Police and Crime in Hertfordshire



Annual Report 2014-15

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Annual Report
April 2014 – March 2015

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Foreword by David Lloyd

This is my third annual report as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire and the message is one of significant progress achieved against the Police and Crime Plan "Everybody's Business 2013-2018"

Over the last year, we have built on success and progressed in the key areas of Public Focus, Offender Pays and Business Sense. Hertfordshire continues to be one of the safest places to live, and is served by one of the country's best performing police forces. Although you may read that recorded crime has increased, this is mainly a consequence of better reporting and more accurate recording, following a review that I asked for. I am pleased that we can all feel confident that crimes are being accurately captured and recorded – it is something that I was determined should happen.

I remain committed to protecting local policing, building on the strong and successful model already in place. You still have dedicated Safer Neighbourhood Teams in each of the ten boroughs and districts, serving your community, supported by Special Constables. Despite reductions in the annual government grants for policing, ours will be one of the few forces this year to be increasing officer numbers. Through applying greater business sense across policing, we have achieved £8.5m savings, brought about through collaborating with our neighbouring forces. I have also reviewed our use of buildings and relocated police teams to locations like district council offices so improving partnership working and accessibility at reduced cost. This rigorous financial approach has enabled me to freeze the police element of the council tax for the fourth consecutive year.

This year has seen significant growth in my responsibilities for the commissioning of victims' services across Hertfordshire, enabling me to give victims a stronger voice, to reflect their needs and the responses they require, in our planning-putting them at the centre of all we do. Earlier this year I launched Beacon – the multi-agency Victim Care Centre – to provide a complete service to help victims cope and recover from their ordeal.

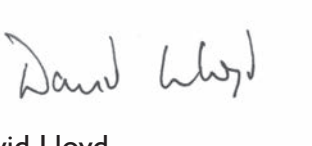
I have also continued to focus on domestic abuse and am pleased that since last year, more people feel confident enough to report the harm they have suffered, with a 47% increase in reports. I commissioned SafeLives (formerly CAADA) to conduct a comprehensive review of domestic abuse services in Hertfordshire, as I know that many crimes, such as domestic abuse, sexual abuse and hate crime, remain under-reported. I believe that, as a result of that report, agencies across Hertfordshire will now work even better together to improve the referral process and provision of services.

I have a leading role in community safety and criminal justice across the county and I have worked with a wide range of organisations, including those from health, housing, fire and rescue, the county council and probation, to deliver a joined-up approach to preventing crime and keeping people safe. This year I was delighted to co-ordinate and publish Hertfordshire's Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat and Action Plan, demonstrating the commitment by leaders across the county to improve services for people with mental health issues. Our innovative work to triage services to assist police, by having a mental health nurse in the force control room,

has helped to provide early intervention to divert some of those with mental health issues out of the criminal justice system and into the treatment they require.

Throughout the year I have continued to be impressed by the Chief Constable, his officers and staff, and all the partners I engage with who continue to help deliver the priorities outlined in my Police and Crime Plan. It is 'Everybody's Business' to maintain Hertfordshire as a safe county, helping to cut crime, protect local policing and spend wisely. Partnership working is at the heart of my approach and I could not do this alone.

I hope this report gives you a good insight into the work that has been achieved over the last year and how Hertfordshire Constabulary is performing. Over the coming year I will be asking everyone to play their part once again as I publish my refreshed Police and Crime Plan for Hertfordshire 'Everybody's Business' (2015-2020).



David Lloyd
Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

My five key achievements in 2014/15:

DELIVERED A SAFER COUNTY
One of the best performing police forces across the country.
You are very unlikely to be a victim of crime

PROTECTED LOCAL POLICING
You still have local policing teams aligned to your area

MAINTAINED THE POLICING PRECEPT
You have not been charged any more for policing

SUPPORTED VICTIMS OF CRIME
Victims now have a greater voice and choice over the services and support they receieve

IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY AND SCRUTINY
Better scrutiny of the Constabulary's performance and public complaints

Success and progress in delivering the police and crime plan in 2014-15

Building on success

It is always worth reminding ourselves that Hertfordshire is an extremely safe county, served by one of the country's best performing police forces. It is against this context that my original Police and Crime Plan was set, seeking to preserve what we have, make improvements where possible and to meet new challenges which may arise. The plan was based on a conviction that partnership working is the key to building and preserving a safe and prosperous community. Everybody has their part to play and the successes I am able to include in this third annual report reflect a considerable collective effort.



Crime Figures

Overall crime continues to fall – the Crime Survey for England and Wales recorded a national fall of 11% for the year to January 2015, putting crime at its lowest level since the survey began in 1981. The survey is based on the experiences of victims and includes many crimes that do not come to the attention of the police. I continue to believe it is important that the police are made aware of any crime so they can be accurately recorded and we can be confident that any necessary actions are taken.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) undertook a national inspection of how police record crime. Following this I tasked the Constabulary to take measures to improve their compliance with National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS). This meant a re-basing of recorded crime figures. I am pleased to say that there has been a significant improvement and that, overall, 10.6% more crimes have been recorded in the last year as a result.

Protecting Local Policing

Hertfordshire's local policing model is a foundation for our success and which I know is greatly valued by the public. It is something that fewer forces are able to maintain but the Chief Constable and I are determined to protect local policing in Hertfordshire despite continuing financial pressures. Through improved efficiency and a commitment to seek savings through collaboration, we have been able to sustain our local policing teams and even to begin a programme of recruitment, after I set a budget which will allow the Chief Constable to increase the total number of officers in the coming year.

Partnership Working

Excellent partnership working is at the core of the Police and Crime Plan and last year I was able to report on the structures and funding which I put in place to help sustain this in Hertfordshire. So I am pleased to report that I have continued to support the work of the Community Safety Partnerships and provide strategic drive in areas such as domestic abuse and serious and organised crime. In addition, this year has seen a broadening of this partnership working, particularly with colleagues in Health. A highlight was the signing of the Mental Health Concordat, where 25 partner organisations came together to pledge improved service for the

treatment of those facing mental health crises. An early example of how this is working is our Mental Health Triage pilot which has seen mental health nurses working within the police control room, providing early intervention to divert some of those with mental health issues away from the criminal justice system and into the treatment they require.

Mental Health Triage



In January 2015 the Constabulary and Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) launched a pilot Mental Health Triage scheme advising frontline police dealing with people with mental health issues in the course of their duty.

The scheme aims to reduce the number of Section 136 Mental Health Act detentions, which have risen from 66 in 2004-5 to 529 in 2014-15. Community mental health professionals, from HPFT's Crisis Assessment & Treatment Teams, have been working overnight in the Police Force Communications Room (FCR).

They are available to officers and staff to assist with incidents where police are considering using their powers of detention under Section 136. This power allows police officers to detain a person, who appears to be suffering from a mental disorder, in a public place for their own or others' safety.

The ability for police to seek advice from a mental health professional means that better informed decisions can be made to ensure that people are kept safe, receive help in a proportionate and timely way and are started on their recovery pathway.

Triage also reduces the number of hours that police officers remain with someone awaiting an assessment, thereby releasing them for other duties. The pilot is being closely monitored by all agencies involved brought together under Hertfordshire's Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) was an area the public asked me to focus on and it has been one of our biggest success stories. Over the first two years of my plan there has been a major fall in ASB reports, making Hertfordshire one of the most improved areas in the country, with a recorded drop in ASB of 66% since 2011. It is another example of excellent partnership-working in Hertfordshire, but it is something we need to continue to tackle. The introduction of SafetyNet software has been extremely successful in helping the police and other agencies to share information and manage cases and its use has expanded not just around anti-social behaviour but into other areas including domestic abuse.

Putting victims at the centre

For many victims of crime, the impact may be short-lived and merely a minor inconvenience, but others find themselves having to contend with the emotional effects of crime. For those subject to the most serious violent and sexual crimes, the effects can include distress, hardship, a life-changing injury or even bereavement. Research has shown that victims struggling to deal with the impact of the most serious offences, or those who are repeatedly the victims of crimes, too often have not received the support they need. This is why it is important that we all have a very clear understanding of our commitment to victims and why we must do more to target support to those who need it most.

New legislation has brought a significant change to the way in which victim services nationally are commissioned as responsibility transferred from the Ministry of Justice to each Police and Crime Commissioner. The government recognised that Police and Crime Commissioners are ideally placed to better understand the needs of their communities and to ensure that the best support and advice is available to anyone who has been unfortunate enough to be a victim of crime. This devolved responsibility has given me and my key partners an opportunity to commission and deliver a new locally-tailored service that better reflects and is more responsive to the needs of victims of crime in Hertfordshire.

During the course of the year, I have listened to victims, consulted with service providers and considered how best to put in place services that will support victims to cope and recover. This has resulted in some innovative thinking, challenging current practices and stimulating new ways of working. This has been particularly evident in introducing Restorative Justice to victims of crime, which has required extensive discussion with our criminal justice partners to enable victims, if they chose, to meet with the offender and convey the impact of the harm caused to them. For some victims, this can be a significant step on the road to recovery.

Victims' Voice Consultation

I undertook the Victims' Voice consultation in 2014 and received just under 400 responses from victims experiencing a wide range of crimes. Victims' Voice indicated generally high levels of satisfaction both with police and Victim Support but also indicated where services were unsatisfactory.

The results from the Victims' Voice consultation were clear and highlighted that victims want:

- To understand what happens once a crime has been reported
- To be updated on progress of an investigation
- To receive practical and emotional support when required
- To have a single point of access to avoid recounting the crime to various agencies

In December 2014, the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales, Baroness Newlove, conducted an inspection into how PCCs managed complaints from victims. The inspecting team noted Victims' Voice as an example of good practice and therefore I decided that Victims' Voice will now be an on-going survey to allow victims to offer feedback on their experiences indefinitely.

In addition to Victims' Voice I undertook the extensive task of service mapping, developing relationships with service providers and understanding the needs of victims in Hertfordshire. This highlighted that it was sometimes difficult to access services, with victims having to recount their experiences several times. This was made worse by staff working shifts, case handover to different departments or service providers working in different locations, including out of county.

For me, this is the very reason why we have launched Beacon, the Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre. The Centre will address all these needs by becoming the single gateway for victims of crime in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre - 'Beacon'

I was very pleased to launch Beacon. This new co-located and, importantly, multi-agency approach will transform victims experiences by providing a single point of access. It represents an important step-change in the way victims are able to access a range of coordinated services.



My key priorities for this new service for victims are threefold:

- to ensure victim services are as accessible as possible;
- to ensure that priority groups (as defined by the Victims' Code) can be assessed, across a variety of parameters, and receive the support they need;

and

- to avoid victims having to recount (endless times) what has happened to them to multiple agencies.

The centre will provide a complete service to help victims regardless of whether they reported the crime to the police or not. It is open seven days a week from 7am to 10pm and accessible by phone through a new, local rate, 0300 011 5555 number. It can also be accessed through a web portal. www.hertfordshirebeacon.org. The website features advice and self-help tools. It will also remind victims that they can access services at any time following a crime.

All victims of crime are contacted by our Victim Service Team (Constabulary staff) and, where appropriate, Victim Support to help victims cope and recover. Crucially, Victim Support will be there to provide confidential guidance and advice, even if the victim does not want to report the crime. Where required, the Beacon team has direct access to the other support services, including:

- Mental Health services (Hertfordshire Partnership University Foundation Trust's Single Point of Access team)
- Social Care Access Team (Hertfordshire County Council)
- Hertfordshire Home Security Service

Victim Services Commissioning

The extensive consultation mentioned above brought greater clarity to the expectations of Hertfordshire victims and their experiences of interacting with the Police and other service providers. My commissioning team held a multi-agency workshop which identified that the criminal justice system could seem complex for victims.

The creation of Beacon enables a co-ordinated and seamless service for victims of crime. It is just the start of a strategy to coordinate service providers from across the criminal justice system so that there is effective case handover and communication with the victim and witnesses.

To allow the commissioning of services, the Ministry of Justice grant funded my office £805,000 in 2014-15 to support capacity and capability to prepare for the introduction of victims commissioning on 1st April 2015. This allowed me to encourage service providers to bid for grant funding through the Commissioner's Community Fund. I also financed additional Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) to match an increase in demand brought about by an improved Domestic Abuse reporting process.

Launch of Beacon, the new Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre



The launch of Beacon took place on 27th March 2015. The event was attended by service users, providers and representatives from the statutory authorities. The Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre has been branded as Beacon, symbolising direction, guidance and hope. It should also be considered a safe place to access help and support. The Beacon logo contains a blue ribbon, a symbol used in other countries to promote victims' rights.

Restorative Justice Strategy for Hertfordshire

Another new area of responsibility for me is to ensure that victims have access to Restorative Justice, a process that brings together victims and the person responsible. In some instances, Restorative Justice can prove an invaluable intervention for victims, allowing them to convey the impact of the crime and to receive an apology from the offender.

Adult victim-led Restorative Justice is not only a new area of business but a relatively new idea for Hertfordshire. Whilst Restorative Justice is established as an effective intervention with young offenders, the idea of an adult victim meeting with an offender to talk about the impact of a crime requires the introduction of a new way of working with the criminal justice system. To assist with this process, I have entered into a partnership with the University of Hertfordshire's School of Law to deliver the three year Restorative Justice Strategy which I launched in March (www.hertscommissioner.org/victims). The University has a well-established civil and commercial mediation centre in place as well as senior lecturers that undertake research and practice Restorative Justice. This provides Hertfordshire with unrivalled access to current and emerging thinking around this new and important area of development. The establishment of a Restorative Justice Centre at the University gives partners and practitioners access to training and development resources including Restorative Justice delivery workshops.

New Hertfordshire Victims' Website - www.hertfordshirebeacon.org

The Victims Service's web portal was developed to provide advice and information to victims of crime in Hertfordshire who do not require the intensive support the Beacon Victim Care Centre offers. The website has been designed to act as a self-help service providing information about victims' entitlements, services that can be accessed via Beacon and advice about what to expect when entering into the criminal justice landscape. Just as importantly, the website will also act as a channel for those victims wishing to access services but who do not wish to report the crime or contact the police directly. A skeletal website went live from 1st April 2015, initially to capture any onward referrals from the new Ministry of Justice's new Victims Information Services that also went live on 1 April 2015, and has been set up as a national safety net to ensure victims did not fall through any gap. Hertfordshire's fully functioning website including further enhancements, such as an interactive map to help victims locate support services nearby, will be live by the end of June 2015. The website also contains information on Restorative Justice and how victims can access the service.

SafeLives (formerly called Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse - CAADA)

I commissioned SafeLives to undertake a review of the countywide response to domestic abuse. The review follows the success of strategies put in place

to make it easier and safer to report domestic abuse in Hertfordshire, resulting in a 47% increase in the number of victims coming forward over the last two years.



I published the report in January 2015. It highlights some really good work going on across the county. But importantly the report highlights some areas for improvement:

- the governance and leadership arrangements for domestic abuse in Hertfordshire:
- developing joint commissioning of all domestic abuse services countywide;
- the consistency through which victims are referred to services, and
- gaps around the provision of services and support for victims and perpetrators.

The review was an essential first step to finding out what needs to be done. It has also set the county several challenges. Of course, tackling domestic abuse is not the responsibility of any one individual or department and can only be tackled if we all work together, I am pleased that all the key agencies in Hertfordshire are committed to ensuring that happens.

The county had access to six independent domestic violence advisers (IDVAs) delivering an invaluable service to victims. I was delighted to have funded an additional three IDVAs last autumn for six months to help the service meet the spike in demand. As an interim response to the review I have agreed that these three posts will roll-over for a further year, until March 2016, while the overarching multi-agency strategy for the county is developed.

The county has also run a pilot this year embedding two IDVAs at the Lister (Stevenage) and Watford General Hospitals funded jointly by my office and the North & East Clinical Commissioning Group. The feedback from this pilot is that many cases of domestic abuse have come to light that would probably not have done so otherwise. Because of this success I have agreed to extend this important work in 2015-16.

Our campaigns to get more victims of domestic abuse to come forward are working and it is vital that we provide them with the best services possible when they do. We can only tackle this issue by working together and I am pleased that all the key agencies in Hertfordshire are committed to ensuring that happens.

Hertfordshire Home Security Service (HHSS)

On my behalf the then Crime Service Team at Police Headquarters undertook a pilot from October 2014 to March 2015 focussed on all victims of burglary who reported the crime. The aim was to contact victims within 24 hours of reporting their burglary, conduct a needs assessment to identify those belonging to the priority groups and offer to refer them to Victim Support and HHSS (a service that visits people's homes to help make them safer) if required. This work identified an untapped demand for HHSS services for burglary victims and I am working closely with Hertfordshire County Community Protection Directorate to deliver an even more comprehensive HHSS service.

Public Focus

Strengthening public confidence and satisfaction lies at the heart of creating better customer services for the people of Hertfordshire. During the last year I have made significant progress in putting the public's needs at the heart of everything I do, better tailoring services and using technology to enable the public to engage with the police when and how they want, better suiting their needs and preferences.

During 2014 an on-line appointment system has been piloted in four areas and is currently being prepared for full implementation across the county. The system provides an improved level of customer service by providing members of the public with an appointments system which allows non-urgent police attendance to be scheduled at their convenience.

Using Technology to Speed up Justice for Victims

I have invested significantly in the last year to improving the whole journey through the criminal justice system to make it simpler and faster for all involved. This year I have made significant improvements to the way victims experience the criminal justice system through the use of technology. I have secured funding to increase the number of virtual courts facilities across the county so that we now have facilities in all four of our custody centres, enabling offenders to appear before magistrates via a video link. This significantly speeds up the justice process, meaning quicker justice for those accused, savings in police time and a reduced risk of prisoners absconding.

Reuniting People with Lost Property

Over the last year the Chief Constable and I have been looking at better use of technology to improve victim confidence and satisfaction, giving victims more choice about ways they can be contacted and kept informed. In January this year I launched Herts Reunited, a new web portal (www.hertsreunited.co.uk) that links to the Constabulary's Property Management System, helping members of the public to record lost and found property and reunite items recovered with their rightful owners.

I will be further exploring how to use technology to enable people to report crimes online via the Track My Crime application and follow how their crimes are being investigated and progressed.

Volunteering

This year I have seen the number of volunteers grow significantly across the county, undertaking various roles, including the Special Constabulary supporting operational policing activity; Independent Custody Visitors who check the welfare of prisoners at police stations and ensure cells are up to standard; Community DriveSafe schemes where local people are supported by police to run speed awareness operations; and Neighbourhood Watch who take action following messages on the Online Watch Link (OWL) system. Over the coming year I will be working on plans to further enhance, support and encourage volunteering through closer collaboration with the eight Volunteering Centres across Hertfordshire.

Special Constabulary

Special Constables play a vital role in our communities, bringing in valuable skills to enhance the Constabulary's operational establishment both when responding to 999 emergencies and working in Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Specials are used increasingly in specialist roles including those relating to Fraud, Roads Policing and specialist investigations. This has significantly enhanced the capacity, capability and resilience of policing in Hertfordshire. I am delighted that we now have strong support for our rural communities through the Rural Special Constables, who cover all rural and semi-rural areas across the county, to help meet the challenges that can blight rural communities including those relating to fly-tipping, theft of heating oil and poaching.

Case Study on Rural Specials



Hertfordshire benefits from a highly motivated team of 60 Rural Special Constables. Rural Specials generally hold paid work in professions such as farming, game keeping, pest control, horse breeding or forestry and, in their spare time, help to prevent crimes such as theft of lead from church roofs, hare coursing, fly tipping, poaching, burglary and wildlife offences.

Rural Special Sergeant Steve Meredith has been patrolling the rural villages across Dacorum with a small team of Special Constables for three and a half years. Steve says "I am passionate about the preservation of the countryside and the maintenance of law and order in all areas. I derive great pleasure from doing what I can to help people, especially the vulnerable. I have a sound knowledge and understanding of rural issues and am privileged that I can serve the local community in a position of such responsibility."

To learn more about the Rural Specials role or to apply to become a Rural Special Constable visit: http://www.herts.police.uk/hertfordshire_constabulary/special_constabulary/specials_home.aspx

Community DriveSafe

Community Drivesafe continues to grow across Hertfordshire, with over 39 schemes, involving 268 volunteers across the county. Many residents tell me that speeding is a key concern in their local area so I am delighted that so many people want to play their part in helping to educate motorists about the nature of their dangerous driving. In October 2014 I held my annual DriveSafe meeting where I was able to celebrate the dedication and community spirit of volunteers and tell them about my proposals to simplify the scheme, enabling volunteers to spend more time on the roadside and less processing forms. I am pleased that Drivesafe volunteers are working well with their Safer Neighbourhood Teams to address local issues and will continue to be strengthened through the additional support of Special Constables.

Volunteer Police Cadets

I am delighted that our Volunteer Police Cadet scheme continues to go from strength to strength, and this year we have seen the number participating rise dramatically to over 200, with coverage in all ten districts and boroughs. Over the last year we have been working hard to improve the scheme, with the Constabulary now a full member of the



National Volunteering Police Cadet Scheme enabling all cadets to develop a practical understanding of policing, encourage good citizenship, inspire young people to participate positively in their communities, and support local policing priorities.

Citizens' Academies

Over the last year I have worked with three borough councils - Dacorum, Welwyn Hatfield and Broxbourne to pilot the Citizen Academy scheme. I have been encouraged by the enthusiasm I have seen from the public in engaging in policing and crime prevention matters and their desire to get involved in various activities across the county. Over the coming year I will be building on the pilots to set

up a new online web–based crime fighting Citizens' Crime Prevention Academy, designed by the Constabulary and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) which helps to support the public to better understand how to stay safe both outdoors and online, and how to help prevent themselves and others becoming a victim of crime. I am delighted to be working with the University of Hertfordshire to provide accreditation to the scheme.

Commissioner's Community Fund

During 2014/15 I have continued to support a wide range of local organisations, charities and voluntary schemes through my Commissioner's Community Fund, supplemented by victims' grant funding. We received bids totalling £2.3m to support a broad range of projects and activities to help deliver the Police and Crime Plan and support victims' services. The volume and range of bids received for the general fund and those to support Victims' Services demonstrated the real appetite and desire for local people to make a difference in their communities and make them feel safer. In 2014 we supported 32 successful bids.

The bids included Farming for All in Watford to help run two Care Farm Courses to help steer offenders away from a life of crime by providing them with practical life and employment skills. Another successful recipient was St Albans Business Against Crime (SABAC) who was awarded funding to purchase radios for retailers in St Albans and a leaflet campaign to encourage retailers to join the scheme and better tackle business crime. Groundwork Hertfordshire was successful in its bid to build on its 'Green Aiders' service in East Herts by extending the programme to Stevenage. Green Aiders helps vulnerable, elderly and disabled householders, whose gardens have fallen into a state of disrepair and are therefore at greater risk of being targeted for burglary or doorstep crime and/or which are causing them other safety problems such as trips and falls.

Offender Pays

My police and crime plan lays down a very clear principle, that is, we should be working towards a situation where those responsible for crime bear a greater proportion of the costs of dealing with that crime and putting right the harm that they have caused. For me that means being prepared to explore radical and innovative solutions, but also making better use of the options we already have. Some of this will require lobbying and legislative change but there is a lot we can do today.

Offenders Pay for Victim's Services

As has been outlined earlier in the report, the past year has seen a revolution in the way services for victims are commissioned and funded. The fact that this new deal for victims has been paid for by offenders, through the Victim Surcharge imposed by the courts, is exactly in line with my 'Offender Pays' principle. I am delighted that the £1.2 million granted to me to spend on commissioning victim services in 2015-16 is coming out of the pockets of those responsible for causing that harm and not out of your taxes.

In addition, in March, the government also gave PCCs responsibility for spending some of the money raised through Prisoners Earnings. In Hertfordshire that amounts to around £20,000 and I have decided to invest that money in the Hertfordshire Home Security Service which provides practical help to vulnerable victims of burglary, paying for new locks and other security measures for victims.

Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA)

The Police and Crime Plan calls for the Chief Constable to redouble efforts to seize criminal assets which can then be put to use in the fight against crime. The police have had great success in this area in the last two years using the Proceeds of Crime Act and have recovered approximately £1.3 million which includes an estimated £631,000 in 2014-15. During the past year responsibility for pursuing POCA cases has now passed from individual police forces to our Eastern Region Serious and Organised Crime Unit (ERSOU). This should allow us to focus even greater expertise on depriving criminals of the proceeds of their crime and I am determined to see that this continues to happen.

Community Trigger and Community Remedy

It's not just through cash payments that offenders can be made to put things right for victims. This year has seen the introduction of two new important mechanisms which will support the 'Offender Pays' agenda. The Community Remedy and Community Trigger put the victims of anti-social behaviour in the driving seat giving them the opportunity to insist that their problems are addressed and to have a say in how those responsible put things right. These are already being used and I expect to see them have a significant impact in the future.

Innovation

Over the last year I have continued to explore a number of innovative ideas which will expand the Offender Pays principle. This includes engaging in the debate around the introduction of offender funded "Drunk Tanks" or "Alcohol Recovery Centres" to tackle the issues of alcohol related crime and nuisance in our night time economy. As a result I am engaging with a national group of police, and other partners examining the practicalities of implementing such a policy. Many of these ideas face legal and other barriers and will take more time to implement.

Business Sense

For me Business Sense is about using a business approach within policing and community safety to ensure we use resources more efficiently and effectively and also reduce the impact of crime on Hertfordshire's business community. While overall crime remains low, crime against businesses accounts for almost a quarter of all recorded offences in Hertfordshire. So I am committed to working with businesses across Hertfordshire to help them to protect themselves.

Business Crime Survey

Last summer I invited businesses to take part in my Business Crime Survey. The survey gave me the opportunity to find out the needs and experiences of businesses across Hertfordshire and responses were provided by a wide range of businesses in all ten districts and boroughs in Hertfordshire. These survey responses will be used to help develop my countywide Business Crime Strategy and implement an Independent Business Advisory group (IBAG)

Working More Efficiently Through Collaboration

There is no doubt that the public sector organisations most involved in reducing and tackling crime face continued financial challenge in the years ahead. I know the people of Hertfordshire support a local policing model, so I am working with partners to provide efficiencies so this model can be maintained. In Hertfordshire, we have a strong track record of successful multi-agency working, through our County Community Safety Unit, my Community Safety Board, through delivering some of our policing services through collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary (known as the BCH Strategic Alliance) and with the wider Eastern Region of policing organisations.

There are clear operational and financial advantages in joining functional units together across the Strategic Alliance and the region to deliver a more co-ordinated, efficient and resilient policing response. Whilst maintaining local policing in the Hertfordshire style, a considerable focus this year has been working with the other Commissioners and Chief Constables in the Strategic Alliance to examine proposals on how other functions in operational and organisational support could be delivered collaboratively. Alongside this work, a number of IT solutions are being implemented to provide a common working platform and support improved front-line working. I will ensure that any future collaboration work makes good business sense and works for Hertfordshire.

BeNCH Transforming Rehabilitation

BeNCH is the Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company. As part of the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda, I am working with the BeNCH Restorative Justice Working Group. The working group has met several times throughout the year to discuss how Restorative Justice (RJ) can

be embedded into the criminal justice landscape using a common framework for RJ delivery. This has included adopting an agreed common definition of RJ and areas where RJ should not be employed, such as for serious sexual assaults.

ERSOU Collaboration to Help Identify, Disrupt and Dismantle Organised Crime Groups

The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) is made up of resources from across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk and its purpose is to identify, disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups impacting on the Eastern Region. Our Constabulary has produced local profiles for the each of 10 CSPs. These have been circulated to each of the CSP Chief Inspectors and the local Chief Executives to discuss at the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) meetings and shared with wider statutory partners. There is an expectation that each local profile will be updated and refreshed annually for the start of each financial year and an appendix will be refreshed quarterly.

Blue Light Collaboration

Blue Light collaboration enables forces to deliver savings and improve quality of service through integration of the 'blue light' services of police, ambulance and fire and rescue and I encourage this work wherever possible.

On a national level I currently chair the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group on behalf of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. The working group helps to drive collaboration between the emergency services through co-location, joint training and integrated governance structures. The research commissioned by the group on emergency services collaboration can be found here.

http://www.hertscommissioner.org/2014-11-trailblazing-bluelight-integration-projects-highlighted-in-national-report

Investment in Technology

My Police and Crime Plan calls for investments in new technology in order to make financial savings and improve the service to the public. I am pleased to announce that over the last year investments in have enabled front-line officers to use their time more efficiently and effectively, enabling them to be more accessible and provide the public with an improved level of service.

Investments in technology during 2014 include the introduction of an internal WiFi network which has allowed increased flexible working and reduced the amount of paper and printing costs.



I have encouraged other technological advances which have seen many staff, particularly in collaborated units serving Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire improve productivity through tools such as Instant Messaging and Video-Conferencing. This technology allows colleagues from any force to quickly and easily establish a conversation, or run a virtual meeting from their desk or mobile device, effectively removing the geographical issues of working across the three counties. This technology has saved time and money, freeing up resources for local policing. I will continue this investment as we see police officers using handheld devices to collect evidence, share information and reduce the time to charge offenders and bring cases to court.

I agreed financial investment for Body-Worn Video Cameras which have been used with great success. A further investment in these cameras is to be made within the new financial year with plans to purchase around 800 more devices. The resulting videos will ensure evidence is more efficiently stored and more easily available enabling the prosecution of offenders

and providing reassurance to the public we serve that we are acting transparently and with integrity.

Cybercrime Fraud Unit

Reinvestment of some of the financial savings made by collaboration and regionalisation has enabled the force to respond to current and emerging crime trends. Cybercrime is a crime which is increasing at a national and local level and is driven by criminals who exploit vulnerable individuals for financial gain. Cybercrimes are likely to involve organisations beyond local criminals. I agreed reinvestment of some savings into a new Cyber and Financial Investigation Unit which provides technical expertise in cyber, financial and human trafficking crime. This new unit provides the capacity to investigate complex cybercrime cases, meet local priorities and provide a centre of excellence to protect vulnerable victims.

Exercise of Functions

Holding the Chief Constable to Account

A key part of my role as Police and Crime Commissioner is to be democratically accountable to the people of Hertfordshire by holding the Chief Constable to account for constabulary performance. The Chief Constable and I meet regularly to discuss community concerns and police performance. When I think it appropriate, I write to the Chief Constable outlining a specific issue and requesting his written response. These letters are then published on my website under the scrutiny information transparency section. I hold a monthly Strategic Executive Board, attended by the Chief Constable and his senior team. At this meeting I scrutinise performance and seek assurances and resolutions to issues I have identified.

I maintain a proactive overview of police complaints and I receive monthly updates on the nature and outcome of all complaints against the police. Although I have responsibility to deal with any complaints against the Chief Constable I am not responsible for complaints against the police. I do, however, look at every complaint so I can comment and make improvements where appropriate.

I do not rely entirely on the police to monitor constabulary performance. I have a number of independent assessments reported to me both directly and indirectly. I receive frequent and wide ranging reports from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). I also receive reports from my volunteer independent visitors with regard to custody and police dogs. The Constabulary and my office also have a joint Independent Audit Committee. I receive reports from our internal auditors and our external auditors. 'Invaluable' is the feedback I receive on my District Days I visit the ten boroughs and districts in Hertfordshire and consider with them the priorities for those areas. A member of my team also attends every Responsible Authority Group meeting for the Community Safety Partnerships in each borough and district, this helps sharing of good practice. Again, this provides feedback on the issues of importance for an area and any concerns about police response. I also ensured the Constabulary established an Ethics Committee as another overview function.

At the end of this year my improved website LINK went live. As well as looking more modern and easier to use for the public, it is mobile-friendly and improves public access to scrutinise the work that I do. A wide range of information about my office and what I do is available on the website including the specific transparency information required to be published by my office by law.

Stop and Search – Setting up a Community Scrutiny Panel

In August 2014, Hertfordshire signed up to the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme to show our commitment with partners to implement a range of measures outlined by the Home Secretary and HMIC. A key part of this was to enable the public to provide an independent and critical eye over current Stop and Search practices through the setting up of a community panel to sample Stop and Search forms. They provide feedback and challenge the extent to which the forms are compliant with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

I established a countywide Community Scrutiny Panel consisting of nine people from a wide range of backgrounds, ethnicities and ages across Hertfordshire. The panel meets bi-monthly and held their first meeting in March 2015.

Independent Visiting Schemes

I have an important statutory function of holding the Chief Constable to account and ensuring an effective police service. One of the ways I am supported in carrying out this function is through the committed involvement of a number of volunteers from all parts of our Hertfordshire community, who are given access to our custody suites and to our police dog teams so that there is transparency and independent oversight in these areas of policing.

There are 50 Independent Custody Visitors, who make unannounced visits to the county's four custody suites and report to me on the welfare of detained people and the management of those facilities. During the year, 162 of these visits were conducted and 562 detainees (92% of those available



during the time of the visits) were spoken with and given the opportunity to raise any issues or concerns. No serious issues were identified, but the visitors do report back the comments made and their own observations and these are reviewed by both my office and also the Constabulary's Custody managers to ensure that feedback is acted on as appropriate.

I also have Independent Police Dog Welfare Visitors. This year we have welcomed three new Independent dog visitors, increasing our team of volunteers to five, working across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire to check on the welfare of our police dogs. These volunteers meet the dogs and their handlers on a regular basis, with the scheme managed from my office, ensuring that all dogs are visited and that there is comprehensive independent monitoring of police dog health and welfare.

More information on both of these independent visiting schemes is available through the Scheme Annual Reports on my website.

Holding Me to Account

To ensure that I am doing my job well, as well as being as open as I can be to the public, I meet regularly with the Police and Crime Panel for Hertfordshire. The Panel's annual report can be found on the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel website www.hertspcp.org.uk . This report gives an indication of the range of questions that have been asked in public meetings and I provide answers to these questions. A particularly important meeting with the Police and Crime Panel takes place every January when my budget is discussed. This year, as in previous years, my proposal to the Panel was that the council tax precept policing should be frozen. A full budget and report was given to the Panel so that they could challenge my proposals and assumptions. I am pleased that the Panel were able to support my proposals, as they have in previous years.

Working Together & Engaging with the Public

It is very important that I continue to work, engage with and listen to the communities of Hertfordshire. I have been engaging with residents, local businesses, associations and public sector partners to keep updated on your concerns and needs.

I continue to take great interest in the correspondence and issues that come in to my office from the public and have many opportunities to meet with you and explore how we can do things better and learn lessons. Issues raised are reviewed and discussed frequently within my office in order to understand any changing areas of focus so that I can support the residents of Hertfordshire more fully.

I will continue to work and focus on new initiatives to fulfil my responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire and I continue to make it as easy as possible for people to contact me and help shape the future of policing, crime reduction and community safety in Hertfordshire.

District Days

As part of engaging with the people of Hertfordshire I have an established programme of district days to enable me to visit each of the districts and be 'on the ground' seeing the work of police and community safety partners. The districts have the opportunity to highlight particular areas of concern and also good practice and excellence in tackling crime. This offers me a key insight to work with the police, local leaders and businesses to drive down crime in Hertfordshire. Importantly I am able to meet with those organisations funded by my Community Fund and see their work in action. I see a number of benefits of holding my district days whilst also raising the profile of policing in many local areas.

Rural Barn Meet

Hertfordshire has a large rural community and reducing rural crime and tackling the issues and concerns affecting residents and business owners in rural areas remain a key priority for me.

At a national level I was one of the first supporters of the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN).

The NRCN provides information and support for rural communities by encouraging direct interaction between business, organisations and the police in order to help tackle crime issues that are often unique to rural areas and require specialist knowledge to tackle effectively.

At a local level I remain committed to supporting initiatives such as 'police barn meets' where I engage with local residents, farmers, parish councillors and rural business owners to gain a better understanding of the main issues and priorities. Rural barn meets are a good example of local residents, business and police coming together to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Keeping Residents Informed

As part of my role is to be the voice of the people, and to be the link between the police and Hertfordshire community, it is important that I keep Hertfordshire residents informed and updated on local matters.

I aim to do this in a number of ways through my:

- Annual Report which sets out the progress of my five-year Police and Crime Plan, highlighting my main achievements over the past year.
- Police and Crime Plan which lays out strategic plans for policing and the other services that keep Hertfordshire safe, as well as explaining how budgets will be spent.
- District Days and my engagement and visits with residents.
- Website which holds key information about me and my office and is constantly updated with the latest news and initiatives I am working on.
- Annual Safer Neighbourhood Newsletters that are delivered to every household in the county.
- Monthly parish council updates, with local crime information, police activity and PCC news.

- The annual council tax policing precept leaflet which goes to every home with a council tax bill and contains information about the Police and PCC budgets.
- Social media – I have dedicated Twitter (@hertspcc) and Facebook (hertspcc) accounts, which are regularly updated with news and information.

District Day



My District Day visits to each of the 10 districts and boroughs twice a year affords me the opportunity to meet with businesses, community safety partners, residents, charities, housing associations, councils and volunteer groups who are working with the police to protect vulnerable people, reduce crime and improve the overall quality of life for people in their area. An example is my visit to East Hertfordshire where I saw how the community is working together on a number of crime reduction initiatives to address local issues and keep the community safe.

I started the day at Bishop's Stortford Police Station where I sat in on the Police Daily Management Meeting where crimes from the previous 24 hours are identified and an action plan for the next 24 hours agreed. I then visited an East Herts Pubwatch scheme which is run by the licensed premises in the town, with support from police and licencing authority at East Herts Council. During the meeting I shared my views on how businesses can contribute to crime prevention and public safety, including using pub security systems such as Scannet, which checks and records the identities of all those entering the establishment and can be used by police in the event of a crime occurring inside the premises. I was delighted to hear that one of the nightclubs in the town was in the process of installing the system. From there I visited Spellbrook Primary School where I saw pupils taking part in the Slow4Schools programme. This scheme aims to encourage speeding drivers to slow down by putting them face-to-face with the youngsters from the school to discuss the dangers of speeding.

In the afternoon I visited Valley Court sheltered accommodation where sixth form pupils from the Bishop's Stortford High School were visiting the residents as part of Operation Stomp. The operation is a crime prevention initiative, using local volunteers led by East Herts police to help make vulnerable people in the community less likely to be targeted by criminals.

Later I discussed partnership working to deal with anti-social behaviour, low level crime, domestic abuse and community safety with the anti-social behaviour manager for Circle Housing Association and the Head of Community Safety and Health Services for East Herts Council.

My final appointment of the day was a visit to the Northgate Youth Centre where I saw how Herts County Council's Youth Connexions service provides a support and diversionary service for young people in Bishop's Stortford. I was shown around the facility by some of the young people who use the centre and discussed their experiences and their perceptions of crime.

A Year in Focus

I have included this section again this year to provide you with a small sample of some of my activities throughout the year.



April 2014

Groups providing support to victims, as well as community crime-busting projects, are invited to bid for grants from a third round of my Community Fund.

I visited farms, Hertford Police Station, a Senior Citizen's Crucial Crew event and Operation Stomp in Ware (pictured) before I met district councillors in Hertford as part of a District Day.

May 2014



Almost £800,000 from my budget is provided to the 10 Community Safety Partnerships and the County Community Safety Unit to support their work in tackling crime, road safety and anti-social behaviour and to build community reassurance.

I continued my engagement by attending the launch of two new safety initiatives in Borehamwood aimed at keeping school children safe on the roads (pictured) and another to support people with learning difficulties, for a Hertsmere District Day.

June 2014



I and the Deputy Chief Constable launched a new Volunteering Strategy in National Volunteer Week, with the aim of encouraging and enabling more people to play their part in keeping Hertfordshire safe. My annual lecture takes place, entitled What is Crime?

A £24,000 Commissioner's Community Fund grant to a social enterprise is celebrated (pictured) during Stevenage District Day. I also met the local Pubwatch members, visited the CCTV control room which covers Stevenage, North Herts, East Herts and Hertsmere, and saw the 'No More' project which helps people with addictions.



July 2014

The 35th Community DriveSafe scheme is set up in Ickleford, North Herts, and I met community support for older people, youngsters excluded from school and minority ethnic groups during North Herts District Day.

I officially opened the new Borehamwood Police Station, which forms part of the existing Hertsmere Council offices, with senior police officers, the Council Leader and Mayor (pictured).

August 2014

I chaired the first national Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group and announced £160,000 in government funding to take forward work to help 'bluelight' services work together efficiently.

I supported the launch of the National Rural Crime Network, an area of particular interest for me (pictured) and I ensured that Hertfordshire was signed up to the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme.





September 2014

I agreed funding for an Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor, who can work directly with health service professionals to identify victims and those at risk, at Watford General Hospital's A&E Department.

At the Three Rivers District Day I saw my DriveSafe scheme in action and met the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group, a National Citizens' Service scheme, run by Youth Connexions in South Oxhey, and talked to businesses in Abbots Langley.

October 2014

I welcomed new measures to help police and partner agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB), as the Community Remedy and Community Trigger come into effect. The changes give the public a greater say in how ASB is investigated and in choosing punishments for offenders. I hosted the annual DriveSafe meeting.

Broxbourne District Day showcases the council's Field Force, tackling environmental crime, such as fly tipping and graffiti, the Parks Patrol (pictured), who look after the security of Broxbourne's open spaces and the Lee Valley Regional Park, and I visit a school in Hoddesdon.



November

I, and more than 20 local agencies, make a commitment to work together to support and care for people suffering mental health crisis, signing the Mental Health Crisis Concordat for Hertfordshire.

The first Citizens' Academies are launched in Dacorum, where young adults at three secondary schools were equipped with the resilience and skills to keep themselves and their communities safe.

Citizens' Academy
Empowerment Engagement
Education
Playing your part to keep Hertfordshire safer



December

East Herts District Day includes visits to older people in sheltered accommodation to discuss their crime concerns.

I also attended a police barn meet with the Chief Constable, talking directly to farmers, rural business people and residents about what is being done to tackle rural crime (pictured).

January 2015

Along with the Constabulary I launch a new website, www.HertsReunited.co.uk, to help reunite members of the public with their lost and stolen property. The website features photos of found and recovered items, as well as a facility for people to report their lost property. The report I commissioned on dealing with domestic abuse in Hertfordshire is published.



HertsReunited
Reuniting lost and stolen property with rightful owners

I launched a virtual court at Stevenage, bringing all the police custody stations on line (pictured). Virtual courts reduce the need to transport offenders as they appear before magistrates via a video link, saving time and travel expense and reducing the risk of prisoners absconding.



February 2015

'Farming For All' in Watford showed me how the £16,000 grant from my Community Fund is being spent to divert former offenders away from a life of crime (pictured).

I announced the continuation of my Victims' Voice survey to ensure that new services reflect victims' needs and concerns.

March 2015

As part of a District Day in Watford, I met Tracey Burke at Watford Women's Centre (pictured) which offers a range of services to both women and men who have suffered from domestic abuse. I also attended Watford Grammar school, met local police and visited Watford Magistrates' Court.

As part of my commitment to a 'Public Focus' I welcomed the police roll-out of an appointment-booking system for face-to-face meetings with members of the public who need to talk in person about a policing or crime issue.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Financial Position and Precept

Financial Position

The budget for 2014-15 totalled £194.6m. A favourable year-end position is forecast which will provide additional reserves to support the budget in future years.

Looking forward, the budget for 2015-16 was set at £192.5m reflecting savings of £5.2m – a high proportion of which have already been achieved as well as reinvestment of £1.1m - in areas such as cyber crime and safeguarding vulnerable victims. A further £0.6m of one-off reserves will be invested as part of a four-year plan to support police officer recruitment.

It is currently anticipated that a further £20.1m of cash savings will need to be found covering the three year period up to and including 2018-19, a significant proportion of which will come from collaboration with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Well-developed financial plans are in place which include a proportionate use of reserves over the next four years. In view of this overall financial position I have frozen the policing precept for 2015-16 for the fourth successive year.

The following table gives a high-level breakdown of the 2014-15 budget and how this has been reshaped for 2015-16 in line with the tightening financial position.

	2014-15 Gross Budget £'m	**2015-16 Gross Budget £'m**
Local Policing Command	84.4	84.4
Community Safety & Crime Reduction	9.6	10.1
Protective Services	32.8	31.9
Operational Support	23.1	22.3
Business Support	32.8	32.2
Hertfordshire Corporate Budgets	9.2	8.3
Total Constabulary	**191.9**	**189.2**
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	1.0	1.0
Commissioner Funded Initiatives	1.7	2.4
Total Office of the PCC	**2.7**	**3.3**
Total Revenue Budget	**194.6**	**192.6**

Appendix 2: Chief Constable - Managing Performance



As Chief Constable, I am pleased to report on another successful year for the Constabulary in which my teams have continued to deliver outstanding results against a backdrop of some significant challenges.

This is a reflection of the hard work of my officers and staff, working together with the public and our partner agencies to reduce crime, catch criminals and keep people safe; maintaining Hertfordshire's place and reputation as one of the safest counties in the country.

Building On Success

Hertfordshire continues to experience low levels of crime and has the 6th lowest level of recorded crime in the country. Better still, when compared with seven other forces that are most similar to Hertfordshire*. The county has the lowest level of recorded crime. Mainly attributable to improved crime recording in accordance with the National Crime Recording Standards, crime increased by 10.6% last year. This increase is a measure of my determination to ensure rigorous recording of crime but also of my clear wish to support and encourage victims to have the confidence to report crime in the first place.

Last year the launch of Operation Oak, together with community safety partners from across the county, focused attention on encouraging victims of domestic abuse to report crime. Recorded domestic abuse increased by 46.4% enabling the Constabulary to support those most at risk of harm and to take positive action against offenders.

Following media coverage about child sexual abuse, we have also supported more victims of historic crime who have felt more able to come forward. This approach has also been applied to other crimes affecting our neighbourhoods, seeing improvements in the recording of offences, such as fly-tipping, ensuring multi-agency proactivity in tackling them.

Our aim remains to understand what crime is happening in Hertfordshire and then to work tirelessly to reduce it.

Crime: 56,886 - up 5,464 offences, up 10.6%

Crime	This Year 2014-15	Last Year 2013-14	Change	Change %
Dwelling Burglary	2936	2859	77	2.7%
Violence Against the Person	11736	8097	3639	44.9%
Domestic Abuse	5861	4004	1857	46.4%
Vehicle Crime	5374	5596	-222	-4.0%
Criminal Damage	8381	7349	1032	14%

*Hertfordshire's 'Most Similar Force' (MSF) group is identified by the Home Office and comprises Avon & Somerset, Hampshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Sussex, Surrey and Thames Valley Police.

Alongside performance measures, it is important to me that we recognise and consider how these results are achieved. For this I look to the quality of our interaction with the community, confidence in the service and legitimacy of our actions and decisions.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales is a face to face survey carried out independently by the Office of National Statistics. It asks many hundreds of local people a range of questions about their perceptions of their local police.

It is particularly pleasing that the most recent survey shows that the public of Hertfordshire have greater confidence in their Constabulary than anywhere else in the country. They think of their police as the most reliable and respectful too. The survey also gauges whether "the police and local council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the local area". No other police force scored higher.

Furthermore, Hertfordshire has the greatest national percentage of people who think we are doing an 'excellent or good job' locally. This is high praise indeed from the public we serve.

It is not just what we do as a force that counts, a focus on how we do it is vital if we are to enjoy the confidence of the people we serve.

Crime Survey England & Wales (Results to September 2014)

CSEW Measure(s)	%	MSF	National
Confidence	85.60%	1st	1st
Doing an excellent job	73.3%	1st	1st
Dealing with crime & ASB that matters	71.80%	1st	1st
ASB perception	4.70%	1st	1st
Reliable	70.60%	1st	1st
Respectful	91.20%	1st	1st
Fair	72.20%	1st	4th

MSF = Family Group of similar police forces

Public Focus

Keeping communities and victims at the centre of everything we do has seen us continue to develop ways of working which engage our communities and make our services more accessible, prioritising frontline services which are responsive to public need. In the last twelve months, this has been evidenced, in part, through our response to emergency calls and our high level of attendance at reports of crime; improving victim satisfaction and standards of investigation.

Our victim focus has led to the development of a Safeguarding Command, a team of officers and staff dedicated to supporting and enhancing our responses to the most vulnerable victims and those offences that warrant specialist investigation skills, including Child Protection and Child Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Abuse, vulnerable adults and mental health. The Command will soon form part of a newly established Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub to further strengthen information sharing, learning and partnership approaches to keeping people safe.

Local Policing continues to be prioritised and responsive to local concerns from our city centres to rural villages. Our Rural Policing Conference this year focused on issues from theft of heating oil to poaching and rights of way to engagement in rural areas. This model of policing lies at the heart of my, and our Police and Crime Commissioner's, approach to tackling crime in a way that is truly responsive to local people's needs. It is sustained, in part, by the savings yielded by collaboration. As a force we have put in place measures to recruit additional officers in 2015/16, to increase officer numbers and sustain our local policing model, supported by Police Community Support Officers and the Special Constabulary.

Special Constables continue to play a significant role locally and are well integrated into the operational establishment, both on our response and safer neighbourhood teams and increasingly in specialist roles, previously only open to regular officers, such as Roads Policing and specialist investigations. Our emphasis on recruitment to this crucial reserve role aims to increase our Special Constable numbers to 400 in 2015/16.

January 2015 saw the launch of Herts Reunited, a web portal providing direct access to the Constabulary's Property Management System, helping members of the public to record lost and found property, and search for items recovered and held by police, increasing the chances of finding the rightful owner. The public self-service function is also being developed to provide victims direct access to their crime report online via the 'Track My Crime' application.

The Constabulary is a national leader in embedding Virtual Court facilities into our criminal justice processes, providing live video links to court rooms, speeding up justice and reducing the time officers spend at court. The year ahead will see this facility introduced beyond police witnesses and persons appearing before the court to include the benefits to public witnesses.

Offender Pays

Over the last 12 months Hertfordshire's Serious and Organised Crime Department has worked closely with partner law enforcement agencies actively to disrupt those engaging in organised crime within the county, dismantling completely a number of crime groups committing crime locally. Particular successes have seen enforcement against groups supplying controlled drugs; with assets seized of over £500,000 from one group alone and imprisonment of its members.

At the same time, we have realigned resources to tackle new and emerging criminal threats, such as cyber-crime and human trafficking. We have formed a new cyber-crime team employing specialist officers to prevent and investigate those offences facilitated through new technology. The force has also invested in ensuring front line officers are trained to recognise and investigate such offences and has provided crime prevention advice for computer and internet users.

The Constabulary also hosted a multi-agency problem-solving conference to discuss the emergence of human trafficking and modern day slavery. This allowed the exchange of ideas and the development of working practices to tackle this type of crime.

Business Sense

The budget for 2014-15 totalled £194.6m. A favourable financial year end will provide reserves to support the challenging budget in future years. Looking forward, the budget for 2015-16 is set to reflect the savings required, a large proportion of which have already been achieved, including savings which will be reinvested to meet current and future demands including Cyber Crime and Safeguarding Vulnerable Victims, maintaining our focus on emerging trends and vulnerability. Further reserves will be invested as part of my four year plan to support additional police officer recruitment.

It is anticipated that a further £20.1m of cash savings will be needed in the three year period up to and including 2018-19, a significant proportion of which will rely on our collaboration with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire and a proportionate use of reserves. This financial position has allowed the Police and Crime Commissioner to continue to freeze the policing precept for a fifth successive year.

We continue to identify opportunities to rationalise the Constabulary's estate where it no longer meets the needs of our working arrangements to best serve the public. As was seen in the relocation of St Albans Police Station to accommodation shared with the District Council, vacating an aged building and making significant capital savings available for reinvestment in other areas.

The Police and Crime Plan seeks to harness the collective energy of statutory partners and this remains key to our plans. The last year has seen excellent new relationships formed, including the placement of a triage service in the Force Control Room to support our assessment of mental health vulnerability and office space being shared with British Transport Police in Stevenage; being but two examples, both arrangements improving joint working, reducing demand on the Constabulary and enabling more effective responses to crime and incidents.

All of our work continues to be supported by access to information, most important at the point of service. This year has seen our continued commitment to equipping our staff with effective, industry standard, mobile data devices. Putting crime-fighting information at officer's fingertips, makes our officers more efficient and effective and in turn helps to keep people safe.

As we look to the next year and beyond, the Constabulary remains a high performing force and has demonstrated that it is capable, agile and entrepreneurial in adapting to changes in criminality. As well as tackling budget challenges. I have every confidence that the outstanding men and women who contribute to policing locally, whether officers, staff or volunteers will display these self-same qualities.

Key Contacts and Useful Information

By Email: commissioner@herts.pnn.police.uk
Via Website: www.hertscommissioner.org
On Twitter & Facebook: @HertsPCC facebook.com/hertspcc

By Letter: Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire
Harpenden Police Station
15 Vaughan Road
Harpenden
Hertfordshire
AL5 4GZ

By Telephone: 01707 806100

By Appointment:
Please call or write to arrange a suitable date and time for an appointment with the Commissioner. Unfortunately the Commissioner is not able to see anyone without a prior appointment.

Police
In an emergency call 999 and if you have a non-urgent query or information to share with the police please call 101. You can also call 101 if you would like to find out who your local neighbourhood police officer is or would like further information about policing in your neighbourhood.
Website www.herts.police.uk

Crimestoppers
Tel - 0800 555 111 Website: www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Neighbourhood Watch
Tel: 101 (police) Website: www.hertswatch.com www.owl.co.uk

Beacon
For victim support
Tel 0300 011 55 55 Website: www.hertfordshirebeacon.org

Hertfordshire Domestic Violence/Abuse Helpline
Tel 08088 088088 Website www.hertssunflower.org

Hertfordshire County Council
Your gateway to all you need to know about Hertfordshire
Tel - 0300 123 4040 Website: www.hertsdirect.org

Citizens Advice Bureau
Tel – 03454 04 05 06 Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk