



## July newsletter from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Dear {FIRST\_NAME}

Welcome to July's newsletter – in this edition:

- Inspectorate finds significant improvements in Herts Police
- Retail Crime Forum launched to tackle shoplifting
- Safer town centres for Hertfordshire – more police patrols, making parks safer, protecting women in the night-time economy, closing dodgy vape shops and more!

This month has also seen some great work by Hertfordshire's police officers and staff to: make 18 arrests as part of a [crack down](#) on crime in Hemel Hempstead and take 19 County Lines [drug dealers](#) off the streets. Jail sentences have been secured for a [burglar](#), sexual [predator](#), drug [dealer](#)., [shoplifter](#) and a prolific [offender](#) responsible for car thefts, shop theft and burglary.

### Inspectorate finds significant improvement in Herts Police

When I was elected last May, Hertfordshire Constabulary was in the middle of an independent inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Every few years they undertake an inspection into how well police forces respond to the public, protect vulnerable people, and the way in which they report, investigate and prevent crime.



Hertfordshire's inspection report raised a formal 'cause of concern' about crime recording practices, meaning that some crimes were not being correctly recorded. The report made a series of recommendations for improvements.

I've made these improvements a key priority in the Police & Crime Plan and in my role holding the Constabulary to account. Extensive work has been undertaken by police officers and staff to bring about the changes necessary.

I am pleased to report that HMICFRS recently reinspected crime recording practices in Hertfordshire and judged that that significant improvements had been made, sufficient to lift the 'cause of concern' notice. Although there is still more work to do, this is excellent progress in under a year.

Getting crime recording right is essential to ensure victims of crime get the right support and offenders are being brought to justice and I will continue to maintain oversight of these improvements.

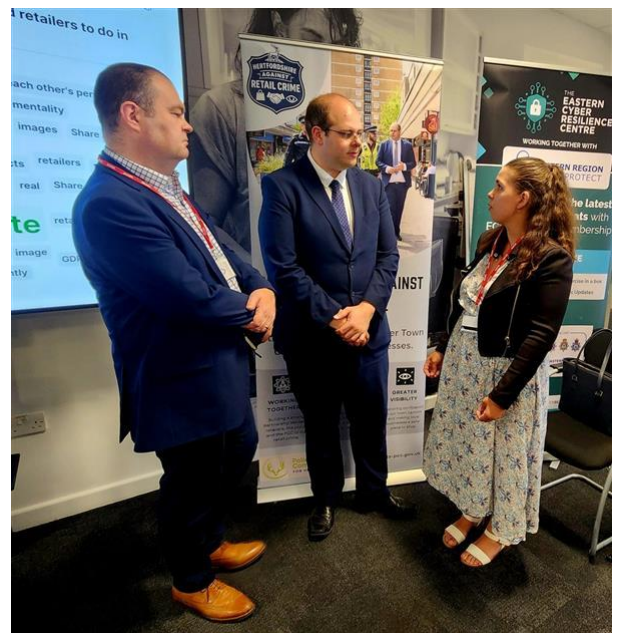
### **Retail Crime Forum launched to tackle shoplifting**

Shoplifting represents around 10% of recorded crime in Hertfordshire and, although lower than many other parts of the country, we've not been immune from national increases. So I've made tackling it a priority.

I recently organised a Retail Crime Forum, bringing over 100 representatives from national and local retailers, shopping centres and business organisations together with the police to discuss how we can collectively reduce shoplifting, business crime and assaults on retail workers.

Kindly hosted by Tesco at their HQ in Welwyn Garden City, major retailers such as Sainsbury's, Waitrose, M&S, John Lewis, Boots, B&Q and Co-op were all represented along with many of our independent retailers.

Retail crime is unacceptable and there is more we must do about it. Progress is being made in Hertfordshire, with the number of shop thefts being solved by police rising and additional town centre patrols through Operation Hotspot making an impact. We've also made clear that the police will act whatever the value of the good stolen, there is no lower limit in Hertfordshire.



We also need retailers, especially some of the biggest brands, to do more on things like better CCTV, security presence and sensible product placement.

The Retail Crime Forum will be a launchpad for further action so we can make Hertfordshire an unwelcome place for retail crime.

Read more about the Retail Crime Forum [here](#)

### **Safer town centres for Hertfordshire**

Hertfordshire's town centres have huge amounts to offer people and thriving high streets are critical to the county's economy. Ensuring they are places where people of all ages feel safe and want to spend their time is really important to me as your Police & Crime Commissioner.

To build on the success of Operation Hotspot, I've launched a new project to bring together Hertfordshire Constabulary and community safety partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and make our town centres safer.



The initial campaign over this summer will deliver:

- Additional police patrols in town centres to boost police visibility and tackle crime
- The expansion of Operation Hotspot patrols into two parks – Cassiobury Park in Watford and Hartham Common in Hertford
- Action to target shoplifters and predatory behaviour in the night-time economy
- Partnership working with Councils and business groups to boost crime prevention

As this work has got going over the last few weeks, I've been out and about across Hertfordshire seeing some of the impact it is already having.

In Watford, I joined officers on an Operation Hotspot patrol in Cassiobury Park and have made funding available for police horses to be out on patrol in the park during two busy weekends in August.

In Waltham Cross, the Chief Constable and I visited a retailer who has installed pioneering facial technology in their store which stores details of known shoplifters (innocent members of the public have their data deleted immediately) helping the staff and police react accordingly.

In Royston I joined an operation run by the District Council with Trading Standards and the police to shut down a dodgy vape shop which had been repeatedly selling illegal and counterfeit goods, including to children. Trading Standards have also acted to seize counterfeit and illegal goods at shops in Bishop's Stortford this month.

I joined the Roads Policing Unit on a recent operation they have been undertaking to tackle dangerous and anti-social riding on e-scooters, mopeds and off-road bikes. The shift I joined covered Borehamwood, Potters Bar and Hatfield, but patrols are happening across the county.

And there's a huge amount more work going on right across Hertfordshire! I'll be bringing you more of August's activity in my next newsletter.

Safer Town Centres for Hertfordshire: Your Town. Your Safety. Our Priority.

Read more about the project [here](#)

That's just some of the things I've been working on as your PCC. Make sure you [follow me on Facebook here](#) to keep up to date with everything else I'm doing to make Hertfordshire safer.

Best wishes,

Jonathan

**Jonathan Ash-Edwards**

**Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire**

P.S. As always, don't hesitate to let me know if there's anything you'd like to discuss with me as your Police & Crime Commissioner – email me any time on [commissioner@herts-pcc.gov.uk](mailto:commissioner@herts-pcc.gov.uk).