

Subject: Crime trends and performance in Brighton & Hove:
Position at end August 2010

Date of Meeting: 18th October 2010

Report of: *Director of Environment*

Contact Officer: Name: *Ruth Condon* Tel: 29-1103
E-mail: ruth.condon@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report describes crime trends up to August 2010 and reports against targets and areas of work relating to the Brighton & Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy, 2008-11. The report is intended to keep members of the Community Safety Forum apprised of crime trends and of recent work which is going on in support of the various areas.
- 1.2 Graphs with monthly data are also provided going back to April 2006. This enables recent data to be interpreted in the context of both longer term trends and also seasonal crime cycles (where appropriate).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) The Community Safety Forum notes the information provided in this report and invited to:
 - i) comment on any developments they may be aware of from their own or their organisation's experience which may help to understand and interpret the police crime data contained in this report.
 - ii) consider the potential for supporting crime reduction and community safety when their organisations develop and take forward projects

3. INFORMATION:

Total Police Recorded Crime

- 3.1 After the first five months of 2010/11 (to end of August) there was a reduction in overall crime of 4.8% compared to the same months of 2009/10 and this exceeds our 3% reduction target. This is a continuation of the long term downward trend experienced in the past ten years.

Criminal Damage

- 3.2 Criminal damage offences during the first 5 months of 2010/11 were 17% fewer than in the same months in 2009/10. The numbers rose from relatively low levels in the winter months up to a peak in May and June, but have dropped back during the following two months. This pattern was observed across the various types of criminal damage (ie. against dwellings, other buildings and vehicles).
- 3.3 Work has been progressing around improved appearance of the local environment with renewed work to tackle fly-posting and flyering and the purchase of high pressure street washing equipment to remove chewing gum. Such work helps to discourage deliberate damage. Partnership working involving projects with children in East Brighton has helped to tackle arson in this area and to keep numbers within target.

Violent Crime

- 3.5 The number violent offences involving injury (including both serious and other injury) has reduced in the first 5 months of 2010/11 by 9% compared with the same months in 2009/10, which is better than the 3% reduction target. Alcohol misuse is often behind violent offences. Work continues around the development of an overarching Alcohol Strategy for the city which will ensure that the work of the wide range of partner agencies who have an interest in managing the use of alcohol in the city is co-ordinated. In parallel to this, research and consultation work around alcohol problems and services is also taking place through the 'intelligent commissioning' process to ensure future city-wide services are commissioned in the most effective way. Ways of effectively delivering information to the public around alcohol are being taken forward by a partnership group both from the health and crime perspectives. Measures were put in place prior to World Cup match days to ensure that an increase in violent crime did not result.

Sexual Offences

- 3.6 In the first five months of 2010/11 there have been 152 sexual offences, 2% fewer than in the same months of 2009/10. Although there was an peak in the number of offences recorded in July, a number of these related to historical incidents and in fact there were fewer taking place in July this year than last year. In the first three months 21 clients were referred to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre for specialist services and further referral to support agencies. Information around mental health and adult vulnerability collected by the SARC is being analysed to inform the development of new working arrangements with adult social care and other services. Two part time Independent Sexual Violence Advisor posts have now started in post. They are based at Survivors Network and support victims of sexual offences by working with them through the criminal justice process, providing advice, helping them access counselling and so on. The scrutiny of sexual violence services is now complete and a final report with recommendations has been produced. This will be considered by a partnership meeting of statutory and third sector organisations during October.

Domestic Burglary

- 3.7 The number of domestic burglaries in the first five months of 2010/11 is 22% lower than in 2009/10. The long term pattern over the last three years has oscillated and is often related to the presence or absence of individual prolific burglars. Residents living near burgled houses have been alerted to take extra crime prevention measures due to statistically heightened risk or further burglaries. Homes that are repeat victims of burglary or where residents are deemed vulnerable have received security upgrades. There are a small number of prolific offenders whose drug-related offending is particularly problematic and these individuals are worked with intensively to reduce the risk of further drug-related offending.

Motor Vehicle and Cycle Theft

- 3.8 The number of vehicle thefts during 2010/11 to date have decreased by 9% compared with 2009/10. This decrease applies both to thefts of and thefts from motor vehicles. Car parks have received new crime prevention signage. Vehicle crime prevention advice has been distributed at a range of events across the city such as Freshers Fairs. Also, police operations have taken place over the summer to address the problem of stolen mopeds.
- 3.9 During the first five months of 2010/11 police recorded cycle thefts increased by 5.5% compared with last year, with numbers of thefts during June and July being particularly high with over 120 cycle thefts each month. A number of police action days for cycle theft have taken place at locations across the city including Brighton train station, the promenade, St James St and Churchill Square. This involved registering cycles on immobilise.com, giving out crime prevention advice, postcoding cycles and leaving crime prevention tips on cycles left unattended in cycle theft hotspots.

Domestic Violence

- 3.10 The number of domestic violence incidents reported to the police continues to increase, with numbers over the last four months averaging about 335 per month. So far during 2010/11 numbers are 3% higher than the same months last year. While seeking to decrease the incidence of DV, there is also ongoing work to increase reporting. The police are responding promptly to investigate offences and improving other processes around their handling of domestic violence cases and as a consequence more offences are being detected and charged than in previous months and years. The percentage of finalised court cases with successful outcomes remains at over 70%.

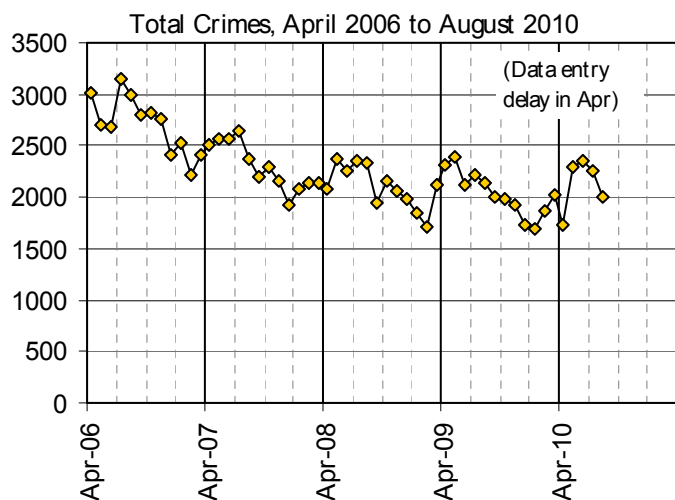
Hate Incidents and Crimes

- 3.11 The number of racist and religiously motivated incidents (RRMI) recorded by the police continues to decline, although the number recorded through the multi-agency Racist Incident Report Form remains relatively stable. This form has now been superseded by a generic Hate Incident Report Form which has been launched and is available on the council, Safe in the City and Racial Harassment Forum websites, as well as being promoted to a wide range of organisations and reporting centres. A BME businesses safety project has begun and is seeking to engage with community partners.
- 3.12 Police recorded LGBT-motivated hate crimes and incidents also continue to fall. It is anticipated that the generic Hate Incident Report Form which is being widely promoted across agencies will promote further reporting. The Partnership Community Safety Team once again had a high profile presence at Pride and

messages delivered via the local authority focused on how to report and deal with hate crime, what support services are available and LGBT youth bullying.

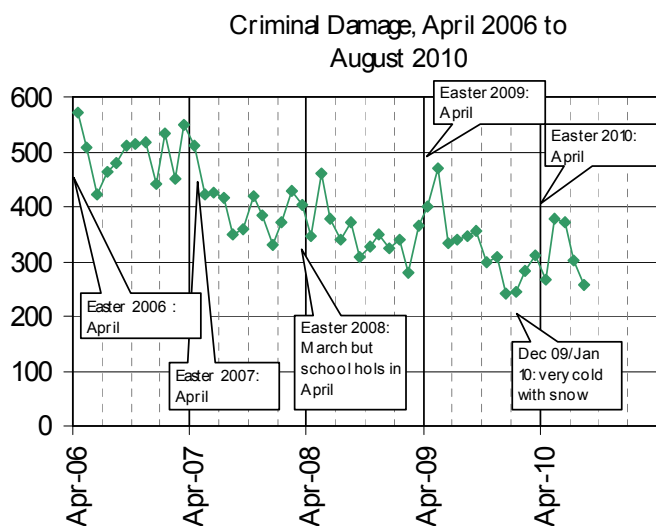
3.13 There were 5 disability hate incidents reported to the Partnership Community Safety Team between April and June 2010. A wider launch than that mentioned above which focuses on promoting headline messages about the unacceptability of disability hate incidents is appropriate. There have been three disability hate incidents finalised in court since April and all of these have had successful outcomes.

Crime trends up to August 2010



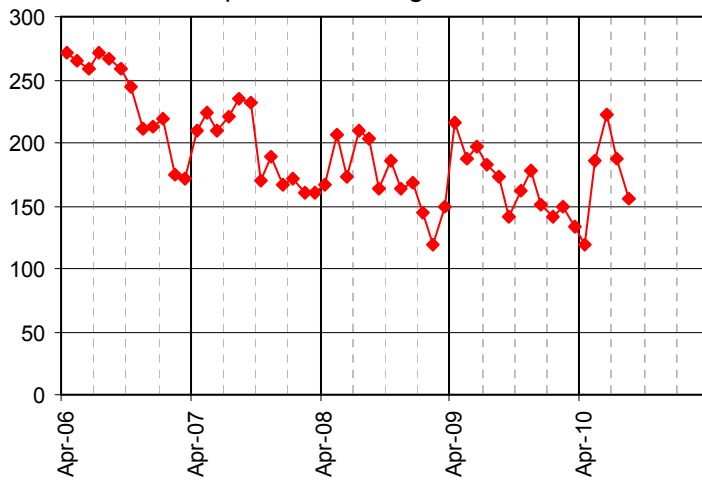
3.14 The typical seasonal pattern in crime levels has continued with lower levels over the winter months, rising again in the summer.

There was a delay in entering crimes into the police data recording system in April, so numbers are showing fewer in that month, and numbers in the following two months are correspondingly enhanced. This effect is seen in a number of the crime types shown below.



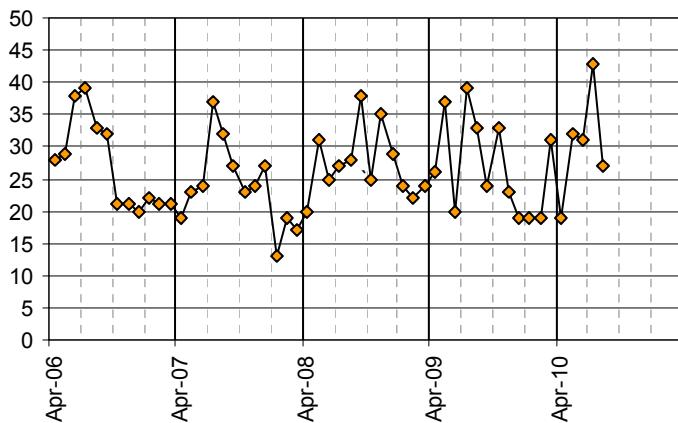
3.15 Numbers of criminal damage offences have risen since the low levels experienced during December and January when the weather was particularly cold, but overall the long term decline continues. Numbers of criminal damage offences have been lower in July and August than in May and June.

All Injury Violence
April 2006 to August 2010



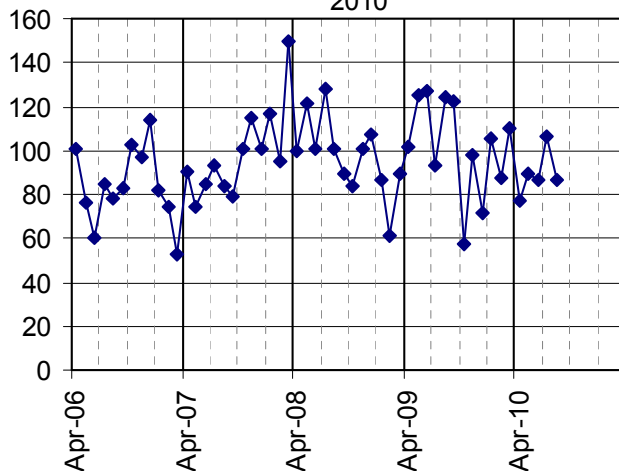
3.16 There is a clear seasonal pattern in injury violence with higher levels tending to occur in the early summer. This pattern has continued.

Sexual Offences
April 2006 - August 2010



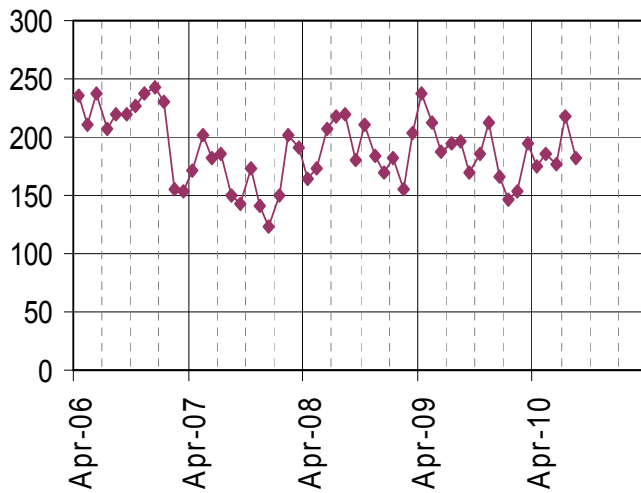
3.17 In the first 5 months of 2010/11 numbers are similar to the same months in 2009/10.

Domestic Burglary, Apr 2006 to August 2010



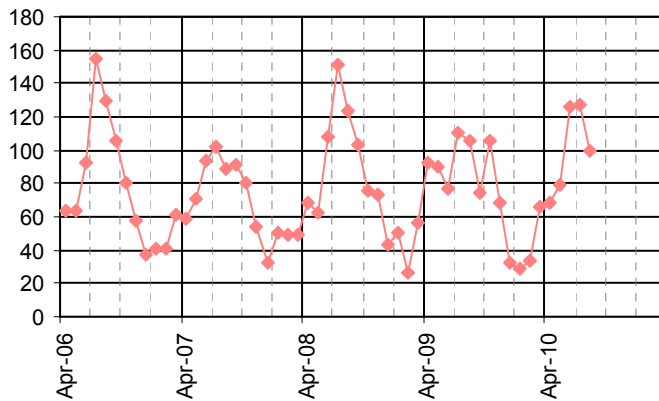
3.18 The number of domestic burglaries has averaged at about 90 per month in the first 5 months of 2010/11 and this is roughly the same level as the preceding 5 months, but below the same 5 months in 2009/10

Vehicle Crime, April 2006 to August 2010



3.19 The number of vehicle crimes in the first 5 months of 2010/11 has averaged about 190 per month. Both thefts from vehicles and thefts of vehicles have decreased compared with the same period in 2009/10.

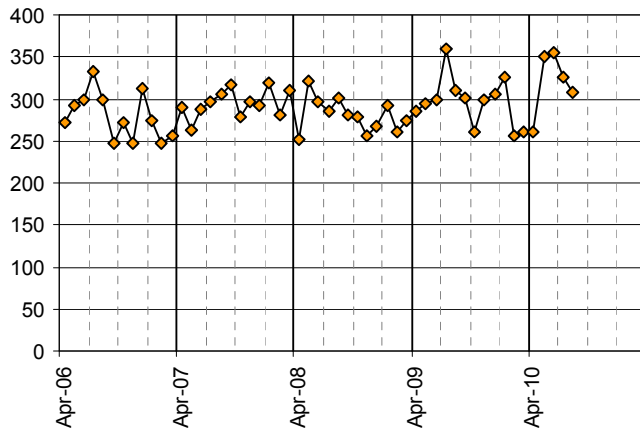
Theft of a Pedal Cycle, April 2006 to August 2010



3.20 Pedal cycle theft shows a strong seasonal effect related to the months when more people cycle and can be influenced by weather.

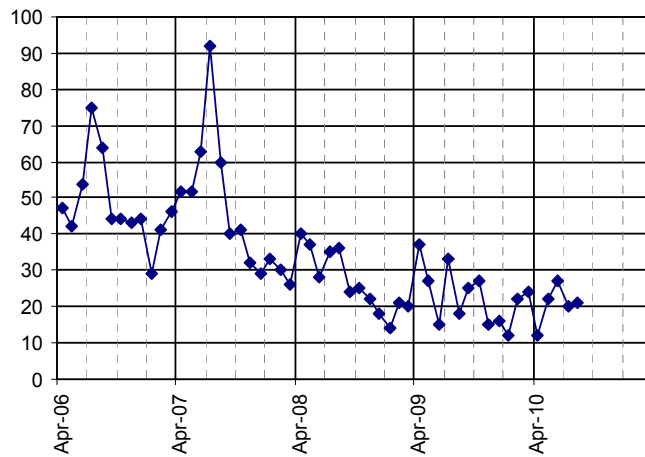
3.21 Police crime data presented in this report only reflect those crimes which are reported and recorded. There is likely to be a level of underreporting in many crime types. However, domestic violence and the hate crimes on this page are likely to be particularly liable to underreporting.

Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents,
April 2006 - August 2010



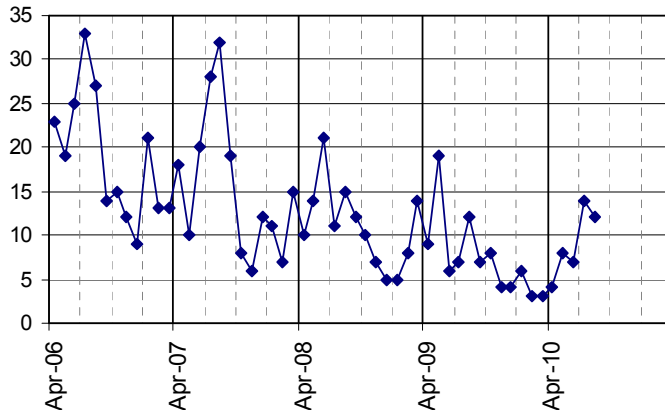
3.22 The number of domestic violence crimes and incidents during the first 5 months of 2010/11 has increased compared with the same months in 2009/10. This increase is seen in both the crime and crime-related incidents. Numbers remain significant at an average of 320 per month.

Racist and Religiously Motivated Crimes and Incidents, April 2006 to August 2010



3.23 The declining trend in racist and religiously motivated incidents and crimes appears to be continuing with an average of 20 per month. The seasonal effect (more incidents in the summer months) may still be present, but this is much less marked than in previous years.

LGBT Hate Crimes and Incidents, April 2006 to August 2010



3.24 After the very low numbers of recorded crimes and incidents between Nov and Apr numbers have risen again, in common with previous season patterns. Jul and Aug have seen 14 and 12 crimes and incidents respectively.

Performance data for key crime types, 2010/11

Police recorded crimes April to August (inclusive)	number of crimes Apr 09-Aug 09	number of crimes Apr 10-Aug 10	reduction target (from 2009/10 baseline)	performance against target to date		rank within 15 benchmarked CSPs
Total Crimes	11,179	10,647	-3%	on target		8
Criminal Damage	1,891	1,572	-5%	on target		13
Injury Violence ¹	956	871	-3%	on target		9 ²
Sexual Offences	155	152	-	-		11
Domestic Burglary	571	446	-	-		2
Theft from/of a Motor Vehicle	1,028	937	-	-		4
Pedal Cycle Theft	475	501	-	-		6
Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents	1,551	1,598	-	-		n/a ³
Racist/Rel. Crimes and Incidents	144	102	-	-		n/a
LGBT Hate Crimes and Incidents	53	45	-	-		n/a

¹ As defined by Sussex Police

² iQuanta category 'wounding (serious and other)'

³ Because DV and hate crimes are locally 'flagged' crimes and do not have nationally defined classification codes, comparative/benchmarking data are not available. Also, because DV, hate crimes and sexual offences are subject to significant underreporting and local work is being undertaken to increase reporting of these crimes, it is not appropriate to judge performance in comparison with other CDRPs based on the number of police recorded crimes.

Appendix.

A note on how Brighton & Hove's performance is compared with other Community Safety Partnerships

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

CSPs 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 CSPs. 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 CSPs. For example, a ranking of 1 indicates that a CSP is performing best within the group, and a ranking of 8 shows that the CSP is in the middle ranked position.

Other Members of Brighton & Hove's Most Similar CSP Group (from Apr 2010) are as follows:

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

