



Trust & Confidence in the Police in Waltham Forest and the impact on residents

October 2021

Purpose of this pack



1.

To **surface the latest results** of the Met Police / MOPAC Public Attitudes Survey which show significant **increases in concerns about crime and violent crime** among Waltham Forest residents (and across London)

2.

To **re-connect with what residents told us in 2019**, before Covid, about why they are **concerned and fearful** about crime

3.

To offer a **basis for a clear conversation** with the Borough Commander on the **impact of Police numbers and other aspects of Policing** that are having an direct impact on the quality of life of our residents



Section 1: The data on “Trust & Confidence”

Current Context

1 HIGH TRUST | 16 MID-LEVEL | 32 LOW TRUST



Measuring Trust and Confidence: Key points from the 2021 data

Below are the 7 Police Trust and Confidence measures relating to Waltham Forest, listed from those measures rated highest to lowest. It is important to note that there have been significant improvements over the past 2 years across most measures, however:

Agree the police listen to the concerns of local people

Waltham Forest ranks 15/32 in London

Police do a good job in the local area

Waltham Forest ranks 16/32 in London

Feels well informed about local police activities over the last 12 months

Waltham Forest ranks 17/32 in London

Agree the police are dealing with the things that matter to this community

Waltham Forest ranks 19/32 in London

Agree the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are

Waltham Forest ranks 20/32 in London

Knows how to contact their local ward officer

Waltham Forest ranks 20/32 in London

Agree the police can be relied upon to be there when needed

Waltham Forest ranks 31/32 in London





Section 2: Fear of crime in Waltham Forest

Historical context | Key findings from 2019 Waltham Forest Crime and Safety Research



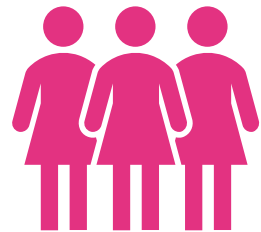
Crime was a priority for the majority of residents involved in the research and was growing in importance



There were **two key drivers** for the increase in fear: lived experience and media messaging



Crime and the fear of crime had a strong effect of 1/3 of **resident's quality of life**



Almost all participants had either **experience of crime in the past 2 years** (been a victim, been a witness, or their family/friends had)



Crime residents were **most worried about**:

- Burglary
- Knife crime (disproportionately higher in Walthamstow)
- Drug dealing



Knife crime is a **signal crime** (a crime which has a disproportionate impact on fear and the perception of the risk of victimisation)

Current Context

1 LOW FEAR | 16 MID-LEVEL | 32 HIGH FEAR



Measuring Fear of crime: Key points from the 2021 data

The results for 2021 place Waltham Forest residents as the most concerned about knife and gun crime of any London Borough. This is not a new effect: we have been outliers since 2018. The clear outlier in the opposite direction is LB Lambeth (high levels of crime and relatively low levels of fear).

Almost two-thirds of residents say they are worried about crime (higher than the London average although results for London have increased)

Waltham Forest ranks 25/32
in London boroughs

Half of residents say they are worried about anti-social behaviour (similar to pan-London)

Waltham Forest ranks 20/32
in London boroughs

Concerns about knife crime and gun crime are higher and have increased by a larger amount since the last survey owing to a change in methodology, however:

- Four-fifths of residents say that knife crime is a problem in the area
- Three-fifths of residents say that gun-crime is a problem in the area

Waltham Forest ranks 32/32
in London boroughs
on both measures

Historical context | What we've done to try and address fear of crime



October 2017
Mayor's 1st
Knife Crime
Strategy

Waltham Forest was found to be an extreme outlier on fear of knife crime in the Mayor's first Knife Crime Strategy, which showed our children most fearful in London. This drove us to commission *From Postcode to Profit*, published in June 2018, generating additional investment to underpin a new strategic approach.

November 2018
Launch of VRP

As part of the new strategic approach **we launched the VRP**. This involved residents and community groups much more in the work and offered significant multimedia communication opportunities with dedicated proactive resource which is no longer available

December 2019
Waltham Forest
Crime and Safety
Research

Gun and knife crime was coming down but levels of fear were not so we commissioned research into residents' perceptions. Clear recommendations emerged, particularly for the Police approach to communications, but findings were not well socialised beyond SafetyNet and Covid struck 3 months later.

March 2020 – June
2021
Hyperlocal
approach

We **implemented Council-focused recommendations through VRP, but Police did not amend their approach**. MOPAC stopped collecting data collected from last quarter 2019/20 to first quarter of 2021/22, leaving us unable to track progress. New methodology introduced in June 21, every borough has deteriorated.





Section 3: Correlation between trust & confidence and fear of crime

Statistical correlations



Based upon 17 quarters of publicly available data:

At a London-wide level, there is a **strong negative correlation** between “Agree the police can be relied upon to be there when needed” and the level of fear, particularly general fear and fear of knife crime. So, the lower the level of confidence the higher the level of fear. Police visibility (and therefore numbers) are central to this measure).

The same is true for “Agree the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are”. Given substantially lower levels of confidence amongst diverse groups, the it is likely that more diverse boroughs will experience higher levels of fear.

Looking at the WF-specific data, there is additionally a **strong positive correlation** with “Feels well informed about local police activities over the last 12 months”. The more well-informed people are, the less fearful they are.



Section 4: Potential KLOE



IDEA 1

There has been an announcement of additional police resources for some London boroughs but not Waltham Forest.

Residents comment frequently on the lack of visibility of Police on their streets

Our first idea is that lower numbers of police in Waltham Forest is negatively impacting on Trust, Confidence and therefore Fear of Crime measures because residents report that they have a low level of trust and confidence in Police being there when needed.

RATIONALE

Of the 7 trust and confidence measures in the Police, *'Agree the police can be relied upon to be there when needed'* is the worst ranked measured for Waltham Forest (31/32 London Boroughs). This is supported by the common complaint from residents about lack of Police response on 101.

A low level of confidence in Police "being there when needed" correlates strongly with increased levels of fear of crime both across London and in Waltham Forest.



IDEA 2

Our second potential line is that, because of Police numbers, residents don't get enough support from the Police when they are a victim of crime, particularly property crime. Victim Support is commissioned on a pan London basis but tends to prioritise violent crime. In the absence of visible police and an adequate feedback loop, residents are left feeling abandoned and hopeless, compounding their fears about vulnerability to crime in general and gun and knife crime in particular

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KLOE 3



IDEA 3

Our third suggestion is that low levels of trust and confidence in some large demographic groups is driving elevated levels of fear of crime across different areas of the borough. We need to understand fear of crime on a hyper local level, in line with our refreshed Neighbourhood based Violence Reduction Partnership approach.

RATIONALE

We know from the Crime and Safety Research undertaken in December 2019 that 32% of residents say that fear of crime has a strong effect on their quality of life.

There is a notable difference by area with residents in Leyton and Chingford claiming a much stronger impact than those in Leytonstone and Walthamstow.

A belief in Police treating everyone fairly correlates strongly with lower levels of fear. This belief is less likely in areas of high diversity.



IDEA 4

Our fourth suggestion is that the corporate and, to some extent, local Met approach of showing weapons rather than other aspects of Police operations, or broader partnership interventions, is undermining trust and confidence and is resulting in increased fear among residents.

RATIONALE

Waltham Forest has a much more localised issue with violence than most boroughs, which means that even though the volume isn't the largest, residents probably feel the impact more.

Residents told us very clearly in the Crime and Safety Research:

- “We look to Police as the authentic voice on crime issues
- Don't show us images of weapons on social media because it makes us feel worse
- Do show us images of cash or drugs confiscated or of criminals brought to justice
- Tell us more about what you are doing to enforce against crime
- Tell us about the preventative work too”

Being well-informed about Police operations is strongly and positively correlated with lower levels of fear.

