

Our commitment to you

This year we have continued to deliver an effective prosecution service for Londoners and to champion victims' rights.



We now have lawyers working in police stations throughout the capital deciding the charges that should be levelled against suspects and advising investigating officers.

Our Witness Care Officers are working alongside their police counterparts to support and guide victims and witnesses involved in cases.

Through our commitment to prosecute hate crimes and anti-social behaviour, and by talking and listening to the people we serve, we have sought to increase public confidence in the criminal justice service.

In this leaflet we outline our performance for 2005-06 and explain more about what we do. Should you have any questions about our role or suggestions on how we can improve our service, please contact me.

Dru Sharpling
Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS London

50 Ludgate Hill, London EC4M 7EX
tel: 020 7796 8000
e-mail: CPS.London@cps.gsi.gov.uk
website: www.cps.gov.uk/London

Domestic safety for you

Domestic violence is the cause of one in four murders and nearly a quarter of all reported violent incidents in London.

The cost to Londoners is estimated at a staggering £3.5 billion a year.

The safety of victims and children is a prime consideration when we decide whether to prosecute domestic violence cases.

We try to build cases on evidence other than that of the victim's, for example, evidence from the scene, accounts by police officers, and a record of 999 calls.

And we do not automatically halt a case when victims say they no longer wish to give evidence. Under current legislation we can compel a victim to attend court.

Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247
Perpetrators' phone line: (RESPECT): 0845 122 8609



Prosecuting hate crime for you

We regard a racist or religiously-motivated incident as:

Any incident which is perceived to be racist or religiously motivated by the victim or any other person.

An offence is racially or religiously aggravated if:

- at the time of committing the offence, or immediately before or after doing so, the offender demonstrates towards the victim of the offence hostility based on the victim's membership (or presumed membership) of a racial or religious group; or
- the offence is motivated (wholly or partly) by hostility towards members of a racial or religious group based on their membership of that group.

Certain offences, including assault, harassment, criminal damage and public order offences, can be prosecuted specifically as racially or religiously-aggravated offences.

With any other offence where there is evidence of racial or religious aggravation, the defendant faces a harsher sentence than if he or she were found guilty of a non-racial or religious crime.

Helping you to feel safe

We regard homophobic and transphobic crimes as particularly serious.

This is because they are motivated by hatred, prejudice and discrimination, and undermine people's right to feel safe in their sexual orientation and gender.

We define a homophobic incident as any incident which is perceived to be homophobic or transphobic by the victim or by any other person (including the perpetrator).

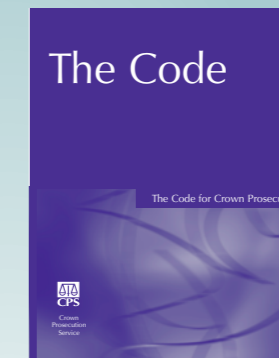
If a case involving a homophobic element passes the evidential test set out in *The Code for Crown Prosecutors* and the victim is willing to give evidence, we will almost always prosecute because we regard the homophobic element as a serious aggravating feature.

In London, as with other CPS Areas, we have lawyers who are specialists at prosecuting homophobic and transphobic crimes.



Justice for you

Our decisions on whether or not to prosecute are governed by the principles set out in *The Code for Crown Prosecutors*.



Each case must pass two tests:

The evidential test

Our lawyers have to satisfy themselves that there is enough evidence to provide a "realistic prospect of conviction" against a defendant.

No matter how important or serious it may be, if a case fails to pass the evidential test it does not go ahead.

The public interest test

Once a case passes the evidential test our lawyers must then decide whether a prosecution is needed in the public interest. This will usually happen "unless there are public interest factors tending against prosecution which clearly outweigh those tending in favour..."

The Code is available on:
www.cps.gov.uk/London under Publications
— CPS guides and leaflets.

The Crown Prosecution Service in London and

YOU

Area Annual Report 2005-06



What the CPS does for you

The main role of London's Crown Prosecution Service is to prosecute people charged with a criminal offence.



Our lawyers determine the charge in all but minor cases. They review the evidence gathered by police and decide whether the case should go to court.

Their work involves:

- deciding charges on cases for prosecution
- reviewing prosecutions to ensure the right defendants are prosecuted on the right charges before the right court
- preparing cases for court
- presenting cases in magistrates' courts, the Crown Court and higher courts

CPS London handles around 235,000 magistrates' court cases and more than 20,000 Crown Court cases a year.

In 2005-06, our conviction rate was 79.60 per cent in magistrates' courts and 70.51 per cent in the Crown Court.

For further performance figures go to www.cps.gov.uk; click on Publications, then Performance Management Information.

CPS London

Covering the capital's 33 boroughs, CPS London deals with cases from the Metropolitan, City of London and British Transport police. It serves 35 magistrates' courts and 12 Crown Courts — including the Central Criminal Court or Old Bailey — and youth courts.

Chief Crown Prosecutor Dru Sharpling who heads CPS London has overall responsibility for its legal business. She is supported by Operations Director Lesley Burton, who is responsible for the delivery of business systems.

The Area is divided into three geographical sectors — West, South and North & East — with a fourth, Serious Casework Sector, handling special casework and cases heard at the Old Bailey. Each is led by a sector director.

West Sector, which spans 12 boroughs, is headed by Nazir Afzal. **South Sector**, led by Simon Clements, serves nine boroughs. It includes a traffic unit which processes all the city's traffic cases. **North & East Sector**, which covers 12 boroughs, is headed by Wendy Williams. Sector Director for **Serious Casework Sector** is René Barclay.



Keeping you informed

No Witness No Justice

At the heart of No Witness No Justice are the Witness Care Units, which now provide an enhanced level of service to all victims and witnesses in England and Wales in cases where a charge has been brought. This includes completing needs assessments, to identify childcare or accessibility issues for example, and organising pre-court familiarisation visits.

Victims' Code

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime came into full effect on 3 April 2006.

The Code of Practice will give victims rights to minimum standards of service from the criminal justice system for the first time. This includes notifying vulnerable or intimidated victims within one working day if there is insufficient evidence to charge a defendant, and within five working days for all other victims, as well as identifying any special measures that may be appropriate.

The CPS is committed to its obligations under the code, which formalises many of the good things it is already doing.

Supporting you

To enable us to assess our performance we are setting up special groups to invite feedback from members of the community.

Known as Performance Indicator Community Panels, they will help us forge relationships with the public and improve the way we tackle hate crimes.

Each of CPS London's four sectors will hold a panel every quarter, made up of senior managers and community representatives.

Through these panels we will receive guidance and advice on setting targets and establishing priorities. This will strengthen the prosecution of domestic violence and hate crimes, as well as help reduce the number of ineffective trials.

We will share and analyse data on racial incidents, domestic violence and homophobic crimes. This will allow us to identify emerging crime trends, and discuss possible causes and where community engagement is needed.

Each panel will focus on reviewing either domestic violence, homophobic crime, disability/special measures, or racist and religious crime.



The CPS — working for you

As the largest of the 42 Crown Prosecution Service Areas, CPS London employs more than 1,400 staff.

Of these, nearly 500 are lawyers — both barristers and solicitors — and include legal trainees.

The remaining staff include designated caseworkers, who present a limited range of cases in magistrates' courts including straightforward guilty pleas, caseworkers and administrative and support personnel.

Our workforce is as diverse as the communities we serve, with a third (167) of our lawyers and 31 per cent (292) of our administrative staff coming from a minority ethnic background.

Sixty-five per cent (931) of our staff are women. Staff with a disability account for 3.6 per cent (51). More than 18 per cent of our staff (266) work part-time.



Working together for you

In our efforts to protect Londoners from crime, we work closely with the capital's other criminal justice agencies.

The London Criminal Justice Board ensures that we, the police, magistrates' courts, the Crown Court, Probation Service, Youth Offending Teams and Prison Service, with Victim Support London, co-ordinate activities to provide an effective service for the public.

The largest of the 42 local criminal justice boards set up by the Government across England and Wales, the London CJB is chaired by Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Tim Godwin.

The other members of the board are chief officers from the member agencies.

The London CJB aims to increase the number of offenders brought to justice, improve the service to victims and witnesses, encourage joined-up working among agencies and instil more confidence in the criminal justice service among Londoners.

The board's plans are implemented at a local level by 28 Borough Criminal Justice Groups. These are formed among local operational managers of criminal justice agencies at borough level.