



Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Panel 4th October 2024 Commissioner's Update Report

Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities Where Everyone Plays Their Part

SAFE

Hotspots Response Initiative Update

Since its inception in April 2024 the Devon and Cornwall Hotspots response initiative has delivered 439 Hotspot police patrols and 368 Street Warden patrols, totalling over 6,000 foot patrol hours in the ASB and serious Violence hotspots identified by crime data analysis.

To date, the extra patrols have resulted in 369 ASB incidents being attended by officers, 107 arrests being made, and 146 Stop & searches being executed and 85 Safeguarding referrals or Public Protection Notices (PPN) being made across our region. Community Engagement and maintaining a highly visible uniformed presence is the core tenet of the Hotspots methodology for deterring and disrupting ASB and Serious Violence, as such our Police Officers and Street Marshalls have proactively engaged with over 20,650 members of the public, carried out 5,961 premises visits, and have attended 35 public engagement events.

My team have increased our communications efforts for hotspot policing, focusing on community engagement and collaboration with our partners. We have hosted engagement events in Bideford, Exmouth and Truro so far to listen to residents' concerns about antisocial behaviour and raise awareness of the increased patrols. The police patrols have delivered impressive results which have been shared through social media updates, a video and press releases to maximise the project's visibility. Additionally, we have worked closely with local authorities to launch street marshal patrols, a development welcomed by both residents and businesses who appreciate the increased uniformed presence.

A mid-term report on Hotspot Policing will be presented to the Panel at the October meeting.

Safer Streets 5 Initiative

Launched in October 2023, the Safer Streets 5 initiative has enabled the OPCC to collaborate with Devon and Cornwall Police, Local Government, and local NGOs to

deliver target hardening, guardianship, and educational interventions proven to reduce levels of neighbourhood crime, fear of crime, VAWG and ASB. In Devon the focus has been Paignton, and in Cornwall the focus has been Camborne and Redruth; these areas have higher than the peninsula-average levels of deprivation and higher crime levels, with particular problems around ASB, drug taking and sexual assault, as well as littering and graffiti.

The target hardening interventions delivered by the initiative to date include new CCTV provision and upgrades to existing CCTV and monitoring equipment; extra street lighting has been installed and areas of excessive foliage trimmed back to ensure the lighting and CCTV has optimal impact. Items of street furniture that were attracting unwanted congregation, vandalism, and ASB such as old telephone boxes and benches, have been removed, and disused buildings have been secured with fencing and boarding.

Our Guardianship initiatives have supported deployment of Town Centre Officers and Streets Marshalls delivering regular high visibility patrols in locations that have traditionally experienced high levels of ASB, and a dedicated ASB Caseworker for Camborne and Redruth has been recruited and trained. As well as carrying out patrols the Marshalls and ASB caseworker are responsible for attending safety events such as Neighbourhood Watch meetings, Pub Watch meetings, and Community events. In Cornwall the Street Marshalls have encouraged 20+ businesses to sign up to Disc (an online information sharing system to designed to share information about threats to community safety and security). Community response to the Street Marshalls has been overwhelmingly positive.

Our Education and Outreach focus has enabled us to commission Barnardo's and With You in Cornwall to delivered Healthy Relationships training to over 400 school pupils, 15 Bystander Awareness Training sessions, and 16 Healthy Foundations training sessions. Also in Cornwall we have supported assertive outreach and education to engage young people that require a Young YP service; and delivered targeted one on one and group work in schools, delivering the Substance Misuse /ASB groupwork programme.

In Paignton the Restorative Community Circles and Awareness Courses delivered by our partners Shekinah have delivered positive impacts, with the Home Office responding to our case study with the following, *"Thank you so much for sending through this excellent example of an educational programme from the SSF – this is just the thing we are looking for examples of and I particularly enjoyed reading the quotes from the children – powerful stuff."*

Street Focus Torquay



In June I announced my bold vision to support policing and Torbay Council to address ASB and criminality in Torquay town centre. Working together with partners to tackle issues such as antisocial behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, and violence which have blighted the lives of residents and traders for far too long.

Street Focus Torquay was launched with the collective aim of improving safety in the town. It called upon stakeholders to step up and play their part as we strive to make Torquay a place where community members can be proud to call home, and where residents and visitors can be free to enjoy their time on the English Riviera without feeling at risk or uncomfortable or being faced with dirty streets and neglected spaces.

I have brought partners together from Devon & Cornwall Police, Torbay Council and SWISCo to join my office in sharing their successes so far and laying out plans for future activity. Activities to date includes:

- A roll out of the Hotspot Policing project with more than 1,000 individuals being engaged, 47 incidents of ASB attended and five people arrested as a result of these targeted foot patrols.
- Additional high-visibility officers on patrol through the Neighbourhood Support Team.
- Increased intelligence around drugs which has led to 2 warrants being executed leading to arrests, and safeguarding visits including 2 reports of cuckooing - where homes of vulnerable people are used by individuals involved in illegal drug activity.

- Enforcement of the new Public Space Protection order with 15 dispersal notices issued so far, 135 directions to surrender alcohol, and one person arrested and fined.
- A new mobile police station, provided by my office, which is deployed in Castle Circus on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays.
- Jet-washing of areas such as Factory Row alongside weeding to improve the look of the area.
- Weekly engagement sessions outside the Town Hall where my team and I have spoken with members of the public about issues and improvements they have seen.
- Working with Crimestoppers who launched a targeted campaign in the town centre last month, providing a way to report a crime if you prefer to remain anonymous. You can contact them at <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/> or on 0800 555 111.

We know residents can become disillusioned when it comes to reporting if they do not feel they are seeing improvements, which is why I want to really encourage people to report what they are seeing through the right channels, and to keep on reporting every single incident. You can visit the mobile police station on Mondays, Fridays or Saturdays, see my team on a Thursday or fill out the contact form on our <https://www.street-focus.co.uk/> website to tell us about what you think should be done to tackle the problems in Torquay.

Violent Disorder Across the UK

August was marred by outbreaks of violent disorder across the UK as result of the tragic loss of life in Southport when three young children were murdered at a dance event. The disorder spread across the UK and results in protests and counter - protests including in towns across the Devon and Cornwall Policing area. The largest area of disorder was in Plymouth City Centre in early August 2024.

The response by Devon & Cornwall Police was exemplary and the Force really worked with partner agencies and communities to ensure that those who were the perpetrators of the violence and unrest we arrested and dealt with swiftly. There was an ongoing commitment for Devon & Cornwall Police to provide public order trained officers to assist other areas across the country for a few weeks after our own disorder response and deployments were made to other areas in the country as part of the agreed mutual aid arrangements.

I chair the Local Criminal Justice Board and with the support of this partnership, together with Acting Chief Constable, Jim Colwell, and Chief Crown Prosecutor (South West), Victoria Cook, issued open letter to communities following the disorder stating:

“Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, we are appalled by the violence that has occurred in our area in recent days under the

guise of protest. We will always support legitimate protest, but violence, racism, disorder, criminal damage, and the community fear that this generates will not be tolerated.

We would like to assure the communities we serve that the agencies within the criminal justice system are dealing with criminality swiftly. You will already have seen charges of individuals involved both locally and nationally. Several individuals have already been remanded into custody at various locations. Of the six people arrested in Plymouth, four have pleaded guilty to offences under Section 2 of the Public Order Act 1986. Sentencing for their crimes is due to happen today (Thursday 8 August) and their photographs have already been published. Working together with our LCJB partners, we will act quickly and continue to use all powers available at our disposal to bring these criminals to justice.

Our partnership intelligence and information systems ensure that we will have local and national resources available to respond and deal as necessary to future disorder to keep our communities safe.

We would like to thank the law-abiding people of Devon and Cornwall for their support at this time and give a commitment that where we have the evidence of people choosing to participate in any activity of this nature, either directly or online, they will be arrested, detained, charged and sentenced.”

This letter was on the front page of the Western Morning News on Thursday 8 August.



RESILIENT

Commissioner's Community Grants



This year (2024-25) I have had a dual theme for my community grants which are distributed on my behalf by Cornwall Community Foundation and Devon Community Foundation. They are:

- Crime prevention initiatives to make community spaces safer.
- Projects focusing on offering education and/or purposeful activities for people with anti-social drug and alcohol issues.

The Cornwall scheme opened in June and the panel has now met to discuss the applications, 5 out of 17 proving to be successful, residual funds will be rolled forward to the next round of applications. The application process for Devon has opened this month.

Two examples of projects that have benefited from this funding are Callington Youth Club and WILD Young Parents.

The Groundworks South Trust is a national charity which brings transformative development to deprived communities. They received a grant of £5,000 from the Commissioner's Community Grant Scheme to create a youth club for young people of Callington to spend time with like-minded peers to divert them from participating in antisocial behaviour (ASB).

It involved working outdoors to clear and rejuvenate a green space to allow more accessibility for community residents within the area. The funding was also spent on making the youth club an attractive place for young people to spend their time, this included the purchase of electronics, pool table, board games, food, and also for members to undertake training with an accredited GB boxing coach (pictured). This funding also went toward to employment of a youth worker whose main role was to

have discussions with the members regarding the issues of ASB, substance misuse and mental health concerns.

Funding has also enabled WILD Young Parents to provide a safe 'outdoor space' at their local allotment to enable dads and their families to spend quality time together and offer opportunities for work outside with families.

This space provides young dads new skills in gardening, growing food, tending an outdoor space, working as a team, and spending positive time with their family. Our WILD dads often face complex barriers to parenthood; four in 10 have had contact with criminal justice, six in 10 have experienced mental ill health, and one in five struggle with addiction or substance dependency issues.

In addition to the Commissioner's Community Grants the two foundations distribute Police Property Act funding on my behalf. This is funding from sold property which has into the possession of the police in connection with a crime and where the owner cannot be found can be sold; or from property which has been forfeited following a conviction and by order of a court if it was used or intended for use in a crime. Both Cornwall and Devon Community Foundations are due to open applications for the Police Property Act funding shortly. This year I would like the money to go to charities who are undertaking work to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Criminal Justice and You

In July I shared with you the work of my office and the launch of an innovative online product which aims to transform the experience of victims and witnesses in the criminal justice system in Devon and Cornwall. I am also pleased to report that since the Launch in March, the creation of this product has continued to attract attention from across the country and we are in consultation with other LCJBs to share the good work and promote the resource nationally. Criminal Justice and You is hosted on the OPCC's Victim Care Devon & Cornwall website, which helps victims to access specialist support services at any time, even if a crime hasn't been reported to police. I am continuing to develop this product and soon it will include a section specifically for victims of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and information where the suspect is subject to Bail Conditions or has been Released Under Investigation (RUI). To further promote the resource it is also being featured in social media campaigns on Facebook and TikTok which are proving to be very successful in attracting more views on the resource.

Barnardo's Exceed

My office funds 'Exceed', a Devon and Cornwall wide service delivered by Barnardo's that works with young people affected by, or vulnerable to, sexual exploitation. The impact of their work has been highlighted this summer, as we saw a number of guilty verdicts in a complex child rape case in Plymouth ([Three men convicted for raping young girls in Plymouth | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\).](#))

Without the support from Exceed staff, and excellent partnership work with the police, even getting this case to trial would have been impossible. The young women affected received long term support from Exceed that allowed them to understand what has happened to them and develop coping tools which resulted in them having the bravery to engage with the lengthy police investigation and give evidence at trial. I hope the guilty verdicts will enable some of the young women to move on from their ordeals.

As well as some one-to-one work, the Barnardo's Exceed service also offers schools work, group work, parent training and professional consultations to help young people, their families and those working with them to understand sexual exploitation, help reduce risks and keep young people safe.

Devon Domestic Abuse Tender

My office has been working closely with commissioning partners at Devon County Council on the retender of their county wide Domestic Abuse Service. The OPCC contributes financially to Domestic Abuse Services across all four Local Authority areas and working with partners on procurement processes such as this one ensures our office fulfils its obligations to victims. Over recent months, my team has contributed to the development of Devon's service specification, evaluated bids against the service requirements and in early September, attended moderation sessions to agree consensus scores and feedback.

The new service will have 5 elements:

1. Single Entry Gateway, Navigation Support and Community Engagement
2. Community support including:
 - Specialist victim support for moderate and high-risk DA
 - Whole family support to non-violent parent and children
 - Engagement with those that cause harm to elicit behaviour change
3. Support in domestic abuse safe accommodation and refuge, staying put and resettlement
4. Support in safe accommodation for women experiencing multiple disadvantages including domestic abuse and sexual violence
5. Trauma responsive recovery therapeutic support

It is a complex and important service and I look forward to learning who the successful provider is when contracts are awarded in early November. The new service is due to start in March 2025.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Together with the Acting Chief Constable and Local Authority partners, I continue to tackle the root causes of violence and its impacts across the peninsula by funding Devon & Cornwall's Serious Violence Prevention (SVP) Programme. The strategic mission of the SVP Programme remains 'breaking the cycle' of violence, the long-term preventative aim of diverting vulnerable young people from violence and tackling inter-generational harm.

Now in its fourth and final year of initial funding, the programme is under review but remains committed to improving both the police and partner response to violence via an expansive portfolio of evidence-based work, aligned to my evolving Police and Crime Plan.

The SVP Programme sponsors a wide range of improvements across Devon & Cornwall Police, including the use of 'hot spot' policing in high crime areas, high-harm perpetrator identification and trauma informed work-force training, supporting children affected by domestic abuse or parental imprisonment, and also supporting the national policing priority of reducing violence against women and girls (VAWG).

The Home Office legislation mandates specified partners (Police, Health, Local Government and Justice leads) to collaborate to reduce violence across the region, supported by dedicated grant funding from the Home Office. Over the past 2 years, over £960,000 has been distributed to local authority Community Safety Partnerships by my office, including £320k from the Home Office under the new SV duty – with CSPs receiving a further £657k in total during 2024/25.

During the last reporting period, a pioneering research project has concluded on using data science to tackle 'high harm' domestic abuse across the peninsula. Working with national academic partners using best practice to guide the research, the recommendations focus on harnessing algorithms to improve the identification and onward management of perpetrators. This use of technology could significantly impact on driving down persistently high rates of domestic abuse across the region and safeguarding vulnerable victims.

For the Serious Violence Prevention Programme to remain effective and successful, the funding must be correctly targeted and deployed in high-risk areas.

Criminal Justice Scrutiny

I remain committed to undertake scrutiny across the criminal justice partnership for Out of Court Resolutions (OoCRs) and to assess quality of compliance with the Victim Codes of Practice (VCoP). My Scrutiny panels receive positive engagement and are well supported through attendance of relevant representatives from the Police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), His Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS), His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS - Probation), the Magistracy, Youth Justice Service (YJS), Youth Justice Board (YJB) and relevant support services where appropriate. In total 12 partnership scrutiny panels are held each year, averaging one taking place each month. Cases are reviewed against a topic or crime type which is relevant to my Police and Crime Plan priorities or areas

of interest. In September there was a youth OoCR panel to focus on cases involving female violence, a VCoP panel which will review the use of pre-recorded cross-examination (Section 28) for intimidated victims and witnesses and an adult OoCR panel in mid-October which will review cases of knife crime.

I am particularly proud of our established approach to scrutinise cases to understand the effectiveness and impact of the Victims Code which puts us in a strong place to meet the new requirements detailed within the Victims and Prisoners Act which received Royal Assent on the 24th May 2024. This process enables me to see how information is captured and communicated between the key criminal justice bodies who have responsibilities under the code, identify good practice and areas for learning which will help us work more collaboratively and focus on the quality of contact with victims not just the process.

File Quality Scrutiny Inquiry

My accountability and standards team have recently concluded an intensive scrutiny inquiry into the police's file quality and prosecution case management.

Working alongside the Local Criminal Justice Board that I also chair, the team spent several weeks reviewing documents and interviewing officers and staff, as well as senior managers from other agencies such as the CPS and other important people such as members of the magistracy.

This work was undertaken with a focus on victims at its very heart, and although we are not yet at the point of publication, I am confident that the findings and resultant recommendations will help the police make improvements that will directly benefit victims of crime.

CONNECTED

New OPCC Website

On September 20 the new website for my office was launched. Developed in house by my Communications and Customer Engagement team, the new site has a modern and accessible design and provides a wide range of documents and information about my work and my office presented in an easily navigable format. The new site also makes contacting the office easier by offering an updated contact form alongside traditional contact methods and updated frequently asked questions to help the public with their queries. [Your voice in policing – The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly \(devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk)

Councillor Advocate Seminar

Councillor Advocates are local authority elected members who, supported by my office, meet regularly with representatives of Devon & Cornwall Police and Community Safety Partnerships to raise issues on behalf of their communities.

On September 11 my office hosted a seminar on the theme of contact and Right Care, Right Person for our Councillor Advocate cohort at Exeter Racecourse. I was pleased to welcome the day's speakers Acting Chief Constable Jim Colwell, Assistant Chief Constable Nikki Leaper and Chief Inspector Fergus Paterson. As always there was a good turnout and plenty of lively debate and questions around the subjects discussed.

Media Coverage

Since the last Police and Crime Panel my office has been in the news regularly, with 224 articles published across 77 news outlets. These articles covered updates on my work across the Police and Crime Plan priorities of tackling antisocial behaviour (ASB), drug use and serious violence, and improving road safety and supporting victims of crime. More than a third of coverage focused on work to crack down on ASB, which reflects the increased focus on this issue thanks to our Street Focus project which aims to tackle this issue and improve safety in town centres.

Public Engagement Events

A key responsibility of my office is engaging with the public to hear their concerns and keep them informed about support available to them through my work and Devon & Cornwall Police. My Communications and Customer Engagement team has been supported by the wider office attending a packed calendar of engagement events across the force area, promoting the victim services I commission as well as sharing reporting methods and help available for those experiencing antisocial behaviour. For the first time my team attended the Boardmasters music and surfing festival in Newquay, where my new Young Voices in Policing survey was launched which aims to collate the views and experiences of young people about crime and policing in Devon and Cornwall. The survey was also promoted at Plymouth University Freshers' Fair on September 17.

Cornwall Police Family Fun Day

In September my team attended the Devon & Cornwall Police Family Fun Day at the Royal Cornwall Show Ground in Wadebridge. The annual event is an opportunity for our dedicated and committed police officers, staff, and their families to get together and enjoy some fun activities and engage with force assets such as the dog unit, dive team and forensics. I am well aware of the sacrifices made by our policing family, and I am pleased that this event offers hard-working officers and staff a chance to unwind with their loved ones.

Launch of the Police and Crime Plan Consultation

I am pleased to invite the Panel and members of the public to contribute to the development of the new Police and Crime Plan by participating in a consultation on the draft Plan for 2024-2029. The Police and Crime Plan is the key strategic plan through which I set out the vision for policing and criminal justice services for my new term of office.

In the draft Plan I have set out a vision for safe, resilient, connected communities where everyone plays their part. This includes the draft priorities:

- Drugs and alcohol
- Antisocial behaviour
- Violence (including Violence Against Women and Girls)
- Theft

The draft Plan sets out how I intend to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering against each of these priorities, and lead partners to address these priorities in the following settings:

- In our town and city centres
- In our countryside and coastal communities
- On our roads
- In our homes and neighbourhood

Following a four-week public consultation period I will bring a draft copy of the Plan, with analysis of the public feedback, to the Police and Crime Panel meeting in November for formal consultation with the Panel.

[Have Your Say Today - Police and Crime Plan 2024-29: Public survey - Devon And Cornwall Police And Crime Commissioner's Office \(commonplace.is\)](#)



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