

Report to Community Safety Forum – 2 March 2015**Subject: You Said We Did: Interpreting Data on Domestic & Sexual Violence**

Contact Officer: Name: *Linda Beanlands* Tel: **29-1115**
E-mail: Linda.beanlands@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk
Wards Affected: All

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At the last meeting of the Community Safety Forum, you asked for more explanation of what lies behind the data that we report on domestic and sexual violence. The following information helps our understanding.

2.0 Interpreting data on sexual offences and on domestic violence (DV) offences

2.1 There are two main aims to the Partnership's work around sexual and domestic violence offences. The primary aim is to reduce the amount of domestic and sexual violence that takes place – indeed, to stop it happening altogether. However, we also seek to increase reporting of incidents so that there are opportunities for services to engage and protect the individuals affected and where possible, to bring perpetrators to justice through criminal justice processes. Much work continues to take place to actively encourage victims to report.

2.2 Interpretation of this data is difficult. With overall police recorded numbers being influenced by reporting rates as well as underlying incidents taking place, we are not in a position to be able to say that the number of crimes and incidents going up (or going down) is 'good' or 'bad'. However, the data provided do indicate the scale of the problem that services need to address, which especially in the case of domestic violence and abuse is significant.

2.3 Benchmark data is not available for domestic violence crimes and incidents. While data for comparing Brighton & Hove with comparator (benchmarked) partnerships are technically available for sexual offences, because of the difficulties and differences in interpretation, it is not useful to include that information in our reports.

2.4 In our reports, we tell you about police recorded crimes as well as police recorded incidents. For crimes, we follow the Home Office definition, counting and reporting on those recorded for aged 16years and over. For incidents, we are able to count and report on victims of any age since they are drawn from a different database (that database does not separate according to age).

3.0 Differences in reporting by different sections of the population.

- 3.1 The question on trends in who is reporting crimes is not straightforward to answer. The police only collect information on who is the aggrieved (not necessarily the person reporting).
- 3.2 The question raised at the Forum focused particularly on the reporting rate of older people and whether this had changed. An example is the breakdown set out below, of the age of the aggrieved (the person affected by the crime) from April to September 2014:

<18s	583
18-25	1640
26-49	4049
+50	1636
Aggrieved age is null	3347
No aggrieved	131

- 3.3 However, you wouldn't expect victimisation to be spread evenly across the age groups (young people are most often the victim in some of the more numerous crime types, e.g. theft and violence), so it's hard to say whether reporting (as opposed to victimisation) is more or less likely in any particular age group.
- 3.4 The table below provides annual data for crimes where the victim is aged 50+, aged 60+ and for total crimes. Over this 6 year period from 2008/9 to 2013/14 all datasets have shown a decline, with the data for over 50s showing less of a decline than that for total crimes and the data for victims over 60 years old showing a slightly greater decline than the total crime figure. More analysis would be required to understand this difference in more detail. However a possible factor which may be disproportionately encouraging younger rather than older people to report could be the fact that there are now more ways to report crimes using new information technology.

	No. of crimes with victims aged 50 and above	No. of crimes with victims aged 60 and above	Total police recorded crimes
2008/09	3049	1493	25099
2009/10	2945	1431	24382
2010/11	2985	1439	23998
2011/12	2848	1312	23608
2012/13	2761	1295	23541
2013/14	2808	1239	21616
% change 2008/09 to 2013/14	-7.9%	-17.0%	-13.9%

Safe in the City Partnership	
-------------------------------------	--

The 2013 Strategic Assessment of Crime and Community Safety undertook a fairly wide-scale look at which groups within the local population were more affected by crime or community safety issues and this information was taken into consideration during the development of the Community Safety Strategy for 2014-17. The Strategic Assessment can be found [here](#).

People should always be encouraged to report crimes to the police (or to another service). All information received will contribute to acquiring a fuller picture of crime and disorder and will enable responses and preventative measures to be targeted in the most effective way.

