Newsletter from Police & Crime Commissioner Jonathan Ash-Edwards



Dear {FIRST_NAME},

It's a bumper update this month. In this newsletter, I'm pleased to bring you some updates on the progress we're making to deliver the Police & Crime Plan, examples of where Hertfordshire is bucking the national trend and, importantly, feedback from the public about the things that are making a difference.

Public confidence in policing really matters. It's at the heart of policing by consent and the relationships communities have with those charged with upholding the law. That's why I'm so pleased that public responses to the independent Crime Survey of England & Wales has ranked Hertfordshire the best police force area on whether the police do a good job locally.

I've been asking your views on the possibility of police force mergers recently and thousands of you have responded – thank you. Hertfordshire overwhelmingly is against losing a county police force and I'm making your views clear to the Government as they consider their policy.

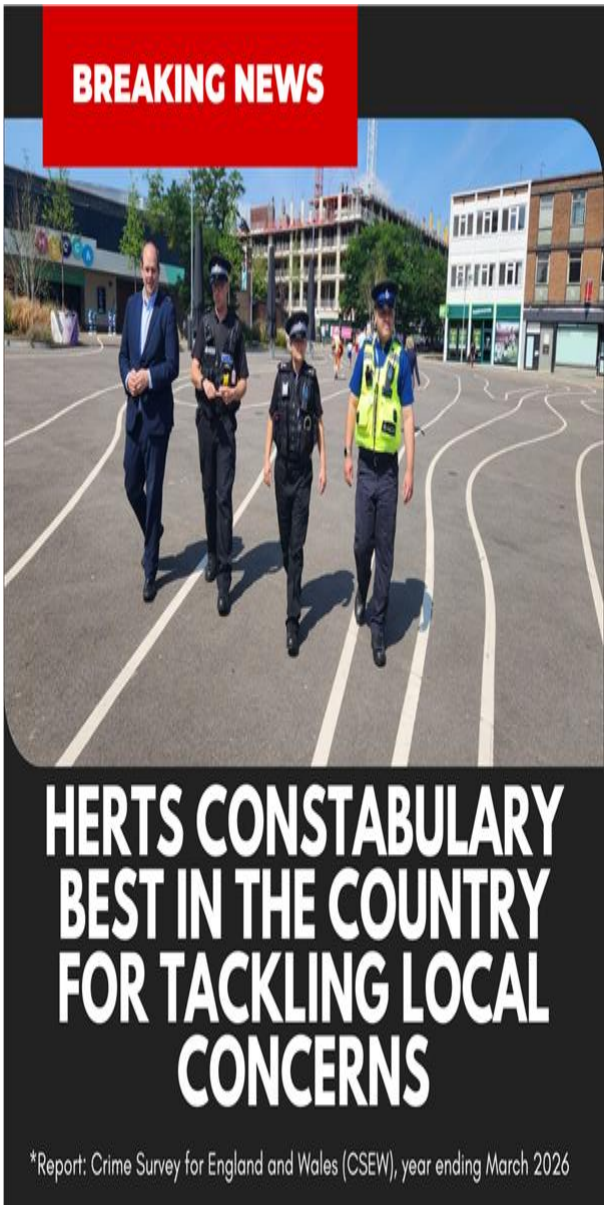
I wanted to share with you some updates below on an increase in stop and search, how we're working with retailers to tackle shoplifting and a welcome funding boost to protect Hertfordshire's Jewish communities.

And throughout the busy summer period, our Safer Town Centres project is underway with targeted action to keep our town centres safe and invest in projects that the police, councils, businesses and community groups tell me would make a difference. I'll update you in a future edition of this newsletter.

As ever, please get in touch at commissioner@herts-pcc.gov.uk if there is anything you'd like to raise. It remains a privilege to represent you as Hertfordshire's Police & Crime Commissioner.

Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire ranked best in the country for public confidence in policing



I want people in Hertfordshire to know that when they need the police, they will get the best possible service. My Plan as Police & Crime Commissioner is based on what residents and businesses told me were your priorities: more high-visibility patrols, quicker handling of 999 and 101 calls, more crimes being solved and stronger action on crime and anti-social behaviour

A new independent survey shows real progress is being made and Hertfordshire residents are noticing a difference. Every year the Office for National Statistics carries out the Crime Survey for England & Wales. It's the biggest and most accurate indicator of the public's experience of crime and policing.

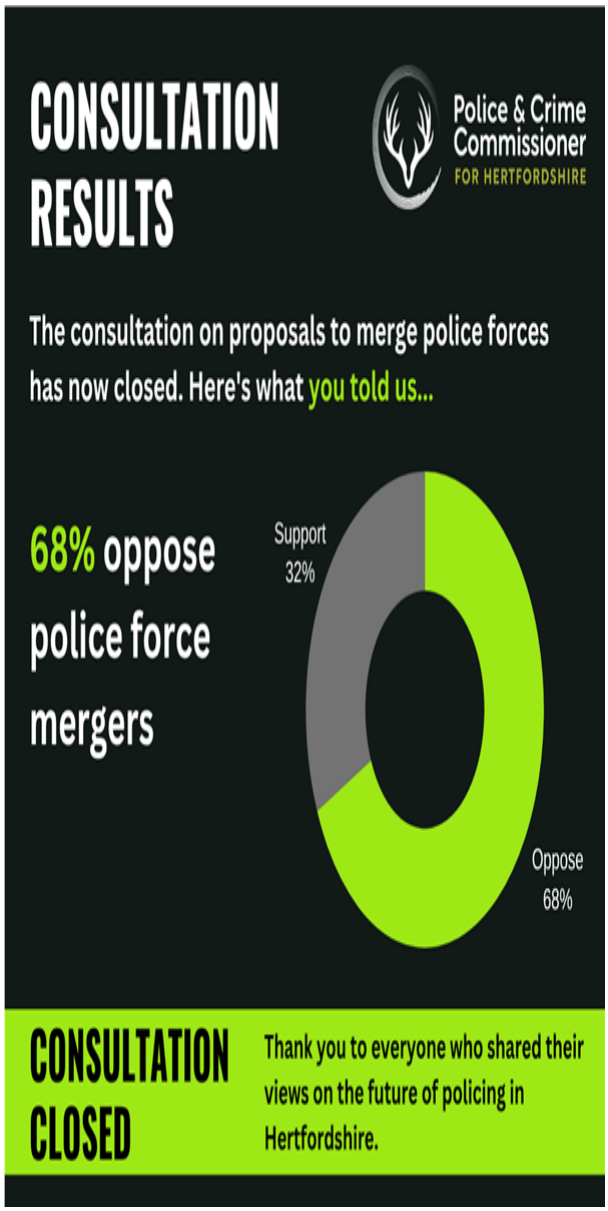
And on two of the key measures of public confidence, Hertfordshire has been ranked the best police force area in England and Wales by the public.

The ONS found that 59% of residents here believe their local police do a good or excellent job, compared with 49% nationally.

It also found that 62% believe police are dealing with the crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter where they live, again the highest score in the country and 14% percentage points higher than national average.

Public confidence has to be earned. These results are great feedback from the public, a significant milestone and reflect the hard work of police officers and staff across Hertfordshire. But nobody should be complacent. There is still more to do and I will keep advocating for the best possible policing for our county.

Read more here



Residents reject plans for police force mergers

Over the last couple of months, I've been consulting Hertfordshire residents on the Government's proposals to merge police forces. Thank you if you were one of the thousands of residents who had your say.

Hertfordshire's response is clear: our county wants policing to stay local, accountable and rooted in the communities it serves.

The public consultation received 3,697 responses, making it one of the largest consultations undertaken by my office. Overall, 68% of respondents opposed police mergers, while only 15% supported them.

The concerns residents raised are practical and personal: fewer visible officers in neighbourhoods, slower response times, weaker local knowledge and decisions being made further away from Hertfordshire. 80% said public money would be better spent putting more officers on the streets than funding structural reorganisation.

I've written to the Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, and the Independent Reviewer of Police Force Structures, Lord Hogan-Howe, to give them the results of the consultation.

Bigger does not mean better. I will make sure Hertfordshire's voice is heard by Government and continue pressing for what residents have told me they want: local policing, visible officers, faster responses and decisions made with Hertfordshire communities in mind.

Read more about the consultation results here

£9 million boost to protect Hertfordshire's Jewish communities



No one in Hertfordshire should have to look over their shoulder because of their faith. That is why I have welcomed a major new Home Office funding package which will provide Hertfordshire Constabulary with an additional £9 million over the next three years to strengthen protection for the county's Jewish community. It's exactly the kind of practical response that I've been calling for.

I know from speaking directly to residents, rabbis, school leaders and community organisations how deeply recent events have been felt. Hertfordshire has one of the largest Jewish communities outside London, and the county cannot be treated as an afterthought when the impact of hate crime is being felt so strongly here. Antisemitism is a stain on society and it must never be tolerated in Hertfordshire or beyond. We can and must do more to defeat it.

The extra funding will put more strength behind the work already under way with visible reassurance patrols, protective security, closer engagement with local communities and quicker action when concerns are raised. Hertfordshire stands with its Jewish community, and we will do everything we can to keep people safe.

Find out more here



Proactive policing drives 15% increase in stop and search

Used effectively, stop and search is an important police power to disrupt criminality and take weapons and drugs off our streets. Nationally, it's use has been declining for years. Too often that is unquestioningly accepted as a good thing.

That's why I welcome the news that Hertfordshire has bucked the national trend, increasing stop and search by 15% last year. That proactive policing is helping to keep communities safer.

Crucially that increase in stop and search has been effective. Because the proportion of stop and searches that result in police action has increased as well.

During 2025/26, officers carried out 7,735 stop and searches. 40% of these resulted in police action such as an arrest, drugs seizure, weapon recovery or other enforcement outcome. That is above the national average and points to the power being used in a more targeted and effective way.

For residents, the benefit is simple: weapons and drugs taken off the streets, offenders disrupted and stronger action in the places where crime causes harm.

Stop and search must always be lawful, fair, justified and proportionate. This is why it is scrutinised by independent community panels run by my office as well as

through my accountability meetings. But I'm pleased to see the increase in stop and search in Hertfordshire is helping make our county safer.

If you are interested in finding out more about joining a police powers scrutiny panel, contact me office at commissioner@herts-pcc.gov.uk.

Retail Crime Forum marks a year of progress



Retail crime is not low-level. It affects shop workers, businesses, customers and town centres, and it is often organised, persistent and deeply damaging. A year on from launching Hertfordshire's first countywide Retail Crime Forum, I brought retailers, police and partners back together to look honestly at the progress made and where more action is needed.

We have listened to what retailers told us. Since the first forum, the Herts Against Retail Crime Partnership Board has been established, improved reporting using new technology platforms such as ShopSafe and Auror has been rolled out, information sharing has strengthened and there is now a sharper focus on the prolific offenders causing the most harm. Better reporting and stronger evidence give police a clearer picture of what is happening, help build stronger cases and support more action against repeat offenders. For shop workers and businesses, that means better support, greater confidence to report crime and safer town centres for people to work, shop and visit.

Importantly, better reporting helps provide a better police response. The Forum heard some really good examples of where that partnership has worked. Like a single shoplifting report in Stevenage that resulted in officers arresting an organised crime group allegedly responsible for around £200,000 of thefts across the UK. Or the work of a fantastic neighbourhood officer in Welwyn Hatfield who is

solving over 85% of the shoplifting reports from a group of shops he has worked with, ensuring more offenders are put before the courts.

My message remains clear: retail crime will not be tolerated in Hertfordshire. We will keep working with businesses, police and partners to prevent crime, improve reporting, target offenders and help our town centres thrive.

Message Sent By
Jonathan Ash-Edwards