



RICHMOND SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD - CHAIR'S UPDATE AS AT 4 MARCH 2026

1. I took up the appointment of Chairman Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board in January 2024; my Vice Chairman is Mrs Pam Fleming. We are now into the third year of my Chairmanship.
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.



Recipients are encouraged to sign up to MetEngage

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 have allocated similar funding to SNBs for FY26/27, as in previous years; in fact the funding for Richmond SNB has been frozen at £19.5K for at least the last 4 years, so has been reduced by inflation.
 - b. MOPAC is forecasting a £5M shortfall for FY 26/27 and requires to make savings.
 - c. MOPAC had planned to remove both Admin and Project funding from all SNBs, but this is being reviewed following lobbying from SNB Chairs and LCP2.
 - d. SNBs will continue to have a role, but governance arrangements are likely to change.
 - e. MOPAC plan to form 'Public Scrutiny Panels' which will cover new areas, including Independent Custody Visits. The current planned 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 meetings at Borough level.
 - f. Our SNB will continue to support LCP2 in representing the interests of all SNBs.

Functions

5. 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.**

6. 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.

7. **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 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 at the CSP on 25th March.

d. With the recent formation of the SW BCU Volume Crime Team (VCT) there is early promise of better resourced investigations teams, and better organisation. 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.

e. In the face of lobbying by the SNB, the MPS finally closed the Front Counter of Twickenham Police Station at the end of February 2026. This will seriously affect Trust and Confidence.

Developing the SNB and Supporting the PLGs

11. The Board meets quarterly; upcoming highlights are:

a. Over the summer and autumn of 2026 the SNB attend a number of fairs and similar events, in co-operation with the Community Safety Officers. The success of this initiative was significant, and we will have a similar plan for this year.

b. The SNB AGM will be on 26th March 2026.

c. There will be a focus on tackling Volume Crime at the SNB on 9th July 2026.

d. There will be a Crime and Community Safety Summit at York House on 8th October 2026.

Diary

12. Key dates in SNB diary:

Date / Time	Event	Status / Remarks
Wed 25 Mar 26	Community Safety Partnership Board mtg	
Thu 26 Mar 26	SNB AGM followed by SNB mtg	RM, PamMcM
Sat 9 May 26	Richmond May Fair	SNB Stall
Sat 13 Jun 26	Ham Fair	SNB Stall TBC
Sat 20 Jun 26	Kew Fete	SNB Stall TBC
Sat 4 Jul 26	St Margaret's Fair	SNB Stall TBC
Thu 9 Jul 26	SNB mtg	Volume crime theme
Sat 11 Jul 26	Barnes Fair	SNB Stall TBC
Thu 8 Oct 26	Crime and Community Safety Summit	

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

Best wishes,

Roger Metcalfe

Chair, Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board

4th March 2026