

MAYOR OF LONDON



# The London Knife Crime Strategy

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Greater London Authority  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
More London  
London SE1 2AA

[www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)  
enquiries 020 7983 4000

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# Foreword - Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London

As we publish this Strategy, knife crime with injury has been on the increase for three years around the country. In London, dozens of families have been bereaved; many more have seen their loved ones severely injured. I know I speak for the overwhelming majority of Londoners when I say that this is absolutely unacceptable. It has to stop.

Through this Strategy, we set out a comprehensive plan of partnership action to tackle the immediate threat to safety posed by knife crime in London. But, important as it is, tackling the immediate problem is not enough. Over the last decade, we have seen knife crime peak, trough and peak again in London. I refuse to accept that this is the norm. If we are to make a lasting difference, we must do more to get to grips with the deeper issues fuelling violence and knife crime in our city.

We value all of our citizens and the contributions they make as a whole in making London the best city in the world. Our young citizens play a huge part in everything that is great about London, they are vibrant and dynamic, innovative and inspirational. We must ensure they have every opportunity to flourish and make the most out of the wealth of opportunities which London provides.

We must not accept that crime and violence is a foregone conclusion for any young person in London, regardless of their circumstances. We will redouble partnership efforts to divert young people at highest risk of offending and victimisation away from a life ruined by crime and onto a better path.

Our communities are sick and tired of the damage being done by knife crime. We hear their voices. In this Strategy we set out how we will support communities as they stand up against knife crime, with new funding for grass-roots community activities to protect their children and drive out crime.

We recognise that knife crime hurts more than just the person physically injured, and that support services must reach further. We are making greater investment in support for the victims of knife crime, their families and wider communities.

We support determined, targeted enforcement by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and partners like Trading Standards to get dangerous individuals and dangerous weapons off our streets. This includes greater Borough-led activity to catch knife offenders and to deter anyone thinking of carrying a knife. It includes new activity to target the online sale of knives to young people, which must be addressed.





But we must not submit to a counsel of despair that some of our most troubled young people are beyond help. We will not give up on them. We will expand our work to reach out to those caught up in crime and give them the skills, the resources and the confidence to get out.

No one person or organisation has all the answers to knife crime, and we embarked on producing this strategy with a clear ambition to involve as many organisations, groups, communities and individuals as possible – bringing together the expertise and passion of people doing excellent work every day to keep young people safe. The tough funding situation for all organisations underlines the need for us to work together, making the most of what we have at our disposal to make the biggest difference we can for our children and young people. The Met have already reduced costs by nearly £600m since 2012-13 and the government's current funding settlement requires them to reduce costs by roughly a further £400m by 2020-21. I am working hard with the Met to deliver this through greater efficiency and minimise the impact on front line officer numbers. But this is becoming increasingly difficult. The police service in London needs to be properly funded and I am making this case to Government.

The Met are just one of many public services in this city that have suffered massive cuts, and we recognise the challenges also faced by local authorities, criminal justice partners, health services and charitable sector partners. We know we cannot rely on police, or even statutory services alone, to respond to knife crime. Communities, families, faith groups, the media and cultural sectors; we all have a responsibility to encourage young people to fulfil their potential and not to carry and use weapons.

I am grateful to everyone who has taken part in the development of the Strategy, and I look forward to working together to deliver it.

We must drive knife crime out of London. Together, we can do it.





# Knife Crime in London

### What do we mean by knife crime?

Since 2008, knife crime has been defined as any offence that satisfies both of the following criteria:

- Is classified as an offence of homicide, attempted murder, assault with intent to cause harm, assault with injury, threats to kill, sexual offences (including rape) and robbery;
- Where a knife or sharp instrument has been used to injure, used as a threat, or the victim was convinced a knife was present during the offence.

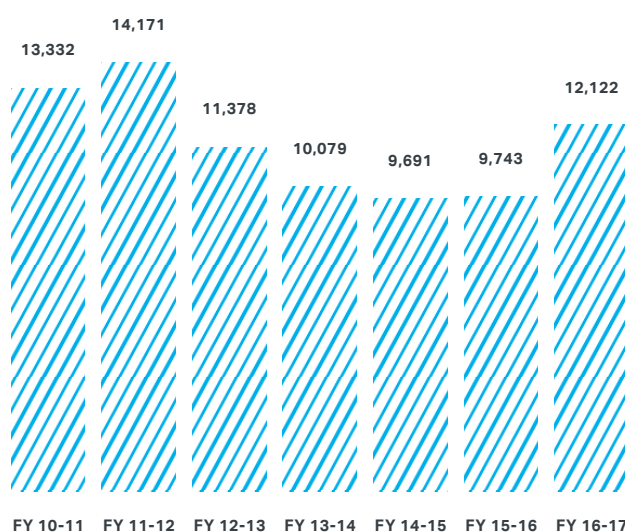
Knife possession offences have been defined as:

- Having an article with blade or point in a public place (including school);
- Threatening with a blade or sharply pointed article in a public place (including school);
- Possession of offensive weapon;
- Using someone to look after an offensive weapon;
- Threatening with an offensive weapon.

### How many knife crimes are there? Who are the offenders and who are the victims?

Knife crime is on the rise across the country. In 2016, London (excluding the City) accounted for around three in ten recorded knife offences nationally.<sup>1</sup> In the 12 months to March 2017, over 12,000 knife crime offences were recorded in London.<sup>2</sup> In 2016 knife crime across England and Wales rose by 14 per cent, compared to 11 per cent in London. The majority of knife crimes in London are related to street violence and robbery.

**KNIFE CRIME**  
MPS recorded offences  
April 2010 - March 2017



1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables>

2. Metropolitan Police Recorded Crime data 2016/17 with comparisons to 2015/16



Analysis of Metropolitan Police crime data for 2016/17 indicates that 75 per cent of victims of knife crime are male and frequently aged less than 25 years of age.<sup>3</sup> Almost half of all victims of knife crime were from BAME backgrounds. Those recorded as black ethnicity represented one in five of all victims of knife crime in the last year. For offenders, almost ninety per cent were male and of those, 62 per cent were from BAME backgrounds.

**HOMICIDE** In 2016/17 there were 110 homicides across the capital. Of these, 57 were identified as being fatal knife crimes. This includes seven which were domestic abuse related. The remaining 50 victims were almost exclusively male. Almost a third of all female victims of homicide were victims of fatal knife crime in the last year. For male victims this was much higher, with 57 per cent of all male victims of homicides being victims of fatal knife crime.

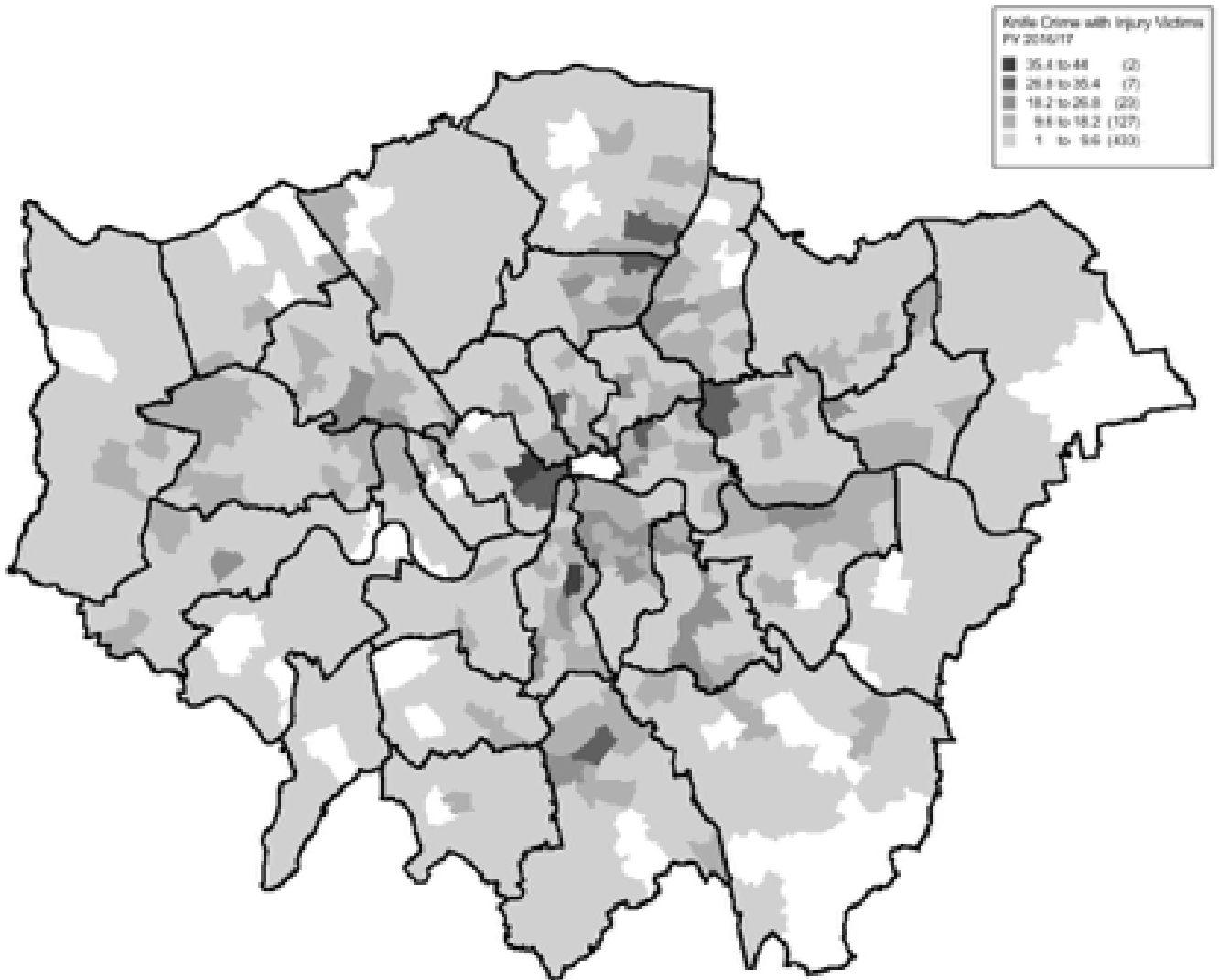
Young BAME males were frequently the victims of non-domestic abuse related fatal knife crime in that period, with almost half of all victims of non-domestic knife homicide being black males aged between 15 and 24 years of age.

**VIOLENCE WITH INJURY** Knife crimes where someone is injured as a result are increasing across England and Wales. In London, in the twelve months to March 2017 there were over 4,400 victims injured as a result of knife crime – from slight injuries to serious, life threatening wounds. This is an increase of over 750 victims compared to the preceding year, or 20.5 per cent. During this period, 49 per cent of victims of knife crime resulting in injury were aged 24 or younger. This represents over 2,000 young people and an increase on the preceding year of almost 25 per cent. BAME young males are disproportionately affected, with 6 in 10 young male victims recorded as from BAME backgrounds. More specifically, almost half of all young male victims of knife crime with injury were of black ethnicity.

Those who commit knife crime with injury are predominantly described as male and frequently from a BAME background.<sup>4</sup> Of male offenders, over half were described as black males aged under 25 years of age. It is also recognised that there is a huge overlap between victims and offenders, and that they are not always to separate groups. Likewise, whilst ninety per cent of knife crime offenders are male, 10% are female and interventions and activity delivered through the strategy must recognise the role of women and girls as offenders as well as victims.

<sup>3</sup> MPS knife crime victims data 2016/17.

<sup>4</sup> 2016/17 accused data shows that almost 88% of knife crime offenders who commit crime resulting in injury were male. Of these, 65% were described as BAME





**POSSESSION** of weapon offences have also increased in the most recent period across England and Wales. In 2016/17 there were approximately 4,000 crimes recorded in London, representing an increase of almost 23 per cent on the preceding year. As possession offences are often identified through police activity targeting people suspected of carrying a weapon, this may be an indication of greater police activity rather than an increasing prevalence in this type of crime.

### **Why are people carrying and using knives?**

The majority of research conducted into weapon carrying has pointed to self-defence and protection<sup>5</sup> as a key reason why young people carry knives. Significantly, for people surveyed, protecting themselves from others carrying weapons was considered to outweigh the risk of being caught by police.<sup>6</sup> However we also recognise that the decision to carry or use weapons is often more complex – in many cases knives are carried not for protection but to intimidate others, to facilitate robbery, to deliberately injure or kill or simply for the perceived power and status that the carrying of a weapon provides.

5. Lemos, 2004; Squires et al., 2008

6. Broadhurst et al. (2008)

## What do we mean by 'habitual knife carrier'?

A habitual knife carrier is determined by the police as any individual that has come up at least twice as a suspect on the Crime Record Information System (CRIS) for Possession of an Offensive Weapon / Knife / Bladed Article or a Knife Injury excluding Domestic Abuse offence in the last two years.

AND;

At least one of the above offences is in the last 12 months unless this subject has been in prison for a period in the last 12 months.



In May 2017, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime met young offenders at HMP Isis who had collectively been directly involved as both victims and offenders of knife related injury offences, discharging of a firearm and other serious violent offences, and were deemed to be amongst the most prolific and high risk offenders within Isis. Their view was that street robbery was a key reason why young people carry a knife; stating many young people are exposed either directly or through the experiences of their peers to street robbery between the ages of 11 and 14. The statistics support this - Robbery – Personal Property (42%) and Grievous Bodily Harm (34%) offences continue to be the highest recorded categories of Knife crime. This results in a perception of danger and risk amongst young people and that they need to have a knife


in order to protect themselves. Young people are aware of the areas where they feel they will be at a greater risk of being hurt and stated that they will always choose to be “safe rather than sorry” when asked if worried about being caught by the police.

### **What is the relationship between gangs and knife crime?**

Research<sup>7</sup> has shown a greater likelihood of carrying knives among gang members compared to non-gang members, with a significant difference in the percentage of people carrying knives between these two groups. A review of survey data from the New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (NEW-ADAM) programme at various custody suites across the country found highly significant differences in weapon

<sup>7</sup> McVie, 2010





**"...when considering our responses to knife crime in London, it is important to understand that knife crime is much more than just gang related activity."**

carrying between gang members and non-gang members, with a greater tendency to carry weapons among gang members.

Recent data suggests that the majority of knife crime is not gang-related. Gang-flagged crime accounted for 5% of all knife crime with injury during 2016 – down from almost 9% in the preceding year. However, gang-related knife crimes are usually of a more violent nature to other knife related offending and that young black and ethnic minority males are disproportionately affected by more serious and violent forms of knife crime, where an injury has resulted from the offence. Statistics show that the victims of serious, gang motivated knife crime are predominantly male (92 per cent), young (80 per cent under 25 years of age) and from a BAME background.

As such, when considering our responses to knife crime in London, it is important to understand that knife crime is much more than just gang related activity; focusing exclusively on gangs is not going to solve or adequately impact on our knife crime challenges in London; this Strategy also recognises that there has been a shift in offending patterns with a renewed emergence of group related offending, a group of individuals who cannot be classified as being part of an organised group or gang. It should also be recognised that gang and group violence is often linked to drug markets, and that stabbings and knife crime can be associated with the control of drug supply both within and beyond London. These changing trends in offending behaviour and patterns will continue to be monitored and responded to, whilst never losing sight of gang related offending which continues to be a key priority.

## Women, girls and knife crime

This strategy targets girls and young women who carry and use knives alongside their male counterparts. However there are significant proportions of knife crime which affect women and girls in the context of abuse and violence within the home and interpersonal relationships. The Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy will address acts of violence and harm perpetrated in the context of domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG which may involve knife crime.

In December 2016, the Femicide Census Report, published by Women's Aid analysed trends in women killed through intimate partner violence over seven years. The findings demonstrated that women who experience domestic abuse are at a significantly higher risk to knife crime and, sadly, often within their own homes.<sup>8</sup>

We know that Domestic Abuse is vastly under reported. Estimates based on those interviewed in the Crime Survey for England and Wales during the year ending March 2015 showed that around 4 in 5 victims (79%) of partner abuse did not report the abuse to the police.<sup>9</sup> This implies that there are many unreported knife crime incidents happening within the home.

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8. <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning-and-influencing/femicide-census/>

9. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2016>

10. Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021

In order to effectively bring perpetrators of domestic abuse related knife crime to justice, there needs to be an adequate risk-assessment process that records the use of knives/sharp weapons in a domestic violence incident and ensures there are significant consequences for such action. MOPAC will work with the Crown Prosecution Service and the judiciary to ensure that the severity of threats of violence (typically with a knife) is taken into account when prosecuting perpetrators of domestic abuse, or when considering criminal and civil court orders or restraining orders.

### **Knife crime and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

MOPAC and NHS England (London) commissioned a Needs Assessment of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation published in 2016 which aimed to establish the level of CSE in London and the scale of the need for support services. Whilst the Needs Assessment did not identify the use of knives as a major issue in relation to CSE, it was reported during the consultation for this strategy that there are increasing concerns with regards to the link between sexual violence committed by and against young people and the increased carrying and use of knives, putting young women at even greater risk.

MOPAC and NHSE, along with partners, are using the findings from the consultation for this Strategy and the Needs Assessment to explore future commissioning of services to support victims of CSE.

Delivery against these priority areas will therefore sit outside of this strategic Knife Crime Strategy, which is targeted towards preventing and reducing knife crime affecting young Londoners.

### **Knife crime and the Late Night Economy**

The night time economy is a key driver of economic and cultural regeneration and a magnet for domestic and international visitors. Recent research shows that the night time economy contributes £26.3bn to London's annual GDP and supports 1 in 8 jobs.<sup>10</sup> This figure is expected to rise to £28.3bn by 2029.

Analysis of the locations of knife crime shows some cross over with areas linked to London's night time economy, such as areas in central London. However, more work is needed to understand if these are directly linked or that this is a key driver of knife offending. Through further analysis we are seeking to gain a greater understanding of any impact knife crime has in areas related to the night time economy.





## What do Londoners think about knife crime?

Londoners are highly unlikely to be victims of knife crime, but knife crime affects us all, our sense of community and our feelings of safety on our streets. Findings from the MOPAC Public Attitude Survey (FY 16/17) indicate that 19.7% of Londoners perceive knife crime to be a problem in their local area. Within this there is borough variation – Waltham Forest has the highest perceived concern (34.9% view as a problem), while Bromley has the lowest (4.8% view as a problem)<sup>11</sup>. Younger respondents (under 25) are most likely to feel that knife crime is a problem in their area, while those over 65 are least likely to feel it is a problem.

In line with the findings of our research and consultation, this Strategy focuses tackling non-domestic, high harm knife crime which is perpetrated against young people, under the age of 25, targeting resources to our most vulnerable locations and Londoners; to our geographical locations most at risk of being affected by knife crime and to those communities and Londoners most likely to be directly involved or impacted by knife crime.

We also recognise that other weapons are used to cause harm. Firearms, bottles, and even acid can be used as a weapon, but we are also mindful that the volume of harm caused by knives in London is significant and so must be targeted and addressed. We will keep this under review however, and should it be necessary add to the delivery plan for the strategy to incorporate other weapons. This strategy aims to prevent violence overall – no matter what the weapon of choice might be.

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11. The MOPAC Public Attitude Survey is a large scale representative survey of London, interviewing 12,800 Londoners per annum.







# Developing and delivering this Strategy

The challenges in delivering this strategy cannot be overstated and even with all the powers of the Mayor and the police, knife crime will not reduce without all partners and communities in London pulling together to make changes and improvements. Arresting, sentencing, and even rehabilitating offenders will not stop knives being accessible on the streets and nor will it stop young people making the choice to carry a knife for the first time. For long term change we need parents and families, schools and youth groups, and communities to come together to discourage and prevent knife carrying, as well as the media, businesses and other influencers to do their part to make spaces where young people spend their time – online, at school, town centres, outdoors and at home – safe.

### **Oversight**

The Mayor is responsible for agreeing the Police and Crime Plan for London, agreeing the MPS budget and overseeing the performance of the MPS. He delegates most of these powers to the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, who is supported in her work by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, supported by MOPAC, will continue to provide robust scrutiny of the MPS responses to knife crime, driving forward performance and holding the Commissioner to account through her regular oversight meetings with the MPS.

Strategic risks of both MOPAC and the MPS receive scrutiny and challenge from the independent MOPAC/MPS Audit Panel. The Audit Panel is responsible for enhancing public trust and confidence in MOPAC and the MPS.

### **Convening**

Partnership is central to the delivery of this strategy – no one organisation has the ability to solve the problem of knife crime alone. The Mayor has a unique convening power in London. Agencies in the criminal justice sector and beyond look to the Mayor to provide leadership and to bring organisations together to strengthen partnerships. In tackling knife crime, we are using this power to bring together all of our partners

We convene partners at the London Crime Reduction Board to drive joint working with the most senior officers

from across the Criminal Justice Service and to influence key strategy decisions. Where we need to, we will challenge partners, advocate and call for action on priority issues to make sure we get the best services for Londoners.

This Strategy has been developed in close co-operation with the MPS, partner agencies and communities. We've consulted and surveyed hundreds of young people, professionals, and community partners to inform the commitments. We have had a particular focus on ensuring the strategy is informed by the 'youth voice', and as such we hosted specific events to target young people, including a youth roundtable event, workshops with young offenders in HMP Isis prison, and those on community orders under the supervision of youth offending teams, in addition to a Big Talk event with young people. We've surveyed 400 young people in the areas most affected by knife crime in London and also used the findings from over 700 16-24 year olds who were surveyed in the Talk London survey in the development of the Police and Crime Plan.

## A multi-agency partnership approach

Recognising that there was little support available for young victims of crime, The Lewisham Young Victims' Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Youth MARAC) was established in May 2009 to increase young people's confidence and trust in key agencies. Facilitating multi-agency information sharing fora and action planning to protect young people at risk of harm, the project presents a pioneering approach to supporting and protecting young victims of crime.

This work has been developed further and Lewisham now operates both a Serious Youth Crime Prevention Panel (SYCPP) and a Missing Exploited and Trafficked (MET) process.



Participants in the consultation include:

The MPS, The Crown Prosecution Service, HM Prisons and Probation Service, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, the London Community Rehabilitation Company, London Councils, the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, NHS England, the London Fire Brigade, Victim Support, London Heads of Community Safety, Trading Standards, the Youth Justice Board, London Head teachers, Vicky Foxcroft MP, Ofsted, the London Assembly, the London Stop and Search Community Network, Stopwatch, Safer Neighbourhood Boards, City Safe Havens, New Beginnings, Ganglines, Chance UK, Growing Against Violence, London Youth, the Godwin Lawson Foundation, Groundwork, St Matthew's Project Brixton, Hackney Quest, Bankside Residents Forum, Football Beyond Borders, Coin Street Community Builders, the Crib, Barnardos, Leaders in Community, Rugby Portobello Trust, the Safer London Foundation, the Oasis Trust, Gang Conflict Mediation, Young Lambeth, Gascoyne and Morningside Youth Clubs, the Damilola Taylor Foundation, South Central Youth, Epic Learning, Edukit, Educational Excellence,

Leap Confronting Conflict, Redthread, St. Giles Trust, Catch 22, LVSC, Box Up Crime, the SOLA Foundation, the Prince's Trust, Hyde Housing, Spark 2 Life, Hoxton Hall, Misunderstood, Lewisham Council, Transport for London, Southwark Council, Camden Council, Shout Out UK, Kiyon Prince Foundation, Ofsted, Ben Kinsella Trust, ChildLine, Word 4 Weapons, Josh Hanson Trust, MAC UK, Parent Voice, Evolve Housing, Fight for Peace, The Flavasum Trust, Rise Empowerment, Cherry Tree Foundation, Working Chance, Gangs Line, Mother, Jags Foundation, Anti Knife UK, Inspired Futures, Lambeth Council, Edmonton County School.

Inclusion and involvement are at the heart of our approach to our work, and we will continue to engage with communities and stakeholders, building relationships and working together to rid our city of knife crime.

## Delivery

MOPAC commissions a range of services, and provides funding and support to a wide range of crime reduction and community safety projects in London.

For the first time, the Mayor's funding for victims' services across the capital, previously provided on an annual basis, has been allocated for three years to provide longer-term support. The investment of £47 million over the Police and Crime Plan period will help improve current work and commission new services, including developing a collaborative 'one-service' approach rather than the current system which sees a victim or witness dealing with a confusing number of different agencies. Within this funding, £2m has been allocated to increase support for young victims of crime - including knife crime - and their families. The change in funding delivery will allow flexibility for MOPAC to respond to changing demands and deliver the Mayor's commitments to do more in areas including restorative justice.

Through the London Crime Prevention Fund, the Mayor has committed £72m over the Police and Crime Plan period to support projects across London dedicated to preventing crime, including £5m spent on projects tackling youth crime, gang crime, and knife crime.

This new London Crime Prevention Fund settlement is awarded according to the greatest need across London's Boroughs, with a new emphasis on ensuring every Londoner has the access to the services they need to help support them and keep them safe, in line with the principles of the Police and Crime Plan. Furthermore, some funds will be redirected to support joint commissioning of services across Boroughs, helping to facilitate the provision of specialist services that need a greater economy of scale than can be provided by one Borough alone. Local Authorities are core partners in the development of this new funding pot, which accounts for 30 per cent of the LCPF budget from 2018/19 onwards. This Strategy is backed by a further investment of £625k by the Mayor, taking the total spending by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime on knife and gang crime projects to more than £7m per year.

Across all our commissioning for this Strategy, we will take a trauma-informed and culturally competent approach, and we will be ensuring that service users and young people are engaged. Importantly, we will continue our grip on ensuring we secure genuine value for money. We want to be assured that the taxes paid by Londoners are being used as efficiently as possible. We will continue to make this happen with rigorous funding application processes and robust contract management.







# Taking action

01. **TARGETING LAWBREAKERS**
02. **OFFERING WAYS OUT OF CRIME**
03. **KEEPING DEADLY WEAPONS OFF OUR STREETS**
04. **PROTECTING AND EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE**
05. **STANDING WITH COMMUNITIES, NEIGHBOURHOODS  
AND FAMILIES AGAINST KNIFE CRIME**
06. **SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF KNIFE CRIME**



“Our fight against knife crime is ingrained in our neighbourhood policing and runs through everything we do. From our diversion schemes, and gang enforcement, to our protection of vulnerable people and our partnership with schools.”

**Cressida Dick,  
Commissioner of the  
Metropolitan Police Service**



## TARGETING LAWBREAKERS: POLICING

As we have seen with the recent tragic events in London, the demand for an efficient, dynamic and responsive police service in the capital has never been greater, and community policing is the foundation of all our efforts to protect our city. There is no substitute for visible officers out on the beat in neighbourhoods. They are the eyes and ears of policing – helping to detect and prevent crime, and build trust and confidence.

Vital to our mission of making London a safer city for all, is ensuring that the Metropolitan Police Service has the funding it needs. As a result of government funding reductions, the MPS has made £600m in savings since 2010, and has a further £400m to save over the next four years. This will be extremely challenging. The Mayor and MOPAC continue to lobby the Government for the funding the Metropolitan Police Service needs to keep our growing, global city safe.

Effective policing plays a critical role in the partnership response to tackling knife crime, and the Commissioner has signalled her commitment that a determined effort to tackle knife and gun violence will be the hallmark of her term in office. She has the full support of this Mayoralty in seeking to make our streets safer.

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, supported by MOPAC, will continue to provide robust scrutiny of the MPS responses to knife crime, driving forward performance and holding the Commissioner to account, as well as bringing together the partnerships that are needed to support the police.

### Operational activity

In the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021, we set out the key issues that cause the greatest harm in our society – including youth violence and knife crime - as mandatory priorities to go alongside the locally agreed priorities that local police and councils are now working towards in each Borough. Going further, every Borough is now developing a local Knife Crime Strategy, led by the MPS and involving partner organisations. This ensures that pressure on the possession and use of knives is felt across the city, whilst retaining the local flexibility needed by the MPS and local authorities to make the right decisions for their area.

Operation Sceptre, the MPS' intensive response to knife crime and violence, is increasing in frequency, from bimonthly to monthly. Sceptre brings together a wide range of resources to target priority areas with activities including weapons sweeps, targeted stop and search of known prolific knife carriers, test purchasing and plain-clothes policing operations.

Sceptre makes a difference - in May 2017 Operation Sceptre involved in excess of 1,800 such activities and seized 380 knives, 17 firearms and 75 offensive weapons. The MPS made 500 arrests in that week including 112 knife related arrests, of whom 33 were Habitual Knife Carriers.

Supporting the work of Sceptre, the MPS is also deploying 80 officers, both in uniform and plain clothing, into high knife crime borough hot spots, including 'super recognisers' to aid in the identification of key offenders.

The MPS is working with a range of agencies to target activity around the non-licensed venues that are hotspots for knife crime or at risk of being so. This will focus officers on high-harm wards with evening patrols in 'hot spot' areas, but also tackle 'problem venues' with law enforcement on health and safety, trading standards, licensing planning enforcement, fire safety and anti-social behaviour.

In addition, the MPS will work with councils, Business Improvement Districts and Safer Neighbourhood partnerships to reduce alcohol and drug-related crime in locally identified areas, for example by using 'section 92' officers in MetPatrol Plus schemes. Section 92 officers are additional police constables who are funded by local authorities in a 'buy-one-get-one-free' agreement with the MPS.

In Brent for example, this will provide an additional six officers in 2017-18 focused on knife crime, gang and youth related violence and diversion, delivering the Safer Brent priorities. In other London boroughs, where s92 officers have been funded for other purposes, MOPAC will be flexible and responsive to requests from local authorities to use these to tackle knife crime locally.

### **Neighbourhood Policing**

The Police and Crime Plan sets out our ambition to restore neighbourhood policing and putting Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) and PCSOs – who know and are known to the communities they serve – back at the heart of policing in London. As the Mayor has set out in the Police and Crime Plan, there will be one PCSO and two Police Officers dedicated to every one of the 629 wards in London – this commitment has already been met in terms of the PCSOs, whilst the vast majority of the Police Officers are also in post.

We will work with the MPS to deliver a policing service that is better equipped to deal with knife crime locally, across the city and online, strengthening neighbourhood policing, giving Boroughs a say in local policing and crime priorities, and transforming the way the organisation works to ensure it is equipped to deal with 21st-century policing needs.

## Stop and Search

We support the targeted, intelligence-led use of stop and search in the fight against rising levels of knife crime in London. Stop and search is a vital tool for our police, and it can save lives. Findings from MOPAC's Public Attitude Survey indicate that the majority of Londoners also support the use of Stop and Search (74% of Londoners agree with the use of Stop and Search) – although within this younger groups are less positive and the quality of the encounter is critical. In a survey commissioned for this strategy,<sup>12</sup> 58% of young people and young adults agreed that increased stop and search would reduce knife crime, whilst 28% disagreed.

However, it is an intrusive tactic, and striking a balance between keeping people safe and maintaining the trust and confidence our communities requires constant review and careful consideration. Misused, it can lead to increased community tensions and mistrust of the police, undermining attempts to encourage communities to come forward and report crimes.

It is important that MPS officers feel confident to use their judgement and exercise their powers to stop and search where they feel it necessary. We want officers to feel that they have the knowledge and training to help them to

## Stop and search – the statistics

Over 31 per cent of all stops and searches carried out by the MPS result in a positive outcome, up from 13 per cent in 2012 – showing that officers are making better use of intelligence to target their stops more effectively. A positive outcome for Stop and Search is anything other than NFA (no further action). Illegal objects are found in 27 per cent of searches, and over 3,000 arrests are made for weapons each year from stop and search alone.

The Met publishes monthly data on stop and search which the Community Monitoring Network and local Community Monitoring Groups can review such as volumes, arrest rates, proportionality and complaints. The MPS have also introduced a Stops Dashboard which provides more localised and detailed reports for community scrutiny.

<sup>12</sup> Survey conducted in Croydon, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets and Southwark, n= 413





make the right decisions about when to carry out a stop and how to do it. Intelligence-led use of these powers means that, at times and places of higher concern, where public safety is at increased risk, the number of stops and section 60 orders may go up. At times of lower concern, where intelligence indicates a reduced level of risk, the number may go down. We will support the MPS in rolling out judgement training for officers, enabling them to experience and practice their decision-making in a range of different scenarios. We will also work with our communities and police colleagues to review the use and authorisation of section 60, allowing officers to be more responsive in the aftermath of a critical incident.

Balancing that support for greater professional judgement is greater accountability. Body-worn video, which will be rolled out across the MPS by the end of 2017, provides a new level of accountability and transparency for all parties involved in a stop and search, and is already demonstrating real value, reducing complaints, providing better evidence for court cases and supporting officer training.

We will continue to consult and engage with communities to understand their views on the use of stop and search. Consistent local oversight of stop and searches is provided through the Community Monitoring Network (CMN), the MOPAC forum that draws together the local stop and search Community Monitoring Groups (CMGs) from each London Borough. The CMGs are made up of independent volunteers who scrutinise and hold the police to account on the use of stop and search powers in their areas. To support the accountability and transparency into the use of stop and search and section 60 powers, the MPS now publish this activity on a publically accessible dashboard on a Borough by Borough basis.

## Q WHAT'S SECTION 60?

Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 allows a police officer to stop and search a person without suspicion in an area which has been authorised by a senior officer of Commander rank. This power can only be authorised where there is a reasonably held belief that serious violence will take place. Between June 2016 and May 2017, 442 searches were conducted by the MPS under Section 60 powers.

## Young people and police training good practice – Hackney Stop and Search group

In Hackney, a Stop and Search group for young people holds the Met to account about stop and search practice in Hackney. The young people in the group have undertaken four days training to support their work, and used this to produce a DVD called 'Search Me' which is used to help train officers and members of the community in stop and search good practice.

The trained young people are also tasked with planning community events called "Build Up" which is aimed at improving dialogue between young people and the police. Events have included football matches, role play and sports days with local officers. can review such as volumes,

We have contributed to the current consultation being undertaken by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) on out of court disposals, asking that when a stop and search has been executed and when the individual has been found to be in possession of a knife, police cautions are no longer considered to be a viable option; ensuring that tough criminal sanctions are taken against serious offenders, and only where appropriate, which will be in very limited circumstances - making use instead of conditional cautions to ensure that some rehabilitative or restorative intervention takes place where it may prevent a young person from going on to more serious offending.

### **Gangs and knife crime**

As committed in the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan, we are reviewing the MPS approach to gang related crime, including reviewing the Gangs Matrix, which identifies the most violent gang members in London and supports the MPS to tackle gang crime, gun crime and knife crime in London. We are also working with the MPS Trident and Area Crime Command and other partner agencies to strengthen the identification of young people who are at risk of serious violence, whether perpetrators or victims. It is intended that this work will also enable the MPS to target enforcement activity more effectively.

The Trident and Area Crime Command works to tackle gang crime in London through enforcement, suppression, proactive policing and working with partners to prevent offending and build safer communities. Their work covers the investigation of all non-fatal shootings and other serious crimes where the victim or suspect is on the Gangs Matrix and the crime is believed to be associated with a gang. Trident coordinates action to reduce gang crime in target boroughs through the Trident Central Gangs Unit, and tackles the most harmful and prolific Organised Criminal Networks through the London Crime Squad.

Their work is also preventative: the Trident Community Engagement team works in partnership to safeguard young people from being drawn into gang crime, visiting schools and liaising with dedicated schools officers, offering support for those wishing to exit from gangs, or delivering conflict resolution programmes. We will strengthen this work through a project underway to identify and address issues of particular vulnerability amongst young Londoners, including ongoing operational work on 'County Lines' drug dealing (the practice of gangs from large metropolitan areas developing drug markets in surrounding towns and counties, in which children, women or vulnerable people are exploited by criminals to deliver drugs to and from other areas).

Operation Teal is the MPS response to serious gang, gun and knife violence, and is now a permanent part of Trident. The Met Control Centre now has a Teal representative permanently in place to monitor intelligence and incidents in live time and co-ordinate and task police assets in response.

### **Criminal exploitation and knife carrying**

The criminal exploitation and violence that is part of 'County Lines' is highlighted within the Police and Crime Plan 2017-21. This includes children and young people coerced into carrying knives and other criminal activities on behalf of the gang. As part of our work, MOPAC will be looking to develop, in partnership with key delivery agencies inside and outside of London, a comprehensive approach aimed at reducing the harm to vulnerable individuals, tackling the supply and distribution of drugs and ensuring that those responsible for harm face the consequences of their actions, including coming face to face with the harm they have caused through a restorative justice process. We will support the MPS to undertake police operations in partnership with county forces, which both enforce against the gangs and the organisers and aim to utilise legislation to enforce against gangs and organised criminal networks that profit from this practice.





## **TARGETING LAWBREAKERS: CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

The whole Criminal Justice Service has a vital role to play in the fight against knife crime – through tough community sentencing, tough punishment for persistent offenders and rehabilitation.

We recognise that many young people carry knives out of fear. But there are also those who carry knives with the aim of committing crime; to harm and intimidate others, to protect drug markets, to commit robbery or make threats, even to murder. Our message to our communities must be clear and consistent – whatever the reason, carrying a knife in London will not be tolerated and when caught, there will never be just ‘a slap on the wrist’.

### **Supporting better sentencing decisions**

Pre-Sentence Reports (PSR) provide critical information that helps make sure that offenders are sentenced appropriately, yet we are seeing knife related offences being sentenced without a PSR. Equally, we are seeing offences being sentenced without a Victim Personal Statement (VPS).

The Victim Personal Statement (VPS) gives victims a voice in the criminal justice process by. The VPS is a written or oral statement presented to the court at the time of sentencing created as an opportunity for the judge to understand how a crime has affected the victim and their families. It is unacceptable that sentencing decisions are being made without all the possible information available, and we will work with courts and probation services to push for a commitment to ensure that Pre-Sentence Reports (PSR's) and Victim Personal Statements (VPS's) are completed for at least 90% of knife related offences, helping to ensure that offenders receive sentences and requirements which are better targeted at addressing their offending behavior, sentences which are in line with sentencing guidelines and that the victim's voice has been heard.

This supports the Sentencing Council's view that sentencing of youths and young adults should be much more focused on the individual offender than when sentencing adults; and that all offender-specific factors are considered before determining the most appropriate sentence, as well as better protecting communities.

### **Providing better sentencing options**

Despite the significance of the knife crime challenge in London, none of the community sentencing options available to courts are currently targeted specifically towards those who carry knives or other weapons. This must be addressed, and we will work with the London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), National Probation Service (NPS), courts and others to develop a new, targeted community sentence requirement for those convicted of knife possession, which can be used on top of jail time and traditional sentencing where appropriate.

MOPAC recently launched a GPS tagging pilot which uses satellite tagging technology to monitor the capital's most prolific offenders, the first scheme of its kind in the UK. The pilot means that Magistrates in eight London boroughs can now order the wearing of GPS tags as part of a community or suspended sentence. This is not constant surveillance - the tags gather data to monitor an offender's compliance with their court order or bail conditions, alerting probation officers if these are breached. This includes entering an exclusion zone or failing to attend mandated appointments. For the first time, the use of GPS tags will enable the

police to use this information for crime mapping, providing information on an offender's location at a specific date and time to identify whether they could have been at the scene of a crime. In addition to a review of available enforcement measures and greater use of Electronic Monitoring, we want to build on this innovative pilot and test the use of GPS tagging technology for offenders who are released on licence following a custodial sentence for a knife related offence and for knife related community orders, lobbying for secondary legislation if required.

The overarching ambition of this strategy is for young Londoners to feel safer, and to protect those who are vulnerable and in order to do this we have to ensure that those who break the law receive sentences in accordance with the severity and impact of their crimes. In light of feedback we have received from young people about the lack of awareness of the consequences of knife crime; we have asked the Sentencing Council to also consider the role that they could play in raising awareness amongst young people regarding the consequences of knife crime and what further consultation could take place with young people regarding sentencing guidelines in the future.

## Rehabilitation

Effective rehabilitation of offenders by the Criminal Justice Service must also make a significant contribution to crime reduction. By stopping repeat offending will we protect young people and reduce knife crime. There is currently very limited provision for offenders to address weapon use for both adults and young people within the custodial estate and in the community.

Through the consultation for this strategy it is clear that there is no clear picture of how many young people under the supervision of youth offending services in London are there as a result of an offence involving a weapon, and who might be attending the Knife Crime Prevention Programme which has been adapted by Youth Offending Teams (YOT) across the capital and is delivered inconsistently across different areas. Nor is it clear what the impact of this programme is on young people and their offending. This is an unacceptable gap in our response to young offenders and we will press the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to get a clear picture.

We will also work with partners to explore better use of restorative justice and mediation where appropriate, working with families and communities to address knife crime and make amends.

## Tough consequences for persistent offenders

We support Section 28 of and Schedule 5 to the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015, which created a rule commonly known as 'two strikes and you're out', which is a minimum custodial sentence for those aged 16 and over who are convicted of a second or subsequent offence of possession of a knife or offensive weapon. The minimum custodial sentence for 16 and 17 year olds is at least a four month detention and training order and for adults over the age of 18, a mandatory minimum sentence of 6 months.

Nine in ten repeat knife crime offenders were adults of which over half received an immediate custodial sentence, 96% of those adult offenders who received an immediate custodial sentence had pleaded guilty and received an average sentence length of 7 months; this was almost 12 months for those pleading not guilty. Where repeat offenders were aged 16 or 17, 45% of these received a community sentence and 47% received an immediate custodial sentence with an average sentence length of 6 months.



Youths are far less likely to receive an immediate custodial sentence (11% compared to 37% for adults) Over half of youths received community sentences instead, cautions were also used more frequently for youths than adults. The reoffending rates for these community sentences and cautions are high and need to be improved. For example, the reoffending rate for people given court orders in London is 31 per cent, and the reoffending rate for those given fines 32%. The proven reoffending rate for juveniles for possession of offensive weapons in London was 36%, compared to a rate of 33% for all of England and Wales.<sup>13</sup> We will use our oversight role to hold the Criminal Justice Service to account for adhering to sentencing guidelines around knife possession and offending, ensuring progress, and we will provide greater transparency and accountability by publishing data on knife crime and sentencing outcomes for knife crime.

### **We are targeting lawbreakers by:**

- Ensuring that all Borough Commanders work with their Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to have in place local knife crime plans that will drive activity using Borough resources and to ensure that focused work is undertaken with communities and partnerships to ensure a coordinated response.
- Supporting the police in using all of their powers and increasing the frequency of Operation Sceptre weeks of action, providing concerted enforcement activity in knife crime hot spots, using tactics including visible patrolling; plain clothes officers; intelligence-led stop and search; and targeting known prolific knife offenders;
- Establishing a specialist MPS team of 80 officers, plain clothes and uniform, to carry out targeted crime prevention and enforcement in knife crime hot spots;
- Reviewing the MPS Gangs Matrix, which identifies the most violent gang members in London, and strengthen the identification of young people who are involved in serious violence, whether perpetrators or victims;
- Continuing to support the delivery of training for police officers and the use of intelligence-led use of stop

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13. Ministry of Justice – Proven reoffending overview data tool (July 14 – June 15) [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-july-2014-to-june-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-july-2014-to-june-2015)

and search which is responsive to the challenges on our streets, keeping people safe whilst also maintaining the trust and confidence of our communities;

- Strengthening the work of the MPS Trident and Area Crime Command to identify and address issues of particular vulnerability amongst young Londoners, including work on 'County Lines' drug dealing, where vulnerable people are exploited by criminals to deliver drugs to and from other areas;
- Working with the London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), National Probation Service (NPS), Youth Justice Board (YJB), Youth Offending Services (YOS), courts and others to develop a new, targeted community sentence requirement for those convicted of knife possession which offer support to the offender to exit offending behaviour.
- Making more use of electronic monitoring (where appropriate) and lobbying for GPS technology to be used on offenders serving community sentences, or released on license following a knife related offence;
- Working with the Youth Justice Board to establish how many young people under the supervision of youth offending services in London are there as a result of an offence involving a weapon, and who might be attending the Knife Crime Prevention Programme, to establish how effective this programme is at addressing young people's use of knives and if necessary, work with partners to replace it with something better.
- Working with the MPS to ensure that police cautions are no longer considered to be a viable option for knife possession offences. To support this, we will review the available enforcement measures.
- Pushing for a commitment by all relevant Criminal Justice Service partners to ensure that on the day Pre-Sentence Reports (PSR's) are completed for at least 90% of knife related offences which go through our courts;
- Pushing for a commitment by all relevant Criminal Justice Service partners to ensure that Victim Personal Statements (VPS) are included for at least 90% of knife related offences which go through the courts;
- Working with the Sentencing Council and National Police Chiefs Council to ensure appropriate sentences and sentence guidance for knife crime offences
- Publishing data on the commission and sentencing of knife crime offences.



## OFFERING WAYS OUT OF CRIME

There is no excuse for criminality, but we know that the factors that drive young people into violence are often complex and powerful. Many offenders have been exposed to criminal behaviour throughout their lives, and many have been victims of serious crime themselves. There are others who are coerced from an early age into committing crime. Many perpetrators have support needs around mental health, drugs and alcohol, education and employability.

Regardless of their circumstances and their past behaviour, carrying a knife or using a weapon is never a foregone conclusion – and nor is it acceptable - for any young Londoner.

The MOPAC funded London Gang Exit (LGE) Service is helping to divert vulnerable young people out of serious offending, bringing together partner agencies to provide a comprehensive package of support around health, education, housing and employment. We will continue to fund this service and will look to strengthen it further as a means of diverting at-risk young people out of gang crime. Early findings from completed cases<sup>14</sup> indicate that 75% of LGE clients engage in gang exit activity and reduce or cease involvement in gangs and 68% of engage in activity to address offending behaviour and report a reduction in offending.

Working with prisons is a new area of focus when responding specifically to knife related offending. Whilst prisons play an important role in removing dangerous offenders from communities, we wanted to know if our stakeholders thought they could be doing more. At the Mayor's Knife Crime Summit, 55% of the audience believed that prisons had a key role in rehabilitating offenders of knife crime. Acting on this feedback, we will place a renewed focus on what more can be done to rehabilitate offenders in custody but also to look at what more can be done to tackle knife related offences within our secure estates. Currently, Violence With Injury (VWI) offences within our secure estates are on the increase, with the majority of weapons in secure estates being improvised bladed articles which have been produced by offenders for the sole purpose of inflicting injury and protection and whilst creatively made, are more than capable of causing a fatality.

The Chrysalis project, funded by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and supported by MPS policing contribution through the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, has been put in place to support some of these challenges and has been running in HMP Isis since September 2013. Following the extension of the pilot in February 2016, Trident officers are working in both HMP Isis and HMP & YOI Feltham A & B.



The primary role of these officers is to proactively work with known and emerging gang affiliated prisoners, prosecute offences swiftly, support the reduction of violence and provide links to community provision that support gang exit aims. Since the introduction of the pilot into HMP Isis in 2013 there has been a 39% reduction overall in the number of recorded violent incidents.<sup>15</sup> Since 2016 results in HMYOI Feltham have shown a drop in violence against the person and an increase in the number of offences detected. We will work with Trident and others to extend and co-fund the Chrysalis project to address all weapon use and from this, explore the scope for extending the programme across all London prisons.

We heard through the consultation that the transition point at the end of a prison sentence, where an offender enters back into the community, is critical. More needs to be done to work with young offenders to not only address their offending and violent behaviour but to also address some of the complex emotional challenges which offenders face to ensure that emotionally, the offender is ready to turn away from crime and be integrated back into society. There needs to be much more recognition that we are working with highly complex individuals with a range of challenging disorders such as mental health issues linked to emotional trauma,

learning difficulties and personality disorders. A public health rather than purely criminal justice approach - that focuses on creating positive change, addressing underlying vulnerabilities, reducing risk factors, and strengthening protective factors has been shown to be most effective in reducing knife crime.<sup>16</sup>

Building on the Government's 'Through the Gate' reforms, we will explore opportunities presented by criminal justice devolution to develop a 'prison pathfinder' in order to reduce reoffending, which will:

- Ensure that prisons play a fully integrated role within London's Criminal Justice Service;
- Support the ambition for prisoners to serve their sentences closer to home, thereby providing a platform to strengthen family relations and enabling continuity of services on release;
- Demonstrate how London can reduce violence within prisons and offer greater rehabilitation opportunities;
- Provide better support to offenders for reintegrating into society on release from prison;
- Support the use of Restorative Justice upon exit to support reintegration with society.

This is an opportunity to enhance 'through the gate' services to offenders being released from short prison sentences lasting less than 12 months, as often seen for knife related offences.

In the medium term, we will continue to push for greater GLA involvement in the commissioning of London's Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), in order to ensure a more joined up approach with other Criminal Justice agencies and an improvement in services.

### **We are offering ways out of crime by:**

- Continuing and developing the work of the London Gang Exit Service to focus work on people involved in gangs who use weapons, including work to develop offenders' skills to improve their employability and increase their access to job opportunities.
- Extending the work of Project Chrysalis to include weapon related violence in HMP Isis and HMP YOI Feltham;
- Working with MoJ and partners to use Chrysalis as a foundation to build a violence reduction programme for London's secure estate;
- Supporting a trauma informed approach to our interventions when commissioning rehabilitation services;
- Supporting alignment with existing child and adolescent mental health services and work closely with the Greater London Authority and health partners to jointly commission better provision and lobby for more powers and budget to do so from central government;
- Building on the Government's 'Through the Gate' reforms, we will look to explore opportunities presented by devolution to develop a 'prison pathfinder' to better reintegrate offenders back into society.

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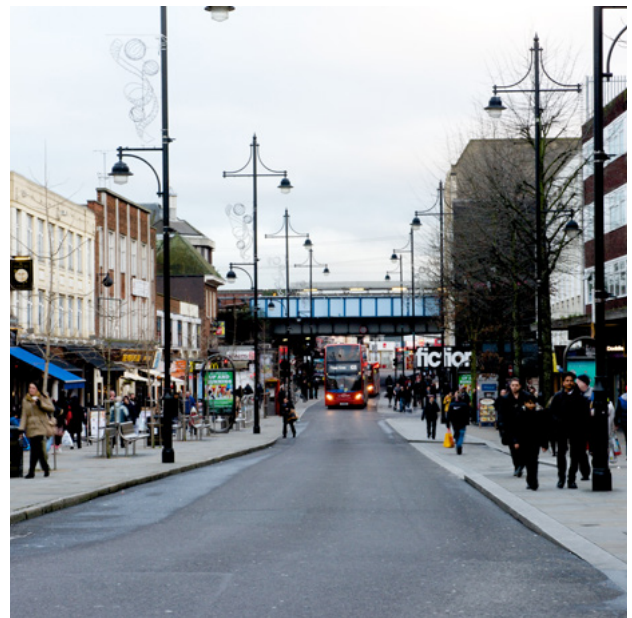
14. Case review of 28 completed cases for London Gang Exit Service

15. Data source: MPS Recorded crime – Comparing figures from Oct 2013 – Jun 2016 to the period preceding, Jan'11 – Sep 2013.

16. Foster, 2013; Eades et al, 2007; Sethi et al, 2010; Cordis Bright, 2015; Williams et al, 2014; Golding and McClory, 2008; McVie, 2010

“Advanced pre-hospital services, Major Trauma Centres and networks of care have transformed our ability to provide world leading care to patients in London. Although these advances have resulted in more people surviving after trauma than ever before there are still tragic fatalities and significant life changing injuries that have a significant impact upon the physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals and communities.”

**Duncan Bew, Clinical Director  
of Major Trauma and Acute Surgery,  
King’s College Hospital**



## **KEEPING DEADLY WEAPONS OFF OUR STREETS**

Alongside confronting the behaviour behind knife crime, we must also act to reduce the availability of knives to children and young people.

The types of weapons found by the police through stop and search and weapons sweeps tell a story about the scale of the problem and the risk of harm. Combat knives, hunting knives, 'zombie killer' knives, flick knives, samurai swords – designed purely to inflict serious damage to flesh, organs and bone. Kitchen knives, screwdrivers, hacksaw blades – innocuous household items that, if used against people, can cause terrible injuries.

More can and must be done to stop these implements getting into the wrong hands and onto our streets.

### **Supporting responsible retail**

The Responsible Retailers Agreement is a voluntary agreement businesses can sign up to, giving their commitment to work with the police, local authority and Trading Standards to help make their borough a better place to live and work. Businesses participating in an Agreement have access to training, support and accreditation.

We will be reviewing the adoption of the Responsible Retailers Agreement by London businesses, and reconvening national and regional partners and agencies to continue partnership working and information sharing on best practice on tackling the challenges around both online (including their couriers and delivery companies) and instore illegal sale of knives.

We will work with businesses, local authorities and Trading Standards to develop 'London Guidance' which is tailored specifically for knife retailers in London, offered on a London wide basis with a priority on our boroughs most affected by knife crime and smaller independent retailers who do not benefit from the same level of corporate training providing by some of our larger multi-national retailers. The training will encourage the securing of knives to prevent shop-lifting and to increase the interaction between the purchaser and staff to reduce the risk of 'accidental' sales. We recognise that trading standards have been subject to cuts by local authorities, who have had to make incredibly difficult local funding decisions.



## Licensing

63% of respondents at the Mayors Knife Crime Summit felt that the private sector should be completely accountable for the responsible sales of knives online and on the high street.

We have begun a review into the feasibility of introducing a licensing scheme for retailers who sell knives, similar to the one based in Scotland, where the Custodial Sentences and Weapons (Scotland) Act 2007 gave Ministers the power to establish a licensing scheme for knife dealers in Scotland. We are investigating whether a similar licencing scheme for knife retailers in London could provide a flexible preventative response to the illegal sale of knives in London, and support both the Metropolitan Police Service and Trading Standards not only in having a much more comprehensive understanding of knife retailers in London, but also provide retailers with a comprehensive set of minimum requirements which can be enhanced<sup>17</sup> by the licensing authority for some of our most disproportionately affected locations and for our larger instore and online knife retailers. If it can be demonstrated this would make a difference, we will work with Government and others on the implementation of such a scheme.

## The Primary Authority approach

We support and encourage the Primary Authority approach which exists to ensure the better delivery of regulatory processes. The approach offers businesses the opportunity to form a legally recognised partnership with one local authority, which will then provide robust and reliable advice for other councils to take into account when carrying out inspections or dealing with non-compliance.

Streamlining the communication of often bureaucratic and complicated regulatory requirements assists in ensuring business receive consistent and reliable advice and support, cutting out red tape, reducing complaints to trading standards and supporting business to ensure that they remain compliant with regulatory requirements.

This Strategy will build on and develop the efforts of the MPS in establishing joint partnership working arrangements with our major retailers and continue efforts to educate and raise awareness with regards to the responsibilities of businesses to be proactive in tackling the illegal sale of knives. We call on the Government to introduce legislation to extend the Primary Authority scheme to knives as soon as possible.

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17. <https://primaryauthorityregister.info/par/images/documents/handbook.pdf>

## **Tough action against irresponsible retailers**

We will support efforts to ensure there are tough penalties for irresponsible retailers who break the rules and make our streets more dangerous by not taking the necessary steps to stop young people purchasing or shoplifting knives. We will work closely with the MPS and Local Authorities to ensure that those who supply knives to underage people are brought to justice, with targeted test purchasing activity, including, for the first time, with online retailers. In doing this, we also recognise the challenges with stopping the illegal underage sale of knives from outside the United Kingdom. We will conduct a review on how we can most effectively reduce access to the UK market from our most challenging overseas retailers, lobbying for amendments to legislation where required.

We will continue to work with courts to consider what more can be done to ensure the maximum penalty for selling a knife illegally is imposed; 6 months imprisonment and a £5,000 fine. To support this we have asked the Sentencing Council to consider tougher sentencing on retailers who sell knives to children. To support this, we will do more to raise awareness with Magistrates about the seriousness of offences which result from the underage sale of knives.

## **Good practice – supporting responsible retailing**

Croydon Trading Standards offer free of charge accredited trader training sessions to small and medium sized businesses in order to help them be more aware of their responsibilities in relation to the sale of age restricted products including knives to young people.

Retailers receive a personal invitation by way of a visit from a Trading Standards Officer which is followed up by a letter confirming their place on the course. The course lasts for two and a half hours with an exam at the end. Retailers are also asked to sign up to the Responsible Retailer Agreement, agreeing to the safe and responsible packaging, display and sale of knives.

## Good practice - sale of knives: voluntary agreement by retailers

Tesco, Lidl UK, Amazon UK, Wilko, Argos, Morrisons, Asda, Poundland, Sainsbury's, John Lewis, Waitrose, Boots, Aldi, Co-Op, B&Q and TK Maxx have agreed to adhere to a set of principles to reduce the underage sale of knives.

The retailers will apply their policies for age-restricted sales such as think 21 or challenge 25 to ensure age verification checks take place and knives will only be sold (or supplied) once they are satisfied the customer is 18 or over. This will include proof of age checks for in-store sales, collection or point of delivery situations.

We also recognise that there are some considerable challenges with taking enforcement action against our larger retailers, particularly given significant cuts to Trading Standards teams in recent years. A key issue that local authorities face is the cost of prosecutions, which can be significant when taking action against larger retailers. However there are sanctions other than criminal and civil ones which can be applied to unscrupulous retailers who place dangerous weapons into the hands of children and where necessary, this Mayoralty will explore 'naming and shaming' retailers who persistently fail to check thoroughly and appropriately that knives are not being sold to underage children and young people.

We will also support victims who wish to express directly to these 'unscrupulous retailers', the harm they have experienced due to knife crime through a restorative justice process.

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**We are keeping deadly weapons off our streets by:**

- Reviewing the adoption of the Responsible Retailers Agreement by London businesses, and reconvening national Trading Standards, local Business Crime Reduction Partnerships and regional partners and agencies to continue partnership working and information sharing on best practice on tackling the challenges around both online and instore illegal sale of knives at a pan-London level;
- Working to ensure knife retailers and their couriers/delivery companies have access to training and guidance on the law on underage sales and target enforcement efforts against those who choose not to participate in this training;
- Extending the MPS use of test purchases to include online sales, holding online retailers to account for illegal sale of knives to children;
- Exploring 'naming and shaming' those retailers who continue to refuse training provisions and repeatedly are identified by the police and trading standards as selling illegally to underage customers;
- Support the use of Restorative Justice with retailers to help them understand the impact of their actions/inaction;
- Working with HMCTS to raise awareness amongst Magistrates on the impact of retailers illegally selling knives;
- Evaluating the feasibility of the introduction of a Licensing Scheme for knives in England;
- Calling on Government to introduce legislation to extend the Primary Authority scheme to knives as soon as possible.



"I've always been passionate about early intervention and getting to young people at the right age at the right time. It is vital that we spot the signs and provide the appropriate support and intervention at the earliest opportunity. This isn't a short term problem. You have to invest in young people and long term solutions.

At the Godwin Lawson Foundation, young people who attend workshops say that hearing from victims of knife crime help them leading them to choose a

safer lifestyle. It is great to know early intervention is at the forefront of this strategy, getting the appropriate support at the earliest opportunity is critical for all children's wellbeing."

**Yvonne Lawson, founder of the Godwin Lawson Foundation**



## **PROTECTING AND EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE**

If we are to make a long term, sustainable difference we have to protect, educate and support young people – or we will forever be tackling the symptoms not the problem. We must do more to seize opportunities to engage with young people and identify and intervene with those at risk of offending or victimisation. This Strategy aims to safeguard children and young people from harm and making the wrong choices. We recognise that any activity must operate within and integrate with existing child protection structures.

Much more needs to be done to get a grip on some of the key drivers of knife related violence and offending and to change the attitudes and behaviours around the carrying of knives. Carrying a knife in London is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Whilst we accept that the majority of our young citizens will never pick up and carry a knife, this strategy focuses on the minority who do.

### **Safeguarding young people**

Police and Crime Commissioners have statutory safeguarding responsibilities; MOPAC has statutory duties to hold the MPS Commissioner to account for the exercise of child safeguarding duties under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 as well as to discharge its own

functions having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as outlined in the same legislation. Child safeguarding runs through almost every strand of MOPAC's work, including gangs, Violence Against Women and Girls, Counter-terrorism, Victims and Justice and we will continue to provide strategic oversight of the MPS's work in this area and to work with agencies across London to ensure that we do everything we can to protect children in the capital.

### **Early years**

The need for better early intervention with children at risk of offending, and lack of evidence as to what works in supporting at-risk children, are challenges which have consistently been raised by stakeholders throughout our consultation for the development of this Strategy.

MOPAC is supporting the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF), which champions and supports the use of effective intervention for children who display indicators of risk. The EIF will play a critical role in evaluating the evidence of what works in the field of intervention – both programmes and local practice. An innovative new programme in Lambeth and Wandsworth aims to prevent youth crime, knife crime and gang involvement by working across primary schools in the boroughs. We will

work to ensure that once established; evidence from the programme is shared widely and used to drive change and support partners both locally and regionally. MOPAC will work with partners such as Edukit to share good practice with schools and education providers.

### **Through the education system**

This Strategy recognises that effective schools programmes, youth provision, after school programmes and summer activities are absolutely critical to dealing with some of the factors such as poverty, unemployment and educational failure that give rise to young people who are vulnerable to becoming exposed and lured into various forms of criminality. We recognise that schools and alternative education providers have a crucial role to play in the delivery of positive messages and safeguarding measures to our young people and their parents. They also need to be places of safety.

We will lobby Ofsted and the Department of Education to introduce requirements for schools to provide safeguarding measures for pupils at risk of becoming involved in knife crime, including the provision of support, advice and effective conflict resolution skills for both teachers and parents. We want to acknowledge those schools that have taken proactive measures to support our most vulnerable and ensure that others provide a safe space for our young people. To do this, we will work

to develop a Mayoral 'Safer Schools' standard which will publically commend the school as taking a responsible and proactive approach to protecting their students against the dangers of crime and providing appropriate levels of support. We will support our schools to provide a safe space for students by offering schools in the areas where knife crime is most prevalent the use of knife wands, and increase access to knife arches where and when required to ensure a safe environment.

MPS Safer Schools Officers have a vital role to play in making London's schools safer places to learn and grow up, providing a trusted link between young people, teachers and policing. We currently have almost 300 Safer Schools Officers across London, some of whom are working in London's Pupil Referral Units. We have committed to increasing the number of Safer Schools Officers, ensuring that every school has access to one.

Skills based programmes that aim to develop young people's abilities to control their behaviour (problem solving, self-control, anger management) as well as family focused programmes which incorporate the young person's wider network have also been shown to work in preventing gang involvement and youth violence.<sup>18</sup> Young people need to be equipped with the skills to be able to resolve conflict without the need to resort to violence and weapons use.

We will continue to work with partners and support programmes that are already in place to support young people; but there is much more that needs to be done to support our most vulnerable. To support the prevention campaign, we will provide toolkits for schools to allow them to access the materials and support sharing consistent messages to all London's children. We will work with partners to explore how we can collectively bring more resources and support into youth provision services, Pupil Referral Units (PRU's) and schools within our most challenging boroughs. To support this we will host an event with education providers, education leaders, Principals, Academy Trust Chairs, board members and Governmental bodies to better understand their needs and agree a plan of action to help tackle knife crime.

### **Outside of school**

In a survey of over 400 young people and young adults commissioned specifically for this strategy, 42% were worried about knife crime in their local area, and 22% knew someone who had been a victim of knife crime, whilst 3% had themselves been a victim.

## **A whole school approach to crime prevention**

MOPAC is working with Croydon Council to pilot a new, whole-school approach to protecting children and young people, providing information and support on safety to teachers and pupils from Year 6 onwards and making personal safety part of everyday learning.

The project aims to equip teachers and other education professionals with the knowledge, skills and confidence to identify and take the appropriate next steps with children and young people at risk of victimisation or offending. Equally, it seeks to educate pupils on the risks of crime, by helping them to understand the warning signs of crime and abuse, how to make positive life choices and where to get help if they are concerned for themselves or for others. The project uses drama and arts to involve young people in scenarios to see and understand the consequences of different courses of action, as well as to see actions from different points of view.

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18. (McVie, 2010; Foster, 2013; Eades et al, 2007; Golding and McClory, 2008; Kinsella, 2011



## Good practice – SchoolWatch, Tower Hamlets

SchoolWatch was launched in November 2011 after Bethnal Green Academy entered into a partnership with London Citizens and the Metropolitan Police. There had been a large increase in street crime within the local area, which caused the fear of crime amongst young residents to rise. Students worked with the police and other partners to develop Safer Routes to travel and successfully created 35 Safe Havens through the use of CitySafe Zones in Tower Hamlets.

Whilst this was a police-led scheme, for the first time there was the positive intelligence and information from young people who felt they could communicate with police and partnership agencies, safe in the knowledge that their information would be received and acted upon.

The MPS, with partners including Transport for London (TfL) and the British Transport Police, are developing a stronger evidence base of the public spaces where young Londoners are least safe, to inform their deployment of officers and ensure that police are on hand at places and times of highest risk for young people, such as school closing time and key transport hubs.

The issue of youth services provision in London is an important element in the context of the rise we have seen in knife related offending in London. This Strategy recognises the invaluable role that youth workers and youth providers play within our communities and the vital support which they provide to young people. However, the landscape of youth services has completely changed and local authorities have reduced youth provisions for young people due to funding pressures. We cannot bridge the gap in funding which is available to support the required growth of youth services provisions within the capital. We call on Government to do more to ensure that youth provision is protected and sustained, and support our partners, including the MPS, LFB, education and health services to work together to provide effective youth services and community support for young people, as well as lobbying the Government to increase funding for youth services.

The MPS currently has 5,000 MPS Cadets across London volunteering regularly to support operational policing, crime prevention and community safety. In 2015 cadets contributed over 200,000 volunteer hours in London, to an estimated value of £7 million. The Cadets scheme, for young people aged 10-24, builds skills, confidence and experience in a positive setting, and involves a broad cross-section of young Londoners, including a significant percentage of young people from deprived and crime-vulnerable communities. We will work with the MPS to build on the success of the Cadets scheme to offer more young Londoners positive activities outside of school hours.

We recognise and seek to harness the power of sport and the arts as a means of engaging young people inside and outside of formal education, providing opportunities to develop skills, confidence and relationships in a positive context.

One such project is London Kicks; engaging young people aged between 12 and 18 who are at risk or on the periphery of being involved in gang or knife crime. Between 1st September 2014 and 31st August 2016 a total of 4,467 young people have engaged in Kicks. 2,621 of these young people have participated in personal development workshops, 809 young people have achieved qualifications and 690 young

people have been supported to access education and training. We will continue to work in partnership with pan-London initiatives such as Kicks and support local services in London Boroughs through the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF), enabling the development of local anti-gang and knife strategies. We will also work with partners and schools to develop educational materials to be made available to our most challenging schools and youth service providers and support a more direct community response to not only engaging directly with our most vulnerable and hard to reach young people, but to also become part of the solution in identifying local responses to knife crime.

We continue our support for the CitySafe Haven initiative, which offers young people a safe place to go if they feel threatened or in immediate danger. City Hall itself was made the 200th CitySafe Haven in 2009, and there are currently approximately 600 CitySafe Havens across London. They aim to enhance and develop relationship with neighbours, police and the local community. We will work to make sure that these City Havens continue to develop and where possible are matched and located within our key geographical knife crime hotspots. This local approach will ensure that fast food outlets and other places where young people might congregate can play their full role in keeping their neighbourhood





safe. We will provide the necessary support and resources and work with TfL, BTP, and CitySafe Havens to ensure that transport hotspots are identified and made safer.

Fast food restaurants are amongst the hotspots for knife crime, operating into the early hours and attracting a young clientele. In partnership with the MPS we are identifying the fast food outlets where violence has occurred. We recognise that this violence is not linked to the restaurants themselves, but rather to the locations where young people congregate, much like transport hubs. However we must do more to ensure that these locations are safe places. We will work with major fast food outlets and partners to provide additional training for staff, equipment and other support to make these locations safe. We will convene the top 20 most affected areas and work with them to reduce knife crime incidences in and around their restaurants, building on good practice. In addition, we will work with the CitySafe scheme and retailers to cover the top 20 fast food outlets in London that are linked to serious youth violence.

### **Online**

The availability and affordability of technology is enabling young people involved in gangs and violence to produce media content with high production values and share it widely via

social media. There have been a number of cases of serious violence associated with confrontational music videos, and such videos were cited by some of the young people who we consulted with as continuing to normalise and incite violent behavior in particular parts of London. Videos of this kind are openly available on the major social media sites, with no age restrictions, and widely shared. In some cases, people uploading these videos are making money from advertising embedded in them, helping to fund criminality. We are working with social media companies to address these issues, and to find ways to use their platforms to provide positive messages to young people. The Law Commission is currently exploring whether to review legislation on offensive online communications. We will support the undertaking of a review of how hosting companies take responsibility for the content they publish through their sites or platforms.

Evidence shows that education-based approaches that both demonstrate the dangers of carrying a weapon but also make available resources and services to support vulnerable young people hold potential in addressing knife crime. In Autumn 2017, we will launch a prevention campaign to dissuade young people from carrying knives – using social media platforms and giving strong messages on the dangers of carrying a knife. These approaches will encompass both formal



## Good practice – fast food outlets

McDonalds and KFC ensure that their staff receive training on conflict management, provide measures such as controlling Wi-Fi and phone charging facilities, play classical music to create a calming environment, and liaise closely with local police teams.

and informal approaches delivered within school and community settings, acknowledging some young people's poor attachment to school.

Finally, we will bring the most influential social media companies to the table to not only tackle the prevalence of videos on social media which glorify gang and knife crime, but to also use it to communicate positive messages directly to our most vulnerable and susceptible young audiences, and we will work with those whose advertising is linked to gang videos to see how they can play their role in avoiding any inadvertent support for videos which glorify knife and gang crime.

## Youth Involvement

Young people have played a hugely important role in informing the content of this strategy; around half of all participants in the consultation were young people. We want to continue this dialogue and recognise that as the most significantly affected group, young people should be part of the solution for London and should continue to guide and inform the delivery of this strategy. We will therefore establish an ongoing youth engagement and consultative mechanism to continue this dialogue.

### **We are preventing young people in London being involved in knife crime by:**

- Increasing the number of Safer Schools Officers, and ensuring that every school has access to one;
- Supporting the prevention work of the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) in primary schools and ensuring that information on projects which are proven to work are shared with partners;
- Working with partners to explore how we can collectively bring more resources and support into youth provision services, Pupil Referral Units (PRU's) and schools within our most challenging boroughs;
- Lobbying the Department for Education and Ofsted to develop and

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- include mandatory requirements for schools to take effective safeguarding measures against knife crime supporting both students and parents;
- Working with schools and education partners to develop a Mayoral 'Safer Schools' standard – allowing schools to evidence that they meet best practice around student safety;
  - Hosting an event with education providers, education leaders, Principals, Academy Trust Chairs, board members and Governmental bodies to better understand their needs and agree a plan of action to help tackle knife crime;
  - Supporting the MPS to build on the success of its Cadets scheme and encourage more young Londoners to take part;
  - Working with the CitySafe scheme and retailers to cover the top 20 fast food outlets in London that are linked to serious youth violence, as well as exploring with TfL extending this to transport hubs;
  - Developing a media campaign targeted towards young people and their parents, raising awareness on the dangers and consequences of knife crime; and providing reassurance and advice on what they can do if they have concerns about an individual's involvement or risk of involvement in knife crime;
  - Providing prevention materials linked to the media campaign, supporting the integration of the message into the activities of schools and alternative educational providers;
  - Encouraging the Law Commission to undertake a review into offensive material published online, arguing that videos that glorify knife crime and violence are harmful;
  - Working with social media organisations to ensure online videos which glorify knife crime are quickly taken down, including working with companies to put an end to the profits made from advertising linked to their videos;
  - Working with the MPS and partners to build greater evidence on the times and places at which young people are at greatest risk of harm, such as transport hubs at school closing time, and ensuring that the police are on hand at those places;
  - Establishing an ongoing youth engagement and consultative mechanism, ensuring young people continue to be consulted and involved in the delivery of this Strategy;
  - We will support schools to provide a safe space for students by offering them the use of knife wands in areas where knife crime is most prevalent.



## **STANDING WITH COMMUNITIES, NEIGHBOURHOODS & FAMILIES AGAINST KNIFE CRIME**

London's communities and families have had enough of the violence. We stand with them in calling for an end to the madness of young people maiming and killing each other.

Over the next year, through the London Crime Prevention Fund, in partnership with 31 London boroughs MOPAC is sustainably funding 38 projects, at a value of approximately £5m, to keep Children and young people safe, and reduce knife and gang crime and serious youth violence.

We will strengthen and amplify the positive outrage of Londoners against knife crime through the provision of new funding to support grass-roots community groups involved in protecting young people and ridding our communities of violence. We will provide seed funding to support small organisations currently operating and to encourage the growth of other community groups and movements against violence.

To support this, our prevention campaign will therefore be supported by a toolkit for schools, community groups, faith groups and others to push the message locally, ensuring that this is owned and driven forward by influential local leaders and community members.

We will also develop messages for parents, supporting them to be aware of and support the messages their children receive, and identify indicators that their child might be at risk.

As part of our effort to ensure effective and meaningful engagement with London's communities, we will be working alongside the GLA Community Engagement Team who are currently developing new approaches to community engagement as part of a wider social integration and equalities agenda. Our goal is use their experience to broaden and deepen our reach into London's communities and find innovative ways to obtain the views from all those impacted by knife-crime in the capital.



Galvanising and working with our communities should not be an approach which is limited to the most serious incidents, such as terrorist attacks or high profile homicides within affected communities. We need to do more to work collectively with our communities, community groups and statutory partners to assess and manage the community impact not only after critical incidents, but after major knife related incidents. To provide assurances and also to work closely with the community, the victims' family and the victim's peers, to learn from the incident as to what can be done differently and to offer opportunities to speak out, whether it be formally or via third party or anonymous reporting mechanisms, beginning the process or breaking down the walls of silence we so often see amongst our communities after critical incidents, and empowering our communities to be part of our response to knife crime in London.

This is supported by our commitment to restore real neighbourhood policing in the capital's communities. Police cannot operate effectively without the cooperation of the community – whether that be through providing intelligence or playing their role in educating young people. Community policing is the bedrock of all our efforts to protect our city, and we are putting an extra dedicated police officer back in every ward in the capital to help tackle the problems of crime and antisocial behaviour that concern residents most.

To ensure police and partner resources are targeted in the communities where they are needed most, we will continue to build up a better picture of the prevalence of violence in London, and work in partnership with the NHS to continue with the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence (ISTV) programme. Under this programme, hospital emergency departments share with the police anonymous data pertaining to where, when and what violent crimes have been committed to better inform partnership responses and intervention approaches and assist in building a better picture of the level, nature and locations of violent incidents in the city. This allows us to work with partners to better problem solve and design out crime in our key knife crime hotspots and most vulnerable geographical locations and improve our general understanding of the use of weapons in violent crime, assisting in supporting the prevention of violent crime but also supporting partners in providing the most appropriate enforcement and intervention response to serious violence including knife and gun enabled violence.

This in turn will help identify the most suitable locations for knife bins, funded by MOPAC and the MPS, which allow individuals who want to give up knives a safe way of doing so. The availability of a knife bins in areas where knife crime is prevalent, and where there may be a reluctance to report to the police, allows for the safe disposal of weapons. We will support the increased availability of knife bins in these locations.

We will work with the London Community Rehabilitation Companies and the Ministry of Justice to improve and develop the use of Community Payback supporting more appropriate placements for habitual knife carriers; introducing a restorative element to the placement. We will consult with communities who are most affected by knife crime to see what redress they might wish to see for knife related offences and work with the London CRC to direct community payback activities accordingly; ensuring that Londoners feel that they have a say in the sanction and rehabilitation of offenders who commit knife related offences and receive a community order.

## Communities against Knife Crime - Dwaynamics

Dwayne Simpson took up the challenge to address the lack of facilities for young people in Angell Town Estate, enabling them to engage positively through his boxing and fitness project.

Dwayne was tragically stabbed to death in 2014 and Dwaynamics Boxing MBE is now run by Dwayne's Mother, Minister Lorraine Jones and Richard Davis. The project offers boxing and fitness workshops alongside bespoke training for employment, social development and entrepreneurship skills.



### **Community Impact Statements**

We will push for a commitment by all relevant Criminal Justice Service partners for the greater use of Community Impact Statements when considering responses to knife related incidents.

A Community Impact Statement is intended to provide relevant and useful additional information about the impact crime and ASB or a particular incident is having on a particular community for all law enforcement partners. The intention is to enable better informed decisions that are made with the knowledge of the local context and can be used throughout the justice process. Such decisions may include charging decisions, sentencing, restorative justice and reparation interventions. The use of the Community Impact Statement should not be confined to court proceedings and may be used at various other stages in the justice process including out of court disposals such as cautions and restorative justice (RJ) interventions.



**We are standing with communities, neighbourhoods & families against knife crime by:**

- Providing seed funding to community groups and anti-knife crime initiatives in priority areas in London, supporting a grass-roots response to knife crime;
- Provide a toolkit alongside the knife crime media campaign which supports schools, community organisations, faith groups and others to participate in anti-knife crime activity locally and take ownership of local solutions. We will support them to deliver this by offering workshops and training sessions;
- Supporting the increased availability of knife bins in locations with high levels of knife crime;
- Making adult offenders make amends to the communities they have harmed, working with communities and the London CRC to link tougher Community Payback sanctions for those convicted of knife possession with projects based in communities most affected by knife crime;
- Pushing for a commitment by all relevant Criminal Justice Service partners for the greater use of Community Impact Statements when considering responses to knife related incidents;
- Work in partnership with the NHS and Local Authorities to continue with the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence (ISTV) programme;
- Continuing to fund local services in London Boroughs through the LCPF to support interventions to reduce serious youth offending and knife crime;
- Delivering positive messages through the 5,000 Police cadets who live within and are part of our diverse range of communities across London;
- Developing a plan for working with our partners and communities following serious knife related incidents, assessing the impact on the families and communities to strengthen community engagement facilitating a two way dialogue for information sharing between the communities and authorities, providing assurances and positive messages across the community and appropriate signposting to local support services;
- Support anonymised reporting mechanisms between the communities and the police, such as Crimestoppers.





## SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF KNIFE CRIME

Whilst our first and most important objective is to prevent people from becoming victims of knife crime in the first place, provision of effective support to those who do fall victim is essential. In the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021, we give our commitment to put the needs of victims at the heart of everything we do; stand up for the rights and needs of victims; and to work to provide the help and support victims need at every stage in the criminal justice process.

Accordingly, this Strategy commits to providing better support to victims of knife crime and to better acknowledge the impact that knife crime has on the victim, the victim's family and the wider community, in terms of emotional trauma, but also in terms of the direct impact the incident has on the levels of trust of families and communities in the emergency services' ability to effectively keep their families and communities safe.

"Every victim of knife crime in London is one too many. Knife crime has a devastating impact on young people all over London, as well as their friends, loved ones and their communities. Amongst other things, we are increasing support to £1m a year for young victims and – crucially - their families, to ensure that victims can access the right support and tools to help them recover from knife crime.'

**Claire Waxman, Victims  
Commissioner for London**



We will improve the services available to victims of knife crime and their families through our victims' services commissioning work and extend the support for young victims of serious violence such as knife crime with injury—increasing investment from £360k per annum to £1m per annum, in order to broaden support to families in terms of guidance and recovery, acknowledging the emotional trauma which affects both the victims and families of knife crime.

Working with partners, we will produce a toolkit with information and advice on what to do in the aftermath of a knife crime, aimed to help front line workers such as teachers and doctors, faith groups and community groups to recognise the signs of trauma in family members and friends affected by a knife crime and to take the appropriate steps to support them.



Support for victims of knife crime is currently delivered through Victim Support. Each of its 10 Children's Young Peoples caseworkers deal with an average of 200 cases each covering a range of offences, and currently there is no capacity to deliver any further support. In response to this, MOPAC's Integrated Victims and Witness

Service Resource Plan 2017 – 2020 Plan allocates £2m to develop a new Children's and Young Persons Victims Service from 2018-2020. The Service will consider how victims of knife crime can be better supported and how our response to other serious crimes affecting children and young people can be strengthened.

Every person who has been affected by knife crime has the right to access restorative justice, and through the Restore:London restorative justice service funded by the Mayor, the option is available in those cases where the offender is an adult (18+). The onus would be on Youth Offending Teams to deliver restorative justice where the offender is a young person, and we will work with the Youth Justice Board and others to explore the extension of this where appropriate.

We also recognise that some young victims of crime may find it hard to engage with the police or other formal parts of the Criminal Justice Service, but it is vital that they do. To support this, we will extend our support of youth provision currently provided for our four Major Trauma Centres (MTCs); into A&E departments which are disproportionately

impacted by knife related injuries, providing specialist youth services for victims of serious youth violence and sexual exploitation (aged 11 to 25). The service allows youth workers to engage with victims of knife and gang crime who present at the A&E with assault-related injuries, gunshot wounds, stabbings, and those who report having been sexually exploited. This intervention which is conducted in the hospital immediately after an incident, has shown to be a unique 'teachable moment'. These services, directed towards young people at this time, will ensure that the other issues faced by young people involved in knife crime, such as mental health support needs or sexual exploitation, are addressed holistically. Over 800 young people across London who have suffered serious violence have been supported by the service to date. 8% of these were under the age of 18 and not known to any agencies prior to their admission. Approximately 80% of the young people worked with are male and around two-thirds had been stabbed with a knife. MOPAC has funded this at a value of £1.2m from 2015-2018 and has committed a further £622,668 in 2018/19 and £800,721 in 2019/20 to further develop this programme.





### **We are supporting victims of knife crime by:**

- Improving the services available to victims of knife crime through our victims' services commissioning work and extending the support for young victims of knife crime with injury – broadening support to families.
- Increasing investment from £360,000 per annum to £1m next year, providing an up-lift in services for victims of serious crime, and allocating a further £2m to develop a new Children's and Young Persons Victims Service from 2018-2020.
- Working with partners to produce a toolkit with information and advice on what to do in the aftermath of a knife crime, aimed to help front line workers such as teachers and doctors, faith groups and community groups to recognise the signs of trauma in family members and friends affected by a knife crime and to take appropriate steps to support them.
- Ensuring that victims are aware of their rights to access a restorative justice provision;
- Continuing to fund the youth support to victims of knife and gang crime in London Major Trauma Centres, ensuring that victims of knife crime are supported at a most critical time;
- Extending this programme to key A&E departments in Boroughs that have high levels of knife crime to maximise the power and value of this 'teachable moment'.

#### **Q** **WHAT'S A 'TEACHABLE MOMENT'?**

A teachable moment is an event or experience which presents an opportunity to learn something new or re-evaluate an existing belief. In the case of knife crime, a person's admission to hospital with knife injuries is one such teachable moment – at which the right intervention and support can help someone turn away from their involvement or association with crime.





# Measuring progress on knife crime



One of the most important roles of MOPAC is to oversee the Metropolitan Police on behalf of Londoners and hold it to account. This means ensuring the MPS is effective in its work and that it is efficient in the use of its budget. The Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 sets out our full performance framework for the MPS and for the delivery of our objectives.

We provide in-depth scrutiny of the MPS' performance in keeping London safe and delivering on the commitments in the Police and Crime Plan.

MOPAC holds the MPS to account by holding regular meetings with the MPS Commissioner and keeping a tight grip on the MPS budget, making decisions on strategic and high-level spending and ensuring the MPS and Londoners receive value for money.

With a specific focus upon knife crime, success will be measured at two levels. The first will seek improvements in a variety of crime measures that will make London safer (i.e., reduction in knife crime, knife crime with injury) with a focus on repeat victimization and repeat offending.

To support this MOPAC will launch a new knife crime data dashboard to enable public transparency and monitoring of such data. The second will focus upon monitoring aspects such as Stop and Search, Sentencing and seeking to reduce levels of concern around knife crime in both adult and youth Londoners. A new youth survey will be established to inform this.

# Measuring progress on knife crime

## MAKING LONDON SAFER

### PRIMARY MEASURES

Active monitoring and reporting

Active monitoring and reporting – looking for improvements within:

Total knife crime	Possession of a weapon
Knife crime offences (with injury)	Reducing the likelihood of being a victim
Number homicides (knife)	<i>Running throughout these: a reduction in repeat victimisation and repeat offending</i>
Number homicides u. 25 (knife)	
Knife crime with injury (non-DA <25)	

### SECONDARY MEASURES

Active monitoring and reporting

Active monitoring and reporting:

Monitor weapon related Stop and Search (i.e rate of Arrest / No Further Action)	Reduce levels of concern around knife crime (within adult and youth), measured via the MOPAC Public Attitude Survey and a new Youth Survey
Monitor sentencing, use of cautions, use of custody	Analysis from media campaign

### SUPPORTED BY

Activities / outcomes:  
What is happening on the ground

Need key data documenting the activities underpinning the initiatives (i.e. activities, staffing, arrests etc.)	New research and analysis (i.e. County Lines, potential new evaluation on initiatives / aspects of the strategy)
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Monitoring of partnership action plans

## **Local crime and antisocial behaviour priorities**

We have developed a new performance framework that enables the Mayor to fulfil his role (making sure that people's priorities are being dealt with effectively by the MPS and partner agencies) while also giving local police the flexibility they need to do theirs – responding to and resolving what really matters to the people in their community. Equally, we want to ensure that the most harmful crimes, such as knife crime, sexual violence and child sexual exploitation, are treated as priorities across the city.

Instead of focusing on local crime targets imposed from City Hall, which may bear little resemblance to the things that really matter in communities themselves, we have consulted with every Borough and developed a new system of agreeing local priorities, in partnership with local police leaders and the elected local Council. This means that across London, local police teams are focusing on local priorities, agreed using data and evidence.

Under this system, each Borough has selected two local priority crimes, based on local knowledge, crime data and police intelligence, along with antisocial behaviour, which has been identified as an important issue in every Borough.

The priorities for all Boroughs also include mandatory high-harm crimes: knife and gun crime, sexual violence, domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation and hate crime. We actively monitor the volume of offences and look for a reduction in repeat victimisation.

MOPAC supports each Borough in making its decisions by providing detailed data and analysis of local crime trends. To ensure that these priorities remain current and relevant, they will be refreshed annually, with flexibility to change during the year if necessary.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor hold the Commissioner to account for the MPS' performance in tackling these local priorities. For progress and monitoring underpinning this performance framework see <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac>

## **How the MPS manages its performance**

The MPS has a framework for analysing, understanding and improving its performance which will be driven by these measures and priorities and play a key part in the delivery of this Police & Crime Plan. Structures are in place to hold leaders to account, share effective practice and encourage problem solving.

They already include a substantial focus on the key priorities in this Plan, including child safeguarding and knife crime. The MPS and MOPAC teams undertake innovative analysis, complemented by productive relationships with many universities. Meanwhile a wide range of data is made available for public scrutiny through the MPS and MOPAC websites and the London Datastore. To see all of our priorities for achieving a safer city for all Londoners, please see the Police and Crime Plan.

Key performance measures from the Police and Crime Plan that relate to the Knife Crime Strategy are:

### **A better police service for London**

Using data from the MPS and MOPAC research, we will actively monitor and look for positive progress in:

- Victim satisfaction with police service, using data from MOPAC's User Satisfaction Survey
- Public perceptions towards the MPS – using data from MOPAC's Public Attitude Survey
- Reducing inequalities in satisfaction and public perceptions.

### **A better Criminal Justice Service for London**

Using data from the Ministry of Justice and MOPAC research, we will actively monitor and look for positive progress in:

- Reducing offending behaviours of targeted cohorts – measuring offending, frequency and the severity of offences
- Improving service for victims – such as compliance with the Victims Code of Practice
- Improving victim satisfaction with the service they receive through the courts – measured through a new survey.

### **Keeping children and young people safe**

Using crime statistics and data from the Ministry of Justice, we will actively monitor and look for positive progress in:

- Reducing young people's chances of becoming victims of crime
- Reducing the number of first-time entrants to the Criminal Justice Service
- Reducing the number of knife crimes, by volume and numbers of repeat victimisation.



## **Other formats and languages**

For a large print, Braille, disc, sign language video or audio-tape version of this document, or if you would like a summary of this document in your language please contact us at this address:

### **Public Liaison Unit**

Greater London Authority  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
More London  
London SE1 2AA

Telephone 020 7983 4100  
Minicom 020 7983 4458  
[www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)

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