Newsletter from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire



Dear Resident

Every year, Police & Crime Commissioners have to provide an annual report to the Panel of councillors who scrutinise how I do my role. Having presented this recently it was great to reflect on some of the progress which has been made in the last two years:

 50,000 hours of high visibility police patrols with Operation Hotspot (read more below)

 More crime solved – with Hertfordshire now in the top 10 forces nationally for solving crime in the first quarter of this year

 Over 50 additional officers in **neighbourhood policing** teams

 999 and 101 calls being answered faster, with the proportion of 101 calls abandoned because they weren't answered quickly enough more than halved

 More protection from domestic abuse, with Hertfordshire now **5th best in the country for using Clare's Law**, the domestic abuse disclosure scheme (Hertfordshire was bottom nationally for this when I came into role).

 Action to tackle shoplifting, with new reporting platforms for retailers, faster prosecutions and retail crime beginning to fall in Hertfordshire, bucking the national trend.

All delivered whilst reducing the size of the PCC's office by 18%, giving local taxpayers better value for money.

There's loads more to do, but it feels like we are on the right track to ensure that Hertfordshire remains a safe county, crime is being proactively tackled and our county has the best possible policing.

As ever, if there are any issues you would like to raise, please email me at commissioner@herts-pcc.gov.uk

Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire



Visible policing boost passes 50,000 patrol hours milestone in two-year crackdown on crime and anti-social behaviour

More than 50,000 hours of targeted hotspot patrols have now been delivered across Hertfordshire as part of ongoing work to crack down on crime, anti-social behaviour and violence in town centres and neighbourhoods.

Hotspot policing is one of my key priorities as Police & Crime Commissioner – delivering on the public's desire to see more police patrols. But importantly it is also helping to cut crime and anti-social behaviour, making Hertfordshire safer for everyone.

Putting more police officer time into crime hotspots and town centres is not rocket science, it's common sense and it delivers real results. Over the last two years, during Operation Hotspot patrols, officers have made hundreds of arrests as well as carrying out hundreds of stop searches, using anti-social behaviour powers and taking weapons and drugs off our streets.

Passing 50,000 hotspot patrol hours in two years is a major milestone. I am grateful to Hertfordshire's police officers and PCSOs who have stepped up and done these additional patrols on top of their day-to-day work. It has made a real difference in

making Hertfordshire safer and I will keep backing proactive policing in Hertfordshire.

Read more about Operation Hotspot and the 50,000 patrol hours milestone here.



Have your say on the biggest policing shake-up in decades

I am asking residents, businesses and community groups across Hertfordshire to share their views on Government proposals which could see police forces merged into much larger regional organisations.

These plans would represent the biggest shake-up of policing in more than 60 years, potentially reducing the current 43 police forces across England and Wales to as few as 12 regional forces.

Despite that, the Government is not asking local communities for their views. Our country prides itself on policing by consent, so it's only right that the public are properly consulted on changes on this scale.

While there are sensible reforms worth discussing in the police reform white paper, I am concerned that larger regional forces could mean resources and decision-making move further away from local communities like ours.

I want to hear the views of Hertfordshire's communities so I can share the findings with the independent review that is looking at this issue.

The consultation remains open until 10th July and I would encourage everyone to take part.

Find out more and have your say here



Hundreds of tool marking kits handed out as roadshows support Hertfordshire tradespeople

Every day across Hertfordshire, tradespeople are hard at work on building sites or in customer's homes. Their tools are vital for them to be able to do their job.

But I've heard horrendous stories from tradespeople about the impact of tool theft: livelihoods damaged, jobs cancelled and huge replacement costs.

I wanted to do something to help tradespeople. That's why I've allocated funding for free forensic marking kits for tools. The forensic marking kits contain a unique traceable solution which can be applied to tools and equipment, helping deter criminals, support police investigations and make stolen property harder to sell on.

They have two great benefits: deterring thieves who are less likely to nick tools that can be traced and allowing the police to return tools that are found to their rightful owners. Police officers regularly uncover stolen tools that are not marked and they have no way of reuniting with victims.

Over the last few weeks, tool marking events have been held at DIY and trade retailers across the county. We've had a great response and hundreds of tool marking kits have been handed out to tradespeople.

If you are a Hertfordshire based tradesperson, you can request a free kit here: https://tinyurl.com/y84hv2s3

Tool theft is not a victimless crime. For many people, losing their tools means losing work, income and peace of mind. That is why I am continuing to back practical action which protects tradespeople and targets offenders.

Alongside these roadshows, Hertfordshire Constabulary continues proactive work to tackle acquisitive crime and pursue those responsible for stealing tools across the county.



Working together to tackle violence against women and girls

I joined partners from across Hertfordshire to launch a new countywide strategy and communications charter aimed at tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Violence against women and girls is unacceptable and a stain on our society. Nationally, one in eight women experienced domestic abuse, sexual assault or

stalking last year. Everyone in Hertfordshire deserves to feel safe and free from abuse and harm, whether in their own homes or in their local community.

The new partnership strategy, developed alongside Hertfordshire County Council and other local organisations, sets out a clear plan to prevent violence, pursue perpetrators and support victim survivors, with agencies working together and the lived experiences of survivors at the heart of the work.

And during the World Cup, there is additional focus on tackling VAWG. The national evidence shows that, win or lose, domestic violence increases when England play. No one should suffer in silence and the Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline is available for help on 0808 808 8088. Always call police in an emergency or to report a crime.



Building on progress to keep Hertfordshire's town centres safe this summer

Our town centres are at the heart of community life. They are places where people shop, work, socialise and spend time with family and friends. Everyone has the right to feel safe when they do so.

Last summer, targeted patrols and partnership activity helped reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Town centres and parks across Hertfordshire saw reductions in robbery, violent crime and assaults.

This summer, we'll continue to build on that progress and I'll be working with Hertfordshire Constabulary, local councils and business groups to make our town

centres safer. I'll also be making grant funding available for initiatives to support crime prevention and public safety.



Scrutinising police powers

My next Accountability & Performance Meeting will be held on Tuesday 7th July at 10.30am. I'll be scrutinising the use of police powers, such as stop and search, use of force and police custody.

You can register to watch the meeting live here: https://tinyurl.com/4hre6353 and the recording will be online soon after.