



Building

TOWARDS THE SAFEST CITY

DELIVERING POLICING FOR LONDONERS

2003-2008

a property & estates strategy



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Working for a safer London

MPA

Metropolitan Police Authority

Forewords by Nicholas Long and Alan Croney



The MPA recognises the vital importance of the police estate in supporting the delivery of London's policing. The estate was vested in the Authority at inception on 3rd July 2000 and, within the limited resources available, steps have been taken to lay the foundations for a new approach to obtaining the most economic and beneficial use of the estate.

There have been a number of recent national reports on the police estate – most notably “Action Stations” by the National Audit Office. While this work is valuable, London has its own unique needs: it has a dense urban fabric and town and country planning regimes across 32 boroughs need to be respected.

This estate document is different from previous ones. It is the first step towards a new strategic approach, forward looking but capable of providing quicker solutions to current pressing problems. It also demonstrates how Property Services plans to address the strategic priorities.

Creating the “ideal” police estate needs to be sympathetic to existing uses and to the communities we serve. And in a tight financial framework, we will need to find innovative new routes to fund our brand new strategy.

Nicholas Long MBE

Lead Member: Estates Issues
Metropolitan Police Authority



Our vision is to make London the safest major city in the world and “Towards the Safest City” sets out the corporate framework to achieve this. The Property Services Department (Property Services) has created this document, called “Building Towards the Safest City”, to demonstrate how our police estate strategy closely mirrors the messages of the wider MPS strategy.

Property is a long-term investment compared to the short-term and ever changing policing needs it seeks to support. There is inherent conflict and challenge. A separate challenge we face is that flexibility and responsiveness have to incorporate best value for money.

With increasing officer and civil staff support numbers, developing and evolving an estate strategy is a formidable task. We need to come up with some new and radical thinking to ensure solutions are affordable, deliverable and in line with diverse and often complex front-line policing needs.

We have an ageing estate with many buildings located in the wrong places. There is an acute need for a major change.

Alan M Croney FRICS

Director of Property Services
Resources Directorate

What does Property Services do?

The MPA has over 600 operational buildings, 1116 residential properties and 667 rooms in section houses. It provides facilities for over 40,000 police officers and civil staff across London and is responsible for the stewardship of the police estate.

Property Services undertakes a wide range of activities on behalf of the Police Authority. They include the following:

- provides strategic guidance to the MPA
- asset manages the entire estate
- provides property management and facilities management services
- advises on energy issues
- ensures on-site health and safety
- provides maintenance
- delivers new build procurement, including PFI/PPP
- leads on environmental issues

We also deal with support functions for operational policing (public order and incident response), crime scene survey, traffic survey, residential protection, specialist Computer Aided Design reconstruction, logistical deployment in support of operations and other related areas.

Our Property Services design and specialist teams lead nationally on matters such as specialist design (e.g. custody suites, front offices) and forced entry to buildings etc. We also train other UK and international forces in these areas.

Property Services is part of the Resources Directorate and the Director of Resources is a member of the MPS Management Board.

In July 2000, the MPS had 25,400 police officers. Today, in 2003, there are just under 28,500. By 2006, we expect there to be 35,000. Yet the police estate was already at full capacity last year. This document addresses the problems we face and provides a broad vision on how we propose to deal with these challenges. We have mapped out a brand new strategy which contains some innovative ideas. Because, clearly, we need to introduce fundamental changes if we are to resolve our property and estate problems.

We will issue a more detailed document in 2004/05.

A brief overview of the current estate:

Operational

The sheer number of operational staff is not the only indicator of property need. Population demands and crime hot spots shift from area to area and the physical locations of our sites need to reflect this. For example, some aspects of policing (e.g. response teams) would be better located in business/industrial parks; and some police station front offices would be better relocated to places such as shopping centres and public libraries.

Support

Increasing numbers of officers means a corresponding demand for support and logistics. But, due to financial constraints, these have not been fully funded in line with the additional head count.

Training

Increased recruitment also impacts on training. The Hendon estate is already over capacity and has moved to two-shift working and other initiatives in order to cope. Increased hours add to operational costs and present a major challenge – particularly as the residential part of the Hendon estate is overdue for a major refurbishment. Other key training facilities at Gravesend (Firearms and Public Order Training) and Keston (Dog and Handler Training) are also operating at full capacity. Furthermore, the recently launched Crime Academy will require a more permanent base.

Residential

The MPA, by custom, provides accommodation for all qualifying staff, at present limited to police officers. Demand for flats, houses and rooms in Section Houses exceeds supply and conditions are often basic. We will soon be undertaking a thorough review of all our housing provision. As an alternative to direct housing provision, we will consider key worker initiatives, shared equity schemes and other suitable options.

Other (including covert, logistics and sports clubs)

Our covert locations serve investigations, witness protection and also safeguard our employees and officers. However, in an increasingly violent and intrusive environment, we have experienced a sharp increase in demand for such accommodation. Other buildings we hold and manage within the estate include long-term storage facilities and sports clubs. We also arrange and provide support for public order and events. This kind of activity is on the increase and we need to respond to ensure safety is maintained and threats contained.



Developing the Estate

The MPA is committed to borough-based delivery of its operations. But London is changing, so we need to respond to areas of future population growth and shifting demographic patterns. For example, we have to be aware of the London Plan and London Borough Unitary Development Plans. We will also need to make provision for the Thames Gateway. Increasingly, the MPA will look to the London Boroughs to reflect policing need in their planning policy and implementation.

There are some London Boroughs where the estate requires more urgent modernisation and expansion. These include Barking & Dagenham, Haringey, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Richmond, Waltham Forest and Wandsworth. Non-Borough Operational Commands (OCUs) are also under pressure, including Child Protection Teams (CPTs) and the Heathrow Airport OCU.

Most police estate needs are unique and demand high-specification buildings. Most are based on 24/7 operations and require commuter access to meet shift patterns, as well as necessary security for all personnel. We need to reflect this in all our building planning and design.

In South East London, a PFI Firearms and Public Order Training Centre has recently opened and four new PFI stations are nearing completion. Once they are all operational, we will assess whether we continue to use PPP/PFI as a procurement route, or whether we should consider other options.

Key initiatives to drive forward our aims:

- Developing building “templates” across London, so we end up with a more flexible, affordable estate. We will also devise a costed implementation plan for this template initiative.
- Ensuring we deliver an estate that reflects growth projections for London (particularly in the Thames Gateway area, Heathrow and Terminal 5 and sports stadia).
- Taking full advantage of “mix and match” solutions with public and private sector partners – including co-location.
- Resolving the problem of insufficient car parking spaces and access issues for staff who commute by car.
- Funding the backlog of overdue maintenance, while new solutions are being developed and rolled out. For too long, maintenance has been underfunded.
- Continuing our commitment to sustainable development, design (BREEAM) and energy/environmental policies.
- Introducing a flexible estate that is deployed close to crime “hot spots”.
- Evolving both a long-term capital plan and new funding routes to meet estate and policing objectives.
- Exploiting closer managed and affordable partnerships in the short-term.

We will know we have succeeded if:

- The OCU template approach is successfully rolled out.
- London Boroughs reflect policing needs in their planning policies and their implementation strategies.
- Funding partners respond to the backlog of maintenance.
- Estate provision and utilisation can increasingly demonstrate value for money.
- Devolution principles and related estate costs can be managed to reduce overall costs.
- Co-location through partnerships actually becomes a reality – and partners share the cost with us.



Securing the Capital against Terrorism

There are a number of terrorism issues which directly relate to the police estate:

- **Resilience:** Buildings on the police estate potentially face a wide range of threats, and disaster may strike at any time. Since our job is to serve the public, our buildings need to be made resilient so they can remain operational at times of crisis.
- **Hardening:** All our key facilities need to be extra robust and certain buildings have been physically reinforced. A number also have protected air conditioning and environmental systems.
- **Design and Cost:** Undertaking resilience and hardening of buildings is expensive. Once properties have been upgraded, there has to be a rigorous programme of maintenance – especially in light of the current global situation.
- **Operational Support:** Property Services provides major operational support in terms of public order management and covert property needs. Our experience is widely respected. As officer numbers grow, so do support needs – but our funding is not increasing proportionately with this. However, we are making exceptional efforts to ensure we bridge this funding gap.



Key initiatives to drive forward our aims:

- Implementing the C3i programme (Command, Communications, Control and Information) will improve resilience across London.
- Supporting operational counter-terrorism action.
- Reflecting changing needs in all our design and construct programmes.
- Testing the resilience of the estate, including flood, fire protection and power provision.

We will know we have succeeded if:

- The estate is upgraded to a consistent and minimum level of security.
- Our properties remain resilient and service provision is maintained/protected.
- Our operational support activities meet the needs of police colleagues.
- Public order and support operations successfully respond to changing demand patterns.
- Our contingency plans have been reviewed and updated.

Revitalising the Criminal Justice System

The key issues here are:

- **Co-location & Glidewell:** We are fully committed to co-locating Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) lawyers at the point of charge in police stations. However, it does mean our limited space will be placed under even greater pressure. Secondly, the CPS has different office standards from those of the MPS. Wherever we share space with the CPS, we will need to ensure that we also share the costs with them.
- **Criminal Justice Units:** Many CJU staff are based in police stations but need to be nearer to court and CPS locations. Also, their working environment needs to be significantly improved.
- **Courts Strategy:** We have a strong and pragmatic relationship with the Greater London Magistrates Court Authority (GLMCA). However, there are changes in court arrangements on the horizon and we are hoping we will be made aware of these soon, to help us in our forward planning.
- **Custody arrangements:** The main pressures we face with the current police station custody arrangements are as follows: there are not enough cells; the conditions fall short of modern standards; there are acknowledged health and safety issues – in particular, there is a need to reduce the potential for self harm by detainees. Dispersing custody provision is becoming impractical but it is proving difficult to fund and find suitable sites for consolidated facilities. We are, however, meeting our legal obligations to improve our custody standards.
- **Standards:** There are major programmes planned throughout the MPS to increase our effectiveness. Addressing accommodation issues figures highly in these plans.

Key initiatives to drive forward our aims:

- Funding the CPS co-location/Glidewell plans.
- Significantly improving custody standards (including reducing the risk of detainees harming themselves).
- Improving facilities for CJUs.
- Clarifying affordable court arrangements.

We will know we have succeeded if:

- The physical environment of custody areas reduces risk of death or harm to detainees – and to our staff.
- We have a new style of custody building, possibly in stand-alone new facilities.
- CPS co-location/Glidewell funding issues are resolved.



Developing a Professional and Effective Workforce

Property Services can contribute Service-wide in a number of positive ways:

- Operation Cleansweep: We will incrementally upgrade workspace and facilities for operational officers. This includes modernising changing facilities, shower and rest areas to 21st century standards.
- Gender and families: We will support facilities (such as crèche/childcare, remote shopping etc.) to attract and retain more female and single parent staff.
- Worship: Wherever possible, we will provide facilities so staff can observe their religion while at work. This will include prayer rooms.
- Physical: We will provide additional space in those locations which are over crowded.
- Residential: We will ensure all staff have access to a range of accommodation, by type and tenure.
- Standards: The MPS expects high standards of all staff and Property Services will strive to ensure that the standards of our buildings are equally as high. We will move from the current “make do” approach to providing solutions that are both planned and managed.
- Disability Discrimination Act: We will meet our obligations to staff under the DDA by carrying out increased modifications to work environments – both for civil staff with disabilities and for police officers who become disabled in the line of duty.



Key initiatives to drive forward our aims:

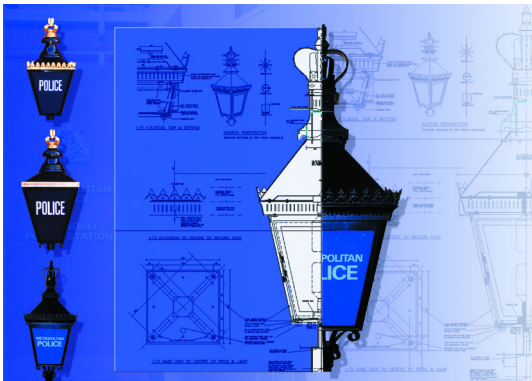
- Refocusing the Operation Cleansweep programme so that it delivers to staff right across London, where needed.
- Introducing new initiatives around family-friendly and gender programmes. For example, delivering crèche facilities etc. within three years.
- Improving access to residential accommodation.
- Providing more facilities for religious observance.
- Meeting “best use” criteria so we can optimise the way the existing estate is currently used.

We will know we have succeeded if:

- We have successfully implemented these physical improvements.
- We can measure satisfaction levels through ongoing surveys (both of the improvements themselves and the use staff are making of them).

Reforming the Delivery of Policing Services

The MPS is proposing to introduce a programme of change in the way it delivers policing to London. This will reflect the principles of public sector reform – identifying and implementing first those elements it considers to be of greatest value to Londoners. In property terms, this means:



- Deliver facilities consistent with operational policing requirements.
- Deliver affordable and realistic DDA programmes.
- Provide a safe and acceptable working environment for all our people.
- Shift the estate, over time, to ensure facilities are located in those places where they are needed. We will also make sure these buildings have a relevant and welcoming design.
- Work with our partners to achieve co-location and partnership in many of our buildings. This needs to be done within a framework that respects the legal requirement for both visitors and staff.



Key initiatives to drive forward our aims:

- Where practicable, redesigning physical facilities and service approaches to comply with the DDA.
- Upgrading our “front offices”.
- Constructing vulnerable and intimidated witness suites.
- Upgrading our custody facilities.
- Increasing our points of presence using new kiosks and mobile police stations.
- Achieving a rational and coherent co-location strategy, so we are able to share our buildings and those of other agencies.
- Eliminating buildings from the estate which do not conform to modern requirements.

We will know we have succeeded if:

- There are fewer buildings left with vacant space and there are fewer overcrowded buildings.
- We exceed our targets for DDA access. This currently stands at two police stations per Borough.
- We roll out new front offices to at least two police stations per Borough.
- We provide at least one vulnerable and intimidated witness suite per Borough.
- We complete a basic overhaul of all custody facilities within 24 months.
- We improve the quality of space available to our civil staff and officers.
- Operational Commanders work together with Property Services to improve property service delivery and best value.

Key Strategic Initiatives

The radical overhaul of the police estate envisaged within this strategy has started, but will take time to complete. We will not be able to implement this within the same timescales as most changes in policing priorities but the first phase should be completed during 2005/2006.

These are Property Services' key strategic initiatives:

Planning and review

We are reviewing all our accommodation and uses, so that more of our operations can be housed in commercially available space, rather than in custom-built solutions. We will also develop a template of buildings we can roll out across the capital, in order to reduce costs.

Benchmarking how our accommodation is used already takes place. We will take this existing data to help bridge the gap between the longer-term solutions and immediate need and we will drive consistent best practice across the whole estate. Space planning and specification changes will play a critical role in this.

Delivering flexible funding options

There will always be constraints on funding for the police estate and, while PFI will deliver new stations in South London and a Public Order training centre, it is proving to be cumbersome. It is also an unresponsive procurement method for many policing needs. New, more flexible, mechanisms will be explored as we recycle and improve the existing building stock.

Supporting ongoing major projects:

Call Handling – C3i and Airwave

This project has three new, highly specialised call centres at its heart. It is the biggest property development programme in the history of the Metropolitan Police. With property costs of some £60m and many critical delivery paths, it has to be the major focus for Property Services. It is subject to rigorous controls and management.

Devolved budgets

The MPA is committed to moving financial allocation closer to front line policing. This poses issues for service procurement and supervision – particularly for facilities management. It will require a new partnership between central property and FM specialists in Property Services and also the local/OCU Finance & Resources Managers. We will need to adopt new partnership management styles to ensure the MPA delivers best value and reaps the benefits of large-scale procurement.

Managing growth in staff numbers

Not only are our buildings overcrowded but a majority of our facilities do not provide an acceptable working environment for officers and staff. If we aspire to recruit/retain people and to operate our services to a high standard, then we must provide quality accommodation that meets our people's expectations – and that measures up to other organisations' standards. Creating better accommodation and improving space planning will also increase productivity and reduce accommodation moves across our workforce.



Delivery and Costing

Delivery

In order to deliver our strategy, our plans have to be workable, flexible and, above all, affordable. It is too easy to opt for quick-fix solutions but we need to plan for the long-term. However, long lead times frequently act as a frustrating barrier both to Property Services and to our police colleagues.

We must not allow this frustration to detract from our strategy. That is why Property Services is addressing the immediate short-term needs while planning ahead for the future.

Our template-based plan is brand new and will require a degree of sophistication that is totally new to police estate provision. Property Services is realigning itself to meet these new demands and is recruiting new skills to address the challenges that lie ahead of us.

Funding

Our challenge is to turn our ideas into plans which are affordable and which minimise disruption to police operations. Land prices in Central London are some of the highest in the world but we will strive to deliver innovative and new solutions that meet all the MPS estate requirements.

At the moment we do not have the necessary funding to implement our ground-breaking plans for improving the police estate. That means we need to find new routes to finance our ideas. This will take time. In addition, we need to do a great deal of “behind the scenes” preparation. The amount of data and financial information required is extensive and goes far beyond what Property Services has been asked to deliver in the past. It also requires totally new thinking.



Over the next two years, we will:

- Work out how to solve our funding dilemma;
- Devise a detailed blueprint for the estate which will be rolled out across the capital. Stakeholder consultation will be a major part of this.

In the meantime, the Property Services team will deliver short-term solutions that dovetail with our plans for the future. We know we have a big challenge ahead.

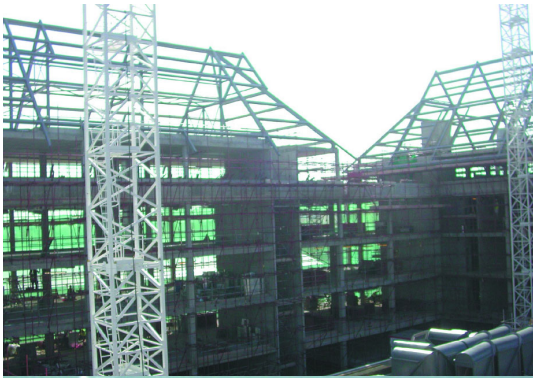
Review

“Building Towards the Safest City” is the framework document to guide Property Services over the coming five years, as a new approach is evolved.

This document links with the overall MPA framework “Towards the Safest City” and so will need to be amended as the wider framework is updated. It provides a basis for measuring performance and provides a clear positioning statement against which our actions can be judged. Property is a long-term investment and this framework is an essential tool in balancing competing demands with policing priorities.

This document also demonstrates how we are committed to facing up to the issues of delivering long-term property strategies, when immediate policing pressures can easily distract attention to the short term.

In order to deliver an excellent police service, our buildings have to meet both our needs of today as well as our future demands. Too much of our estate is outdated and in the wrong place. The aim of Property Services is to correct this in a dynamic and innovative way. Simply upgrading or renewing the estate is no longer an option.



Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

The MPS's mission is:

Making London safe for all the people we serve

We:

- make places safer;
- cut crime and the fear of crime;
- uphold the law.

The MPA's mission is:

To secure an effective, efficient and fair police service for London's communities

Vision

The MPS's and MPA's shared vision is:

To make London the safest major city in the world

Values

The MPS's and MPA's values are to:

- treat everyone fairly;
- be open and honest;
- work in partnership;
- change to improve.

Do you want to know more?

To find out more about Property Services' estate strategy, contact:

Nicholas Long MBE
Metropolitan Police Authority
10 Dean Farrar Street
London SW1H 0NY
nicholas.long@mpa.gov.uk
www.mpa.gov.uk

Alan Croney FRICS
Metropolitan Police Service
Cobalt Square
1 South Lambeth Road
London SW8 1SU
alan.croney@met.police.uk
www.met.police.uk