

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire Newsletter



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"Putting people at the heart of policing"

In the News

- Bedfordshire PCC launches innovative emergency services access terminals
- PCC consults with residents about web-based reporting
- Highest number join Bedfordshire Police as 999 call handlers
- Almost 200 additional police officers for Bedfordshire as PCC delivers on recruitment pledge
- Spotlight on The Bobby Scheme
- Key Information about Bedfordshire Victim Care Services

April 2023

Bedfordshire PCC launches innovative emergency services access terminals

PCC continues to deliver on community policing promises with investment in new access terminals across Bedfordshire

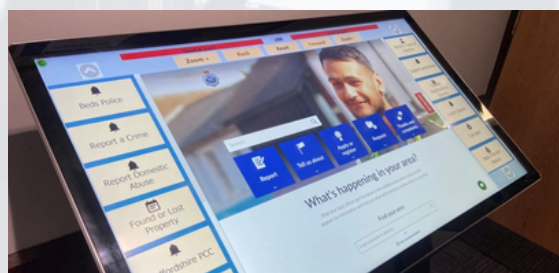


PCC Festus Akinbusoye has launched the county's first 'public access terminals' which aim to improve residents' accessibility to policing and statutory services.

Situated in key locations, the first terminal was installed in Leighton Buzzard Library, Lake Street, earlier this month. First of its kind, the large touchscreen device has been designed to provide members of the public online access to non-emergency policing services, including reporting an incident, submitting intelligence, victim care support and submitting feedback to the force.

The terminals will also feature information on local events and services provided by partners, such as local authorities, the Fire Service and other agencies. Bedfordshire remains an area of high internet poverty. The devices aim to help bridge the gap for residents that face challenges seeking support via the internet, while providing a safe space to do so.

The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner are also progressing plans to develop and launch a mobile phone application for both IOS and Android users later this year that will provide a similar provision.



Events

Multi Faith Conference - Upcoming

We have exciting news that the details of our Multi Faith Conference 2023 are being finalised and will be released shortly!

The aim of the event is to give all faith groups the opportunity to hear from the PCC and Bedfordshire Police whilst also getting the opportunity to network.

Please email PCC@beds.police.uk if you would like any further information or would like to enquire about any OPCC events.



Coming Soon!

Bedfordshire PCC consults with residents about web-based reporting

Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye has launched a public survey for residents across the county to have their say on getting in touch with the police online.

The survey gives residents an opportunity to offer feedback on their views and experiences with Bedfordshire Police's online reporting services.

Over the last year, Bedfordshire Police's online reporting tool has seen more than 24,000 visitors on average each month – with last month attracting 31,452 hits.

Mr Akinbusoye said: "My role as Police and Crime Commissioner is to be the 'voice of the public' in policing. This means understanding the needs of the community and ensuring a real and tangible response to these issues.

"Part of this aim, and in line with my Police and Crime plan, is public consultation. I am keen to hear the community's experiences with the force's online reporting tools and whether it provides the level of service the public expect.

"I would encourage the public to get involved and help shape how we move forward with our innovations to policing."

SCAN ME



The survey is available here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/aKSr58BrJM>

or via the **QR code**

The survey closes on 26 May 2023 and a report analysing the data in the survey will be published in due course

Web-based reporting to Bedfordshire Police



You can report crimes, issues and incidents to Bedfordshire Police via their website at <https://www.beds.police.uk/ro/report/>. This includes (but is not limited to) - reporting a missing person, road traffic incidents and reporting lost and found property.



You can also speak to Bedfordshire Police operators on their web chat service using the green circle button with a speech bubble on their website.



Only call **999** if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

British Sign Language (BSL) users can use Bedfordshire Police video relay service where an interpreter will help you report the crime.

DID YOU KNOW?

Highest number join Bedfordshire Police as 999 call handlers

Bedfordshire Police has recruited its largest ever single cohort of staff into its force control room as part of Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye's pledge to invest in improving public contact



Nineteen new police staff members have started training with the force ahead of joining the nerve centre of policing in the county where all 999, 101 and other public contact is managed. The new starters are made up of a combination of radio agents, call handlers and crime bureau operators.

More than 50 staff have joined the force's control room since August at a time when demand is growing. Since the Covid lockdown restrictions were fully lifted in 2022, Bedfordshire Police witnessed an increase in call volumes, rising from under 10,000 999 calls a month at the start of the year to more than 13,000 calls per month on a couple of occasions towards the end of the year.



Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye and Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst met with the new cohort last week during their first week of training.

It follows the PCC directing investment into this area to help ensure the force could increase staffing numbers in this key area of business.

Almost 200 additional police officers for Bedfordshire as PCC delivers on recruitment pledge

Bedfordshire Police has announced that it has exceeded its three-year target to recruit more than 650 additional officers.

The force has increased its base number of officers by 198 since it launched its biggest ever recruitment drive in 2020, as part of the Government's national police uplift programme.

The force celebrated surpassing the target when the latest cohort of student officers started on Monday (27 March).

Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye said increasing officer numbers, especially in community policing, had been a key part of the reason he had taken the decision to increase the police council tax precept over the past two years.

"Achieving our recruitment target and exceeding this has taken immense work, especially in this, the final year of the uplift," he said.

"We now officially have more police officers in Bedfordshire Police than at any time in the force's history. Recent changes also indicate an improving retention rate.



The Bobby Scheme

Did you know about the Bobby Scheme which is run by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner?

The Bobby Scheme supports elderly (over 65), vulnerable victims of Crime, and victims of domestic abuse by improving their home security. This is a free service, and in the last 15 years over 20,000 households have received a visit from the Scheme. The Bobby Scheme works in partnership with Bedfordshire Fire Service and the counties three Local Authorities to deliver their service.



Bedfordshire Victim Care Services

Bedfordshire Victim Care Services (BVCS) offers free and confidential support to anyone affected by crime, whether it has been reported to the police or not. This includes victims themselves, bereaved relatives, parents or guardians of victims under 18 and members of staff where a business has been the subject of a crime.

When you report a crime to the police you will be asked a few questions to find out how you have been affected by the crime and your personal circumstances, to see if there is any additional support that you might need. BVCS will use this information to decide the best way to support you. One of the teams' skilled Victim Care Coordinators will be able to identify the help you might need and what local support is available. If needed, they can also support you through any proceedings at Magistrates' or Crown Court.

BVCS can also talk to you about the benefits of Restorative Justice, which can give you the opportunity to tell the offender about the real impact the crime they committed has had on you.

BVCS also work with a range of specialist organisations and community support groups, and can support you in making contact.



Bedfordshire
**Victim Care
Services**

Contact Information

Telephone:
0800 0282887

Email:
info@bedfordshirevcs.com

Website:
<https://www.bedfordshirevcs.com/>

Monday to Friday: 8am – 6pm

PCC out and about



Volunteering and other opportunities

There are a number of volunteering opportunities at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire.

Independent Custody Visiting

Independent Custody Visitors are members of the local community who, working in pairs, call at Police Custody Suites unannounced at any time. With agreement, the visitors can speak to detainees about their treatment or conditions, and take up any issues of concern with custody staff.

Scrutiny Panel - Stop and Search and Use of Force

The Scrutiny Panel review Stop and Search and Use of Force data, outcomes and also reviews body worn footage recorded to scrutinise use of the power. Panel members attend quarterly meetings which are usually held online via Microsoft Teams on an evening.

Please view our website under the 'volunteering' section or email **PCC@beds.police.uk** to find out more.

You can also keep up to date with the PCC and his offices day to day work via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram



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If you need to contact the police please either call **999** if it is an emergency

or dial **101** if it is a nonemergency

