

Report to Scrutiny Committee Violent Crime

1. Introduction

This report details current performance in violent crime, and identifies those areas where potential improvements could be made. The Safer Southwark Partnership Board has identified violent crime as a key priority for the coming months, and is focussing the work of the Partnership Performance Group and the Partnership Operations Group in this area.

2 All Violent Crime

There were 12,223 recorded violent crime offences in Southwark in the year April 2004 to March 2005 which accounts for 28% of the 43,771 total offences in the borough. The following table details the breakdown of violent crime by crime type and displays the trend in performance¹.

Crime Type		2002-3	2003-4	2004-5	% of all Violent Crime 2004-5
Violence Against the Person	Murder	10	13	9	0%
	Grievous Bodily Harm	249	246	274	2%
	Actual Bodily Harm	1,488	1,932	3,398	28%
	Common Assault	4,264	3,913	2,727	22%
	Possession of Offensive Weapon	402	463	438	4%
	Harassment	1,358	1,605	1,789	15%
	Other	450	740	703	6%
Violence Against the Person Total		8,221	8,912	9,338	76%
Robbery	Personal	2,033	2,085	2,277	19%
	Commercial	187	210	129	1%
Robbery Total		2,220	2,295	2,406	20%
Sexual Offences		457	500	479	4%
All Violent Crime		10,898	11,707	12,223	100%

Violence against the person contributes the largest proportion to the total violent crime figure, with the sub types of actual bodily harm and common assault contributing 50% to the overall violent crime figure. Actual bodily harm is showing an increasing trend (76% increase in 2004/05), whilst common assault is decreasing (-30% in 2004/05). This is partly due to a change in police counting methods, with more incidents classified as actual bodily harm (as opposed to common assault). The remainder being due to possibly crime becoming more violent and/or incidents of common assault being reported less.

The overall violence against the person total has shown an increase of 4.8% when comparing 2004-5 to the previous year. Robbery has also shown an increase of 4.8% for the same period.

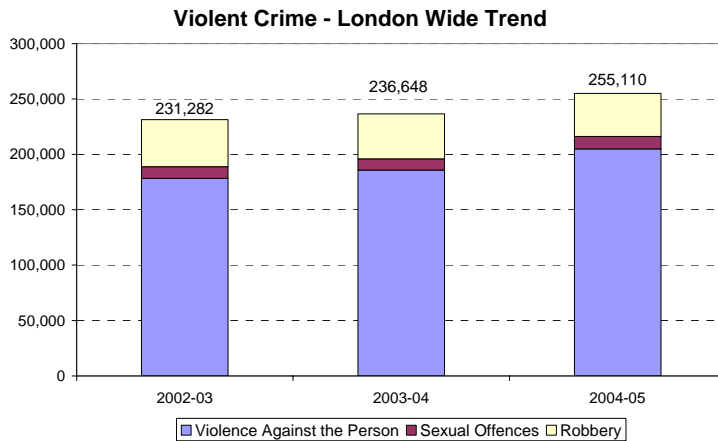
The total cost of violent crime in Southwark in 2003/4 was estimated to be in excess of £107 million as shown in the table below, using home office 2003/4 published estimates for the cost of crime. This rose to £113 million in 2004/5 using the same cost estimates. For the first two months of 2005/6 there has been an increase of 38% from £15.8m to £21.8m when compared to 2004/5.

Crime	Total Cost (£)
Violence Against the Person	74,658,255
Robbery	16,712,190
Sexual Offences	15,719,000
Total Cost	107,089,445

¹ Data for the table is taken from the Metropolitan Police published recorded crime figures.

3 London Wide Trends

The following chart illustrates the trend for the whole of the Metropolitan Police area. It demonstrates that across London there is an increase in the number of recorded violent crimes, with an increase of 7.8% in 2004/5 (compared to a 4.4% increase in violent crime in Southwark)

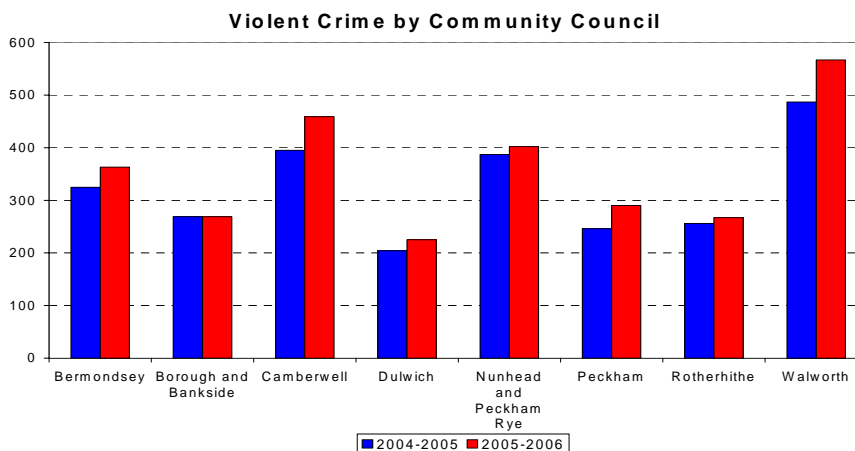


The following table shows the trend for the first 2 months of the year. It demonstrates that there has been an increase in violent crime across London of 9.2% (compared to an increase in of +31% in Southwark).

	April - May 2005	April - May 2006	Percentage Change
Violence Against the Person	32,857	35,054	6.7%
Sexual Offences	1,765	1,957	10.9%
Robbery	6,355	7,750	22.0%
Total	40,977	44,761	9.2%

4 Community Councils

The following chart illustrates the breakdown by community council of violent crimes reported to the police and compares April to June 2005 to April to June 2004.

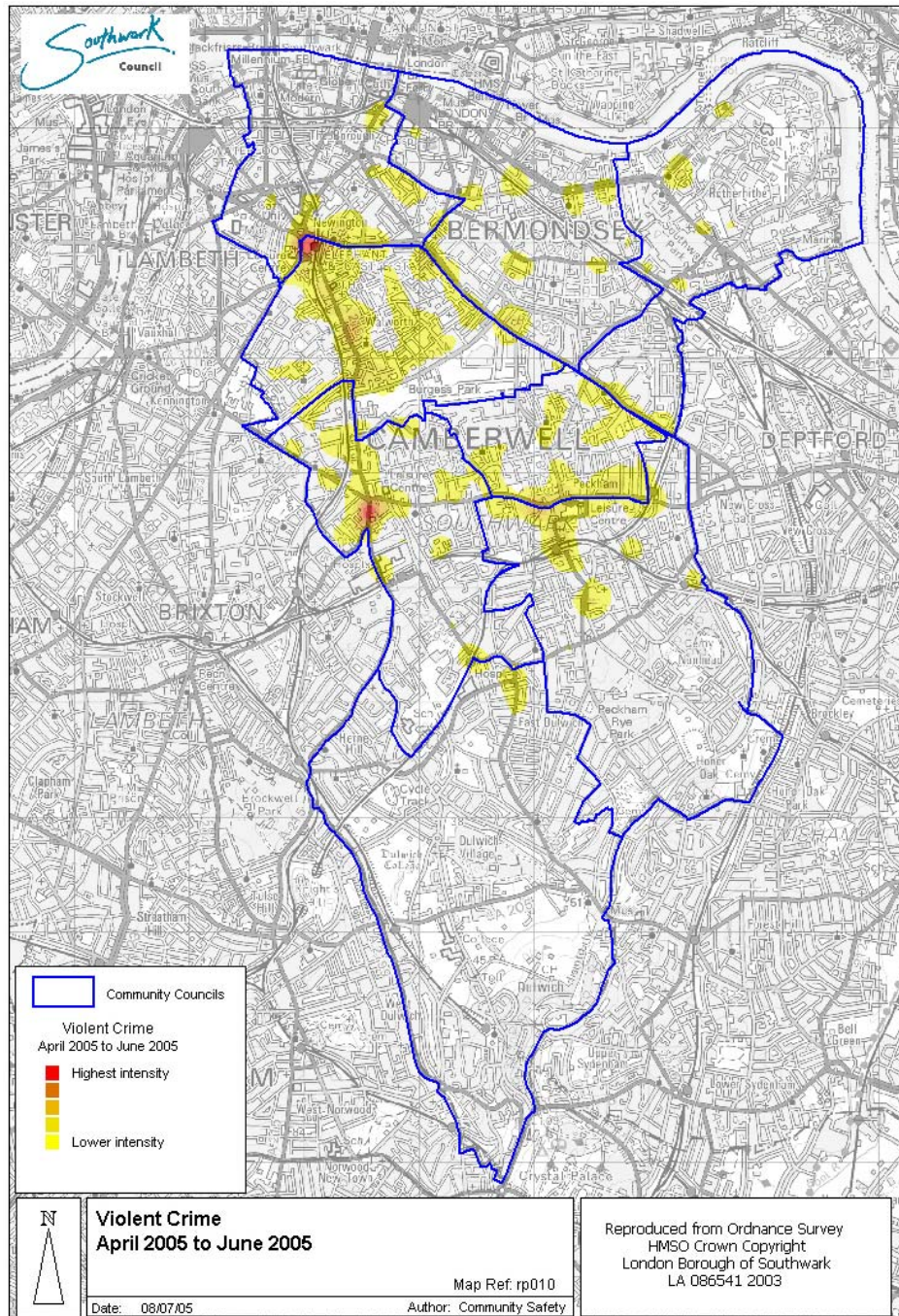


It can be seen that the largest increases occurred in Camberwell, Walworth and Peckham community council areas, with increases of 16%, 16% and 18% respectively.

5 Location of Violent Crime

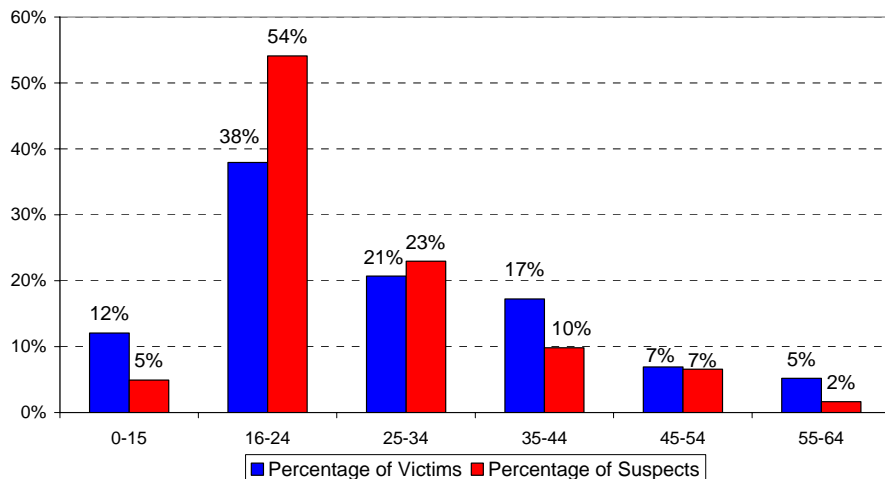
The following diagram illustrates the hotspot areas for violent crime incidents reported to the police. The main hotspot is at Elephant & Castle, with a smaller hotspot in Camberwell.

There are a number of factors for the Elephant being a hotspot: numerous transport links bringing a large number of people - potential victims and offenders- together; increasingly late night pubs and clubs are bringing people into the area; in area around South Bank University, 24% of victims are students.



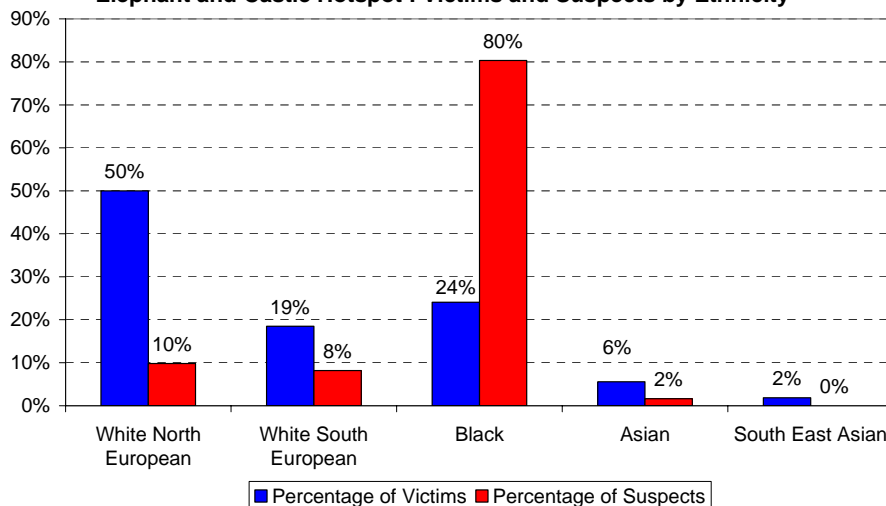
The suspect and victim details were examined for those incidents within the Elephant and Castle hotspot where this information was recorded. The following chart shows that the peak age group for both victims and suspects in this area is the 16 to 24 age range.

Elephant and Castle Hotspot : Victims and Suspects by Age



The following chart shows the breakdown by ethnicity within this hotspot. It shows that where the ethnicity was known, the majority of victims were white north European, and the majority of suspects were black, which was influenced by two incidents involving a large group of black youths.

Elephant and Castle Hotspot : Victims and Suspects by Ethnicity



Where the sex of individuals was known, 64% of all victims were male, whilst 88% of suspects were male.