

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

Annual Engagement Report

1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018

Vision

Upon re-election, PCC Martyn Underhill pledged to publish an annual engagement report to evidence engagement activities carried out by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

In 2017/18, we engaged with over 3,000 people face-to-face at summer events, speaking engagements, conferences, community meetings and PCC surgeries. We reached over 3.9 million people via our social media channels. We delivered 4 formal public consultations receiving over 10,500 responses from local people in total and achieved more than 4,000 user engagement minutes during online web chats with residents.

Effective public engagement is a statutory responsibility of PCCs, who must seek the views of the community in order to act as the bridge between policing and the public. This engagement informs local policing priorities set by the PCC on behalf of Dorset residents in the Police and Crime Plan, to which Dorset Police is held to account.

As the voice of local people in policing, the PCC aims to ensure that policing remains dynamic and responsive to communities it serves, supporting the policing by consent model that operates in the UK. This is achieved through various methods to inform, consult and inform residents of Dorset.

The Annual Engagement Report allows for greater transparency, accountability and public scrutiny of the PCC's current engagement approach, empowering residents to become more involved in generating new ideas to more effectively bring policing to the heart of all communities in Dorset.

The OPCC has taken a position that no person or group of people are hard to reach – it just depends on the approach that is taken. The need to exert more effort and creativity in reaching certain groups has been recognised, and the Office is committed to ensuring that all members of the community are given the opportunity to engage with the OPCC in order to more effectively hold Dorset Police to account.



Engagement activity

Below is a summary of the key strands of engagement activity that have been delivered by the OPCC during the 2017/18 financial year.

Police & Crime Plan launch

1. Public consultation

The PCC is required to publish a Police & Crime Plan for the duration of his term of office. The Plan sets out the strategic direction and key objectives for policing, wider community safety and criminal justice outcomes in Dorset. The PCC works closely with partners and holds the Chief Constable to account for delivery against the Plan.

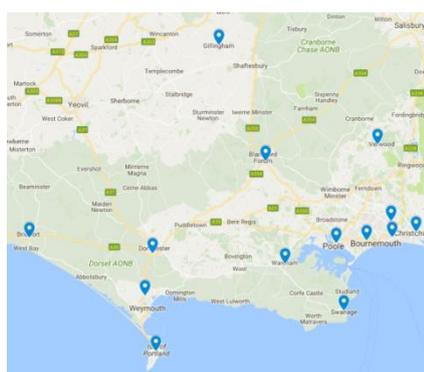
In undertaking these duties, the PCC is required to ensure that the views and concerns of local people, including the most vulnerable members of the community, are fully considered.



The Police & Crime Plan was informed by public consultation. This took place both online and face-to-face over a six week period.

The face-to-face consultation took place at shopping centres and supermarkets across Dorset: Bournemouth, Christchurch, Boscombe, Poole, Verwood, Gillingham, Dorchester, Blandford, Swanage, Wareham, Bridport, Weymouth and Portland.

Views expressed by residents shaped the final priorities set for Dorset Police.



2. Stakeholder engagement

To launch the new priorities for Dorset Police, the PCC held four 'ask the experts' events to improve stakeholders' understanding of how residents' top priorities will be achieved over the course of his term of office.

During these events, expert panellists delivered inputs on each of the Police & Crime Plan priorities. Tangible examples of how progress towards meeting priorities were offered, and partnership involvement welcomed.

PROTECTING PEOPLE AT RISK OF HARM



Effectively targeting resources on the basis of threat, risk and harm to safeguard the most vulnerable and fulfil the core policing duty of protecting our communities.

SUPPORTING VICTIMS, WITNESSES & REDUCING REOFFENDING



Providing the best possible support services to victims and witnesses of crime in Dorset, while taking steps to break the cycle of reoffending by rehabilitating our young and most prolific offenders.

WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES



Regularly engaging with local people and partners to bring the police to the heart of the communities they serve and to identify sustainable solutions to the issues of greatest concern in Dorset.

TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE



Working in collaboration with partners, developing our technology and investing in our people to meet the challenge of emerging threats and operate effectively, both now and in the future.

In addition to an internal audience, attendees included representatives from the following organisations: Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, Dorset Rape Crisis, Victim Support, the Dorset Police Victims' Bureau, Poole Harbour Watch, the Police & Crime Panel, North Dorset District Council, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, the LGBT Equality Network, Citizens Advice Witness Service, Dorset Action on Abuse, Dorset Race Equality Council, RNLI, Circles, Safer Poole Partnership, Acts Fast, BCHA, Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Safe Partnership, Bournemouth University SU, Samaritans, Independent Custody Visiting Association, the Harbour Master and the Association of Dorset Watches.

Results

Just 31% of attendees said they had a 'very good' understanding of the previous 2013-2017 Police & Crime Plan priorities.

Having attended an Ask the Expert panel, 76% of attendees assessed their understanding of the 2017-2021 Police & Crime Plan as 'very good'. 82% said their understanding of the new priorities had improved.

3. Ongoing public engagement

Residents can visit the interactive Police & Crime Plan webpage to stay up to date with progress being made to meet Dorset Police's priorities. You can view all updates, browse by time period or use the filter options to find out more about your specific policing interests, from rural to cyber-crime. Visit www.dorsetpoliceplan.com to learn more about the activity carried out by the OPCC on behalf of the public.

All Updates Updates in the last 3 months



PROTECTING PEOPLE AT RISK OF HARM



WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES



SUPPORTING VICTIMS, WITNESSES & REDUCING REOFFENDING



TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE

VULNERABILITY, PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION

MENTAL HEALTH, DRUGS & ALCOHOL

NATIONAL ISSUES & LOCAL APPROACHES



Public consultation

Public consultation on policing and community safety issues provides residents and partners with an opportunity to scrutinise, inform and influence outcomes. By collecting a wide spectrum of perspectives, initiatives and proposals are better exposed to the people they will affect prior to implementation and therefore take into account local needs.

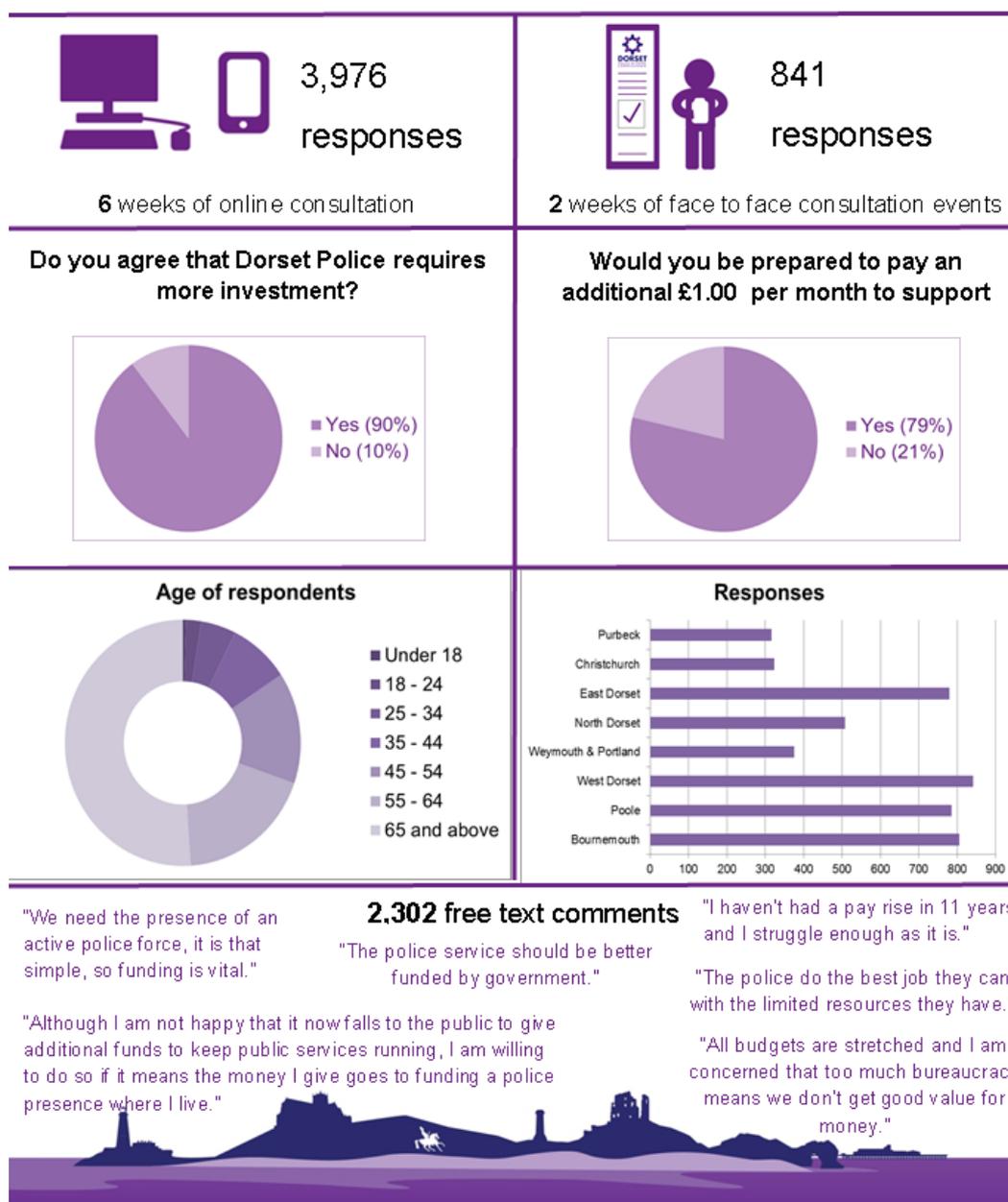
1. Policing precept consultation

The PCC is responsible for setting the policing element of local council tax and is required in statute to consult with residents on this issue. This year, Dorset OPCC achieved the highest number of responses it has ever had to the annual precept consultation.

2016/17: 4,135 responses

2017/18: 4,485 responses

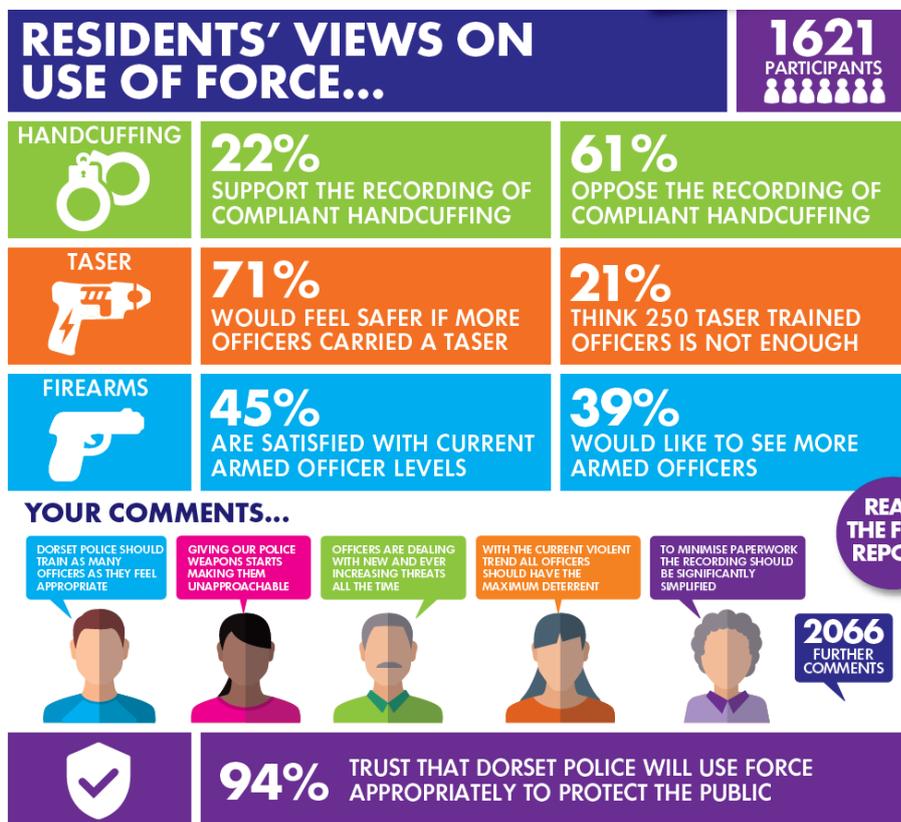
2018/19: 4,817 responses



2. Use of Force consultation

From the challenges posed by terrorism to the increase in knife crime, policing is operating in rapidly evolving times. In 2017, Dorset Police announced that the number of Taser trained officers will increase to 250 after a thorough assessment of threat, risk and harm.

With this in mind, the PCC decided to launch a public consultation to identify trends in local opinion on how officers are equipped. Key findings are outlined below.



Under the Home Office recording system, officers must answer fifty questions every time force is used.

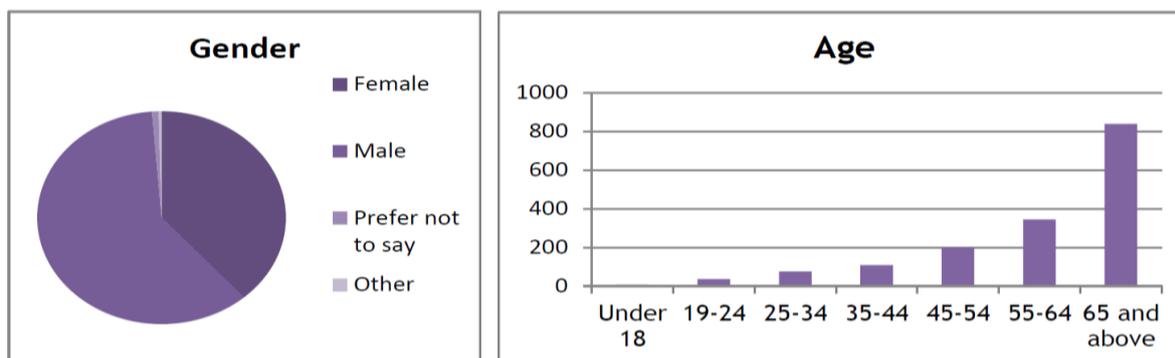
At present, this includes compliant handcuffing, where the arrested person presents no physical or verbal challenge to being handcuffed.

Only a minority of local respondents expected officers to record compliant handcuffing as a use of force.

The Commissioner shares concerns about the demand this places on scarce officer time and will be presenting this result to police leaders as the recording process evolves.

Looking ahead, the Commissioner will be taking the findings of the consultation to the Use of Force Scrutiny Panel that has been set up to scrutinise officers' use of force. This will maximise opportunities for learning.

Valuable contributions made by members of the public and a demographic breakdown of participants can be read in the [full Use of Force Consultation Report](#).



3. Drink drive limit consultation

Upon re-election, the Commissioner pledged to lobby the Government to lower the drink drive limit to bring it in line with limits seen in Scotland and Europe. In support of this, the Commissioner launched a public consultation to gather the views of residents.



The consultation was launched in conjunction with annual drink drive awareness campaigns in December 2017, and closed at the end of March 2018.

This engagement opportunity was promoted through various channels to encourage wide participation in the consultation.

Residents were targeted via news releases, local newspaper coverage, Dorset Alert messages, social media promotion including sponsored posts, radio interviews and via the OPCC website.

Key results and trends

- 2,098 people shared their views in a survey, with 72% supportive of legislative change to bring the current limit into line with standards seen in Scotland and Europe.
- On a scale of '100% confident' to 'not at all confident', people were just 53% confident that they knew how much alcohol can legally be consumed under the current limit.
- 70% expressed a view that if the drink drive limit was lowered, motorists would be more cautious about how much alcohol they consume before driving. 61% said they would feel safer when travelling in Dorset.
- Of those who stated that they currently consume alcohol before driving, 38% said a lower limit would result in them consuming less alcohol before driving, while 40% would no longer consume any alcohol before getting behind the wheel.
- Support for legislative change was strongest among those in the 35-44 age range, with over 74% seeking a lower drink drive limit as compared with just below 68% of participants between the ages of 55 and 64.
- Significantly, while 89% of female respondents supported a lower drink drive limit, just 63% of male participants agreed.

Levels of support for a lower limit by area

- Weymouth & Portland (212 respondents) – 75%
- East Dorset (335 respondents) – 74%
- Bournemouth (339 respondents) – 74%
- Poole (350 respondents) – 72%
- Christchurch (112 respondents) – 71%
- North Dorset (250 respondents) – 70%
- West Dorset (344 respondents) – 69%
- Purbeck (125 respondents) – 62%
- Outside of Dorset (31 respondents) – 74%



Summer events

Every year, the OPCC attends a number of organised events to give residents an opportunity to share any crime or community safety concerns they may have. The commitment from OPCC volunteers this summer, as previously, was integral to the success of each of the events.

Results and findings

SUMMER EVENTS
<i>The PCC and his team attended events across the county to talk to the public about the new Police & Crime Plan for Dorset.</i>
<i>Bourne Free</i> 1 July 2017, Bournemouth
<i>Emergency Services Family Fun Day</i> 22 July 2017, King's Park
<i>BCHA Festival of Wellbeing</i> 4 August 2017, Boscombe
<i>Gillingham & Shaftesbury Show</i> 16 August 2017, Motcombe
<i>Melplash Show</i> 24 August 2017, Bridport
<i>Bournemouth Air Festival</i> 31 Aug - 3 Sept 2017, Bournemouth
<i>Dorset County Show</i> 2 - 3 September 2017, Dorchester

In total, 830 residents formally recorded their views with the OPCC in a survey.

358 residents signed up to receive the OPCC newsletter.

340 individuals expressed an interest in finding out more about the four scrutiny panels overseen by the PCC.

82% felt it 'very important' that the issues the PCC raises with the Chief Constable reflect the views, concerns and ideas of Dorset residents. Only 5 people (0.6%) stated that it was 'unimportant'.

For respondents who had phoned 101 in the last year, with 10 being the best and 1 being the worst: 30% rated the overall quality of the service they received as 4 or less, 27% rated it as between 5 and 7, and 43% rated it as 8 or above.

When asked about the potential for PCCs to take on a bigger role in the police complaints process, 65% felt it would be a positive change and 28% were unsure.

77% agreed to some extent (35% strongly agreed) that they had confidence in police in their area.

Taking everything into account, 31% felt police are doing an excellent job in their area, with 47% saying they are doing a good job.

Demographics of survey participants

Area	Proportion of Dorset population	Proportion of surveys completed
Poole	20%	11%
Bournemouth	26%	31%
Dorset County	55%	58%

The table compares the number of consultations completed by people from different areas of Dorset, compared to the population estimates of mid-2016. The OPCC will consider options for additional engagement activity in Poole going forward.

Age

Of those that provided information on age, the highest proportion were aged 65 and over. This group equated to 31% of the total number of respondents: 2016 estimates suggest this age group makes up 24% of the Dorset population.



Outside of this group, there was a good distribution across the age groups between 25 and 64, ranging from 12 – 20%. The fewest survey responses were gained from those aged under 18 (10 responses – 1%) and 18-24 (31 responses – 4%). Encouraging greater involvement and participation among young people in Dorset is an OPCC engagement objective for the coming year.

Ethnicity

20% of participants did not share their ethnicity. Of those that did, 96% identified as White (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish). Other respondents identified as the following:

Any other White background		Asian	
'Australian'	2	Indian	3
'Eastern European'	1	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	
'French'	1	African	2
'German'	2	Other Ethnic Group	
'Hungarian'	1	Arab	1
'Polish'	5	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	
'Russian'	3	White & Black Caribbean	1
'American'	1	White & Black African	1
'European'	2	White & Asian	3
'Czech'	1		

The most recent population estimates suggest that approximately 95% of the Dorset population identify as white. However, community perceptions score consistently lower with BAME communities in Dorset. Residents from some minority ethnic communities are less likely to engage with policing issues. Victim satisfaction levels are also consistently higher for white British users (79%), compared to BAME users (70%).

For these reasons, the OPCC continues to recognise the need to improve engagement with these groups and welcomes public feedback and ideas.



Scrutiny panels

With the help of independent members of the public, scrutiny panels are administered by the OPCC to enable the PCC to hold Dorset Police to account. The active involvement and participation of residents ensures scrutiny is thorough and takes into account the experiences of diverse groups across Dorset.

11 scrutiny panels were held in total from 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018.

More information can be found [online](#).

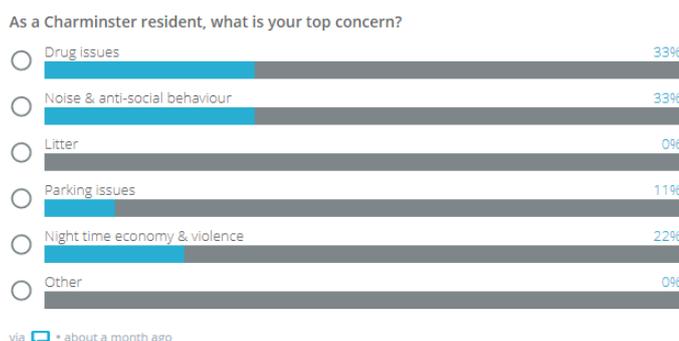
Web chats

The Commissioner pledged to improve accessibility and make engagement opportunities as convenient as possible for residents.

While face-to-face public meetings are highly valuable, online web chats allow the OPCC to reach many more people. All that is required to participate in an online web chat is an internet connection. If residents are unable to participate live, they can submit any queries beforehand via email or Twitter and read back through discussions, which are published in full on the OPCC website.

This tactic has been successfully trialled 3 times in the last financial year, in an effort to diversify the public feedback received by the Office.

Each chat had a different focus, which included Independent Custody Visiting recruitment, a residents' chat to consider local issues being addressed with a partnership approach and police funding.



The software allows for multi-media engagement and includes a poll feature, giving the OPCC a real insight into residents' views on specific matters.

Results

	ICV recruitment	Charminster residents	Police precept	TOTAL
Live page views	71	45	78	194
Replay page views	192	150	98	440
Comments received	41	16	8	65
User engagement minutes	1,840	1,130	1,040	4,010

Public contact

Residents are able to engage directly with the OPCC via telephone, website contact forms and by email. In 2017/18, the OPCC was contacted 897 times in total by members of the public. The nature of public correspondence received is wide-ranging, from general comments to requests for information.

Surgeries

Under the terms of the 2011 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, the PCC has a statutory duty for obtaining the views of the community about matters concerning the policing of their local area. This also includes a specific duty for obtaining the views of victims of crime.

PCC surgeries enable the PCC to meet residents face-to-face and in confidence, to listen to their concerns and try to help resolve any issues they might have. 17 surgery appointments



were held by the PCC between 31 March 2017 and 1 April 2018. You can find out more about PCC surgeries [online](#).

Speaking engagements

The Commissioner regularly attends community group meetings, conferences and events across the county to give residents and stakeholders opportunities to take part in Q&As and find out more about the work of the OPCC.

The PCC is proud to have been able to directly engage face-to-face with over **3,000** residents during the 2017/18 financial year.

Social media

Social media channels are used by the OPCC to generate regular two-way engagement, giving the public an opportunity to interact with the work of the Office in an accessible way, and receive responses to specific comments or queries.

	31 March 2017	1 April 2018	Percentage increase
Facebook fans	1,152	1,404	22%
Twitter followers	4,251	4,754	12%

Facebook statistics for 2017/18

Total reach – 234.8k
Total Facebook posts (outbound) – 375
Direct messages received – 288

Twitter statistics for 2017/18

Total reach – 3.67m
Total Tweets (outbound) – 371
Total interactions (inbound) – 701

2018/19 engagement objectives

The OPCC will strive to continue to improve upon the ways in which we inform and involve local communities. Our specific objectives going forward will focus on the following groups:

1. **BME** – Collate existing intelligence, contact and consultation with local groups to establish objectives for specific minority ethnic groups, primarily focused on increasing accessibility, opportunities to actively participate in service delivery and public confidence. Engagement activity will be strategically designed to reach a diversity of residents.
2. **Youth** – Establish the OPCC within the youth community as a bridge between them and the police, ensuring they are aware of the functions of the OPCC that can benefit them.
 - a) To obtain a clearer picture of young people’s views on crime and community safety by using existing intelligence and through proactive consultation.
 - b) Using this data, to identify gaps in service delivery and establish solutions based on inputs from young people in Dorset.
 - c) To empower young people to become involved in service delivery where projects or initiatives will benefit their peers.
3. **Elderly** - Contribute to improving Dorset Police’s response to elderly abuse and other age specific crimes, by engaging with older people and their networks to identify patterns, trends and gaps in services/information provision.
4. **Rural** – Work with, support and scrutinise the work of the Rural Crime Team to monitor trends, champion rural issues at a strategic level and help improve public confidence within rural communities.

