

# Harrow Community Safety Strategy 2016-2019

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## Harrow Community Safety Strategy 2016-2019

On behalf of the Harrow Community Safety Partnership, known as Safer Harrow, I am pleased to introduce Harrow's Community Safety Strategy for 2016-2019.

Last year, we presented a Community Safety Strategy that differed quite radically from those that had been prepared in previous years. Earlier strategies had looked at marginal changes in the volume of different crime types over the period covered by an Annual Strategic Assessment and proposed slight variations to the response to address emerging trends. Sometimes, Community Safety Strategies acknowledged the underlying causes of crime and considered wider, partnership actions that might begin to address them. Overall, however, these strategies sought to get the best possible partnership response to contain crime in an already comparatively low crime area.

By contrast, last year's strategy focused on the strategic threats to Harrow's communities. While these threats included volume crimes such as robbery and burglary, it concentrated on unlikely but potentially community changing events such as terrorism, radicalisation and wide-spread Child Sexual Exploitation. These threats have not diminished in the last 12 months and we need to continue to be vigilant to protect Harrow.

It is therefore appropriate that the strategy for 2016-19 is very similar to that presented last year. This version has new data, brings together the outcomes of work completed in the last year and references work still on-going. It tries to strike a balanced view of need for security from, for example, criminal damage, burglary and car crime and the potentially devastating consequences of, for example, a terrorist event.

As I said in the introduction to last year's strategy, and which is still very much the case, crime causes damage - be that physical, economic or social. The damage caused to each individual and to the wider community by crime is unacceptable. Crime causes fear which reduces confidence and resilience in communities. We all have the right to live our lives free from that fear. By tackling crime, we also improve the lives of offenders, their families and the communities in which they live. We can turn lives around - to help individuals to make a positive contribution. By reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour we help build strong, resilient communities, in which people can thrive and reach their potential.

It is the responsibility of all of us who live and work in Harrow to keep our borough safe. Resident involvement in keeping Harrow safe and making it safer still is the key to our success.

Councillor Graham Henson,

Chair, Safer Harrow

## **Vision**

The Council's vision for the future of Harrow is "Working together to make a difference for Harrow" and this is particularly relevant to the work of Harrow's Community Safety Partnership which we call Safer Harrow. This brings together many of the organisations that are contributing to our ambition of making Harrow the Safest Borough in London to share their ambitions and plans so that we can integrate their effort and achieve a better and safer outcome.

The Council's vision for Harrow will be delivered by:

- Building a better Harrow;
- Being more business-like and business friendly; and
- Protecting the most vulnerable and supporting families

Community safety is a thread that runs through all of these priorities from helping to make Harrow a good place to live and do business, safeguarding vulnerable young people and adults, addressing anti-social behaviour that can blight communities, reducing shop lifting and criminal damage that undermines businesses and tackling domestic violence that breaks up families and, in some cases, leads to very serious injuries.

Safer Harrow also has its own ambition which is that Harrow becomes the Safest Borough in London and this Strategy, which is developed and owned by the partnership will demonstrate how all the partners will work together to try and achieve this aim and the progress we've made to date.

## **Harrow the place**

In Harrow our population is growing, and is getting proportionally older (65+) and younger (5-9 years), becoming more diverse overall and seeing an increase in the size of families. In some areas of the community, the working level of English is poor, which increases the risks of worklessness. We are seeing an increase in the demand for services for those residents with complex needs and seeing a growth in health inequality between our most deprived and most affluent wards. Harrow continues to profit from its reputation as a tolerant and welcoming place for new arrivals but tensions can develop in communities that undergo rapid change and these must be effectively managed. Community cohesion is therefore an essential ingredient for Harrow to become and to maintain a position as the safest borough in London.

## **National Context**

The Crime Survey for English and Wales (CSEW) shows that all crime is declining. The latest figures from the CSEW show that, for the offences it covers, there were an estimated 6.6 million incidents of crime against households and resident adults (aged 16 and over) in England and Wales which is not significantly different from the previous survey total.

There was a 6% increase in police recorded crime compared with the previous year, with 4.3 million offences recorded in the year ending September 2015. Most of this rise is thought to be due to a greater proportion of reports of crime being recorded following improved compliance with national recording standards by police forces.

Improvements in the recording of crime are thought to have particularly affected some categories of violent crime. There was a 27% rise in violence against the person offences (an additional 185,666 offences) which was largely driven by increases within the violence without injury sub-group (up by 130,207 offences; a 37% increase). The CSEW estimate for violent crime showed no significant change compared with the previous year's survey.

There were also increases in some of the more serious types of police recorded violence, including a 9% rise in offences involving knives or sharp instruments and a 4% increase in offences involving firearms. Such offences are less likely to be prone to changes in recording practices, though there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that a tightening of recording procedures may be contributing to some of the increase in some forces.

Sexual offences recorded by the police continued to rise with the latest figures up 36% on the previous year; equivalent to an additional 26,606 offences. The numbers of rapes (33,431) and other sexual offences (66,178) were at the highest level since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in the year ending March 2003. As well as improvements in recording, this is also thought to reflect a greater willingness of victims to come forward to report such crimes.

The number of new entrants to the criminal justice system has continued to fall since its peak in 2007. This decline has been much sharper for juveniles than for adults; however, during the 12 months ending September 2015, the decline slowed for both groups of offenders. Around 2 in every 5 adults convicted of an indictable offence had a long criminal record compared to just over a quarter in the same period 10 years ago. Despite having long criminal records, there has been a 35% increase since Q1 2013 in adults with 15 or more previous convictions or cautions receiving a suspended sentence following a conviction for an indictable offence. There seems to have been a growing reluctance to sentencing re-offenders to custody.

In the 12 months ending September 2015, the number of offenders with no previous convictions or cautions sentenced for indictable offences increased by 3.6%. The increase has been seen across all types of offences except robbery and theft offences. In the latest period, around 96,000 adult offenders convicted of an indictable offence had 15 or more previous convictions or cautions (long criminal records - on average 33.6 previous sanctions). 39% of adults convicted of an indictable offence had a long criminal record compared to 29% in the same period 10 years ago. This suggests that there have been recent increases in both the conviction of individuals who are new entrants to the Criminal Justice System and of serial re-offenders defined as those with 15 or more previous convictions.

However, over recent years the trend has been a decline in offenders with longer criminal records. Further investigations have shown that there has been a fall since 2009 in the number of offenders progressing from their 15<sup>th</sup> to their 16<sup>th</sup> conviction or

caution. Similarly during the 12 months ending September 2015 there was a decline in the number of offenders with 16 or more previous convictions or cautions. Three fifths of those convicted of an indictable offence with 15 or more previous convictions or cautions were convicted for offences related to theft – by comparison, only 22% of those with no previous convictions or cautions were convicted for theft offences.

For those convicted of a sexual offence in the 12 months ending September 2015, just under half also had a first offence for the same offence category and for just 5% of offenders, all of their previous convictions and cautions were for sexual offences.

In the 12 months ending September 2015, there were 1.22 million offenders sentenced following a criminal conviction, 2% more than in the previous year. This mirrors the trends in proceedings and convictions, where more defendants were proceeded against and more were found guilty over the same period.

A fine was the most common sentence given to offenders at all courts, accounting for 72% of all sentences. This proportion has been increasing since 2011, because the prevalence of summary offences has been increasing, and fines are the most common sentence for summary offences. Indictable offences were more likely to warrant an immediate custodial sentence or a community sentence.

The overall number of young people in the Youth Justice System continued to reduce in the year ending March 2015. Reductions have been seen in the number entering the system for the first time (First Time Entrants, FTEs), as well as reductions in those receiving disposals, including those receiving custodial sentences. Compared to the year ending March 2010, there are now 67% fewer young people who were FTEs, 65% fewer young people who received a youth caution or court disposal and 57% fewer young people (under 18) in custody in the youth secure estate.

In the year ending March 2015 there were around 950,000 arrests for notifiable offences in England and Wales, of which 94,960 were of people aged 10-17 years. Therefore, arrests of 10-17 year olds accounted for 10% of all arrests. This is the same as the proportion of young people in England and Wales of offending age. The reoffending rate has increased (by 5.6 percentage points since the year ending March 2008, to 38.0% in the year ending March 2014), but there were significant falls in the number of young people in the cohort, the number of reoffenders and the number of re-offences.

Overall young people were convicted of 87,160 proven offences (those resulting in a caution or conviction) in the year ending March 2015. The number of proven offences has been decreasing; it has fallen by 4% from the year ending March 2014 and by 70% since the year ending March 2005.

The number of proven offences has fallen amongst most offence types, but increased for violence against the person offences, criminal damage offences and sexual offences compared with the previous year. This has led to a change in the proportional makeup of proven offences by offence type. The largest proportion of proven offences in the year ending March 2015 were violence against the person offences, which also increased the most compared with March 2010 (by 4 percentage points) and now make

up 24% of total offences over this period. Drug offences and sexual offences also increased, by 2 percentage points and 1 percentage point respectively. On the other hand, the largest decrease was for theft and handling stolen goods which decreased by 4 percentage points. The proportions for criminal damage offences, burglary and robbery remained fairly constant between the years ending March 2010 and March 2015.

Finally, the ongoing reporting of young people making their way to Syria to support ISIS has heightened concerns about radicalisation, and events in Paris, Brussels and elsewhere have increased the assessed risk of the threat of terrorism. While counter-terrorism activity is mostly the responsibility of national agencies, the front line in relation to radicalisation rests with the local authority and the Community Safety Partnership.

### **London Context**

The latest figures for London compare the year to January 2016 with the previous 12 month period. In this period, the total recorded crime rose by 5.2% although this is still 18.4% below the baseline year of 2011/12. The biggest increase was in relation to violence with injury. Another way of showing crime figures is the number of recorded offences for each 1,000 people living in London. In the 12 months to September 2015, this rose from 81.6 to 83.6 crimes for each 1,000 people.

Strategy for the Metropolitan Police is now set by the Mayor through his Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). The Mayor has designated certain crimes as a priority because of the impact they have on the community on a daily basis. These crimes are Burglary; Robbery; Theft from the person; Theft of a motor vehicle; Theft from a motor vehicle; Criminal Damage and Violence with Injury. The number of these MOPAC 7 crimes recorded in 2015 fell by 18.1% across London compared to 2014. This represents a fall from 39.6 MOPAC 7 crimes for each 1,000 people living in London to 38.6 crimes.

### **Local Context**

The latest local crime figures show that, for the period October 2014 to September 2015 compared with the previous 12 months, recorded crime in Harrow increased by 5.1% with the number of crimes for each 1,000 people rising from 49.5 to 50.3. For the MOPAC 7 crimes, there was a local reduction of 5.9% with 24.0 crimes for each 1,000 people – down from 25.5. These figures show that Harrow's crime rate is substantially below the London average. There were reductions in all of the MOPAC 7 categories except violence with injury and theft of motor vehicles.

More recently there has been a spike in residential burglaries with the share of all of London's burglaries occurring in Harrow increasing from a two year average of 2.94% to 4.21% in the last four months to February 2016.

This is the latest in a long series of community safety strategies that has been able to report a reduction locally, across London and nationally in most reported crimes types. Certain crime types have, however, seen an increase in the last year but this needs to

be set in the context of a 24.2% decline in the MOPAC 7 crimes in London since the baseline year of 2011/12. The impact of a crime on individuals, families and businesses is not diminished but the number of individuals, families and businesses that suffer from the loss and distress of being a victim of crime has reduced substantially over recent years and we are anxious to maintain this trend. Details of local crime statistics are given in a table at the end of this strategy.

However, we are also aware that wider criminal issues could have an even more significant impact which is why this strategy continues to prioritise for consideration the local potential for terrorist incidents to occur here and the threat posed by radicalisation as well as the potential for Child Sexual Exploitation and the impact of violence and gang activity. The threat of all of these issues appears to be real and immediate.



## **Aims and Ambitions**

Safer Harrow's overarching aim is, for Harrow to be the safest Borough in London. In attempting to maintain Harrow's current position as one of the safest Boroughs, the partnership needs to focus on more than just the volume crimes such as robbery and burglary. This is not just because of the progress that has been made in these areas but because of the threat that terrorism, radicalisation and child sexual exploitation for example present to our communities. This Strategy therefore focuses on these potentially community changing events in the following pages but also on the every day crimes and anti-social behaviour that we need to continue to reduce to make a difference for Harrow.

## **Getting things done**

**Partnership** - The job of making and keeping Harrow safe belongs to Safer Harrow, our statutory Community Safety Partnership. The partnership comprises the Council, the Police, the Fire Service, the National Probation Service, the new Community Rehabilitation Company that provides probation services to less serious offenders, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, a representative of the local magistrates, and the Voluntary and Community sector and a Secondary School Head Teacher. We hope to be able to add representatives of the Health Services in Harrow in the coming months.

Many of the organisations comprising the Partnership are under significant pressures with reducing management teams and are not always able to attend meetings. This is concerning as community safety cannot be achieved by any one or even just some of the essential organisations working in Harrow - it takes the collective effort of the key partners aligning strategies, priorities and operational activity.

There have been continual suggestions that the Police in particular will face changes to their structure which could include the dissolution of the link with London Boroughs as the basis for territorial police organisation. While announcements on any changes will not be made before the new Mayor is elected and has an opportunity to consider the implications of this sort of change, this suggestion continues to cause uncertainty which threatens to destabilise the partnership.

**Other Strategic Partnerships** - Safer Harrow is assisted in its work by the efforts of other strategic partnerships that have separate but, in some ways, complementary objectives. Partnerships such as the Harrow Safeguarding Children's Board, the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the Youth Offending Team Management Board in pursuing their own agendas contribute to keeping Harrow safe. Safer Harrow has cultivated and maintains links with these other strategic partnerships to ensure that we have a current overview of the relevant and related activity.

**Harrow Council** - The Council's participation includes public protection services which are environmental health, trading standards, licensing and the anti-social behaviour team, Children's Services, especially the Youth Service and the Youth Offending Team, the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Public Health Services which include drug and alcohol services and Policy for Domestic and Sexual Violence, Community Cohesion and work on radicalisation as well overall co-ordination.

**Support** - Managing the interventions designed to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour is complex. There are services to help people who are victims of crime, as well as a broad range of services and programmes to help people who may be at risk of offending or re-offending. Many offenders are also victims and need the support of the services that safeguard young people or adults from harm.

**Working efficiently** - In these times of austerity we need to ensure that we work effectively with unprecedented reductions in budgets within public services. Bringing all of these programmes together, making sure that gaps in service provision are identified and programmes changed if possible to fill them, eliminating duplication and ensuring that work achieves its objectives are all functions that Safer Harrow is designed to achieve. Safer Harrow has contributed to improving effectiveness by reviewed its own purpose and methods of working and adopting a more active and assertive role to make sure that the right things get done. While, as a Partnership Body, Safer Harrow cannot instruct other agencies what to do or how to do it, it can highlight need and encourage joint working, co-operation and participation in achieving improvements and solutions.

Safer Harrow now demands analysis to demonstrate how performance issues in one area have an impact on other services and on community safety issues. Safer Harrow is aware that community confidence in the safety of Harrow is related to the quality of all of the services that address specific community safety issues and that many of these services are inter-dependent. Safer Harrow provides the forum within which the impact of the quality of each programme can be assessed.

**Sharing information** - One of the ways in which Safer Harrow can add value is by facilitating the sharing of data and information in a timely and relevant way so that those who need to know can easily find out about problems, issues, individuals of interest and those needing support. A number of data sharing agreements have been reviewed in the last year and will be refreshed to facilitate better joint working.

Within the Council information is probably not shared as well as it could be to enable a joined up, seamless service to be offered to residents experiencing crime and anti-social behaviour. Safer Harrow will continue to support using technology to ensure that each of the public-facing services that support victims of crime and anti-social behaviour can access the history of all of the Council's interventions and communications with each victim so that the whole picture of what is happening and what has been done in the past can inform the development of new solutions. Serious failures can arise by addressing a problem without the benefit of the history of previous interactions between public services and relevant individuals. Safer harrow is also supporting the development of a dynamic problem profile that will show the extent and nature of violence, vulnerability and exploitation in Harrow and may be capable of being developed further to support work to combat other issues.

**Signposting** - Technology can also ensure that up-to-date information is available to help Council staff signpost residents with crime or anti-social behaviour problems to other agencies if they are better placed to help resolve the presenting issue.

## Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another. So, with a population that is becoming increasingly diverse, it is important to work actively to identify changing issues, to maintain Harrow's high levels of cohesion and to respond quickly and effectively when there are tensions to be addressed. Our concern is not just with race and culture - it also examines the many factors that could divide our local community, such as social class, prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, disability, faith or sexual orientation.

Becoming complacent is one of the quickest paths to the breakdown of community cohesion, so we need to focus both on addressing the divisions that do exist – because as strong as Harrow's community is, it is not perfect – and on building upon the excellent work that has already been done by residents and community organisations, in partnership with local public sector organisations.

Cohesive communities have five key attributes:

- **Sense of community:** for example whether people enjoy living in their neighbourhood and are proud of it; whether people look out for each other and pull together.
- **Similar life opportunities:** the extent to which people feel they are treated equally by a range of public services.
- **Respecting diversity:** whether people feel that ethnic and other differences are respected within their neighbourhood.
- **Political trust:** do people feel they can trust local politicians and councillors and do they feel that their views are represented?
- **Sense of belonging:** whether people identify with their local neighbourhood and know people in the local area.

Local areas with a high sense of community, political trust and sense of belonging show significantly lower levels of reported crime. Rates for different types of crime are predicted to reduce as sense of community goes up. Crime and anti-social behaviour are most prevalent in fractured communities.

These attributes can be influenced by other social programmes and outcomes such as:

- Social Mobility that widens access to jobs and training and encourages educational aspiration and enterprise
- Common Ground – a clear sense of shared aspirations and values which focus on what we have in common rather than our differences
- Participation to create a clear understanding and tolerance through doing things together and pulling together to achieve success
- Personal and Social Responsibility
- Tackling extremism and intolerance that deepen division and increase tensions
- Integration which comes from everyday life and long-term social and economic challenges which create barriers to a more integrated community.

The “sense of community” factor has been identified as the strongest predictor of various types of recorded crime. This “sense of community” factor is made up of some issues that include elements of social control, such as whether people pull together to improve the area, whether they feel safe walking at night, whether neighbours look out for each other and whether they trust people in their neighbourhood. But it also includes a more general sense of camaraderie such as whether people enjoy living in the area and are proud of the neighbourhood.

The “sense of belonging” factor also contains aspects of social control. This measures whether respondents know many people in their neighbourhood and whether they feel a sense of belonging to the local area and neighbourhood. This factor is not a strong predictor of lower levels of crime. This means that you don’t need to feel a strong sense of attachment to an area in order to benefit from the sense of community that is linked with lower levels of crime. A sense of community rather than a sense of attachment is the most important predictor of lower levels of crime. This is good news for areas with high population turnover, particularly because this sense of community is not only linked with lower levels of violent crime (the type of crime most often linked with the presence or absence of social control), but also with other types of neighbourhood level crime such as burglary from dwellings, and theft of and from motor vehicles.

A Community Cohesion Action Plan is being developed to which we will seek to contribute.

## Offending

### Countering Terrorism

The Government’s Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism, in the Home Office, works to counter the threat from terrorism. Their work is covered in the government’s counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

The strategy is based on 4 areas of work:

- **pursue:** to stop terrorist attacks in this country and against our interests overseas. This means detecting and investigating threats at the earliest possible stage, disrupting terrorist activity before it can endanger the public and, wherever possible, prosecuting those responsible.
- **prevent:** work to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and extremism – Counter terrorist propaganda; intervention programmes for those at risk; reporting of illegal on-line material when it comes to light; focus only on the vulnerable rather than give the impression that whole communities need to be convinced that terrorism is wrong
- **protect:** We know where and how we are vulnerable to terrorist attack and have reduced those vulnerabilities to an acceptable and a proportionate level; and
- **prepare:** working to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover from it as quickly as possible

The Prevent agenda falls to local authorities in the main. We have agreed a Prevent Action Plan that covers all aspects of the specific duties placed on the local authority and supports the requirements that are the responsibility of schools and colleges.

The Council and all of the statutory partners need to prepare for dealing with emergencies whatever their cause. Locally, emergency planning contingency plans have been prepared and continue to be updated to enable the Council and the emergency services to be as prepared as possible to respond to any emergency situation.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

The sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) is both complex and often inextricably linked to other problems and difficulties. It is defined as child abuse and those children and young people who are sexually exploited face huge risks to their physical, emotional and psychological health and well-being.

Some groups of children and young people are more vulnerable to targeting by perpetrators i.e. those in Local Authority care, but the national statistics indicate that many of those being exploited are actually living with their families.

CSE is by its nature coercive but many of the children and young people experiencing this will not recognise this, believing the so called relationship with their exploiter is entered freely and not seeing themselves as victims of exploitation. However, a child or young person cannot consent to their own abuse. Their behaviour is not voluntary and once entrapped in this form of abuse, acts or threats of violence may impede their escape and access to help.

There is link between CSE and children and young people who are trafficked for sexual purposes which can and does occur anywhere within the UK.

Tackling CSE is difficult due to the covert nature of the activity and the difficulty young people have in both recognising the abuse and being able to disclose what is happening to them to someone whom they can properly trust, perhaps in the face of threats from their abuser.

Creating opportunities for young people to build positive relationships and tackling their associated problems, as well as promoting the young persons participation in their support plan, are vital components in dealing holistically with CSE.

Together with our partners, we have developed some operational structures to take forward our shared vision to protect and safeguard our children and young people from sexual exploitation. We will continue to learn from others and from Inspection outcomes. Harrow Safeguarding Children Board is leading on implementing strategies and standards to address CSE, but Safer Harrow ensures all relevant elements of the partnership are involved in and contribute to keeping our young people safe from CSE.

## **Gangs**

Harrow has adopted a well used definition of a gang which is a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of people, who see themselves and are seen by others as a discernible group and engage in a range of criminal and anti-social activities including violence. A gang will identify with or lay claim to a particular territory and, potentially, will be in conflict with other similar gangs.

Safer Harrow is developing a Gangs strategy that seeks to address violence, vulnerability and exploitation; reduce the number of people drawn to gang membership through education, diversion and other means, equip existing gang members with support to exit their gang, disrupt gang activity through investigation and enforcement, particularly related to gangs' economic activity; and enable the families of gang members to encourage and support withdrawal from gangs and to safeguard the younger siblings of gang members. The strategy will be supported by the dynamic problem profile that is being developed, hopefully utilising data from a range of partners.

The development of the Strategy has benefited from a Peer Review undertaken by the Home Office Ending Youth and Gang Violence Team. The Review recommendations have been added into the emerging Strategy and further work with the review Team is underway to identify further opportunities to prevent gang culture becoming further embedded in Harrow.

## **Domestic Violence**

Safer Harrow has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Council's Domestic and Sexual Violence (DSV) Strategy and ensuring that the impact of the Council's investment fund is maximised to support and maintain existing services and, where possible, lead to additional Domestic and Sexual Violence services.

The key priorities from the DSV Strategy are:

- an increased investment in services for high risk victims of domestic violence;
- an attempt to provide earlier interventions both through specialist support and by equipping professionals working for all relevant agencies with knowledge and confidence to recognise the indicators of abuse and refer appropriately; and
- increasing community awareness and capacity to counteract the influences that lead to forced marriage, honour-based violence and Female Genital Mutilation.

In the last year, the Council re-commissioned its primary Domestic and Sexual Violence Services contract to provide an even better integrated and co-ordinated service that takes into account the provision made by MOPAC in the Pan-London service and the emerging needs around issues such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour-based violence and Forced Marriage. A pilot therapeutic family project is currently underway and this may form an ongoing offer to address the domestic violence as part of the Government's renewed Troubled Families agenda.

## **Volume Crime**

The Strategic Assessment has identified that for the period October 2104 to September 2015 compared with the previous 12 months, recorded crime in Harrow increased by 5.1% with the number of crimes for each 1,000 people rising from 49.5 to 50.3. For the MOPAC 7 crimes, there was a local reduction of 5.9% with 24.0 crimes for each 1,000 people – down from 25.5. These figures show that Harrow's crime rate is substantially below the London average. There were reductions in all of the MOPAC 7 categories except violence with injury and theft of motor vehicles.

More recently there has been a spike in residential burglaries with the share of all of London's burglaries occurring in Harrow increasing from a two year average of 2.94% to 4.21% in the last four months.

Ex-offenders are supported by the Community Rehabilitation Company to try to reduce re-offending and while the Integrated Offender Management Scheme works to help those at most risk of re-offending to stay out of trouble, more attention needs to be given to enabling this scheme to liaise effectively with programmes to help people into work, into accommodation and to address substance misuse

A lot of crime is related to addictions – mostly drugs and/or alcohol – and the Council has in the last year recommissioned services to help people address their misuse of these substances.

The Youth Offending Service has been restructured in the last year and new IT provided to help manage the complex processes around management of and support to young people at risk of offending and re-offending. The introduction of this IT has not been problem free but it promises, in the medium term, to make the operation of the team more effective. Locally, there has been a recent increase in the number of new entrants to the criminal justice system but the re-offending rate has declined as has the use of custody.

## **Hate Crime**

Hate crime happens because of hostility towards a person's race, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, religion or faith. No one should have to tolerate incidents of hate crime.

Tackling hate crime matters because of the damage it causes to victims and their families, but also because of the negative impact it has on communities in relation to cohesion and integration. There is clear evidence to show that being targeted because of who you are has a greater impact on your wellbeing than being the victim of a 'non-targeted' crime. We also know that low level hate crimes can escalate quickly if not dealt with early, with victims often being targeted repeatedly. As a number of cases have shown, this escalation can have tragic consequences, if it is not challenged quickly. More widely, tackling hate crime effectively – and being seen to tackle it – can help foster strong and positive relations between different sections of the community and support community cohesion.

All the available research and testimonials from voluntary organisations suggest that hate crime is hugely under-reported. Some victims may be reluctant to come forward for fear of attracting further abuse, for cultural reasons, or because they don't believe the authorities will take them seriously. More isolated sections of the community are even more unlikely to report crimes. Under-reporting is a significant issue among the following groups:

- New migrant communities, including Asylum and Refugee communities
- Gypsy, Irish Traveller and Roma communities
- Transgender victims
- Disabled victims

Hate crime makes victims of whole communities with repercussions beyond those being targeted. Hate crime has a significant impact on the perception of crime and community cohesion and can lead to feelings of fear, stigmatisation and isolation among those who share characteristics with victims, even if they have not been victimised themselves.

Analysis of the hate crime data undertaken by MOPAC indicates that in the rolling year to December 15, the number of recorded offences in each category in Harrow is:

- Faith hate crime increased by 4 from 35 to 39
- Sexual Orientation hate crime increased by 7 from 15 to 22
- Racist and religious hate crime increased by 78 from 263 to 341
- There was no reported Transgender hate crime

Hate crime can be reported directly to the police. Additionally, the Council has commissioned Stop Hate UK, a national charity that works in this area to take reports of hate crime and to advise victims of the support available to them. Stop Hate UK provide anonymous and independent support and can be contacted on their 24 hour helpline, 0800 138 1625. Reports of hate crime can also be made online by visiting [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org) or texting 077 1798 9025.

An action that is common to the Hate Crime and Domestic Violence categories is improving reporting rates so that not only are individual cases able to be addressed but the actual scale of the problems emerges. The most effective way of increasing reporting rates is for cases to be resolved quickly and effectively and for the outcomes to be publicised so that other victims see the value in reporting. Other approaches include developing better partnerships with schools generally as young people appear to be disproportionately at risk of being victims of Hate Crime.

## **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Anti-social behaviour can have a devastating effect on people's lives. Incidents of anti-social behaviour can range from something that is a mild annoyance to something that causes fear and insecurity. It could be a one-off event or something that happens over and over again. We define anti-social behaviour as "any conduct or activity that causes harm to an individual, to a community or to their environment". This could be an action



by someone else that leaves you feeling alarmed, harassed or distressed. It can include noisy or abusive neighbours, littering or graffiti. Some of this behaviour is criminal and therefore illegal whereas other forms of anti-social behaviour can be addressed through other means such as tenancy conditions or civil injunctions.

You do not have to put up with anti-social behaviour. If you cannot deal with it yourself and you need to report it, you can contact police or your local council. If you live in social housing, you can report it to your landlord. The Council and the Police work very closely together to sort out anti-social behaviour.

If you are suffering disproportionately because you are vulnerable, or because there is repeated anti-social behaviour occurring, we will treat you as a priority. Please tell the Council, Police or your landlord about your circumstances when you call. Your report will be assessed and, wherever appropriate, an officer will be sent to investigate.

## **Support**

### **Victims of crime**

A range of victim services have been developed across London, delivered both by statutory agencies and the Voluntary and Community Sector. The type of support offered varies from helplines and online forums to direct work with victims offering emotional and practical support. The length of contact victims have with services is determined according to their need.

At the time of writing, funding for Victim Services for 2016/17 and beyond has not been announced. This puts the continuation of services commissioned by MOPAC in some jeopardy although the Ministry of Justice said in January this year that a funding announcement will be made soon. The services at risk include information about the progress of court cases and, in some circumstances, about the management of offenders as well as victims being afforded the opportunity to make victim statements at various stages of proceedings and parole hearings. This also includes support for victims and witnesses throughout any criminal proceedings.

If you've been a victim of any crime or have been affected by a crime committed against someone you know, Victim Support can help you find the strength to deal with what you've been through as well providing some practical help. Locally, Victim Support can be contacted on 0845 450 3936.

### **Safer Neighbourhood Board**

In 2013, MOPAC reviewed their support for local Police engagement and accountability structures and decided to sponsor the creation of a Safer Neighbourhood Board for each Borough. In Harrow, a Board was established in April 2014 and has met quarterly throughout the year receiving data packs on crime levels and police performance and submitting bids for projects to address issues of concern.

## Fire Service

The Fire Service provide free home fire safety visits, particularly for vulnerable households, during which they will assess your home and offer advice on how to make it safer; where appropriate they will also fit a smoke alarm. The home fire safety visit is usually for people regarded as having a higher risk of fire in the home such as:

- Older people living alone
- People with mobility, vision or hearing impairments
- People accessing mental health service users
- Those liable to intoxication through alcohol and/or drug use

Visits shouldn't last more than a few minutes and could significantly help prevent fires.

The Fire Service also provides advice and information about issues such as hoarding which can increase the risk of fire and prevent quickly leaving a burning building, carbon monoxide poisoning, barbeques, bonfires and fireworks to help keep residents safe.

The Service also works hard to tackle the problem of arson. The number of deliberate fires is coming down, but more still needs to be done because these fires damage property, take firefighters away from training and fire safety work, and can lead to people being hurt or killed.

They tackle arson by working closely with other organisations like the Police, and also raise awareness of the problems of arson by using publicity and campaigns. Through youth engagement programmes, they talk to young people about the consequences of crimes like arson and hoax calls.

A range of people help tackle arson including:

- Fire investigation units, teams who attend fires after firefighters have put the fire out. Fire investigators work closely with police to find out how deliberate fires are started. Teams use specialist equipment and techniques, and can even call on fire investigation dogs, trained to sniff out accelerants such as petrol.
- An Arson Task Force, which brings together the Fire and Rescue Service, the police and government departments, to reduce arson-related deaths, injuries and fire damage.
- The juvenile firesetters intervention team (JFIS), which works with young people who have demonstrated firesetting behaviour.

## MOPAC Crimes in Harrow 2014 & 2015

All figures stated below were taken from the MET Police website that was available at the end of January 2016.

