

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire Newsletter



July 2023

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- OPCC supports national charity in raising awareness of spiking
- PCC celebrates Bedfordshire police as they welcome 28 new officers
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Bedfordshire's PCC has called for better welfare provision in the county's schools after a successful pilot project saw specialist youth workers engage with almost 200 young people

The unique pilot initiated by Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Festus Akinbusoye saw 180 students from seven schools across Bedfordshire engage with specialist youth workers as part of a coordinated project to get them back in the classroom.

Launched in June 2022, the flagship project aimed to reduce absenteeism by identifying key drivers of persistent unauthorised school absence, while providing participating schools with additional resources to tackle the issue.

The first of its kind in Bedfordshire, the pilot was delivered in partnership with the county's Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU), whose team of Youth Intervention Specialists (YIS) provided one-to-one mentoring support to those referred to the scheme.

All 180 young people involved in the project engaged with youth workers from the VERU and its delivery partners, with the report highlighting positive feedback for the scheme from students, their families, and the schools themselves.

Read more: [here](#).



OPCC supports national charity in raising awareness of spiking

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has partnered with national charity Stamp Out Spiking to deliver training to professionals in a bid to help raise awareness of spiking and keep partygoers safe.

As part of the [Safer Streets project](#), the OPCC have joined forces with Stamp out Spiking to deliver training to officers and local authorities, educating them on the signs to spot when it comes to spiking and how they can help prevent such offences.

Project Manager for Safer Streets Phillip Eaton said: “We commissioned Stamp out Spiking to deliver anti spiking training in a ‘train the trainer’ format to staff from the force and key stakeholders from our local authorities.

Read more [here](#).



PCC celebrates Bedfordshire police as they welcome 28 new officers

The county's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has congratulated the force on welcoming a further 28 officers. Twenty-eight officers celebrated passing initial training after spending the last 22 weeks in the classroom learning the basics of policing. They were in two different cohorts, the fast-track detective route, to become a detective in two years, and the other group on a degree apprenticeship, where they train as an officer alongside gaining a fully funded degree with Anglia Ruskin University.

The ceremony involved receiving certificates whilst celebrating with their teammates, trainers, family and friends. It was an emotional moment for the students as they shared stories and reminisced about the highs and lows of the training in the last few hours they were all together as a cohort.

Read more [here](#).



PCC attends Police Bravery Awards as Bedfordshire officer recognised for ‘heroic’ efforts

A Bedfordshire Police officer who entered a burning building in an attempt to rescue someone has been recognised for his efforts at the national Police Bravery awards.

The National Police Bravery Awards on Thursday (13 July) honoured officers from across England and Wales who have performed outstanding acts of bravery while on or off duty. The Bedfordshire officer, who has chosen to remain anonymous, sustained life changing injuries after being deployed to Green Court, Luton in April last year.



Shortly after arrival, the officer and his team were faced with fire inside one of the apartments on the 14th floor that was causing smoke to slowly engulf the hallways.

Read more [here](#).

Safer Streets Residents Competition

“ENOUGH” Be part of the change, make a difference and help end Public Sexual Harassment



As part of the Bedfordshire Safer Streets initiative, we are running a competition for residents across Bedfordshire to create digital art, a short animation and/or a short film to help to raise awareness about Public Sexual Harassment. Entries must look to raise awareness about Public Sexual Harassment, so that we can help to raise a generation who are equipped to challenge harassment, to empathise with those who experience it; and who never become perpetrators of this everyday violence.

Should you require any further information, please email

saferstreets.bedfordshire@beds.police.uk

CLOSING DATE: 30th September 2023

Further information including competition entry guidelines can be found [here](#).



The PCC and his team engaged with residents at Ampthill Festival

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and his team engaged with residents at the Ampthill Festival (Amp Fest) from Friday 14 July to Sunday 16 July. The festival comprised of three separate events, AmpRocks, AmpProms and AmpGala. Each event was different and provided something for the whole family to enjoy throughout the course of the weekend.

Lots of residents were able to visit the safer streets stand to learn more about the scheme and what the OPCC is doing. The PCC engaged with residents and was able to promote and share information on the work that he and his office are completing.

Head over to our social media pages [@BedsOPCC](#) to find out more!



Amp Fest 2023

Spotlight on Restorative Justice

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative justice enables victims to meet or communicate with their offender to explain the real impact of their actions. It gives someone affected by crime the chance to have their say, explain what the effect was on them and to seek a direct explanation from the offender about what they did.

Through this the offender can begin to understand the effect of their behaviour and make amends. Restorative justice does not replace the criminal justice system, but helps to deal with the emotions and stress caused by crime, so the person harmed can move on with their lives. If you've been a victim of a crime it's likely to have been a deeply upsetting and unsettling experience. For many people restorative justice helps to get closure after a traumatic time. People who have participated in restorative justice have reported that it has been an empowering experience which allowed them to feel more in control of what happened to them.

You can find out more about the Restorative Justice process via our website [here](#) or by emailing:

restorativejustice@beds.police.uk



I am glad restorative justice exists because without it, I would have not known the reasons behind why the offender did what they did, and I am someone that likes explanations for things – it helps me process and understand much better

Referral

Referrals are submitted via agencies with one or more party, or individuals can also self-refer.

Consent

Consent is sought wherever possible, prior to a referral being submitted.

Risk Assessment

An initial risk assessment is concluded before the case goes ahead.

Facilitation

Facilitators meet with each party to explain the Restorative Justice process and to seek agreement to participate.

Communication

An appropriate way forward (direct or indirect communication) is decided and agreed by parties and communication is facilitated.

Round up of some of the Commissioner's activities

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Met with retired Police Officer Lionel Stewart, who is the Chair of the Bedfordshire branch of the National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO).



Joined Police Cadets at their last session of the school year. He spoke to them about his experience as a Special Constable in Bedfordshire, and the quality training they've received.



Attended Silsoe V.C Lower School for the schools graduation ceremony, to celebrate the success of the students and school.



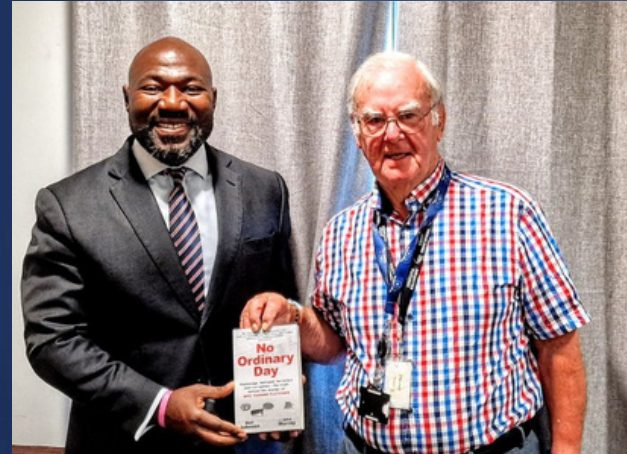
Attended the launch event of Bedfordshire's newest Watch Scheme in Greenfield, Flitton and Wardhedges. There are now 60 Parishes with a Speed Watch Scheme, and 30 with Street, Dog and Horse Watches.



Visited Ampfest, thanks to so many people for coming to visit our safer streets stand to learn more about the scheme and what the OPCC is doing. The PCC engaged with residents and promoted the work that he and his team are doing.



Follow **@BedsOPCC** to find out more on what activities the PCC and his office are doing day-to-day!





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



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