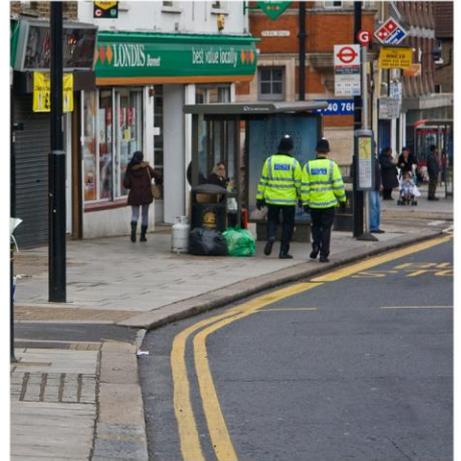
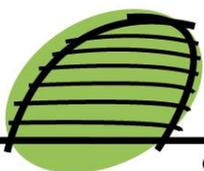


COMMUTING COPS – WHERE DO OUR POLICE OFFICERS LIVE IN 2018?



A briefing by Sian Berry AM
Green Party Member of the London Assembly
October 2018



COMMUTING COPS – WHERE DO OUR POLICE OFFICERS LIVE IN 2018?

In 2016 I looked at where London’s borough police officers live, and my research showed that almost half of them lived outside London.¹

This was despite the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) recognising, in 2013, that the number of officers based outside London was something they needed to change, and introducing a London residency criterion by which all new recruits need to have lived in London for a minimum of three of the last six years.²

Then in October 2016, Lord Harris published his report into London’s preparedness to respond to a major terrorist event. His top two recommendations were about improving and increasing housing for ‘blue light’ workers, to cut down on response times should a major incident occur.³

The Harris report evidence base also backed up my findings that almost half of police lived outside London.

Now, two years on, I have repeated this research to see what – if anything – has changed for our police in London.

This short report shows what I found, and I am very concerned to see that, despite many reasons to take action on this issue, so little has been done yet to provide more opportunities for police officers to live affordably within our city limits.

Sian Berry AM
October 2018



The Harris report

Recommendation 1

The Mayor should ask the Chair of the London Resilience Forum to consider how London’s preparedness to deal with a major incident may be impacted by a majority of the three main ‘blue light’ emergency services workers living outside London.

Recommendation 2

The Mayor should consult the London boroughs and the Corporation of London on an alteration to the London Plan to formally identify the need for specialist emergency services worker housing as an important planning issue for London.



HALF OF OUR BOROUGH POLICE LIVE OUTSIDE LONDON

Although the proportion of officers living in London has remained at just under 50 per cent, compared with 2016, actual numbers have dropped from 8,927 in 2016 to 8,320 this year.

You can see the breakdown for each borough in the map below.

The proportion of officers living outside London is particularly high in a number of outer London boroughs. It is lowest in the inner south London boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham.

Percentage of borough officers living outside London



Central North Command Unit (Islington and Camden) and East Area Command Unit (Redbridge, Havering, and Barking and Dagenham) could not provide figures for individual boroughs as their services are merged.

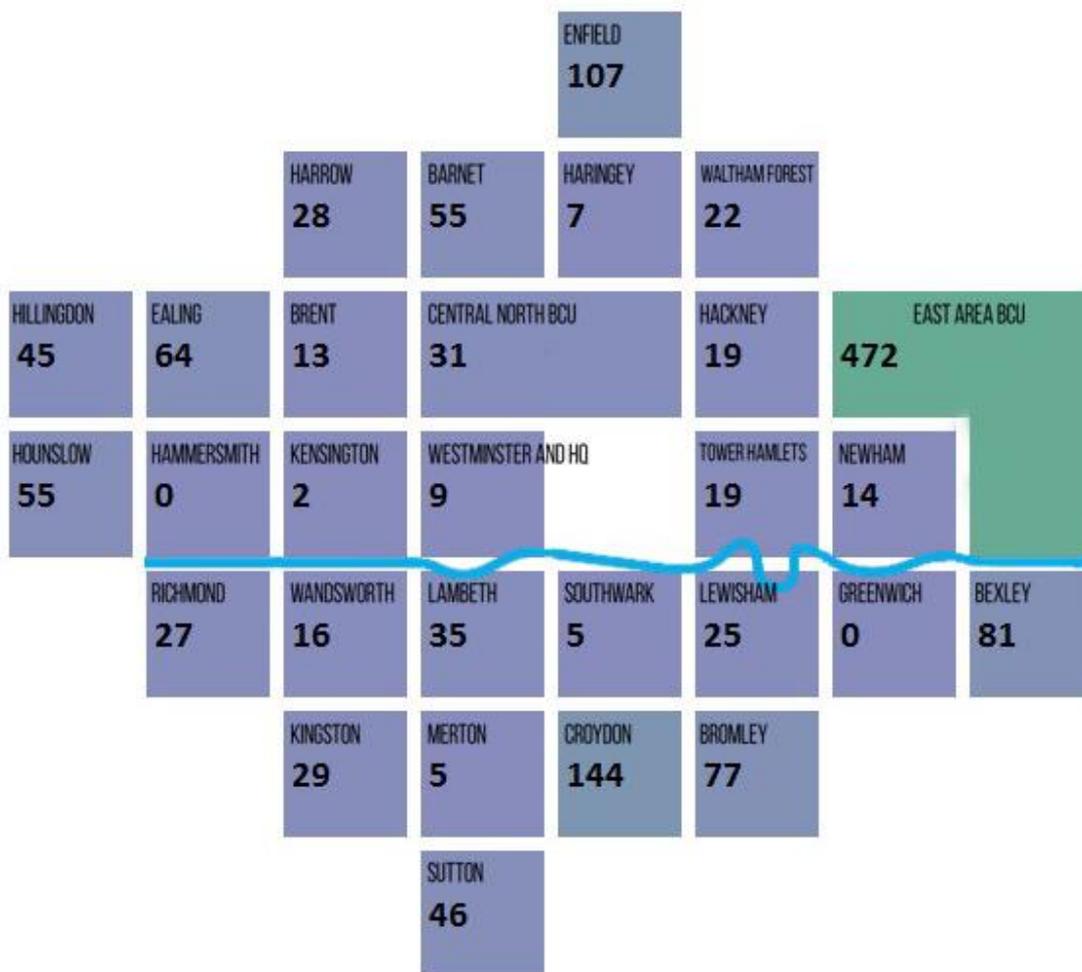
VERY FEW OFFICERS LIVE AND WORK IN THE SAME BOROUGH

The data I asked for also included how many officers live in the borough they work in. The results are shown in the map below.

Some boroughs don't have any officers who actually live in the community they serve.

For example, there are no officers living and working in Greenwich or Hammersmith and Fulham. Only two officers live and work in Kensington and Chelsea, and five in Southwark.

Number of officers living in the borough where they are based



Central North Command Unit (Islington and Camden) and East Area Command Unit (Redbridge, Havering, and Barking and Dagenham) could not provide figures for individual boroughs as their services are merged.

DATA FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

The overall London data for each year since 2014, obtained by my questions since 2016, and by my predecessor Jenny Jones AM before that, are shown in the table below.

It is very concerning that despite assurances from the MPS, the Mayor and MOPAC since 2013 that plans were being put in place to increase the proportion of local officers able to live within London, so little has changed in this period.

It is even more concerning in the light of the report by Lord Harris, and his recommendations add to the scrutiny being done by Assembly Members.

There is no question that the service to Londoners provided by the Metropolitan Police Service – and our community’s confidence in that service – could be improved if more borough police officers were drawn from and lived within the areas they serve.

I hope the Mayor will do more through his planning powers, and through his housing and police funding powers, to shift these figures in future.

	Number living in borough	Number living in London	Total borough-based officers	Per cent living in borough	Per cent living in London
2014	1,208	8,769	18,400	7%	48%
2015	1,262	8,896	18,179	7%	49%
2016	1,220	8,927	18,043	7%	49%
2017	1,411	7,849	16,134	9%	49%
2018	1,452	8,320	16,804	9%	50%

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Please get in touch with me if you have any comments or suggestions.

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This report sets out my views as an individual Assembly Member and not the agreed view of the entire Assembly.

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Officer in Hate by Gary Knight on flickr (cc)

Officer in street by Martin Addison on flickr (cc)

References

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