

April 2025

VIEWPOINT

Met Black Police Association



Chairperson's Update

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on the current situation regarding my election as the new Chair and the state of the Met BPA as we move forward.

As you are aware, the election process concluded on 13th February 2025, with my election as the new Chair and Angela McLeary as the new Deputy Chair. However, I have not yet been allowed to take up my post as Chair. The past months have been marked by efforts to destabilise our association, which we have managed to overcome with the collective support and solidarity of our members, partners and the community.

I want to assure you that despite these obstacles, our commitment to the core values of the MBPA remains unshaken. We are here to serve the interests of our members and the diverse communities of London and to advocate for fairness and equality in policing. We are dedicated to building bridges with the communities we serve, ensuring their voices are heard and that we are treated with the respect and dignity we deserve.

In light of the Met SLT's behaviour, we have made the strategic decision to maintain a firm stance and not engage with the MPS on matters of governance and strategy until our concerns are adequately addressed. This does not mean we are disengaging from the issues at hand; rather, we are focusing our efforts on providing unwavering support to our members and continuing the critical work of promoting diversity and challenging discrimination within the service and beyond.

I will keep you informed of any developments and encourage you to remain engaged with the association. Your voice is vital to our collective success, and together, we can overcome any challenges that come our way.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or any member of the executive team if you have any concerns or require assistance. We are here for you.



Thank you for your continued support.

Diane Vincent

STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY CONFERENCE
24 APRIL 2025

FROM DIVISION TO UNITY
OVERCOMING THE IMPACT OF FAR RIGHT VIOLENCE AND HATE

TIMINGS
ARRIVAL: 09:15
START: 10:00
FINISH: 15:30

LOCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON
DOCKLANDS CAMPUS
UNIVERSITY WAY LONDON E16 2RD
CYPRUS DLR STATION
DOCKLANDS LIGHT RAILWAY
LUNCH & REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
University of East London
Year of Health

VOYAGE

IN SUPPORT OF THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY FOUNDATION

Upcoming Event at UEL

The Stephen Lawrence Day Conference 2025 – **From Division to Unity: Overcoming the Impact of Far Right Violence and Hate** will be held on **24/04/2025** at the University of East London. It will be an inspiring and thought-provoking space for reflection and action.

The violent disorders we witnessed across the country last summer were a stark reminder of the rise in far-right aggression, fuelled by global political narratives that continue to embolden these dangerous ideologies. Over three decades ago, those responsible for the tragic murder of Stephen Lawrence were driven by the same racist beliefs. Despite the efforts to educate, inform and change cultures, far-right movements remain a real and growing threat to our communities.

DEBATE

The Stop and Search Charter



In March 2023, the Final Report into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the MPS was published. Baroness Casey wrote : *“The Met itself sees scrutiny as an intrusion. This is both short-sighted and unethical. As a public body with powers over the public it needs to be transparent to Londoners for its actions to earn their trust, confidence and respect..”* (8.6 page 233)

Baroness Casey made a number of recommendations and in Building trust with London’s communities to restore consent we read *“The Met has yet to free itself of institutional racism. Public consent is broken. The Met has become unanchored from the Peelian principle of policing by consent set out when it was established. 8. The Met should be reformed so that the Peelian principles of policing by consent – securing and maintaining the respect and approval of the public – are its guiding principles, and the measures against which all of its policies and practices are tested. 9. The met should introduce a new process with Londoners to apologise for past failings and rebuild consent, particularly with communities where this is most at risk. 10. The use of stop and search in London by the Met needs a fundamental reset. The Met should establish a charter with Londoners on how and when stop and search is used, with an agreed rationale, and provide an annual account of its use by area, and by team undertaking stop and searches. Compliance with the charter should be measured independently, including the viewing of Body Worn Video footage. As a minimum, Met officers should be required to give their name, their shoulder number, the grounds for the stop and a receipt confirming the details of the stop.”*

After a long gestation, the Charter was launched on 27 February 2025. It was a damp squid as it took too long to formulate simple guidelines that no professional policing service should have needed.

Interestingly, many of those who read the document agree with the analysis of StopWatch *“Repetitive, vague, meaningless, and unenforceable: We read the Met’s new ‘Stop and Search Charter’, so you don’t have to”*.

What do you think of the Charter? Can we start a debate in Viewpoint, your newsletter?

The Charter has eight key themes:

1. Focus on the Quality of the Encounter
2. Improved Training
3. Improved Supervision
4. Improved Complaints Handling
5. Better Use of Technology
6. Enhanced Independent Governance and Scrutiny
7. Community Involvement in Where, When and Why Stop and Search is Being Used
8. Better Public Understanding of Stop and Search



DEBATE

The Stop and Search Charter



There are two headings for each theme: a '**Commitment**' from the Met, and a '**Community Expectation**' which allegedly sums up the expectations of public who participated in the meetings held to develop the Charter.

The various commitments present existing legal obligations that should already be in place, based on the lowest possible expectations of police officer conduct. Reading, for example, that *'The MPS will commit to making sure that officers do stop and search with professionalism, showing basic forms of respect'* or that *'The Met should commit to not stereotyping individuals based on their clothing, race or whether they are in a group'* is a clear admission that the concerns regarding the way Stop and Search is being used are valid.

Saying that police officers should be made to understand what being stopped and searched feels like for the person being stopped and committing to training that should lead to improved communication, improved professionalism, makes one think that all the training up to now has been an abject failure. *'Training should make sure there is improved professionalism'*; *'Work should be done to prevent prejudice against protected characteristics'* are extraordinary admissions of such failure.

Those who have been trying to hold police to account asking the Met to improve supervision by conducting *'regular and random reviews of stop and searches'* may think they have achieved their goals but there is no clear explanation how this should be implemented. How can police officers be *'held accountable for their actions'* and how can the MPS *'make sure there are sanctions for poor performance'*? What is *'a generally more holistic and inclusive approach to stop and search'*?

Furthermore, the Charter states that the Met *'will commit to making sure the complaints process is clearly communicated and accessible to everyone'*. Again, there is no clear plan how to achieve this in a policing service that marks it own homework. Will the closing of ranks disappear?

Is the Charter legally binding? No independent review body with adequate legal power has been set up to hold the Met to their commitments.

There are 5 Lead Responsible Officers who will be responsible for meeting with the community

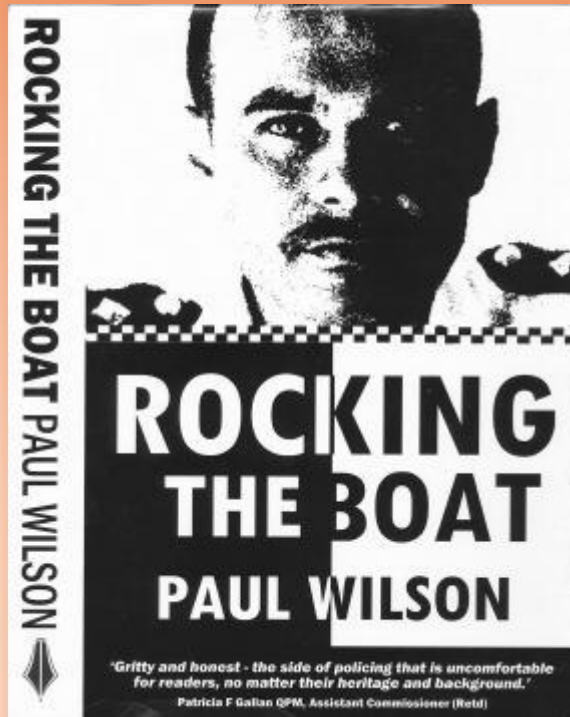
Five senior figures in the Met have been carefully selected as 'Lead Responsible Officers' to create a *'mutually agreed action plan'* within London and the action plans *'will be collated and put in a tracker, which will be made public'*.

The Charter states that the public can use the tracker to hold the Metropolitan Police to account but it is the Met that *'will aim to identify and work with an independent body to provide regular updates on progress to Londoners'*.

One wonders if this is what Baroness Casey had in mind. One wonders what will come out of this PR exercise. One may also wonder how the Met will identify any independent body. The Scrutiny Panels that morphed into Encounter Panels come to mind. What happened to them? *To be continued*

BOOKS

Rocking the Boat by Paul Wilson



This is a book that must be read and read again. The entertaining anecdotes make it a pleasant read but the book shows the stark reality of *“policing as lived when you are a person of colour”*. It is a faithful and well documented book for anyone wanting to learn about BPA.

Nothing much has changed since, on Monday 26th September 1994, Paul read in the London Evening Standard *“Black and Asian Police officers made clear today that they would no longer tolerate racism within the Metropolitan Police Force as they launched their own association in a ceremony attended by Commissioner Sir Paul Condon.”*

30 years on, there is an effort to silence the Met BPA, often with the help of those who pretend that Institutional Racism no longer exists.

Paul Wilson has not lost any of his “strident advocacy and blistering rhetoric” and was happy to raise in defence of the BPA.

The Black Police Association (BPA) plays a crucial role in promoting equality of opportunity within policing and ensuring that Black and other minority communities receive fair and just service delivery. In a profession where trust and accountability are paramount, the BPA provides a necessary independent voice, advocating for officers and communities often marginalised within the system.

Black and minority ethnic officers have historically faced discrimination within policing, from recruitment and promotion to workplace culture and disciplinary procedures. The BPA works to:

- *Challenge institutional barriers to career progression.*
- *Promote recruitment and retention of Black officers.*
- *Ensure that workplace policies do not disproportionately disadvantage minority officers.*

As Malcolm X stated, “If you’re not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed and loving the people who are doing the oppressing.” This highlights the importance of independent advocacy within policing to counter misleading narratives about race and equality.

The BPA also plays a vital role in ensuring fair policing practices for Black and minority communities, advocating against:

- ◆ *Disproportionate use of stop and search.*
- ◆ *Racial profiling.*
- ◆ *Excessive use of force.*
- ◆ *Lack of representation in community policing strategies.*

BOOKS

Rocking the Boat by Paul Wilson



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. warned against complacency in the face of injustice: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

The BPA ensures that racial injustice in policing is not ignored but addressed at all levels.

The Importance of an Independent Voice

A key function of the BPA is to speak truth to power without fear of retribution.

Historically, institutions have sought to control the narratives of Black organisations, diluting their messages or suppressing dissenting voices. For example, The Stephen Lawrence Campaign Group we now know was subjected to police tactics designed to undermine their message.

When minority-led groups are controlled by the institutions they seek to hold accountable, their effectiveness is undermined.

This control serves to maintain the status quo rather than to address systemic issues.

As Frederick Douglass declared, “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.” Independence is essential for the BPA to challenge injustice effectively.

The Racism of Silencing Black Advocacy

*Controlling the output of Black organisations is a historical tactic used to maintain racial hierarchies. Attempts to dictate how the BPA operates or limit its ability to highlight disparities within policing amount to **institutional racism**.*

The BPA must be able to present reality to senior leaders without retaliation or suppression.

Suppressing independent voices contributes to distrust between communities and law enforcement.

James Baldwin’s words remain relevant: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

The BPA’s role is to confront racial disparities within policing, forcing institutions to acknowledge and address them.

The Black Police Association is essential for ensuring equality of opportunity for Black personnel and equitable policing for minority communities. It must remain independent to effectively challenge systemic issues that historically plague policing. Efforts to control or silence such organisations serve only to maintain racial inequality, reinforcing the very issues they seek to dismantle. Institutions committed to genuine progress must embrace, rather than fear, the truth that the BPA seeks to bring to light.

“Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

— [Frederick Douglass](#)

ENGAGE

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and
send your
contributions.**

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Metropolitan Black Police Association

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