

### Analysis of weapons use across London

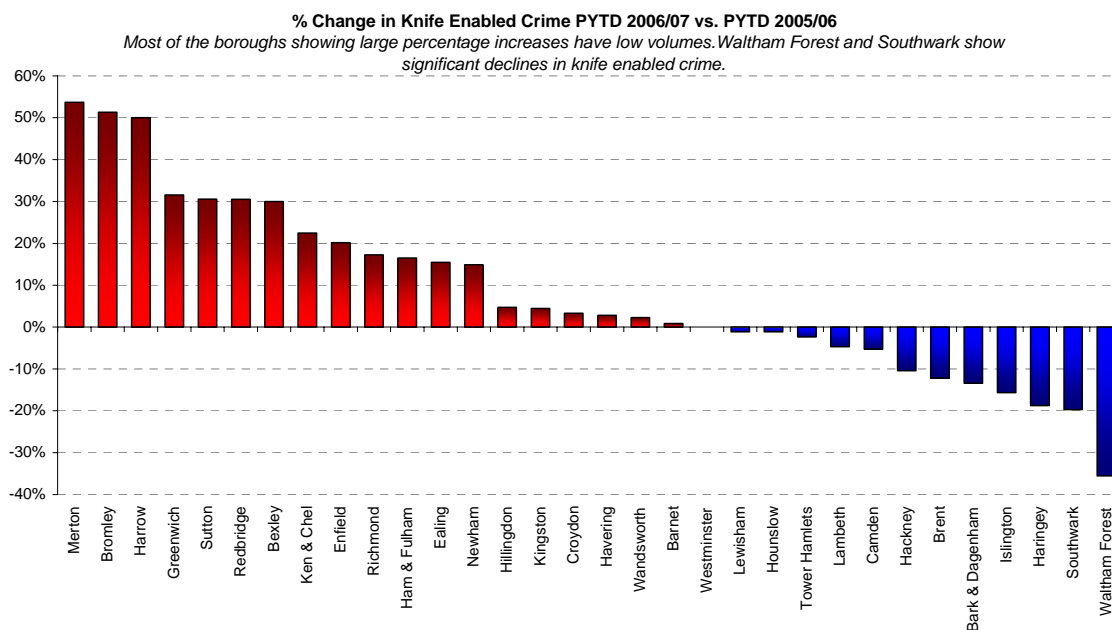
Despite gloomy headlines in the national press, knife crime has not escalated out of control in London. For the performance year to date (April to July 2006), there is an increase of 0.2%, equating to eight additional offences compared with the same period last year. Some boroughs have shown more substantial increases, but others are showing significant reductions against last year, particularly where Operation Blunt resources have been focussed.

This report is intended to be a brief summary of the levels of knife crime in the capital. A full report will be submitted to the October Full Authority meeting.

#### Findings – Borough Performance

Knife enabled crimes amount to 4,237 offences for the performance year to date. This represents a 0.2% increase on the same time last year, eight additional offences. While the MPS shows little change over the period, there are considerable variations across the boroughs as Chart 1 shows.

**Chart 1**



Waltham Forest, the top performer, has tackled knife crime using search arches, a borough-based knife amnesty and a high profile media strategy. Robbery has fallen by 20% on the borough, and this is likely to be a driver in the reduction in knife crime: robberies using a knife are down by 36% (58 offences) in Waltham Forest.

Offences in Merton increased by 54%, although this is a rise of 22 offences in numerical terms. The greatest volume rise was in Greenwich, which recorded an additional 41 offences – this is combined with a 15% rise in robbery indicating that the two are more than likely connected.

## Knife use by crime type<sup>1</sup>

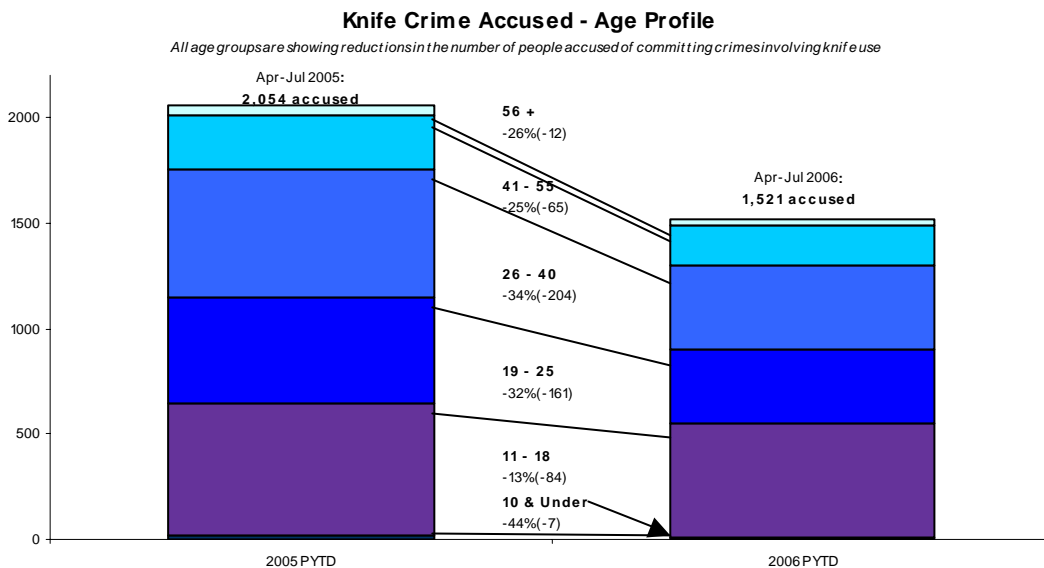
Within the general description of knife crime, there are distinct movements with relation to certain crime types. Data drawn from CRIS suggests that between April and July 2006, compared with the same period last year:

- Robbery with a knife is down by 2% (43 fewer offences)
- Burglary with a knife is down by 32% (56 fewer offences)
- Sexual offences with a knife are up 44% (19 additional offences)
- Violence against the person with a knife up 3% (60 additional offences)

## Victims & Accused: Age profile

Overall, the number of victims of knife crime has fallen and this trend applies to all age groups, with the exception of the 11 –18 category. The number of knife crime victims between 11 and 18 years increased by 4.5% or 47. The greatest drop is amongst victims aged 26 to 40, with 168 fewer victims recorded. Chart 2 shows the changes by age group, and highlights the overall drop in the number of knife crime victims.

Chart 2

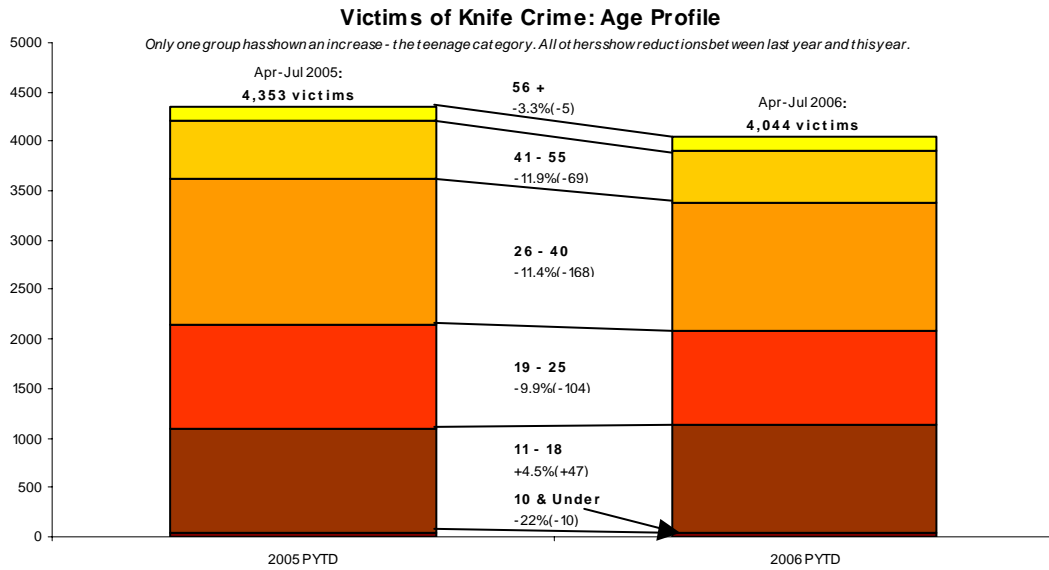


With respect to the ages of those accused of knife crime, all age groups are showing reductions. Accused data is patchy on the CRIS system, which explains the substantially lower figures for accused compared with victims.

The greatest reduction is amongst the 26 - 40 age group, where the number of accused has fallen by 204 or 34%. Chart 3 shows the complete picture with respect to the overall numbers of knife crime accused.

<sup>1</sup> Data used from here onwards is from CRIS, and may not total the same as Metstats data used in headline section above. Data for victims and accused is likely to be influenced by erroneous completion of CRIS fields.

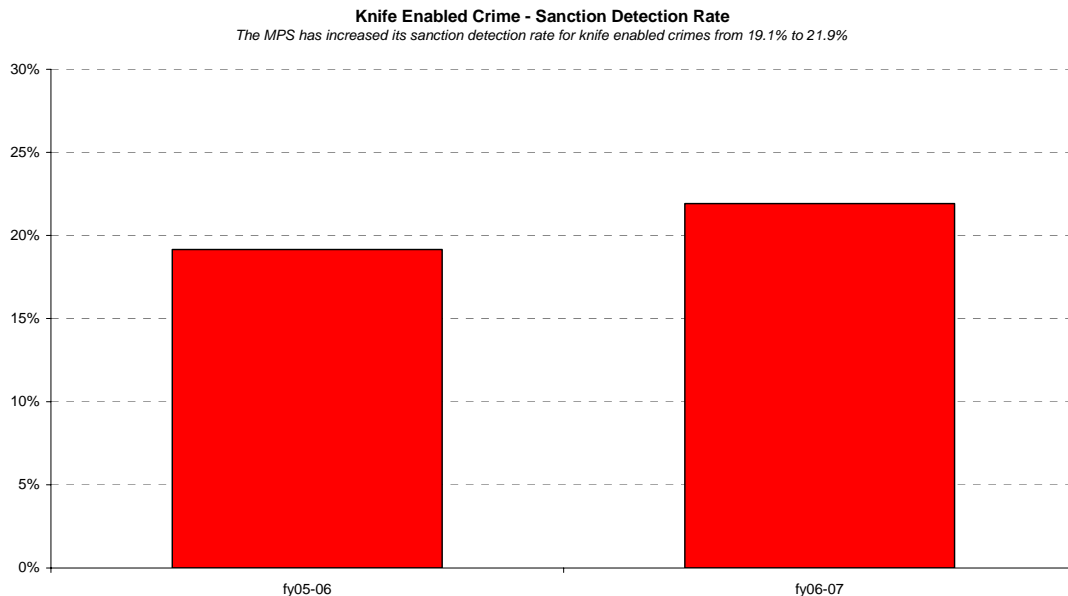
### Chart 3



Clearly, the levels of accused are lower, but the most obvious reason for this is that in the period since 2005 many crimes have either been detected or had accused details entered – at the time of writing some 2006 entries will have been only recently created on CRIS.

### Sanction Detections

The number of sanction detections is up on last year (929 between April and July 06 compared with 810 last year). The sanction detection rate has improved for the MPS as shown in Chart 4:



### Use of other weapons

Knives account to the greatest proportion of offensive weapons used, however a summary of trends regarding other weapons follows:

- Gun crime across London is down by 23%, performing well against a 4% target

- Overall, possession of an offensive weapon is down by 9.4% across the Metropolitan Police District.