

MAYOR OF LONDON

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Dear John

Thank you for your letter of 29 January following my appearance at the Budget and Performance Committee. You asked about crime trends in London compared to elsewhere in the country and enclosed are tables containing information in relation to crime reduction over a 10 year timeline.

Whilst we recognise the need to understand the national statistics on crime and the variations, this is not new research that can be carried out by MOPAC itself. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime has asked Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) to use its national position and role to ensure data is comparative and establish the reasons for regional variations. While MOPAC is wholly responsible for explaining its own figures and trends, it does not have automatic access to other forces' information nor is this their role, so detailed explanations are not possible. However, a few general observations can be made.

First, the drivers of crime in London are different to elsewhere in the country. Densely populated urban areas have traditionally experienced higher crime rates; and London is uniquely urban when compared to other police force areas. London has also seen more rapid population growth in the last decade compared to the national average.

Secondly, although the general downward trend seen nationally began more slowly in London it has accelerated in the last two years, and London's contribution to the national reduction in crime has increased. The latest ON5 statistics (up to October 2013) released on 23 January 2014 demonstrate that crime reduction in London is now outpacing the majority of police force areas in the rest of England.

Thirdly, it is clear that London's improved performance on crime reduction in the last two years corresponds with important changes to how the Metropolitan Police Service is organised. Significant changes to local policing in the last couple of years including more a stronger focus on crime fighting, and new tactics like predictive policing, targeting hotspots and reducing repeat victimisation, are likely together to have contributed to the big reductions in victim-based crimes being seen.

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Historically London has lagged behind the rest of the country on the visibility and availability of police officers, and the proportion of the workforce on the frontline according to HMIC, because too many officers (up to 4,700) were stuck in middle and back office. Our reforms change that with fewer senior staff and supervisors, and more police constables, allowing us to reach 26,000 bobbies as part of my budget plans. This combines with a commitment under the Local Policing Model to strengthen the frontline with 2,600 extra officers into neighbourhoods by 2015, and to reshape local policing to allow these extra officers to be deployed where crime is likely to be committed.

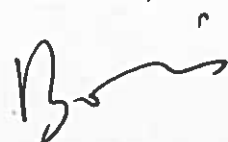
As you are aware, my Police and Crime Plan sets a target to reduce 7 key neighbourhood crimes by 20 per cent by 2016. Overall crime is down by 11.3 per cent against the Plan's baseline year of 2011-12 and the MOPAC 7 crime measures are down by 10.2 per cent. In real terms this is over 40,000 fewer victims which is very positive news. The Commissioner and I hope this trend will continue, so crime in London falls even further in the next two years.

One final point on national comparisons is to refer you to the most recent recorded crime data up to December 2013 which appears to show crime either flat or rising in up to a third of forces nationally. There is, as yet, no consensus as to why this is happening, and there is no obvious link between the forces that are showing increases (e.g. they are not geographically linked). An increase in acquisitive crime appears to be one driver.

Lastly it is important to note the limitations of recorded crime, particularly in the context of changing crime patterns. The true scale of fraud and many types of cyber-enabled crimes are not picked up in recorded figures because of significant under-reporting, but we know the impact of this is increasingly significant. This is why MOPAC is working with the MPS on a new Business Crime Strategy to raise confidence and drive up reporting of these kinds of offences.

I hope this provides useful context for your investigations.

Yours ever,



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

Cc: Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime
Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe QPM, MBA, MA (Oxon), Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

Enc.

	Total crimes			
	Rest of E & W	Metropolitan and City of London	E & W	London contribution to national reduction
FY 2002/03	4,885,057	1,089,903	5,974,960	18.24%
FY 2003/04	4,943,582	1,070,177	6,013,759	17.80%
FY 2004/05	4,613,705	1,023,806	5,637,511	18.16%
FY 2005/06	4,562,615	992,557	5,555,172	17.87%
FY 2006/07	4,497,806	929,752	5,427,558	17.13%
FY 2007/08	4,081,839	870,438	4,952,277	17.58%
FY 2008/09	3,850,386	852,311	4,702,697	18.12%
FY 2009/10	3,502,330	835,965	4,338,295	19.27%
FY 2010/11	3,321,128	829,788	4,150,916	19.99%
FY 2011/12	3,202,366	820,744	4,023,110	20.40%
FY 2012/13	2,955,887	775,774	3,731,661	20.79%

Most similar forces

	Greater Manchester	Metropolitan Police	West Midlands	West Yorkshire
31-Mar-04	-3%	-2%	-3%	1%
31-Mar-05	-12%	-4%	-14%	-19%
31-Mar-06	1%	-3%	-1%	-2%
31-Mar-07	1%	-6%	-3%	-4%
31-Mar-08	-10%	-6%	-11%	-9%
31-Mar-09	-5%	-2%	-8%	-5%
31-Mar-10	-13%	-2%	-7%	-9%
31-Mar-11	-7%	-1%	2%	-4%
31-Mar-12	-9%	-1%	-10%	-3%
31-Mar-13	-13%	-5%	-12%	-10%