



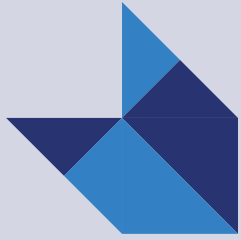
**POLICE  
& CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**  

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**THAMES VALLEY**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2022-23**

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire,  
Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire



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# Introduction

This is my second annual report, which highlights achievements against my 4-year Police and Criminal Justice Plan (2021 – 2025). This year marks ten years since PCCs were first elected and their role in policing our communities has greatly evolved.

The past 12 months have seen many notable events in policing, both nationally and locally. Policing has undoubtedly come under the spotlight and I am very aware of the national headlines that surround police legitimacy, and public trust and confidence. Policing's unique position means that officers and staff are under greater pressure to go further and I am confident that the service will reflect and respond to these issues to enable it to provide the law enforcement needs of modern society.

Celebrations of the Platinum Jubilee were sadly tempered by the Queen's death in September. Locally, this period saw the force undertake one of its largest and most significant operations in its history, with more than 2,500 police officers



# Introduction

and staff policing Her Majesty's committal service in Windsor. Her Majesty the Queen provided a sense of unity, stability and continuity to the nation and through her extensive community and charity work has touched countless lives.

I have worked in conjunction with the force and our partners to make our communities safer by focusing on several key initiatives. The National 'Knife Angel' Monument has travelled across our force – it is a poignant symbol that reminds us of the devastating impact of violence and aggression. The Force's focus on knife crime has seen a decrease in murder cases from 24 in 2021/22 to 14 in 2022/23. Operation Deter has begun rolling out across the Force bringing a zero-tolerance approach to knife carrying, rapidly putting offenders before the courts.

Alongside this, the work of Project Vigilant and the Violence Reduction Unit have been key drivers in tackling crime in Thames Valley. An extensive force focus on domestic abuse, sexual offences and stalking and harassment has led to significant increases in the volume of formal action, demonstrated by a 27% increase in formal action for domestic abuse cases.

Since 2022, the Force's Rural Crime Taskforce have recovered over £1.5m worth of items and we had a positive impact in tackling Neighbourhood Crime through my funding of the Safer Streets initiative.

I welcome confirmation that Thames Valley Police has exceeded its national Uplift Programme target by 175 police officers. This brings the total number of police officers to 5,034 by the end of March 2023, and provides an additional 784 police officers since 2019. These additional officers will help to cut crime across Thames Valley, reassuring our communities that it is a safe place to live.

Thames Valley Police now has more officers than ever before and the Force will continue to recruit police officers and PCSOs as part of my plans to strengthen community policing. I recently announced details of my Crimefighters Strategy (further details are set out on page 22), which will see the number of neighbourhood policing officers, double over the coming year across Thames Valley.

The addition of new police officers and the refocus on neighbourhood policing will be pivotal for

# Introduction

my new Chief Constable, Jason Hogg. I am delighted with Jason's appointment and I know his continuing commitment to working with our people, and our partners to ensure Thames Valley Police continues to protect all of our communities.

As well as welcoming a new Chief Constable, I have also recruited a new Chief of Staff and Chief Finance Officer for the OPCC. They will be joined by a new Head of Violence Reduction as the VRU transitions into a new business as usual model within my Office. For my part, I will continue to work towards my Police and Criminal Justice Plan priorities, ensuring communities remain safe across the Thames Valley:

- ▼ **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 reoffending
- ▼ **Tackling illegal encampments** – Enforcing with partners



**Matthew Barber**

Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

# Progress in meeting the Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021-2025

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023

My Police & Criminal Justice Plan sets out the five priorities I intend to focus on over the next four years. This Plan has victims at its heart. Bringing criminals to justice is vital, but preventing people from becoming victims of crime in the first place is even more important, both through proactive crime prevention and through reducing reoffending.

Aligned with my local priorities are National Priorities for Policing. The Home Secretary has developed some key measures to support the strategic priority for cutting crime

## The six priority areas are:

- Reduce murder and other homicides
- Reduce serious violence
- Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
- Reduce neighbourhood crime
- Tackle cybercrime
- Improve satisfaction among victims – with a particular focus on victims of crime

A high-level performance summary of the national measures is set out in the table below; the context of which is reflected across each of the priorities (excluding 'Tackling illegal encampments') in the next section of this report. A more detailed breakdown of year-end performance figures linked to my plan was scrutinised at my Performance and Accountability Meeting (PAM), and is available on my [website](#).

## National Crime and Policing Measures

Measured at a national level using national metrics such as CSEW minimises any administrative burden on forces and respects forces' operational autonomy.

Priority Measure	National Metrics	Baseline (Jul-18 to Jun-19)	Latest 12 months (Apr-22 to Mar-23)	% Change compared to baseline
Reduce Murder and other Homicides	Homicides	13	14	+8%
Reduce Serious Violence	Hospital admissions of u25s for assault with a sharp object	TVP has the 10 <sup>th</sup> lowest rate of Hospital admissions of u25s for assault with a sharp object across all forces (46 admissions per million pop in 12 months to December 2022)		
	Offences involving a discharge of a firearm	39	10	-74%
Disrupt drugs supply and county lines	Drug-related homicides	1	3	+200%
	Police referrals into drug treatment	UK Health Security Agency date (formerly PHE)		
Reduce Neighbourhood Crime	Burglary (residential), robbery (personal), theft of and from a vehicle, theft from a person	27,735	23,149	-11%
Improve satisfaction among victims, with a particular focus of domestic abuse	Satisfaction with the police among victims of domestic abuse	CSEW		
	Victim satisfaction with the police	CSEW		
Tackle cyber crime	Confidence in the law enforcement response to cyber crime	Cyber Aware Tracker		
	Percentage of businesses experiencing a cyber breach or attack	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport survey		

The following section contains highlights of progress towards delivering my Police and Criminal Justice Plan in 2022/23. There are many examples of where grants and funding have supported projects within my priorities.

A full breakdown of all commissioned activities that have utilised Community Safety or Ministry of Justice funding is available on my website through the [Annual Statement of Accounts](#). A full list of allocations to the Community Fund (formerly the Police Property Act) is also published on my [website](#).







## Strategic Policing Requirement National

- ▶ The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.
- ▶ A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats. These are as follows: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies. These remain from the 2015 version with the addition in 2023 of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
- ▶ Given this annual report is for the year April 2022 to March 2023, it will not respond in detail to the revised SPR due to the timing of its publication. However, as Police and Crime Commissioner, I am confident I have given due regard to the six threat areas identified in the previous SPR in my Police and Criminal Justice Plan and in my role of holding my Chief Constable to account. Violence against women and girls, while not previously contained in the SPR, nonetheless is a key issue that is reflected in my Police & Criminal Justice Plan and which is included in this report.



## Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ In July, Thames Valley was successful in all of its four submitted bids to receive a portion of the Safer Street Fund funding, with over £1.67 million secured for activity across six local authority areas. Both VAWG and anti-social behaviour can have a significant impact on the extent to which residents feel safe in their communities. Many of the initiatives have funded a preventative approach to these crimes, which will help to deliver positive, longer-term outcomes and reduce the number of victims of crime.
- ▶ My Safer Street Funding has also helped to provide Milton Keynes with additional CCTV cameras to operate 24/7 in areas that have seen a disproportionate number of crimes. I am confident these additional cameras will provide residents and visitors to Milton Keynes with additional reassurance, as well as enhancing Thames Valley Police's view of the city to help keep our communities safe.
- ▶ The Community Fund provides biannual funding to voluntary and community groups that help to achieve the objectives of the PCC's Police and Criminal Justice Plan. The money for the scheme comes from the sale of stolen property that cannot be returned to its rightful owners. In October, both the Chief Constable Police and I were pleased to have awarded over £100,000 to 25 voluntary and community groups across the Thames Valley, while in February, the same process saw 39 groups being awarded £105,520. The successful recipients attended presentation ceremonies in October and March respectively.



## Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime Taskforce have recovered stolen goods worth more than £1.5m and their proactive approach has seen a significant impact in reducing hare coursing offences. In March, the Home Secretary's visit was an opportunity to showcase some of the force's work to protect our rural communities, and to highlight the challenges that theft of machinery and tools present to those farming in Thames Valley. Aligned with this, Local MPs in Thames Valley have been instrumental in supporting The Equipment Theft (prevention) Bill, which is currently working its way through Parliament.
- ▶ I have held two Road Safety Summits in May and November, which brought together highways authorities, roads policing and road users to help set a new strategy to cut road deaths. Thames Valley has a vast network of roads, from smart motorways to the smallest of country lanes, and the purpose of the Summit was to begin to set a new strategy for cutting road deaths across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire. This Summit was the start of that conversation, generating clear recommendations and helping to make our roads safer for all. Work continues on developing a draft strategy for consultation.
- ▶ To help improve road safety in the Thames Valley, I have actively encouraged people to sign up for Community Speedwatch. The 'new style' Community Speedwatch scheme enables effective communication between groups and the police. As a result, the police are better able to target persistent offenders and hotspot locations, ultimately reducing the number of people speeding on our roads and potentially saving lives. I am pleased to see there is a growing number of groups joining the scheme. We currently have 238 groups operating to date with over 1,400 volunteers. Work continues to seek to improve the system further.



## Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ I am pleased to have supported A Better Place to Live to help increase the number of Neighbourhood Watch volunteers and groups across the Thames Valley. This national-led campaign resulted in £7,000 of funding being awarded to provide local resources for new volunteers, and to help coordinators increase their membership to start their own groups. The funding forms part of my £25,000 grant awarded to Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch in April 2022. This has been established as an annual partnership arrangement.
- ▶ An online survey was launched on my website allowing Thames Valley residents the opportunity to share their views and experiences of policing and crime. I want to gain a real understanding of how crime is affecting communities and hear feedback on what the police are doing well or what could be improved. The community's views are helping shape the future of policing in Thames Valley and the results of the survey, which has been open all year round, are regularly published on my website, and through social media and other communication channels. This forms part of my consultation on the policing precept.
- ▶ £48,992 of funding has been provided to enhance the first aid response of all dog section officers across Thames Valley and Hampshire. This funding will provide dog handlers with a variety of lifesaving first aid equipment including defibrillators, airway management equipment and the ability to deal with catastrophic bleeds. Our Dog Handlers are routinely first on the scene at incidents involving serious trauma and medical episodes, and I am in no doubt that, this new equipment will help save lives.



## Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ I was delighted to provide £30,000 of core funding to help support the vital role of Search and Rescue Teams who keep our communities safe across Thames Valley. The support that Thames Valley's five search and rescue organisations provide to the police is invaluable. Their assistance in searching for vulnerable and missing people can help to save lives and bring closure to families in the worst of circumstances.
- ▶ The scale of the recruitment as part of the national Uplift programme has presented challenges for policing. This has been particularly stark in terms of neighbourhood policing which has been under significant pressure over the last twelve months. Having continued to challenge the Chief Constable on the need to focus on neighbourhood policing, the 23/24 Crimefighters strategy will seek to improve Force performance in this key area.



## Strategic Priority Two Fighting serious organised crime

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ This year I welcomed an additional £7m over three years from the Home Office Serious Violence Fund to support efforts to prevent and tackle serious violence and knife. The funding is awarded to the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to continue its work coordinating the partnership response to serious violence across the Thames Valley. There are two separate allocations; the first is £5m over three years for the VRU's programme of work to prevent young people from being drawn into crime, while more than £2m of funding - over three years - comes from the "Grip" fund. This supports Thames Valley Police to deliver additional proactive policing operations, which target those areas with the highest levels of serious violence and those people who are committing violent crime and carrying weapons. This additional money gives us confidence for the next three years - it will allow us to plan and invest for the longer term, which will lead to more effective and sustainable work.
- ▶ Supported by Thames Valley Police, my drive to tackle knife crime through the introduction of Op Deter has seen positive results across the force. After its initial launch in Milton Keynes in July last year, Op Deter is rolling out across the Force with the objective of obtaining swift charge and remand decisions for offences involving knives. This comprehensive approach to tackling not just knife crime but the wider culture of knife carrying will be an exemplar, not just for the whole of the Thames Valley, but a model for other forces to follow. Our communities want an end to knife crime and Operation Deter is making positive progress to divert those who carry knives away from serious offending, which will affect not only the lives of their victims but also their own lives.



## Strategic Priority Two Fighting serious organised crime

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ An important part of the Op Deter model is the early intervention for child-offenders. I have funded a pilot with the Milton Keynes YOT and secured Home Office funding through the Homicide Prevention Fund for a further pilot in Slough, with the expectation that local authorities will continue to fund this work through Youth Offending Teams in the future.
- ▶ The month of action for January was marked with the arrival of the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression at Arbour Park Stadium in Slough. Also known as the 'Knife Angel', this month brought together my Office (OPCC), Thames Valley Police and Slough Borough Council to help drive community knife-crime reduction projects, such as the early intervention knife crime prevention session to 1,950 primary school pupils across Slough.
- ▶ Last June I welcomed more than £400,000 of funding that was awarded through the NPCC's STAR (Science, Technology, Analysis and Research) Fund. My office received £109,145 towards the trialling of a predictive mapping approach to partnership problem-solving and multimedia resources to support behavioural change outcomes across youth justice (Project 180). Furthermore, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) received £255,266 towards data quality improvements (DaQIOA) and Prediction of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which is a tool for investigation, harm reduction, and violence prevention. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this funding, and the impacts they will have on our communities



## Strategic Priority Three Fighting cybercrime and fraud

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Thames Valley Police have continued to use innovative fraud and cyber protection campaigns over the last year reaching large audiences. Of note, following the success of the romance fraud booklet, a bespoke fraud protection toolkit has been launched in digital and hard copy form and has been reproduced by forces, and other agencies, across the country. The toolkit takes a fresh approach by providing members of the public with ways in which they can take positive action, empowering them to take steps to feel back in control, as well as practical ways in which they can keep their financial and emotional wellbeing safe.
- ▶ The new Thames Valley Police Central Fraud Unit (CFU) is now operational following the growth of 36 officers in this area of business. The unit is divided into five separate teams; a triage and safeguarding team alongside four investigation teams focussing on high harm and volume fraud cases. The CFU works closely with the City Of London Police (CoLP) and Action Fraud to ensure the timely recording of fraud offences and subsequent outcomes.
- ▶ Thames Valley Police Central Fraud Unit led a newly formed Multi Agency Against Fraud (MAAF) network. This consists of a strategic MAAF group chaired by the Central Fraud Unit Detective Inspector with strategic leads from Trading Standards, Fire and Rescue, Council investigations and Local Authority safeguarding in attendance. Two thematic sub-groups that feed into the strategic group centred on multi-agency fraud pursue activity and safeguarding and prevention activity and there is also now a two-way formal tasking process for fraud cases between Thames Valley Police and partner agencies.





## Strategic Priority Three Fighting cybercrime and fraud

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ The CFU has also benefitted from Thames Valley Police's significant investments in technology by fully automating the fraud recording processes. Phase 1 is now live and all fraud victims' details received from Action Fraud are now recorded on Thames Valley Police systems via a robotics process (prior to this only the most vulnerable were recorded). For the first time, all fraud data is now recorded providing greater opportunities for local safeguarding, intervention and proactive protect activity. Phase 2 will be for all investigation disseminations from Action Fraud to be automated onto Thames Valley Police systems. This process will provide cost savings and increase the speed and accuracy of investigations being passed to the Central Fraud Unit for progression.
  - ▶ National structures are also embedded within the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC), CoLP and Cyber networks. This has enabled consistency of approach across National and regional responses to threats and investigations.
- Coordination of national campaigns is business as usual, as Thames Valley work closely with regional forces on specific threats for example; Romance and Courier Fraud, Ransomware and Distributed Denial-of-Service attacks (DDOS). There remains a national year-on-year increase across reporting for cyber and economic crime and the new Action Fraud system will be launched in 2024 providing enhanced analysis and allocation.
- ▶ The South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) supported by national funding continues to develop capabilities in Cyber and Fraud. The creation of a Dark Web, Crypto, Cyber and the Priority Economic Crime Team (PECT) enhances expertise in both prevention and investigation methods, providing an enhanced capability in a changing and challenging cyber environment.



## Strategic Priority Three Fighting cybercrime and fraud

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ The South East PECT are one of nine nationally networked across England and Wales created to tackle Fraud and associated money laundering with coordination and workflow either self-generated, referred from Forces or provided by the CoLP. Their purpose is to disrupt fraud and money laundering by taking a proactive approach with a focus on pursue and disruption as well as looking to identify and recover assets for victims.
- ▶ Project Configured has recently been launched which, using open source intelligence, tries to identify businesses in the South East with vulnerabilities in how they connect to the internet (and therefore could be a target for criminals) and informs them. Early indications have shown a high percentage of businesses have acted on this information and mitigated their vulnerabilities - the next stage is for this system to become fully automated to notify (and protect) more businesses across the Thames Valley and wider South East area.
- ▶ There remain significant challenges in meeting the needs of victims of cyber crime and fraud. Despite the work of the Force, too many cases result in NFA due to the complexity and geographic reach of this type of criminality. Prevention is a much more effective tool, but the Force will need to be more focused in proactive prevention activity.



## Strategic Priority Four Improving the criminal justice system

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Ahead of White Ribbon Day in November, I announced a Thames Valley-wide strategy aimed at improving the lives of women and girls. The risks to both women and girls in our communities can take many different forms, from domestic abuse to public place harassment, stalking to sexual violence. Therefore, a variety of responses must be in place to ensure the Thames Valley is a safer place for all women and girls. I am pleased to be supporting a range of initiatives to make our streets safer. This includes the development of school-based programmes to focus on the safety of women and girls, and additional activity focused on street harassment, stalking, sexual assault, rape and predatory behaviour.
- ▶ My Office secured a significant investment from the Ministry of Justice Local Leadership and Integration Fund (Prison Leavers Project). The funding is delivering a pilot programme, Restart Thames Valley, which is working with partners across the region to develop solutions to key challenges faced

by people released from prison. Such challenges include the provision of and access to support, access to accommodation and work opportunities and engagement with numerous service providers. Over half of the people released from prison in the Thames Valley reoffend within 12 months which is why this funding is so important in helping us address the challenges that they, and the services supporting them, face. Such challenges begin at the prison gates as many face difficulties in accessing support, especially out of hours. Geographical and organisational barriers can also make effective engagement with services very difficult. Many, unfortunately, fall back into a cycle of offending. Reducing reoffending will prevent more people from becoming victims of crime in the future and keep all of us safer.



## Strategic Priority Four Improving the criminal justice system

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Following successful applications to the Ministry of Justice, I was delighted that my Office (OPCC) secured over £1.4 million per annum (£4.4m in total) of funding over the next three years to support victims across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. This funding is providing essential support to many organisations supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. It is also being used to fund dedicated posts to supporting particular groups who can be less likely to access support such as men, older people and victims within LGBTQ+ and BAMER communities. Not only will this funding make a difference to these organisations, but it also ensures victims and survivors are supported for the long term. Additionally, we will be able to increase the level of specialist service provision to provide victims with better access to much-needed support to help them recover from the harm they have experienced. 19 organisations across the Thames Valley will benefit from this additional funding.
- ▶ I am pleased we can offer specialist provision to help those affected by stalking in the Thames Valley and to be working with Aurora New Dawn who have proven expertise in this area. The service forms a key part of my strategy launched last year to improve the safety of women and girls in the Thames Valley. Stalking can affect every area of a victim's life with stalking behaviours potentially experienced over long periods, leading to emotional and psychological distress and fear. It is important that victims get the support they need to cope with the impact on their lives and move forward. This may include helping them cope emotionally, practical safeguarding advice as well as advocacy and guidance to empower them and help them feel safe as they navigate the criminal justice process. Aurora New Dawn has been awarded £120,000 a year until March 2025 to deliver the service across the Thames Valley. Victims First, part of my own office, is working with the Thames Valley Stalking Service to manage referrals into the service.



## Strategic Priority Four Improving the criminal justice system

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ I was delighted that the plans for a new state-of-the-art-forensics centre in Bicester was given the go-ahead in February. The programme is the result of a review of Thames Valley Police's forensics services as a whole, which identified the need to modernise facilities and increase capacity. In a world of rapidly advancing technology, ensuring the police stay on the cutting edge of forensics is crucial to keeping the public safe. Construction is expected to begin in the summer 2023 and be completed in winter 2024/25.
- ▶ Last August I announced a series of psychologically-informed and trauma-informed training sessions that will be delivered as part of the RESTART Thames Valley pilot project. RESTART Thames Valley is a year-long pilot programme supporting people leaving prison, including women and those on short-term sentences - the highest risk of reoffending is within the first few weeks after being released from prison. A trauma-informed approach is nationally evidenced and recommended and the training sessions are an important step in improving our response to reoffending. RESTART not only helps to get people's lives back on track once they leave prison, but by reducing reoffending we will also be protecting the public and ensuring there are fewer victims of crime in the future.
- ▶ Earlier this year I published findings of my internal review into the provision of victim's services across Thames Valley. The review, which was compiled by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC), was conducted to evaluate existing OPCC-funded victims' services to ensure they continue to meet victims' needs. Outcomes from the review will help to provide a framework for the future commissioning of victim services, with new contracts due to begin in April 2024.



## Strategic Priority Four

### Improving the criminal justice system

#### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ The creation of a central team to manage and oversee RASO (Rape and Sexual Offences) investigations, along with a similar team to manage Domestic Abuse has led to a clearer focus on supporting victims. Maintaining the support of victims is key to securing successful prosecutions and the advent of Sexual Offence Liaison Officers (SOLOs) has significantly improved this aspect of support.
- ▶ Although well documented the delays in the courts continue to cause concern, but for delivering justice for individual victims and for the efficiency of the system more broadly. I continue to have concerns about the challenges of data sharing between criminal justice agencies and the delays caused by redaction.



## Strategic Priority Five Tackling illegal encampments

### Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ New legislation relating to Unauthorised Encampments came into force on 28 June, as part of the Police Crime Sentencing Courts Act 2022. A recent learning event was held by Local Policing to brief operational Inspectors on their use of relevant guidance.
- ▶ The first 6 months of data show that TVP and local authority partners have used the legislation to apply a consistent and improved response to unauthorised encampments. There is a drive to keep police training relevant, a focus on the performance response to Unauthorised Encampments, and maintaining vital relationships with local authorities.
- ▶ Data also indicates that the force uses its Section 60C and 61 powers in a proportionate and effective way. Whilst numbers are thankfully relatively low across the Thames Valley, the figures are consistent with Regional and National responses by other Police Forces.
- ▶ Thames Valley Police has consulted all Local Authorities on a revised joint working protocol for managing Unauthorised Encampments. I fully support such a protocol and I look forward to its full adoption during 2023, which will see further consistency of approach between police and local authorities. TVP now has a new Force Tactical Lead (Chief Inspector) to manage the operational demands of Unauthorised Encampments.
- ▶ The focus on this area has brought about changes in processes by Thames Valley Police, which has seen better, more consistent training for Inspectors, the reporting of new encampments to Daily Management Meetings (DMMs) and the early involvement of Public Order Commanders.

# Looking ahead to 2023/24

2023/24 provides an opportunity to build on the successes already achieved and to challenge harder in those areas that still need improvement. I will closely scrutinise the work relating to the Force Review, seeking to ensure that neighbourhood policing and local responsiveness is not just maintained, but enhanced through any new model.

I will seek innovative use of funds, exploring how to invest the Road Safety Fund, and exploring investment opportunities to further reduce neighbourhood crime. I am reviewing the various scrutiny arrangements that are in place to ensure they give me a clear line of sight into policing in order to best hold the Chief Constable to account. I will continue to speak up nationally to lobby for change where necessary, such as establishing a data sharing arrangement between the police and CPS, pushing for better fraud structures nationally (with some positive signs in the Government's new Fraud Strategy) and emphasising the need for sentencing to get the right balance between public protection and rehabilitation.

In my introduction, I referred to the number of neighbourhood police officers in the Thames Valley is expected to double over the coming year, marking the beginning of a shift in emphasis for the force. This commitment forms part of my Crimefighters strategy; a shared vision with Thames Valley Police to strengthen local policing and help build the trust of all our communities. Crimes such as thefts, burglaries, shoplifting and crimes associated with anti-social behaviour can blight the lives of those affected, as well as have a significant social and economic impact on communities as a whole.

I know from listening to the public that there can be frustrations with the policing response to neighbourhood crime. These crimes are not and never will be tolerated.

In the delivery of Crimefighters, Thames Valley Police and I are taking a long-term look at the improvements to community policing to build trust and confidence and increase peoples' feelings of safety. This includes increasing the number of officers which will benefit communities across the force area but also the refocus of community policing as a whole to enable officers to deliver a more proactive and responsive service that is better placed to effectively prevent and disrupt crime.



Key elements of the Crimefighters strategy include:

- ▼ **Strengthening local policing** - In addition to more officers, the recruitment of PCSOs will remain a priority. Officers will be more visible with increased local engagement to help build relationships and instil confidence in communities. A greater depth of knowledge and understanding of local areas will enhance the prevention and disruption of crime.
- ▼ **Embedding crime prevention** - Neighbourhood officers will focus their efforts where there is the most likely impact to reduce crime. Policing will be intelligence-led, focusing on known hotspots and known offenders to prevent crime, with visible patrols on foot and in vehicles.
- ▼ **Improved communication between the public and the police** - Reducing the 101 wait times as well as investing in technology to improve and expand channels for reporting will encourage the public to report crime and incidents. Automated systems will also improve the way that victims can get feedback from the police on the crimes they have reported.

150 additional officers will be allocated to neighbourhood policing roles over 2023/24 as the start of a shift which will continue to demonstrate the growing role of community policing within the force.

A full copy of the strategy can be found on my Crimefighters webpage

[Crimefighters - Thames Valley PCC \(thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk)

# Crimefighters

## Strong local policing

