



Metropolitan Police Authority

Domestic Violence Board – 4 March 2008

Camden Borough Response to Domestic Violence

This report has been compiled at the request of the MPA Domestic Violence Board to give information on how Camden BOCU in partnership with others responds to domestic violence.

The report will describe how the BOCU works to

- Tackle domestic violence
- Keep survivors safe
- Hold offenders to account
- Prevent domestic violence
- Work in partnership with organisations and communities to improve the response to domestic violence

Areas of best practice and innovation will be highlighted, as will the challenges that the Borough faces in providing an effective response to domestic violence.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION – INDEX

Introduction

- A Domestic Violence Data provided by the MPS**
- B Tackling Domestic Violence**
- C Keeping Survivors Safe and Holding Perpetrators Accountable**
- D Preventing Domestic Violence**
- E Working in Partnership**
- F Training**
- G Employee Domestic Violence**
- H Continuous Improvement**
- I Equality and Diversity**
- J Financial Implications**

Introduction

i Overview of Camden Borough

Camden BOCU is located north of the River Thames adjacent to the BOCUs of Westminster, Brent, Haringey and Islington. Comprising approximately 22 square kilometres in the heart of London, Camden is a borough of multicultural diversity and contrasts. The business centres of Holborn, Euston and Tottenham Court Road contrast with exclusive residential districts in Hampstead and Highgate, upcoming Belsize Park, the open spaces of Hampstead Heath, Parliament Hill and Kenwood, the youthful energy of Camden Town, the multi-occupancy housing in Kentish Town and West Hampstead, and the relative deprivation of areas such as Kings Cross and Gospel Oak. Camden is the one of the most economically polarised boroughs in London, with the gap between the richest and poorest wards greater than anywhere else in London.

The Council has designated 36 Conservation Areas, whilst nearly 6,000 buildings are listed as having special architectural or historic interest. The BOCU is well served by public transport, including three mainline railway stations, Kings Cross, St Pancras and Euston, and has extensive coverage by the bus, tube and suburban rail networks. Ten neighbourhood renewal areas have been identified to receive priority for resources; 8,000 dwellings are unfit. Many of the borough's streets are under severe parking stress and the southern part of the BOCU is within the Central London congestion-charging zone.

Camden's population at 2006 is 220,700, bigger than Luton or York and only slightly smaller than Southampton or Swansea. Of neighbouring boroughs, Barnet, Brent, Westminster and Haringey are bigger; the City and Islington are smaller. Camden is a fragment of Greater London, with 2.9% of the population in 1.4% of the land area. The mix of social and economic conditions in Camden is described by ONS as similar to Westminster and the City, Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington or Kensington & Chelsea. Camden wards are described as metropolitan, either "prospering" or "multicultural", categories that are common in London but rarely occur elsewhere.

Every part of Camden has areas of relative affluence alongside areas of relative poverty. On three summary measures for local authority districts in 2004, the Indices of Deprivation rank Camden among the 21 most deprived districts in England, and on four measures among the 8 most deprived London boroughs. The most deprived area in Camden (Camden Town) is amongst the 2% most deprived areas in England.

The Acorn classification, which adds lifestyle information to the census, shows 66% of Camden households live in postcode areas consisting mostly of “educated urbanites” and 29% in areas of “inner city adversity”. More than 14,000 residents (9%) are on Income Support. 30% of over-60s are on Pension Credits (August 2004).

Camden has the highest proportion of full-time students in London (11%) and 47% of residents in employment are educated to degree status; 17% of people of working age have no qualification. More than one resident in five (22%) rents their home from a private landlord, and almost 5% live communally in hostels or care homes rather than in households, one of the highest proportions in the country. 86% of household spaces are in purpose-built or converted flats; just 14% are self-contained houses.

ii Diversity – Minority Ethnic Groups in Camden

Camden is a multi-cultural Borough with a diverse ethnic, faith and language mix. Camden’s largest communities, with a distinctive cultural identity are the Irish, Bangladeshi and black African communities, followed by black Caribbean, Indian, Chinese and Eastern European. Bangladeshis form the largest minority group in seven Camden wards and black Africans the largest minority in nine.

Apart from English, children in Camden schools speak more than 100 languages. The most widely spoken languages are: Bengali/Sylheti with nearly 3,000 speakers; Somali with nearly 1,000 speakers; and Albanian, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Yoruba, Farsi and Lingala, each with more than 200 speakers. The Council’s language service was approached for 3,700 interpreting assignments and translations relating to 52 community languages in the past year.

Camden also has a diverse religious population, with a significantly higher proportion of people of Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist faith than either London or England & Wales.

iii Camden’s Achievements tackling Domestic Violence

The London Borough of Camden is a challenging inner city environment and it is also a priority Borough for Safer Homes. Camden’s achievements tackling domestic violence must be seen within this context.

Camden Borough exceeded its sanction detection target for domestic violence offences in 2006/07 and the BOCU is exceeding its sanction detection rate for

domestic violence in the year to date. A high proportion of detected domestic violence offences result in charges, demonstrating consistent quality in detections.

As will be detailed later in this report, the BOCU's approach to tackling domestic violence is an example of best practice in a number of areas. This includes the close relationship between the BOCU Community Safety Unit (CSU) and Camden Safety Net. Camden Safety Net (CSN) is a small team, located within the CSU. CSN Staff are independent, Local Authority-funded specialists who provide support to DV survivors. The BOCU was also a pilot site for the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) system and has a dedicated MARAC officer. Further, there are strong supervision systems in place to ensure high standards in domestic violence reporting and compliance with the positive arrest policy.

The domestic violence offences sanction detection target of 33% for 2006/7 was exceeded; a detection rate of 35.4% was achieved. This achievement has formed a platform for Camden to exceed expectations this financial year. So far this year, measured to December, a sanction detection rate of 53.4% has been achieved against an MPS average of 42.3% and a target of 40%. This is the fourth highest in the MPS.

Although the arrest rate against domestic incidents may appear low, the effectiveness of those arrests made is shown in the high percentage of arrests against substantive offences and the high charge rate. As an example, Camden's substantive offence arrest rate up until December 2007 is 64.5% against an MPS average of 61.2% and a target of 60%. Camden policy is to seek charge whenever this is possible and appropriate and on this measure the BOCU currently lies first within the MPS. From April 2007 to October 2007, Camden has the highest offences charged rate in the MPS: 29.8% against a Service average of 18.7%. This is a measure of the proportion of DV offences that result in a charge. The reasons for this achievement are a number of factors including

- Timely response to DV calls
- Effective evidence gathering at scene
- Adherence to positive action arrest policy
- Welfare and support provided to victims to support a prosecution
- Comprehensive risk management procedures that enhance victim confidence
- Effective communication strategy with CPS leading to charging decisions, including dedicated specialist DV case lawyer
- Support to victims throughout the criminal justice process by CSN and others
- Early monitoring of evidential quality through a robust Gatekeeping system

The BOCU recognises the need to improve performance for arrests and as such new systems have been implemented to ensure robust supervision and compliance in the areas of completion of 124Ds and positive action by means of arrest. The SMT together with local strategic partnerships is determined to improve performance. In this report, areas of best practice and innovation will be highlighted, as will the challenges that the BOCU faces in providing an effective response to domestic violence.

A. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DATA PROVIDED BY THE MPS DIRECTORATE

This data covers the period 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007. This report also contains data for the current financial year to 2 December 2007.

Please note: all year to date figures provided in this report are for the year to December 2007 and can be updated prior to presentation of this report.

- There have been 3050 domestic violence incidents of which 1643 were substantive criminal offences. 53.8% of domestic violence incidents were criminal offences. ***(From April 2007 to 2 December 2007 there have been 1720 domestic violence incidents of which 768 were substantive criminal offences. 44.7% of domestic incidents were criminal offences. This equates to a 34% reduction in substantive offences).***
- A sanction detection rate of 35.4% was achieved. ***(For the year to 2 December 2007, a sanction detection rate of 53.4% has been achieved against an MPS average of 42.3% and a target of 40%).***
- A total number of 3050 victims reported incidents of domestic violence over the last year; 652 of those were repeat victims. This represents 21.4%. ***(From April to 2 December 2007, a total number of 1720 victims reported incidents of domestic violence, 295 of those were repeat victims. This represents 17.1%, which equates to a 4.1% decrease)***
- The domestic violence incidents arrest rate was 35.5%. This includes incidents as well as substantive offences. ***(Since April 2007 only substantive offences are included in this measure. Camden's arrest rate for the year to date is 64.5% against an MPS average of 61.2% and a target of 60%).***
- The total number of persons who were charged with domestic violence related offences was 416 out of 581 sanction detections, this relates to a healthy 71.6% charge rate. 7 of these charges relate to GBH.

- There were no domestic violence homicides during the last financial year. **(This current FYTD there was one domestic violence related murder, in September 2007. One female has been charged with murder of her male partner and awaits trial. The Homicide Review of this case is currently being undertaken. Under Project Umbra (Strand 6), the MPS Violent Crime Directorate's Community Safety Unit Delivery Team now drives all DV homicide reviews. Camden BOCU will comply with this central policy.)**
- Three offences were flagged as forced marriage. There is no separate flag for 'Honour' based violence at present; such cases are brought to the attention of the CSU Detective Inspector who determines an appropriate investigative strategy. A specific flag for 'Honour' based violence is likely to be introduced with the issue of an updated MPS Domestic Violence policy later this year.

B. TACKLING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1. Camden BOCU together with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships has made tackling domestic violence a Borough priority. The Borough Commander Dominic Clout and Detective Superintendent Jeremy Burton have ensured that hate crime continues to be a focal point for improvement and good practice.
2. Detective Chief Inspector Dave Cobb and London Borough of Camden (LBC) DV Strategy and Services Manager, Ms Caitriona Scanlan, chair the Domestic Violence Working Group (DVWG). Together with voluntary and statutory agencies, they have set out a number objectives with aim of improving police and Local Authority services in responding to victims of DV and their children. The DVWG objectives also aim to ensure victims' safety and to engage in preventative work. Please refer to Appendix A: DVWG Action Plan 2007-08.

i Policy Compliance, Implementation and Quality Assurance

3. As can be seen from the notable domestic violence reduction in 2007/8, supervisors from the Community Safety Unit make every effort to ensure calls classified as domestic violence on the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system are given a CRIS number. CAD to CRIS conversion rate for the period April 2006 to November 2006 was 88%. This was above the MPS average of 75%. For the same period this financial year, Camden has been 85% compliant.

4. Once any call has been identified as a domestic incident then it must be marked as Class 29. Before any Class 29 calls can be shown as complete on the CAD system, a crime report number (CRIS) must be entered or an explanation recorded as to why a crime report was not necessary. The reasons for not achieving 100% are due to multiple calls to the same incident or due to the lack of understanding by control room staff. There have been a number of interventions implemented to reduce this discrepancy and these now form part of daily procedure. Firstly, the Uniform Core Team Duty Officer has the responsibility to account for all domestic incidents that have been classified as Class 29. All such incidents are reviewed at the Daily Management Meeting and cases of non-compliance will be identified and resolved. Second, there is an internal audit process carried out daily by the CSU supervisor. Every CSU Detective Sergeant has been trained to access and browse CAD and as such has a duty to ensure that every separate DV incident is converted to CRIS. Lastly, the completion of CAD report is the responsibility of the Integrated Borough Operations unit (IBO) and a dip sample process for compliance with National Crime Recording Standards is used. DV awareness training is provided by CSU staff in identifying a DV incident and the response required as set out by the DV Standard Operating Procedure.
5. Appropriate flagging of domestic violence cases on CRIS is ensured through training and supervision. The Crime Management Unit checks that all CRIS reports are appropriately DV flagged before screening the crime into the CSU. CRIS reports are further checked by the CSU DS when reports are screened into the CSU for further investigation. This is then again checked at a later stage by the CSU Delivery Team (CSU DT) at Territorial Policing Headquarters. This identifies any apparent errors by examining relationship codes shown between victims and suspects and produces a list that may be in error. This list is then thoroughly checked by the CSU DI to remove or implement flags where appropriate. The main discrepancy is normally around age, where one of the parties involved, for example the perpetrator, is a youth under the age of 18. Although this offence does not meet the ACPO definition of domestic violence it will still be investigated by CSU officers but will not retain the flag. There are very few cases of DV that will be investigated outside the parameters of the CSU due to the unit's clearly publicised remit.
6. Camden Borough policy stipulates that any officer attending a DV incident between 8am – 10pm must contact the CSU. This will enable an experienced CSU officer to provide guidance to the initial response by the service. This is essential in terms of gathering evidence and promoting compliance with the positive action strategy. Outside these hours the matter will be referred to the Night Duty CID team. Initial advice is recorded and the appropriate strategy

agreed upon. Since this implementation, the working relationship between CSU and uniform officers has been enhanced, as has the standard of evidence.

7. To support initial evidence gathering, all response vehicles are equipped with form 124Ds and Polaroid cameras for immediate evidence capture, ensuring that the scene and any injuries are photographed. The CSU also have access to a digital camera sponsored by the Violent Crime Directorate. This provides early tangible evidence to the investigator, which can be used during interview, and provides evidence upon which the CPS can charge.
8. In accordance with the DV SOP all domestic violence incidents are recorded in a 124D. It is BOCU policy that officers will record the fact that they have completed the 124D on the CRIS along with a Merlin reference number. Earlier this year (2007), it was clear that although officers were completing the 124D, some were failing to record this fact on the CRIS report and as such undermined Camden's performance.
9. The CSU have now set up a system to ensure reporting officers send and book in their completed 124D into a register. This is supervised by a CSU DS who will record the completion, that it is accounted for on the CRIS system and lastly that the content meets the required standard. Failure to comply will be noted and their line supervisor will be informed. An agreement has been made whereby those officers who fail to meet these standards on more than one occasion will be directed to complete a short CSU attachment. Such postings have improved individual development and performance within their teams. Where patterns of poor performance have been identified this can be addressed through the Borough training cycle. There is still a need to improve front line supervision. (Camden is currently looking to introduce a supervision proforma developed by Tower Hamlets to increase and improve their frontline supervision).
10. All incidents of domestic violence within Camden BOCU are investigated and recorded in accordance with the MPS Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) relating to domestic violence. Leadership, training and supervision ensure that the standards that are laid out in the SOP are understood and adhered to. Once the investigation has been screened in to the CSU a further risk assessment will be conducted. This will be a culmination of the Risk Assessment (RA) initially carried out on the 124D by the initial reporting officer and further enquiries will include checking for historic incidents for the last 5 years or longer. Where there are incidents of threats to life, this is brought to the attention of the Duty Officer who will carry out a risk assessment and bring it to the attention of the CSU/CID. The Detective Inspector will then conduct a secondary RA and tactics will be deployed to remove or reduce that risk.

Victims and family members also at risk are taken to a comfort suite based at Holborn, where matters can be discussed without fear of compromise and introduced to Camden Safety Net (CSN) Staff.

11. CSN, the domestic violence service of the Local Authority, is located in Holborn Police Station is advised of all DV reports to Camden Police. CSN make contact with all clients offering support, advice, safety options and crisis intervention amongst other services. Victims who are identified as being at high risk through the assessment of the heightened risk factors will be referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). This is a panel of agencies chaired by the CSU Detective Inspector (DI). The group shares information in order to increase the safety, health and well being of the victim and their children. The main aim is to reduce repeat victimisation and ensure safety of victim and children.
12. The CSU DI and DSs ensure that ongoing DV secondary investigations are being progressed within the SOP guidelines. A full risk assessment will always be completed and an arrest strategy devised to apprehend outstanding suspects. Contact with the victim will always be established within 24hrs unless the victim specifically requests otherwise. All contact attempts will be recorded. Supervisors will then ensure that the investigation is updated on a regular and timely fashion.
13. The DI is responsible for the management of the CSU as well as Sapphire and both teams work side-by-side, interacting on a regular basis. Joint management allows there to be flexibility depending on priorities and workloads. This is critical where some domestic violence investigations will involve the input of more than one department, for example an allegation of domestic rape. This joint supervision ensures compliance with DV SOP's in allegations of rape. Historically there have been service wide concerns of non-compliance around DV sexual offences. During the FYTD there have been four allegations of DV rape, relating to four individual victims. These investigations are subject to both Sapphire and CSU SOPs and risk management strategies, providing two levels of support to victims.
14. The Child Abuse Investigation Team and Jigsaw Team are also situated in the same building, which establishes constant cooperation and the fast time flow of intelligence. An example of this good practice resulted in the arrest and detention of a high-risk sex offender who had recently been released. Due to the quick interaction of the units and outside agencies, within hours of him committing a sexual offence, he had been apprehended.

15. This unity between teams will allow for the smooth transition this year towards implementing a Public Protection Unit, this will be in line with the Met Modernisation Programme.
16. Performance management of domestic violence is robust. The Senior Management Team are provided with weekly performance data by Territorial Policing, which gives details of detection and arrest rates. At the Borough Commander's Quarterly Performance Meetings domestic violence is a standing agenda item. The Crime Manager and DI with responsibility for the CSU have sanction detection targets set within their Performance Development Review as do all officers working directly within the CSU.
17. To ensure the BOCU are aware of current performance issues, meetings take place throughout the ranking structure. One of the items on the agenda will focus on performance. Such meetings have been crucial not only to provide a formal basis for communication by supervisors, but also to promote feedback and to capture and harness useful suggestions, issues and initiatives. These meetings are published on an internal forum to allow for easy reference and to ensure compliance.
18. There are stringent measures put in place to ensure that on a daily basis a return of work is forwarded to the Crime Manager highlighting critical incidents, issues of media interests, incidents that may have an impact on the Borough that day, detections and outstanding arrests. This information is passed to the Daily Management meeting, which is held every weekday. The BOCU Detective Superintendent or his/her deputy chairs this meeting. Domestic incidents are a standing agenda at this meeting, and the Duty Officer will account for all such incidents over the last 24 hrs. During that period of time, DV activity will also be fully documented on the Duty Officer's OB. Any failures to comply with the positive action policy are brought to the attention of the Superintendent and the Duty Officer of the team responsible.

ii Resources

19. The SMT are fully committed to tackling hate crime and this is reflected in their commitment to ensuring the CSU is appropriately staffed. Currently the CSU has one DI who also manages the Sapphire Unit, four Detective Sergeants, twenty Investigative Officers of Detective Constable and Police Constable Rank, one Administrative staff member and one MARAC Coordinator. Camden CSU is one of the strongest resourced units within the Metropolitan Police Service.

20. As of the 14th January 2008, the team comprises of three male and one female DS's who lead their respective teams. They are also responsible for the progress of their individual portfolios that include race and homophobic crime as well as vulnerable person abuse. Within the four teams, there are seven Detective Constables comprising 4 male officers and 3 female, four Trainee DC's, 2 of whom are female and 2 male, nine Police Constables, comprising 6 females and 3 males. The unit has also one female Staff Administrator. One officer works compressed hours, but all staff are full time. There are no disabled staff in the CSU. Three investigators are from black and ethnic minority groups, two investigators are gay and assist in tackling homophobic crime and coordinate the other 14 LGBT Camden liaison officers.
21. The CSU is a specialist investigative unit within the BOCU. Currently, there is a balance of skills and expertise that provides an excellent learning environment for junior staff members. The training received by CSU staff will be covered in section F of this report.
22. Supervisors assess the needs of the Borough and development of their staff twice a year in line with staff performance development reviews (PDRs). They then pass their recommendations to the Crime Manager. Decisions are made at a CID SMT level to accommodate the needs of the Borough and staff. This system has ensured that performance is maintained and staff opportunities are accomplished. The Borough's posting panel sits every six weeks and supports this process.
23. Camden, like all other MPS boroughs, is supported by Territorial Policing to deliver effective performance in relation to domestic violence. The BOCU is assisted in the following ways
 - Weekly performance data is provided in relation to sanctioned detection and arrest rates, this includes comparative data with other Boroughs.
 - Six-weekly DI Meetings are held by the CSU Service Delivery Team. At these meetings more detailed data is provided such as CAD to CRIS conversion rates, sanctioned detections and the ratio of charges and cautions. Policies, procedures and issues impacting on performance are discussed. Best practice is identified and disseminated.
 - TP Violent Crime Directorate conducts a daily review of serious violent crime that falls within the public protection arena, flagging up to individual Boroughs those crimes that are of critical concern, offering support and advice.
 - CSU Service Delivery Team website is a central reference point for policies, guidance, legislation etc relating to domestic violence.
 - CSU Service Delivery Team provides an advice service and will review investigations upon request. In the past twelve months, the CSU Service

Delivery Team has assisted Camden BOCU by reviewing and giving advice on a number of critical investigations.

- CSU Service Delivery Team provides the BOCU with a single point of contact who regularly visits and provides support when appropriate.

C KEEPING SURVIVORS SAFE AND HOLDING PERPETRATORS ACCOUNTABLE

24. As well as an immediate risk assessment on a 124D, officers within the CSU will always carry out a further comprehensive risk assessment (RA) on all domestic incidents. Under no circumstances will any such RA and appropriate measures to manage the risk be left unrecorded until the following day. Officers on the CSU are fully aware of this critical part of their duty and always adhere to the 'RARA' procedure when compiling Safety Plans for victims. 'RARA' is the established MPS risk management model. CSU Detective Sergeants have responsibility for the risk management of all cases of DV on their team, but in particular the medium and high risk cases (there are enhanced risk assessment models to deal with these cases). The CSU Detective Inspector has responsibility for the risk management of all cases of DV victims but in particular the high risk cases. He/she will inform the reactive crime wing managers as soon as practicable about such high-risk cases. These assessments are rigorously monitored as new information may further impact on control measures. The CPS is briefed on any medium or high-risk victims in order to inform the investigating officer of any changes in relation to the offender's restrictions or conditions.
25. Camden Safety Net team is located within the CSU, thus facilitating regular exchanges between both agencies around the safety of victims of DV and their children. All DV crimes and incidents are referred to CSN and officers record this action in a book together with the type of response required.
26. This service is available 8.30am – 5pm every weekday; however staff often see clients outside these times if prearranged. The expectations are that CSN receive 100% of domestic incidents for both CSU and Sapphire units. This performance is monitored through a referrals book. The CSN Manager attends monthly Sergeants' Meetings to discuss performance and any operational issues arising. The staff also offer a duty system whereby one of the incident workers is available every day to attend the victim's current address with an officer. Opportunities will be discussed to extend these hours once the Independent DV Advisory Service has been implemented. This service will be covered later in this document.

27. The CSN offer a number of services, but in essence, they are a crisis intervention service carrying out a risk assessment and offering safety planning. Below is a list of services they can supply or access to keep survivors safe.

- Liaison with housing departments and refuges to secure alternative safe accommodation, this is invariably at short notice to avoid any future risks
- CSN offer clients crisis counselling, longer term counselling, monthly confidence building courses, weekly support groups, and parenting classes
- They offer information with regard to civil remedies such as injunctions, contact and non-molestation orders. They also have excellent contacts with local family solicitors
- CSN staff support victims and witnesses awaiting trial and liaise with witness services at various courts
- In discussion with the victim and where it enhances safety, they often make referrals to the “safer homes scheme” to improve security measures
- CSN offer welfare and benefit advice
- CSN commission perpetrator programmes for men

The above list encompasses just some of the practical functions the CSN is able to perform. CSN staff speak a variety of languages including Sylheti, Hindu, Urdu, Punjabi and British Sign language. They also have access to interpreters for any other language requirement.

28. CSN intervention has significantly impacted on victim safety and holding perpetrators accountable, measured through increased detection targets and reduced repeat victimisation. Through their support, victims have been more willing to support the prosecution process.

29. Camden’s Crime and Reduction Partnerships through the Domestic Violence Working Group recognised the need to implement a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). This was critical to make a significant difference to the safety of *very high risk* victims. During April 2007 funding was secured and this initiative was implemented. This has grown in stature and now sits alongside other existing public protection units such as the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) and Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB’s). Various representatives from lead agencies attend more than one of these meetings to ensure that sharing of information exists throughout all these processes/teams and agencies.

30. The MARAC is represented by a number of agencies such as Camden Mental Health, Housing, Victim Support, Camden Safety Net, Solace Woman's Aid, Probation, Children Schools and Families, Safeguarding and Social Care, Health and Accident & Emergency Services and many more. The panel sits once a month, chaired by the CSU DI, and as of 5 December 2007 has heard 113 cases. Seventy-nine of these cases involved children, 162 children in total. Cases are referred by various agencies and CSU through the internal risk assessment process, with the majority of cases being referred by the police. 76% of cases in the last year were referred by the police, 5% by IDVAs, 7% by Safeguarding and Social Care, 10% by Probation and 2% by voluntary organisations. All agency representatives have undergone Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse training (CAADA). This includes being able to conduct their own risk assessment and identify factors that would merit a MARAC referral. This has been highly successful with the number of referrals increasing from outside agencies and a reduction of repeat offenders. This is currently under review by the DVWG to estimate the impact on the overall reduction in DV offences. The group continues to be linked into CAADA, who provides ongoing implementation support.
31. The Local Authority, through the LAA, has funded a police officer to fulfil the role as a MARAC coordinator. This officer provides daily contact with MARAC agencies to enhance the support to victims. The panel have access to a secure e-mail address that facilitates regular communication between different agencies through the coordinator. This officer, in partnership with other agencies has devised a spreadsheet to maintain a record of all cases and actions carried out. There has also been a local MARAC CRIS flag implemented; this has enabled such actions to be cross-referenced to the crime report.
32. Camden has dealt with a number of 'Honour' related incidents and is aware of the safety measures that have to be implemented and managed in order to secure survivors' safety. Recently, in response to an 'Honour' related murder, Camden CSU applied a full range of proactive measures to secure the safety of significant witnesses, who were at high risk of becoming victims themselves.
33. Camden Borough was identified by the MPA Domestic Violence Board as having the third lowest arrest rate: 35.5% covering April 2006 – March 2007. These statistics provided by the Performance Directorate covered domestic incidents as opposed to substantive DV offences. Camden's CSU Detective Inspector has made representations to the Performance Directorate and Territorial Policing Violent Crime Directorate in relation to this particular performance indicator. This is on the basis that performance should not be

based upon incidents, but on substantive offences for which an arrest should follow. Camden judged on this more relevant performance measure for April 2007 to December 2007 have achieved an arrest rate of 64.5% against an MPS average 61.2% and a target of 60%.

34. As already highlighted Camden's CAD to CRIS conversion rate stands at 85% and each crime report is scrutinised by the Crime Management Unit (CMU) and the CSU to ensure the classifications are correct.
35. However, as previously outlined, Camden is striving to improve performance around positive arrest policy to hold perpetrators accountable. Where an arrest is not made when a power of arrest exists, this decision must be made after consultation with the CSU Gatekeeper who is contactable on a dedicated mobile phone (outside 8am – 10pm Night Duty CID). This system was initiated by Camden and replicated on other Boroughs as good practice. The facts for not arresting must be recorded on the Duty Officer's OB and CRIS report. Furthermore, this is also highlighted at the Daily Management Meeting.
36. Camden's CSU and the Hate Crime Partnerships (DV, Race and Homophobic Working Groups) have invested resources to run a Hate Crime Car during the last three months of 2007. This was based on Operation Athena and aimed at increasing awareness around the issues and offences involved in DV and Hate Crime. The purpose of this was to hold perpetrators to account and to reassure the public. This involved the availability of CSU to perform additional duties by staffing a Hate Crime Car together with various partners. The main thrust of this operation was to ensure that the "positive action strategy" was complied with and victim care enhanced and effectively managed.
37. This proactive operation's aim was to increase the quality of service and support given to the victim at the scene. With this increased level of support, it is hoped that the victim is more likely to believe a positive outcome will occur and as such, feel more inclined to support a prosecution. During the first few months this car has also been utilised to arrest outstanding suspects quickly to increase the arrest and sanction detection rate.
38. The recording of cross allegations and carrying out dual arrests at domestic violence incidents is discouraged. Officers are expected to carry out a full investigation of the incident, which should identify the primary aggressor. Any cross allegations or dual arrests are reviewed by the CSU DI and where appropriate challenged. Whilst there is no data available on numbers of cross allegations or dual arrests, they represent very few cases.
39. Up to 2 December 2007, a sanction detection rate of 53.4% has been achieved against an MPS average of 42.3% and a target of 40%. Camden so

far has recorded the fourth highest detection rate in the MPS. The BOCU ensures that these detections are not 'built on sand' in that there is a positive charging policy. Camden will always seek to charge where a caution has already been administered or there is a history of DV. As a result of this criteria and the excellent support provided by the CSN, Camden's disposal rate in terms of charging is very healthy and are currently the second highest in the MPS. The CSU has incorporated its own Gatekeepers to ensure case files are fit for purpose, in line with Operation Emerald.

40. The CSU DI chairs the Special Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) Steering Group meeting, which is a sub group of the Local Criminal Justice Board. Meetings are held at Highbury Corner Magistrates' Court and the main aim, together with Islington Borough, is to formulate a structure and secure Government funds to introduce (SDVC). Funding for the introduction of MARAC and Domestic Violence Advisory Service (IDVAS) has already been achieved.
41. This group also looks to improve performance in order to reduce attrition rates to bring more offenders to justice. There is always a need to improve case files and adopt good practice. The meeting also allows the CSU to adjust to new systems, without there being a dip in performance. A recent example of this is the introduction of Criminal Justice Speedy Simple Summary scheme (CJSSS). As a result of this meeting, officers have been given a briefing as to compiling files that are fit for purpose.
42. The MARAC coordinator is currently maintaining a file on our vulnerable repeat DV victims, in order to build up evidence and bad character against their perpetrators. This is either to promote victimless prosecutions or to charge offenders with historic matters, where the victim decides to proceed.
43. During this financial year (2007/8), Camden CSU have dealt with a number of 'Honour' related DV incidents, including a recent kidnapping. This related to an Asian female victim who was pregnant and whilst visiting hospital for a scan was kidnapped by her family. The victim was in extreme fear that she would be forced to leave the country and to have an abortion. CSU Officers together with outside agencies secured her safety and the implicated family members were arrested and remanded in custody. The investigation officer spent months dealing with these protracted enquiries and due to this experience has now prepared a training package to be used locally.
44. CSU Officers are encouraged to take impact statements, because this is an excellent opportunity for the victim to hold the perpetrator accountable. Attached is a statement in a recent CSU case, this was taken into consideration by the judge and provided an opportunity for the victim to be

heard. The offender received a 6-year sentence under the new public protection legislation. The victim has given her permission for this statement to be used for training. She also wishes to share her experience and has agreed to attend a training day to raise DV awareness.

D PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

45. Camden CSU supervisors unlike other Boroughs ensure a comprehensive risk assessment is carried out for **every domestic violence incident not just substantive offences**. Every incident is then referred to the CSN, who also carry out their own independent assessment. The Investigating Officer has clear instructions that where the need arises a clear safety plan must be implemented and documented. Supervisors will be consulted and an action plan agreed on for all medium and high risk cases. Where victims are of high risk or repeat victims that are hard to engage, a referral to MARAC is considered. This work is critical to prevent domestic violence and reduce the number of repeat victims.
46. The Safer Neighbourhood Teams are also provided with details of those victims who have been referred to MARAC. This enables officers to be aware of those victims at high risk, where appropriate to conduct visits and respond to any calls.
47. Preventative work is taking place through the Borough's involvement with the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP). As part of their sentence, perpetrators convicted of domestic violence can be placed on the IDAP. This is a 33-week programme, the aim of which is to address their behaviour. CSN also commission a perpetrator programme with 12 places for a 36-week programme. Perpetrators attend this voluntarily, the aim of which is to change their abusive behaviour. The CSN, have a woman safety officer who engages with partners and ex-partners of the perpetrators on that programme.
48. Within Camden there are currently 24 bed spaces provided by SOLACE Woman's Aid. SOLACE are part of a national network of refuge provision that provide emergency safe temporary accommodation for woman and children fleeing domestic violence. There are also 30 bed spaces provided by St Ursulas Woman's Hostel, which will be re-commissioned this year. These facilities have been utilised on a regular basis to secure the safety of the victim and prevent further offences from taking place

49. This BOCU has had one domestic murder in the last two years, however Camden is aware and supportive of the new MPS protocol for murder reviews. The review process has been made more independent and less demanding for the local CSU as the review report is now completed by the central Violent Crime Directorate (CSU Delivery Team) under Project Umbra.
50. Partners from the DVWG also aim to raise awareness amongst young people by delivering in schools the Westminster DV Preventative. This programme is currently being carried out by Educational Welfare Officers and a representative from SOLACE Woman's Aid. There has also recently been, as part of inside justice week, workshops and programmes at Highbury Magistrates Court for schools. One of the successes was the running of a mock DV court.
51. Camden has experienced a 34% reduction in substantive DV offences during this FYTD, from April 2007 to December 2007. Members of the Domestic Violence Working Group propose a number of reasons for this reduction:
- The last MPS publicity campaign on DV was 3 years ago and a future campaign may result in an increase in reporting of DV offences and incidents
 - Excellent partnership service practice including the recent implementation of the MARAC system have prevented DV offences by protecting victims
 - Positive action strategy by means of arrest and high rates of offenders brought to justice have impacted on the behaviour of perpetrators
 - Working in partnership to implement an Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme is believed to be impacting on perpetrators through education
 - Internal police procedures have been scrutinised and there is no evidence that recording policy or practice is different from previous years

It is of note that levels of DV incidents have also reduced in this financial year. Figures from 1 April 2007 to November amounted to 1720 DV incidents, compared to 2159 in the same period the previous year. The ratio of crimes to DV incidents remains consistent. As a result of the reduction in offences, the DVWG have commissioned an independent academic study seeking to establish an explanation. The findings of this study are expected to be delivered by May 2008.

E WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

52. The BOCU works in partnership with a number of statutory and voluntary organisations to tackle domestic violence. The DCI and CSU DI attend and chair the Domestic Violence Working Group (DVWG) funded by the Local Authority, it has implemented an action plan to tackle domestic violence. The board consists of representatives from the London Borough of Camden (LBC) DV strategy and services, LBC Community Safety, Witness Services, LBC Partnership Information Unit, LBC Anti social Behaviour Unit, SOLACE Woman's Aid, Housing and Probation. The purpose of the group is to assess the overall provisions and effectiveness of Police and Local authority services designed to help victims of DV and prevent further domestic violence. Targets, Aims and Objectives have been set and this action plan is attached. There are thirteen objectives the activity of each one is assessed through the measure of performance at these regular meetings (Domestic Action Plan and Funding 2007/8 – attached as Appendix A).
53. The LBC Domestic Violence Strategy and Services Manager coordinates the Camden DV Forum. The meetings are open to all practitioners in the area and aim to provide information exchange and networking opportunities, advice, guidance and support and to identify and share good practice. This meeting can also help to identify barriers to achieving best practice that need to be addressed or gaps in service provision.
54. One of the objectives of the Domestic Violence Group is to provide intensive support for identified victims of domestic violence. The main activity surrounding this was the implementation of MARAC. The funding for this has been secured and the implementation and initial training completed. The MARAC is chaired by the CSU DI and has a healthy representation from a broad spectrum of services. During this financial year 113 cases have so far been referred.
55. The CSU DI also chairs the Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) Steering Group, which is designed together with Islington Borough to seek funding for the implementation of a DV Advisory Service and SDVC. Funding has been secured for extra advocates recruited through Camden Council's Safety Net. These advocates will be accommodated at Holborn Police Station to work alongside the CSU. The Board has applied for funding to accommodate a cluster SDVC and if successful will be implemented in 2008. This group also places on the agenda measures to reduce the attrition rate and support victims through the criminal justice system.

F TRAINING

56. In early 2004, Camden sought to radically overhaul the policing of DV within the Borough. Although the CSU was performing adequately, there was room for improvement. Key police personnel recognised that excellent relationships had been forged with the Local Authority DV Service – Camden Safety Net (CSN). As a result there was a more holistic approach to the issues faced by victims. Now police were able to ensure that victims received expert advice on housing, welfare benefits and civil remedy as well as safety planning, criminal law advice and the support of the police. Despite this excellent work, it was clear that further training was needed both internally to Police Officers and key Police Staff as well as to some of our partner agencies. Internally, officers and staff were unaware of the MPS policy and the potential support available to victims, accessible through the CSU. Externally there was a mistrust of the police based on historic MPS attitudes and the anecdotal evidence widely “believed” by most DV agencies.
57. Initially, Camden developed its own DV Training Package and this was rolled out during training days in 2004. This package was planned, developed and instigated prior to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) DV Training Package. One of the training sessions was observed by officers from the Territorial Policing Performance Review Unit, as they wished to see what training was being given as Camden’s performance around DV had already started to significantly improve.
58. The Camden Training Package was received extremely positively. Officers and staff acknowledged that they now had a greater understanding of the many and complicated issues involved in any DV relationship. The ideas behind ‘Positive Action’ were explained and now fully appreciated. There was also now a better understanding around the difficult but pivotal role that is played by the police and the excellent services that could now be accessed by victims and their families in Camden.
59. The MPS DV Training Package then superseded the Camden version. However, in effect it was very similar, but gave little scope to explain local policies and procedures. As a result, Camden further developed the programme to ensure that we still allowed for enough discussion around local issues. This made sure that officers and staff remained engaged and saw the relevance to their daily work. It also allowed for continued development of local policies. In accordance with MPS policy local representatives from DV agencies also became involved in the training. This helped with partnership

engagement and sought to increase outside agency understanding of the MPS DV policy.

60. Since September 2004, the Training Unit together with the CSU and CSN have delivered this programme to 942 staff members. Members of the BOCU Senior Management Team are also included in Borough training programmes, including DV training. Currently, 747 members of staff are trained, however there are 42 members, mainly comprising of new recruits and transferees, that are yet to be trained. These will be included in the next training cycle. This equates to 79.3% of Camden Borough staff currently trained.
61. Community Safety Unit staff receive additional specialist training when an officer joins the unit. As a minimum, Police Constables will attend the one-week CSU course and the 'Tier Two' interview training. Those officers on the TDC programme will already be 'Tier Two' Trained and will have or be awaiting their initial investigators course, which includes a CSU module. On completion of those two courses, officers become eligible to attend the ABE Achieving Best Evidence Course.
62. Camden was a pilot site for the localised training of recruit constables with the MPS. The CSU seized the opportunity to tailor specific 1-day package for this group of constables. In that day we were able to identify their knowledge level and then discuss the psychology behind DV offending, as well as, all the issues facing victims of DV. Of course MPS policy and local procedures were fully explained as well as the constables receiving an input from the local Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) DV lawyer. However, the highlight of the training session was when a victim of a 12 year DV relationship spoke to the assembled audience. The victim also bravely agreed to take part in a 30-minute question and answer session with the constables.
63. On joining the CSU, officers will have internal training from their line managers in relation to DV standing operation procedures and risk assessments. The Camden Safety Net and LGBT forum also provide new staff with training.
64. Camden CSU are currently organising a training day to coincide with internal staff moves across the crime wing. This training will incorporate presentations surrounding internal processes and also feature external speakers covering topics such as victim support, honour base violence and MARAC.
65. Since 2004, Camden has a well-earned reputation for pro-activity and innovative thinking when it comes to tackling DV. Integral to this has been the ability of the Police to engage fully with local partners and ensure that they fully understand the Police role and policy towards DV. Key to this has been

the training provided by officers to external agencies. The training has ensured that other agencies and groups have increased trust in the Police and promote the excellent work being done. This leads to greater reporting to Police, greater cross-referral between agencies and ultimately a more structured support package for victims of DV in Camden.

Outside agencies/groups who have received training are:

- Camden Safety Net
- Camden IAG members
- Victim Support Camden
- Private Landlords Association (Camden)
- Camden Police Community Consultative Group (CPCCG)
- Highbury Corner Magistrates' Court staff
- The year 2006/2007 has seen further training to outside agencies and groups. This has included:
 - MARAC training to partner agencies as well as CSU and Sapphire staff
 - Camden Womens Aid Legal Awareness Day
 - DV Survivors Group
 - Camden and Islington Probation Service

66. Through the DVWG a co-ordinated action against domestic abuse training day was organised. Representative from each agency were provided with training around the introduction of IDVAS, MARAC and a coordinated approach to risk assessments. This day had a significant impact by improving the way agencies share information and the ability to identify and refer cases.
67. All CSU staff were provided with training and access to the Integrated Information Platform intranet site (IIP). The search allows staff to conduct multiple searches using one gateway in order to conduct risk assessments.
68. Officers have access to a reference library within the CSU to enhance their knowledge of DV issues.

G EMPLOYEE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

69. Police employees who commit domestic violence will not be seen or treated as different from any other perpetrator and will be investigated and held

accountable through the Criminal Justice System in the same way as any other person. It is of paramount importance that the public has faith in the honesty and integrity of Police officers.

"The primary duties of those who hold the office of constable are the protection of life and property the preservation of the Queen's peace and the prevention and detection of criminal offences. To fulfil these duties they are granted extraordinary powers. The public and the Police services therefore have the right to expect the highest standards of conduct from them".

70. The CSU Detective Inspector leads all investigations in the first instance. There is a comprehensive SOP that audits activity through to ACPO ranks and is for strict compliance.
71. The safety of the victim and their children **will be paramount**. There may be additional barriers to reporting for partners of Police officers/employees and further pressures for victims who are Police employees and must always be borne in mind.
72. The CSU at Camden has the confidence of its peers and has supported Service Policies and initiatives to tackle DV. An internal advertising campaign was eagerly supported. Support mechanisms and referrals are commonplace tools to win victim support, whilst ensuring that confidentiality issues are robustly adhered to. Such is the confidence of the management around internal DV, the SMT, TP VCD and Directorate of Professional Standards have allowed the CSU to 'lead' on several such matters.
73. Whilst the performance in this particular area has not been formally measured it can be seen from the sample case studies that the victims are confident that the CSU are ensuring their obligations under articles 2 and 3 of the Human Rights Act. In the last eight months, Camden has managed six such internal matters, all of which have adhered to the policies outlined above.

H CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

74. Camden Borough is continually making steps to improve performance and there are a number of challenges for 2008. Steps have already been taken to allow for smooth transition into forming a Public Protection Unit. This unit will include Sapphire, CSU, Jigsaw, Compass, CSN and Operation Curb supported by an intelligence focus desk The teams will work alongside each other to allow for a joint partnership approach to public protection issues.

75. Camden has secured funding to implement the Independent Domestic Advisory service. This will build upon the CSN services to support victims from the initial stage of investigation of domestic violence to court proceeding. There is great belief that this scheme will ensure more perpetrators will be brought to justice and that DV attrition rates will be reduced.
76. Camden together with Islington are currently in the process of bidding for Government funds to implement a Special Domestic Violence Court. Once this has been achieved, all partnership agencies will receive training to enhance the support of victims and prevent perpetrators from re-offending.

I EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

77. The CSU DI not only co chairs the Domestic Violence Working Group, but also chairs the Camden Homophobic Crime Working Group and the Race Crime Working Group. Members of these forums also attend the DVWG. This allows for a broad spectrum of knowledge and understanding the needs of different groups within the community.
78. SOLACE Women's Aid in conjunction with Camden's Asian Women's Centre (Hopscotch) has developed a support service for Bangladeshi woman, who are victims of domestic violence. This has proved to be successful and is currently celebrating their first year of success. This is in response to the high proportion of Bengali residence in Camden
79. Each DS, within the CSU, is responsible for performance and training around Race, LGBT and Vulnerable Adults. One of the aims is to promote third party reporting sites to build community trust and confidence. Camden Police are aware of the historic problem of underreporting of DV among BME groups, LGBT and other groups, for example among people with disabilities. Together with various partnerships, the drive is to raise the awareness about domestic violence and the service available to their victims and families. Another aim of the CSU strategy is to form a point of contact for Safer Neighbourhood Teams to tackle hate crime community issues. While some partnerships have been established for a number of years, contacts and partnerships with other groups are relatively new and the CSU would welcome assistance in developing these partnerships.
80. Camden has 14 LGBT LO Officers, three of whom are currently working within the CSU. The officers are a vital resource for engaging with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. They have not only provided support in

hate crime, but also to other specialist departments on major enquiries and Gold Groups.

81. The CSN recognises the difficulties to engage Black and other ethnic minority groups and as such targeted additional resources from similar backgrounds. As highlighted earlier, this unit now has a broad spectrum of languages and cultures. There are also other partnership initiatives, in 2007 the DVWG were successful in obtaining funding from the Violent Crime Programme to roll out training on domestic violence issues for our partners in BME agencies. This training was delivered through the sub-group of the Domestic Violence Forum and was run over two days attracting a participation of eight individual agencies. LBC also funded a member to work with Hopscotch (Asian Woman's Support Service) and SOLACE to engage with members of their community who are experiencing domestic violence.
82. Performance figures show that of the 1671 victim's of DV, 985 were white European which equates to 59%, 312 were African / Caribbean (19%), 168 were Indian / Pakistani (10%), 108 were dark European (6.5%), 26 were Arabic / Egyptian and 23 were Chinese / Japanese. These statistics highlight that 38% of DV victims are from BME backgrounds. Camden ensures that frontline officers are fully trained in dealing with diverse communities; victims are also given access to Language Line, MPS interpreters, and to specialist BME support groups. Compliance with the 'SPECES' risk assessment model ensures that cultural factors are included in the risk assessment of every reported domestic incident. Although this indicates we are engaging with various ethnic minority groups, Camden's DV partnerships are aware that further work needs to be carried out.

J FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

83. Information that addresses the financial implications of work being done in response to domestic violence have been covered throughout the report where relevant.
84. The Local Authority Agreement (LAA) has provided funding (£30,000) in order to facilitate a MARAC Coordinator's post. This has been essential in order to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing. This has enabled appropriate actions to be taken to increase public safety.

85. The LAA has also provided funding (£70,000) in order to deliver the perpetrator programme that includes a Woman Safety Officer's post to facilitate, monitor and progress this initiative.
86. Lastly, the Domestic, Race and Homophobic Working Groups has provided funding (£6,000) to support the running of a Hate Crime Car. This partnership initiative has assisted in progressing the targets, aims and objectives of the working group's action plans. This initiative is currently being reviewed.

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Attachments

Appendix A Domestic Violence Working Group Action Plan and Funding 2007-2008

Glossary

ABE	Achieving best evidence
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
BOCU	Borough operational command unit
CAADA	Coordinated action against domestic abuse
CAD	Computer aided dispatch
CAIT	Child abuse investigation team
CDRP	Crime and disorder reduction partnership
CJSSS	Criminal Justice Simple Speedy Summons
CMU	Crime Management Unit
CPS	Crown prosecution service

CRIS	Crime report information system
CSN	Camden Safety Net
CSU	Community Safety Unit
CSU DT	Community safety unit delivery team
DI	Detective Inspector
DV	Domestic Violence
DVWG	Domestic violence working group
FYTD	Financial year to date
GBH	Grievous bodily harm
IBO	Intergrated Borough Operations
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service
LBC	London Borough of Camden
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
LGBT	Lesbian gay bisexual transgender
LSCB	Local Safeguarding children's board (s)
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
OB	Occurrence book
PDR	Performance development review
SD	Sanction detection
SDVC	Specialist Domestic Violence Court
SMT	Senior management team
SOP(s)	Standard operation procedure/ procedures