



Serious Violence Duty Strategic Needs Assessment

Technical Document

January 2024

Executive Summary

The Government has introduced a new Serious Violence Duty which ensures that public bodies work together to reduce and prevent serious violence.

The Duty requires organisations to work together to share information, analyse the situation locally and produce solutions, including the publication of an annual Strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence on a local basis. This Strategic Needs Assessment will:



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



Examine potential causes and drivers of violence



Highlight the types of individuals most at risk of violence



Identify hotspot locations



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

Executive Summary

Nearly a third of all crime that occurs in Lewisham is classified as serious violence. In comparison with the 32 London Boroughs, Lewisham is ranked 9th highest for serious violence compared with 12th highest for overall crime. Notably, domestic abuse related crime accounts for half the serious violence offences and is ranked 2nd highest.

Understanding, reducing, and preventing these heightened violence levels, particularly domestic abuse, is a key objective for the Safer Lewisham Partnership Board. Although some crime levels may be anticipated in an inner-city London Borough, our commitment is to exceed these expectations and tackle all forms of violence.

Detailed police data are only available from 2021 so long-term trend analysis (including comparison with pre-covid crime levels) is not possible, however we know Lewisham has experienced a 9% increase in all reported serious violence between the 12 months up to and including October 2023 and the previous 12-month period. This is higher than the 3.9% increase observed across London as a whole.

Increases were observed across all crime types included in our definition of Serious Violence, except for Possession of Weapons. However, they were particularly high for specific crime types, including Drug Trafficking (21.2%, although lower than the 45% increase across London), Personal Robbery (16.4%, similar to the 17.4% increase across London), and Threats to Kill (27.2%, compared with a 16.1% increase across London).



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

Executive Summary

The underlying causes of violence are complex and multi-faceted but are well documented. Influencing factors presented in this document include deprivation, education, mental health, socio-economic factors and substance misuse, although it is recognised that this is not an exhaustive list.

Lewisham faces significant challenges, ranking 35th highest in England and 6th highest in London for deprivation. Socio-economic factors such as poverty and unemployment are prevalent, with high rates of free school meal eligibility and a higher proportion of economically active but unemployed residents compared to the national average. The borough also grapples with educational issues, witnessing higher rates of student exclusions and individuals not in education, employment, or training.

Mental health disparities are evident in specific areas, including Rushey Green, Bellingham, and Sydenham. The surge in substance misuse treatment numbers indicates the high prevalence of opiate and alcohol users in the community. Additionally, factors associated with an increased cost of living, such as economic conditions and inequality, contribute to the complexity of community challenges. Recognising the interconnected nature of these issues, a collaborative and holistic approach is deemed essential to effectively address and mitigate the root causes of violence in Lewisham.



Examine potential
causes and drivers
of violence

Executive Summary

Perpetrators of violence, whether domestic or non-domestic, are predominantly male. Victims of sexual offences and domestic abuse, especially those facing significant harm, are predominantly female. On the other hand, male individuals are more frequently victims of other forms of violence.

While people 25 years and above are disproportionately affected by domestic violence compared to younger people, those under 25 years are more likely to be involved in other types of serious violence, particularly robbery and weapon-related crime.

This latter issue is of particular concern and emerged as an issue from the consultation as well as observed in the data examined. There are positive steps by the Youth Justice Services to address first time entry and reoffending, but there are concerns around the sustainability of these services.

Ethnicity patterns in domestic abuse victimisation vary across sources. Black, Asian and multi-ethnic groups are under-represented in police data but over-represented in Athena data, Lewisham's specialist domestic abuse service. Conversely, white ethnic groups show the opposite trend.

In relation to other serious violence, Black, Asian and multi-ethnic groups are over-represented in the police suspect data. Our understanding of specific groups is limited due to the categories provided by the police; however, Probation, Youth Justice and other data support this pattern.



Highlight the
types of
individuals most
at risk of violence

Executive Summary

There are different location profiles between domestic abuse and non-domestic serious violence.

For non-domestic serious violence, crime hotspots tend to concentrate in town centres and transit hubs. Lewisham Central ward has the highest crime rate followed by Rushey Green and Deptford wards. Smaller areas with high concentrations include Catford town centre, the area around Lewisham Hospital and Lewisham town centre; Deptford High Street and New Cross Road also have high levels.

The distribution of domestic-abuse related violence is more widespread across the borough, in both town centres and residential areas. Bellingham ward has the highest rate of domestic abuse, notably the 7th highest rate of any ward in London. Rushey Green, Deptford and Downham wards also have high levels.



Identify hotspot
locations

Executive Summary

There were several gaps identified which have limited our knowledge and understanding of serious violence in Lewisham. Gaps identified which would improve future iterations of this needs assessment include:

- Gaining a better understanding of an individual's pathway to violence and their interactions with services, through improved dataset linkage where possible or specific case studies. This will help lead to a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the drivers of violence as well as any interventions.
- Enhancing analysis to identify groups disproportionately affected by violence and tracking these changes overtime. This involves better collection of demographic data and collaborating with partners to improve the information supplied for analysis.
- Although the survey and community consultation were invaluable, broadening the outreach can only serve to enhance awareness of violence and its perception in the borough. This expanded reach can also yield distinctive ideas for both prevention and intervention strategies.
- Application of more sophisticated analysis techniques and 'deep-dives' to help gain a more detailed understanding of specific issues and drivers of violence within Lewisham. This approach is particularly valuable for addressing key concerns like Domestic Abuse, which stands out as a prominent issue in Lewisham.



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

Introduction

The Serious Violence Duty

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

Responsible Authorities



Consulted Authorities



The Requirements

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

Purpose of the Strategic Needs Assessment



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



Examine potential causes and drivers of violence



Highlight the types of individuals most at risk of violence



Identify hotspot locations



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

Governance



**To include relevant associated meetings for example, Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Partnership, Strategic Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) group,*

To include relevant sub-groups

Lewisham

Population



300,600
residents

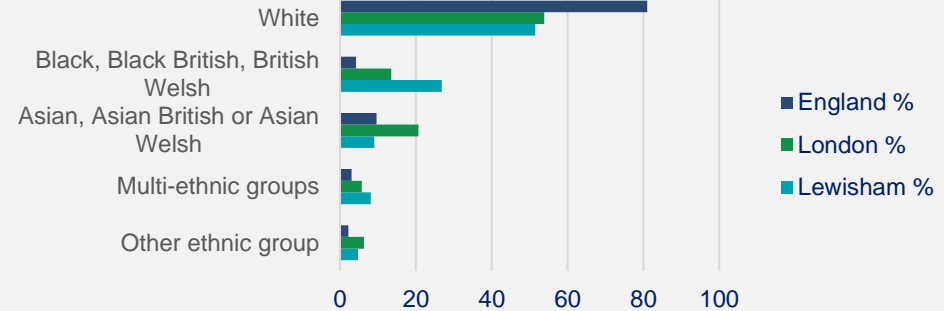
The population
of Lewisham
increased by
9% since
2011

52.5%
Female

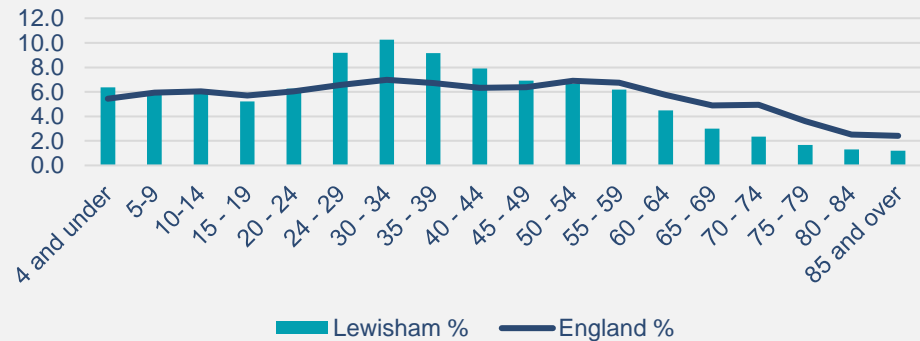
47.5%
Male



Ethnicity



Population Age



More detail can be viewed at the [Lewisham Observatory](#) including [Ward Profiles](#)

Voices of Lewisham

Who we spoke to

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



Collective conversations about reducing violence in Lewisham – 2021 findings

What does violence in Lewisham mean to you?

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

Why do you think we have violence in Lewisham?

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

What could we do as a community to reduce violence?

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

Collective conversations about reducing violence in Lewisham – 2023 findings

What does violence in Lewisham mean to you?

- It is varied and widespread. It takes many forms, and cannot be put into one particular box
- Hate crime - antisemitism and racism
- Robbery and mugging, which may sound insignificant but have great impact
- Violence against people experiencing homelessness, which is often unreported
- Gang violence – you can be at risk just by being friends with someone

Why do you think we have violence in Lewisham?

- Adverse childhood experiences and adverse community experiences
- Language barriers/communication issues impact on access to support
- Unmet needs, including neurodiversity
- Lack of community culture
- Lack of spaces for people to come together
- Lack of respect for authority

What could we do as a community to reduce violence?

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

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

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

Mugging / personal robbery

- 6.2% experienced
- 36.3% witnessed

Physical assault

- 5.7% experienced
- 39.6% witnessed

Violence related to drugs

- 3.6% experienced
- 34.5% witnessed

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

Whilst for all types of serious violence listed, most respondents had not had direct experience, it was clear that a large proportion had some level of exposure.

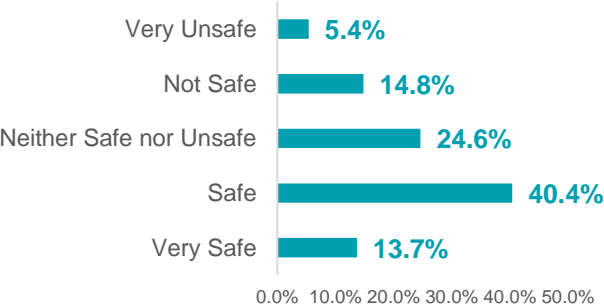
Homicide <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2% experienced• 20.2% witnessed	Use of knife or gun <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.6% experienced• 31.4% witnessed	Threats to kill <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4.9% experienced• 19.9% witnessed
Domestic abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.6% experienced• 23.6% witnessed	Sexual assault/rape <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1.8% experienced• 14.8% witnessed	Arson/property damage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6.2% experienced• 23.3% witnessed

Violence can cause physical injury, including long term health conditions, as well as psychological harm. It has a negative impact on those who experience or witness it.

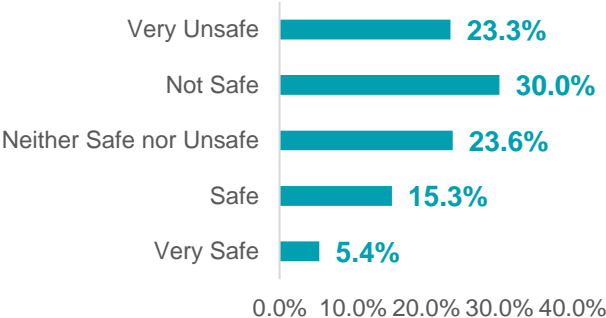
Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

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

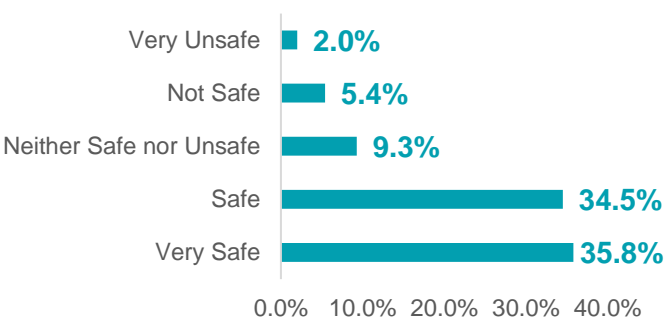
How safe do you feel in the daytime?



How safe do you feel after dark ?



How safe do you feel inside your home?

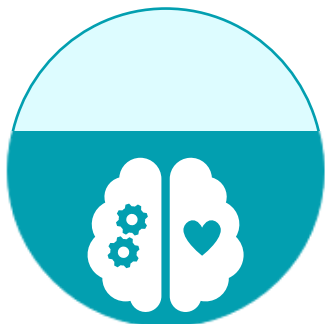


Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham



78.5%

Use of drugs /
alcohol



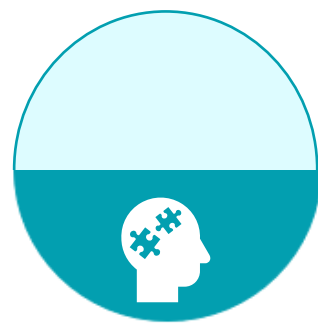
65%

Mental health
issues



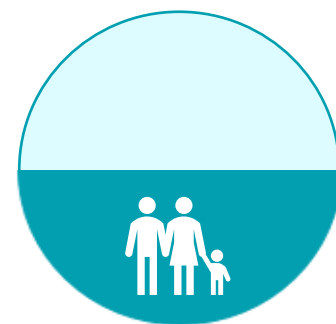
63.5%

Poverty



59%

Poor behaviour
control



59%

Lack of parental
supervision

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

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

We asked respondents to write in a freetext box what they think the cause of serious violence in Lewisham is. One of the key themes which came out was the **lack of policing and enforcement**.

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

”

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

”

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

”

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

We asked respondents to write in a freetext box what they think the cause of serious violence in Lewisham is. Another key theme was **cultural / societal factors**.

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

”

Lack of strong father figures, broken families

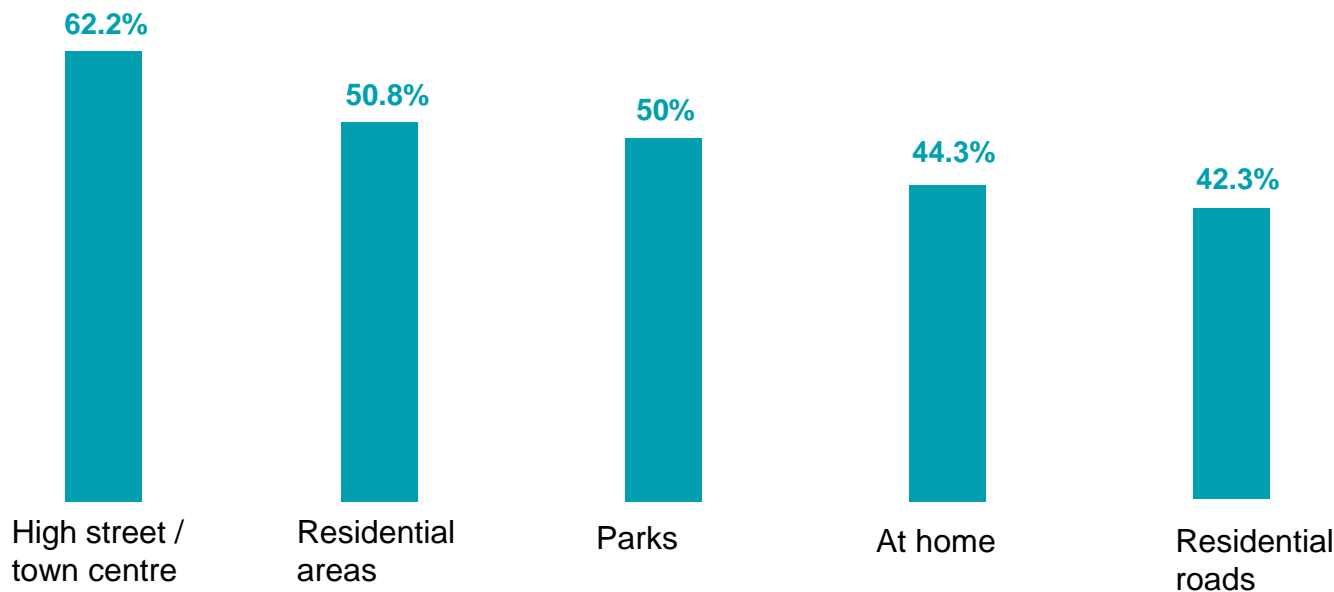
”

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

”

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

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



Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham



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

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

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

Enforcement

Harsher penalty for doing wrong.

More visible and expecting policing.

More police presence in the community

A stricter approach and less tolerance.

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

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

Better correctional facilities and some sort of law and order.

Removal of drug addicts and alcoholics from Catford town centre.

Harsher sentencing for offenders.

More police, and stricter justice.

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

Family/social

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

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

Parental control/example

Can't stress the importance of better community infrastructure

More race relations work

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

Greater services for men - especially fathers

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

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

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

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

Support services

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

Drug / Substance misuse support

You close down all of the youth clubs so no one has anywhere to go but cause criminality and get high and drunk. Put services back in place.

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

More youth clubs and youth workers.

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

More responsive mental health services.

Improved outreach mental health services including for rough sleepers for example START team with SLAM

Earlier mental health intervention and support

Employment and training opportunities

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

Creating more job opportunities, such as Apprenticeships

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

Working much harder to prevent poverty and deprivation.

Survey of people living in, working in and visiting Lewisham

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

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

”

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

”

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

”

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

”

Protective and Risk Factors

The 2018 Government Serious Violence Strategy listed a number of factors influencing risk of violence. A selection are detailed in this section here although it is noted that this is not an exhaustive list.

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

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

Risk & Protective Factors Summary

Risk and protective factors highlight the interconnected nature and influence of vulnerability and violence in Lewisham. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a holistic and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders and community resources. While economic, educational, mental health, substance misuse and cost-of-living factors are discussed here, it is recognised that this is not an exhaustive list.

Deprivation and Poverty

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

Socio-economic Factors

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

Education

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

Mental Health

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

Substance Misuse

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

Cost of Living

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

Serious Violence

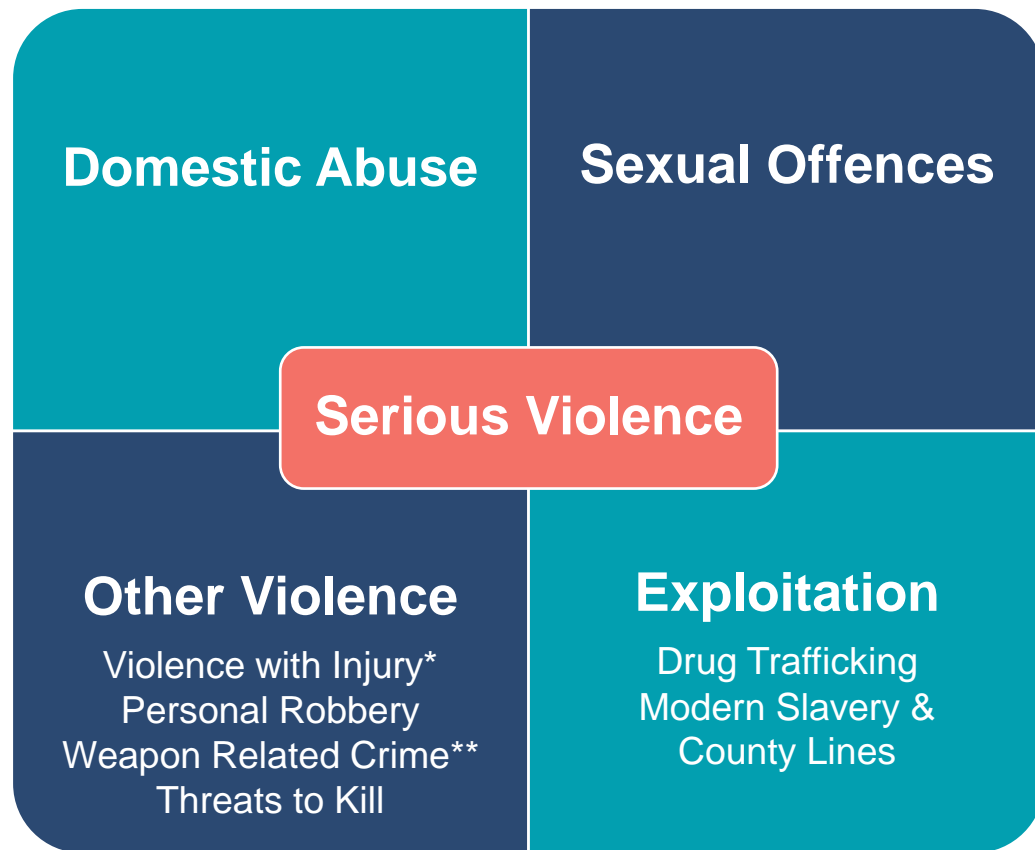
- Definition of Serious Violence
- Overall crime statistics
- Crime statistics for Domestic Abuse (includes data from supporting services)
- Crime statistics for Sexual Offences
- Crime statistics for Other Violent Offences
- Crime statistics for Exploitation

Serious Violence Definition

The crime types or offence flags included in our definition of serious violence fall under the four categories shown to the right. These were chosen in-line with the guidance for London Councils but supplemented to include additional crimes and age ranges considered important to Lewisham. Arson and Criminal Damage in relation to any of the offences listed is also included.

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

Domestic Abuse data is presented separately to other offences due to the different patterns observed.



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

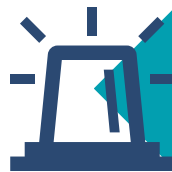
** Includes Possession of Weapons and weapon-related crime

Serious Violence Overview

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

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

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



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



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



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

Serious Violence Overview

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

Crime Category	Number of Crimes (Nov-22 to Oct-23)	% of Total Serious Violence	Increase on previous 12-months	Rank out of London Boroughs (1 is the worst)
All SV	8986	100.0%	9.0%	9
Domestic Abuse	4175	46.5%	3.8%	2
Sexual Offences	904	10.1%	7.9%	8
Violence with Injury*	2053	22.8%	10.6%	10
Personal Robbery	703	7.8%	16.4%	16
Possession of Weapons	252	2.8%	-6%	8
Other weapon-related crime	756	8.4%	16%	12
Exploitation	139	1.5%	13.9%	3
Drug Trafficking	440	4.9%	21.2%	9
Threats to Kill*	279	3.1%	52.5%	6
Arson & Criminal Damage**	301	3.3%	15.8%	1

*Excludes domestic abuse

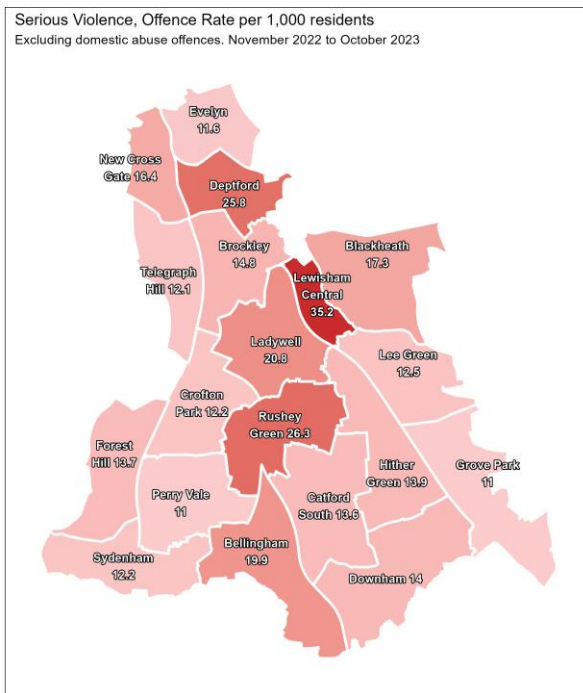
**When it occurs in relation to the above Serious Violence offences

Serious Violence Locations

Viewing serious violence crime rates per ward allows us to make comparisons between wards.

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

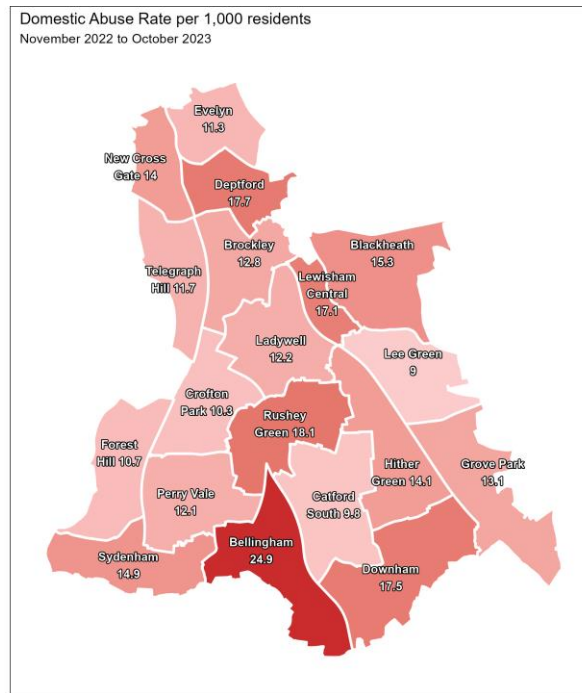
Specific areas with high concentrations, include Catford town centre, the area around Lewisham Hospital and Lewisham town centre; Deptford High Street and New Cross Road also have high levels.



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

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

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



Serious Violence Locations

The table below benchmarks the crime rate per ward per category against all London wards. 1 = rates are within the highest 10% in London; 10 = rates are within the lowest 10% in London. Lewisham wards with transit hubs and town centres are consistently amongst the highest, however, Bellingham, Blackheath and Ladywell also have very high levels across each category examined. Other wards may be more variable, but all show high levels for at least one category.

Ward	Domestic Abuse	Sexual Offences	Violence with Injury*	Personal Robbery	Possession of Weapons	Other weapon-related crime	Exploitation	Drug Trafficking	Threats to Kill	Arson & Criminal Damage**
Bellingham	1	2	2	7	2	2	3	4	2	1
Blackheath	2	3	3	4	2	3	1	3	5	1
Brockley	3	3	3	6	6	4	2	6	3	1
Catford South	6	4	4	9	2	5	5	2	6	2
Crofton Park	6	6	5	7	4	4	2	6	7	2
Deptford	1	2	2	2	1	1	4	2	2	1
Downham	1	3	4	6	6	5	7	2	4	1
Evelyn	5	6	8	4	6	7	3	2	7	2
Forest Hill	5	5	5	6	6	5	5	2	6	3
Grove Park	3	8	7	7	5	5	5	3	2	4
Hither Green	2	5	4	8	5	4	1	4	2	1
Ladywell	4	1	2	4	1	2	6	5	3	5
Lee Green	7	7	5	3	3	4	6	7	7	7
Lewisham Central	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	7
New Cross Gate	2	3	3	4	6	6	7	4	3	8
Perry Vale	4	4	6	8	5	7	6	5	4	2
Rushey Green	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	3	3
Sydenham	2	3	6	8	6	8	6	4	6	1
Telegraph Hill	4	5	5	6	5	7	10	4	6	2

Victims of Serious Violence

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



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

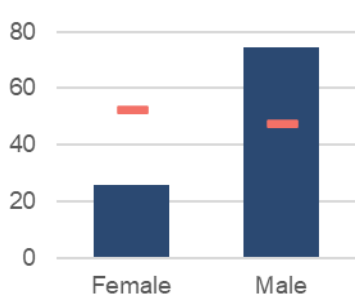
Suspects of Serious Violence

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

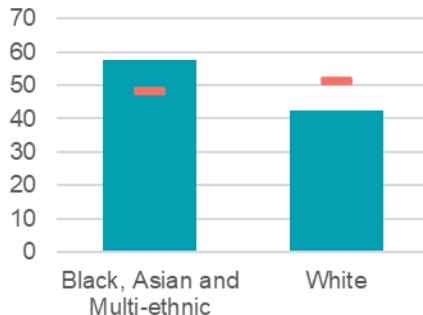
Domestic Abuse

A comparison with the local population is shown in pink

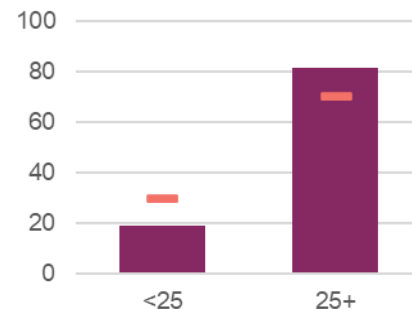
Gender (%)



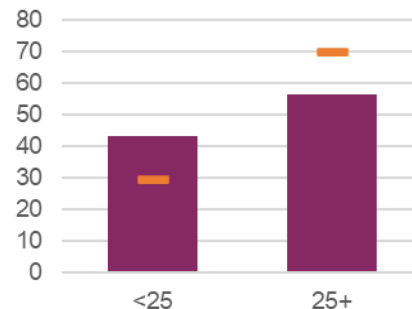
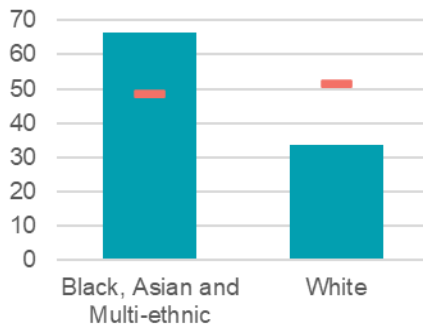
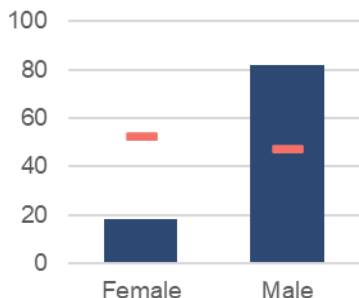
Ethnicity (%)



Age (%)



All other Serious Violence



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

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse Summary

Disproportionately high rates of domestic abuse in Lewisham

- The levels of Domestic Abuse in Lewisham are alarming. With the 2nd highest rate in London, offences are disproportionately high compared with crime overall (ranked 12th highest) and Serious Violence (ranked 8th highest). Considering non-crime data, Lewisham Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference discussed 669 cases, which is 59 cases per 10,000 adult female population, far higher than the average of 52 per 10,000 adult female population seen across London. Even considering various risk factors and drivers of violence it is still not well understood why this is the case and further investigation outside this needs assessment will be undertaken.

Earlier identification of victims/survivors is needed

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

Observed link between domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health

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

Crime Overview

Lewisham consistently has one of the highest rates of offences linked to domestic abuse in London. Levels are **disproportionately high** when compared with other crime types and the cause of this is not well understood. Theories include higher rates of reporting following campaigns or a higher ratio of incidents recorded as crimes. The underlying causes are currently the subject of a separate, more thorough investigation.

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

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

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

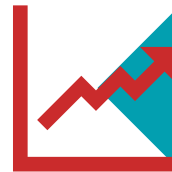
There were 253 offences where the victim had serious or moderate physical injuries, and two fatalities; the **highest rate in London** for these type of offences.



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



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



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

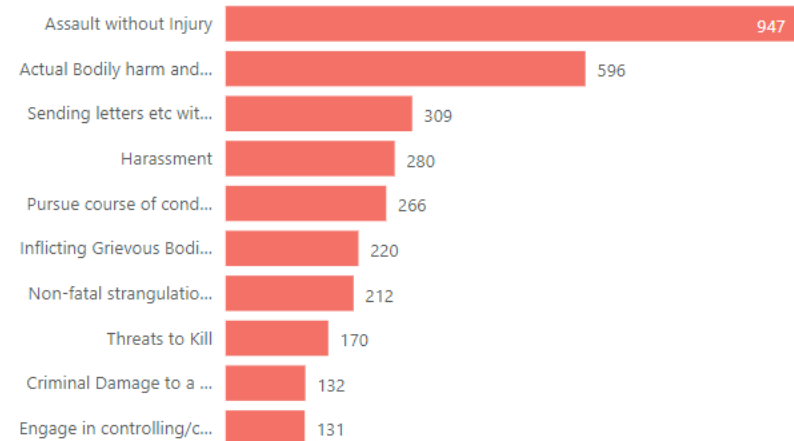
Crime Types

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

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

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

10 Most Common Offence Types



Location of Offences

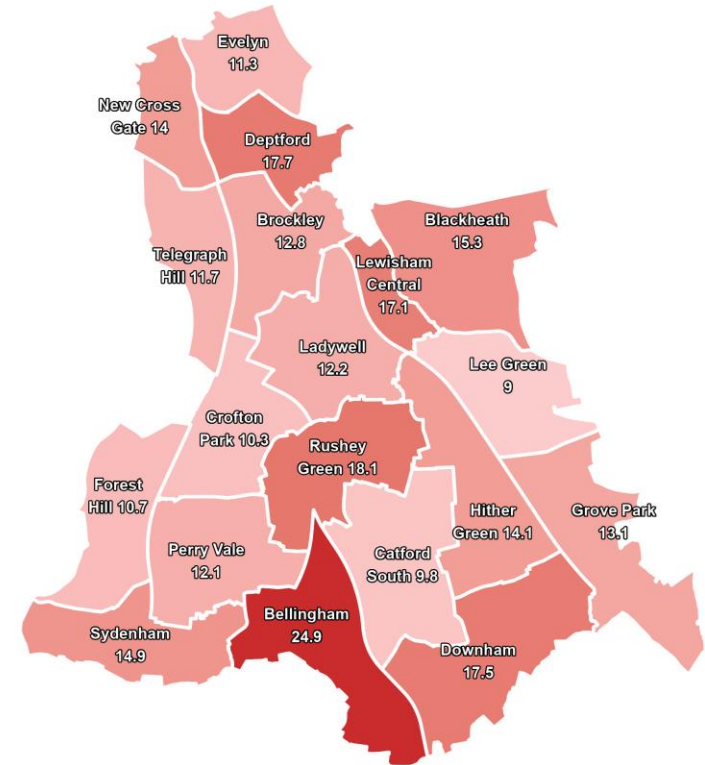
The ward map shows the rate of domestic abuse across the borough. In the 12-month period to October 2023, the **highest rate occurred in Bellingham** (24.9 per 1,000 population).

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

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

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

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



MARAC Referrals

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

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

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

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

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

Victims/Survivors

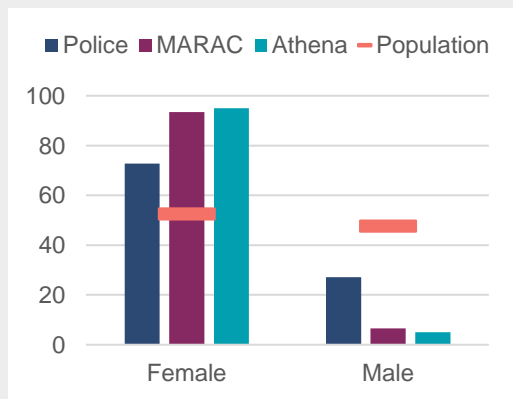
A comparison of the demographics for police survivors/victims, and MARAC and Athena referrals is shown below.

The **disproportionately high number of female victims** affected is evident across each data source, but much higher for MARAC and Athena referrals; as previously discussed, high-risk cases are more likely to affect women.

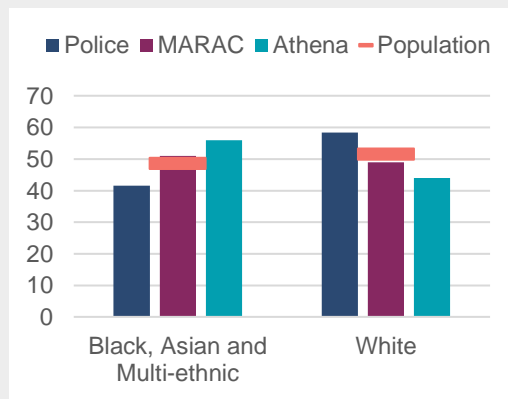
The **ethnicity of victims varies** across sources with Black, Asian and multi-ethnic groups slightly under-represented in police data but over-represented in Athena data (by 1.1x), and vice-versa for white ethnic groups. Black, Asian and multi-ethnic victims may not report abuse to the police for a range of reasons, including concerns about the impact or stigma on their wider family or community, language difficulties and feeling distrustful of the police because of past negative experiences (Thiara & Roy, 2012). However, they may feel more comfortable disclosing the abuse to a voluntary, specialist service as they may appear more trustworthy.

The **slightly disproportionate number of people over 25 years** is also similar across sources, although, again, this is stronger in the Athena referrals.

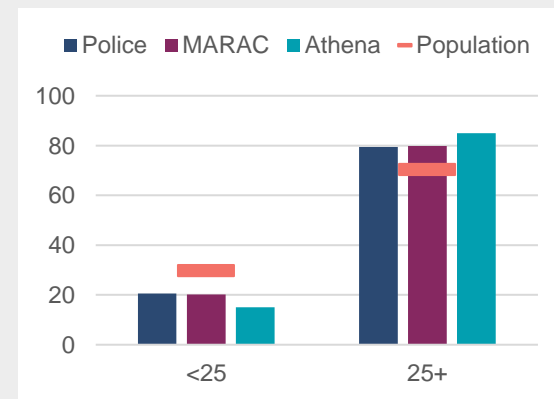
Gender (%)



Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



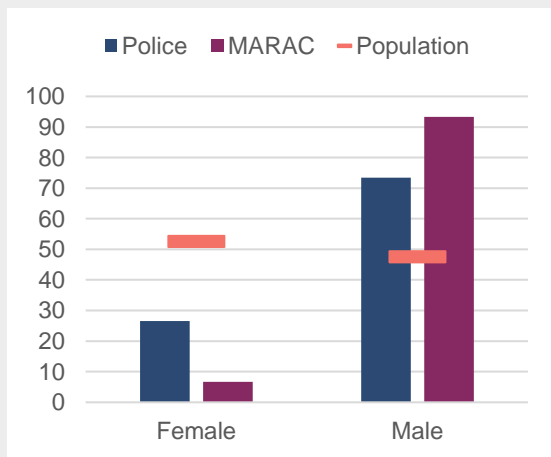
**Note that individual police ethnicity categories are not comparable with local population data due to an absence of Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity categories. Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups have been considered together to provide an indication of proportionality against the local population.*

Suspects/Perpetrators

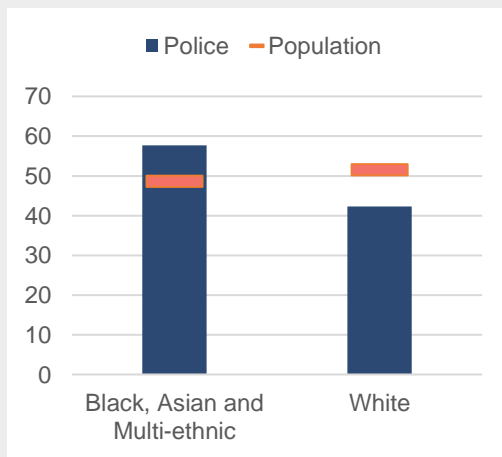
A comparison of the demographics for police suspects and MARAC perpetrators is shown below; there are no details for Athena referrals available.

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

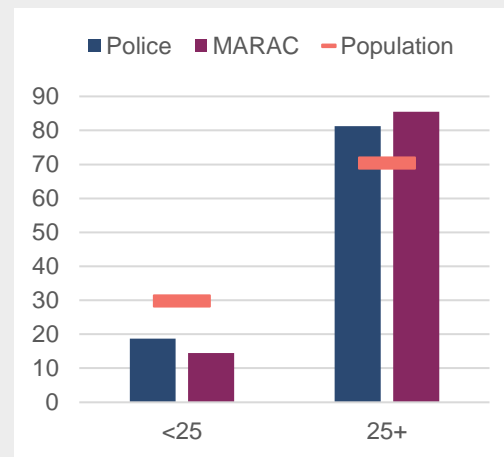
Gender (%)



Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



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

Sexual Offences

Sexual Offences Summary

Exploitative dynamics in sexual violence

- Under 25s are highly over-represented as victims of sexual violence. At the same time, we do not see the same pattern for offenders. This is suggestive of a power imbalance created by an age difference and elements of exploitation being used in sexual violence offences in Lewisham. Crime data shows perpetrators of sexual violence often have some level of acquaintance with the victims. This highlights the insidious nature of sexual violence, often occurring within familiar circles and emphasising the importance of addressing power dynamics within interpersonal relationships.

High offences rates in central wards

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

Low sanction detection rate

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

Sexual Offences



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

8

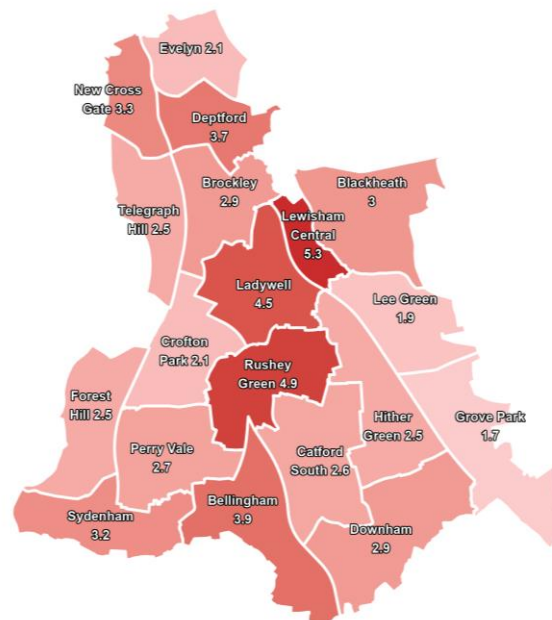
This is 3.0 per 1,000 population; the 8th highest rate of all London Boroughs. There was a 7.9% increase to the previous 12-months; the 4th highest increase of all London Boroughs.



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

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

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



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

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

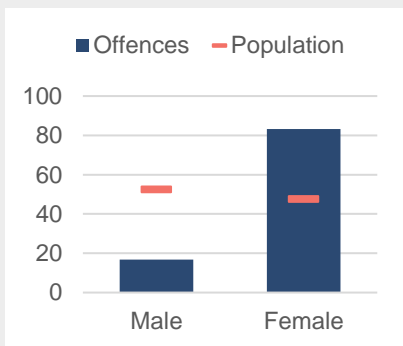
The **sanction detection rate** of all sexual offences reported in the year to October 2022 was **3.2%**.

Sexual Offences

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

Victims

Gender (%)



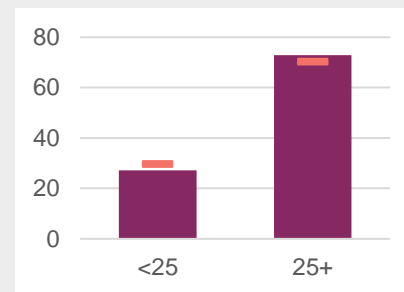
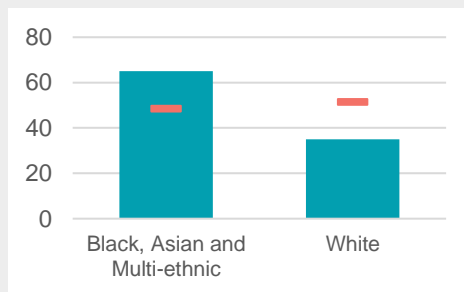
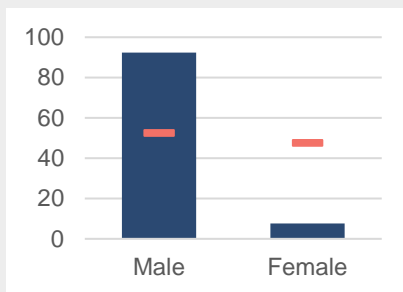
Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



Suspects



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

Other Violent Offences

- Violence with Injury
- Personal Robbery
- Weapon-related Crime
- Threats to Kill

Other Violent Offences Summary

Weapon carrying and use by young people

- Data shows people aged under 25 years are overrepresented for carrying and use of weapons, especially knives. Weapons are often used in personal robbery offences, the majority of which is committed by under 25s. Almost a third of suspects of violence with injury offences under 25, were under 14 years old. This is especially seen in Deptford. This suggests that a sizeable proportion of young people becoming involved in knife carrying at a really young age.

Reaching young people where they are

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

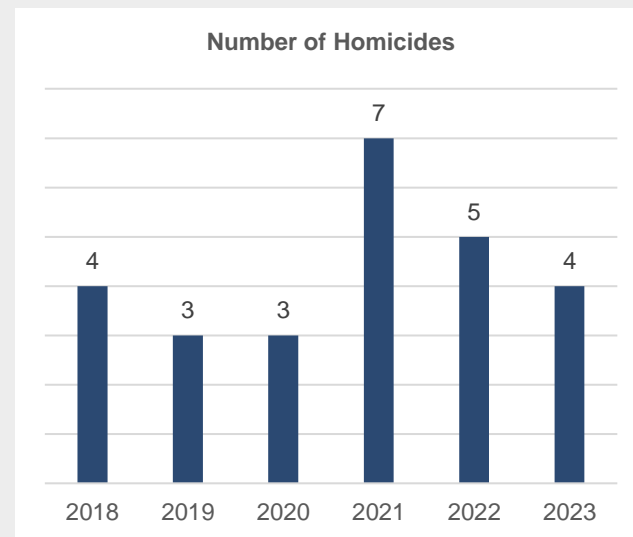
Homicide

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

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

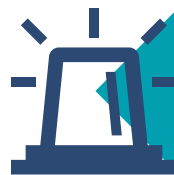
Of the seven homicides, four involved the use of a knife.

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



Violence with Injury (excluding Domestic Abuse)

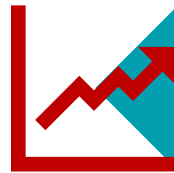
- Violence with Injury is the **largest crime category** included in the Serious Violence definition.
- Excluding offences which relate to domestic abuse, there were 2,053 offences in the 12 months to October 2023.
- This was the 10th highest rate of all London Boroughs.
- There was a 10.6% increase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



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

10

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

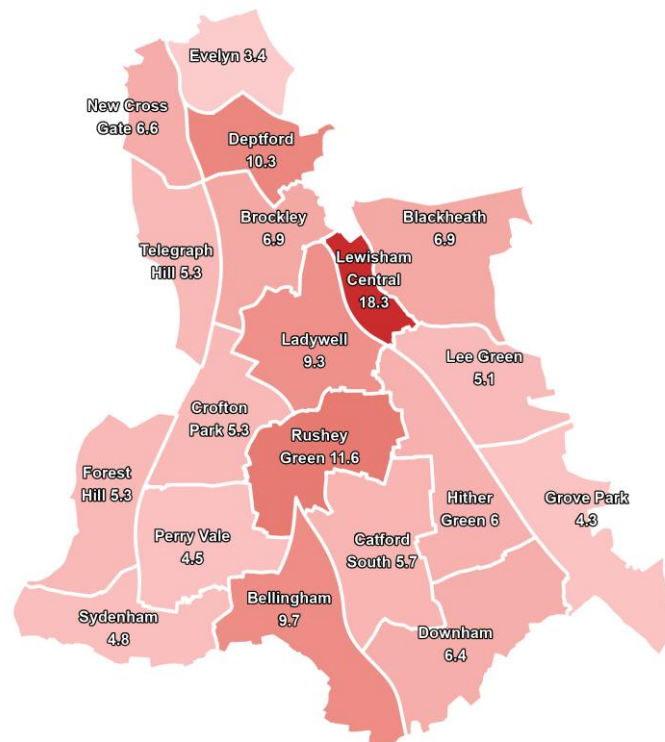


There was a 10.6%
increase to the previous
12-month period; the
highest increase of all
London Boroughs

Violence with Injury (excluding Domestic Abuse)

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

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



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

Violence with Injury (excluding Domestic Abuse)

There is disproportionate number of male victims and male suspects when compared with the local population (by 1.2x and 1.4x, respectively). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are proportional for victims but over-represented slightly for suspects (by 1.3x). The two victim age groups included are also proportionate to the population, although suspects over 25-years are slightly over-represented by 1.2x the population.

Victims

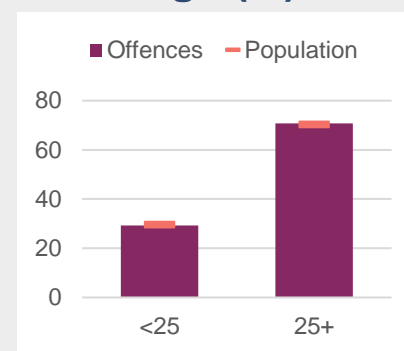
Gender (%)



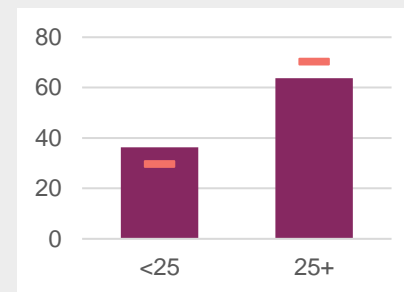
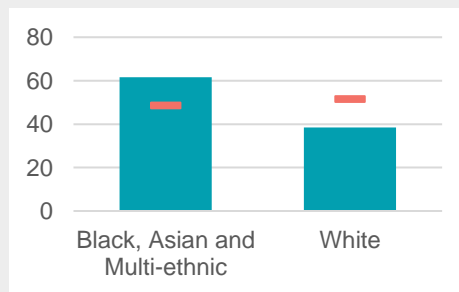
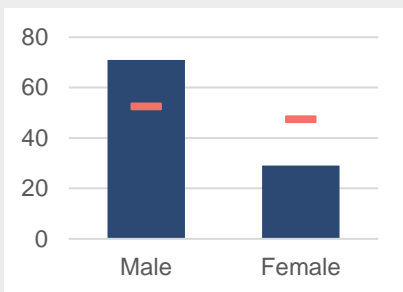
Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)

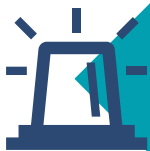


Suspects



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

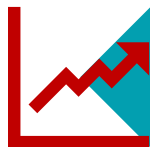
Violence with Injury – suspects <25 years



There were 465 offences committed (excluding domestic abuse) in the 12-months to October 2023 where a suspect was <25 years.

6

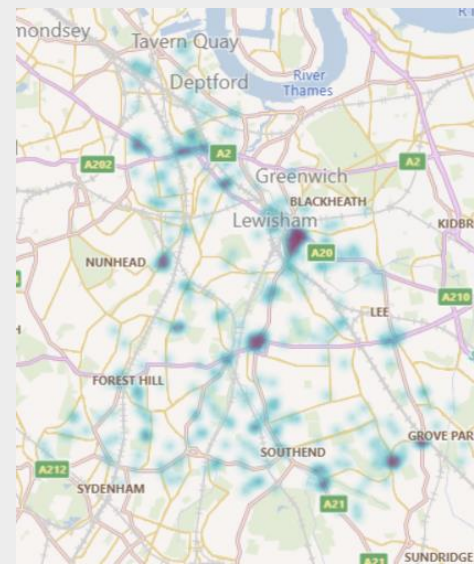
This is a rate of 1.3 per 1000 residents, **the 6th highest rate of all London Boroughs**



There was a 9.4% increase to the previous 12-month period, the **2nd highest increase of all London Boroughs**

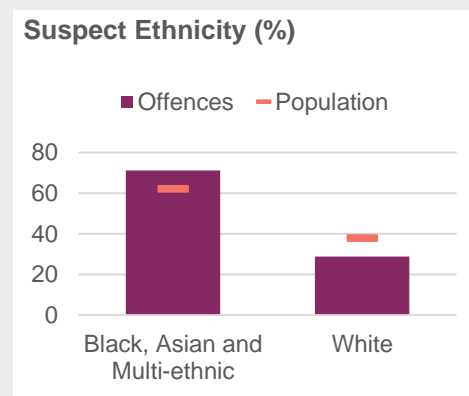
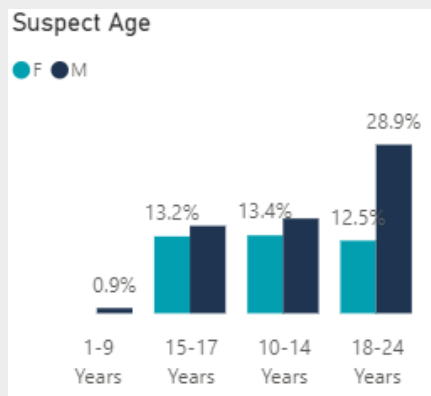
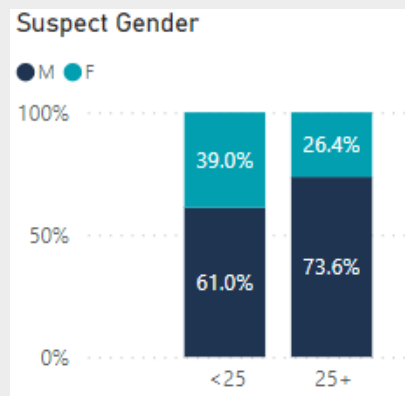
The most common time for offences was 5-6pm when suspects were 18 to 24 years, and **3-4pm when suspects were <18 years**, correlating with the end of the school day.

Lewisham Central, Bellingham and Downham wards have the highest rates, although Bellingham has experienced a much higher increase than other wards (131%). **There are higher rates in the south of the Borough**, than observed in overall Violence with Injury crime. The key hotspots are in Lewisham and Catford Town Centres, although the map below shows several smaller ones across the borough.



Violence with Injury - suspects <25 years

- **44 (9.5%) involved a weapon** (6 a firearm, 38 a knife), slightly higher than the 6.7% of offences committed by older suspects.
- There is a **higher proportion of female suspects** within the <25 age group: 39% compared with 26% for crimes with suspects aged 25 years and over (see left hand graph below).
- Of concern, **more than half the suspects were under 18 years old**, with 28% between 15-17 years old, 30% between 10-14 years old and 1% <10 years (see middle graph below).
- **The proportion of male and female suspects is nearly evenly split for those <18 years** indicating more involvement from girls than observed in any other dataset. It will be important to track this pattern overtime.
- When compared to the local population, young people from Black, Asian and multi-ethnic groups are slightly over-represented (1.1x, see graph bottom right).



Personal Robbery

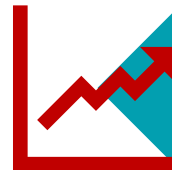
- Robbery is theft with the use of force or a threat of force. It does not include snatch theft.
- There were 703 Personal Robbery offences recorded in the 12-month period to October 2023.
- **188 (26.7%) involved a knife**, i.e., crimes flagged as knife intimidated, injury or threatened – a similar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



703 offences
recorded in the 12
months to October
2023



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

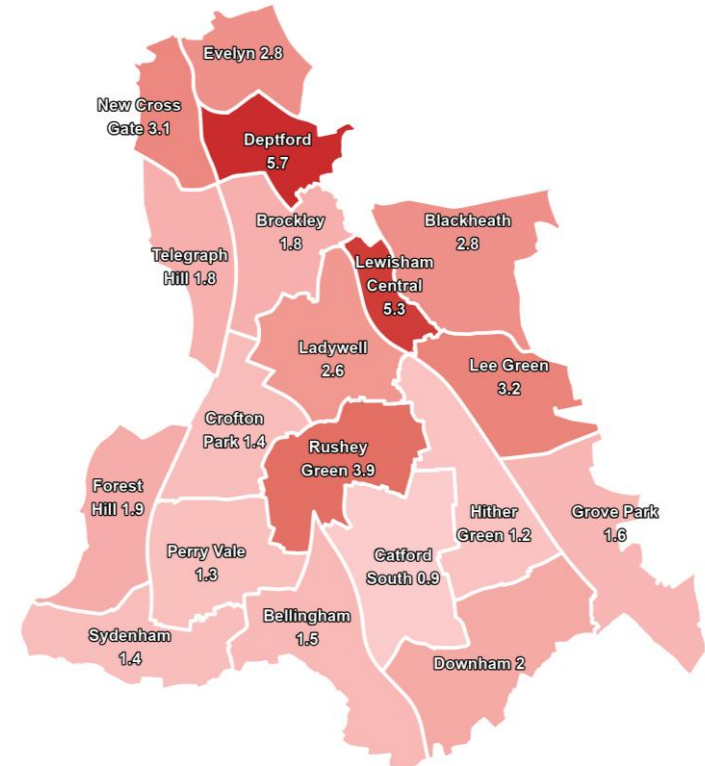


There was a 16.4%
increase to the
previous 12-month
period

Personal Robbery

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

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



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

Personal Robbery

There is disproportionate number of male victims and **male suspects** when compared with the local population (by 1.4x and 1.8x, respectively). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are almost proportional for victims but over-represented for suspects (by 1.6x). **Under-25 year old victims and suspects** are also disproportionately represented by 1.6x and **2.5x** the population.

Victims

Gender (%)



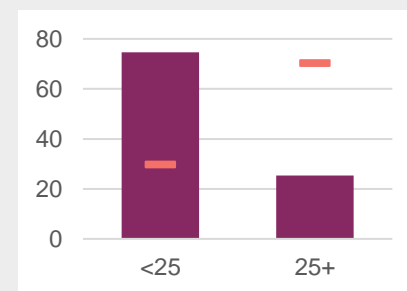
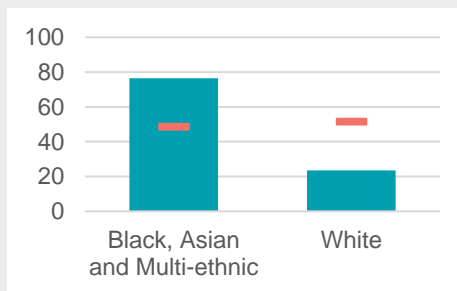
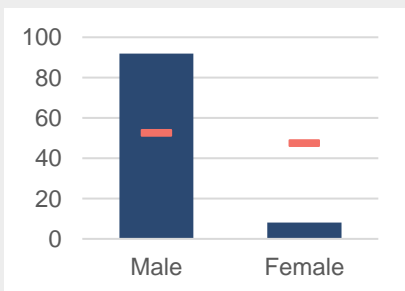
Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



Suspects



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

Possession of Weapons



252 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023

8

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

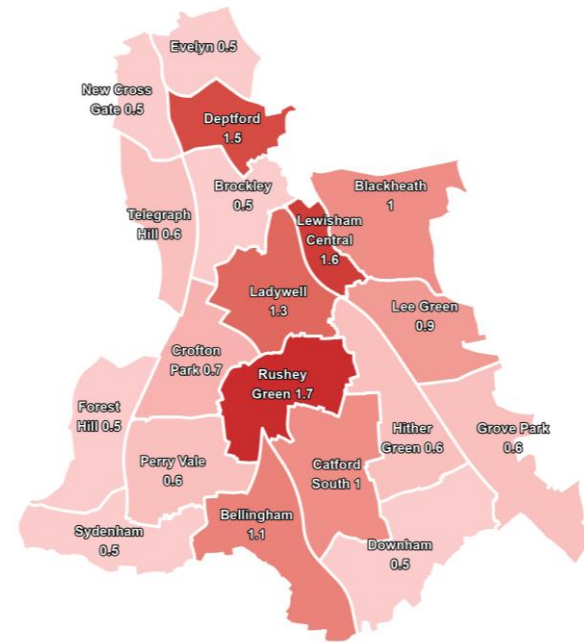


There was a -5.8% decrease to the previous 12-month period

The reduction in offences may be due to the number of stops and search decreasing over the same period (by 29.6%).

There is a relatively high sanction detection rate of 48% compared to other offences, presumably because many cases are identified when a person/property is searched by the police.

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



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

Offences were concentrated around the **town centres of Lewisham Central and Catford** (Rushey Green), the connecting part of the A21 through Ladywell, and Deptford. This is where most stop and searches take place. These 4 wards were amongst the 10% of wards in London with the highest offence rates.

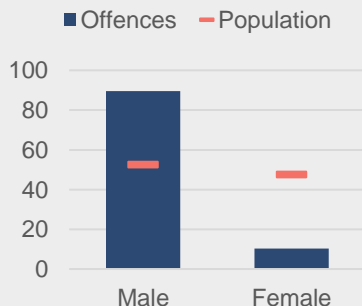
Possession of Weapons

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

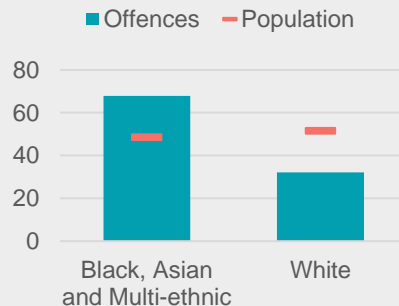
The overwhelming majority of suspects are male, so are disproportionately over-represented when compared with the local population (by 1.7x). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are over-represented (by 1.4x), as are suspects under-25 years old (by 1.6x).

Suspects

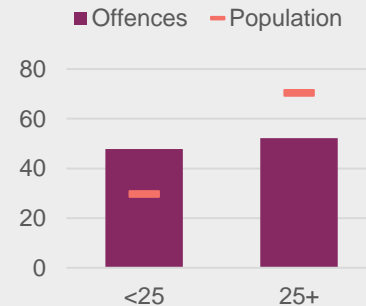
Gender (%)



Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



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

Other Weapon-Related Offences

This includes any crime flagged as involving a knife, gun or noxious substance; it excludes the Possession of Weapons offences.



756 offences recorded in the 12 months to October 2023. 661 Violence against the person, 222 Robbery and 116 Public Order offences.

12

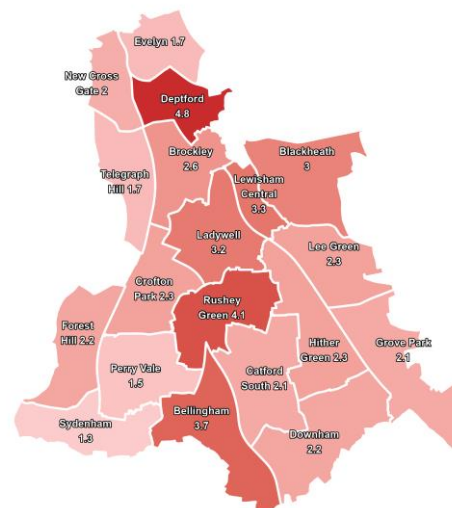
This is 2.5 per 1,000 population; the 12th highest rate of all London Boroughs. Note the Metropolitan Police reported the 3rd highest rate of knife crime of any police force in England and Wales 2022/23 so this is still considered very high compared with national levels (Allen 2023)



Rates increased in many London boroughs in this category. In Lewisham there was a 16% increase from the previous 12-month period

690 offences involved a knife (a 15.4% increase); 69 involved a gun (a 25.5% increase).

Weapon Related Offences excluding Possession of Weapons
Rate per 1,000 residents; November 2022 to October 2023



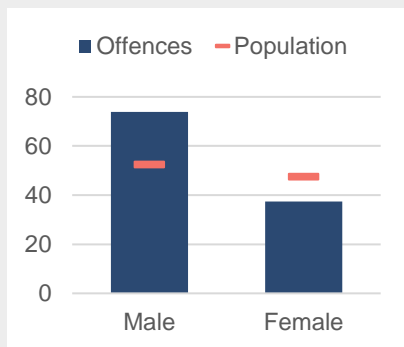
The wards with the highest rates were Deptford and Rushey Green. These are amongst the 10% of London wards with the highest offence rates. **Offence rates varied across the borough** with rates in several wards amongst the lowest in London.

Other Weapon-Related Offences

There is disproportionate number of male victims and male suspects when compared with the local population (by 1.4x and 1.7x, respectively). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are almost proportional for victims but over-represented for suspects (by 1.5x). Victims and suspects under 25 years old are also disproportionately over-represented by 1.3x and 1.7x the population.

Victims

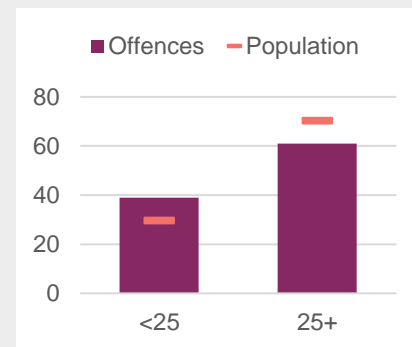
Gender (%)



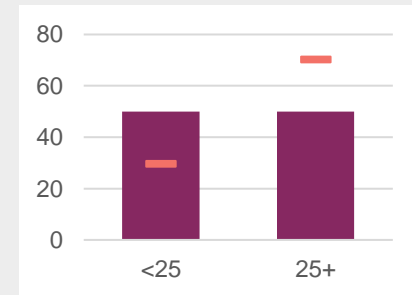
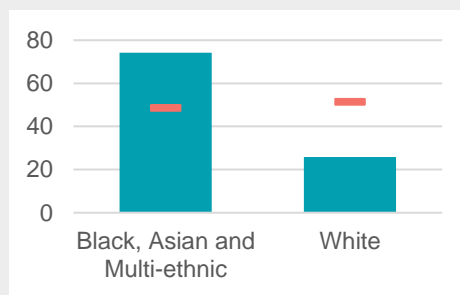
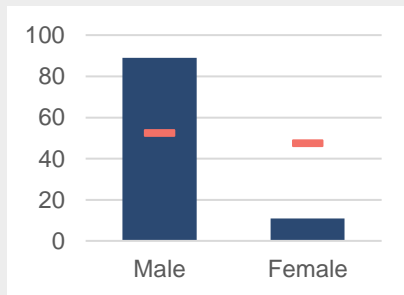
Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



Suspects



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

Threats to Kill

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



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

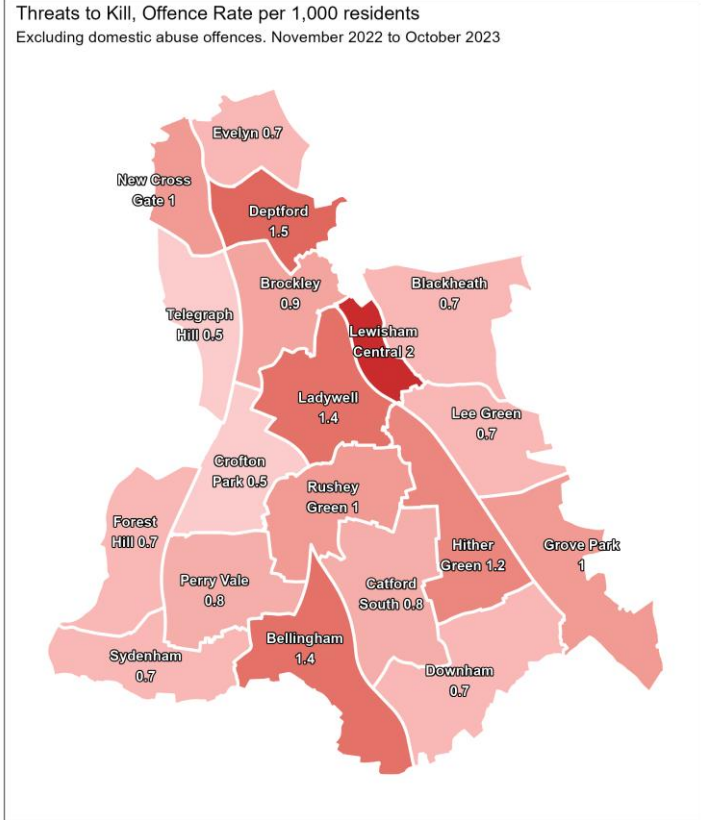
6

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



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

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

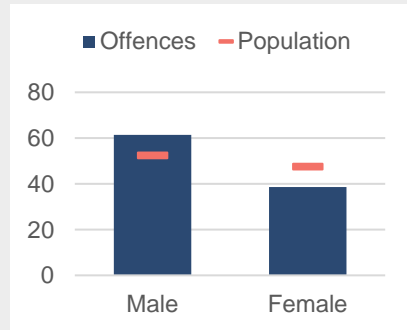


Threats to Kill

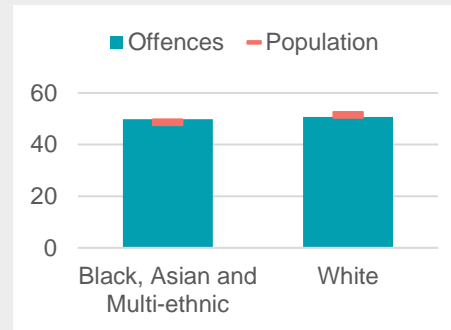
There is slightly disproportionate number of male victims and suspects when compared with the local population (by 1.2x and 1.4x, respectively). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are proportional for victims but over-represented for suspects (by 1.2x). Victims and suspects under 25 years old are also close to proportional.

Victims

Gender (%)



Ethnicity* (%)

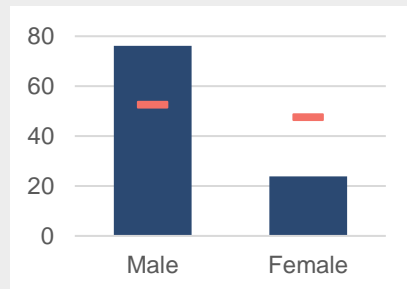


Age (%)

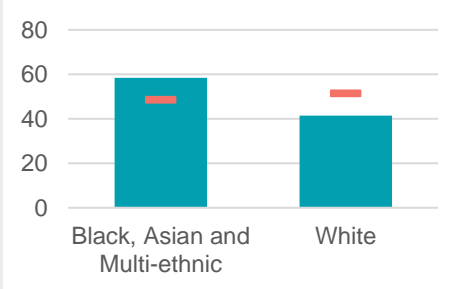


Suspects

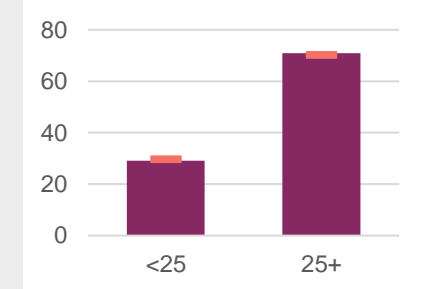
Gender (%)



Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



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

Exploitation

Exploitation Summary

Some wards are disproportionately affected

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

Younger people appear to be disproportionately victims of exploitation

- As Lewisham has a younger population (in comparison to national statistics), this may feed into the high levels of exploitation in Lewisham when compared with the rest of London. Available data shows that victims of exploitations are disproportionately under 25 years old.

Criminal exploitation and drug trafficking

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

Drug Trafficking

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



440 offences were recorded over the 12 months to October 2023

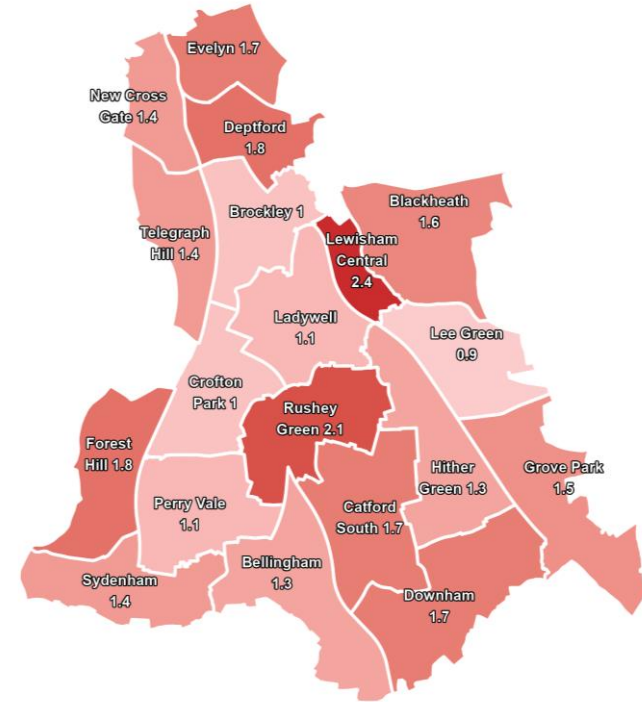
9

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



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

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



Source: Metropolitan Police Service

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

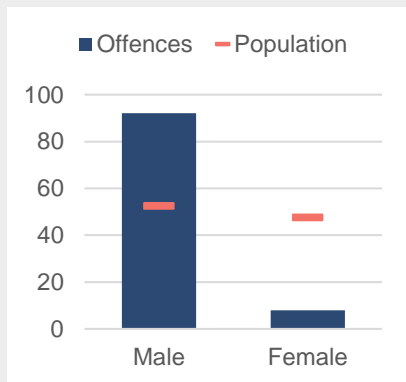
Drug Trafficking

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

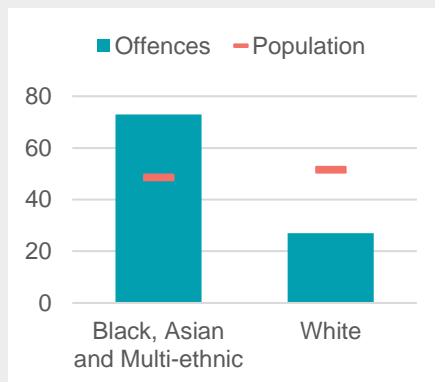
The overwhelming majority of suspects are male, so are disproportionately over-represented when compared with the local population (by 1.8x). Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic groups are also over-represented (by 1.5x), as are suspects under-25 years old (by 1.2x).

Suspects

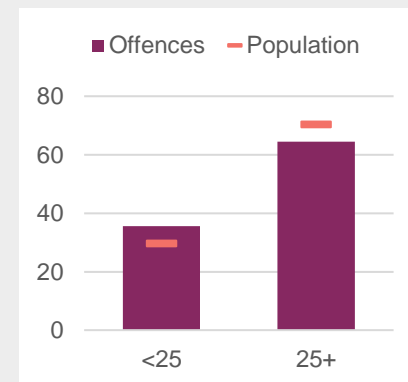
Gender (%)



Ethnicity* (%)



Age (%)



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

Exploitation

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



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

3

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

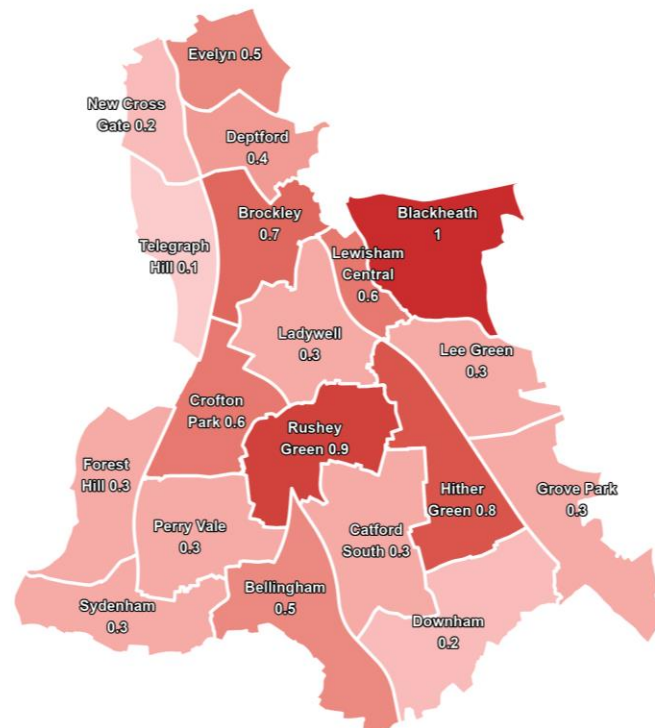


There was a 13.9% increase to the previous 12-month period, the 4th highest increase.

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

Exploitation Related Offences

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



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

Criminal Damage and Arson

This includes any Criminal Damage and Arson offence which occurs in relation to serious violence, as per the guidance for London Councils.



There were 301 offences recorded over the 12 months to October 2023. 91.4% of the offences related to Domestic Abuse

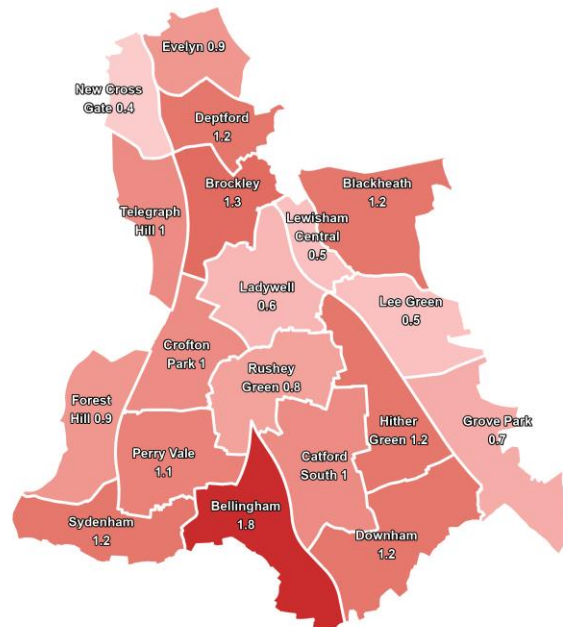
1

This is 1.0 per 1,000 population; the highest rate of all London Boroughs



There was a 15.8% increase to the previous 12-month period, the 2nd highest increase.

Criminal Damage and Arson, Offence Rate per 1,000 residents
November 2022 to October 2023



Bellingham has the highest rate in Lewisham, correlating with the high rates of Domestic Abuse in this ward. Seven wards are within the highest 10% of rates in London.

Violence-Related Datasets (Non-Crime)

This section presents information on:

- Violence Reduction Team referrals
- Modern Slavery data including National Referral Mechanism data
- Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Referrals
- Information Sharing to Tackle Violence data
- London Ambulance Service

Other Violence Summary

Additional risk factors

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

Domestic abuse is the most prevalent type of serious violence

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

Probation and Youth Justice Services

Probation and Youth Justice Services Summary

Impact of community resolutions

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

Violence-related offences

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

Criminogenic needs

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

Key themes

Common themes which emerged across the resident and stakeholder consultation and the quantitative evidence base

Weapon carrying and use by young people

Data indicates high levels of weapon carrying and use of weapons in personal robbery, which is pertinent due to public survey results showing that personal robbery is the most commonly experienced type of serious violence in Lewisham. A distinct demographic trend emerges for both weapon carrying and personal robbery, revealing that both victims and suspects under 25 years old were over-represented in comparison to local population.

Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<p>Engagement with the public showed personal robbery was a big concern.</p> <p>It was the most commonly experienced type of serious violence in Lewisham.</p> <p>Feedback also suggested that residents felt that personal robbery was not taken seriously by enforcement agencies and not enough was done to investigate these crimes.</p>	<p>Over a quarter (26.7%) of personal robberies involved a knife and levels increased by 16.4% in the 12 months to October 2023.</p> <p>Under-25 year old victims and suspects are also disproportionately affected by personal robbery. Almost three quarters, 74.6%, of suspects of personal robbery were less than 25 years old (2.5x the population). Almost half, 47.2%, of victims of personal robbery were under 25 years old (1.6x the population).</p> <p>Nearly half (47.8%) of suspects for weapon carrying were less than 25 years old (1.6x the Lewisham population).</p> <p>There is a relatively high sanction detection rate of 48% for possession of weapons compared to other offences, presumably because many weapons are identified when a person/property is searched by the police.</p>

Exploitation of Young People

Criminal exploitation appears to be the most prevalent reported type of exploitation / modern slavery in Lewisham with drug trafficking on the increase, the two likely to be interlinked. Data shows that young men under 25 are over-represented as victims as are those who are not in education, employment or training.

Feedback from residents

A key theme from the public consultation was the need for more employment and training opportunities as a way to reduce serious violence. Respondents to our survey thought the local community would benefit the most from **positive activities and safe places for young people to meet and socialise and more employment opportunities** for all.

The key benefit of such initiatives is that they help to address underlying factors contributing to the exploitation of young people. Provision of constructive alternatives and opportunities, can lead to reduction in the vulnerability of young individuals to engagement in serious violence. Accessible employment and positive activities not only offer a path towards personal development and financial stability but also create a supportive environment that can help deter involvement in exploitative situations.

Evidence base from data sources

Lewisham has the **3rd highest rate** for exploitation of all London Boroughs. There was a 13.9% increase to the previous 12-month period, the 4th highest increase in London.

The majority of National Referring Mechanism referrals related to Criminal Exploitation (67%).

The most common primary risk category of MACE referrals was criminal exploitation (43.7%). 38% of referrals were categorised as NEET.

There was a 21.5% increase of drug trafficking to the previous 12-month period. Every London borough observed an increase over this period. Lewisham Central was the ward with the highest rate in Lewisham and amongst the worst 10% in London. Lewisham also has another six wards amongst the worst 20% in London: Rushey Green, Deptford, Forest Hill, Evelyn, Catford South and Downham.

Over a this (23, 39%) of referrals to the Violence Reduction Team were NEET.

Exploitation in Sexual Violence

It appears that perpetrators use exploitative tactics and an imbalance of power in sexual violence. The data on non-domestic abuse-related sexual offences reveals that perpetrators often have some level of acquaintance with the victims. This highlights the insidious nature of sexual violence, often occurring within familiar circles and emphasising the importance of addressing power dynamics within interpersonal relationships. Gender and age disparities among suspects and victims in Lewisham further highlight this issue.

Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
We did not receive a lot of direct feedback on sexual violence in our public engagement efforts. This is not surprising because of the social stigma and shame that surrounds sexual violence.	<p>Lewisham has 8th highest rate for sexual violence of all London boroughs. There was a 7.9% increase in the 12 months to October 2023, the 4th highest in London.</p> <p>For non-domestic abuse related offences, the abuser was most commonly an acquaintance of the victim (31.8% of known relationships).</p> <p>The third most common reason for referring to the Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel was child sexual exploitation, with 21% of all referrals since April 2022 made for this reason.</p> <p>There are clear gender and age differences in suspects and victims. Victims were more often female (83.3%) and under 25 (46.9%, 1.6x the local population) and suspects more often male (92.4%) and older (72.9% over 25).</p>

Link between Mental Health, Substance Misuse and Domestic Abuse

Data shows higher levels of mental health and substance misuse in cases of repeat victimisation and/or perpetration of domestic abuse. This is likely to make such cases more complex and require more collaborative efforts between professionals. This may indicate that addressing domestic abuse effectively requires a holistic approach that considers the mental health and substance misuse aspects to break the cycle of violence and provide meaningful support to those affected.

Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
<p>The most common response to our survey question ‘What is the cause of serious violence in Lewisham’ was substance misuse, with 78.5% of respondents stating this.</p> <p>The second most common answer was mental health, with 65% of respondents to our survey stating that they thought mental health issues were the cause of serious violence in Lewisham.</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse makes up 46% of the serious violence offences in Lewisham, compared with 41.8% London-wide. The highest rate of domestic abuse occurred in the Bellingham ward of Lewisham (24.9 per 1,000 population). Bellingham is in the worst 1% of all London wards with the 7th highest rate in London.</p> <p>Four of the Lower layer Super Output Areas in Bellingham are the worst 40% in the country for poor mental health.</p> <p>Drug misuse is a high risk in Bellingham for parent/carers assessed by Children Social Care where child was at risk of domestic violence (10.5% of assessments).</p> <p>Cases discussed at the Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, which are those with the highest risk of harm to the victim, showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19.6% of victims and 31.9% of perpetrators were noted to have substance misuse problems.• 34.2% of victims and 26.8% of perpetrators were noted to have mental health concerns.• 12.3% of victims and 17.2% perpetrators had co-occurring mental health and substance use concerns.

Profile of Local Issues

Data shows variance of offending rates between wards in Lewisham. Wards with transit hubs and town centres have consistently some of the highest rates of serious violence in London, however, Bellingham also has very high levels across each category examined as does Blackheath and Ladywell.

Feedback from residents	Evidence base from data sources
Residents expressed that there is a need for more local community-based interventions to bring people together and give people a sense of belonging and togetherness.	<p>Lewisham Central ward has the highest crime rate of all wards in Lewisham. It has the highest crime rate of all Lewisham wards for sexual offences, violence with injury, possession of weapons, drug trafficking and threats to kill.</p> <p>Bellingham has the highest rate of domestic abuse in Lewisham. It is in the worst 1% of all London wards, with the 7th highest rate in London. Bellingham also has the highest rate of referrals to the specialist domestic abuse service, Athena and the highest proportion of Children Social Care assessments where a child was at risk of domestic abuse.</p> <p>The wards with the highest rates of personal robbery were Deptford and Lewisham Central (5.7 and 5.3 per 1,000 residents, respectively). Both these wards were amongst the 20% of wards in London with the highest offence rates. Hot spot analysis shows the highest concentration occurred in Rushey Green around Catford town centre.</p> <p>The south of the Borough has higher rates of serious violence experienced by those under 25 years old, than observed in overall Violence with Injury crime. The key hotspots are in Lewisham and Catford Town Centres.</p>

Current Interventions

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

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

Lewisham Council

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

Metropolitan Police

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

Youth Justice Service

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

National Probation Service

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

National Probation Service

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

National Probation Service

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

Next steps

- Gaps in knowledge & future research
- Serious Violence Monitoring

Gaps in Knowledge & Future Research

There were several gaps identified which have limited our knowledge and understanding of serious violence in Lewisham. Key areas identified which would improve future iterations of this needs assessment include:

Mapping pathways to and interactions with services. This could offer a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the drivers of violence and service interventions, achieved through:

- Improved dataset linkage, for example by linking the Violence Reduction Team, the Multi-Agency Criminal Exploitation panel and Crime and Violence Reduction Panel datasets, at a minimum.
- Improved data collection, for example collecting MARAC data per referral rather than by person.
- Breaking down pathways by location to investigate differences across the borough.

Expanding datasets. A broader perspective supports more effective and targeted strategies for prevention, intervention, and community engagement. Including:

- Non-crime data, such as that from voluntary services or sexual violence data from health sources and specialist services to help provide a more accurate picture.
- Collaborating with partners to enhance the quality of information supplied for analysis, for example the NHS Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust.
- Engaging with domestic abuse victim/survivor data, such as Claire's Law use.
- It would be beneficial to have access to data on repeat victims and perpetrators to understand the extent they effect overall incident numbers. This is not currently available from the police.
- Include analysis of incidents as well as notifiable offences.

Gaps in Knowledge & Future Research

Broadening the reach of the community survey. Although the survey and consultations completed for this report were invaluable, widening the outreach can only serve to enhance awareness of violence and its perception in the borough. This expanded reach can also yield innovative ideas for both prevention and intervention strategies.

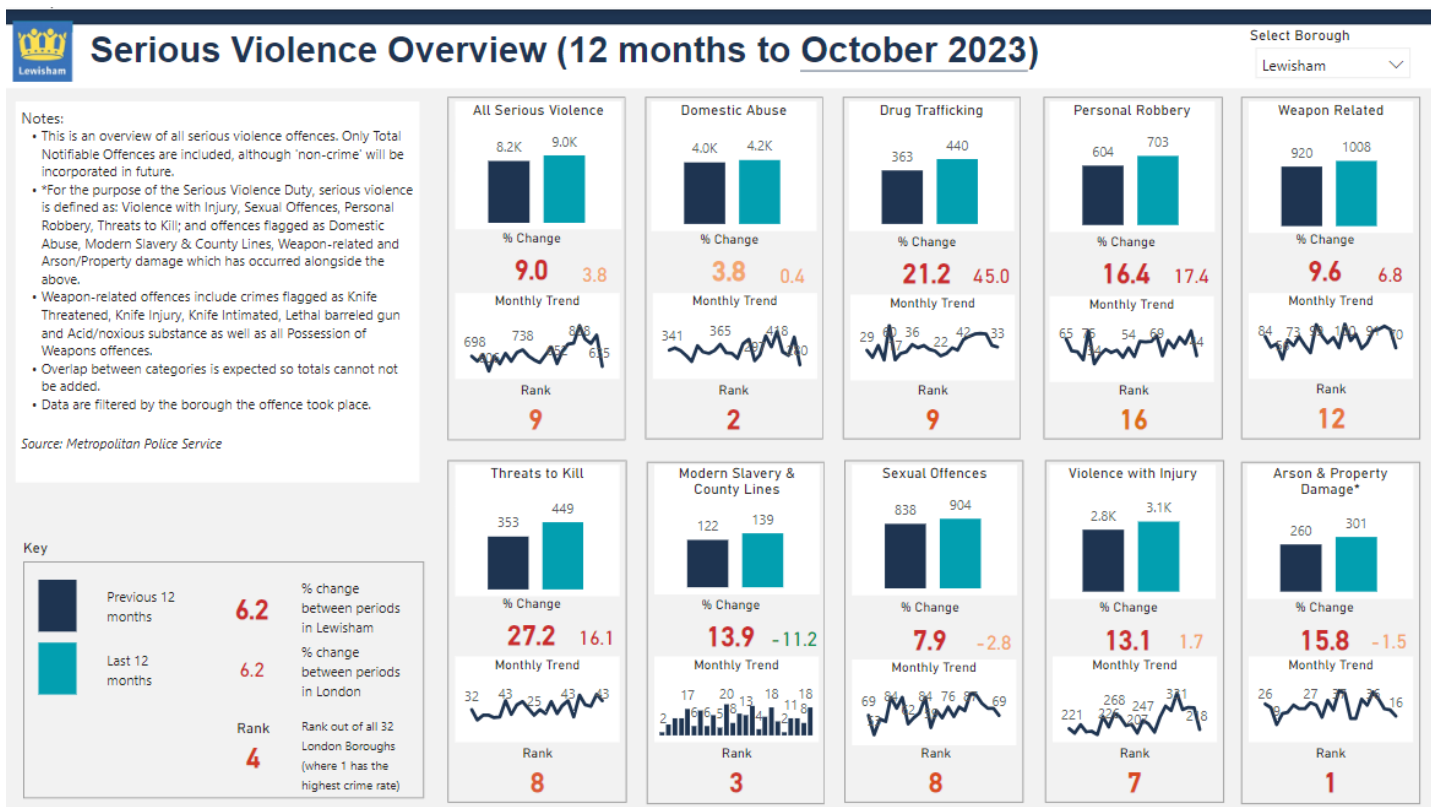
Focus on disproportionality within violence.

- Suspect data have been presented in this report, however suspects are not people who have been charged with crimes and therefore may be misrepresentative. The 'accused' dataset, while relatively small and containing gaps in data, should be incorporated in the next iteration of the report.
- Collaborate with the police to achieve more accurate/useful ethnicity data so more specific details on disproportionality may be identified.
- Incorporate police disability data.

Application of sophisticated analysis techniques for deeper understanding. Utilising more advanced analysis techniques and 'deep-dives' is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of specific issues and drivers of violence within Lewisham. This approach would be particularly valuable for addressing prominent concerns like Domestic Abuse. Analysis of trends over a longer period of time in future iterations will provide more confidence in patterns observed.

Serious Violence Monitoring

Serious Violence crime categories will be monitored by the Safer Lewisham Partnership Board via an internal Crime Dashboard. This includes a summary of each crime category with comparisons against London trends, as shown below:



Safer Lewisham Partnership Board



**To include relevant associated meetings for example, Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Partnership, Strategic Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) group,*

To include relevant sub-groups

References

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- Office for National Statistics
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- End child poverty
- Fingertips
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- NEET: [department-for-education.shinyapps.io/neet-comparative-la-scorecard/](#)
- Standing Together Against Domestic Violence: [Adult Family Violence Briefing Sheet](#)
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- Dobash & Dobash, (2004) Women's violence to men in intimate relationships
- Hester (2013) Who does what to whom? Gender and domestic violence perpetrators in English police records
- McKinlay et al (2023) How did UK social distancing restrictions affect the lives of women experiencing intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic? A qualitative exploration of survivor views
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Glossary

Term	Meaning
Athena	A service run by refuge which provides confidential, non-judgemental support to those living in the borough of Lewisham who are experiencing gender-based violence.
Claire's Law	Enables police to disclose information to a victim or potential victim of domestic abuse about their partner's or ex partner's previous abusive or violent offending.
Consultation	All activities conducted as part of the consultation outside of the survey
County Lines	When drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries.
CSEW	Crime Survey England and Wales
Cuckooed Homes	A home that has been taken over and used to facilitate exploitation.
CYP	Children and Young People
Decile	.

Term	Meaning
Hotspot	Locations with higher levels of crime and violence than surrounding areas
MACE	Multi Agency Child Exploitation Meeting
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
Modern Slavery	When an individual is exploited by another for personal or commercial gain.
MOPAC	The Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
Offence Rates	A measure of change in recorded crime over a given period, based upon official statistics for offences or areas.
PAC	Prevent and Change
Public	Any member of the public consulted with
Respondent	Someone who responded to the survey
Sanction Detection Rates	When offences have been resolved through formal sanction, including being charged or receiving sanction.

Term	Meaning
Survey	Public survey conducted to consult with those living in, working in or visiting Lewisham on serious violence.
SYV	Serious Youth Violence
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VRU	Violence Reduction Unit
Ward	Geographic subdivisions of a local authority area
Young People	Individuals aged between 11-25



Lewisham