

ACCOUNT

POLICING IN HACKNEY

CHALLENGES FROM
YOUTH IN 2020

Research conducted by
ACCOUNT



#FairerHackney
hackney
CVS



ACCOUNT

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Account is a social action project led by young people and based in Hackney.

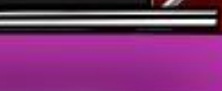
The group started in 2012 as the Young people's Stop and Search Monitoring Group at Hackney Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), tasked with scrutinising police activity in the borough.

Since 2019 the group has expanded its role to also include research, campaigns and outreach work in the community.

On top of its media and research work the group meets regularly with the local Basic Command Unit (BCU) and other policing bodies to hold officers to account on issues including use of force, Stop and Search, racial disproportionality and taser usage.

The group also advocates for young people at Hackney Council and other local government bodies.

ACCOUNT



TRALIMA



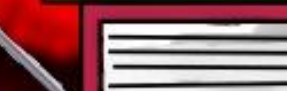
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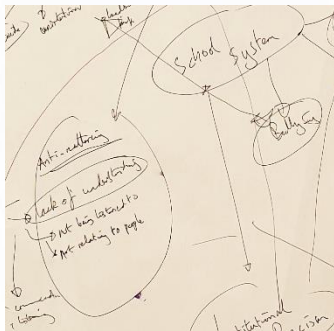
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Account Core Principles

BUILD UP OUR YOUTH

We are driven by a passion to empower young people in our community. We want to see every young person in Hackney hit their potential. We do this by giving them a platform to express themselves, giving them knowledge, and helping them push for change.



CREATE OUR OWN KNOWLEDGE

We are committed to developing expertise in our own community by leading research projects designed and carried out by young people. Evidence is a powerful tool that should not only be wielded by those in power.

GET JUSTICE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

We actively carry out campaign work and political activism to push for community healing and institutional change. We also advocate for young people who have suffered from trauma, discrimination, or injustice.



HOLD THEM TO ACCOUNT

We work hard to monitor police activity in our borough. This includes scrutinising data on Stop and Search, use of force and complaints. Our job is to ensure that police are accountable to young people in the community they serve.

Core Research Team



David Smith

Head of Research

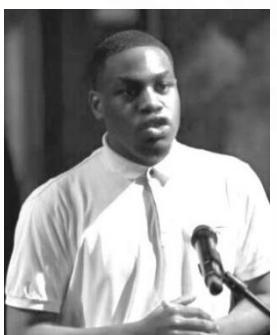
David Smith is the head of research and youth outreach at Account and youth leader at Hackney CVS. David was responsible for designing, leading and carrying out the research project that makes up this report. Born and raised in Hackney, he has a passion for educating and giving hope to young people in his borough. He has been published on issues in policing such as Live Facial Recognition Technology.



Yolanda Lear

Community Researcher

Yolanda Lear is responsible for Community Research and Communications at Account. Yolanda was responsible for analysing data around 'Trust' for the following report. Yolanda is an accomplished spoken word artist and poet and has written publications on the death of George Floyd, racism, and deaths in custody in the UK.



Emmanuel Onapa

Campaigns Manager

Emmanuel Onapa is the Campaigns manager at Account, youth leader at Hackney CVS and undergraduate student in Politics and International Relations at the University of Exeter. He has published work on activism, racism and social justice in publications such as the Fabian Review, the Huffington Post and The Independent. He currently co-chairs the Hackney Young People's Stop and Search monitoring group run by Account.



Infinity Agbetu Community Researcher and Artist

Infinity Agbetu is a researcher at Account and a student in BSc Psychology Goldsmith College, University of London. Within the following report Infinity was responsible for creating all artwork and illustration. Infinity was also responsible for data handling, transcribing, and coding throughout the research project.

Extra Support



Georgina Appeageyi **Data Analyst**

Georgina Appeageyi is a youth leader at Hackney CVS and Data Analyst at Account. In this report she was responsible for data handling and visualisation. Georgina is the co-founder and Director of Social Innovation at The Plug, a youth innovation agency.



Great Okosun **Head of Media**

Great Okosun is a film director, artist, activist and Head of Media at Account. He was responsible for creating and selecting all photography in this report. Great is currently producing a film into the police's treatment of young people with mental health and learning difficulties. In 2019 he co-created the film 'Misconceptions of an Atypical Mind', produced with the BFI.



King Ilunga **Resident Poet**

King Ilunga is a youth leader at Hackney CVS and resident poet for Account. As well as his passion for spoken word, rap and poetry, King has a keen interest in social activism. He is a campaigner on issues including racism, mental health and the rights of young people.



Trey Stewart **Youth Engagement**

Trey Stewart is a youth leader at Hackney CVS. He splits his time in his role between Account and Politically Black, the youth led social action group responding to Hackney Council's Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men programme. At Account he is responsible for developing the group's youth engagement strategy.

Extra Support



CB

Youth Outreach

CB is a youth leader at Hackney CVS. He is a key team member in a series of projects; Politically Black, Account and the Cool Down Café; a mental health outreach programme based at Pembury Community centre. At Account CB is responsible for Youth Outreach, running weekly sessions for young people aged 8 to 14 in the local community. CB also assisted in the early stages of the research design of this report.



Raheem Bailey

Social Media Manager

Raheem Bailey is a youth leader at Hackney CVS and Social Media Manager for Account. As well maintaining the groups Instagram page, Raheem is responsible for the branding of Account, assisting in developing the logo and clothing line.

Special thanks to:

All the team at **Hackney CVS**

Tim Head Account Group Project Officer, Graphic Design

Deji Adeosun Youth Leadership Manager

Saqib Deshmukh Head of Youth Programmes

All the young people at **Take Back the Power** and **Fighting Sus**. **Luke Billingham**, **Alexandra Cox**, **Suzie Shepherd** and **Jackie Head** for proofreading and comments.

Etienne Joseph and **Emma Winch** and Hackney Archives.

All young people who contributed to the research findings. All names and identifying features have been changed.



Introduction

David Smith, Head of Research



It was a confusing time growing up around police in Hackney. When we were young, me and my peers would sometimes idolise police officers. Some of us would even talk about being police when we grew up. They seemed like heroes; the ones always saving the day. Sworn to serve and protect.

But these ideas didn't always match up to the things we saw. We'd see people who looked like us constantly getting stopped and searched. We'd see police target Black people and we'd see it as normal. We'd see the reactions, the anger this created, and we'd see that as normal too.

This confusion sometimes frustrated me. But also, it made me want to understand, to dig deeper, and get to the bottom of what I saw on the streets. This is where our research comes in.



POLICE

Research is important to everything that we do at Account. People don't expect young people to be armed with their own evidence. Research gives us the ability to go out and seek a deeper meaning to the things that get presented to us. We don't have to accept the story presented to us in the media, by the government, or by other institutions.

Creating our own knowledge is important; it stops us from falling into the biased interpretations of those in power. We can find out how things really work at a deeper level; looking beyond correlation to understand causation.

Research has helped us to challenge the narrative. Our findings go against the story that gets pushed on me and my peers. It shows us that we are not the problem. It reveals the systemic problems that lie underneath the way things seem.

The research started in Summer 2019 and took place over a year.

First, as a group, we made foundational plans. We discussed and debated and decided what we saw as important. We thought about what we wanted to change in our community. We were trained in how to carry out research. We learnt about ethics and confidentiality, interviewing technique, ethnographic methods and statistics. We went through Racial Identity Training, we learnt about our history, about the history of police, and about the stories of communities in Hackney.

After recruiting young people to work with, we carried out long, open interviews speaking with young people about their experience with schools, prisons, police and the political system.

During this time, we also contributed to meetings with police and the council and attended university seminars. We met with researchers, academics, activists and other groups of young people working on similar projects.

We transcribed all the interview data, changing all names and identifying features, and looked over the issues being covered.

After coding the data, we decided to focus on issues around the criminal justice system, specifically policing, and the impact it was having in Black communities. We focused on three 'challenges' to policing raised by young people; trauma, trust and accountability.

Often research about the police is carried out by the police themselves, or other institutions that work closely with them. This in itself should be seen as a problem.

We wanted to do things differently, by working closely with people that usually don't get to create this knowledge, even though they are the ones getting the most attention from police.

Our findings shone a light on a series of issues facing young people.

We learned that many young people would not call on police to help them when they needed it. We saw a deep disconnect in trust. A big part of this seemed to come from the fear of criminalisation among young Black men specifically. Stereotyped as gang members or criminals, they felt they couldn't turn to police for help.

We also heard stories where some police were not able to control situations effectively. In many cases young people talked about police 'provoking' situations instead of calming them down.

We heard countless accounts of wrongful stop and search and accounts of excessive uses of force. We heard about the trauma and the pain this caused. We saw first-hand the effect this was having on widening the gap between the police and the community.

As well as not turning to the police, many young people also felt that they couldn't turn to the complaints system. Many saw it as corrupt, biased, or a waste of time. This was concerning to us. Not only did some young people feel they don't have police available to serve and protect them they also have no system for accountability when things go wrong.

We want our research to raise awareness of these issues – not just in the media and politics – but also in our own community. Too many young people we work with grow up blaming themselves for the injustices they face. They internalise the negativity that is all around them and turn that violence on themselves.

We want the police to see our research, and we want them to listen. We want them to be able to handle situations better and learn to act with respect.

More importantly, we want to see better accountability in place. We want to give our community the power to hold the system to account.

We want to see young people more educated and more empowered. We want to give them the chance to learn about the law, their rights, the system, and the things that affect them and hold them back.

We want young people to be able to grow up to be bigger and better than the stereotypes our institutions put on them. We want to see them stand tall, walk with confidence, lesser than no one.

David Smith, July 2020



DENTAL SURGERY

Foreword

Emmanuel Onapa, Campaigns Manager



The research in this report was completed weeks before the tragic death of George Floyd; the spark that relit the flame of the Black Lives Matter movement across the world in 2020.

Since then, the Black Lives Matter protests, as well as the Coronavirus lockdown, have shone a brighter light on many of the issues we have been investigating, including, not least, racial disparities in policing.

Most importantly however the Black Lives Matter movement has given a platform to those people who are most marginalised by society. Our report was created for the same reason; to elevate the voices of those most frequently denied power and representation when it comes to public conversations around policing. The project was created to give power to those marginalised by the system.

The way police have handled and responded to some of the protests has shown how deep rooted some of the issues with institutional racism are in our society. Like many of my peers I was disappointed when Commissioner Cressida Dick claimed that institutional racism was not a 'useful or appropriate phrase' for describing the

Metropolitan Police.¹ To me this demonstrates that there is a lack of understanding from the top level about the real grievances that citizens face.

Whilst we are not afraid to criticise the police, we do what we do for the sake of our community. Our key political demand is to give our communities safe spaces to build and heal from years of traumatic treatment at the hands of state institutions.

We need better mental health provision as well as better support to get accountability and justice for young people.

We need to explore abolitionist alternatives to criminal justice policies.

We also want to see a change in approach from the top levels of the Met. An end to militaristic aggressive policing that sees my community as occupied territory.

Most importantly we want to see our communities treated with dignity, respect and humanity.

The current times, whether in the pandemic or the protests, are quickly becoming a defining time for global politics around equality.

It is crucial that leaders in our society address grievances and, more importantly, the *ideas* coming from young people in these times.

Young people cannot be seen as second-class citizens anymore when it comes to policing. They need to be at the table, with a role to play in making decisions that affect their lives.

This is crucial not just for the politics of race relations and policing, but for the future of our democracy itself.

Emmanuel Onapa, July 2020

¹ Nadine White, 'Cressida Dick: Black Lives Matter Has Provided "Powerful" Lessons But Met Isn't Racist', *Huffington Post*, 2020 <https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/cressida-dick-black-lives-matter-has-provided-powerful-lessons-but-met-isnt-racist_uk_5ef5ebe4c5b6acab28407304?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAAAvgZN30wKSYc9j9ZMxD9ri> [accessed 17 August 2020].

METHODOLOGY



Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a methodology that enables communities to take real ownership of knowledge. All too often research is designed and carried out by privileged people in powerful institutions. In our community, as young Black people, we are often the focus of research studies. Rarely do we get the chance to lead and create research ourselves. PAR is a way to reverse that injustice. It is a way to generate knowledge, use it to our advantage, and push for the change we want to see.



TRAINING

Research ethics • Interviewing technique • Statistical analysis
• Historical archival research • Racial Identity Training



SAMPLE

9 interviewees • All raised in Hackney
All young Black men (aged 15 – 24)

RESEARCH DESIGN

Deciding what we wanted to change • Choosing a focus • Creating interview questions



INTERVIEWS

Recruiting Young People • Carrying out extended interviews • Transcribing



DATA ANALYSIS

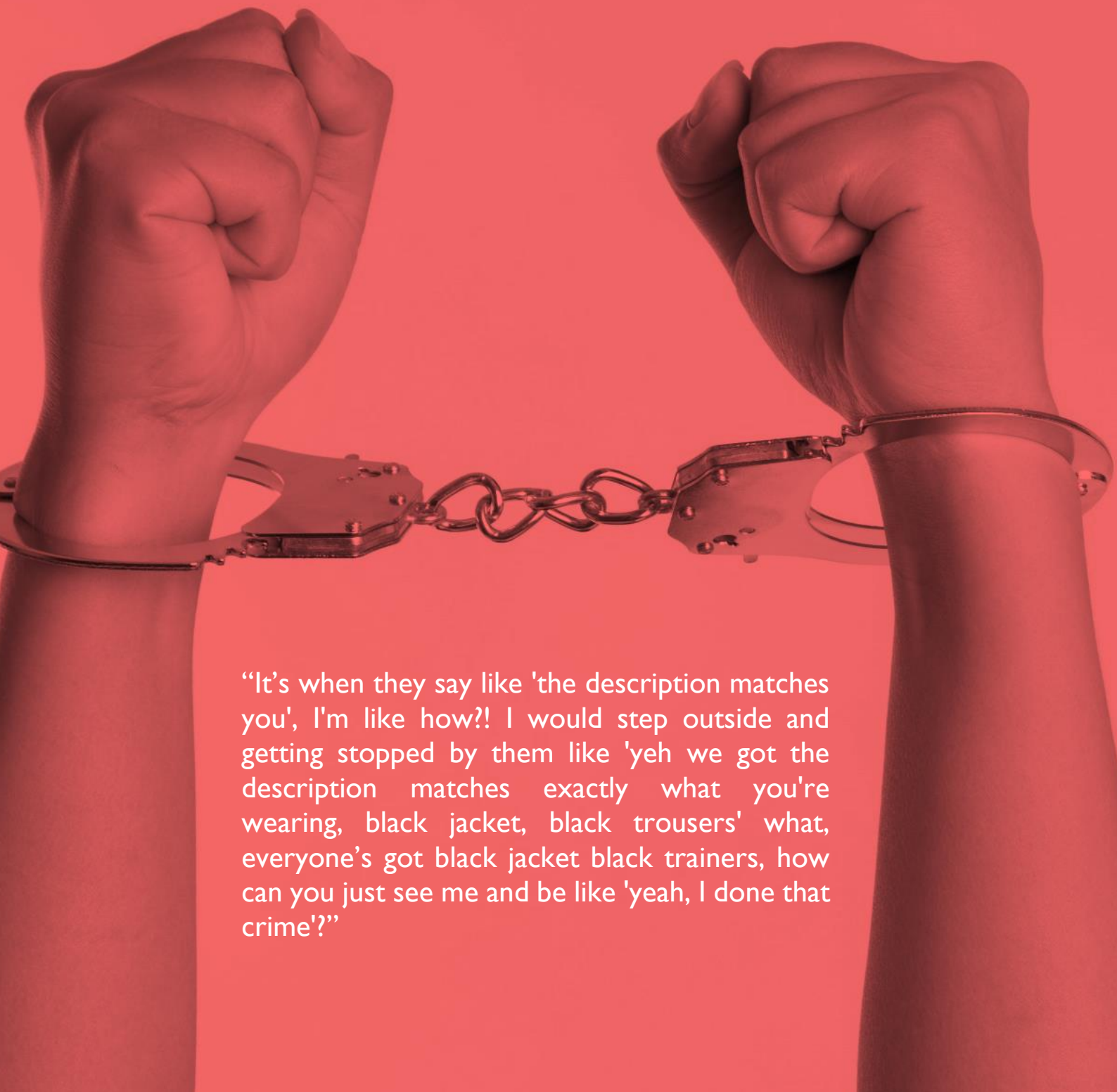
Coding interview data • Statistical analysis • Choosing themes • Creating Report



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1. TRAUMA



“It’s when they say like 'the description matches you', I'm like how?! I would step outside and getting stopped by them like 'yeh we got the description matches exactly what you're wearing, black jacket, black trousers' what, everyone’s got black jacket black trainers, how can you just see me and be like 'yeah, I done that crime?'”

For many young people we spoke to, the use of handcuffs by police officers caused psychological distress.

Evidence shows that handcuff usage has increased dramatically in Hackney and London in the last 3 years (by 158% in Hackney).³ Whilst police leaders claim that handcuffs are a necessary tool, the research team are concerned that the impact of handcuff usage is not being properly understood.

As well as being physically painful their usage can create negative emotions, including embarrassment and humiliation. For some young people we spoke to handcuffs were described as ‘degrading’. This may be having a negative impact on relations with the police and impacting on young people’s sense of self-worth.

Many young people believe they are singled out for excessive police attention due to their skin colour.

Out of the young people we spoke to, nearly all chose to bring up the issue of their racial identity and its relation to policing. Young Black men in particular often believed they were the targets of racial profiling. Some claimed this was due to being stereotyped as gang members. Others spoke about being treated like a threat, facing excessive treatment and disproportionate use of force.

Much of the statistical data on police use of force in relation to ethnicity supports the claims made by young people. Young Black Men

² Metropolitan Police, ‘Metropolitan Police Stop and Search Dashboard - “Hackney” “S&S R12 Summary”’, *Met.Police.Uk*, 2020 <<https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/stop-and-search-dashboard/>> [accessed 27 April 2020].

³ Metropolitan Police.

in Hackney are 6 times more likely than their white peers to be Stopped and Searched. Black people are also 4 times more likely to have force used against them.

Police in Hackney also Stop and Search young black men with a much lower 'hit rate' than white people. From August 2019 to July 2020 22% of searches in Hackney led to a positive outcome. For young black men (aged 15-19) this figure was 14%.⁴ The research team are concerned that this may be having a traumatic impact on young black men's sense of identity in relation to their race.

Excessive use of force by police can have a serious long-term impact on the mental health of young people.

Most encounters with police do not involve excessive use of force. Despite this our research suggests that when excessive force is used it can have a damaging long-term impact on the emotional well-being of those it targets.

Academic research talks about the 'asymmetrical' impact of negative encounters with police.⁵ This means that these negative experiences have a much bigger impact than positive experiences. Our research suggests that this could partly be due to the trauma caused by excessive use of force.

⁴ This is compared to 18% for young white men of the same age category. For full statistical breakdown see Appendix, Racial Disproportionality Statistics.

⁵ Ben Bradford, *Stop and Search and Police Legitimacy* (Routledge, 2017), p. 177.

2. TRUST

NO JUSTICE
NO
PEACE

54
15-057

LSC17

54

RUGEY ROAD

“I feel like another issue would be, again, police and how they’ve treated communities in the past, which has just destroyed communities where they’ve just really took the piss in terms of the ‘Sus’ laws back then. So, you see how there’s that boundary where the elders will say ‘don’t trust the police’. And the youngsters will grow up thinking, yeah, well, it is their reality, don’t trust the police, and that also destroys community, in a sense, because who do you trust? Who do you call when there’s a problem? I mean, you’re not going to call the police, you’re going to call your boy.”

For a variety of reasons, many young people we spoke to had problems with trusting the police.

For many of the young people we spoke to, the police were not seen as a group who could be trusted. This was for a variety of reasons.

Some young people spoke about a belief that engaging with the police could lead to being wrongly criminalised. Some young people referred to past examples where they had been treated automatically as perpetrators, as opposed to victims. Other young people spoke about their perception of the police being 'inefficient' or not able to intervene effectively. Others spoke about beliefs handed down from elders in their community that warned against trusting the police.

The young people we spoke to with low trust towards police, could point to examples where they had witnessed police abuses of power.

Out of those young people we spoke to who had low trust in the police, all were able to pinpoint an experience, often in their childhood, where they first began to distrust the police.

For some young people this experience was a direct encounter, e.g. a Stop and Search, for others it was witnessing an encounter in a public place. For some young people we spoke to it was witnessing police attempting to, as they saw it, 'provoke' a confrontation with young people.

Due to of a lack of trust, many young people said that they would not call on police to help them.

A key part of our research focused on the outcomes of low trust. One area we were interested in was young people's willingness to call on police for help. We found that among young people with low trust, the police were not seen as an appropriate way to get help.

This was often the case even during a serious incident involving conflict or violence. For some young people this seemed to put them in further danger, when they opted instead to 'take matters into their own hands'.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY



“They’re [Police] taking the piss, they don’t understand, nobody wants to complain, do you know how much of a stressful thing it is to fill out a form about a traumatic experience. People that have been raped barely want to fill out forms, why would I? Someone that’s dealt with physical pain from a multitude of people with zero support, why would I go through that again, to write it down, for police to question me about it, it’s a piss-take, I never want to deal with it again.”

The death of Rashan Charles in Hackney brought to light several issues around police accountability.

In Summer 2017 Rashan Charles died after swallowing a package whilst being restrained by an officer of the Territorial Support Group (TSG). This death continues to have a huge impact on relations with police in Hackney.

For many the death represented a lack of accountability with and led to the perception that police 'got away with it'. The video footage that circulated on social media was seen by many young people across Hackney. The refusal of the Met Police to suspend the TSG officer pending investigation, as recommended by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), represents a key area where the accountability system could be seen to fail.

For many young people, the notion of police impunity added insult to injury, with the grief of loss made worse by a sense of injustice.

High profile incidents, like the Rashan Charles case, have the potential to damage trust in the police complaints system.

The police complaints system is the key place where young people can hold police to account. Our research suggested that many young people do not have confidence to engage in this system.

Our findings support the idea that high profile incidents such as a death in custody, especially when no 'justice' is seen to follow, can prevent young people from engaging with the complaints process. The

widespread coverage these cases have on social media, among peers, across families and communities means they may 'set the tone' for less serious incidents.

Many young people didn't feel the police complaints process could be trusted.

For a variety of other reasons, many young people we spoke to didn't trust or want to engage with the complaints system.

One young person described the process as 'being asked to return to the lion's den to complain against the lions'. This highlighted a key issue about young people believing it was pointless complaining about police to police. For some young people engaging in the complaints process also involved revisiting trauma. This meant that without proper mental health support they did not feel it was worth their time, or good for their mental health, to engage in the system.









Key Research Findings

All names and identifying features have been changed



Section 1: Trauma

TRAUMA

KEY STATISTICS

In Hackney in the last year...
(July 2019 to August 2020)



10,827

Stop and Searches carried out



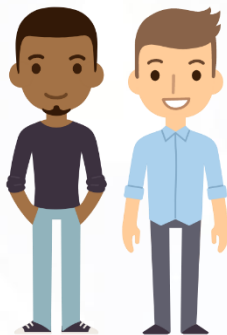
5,851

Stop and Searches carried out on Black people

768

searches per 1000 population

for young black men
(aged 15 -19)



136

searches per 1000 population
for young white men
(aged 15 -19)

This means if you are a young black man, you are **6 times more likely** to be stopped and searched than your white peers



If you are black you are **4 times** more likely to have force used against you

103

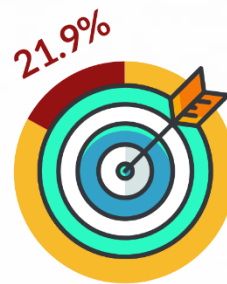
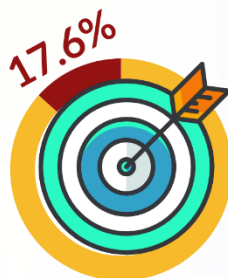
uses of force per 1000 population
for black people



25

uses of force per 1000 population
for white people

Stop and Searches of Young Black Men that led to a 'positive outcome' (aged 15-24)



Stop and Searches of Young White Men that led to a 'positive outcome' (aged 15-24)

Trauma derives from the Greek word for ‘wound’. When discussing social issues trauma generally refers to psychological distress that causes long term impact. For many of the young people we spoke with, difficult experiences while growing up had left a lasting impression on their mindset. Often negative experiences with the police from a young age had created and inbuilt fear, paranoia or anxiety when dealing with officers.

Stop and Search

For police officers, Stop and Search amounts to a key power as public law enforcement. It is a tactic the Home Office says is a ‘vital tool’.⁶ However, many studies have shown that these encounters can have a detrimental impact on the mental health of minority groups who are often disproportionately impacted.⁷ Our findings seemed to support the idea that the experience of Stop and Search can lead to trauma.

As shown in the academic literature, this could be due to Stop and Search amounting to ‘teachable moments’ that can make citizens feel devalued.⁸ For many young people we spoke to, Stop and Search impacted their self-perception as they felt criminalised through policing interactions.

For some people the practice of Stop and Search can have a damaging impact on mental wellbeing, causing feelings of embarrassment, humiliation or anger.⁹

For some young people we spoke to, the use of handcuffs specifically were found to have a detrimental impact on young people’s perceptions of themselves. It is worth noting that handcuff usage in the borough has increased by 158% in the last 3 years.

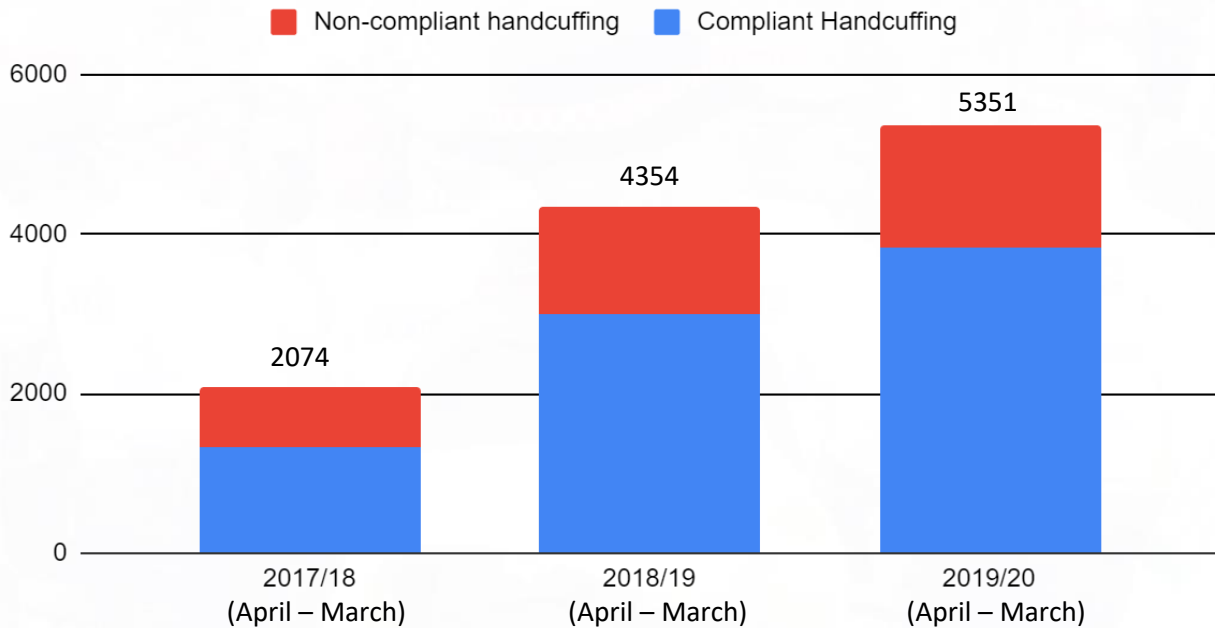
⁶ Mark Townsend, ‘Black People “40 Times More Likely” to Be Stopped and Searched in UK’, *The Guardian*, 2019 <theguardian.com/law/2019/may/04/stop-and-search-new-row-racial-bias> [accessed 1 May 2020].

⁷ Ben Bowling and Coretta Phillips, ‘Disproportionate and Discriminatory: Reviewing the Evidence on Police Stop and Search’, *The Modern Law Review*, 70.6 (2007), 936–61; Amanda Geller and others, ‘Aggressive Policing and the Mental Health of Young Urban Men’, *American Journal of Public Health*, 104.12 (2014), 2321–27 <<https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2014.302046>>.

⁸ Ben Bradford, ‘The Dog That Never Quite Barked: Social Identity and the Persistence of Police Legitimacy’, in *Changing Contours of Criminal Justice*, ed. by Mary Bosworth, Carolyn Hoyle, and Lucia Zedner (Oxford University Press, 2016); Tom R Tyler, Jeffrey Fagan, and Amanda Geller, ‘Street Stops and Police Legitimacy: Teachable Moments in Young Urban Men’s Legal Socialization’, *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, 11.4 (2014), 751–85.

⁹ Ben Bowling and Estelle Marks, ‘Towards a Transnational and Comparative Approach’, in *Stop and Search: The Anatomy of a Police Power*, ed. by Rebekah Delsol and Michael Shiner (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 172.

Compliant Handcuffing and Non-compliant handcuffing



One young man explained to us the psychological impact of handcuff usage.

Toyin: But where they came up to me they asked me a question, then as I pulled out my hand, they just handcuffed me. It was just like 'have you even told me why I'm getting handcuffed?' You get what I mean? It came like a shock...

Interviewer: What was the tone of that encounter?

Toyin: ...When he [the police officer] got the handcuffs, he said the other police officers name, 'handcuff him'. Then I'm just thinking, what am I getting handcuffed for? Then it was just that it was mad. It was kind of degrading. Yeah.

Toyin, like many young people we spoke to, suggested this impact was made worse by a lack of communication and believed it was linked to racial bias.

Interviewer: Why [was it degrading]?

Toyin: Because you're not even reading me my rights. I feel like because of what's portrayed on social media, the web, the news and stuff and TV, of course I'm going to feel like it's a Black issue.

And he's probably thinking himself - everyone's got biases, and police officers biases are majority of the time it's going to be a Black issue, like, you get what I mean, they're gonna have a bias towards Black people.

Interviewer: And you feel like that affected his decision to use handcuffs?

Toyin: I feel like 100%, 100% because you could've spoke to me, I was going about my own business...

Another young man we spoke to, Darius, also described his experience of Stop and Search, something he referenced as happening from a young age.

Darius: I'd say like, growing up around the area, there used to be bare people around this one cage we used to go play football. My uncle used to take us out on peddle bike trips, everyone had mountain bikes or BMXs, used to circle the whole of my area init. Start from like Hackney marshes on the riverside, round the whole area. One time my brother was fixing his bike, he had a spanner in his hand... This time police would go there and say, Yo 'this is a gang' and what not. That was those type of days.

Interviewer: How old were you then?

Darius: Like 11, 12. Now they hopped out the car now. This was my first time getting Stopped and Searched, like oh, you got a weapon on you. Like, how is this a weapon, he's fixing his bike? And they was like 'ah, stop right there'. like three of them jumped out the car now, was searching man. Then I think it was the day after, everyone's all going home, they searching man again. Literally bruv - we was thinking *what!?* Was thinking that's so weird.

Darius here describes a common experience of young Black men being stereotyped as gang members from a young age. It is possible that for many young people this could have an impact on their sense of identity.

As Toyin described later, feeling singled out by police could have an impact on a young person's sense of identity. An interaction, especially when carried out without effective communication or sensitivity, can come as a 'challenge' to a young person's sense of self.

Interviewer: Did you reflect on it later?

Toyin: I mean, I still reflect on it. Sometimes like rah that happened, and knowing the person *I am*, like really? Honestly, you're going to Stop and Search me?

If only you knew what I was tryna do and you knew where my mindset is? And you're really trying to Stop and Search me?

Whether being stereotyped as a gang member or treated in a dehumanising manner Stop and Search could be seen as a way that young people are made to feel they do not 'matter'.¹⁰ As leading policing scholar Ben Bradford puts it, Stop and Search may be 'an important aspect of wider processes of social exclusion that damage people's social identities and connection to wider society'.¹¹

EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE

For some young people that we spoke to, negative encounters with the police caused them to have anxiety and fear of encountering police within their community.

One young person we spoke to, Ayodeli, described serious long-term mental trauma following an experience of excessive use of force after being detained by police:

Ayodeli: It gives me... I've got PTSD about it, I can't see any police, gives me like... my heart beats faster, I'm frozen... the last time I got arrested, 7 policemen jumped on me in the police station, they thought I was tryna 'harm myself'. They, they said they were restraining me cos they thought I was tryna hurt myself.

Interviewer: What did they say you were doing?

Ayodeli: Banging my head on the table , countertop, when I was just hitting my head like *that* [bangs table lightly] and um one of the women tried to put her hand on my head, and I'm like 'what the fuck are

¹⁰ Gordon Flett, *The Psychology of Mattering: Understanding the Human Need to Be Significant* (Academic Press, 2018).

¹¹ Ben Bradford, 'Unintended Consequences', in *Stop and Search: The Anatomy of a Police Power*, ed. by Rebekah Delsol and Michael Shiner (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

you doing?' [mimes putting hand up to remove lady's hand] cos like I'm still in cuffs, then they all just jumped on me.

Interviewer: Were you resisting?

Ayodeli: Yeh resisting.

Interviewer: But you're handcuffed?

Ayodeli: Yeah... at the end of the day I don't like people touching me, it's an autism thing as well... I've got permanent damage to my wrists.

Interviewer: From the handcuffs?

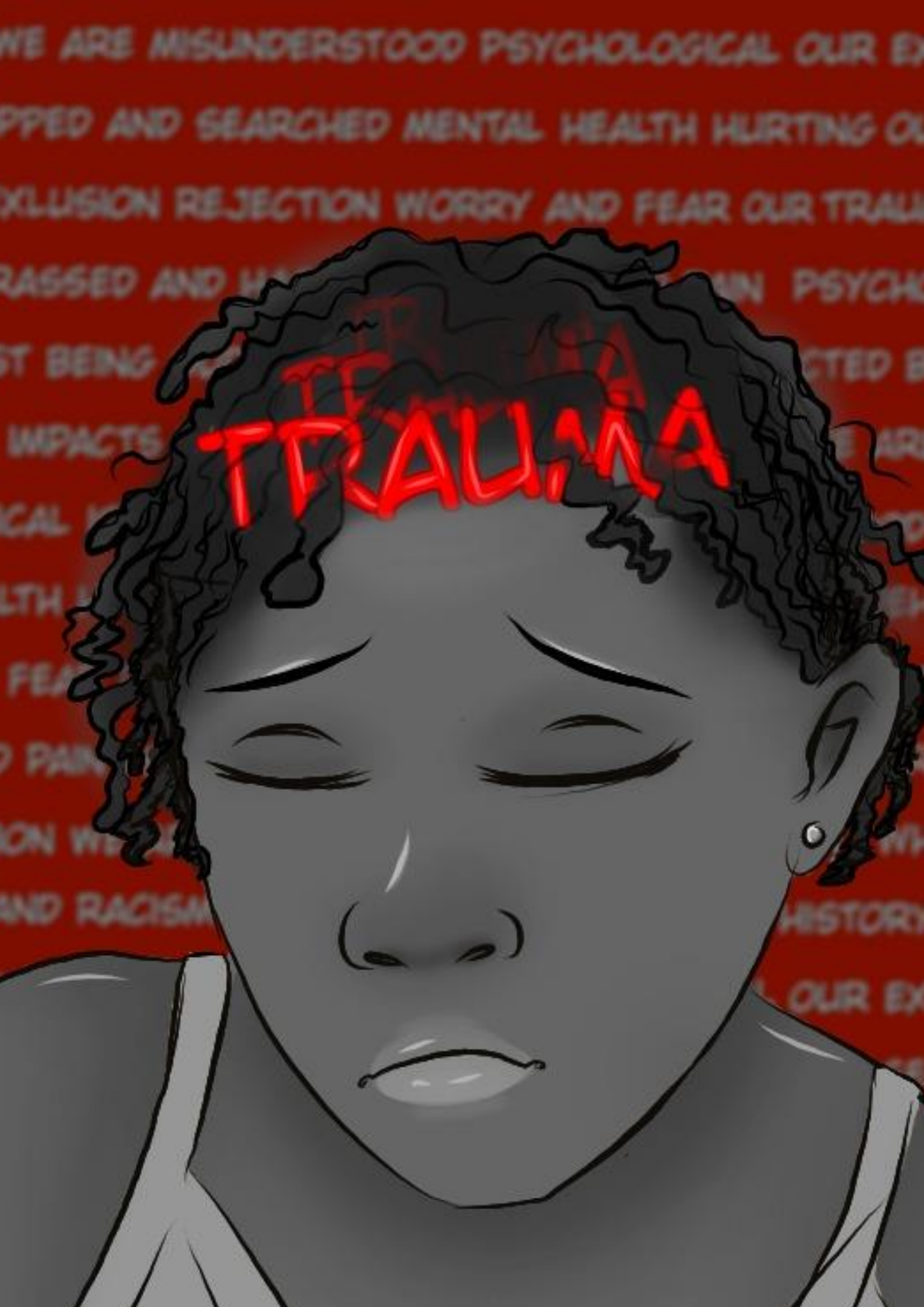
Ayodeli: Yeah, one of them stood on my head and pressed, damage to my knees, after the police station I went to a hostel cos my parents had kicked me out, I was slumped on the bed for time because the pain, the adrenalin, had gone, and the pain was just there, physical and mental pain. I could not move for like a whole weekend.

This description by Ayodeli of 'physical and mental pain' gets to the heart of the concept of 'trauma'. His account demonstrates how misuse of police power through excessive use of force can be psychologically damaging for citizens.

The academic literature talks about an 'asymmetrical effect' of negative encounters with the police. Simply put, this means 'bad' encounters have a greater impact than 'good' encounters¹². This means that young people are more likely to remember a negative experience than a positive one.

Tragically this means that for some young people like Ayodeli, these negative encounters are hard to move beyond. Even just seeing police officers can bring back tension, apprehension, and stress.

¹² Bradford, *Stop and Search and Police Legitimacy*, p. 177.



Section 2: Trust

TRUST

KEY STATISTICS

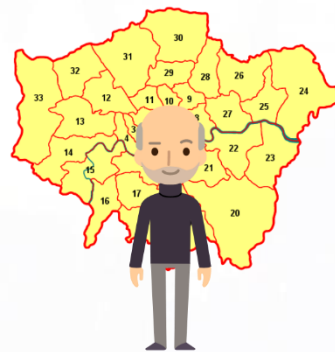


"Police can be relied upon to be there when needed"

(Survey question from Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) Public Attitudes Survey)

56%

agree
for Hackney
residents
(2019-20)



69%

agree
average for
Metropolitan Police
(London)
(2019-20)

63%
agree

for respondents
living in council
housing
(Hackney, 2018-19)



72%

agree
for respondents
living in other
accommodation
(private renting,
mortgage etc.)
(Hackney, 2018-19)

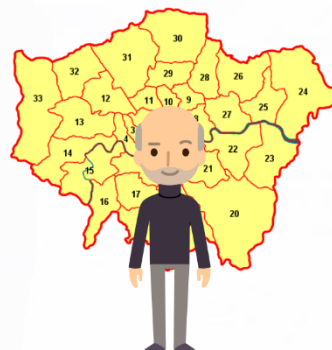


"The police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are"

(Survey question from Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) Public Attitudes Survey)

53%

agree
for Hackney
residents
(2019-20)



76%

agree
average for
Metropolitan Police
(London)
(2019-20)

“Trust” is usually defined as having a firm belief in reliability, truth or ability of someone or something.¹³ For police officers to be trusted people have to believe officers can be counted on for help, that they act with integrity and that they will act in line with the ways they are legally expected.

Researchers describe trust in institutions as being rooted in ‘experience’. Past experiences of interactions people have with police officers create assumptions about the way people expect to be treated in the future.¹⁴

The latest statistics from the Mayor’s Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) show that Hackney residents tend to have lower than average levels of trust for the police. When asked if people believed ‘Police could be relied upon when needed’ in 2019 only 53% agreed, compared to an average of 76% across London, and 81% in Kensington and Chelsea.¹⁵

In this section we investigate some of the reasons why young people may have low levels of trust in police. We also explore some potential consequences of low trust in police.

THE ROOTS OF MISTRUST

Many of the young people we spoke to had low trust in the police in Hackney. In many cases this hadn’t always been the case. Some young people reflected on a close personal relationship with a ‘community support officer’ growing up, with two young people even sharing that they had considered becoming an officer at a young age.

By their teen years however, these ambitions were often replaced by more hostile feelings towards the police. Often young people would refer to police officers acting in a ‘provocative’ manner, causing ‘trouble’ in the communities they live in. Seeing this first-hand would create a climate of hostility or mistrust. One young man we spoke to, Lloyd, described the reasons he had grown to ‘hate’ the police after seeing abuses of power and immoral behaviour from a young age:

¹³ <https://www.lexico.com/definition/trust>

¹⁴ William Mishler and Richard Rose, *Trust in Untrustworthy Institutions: Culture and Institutional Performance in Post-Communist Societies* (Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1998), p. 5.

¹⁵ MOPAC, ‘MOPAC Public Voice Dashboard: Public Perception Data’, *London.Gov.Uk*, 2020 <<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/public-voice-dashboard>> [accessed 30 July 2020]. Figures as of June 2020

Interviewer: What did you think of police while growing up?

Lloyd: I hated them.

Interviewer: From?

Lloyd: From born. From what I've been seeing from when I was young till now, it's like they got worse. Growing up seeing police, I knew they were there to help the community, but at the same time they were just there to be bastards and that. Cah they will *look* for trouble, I've seen it, they will look for problems, just to get a reaction out of a person just to arrest them. And then I would think, this isn't what you're meant to do, you're meant to serve and protect the community but you're provoking youth, like kids, for them to react, you give them a reason to arrest, you can't be going around causing trouble, Cah you want a reason to arrest someone. Growing up police; they just got bad to worse like.



Lloyd described how this negative perception stems back from his first encounter with police at a young age.

Interviewer: Can you remember your first encounter?

Lloyd: Yes, it was Mare street, when the 236s used to run through, or where McDonald's n that, it was an old woman, she didn't have no money on her oyster card. So obviously, she just wanted to get on. But the driver made a big thing, called the police n' that. She didn't wanna come off the bus, but they [police] *dragged this old woman off the bus...* I'm thinkin' you're meant to protect and serve, imagine if she was getting robbed now... but you're doing that now, if she does get robbed who's she calling? Cos she's not gunna trust you lot after that now.

Lloyd's account demonstrates how the perceived police abuses of power have a negative impact on trust. This finding would support academic research that suggests a lack of perceived 'fairness' impacts trust negatively; both when experienced directly and when seen second-hand.¹⁶

Psychologists often call this 'vicarious' or 'secondary' trauma; where you feel pain of other people by being exposed to it repeatedly in your daily life.¹⁷ Police misconduct often takes place in public places where many people can see an incident unfolding. These public scenes can shape the opinions young people form about the police, including whether they feel they can trust them.

One young person we spoke to, Marcus, described how personally he always managed to stay clear of police hostility. Despite this he described seeing it directed at other people in the community:

Marcus: For me, they [police] have been good to me, they haven't disrespected me. I've seen them disrespect other people though, that's one reason why I don't really like them. The way they treat people is not right, needs to change, seriously... I think they feel like they're in America or something. The way they're treating people, it's different. Back in the day, I know they were still beating people and that but when I was younger there was more respect for the police in the community. They were not grabbing up people and dashing them on the ground.

¹⁶ David De Cremer and Tom R Tyler, 'The Effects of Trust in Authority and Procedural Fairness on Cooperation.', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92.3 (2007), 639.

¹⁷ Sharon Rae Jenkins and Stephanie Baird, 'Secondary Traumatic Stress and Vicarious Trauma: A Validation Study', *Journal of Traumatic Stress: Official Publication of The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies*, 15.5 (2002), 423–32.

IMPACT OF LOW TRUST

In this section we address some of the consequences of low trust in the Police. Many young people we spoke to mentioned a negative mentality of ‘don’t trust the police’, often shared between generations. One of these young people, Toyin, suggested that this could lead to a process that ‘destroys community’:

Toyin: I feel like another issue would be, again, police and how they’ve treated communities in the past, which has just destroyed communities where they’ve just really took the piss in terms of the ‘Sus’ laws back then. So, you see how there’s that boundary where the elders will say ‘don’t trust the police’. And the youngsters will grow up thinking, yeah, well, it is their reality, don’t trust the police, and that also destroys community, in a sense, because who do you trust? Who do you call when there’s a problem? I mean, you’re not going to call the police, you’re going to call your boy.

Many of the young people we spoke to echoed Toyin’s claim by making it clear that they would not go to the police for help, even if they or their peers were in danger.

Interviewer: Would you call on police to help you, if your peers were in trouble, if you saw shit kicking off, would you ever call the police?

Darius: Nah nah nah, don’t think so... nah I wouldn’t go to the police for no help. I’d rather I do it myself, I’d rather help myself instead of calling them.

Interviewer: Is that common among your peers, friends?

Darius: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I’d say that as well

Young people often described the role of the police as being ‘to protect and serve’. The claim however that they would not call on police to ‘protect and serve’ them was a common theme for young people in interviews. Many young people said they did not feel comfortable going to the police for assistance instead preferring to take matters ‘into their own hands’. One potential worry outlined was that in asking police for help they may themselves become criminalised.

Interviewer: Would you still have the same thoughts now about police, like would you call on them, would you call police?

Darius: Nope, I would go about my business, if I call police, next they'd try and say, yeah, I was there when that incident was happening. I'd be like 'I just called you? What you talking about?' I'd just do my ting...

Interviewer: But what if you got people out there that's tryna get you, you got opps [enemies] or something, would you bring the police in?

Darius: Boy, never. To be honest you should never do that, cos maybe you might cause it on yourself. You calling police is just mad, makes things worse for yourself.

The extent of distrust in the police can be seen in the belief of some young people interviewed, that calling on the police could 'make things worse for yourself'. Darius expresses a commonly held belief that calling the police can 'flip' or 'switch' the situation back on to young people seeking help; for many young people, the alternative is to "just do my ting".

These findings could support research that suggests low trust can have a negative impact on crime within communities.¹⁸ When speaking to another young man named Ayodeli who had previously been involved in gang conflicts, he made it clear that a lack of trust in the police meant he would call on his peers, not the 'authorities' to deal with conflicts.

Ayodeli: I only trusted my gang when it came to stuff. We'd just see the authorities as a hindrance. If one of my boys got kidnapped, we'd find out which gang it was and just deal with it init. Kick down their family door, ask them where the fuck my boy is.

Ayodeli is demonstrating one method that him and his gang may use "When taking matters into their own hands". This could drive crime or further violence, given the potential of gangs to escalate or retaliate in conflicts. As well as being linked to a fear of criminalisation, Ayodeli spoke about a lack of faith in police to be effective, or relate and 'negotiate' effectively with young people:

Interviewer: Why not go to the police?

¹⁸ Kimberly A Lochner and others, 'Social Capital and Neighborhood Mortality Rates in Chicago', *Social Science & Medicine*, 56.8 (2003), 1797–1805; Richard Rosenfeld, Eric P Baumer, and Steven F Messner, 'Social Capital and Homicide', *Social Forces*, 80.1 (2001), 283–310; Elijah Anderson, *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City* (WW Norton & Company, 1999).

Ayodeli: Because it could get handled faster. There's a chance that it might escalate, but that time right then, that problem right there squashed. There's no police ting, the police are useless, no, the police are *fucking* useless in most situations, because they don't know how to negotiate with people, especially when it comes to gangs.

Section 3: Accountability

ACCOUNTABILITY

KEY STATISTICS



39

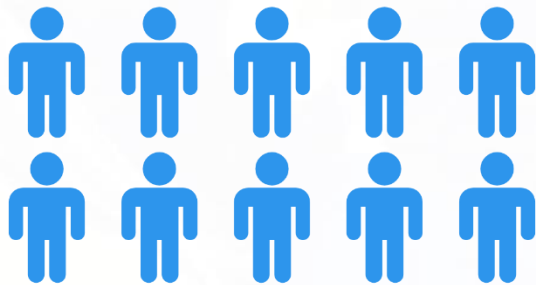
Custody related deaths
2017-19



of deaths in custody
are Black people

This means black people are

2 times more likely to die in custody than white people



There have been **10** deaths in
custody since 1990 that a jury
have ruled as

'Unlawful Killing'

Of these deaths there has been
0 successful prosecutions for
murder or manslaughter



"Deaths of people from BAME [Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic] communities, in particular young Black men, resonate with the Black community's experience of systemic racism, and reflect wider concerns about discriminatory over-policing, stop and search, and criminalisation."



Dame Elish Angiolini

Angiolini Report: Independent Report on
Deaths and serious incidents in police custody

Source: BBC News 'How many black people die in police custody in England and Wales?' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/52890363>

Accountability refers to the ability of citizens to hold those in power responsible for their actions.

One of the ways that police can be held accountable is through the complaints system.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct reported a total of 12,607 allegations against the Metropolitan police in the year 2017/18. This figure is up 1% from the previous year where the police recorded 12,473 complaints.¹⁹

These allegations from the public include a range of categories from ‘oppressive conduct or harassment’ to ‘neglect or failure in duty’ to ‘mishandling of property’ which led to several different outcomes. Out of those investigated (7,571) 11% (864) were ‘upheld’ and 89% ‘not upheld’.²⁰

In lots of places (in meetings with community groups, press conferences or local government) police use these figures to measure or celebrate their success. Complaints being low and investigations not being upheld are presented to show that police are doing a good job.

But if we look deeper into problems with the complaints system, and what the public thinks about it, then we see that things are not so simple. A Home Office report in 2007 recorded that out of people dissatisfied with police 87% of people chose not to complain.²¹ Why is this number so high?

HIGH PROFILE INCIDENTS – THE RASHAN CHARLES CASE

A series of high-profile cases of police misconduct are often the first way that young people in Hackney find out about the police complaints system and the institutions that investigate incidents.

In July 2017 Rashan Charles died following contact with an officer from the Territorial Support Group on Kingsland Road.²² The case sent shockwaves through the community in Hackney, with many young people publicly protesting and mourning on the streets in the days after the incident.

¹⁹ IOPC, *Police Complaints: Statistics for England and Wales 2017/18*, 2018, p. 24

<https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/statistics/complaints_statistics_2017_18.pdf>.

²⁰ IOPC, p. 31.

²¹ Graham Smith, ‘Why Don’t More People Complain against the Police?’, *European Journal of Criminology*, 6.3 (2009), p. 251.

²² Open Democracy, “Rashan Charles”, *Opendemocracy.Net*, 2020

<<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/tagged/rashan-charles/>> [accessed 27 July 2020].

Immediately after the incident the Independent Police Complaints Commission [IPCC], (now the Independent Office for Police Conduct) recommended that the offending officer be suspended whilst an investigation was being carried out. The Metropolitan Police chose to ignore this advice and allowed the officer to remain in position.

POLICE SHAPE THE NARRATIVE

The Rashan Charles case, and others, demonstrate the ability the police have to ‘shape the narrative’ in the media and public life.

Before the video footage of Rashan Charles being tackled to the floor was leaked to the press, Chief Superintendent Simon Laurence, Borough Commander for Hackney, released an official statement the following morning on the MPS website that:

‘A man... was pursued on foot before entering a shop where he was seen to be trying to swallow an object. He was then taken ill...’ and then ‘taken to hospital by the London Ambulance Service where, sadly, he died later that morning’.²³

In this statement there was no mention of the search, detention, use of restraint or the way in which the death occurred.

ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS

The IPCC/IOPC then announced an investigation into the death with Chief Superintendent Simon Laurence stating that ‘all police officers understand that they will be asked to account for their actions, and they would not want it any other way’.

After a year-long investigation in August 2018 the IOPC ruled that ‘no officer should face gross misconduct or misconduct proceedings’.

The jury at the inquest at the Coroner’s Court also returned a conclusion of ‘accidental death’ with a ‘narrative determination’ suggesting that the officer was ‘justified’ in his use of force.

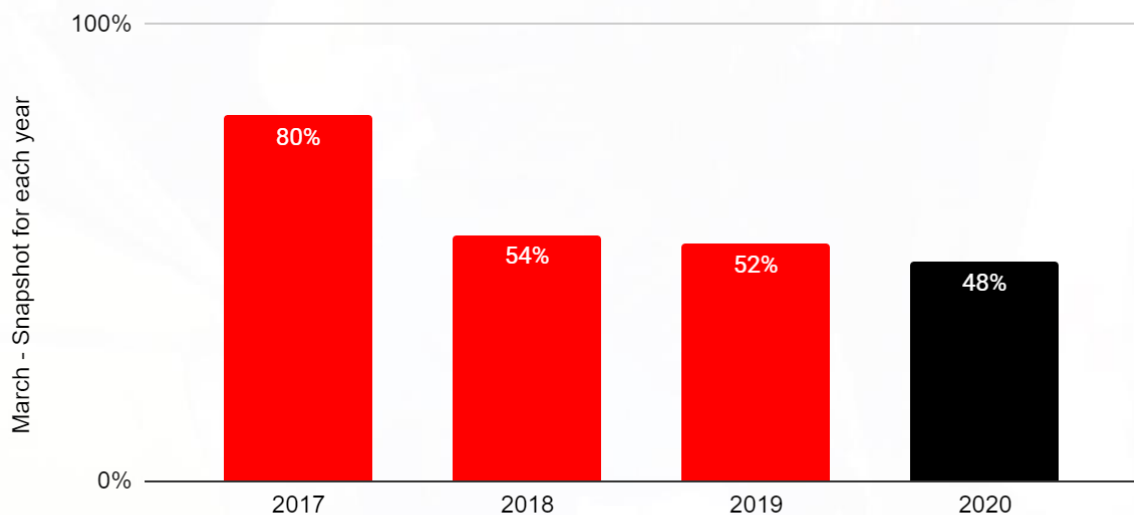
²³ Barney Davis and Justin Davenport, ‘Rashan Charles Video: CCTV Footage Shows Him “swallow Object” While Being Chased by Police’, *Evening Standard*, 2017 <<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/cctv-footage-shows-rashan-charles-swallow-object-while-being-chased-by-police-a3594521.html>> [accessed 27 July 2020].

The Crown Prosecution Service [CPS] also decided that there wasn't enough evidence to put together a case against the offending officer.²⁴

The decisions made by these four public bodies; the Metropolitan Police, the IOPC, the CPS and the Coroner's Court; each faced criticism from within the community in Hackney. Rod Charles, former Met Chief Inspector and great uncle to Rashan, said the inquest process had descended into 'farce'.²⁵

When looking at opinion poll data from the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime it is striking to note how the public perception of the police changed after 2017; the year of Rashan's death:

Public perception of the police in Hackney. Do you... "agree the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are"?



Source: Mayor's Office for Police and Crime

For many in the community the Rashan Charles case, along with the death of Mark Duggan in 2011, was as an example of police impunity when dealing with minority residents and the inability of families to get 'justice'. Our historical research at Hackney Archives also showed us a long history of police impunity in Hackney with regards to deaths in custody, including the deaths of Colin

²⁴ Open Democracy.

²⁵ Henry Vaughan, 'Rashan Charles: Family Label Inquest a "Farce" after Death Ruled Accidental after "Justified Use of Force"', *Hackney Gazette*, 2018 <<https://www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/crime-court/rashan-charles-family-label-inquest-a-farce-after-it-finds-death-was-accidental-after-justified-use-of-force-1-5570190>> [accessed 27 July 2020].

Roach in 1983 and Michael Ferreira in 1977.²⁶ Stories of police ‘getting away with it’ do not fade from memory easily. As one young man Jason put it to us in an interview:

Jason: Mark Duggan ain't the first come on, if we wanna talk about Black oppression and stuff getting into that then we'll be here all-day fam.

These high-profile incidents set the tone for young people when thinking about whether complaining to the police is worthwhile. For many, it may seem like the courts, the police, and any other public body, collude when investigating incidents. Or more plainly, as Toyin put it:

Toyin: Sometimes it feels like everyone's in cahoots except from your people-dem, you get what I mean? They're all in unison to attack you, and all against you, they don't want nothing for you.

TRUST IN THE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM

Many young people in Hackney do not trust the police complaints system. This may be for a number of reasons.

Among many young people, especially those from so-called ‘Black and Minority Ethnic’ backgrounds there is a perception that that police will not take their complaints seriously and that they may be unfairly treated in the process.

As a recent report from the IOPC found ‘Young people from marginalised and minority groups’ when dealing with the complaints system ‘feel they are less likely to be believed and more likely to be discriminated against.’

This links in with broader issues around trust in the police and a feeling of ‘powerlessness’ many young people have with the police, as well as a fear that the police will attempt to ‘smear’ the complainant’s character in the investigation. As one young person said to us in interview:

Me against the entire fucking police station? What do you expect? And white people are telling me 'oh you should report it'... This is not a win-win situation for me, they could pull up my record and make me look like a bad person, it's not good for my mental health it's not good for anything.

²⁶ Independent Committee of Inquiry into Policing in Hackney and Colin Roach, *Policing in Hackney, 1945-1984* (London: Karia Press, 1989). See also *Hackney Ain't Innocent* by Yolanda Lear, in this report.

RELIVING TRAUMA

For some young people there is also an unease and mistrust when approaching police complaints, when they have been traumatised by the original incident.

One young person we interviewed, Ayodeli, was the victim of a serious incident of brutality within a police station. Despite receiving permanent damage to his knees and wrists Ayodeli informed us that he chose not to make a complaint against the police since the trauma from the incident made him fearful of dealing with police again:

Ayodeli: So when white people were like 'you should report' I wanted to tell them '*I don't want to step inside a police station EVER AGAIN, I don't want to step foot inside there, I don't wanna talk to a policeman, I don't wanna look at a policeman, I don't want a policeman to talk to me, I don't wanna deal with them*, and this is like right after the incident, so they're telling me to go in there and fill in a report, but the police station is known for their brutality, and they expect me to go down there, its fucking bullshit.

Ayodeli's case emphasises the problems with having incidents investigated by the police, or other institutions which young people do not trust, especially when trauma is involved. As Ayodeli expressed it:

Ayodeli: *They're [Police] taking the piss, they don't understand, nobody wants to complain, do you know how much of a stressful thing it is to fill out a form about a traumatic experience. People that have been raped barely want to fill out forms, why would I? Someone that's dealt with physical pain from a multitude of people with zero support, why would I go through that again, to write it down, for police to question me about it, it's a piss-take, I never want to deal with it again.*



Hackney Ain't Innocent

By Yolanda Lear

Hackney ain't innocent
There's blood on our streets from the hands of the police
Remember the name
Rashan Charles
He was killed in 2017
His family still weeps
But Coolie, "The officer was just doing his job"
Nah man, the brudda couldn't breathe
This one's close to home, really broke Hackney,
Still no justice, officer walked free,
There's a murderer out on the streets, and he's still patrolling Hackney,
How can we feel safe, who's gonna protect us?
My prayers go out to his family,
We must never forget his name
So, say his name, Rashan Charles.
Say his name Rashan Charles, RIP.
Maddest ting is, he ain't the first
In 2002 we was saying R.I.P Kwame
Another death in custody
And it's the same old story, he died of natural causes,
But when he asked for your help
Officers refused, they thought he was faking it
Though he was constantly collapsing, moving round in agony
He should have lived, he had a 90% chance
But they show you neglect, when your skin colour is dark,
Kwame R.I.P, my prayers are with your family
1994 that's the year of my birth
But right before Christmas, the feds left Hackney hurt,
That's another family crying, another brother dying,
An unlawful killing as he struggled for his life
Say his name Oluwashiji
Say his name Oluwashiji
In 1998, there was still no justice for his family
My prayers are with them, as the officers where let free
But hold on wait, ain't the police meant to serve and protect,
So what happened to Vandana

Is that a case of neglect?
In 1991 she seeked refuge in your station
Escaping from her boyfriend, who used her body as a target,
She pleaded for your protection, she didn't want him in the meeting,
But you let him in anyway
And he stabbed her to death,
She was only 21, she should've had a lot of life left,
I'm sorry officer, what is your job again
Because it can't be to serve and protect,
As we remember their names
Let's remember their families,
Because nothing makes sense when tryna comprehend these tragedies,
In 1983 Hackney said R.I.P
To a brother named Colin Roach,
Died from a gunshot, in the entrance of the police station
Coroner's Jury deemed it a suicide
Typical, I'm starting to think suicide means "We did it"
Because the amount of suicides in their station
I swear it deserves an investigation,
Colin Roach was 21
His family deserves some justice man,
Do you want me to believe a Black man could walk down the streets of
Hackney, in 1983
With a bag and a shotgun,
And not get stopped by no one,
Only to make it to the station, then turn around and commit suicide?
You'll have an easier job convincing me
That I'm actually white, than me ever believing that lie
And since that will never happen,
I know for a fact that Colin Roach didn't commit suicide
See Hackney ain't innocent
There's blood on our streets
From the hands of the police
And there's some names I didn't even mention
Like Vincent Graham
Tunay Hassan, and Michael Ferreira
All these names and no officers charged
Still no justice for their families
My prayers are large
Coz it do'nt take a bullet to break someone's heart
R.I.P to da fallen, Hackney ain't innocent
There's blood on our streets from the hands of the police.





RECOMMENDATIONS





The core research team have put together the following recommendations for action.

These were informed by the findings of the research as well as ongoing meetings with the police and work with young people.

For: London Borough of Hackney and Local Partners

I. Funded, representative, effective and independent community scrutiny panels are needed to evaluate police complaints.

- I.1. As found in our research and other studies,²⁷ the police complaints system is not currently fit for purpose for young people. Urgent work is needed to give young people trust and confidence in the accountability process.
- I.2. To partially address this issue, Hackney Council needs to set up an independent Community Scrutiny Panel. The role of the panel will be to scrutinise police complaints. For the panel to be effective the following conditions must be met:

²⁷ See e.g. Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) Youth Panel: Key Findings & Recommendations 2019 https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research-learning/iopc_youth_panel_report_march2019.pdf
Smith, G. (2009) 'Why Don't More People Complain against the Police?' *European Journal of Criminology* <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1477370809102167>
Smith, G. (2008) 'Police complaints in the reform era' *Criminal Justice Matters* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09627250608553114?journalCode=rcjm20>

- 1.2.1 The panel must be independent from the BCU.
- 1.2.2 The panel must be representative of the resident population of Hackney. This will need to include mandatory quotas on age, ethnic background, gender, income, housing. In practice this will require effective community outreach and engagement to ensure buy-in from diverse communities.
- 1.2.3 Panel members need to be properly trained and paid for their time.
- 1.2.4 The panel needs to have the power to access redacted Body-Worn Video camera (BWV) footage, police statements and witness testimonies.
- 1.2.5 The panel needs to have the power to penalise or suspend local officers.

2. Additional independent support needed for young people making complaints against police.

- 2.1. As a further measure to increase trust in the complaints system, there needs to be a clear referral process for young people to follow in order to access support, independently from police, if they feel they have been mistreated.
- 2.2. This support ‘package’ needs to be delivered by a team of community members and professionals, who operate independently from police and council, and include legal expertise, mental health support and youth advocacy. This support will need to be flexible, and based around the needs of the young person and the facts of the particular case: in some cases the best option for a young person may be support to engage with the police complaints system or community scrutiny panel, in other cases it may involve staging a local resolution, or, in others, it may involve compensation claims in court.
- 2.3. Officers will need to provide information to members of the public of this independent referral process following any Stop and Search encounter, as part of their standard operating procedures. This information should be provided in a simple leaflet, which has sections

written in both standard and “easy read” formats and in a range of languages spoken by Hackney residents.

3. Funding for mental health support for victims of police misconduct.

- 3.1. A key part of the support ‘package’ needs to be properly resourced mental health provision for young people who have been traumatised following an encounter with police. This needs to be carried out by community-based counsellors and therapists that can engage with young people effectively.
- 3.2. A key part of the professional help available needs to be tailored to the needs of neurodiverse young people, especially those with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD), due to the disproportionate and excessive treatment these young people often face at the hands of the police.

4. More funding to support local safe spaces in which communities can heal from collective trauma and rebuild trust.

- 4.1. Independently from police, council or statutory services, communities need ‘safe’ spaces where they can heal from trauma from violence and victimisation. These spaces need to be owned, managed and run by local residents who are paid to help build trust, resilience and cohesion between generations. These need to be spaces where communities can speak freely, socialise and organise to begin to heal from decades of intergenerational trauma.
- 4.2. A key function of these spaces needs to be to foster well-resourced non-enforcement approaches to community safety and violence reduction. Following examples of best practice from projects like ‘4Front’²⁸, ‘FightForPeace’²⁹, ‘Project 507’³⁰ and ‘H.O.L.L.A.’,³¹ these spaces could play a role in conflict resolution, gang mediation, and ‘peace building’

²⁸ <https://www.4frontproject.org/our-work>

²⁹ <https://fightforpeace.net/>

³⁰ <http://www.project507.co.uk/>

³¹ <https://holla-inc.com/>

as well as broader projects around education, mental-health support, and community-based restorative³² or transformative³³ approaches to justice, harm-reduction and healing.

- 4.3. These spaces either need to be hosted at a series of estates or via portable venues (e.g. a bus), to ensure they are accessible to young people who are not able to travel across Hackney.

For: Hackney and Tower Hamlets Basic Command Unit (BCU)

5. Fundamental changes are needed to develop effective transparency and accountability around racial disproportionality in Stop and Search encounters and institutional racism.

- 5.1. The BCU needs to commit to a comprehensive new ‘anti-racist’ strategy to address racial stereotyping, profiling and disproportionality. This needs to include an acknowledgment of the police’s role in perpetuating systemic racism in the past and present and needs a dramatic shift in tone from the senior level to take the issue of race and racism seriously. The most senior officers need to take the lead in establishing and promoting an anti-racist culture within the BCU.
- 5.2. Rigorous data on racial disproportionality needs to be published and monitored by the BCU in line with the Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme. This data needs to be made regularly available to scrutiny groups.

³² <http://criminaljusticealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/RJtimeforaction.pdf>
<https://restorativejustice.org.uk/what-restorative-justice>

³³ <https://www.transformativejustice.eu/en/what-are-ca-and-tj/>

- 5.3. A new independently run evaluation process is needed to assess the use of racial profiling in frontline policing, co-supervised by an external partner such as a university or research institute. Officer self-testimony is not sufficient as evidence in this process. There need to be adequate penalties in place, including suspension, for officers found to be racial profiling. (With fair and reasonable appeals processes in place as needed).
- 5.4. All police officers (internal and external) need to engage in training to lessen the impact of racial stereotyping and racial profiling. This needs to include (at a minimum) training in cultural competency, racial identity, confirmation bias and unconscious bias. Training must be mandatory for all current and new police officers. Where possible, this training should be delivered in collaboration with local community professionals who have a deep understanding of the local community's history and culture.
- 5.5. All police officers (internal and external) need to commit to regular engagement events with young people in the borough through the youth engagement team, to help break down fears and stereotypes in particular in relation to young Black men.

6. Significant improvements needed in use of body worn video (BWV).

- 6.1. The introduction of Body Worn Video (BWV) has offered an opportunity for greater transparency and accountability. Currently, however, BWV is not used consistently among all officers in the BCU and is used too often as an internal tool for evidence, instead of an external tool for accountability.
- 6.2. Officers need to have BWV switched on during all encounters with the public. It should not be at the discretion of the officer when a camera is switched on. Their camera needs to be visible, and not blocked by clothing. There need to be significant penalties for officers not complying with appropriate BWV use, including suspension.
- 6.3. Following a contentious incident or 'community trigger' (as detailed in Best Use of Stop and Search scheme), redacted BWV needs to be made available in a timely fashion to independent scrutiny panels.

7. BCU needs to sign up to the Home Office Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme.

7.1. The Best Use of Stop and Search scheme was introduced by the Home Office in 2014 to create 'greater transparency, community involvement in the use of Stop and Search powers and to support a more intelligence-led approach, leading to better outcomes, for example, an increase in the Stop and Search to positive outcome ratio.³⁴

8. Handcuff usage and its impact on community relations needs greater scrutiny and accountability.

8.1. Our research found that excessive and unwarranted use of handcuffs is causing irrevocable damage to community relations and traumatising many young people. From our research, it would appear that handcuffs are being used in circumstances where they are wholly unnecessary, and in a highly public fashion, causing considerable fear, embarrassment and humiliation for young people.

8.2. BCU officers should be expected at all times to follow the guidance on handcuff usage published by the National Police Chiefs' Council. Appropriate sanctions should be in place for officers who do not follow this guidance:

Any intentional application of force to the person of another is an assault. The use of handcuffs amounts to such an assault and is unlawful unless it can be justified. Justification is achieved through establishing not only a legal right to use handcuffs, but also good objective grounds for doing so in order to show that what the officer or member of police staff did was a reasonable,

³⁴'Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme' Home Office (2014)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346922/Best_Use_of_Stop_and_Search_Scheme_v3.0_v2.pdf

necessary and proportionate use of force.³⁵

- 8.3. Greater transparency and accountability are urgently needed around 'good objective grounds' being given to demonstrate 'reasonable, necessary and proportionate use of force' in the usage of handcuffs in the borough.
- 8.4. The BCU needs to record and publish detailed data on handcuff usage, including grounds for usage.
- 8.5. Handcuff usage also needs to be scrutinised via BWV dip-sampling by a Community Scrutiny Panel. Failure to use 'good objective grounds' needs to lead to the penalisation of officers, including suspension following repeated offending.

9. Fundamental new approach needed for local officer retention.

- 9.1. A key problem outlined in the research was the cultural gap between many of the officers operating in the borough and young people. The exception to this rule was local officers who had been in post for years, even decades. This longevity allowed the officers enough time to build up trust and respect among communities they operated in. Many young people commented on the ability of these local officers to 'deescalate' situations, in contrast to external units that all too often appeared to 'provoke'.
- 9.2. Far more resources need to be committed to neighbourhood officers, the youth engagement team and local 'community policing' based strategies.
- 9.3. There need to be clear incentives introduced to keep officers in these posts for longer and end the high turnover of officers in the borough.
- 9.4. Community members, specifically young people, need to sit on recruitment boards for new officers joining the BCU.

³⁵ 'Guidance on the use of handcuffs' ACPO (2000)

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/FoI%20publication/Disclosure%20Logs/Uniformed%20Operations%20FOI/2013/003%2013%20Att%2015%20of%2015%20Guidance%20on%20the%20Use%20of%20Handcuffs.pdf>

9.5. Leaders in these departments need to have greater power to hold to account units such as the Territorial Support Group or the Criminal Investigation Department; community policing should not only be the task of one department but of *all officers working in the borough*.

10. Scrutiny and Independent evaluation is needed of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

10.1. In our research, many young people frequently referenced mistreatment at the hands of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Plain clothes officers were often described as the 'Grand Theft Auto' officers - lacking the professionalism or sensitivity of other officers and regularly engaging in excessive use of force.

10.2. Despite its 'undercover' role, the CID needs be made available for public scrutiny, much like any other police department. In too many cases the CID can be seen to undo the hard work of the more 'community-centred' officers, breaking down trust and confidence.

10.3. To ensure the use of force is reasonable, necessary, and proportionate, it is recommended that the CID commits to an independent evaluation by an external partner. This evaluation must include a detailed review carried out by ex-police officers and community members. The review should be supervised by a community scrutiny panel and should result in a series of public recommendations.

10.4. As with the whole BCU, the CID needs to sign up to and comply with the BUSS scheme. It also recommended that department regularly submits BWV footage (where available) for dip sampling to the community scrutiny panel.

For: Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

11. The Territorial Support Group (TSG) need to be subject to an independent evaluation of their role, tactics, and effectiveness. This should include a review of recruitment, training, and their impact on community relations.

11.1. Known locally, and across London, as 'bully vans' by young people, relations with the TSG are a constant cause for concern. A huge number of the incidents that lead to serious injury and trauma in the borough are carried out by officers from the TSG.

11.2. Historical research demonstrates that the 'confrontational' approach of the TSG (known previously as the Special Patrol Group [SPG]) has done untold damage to community relations since its inception.

11.3. If the Met police wants to take seriously the problem of public 'trust and confidence' then a meaningful independent evaluation of the TSG is urgently needed. This evaluation must include a detailed review carried out by academic researchers, community partners and independent police expertise (such as ex-police officers). The review should be supervised by the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) and contain actionable public recommendations with a commitment to reform from the MPS.

11.4. If the TSG's negative impact on community relations cannot be justified with a clear evidence base, then it is not fit for purpose and must be abolished.

12. MPS need to deliver a meaningful public apology for historical trauma caused to communities and families from death in custody

incidents. Where appropriate, cases should be reopened.

- 12.1. The impact of high-profile deaths in custody on trust in the police in Hackney and other boroughs over generations have been immeasurable. The Metropolitan police as an institution need to become more aware of this history, and their part in it, before they can hope to rebuild trust and confidence.
- 12.2. Across London, including Hackney, senior police need to educate themselves and their officers about this history and deliver a meaningful public apology with a commitment to change. As a minimum this should be accompanied by mandatory training delivered by relevant community groups about the historical impact of local deaths in custody within given boroughs.

13. MPS need to comply with recommendations given by the Independent Office for Police Complaints (IOPC) during misconduct investigations.

- 13.1. Untold damage was done to community relations when the Metropolitan Police refused to suspend (pending investigation) the officer involved in the fatal incident with Rashan Charles in 2017.
- 13.2. If the IOPC are to be effective and genuinely independent, then the police need to comply with *all* recommendations given by the IOPC. Without this, the IOPC are not fit for purpose.



BLACK LIVES MATTER

PROTECT BLACK WOMEN

FROM GREAT TO THE LITTLE SHY

SAY HIS

COOLZON

Are we allowed to live?

**Statement on the killing of George Floyd by Yolanda Lear,
Community Researcher**



Frustration, pain and agony. These are some of the emotions I feel when staring into the face of this tragedy. When I see a Black man, who could be my father, brother, uncle or cousin, murdered, with no justice. And this isn't the first. Are these murders a way of silencing our struggle, our pain as a people? Are these murders a way of the system telling us we don't belong? That we aren't welcome on the land of the "Great"? Nor are we welcome in the kingdom that is supposed to be United? United means to be one, to be treated equally regardless of anything. But where is the equality?

Why is it, when I see someone who looks like me, they are usually deemed as a criminal or a lost cause? What hope do I have, to find hope in a world where it is a sin to be Black?

We try to get our voices heard and we are told "NO DON'T DO THAT." Anger boiling up and tensions rising, we don't get to express the emotions inside. But

then we are told, we are being 'too violent'. So, we protest in peace, but now we are causing havoc on these streets.

I am a young Black woman, asking "What do you want from me?"

If I stay silent, my silence is deafening. A direct injustice to my ancestors. I would feel like I'm letting down my people. But when we speak it falls on deaf ears; so how do we get heard?

I guess the real question is, do you even want to listen? Because we have been speaking for years, and still haven't been heard. So as a Black person, I ask you, can you listen to our cries? We say Black Lives Matter, and you respond, "all lives matter." But if all lives mattered, why do we still have to question whether or not Black lives really matter? If all lives do matter, can you stand with us; not against in the fight for equality and justice? Can you see a human being, not a thug, criminal, drug addict, when you see our Black men? Can you see a human being, not a loudmouth, aggressive woman, when you see our Black women? Because all lives can't matter until you can listen to our cries and emotions, without trying to counteract what it is we are saying. Until you can do this, I am yet to believe that you really believe all lives matter.

Are we allowed to live? I have to ask, because we are getting murdered with no justice over here in the UK, as well as the USA. It has become a trendy topic all over our socials. We are forced to watch the modern-day lynching of our people. Forced to see the faces of their killers, as it's all over our socials. To then see, no justice has been given. Yep you guessed it, it's all over our socials as well.

We say Black Lives Matter, but in the same breath, we are killing and cursing our own people. How is it we expect the world to view our lives as Black people as valuable if we as Black people do not view our lives as valuable. If we look and talk down on our very own people on a regular basis.

Think about the emotional trauma, we as a people experience from seeing this. From seeing someone who could easily be related to us, murdered. Imagine the fears a mother has when letting her son go out. When your skin alone makes you a target. Imagine the paranoia we live in, not knowing if today could be the day it happens to you. To make matters worse it's not only the police we have to be on guard for. Cops are killing us, people of other faces are killing us, we are killing us! So again I ask, are we allowed to live?

Yolanda Lear, June 2020



Except cycles



Abuse of Power

By King Ilunga

They call us names, treat us like animals
hoping we retaliate always wanna provoke us
just coz they can or
think they can.

Meant to protect and serve but to be honest
they really make the problem worse,
If we commit an act of violence, we are sentenced
if it's them they are more likely not suspended,
this ain't justice,
this ain't right.

Have you ever stopped to think yes,
we are the police,
we are the law but
let's be reasonable with those we confront coz
you never know who you may come across
but nah the Jakes want to escalate when sometimes
there is no need.

I say how about those that suffer
from physical or mental illness, depression or anxiety
how about those affected emotionally but
suffer in silence,
family,
friends,
those are also true victims,
of how the system will never treat communities
with some sort of fairness or cease to realise

we are not animals
something must change
Or else nothing will.

NOTHING TO SEE HERE.



Appendix – Racial Disproportionality Statistics

In the last year (Aug 2019-July 2020) there have been 10,827 stop and searches in the borough of Hackney.³⁶ 5,851 of these searches were of black people. This means that whilst black people make up roughly 26% of the population in Hackney, they account for roughly 54% of stop and searches.

3,119 of these searches were of White people. White people make up around 55% of the population in Hackney and account for around 29% of stop and searches.

This amounts to 90.4 searches per 1000 people for Black people and 23.2 searches per 1000 people for White people. This means you are roughly **4 times more likely to be stopped and search if you are black.**

This figure increases to 768.6 searches per 1000 population for young black men (aged 15 to 19). This means **if you are a young, male and black, you are 6 times more likely than your white male peers to be stopped and searched** (young white men aged 15-19 are searched at a rate of 136.2 searches per 1000 population) or **17 times more likely to be stopped and searched than someone from the general population.**

Positive Outcome rates

If, as police leaders claim,³⁷ disproportionality figures can be explained via higher perpetrator and offending rates among black people then 'positive outcome' levels (i.e. where the officer finds a prohibited item during a search) ought to remain equal among ethnic categories.³⁸

If we look at the data over the last 12 months (Aug 2019- July 2020) 10,831 searches in Hackney led to 2,392 'positive outcomes'. This means a 'hit rate' of roughly 22.1%. Put simply, **22.1% of police stop and searches led to a positive outcome** (usually meaning drugs, weapons etc. were found on the person searched).

If we change this figure to young black men (aged 15-24) the outcome rate drops to 17.6% (i.e. out of 3,334 searches, 579 led to a 'positive outcome'). This compares to a positive outcome rate of 21.9% for young white men of the same age category. **If we lower the age group to 15-19 then for young black men the positive outcome rate is 14.3%** (compared to 18% for young white men of the same age category).

For drugs searches (i.e. searches carried out under section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act) **in Hackney 25.3% led to a positive outcome.** This figure rises slightly to 26.8% for white people.

However, **for young black men (aged 15-19) only 17% of drug searches led to a positive outcome.** This compares to a 22.9 % positive outcome rate for young white men from the same age category.

³⁶ All stop and search data from Met Stop and Search Dashboard <https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/stop-and-search-dashboard/>

³⁷ See e.g. Ed Sheridan, 'Hackney Police's Stance on Race Disparity in Stop and Search "Astounds" Equalities Boss', *Hackney Citizen*, 2020 <<https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2020/06/24/hackney-police-stance-race-disparity-stop-search-astounds-equalities-boss/>> [accessed 21 August 2020].

³⁸ Outcome rates also don't fall into problems with inaccurate population data since the sample only concerns people who are being stopped and searched.

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