

38 per cent decrease in violent knife crime following Operation Langdale and St James Street pilot

After a disturbing rise in violent crime involving offensive weapons between 2016 and 2018, Waltham Forest Council spearheaded an innovative partnership, working alongside the Metropolitan Police to reduce the level of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour (ASB), targeting Walthamstow's High Street and St James Street ward, named Operation Langdale.

Operation Langdale ran alongside a council-led initiative named St James Street pilot from 1 October to 31 December, 2018.

Initial evidence suggests that Operation Langdale and St James Street pilot helped to achieve a reduction in serious violence. In the four months from October 2018 to January 2019, there was a reduction of 60 per cent in GBH and Wounding (in contrast for the same offences, as seen in previous years).

After peaking in 2018, there is also now a reduction in the number of knife crime offences across the borough. In the last 6 months (September to February) there were 33 fewer knife crimes with injury compared to the same period in the previous year – a decrease of 38 per cent.

In early October 2018, the police carried out covert operations targeting gang activity and were able to report the following outcomes: 70 arrests made since the start of the operation; 15 knife seizures and a recorded 10 per cent decrease in knife crime. There are currently 17 people awaiting sentencing as a result of this operation.

Waltham Forest's ASB Team conducted joint patrols enforcing the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) and assisted with addressing other anti-social behaviour in the St James Street area. ASB Officers served Community Protection Warnings (CPW) and Community Protection Notices (CPN) on those causing a nuisance. A total of 71 CPWs and 6 CPNs were issued during the operation.

Neighbourhood officers dealt with environmental issues such as fly tipping, litter, improvement to lighting and overgrown vegetation.

Referrals were made for drug and alcohol support and St Mungo's homelessness outreach team to engage with individuals who were considered vulnerable.

Those arrested by the police were subject to a range of penalties, ranging from Criminal Behaviour Orders, Civil Injunctions and Premise Closure Orders, as well as potential custodial sentences for serious offences. The council is also looking at breaches of tenancy terms and conditions, and property licenses, for those involved in criminal activity.

Councillor Ahsan Khan, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, said: "Operation Langdale and the St James Street pilot have shown how working together across different agencies is keeping people safe, removing dangerous people and weapons from our streets. We are now looking to roll out this partnership in other areas in the borough."

North East Borough Commander Richard H. Tucker said: "The success of Operation Langdale shows the value of a high-visibility police presence in an area affected by high levels of crime. Our partnership with the council sends the message that there is no tolerance for anti-social behaviour and criminal activity in the area."

St James Street pilot will continue to address the long-term issues at the location, with the ASB Team continuing to carry out joint patrols with the police to gather intelligence and deal with street-based ASB. The Neighbourhood Team will continue to patrol the area and deal with environmental crimes when necessary.

Residents are invited to report anti-social behaviour via email to asbteam@walthamforest.gov.uk.



Council and residents come together to bring comfort and security to local mosques



Following the terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand on 15th March, Fozia Shaikh, Community Engagement Coordinator for Waltham Forest Council, has reached out to all 16 of the mosques and Islamic schools in the borough, to offer additional security, information and support around reporting hate crime.

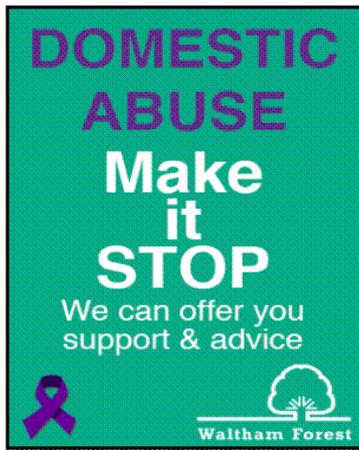
Waltham Forest's Community Safety Team and Hate Crime Ambassadors have been volunteering their time to help support this work. The Metropolitan Police have also been increasing patrols around places of worship to reassure and support faith communities.

Councillor Ashan Khan said: "What has been incredible to see during this painful time has been the outpouring of support and solidarity from friends and neighbours. I have seen the flowers and letters from local residents showing their support and it's clear that there is no tolerance for division and hate in Waltham Forest."

Paul Anthony, a Waltham Forest resident originally from New Zealand pictured above at Queens Road Mosque, said: "I cannot fully convey the hurt we felt in Christchurch. It still hurts - and will do for some time - but sharing the aroha (love) that we feel for our whānau (extended family) is the best way to deal with such events. And in response, the love that I felt from the congregation at the mosque today was immense. When we learn to respect and celebrate our differences, then we become closer as humans. Kia Kaha!"

The Home Office has released extra funding for security around places of worship, so officials for mosques, synagogues and churches are encouraged to email Fozia on fozia.shaikh@walthamforest.gov.uk if they want information about how to apply for this.

Raising awareness around domestic abuse One-Stop Shop



Each of the Children and Family Centres in our borough hold Domestic Abuse One-Stop Shops. The drop-in sessions are safe, confidential, non-judgemental place for anyone to come in and seek advice in relation to their safety, wellbeing and practical needs.

Whether you want to get advice, just talk about your concerns or access immediate support, you can meet with one of our specialist workers who can help you get support and advice you need.

We know it can sometimes be daunting getting the advice you need from all the different services, so the specialist worker will help bring these services to you. We believe that everyone deserves to live a life free of abuse and fear, and we will work with you to support you in achieving this.

Some of the areas of support that service users will be able to explore include:

- Safety planning
- Legal matters
- Housing advice
- Reporting to the police
- Advice around benefits and finances
- Therapeutic interventions for adults and children
- Specialist support (e.g. drug and alcohol, sexual health)

There is no need to book an appointment, just drop in to one of our scheduled sessions. Sessions will run in Chingford, Leyton, Leytonstone, and Walthamstow. Keep an eye out for dates and times in future timetables.

If you would like to read more about domestic abuse before attending the drop-in, you might be interested in looking at the Survivors Handbook <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook/>. This handbook is available online in a number of languages and in audio. Speak with staff at the centre if you would like help accessing this information or if you would like to know more about the One-Stop Shop,

For any queries, please contact:

Rasha - Senior Practitioner, rasha.hamid@walthamforest.gov.uk

Or speak with one of the staff at your local centre

Ashiana Network welcomes Home Office's new campaign raising awareness around forced marriage



The Ashiana Network is Waltham Forest's specialised support provider for residents at risk of forced marriage, with the aim of empowering South Asian, Turkish and Iranian women who are experiencing domestic violence with culturally sensitive advice, support and safe housing- enabling them to make positive and appropriate choices for themselves.

Ashiana CEO Shaminder Ubhi applauds the Home Office's commitment to tackling the brutal practice of forced marriage, through their new campaign which aims to educate people about what constitutes a forced marriage and the fact that it is illegal under UK law.

"In the last year, Ashiana were able to help a number of Waltham Forest women who were threatened with forced marriage, and an even greater number who were already trapped in them.

"Ashiana provides them with refuge, a place where they can stay when they are at risk of being pushed into marriage against their will. We support women and girls by preparing them for living independently, for example, by teaching them what benefits they are entitled to, and they have access to in-house counselling.

"Some women make the decision to go back to their families and we support them in that, because we don't make any judgements – however, we make sure that they have a safety plan in place and we make it clear that it is always safe to come back."

Shaminder Ubhi concludes, "I think that it is incredibly helpful that the Home Office's Forced Marriage Unit is drawing attention the abhorrent practice of forced marriage – it is a huge asset for helping victims and in particular, their recent decision to bear the cost of repatriation for forced marriages abroad has removed a heavy financial burden from the shoulders of victims."

If you are a Waltham Forest resident concerned about the risk of forced marriage to yourself or someone else, please email info@ashiana.org.uk or ring 020 8539 0427.

Six month after the Police Pledge – what do Waltham Forest residents think?



In October 2018, the London Metropolitan Police Service transformed its approach to policing, moving away from having 32 borough units and joining them into 12 clusters. Waltham Forest and Newham joined together to become the North East Command Unit.

With a particular emphasis on community policing, the changes led to a policing pledge with the aim of 'making every community safer through accountable and visible policing at the most local level'.

The Police Pledge in detail:

- Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) with two Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) and one PCSO per ward as a minimum
- These officers not to be abstracted for other duties
- All DWOs and PCSOs will have an online presence through social media and the Met website
- All DWOs and PCSOs will ensure that their contact details are known throughout the community e.g. in faith and community centres

The local commitment from the Safer Neighbourhood Team:

- Every ward team will, as a matter of routine, conduct a minimum of one weapon sweep per week. This is a continuance of SNT commitment to preventing knife crime
- Every ward team will nominate three 'presence areas' on their ward. These key areas will see Police patrol every day the team are on duty
- The Neighbourhoods Sergeant will be available to meet with their local councillors, key stakeholders, or local partners every month
- DWOs will adopt a problem-solving approach to long-term challenges on their ward and work collaboratively with our partners to deliver successful outcomes
- DWOs will respond to all community contact / requests for assistance within 24hrs of receiving notification
- Updates for on-going or long term issues will be provided every 10 days
- DWOs will aim to complete actions to achieve an outcome for matters which they lead on, within 12 weeks of receiving notification
- Every ward team will use social media and traditional communication methods to maintain regular updates for communities

- Every ward team will hold a contact session / ward surgery at least once per month within their communities
- Each ward team will attend their local Ward Panel

Six month on, what do residents think about the Police Pledge?

Supt Khan, lead for neighbourhood and partnerships in the North East Command, and his team will be conducting a six-month review of this pledge, and invite your comments to see what residents think about the Police Pledge and how the North East Command Unit could further improve and enhance its commitment to community policing.

This will be discussed at all local ward panel meetings, so please do attend and share your views and comments. All ward panel views will then be collated and considered as part of the review. Details of your local ward panel meetings are available at www.met.police.uk – please follow the prompts to enter your postcode and select “meetings and events”.