



A message from your Commissioner:

A new Government was elected in May and the clear signals over the next five years indicate that the Police Service is going to face even more stringent cuts to the funding that the Government allocates to us. We have already announced the closure of 58 Police buildings including many local Police Stations from the cuts imposed by the last Government. Our Police Officer numbers have fallen from 2100 in 2010 to around 1800 now and we predict that number will be around 1650 in 2019/20 or possibly lower if even higher cuts are announced. This is a very difficult time for Policing and all public services but we will manage our budget in a way that there is the lowest possible impact on protecting our communities.

Modernisation is not something any force can choose to ignore in the current climate. Technological advances are offering us a lifeline in the face of persistent budget cuts and resource shortages, ensuring our officers remain visible in our communities to provide reassurance and reduce fear of crime. We will use money that we have put aside (reserves) to invest in new equipment that will allow officers to work remotely without the need to come back to their Police Station. This is going to take around 18 months as we also have to upgrade some of our main computer systems, but once we have achieved this it will make Derbyshire Police a great deal more efficient.

As ever, the views of the public are hugely important in guiding our decisions and I hope you will take the opportunity of providing feedback to communicate your priorities for community safety in this year's Over to You project. Your voice really can instigate change.

Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner **Alan Charles**



Changes to our enquiry offices



Crime itself is continually changing and there are always new threats to negotiate to keep our communities safe. To meet these challenges, in the context of a dwindling budget, we have to rethink how we organise our services. It's no longer possible to avoid change – it's inevitable that reductions in police buildings, vehicles, officers and staff will need to take place to reduce our overheads and modernise the way we work to safeguard our most critical services. These tough decisions are being made.

We have no option but to close a number of police stations and other buildings and reduce the 16 public enquiry offices currently open down to four due to large reductions in our finances and changing customer demand. It is part of a wider plan to make savings of up to £26m during the next five years.

The enquiry offices will close gradually over the coming months so that by September, only the counters at Buxton, Chesterfield and Derby's St Mary's Wharf and Pear Tree police stations will remain open.

On June 12, enquiry offices at Glossop, Matlock, Clay Cross, Bolsover, Long Eaton, Cotton Lane in Derby and Swadlincote will shut with Bakewell and Derby's Assembly Rooms enquiry offices closing the following day. By September 18, Ashbourne, Ripley and Ilkeston enquiry offices will close, with closure dates announced nearer the time.

I understand that people don't like to see their access to police stations close, but in these times of austerity we have the choice of keeping Police Stations open when the Chief Constable has said he can produce a policing model where they are not required, or use the savings to offset the number of Police Officers that we are losing.

Most importantly, please be assured we will not be moving out of any area without alternative accommodation for our Safer Neighbourhood Teams set up and ready to go. And when we do, it will be widely publicised.

over to you CONSULTATION

Derbyshire's largest annual feedback exercise is underway and is ready and willing to hear what you have to say about policing.

Last year, almost 3,455 Over to You questionnaires were completed during face-to-face interviews and online and the resulting feedback was fed into my Police and Crime Plan to ensure the priorities I outline continue to remain relevant.

This year's project will see us visit a host of police and community events across Derbyshire over the next six months to meet residents and find out what they think about community safety.

So far, almost all of the residents we've spoken to have shared my frustration at the relentless cuts to police funding from the government and calling for an end to future reductions. They've also voiced their views on what crimes the police should be focusing on most.

Over to You is an important factor in determining where resources are allocated and which crimes are to be prioritised in the future. We are facing ongoing financial difficulties which requires tough decisions – it's vital that the public are given the opportunity of letting us know where our scarce resources are needed most.

Completing this survey is one of the simple ways you can contribute to future community safety. This will help us shape a better police service for everyone.

You can complete the survey by visiting:

<http://www.derbyshire-pcc.gov.uk/oty>



Tackling wildlife crime

As one of my Police and Crime Plan priorities, wildlife crime remains a focus in Derbyshire and we are continually looking at new ways of enhancing our response in this area without increasing the cost.

The Force is receiving a growing number of calls in relation to wildlife and animal cruelty, which is a strong indication that people want to see our wildlife and natural heritage protected.



As a result of this, I have helped to fund the training for an additional 16 officers to tackle wildlife crime and animal cruelty across the county, taking the number of trained wildlife police officers to 36 in the past ten months. This latest rise in our wildlife response follows a week-long course at Derbyshire Constabulary's headquarters in Ripley. The role requires additional training in the law on wildlife crime, environmental legislation, endangered species and a multiagency approach to investigative procedures.

All 36 of the wildlife officers are spread across the Force area and undertake normal policing duties in addition to their specialist roles. As ever with rural and wildlife crime, we rely heavily on the eyes and ears of the public to keep us informed about suspicious behaviour and would ask them to remain vigilant. If you have any concerns or want to report a wildlife crime, contact the Force on 101. In an emergency, always dial 999.

Also, if you get chance by 24 June, please take part in the largest ever survey about crime and anti-social behaviour in rural areas which is being carried out by the National Rural Crime Network.

To take part, visit:

<http://www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net/survey?member=Derbyshire>

Domestic Abuse CONFERENCE



Prevention is a core focus in the multi-agency work taking place to protect victims of domestic abuse in Derbyshire. In April, I jointly hosted a national conference in the county exploring new approaches to protecting vulnerable people from abusive relationships before they suffer physical or psychological harm.

The 'Is Prevention Better than Cure' event, held in Chesterfield on April 22 and organised by national criminal justice network NoOffence!, in partnership with my office, brought together leading figures from health, education and criminal justice to address a series of issues including lack of confidence among victims to report their experiences.

One of the over-riding themes to emerge from the discussions has been the need for mainstream funding to be invested into support facilities for survivors. While I've dedicated a significant proportion of my Community Safety Fund into improving advice and practical help for victims of domestic abuse, it's clear that a bigger commitment is needed centrally to enable public protection agencies to take this forward and build on the good work taking place at a grassroots level.

It is evident that many domestic abuse organisations operate on a year-to-year or even six-monthly basis, not knowing where their next source of funding will come from. Long-term benefits cannot be achieved with such uncertainty.

If we are going to improve our response in the long-term then these hardworking organisations require financial security.

Increasing support for victims of domestic abuse is one of my key priorities. Since April, I've announced almost £100,000 of Ministry of Justice funding for a host of domestic abuse projects which will secure services until March 2016.

A large proportion of the funding - £34,392 - has been awarded to the Derbyshire Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Service to fund a court-based Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) post in the north of the county for a period of 12 months.

IDVAs focus on high risk victims and support individuals at a point of crisis, helping them to plan safety strategies to protect them and their families.



NEW HQ PLANS take step forward

In the face of an ever-decreasing budget, we are exploring all opportunities available to work with our partners to enhance efficiency and resilience. Our new Derbyshire Constabulary and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service joint headquarters is testament to this forward-thinking and I'm delighted to report that the project is well on its way.

Now that the main construction contract has been awarded to Derbyshire-based Bowmer and Kirkland, following a comprehensive tendering exercise, building work is expected to take place next month with an anticipated completion date of summer 2016.

The new HQ will be situated at the current police site at Butterley Hall in Ripley and provides an opportunity for both emergency service organisations to work more closely together and save money while also delivering value for money for the public.

Currently, the headquarters for both organisations are old buildings that are at the end of their useful life and in need of considerable future investment. This project offers the most cost-effective solution in the long-term and will cement our status as close working partners.



Multi-agency drugs conference

Prevention over cure is governing our approach to most types of crime including drug misuse. Drug crime is often the product of a whole host of social and economic problems and it is accepted that strategies that focus on resolving many of these issues can deliver long-term solutions.

As this goes to print, Derbyshire Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner is preparing to host a multiagency drugs conference to highlight the current response to drug crime and to increase pressure on the government to review drugs policy in the UK, focusing on treating rather than criminalising addiction.

Recent developments in legislation surrounding the ban on psychoactive substances (NPS) – the new so-called ‘designer drugs’ on Britain’s streets – have opened up the argument for a more radical rethink of current UK drugs policy.

Professionals from all sectors including health, education and policing are in support of a new national framework that concentrates on recovery and helping people to rebuild their lives in the long-term. Prison is often only a quick-fix solution with many offenders returning to their criminal ways the moment they emerge from jail.

“We need to be concentrating our ambitions on developing healthy, well-rounded people who can contribute to the economy as well as keeping our streets crime and drug free. This is not achieved through enforcement alone”

The ‘Time to talk? About Drugs Policy’ is taking place at the Post Mill Centre in South Normanton and will feature presentations from a range of people including Derbyshire Chief Constable Mick Creedon and Dr Liz Austen, Lecturer of Criminology at Sheffield Hallam University and will be calling on the Government to hold a commission into existing drugs policy in the UK.



PHOTO ABOVE: PCC and Mitch Winehouse at an event for parents at the Springbank Arts Centre, New Mills, to introduce the Amy Winehouse Foundation’s drugs prevention ‘Resilience’ programme which will be trialed at New Mills School in the coming year.



Mum, can you lend me twenty quid?

This very forceful stage adaptation of the book by Elizabeth Burton Phillips is a powerful reminder that drug addiction can happen in any family and with devastating consequences.

The war against drugs shows no sign of abating, even after 44 years of effort and investment. In North Derbyshire alone, in December 2013 there were 45 arrests, two pubs shut down three days before Christmas and resulting long custodial sentences.

It was a really great policing operation, very successful. But did it stop drugs being sold on the streets of Chesterfield and Buxton? **NO.** Of the billions of pounds spent on drug related issues each year 65% is spent on Law Enforcement, 11.5% on Health and just 0.1% on Education!

We need to do more. And I believe that we need to do it differently.

The true story of ‘Mum, can you lend me twenty quid?’ is a story of loss but more importantly it brings real hope for recovery. It carries a powerful message to both young people and to parents, in fact to the whole community. Elizabeth’s story is a universal story.

With many positive reviews and testimonials from Chief Constables, Prison Governors, The ACMD Recovery Committee, Health professionals and other agencies I urge people to take the opportunity to see it if they can.

A teacher, Elizabeth had identical twin sons, who had been doing well at school. She never imagined that they would become involved in drugs. Suspension from school for smoking cannabis was the start of a cataclysmic journey that culminated with a knock on the door in the early hours by the police. They gave her the devastating news that her son Nick had killed himself in despair at his heroin addiction.

Earlier this month I was lucky enough to be invited to a performance and speak to the audience afterwards in Chesterfield thanks to Spoda, a charity which has been providing services to families and carers who live in Derbyshire since 1998.



Neighbourhood Watch

Partnership

A new partnership between my office, the Force and the many Neighbourhood Watch schemes operating across D Division is increasing the profile of community safety work and encouraging more people to get involved.

This progress has been helped by Brian Farthing of Neighbourhood Watch and now meetings are being held every two months to discuss crime prevention updates and the work undertaken by the watches to make people safer. There are now 607 watches across D Division which can advise and deliver security advice including bike marking. Two bike marking events are planned for Chellaston and Aston in the near future.

Watch members have been busy promoting their work at schools, hospitals and on the radio. In the coming months, Neighbourhood Watch contacts and links will be available on the OPCC's website as well as information on how to become a watch volunteer or launch a new watch.

Neighbourhood Watch volunteers in D Division have also been busy encouraging residents in their areas to complete the Over to You feedback survey. It is vitally important we encourage as many people as possible to provide us with their views so we gain a cross section of our population and I would like to thank them for their ongoing support.

PHOTO ABOVE: Deputy Commissioner Hardyal Dhindsa with members of Buxton Neighbourhood Watch at the Emergency Services Day.

Contact me

Do you have something to say about achieving a safer Derbyshire?
I want to hear it!



YOU CAN:

Go to my website:

www.derbyshire-pcc.gov.uk

Email me at:

pccoffice@derbyshire.pnn.police.uk

Call me on:

0300 122 6000

Write to me at:

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