2024	Outreach is delivered outside of schools and hotspots such as Lewisham Town centre and Catford Broadway.
<b>Immersive Schools Programme</b>		
<b>Community Multisystem Violence Reduction Vanguard Programme</b>	The MHLW has a specific focus on supporting young adults aged 18 – 25 where mental health has been identified as a feature associated to violence.	Borough-wide
<b>Safe Space</b>	This is the statutory social work offer for children at risk of serious youth violence. Safe Space Practitioners support young people (aged 11-17) who are at risk of harm from factors outside of their family home.	Borough-wide
<b>Prevent and Change (PAC)</b>	PAC aims to ensure that perpetrators are managed in partnership with communities across South London, to increase the safety and wellbeing of victims and survivors and associated children and to prevent new and/or further victimisation and	Borough-wide (in partnership with, Southwark, Kingston, Richmond and Wandsworth).

# Current interventions – Youth Justice Service

Intervention	Aims and target audience	Locations of the intervention
<b>Engage (VRU funded)</b>	Youth work provision at Lewisham and Bexley police stations. Aimed at Reachable moment children in police custody.	Lewisham and Bexley police stations.
<b>Turnaround (MoJ funded)</b>	Preventing escalation of offending. Aimed at children young people on ‘cusp’ of offending.	Lewisham various
<b>LYFT family intervention</b>	Family therapy. This is aimed at Parents of children at risk or involved in offending.	Home and Holbeach
<b>Community based work and groupwork:</b>	Fathers’ group; identity group. Aimed at children and public.	Lewisham various
<b>‘Your choice’ adolescent therapeutic CBT</b>	Intensive Intervention program. Aimed at CYP at risk or having been involved in SYV/Exploitation.	Holbeach/community/home



# Current interventions – National Probation Service

Intervention	Aims and target audience	Locations of the intervention
<b>Building Better Relationships (BBR) – Accredited Programme</b>	Aimed at males in heterosexual relationships and Intimate partner violence offences only. Denial of index offence acceptable, providing some responsibility taken for similar past behaviours against intimate partner	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) – Accredited Programme</b>	General thinking & behaviour Accredited Programme for Males and Females	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Horizon – Accredited Programme</b>	Males convicted of sexual/sexually motivated offences	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>iHorizon – Accredited Programme</b>	Males whose sexual conviction is for internet sexual offences, in which they have had no contact with victims	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>New me Strengths – Accredited Programme</b>	Aimed at convicted of sexual/sexually motivated offences who also have Learning Difficulties & Challenges – Accredited Programme	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Structured Intervention Managing my Emotions</b>	Aims are to increase understanding of anger, increase self-awareness, explore relationships between emotions and gender, develop emotional recognition, develop emotional expression and increase resilience.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Structured Intervention First 4 Women</b>	Aims to foster (and restore) a sense of identity, self-esteem and self-efficacy	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Structured Intervention Positive Pathways</b>	The content of the sessions is built around desistance theory, in the main, and focus on the utilisation of a strengths-based approach to personal development	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.

# Current interventions – National Probation Service

Intervention	Aims and target audience	Locations of the intervention
<b>Structured Intervention Positive Pathways Plus</b>	The structure arising from a desistance approach, strengths base self-assessment and personal goal setting is common to all who would seek more positive relationships.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit: Choices and Changes</b>	Supports the development of psychosocial maturity and pro-social choices through 6 aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a stable, pro-social identity</li> <li>• Building resistance to peer influence</li> <li>• Developing self-sufficiency and independence</li> <li>• Building skills to manage emotions and impulses.</li> <li>• Increasing future orientation</li> <li>• Strengthening bonds with family and other close relationships</li> </ul>	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit: Maps for Change</b>	Can be used for sexual offenders maintaining their innocence. The Maps for Change toolkit is organised to strengthen protective factors linked to sexual offending	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit: New me MOT</b>	Adult males convicted of sexual/sexually motivated offences, to support graduates and to consolidate the learning of their completed accredited programme.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit: Skills for Relationships</b>	Adult males and females who present a high or medium risk of intimate partner violence.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit Stepping Stones</b>	Adult Males Strength based approach with all exercises designed to help participants to identify and develop strengths which support people to lead more meaningful lives.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.

# Current interventions – National Probation Service

Intervention	Aims and target audience	Locations of the intervention
<b>Toolkit Pathways to Change</b>	Aimed at adult Females. This is a gender-responsive and trauma-informed, to target the specific needs of Women Convicted of Sexual Offending linked to following areas: Relationships, Self Esteem, Problem Solving, Unhealthy Sexual Thinking and Behaviour.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit First Steps to Change women's toolkit</b>	Provide structure when working with women. Improve engagement at start of supervision and start of licence. Increase self-esteem and well-being. Facilitate a therapeutic alliance between practitioner and the supervisee.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit Creating Positive Connections</b>	Understand social capital and its benefits. Identify their networks. Develop their self-esteem and confidence and feel a sense of connection. Aimed at adult males.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit Responsibly Aware</b>	Aimed at adult Males. To understand use of substances and recognise the gains and losses of this. To increase understanding of what is safe and responsible. To increase awareness of the impacts of use of substances on others To develop techniques and strategies to manage substance use.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit Moving On</b>	Guided sessions for adult males to seek to support desistance by exploring the participant's identity and by attending to some of the factors which may be preventing them from achieving a positive self-identity. An individual's self-identity is how they view and understand themselves, shaped by characteristics including their life experiences, beliefs, values, appearance, personality traits, qualities and so on.	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.
<b>Toolkit Constructive Conversations</b>	Adult Males N.B. Constructive Conversations is currently being piloted	Individuals subject to statutory Probation Service intervention.

# Next steps

Gaps in knowledge / future research

Limitations

Way forward

# Gaps in Knowledge / Future Research

- Work with ISTV contacts to try and improve information gathered and reported at Lewisham and Greenwich NHS trust.
- Gather internal violence datasets together and link so that a better picture can be built of people's involvement with MARAC, VRT, CSC, MACE etc.
- Perhaps consider looking at the impact of being a young victim of domestic abuse with involvement with violence later in life.
- Deep dive into the drivers of Domestic Abuse – big data analysis as well as case study analysis?
- Change MARAC database to record by referral rather than person so that information can be better tracked over time.
- Victim/survivor engagement with the police – data on use of Claire's law
- Ethnicity data is not well recorded – need to work with police to improve Ethnicity categories and better understand disproportionality for specific groups.
- More data is needed on prevalence of sexual violence from health sources and specialist services. Crime data does not provide an accurate picture due to underreporting.
- Expanding on ward based non-crime data to improve understanding of where there are highest levels of under-reporting.
- Explore location detail correlation more.

# Limitations

- A person that is a suspect means they are unconfirmed to that crime, which there can be more than one. There can be discrepancies with suspect data as they are unconfirmed towards the crime
- Ethnicity data from the police is poor, some internal datasets have improved but detailed info could be better

# Way forward

*To be completed in due course.*

# References

- IMD
- [Poverty and Inequality Data For Lewisham - Trust For London | Trust for London](#)
- Census
- Experian
- End child poverty
- Fingertips
- YOS Data Report June 2023
- [explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)
- Crime Survey for England and Wales
- Lewisham: Crime and Vulnerability Strategic Needs Assessment Crest Advisory 2021
- NEET: [department-for-education.shinyapps.io/neet-comparative-la-scorecard/](https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/neet-comparative-la-scorecard/)
- Standing Together Against Domestic Violence: [Adult Family Violence Briefing Sheet](#)





**Lewisham**