



PRIORITY 1



REDUCE THE NUMBER OF VICTIMS OF CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

KEY FACTS

Since the publication of the Plan in April 2013:

- Overall crime compared to 2012-13 has reduced by 7.3% (2,951 fewer crimes)
- Year on year incidents of ASB have decreased by 8.9 % (2,867 fewer reports)
- Dwelling burglaries have reduced by 9.7% (184 fewer homes burgled this year)
- Dwelling burglaries where the offender(s) have been caught have risen from 13.5% to 19.3%
- Vehicle crimes have reduced by 16.1% (762 fewer victims)

Putting the victim first is a clear strategic priority for the Commissioner and for Dorset Police and is a fundamental principle for service delivery. Having fewer victims is the key outcome but it is equally important to ensure that care and support is given to those who suffer crime and anti-social behaviour. How victims are supported and how the risks they face are managed is also carefully monitored. Now the challenge is to ensure that services provided to victims are effective across the criminal justice system and beyond.

CUTTING CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Detailed delivery plans have been drawn up to describe the work involved to achieve lasting reductions in the number of victims. Areas of highest priority are dwelling burglary (which includes garden sheds), 'personal' anti-social behaviour and vehicle crime.

Much progress has been made in relation to ASB but there is still work to be done to ensure that all agencies with information about the vulnerability of people and the risks they face share that information effectively. This year, with partners, we are exploring the potential development of an ASB awareness course for young offenders, and the Commissioner is supporting a pilot in 2014/15.

Following the enactment of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 the Commissioner has also discharged his statutory duty by launching a public consultation on Community Remedy – giving members of the community a say in determining a menu of punishments for low-level crime and anti-social behaviour – allowing victims to select a punishment for the offender as a means of delivering justice without involving the court process. This consultation remains live at the time of publishing this refreshed Plan.

RESOLVING CRIME – POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Dorset Police is on course to enabling the Commissioner to fulfill his pledge to you to increase the amount of crime that is resolved to one in three at the end of the first term from one in five when the Commissioner came to office. The percentage of crimes achieving a positive outcome has increased from 22.8% in 2012/13 to 26.8% in 2013/14. With regard to burglaries to people's homes the percentage detected has improved from 12.8% to 20.5% over the last year.

PRIORITY 1

HELPING VICTIMS COPE AND RECOVER

The Commissioner is the voice for victims and as such he is working with partners in the criminal justice system to ensure that a victim's journey through the system is as positive as possible. To that end the Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account for Dorset Police's contribution to that aim - such as ensuring that prosecution files are of high quality and delivered to CJS partners in a timely manner.

The Dorset Criminal Justice Board is a key vehicle for ensuring that this vision of improved care for victims of crime is achieved.

In November 2013, the Commissioner launched the Dorset Victims' Bureau – one of only two in England and Wales. It will grow to become the first multi-agency victims' service in the country encompassing all the Criminal Justice Agencies. The Bureau offers tailored support and advice to victims of crime, treating people as individuals and responding according to their particular needs. Contact is maintained using whatever reasonable means the victim decides.

As well as the Dorset Victims Bureau, the Commissioner has also introduced Victim Focus groups and Surgeries across Dorset, so that he can learn from people's experiences. The Commissioner wishes to give victims a voice, through listening to personal experiences and the impact of crime on individuals, and exploring how he can influence and facilitate change for the better in the criminal justice system.

The Victim Focus groups are held quarterly and are open to any individual or business that has been the victim of crime. The focus groups have proved a valuable link to victims and they have highlighted several issues that the Commissioner and the Chief Constable have been able to address, from very basic issues such as members of the public not knowing how to recognise Police ID badges, to more serious concerns, including the damaging effects on individuals at the periphery of an incident, that have been overlooked when organising victim support. Accompanying each focus group, the Commissioner holds individual surgery sessions where individuals who may have experienced a more serious crime can discuss their victim journey in private.

The new Code of Practice for Victims of Crime came into force on 10 December 2013. It helps to ensure that victims are rightfully at the heart of the Criminal Justice System and are treated with respect, sensitivity and professionalism. The Commissioner will work with Dorset Police (and other relevant agencies) to ensure that they fulfil their requirements under the Code.

The Commissioner is also committed to the development of a new victims website for Dorset which will signpost victims to relevant partners and agencies in relation to their particular crime and provide suitable advice and guidance. This will help ensure that the right information is readily available to people at risk such as victims of domestic abuse. Such a website could also be an invaluable resource for signposting those victims who do not wish to report their crime to Police to appropriate support.

In addition, work is also underway to replace the Dorset Police website. The new site will be more focussed on the needs of the public, provide appropriate information when it is required and enable direct reporting of incidents.

EARLY INTERVENTION

The Commissioner has been delighted to support Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole in their bids for key national Early Intervention programmes. Dorset won two out of twenty 'pioneering places' across the country – a great result for the county. These Early Intervention Foundation Places will improve the lives of vulnerable children by breaking the cycle of dysfunction and under-achievement. By working together, the OPCC, Dorset Police and partner agencies can help to remove chaos, criminality or poor parenting and we can give children a chance their parents didn't have. This programme complements the wider Troubled Families work ongoing in the County.

PRIORITY 1

WHAT WE WILL DO

- A core role for the police that has a direct impact on the number of victims is the effective resolution of crimes. The Commissioner has pledged to raise the proportion of all offences that are resolved to a third over the course of this plan. This is being achieved through more effective crime screening and improved investigation of solvable crimes.
- The Commissioner will fund and direct (through the OPCC) the expansion of the work of the Victims' Bureau to ensure support is provided throughout the victim journey across the Criminal Justice System and beyond.
- The Chief Constable will improve the Dorset Police website so that victims have ready access to the information they need.
- The Commissioner will work with partners to expand 'early intervention' from birth, enabling parents and children to make positive choices and improve outcomes for children.
- The Commissioner and Chief Constable will continue to consult on how victims can be more involved in deciding how offenders who commit crime and ASB are dealt with, including consultation on Community Remedy as required by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- The Commissioner will continue to build on the restorative justice approach that has proven successful in Dorset in relation to young offenders, extending it to adults and more serious offences where appropriate, ensuring pan-Dorset coordination of Restorative Justice (RJ) from the OPCC, with the development of a Dorset RJ Strategy and the employment of an RJ Coordinator within the OPCC (funded through government grant).
- The Commissioner will work with partners, and directly commission services that help ensure that the offenders who pose the highest risk of reoffending have the opportunity to be mentored to support them in moving away from a life of crime.
- The Commissioner will continue to spread the success achieved by Watch groups in some neighbourhoods across all of Dorset, especially groups such as Neighbourhood Watch, Community Speed Watch, Shopwatch and Farmwatch.
- The OPCC will explore an ASB awareness scheme so that offenders can be more informed about the impact of their offending.
- The Commissioner, with partners, will offer support and alternatives to street sex workers to help them change their lifestyles, whilst enforcing the law and educating 'kerb crawlers' on the implications of their actions.

WHAT RESULTS ARE WE SEEKING TO ACHIEVE?

- A reduction in recorded crime and anti-social behaviour in Dorset.
- All relevant agencies consistently share information and contribute to lasting solutions to problems.
- Communities feel safer and are involved in the work to maintain and enhance that safety.
- A reduction in repeat victimisation – how many times the same person is a victim of crime or ASB.
- One in three crimes are resolved rather than one in five.

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