

Community Safety Forum, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009

## **Crime trends and performance in Brighton & Hove**

This report describes crime trends up to October 2009 and reports against key crime targets relating to the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy, 2008-11.

### **Total Police Recorded Crime**

Since April 2009 there has been a reduction in overall crime of 1.8% compared to the same period last year although this is still below our 3% target. This is a continuation of the long term downward trend experienced in the past ten years.

### **Criminal Damage**

Between 2006/7 and 2008/9 criminal damage dropped by about 30% to about 4,200 crimes. This year we are maintaining this lower level with the level of criminal damage to date showing a similar level compared to that in the same period last year. However, within this overall crime group there are different sub trends; criminal damage against dwellings and other buildings are showing a decrease while damage against vehicles is showing an increase.

### **Violent Crime**

The number of offences of serious violence recorded is extremely small forming less than 1% of total crime. There were 114 offences recorded since the beginning of April; this compares with 112 offences in the same period last year. Offences of actual bodily harm, less serious violent crime, have decreased by 5%. The community Alcohol Brief Interventions Service for harmful and hazardous alcohol users became operational in September. This will target those involved in alcohol-related domestic and public place crimes, as well as those registered with GPs. It aims to reduce levels of harmful and hazardous drinking and reduce the number of hospital admissions.

### **Sexual Offences**

There have been 216 sexual offences recorded up to the end of October. This is an increase of 11% compared with last year and may reflect an increased confidence in women being prepared to come forward to report. Public awareness campaigns to highlight the link between the risk of sexual assault and drinking to excess are being undertaken. In addition to existing referral routes to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre which provides support to women and men who have been victims of sexual assault, the SARC is also now accepting self referrals.

### **Domestic Burglary**

Since April domestic burglary has increased by 4.3% compared to the same period last which is an improved position from earlier in the year. Ongoing work includes increasing the security of windows and doors of vulnerable properties which have been identified by police officers, crime prevention officers, or other partner agencies. Also, local residents are alerted when there have been nearby burglaries so as to encourage them to take appropriate security measures.

### **Motor Vehicle and Cycle Theft**

Between April and October there has been a slight increase of 1% compared to the same months last year. Thefts from motor vehicles (TFMV) are more numerous than thefts of motor

vehicles (TOMV) (accounting for 66% of all vehicle crime), but TFMV are showing a decreasing trend whereas TOMV is showing a rising trend. Awareness raising publicity has been ongoing in various ways: there has been increased security signage across all car parks; notices are now on all pay and display machines in the city; and parking attendants have slipped warning leaflets into vehicles where a window has been left open.

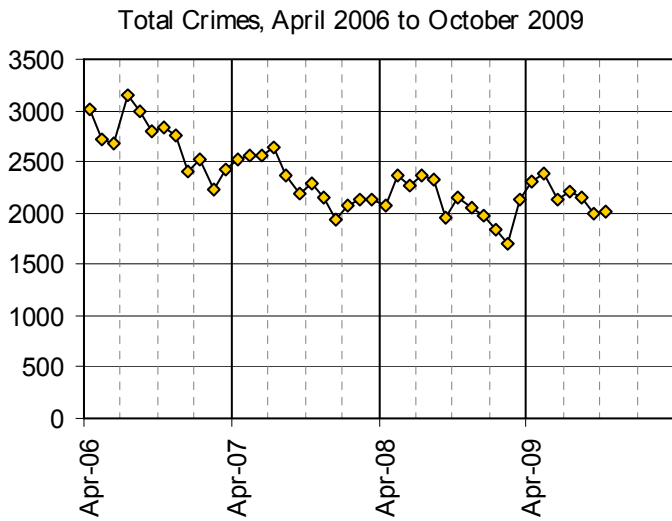
Cycle thefts are showing a 5% decrease compared with last year. A number of partnership initiatives to reduce cycle theft include have taken place in recent months, including police operations and work with cycle shops to deter resale of stolen cycles. After initial trials, there are plans for further provision of on-street cycle parking at 15 sites around the central and seafront areas of the city.

### **Domestic Violence and Hate Crimes and Incidents**

The number of domestic violence incidents reported to the police is 5% higher than last year. While seeking to decrease the incidence of DV, there is also ongoing work to increase reporting. The percentage of prosecutions for DV which have successful outcomes is showing an improving trend and this is likely to both deter offending and increase reporting. Each month the cases of about ten high risk victims of DV are considered in detail at 'Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences' and we are meeting our target to reduce repeat victimisation with these clients.

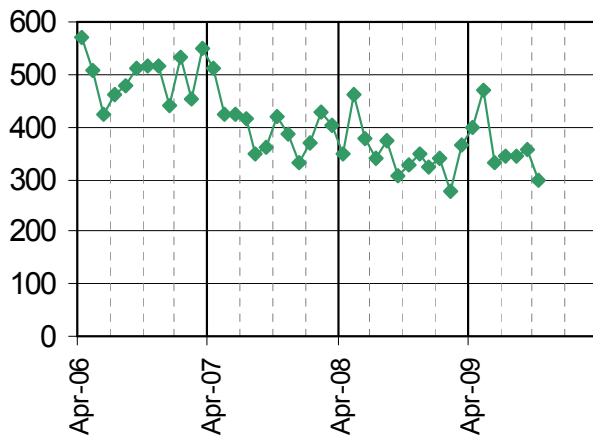
The number of racist and religiously motivated incidents (RRMI) recorded by the police continues to decline. However, there is an increasing level of reporting via other agencies which demonstrates increasing awareness and support of other agencies. A report which looked at older people's experience of RRMI was fed into the council's scrutiny process around older people. Police recorded LGBT-motivated hate crimes and incidents also continue to fall and engagement with different sectors of the LGBT community is ongoing to ensure that awareness of reporting routes confidence to report is built up and maintained.

## Crime trends up to October 2009



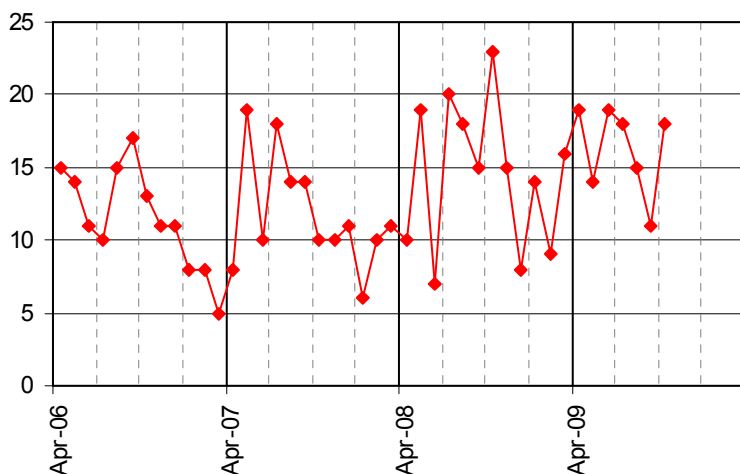
- The number of crimes in the last two months is fewer than in the summer months, reflecting a typical seasonal pattern.

Criminal Damage, April 2006 to Oct 2009



- The performance year began with a steep increase in the number of criminal damage offences, rising to a peak of about 470 in May (linked to the inputting of 60 graffiti offences in that month). Since then numbers have averaged at around 350 per month, except for the most recent month of October when they dropped to 300 crimes.

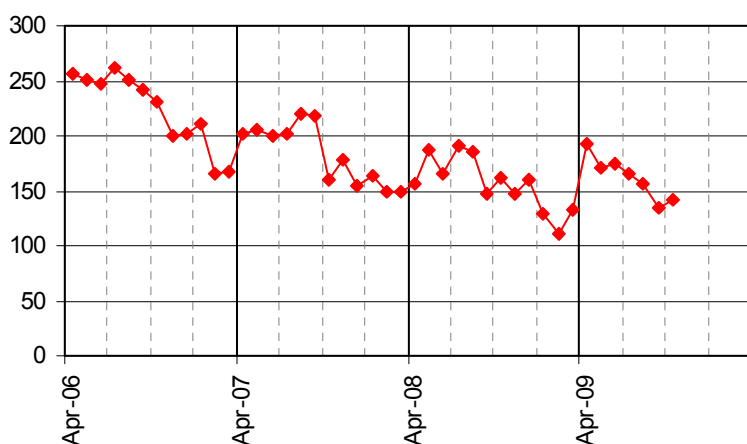
Serious Violence (GBH+)  
April 2006 to October 2009



- The number of serious violence offences has averaged between about 10 and 20 per month over the last 8 months. Instability in the data make it difficult to establish a trend.

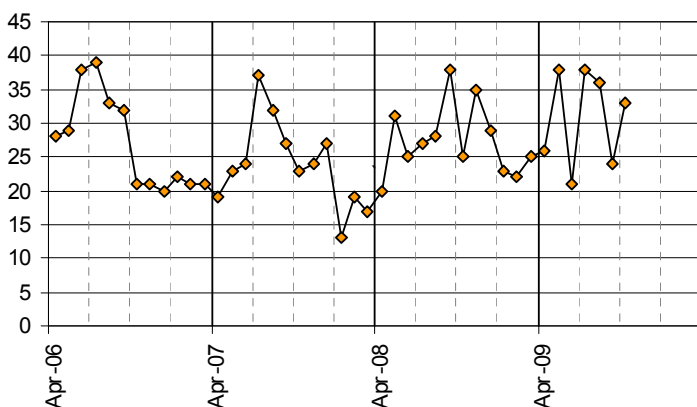
(NB. Categorisation of serious violence crimes was reviewed during 2008 resulting in a slight increase in numbers recorded.)

Assault with Less Serious Injury (ABH)  
April 2006 to October 2009



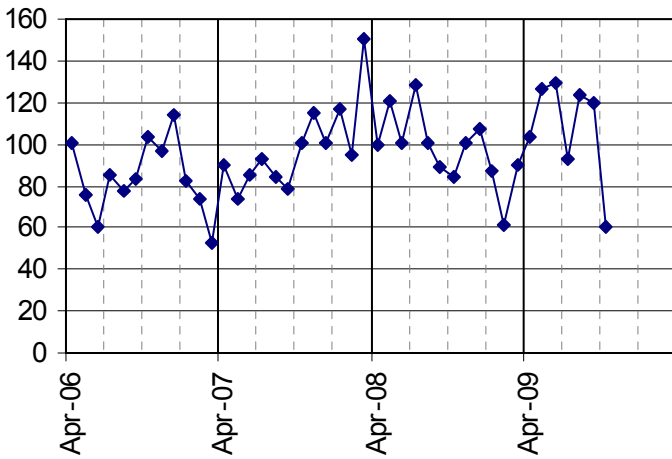
- There has been a downward trend since April, which is contrary to typical seasonal patterns around violent crime. Overall, the number of assaults with less serious injury in the first five months of 2009/10 is about 5% lower than in the same period in 2008/9.

Sexual Offences  
April 2006 - October 2009



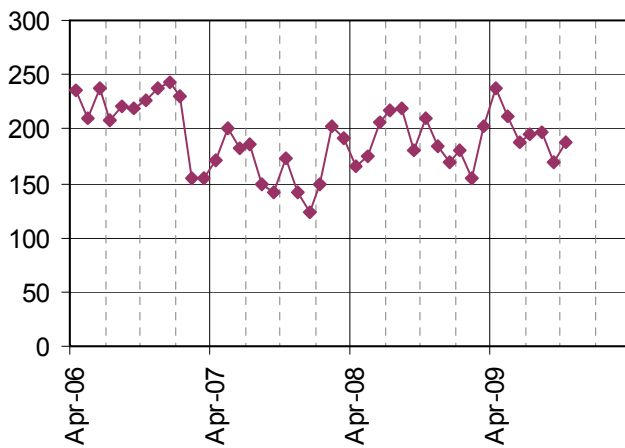
- The Community Safety Forum has requested data on sexual offences. These have numbered between 20 and 40 per month since April 2008 and there tends to be a seasonal pattern with higher levels in the summer (in common with other offences of violence).
- Sexual offences are offences of high impact, yet are under-reported, but there have been recent developments in services which are aimed at increasing reporting and support to victims. Between Apr and Oct 2009 numbers recorded are 11% higher than the same months in 2008.

Domestic Burglary, April 2006 to October 2009



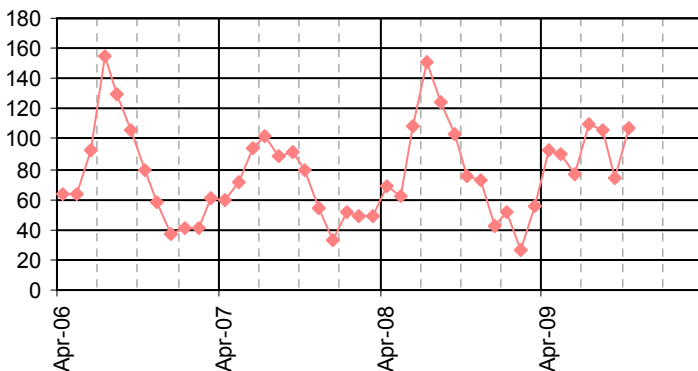
- After the first 6 months of 2009/10 the number of domestic burglaries were 8% higher than in the first half of 2008/9. However there was a steep drop from 120 recorded in September to only 60 in October.

Vehicle Crime, April 2006 to October 2009



- Since a peak in April, the number of vehicles crimes has shown a declining trend. The number of vehicle crimes April to October 2009 is roughly similar to the number last year. However, when examined separately, theft from vehicles is showing a 10% drop while thefts of vehicles (a smaller number than thefts from) is showing a 34% increase.

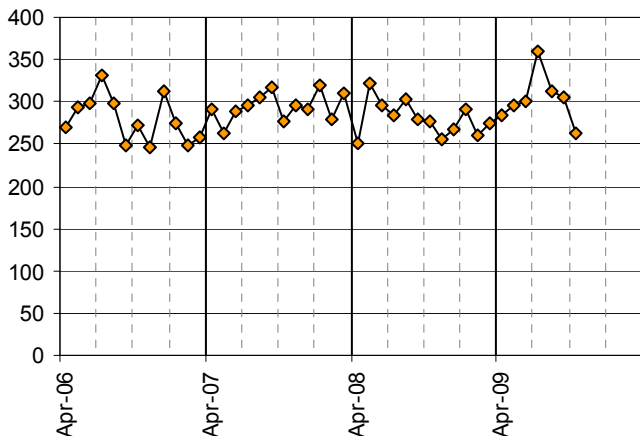
Theft of a Pedal Cycle, April 2006 to October 2009



- Pedal cycle theft shows a strong seasonal effect related to the months when more people cycle. The rise in cycle thefts in October is contrary to this trend, but overall since April 2009 there have been 5% fewer crimes than in 2008.

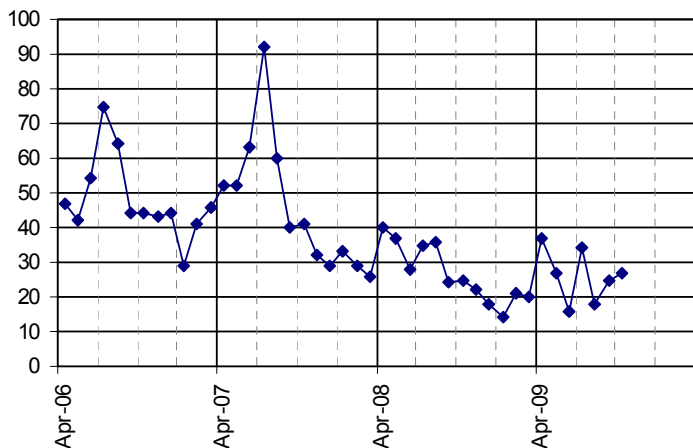
Police crime data presented in this report only reflect those crimes which are reported and recorded. There is likely to be a level of underreporting in many crime types. However, domestic violence and the hate crimes on this page are likely to be particularly liable to underreporting.

Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents, April 2006 - October 2009



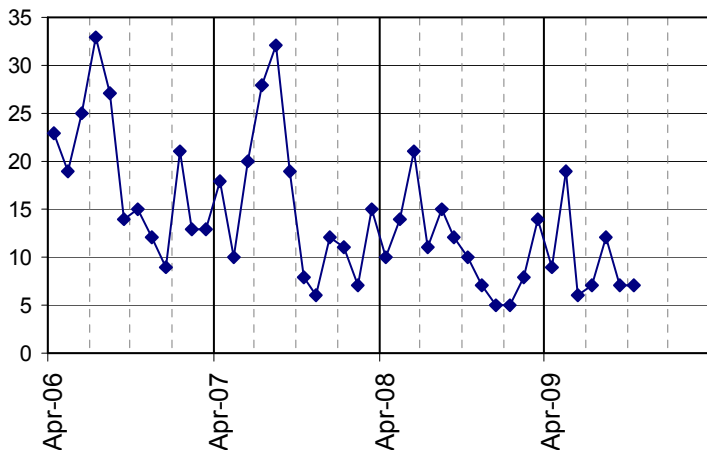
- Over the last 12 months the number of domestic violence crimes and incidents have shown an increase up to July and a decrease again since then.

Racist and Religiously Motivated Crimes and Incidents, April 2006 to October 2009



- The declining trend in racist and religiously motivated crimes and incidents appears to be continuing, although. Over the last few months numbers have shown some variability and the seasonal effect (more incidents in the summer months) has been less clear.

LGBT Hate Crimes and Incidents, April 2006 to October 2009



- Although there are normally higher levels of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic incidents during the summer months, this has been less evident this year with particularly low levels in June and July. The declining long term trend appears to be continuing.

## Performance data for Key Crime Types, 2009/10 (to end October)

<b>Police recorded crimes, April to October 2009 (inclusive)</b>	number of crimes Apr 08-Oct 08	number of crimes Apr 09-Oct 09	reduction target (from 2008/09 baseline)	performance against target to date	rank within 15 benchmarked CDRPs <sup>1</sup> (1=best; 15=worst)
Total Crimes	15,496	15,210	-3%	<b>not on target</b>	7
Criminal Damage	2,530	2,549	-5%	<b>not on target</b>	11
Serious Violence (GBH/more serious violence)	112	114	-5%	<b>not on target</b>	4
Assault: Less Serious Injury (ABH)	1195	1134	-5%	<b>on target</b>	6
Sexual Offences	194	216	no target	-	
Domestic Burglary	724	755	-3%	<b>not on target</b>	4
Theft from/of a Motor Vehicle	1,372	1,385	-3%	<b>not on target</b>	4
Pedal Cycle Theft	693	656	no target	-	6
Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents	2,013	2,120	no target	-	
Racist/Rel. Crimes and Incidents	237	198	no target	-	
LGBT Hate Crimes and Incidents	93	67	no target	-	

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for further information around the benchmarking arrangements

## **Appendix.**

### **A note on how Brighton & Hove's performance is compared with other CDRPs.**

For the purposes of assessing the relative performance of Brighton & Hove CDRP (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) in reducing crime, our performance is compared (benchmarked) with the performance of 14 other 'Most Similar' CDRPs. The Home Office have created these groupings to help provide information on how CDRPs, police forces, etc. are performing.

CDRPs within a 'Most Similar' grouping have been assessed as having similar characteristics in terms of 24 socio-demographic and geographic variables which are strongly linked to increased levels of crime, fear of crime, or incidents.

We are able to compare our crime trends and current performance with our Most Similar CDRPs. The data presented on page 1 of this report (see right-most column of the table) shows our ranked position within this group of 15 CDRPs. For example, a ranking of 1 indicates that a CDRP is performing best within the group, and a ranking of 8 shows that the CDRP is in the middle ranked position.

### **Other Members of Brighton & Hove's Most Similar CDRP Group (from Apr 2008) area as follows:**

LB Barnet  
Bournemouth  
Cheltenham  
LB Croydon  
LB Ealing  
Eastbourne  
LB Hackney  
LB Hammersmith & Fulham  
LB Kensington & Chelsea  
LB Lambeth  
Reading  
LB Southwark  
LB Wandsworth  
Wycombe