

Report to Community Safety Forum – 10th June 2013

Subject: Crime trends and performance in Brighton & Hove, Position up to April 2013

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Wards Affected: All

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report describes recent activities and progress relating to priority areas in the [Brighton & Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011-14](#). It also provides statistical updates for key crime groups for 2012/13, ie. April to March 2013.
- 1.2 Graphs showing monthly crime data from April 2009 to April 2013 are also provided. These set recent data in the context of both longer term trends and also seasonal crime cycles (where applicable).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) The Community Safety Forum notes the information provided in this report and is invited to:
 - i) Feedback on any developments from their community or organisation's experience which may help the understanding and interpretation of the data and trends contained in this report.
 - ii) Consider the potential for supporting crime reduction and community safety priorities within their own organisation or local community.

3. INFORMATION:

Total police recorded crime

- 3.1 Total crimes recorded by the police declined year on year between 2004/5 and 2011/12. However, 2012/13 this decline has levelled out with a total of 23,602 police recorded crimes, marginally fewer than the number recorded in 2011/12, just meeting the target to reduce the number of crimes recorded. Theft and handling offences increased by 4% and this influenced the trend in total crimes since they have made 49% of total crime in 2012/13. The end of year position for theft and handling offences has shown an improvement compared with the position in October 2012 when they was showing a 9.5% increase and total crimes were up by 2.4%.

Neighbourhoods and quality of life

- 3.2 In 2012/13 (Apr to Mar) there were 11.5% fewer offences of criminal damage recorded by the police than in 2011/12, continuing the long term downward trend. Street appearance surveys continue to be carried out by Cityclean and show that graffiti remains at relatively low levels, but that litter is increasing. Sussex Police telephone public perception surveys back up the result in respect of litter.
- 3.3 Partnership work at the Local Action Team level is ongoing and LATs have identified a need to be better promoted, accountable and accessible to the communities they aim to represent. In response to this, materials to promote LATs which are suitable for use at events and 'pop up' opportunities such as school gates and local fêtes are being produced. Community groups are also being supported to set up and manage their own independent web presence to enable them to share ideas and solutions and officers have attended events to promote community involvement in community safety/crime reduction activities.
- 3.4 The Community Safety Projects Team continues to feed into development projects in the city to improve safety. An example of this has been to improve the design of the subway at the bottom of West Street leading to the seafront after dark so that it encourages people to use it rather than crossing at road level, where there have been a number of road casualties.
- 3.5 The Safe in the City website, which became live (www.safeinthecity.info) before Christmas, has been structured around providing residents with information they need (getting help section) and with providing opportunities for them to help improve safety in the city (getting involved section). The website has a facility for on-line reporting on ASB and hate crime incidents. It also holds key documents for the partnership, such as the recently produced second revision of the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011-14.

Drugs Misuse

- 3.6 In February 2013 national data for drug related deaths that occurred during 2011 were published. 20 deaths were recorded in Brighton & Hove, which is a 35% reduction on 2010 when there were 34 (and 50 in 2009). The 2012 result also represents an improvement in the relative ranking within the UK; the city no longer has the highest number of deaths recorded per head of population, as we now rank at eighth highest. Interim local data suggest that numbers in 2012 are on a par with those in 2011 (16 recorded in the first nine months). The Independent Drugs Commission Report¹, published in April, notes the trend in drug-related deaths as "encouraging" whilst emphasising that "the distress caused to families and friends makes it a necessity that better ways are constantly sought to minimise these personal tragedies". A working group has been set up to take forward the 19 recommendations in the report.
- 3.7 The work of the Neighbourhood Liaison Officers, who work to reduce substance misuse harm in communities and families, has been promoted to Local Action Teams and, as a result, areas for focussed work have been identified and local action plans are being taken forward to address specific issues. Another example of local area

¹ Report available at <http://www.safeinthecity.info/sitc-document/independent-drugs-commission-final-report-april-2013>.

partnership work is an initiative which is being taken forward to reduce the problem of drug consumption in stairwells of low/high rise blocks of flats.

Reducing Offending

- 3.8 There was an increase in all acquisitive crimes (incl. theft/handling, burglary and robbery) of 4.6% in 2012/13 compared with 2011/12 and this builds on an increase experienced the previous year (2010/11). This increase has been driven by the steep increase in theft and handling offences experienced up until October 2012, but since then these offences have dropped (as mentioned in para. 3.1 above) and at the end of the year there is a lower increase in acquisitive crime than there was half way through the year.
- 3.9 The number of domestic burglaries in 2012/13 (1,143) was 45% higher than in 2011/12 (791) when numbers were at a historically low level. Following a steep rise in the number of domestic burglaries last summer numbers remained high until January, but there has been a drop in subsequent months. The number of domestic burglaries in the month of April is at a more typical volume. There were 10% fewer vehicle crimes in 2012/13 compared with 2011/12. This comprises 15% fewer crimes of theft from vehicles, while the number of thefts of motor vehicles (fewer in number than thefts from vehicles) has gone up by 5%.
- 3.10 Partnership work aimed at stopping reoffending and tackling the underlying reasons behind offending is ongoing. Screening of 1,769 people, and medical assessments by specialist nurses of 450 offenders at Brighton courts and custody suites have taken place between August 2012 and March 2013. This has led to referrals of 134 clients to medical services, with mental health being the most common issue identified. A sentencing option related to mental health is being made available for appropriate cases. Further progress has also been made around Community Reintegration which seeks to enable offenders to become better citizens, rebuild lives, and connect with services and people in their local community. This includes the support of a volunteer beyond the end of statutory interventions.
- 3.11 A series of restorative justice training events for volunteers and staff began in May 2013. Restorative justice enables those affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward. When targeted, especially around acquisitive or violent offences and where the offender has a medium or high risk of reoffending, it can both reduce further offending and result in high victim satisfaction.

Alcohol Misuse and Alcohol-related Disorder

- 3.12 Alcohol-related hospital admissions were on an upwards trend from the beginning of 2010 until October 2011, but this trend appears to have reversed over the last few months, with numbers recorded between Apr 2012 and Jan 2013 being 8.5% lower than in the same months in 2011/12.
- 3.13 The number of injury violence crimes climbed up from a low point in February 2012 and continued on a rising trend until September (peaking later in the year than in previous years) but dropped again up to February which recorded the lowest number for the year. In 2012/13 there were 1,578 injury violence crimes, an increase of 1.7% compared with the same months in 2011/12, and against a 3% reduction target.
- 3.14 Work continues around developing a network of designated best practice retailers who are branded as such and commit to specific measures such as better proxy

purchase detection, corralled drinking areas, limited alcohol promotion and better information for consumers.

- 3.15 A recent project has looked at student drinking behaviours. This was led by students as part of their volunteer placement posting. The results will be used to develop a health promotion campaign directed at students with the aim of reducing excessive drinking.
- 3.16 A Scrutiny Panel on Alcohol is to be convened and will focus on four areas: developing alcohol free events; responsible retailers; promoting responsible drinking and Brighton and Hove's culture as a party city.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- 3.17 In 2012/13 22% of the 1,507 people surveyed in the Sussex Police local neighbourhood telephone survey² believed that one or more of six types of ASB (drug dealing/use; drunk/rowdy behaviour; vandalism/graffiti; litter/dog fouling; noisy neighbours; and teenagers hanging around) was a fairly big or very big problem in their neighbourhood. This compares poorly with the 16% of residents surveyed in the last nine months of 2011/12. The area of ASB which has contributed most to this increase is litter/dog fouling. All types of ASB problems were perceived to be more problematic by residents living in the city centre.
- 3.18 The dedicated duty line for anti-social behaviour and hate crime has been running since May 2012 (01273 292735 or communitysafety.casework@brighton-hove.gov.uk). In the twelve months up to the end of April 2013 613 reports have been made to the duty system; 386 of those relate to ASB, 86 to race, 30 to disability, 16 to sexual orientation, 3 to trans gender, 1 to religion and 91 others. Over that 12 month period there were 126 new cases for the Casework Team.
- 3.19 Partnership work is in place to address the behaviour of those committing youth disorder. This involves dedicated officers in the police and Casework Team focussing on the behaviour of the most prolific youth ASB offenders with a view to taking out ASBOs or other enforcement action as necessary to dissipate the group and reduce their ASB and impact on communities and individuals. The Youth Offending Team, Integrated Team around the Family, Education and the Youth Service are working together to ensure appropriate support is in place for young people involved in the group. There is also work to develop an early intervention strategy which ensures signs of problems are addressed an early stage, preventing young people's behaviour escalating into criminality and youth disorder where possible.
- 3.20 Findings from the Community Trigger trial operating in the city has helped to inform the development of the new Anti-Social Behaviour Act. The trigger process will continue to operate locally until the ASB Act is implemented in 2014 so that services can continue to develop and enhance their responses to those who activate the trigger.

Children, Young People and Families

- 3.21 The number of young people aged 10-17 entering the criminal justice system continues to decrease (69 in 2012/13 compared with 87 in 2011/12). However, the

² The sampling rate for the Local Neighbourhood Survey carried out by Sussex Police is being reduced from April 2013, so in future it will no longer be possible to analyse these data down to police district level.

most recently available data (although this dates back to the 12 months ending Jun 2011) show that reoffending by young offenders was on an increasing trend and that there was more re-offending by young offenders in Brighton & Hove compared with most other local authorities. The review of our Youth Offending Service is approaching completion and the resulting action plan will focus on improving outcomes for young offenders.

3.22 Key findings from the 2012 Safe and Well at School Survey include:

- Just under a quarter of pupils aged 14-16 years reported having tried drugs, for whom cannabis being used most frequently (80%): Of those using cannabis, 19% use it most days and a further 16% use it at least once a week.
- Of those aged 11-14 years, 35% had ever tried an alcoholic drink, lower than the 60% reported in 2010. Older children (14-16 years) reported much higher levels of drinking; 79% had tried alcohol (lower than 85% in 2010) and, of these, 34% had had an alcoholic drink in the last week and 58% had been drunk in the last month.

3.23 Work by RU-OK (the young people's substance misuse service) with families/parents/carers around the misuse of substances by their young people is being well attended and has received positive feedback from participants.

Domestic Violence

3.24 In 2012/13 there were 3,404 domestic violence crimes and incidents recorded on the police crime database, 29 (1%) more than in 2011/12. Domestic violence crimes made up 14% of total crimes recorded in 2012/13. If this increase represents more people coming forward to report incidents of domestic violence, this is a positive result.

3.25 In 2012/13 the police solved 48% of domestic violence crimes with 32% of crimes being charged. In this same period 68% of finalised court cases resulted in a positive outcome (mostly a conviction), an improvement on the position earlier in the year and on a par with the level achieved in 2010/11, but lower than the 78% achieved in 2011/12. A meeting of agencies concerned took place to help understand any reasons behind unsuccessful outcomes and to agree any appropriate actions to improve DV court outcomes. The withdrawal of victims/witnesses from the criminal justice process is the single biggest factor behind unsuccessful prosecutions. Court waiting times have increased and this may be affecting victim/witness withdrawal. There have also been changes to the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts from April. We will continue to monitor and respond to any effects of these changes.

3.26 Other work is seeking to improve how victims who have reported to the police are referred on to support services, including Victim Support and RISE. As well as improving victim experience, this work also presents an opportunity to improve access to support for high risk heterosexual male victims of domestic abuse.

3.27 The change to the definition of domestic violence to include 16 – 18 year olds and coercive control was introduced nationally in April 2013. The Violence Against Women and Girls Commissioner is working with others to assess the impact of this locally and integrate the new definition of domestic violence into multi-agency working.

Sexual Offences

- 3.28 The number of police recorded serious sexual offences in 2012/13 was 373, and this compares with 332 recorded in 2011/12. This increase of 12% contrasts with the position half way through the year when a decrease was noted. The last six months has shown a notable increase compared with months earlier in the year. This coincides with the release of publicity around abuse by Jimmy Savile which may have increased people's confidence to report incidents. In 2012/13 76 (84%) of the 91 sexual offences which have reached the court stage have resulted in a successful outcome.
- 3.29 Recent work in this area has included a review of access to and uptake of counselling services for victims who have accessed the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). There is also preparatory work around future commissioning of the specialist sexual violence service, with the commissioning of a joint service beyond the boundaries of Brighton & Hove being explored.
- 3.30 Links have been established with both the Universities of Brighton and Sussex to ensure the needs of students are incorporated in the development of the Violence against Women and Girls Strategy.

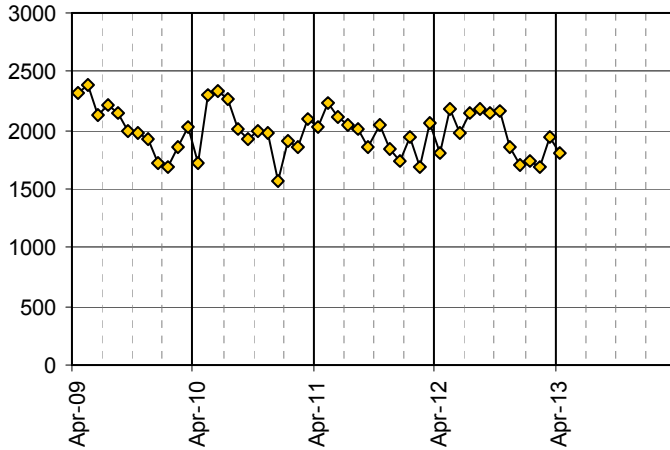
Hate Incidents and Crimes

- 3.31 The police recorded 164 **racist and religiously motivated incidents and crimes** in 2012/13 on their crime database, 16% more than in the same period in 2011/12. The police made charges for 67 racist or religiously motivated crimes over this period. 81% of prosecutions at court resulted in successful outcome (mostly a conviction) in 2012/13 (65 out of 80 finalised prosecutions), dropping back from the level of 89% achieved during 2011/12. There has been heightened religiously motivated activity in the city during the second half of May, presumably as a reaction what happened in Woolwich. Local partnership work has been undertaken to support Muslim communities in various ways, and has reiterated the need for people to report incidents.
- 3.32 In 2012/13 there have been 65 **LGBT hate incidents and crimes** recorded by the police, compared with 62 in 2011/12. In 2012/13 the police solved 28 crimes with 17 of these being charged. 21 out of 24 prosecutions finalised at court had a successful outcome.
- 3.33 The police have recorded 12 **disability hate crimes** and no crime-related incidents on the crime database in 2012/13; this compares with five recorded in 2011/12. There have been two finalised cases at court and these both had a successful outcome.
- 3.34 A Sussex-wide seminar was held on hate crime at Slaugham Manor in March. This examined what prevents people reporting incidents and what can be done to increase reporting across Brighton & Hove and the rest of Sussex. Ways of further enabling engagement between the statutory authorities and communities, including a focus on communities of multi-identities such as the LGBT disabled community, BME LGBT, and the older LGB and Trans communities were also discussed. A pan-Sussex hate crime booklet has been published and is being distributed around partner agencies and organisations in the city and across Sussex. It contains county-wide information on all reporting avenues available for hate incidents and crimes.

Safe in the City Partnership

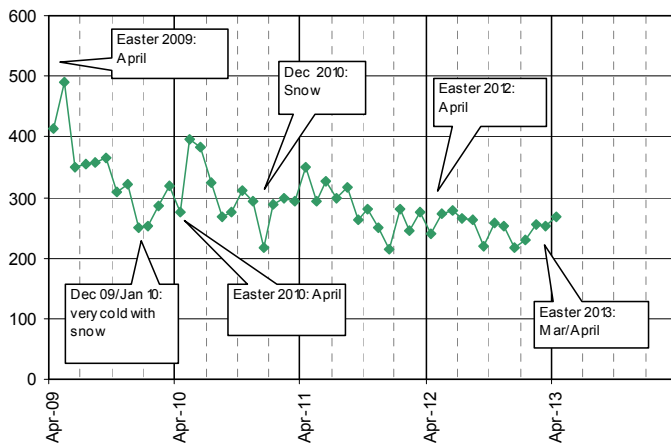
Crime trends up to April 2013 (monthly data)

Total Crimes, Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



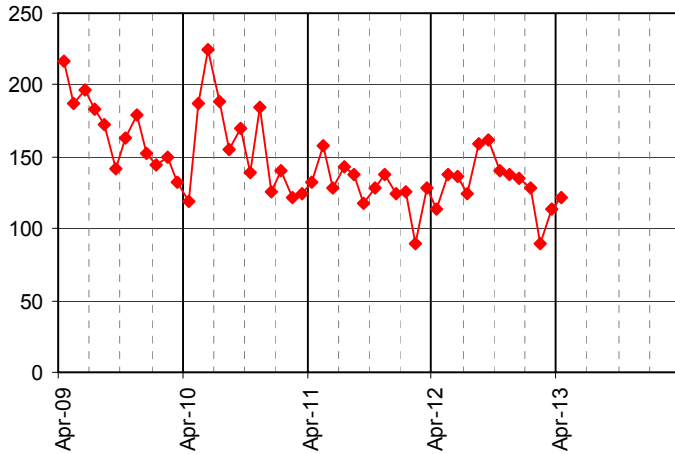
3.35 The seasonal decline in total crime which is usually seen during late summer was not evident in 2012, but the last few months (from November 2012) have shown a more typical seasonal drop.

Criminal Damage, Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



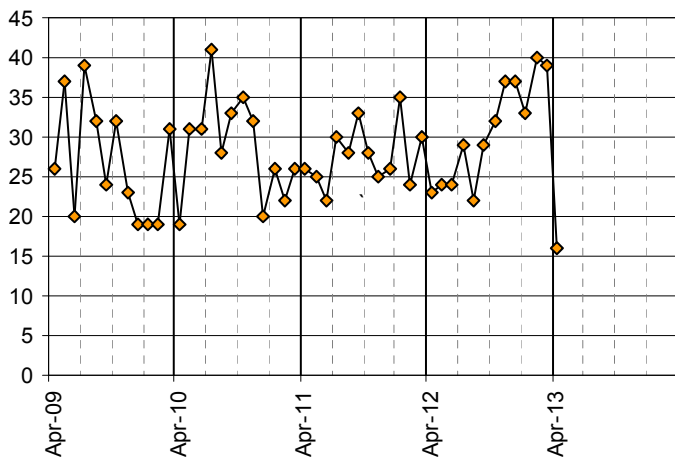
3.36 The long term downward trend in criminal damage continues. The usual seasonal pattern (higher numbers in the summer months) has been less apparent during 2012/13.

All Injury Violence
Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



3.37 The number of injury violence crimes climbed up from a low point in Feb 2012 and continued on a rising trend until September, peaking later in the year than in previous years. Numbers in Jan – Apr 2013 have been similar to the same months in 2012.

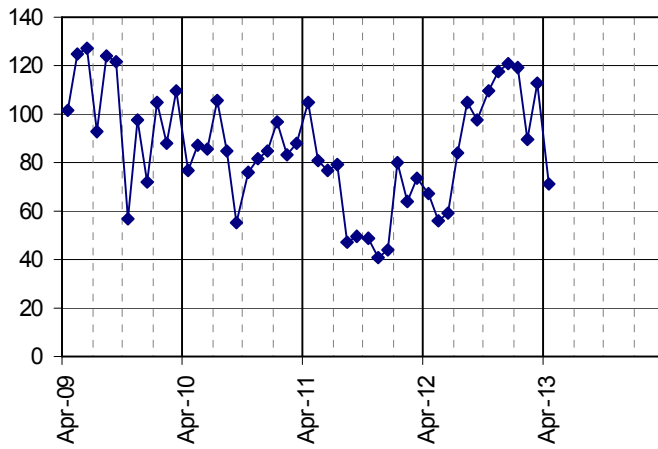
Sexual Offences Apr 2008 - Apr 2013



3.38 The number of police recorded sexual offences in second half of 2012/13 showed a notable increase compared with the first half. However, the number recorded in the month of April 2013 has dropped down to its lowest monthly level since at least Apr 2009.

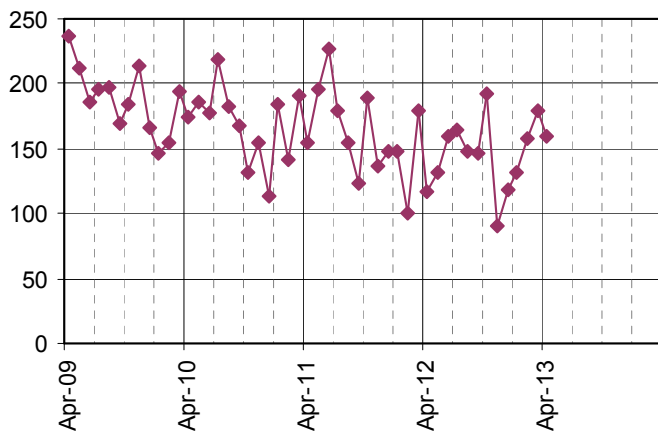
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Domestic Burglary, Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



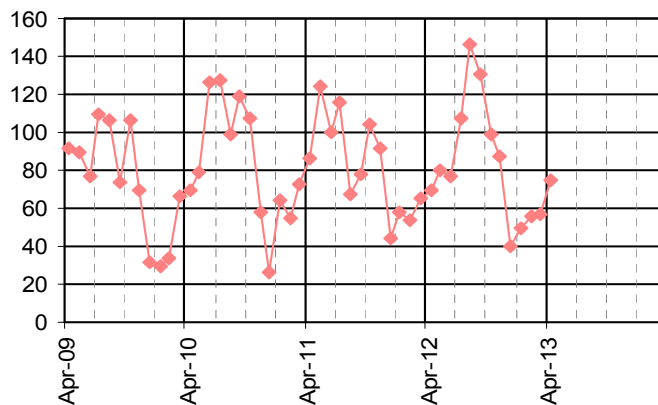
3.39 There was a long term declining trend in domestic burglaries up to 2011/12. From May 2012 onwards numbers rose steadily and levels up to March 2013 remained well above those in 2011/12. Numbers have dropped again in the month of April 2013.

Vehicle Crime, Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



3.40 Vehicle crimes have fluctuated over the past year, but the general trend is downwards. 91 crimes were recorded in Nov 2012, the lowest monthly number recorded for many years, but have risen again since then.

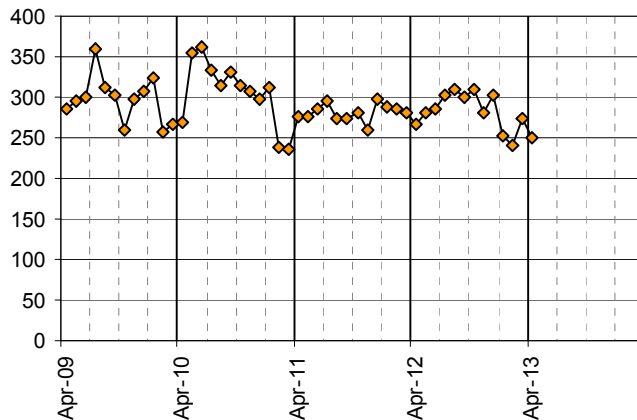
Theft of a Pedal Cycle, Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



3.41 A strong seasonal pattern in cycle thefts continues and is linked to those months when more people tend to cycle.

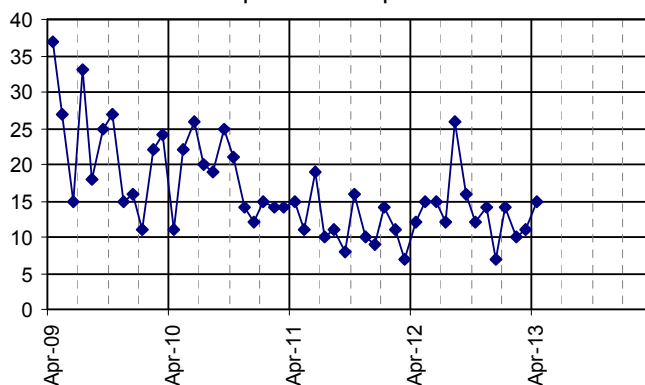
Police crime data presented in this report only reflect those crimes which are reported and recorded. There is likely to be a level of underreporting in many crime types. However, domestic violence and the hate crimes on this page may be particularly liable to underreporting.

Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents
Apr 2009 - Apr 2013



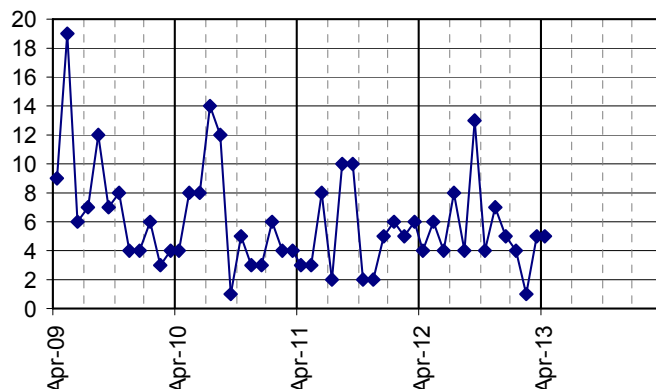
3.42 The number of domestic violence crimes and crime-related incidents recorded during 2011/12 was between 250 and 300 each month. Monthly numbers have mostly remained within this range during 2012/13.

Racist and Religiously Motivated Crimes and Incidents (police crime database),
Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



3.43 The long term declining trend in police recorded racist and religiously motivated incidents and crimes was stabilising at around 10 – 15 incidents per month during 2011/12. The month of August showed a spike up to 26 incidents (as mentioned previously), but the following five months reverted to a more typical level.

Homo/bi/transphobic crimes and crime-related Incidents (police crime database),
Apr 2009 to Apr 2013



3.44 The number of police-recorded homophobic, biphobic or transphobic crimes and crime-related incidents has been at ten or below since summer 2010, with the exception of the month of September when 13 were recorded.

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Performance data for key crime types, position at end March 2013

	number of crimes Apr 11-Mar 12	number of crimes Apr 12-Mar 13	rank within 15 bench-marked CSPs ³
Police recorded crimes			
Total Crimes	23618	23602	6
Criminal Damage	3394	3005	14
Injury Violence	1552	1578	5
Sexual Offences	332	373	n/a ⁴
Domestic Burglary	791	1143	3
Theft from/of a Motor Vehicle	1934	1739	4
Theft and handling (excl. motor vehicle theft)	11137	11564	9
Pedal Cycle Theft	988	1000	7
Police recorded crimes and crime-related incidents			
Domestic Violence Crimes and Incidents	3375	3404	n/a
Racist/Religiously motivated Crimes and Incidents	141	164	n/a
LGBT Hate Crimes and Incidents	62	65	n/a

³ Brighton & Hove is matched for comparative purposes with 14 other Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) according to a range of socio-demographic and geographic variables. A rank of 1 is the best; 15 is the worst; 8 is the middle position. Data reflect the ranking for the most recent three month period.

⁴ Because sexual offences, DV and hate crimes 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 Community Safety Partnerships based on the number of police recorded crimes.

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Disability Hate Crimes and Incidents	5	12	n/a
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