

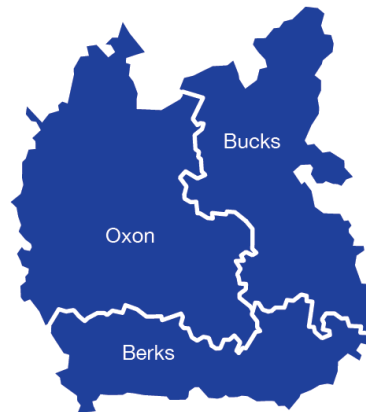
## Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

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### Home Secretary says ‘Enough’ to violence against women and girls

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-says-enough-to-violence-against-women-and-girls>

The Home Secretary has launched an ambitious new, multi-year national communications campaign which says ‘Enough’ to violence against women and girls.

The campaign includes television adverts, billboards, social media and radio advertising and will highlight different forms of violence against women and girls and the simple acts that anyone can take to challenge perpetrators of abuse. Forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) represented include street harassment, coercive control, unwanted touching, workplace harassment, revenge-porn and cyber-flashing.

The campaign was informed by the unprecedented 180,000 responses to the Call for Evidence last year. This multi-year campaign will also include communications to educate young people about healthy relationships and consent, and ensure victims can recognise abuse and seek support.

It has been developed with an advisory group comprising over 30 voluntary sector organisations, survivors and academics who have given their expert insight. The latest findings in behavioural science have also been used, including the role of peers and wider society in influencing people’s actions, and the importance of providing simple, clear options to overcome the barriers people can have to challenging abuse.

Alongside advertising, a new website provides more information on the steps people can take to safely challenge violence against women and girls, guidance for victims of these crimes and advice for perpetrators who recognise their behaviour needs to change.

It comes as the Home Secretary, National Police Chiefs’ Council and College of Policing (HMICFRS) confirm that they are accepting and implementing all of the recommendations made by HMICFRS in their violence against women and girls’ inspection. The inspection, commissioned by the Home Secretary last year, recommends:

- appointing a full-time VAWG national policing lead to co-ordinate and improve the national policing response – which the Home Office supported, and DCC Maggie Blyth is now in post
- adding VAWG to the strategic policing requirement placing it on the same strategic footing as terrorism, serious organised crime and child sexual abuse new guidance to police forces on how to treat victims and to establish a single national survey on victim satisfaction
- ensuring that progress is closely monitored, including violence against women and girls as a priority for the ministerially chaired Crime and Policing Performance Board
- taking action to make sure different agencies, including the police, health and education, are working together effectively to tackle violence against women and girls, including considering whether any new duties should be introduced - the government recently made it clear in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill that local areas can consider domestic abuse and sexual offences for the purposes of the new serious violence duty

The Home Secretary also commissioned a 2-phase independent inquiry, chaired by Dame Eilsh Angiolini QC, to investigate and scrutinise the robustness of vetting practices, professional standards and discipline, and workplace behaviour within the police.

## **Home Secretary launches new Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan**

The new plan aligns closely to the recent Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and sets a clear ambition of prioritising the prevention of these awful crimes, supporting victims and pursuing perpetrators.

Some 2.3 million people in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse in the last year and around 1 in 5 homicides are related to domestic abuse. The government has already taken steps to prevent these crimes, but the new plan is set to go even further in tackling this threat, by delivering many of the provisions set out in the Domestic Abuse Act.

### **Pursuing perpetrators**

The plan includes new measures to tackle perpetrators including:

- options for creating a new register for domestic abusers which could require perpetrators to take actions such as reporting to the police when changing address or opening a bank account with a new partner
- increasing electronic tagging to a further 3,500 individuals who have left prison and who pose a risk to women and girls
- investing £75 million on directly addressing abusers' behaviour, as part of an overall £81 million for tackling perpetrators over the next 3 years

### **Prioritising prevention**

The plan sets out key actions to prevent domestic abuse from happening in the first place. These include:

- a package of support for teachers to deliver the relationship, sex, and health education curriculum to ensure children learn about healthy relationships at an early age
- making it easier to access information on a partner's or ex-partner's previous abusive or violent offending by revising and consulting on the guidance underpinning the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, known as Clare's Law, to consider the timescales for disclosure and promote tools which allow online applications

- working with the National Police Chiefs' Council to review police forces which record the highest rates of domestic homicide and serious domestic abuse crimes

## **Supporting victims**

The plan aims to help all victims and survivors who have escaped from domestic abuse feel that they can get back to life as normal, with support for their health, emotional, economic and social needs. This includes:

- a doubling of funding for the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which sees on average 15,000 users every 3 months, and an uplift for all other national tackling VAWG helplines, to a combined total of over £2 million a year
- a commitment to reviewing the statutory leave laws for victims of domestic abuse
- funding 700 independent domestic violence and sexual violence advocate roles with additional funding for 300 roles later this year to refer and support victims and survivors

## **A stronger system**

The plan intends to improve the systems and processes that underpin the response to domestic abuse across society. This includes:

- the expansion of the successful Ask for Ani codeword scheme to be piloted in Jobcentre offices across the UK
- £7.5 million over 3 years to enable healthcare professionals to better identify, refer and support victims and survivors of domestic abuse
- more work to support police to help identify and reduce the risks of suicide in cases involving domestic abuse

The government has also introduced new measures in our Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which will give victims of domestic abuse longer to report offences to the police, so that abusers cannot evade justice.

## **Why Knife Crime Has Increased So Dramatically In Milton Keynes**

<https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/news/crime/angry-councillor-demands-answers-as-to-why-knife-crime-has-increased-so-dramatically-in-milton-keynes-3633350>

A Bletchley town councillor has calculated that knife crime has soared by 90% in Milton Keynes over the past two years, with at least 10 fatal stabbings during that time.

This is a higher rise than London, she says. And what is particularly worrying is that four of the deaths have happened in the past three months.

The Councillor has penned a letter to MPs Iain Stewart and Ben Everitt and the Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Barber to voice her concerns and frustration.

On September 2021, PCC Mr Barber revealed his plans to commit £7.72million to combating anti-social behaviour, stating MK would be allocated £2,098,398 over three years. He also made a statement last June saying that reducing knife crime was a priority.

## **Home Secretary commissions inspection of the police response to CSE**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-commissions-inspection-of-the-police-response-to-cse>

## **The Golden Thread: Putting Family At The Heart Of The Criminal Justice System**

<https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/the-golden-thread>

## **Road Safety Summit announced by Police & Crime Commissioner**

A Road Safety Summit has been announced for this May, bringing together highways authorities, roads policing and road users to help set a new strategy to cut road deaths.

Announcing the Road Safety Summit, Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, said: "Every death on our roads is a tragedy. A life lost. A family broken. We are all road users in one form or another, and the safety of everyone matters. From HGV drivers to the most vulnerable road users, we should all expect to arrive at our destination safely.

"Thames Valley has a vast network of roads, from smart motorways to the smallest of country lanes, and the purpose of the Road Safety Summit is to begin to set a new strategy for cutting road deaths across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire."

The Summit will bring together local councils, Highways England, Thames Valley Police as well as groups representing a variety of road users.

Matthew added: "As PCC, I want to challenge the police to ensure that they are doing all they can to keep our roads safe, but there is also a huge amount for other partners to do. All too often the debate is polarised into drivers versus cyclists. I want to go beyond that. To understand the inherent vulnerability of cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders on our roads, whilst also recognising the very real dangers to motorists and motorcyclists on our roads."

This Summit is intended to be the start of that conversation, generate clear recommendations and help to make our roads safer for all.

## **£100,000 available to community groups helping to support policing and prevent crime**

The PCC opened applications to his Community Fund to support local projects tackling crime. The closing date for this round of applications was Friday 4th March.

The Community Fund supports voluntary and community groups assisting both the PCC and Thames Valley Police in helping to prevent crime and keep communities safe. £100,000 is available in the latest round of funding, with applications to the fund opening twice a year.

Money for the scheme comes from the Community Fund, which is jointly managed by the PCC and the Chief Constable and is created from the proceeds from the sale of items seized from criminals that cannot be returned to their rightful owners.

Organisations from across Thames Valley can apply for grants for projects that support one of the PCC's 'Police and Criminal Justice Plan' priorities:

- Strong Local Policing (preventing crime & protecting communities)
- Fighting Serious Organised Crime (protecting vulnerable people)
- Fighting Fraud & Cybercrime (fighting modern crimes)
- Improving the Criminal Justice System (reducing re-offending)
- Tackling illegal encampments (reducing the impact of encampments)

## **Thames Valley Police launches Rural Crime Taskforce**

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/news-and-events/thamesvalley-pcc-news/2022/03/thames-valley-police-launches-rural-crime-taskforce/>

Thames Valley Police has launched its Rural Crime Taskforce to make the Thames Valley a hostile place for those who commit rural crimes.

The Taskforce consists of a team of dedicated officers, as well as intelligence support, who will work tirelessly with our partners, drone units, and the Joint Operations Unit with Hampshire to tackle serious and organised rural crime.

### **What is rural crime?**

Rural crimes are offences that relate to farms, agriculture, wildlife, the environment and heritage sites where they are targeted due to their isolation or rural location. Spanning across harm to animals and the theft of vital machinery, rural crime causes distress, misery and unnecessary hardship for farmers who rely on their land and machinery for their livelihoods.

### **How does rural crime impact the Thames Valley?**

The Taskforce is successfully working to support rural communities and tackle crime. Over £400,000 worth of trailers, caravans and other equipment have been recovered by the team. They have been proactively working with the Forensic Investigation Unit to address rises in thefts of GPS systems within tractor satellite navigation systems. This means the Forensic Investigation Unit is able to attend these incidents when they have taken place, helping the rural communities recover from the impact these offences which can have severe consequences on the livelihoods of those affected. Local policing areas across the Thames Valley have also seen the benefit of the Taskforce, with the team supporting investigations into rural issues such as thefts and hare coursing.

There is also proactive work led by the Taskforce, which has included working with the Economic Crime Unit to look into the proceeds of crime. Operations have taken place into money laundering, showing how rural crime can often link into organised crime and the key role the Taskforce will play in supporting wider police operations.

## **Do the Right Thing campaign launches in the Thames Valley**

The Do the Right Thing campaign, which encourages men to recognise and call out sexism and harassment has been launched in the Thames Valley.

Do the Right Thing encourages men to recognise sexual harassment and misogynistic behaviour from others and give them the confidence to call it out when they witness it.

Following the success of Sussex OPCC introducing the campaign, Thames Valley is launching a localised version to align with its work around Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, said: "In partnership with Thames Valley Police, I am committed to tackling sexual violence and harassment and the Do the Right Thing campaign reminds men that we must all speak out against inappropriate behaviour.

"We all have a responsibility to speak up whenever we see bigotry, violence or abuse and the campaign offers some simple advice on what people can do to play their part to tackle inappropriate behaviour.

"I continue to support victims of crime with my Victims First service and I'll also be using the campaign to promote this in the hope that further support can be given to victims.

"I'm encouraging people to support my campaign on social media using the hashtag #DotheRightThingThamesValley."

As part of the campaign men are being asked to do a variety of things including:

- If they see someone feeling uncomfortable with someone else's behaviour, check they're okay.
- Remember consent must be mutual in sexual relationships – be aware of their own actions and speak out if they hear friends aren't being.
- Call it out if a friend or colleague makes an inappropriate sexual remark.
- Recognise if their own behaviour has been inappropriate in the past and make changes for the better.
- Tell people about the Victims First service if they think they need help.