

### Report to Community Safety Forum – 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011

#### Subject: Crime trends and performance in Brighton & Hove: Position at end January 2011

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Wards Affected: All

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report is intended to report on recent developments relating to priority areas in the [Brighton & Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy, 2008-11](#). It describes some recent activities and also provides statistical police data on key crime types up to the end of January 2011 and progress against targets.
- 1.2 Graphs with monthly data going back to April 2006 are also provided. 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 ten months of 2010/11 (to end of January) there was a reduction in overall crime of 2.1% compared to the same months of 2009/10 and this falls just short of our 3% reduction target. Numbers of total crimes were particularly low in December, but rose again during January. The December dip was common to different sorts of crime, including criminal damage, vehicle theft and other types of theft and handling and violence against the person.

### **Criminal Damage**

- 3.2 Criminal damage offences during the first ten months of 2010/11 were 13% fewer than in the same months in 2009/10. Over the past 18 months the Environment Improvement Team in partnership with Sussex Probation have delivered works to improve public spaces through Community Payback valued at £711,000.
- 3.3 Environment audits involving the police, residents and others in the city centre and on estates have taken place to identify issues and concerns and then work has been undertaken to rectify them. An example of neighbourhood partnership work involving residents is a targeted poster campaign aimed at perpetrators in East Brighton in parallel with focussed activity by the neighbourhood policing team. This was successful in tackling an ongoing spate of vandalism to residents' property and cars.
- 3.4 The number of fire service recorded arson incidents over the last few months remains much lower than in the same months in previous years, continuing the long term decline. Quick interventions and increased patrols in known problem areas are limiting the opportunity for fire setting.

### **Violent Crime**

- 3.5 The number of violent offences involving injury (including both serious and other injury) has reduced in the first ten months of 2010/11 by 6% compared with the same months in 2009/10, which is better than the 3% reduction target.
- 3.6 The main focus of work to tackle violent crime continues to be around problematic alcohol use. Action plans looking at the four key themes of prevention, availability, night time economy and treatment which are pertinent to alcohol misuse have been drafted and will provide the structure of forthcoming work across both the health and crime/disorder agendas.
- 3.7 The Alcohol Brief Intervention Service undertook nearly 3,500 interventions in the period from October to December. This ongoing project works with people with alcohol issues who come into contact with services in a range of medical contexts and other scenarios. It seeks to help them think about their use of alcohol and improve their skills in drinking safely, as well as referring high risk drinkers to other specialist services. Recent developments have been to increase coverage of the programme across GP surgeries.

### **Sexual Offences**

- 3.8 In the first ten months of 2010/11 there have been 238 sexual offences reported to the police, 7% more than in the same months of 2009/10. Arrangements between the Sexual Assault Referral Centre and our local rape crisis, ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisor) and counselling services continue to support local victims. Funding bids have been made to secure the continuation of these services into the next financial year.

### **Acquisitive Crimes**

- 3.9 The number of **domestic burglaries** in the first ten months of 2010/11 is 18% fewer than in 2009/10, continuing a longer term decline since 2008/9. There have been fewer series of linked offences recently, but when local domestic burglary activity has emerged showing a pattern, steps have been taken to successfully identify those responsible. Work to improve the security of the homes of repeat burglary victims or others who might be particularly vulnerable is ongoing.

- 3.10 The number of **vehicle thefts** during 2010/11 to date have decreased by 11% compared with 2009/10. This decrease applies both to thefts of and thefts from motor vehicles. Performance in both vehicle theft and domestic burglary remains very strong and we rank nearly at the top of our benchmarking comparator authorities in both of these crime areas.
- 3.11 Since drugs misuse is an important motivator for acquisitive crimes, work to prevent problematic use developing and to help users address their problematic drugs use remains key to removing an important 'driver' for these types of crime. The Partnership continues to achieve improvement targets around getting drug misusers into effective treatment. A particular focus to increase the effectiveness of this work has been to reduce the number of people who drop out of treatment in an unplanned way.
- 3.12 During the first ten months of 2010/11 police recorded **cycle thefts** increased by 12% compared with last year. Despite the usual seasonal drop in the number of thefts during the winter, the data tell us that there is a persistent cycle theft problem in the city. However, compared with benchmarked local authority areas, we are currently performing slightly better than the average of our group. The council is continuing to increase the number of cycle parking stands in the city by at least 80 per year to assist people to lock their bike securely, as well as providing publicity on the best way to lock their bike.

### **Domestic Violence**

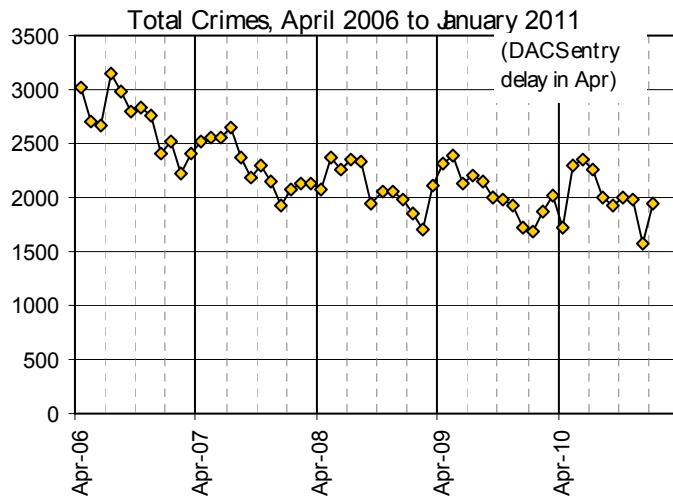
- 3.13 Numbers of domestic violence crimes and crime-related incidents reported to the police remain high, with numbers since May mostly above 300 per month. Over half of reports are against repeat victims. During the first ten months of 2010/11 numbers are 3% higher than in the same months last year. While seeking to decrease the incidence of DV, there is also ongoing work to increase reporting. The percentage of finalised court cases which have successful outcomes remains at 67%. Funding bids have been made to support the continuation of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and part funding the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service into the next financial year. To coincide with LGBT history month a series of five domestic violence resources have been developed. They give in-depth information on domestic violence to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people and were developed through consultation with people from these 'communities'. Go to [www.safeinthecity.info](http://www.safeinthecity.info) for further information. The domestic violence 'intelligent commissioning' process has identified key commissioning outcomes for the future.

### **Hate Incidents and Crimes**

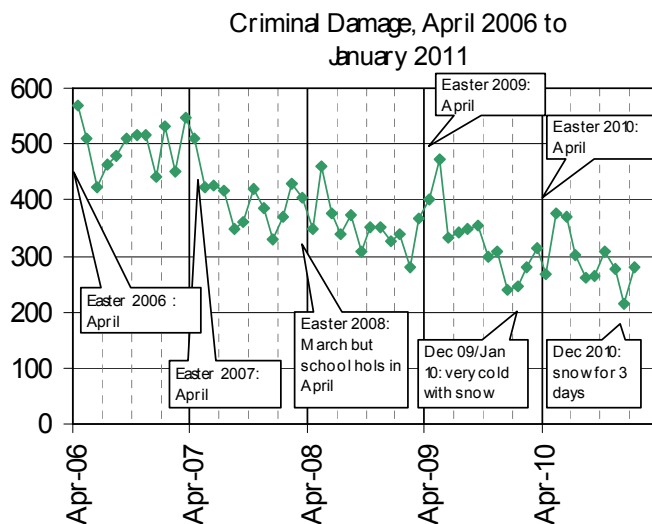
- 3.14 Data up to the end of December show that the number of racist and religiously motivated incidents (RRMI) recorded on the police crime database continues to decline. However, the number recorded through the multi-agency Hate Incident Report Form remains relatively stable and there were a total of 445 reports between April and December 2010. There has been ongoing outreach work to encourage reporting of incidents, including holding stalls at community events and training to staff. The under-reporting of hate incidents by health agencies had previously been identified and positive steps have now been taken to increase reporting and information sharing through the use of the Hate Incident Report Form. The 'See It, Say It, Report It' DVD and resource pack for secondary schools and young people settings has now been launched and has received good feedback from young people.

- 3.15 Police recorded LGBT-motivated hate crimes and incidents also continue to fall. Recent work by the police to engage with the LGBT community has included a 'meet and greet' night at Revenge club and attendance at a Pubwatch meeting in Kemptown where LGBT venue managers were invited to take part. With support from the NHS, safety information has been included in the GPs' newsletter and a flyer distributed to GP surgeries in the city. Events run in conjunction with LGBT history month in February provides an opportunity for police and partners to engage with local people and encourage reporting of incidents through an exhibition at the Jubilee Library, LGBTQ events at Sussex University, and Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals LGBT Forum. There will be a regular monthly drop-in in the Kemptown Crypt being run by the police from February onwards (7pm on the last Wednesday), with associated publicity and distribution of posters by PCSOs to promote it. Also new social media are being used as an additional way for the police to engage with the community.
- 3.16 There were 25 disability hate incidents reported to the Partnership Community Safety Team between April and December 2010. Training to further embed reporting of disability hate incidents across voluntary and statutory agencies to increase access to support services is an important focus of current work. The planned launch of the 'True Vision' easy read self reporting forms and headline messages to raise the profile of disability of hate incidents in December was cancelled due to snow, but is to be rescheduled.

## Crime trends up to January 2011



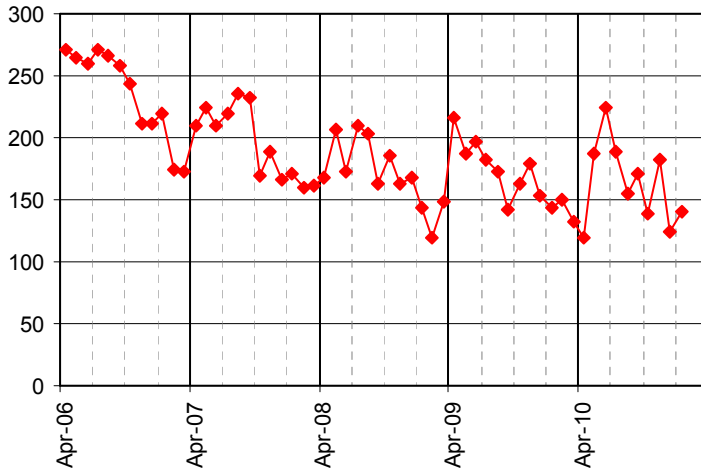
3.17 The numbers of total crimes in December were the lowest monthly figure in more than eight of years at below 1,600. However, the number of crimes jumped up again to nearly 2,000 in the month of January. Overall, the downward trend long term downward trend with seasonal variations continues<sup>1</sup>.



3.18 Recent months have continued to record relatively low levels of criminal damage compared with previous years, especially in the month of December.

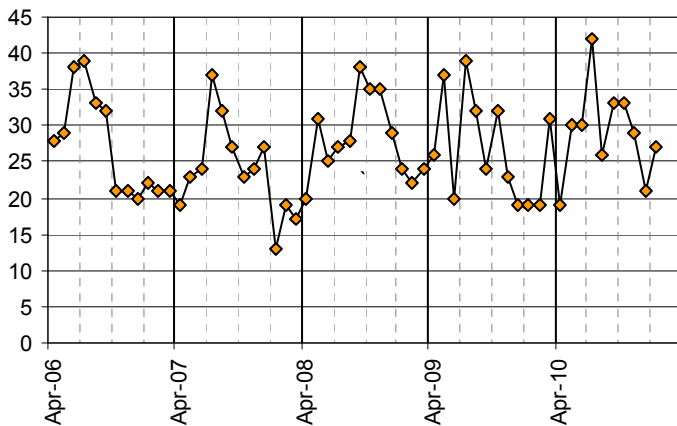
<sup>1</sup> There was a delay in entering crimes into the police data recording system in April 2010, so numbers are showing fewer in that month, and numbers in the following two months are correspondingly enhanced. This effect is seen in a number of the crime types shown in this document.

All Injury Violence  
April 2006 to January 2011



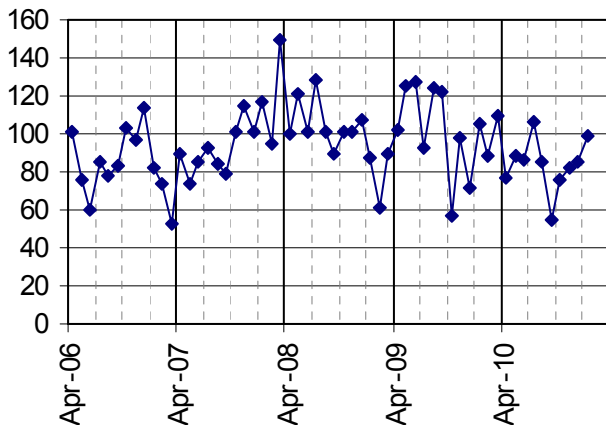
3.19 There is a clear seasonal pattern in injury violence. Monthly numbers have shown a significant drop since the peak in June and have remained relatively low over the Christmas/New Year period.

Sexual Offences  
April 2006 - January 2011

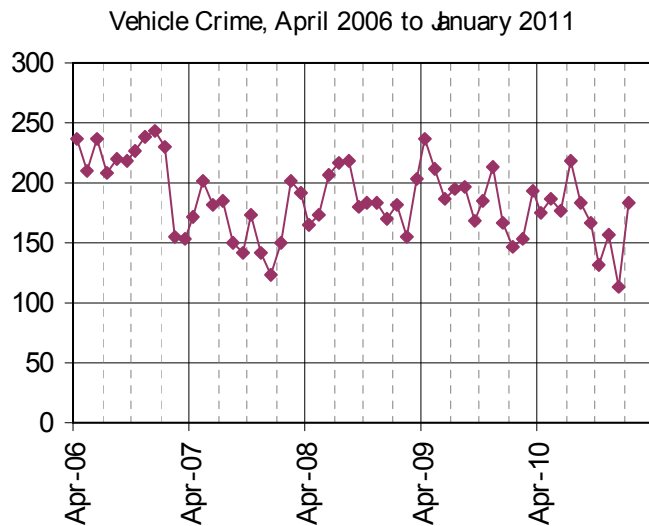


3.20 Number of sexual offences tend to fluctuate from month to month and it is difficult to be certain about trends. In the first ten months of 2010/11 numbers are a little higher than in the same months in 2009/10.

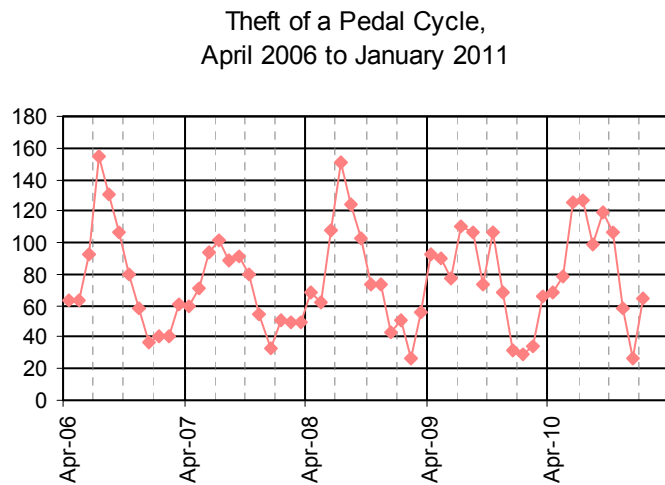
Domestic Burglary, April 2006 to January 2011



3.21 The number of domestic burglaries dropped to a particularly low level in September and have steadily climbed up in subsequent months, but overall, numbers in 2010/11 remain much lower than the previous year.



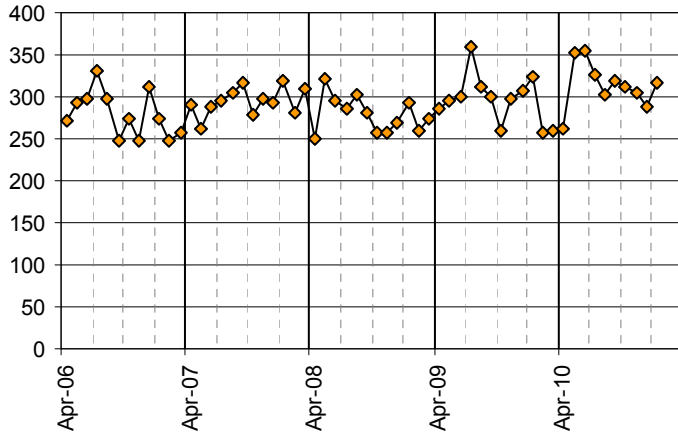
3.22 Vehicle crimes in the month of December dropped to the lowest monthly number (114 crimes) for at least 8 years, although they rose steeply again in January when 184 were recorded.



3.23 There has been the usual seasonal drop in the number of thefts, especially in December (which coincided with particularly poor weather for cycling) but numbers in January rose to over 60 thefts higher than the number in that month during previous years.

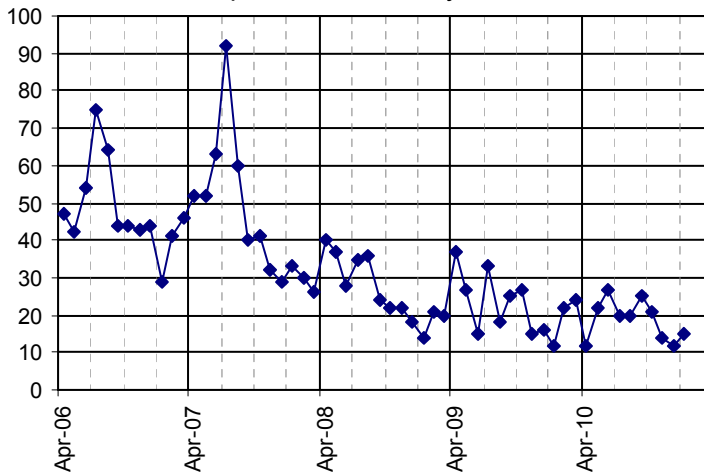
3.24 Police crime data presented in this report only reflect those crimes which are reported and recorded. There is likely to be a level of underreporting in many crime types. However, domestic violence and the hate crimes on this page are likely to be particularly liable to underreporting.

Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents,  
April 2006 - January 2011



3.25 The number of domestic violence crimes and crime-related incidents have mostly remained at over 300 per month since April, generally higher than previous years.

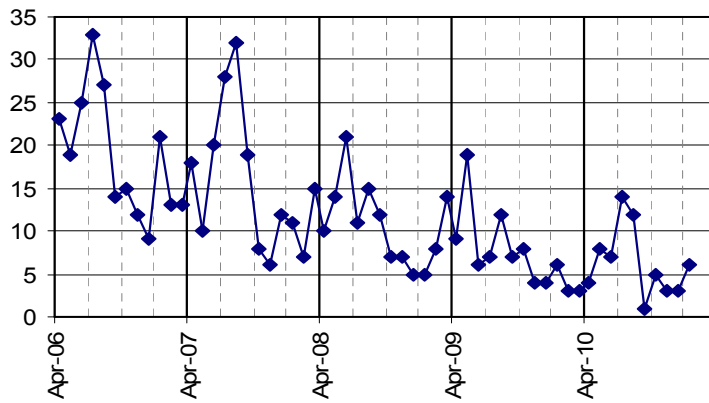
Racist and Religiously Motivated Crimes and Incidents (police crime database),  
April 2006 to January 2011



3.26 The declining trend in racist and religiously motivated incidents and crimes appears to be continuing with between 10 and 15 recorded per month over the last three months.



LGBT Hate Crimes and crime-related Incidents  
(police crime database), Apr 2006 to Jan 2011



3.27 The number of police-recorded LGBT hate crimes and crime-related incidents continue to show a seasonal pattern overlaying a long term reduction in the number of reports.

## Performance data for key crime types, 2010/11

Police recorded crimes April to January (inclusive)	number of crimes Apr 09- Jan 10	number of crimes Apr 10- Jan 11	reduction target (from 2009/10 baseline)	performance against target to date		rank within 15 bench- marked CSPs
Total Crimes	20503	20080	-3%		<b>not on target</b>	7
Criminal Damage	3338	2920	-5%	<b>on target</b>		11
Injury Violence <sup>2</sup>	1737	1632	-3%	<b>on target</b>		7 <sup>3</sup>
Sexual Offences	271	290	-	-		9
Domestic Burglary	1025	839	-	-		2
Theft from/of a Motor Vehicle	1907	1691	-	-		2
Pedal Cycle Theft	785	875	-	-		7
Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents	3041	3137	-	-		n/a <sup>4</sup>
Racist/Rel. Crimes and Incidents	239	188	-	-		n/a
LGBT Hate Crimes and Incidents	82	63	-	-		n/a

<sup>2</sup> As defined by Sussex Police

<sup>3</sup> iQuanta category 'wounding (serious and other)'

<sup>4</sup> 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 underreporting and local work is being undertaken to increase reporting of these crimes, it is not appropriate to judge performance in comparison with other CSPs based on the number of police recorded crimes.

## **Appendix.**

### **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

