



RICHMOND SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD - CHAIR'S UPDATE AS AT 24 DEC 25

1. I took up the appointment of Chairman Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board almost 2 years ago, on 23rd January 2024. My Vice Chairman is Mrs Pam Fleming.
2. This is the latest regular SNB Chair's update, for the Richmond Community Safety Partnership, the Safer Neighbourhood Board, MPS Safer Neighbourhood Team, and Police Liaison Group Chairs in the 18 Wards in Richmond and Twickenham. The Update is copied for information to LCP2 and neighbouring SNB Chairs.



SNB Members wish Superintendent Chris Scammell a happy retirement, 21st November 2025

Governance, Purpose, and Composition

3. The role of the SNB, mandated by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), is to bring together the Police and communities to establish local policing and crime priorities, make sure the public is involved in community safety decisions, monitor Police performance and the level of public Trust and Confidence, and to fulfil a range of important specific functions. This includes ensuring that every ward has a viable Police Liaison Group (PLG), whose Chair will arrange Ward Panel meetings with the MPS SNTs. The SNB also provides crime prevention advice, supports projects, and encourages dialogue between the Police and hard-to-reach groups.
4. MOPAC have recently set out planned changes to governance of SNBs, and funding. No firm decisions have been taken, but I can set out the following issues and likely changes:
 - a. MOPAC currently has a £5M shortfall for FY 26/27 and requires to make savings.

- b. MOPAC plan to remove both Admin and Project funding from all SNBs. LCP2 is lobbying to preserve a level of Admin funding for SNBs. We will seek alternative funding sources for our projects and other functions.
 - c. SNBs will continue to have a role, but governance will change: SNBs will be governed by the Met Police.
 - d. MOPAC will form 'Public Scrutiny Panels' which will cover new areas, including Independent Custody Visits. The current working model of the Met is a spectrum of SCRUTINY – ENGAGEMENT – ADVICE; to be delivered, respectively, by the Public Scrutiny Panels, SNB/Ward Panels, and IAG. The LCP2 position is that all this needs to be joined up at Borough level with scrutiny and advice feeding in to the SNB meeting.
 - e. Our SNB will support LCP2 in representing the interests of all SNBs, while at the same time seeking alternative funding.
5. Any confirmed changes, and interim or transitional arrangements, will be communicated to Project leads, in the New Year. The SNB Executive will run a brainstorming and planning session on 8th January; after this, I will ensure that Project leads, Secretaries, and Partners are given a clear indication of the way ahead, at least on a transitional basis, as soon as possible.
6. Following recent recruiting efforts, we have 2 new joiners: Zara Chambers, and John Turner. I am still seeking more prospective new Members of the SNB; details are on the Reach Volunteering website. Expressions of interest should be sent to the Secretary.

Functions

7. MOPAC has mandated 7 functions for SNBs:
- a. **Enable local engagement with the Police.**
 - b. **Enable local accountability of the Police.**
 - c. **Focus on the (London) Police and Crime Plan key principles and priorities.**
 - d. **Monitor crime performance and public perceptions.**
 - e. **Inform the development of policing priorities in the Borough.**
 - f. **Monitor the MPS support for delivery of Ward Panel meetings and community contact sessions.**
 - g. **Engage with the Borough Independent Advisory Groups and other local mechanisms (eg NHW and Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group (S&S CMG) to support and inform their work across the Borough.**

8. The SNB has translated these MOPAC mandated functions, into an SNB Plan; in order to deliver the functions effectively:

a.	Enable local engagement with the Police.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most important functions are the local ones, to ensure that all Wards have a functioning PLG; and to support NHW. The SNB and PLGs hear updates from MPS leaders on Borough level and Ward level crime performance, and Trust and Confidence. • Richmond MPS has resourced Safer Neighbourhood Teams into 8 clusters, each under an MPS Sergeant, and the 8 x Sergeants are in place. Police Liaison Groups for each Ward are organised to match the MPS clusters. There are 18 PLGs, working effectively. • Local engagement is arranged via Ward Panel meetings, led by Police Liaison Group Chairs; via SNB meetings; and through regular interpersonal meetings at Inspector, Superintendent, and Chair Inspector levels. • The SNB Chair will arrange for engagement with specialist BCU departments, for example the Burglary unit. • As a Member of the VAWG Strategic and Practitioners' Groups, respectively, the SNB Chair and the SNB Member leading VAWG, will influence and champion local initiatives and programmes for the safety of women and girls.
b.	Enable local accountability of the Police.	Local accountability of the Police will be enabled through Ward Panel meetings, and Safer Neighbourhood Board meetings. All these meetings will be open to the public; if the Chair and MPS wish to discuss sensitive topics they are entitled to do so, by arranging for a private session of the meeting, before the public is admitted.
c.	Focus on the (London) Police and Crime Plan key principles and priorities. The Richmond SNB will deliver various outputs against the first two Priorities which are:	<p>Reducing violence and criminal exploitation</p> <p>Building safer, more confident communities</p>

d.	Monitor crime performance and public perceptions.	The SNB will receive the Performance report of the MPS, as submitted quarterly by the Borough Superintendent, hear his narrative and ask questions; and use the MPS Crime Dashboard (Public Tableau) to present further insights and ask questions accordingly.
e.	Inform the development of policing priorities in the Borough.	The Police Liaison Groups will decide their Ward level priorities at their Ward Panel meetings. The SNB will decide Borough level priorities at each SNB meeting.
f.	Monitor the MPS support for delivery of Ward Panel meetings and community contact sessions.	Alone in London, Ward Panel meetings are not arranged by the MPS, but are led by the community. 14 different Chairs arrange meetings covering all 18 Wards in Richmond Borough; these are open to the public and elected Councillors are also invited to attend. The SNB supports these meetings, providing a temporary Chair where necessary (for example for sickness or where there is a gap) and arranging or supporting elections of new Chairs. The SNB issues guidance for PLGs. The SNB supports PLGs including secretarial payments, and paying for hall hire where necessary.
g.	Engage with the Borough Independent Advisory Groups and other local mechanisms (eg NHW and Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group (S&S CMG) to support and inform their work across the Borough.	The Constitution of the Richmond SNB stipulates that the Board membership will include IAG, NHW and S&S CMG. The SNB will not supervise their work, but will support and hear updates from them, assisting public awareness and facilitating understanding and development.

9. **Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee**¹. The SNB reviews crime data and MPS performance, and community confidence, at quarterly meetings. The SNB is asking the SNT to include these elements of the Guarantee in their Plan, and to report against these. Normal scrutiny of crime levels and Police performance will continue, with a focus towards investigations, and communications between BCU, SNT and residents.

- **Police back on the beat:** A Neighbourhood Policing Team in every local area, carrying out intelligence-led and visible patrols, including in town centres and on high streets. We (*Home Office*) will hold forces to account for ensuring neighbourhood policing teams are protected, so they remain focussed on serving communities.

- **Community-led policing:** A named, contactable officer for every neighbourhood, responsive to local problems. Residents and local businesses will be able to have a say on the police's priorities for their area.

- **Clear performance standards and professional excellence:** New training for officers and standards for professional excellence will ensure neighbourhood policing is developed as a specialist policing capability.

- **Crackdown on anti-social behaviour:** Neighbourhood policing teams will have tougher powers, and be supported by other agencies, to tackle persistent anti-social behaviour. This includes piloting the new Respect Order to enable swift enforcement against prolific offenders, and a dedicated lead officer in every force working with communities to develop a local anti-social behaviour action plan.

- **Safer town centres:** Neighbourhood policing teams will crack down on shop theft, street theft and assaults against retail workers, so local people can take back their streets from thugs and thieves.

8. **Issues linked to MPS resourcing and organisation:**

a. SW BCU has 4 Boroughs but only 2 Response teams. This is the worst provision in the Capital. It means that if there is a burglary, or other 999 call, it is likely that response will take longer.

b. The small MPS teams, training, absence for leave, and abstractions continue, and the community suffers from inadequate front-line policing as a result. The level of abstractions, and the effect upon the neighbourhood police teams, must be appreciated; I am asking MPS to conduct a review of abstractions management, examining whether and how holding officers in readiness can be done differently, allowing most to continue their normal duties, for at least part of the requirement.

c. The SNB is contributing to an appreciation of CCTV coverage, and has requested a programme of targeted improvements. I have written to the Leader of Richmond Council

¹ Home Office Police Standards and Performance Improvement Directorate.

(on 18 August 2025) asking for a risk study and multi-year investment plan for more CCTV coverage in specific risk areas in the Borough. I planned to follow this up at the CSP meeting in December, but this meeting was cancelled; I will follow up in 2026!

d. The HM Inspectorate of Constabulary report 2024 criticised the MPS investigative performance. Burglary teams have been centralised, taken away from their Boroughs, then cut further. Burglary team Inspectors have too much workload. What has happened in response to this criticism in the report? There is at last, with the recent formation of the SW BCU Volume Crime Team (VCT) early promise of better resourced investigations teams, and better organisation. ed in a different way. The Chair visited the BRIt at Earlsfield in May, and, with Mike Adams, visited the new VCT at the BCU HQ in Kingston, on 21st November; to understand more deeply the operating pressures for investigation teams. The linkage between the BCU and the SNT has been much improved, and we hope for better performance against volume crime in the coming months.

Developing the SNB and Supporting the PLGs

11. The Board meets quarterly; notable recent and upcoming highlights are:

- a. Over the summer and autumn the SNB accelerated engagement efforts by attending a number of fairs and similar events, in co-operation with the Community Safety Officers. The success of this initiative has been marked, and we will be programming a presence at several indoor and outdoor engagement events in 2026.
- b. Consideration is being given to an SNB website, and social media presence.
- c. At the SNB on 22nd January there will be a focus on VAWG – or rather, Safety for Women and Girls; led by Professor Maria Mellins. Interested parties including PLG Chairs are invited to learn about local counter-VAWG strategies and interventions.
- d. The SNB AGM will be on 26th March 2026.
- e. There will be a focus on tackling Volume Crime at the SNB on 9th July 2026.

SNB Projects and Programme

12. Our Projects plan (separate brief for detail) is once again making a difference across Richmond. MOPAC funds every SNB across London to undertake local projects, with a budget of approximately £20,000, approved by MOPAC. As above, plans for FY 26/27 are uncertain, more to follow.

Diary

13. Key dates in SNB diary:

Date / Time	Event	Status / Remarks
Thu 8 Jan 2026	SNB Exec Brainstorming / Planning	
Thu 8 Jan 2026	Circulate SNB Agenda	RM, PamMcM
Thu 15 Jan 2026	SNB Exec Ctte meeting	
Thu 22 Jan 2026	SNB mtg	VAWG theme
Date TBC	LCP2 meeting	
Fri 6 Mar 26	Circulate SNB Agenda	
Thu 26 Mar 26	SNB AGM followed by SNB mtg	RM, PamMcM
Sat 9 May 2026	Richmond May Fair	SNB Stall
Sat 13 June 2026	Ham Fair	SNB Stall TBC
Sat 20 June 2026	Kew Fete	SNB Stall TBC
Sat 4 July 2026	St Margaret's Fair	SNB Stall TBC
Thu 9 Jul 26	SNB Mtg	Volume crime theme
Sat 11 July 2026	Barnes Fair	SNB Stall TBC

14. At the time of writing, there is no clarity about what system will replace the Front Counters at Twickenham Police Station. Your Chair made a public plea at the NMFL2 public meeting on 15 December for the plan to be changed, to retain a Front Counter part-time. There is no indication of any change of plan.

Thank you for all you do, as we work together to help keep our community safe. Happy Christmas!

Best wishes,

Roger Metcalfe

Chair, Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board

24th December 2025