

Report of: Executive Member for Community Safety

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Policy and Performance Committee	October 2015	C8	All
Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt	

SUBJECT: Annual Crime and Disorder Report

1. Overview

- 1.1. The last year has been a difficult one for Islington: an 11% increase in the overall number of notifiable offences reported to the police; a 16% rise in youth violence; snatch thefts increased by 26%; and two shocking incidents in which young men have been murdered. After nearly 5 years in which overall crime had steadily declined each year, the latest adverse turnaround has been very challenging indeed.
- 1.2. The table below shows the current crime performance picture and indicates the extent of criminality faced by the borough with increasing levels of offending across a range of crime types.

Crime Type	Oct 13 to Sep 14	Oct 14 to Sep 15	Difference	% change	Direction of Travel	MPS Change	Islington Worse?
Total Notifiable Offences	24964	27683	2719	10.9%	↑	4.0%	Yes
MOPAC 7 Offences	12488	13665	1177	9.4%	↑	-0.9%	Yes
Violence With Injury Offences	2063	2250	187	9.1%	↑	9.8%	No
Burglary (total) Offences	2428	2330	-98	-4.0%	↓	-9.7%	No
Robbery Offences	871	1030	159	18.3%	↑	-8.0%	Yes
Theft From MV Offences	1486	1338	-148	-10.0%	↓	-11.4%	Yes
Theft From Person Offences	3097	3846	749	24.2%	↑	2.1%	Yes
Theft/Taking Of MV Offences	730	826	96	13.2%	↑	2.6%	Yes
Criminal Damage Offences	1813	2045	232	12.8%	↑	9.3%	Yes
Theft Snatch	1899	2785	886	46.7%	↑	N/A	
Serious Youth Violence	181	208	27	14.9%	↑	7.6%	Yes
Youth Violence	413	480	67	16.2%	↑	10.8%	Yes
Knife Crime	279	352	73	26.2%	↑	5.3%	Yes
Gun Crime	43	34	-9	-20.9%	↓	11.7%	No
Sex Offences	386	471	85	22.0%	↑	19.4%	Yes
Arson Offences	71	93	22	31.0%	↑	20.2%	Yes
Hate Crime	Oct 13 to Sep 14	Oct 14 to Sep 15	Difference	% change	Direction of Travel	MPS Change	Islington Worse?
Domestic Offences	1839	2083	244	13.3%	↑	15.0%	No
Homophobic Offences	89	83	-6	-6.7%	↓	27.2%	No
Racist and Religious Offences	490	561	71	14.5%	↑	21.8%	No
Disability Hate Offences	7	15	8	114.3%	↑	85.7%	Yes
Faith Hate Crime Offences	30	61	31	103.3%	↑	45.2%	Yes

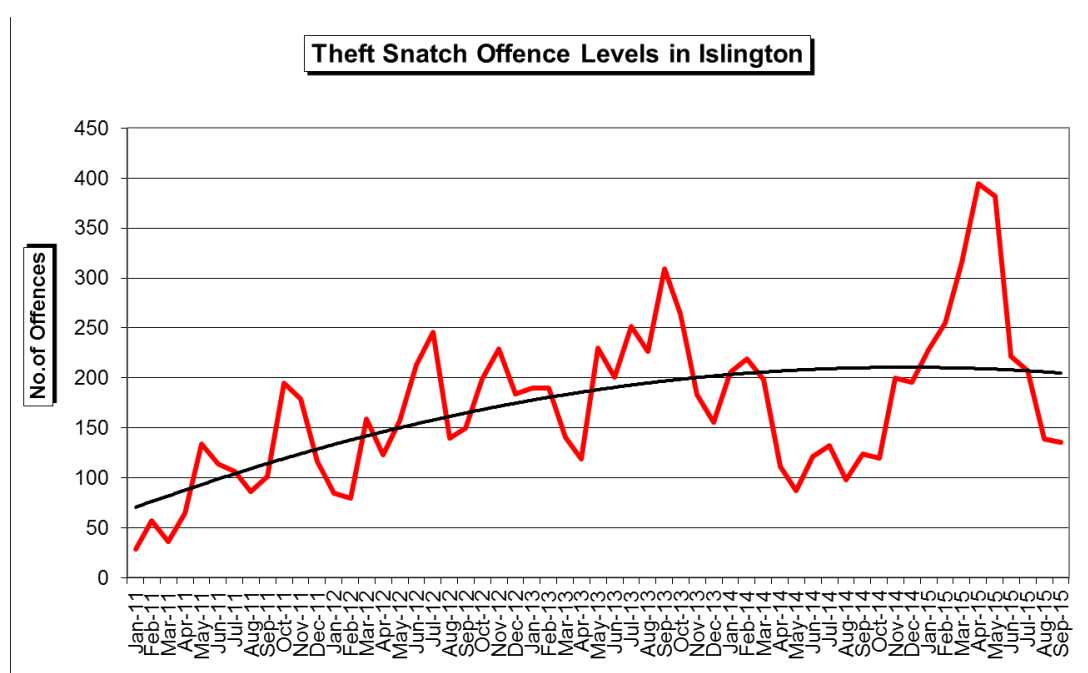
- 1.3. The worsening crime situation, particularly youth-related offences, has required a strong response from all agencies in Islington's crime reduction partnership. During the past year, the partnership has adopted and begun to implement a significantly different approach to the crime problem. This culminated in the adoption of a new strategy in July this year. Central to the strategy is the determination to concentrate on *offenders* rather than *types of offence*, not least because a significant group of prolific offenders commit a wide range of crimes.
- 1.4. Over the year, the most significant type of offence has been snatch/theft, which reached record high levels in April and May with nearly 400 offences per month. These were associated with a range of other offences and a very marked rise in knife crime incidents. This meant that our efforts to curb offending in the borough needed additional resource and better deployment.
- 1.5. During the past 6 months, the immediate response to rising crime has seen the deployment of substantial extra police resources in various operational groupings (patrolling, response, detection and specialist crime) with a determined effort on the part of the Council to step up a co-ordinated effort to reduce young people being drawn into criminality.

2. Youth Offending and Gangs

- 2.1 Children and young adults (under 25) continue to feature highly in the offending statistics, particularly in relation to knife crime and serious youth violence. In particular, those aged 15 to 20 continue to dominate the list of "most arrested" individuals. However, the under 15 year old arrest rate has declined considerably compared to last year. Initial analysis suggests that the cohort contributing to the rise seen last year has aged by a year and is now in the 15+ category and has not been backfilled by newer younger people. This may indicate that some early interventions are beginning to work, resulting in fewer younger people entering the criminal justice system.
- 2.2 Excluding the YOS cohort, there are currently 291 individuals identified as persistent and prolific offenders responsible for a number of offences ranging from acquisitive crime to serious violence. These individuals are managed across different multi-agency arrangements including the Gangs or Bronze process, the Domestic Violence Persistent Perpetrator Panel or the FOCUS (Adult acquisitive crime panel).
- 2.3 Islington has continued to have a very high youth re-offending rate and this significantly increased over the first quarter of 2015. Individuals who have continued to re-offend have had greater chance of being caught as a result of the increased police presence in the borough, particularly over the summer months. This in turn has led to an increase in custody rates for young people. The sentences being given to young people remain fairly short however and while this may be considered a positive thing from some perspectives it requires effective intervention whilst they are in prison custody with better changes of influencing behaviour change pre-release.
- 2.4 While the number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system continues to fall, the borough's "triage" process proved to be less effective than previously.

Currently 21% of young people who have been triaged later enter the criminal justice system compared with only 14% last year.

- 2.5 By concentrating on *offenders* rather than the *offences* they commit, it has become much clearer that there is a significant crossover between ASB and serious criminality at all levels and that many of the same individuals are involved. The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) arrangements have been streamlined to bring multi-agency focus on those individuals causing the most concern.
- 2.6 The chart below illustrates the impact of this different approach. It shows that snatch theft offences declined over a 12 month period from late summer 2013, then rose again before dropping very sharply after a peak recorded in April-May 2015. The first period of decline was mainly due to a specific operation against smartphone thefts. But the second most recent decline reflects activity targeting a group of around 290 people with a core of 60 highly prolific offenders most of whom were arrested on charges not directly related to smartphone theft.



- 2.7 In most cases, the prolific offenders were arrested on charges relating to breaches of previous conditions or for a variety of motor vehicle offences, particularly those involving mopeds or scooters. Of the 290 or so arrests made, only 19 were specifically for snatch offences. Yet the rate of such thefts has dropped faster and further than at any time over the past 5 years because the perpetrators of these offences are in custody or subject to other forms of legal restraint.
- 2.8 During the course of the year, partners contributed to a new strategy, adopted by the Council's Executive in July, aimed at significantly reducing youth crime, particularly violent offences.
- 2.9 **Firstly**, we have been absolutely clear about the nature of the problem. It is a relatively small number of young people who are directly and actively involved – no more than about 200 young people. These have been recruited by older adults into loosely organised gangs that have shifting memberships and affiliations. These gangs commit a range of acquisitive crimes to generate cash in order to participate in the drugs economy in the Borough. The typical age of these recruits is becoming

younger, their behaviour increasingly chaotic and their actions unpredictable. Those young people are using violence – especially knives – to settle their disputes or enforce deals. The victims of violence are mainly those young people who already have associations with gang members or who are perceived to be associated with them. We have identified the geographies where the principal tensions and rivalries lie. The main friction is evident between 3 sets of competing gangs:

- a group who have congregated around part of Mildmay ward (with a cross border affiliation into Hackney) versus groups of young people in the neighbourhoods bordering Essex Road
- young people associated with the Cally Road corridor in competition and dispute with a gang known as Easy Cash that operates in Clerkenwell and Bunhill with some elements involved around Shoreditch and south Camden.
- a group loosely associated with Finsbury Park versus a group connected to Archway

2.10 Although just three of these groups are categorised as “active gangs” (‘Cally’, ‘EC’ and ‘Red Pitch’), the partnership is clear these groups represent a very significant risk not least because of the chaotic pattern of behaviour.

2.11 So, having established a clear and comprehensively understood analysis of the problem the next element of the Youth Crime Strategy is to deal with the current group of young people committing these crimes. We have established establish an Integrated Gangs Team (IGT) involving council, police and probation staff. The team will be co-located in the police station and, in spite of a few outstanding security vetting and 3 outstanding vacancies, will be in place by the end of November.

2.12 The IGT will work with a targeted cohort of young people and adults aged up to 24 (identified via the MPS Gangs matrix and local partnership intelligence) to try to reduce their gang related offending activity. The key aims of the service are to:

- Reduce violence committed by and against the identified cohort
- Reduce re-offending rate of the cohort
- Reduce seriousness/gravity of offending within the cohort
- Improve health, wellbeing and employment and training outcomes among the cohort
- Increase the conviction rate among high risk individuals who continue to offend and cause harm to themselves and others.

2.13 The primary goal is to persuade gang members to change their behaviour by using new legal powers, family and children’s services but to enforce against those who refuse to engage. We also are committed to track-down and remove from our community the adults who are recruiting kids into gangs and who form a link with organised crime because these are the people who provide money for stolen goods and who supply the drugs.

2.14 Having got a grip on the current problem, the second goal of the strategy will be to “turn off the tap” and prevent another cohort of young teenagers from being lured into criminal gangs by:

- Reduce violence committed by and against the identified cohort
- Redirecting some of our youth service resource into detached youth work with individual young people who may be at risk

- Strengthening our partnership with schools to make sure they refer children they are concerned about
- Reviewing our services for all children who are on “alternative provision” and not attending mainstream schools.

2.15 We have also recognised that the Council and police cannot solve this problem alone. We have to work with the whole community to help cut crime. Parents, families, neighbours and young people themselves can discourage the low level anti-social behaviour and crime which later leads to more serious criminality.

2.16 There are some Islington young people, mainly girls, who are considered vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), mainly because of their links to gangs and offending groups. Identifying those responsible for the exploitation continues to be a challenge as there is often very little evidence of actual exploitation and the young people judged to be vulnerable are either unaware or unwilling to accept they are vulnerable or are being exploited.

2.17 Equally the use of vulnerable people to run drugs along the “County Lines”, involving the use of mobile phone ‘lines’ by groups to extend their drug dealing business, is becoming more visible in the Islington gang picture.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour

3.1 There has been a 16% increase in ASB calls to the council’s ASB reporting line so far this year. Fifty one percent of these are from occupants of privately-owned dwellings, a substantial shift from 2013. Satisfaction rates for the service are now high and residents have confidence in the service, which may be contributing to the increase in call rates. The Out-of-hours (OOH) response team are managing to attend 75% of all calls that require their attendance – however, this still means that a quarter of people wanting a response or visit are not getting it.

3.2 Demonstrating resolution in relation to ASB calls has proved difficult given the volume of calls and limited resources in the ASB OOH response team. In addition, it is often difficult to follow-up actions that have been transferred to other housing providers. Currently 37% of residents who phone the ASB out of hours line with verified issues, report the same issue again within three months and the team’s target is to reduce that percentage.

3.3 The ASB multi-agency geographical panel process (MAGPI) has been revised, with the new style meetings having been in place since May this year. The revision means that the work is focussed on longer-term geographical problem-solving instead of responding to individual incidents. So far 10 priority areas have been through the new MAGPI process, most related to youth issues linked to the known gangs or groups on the borough, showing the significant crossover between youth crime and ASB.

3.4 The following areas have so far been discussed and a range of actions have been undertaken with varying degrees of success. However, immediate respite has been brought to residents in many of the locations and ongoing work is being done to achieve longer-term resolution.

- Cluse Court – youth issues

- Marquess/ New River Green Estate – youth issues
- Highbury Quadrant – youth issues
- Margery Street – youth issues
- Seven Sisters Road – violence and alcohol issues
- Caledonian Road – youth issues
- Mildmay – youth issues
- Upper Street – street population
- EC area – theft of two-wheeled vehicles
- Borough wide – distraction burglaries

3.5 The main area of current concern in relation to anti-social behaviour hotspots on the borough is around Cluse Court. It is believed this has been caused by displacement from other areas of youth ASB in the EC area. Use of additional powers, such as Public Spaces Protection Order, is being considered subject to evidence and research as to whether this will be effective.

3.6 Two-thirds of people who repeatedly call the ASB hotline have been through the Community Risk MARAC process which provides support to vulnerable victims, resulting in their call rate reducing. The remaining third require assessment and referral where appropriate over the coming months. Currently 37% of residents who phone the ASB out of hours line with verified issues, report the same issue again within three months and the team target is to reduce that percentage. Initial work on why issues recur shows the need to dedicate more resources to casework, and requiring partners, especially Registered Providers (RPs), to take action using the evidence gathered.

3.7 A key focus has been bridging gaps in mental health provision for low level ASB cases where individuals do not meet the threshold for intervention or refuse to engage with support services. A Clinical Psychologist from Mental Health Personality Disorder Services has been appointed to provide guidance and support to housing and police practitioners for dealing with vulnerable victims and perpetrators with mental health support needs. This includes assertive outreach to encourage people to engage including signposting people to the most appropriate support services.

4. Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)

3.1 Performance around Domestic Abuse (DA) is declining. The number of Domestic Violence (DV) incidents reported to police has decreased, but at the same time the number of actual offences has risen. The number of people arrested for these offences has fallen, leading to a decrease in positive detections as a result.

Crime Type	Oct 13 to Sep 14	Oct 14 to Sep 15	Difference	% change	Direction of Travel
DA Incidents	1978	2164	186	9%	↑
DA Offences	1839	2083	244	13%	↑
DA Arrests	813	742	-71	-9%	↓
DA Not Arrested	227	342	115	51%	↑
DA Cautions	328	277	-51	-16%	↓
DA Charges	484	450	-34	-7%	↓
DA Sanction Detections	814	730	-84	-10%	↑

Figures for Arrested / Not Arrested only compare Apr 15 to Sep 15 with the same period the previous year. Prior to this they were not counted

- 4.2 VAWG is a key issue for the three main victim groups of note for Islington: Under 18s, 25-30s and Over 65s. Recent reviews of the current domestic violence multi-agency risk assessment conferencing (DV MARAC) show that while it is performing very well for those cases heard, referrals in relation to the under 18s and over 65s are very low. Equally the DV persistent perpetrator panel (DVPPP) has proven to be effective in its approach in managing offenders but further work is required in relation to referral routes, which currently come directly from the MARAC and have the potential to miss a range of other high risk offenders residing in the borough.
- 4.3 Recent analysis of crime against young females highlighted that nearly a ***quarter (24%)*** of overall crime against females under 25 years old was connected to domestic abuse. This is a very significant finding and current work is underway to understand how many are primary or secondary victims.

5. Elderly Victims

- 5.1 Distraction burglaries, fraud and DV are the most significant issues of concern in relation to crimes committed against people over 65 years old. Funding was secured from MOPAC to employ a victim “champion” for this age group who will support the multi-agency work to join up the approach to tackling distraction burglary and fraud.
- 5.2 Clear and simple messaging is being designed and needs to be agreed that will cover the majority of the methods used by distraction burglars and fraudsters against the elderly. Work over the rest of the year will focus on potential and actual victims. Potential victims need to be identified better through voluntary sector contacts, Health services and council information systems (such as the disabled badge database). When actual victims come forward, identification of vulnerable adults needs to be better to ensure timely referrals are made, through the MASH, to Adult Services and beyond.

6. Partnership priorities

- 6.1 The priorities for the borough will continue to be based on better understanding of Victims, Offenders and Location – with the main issues requiring partnership focus shown under each as in the table below.

Location	
Caledonian Area	Gang and youth crime
EC Area	Gang and youth crime
Angel / Essex Road	Night time economy and youth crime
Mildmay	Gang and youth crime
Offender	
Early Intervention	Identifying and diverting young people coming to notice
15-24yrs	Re-offending and learned behaviour
34-44yrs	Community re-integration and enhanced enforcement
Victim	
Satisfaction	Improving user satisfaction with the criminal justice system
25-30yrs	Over victimisation of black people and Asian men
Under 18s	Moped criminality, dealing with DV and CSE issues
Over 65s	Distraction burglary, fraud, DV and disabled badge theft