

Devon and Cornwall OPCC annual report 2019-2020

Foreword

Communities are working together and safer than ever – but there is more to be done

The last few days of the 2019-20 financial year were among the most challenging for Devon and Cornwall Police and its partners, as the enormity of the challenge posed by Covid-19 became clear.

While the force rapidly reacted to emergency legislation and society adapted to a host of extraordinary measures designed to save lives, a welcome report from the Office of National Statistics was published.

It showed that Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly now has second lowest recorded crime per head of population – lower than 42 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales.

This was not a total surprise, the force has worked hard and although police performance is part of the picture, other factors have contributed.

We have spent the last few years building connectivity between organisations and the public they serve to create more resilient communities. Initiatives like Safer Towns have brought police together with councillors, residents, health experts and organised groups, resulting in measurable reductions in crime. Penzance and St Austell stand out as good examples.

As well as providing a budget that allowed force strength to grow by 176 officers since I took office – including 97 in this reporting period - I have worked to create new emergency services roles.

Building on the already successful tri-service safety officer scheme in Cornwall, last year saw the creation of community responders who are fully trained firefighters with full police powers in Devon.

Policing in the 21st Century requires modern facilities, equipment and technology. Brand new police stations in Exeter and Liskeard opened on time and on budget, and planning began for a third, in Barnstaple.

These investments unlock capital which has been released to provide our frontline workers with the modern working environments they deserve.

There is still much to be done. The challenges of policing an area that has more domestic visitors than any other yet no additional resource, the criminal gangs that seek to exploit young and vulnerable residents, the hidden crimes which are under-reported, the corrosive effect of violent crime and much-needed reform to reduce reoffending are areas where we and our partners need to focus effort.

Despite this, there is no reason that we, and the people and communities we work with, should not now aspire to create the safest force area in England and Wales.

Alison Hernandez

Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Section 1 – Review of 2019-2020 (Full page with image)

Key developments (full page with image)

Local and national funding gives boost to officer numbers

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly represents the largest force area in England, with one of the lowest police officer densities, every boot on the ground helps.

Local taxpayers have made an increasing contribution to the overall police budget in recent years, up to 39% in 2018/19 to 41% in 2019/20.

In 2019/20 those living in a Band D property paid £212.28 towards policing – an increase of 41p a week (12.75%) on the previous year.

So, as every council tax paying household has contributed more to keeping us safe, it is only right that every community should see a tangible benefit.

In addition to providing more detectives which ensures more criminals face the consequences of their actions, every one of the 27 neighbourhood policing teams has been joined by an additional neighbourhood beat manager.

These are now in place. Four in Plymouth sectors, nine in Cornwall, six across south Devon and eight across the Exeter, East and Mid Devon policing area.

In all, 50 additional officers were supported by our communities in 2019/20 which will contribute to a total increase in budgeted officer numbers of 176 between the last Police and Crime Commissioner elections and the end of 2020/21.

The number of police community support officers (PCSOs) has reduced during the same period as part of a policy to support the recruitment of more regular officers, although the ranks have also been supported by the addition of eight tri-service safety officers in Cornwall and seven community responders in Devon.

Council taxpayers in Devon and Cornwall have done their bit, so it is right that central government increases the amount it gives to our force area.

In August 2019 the Government committed to increasing police officer numbers by 20,000 over a three-year period.

In the first year of this national uplift, funding was for an additional 141 officers over 18 months as part of its three-year uplift. By the end of March 2020 47 of those were already in place,

When combined with officers already being funded by our communities it will take it to 3,241 officers at March 31, 2021. The allocation of additional officers for years two and three has yet to be announced and is dependent on the commitment of the Government for further funding.

Local knowledge, often referred to as 'intelligence' in police circles, is vital to those charged with keeping communities safe.

Liam Lowey is one of seven retained firefighters that have now been trained as Special Constables and are working as community responders in rural towns across Devon.

Community Responders have all the powers of a sworn police constable and as they are on-call and within five minutes of their base station for 21 hours a week, they now spend that time patrolling the town as a special constable.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has provided each responder with an electric bike which substantially extends the area they can cover and it keeps them on their patch.

This versatile use of dual powers makes a big difference to the communities they serve. Community responders are initially based in Cullompton, Crediton, Totnes, Dartmouth, Honiton, Okehampton and Newton Abbot.

Creating a platform for modern and sustainable policing

In a drive to continue improving connectivity with communities and create 21st Century facilities, two new police stations in Exeter (as the new operational headquarters for Devon) and Liskeard opened this year.

The OPCC, which owns the force estate, funded and planned both projects which were delivered on time and on budget.

Exeter's new £29 million police station was built by contractor Wilmott Dixon and is located next to the force's Middlemoor headquarters. The station is in the top 10% of sustainable buildings in the country and at around 8,000sqm, the largest construction project that the OPCC has ever undertaken.

More than 500 officers and staff will be based there.

Representing the biggest single investment in Cornwall's police estate for a decade, the £2 million development replaced Liskeard's existing station which was built in 1968 and had structural problems. The new station is a major boost to policing in Cornwall. One of the main aims of the estate strategy is to reduce force carbon emissions while redesigning new buildings in a more cost-effective way, making better use of space and greener materials.

Barnstaple

In early 2020 a survey of the Barnstaple police station's roof revealed a need for repair. Repair not being economically viable, a decision was taken to invest in a new and modern environment for staff, officers and members of the public to serve north Devon. There will be a phased relocation of the public enquiry office, office space, custody and the armoury, to maintain levels of service to the public and to prioritise the safety of staff, officers and members of the public.

Camborne

The planned refurbishment and reconfiguration of the Camborne Police Station commenced this year and was supported by collaboration with Cornwall College, to ensure that teams are located centrally during the temporary relocation period.

Once complete, Camborne will have a modern, agile work environment for our visitors, the public and our staff.

HQ Middlemoor, Exeter

In June 2019, the existing sports and swimming complex was closed due to safety concerns about the roof structure.

Subsequent design work has been undertaken which will see a new sports hall on the existing site, with work expected to commence in the autumn 2020, and completion likely in summer 2021.

Exeter's new police station is in the top 10% of sustainable buildings in the country.

Key features:

- 314sqm of solar panels

- a state-of-the-art water supply
- stringent thermal efficiency standards
- 22 per cent less carbon dioxide used than a standard building.
- builder Willmott Dixon planted 300 new trees through the force estate and in local beauty spots
- 98% of building waste did not go to landfill.
- the company has also supported two major diversity events, Plymouth Respect and Into the Mix Torbay, involved over 700 students in projects and is working with the criminal justice system to support prisoners being released from prison.

Inspector Mat Helm who helped co-ordinate the Exeter project, said: “These are fantastic new buildings which will help residents feel safe and connected to the police.

“There will also be a much better working environment for officers, staff and volunteers helping to boost their welfare and morale delivering highly professional policing that our communities rely on.”

“Everyone worked together to shape these new stations and ensure they met the needs of staff and officers. Although we have worked hard to keep disruption to a minimum, local communities showed great patience as the build took place.”

How improved scrutiny has influenced HMICFRS ‘good’ inspection

Whilst the work of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is very different to that of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), two organisations which are completely independent of the police, strive to support improvements in policing.

HMICFRS does this through inspection of processes, the OPCC achieves this through governance, scrutiny, performance accountability and public engagement.

HMICFRS integrated PEEL inspection for 2018/19 considered three categories, ‘police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy’.

Each category consists of separate topics that HMICFRS inspect, and each of those topics receives a ‘grade’ of either ‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘requires improvement’ or ‘inadequate’.

The combined grades of each topic give an overall grade for the category.

When the PCC was elected in 2016, the inspectorate graded Devon and Cornwall Police as ‘requiring improvement’ in two categories, namely effectiveness and efficiency.

In 2017 the force had improved and was graded as ‘requiring improvement’ in terms of one category, effectiveness.

Now in the final year of her term, the force has achieved ‘good’ grades by HMICFRS in all three categories of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy.

The independent scrutiny function has explored and challenged performance in a range of areas including how the police use force, and how the force makes decisions relating to the use of out-of-court disposals.

PCC scrutiny panels have also carried out in-depth scrutiny reviews into specific issues such as how the force uses its power to stop and search people.

The office also runs the Independent Custody Visitor Scheme which ensures checks occur every month by specially trained volunteers on those individuals who are detained in police custody, to ensure that they are being treated legally and ethically. An area for improvement identified by HMICFRS under 'treating the public fairly' is that 'the force should ensure that all relevant officers and supervisors understand what constitutes reasonable grounds for stop and search and how to record them'. The office will monitor this specific area for improvement during 2020/21.

In September 2019, the Use of Police Powers Community Scrutiny Panel carried out an independent review into how Devon and Cornwall Police use spit guards.

This scrutiny panel is made up of specially trained volunteers and aims to scrutinise how the force uses some of its legal powers such as use of force and stop and search. The panel reports its findings to the PCC.

The PCC may then use the panel's insight to inform their work with the Chief Constable.

The panel's role is not to criticise the police. Their aim is to identify what is working well along with any opportunities to make improvements.

The panel's value comes from the fact that it is not part of the police, so it can view that organisation and how it works independently and differently.

For this piece of scrutiny, the panel did a small-scale review into how the force uses spit guards and, subsequently, made several recommendations, including:

- that the force regularly review its use of spit guards on under 18s and vulnerable people;
- that the force consider the experiences of those subjected to spit guard use to inform future deployment;
- that the force consider making it standard practice for officers to inform detainees that they are planning to use a spit guard prior to doing so.

Four-year engagement plan has given people a real voice in policing

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly provides many geographic challenges for the police – it provides just as many for a commissioner who has a statutory duty to provide a link between the police and the public and to give people a voice in policing issues. The OPCC's engagement team has increased both its range and impact on communities year on year with 2019 the culmination of a four-year deliver plan which coincided with the PCC's elected term.

This included being much more supportive of partners, with 20 events organised to support Safer Towns in Cornwall, monthly rural crime surgeries with the force's rural crime team and work the CMCU staff, who joined the team at many events to promote working in the call centre.

During the year the team managed to:

- Increase the overall number of events from 172 to 196 in 2018
- Improve the geographic spread of events
- Carry out talks to around 100 organisations which over 3,000 people attended
- Have face to face conversations with 13,500 people
- Conduct survey which 8,354 people took part in (500+ more took part online too)

- Bring the PCC Alert to a potential audience of 31,000 subscribers.
- Increase Instagram, Facebook and Twitter followers to almost 11,000.

The spread of events attended is proportionate across the four force basic command units – Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Plymouth, North East and West Devon and South Devon.

Engagement rates in the Basic Command Units (BCUs) are broadly in line with population ie Devon BCU has 32.69% of the force total population and 38.95% of OPCC events took place.

While a great deal of effort goes into being seen in rural areas it was important too that the OPCC was properly represented in more urban areas.

New events for 2019

Cornwall

- Bodmin x 2
- Camborne x 2
- Falmouth x 2
- Liskeard x 2
- Newquay x 2
- Penzance x 3
- Redruth x 2
- Saltash x 2
- St Austell x 2
- Truro x 2
- Camborne Show
- Camelford Show
- Gwinear Show
- Women's Hope Conference (Truro)
- Liskeard Show
- Cornwall Skills Show (Wadebridge)
- Party in the Park (St Columb)

Rural surgery in:

- Liskeard

Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

- Plymouth community launch
- Plymouth Freedom Fields Festival
- Plymouth Diwali Festival
- Stoke and Backhouse Family Day (Plymouth)
- Ernesettle Funday (Plymouth)
- County Show (Newton Abbot)
- Into The Mix (Torbay)
- Dawlish Carnival
- Holsworthy Show
- Woolsery Show
- Kingsbridge Show
- Tedburn Fair (Exeter)

Rural surgeries in:

- Barnstaple
- Exeter
- Bovey Tracey x 3
- Cullompton x 3
- South Molton
- Tavistock x 2
- Holsworthy

Turning Corners helps children at risk of gang related behaviour

Dozens of children in South Devon have been helped by a scheme designed to stop them being drawn into dangerous gang activity and reduce youth violence.

Turning Corners was set up in South Devon and Torbay with £528,569 of Home Office funding after a successful application from the OPCC.

In 12 months, it helped 162 young people who were at risk of gang-related behaviour. A conference held in Torbay which shared the best practice and learning from this intervention heard moving testimony from a mother whose children were becoming involved in illegal activity before they were helped by a team of concerned parents, police officers, school staff and youth workers.

Partners have worked directly with partners to increase communication and understanding of the lives of young people to increase safer outcomes. One of the parents set up parent support groups including a WhatsApp group for other parents to help them support each other.

Individual plans include diversionary activities and sports led by specialist youth workers from youth services organisations, Space and Love Sport.

Agencies involved in this project remain committed to ensuring that vulnerable young people in this area continue to be presented with positive options about their future and are not exploited by criminals.

One element of the project, Moving Up Together, supports children who will shortly be starting secondary school and who have been identified as being at risk of exploitation.

An assessment is created for each one to aid their transition to secondary school, with a youth worker available in the first two terms to help the transition.

Evidence shows that a positive transition sets the foundation for positive, long-term engagement and reduces the many of the risks for exploitation.

Recent figures released by the project team show that the age group 14-16 account for 73% of all referrals and 80% of all referrals are male.

Chair of Turning Corners, Superintendent Jez Capey, said: "The Turning Corners project has engaged a variety of partners and the public, which has helped us to better understand gang related issues.

"We are now more educated about youth gang culture in Devon and have an improved understanding of how collectively we can make a difference.

"Now that we have picked up the stone there is no going back, and I urge partners to continue to work together so they can intervene earlier and positively impact on young people and local communities."

2020/21 Virtual courts open in Devon and Cornwall

Devon and Cornwall Police area has become one of the first regions outside London to open virtual courts, ensuring that victims still get justice, and this has been particularly useful considering the challenges posed by Covid-19.

Any crime which requires the defendant to be remanded in custody for the next available court now qualifies for a virtual hearing. Defendants remained in custody, supervised by police until the outcome of the case was determined. Court staff and the judiciary remained at the court to co-ordinate the hearing.

Cloud-based technology enables all other court users to join proceedings from a remote location using video conferencing facilities.

Each police custody centre - including the country's newest virtual court at Exeter Police Station – links into courts running across Devon and Cornwall.

Cases from the custody units in Cornwall (Newquay and Camborne) remotely link into Bodmin Magistrates Court, while Exeter Combined Court hears cases from the custody units across Devon (Barnstaple, Exeter, Torquay and Plymouth).

PCC Alison Hernandez is chairman of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) that brings together key agencies in Devon and Cornwall across the criminal justice system.

"Our experience and ability to mobilise so quickly was testament to our strong partnership relationships across the peninsula," she said.

"All partners were committed to making this work efficiently for the justice system and local community."

Victoria Cook, chief Crown prosecutor for Crown Prosecution Service South West, said: "In recent years, the CPS and our criminal justice partners have taken huge steps in using digital technology to transform the way in which trials are run.

"This, together with the experience from the virtual court pilot run in Devon and Cornwall, has ensured that the South West Criminal Justice System is in the best possible position to adapt to new challenges.

"Virtual Courts enabled the Crown Prosecution Service to continue to deliver justice alongside our police and court colleagues, while ensuring that the safety of all involved came first and foremost."

Chris Spencer, solicitor at Cornwall Defence Solicitors, said: "The launch of virtual courts ensured that our criminal justice system continued to operate effectively and safely for all of those involved in it despite the current challenges.

"I am confident that the technology available ensured that appropriate advice, representation and support was given to defendants, some of whom found themselves in court for the first time."

Partnership work, CCTV and safer towns

In order to deliver on the strategic priorities of the Police and Crime Plan the OPCC works with dozens of partners, from local authorities to major national charities to small community interest companies and groups of volunteers.

It is only through this approach that significant change can be delivered, and problems tackled from multiple directions. The challenges posed by anti-social behaviour, for example, require local authority intervention and support, a community response and an enforcement option.

Examples of the OPCC's work with partners include the investment in Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), the Regional Reoffending Board, the Safer Towns initiative and the South West Peninsula Road Safety Partnership

In 2019-20 the OPCC invested a total of £1.7m in CSPs.

CSPs are made up of representatives from the police, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, health trusts and probation services that use evidence to identify priorities and then combine to form a joined-up approach to tackling crime and threats.

Typically, they will use intelligence such as the Peninsula Strategic Assessment to inform actions plans. Projects that they have become involved in include the Turning Corners scheme to divert young people away from gang crime in South Devon, commissioning services for victims of Domestic Abuse and reducing anti-social behaviour.

The Regional Reoffending Board had its first full year of operation in 2019-20, bringing together south west police and crime commissioners with senior leaders from criminal justice, health, the voluntary sector and the Ministry of Justice to reduce reoffending rates across the region and to help improve the probation service. The board has set itself ambitious targets.

The Safer Towns initiative was rolled out across 10 towns in Cornwall - Penzance, Camborne and Redruth, Falmouth, Truro, Newquay, St Austell, Bodmin, Saltash and Liskeard - while working in partnership with the CSP for Cornwall, Safer Cornwall. Like CSPs but with a more targeted, ultra-local approach, these establish a set of priorities and delivery plans design to target specific community issues and involve town councils.

The support offered by the OPCC includes data analysis, access to business crime prevention assessments, access to survey tools to help them gather community views and regular multi-agency engagement days in the community. It also included a £5,000 seed funding grant to support the safer town group in that area to drive forward activity.

The OPCC is now working to establish Safer Towns across Devon.

Another example of partnership work is the OPCC's continued investment in CCTV systems. In October 2019 the commissioner and Torbay Council's leader unveiled a new CCTV hub in Torquay. The first such hub in Devon, it consisted of a network of 282 state-of-the art cameras, connecting towns into a central monitoring station to build resilience. The OPCC supported the £420,000 project with an investment of £60,000.

In 2019 the OPCC established the South West Peninsula Road Safety Partnership – a collective of organisations who jointly agreed a strategy to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured (KSI) on the region's roads. A 'vision zero' approach was established, with partners agreeing that any casualty was one too many, and an interim target of reducing the KSI rate by 50% in a decade was set.

Case Study: Safer Town Penzance

In June 2018 Penzance Town Council held an extraordinary meeting to discuss significant rises in anti-social behaviour and crime increases in the town centre.

Members of the public had complained that groups of street drinkers and aggressive begging was making the market town an unpleasant place to visit and shop.

A police report to the meeting showed that there had been 297 offences in the town's cumulative impact zone in 2017-18, up from 181 the previous year.

The Penzance Safer Towns initiative was given the task of tackling this challenge.

Bringing together Cornwall Council, Devon and Cornwall Police, Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service, the Dorset, Devon and Cornwall Community Rehabilitation Company, Penzance's Business Improvement District, Penzance Town Council, Addaction, St Petroc's, Cornwall Housing, Growing Links, the OPCC and NHS Kernow, it established priorities and an action plan for the town. Since then this partnership has provided traders with ongoing support to tackle shoplifting. Penzance was also one of three towns in Cornwall to pilot emergency services training to support problematic persistent drug users who are not engaged with treatment, and multi-agency walkabouts have taken place to reassure the public that the town's problems were being taken seriously.

A dedicated anti-social behaviour worker was recruited in June 2019.

In November 2019 Penzance launched the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign for Cornwall, with the theme this year being businesses. Safer Penzance in partnership with Safer Futures approached hairdressers, barbers and nail salons to encourage them to support the campaign and attend training which had been organised specifically for the launch of the campaign. Twelve businesses signed up to promote their premises as a safe place and implement a Safer Cornwall domestic abuse policy for their employees.

In September 2019 the partnership reported that crime in Penzance had reduced by 13% (224 offences) on the previous year, with the greatest reductions seen in shoplifting, criminal damage and violence. This reduction is much greater than that seen across Cornwall and the other large towns (-2% and -4% respectively).

A survey of residents of the town completed in September 2019 found that 38% of people thought that antisocial behaviour had dropped in the preceding 12 months while only 13% thought it was getting worse.

How the PCC's commissioning budget is making a difference

The OPCC has funding relationships with 77 organisations who support people affected by crime, those responsible for crime, their families and their communities.

The range of services funded is incredibly broad, supporting people of all ages, genders, sexualities and ethnic backgrounds.

The network of grant funded victim services, which includes 49 charities and community groups, all of different sizes, supported 3,612 people affected by crime last year.

The services commissioned are for people affected by all offence types including murder, sexual offences, domestic abuse, violent offences and all dishonesty offences – amongst many others.

OPCC commissioned services help people affected by crime to cope and recover by providing therapy, as well as practical and emotional support.

From January to March, one of those services for young people affected by crime, operated by Young Devon, Young Cornwall and Kooth, reports that 100% of young people referred to the service feel they had been helped.

Young people using the service increased their wellbeing and improved how they felt about themselves by 73%.

One young person reflected: "I enjoyed the one to one support and then the groups and realised I wasn't the only one with issues. I became less defensive and realised that other people could help at times if I let them."

In another of the victim services for adults, operated by Victim Support, the service was able to report an 88% improvement across the following areas for people they were supporting - health and wellbeing, ability to cope, perception of safety, reintegration, feeling informed and experience of the CJS.

People affected by crime who have benefitted from this service describe it as supportive, helpful and understanding.

One person commented: "I felt like I was alone in society and now I don't feel alone any more. They helped my confidence."

The OPCC also commissions a restorative justice which is delivered by Make Amends. Because it has been shown to reduce reoffending restorative justice makes sense from an investment point of view. Two significant studies have shown that for every £1 spent on restorative justice between £3 and £8 of public money is saved further down the line.

Finance and resources

Introduction

This section provides the draft income and expenditure for the financial year ending March 31, 2020. It also provides a general guide to the financial situation of the PCC as at March 31, 2020, full details are provided in the *Statement of Accounts 2019/20* which can be found at www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-spend.

The overall financial settlement for policing for 2019/20 saw a 1.9% increase in central government funding, the first increase in a number of years.

Although this represented a cash increase in funding, this below inflation increase continued to represent a decrease in central funding in real terms and was coupled with significant additional pressures, such as the increase in the employer cost of the police officer pension scheme.

No account of any potential future formula funding review was taken in the projections. As part of the 2019/20 overall central government funding settlement the council tax flexibility provided to police and crime commissioners was set at a maximum of £24 per Band D equivalent property before a referendum was required.

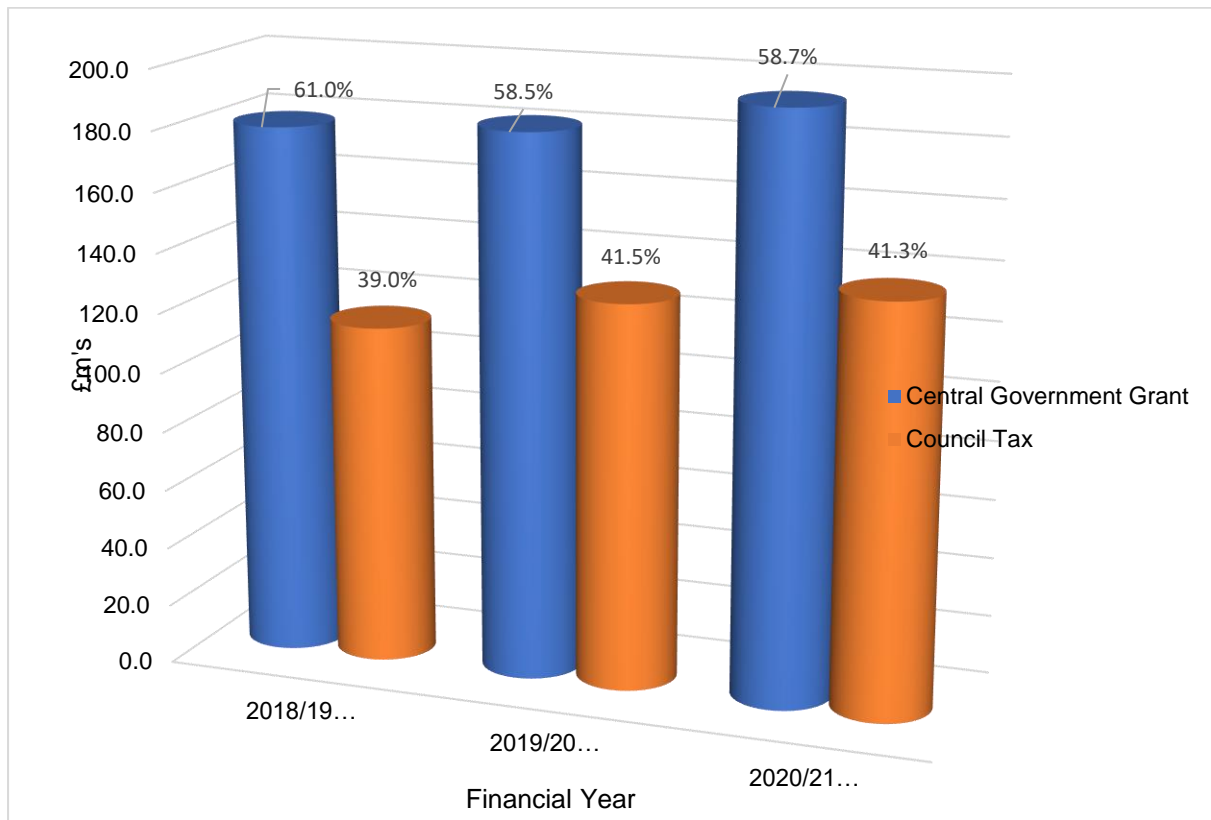
The commissioner, in consultation with the Police and Crime Panel, increased the council tax element for policing by the £24 (12.75%) so that services to the public could not only be maintained but enhanced. Council tax was set at £212.28 for a band D property.

The overall impact of increases to the Home Office core grant and special grant, and council tax increases relating to the precept, tax-base and surplus was an increase in funding in 2019/20 of £22m more than received in 2018/19.

However, significant additional pressures were predicted in relation to police officer pensions (£7.7m), nationally agreed pay awards (£7.5m), developments outlined in section 3.6.4 below (£3.8m), and general inflation (£2.2m). In order to achieve these pressures savings of £4m were still planned and required.

The chart below shows the revenue budget funding sources in 2019/20 as well as the funding in the previous and following year for comparative purposes.

In 2018/19 Central Government grant was 61% of revenue funding, in 2019/20 it fell to 58.5% and in 2020/21 it increased slightly to 58.7% following the provision of additional funding in that year to increase officer numbers nationally.

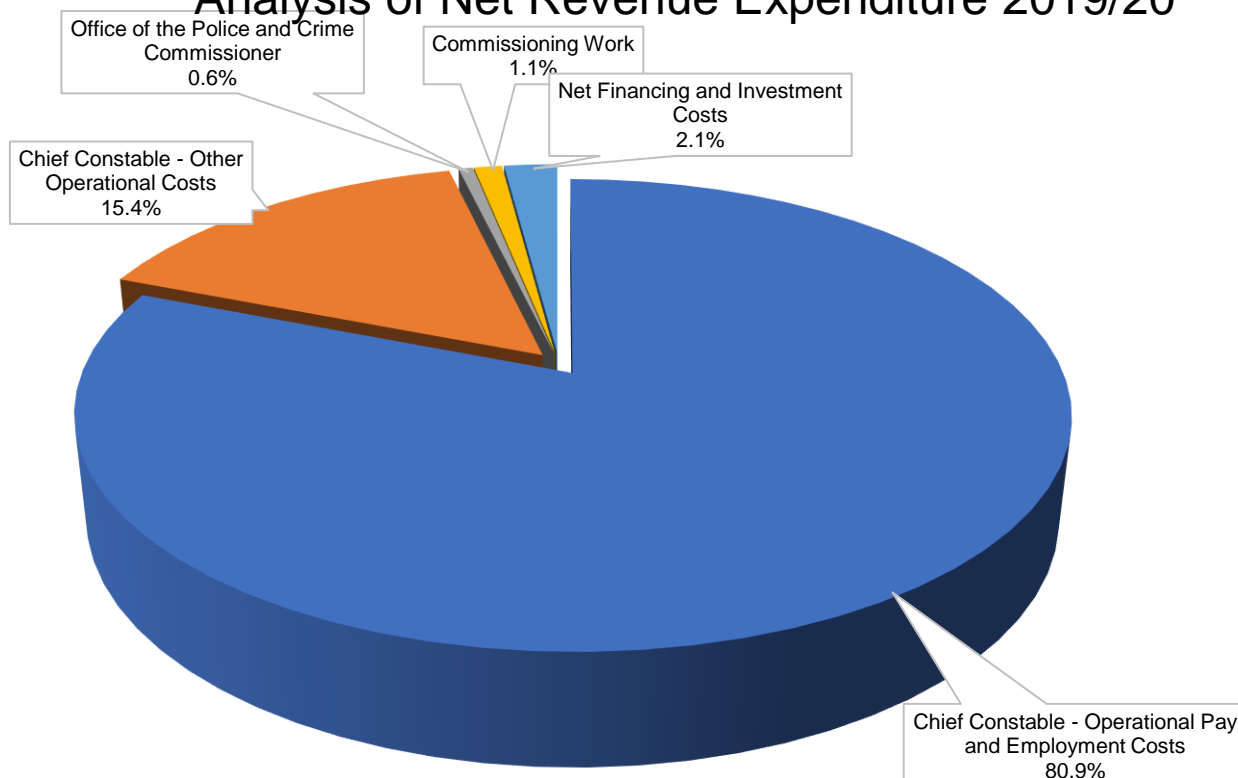


Actual expenditure compared to budget

A budget of planned expenditure is agreed by the PCC in order to set the council tax level for 2019/20. For 2019/20 the final outturn position for the Chief Constable's operational budget was an underspend of £1,067k against a budget set of £306.9m. The OPCC final outturn position was a breakeven position against a budget set of £5.2m.

Therefore, the group final outturn position shows an underspend of £1,067k on the overall budget of £312.1m, which equates to 0.34%.

Analysis of Net Revenue Expenditure 2019/20



What has been achieved during the year?

We said we would	What happened
<p>Increase officer numbers to 3,100 over the next two years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an additional connectivity neighbourhood police officer in each of our 27 sectors. • Increase detectives by 30 to address most serious offending and meet areas identified in the FMS where demand exceeds current resources. • Increase front line response teams. <p>Increase the investment in collaborative posts such as bi-service and tri-service officers.</p>	<p>The number of officers funded from the precept has increased to 3,050 at 31 March 2020 and is on track to reach the 3,100 target by March 2021. During the year a national uplift of 20,000 officer was announced by the Home Office. The first phase of the increase has seen Devon and Cornwall Police increase its numbers by 47 by 31 March 2020 and a further 94 by 31 March 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 Neighbourhood police officers have been appointed. • More detectives have been recruited. • More response officers have been recruited. • Numbers of bi-service and tri-services officers have increased to 17.

<p>Continue with the piloted police staff team who ensure accuracy of crime data and take statements, removing work from the front line. For example, we anticipate 8,000 statements a year will be taken by the team, providing a better service for the front line and the witness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pilot has continued and now been integrated into business as usual.
<p>Roll out of Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) by summer 2019, taking 73,000 sets of workload from the local policing teams. ISD will fundamentally change the way the police deal with non-emergency demands, resolving calls earlier and allocating tasks, where appropriate, across the whole force, rather than to specialist teams. The ISD programme is designed to improve system efficiency and provide a better service to the public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISD has been rolled out across the force area. Since July last year, 42% of all crime is now finalised there and 21,000 crimes have been processed within 12 hours
<p>Invest in technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Worn Video now fully rolled out. • Expansion of the Taser programme. • Voice recognition is helping to prioritise 101 calls and allowing reallocation from switchboard to call handling. Whilst demand in these areas continues to increase significantly, we have invested in technology to at least partially mitigate this.
<p>Continue with high visibility and connectivity as a priority for all officers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 neighbourhood police officers have been appointed to increase connectivity with the community.

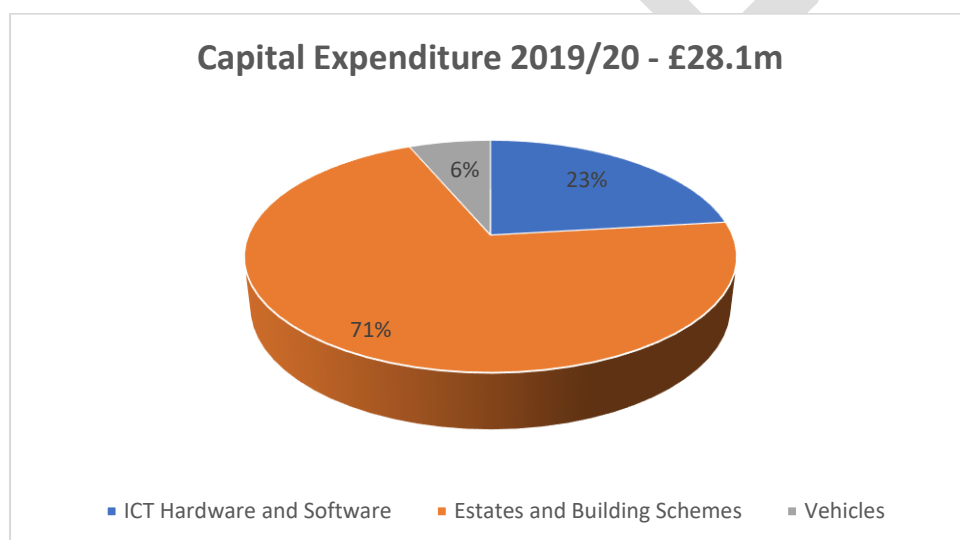
Staffing

Staff and employment costs make up almost 81% of the overall budget. The full-time equivalents (FTE) at the start and end of the year are shown below:-

	As at 31 March 2019	As At 31 March 2020
Police officers	2,982	3,094
Police community support officers (PCSOs)	227	197
Police staff	1,713	1,770
Office of the PCC	27	26
Total	4,949	5,087

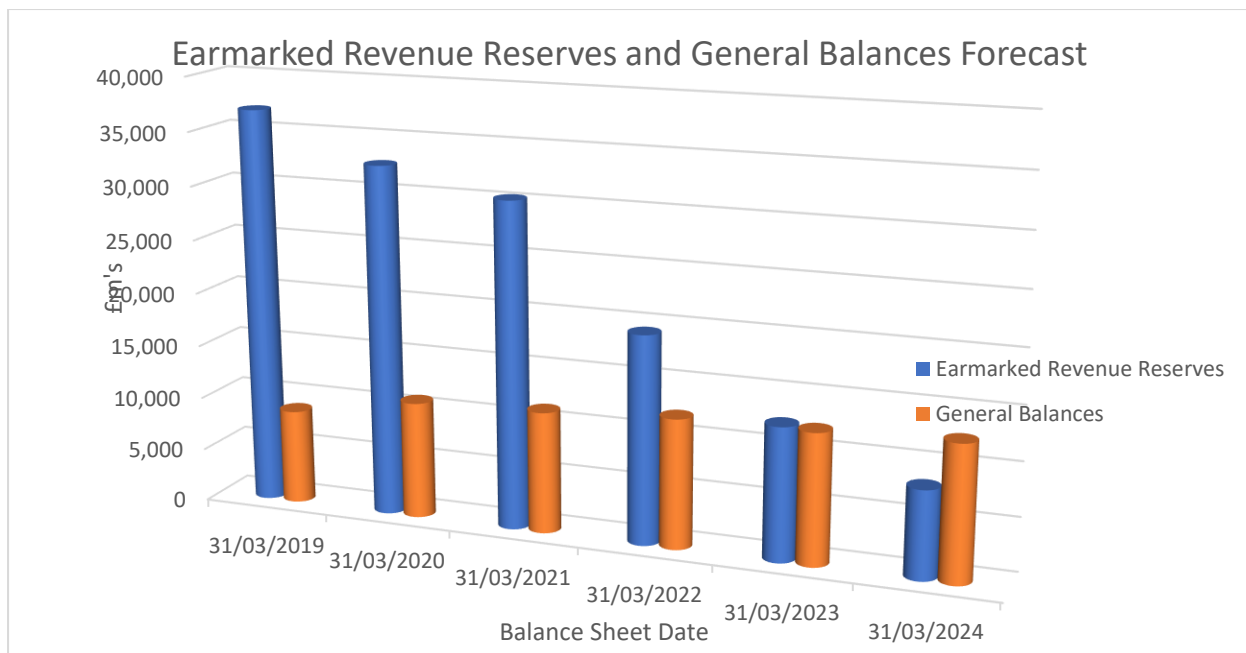
Capital expenditure 2017/18

Capital expenditure of £28.1m was incurred during 2019/20. The chart below highlights the major areas of spend with Estates and Building Schemes being the largest area of spend. The work on the new Exeter Police Station at Middlemoor and the new Liskeard Police Station has continued at pace during the year with both completed in January 2020.



Reserves and balances

Reserves have decreased by £4.4m between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. However, in line with the reserves strategy, general balances have increased by £2.1m to bring them to 3.49% of the net revenue budget. The chart below shows the level of reserves and how we plan to reduce them over the next five years as they support the capital programme for Devon and Cornwall Police.



Managing financial risks and opportunities

The current medium term financial strategy (MTFS) covering 2019/20 to 2023/24 indicates a balanced position. Work is now ongoing to assess the impact of the Coronavirus on policing and the way in which the Officers and staff work differently in the future.

Taking the campaign for summer funding to Westminster

In September the PCC headed to Westminster to strongly argue that Devon and Cornwall Police should receive an additional £17.9m to compensate it for the cost of policing a 'summer surge' of visitors over the past three years.

Each year the force is put under additional strain because the two counties host more domestic visitors than any other force area.

The OPCC's special grant application contained detailed facts and figures that explain the additional pressures placed on officers and staff between April and September.

This 'summer surge' impacts staff and officer welfare and leads to a reduced service for the 1.7m residents of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly throughout the year. This is because so much training and leave is compressed over the winter months to ensure adequate summer cover.

Supported by 18 MPs and by the Police and Crime Panel, the PCC asked for an additional £17.9m from the Home Office special grant fund – a pot of money set aside to reimburse police forces for exceptional events – to compensate it for money spent mitigating the extra calls for help.

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is the largest force area in England yet receives 8p per head per person less funding than the England and Wales average, increasing to an 11p difference once visitor numbers are factored in.

This leads to increased crime - 11% higher in July, August and September than the rest of the year – a value rise higher than for any other police force.

Tourism is vitally important to the south west, and contributes at least £300m a year to the Treasury through VAT.

This application aimed to get back some of that money and would repay the heavy investment in additional resources like a rural and wildlife crime team, collaborations with other blue light services and additional roads policing teams that help cope with the summer surge.

The OPCC made three trips to Westminster (July and October 2019 and February 2020) to lobby MPs around the bid and to showcase force innovations in blue light collaboration, operational policing including digital dogs and drones, and modern slavery and tracking.

The summer surge:

- Devon and Cornwall has the second highest level of tourism in England & Wales behind London – 45 million nights
- The number of visitors is equivalent to a 7% increase on the base population of the force area - the highest in England & Wales – it equates to 125,000 extra people each day if spread across whole year
- The impact of that additional 125,000 people reduces force funding to just 46p per person per day compared to a national average of 57p

Summer lasts from April-September – in that period Devon and Cornwall Police sees:

- An 11% increase in crime: largest in England & Wales
- A 14% increase in incidents, with significantly higher rates in some areas
- An 18% increase in high risk missing people

Performance (Full page with image)

Satisfaction and public confidence

Satisfaction

It is a requirement of the Home Office for police forces to conduct victim satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups.

These surveys are structured around several core questions, exploring satisfaction across different stages of interaction: ease of contact; arrival; actions taken; kept informed; treatment and whole experience.

Devon and Cornwall Police carries out two key victim surveys – Priority Victims and Domestic Abuse Victims.

A priority victim is anyone who is vulnerable, intimidated, persistently targeted, or a victim of the most serious. This includes (the list is not exhaustive): Children under 18 years of age at the time of the offence; any person suffering from a mental disorder or learning disability; any person who is physically disabled.

The levels of satisfaction for priority victims and domestic abuse victims fell slightly for the year when compared with 2018/19.

In the 12 months to March 2020:

- 69.4% of priority victims were satisfied with their overall experience of the service they received from the force, compared with 73% in the previous 12 months
- 83.8% of domestic abuse victims were satisfied with their overall experience of the service they received from the force, compared with 86% in the previous 12 months

Public confidence

The force uses the office of National Statistics Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) to track the confidence of the local public.

Public confidence relates to measurements taken from the general public regardless of whether they have had contact with the police.

In the 12 months to December 2019:

- 55.8% of survey respondents felt the force was doing a good or excellent job, which is a reduction from 62% in the previous 12 months. This is on par with the national average of 55.6%.
- 76.7% of adults in Devon and Cornwall had overall confidence in the local police - which is a slight reduction from 78% in the previous 12 months. This is 2.4% higher than the national average of 74.3%.
- 88.9% of respondents agreed the force would treat you with respect, compared with the national average of 87.4%
- 69.3% of respondents agreed the force would treat you fairly compared with the national average of 67%
- 68.9% of respondents agreed the force understands local concerns, whilst 53.4% felt that local concerns were dealt with. Results are slightly higher compared to national averages for these measures

Crime incidents

- 100,501 crimes were reported across the force in 2019/20 – which down almost 6% (6,360 less crimes) compared to the previous year with 57 crimes per 1,000 population. There were 6,406 fewer victim-based crimes recorded in the year (a reduction of 6.9%).

Crime recording compliance improvements following HMICFRS's Crime Data Integrity (CDI) inspection in 2017 and re-inspection in 2018 have remained strong with a compliance rate of 93.4% for violent crime and 94.4% for sexual offences.

Overall, total crime levels have reduced across the year, with the largest reductions in the second half of the year. As at the end of March 2020 there were 57 crimes per 1,000 population.

- The increase of violent offending seen over the past several years has slowed with a slight (0.2%) reduction in violence against the person. However, the focus on tackling serious violence (based on murder; attempted murder; S18 grievous bodily harm and wounding) at its grass roots remains a priority for the PCC and the Chief Constable. In the last 12 months serious violence offences have decreased by 12.6% from 661 to 578. Rape offences have increased by 3.4% from 1,629 to 1,575 over the same period.
- Levels of reported domestic abuse continue to increase with 20,798 domestic abuse crimes recorded in the year, a 4% increase on the previous year. While this may reflect increasing confidence to report these crimes which are often 'hidden' it must remain a significant area of focus to ensure that action is taken against perpetrators and that victims are protected.
- The year saw a 3.4% increase in recorded drug offences to 4,248 which reflects the increasingly proactive response from the force to pursue drug supply chains. While numbers remain low compared to other parts of the country there was a 13% increase in possession of weapons offences to 1,090 many of which are related to the drug supply chains being actively targeted. There were 300

organised crime group disruptions in the year which led to 43 convictions and nearly 300 years' imprisonment.

The latest national comparators from the Office of National Statistics relate to the 12 months up to the end of December 2019.

- Devon and Cornwall's crime rate for that period was 58.3 per 1,000 population which was significantly lower than the national average of 88.7 per 1,000 population.
- Devon and Cornwall has:
 - the second lowest recorded crime rate in England and Wales, and the lowest crime rate for crimes where there is an identified victim.
 - one of the lowest rates of acquisitive crime out of all force areas with the second lowest rate of residential burglary, third lowest rate of theft offences, the seventh lowest rate of robbery and fourth lowest rate of vehicle offences
- Comparing 2019/20 with a year earlier, there were decreases in both domestic and non-domestic burglary offences, vehicle offences, shoplifting, other theft and criminal damage although there was a small rise in robbery across the year.

Victims and offenders

The OPCC is focussed on reducing the impact of crime by providing care for those who have been the victims of crime.

When officers identify a requirement for victim support services that individual is put in contact with services in the Victim Care Network through experts at the Victim Care Unit.

Victim care activity included:

- In 2019/20, 72,281 Victim Needs Assessments (VNA) were completed
- 12.1% of crimes with a VNA identified a victim need
- As a result, 8,768 victims required victim support services
- Currently the Victim Care Network has over 60 member organisations, offering support services to victims of crime

For the 12 months to 31 March 2020 14.6% of recorded crimes had a positive offender outcome, which includes diversionary, educational or intervention activities as well as prosecutions.

Contacting the Police

In the 12 months to March 2020, Devon and Cornwall's police contact centre received:

- 1,024,982 calls, which equates to 2,808 per day or 1.95 contacts every minute. This was a 0.5% decrease on the previous year.
- Of these 264,404 were emergency 999 calls which is a 17% increase compared with 2018/19
- Despite the increase, 83.2% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds
- The contact centre staff managed 644,039 101 calls in 2019/20, which is a 1.1% decrease on the previous year.
- The average wait time for a call in 2019/20 was 6 minutes and 31 seconds.
- In July 2019 Devon and Cornwall Police introduced a new interactive voice recognition system which removed the previous triage system.
- From July 2019 the 101 contact centre managed 406,623 calls into 101. The average wait time for a call was 9 minutes and 44 seconds and 61.4% of calls

were answered within 10 minutes. There remains significant variations in call answering times due to calls being prioritised on a threat, harm and risk assessment. This leads to those calls assessed as having the lowest risk taking longer to be answered. Improvements in call handling times are continually sought by the OPCC in our scrutiny of the service.

- While phone calls remain the primary form of contact for members of the public, efforts to improve options to report crimes or concerns are in place. There were 114,630 emails, texts and online form submissions to 101 this year which is a 23.6% increase in the number received in 2019/20 compared with 2018/19 – 66.7% of which were answered within 24 hours (a reduction from 95% in the previous year)
- In addition, there continues to be an increase in the number of people using web chat with positive feedback received – 16,955 people spoke to Devon and Cornwall Police via this method in 2019/20, with an average talk time of 17 mins and 1 second.

In 2019/20 the force recorded 244,586 incidents in response to calls for service

- Just over 78,000 of which were graded as immediate incidents (emergency calls) a reduction of 4% from the previous year. These are priority incidents that the police aim to respond to within 20 minutes.
- In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, 68.6% of immediate incidents were attended to within 20 minutes and the median (average) response time was 14 minutes and 32 seconds. These figures are slightly lower than the previous year which saw 70% attended within 20 minutes and a median response time of 14 minutes and 20 seconds.

Section 2

Making progress against the Police and Crime Plan

Accessible

Investment in 101 continues

Thanks to a £7 million investment from the Home Office in 2019 the general public no longer pay for 101 non-emergency calls.

While this positive step has made it easier for people to contact the police, 101 call waiting times continue to be an issue of concern for the public and the commissioner. The OPCC and the force continue to invest in alternative contact methods for non-emergencies and how 101 calls are answered.

The new interactive voice recognition (IVR) system makes it easier for callers to reach the most appropriate person to deal with their enquiry and improves the quality of service.

It also means higher priority non-urgent reports, such as domestic abuse or missing persons are answered and dealt with at first point of contact and more quickly which is welcomed.

The system is currently being developed further with action being taken to introduce more options as well as call messaging to allow callers to understand queue times and to provide live updates on the force website.

The additional pressures placed on 101 and 999 by the summer surge is a clear annual cycle and the OPCC continues to campaign for greater recognition of the immense pressures placed on Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a result of tourism. The pressure on the contact centre to respond to increasing contact with existing resources is high.

The contact centre has also been prioritised in the budget for 2020/21 which will allow the Chief Constable to look at the capacity and capability within the two contact centres and whether it remains appropriate.

How to contact the police

In an emergency ALWAYS call 999.

In a non-emergency **ClickB4UCall**.

Why call when you don't have to?

Visit the force website – dc.police.uk, to use the online contact methods – Web Chat, Report Online and AskNED.

Web Chat – The force's Web Chat allows direct access to the contact centre staff, just the same as calling them.

It's simple and easy to use and can be accessed through any desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile device, 24 hours a day, seven days a week – just the same as calling.

Report online - Simply fill in the details on the online crime reporting form (dc.police.uk/crimereporting) and then once submitted the information/crime report will be logged.

AskNED – an online directory provides the answers to all non-emergency questions. Alternatively queries and reports can be emailed to 101@dc.police.uk.

Responsive

Tri-service safety officers to receive new fleet of specifically fitted vehicles

Since becoming operational in February 2019 Cornwall's 10 tri-service safety officers (TSSOs) have become vital to the safety of communities across the county.

The OPCC part-funded development of the TSSO role as a direct result of the increased contribution to the police budget paid by council tax payers.

In August a new fleet of dedicated vehicles was unveiled which will both help them to do their job more effectively and provide them with a highly visible and recognisable presence in the towns and villages they serve.

The new vehicles are specifically fitted so TSSOs can respond to urgent medical emergencies but are also equipped to support both police and fire and rescue services in their role.

Cornwall has 10 TSSOs who have been fully operational since February supporting the local communities.

They primarily focus on engagement, early intervention, prevention and reducing demand for police, fire and ambulance services as well as responding to emergencies on behalf of the fire and ambulance service.

The TSSO role is jointly funded by the force, South Western Ambulance Service (NHS) Foundation Trust and Cornwall Fire, Rescue & Community Safety Service.

TSSOs operate in the community they are based, having instant access to police, fire and ambulance IT systems to enable a rapid understanding of incidents.

The 10 TSSOs across Cornwall are:

- St Just- Mesha Wardman
- Hayle - Adrian Hart
- St Ives - Dan Tildesley
- Fowey and Polruan - Liam Baker
- Perranporth - Phillip Graham
- St Dennis - Vacant
- Looe - Phil Whittingham
- Lostwithiel - Vacant
- Liskeard - Richard Deavall
- Bude –Adam Chapman

These officers have powers under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme and are able to give community safety and prevention advice such as information on antisocial behaviour.

In addition, they can undertake home safety fire checks, (installation of smoke alarms etc), and provide medical support and onward referral.

This has shown clear benefits to the community as well as reduced 999 demand on frontline emergency services.

TSSOs are proving a vital tool in the police's armoury when it comes to preventing and deterring crime and more are expected to be deployed in the future.

How connectivity is changing communities for the better

In some parts of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly neighbourhood officers were well engaged with other services like local councils, while in other areas the vital connections between police and the people they serve were quite badly broken.

So 'Connect to Protect' became the key priority in the PCC's first *Police and Crime Plan* and it remains so to this day – the different sections of this annual report mirror those priorities.

The reason is simple, it is easier to solve problems when people pull in the same direction and building bridges between the police and local councils is as good a place to start as any.

With hundreds of councils, from parish authorities serving remote villages to the unitary authority serving our biggest city, connecting the police force with these individuals was always going to be a challenge.

There is still a long way to go but the OPCC's councillor advocate programme is making great strides in doing so.

This enables any council member to receive regular policing updates and puts them in regular touch with their neighbourhood team. There are over 140 councillor advocates across the peninsula, from a range of backgrounds and political parties and plans are under way to increase that rapidly in 2020.

It is a super-efficient way of delivering connectivity when a police inspector would not be able to justify visiting each parish in his or her patch.

There is still got a long way to go to make sure that police and councils are pulling in the same direction to tackle crime and create safer, more pleasant places to live.

Informative

OPCC lands fourth consecutive transparency award

For the fourth consecutive years the OPCC has received the prestigious Open and Transparent Quality Mark from Comparing Police and Crime Commissioners (CoPaCC), which each year undertakes an independent analysis looking at how easy it is for members of the public to access information about how PCCs work – particularly through their websites

This year's assessment used the Home Office's 2013 publication *Guidelines for PCCs on Publishing Information* based on the 2011 Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order, as the basis for scoring each disclosure requirement ie that the information both exists and is timely.

This year, CoPaCC added further criteria for assessment – 'ease of use' ie how easy is it for a member of the public to find the information disclosure.

The OPCCs were then assessed by a 'mystery shopper' looking for the required information on each website.

Thirty-two OPCCs were assessed this year including the 28 who received the quality mark in 2019 plus four more who responded to the invitation to take part.

Bernard Rix, CoPaCC chief executive, said: "Each recipient presents key information in an accessible format on their websites. They have all demonstrated that they are transparent in what they do, meeting relevant legal requirements."

Paul Grady, Head of Police for sponsor Grant Thornton, the leading police assurance provider, said: "For the public to be able gauge how successful their PCC is in delivering their electoral mandate, they need access to information that is accessible, easy to understand and fit for purpose.

"For my part, these OPCCs have all demonstrated that they are transparent in what they do, meeting relevant legal requirements. They present key information in an accessible format on their websites."

Why we invested in a response to rural crime

In 2019 the force took a new approach to engaging rural communities and helping them prevent themselves becoming victims of crime.

Dedicated rural engagement officers, supported by the OPCC, are now dedicated to talking to communities about what steps that have been taken to reduce crimes in rural Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and giving advice on prevention.

They could be seen at many of the rural shows and fairs, livestock markets and developed a great relationship with Mole Valley Farmers – holding regular surgeries across their shop network.

The OPCC also supports the many watch schemes across the force area and has invested in Devon and Cornwall Crimewatch Association.

They were often supported by the team of dedicated rural Special Constables.

Both the rural crime team and the rural Specials offer great advice on deterring criminals, as well as practical help with kits that can mark equipment.

In the last three years the force has invested more than £11m in a rural crime and incident response strategy in order to combat these problems.

People in rural communities experience crime just like anyone else – and the fact that Devon and Cornwall are sparsely populated only adds to the challenge.

Livestock and equipment theft have a devastating impact on small businesses and the morale of people who work in the industry, but crime does not have to be rural in its nature to disproportionately affect residents of rural areas.

The range of crimes that is affected by rurality is wide too - most of the fatalities on the vast network of roads occur on lanes.

With a large force area and relatively few officers in comparison to urban forces it can be tough for officers to respond to incidents.

In the summer these problems are exacerbated by the huge rises in the population and a corresponding rise in incidents. Between April and September there is an increase in incidents of 14%, there is an 11% increase in crimes and an 18% increase in high risk missing people cases.

Supportive

How restorative justice helped Jane move forward after devastating loss

A woman whose teenage son was killed in a car crash has spoken about her decision to meet the driver found guilty of causing the collision.

Jane Ure, from Uplyme, described Will as sensitive, kind-hearted and sociable boy who had a wide group of friends. Tragically the apprentice carpenter was killed when the Honda Civic he was a passenger in came off the A3052 in east Devon in the early hours of December 17, 2016.

Will, 17, was killed while the driver, his friend Richard Weldon, 28, escaped with serious injuries.

Last year Richard was given a suspended sentence at Exeter Crown Court after he admitted causing death by careless driving.

Both Jane and Richard decided to take part in restorative justice - a scheme that enables communication between victim and the person that committed the crime against them.

In Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly restorative justice is delivered by Make Amends, a service commissioned by the OPCC.

"I was away visiting family when my husband phoned to tell me the news that Will had died in a car crash. That was the moment that my world shattered," Jane said.

"The restorative justice team became involved because my police liaison officer had told me about the service and, when the criminal proceedings ended, I felt the need to find out more.

"The Make Amends team came to visit me at my home on a number of occasions and they guided me through the whole process.

"They helped me to understand my needs, managed my expectations and explored the impact of the harm. I wanted to meet the driver and they helped prepare me for a face-to-face meeting."

It is a service that she hopes more victims of crime will consider exploring.

Restorative justice is available to victims of a range of crimes.

From tiny acorns do mighty oaks grow

In 2019 the OPCC was proud to see the impact the £61,000 given to 27 organisations the previous year as part of its small grant scheme handed out in the previous year had on the successful organisations.

The small grant scheme was designed to further complement existing partnership work and proves how a relatively small amount of money can make a disproportionate difference to many people.

The Bungalow Youth Project in Buckfastleigh received £2,131 to set up the Saturday Session which focuses on young people who are at the age where they start to 'go out' on a Friday and Saturday night.

One such person was Oliver (not his real name) who had been going to the Bungalow for about six years and had been supported to battle shyness, anger management and anti-social behaviour issues, as well as dyslexia.

Youth workers decided it was time to offer Oliver a key volunteering role at Saturday Session, which boosted his confidence and helped him prepare for and secure his first job.

The Believe project, run by the Dracaena Centre in Falmouth, was based on a premise that early intervention reduces demand on the police.

The project, which received £2,128 from the small grant scheme, asked young people what their needs are and to identify the gaps in provision.

They said that significant cuts to early intervention, preventative work and diversionary activities means those most in need are falling through the gaps.

In the South Hams, Ivybridge Youth for Christ (YFC) received £1,665 towards its Bridge Project, which it used to insure, tax and service its youth 'party' bus which is used for youth outreach.

The bus visits South Brent on Thursday evenings, goes to Ivybridge on Fridays, to Yealmpton once a month and is used by about 100 young people every week.

And finally, Youth Focus South West received £2,495 to support detached youth workers in Devonport.

The funding helped workers build trust by using a range of diversionary activities to build relationships with local young people and other key professionals including the police.

It has provided useful evidence and is contributing to shaping future provision in their community.

Preventing and deterring crime

Neighbourhood Watch gets new champion for its community services

Devon and Cornwall Community Watch Association (DaCCWA) has appointed Julie Fairman as its first-ever staff member to enable it to strategically evolve its community watch schemes across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Funded by the OPCC for an initial two years, in her role as strategic coordinator Julie is focused on expanding both the spread and reach of the charity's existing schemes. She will also explore and launch new community engagement initiatives as well as smarten its existing resources and outreach before raising even greater awareness of the role and benefit of community watches in both counties.

As the recognised umbrella organisation for watch schemes across Devon and Cornwall, DaCCWA aims to promote good citizenship and greater public participation in the prevention and solution of crime and quality of life issues.

This is primarily achieved by providing effective links between the police and its various watch scheme communities whilst also ensuring its infrastructure is aligned to local policing structures.

However, Julie is also examining how the organisation can build on its crime prevention roots, to develop and encourage other forms of community assistance and engagement projects which will ultimately lead to much stronger, friendlier and more resilient neighbourhoods.

Most recently, DaCCWA launched its Good Neighbour Group initiative to provide structure and guidance to communities as they pulled together to ensure those who were vulnerable or more isolated could be considered and supported during the Covid-19 outbreak.

In addition to providing resources and support to its existing network of watch schemes, the initiative saw an additional 250 new community groups wanting to get involved with the DaCCWA family at such an extraordinary time.

Public thinks prevention is better than cure

This report has already focussed on strides taken over the last four years to increase the number of police officers serving our communities - but 2019 showed that the public doesn't want officer numbers to be the only focus when it comes to keeping communities safe.

That was the clear message the public gave when the OPCC carried out the biggest survey into policing ever to be held in Devon and Cornwall.

Over the course of 2019 the OPCC engagement team attended over 170 public events, of various sizes, and talked to people from across all sections of society.

This resulted in over 13,000 conversations and produced a wealth of anecdotal evidence which tells how the public feels about its police force.

And this year saw a shift in emphasis – no longer are people saying that their key issue is more police officers.

A total of 8,875 people cast over 25,000 votes and the result clearly showed that crime prevention (6,965 votes) was where the public felt more investment was needed.

Such data will really help the commissioner in developing the next *Police and Crime Plan*.

Protecting people who are vulnerable or at risk

Why we all have a role to play in protecting the vulnerable

Although anyone can be a victim of crime experience tells us that those with learning disabilities are disproportionately affected by criminal activities and less likely to report their experience to the police.

This could be for a variety of reasons: they don't always understand what's happening to them, the people around them don't know how to spot the signs of hidden criminal activity or, sadly, when they try to speak up, they aren't taken seriously.

This is something PC Kate Marks noticed and wanted to change.

Kate, along with Jo Morgan from Devon Link-Up, a charity which supports adults with learning disabilities, won funding from the OPCC as part of its connectivity fund to put on Hidden Crime Awareness training sessions for professionals working with vulnerable adults across Devon.

A total of six sessions were put on across the county, highlighting key safeguarding and crime prevention messages delivered by relevant experts from across the force. Social workers, carers, health professionals and many more attended the training.

Those attending heard about ways in which malicious criminals target some of the most vulnerable in our communities, how the police handle these incidents, especially in relation to vulnerable people but most importantly how to prevent the situations from happening in the first place.

Criminal gangs are ruthless and do not care how much suffering they inflict on a person's life, nor who they are or how vulnerable they might be, so any measure we can take to keep potential victims safe is extremely welcome.

It is important to remember that education is key because the police can't be everywhere all the time.

Rangers find they aren't alone and learn new skills

What happens when you are 11 years old and find forming positive relationships difficult, have additional needs and generally struggle to engage in mainstream education?

A lot of those who find themselves in this situation often leave school with few qualifications, can't find work and may easily be exposed or drawn into criminal activity.

In Tavistock, Tavistock College alongside the force and South West Lakes Trust (SWLT), developed a Student Rangers project where groups of 11-16 year-olds could learn valuable and practical life skills.

Teachers at the college selected students to take part in the project for a variety of reasons including having emotional or behavioural needs, as potential victims of bullying and, or have issues relating to drug use.

Many of these young people are at risk of offending or have already done so and need a diversion away from the lifestyle.

In the 10-week programme, where pupils spend one day a week at a reservoir, they undertake practical land and habitat management tasks, engage with open volunteering sessions and participate in dedicated sessions where they learn a wide variety of skills including survival and bush craft, personal safety on the moors and knife crime awareness.

Although the project is primarily run by SWLT volunteers, the OPCC committed a small amount of funding for each session as part of its connectivity fund.

The project is the brainchild of PC Jules Fry, a youth intervention officer based in Tavistock, who applied for funding from the PCC's office.

As well as breaking down barriers with some of the hardest to reach communities, Jules has delivered topical police related inputs on things like knife crime and the law surrounding blades.

Supporting victims and witnesses

Bereaved mums tell their stories at PCC's first Drugs Harm Reduction Seminar

Mothers told their harrowing stories of losing their children to addiction at the first Drugs Harm Reduction Seminar organised by Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez.

The event at the Riviera International Centre in Torquay was attended by experts in offender management, homelessness, addiction treatment and policing from around Devon and Cornwall.

Speakers included Christine Evans, a mum from South Devon whose son Jake was an A grade student attending Exeter University before he became addicted to heroin.

Jake ended up dying in Thailand of an accidental overdose. Christine now tells his story to discourage others from using drugs.

Elizabeth Burton-Phillips MBE then took to the floor to explain how her twin sons' recreational use of cannabis developed into a heroin addiction which saw them both become homeless. Tragically one of the twins, Nick, took his own life while in the grip of addiction, while his brother was able to kick drugs to lead a regular life.

Now a government advisor and campaigner, she founded the charity DrugFAM with the aim of supporting families whose members have become addicts and her book, "Mum, can you lend me £20?" has sold 65,000 copies worldwide and been translated into five languages.

Their message to the audience was that drugs were equal opportunities killers – and even those with bright futures could have their lives ruined and even ended by them.

Seminar speakers also included Phil Harris, who has pioneered innovative approaches to dealing with the mentally unwell, a recovering addict who described his experience, and prison staff who run substance misuse programmes.

There were break-out group sessions during which subjects like heroin assisted treatment and the challenges facing drug-addicted mothers were discussed.

Picture caption: Elizabeth Burton-Phillips MBE, Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez, holding a copy of Elizabeth's book, and Christine Evans at the Riviera International Centre in Torquay, where the PCC's first Drugs Harm Reduction Seminar was held

New centre for victims of sexual violence opens in Exeter

In September, Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services, opened a new centre for victims of sexual violence in Exeter, offering a wider range of services in modern, safe and clean surroundings.

The charity provides services to victims of sexual violence in Torbay and in Devon (outside Plymouth).

It receives funding from the OPCC through the Devon and Cornwall Victim Care Network.

The PCC also funds it to provide a young people's counselling service.

Although there has been an increase in the number of people reporting sexual assault and rape, they remain under-reported crimes, so it is vital that the right services are in place to encourage victims of all ages and of all backgrounds to come forward.

Investing in centres such as this one in Exeter helps reduce the impact of crime.

The charity has taken over another floor of the building it occupies in Sidwell Street and invested in a range of improvements.

It now has five counselling rooms, a waiting room and a group room. For the first time it has opened its services to men of all ages while also ensuring that for most of the time there is a women-only environment in line with victims' requests.

The charity provides services to victims of sexual violence in Torbay and in Devon (outside Plymouth).

The Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services Centre has been working across Devon and Torbay since 2011. In that time the number of staff has grown from three to 15 and seven volunteers have become 22. It also has offices in Torquay and Barnstaple.

It receives around 1,000 phone calls and emails a year from people seeking support and delivers direct therapeutic services to 85 women and men every week.

Getting the best out of the police

Plan for Violent Crime Prevention Centre unveiled

In February ambitious plans for a new approach to prevent violent crime were unveiled – a £1m investment to tackle inherent violence that blights lives and has widespread repercussions for society.

This preventative approach will be established as a partnership between the OPCC and Devon and Cornwall Police.

It will bring in experts from across social care and public health to get to the root cause of offending and intervene to prevent people from getting involved in violence.

As a force area Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly has one of the lowest recorded crime rates in the country but violence is on the increase and the centre will help to understand why people resort to violence and work robustly and swiftly to prevent them from doing so, taking a public health approach to the problem and creating a prescription for change.”

Taking an evidence-based approach, using data to understand the detailed, as much as the generic, causes. Thereafter, to utilise resources across the public sector system to reduce and prevent crime.

This approach can also incorporate capabilities from the private sector and most importantly, third sector providers in the voluntary and charitable sector who have their own knowledge and expertise to bring to bear on these systemic community and familial issues.

The OPCC has already been supporting multi-agency partnerships that aim to reduce violence through early intervention, such as the Turning Corners project in South Devon.

Evidence from other projects shows that experiencing violence at a young age makes adults more likely to commit acts of violence themselves.

Areas of focus for the centre could include reducing the number of homicides in the force area, domestic abuse related violence and violence relating to the exploitation of vulnerable victims and associated activity such as county lines and misuse of drugs.

World class policing on your doorstep

Operation Encompass, the Plymouth based sharing initiative that ensures a child who witnesses domestic abuse can receive appropriate support from the school, was recognised as being World Class in 2019, as the inaugural winner of the overall World Class Policing Award.

In 2011 the scheme started in Plymouth, the brainchild of then officer David Carney-Haworth and his head teacher wife Elizabeth, but has now supported hundreds of thousands of children across the country.

It beat off competition from over 100 entries from across the globe.

Judges were not only very impressed by the scheme but also deeply moved by what has been achieved, saying: “This deals with a perennial issue that happens behind closed doors, affects generations and has a pernicious effect on society.

“As a charity, police and education collaboration, it’s exceptional and most importantly it has been sustained. It has now had almost complete UK saturation and has spread to other countries.”

Though the scheme started in Plymouth it took some time for the force to fully embrace it into business as usual, but its effects are now being felt by children here and in forces across the country. Its impact will be felt throughout their lives.

In addition to being crowned overall winner, Devon and Cornwall Police was also highly commended for its work with the Jewish community in the wake of a terrorist attack on Exeter’s synagogue.

It was highlighted for demonstrating not only the importance of every officer in the fight against terror, but also the importance of working closely with all agencies and sharing information effectively.

End of term report (Full page with image)

Straight lift of the pages from the ‘End of term report’ entitles ‘Charting progress over 4 years’

Police and Crime Panel (Full page with image)

Lift from 2018-2019.

Section 3 - People and partners (Full page with image)

Our structure

Working with strategic partners - collaborating across the region

As well as working in partnership with several national and regional organisations the PCC sits on several boards to encourage collaboration and to enable the delivery of strategic visions.

The South West Collaboration Strategic Board is made up of PCCs and chief constables from across the south west and facilitates the procurement of services and goods cost effectively. It also enables them to work together to deliver police training and region-wide functions.

This board, for example, provides governance for the procurement of the Regional Organised Crime Unit, regional forensics collaboration and a regional and organised crime centre. A region-wide programme for the training of firearms officers is also possible because of this arrangement.

Further efficiency is driven through an alliance agreement with Dorset Police, with departments such as finance, communications and engagement and roads policing shared between forces. This is managed via the Working Together Board comprising Dorset’s and Devon and Cornwall’s commissioners and their respective chief constables,

Externally the PCC engages with businesses, charities and public bodies through a series of collaborative structures. These include the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Leadership Board, which provides collective leadership of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, progressing shared ambitions for the county and working together to tackle issues and challenges.

Including in its membership Cornwall Council's leader, the chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the president of the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, it also provides the platform for advancing work to strengthen regional links between Cornwall and the rest of the south west.

In Devon, the commissioner has regular meetings with political and business leaders through initiatives such as One Plymouth and Back the Great South West and sits on the boards of Torbay Together, a Torbay wide partnership that is made up of representatives from the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. It represents the ambitions and actions of local organisations who are working together to develop skills, growth and opportunity in Torbay.

Independent custody visitors

Independent assessors give thumbs up to Devon and Cornwall custody visitors

Custody visiting is part of the UK's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), designated bodies, mandated under a United Nations convention to have regular, independent visits by volunteers to detention centres.

These visits serve as an important safeguard against abuse, prevent torture and ill-treatment in places that by their very nature fall from the public gaze.

The custody visiting scheme in Devon and Cornwall has powers to:

- Inspect all places of detention;
- Access information relating to detainees;
- Interview detainees in private;
- Choose where to visit and who to speak to;
- Make recommendations based on human rights norms to relevant authorities.

In 2018 schemes were invited to be assessed under a quality assurance framework (QAF) by ICVA, which is the Home Office approved body that provides guidance to custody visiting schemes.

The scheme coordinator undertook a thorough review of the scheme considering:

- Recruitment and management of volunteers
- Rewriting of volunteers' handbook and policies
- A training review including understanding human rights

A new application pack was produced, and two separate recruitment processes led to nine new visitors being appointed.

As part of this process prospective candidates were given an opportunity to look around a custody suite to give them a realistic idea of the custody environment in which they would be volunteering.

The scheme is promoted using the OPCCs social media platforms as well as OPCC Alert which reaches 31,000 people.

Significant effort was made to attract applicants from across the community, attending events at Respect and Pride festivals with minority groups and contacting universities and volunteer organisations.

All of these were evidenced and inspected by the independent assessors and the scheme was awarded compliant status following its peer review.

Other highlights:

In June 2019 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assessed Devon and Cornwall as "delivering good outcomes for detainees held in custody";

The scheme coordinator and volunteer panel coordinator attend regular meetings with custody inspectors. The Criminal Justice and Custody Inspector attends the volunteer panel meetings;

In December 2019 the scheme celebrated the dedication and commitment of its volunteers. The Police and Crime Commissioner gave out awards and certificates.

The PCC's blog about volunteering for OPCC mentioned custody visitors;

PlymouthLive published "Inside the cell – what happens to you inside if you get arrested";

Custody visitors took part in evaluation of new custody suite in Exeter, as tweeted by Inspector Helm;

Custody visitors have taken part in the events alongside the OPCC's engagement team to talk about their experiences as custody visitors to members of the public.

2019/20 key facts and figures

There are seven custody centres in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

18,975 adults and 1,040 juveniles were held in custody

ICVs carried out 199 visits during which time 785 people were detained

582 detainees accepted visits

93% of visits take place between Monday and Friday with most (25%) on a Monday

In 87% of visits no complaints are made

Most complaints relate to family not being informed of an arrest

Many positive comments are made by detainees following visits by ICVs