

Committee Report

Meeting or Decision Maker: Communities, City Management and Air Quality
Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31 October 2022

Title: Policing in the City of Westminster

Wards Affected: All

Policy Context:

Cabinet Member: N/A

Key Decision: N/A

Financial Summary: N/A

Report of: N/A

Temporary Chief Inspector Simon Crew

Metropolitan Police Service

Westminster Neighbourhood Policing

This report is submitted to provide an overview of policing in the City of Westminster to the Communities, City Management and Air Quality Policy and Scrutiny Committee. It will be presented along with commentary at the committee meeting on Monday 31st October 2022 and covers the following areas;

- Police Operating Model
- Resourcing
- Stop and Search
- Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Crime

1. Operating model

In 2019, as part of a larger restructuring of policing across London, the individual Borough Operational Control Units of Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster merged together to become the Central West Basic Command Unit (AW BCU).

BCU Commander Detective Chief Superintendent Owain Richards leads a team of five Superintendents who each take responsibility for one of the following strands;

Emergency Response Policing Team

Emergency response policing provide 24 hour emergency and non-emergency response to operational incidents. The officers retain investigations of non-complex/non-serious crimes.

Neighbourhood Policing Team- *Dedicated Ward Officers, West End Proactive Policing Team, Partnership & Prevention Hub, Safer Schools, Youth Engagement & Diversion, Street Engagement Team*

Neighbourhood policing is designed to make the police more visible, reduce fear and increase interaction between the public and the police.

Investigation- *CID, Violence Suppression, Gangs, Robbery, Burglary*

The investigation strand deals with complex and/or serious offences.

Public Protection- *Child Abuse Investigation, Sexual Offences, Missing Persons, Mental Health, Predatory Offender Unit, Multi-Agency Support Hub*

The Public Protection Unit investigates serious sexual offences, child abuse and missing people as well as partnership arrangements for victims, suspects and vulnerable people.

Headquarters- *Operations Room, Operations & Events, Professional Standards, Business Support, Criminal Justice, Learning and Development*

The HQ strand ensures joined up command & control of the BCU.

2. Resourcing

In Westminster, all of the five strands are based within Charing Cross Police Station. Emergency response and neighbourhood teams with responsibility for the north of the borough parade out of Kilburn Police Station and there are additional neighbourhood team bases at Church Street and Buckingham Palace Road.

The current resourcing model dictates a specified number of officers that are required for each emergency response team shift based on assessments of demand and risk during the relevant times.

Westminster has retained a minimum of two Dedicated Ward Officers (DWO) and a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) per ward following the changes to electoral boundaries in May 2022, with officer numbers on several wards exceeding the minimum.

The West End Proactive Policing Team consists of 180 officers dedicated to the West End, providing high visibility policing 24 hours a day. The team focuses on a number of key strategic priorities such as reducing violence and robbery and improving trust and confidence.

3. Stop & Search

Stop and search data has been provided in the attached appendix. This has been taken from the Stop and Search dashboard that is publicly available at [Stop and search dashboard | Metropolitan Police](#).

The following data cover the period from 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2022

Search Volume

- Highest in MPS- 16,690 (8.3% of MPS volume)
- Lowest volume- September 2021- 1,105
- Highest volume January 2022- 1,838

Reason

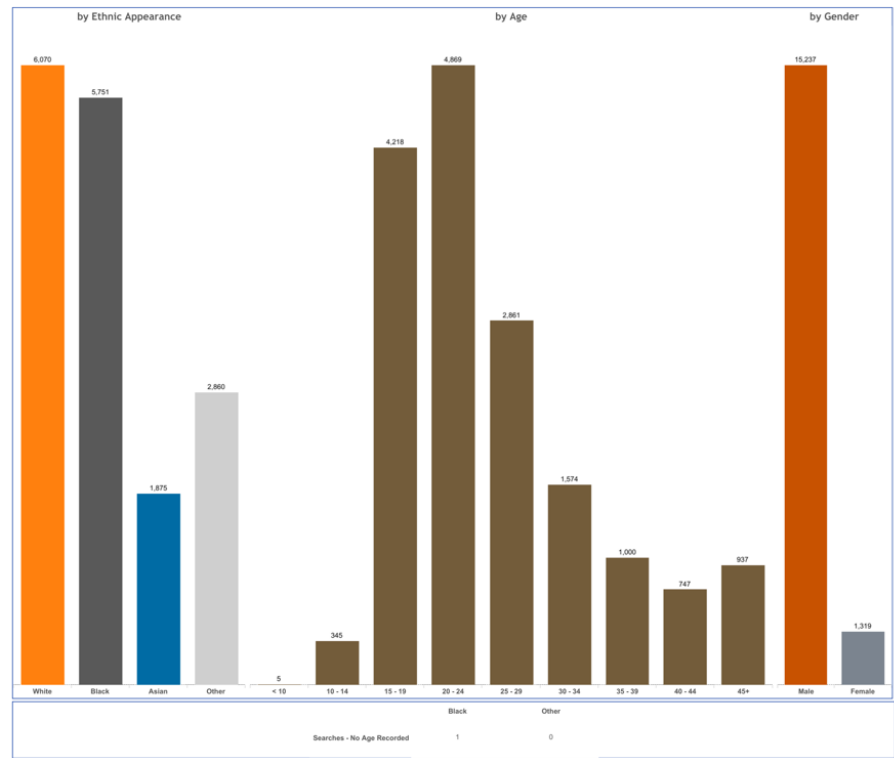
Search Reason	Number of Searches	% of total searches
Stolen Property (s1 PACE)	3,644	21.8%
Drugs (s23 Misuse of Drugs Act)	8,782	52.6%
Firearms (s47 Firearms Act)	113	0.7%
Weapons, Points & Blades (S1 PACE, s139 CJ Act)	2,626	15.7%
Going Equipped (s1 PACE)	422	2.5%
s60 CJPO Weapons	101	0.6%
Articles to cause Criminal Damage (s1 PACE)	165	1%
Other	156	0.9%
Psychoactive Substances	551	3.3%
Fireworks (s1 PACE)	130	0.8%

Demographics

During this reporting period, slightly more searches were conducted on those of white ethnicity in comparison to black, Asian or other ethnic groups. Those aged 20-24 were searched more than any other age group and considerably more males were searched compared to females.

Publication of the most recent census is awaited to provide a comparison of how this data reflects the demographics of Westminster's residential community.

It is known that individuals attend the borough from other areas in order to commit crime and this is likely to be a reason as to why stop and search demographic trends differ from other areas of London.



Governance

- Each stop and search is reviewed and supervised by the officer's line manager to ensure search powers have been used lawfully and proportionality.
- Line managers are directed to dip sample one search per officer per month by reviewing the Body Worn Video footage with the officer to discuss good practice and/or development areas.
- Community Monitoring Group (CMG) meetings are held quarterly to scrutinise the use of stop and search.
- CMG members attend Body Worn Video viewing sessions of randomly selected stop and search encounters. Viewings must be held at least quarterly and can not be conducted more than once per month.
- Superintendent lead for stop and search conducts a monthly meeting with Chief Inspectors to review performance including supervision rates and use of Body Worn Video.
- MPS quarterly stop and search gold group chaired by Commander.

Community Resolution

A Community Resolution is an out of court disposal, used throughout England and Wales since 2013 and the Met since Aug 2017. It is a victim-focused outcome, allowing the victim to be both part of the decision making process and involved in the resolution of the crime. Victims must be consulted about the outcome and have the process explained to them.

A community resolution involves the offender accepting responsibility for the crime. For this to be a suitable and recordable outcome, the offender has to offer an act of reparation; e.g. an apology, repair or financial remuneration.

The use of community resolution is monitored via crime investigation supervision as it is an outcome to an investigation in the same way as a caution, charge or penalty notice. As well as the factors already mentioned, officers will take other aggravating factors into consideration such as the nature of the offence, previous offending history and community impact.

4. Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

What is it?

If a police officer of or above the rank of inspector reasonably believes—

(a) that incidents involving serious violence may take place in any locality in his police area, and that it is expedient to give an authorisation under this section to prevent their occurrence, that—

(i) an incident involving serious violence has taken place in England and Wales in his police area;

(ii) a dangerous instrument or offensive weapon used in the incident is being carried in any locality in his police area by a person; and

(iii) it is expedient to give an authorisation under this section to find the instrument or weapon; or

(b) that persons are carrying dangerous instruments or offensive weapons in any locality in his police area without good reason, he may give an authorisation that the powers conferred by this section are to be exercisable at any place within that locality for a specified period not exceeding 24 hours.

This section confers on any constable in uniform power—

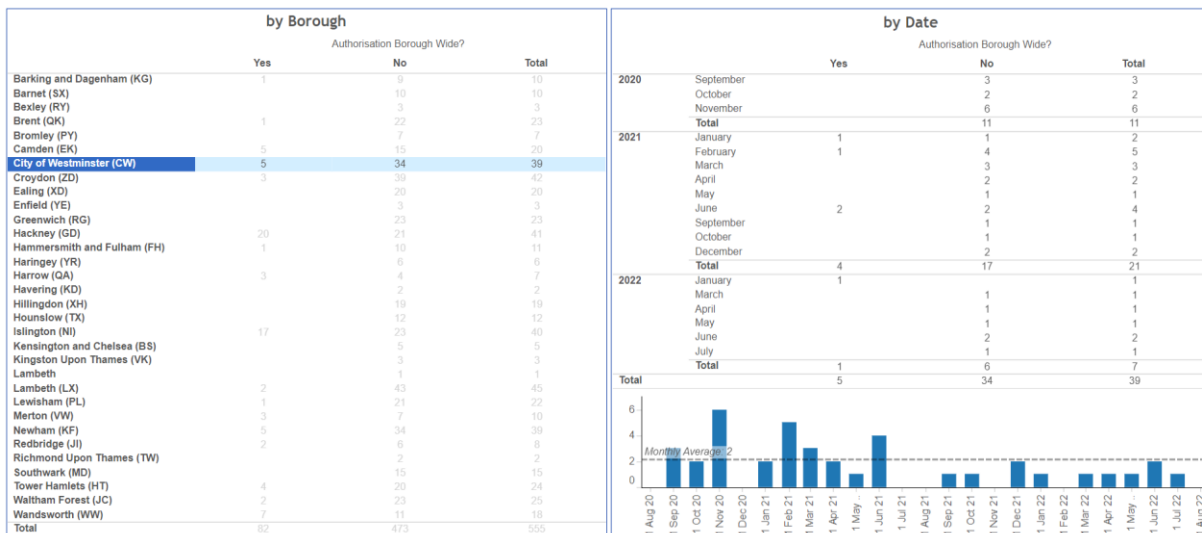
(a) to stop any pedestrian and search him or anything carried by him for offensive weapons or dangerous instruments;

(b) to stop any vehicle and search the vehicle, its driver and any passenger for offensive weapons or dangerous instruments.

How is it used in Westminster?

During the reporting period this authority was granted within Westminster on eleven (11) occasions. In total, 101 searches were conducted utilising section 60 and there were no incidents of significant violence reported after the powers were enabled.

The “by Borough” data set below can not be narrowed down to the reporting period and shows the number of Section 60 authorisations during the past two years across London. This shows Westminster to have had the joint fourth highest number of authorisations. The “by Date” data is Westminster specific and shows the number of authorisations per month.



5. Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

What is it?

Section 34- Authorisations to use powers under section 35

A police officer of at least the rank of inspector may authorise the use in a specified locality, during a specified period of not more than 48 hours, of the powers given by section 35, if satisfied on reasonable grounds that the use of those powers in the locality during that period may be necessary for the purpose of removing or reducing the likelihood of—

- (a) members of the public in the locality being harassed, alarmed or distressed, or
- (b) the occurrence in the locality of crime or disorder.

Section 35- Directions excluding a person from an area

A constable in uniform may direct a person who is in a public place in the locality specified in the authorisation—

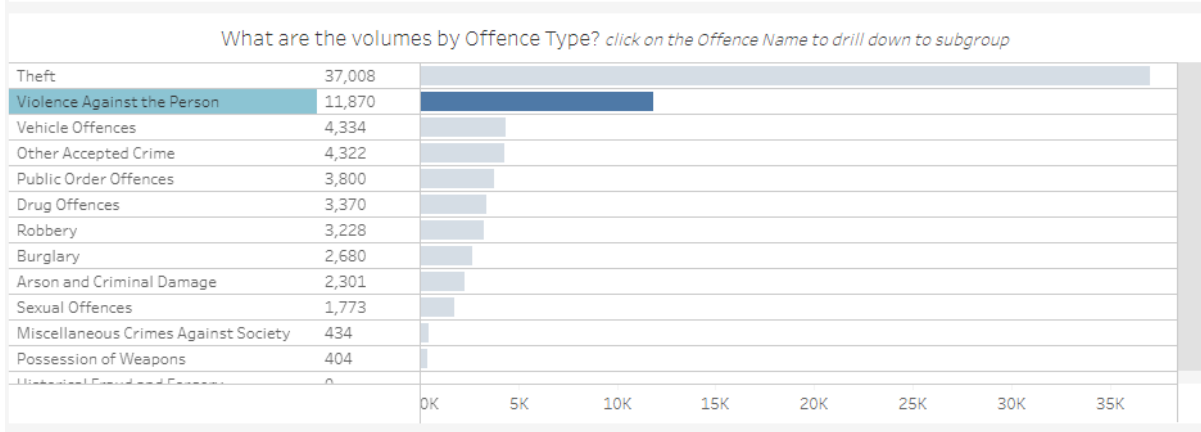
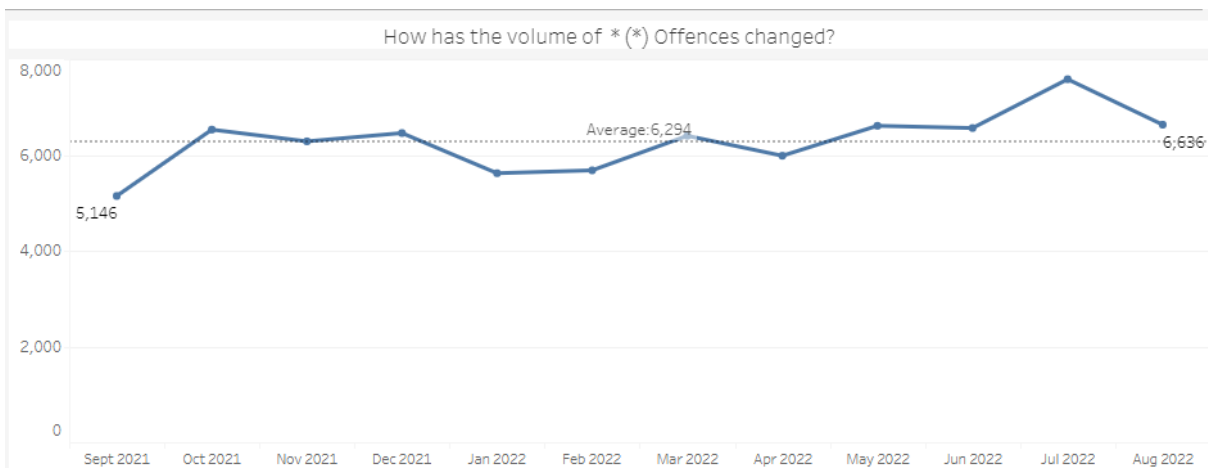
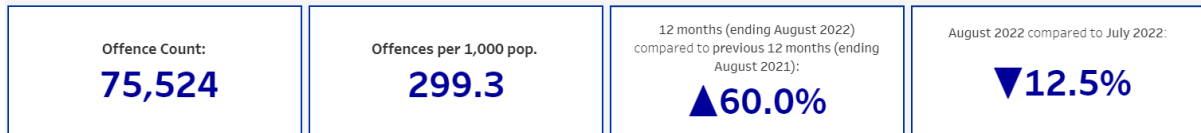
- (a) to leave the locality (or part of the locality), and
- (b) not to return to the locality (or part of the locality) for the period specified in the
 - (2) The first condition is that the constable has reasonable grounds to suspect that the behaviour of the person in the locality has contributed or is likely to contribute to—
 - (a) members of the public in the locality being harassed, alarmed or distressed, or
 - (b) the occurrence in the locality of crime or disorder.
 - (3) The second condition is that the constable considers that giving a direction to the person is necessary for the purpose of removing or reducing the likelihood of the events mentioned in subsection (2)(a) or (b).
 - (4) The exclusion period may not exceed 48 hours.

How is it used in Westminster?

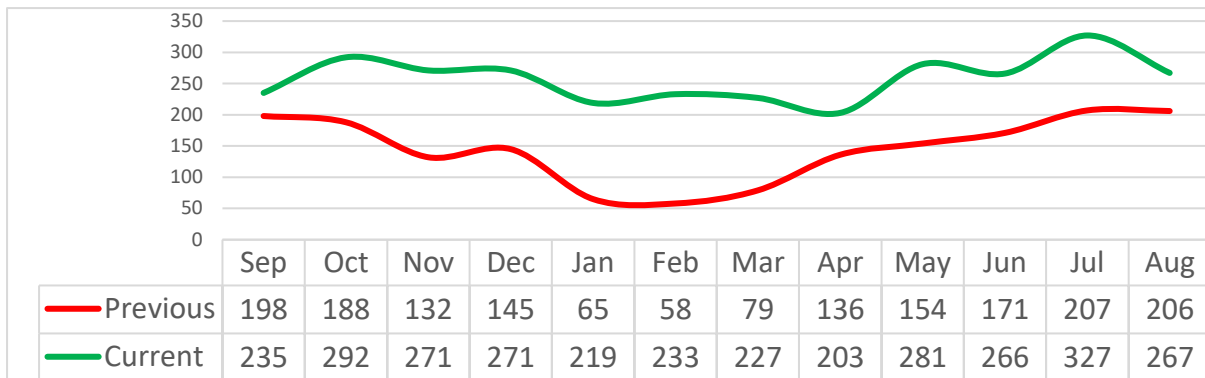
The authority to use section 35 dispersal powers is regularly granted, particularly within the West End as a proportionate method of interrupting anti-social behaviour before it develops into criminality.

6. Crime Performance

Total Notifiable Offences

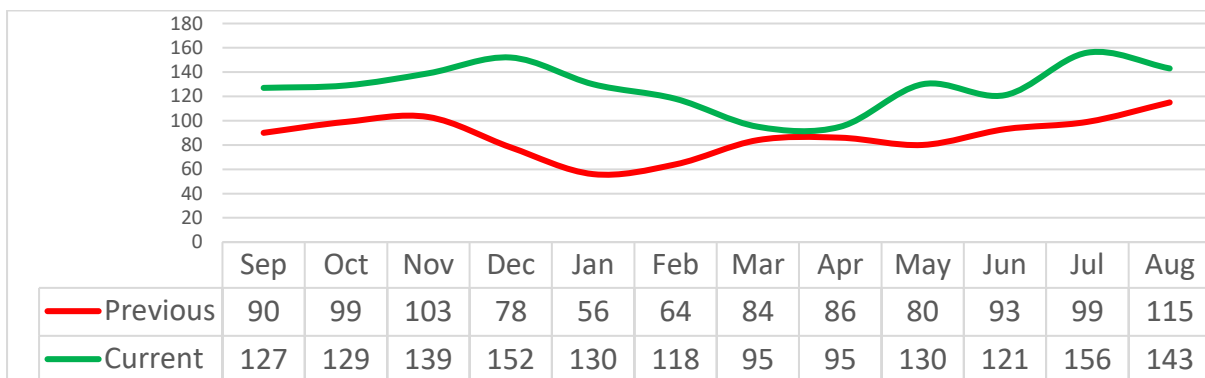


Robbery



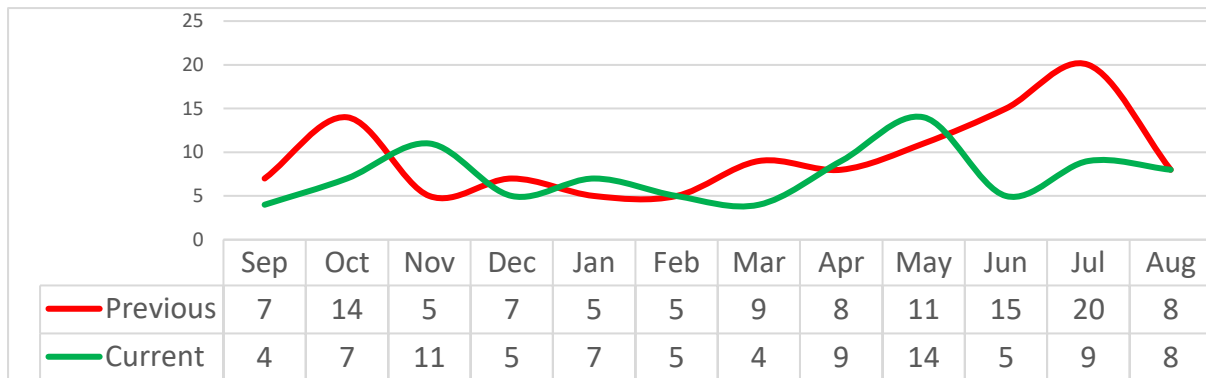
- During August there were 267 offences, this is an increase of 29.61% compared to last year's 206 offences and a decrease of 18.35% compared to July's 327 offences.
- Over previous rolling 12 months there were 3,092 offences, this is an increase of 77.80% compared to last year's 1,739 offences.

Knife Crime



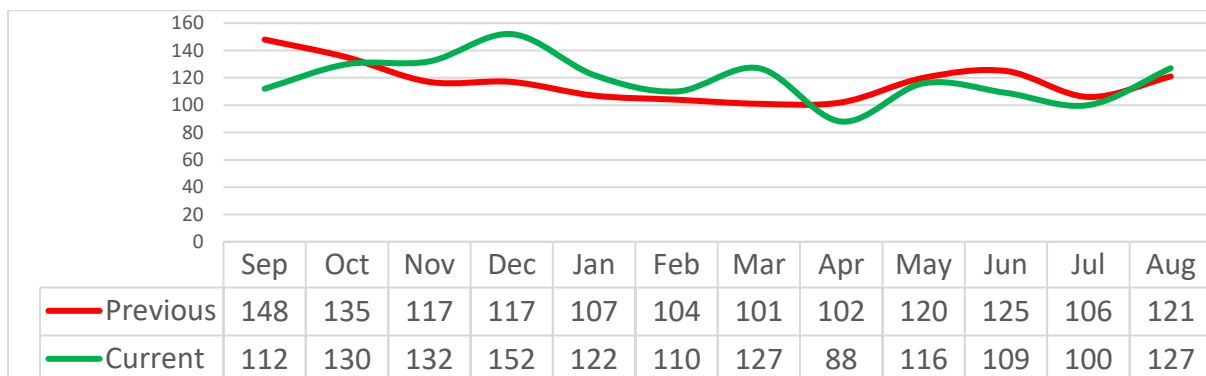
- During August there were 143 offences, this is an increase of 24.35% compared to last year's 115 offences and a decrease of 8.33% compared to July's 156 offences.
- Over previous rolling 12 months there were 1,535 offences, this is an increase of 46.61% compared to last year's 1,047 offences.

Serious Youth Violence



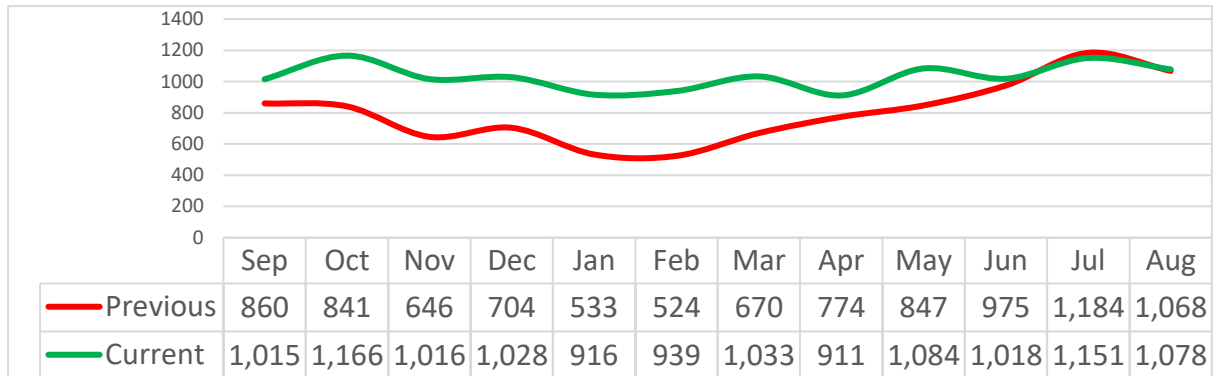
- During August there were 8 offences, this is no change compared to last year. and a decrease of 11.11% compared to July's 9 offences.
- Over previous rolling 12 months there were 88 offences, this is a decrease of 22.81% compared to last year's 114 offences.

Residential Burglary



- During August there were 127 offences, this is an increase of 4.96% compared to last year's 121 offences and an increase of 27.00% compared to July's 100 offences
- Over previous rolling 12 months there were 1,425 offences, this is an increase of 1.57% compared to last year's 1,403 offences.

Violence Against the Person (Excluding Domestic Incidents)



- During August there were 1,078 offences, this is an increase of 0.94% compared to last year's 1,068 offences and a decrease of 6.34% compared to July's 1,151 offences.
- Over previous rolling 12 months there were 12,355 offences, this is an increase of 28.35% compared to last year's 9,626 offences.

Sanctioned Detections

Sanction Detection Count: 4,367	Sanction Detections per 1,000 pop. 17.3	12 months (ending August 2022) compared to previous 12 months (ending August 2021): ▲12.5%	August 2022 compared to July 2022: ▼22.3%
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