# Met Police faces backlash over closure of more than half London’s front counters



The Metropolitan Police Service’s decision to shutter more than half of its police station front counters across London reveals a troubling prioritization of bureaucratic cost-cutting over community safety. This reckless move, reducing accessible counters from 37 to just 19, flagrantly breaks previous promises to keep at least one 24-hour front desk in every borough — a betrayal of the very communities it’s supposed to serve. Stations in Wimbledon, Twickenham, and Merton, among others, are now slated for closure, leaving neighbourhood policing in disarray and residents increasingly vulnerable.

Baked into this misguided plan is an attempt to mask the £260 million budget shortfall with cuts that threaten to undermine the very fabric of local policing. Only eight stations will retain a 24/7 presence, while others are subjected to reduced hours or total closure, stripping away face-to-face accessibility that fosters trust and community cohesion. In doing so, the police are abandoning their role as visible guardians and pushing residents further into the shadows, where reporting crime and seeking help becomes a challenge rather than a right.

Opposition voices from local authorities and community leaders are rightly outraged. Councillor Gareth Roberts denounces the closure of Twickenham’s 24/7 front counter as “shameful,” highlighting how this move saps confidence in police outreach and accountability. With Twickenham now without a constant police presence, residents are forced to travel to distant stations, such as Acton or Lambeth—often inconvenient and impractical—severing the vital link between police and the communities they are meant to protect. This is not community policing; it’s neglect.

Even some Members of Parliament, who have seen firsthand the importance of accessible policing, have spoken out. One local MP recounted how a quick police response once saved a life — a poignant reminder that removing front counters isn’t just about aesthetics; it endangers everyday safety. These cutbacks are part of a broader pattern of diminishing frontline police resources, undermining the principle of neighbourhood policing which has long been essential to building trust and ensuring safety in London’s diverse communities.

Sadiq Khan’s feeble justification, citing “financial realities,” rings hollow amidst the tangible increase in crime that London faces. His previous promises to uphold 24-hour police station services seem now like hollow vows, sacrificed on the altar of austerity. The reality is that diminished physical access compounds feelings of insecurity, eroding the community’s sense of safety while doing little to address the root causes of crime.

The extensive closures impact areas from Kentish Town to Dagenham, Tottenham to Kensington — illustrating a strategic neglect that risks leaving the most vulnerable on their own. For many residents, especially those with limited digital skills or faced with language barriers, face-to-face contact with police isn’t optional, it’s essential. These counters are more than mere buildings; they’re symbols of police openness and community trust, now sacrificed on the altar of cost-cutting.

Such closures illustrate a misguided approach, valuing administrative savings over the safety and reassurance of Londoners. The future of local policing should not be dictated by short-term budgetary concerns but driven by a commitment to accessible, community-based policing that makes everyone feel safe and heard. London deserves better than this abandonment — it’s time to stand up for frontline officers and communities against these reckless cuts that threaten to turn the clock back on decades of progress in neighbourhood policing.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/police-station-closure-crime-mugging-b1241802.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-08-06/full-list-of-london-police-station-front-counters-at-risk-of-closure-released> - ITV News reports that the Metropolitan Police plans to close 18 police station front counters in London, reducing the number from 37 to 19. This move breaks the Mayor of London's pledge to have one accessible 24-hour front counter in each of the capital's 32 boroughs. The closures aim to address a £260 million budget shortfall, with only eight front desks remaining open 24/7. The affected stations include Kentish Town, Tottenham, Edmonton, Harrow, Bethnal Green, Dagenham, Chingford, Kensington, Hammersmith, Twickenham, Lavender Hill, Wimbledon, Hayes, and Plumstead. Critics argue that this decision undermines community policing and public safety. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-08-06/full-list-of-london-police-station-front-counters-at-risk-of-closure-released?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/met-police-cuts-front-counters-london-vvette-cooper-mps-mark-rowley-b1240922.html> - The Standard reports that London MPs have expressed concern over the Metropolitan Police's plan to close half of its front desks to save money. The proposal would reduce the number of counters from 37 to 19, breaking Scotland Yard's pledge to have one accessible 24-hour front counter in each of the capital's 32 boroughs. The closures aim to address a £260 million budget shortfall, with only eight front desks remaining open 24/7. Affected stations include Twickenham, Merton, Wimbledon, Lavender Hill, and Mitcham. MPs warn that further cuts could harm community policing. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/met-police-cuts-front-counters-london-vvette-cooper-mps-mark-rowley-b1240922.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/met-police-stations-front-desk-closures-wimbledon-twickenham-budget-cuts-b1238836.html> - The Standard reports that the Metropolitan Police plans to close half of its front desks in London to save money, reducing the number from 37 to 19. This decision breaks Scotland Yard's pledge to have one accessible 24-hour front counter in each of the capital's 32 boroughs. The closures aim to address a £260 million budget shortfall, with only eight front desks remaining open 24/7. Affected stations include Twickenham, Merton, Wimbledon, Lavender Hill, and Mitcham. Critics argue that this move undermines community policing and public safety. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/met-police-stations-front-desk-closures-wimbledon-twickenham-budget-cuts-b1238836.html?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-07-24/khan-defends-plans-to-shut-police-station-counters-despite-election-promise> - ITV News reports that Mayor Sadiq Khan has defended plans to shut police station front counters across London, despite an election promise he made last year. The Metropolitan Police Service wants to cut the number of police stations open to the public 24 hours a day in a bid to save money. The force is facing a £260 million budget shortfall. The proposals would see just eight front counters staffed around the clock, with 11 of the 32 stations switching to reduced opening hours and 13 shutting their front counters. Critics argue that this decision breaks the Mayor's pledge and undermines community policing. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-07-24/khan-defends-plans-to-shut-police-station-counters-despite-election-promise?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/news_july_2025/police_counter_closure_twickenham> - Richmond Council has condemned the Metropolitan Police's decision to close the 24/7 front counter at Twickenham Police Station, the last remaining front counter in the borough. Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, described the decision as 'shameful' and expressed concern that it undermines public confidence in local policing. The closure means that the South West Borough Command will lose its only 24/7 police desk, with the nearest 24/7 counters now in Acton, Sutton, or Lambeth. The Council argues that the value of front counters cannot be measured in footfall alone, especially when trust in policing is already fragile. ([richmond.gov.uk](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/news_july_2025/police_counter_closure_twickenham?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/met-police-front-counters-budget-cuts-london-b1241670.html> - The Standard reports that the Metropolitan Police plans to close half of its front desks to save money, reducing the number from 37 to 19. This decision breaks Scotland Yard's pledge to have one accessible 24-hour front counter in each of the capital's 32 boroughs. The closures aim to address a £260 million budget shortfall, with only eight front desks remaining open 24/7. Affected stations include Kentish Town, Tottenham, Edmonton, Harrow, Bethnal Green, Dagenham, Chingford, Kensington, Hammersmith, Twickenham, Lavender Hill, Wimbledon, Hayes, and Plumstead. Critics argue that this move undermines community policing and public safety. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/met-police-front-counters-budget-cuts-london-b1241670.html?utm_source=openai))