



2024 ANNUAL -2025 REPORT



 **Bedfordshire**
Police & Crime
Commissioner

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Message from the Police and Crime Commissioner

This first year of my tenure as Police and Crime Commissioner has been invigorating and productive. It has given me the opportunity to learn and to reflect, and to make some progress on behalf of Bedfordshire's communities and businesses. However, much remains to be done, and I am impatient to up the pace and magnify the impact in the coming years.

This first year has been a foundation year. I have had to reshape my office so that it is fit for purpose and is able to deliver my Police and Crime Plan as well as to ensure that my statutory duties can be fulfilled. I have reviewed the PCC policy and arrangements for commissioning and grant funding and have introduced a new strategy which reflects the values and objectives of my police and crime plan and respects the voluntary, community and charity sectors.

I have also strengthened governance arrangements to hold the Chief Constable to account effectively and to do so in a transparent manner.

It has been a year to listen to and learn from the public, senior police leaders and other police officers and staff, our criminal justice and wider public sector partners, and the many incredible voluntary and community organisations across the county.

I have developed good relations with leaders across the public sector and the county's MPs. I meet them all regularly, so we can focus on the serving the public as we all have duties and responsibilities to. I have also established effective relations with the government and senior civil servants as well as taken on some national roles.

In October 2024, I published my Police and Crime Plan that set out my missions for making Bedfordshire safer and fairer. I updated this in April 2025 when I published my Strategic Direction for the next three years.

When I was elected in May 2024, I was clear that I wanted to pursue an ambitious programme of reform, and that this would require system change and collaborative working with our public sector partners, criminal justice partners, the police and a range of stakeholders and the public. Every week that I have been in office, I have realised that this approach is essential.

The police alone cannot address every issue that confronts the public and nor can any other public agency. Our wellbeing and safety also require active involvement with the voluntary and community sector, faith groups and businesses. The public too have responsibilities and contributions to make. Unless we tackle inequality, poverty, poor health, low education attainment, create quality employment opportunities and foster good health, we cannot create a fairer nor a safer county.

2024-25 has seen the creation of the foundations for fulfilling my ambition for the next three years to pursue this holistic agenda, improve police performance and drive long term sustainable change.

The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner is the voice of the public into the police. He makes sure the police serve all communities equitably, visibly and with appropriate resources.

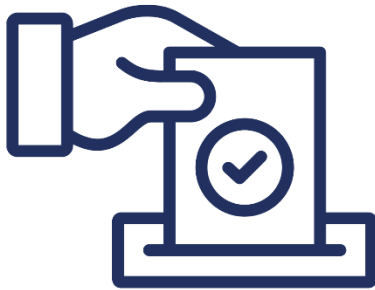
The PCC does not have operational responsibility for Bedfordshire Police. He sets the strategic direction through the Police and Crime Plan, the budget and the council tax.

The PCC holds the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient police service based on the plan and the budget.

The PCC advocates for Bedfordshire with the government, championing the interests of residents including victims of crime.

The PCC has responsibility to coordinate the wider criminal justice system in Bedfordshire. He chairs the Local Criminal Justice Board which brings together the partners responsible for all elements of the system to develop joint strategies and to deliver joint solutions.

The PCC works with the three unitary local authorities in the county and other public sector agencies to strengthen joint planning, working and resource sharing.



Elected for 4 years for
the whole county



Sets the police
strategy and budget



Voice of the public
into the police



Convenes partnerships

Message from the Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police

Bedfordshire Police continues to drive improved outcomes with a focus on making our communities safer. This includes solving more crime and increasing our visible presence in our towns and villages.

Our ambition is complemented by a police and crime plan that focuses on the whole system of public safety and problem-solving to protect our communities and reduce the drivers of crime. A plan which has been developed in close consultation with me and other key stakeholders.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has recognised the need to maximise our income streams and has secured vital funding from the Home Office in addition to supporting me to protect and improve service levels within the police service through additional local precept increase.

During this time of financial challenge, I am committed to exploring how cutting-edge innovation can improve productivity, the PCC is supportive of this approach which has already seen the roll out of numerous technological solutions with more projects under development.

Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

Cllr Umme Ali is the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) and started in office in June 2024 having been selected by the PCC prior to his election that year. The DPCC plays an active role in supporting and advising the PCC.

In her role, the DPCC:

- Is the lead advisor to the PCC on the missions for protecting women and children and supporting victims.
- Chairs the Protecting Women and Children and Victims Mission Boards and ensures system-wide alignment with key priorities.
- Through meetings, engagement and researching policy, the DPCC also advises and inputs into the other missions.
- Identifies potential policy areas for the office to research, develop and pursue.
- Acts as the OPCC's lead voice for victims, championing trauma-informed approaches and ensuring local delivery is shaped by feedback from victims and survivors.
- Alongside the PCC provides scrutiny and challenge to Bedfordshire Police on their response to violence against women and girls, child protection and victim care through regular Performance and Governance oversight.

- Visits voluntary and community organisations to understand frontline challenges, share strategic objectives, and inform policy development going forward to improve services for residents.
- Advises on policy developments including on new approaches to co-commissioning victim support and crime prevention services, working with partners to build more integrated and effective service models.
- Represents and deputises for the PCC at events and meetings across the county.
- Is involved in national events and portfolios in the areas of violence against women and girls, child protection and victim care.



Police and Crime Plan and Strategic Direction

Since his election in May 2024, the PCC has committed to driving whole system change and making sustainable improvements in policing and the criminal justice system that will contribute to this.

PCC's Ambitions

Launched in April 2025, the Strategic Direction and the missions are based on the PCC's four core ambitions. These principles are vital for driving towards a safer and fairer Bedfordshire. His core ambitions are social justice, criminal justice and fairness; policing for and with the community; public trust and confidence; and continuously improving police performance.

PCC's Missions

The missions that form the Police and Crime Plan are the core areas where the PCC will concentrate resources and political capital. They are designed to ensure that the PCC is accountable and in turn for him to hold the Chief Constable to account.

Delivery plans for each mission include measurable outcomes and baselines from which to build from and from which to measure change and impact. The objectives

within the Plan and the Strategic Direction can and will change in response to evidence and new demands on the police service and the wider criminal justice system.



Achievements – May 2024 to May 2025

The PCC is committed to working with the police and criminal justice partners to ensure that victims receive the best possible service at all times from incident to sentencing and beyond.

To set the foundations for his term and begin progressing the delivery of his Police and Crime Plan and the missions, the PCC has reformed the governance arrangements and enhanced transparency when holding the Chief Constable to account.

New initiatives in 2024/25 have included:

- Securing additional funding from the government including funding for local community policing and established effective relations with the government and government departments.
- Radical reform of the commissioning and grant strategy in consultation with the local voluntary and community sector.
- Monthly 'Meet and Challenge' public meetings.
- Quarterly meetings with local authority leaders and CEOs, MPs, and FRS and NHS leaders, UNISON, the Police Federation and the Superintendents' Association.



- Regular online and newspaper columns to explain what PCC is doing as well as addressing wider policy issues, and contribute to local and national media.
- Commissioned a review of the criminal justice, safeguarding and community safety collaborative strategic governance with the aim of rationalisation to ensure greater effectiveness and efficiency and better outcomes.
- National and regional PCC roles to enhance the voice and influence of Bedfordshire.

The PCC has launched a new commissioning and grant strategy for 2025-28 to support local voluntary and community organisations to provide services and advocate for victims of crime; and setting up an innovation fund to foster new initiatives.

The PCC has appointed a new Chief Executive who has restructured the office in order to fulfil statutory duties and deliver the strategic direction.

In particular, he has strengthened data analysis capacity and a process to strengthen complaint handling and transferring services from the police service to the OPCC.

Fulfilling the missions

- Tackling serious crime

The PCC recognises that tackling serious and violent crime is essential for community safety and contributes to the fairness agenda. The PCC has:

Strengthened scrutiny and monitoring of Bedfordshire Police's response to serious and organised crime

Committed to work with all partners to address serious crime and meet targets of the ten-year drugs strategy

Successfully secured government funding for the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) in 2025/26 and developed, with the VERU, a suite of interventions including activities for young people to be diverted from crime

Supported the introduction of a dedicated new police team for drug related crime investigations

Supported both local and national programmes to prevent knife crime



He is committed to work with Bedfordshire Police to ensure they are appropriately resourced and capable of tackling serious organised crime, serious violence and criminal exploitation including fraud and cybercrime; and to a system wider approach to achieve this goal.

- **Protecting women and children**

The PCC is committed to halving violence against women and girls within a decade, and to tackle all misogynistic crime and behaviour. The PCC has:

Invested in educational products that will allow school to educate young people about healthy relationships and consent

Started a comprehensive review of support provided to women and children across Bedfordshire to ensure that services are accessible to everyone

Supported the introduction of Raneem's Law domestic abuse advisors into the police control room – Bedfordshire being one of the five police services piloting this

Continued funding initiatives that work on a whole-system and prevention approach to reducing violence, including the Family Drug and Alcohol Court

Reviewed programmes to target dangerous repeat offenders and address causes via referral services to diversion, treatment and support

- **Reinvigorating local policing**

The PCC is committed to developing and enhancing local policing. His vision is for local policing, based in, working with and being responsive to communities. Providing quality intelligence to tackle serious crime and contributing to building trust and confidence in policing more widely. The PCC is determined to reform local and community policing to focus on crime resolution and reduction, victim support, on community relations and social cohesion and putting prevention and problem solving at the heart of local

policing. The PCC has:

Required the Chief Constable to ensure an equitable allocation of local policing resources across every part of the county

Set out expectations for the police service to have a named police officer for every neighbourhood, and has agreed to the opening of two new local policing hubs

Been an active member of all unitary council based on community safety partnerships

Worked with local community policing teams, local councils and the NFU to address specific rural crime issues

Secured £1.8m from the government through the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee to fund 20 additional police officers and 8 PCSOs in 2025/26

- **Securing excellence in policing**

The PCC is committed to the achievement of high standards in policing, its effectiveness and efficiency. He expects continuous improvement and will hold the Chief Constable to account for securing high standards. The PCC has:

Been through a rigorous review of all budgets to ensure value for money and alignment with this police and crime plan

Strengthened governance arrangements for holding the Chief Constable to account for delivering an effective and efficient police service, including improvement against the findings in 2025 HMICFRS inspection report

Worked with the police service to invest in technological solutions including artificial intelligence to improve productivity and outcomes

Required the police to better understand disparities and disproportionality in all crimes and all police practice, and to address these

Introduced a more rigorous process in dealing with police complaints

- **Prevention**

The PCC aims to support, develop and implement joined-up prevention and community safety programmes. Prevention not only has societal benefit but releases public sector resources for other priorities. The PCC has:

Supported initiatives such as the “Knife Angel” visit to Luton, the government’s programmes for knife amnesties and other local and national programmes to reduce knife crime

Through membership of the three community safety partnership executives, begun to develop shared collaborative approaches to crime prevention and community safety

Supported a commitment to crime prevention in the police service, led by a dedicated superintendent

Funded programmes to engage with young people excluded from or disengaged with the education system

Increased the number of cases dealt with through out of court disposals

- **Building an excellent criminal justice system**

The PCC is committed to an effective and pro-active Bedfordshire criminal justice system. The PCC has:

Agreed shared objectives through the Local Criminal Justice Board for improving criminal justice across the county Worked with partners to invest in and secure more effective local services, including reducing time from crime to conviction

Begun to work with partners within the LCJB to ensure that specialist support is available on a consistent and equitable basis to support rape and domestic abuse victims

Begun to and develop system wide plans to reduce reoffending, including ensuring ex-offenders have access to accommodation, employment and appropriate health services

Mission Boards

The PCC has established mission boards comprising stakeholders and those with expertise from policing and across the criminal justice system in Bedfordshire. The boards contributed to the design of the Strategic Direction for 2025 -2028.



Mission boards will be critical to the implementation of the approach to the Police and Crime Plan and monitoring and driving its success, so the PCC is very grateful for the time that has been committed to them by all partners.

The boards which are chaired by either the PCC or the Deputy PCC are neither operational nor do they fulfil a performance governance role.

Strategic Policing Requirements

Within the Police and Crime Plan and the Strategic Direction 2025 - 2028, the PCC has given due regard to the elements within the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) where the threats are the most significant to Bedfordshire and has ensured that there are appropriate resources available to combat them.

The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats.

- Terrorism
- Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)
- Cybercrime
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Public disorder
- Civil emergencies
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The mission for tackling serious crime ensures effective response through local and regional collaboration to tackle terrorism, serious and organised crime, cybercrime and civil emergencies.

In order to tackle child sexual abuse and violence against women and girls, dedicated teams are resourced within Bedfordshire Police and the PCC's mission for protecting women and children aligns the police with the strategy, enabling effective scrutiny of these areas. Some information and data to illustrate Bedfordshire Police's approach to tackling these crimes and issues has been included within this report.

Serious Organised Crime and Serious Violence

The county of Bedfordshire presents several unique challenges brought about by its location various travel links and growing population. As such Bedfordshire Police encounters an increasingly complex mix and volume of crime including serious violence, drugs and county lines activity.

Serious violence and knife crime continue to be tackled by *Boson (Boson is the force's specialist guns and gang's unit formed to disrupt gang activity and tackle serious violence)* with 400 crimes being recorded in 2024/25. Most Serious Violence levels reduced during Q3 but have risen in Q4 and are now around the average. They are averaging 33 crimes per month.

Levels have been below average during Jan and Feb but rose to above average in March. Targeted and cross-border policing enables the police to disrupt drugs supply with 462 crimes being recorded. Q4 recorded 143 Trafficking of Drugs offences averaging 39 crimes per month in 24/25. Op Costello is a dedicated team that continues to enforce on large scale drug activity with a key focus on the professional enablers linking into SOC and scanning to identify new county lines.

12 Homicides were recorded in 2024/25. Four Homicides were recorded in Q4 averaging around one per month in 24-25. The total number of Homicides recorded in 2024-25 exceeds the number recorded in 2023-24 by 5 crimes

Neighbourhood Crime

Focussing on town centres and identifying prolific offenders and vehicles involved in robbery and burglary, Bedfordshire Police have been working proactively to reduce neighbourhood crime.

Q4 recorded 281 Residential Burglaries averaging 118 crimes a month 24/25. This is lower than the previous quarter and below the same period in the previous year. Solved rate for Q4 24-25 was 13.9%.

Vehicle Crime has decreased compared to Q3, but comparable with previous quarters. Average 352 crimes per month 24/25. The solved rate has remained stable across the whole 24/25 year.

Personal Robbery has decreased compared to Q3. Q4 was lower than the same quarter in the 23-24 year. Average 42 crimes per month 24/25. Solved rate for Q4 24-25 was 12.2%.

105 Theft from a Person during Q4, this is a decrease compared to Q3 and below this time in the previous year. Levels have been below average across the quarter as a whole.

Violence against Women and Girls

In line with the PCC's mission to protect women and children from violence, Bedfordshire Police's specific campaign is Male Violence Against Women and Girls (MVAWG), working together to tackle perpetrators of violence or abuse against women and girls. Crimes which disproportionately affect females include rape and sexual offences, stalking and domestic abuse. Bedfordshire Police's approach to protecting women and children focusses on three key strands:

1. Pursuing perpetrators by taking a zero-tolerance approach to violence, harassment and abuse against women and girls through Project Firefly.
2. Working with support groups, communities and partner agencies to help support women through our HER (Help – Engage – Rehabilitate) initiative.
3. Supporting our staff and demanding high standards through our Blue Bell internal support group.

Bedfordshire continue to make slow but steady progress regarding their charge rates for rape. Whilst this still requires improvement, processes build through Operation Soteria, continues to see this go in the right direction.

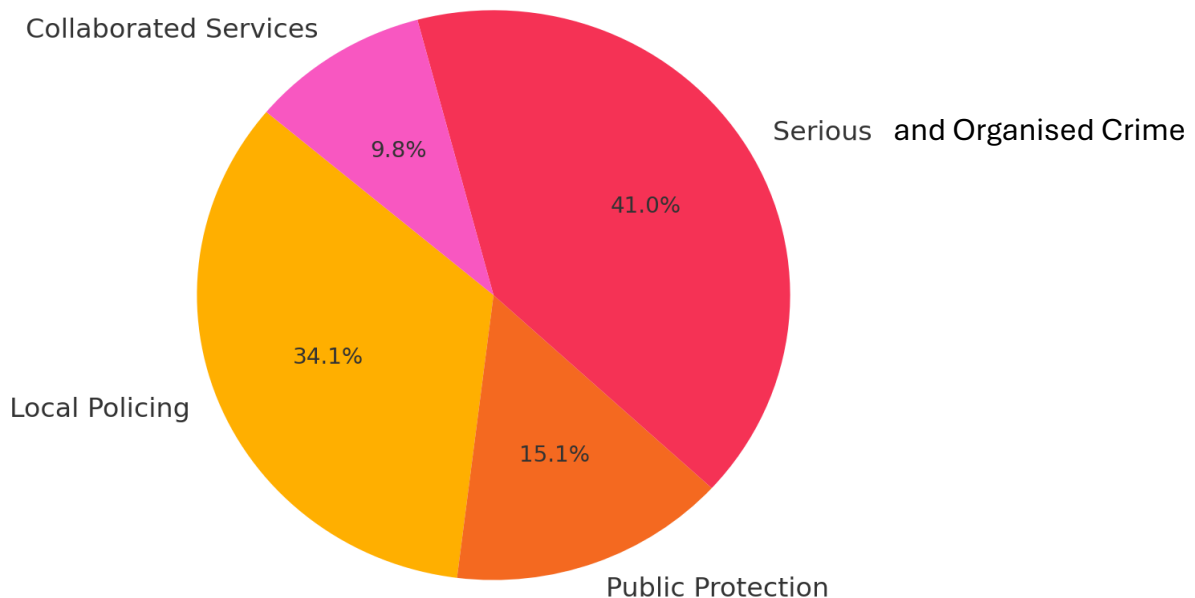
Finance

In England and Wales, it is the duty of the Police and Crime Commissioner to oversee policing, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to meet community needs whilst maintaining good value for money. The PCC sets the police budget each year, aiming to maximise the impact of every pound spent. Bedfordshire Police has two primary sources of funding, direct funding from the Government through the Police Grant and Precept raised by Council Tax charged to the public of Bedfordshire.

The PCC also sets the local precept – the portion of council tax allocated to policing. The total budget is made up of approximately 60% government grants and 40% council tax. The PCC oversees the management of the budget, working with the Chief Constable to make sure it is spent efficiently and effectively.

In order to maintain critical services to protect the public, Bedfordshire Police will need to spend £156 million in 2025/26. After years of underfunding, the new government has increased its contribution by 6.6%. The PCC will receive a new grant of £1.8m for local policing under the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee to fund extra police officers and PCSOs.

Budget Allocation 2025/26





The recent trend towards ring-fenced grants by the Government as a means of targeting the way police services use their budgets has placed an emphasis on Police and Crime Commissioners to increase the element of the budget that is funded locally.

The police budget is reflective of the needs and demands on policing across the county. The PCC and Chief Constable take advantage of collaboration with regional police services and wider local public sector partners, to drive improvements in productivity.

In January 2025, the PCC wrote to the Minister of State for Policing and Crime to outline the need for more flexibility and fewer ring-fenced grants as well as the need for annual Capital Allocations. Policing is one of very few public services that doesn't receive capital allocations, but has a similar reliance on capital spend, such as estate, with Custody being critical to service delivery, fleet and large ICT systems. Currently the service has two choices in funding this spend, one being borrowing and the other funding directly from the revenue budget, which means less money available for officers and staff costs. The PCC makes decisions on when to borrow and when to invest. Some of the borrowing decisions are based on taking out long term loans.

The PCC always expects the police to maximise impact with the available resources, eliminate waste and never use the lack of funding as an excuse for poor performance or failing the people of Bedfordshire. Over the coming year, the PCC will be holding the Chief Constable to account for delivering the budget efficiently and effectively on behalf of the public.

Governance – Holding the Chief Constable to Account

Performance and Governance Board

The PCC chairs a monthly meeting of the Performance and Governance Board at which he holds the Chief Constable to account for the efficient and effective delivery of the police and crime plan, including:

- Effectiveness and efficiency including utilisation of all resources.
- Performance
- Financial Control and Sustainability
- Risk
- Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and the Strategic Policing Requirement
- Public trust and legitimacy

On a quarterly basis the PCC scrutinises the overall performance of Bedfordshire Police, drawing on a large suite of data. He also reviews progress against each of the missions in the Police and Crime Plan and Strategic Direction. Traditionally the papers were not published but the PCC ensures that all reports and actions are published as part of his commitment to greater transparency.

PCC and Chief Constable Meetings

The PCC has weekly meetings with the Chief Constable which form part of the overall accountability and governance arrangements. These include a monthly formal minuted meeting for which the minutes are published externally and are available to the Police and Crime Panel.

Joint Audit Committee

The Joint Audit Committee are held quarterly and are public meetings. The meeting is chaired by an independent Chair and scrutinises internal processes, spending and risk management policies for both the police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It also has the power to review finance issues referred by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable and monitor internal control processes, audit reports and the annual statements of accounts.



Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Alliance Summit

The PCC attends, and has for the last year chaired, the joint strategic committee which oversees the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire constabularies.

This quarterly meeting acts as the Joint Strategic Committee for all shared service collaborations between the three police forces and allows all PCCs to hold their respective Chief Constables to account for the efficient and effective delivery on these services. The alliance undertakes financial planning, ensures strategic risks are being managed and mitigated, and considers opportunities for future collaborations.

Eastern Regional Special Operations Unit Governance Board

Also meeting quarterly, the regional board provides the governance for the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) incorporating Counter Terrorism Policing and the Regional Organised Crime Unit. It provides strategic direction and oversight of ERSOU's performance and continuous improvement. The Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner attends on behalf of the regional PCCs to oversee performance, finances, partnership arrangements and management.

7 Force Summit

The summit meets quarterly and comprises all PCCs and Chief Constables for the seven forces of the region - Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies. It oversees all collaborative operational arrangements such as ERSOU and other services such as innovation and procurement.

Governance – Scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel

The Police and Crime Commissioner is scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel, made up of councillors and independents from across Bedfordshire.

The Panel’s functions are to:

- review and report/make recommendations to the PCC in respect of his draft Police and Crime Plan or any draft variation to their prevailing plan
- review and report/make recommendations to the PCC on his annual report
- review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the PCC in connection with the discharge of his/her functions and make reports or recommendations to the PCC with respect to the discharge of those functions
- review and report back to the PCC on appointments he proposes to make to the following posts: the Commissioner’s Chief Executive, the Commissioner’s Chief Finance Officer, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable
- review and report/make recommendations to the PCC on his proposed precept for the financial year.
- review and report/make recommendations to the PCC on any proposal by him to call on the Chief Constable (CC) to retire or resign.

Panel Membership:

Chair – Mr Paul Downing (Independent Member)	Vice-Chair – Mr Gareth Mackey (Central Bedfordshire Council)
Mr Lee Melville (Independent Member)	Cllr Yvonne Farrell (Central Bedfordshire Council)
Cllr Marc Frost (Bedford Borough Council)	Ms Tatyanna Antoine (Independent Member)
Cllr Tim Caswell (Bedford Borough Council)	Cllr Steve Moore (Luton Borough Council)
Cllr Mohammed Nawaz (Bedford Borough Council)	Cllr Ghulam Abbas (Luton Borough Council)
Cllr Mark Versallion (Central Bedfordshire Council)	Cllr Basit Mahmood (Luton Borough Council)
Dr Fiona Factor (Independent Member)	Cllr Patrick Hamill (Central Bedfordshire Council) (resigned April 2025)

His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services – PEEL Report on Bedfordshire Police 2023 – 2025

Bedfordshire Police was inspected by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in autumn 2024. The inspectors considered performance in nine areas of policing, and the Chief Inspector published his report early in 2025.

This inspection focused on plans and activities already in place before the PCC was elected in May 2024. Many of the report’s recommendations already feature in the Police and Crime Plan and Strategic Direction 2025-2028.

The report provided the PCC with a professional assessment and baseline of the police service, its leadership and its impact. The PCC agrees with the HMICFRS report that Bedfordshire Police is well led, and senior leaders have the support of officers and staff.

Governance and improvements

The PCC has put in place governance arrangements to ensure the development and implementation of an action plan from the Chief Constable to address the areas for improvement identified in the report. The PCC will be reviewing progress on a monthly basis at the Performance and Governance Board.

The PCC looks forward to seeing substantial improvements over the next 3 years and these improvements will align with the expectations set out within the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan and Strategic Direction 2025-2028, including improving investigation standards, responding to the public and putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.

Community Scrutiny Panels

The PCC holds the responsibility for ensuring that the statutorily required community scrutiny panels are in place, supported and contribute to holding the police to account and as a way of overseeing the police service's use of powers and treatment of suspects.



Stop and Search, Use of Force and Section 163 (vehicle stops)

Stop and Search and Use of Force and Section 163 (vehicle stops) are important tools for the police.

The scrutiny panels review the application of these police powers through scrutinising data, records and sample videos. The panel consists of 28 members and reviewed 168 cases.

Independent Custody Scrutiny Panel (ICDSP)

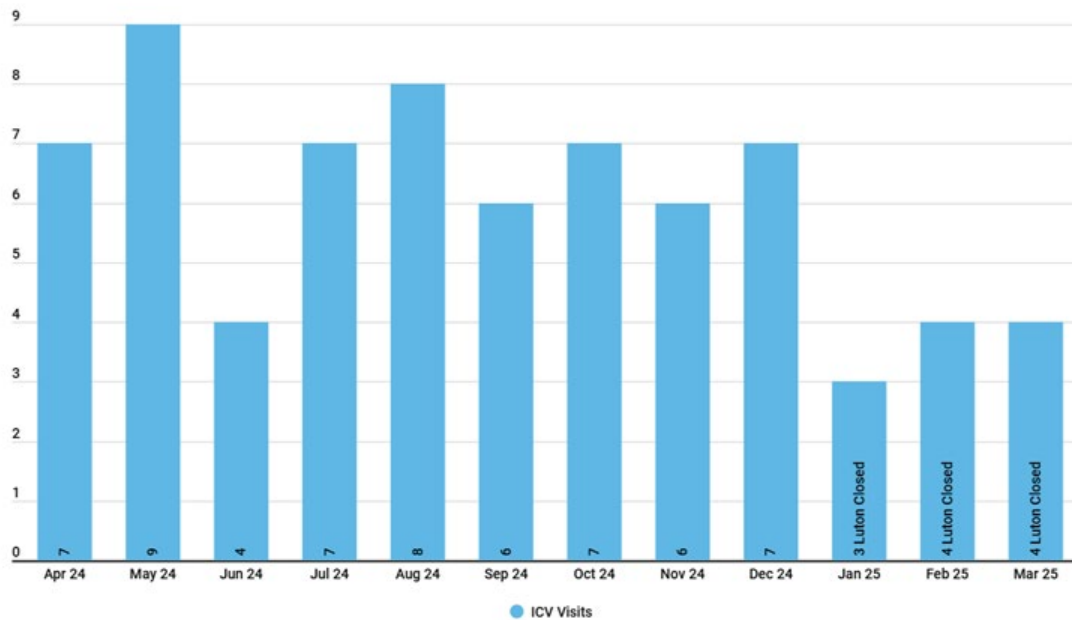
The Independent Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel (ICDSP), which comprises volunteers selected from across Bedfordshire, reviews the environment in which detainees are held within the custody suites and has regular conversations with the officers and staff involved. The panel has 12 active members (3 have lived experience and other members are students of psychology, former magistrates, school governors, mental health experts). The panel have reviewed 40 records over the last nine months focusing on juveniles, uses of force and strip searches.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs)

Independent Custody Visitors are volunteers from the local community who visit people being detained in custody by the police and ensure that detainees are receiving their rights and entitlements and that the conditions that detainees are being held in are satisfactory.

The panel has 28 members who visit both Kempston and Luton custody suites and over the last year ICVs have checked the welfare of over 450 detainees.

ICV Visits





PCC and the Criminal Justice System

Bedfordshire Local Criminal Justice Board

The PCC has responsibility to coordinate the wider criminal justice system in Bedfordshire. He chairs the Local Criminal Justice Board which brings together the partners responsible for all elements of the system to develop joint strategies and to deliver joint solutions.

The purpose of Local Criminal Justice Board’s (LCJB’s) is to provide an opportunity for partners to work together in the common interest to improve the criminal justice system in Bedfordshire. LCJBs enable collaboration and contribute to the reduction of crime through improvements in efficiency and integrity, as well as seeking to improve the experience of victims and witnesses of crime. By working in partnership, the Board aims to improve services to the public.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC • Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service • Bedfordshire Police • Citizens Advice Bureau • Crown Prosecution Service • Defence lawyers • Department of Work & Pensions • East London Foundation Trust (Mental Health Service) • HM Courts & Tribunal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judiciary • HMP Bedford • Integrated Care, Bedfordshire Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) • Local Authorities (Bedford, Central Bedfordshire & Luton) • Probation Service • Victim Support • Youth Offending
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The PCC has begun the process of reinvigorating the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) within his term, focusing on one of the key expectations of its members within the national guidance, which is to ‘work with local, regional and national counterparts as necessary to identify and overcome barriers to improving the delivery of justice’.

This will include encouraging and brokering collaborative approaches to addressing social and economic causes of injustice and crime.

The LCJB have agreed to focus on reducing reoffending- especially youth reoffending, victims’ experience and data sharing, including data sets needed to shape the work of the Board effectively.

As Chair, he has agreed shared objectives through the Board for improving criminal justice across the county and worked with partners to invest in and secure more effective local services, including reducing time from crime to conviction. The Board has begun work to ensure that specialist support is available on a consistent and equitable basis to support rape and domestic abuse victims; and has begun to and develop system wide plans to reduce reoffending, including ensuring ex-offenders have access to accommodation, employment and appropriate health services.

Bedfordshire Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice **BEDFORDSHIRE**

Provided by the PCC's office, the Bedfordshire Restorative Justice service has received a total of 32 referrals which is a 68.5% increase compared to 2023/2024.

The coordinators have proactively raised awareness across various sectors such as Police, Prison, Probation and Victim Services. There has been an emphasis on working with schools and HMP Bedford in embedding Restorative Practices in order to improve relationships, build conflict resolution skills and empower individuals.

Both of our Restorative Justice Coordinators have achieved their Advanced Registered Practitioner status with the Restorative Justice Council. This achievement reflects their commitment to best practice and ethical standards when facilitating cases.

We remain committed to expanding access to Restorative Practices and strengthening our partnerships across the criminal justice system, schools and communities.

Violence and Exploitation Prevention Partnership (VEPP)

The PCC is the recipient of the Home Office grant of £1,047,170 for 2025 / 2026 for the Violence Exploitation Prevention Partnership (VEPP). This was previously known as the VERU and a new strategy was published in May 2025.

The VEPP, which is based in and core to the PCC's office brings together partners from the public and community sectors, to address complex issues of serious violence and exploitation in the county.

The scale and nature of serious violence cannot be addressed by any one agency alone and requires us to act together with greater purpose. The focus must be on prevention and early intervention tackling the underlying causes of violence not just the symptoms. This requires shared ownership of the strategy, joint working and pooling of resources.

While the VEPP currently receives funding from the Home Office, the scale and complexity of the crimes it tackles – and their underlying causes – demand a more sustainable, collective response. The PCC is calling on partners to make additional contributions both financial and in kind, as a clear demonstration the strength of the partnership and the commitment to the long-term success of the VEPP.

PCC as a system leader

The PCC believes that the police alone cannot successfully and sustainably reduce crime and criminality. As a convener of partnerships in Bedfordshire, the PCC aims for a truly collaborative approach between the police, local government, the NHS, schools and colleges, the Crown Prosecution Service, the probation service, the courts, the prison service and many other public sector organisations.

Leaders from across the public, civil and business sectors across the county have given the PCC their commitment to working together to find and implement solutions to make Bedfordshire safer and fairer.

Community Safety Partnership Executive Meetings

The PCC is a member of all Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) executive meetings to address local safety issues. These partnerships work with local authorities, the police, and other stakeholders to address crime, anti-social behaviour, and emerging safety issues. Executive meetings are often used to review progress, set priorities, and make decisions related to community safety initiatives.

Quarterly County Leader Meetings

The PCC has convened a quarterly meeting of the political leaders of the three unitary local authorities, the Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Chair of the Integrated Care Board to discuss governance and pan-Bedfordshire issues such as data sharing, future planning and emergency response.

Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to the above, the PCC meets quarterly with individual county leaders, MPs, UNISON, Police Federation, Superintendents Association, criminal justice partners, community groups and the National Farmers Union. This informs current policy, allows the PCC to discuss ongoing issues with key partners.

National roles and responsibilities

- The PCC holds the APCC joint national portfolio for Performance, relations with HMICFRS, data and data and technology ethics.
- He is a member of the Home Office Police Performance and Data Steering Board.
- He is also a member some other Home Office police reform task and finish groups and of the of the HMICFRS External Advisory Group.
- The PCC is vice-chair of both the Blue Light Commercial Ltd and of the Counter Terrorism Regional Collaboration Board.

The PCC also attends the HMICFRS – Police Performance Oversight Group meeting where the Chief Constables and PCCs of police services in ‘Engage’ (special measures) account for and receive advice and support for their performance improvement.

The PCC has been thanked by Sir Andy Cooke, Chief Inspector of Constabulary for his contribution to rebuilding the relationship between the HMICFRS and PCCs.



Events and Engagements

Meet and Challenge meetings

Once a month, the PCC holds a public meeting with residents to speak to them face to face about the role of the PCC, his strategy and approach, and to allow them to ask questions about policing their local area, the criminal justice system and more.

Each month the meeting is held in a different area of the county and is often attended by members of the public and local councillors. In addition, the PCC is grateful to have been offered the support of the community policing team who have ensured that a senior officer has been present at each meeting to take operational questions.



Police and Crime Plan launch event

In October 2024 the PCC officially launched his Police and Crime plan at an event last attended by over 80 key figures of the Bedfordshire community including MPs, council leaders, blue light partners and charities.

He talked about how his plan aims at social justice and criminal justice together. Whole system change is needed to put victims at the heart of the system, and this can only be achieved through effective collaboration and partnership working.

Partners from Bedfordshire Police, Bedford Borough Council, Luton Council and Central Bedfordshire Council as well as local MPs and representatives from the NHS, fire service and several charitable organisations attended and spoke up in support of the plan and its missions.

It was recognised by those that responded at the event that prevention of crime can only be tackled by addressing societal factors such as support for young people, prison leavers and ethnic minority communities.

Joint surgeries and meetings with MPs and councillors

To engage directly with residents, the PCC has held some joint public meetings and surgeries with MPs in their constituencies, a successful approach which allows him to hear about local policing concerns, or any challenges faced against other agencies within the community safety partnership or criminal justice system.

Having found this to be an effective way to meet and talk to residents, the PCC is seeking to pursue further similar opportunities in 2025/26.

As well as public meetings or surgeries, the PCC regularly visits town centres, residential areas and crime hotspots, often alongside local councillors, MPs and local community police officers to engage with residents and local businesses to hear from them about what they need from policing and how safe they feel in their area.



Youth engagement at Sixth Form colleges

In February 2025, the PCC held an engagement session with sixth formers in Luton studying Criminology, Law and Politics to talk to them about the role of the PCC, his vision and strategy. He took questions and asked students about how safe they feel in their local area and why. He gauged trust and confidence in the police amongst the young people.

Having found this to be an effective way to meet and talk to students, the PCC is seeking to pursue further similar opportunities in 2025/26.



Rural Crime events – in partnership with the National Farmers Union

In October 2024 and February 2025, the PCC hosted a rural crime meeting for farmers and rural residents at farms in Bedfordshire, alongside the NFU who are a valued partner of the PCC and police service. Those who attended were able to express their views and concerns.

They also heard about new training programmes for both specialised and frontline units to ensure the effectiveness of tackling crime affecting those living and working in rural communities.

The PCC announced he is establishing an ‘advisory group’ bringing together the NFU, wildlife organisations, town and parish councils, and the police.

Other engagements

In addition to events hosted by the PCC, he attends town and parish council meetings on a regular basis to speak with councillors about local and systemwide issues. He commits to attending one meeting of each town council per year as well as meetings of parish council associations. The PCC also attends a range of events hosted by faith groups, community groups, the voluntary sector and others.

Statutory Responsibilities

Decision Log

In line with the Decision-making framework, decisions made by the PCC and the OPCC of significant public interest are published on the PCC Website.

42 Decisions have been made and published.

Dealing with complaints against the Chief Constable

The PCC is responsible for reviewing and investigating Chief Constable complaints – statutory guidance. No complaints were recorded in 2024/25.

Complaint reviews

From the 1st February 2020, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is the relevant review body in most cases apart from those complaints or conduct matters listed below which the IOPC are responsible for reviewing where they relate to:

- Any incident or circumstance in or in consequence of which a person has died or suffered serious injury.
- A serious sexual assault or offence
- Serious corruption
- Criminal offence or behaviour which is liable to lead to disciplinary proceedings

If a request to review is submitted to either the IOPC or the OPCC and they are not the correct review body, then they will forward it to the correct review body and notify the complainant that this has happened. A complaint review can be made via our website.

A review offers the opportunity to consider whether the complaint outcome is reasonable and proportionate but not the handling of the incident leading to the complaint. Each review will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If the reviewer concludes that the outcome was not reasonable and proportionate, the review should be upheld i.e the service provided by the police was not acceptable the OPCC will, where appropriate, make recommendation to the Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police.

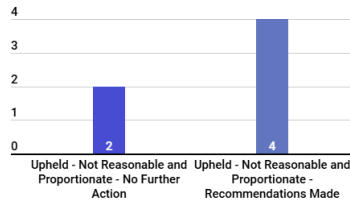
In 2024/25 there were 33 complaint review requests – one of which was upheld with recommendations made to Bedfordshire Police.



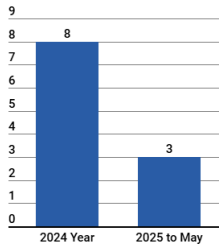
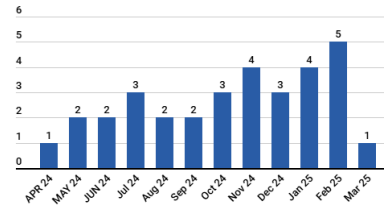
Total Reviews Received (from Feb 2020 to Mar 2025)

191

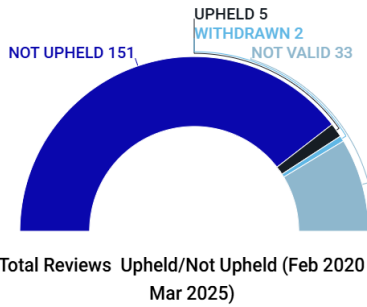
Upheld Review Outcomes (from Feb 2020 to Mar 2025)



Reviews Received Feb 2022 - Mar 2025



Total Reviews which noted OPCC oversight



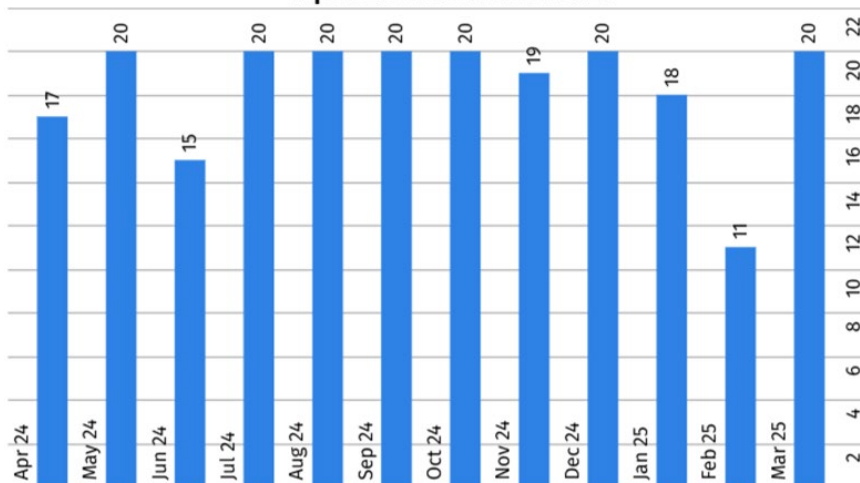
Total Reviews Upheld/Not Upheld (Feb 2020 to Mar 2025)



Dip Sampling – Complaints

The OPCC conduct monthly dip sampling of lower dissatisfaction complaints and hold a monthly meeting with the Customer Support Management team to discuss findings, to ensure feedback is given and fed into future learning. The process relates only to the Dip Sampling of closed complaints cases and does not cover those that remain an enquiry.

Number of Customer Support Complaints Dip Sampled April 2024 to March 2025

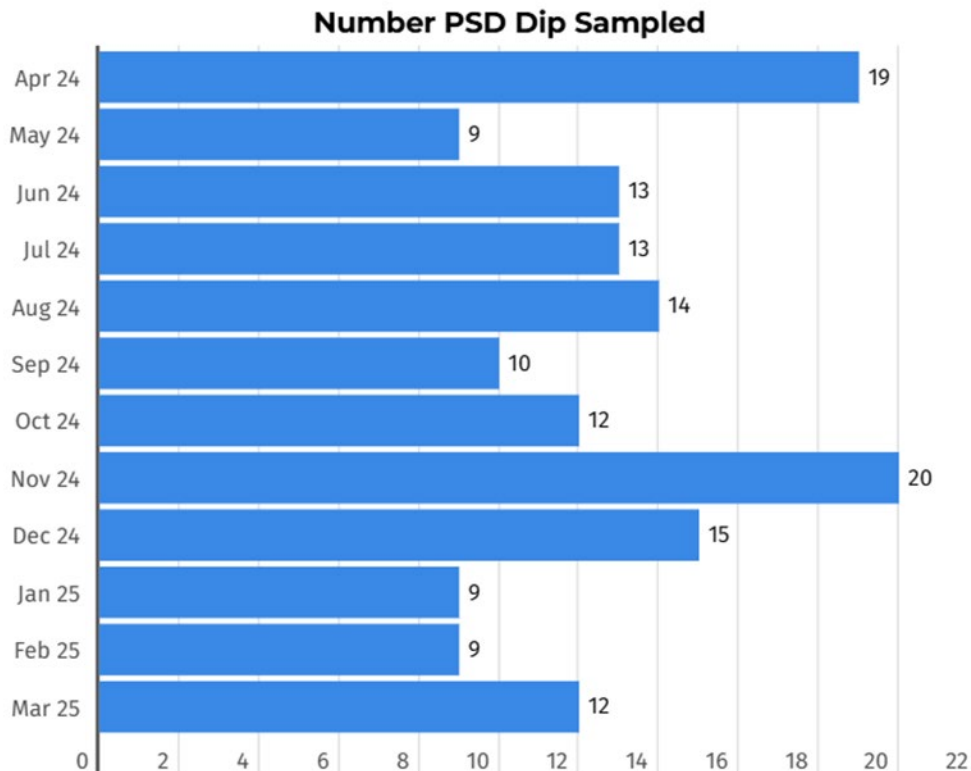


The OPCC will consider such aspects when completing the Dip Sampling:

- Complaint
- Allegations
- Victims Code of Practice
- Recommendations or actions
- Timescales

The OPCC conduct monthly dip sampling of schedule 3 complaint (Professional Standards Department complaints that have been recorded) and the team will consider such aspects when completing the Dip Sampling:

- Timescales for completion of investigations
- Learning Identified
- Were all allegations covered fully and appropriately?
- Satisfaction
- Was Body Worn Video (BWV) used and was it useful to the complaint?
- Other aspects are considered throughout the process.



The process relates only to the Dip Sampling of closed complaints cases and does not cover either the duty to oversee ongoing complaints or the new wider power of direction of the handling of complaints against the police. The purpose of Dip Sampling is not to interfere with the review process and decisions made by the Relevant Review Body can only be overturned by the courts through the Judicial Review Process.

Misconduct Hearings

The PCC's office liaises with other regional OPCCs OPCC's to maintain an up-to-date and impartial list of Legally Qualified Persons (LQP) and Independent Panel Members (IPM) to use when arranging panels for Police Misconduct Hearings in the Eastern Region.

In 2024/25, 10 Accelerated Hearings, 7 Misconduct hearings, 9 Gross Misconduct took place in 24-25: 18 police officers were dismissed at Gross Misconduct hearings. 3 police officers received a final written warning following a Gross Misconduct Hearing. 5 police officers received a written warning following a Misconduct Meeting.

11 disciplinary proceedings were progressed: 6 police staff were dismissed. 3 police staff received a final written warning and 5 received a written warning following a Misconduct Meeting.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The PCC ensures that he and the police service meet their statutory obligations in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

In line with legislation, the PCC:

- Ensures that every victim has access to services they need to help them cope and recover, regardless of geography, personal characteristics, or circumstance.
- Ensures representation of all demographics and communities across Bedfordshire in plans for victim services, acknowledging their needs and challenges.
- Is visible and accessible to all communities in Bedfordshire.
- Ensures all individuals and communities who contact us are dealt with fairly, equally and respectfully.
- Attracts and retains staff and volunteers that reflect our diverse communities.
- Ensures equality of opportunity for all staff and volunteers throughout every stage of employment; from recruitment, retention and promotion, to exit.
- Recognises the needs of diverse groups within our workforce and ensure appropriate support is available for all staff and volunteers.
- Recognises, challenges and effectively addresses any inappropriate behaviour, language or dignity at work issues that may arise.
- Maximises transparency to ensure our activities and decisions can be scrutinised and uses feedback to improve the service provided to the public.

The PCC has attended many events over the last year that have promoted equality and met many representatives to hear about the work they do and support they give.

Mechanisms are in place to measure progress against equality objectives, and this will be monitored by the PCC on a regular basis.

Commissioning and Grant Funding

Commissioning and Funding Strategy 2024 - 2028

The PCC's new commissioning and funding strategy is based on a relational approach between his office and the voluntary and community sector.

The commissioning of projects and services will be done using a combination of funding totalling £955,500 from the Community Safety Fund received from central government and £1,945,817 from the Ministry of Justice Fund which are both allocated on an annual basis.

The PCC regards the voluntary and community organisations as genuine partners not commercial suppliers. Their views will be sought on policy. They will be respected as the voice of victims and communities. Dialogue will always be maintained at all times.

The PCC aims to see more innovation, experimentation, social value, and collaboration between commissioning bodies. The default will be proportionate yet robust grant funding.

As part of the new approach, competitive procurement will only be used for large value contracts but in these cases, there will still be dialogue and proportionate processes.

Partners will be invited to feed back their views, support and challenge. At the launch event of the strategy, attendees confirmed that the strategy will be fundamental in fostering a vibrant range of service provision. The biggest opportunities noted were "the power to mentor, innovate, plan ahead and collaborate".

The strategy aims to engage and support local services including supporting them to build capacity and sustainability. There will be opportunities for organisations to submit proposals for funding and to work together to mentor one another.

This exciting new phase of the PCC's term will be core to the delivery of his missions within the Police and Crime Plan and is representative of the collaborative approach that is essential to drive towards a safer and fairer Bedfordshire for all.

Putting Victims at the Heart of the Criminal Justice System

In 2024-2025 the PCC utilised Ministry of Justice funding to support 9 projects and 21 charities and organisations, providing direct advocacy, therapeutic provision and practical and emotional support to victims of crime across Bedfordshire, with 16 services specialising in support for domestic abuse and sexual violence. During the year, the charities and organisations supported over 10,000 individuals to cope and recover as far as possible from their experiences.

Thousands of victims reported positive outcomes and noticeable improvements after receiving support from a funded project. Feedback from service users, case studies, and stories shared by funded partners demonstrated that the PCC has successfully put

victims at the heart of the criminal justice system. Over 8,000 victims being supported through police reporting, and protected women and children, as well as supporting victims from all cohorts.

Bedfordshire Victim Care Services (BVCS)



Via Ministry of Justice Funding, Bedfordshire Victim Care Service provided practical and emotional support to victims of crime, excluding high risk domestic abuse and those bereaved by homicide. BVCS offered tailored support via the telephone, video and face to face interactions, and signposted to partners for more specialist support.

Outcomes included:

- Offering free and confidential practical and emotional support, available to any victim of crime.
- Providing signposting, advice and supportive referrals and guidance for victims to access more specialist support, according to their needs.

Protecting Women and Children

Through Community Safety and Ministry of Justice funding, a wide range of specialist services have been delivered across Bedfordshire to support victims of domestic abuse. These services have included targeted outreach, multilingual casework, trauma-informed counselling, IDVA and KIDVA support, and tailored programmes for women from Eastern European, Black, and non-English-speaking backgrounds. Providers delivered emotional and practical support such as advocacy, legal guidance and welfare advice, supporting access to English language classes, skills and employment support, and access to safe accommodation. Dedicated services were also provided to male victims, children, victims of stalking and community-based counselling.

Through Ministry of Justice funding, a wide range of trauma-informed, specialist support services have been delivered across Bedfordshire for adult and child victims of sexual violence and exploitation. These include Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs), LGBTQ+ ISVA provision, targeted outreach to victims of sex trafficking, specialised 1-1 and group support and a range of therapeutic counselling options. Service provision was developed in response to service user needs with specialist capability. Therapeutic interventions included the SENSE model and community-based counselling, while innovative solutions such as the mobile support vehicle offered

direct outreach and support during police warrants. Children received specialist counselling and support during police investigations through tailored child-focused services.

Collectively, these projects have improved victims' safety, wellbeing, and resilience—supporting them to reduce risk, feel heard and understood, rebuild self-esteem, and engage positively with services and their communities. Outcomes include improved mental health, greater emotional stability, increased confidence, and stronger social and economic independence. Victims have been empowered to navigate legal processes, access education and work, and build healthy relationships. These interventions ensure a consistent, inclusive, and trauma-informed response for individuals impacted by abuse across Bedfordshire.

Chrysalis Centre

In collaboration with the Hertfordshire PCC, the Bedfordshire PCC continued to develop the Home Office funded domestic abuse perpetrator intervention hub and suite of interventions with over 700 referrals triaged from over 20 sources. Ongoing evaluation recognises the value of the perpetrator interventions, and the holistic, person centric approach to addressing harmful behaviours, continuing to protect women and children.

Prevention: Tackling the causes of crime

In 2024/25 PCC has grant funded 16 charities and organisations, focusing on prevention of reoffending, early intervention, partnership investment and innovative solutions to support the community of Bedfordshire.

The PCC invested funding in 3 local organisations to work with children, exploring opportunities to engage and divert them from entering the criminal justice system, supporting approximately 200 children and young people, these services used innovative, engaging and service user led approaches to dissuade offending and improve engagement with education and authority. Below is an example of a service user led approach.

Tackle Life



Via the Community Safety Fund, Blues Foundation delivered Tackle Life, an early intervention programme for secondary school children, using the power of sport and education to inspire those who disengage from education and/or at risk of offending,



providing educational workshops to provide children with the tools to improve their lives and add value to the wider community while boosting attainment in school.

The project achieved:

- An increase in the student's life skills, such as communication, resilience, teamwork, and leadership, leading to improved behaviour, engagement, relationships and attainment in school.
- An improvement in the student's physical and mental wellbeing.

Additionally, in line with the new commissioning strategy, 2024-2025 saw the introduction and continuation of pilot services, to respond to emerging needs and developments across the county, enhancing the response to underreported and underrepresented cohorts including those from minority ethnic communities. These services reinforced the transition to local grant funding and relational evidence-based funding.

Partnership working, collaboration and joint commitment are focus areas for the PCC, supporting the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan to achieve a safer and fairer Bedfordshire. In support of the partnership working and cross-county developments, the PCC funded partnership roles for Road Safety and Drug and Alcohol services, which are cross cutting themes which impact the community of Bedfordshire and the safety of its residents.

Furthermore, striving towards police excellence, the PCC funds a counselling service specifically to support police officers and staff, prioritising wellbeing and supporting policing activity.