Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust



Appendix A

Annual Report 2025 - 2026

Kent Police & Crime Commissioner

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Foreword by the Police and Crime Commissioner

Police and Crime Commissioners are your local Victim Champions. We put our neighbourhoods first. And we ensure policing delivers the services that citizens want.

I've made a clear commitment to the public: cut crime, support victims and build trust. This Annual Report outlines the progress made during the year in delivering those commitments and my expectations to protect people, places and property, whilst building partnerships so every agency plays their part in making Kent safer.

Throughout the year, Kent Police has continued to operate within an increasingly complex environment. Policing faces growing demands from serious violence, violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, online offending, fraud and organised crime, whilst the wider criminal justice system continues to experience significant pressures. At the same time, public expectations rightly remain high, with residents expecting visible policing, a timely response when they need help, effective investigations and meaningful support should they become a victim of crime.

Despite these challenges, significant progress has been made across all areas of the Plan. Action has been taken to protect vulnerable people from harm, support victims of crime, tackle those who cause the greatest levels of harm in our communities and strengthen confidence in policing. Prevention has remained central to our approach, recognising that the most effective way to reduce crime is often to prevent it from occurring in the first place. The good progress that Kent Police has made was recognised by HMICFRS in their latest PEEL assessment, which sets a strong foundation for delivering the Plan.

Holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public remains one of my most important responsibilities. During the year I have continued to scrutinise performance, challenged where improvement is needed and ensured transparency through robust governance arrangements, public performance meetings and engagement with the Police and Crime Panel. This Annual Report forms an important part of that accountability framework by providing an assessment of progress against the priorities set out in the Plan.

And we do this at a time when the Government is causing confusion and instability within the sector through their police reform programme. This would see weaker governance, less local policing and decisions made further away from our neighbourhoods.

I would like to thank the staff in my Office for their hard work and support to me as your elected Police and Crime Commissioner. My thanks also to the officers, staff and volunteers of Kent Police, the organisations commissioned by my Office, community groups and partner agencies across Kent for their dedication and commitment throughout the year.

Most importantly, I would like to thank the residents of Kent for their continued engagement, support and challenge, all of which help ensure policing and community safety services remain focused on what matters most.

This report demonstrates the progress made towards delivering my vision for a safer county.

Matthew Scott

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

Executive Summary

This Annual Report sets out progress made during the year in delivering the Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust: Kent Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029. The Plan is centred around four key areas: Protecting People, Protecting Places, Protecting Property and Productive Partnerships, with a number of priorities under each. It is supported by effective governance, strong accountability and a sustainable financial framework.

The year has presented significant challenges for policing and community safety. Nationally, policing continues to face increasing demand associated with serious violence, violence against women and girls, cyber-enabled crime, fraud and broader pressures within the criminal justice system. Locally, residents continue to expect visible policing, a prompt response when they need assistance and effective support when they become victims of crime. Throughout the year, Kent Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and partner organisations have worked together to address these challenges whilst maintaining a strong focus on prevention, enforcement, victim support and public confidence.

Progress against the four key areas

Protecting People

Work to protect vulnerable people and support victims remained a central focus throughout the year. Kent Police continued to strengthen its response to rape and serious sexual offences, domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, whilst partnership activity sought to improve victim experiences and criminal justice outcomes. Targeted interventions were delivered to prevent serious violence and support individuals at risk of exploitation through gangs and county lines activity. My commissioned victim services continued to provide vital support regardless of whether crimes were reported to the police.

Protecting Places

Maintaining safe communities remained a key priority. Neighbourhood policing teams, including dedicated Beat Officers and Neighbourhood Task Forces, continued to address local concerns through visible patrols, problem solving and engagement with residents and businesses. Activity to tackle anti-social behaviour, road danger, rural crime and environmental crime was delivered alongside local authority and community partners. Improvements in public contact and accessibility remained an important focus throughout the year.

Protecting Property

Work continued to prevent and investigate burglary, retail crime, vehicle crime, robbery, cybercrime and fraud. Enforcement activity was supported by prevention campaigns, business engagement and victim support services. Particular emphasis was placed on addressing crimes that can have a significant impact on confidence, wellbeing and perceptions of safety within local communities.

Productive Partnerships

Partnership working continued to be fundamental to delivering safer communities. Through the Kent Criminal Justice Board, Community Safety Partnerships and other collaborative arrangements, organisations worked together to reduce reoffending, support victims, improve criminal justice outcomes and address the root causes of criminal behaviour. Education, prevention and public health approaches remained critical components of this work.

Accountability and governance

My Office continued to hold the Chief Constable to account through a robust framework of governance and performance oversight. Progress was monitored through Performance and Delivery Boards, audit arrangements and scrutiny by the Police and Crime Panel. This work was supported by performance information, inspection findings and public feedback to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

In addition, a Board chaired by myself and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner ensured effective oversight of the collaborative arrangements with Essex Police, while my colleagues and I also continued to scrutinise the operation and performance of wider regional policing structures.

Financial stewardship

My Office maintained oversight of a policing and community safety budget of £536.2m in 2025/26, ensuring resources remained focused on delivering frontline policing, supporting victims and maintaining community safety services. This continued against a backdrop of significant financial pressure and a requirement to identify savings whilst protecting core services.

Looking ahead

Whilst this report demonstrates significant progress, challenges remain. Growing demand, financial pressures, technological change and reforms to policing governance will require continued focus on accountability, resilience and collaboration. By maintaining strong foundations and effective oversight, Kent Police, my Office and partner organisations will be well placed to sustain improvements and respond effectively to emerging threats and future challenges.

I am committed to delivering the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan and ensuring that Kent and Medway continue to be safe places to live, work and visit.

Key Headlines 2025/26

Recorded crime reduced across several high-harm offences, including rape by 8.4%, VAWG by 6.4%, serious violence by 4.2% and domestic abuse by 2.7% compared with 2024/25.

More than £6.4 million invested in services for victims, with 85,122 victims referred to commissioned or grant-funded services and 96% receiving some form of support.

Stronger protection for victims of domestic abuse and stalking, with 569 Domestic Violence Protection Notices issued, 498 Domestic Violence Protection Orders secured and 40 Stalking Protection Orders obtained.

Strengthened neighbourhood policing, with a named dedicated Beat Officer for every ward and investment in 65 additional Neighbourhood Officers to increase visibility, engagement and preventative activity.

Improved emergency response performance, with over 90% of 999 calls consistently answered within ten seconds and 62.8% of emergencies attended within 20 minutes, an increase of 11.3 percentage points.

Targeted prevention and early intervention support for young people, with the Gangs and County Lines service supporting 204 young people and education programmes reaching thousands of pupils.

Substantial reductions in key property crimes, including an 18.0% reduction in vehicle crime, a 14.2% reduction in personal robbery and an 8.9% reduction in residential burglary. Officers also attended 98.1% of residential burglaries.

Strong governance and financial stewardship, with oversight of a £536.2m budget and independent assurance that Kent Police finances are aligned to priorities and decisions on expenditure offer value for money.

Independent scrutiny to protect standards and public confidence, with 36 volunteer Independent Custody Visitors undertaking 218 unannounced visits, while the OPCC completed 337 independent complaint reviews.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) supports me in discharging my statutory responsibilities.

The staff do not change with the election of a new PCC and are politically restricted. This means they are not allowed to support me, as the incumbent PCC, or any other candidate to stand for election or become involved in party political work.

I do not have operational responsibility for Kent Police; this is solely the remit of the Chief Constable. However, I am responsible for setting police and crime objectives for the county through a Police and Crime Plan, setting the council tax and Kent Police budget, and appointing the Chief Constable. I also hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient police service.

As a separate organisation to Kent Police, OPCC staff also have no operational policing responsibilities.

In 2025/26, the OPCC received:

- Over 7,000 pieces of correspondence via email, online through the website or in hard copy. This included requests for information, invitations to meetings/events, members of the public wishing to complain about Kent Police and promotional/sales material.
- Of this, 4,500 were individual contacts from the public and handled by my Casework team. A high proportion related to members of the public wishing to make a complaint about Kent Police which were referred to the Kent Police Professional Standards Department (PSD). However, other issues raised included the processing of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and the use of e-scooters/e-bikes on pavements.
- 337 requests from members of the public for an independent review into how their complaint against Kent Police was handled by PSD (an increase of 32.1% or 82 on the previous year).
- 40 Freedom of Information Act requests and 39 Subject Access Requests.

The OPCC is committed to providing value for money. In 2025/26 there was no increase in the cost of running the Office, with the budget being maintained at £1.5m – the same level as in 2017.

With 26 established posts, the OPCC is smaller than many offices around the country allowing as much funding as possible to support policing and commissioned services. The Office makes a significant contribution to holding Kent Police to account on behalf of the public, supporting victims of crime and improving community safety.

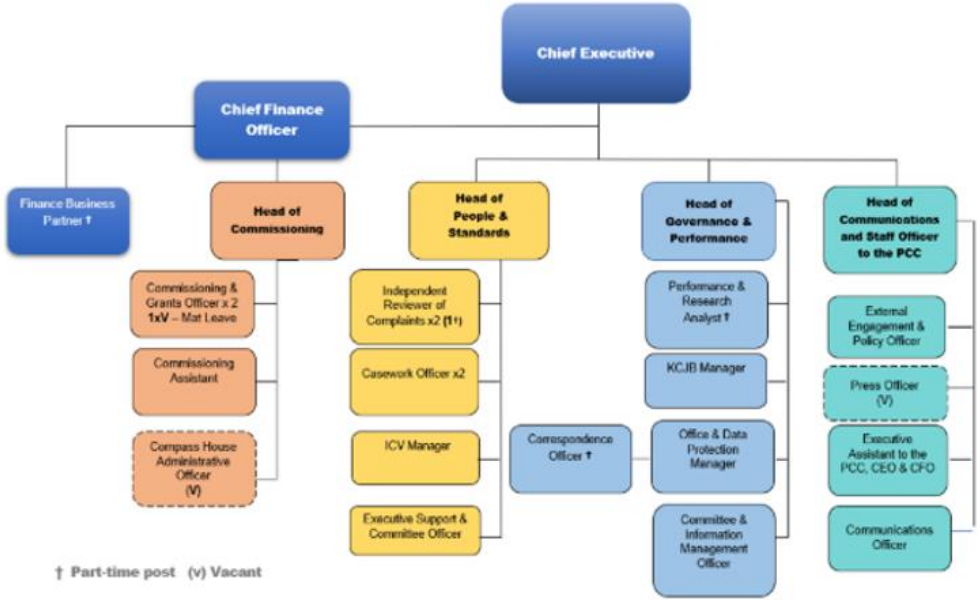
There are two statutory roles:

- the Chief Executive who leads the Office and is responsible for all the staff; and
- the Chief Finance Officer who is responsible for the financial strategy and ensuring good value for money.

In addition, the senior leadership team consists of the following:

- Head of Commissioning;
- Head of People and Standards;
- Head of Communications and Staff Officer to the PCC; and
- Head of Governance and Performance.

The structure of the OPCC is shown below:



About the Police and Crime Plan

By law, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are required to publish a Police and Crime Plan that covers their term of office, and keep it under constant review. PCCs also have a duty to consult victims and the wider community on their priorities.

For me, consultation on police and crime priorities commenced in the lead up to the May 2024 PCC election as I developed my Manifesto commitments upon which I was re-elected. Having been re-elected though, I was keen to encourage further feedback from victims, communities and partner agencies. Therefore, my Police and Crime Plan survey ran from July to December 2024

A total of 6,767 responses were received – the highest return rate ever. The full survey report can be viewed here, but this is a precis of the results.

I would like to thank all those who took the time to have their say on policing and crime in the county.

However, the survey was only one element of my consultation. It also took account of correspondence received by my Office; feedback from engagement events; observations from criminal justice bodies and community safety partners; emerging local threats; and national guidance. The Chief Constable was also fully consulted.

Q1. On a scale of 1-10, how safe do you feel where you live? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)
➢ Respondents felt 7.0 / 10 safe where they live [2023 = 6.3 / 2022 = 7.2 / 2021 = 7.0]
Q2. On a scale of 1-10, how safe do you feel in your nearest town centre? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)
➢ Respondents felt 5.8 /10 safe in their nearest town centre
Q3. On a scale of 1-10, how much do you trust Kent Police? (1 = not at all / 10 = very much)
➢ Respondents trusted Kent Police 6.4 / 10 [2023 = 6.0]
Q4. On a scale of 1-10, how well do you think Kent Police are performing? (1 = very badly / 10 = very well)
➢ Respondents rated the performance of Kent Police 5.8 / 10
Q6. Which of the following crime types do you feel are the most important?
➢ Respondents could select up to six issues from a pre-defined list; the top five were:
1. Rape or sexual assault
2. Knife crime
3. Child sexual exploitation
4. Violent assault
5. Drugs

The Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust: Kent Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 [the Plan] was considered and supported – with some minor amends – by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel at their meeting on 4 February 2025. It was published on 1 April 2025.

At its heart, the Plan is built around a clear commitment to the public: cut crime, support victims and build trust. It recognises that modern policing operates within an increasingly complex environment, with growing demands associated with vulnerability, serious violence, violence against women and girls (VAWG), cyber-enabled crime, fraud and anti-social behaviour (ASB). The Plan therefore seeks to balance the need to address issues that affect many residents whilst ensuring that those who are most vulnerable receive the protection, safeguarding and support they need.

The Plan is structured around four key areas that collectively contribute to safer communities and improved public confidence:

- Protecting People
- Protecting Places
- Protecting Property
- Productive Partnerships

Under each key area there are a number of priorities.

Successful delivery is underpinned by three enablers:

- Effective monitoring and accountability
- A sustainable budget
- Effective national and regional working

Overview of Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust: Kent Police and Crime Plan 2025 - 2029



How delivery has been measured

While the Plan sets the strategic direction for policing, community safety and victim support across Kent and Medway, effective delivery depends upon robust governance, transparent scrutiny and the use of reliable evidence to assess progress and identify areas for improvement.

As PCC, I am responsible for holding the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of policing services and the priorities within the Plan. Throughout the year, progress was monitored through an evolving performance framework and established governance arrangements. This ensured consistency, and that improvement activity was informed by objective evidence, emerging risks and public expectations.

Performance framework

Performance was monitored through a suite of measures aligned to the priorities under each key area. This enabled operational performance, outcomes for victims and communities, crime trends and the effectiveness of policing activity to be assessed. The framework focused not only on current performance, but also historical and longer-term trends, as well as national comparisons (where appropriate) to provide a comprehensive understanding of progress. It was also designed to ensure performance was considered in the round, balancing both quantitative data and qualitative insight.

Governance

Regular scrutiny of performance has been through informal processes, and a programme of formal governance and accountability meetings. These are outlined below:

Key Principles: dynamic & risk-based; takes account of, & has due regard for each parties distinct role		
Informal Interaction (Daily)	Spontaneous discussions between the OPCC & Kent Police.	
Joint PCC & Chief Constable Briefing (Weekly)	A closed briefing which enables dialogue & discussion on a routine frequent basis.	
Performance & Delivery Board (Quarterly)	Held in public & enables me to formally hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the priorities & related matters.	**Held on:** • 28 May 2025 • 16 September 2025 • 26 November 2025 • 25 February 2026
Joint Audit Committee (Quarterly)	Combined committee with Kent Police. Scrutinises internal processes, spending & risk management policies.	**Held on:** • 25 June 2025 • 12 September 2025 • 4 December 2025 • 12 March 2026
Kent & Essex Collaboration Oversight Meeting (6 monthly)	Co-chaired by me and the Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. Keeps collaboration under review and holds both Chief Constables to account.	**Held on:** • 10 September 2025 • 2 April 2026

In addition, my work and that of the OPCC has continued to be scrutinised and supported by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel, ensuring openness, transparency and accountability on behalf of residents across the county.

External evidence and independent assessment

Performance assessment has not relied solely on local performance data. Evidence was gathered from a range of independent and external sources to provide an objective assessment. These included inspections and reports published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), meetings with public bodies such as the Independent Office for Police Conduct, audit findings, feedback from the Independent Custody Visitors and information provided by partner organisations.

This external scrutiny helped ensure local performance was considered within the wider context and that areas of good practice, risk and improvement were identified and acted upon. Particular regard was given to national priorities and the Strategic Policing Requirement, including areas such as VAWG, neighbourhood policing, and serious and organised crime.

Listening to communities

Public accountability extends beyond performance data. Feedback from residents, victims, communities and partner organisations remained an important source of evidence in understanding whether services were meeting public expectations. Consultation activity, engagement events, surveys and stakeholder feedback helped shape scrutiny activity and to identify areas requiring further focus.

Combining performance information with the experiences of residents provided a more complete understanding of how effectively services were being delivered and whether they were making a meaningful difference to the communities served.

Annual assessment of progress

This Annual Report also forms a key element of the Plan's accountability framework. It provides a transparent assessment of progress made during the year against the four key areas and priorities under each.

I will continue to ensure that residents of Kent and Medway can understand how resources have been used, how performance has been monitored and how policing and community safety partners are delivering against the commitments contained within the Plan.



Key area: Protecting People

Victims of crime often experience significant physical, emotional and psychological trauma, and for many the effects can be long-lasting. The Plan therefore places a strong emphasis on identifying and tackling those who cause the greatest harm, safeguarding vulnerable individuals, supporting victims to recover and rebuild their lives, and ensuring that policing operates with the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

Throughout the year, Kent Police, the OPCC and partner organisations have worked together to deliver a comprehensive programme of prevention, enforcement, safeguarding and victim support activity.

The Plan sets out six priorities under Protecting People. The following is an overview of the progress made against each priority during the year.

➢ Rape and serious sexual offences

Summary:

- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded rape offences reduced by 8.4% (168 fewer offences) and serious sexual offences by 3.9% (112 fewer offences).
- The rape solved rate was 9.0%, compared to 9.8% in 2024/25.
- 95.2% of rape victims were satisfied with the overall service.
- Continued victim centred, suspect focused investigations through Operation Soteria.
- Continued delivery of the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service and Sexual Violence Support Service for adults, and children and young people (C&YP).

Kent Police remained committed to Operation Soteria, with its principles embedded through investigative practice, supervision, governance and specialist training. Rape and serious sexual offence investigations were supported by a victim-centred, suspect-focused and context-led model, designed to improve the victim experience, increase confidence in the criminal justice process and enhance investigative standards. A strong emphasis was placed on investigating offences with compassion and professionalism, as well as closer working with the Crown Prosecution Service and continued attention to procedural justice. Additional governance, scrutiny and quality assurance arrangements were also introduced to maintain high investigative standards and drive continuous improvement.

Examples of activity during the year included specialist training for rape investigators and frontline staff, and Project Vigilant which saw highly trained undercover officers working with uniformed officers in the night-time economy to identify and disrupt those displaying predatory behaviour towards women and girls. Kent Police also worked with taxi operators and other partners to raise awareness of sexual violence, spiking and safeguarding risks.

Child protection investigation teams worked closely with Child Centred Policing and Missing Persons teams to ensure a swift response to safeguarding concerns. Operation Makesafe deployments also continued in order to test and improve how hotels identify and report child exploitation concerns.

I continued to commission an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Service and Sexual Violence Support Service to provide support to adults and C&YP affected by rape and sexual abuse, regardless of when the offence occurred or whether it was reported to the police. Delivered by Family Matters, the service received 1,629 referrals - 767 for ISVA support, 254 for the Child ISVA, 11 for the Gangs ISVA, and 597 for therapy. Just under 3,000 ISVA support sessions were delivered, with over 600 for those aged 17 and under. Of those accessing therapy, 89% reported a reduction in suicidal thoughts and 92% improved self-esteem.

The service also introduced a Post-Trial Therapy pilot to address an identified gap following a 'not guilty' verdict. This provided four structured sessions, delivered by qualified therapists and included stabilisation techniques, emotional processing, cognitive reframing, and forward planning.

In addition, a stabilisation pilot was introduced to address the emotional strain and risk experienced in waiting for trauma therapy. This provided a short-term, structured intervention offering 4–6 stabilisation sessions to individuals with complex needs or emotional dysregulation.

➢ Domestic abuse

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded domestic abuse (DA) offences reduced by 2.7% (769 fewer offences).
- The solved rate increased to 10.2%, compared to 9.5% in 2024/25.
- Continued investment in technology and specialist capabilities to improve the response.
- Increased use of DVPNs, DVPOs, Stalking Protection Orders and other safeguarding powers to protect victims.
- Continued provision of a stalking Advocacy Service offering specialist support to victims of stalking.

During the year, the force strengthened its response to DA through specialist teams that safeguarded victims while targeting those who presented the greatest risk. Introduced in October 2025, Proactive DA Teams arrested more than 500 suspects, including high-risk and prolific offenders. This proactive model was supported by an emphasis on evidence-led investigations, including maximising opportunities for victimless prosecutions where appropriate, securing early victim accounts, improving supervision and reinforcing the importance of taking positive action at first contact.

A central part of the force's safeguarding and disruption activity was preventative and protective powers. In 2025/26, Kent Police issued 569 Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs), secured 498 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and obtained 40 Stalking Protection Orders. The Proactive Orders and Safeguarding Team played a key role in securing and managing these, helping to protect the vulnerable, reduce repeat victimisation and prevent further harm.

I continued to support a whole-system approach to reducing harm by funding DA and stalking perpetrator interventions. Delivered in partnership with Interventions Alliance, Kent Police, Look Ahead and Victim Support, the programme focused on managing risk, reducing reoffending and improving outcomes for victims and their children through intensive multi-agency case management and behaviour change interventions.

I also continued to commission a specialist Stalking Advocacy Service. Delivered by Victim Support, the service provided dedicated support, advocacy and practical guidance through Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers. In 2025/26, the service received 4,780 referrals, with the top three categories of support being listening and validation, safety planning, and external signposting.

➢ Violence against women and girls

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded VAWG offences reduced by 6.4% (2,346 fewer offences).
- The solved rate increased to 10.1%, compared to 9.8% in 2024/25.
- Delivery of project Vigilant and wider safeguarding initiatives to protect women and girls.
- Strengthened response to modern slavery and human trafficking, helping to identify victims, disrupt offenders and protect those at risk.
- Continued investment in specialist services supporting women and girls affected by crime, abuse and exploitation.

The force continued to engage with communities and local partners to improve safety and confidence via named Beat Officers in every ward, My Community Voice, Walk and Talk activity, and VAWG community forums. This was supported by visible patrols in hotspot locations, use of Project Vigilant tactics with undercover officers working with uniformed officers in the night-time economy to identify and disrupt those displaying predatory behaviour towards women and girls, bystander training with taxi firms, work with licensed premises through Best Bar None, and wider night-time economy activity to identify and disrupt harmful behaviour.

Kent Police also supported initiatives to raise awareness of stalking, harassment and online safety, while continuing to strengthen its response to modern slavery and human trafficking through safeguarding, intelligence development, preventative orders and referrals into specialist support arrangements.

This work was governed through the Force Performance Management Committee and Force Vulnerability Board, providing oversight of the victim experience, investigative standards, repeat victimisation and offender management across DA, rape, serious sexual offences, stalking, harassment, predatory behaviour and emerging forms of sexual harm. The approach is deliberately whole system, bringing together prevention, public confidence, investigative quality, safeguarding, offender disruption and partners rather than treating VAWG as a single crime type.

I continued to invest in a range of commissioned services supporting women and girls affected by abuse and exploitation. This included specialist victim services, stalking advocacy provision and interventions designed to address perpetrator behaviour. Alongside this, work continued with partners, including schools, to increase awareness of healthy relationships, challenge harmful behaviours and support early intervention with young people.

- **Serious violence, gangs and knife crime**

Summary:

- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded serious violence offences reduced by 4.2% (669 fewer offences). Recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument increased by 1.8% (16 more offences).
- Continued visible presence in hotspots, combining enforcement, safeguarding and prevention.
- Proactive targeting of offenders linked to organised crime, county lines and other serious offences.
- Strengthened governance and multi-agency collaboration to reduce serious violence and ensure resources focused on areas and individuals most at risk.
- Continued delivery of initiatives to help those involved in gangs safely exit, and to equip C&YP with the skills and confidence to make positive choices.

Activity focused on disrupting county lines networks, organised crime groups and those involved in the supply of Class A drugs, while also safeguarding vulnerable people at risk of exploitation. For example, Proactive CID West disrupted an organised crime group involved in the supply of cocaine between Watford and Maidstone. Officers detained three offenders and searches recovered cocaine, cash, mobile phones, electronic scales, deal bags and drug records. Examination of mobile devices also identified evidence of control of a drugs line, customer lists and wider Class A drug supply. All three received custodial sentences, preventing further harm to communities across Kent. The force also maintained a visible presence in violence hotspots and deployed proactive teams to target offenders involved in weapon carrying, serious violence and criminal exploitation.

I continued to chair the Serious Violence Duty Board, bringing together policing, local authorities, health, education and community partners to coordinate action. During the year, the Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment was refreshed and the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) worked closely with Kent Police analysts to align preventative activity with identified hotspot locations. Community engagement was also a focus, with Participation Workers capturing the voices of young people to help shape prevention activity.

Prevention and early intervention was strengthened through my commissioned Gangs and County Lines Preventative and Protective Interventions Service. This provided age-appropriate, trauma-informed, needs-led support to C&YP and their immediate support network to reduce risk and prevent serious youth violence, exploitation, and gang and county line activity. Delivered in Medway, Thanet, Swale, Canterbury, Ashford, Maidstone and West Kent, it consisted of two elements:

- Preventative interventions for those C&YP up to the age of 25 at risk of serious youth violence, knife offences, drug supply, criminal exploitation, or gangs.
- Protective interventions for those C&YP up to the age of 25 involved in serious youth violence, knife offences, drug supply, criminal exploitation, or gangs.

In 2025/26, 134 referrals were received with 204 C&YP supported. Of those supported and who exited the service:

- 100% said their mental health had improved.
- 100% said they felt safer.
- 95% agreed they felt able to enjoy life because of the support received.

I also continued to commission a Young People's Prevention Service to deliver educational programmes to help C&YP make informed and positive life choices. Delivered to C&YP aged 9 to 14, the service was provided by two organisations and covered different topics.

- Collaborate Digital: Healthy Relationships (attitudes, behaviours, and safety), Online Harms and Cyber Safety and Cyber–Bullying.
  Between Winter 2025 and Spring 2026, they ran 26 media workshops and 44 interactive assemblies. These covered awareness of risk, understanding the complex online world, and equipping C&YP with the knowledge, confidence and skills to make informed decisions.
  Sessions were held in 11 primary schools, engaging with 1,017 9 to11-year-olds, 15 secondary schools engaging with 7,421 11 to16-year-olds, and 1 alternative provision engaging with 6 students.
- St Giles Trust: Gangs, County Lines, Violence, Knife Crime and Criminal Exploitation
  Between December 2025 and May 2026, 30 workshops were delivered reaching 2,754 C&YP across 9 primary and 11 secondary schools. Five professional sessions were also delivered, with a total reach of 206.
  Topics covered included knife crime and weapons awareness, gangs – grooming and county lines, girls – gangs and empowerment, and understanding gang activity, behaviour and recruitment. Delivery was via assemblies, classes and small groups.

➢ Supporting victims

Summary:

- Continued commissioning and funding of a broad range of victim services.
- Secured additional external funding to expand service provision, increase capacity and ensure support available to those in most need.
- A wide network of organisations delivered accessible, tailored and specialist support to victims with diverse needs and experiences.
- Strong outcomes for victims, with high levels of engagement and evidence of improvements in wellbeing, confidence, safety and recovery.
- Investment in commissioned and grant-funded services, ensuring a balanced and sustainable approach to delivering support and practical assistance.

As PCC, I can commission or grant fund services to support delivery of the Plan. This includes services to support victims regardless of when the offence took place or if it was reported to the police.

In 2025/26, my Commissioning Team were once again successful in bidding for and receiving additional funding, with £6.4m being spent on services for victims. Additional funding was received from the MoJ to continue support for domestic violence and sexual violence services in managing increased demand, as well as increased capacity for DA and sexual violence trauma counselling.

In 2025/26, a total of 85,122 victims were referred to my commissioned or grant funded services, of which 96% or 82,064 received some kind of support. This was across 26 different organisations, delivering 43 different services. They included specialist support for C&YP, therapeutic services, trauma counselling, stalking advocacy, sexual abuse and DA specialist support.

Of those supported, 9,700 were DA victims, 7,199 were victims of stalking and harassment, and 3,907 were sexual violence victims. Additionally, 75,954 reported the crime to the police before engaging with support, and 1,605 felt empowered to do so following engagement.

In order to balance service provision with financial sustainability, some services were contracted and others grant funded. Contracted services included:

- **Kent Advocacy and Support Service** - a multi-crime service delivered by Victim Support, providing trauma informed, needs and risk led support to any victim of crime resident in Kent and Medway, including C&YP and close relatives. The service also included a dedicated Stalking Advocacy Service and separate Hate Crime Advocacy Service.
  In 2025/26, 80,967 referrals were received for the multi-crime service. The Stalking Advocacy Service received 4,780 referrals and the Hate Crime Advocacy Service 2,695 referrals.

  The service uses a distance travelled survey to track victims' feelings in six areas at the start and end of support. The results show that for each service victims saw an improvement in all areas:

	Multi-crime		Stalking Advocacy		Hate Crime Advocacy	
	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End
Perception of safety	5.1	8.2	4.9	5.8	4.0	6.1
Feeling informed	3.9	7.9	7.0	8.3	5.0	8.2
Experience of CJS	5.0	5.9	5.6	6.2	5.3	5.8
Health & wellbeing	6.8	7.9	6.2	7.6	6.9	7.2
Ability to cope	6.1	7.9	4.2	8.0	5.8	7.3
Reintegration	7.2	8.8	3.8	8.0	6.0	8.2

- **ISVA Service and Sexual Violence Support Service** – delivered by Family Matters to provide support to adults and C&YP people affected by rape and sexual abuse.
- **Restorative Justice (RJ) and Mediation Service** - delivered by Restorative Solutions and consisting of direct, indirect, and informal RJ interventions; Adolescent Parent Violence and Conflict (APVC) interventions; and mediation for repeat and persistent neighbour and community based ASB/crime issues.

Examples of grant funded services included:

- Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) – 1:1 advocacy and peer support for individuals bereaved by suicide or an unexplained death linked to Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews.
- Choices Support – intensive support for victims of hate crime with learning disabilities, mental health needs, and autism.
- Daisy Chain – pro bono legal advice service for DA victims. Support with court documentation, non-molestation orders and child related orders.
- SignHealth – support to deaf victim-survivors aged 16+ living across Kent and Medway who experienced DA or sexual violence.

I also have a dedicated victims' hub in Ashford – Compass House. Established in 2015, 12 victim service organisations including Victim Support and Kent Police's Victim and Witness Care Unit (V&WCU) utilise the facilities, enabling closer working and a more joined up approach to the delivery of services.

The OPCC also collaborated with NHS England on the delivery of therapeutic support for sexual violence victims, with the service going live on 1 April 2026. In addition, there was engagement with Kent County Council (KCC) on the re-commissioning of the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service and ensuring alignment with the Kent Advocacy and Support Service. This included provision of a single point of access and support for sanctuary provision.

➢ Building trust through integrity

Summary:

- Accessible and timely complaint handling, with a focus on resolving issues and improving the service delivered.
- Strengthened oversight of complaints and reviews, ensuring independent scrutiny, timely responses and the sharing of learning.
- High standards of integrity and ethical conduct maintained, reinforcing accountability where trust in policing was compromised.
- Continued independent assurance on the welfare and treatment of those in police custody, with scrutiny and feedback used to drive improvements.
- Support for agencies to learn from serious incidents, strengthen safeguarding arrangements and improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

Kent Police recorded 3,457 complaints, consisting of 7,305 allegations (an increase of 21 and 931 respectively compared to 2024/25). An emphasis on accessibility and responsiveness saw the force engage with complainants promptly, on average making contact within six working days. Outcomes of complaints also demonstrated a focus on resolving issues, promoting learning and supporting improvement.

Independent oversight remained an important safeguard. The OPCC is one of two 'review' bodies (along with the Independent Office for Police Conduct) to which members of the public may appeal after they have complained to Kent Police's PSD and had a response. Where appropriate, it is the role of the OPCC to determine whether the handling of the complaint was reasonable and proportionate.

The OPCC received 337 requests for an independent review (an increase of 32.1% or 82 on 2024/25), and upheld 58 with recommendations made to Kent Police. On average, it took 31 days to complete a review, the same as in 2024/25. Alongside this work, the OPCC continued to pursue Pension Forfeitures where a police officer is convicted of an offence, and the offending can be shown to be linked to their role. While the process can take several years, one pension was forfeited in the year, and another progressed. Taking such action reinforces the principle that officers who abuse the trust placed in them will be held accountable for their conduct.

I am also responsible for the Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme which provides independent assurance on the welfare and treatment of people detained in police custody. In 2025/26, 36 volunteer ICVs conducted 218 unannounced visits and engaged with 724 detainees. They identified a range of positive practices, including improved provision of feminine hygiene products, support arrangements for vulnerable detainees, and religious needs and dietary requirements being recognised and accommodated. Where areas for improvement were identified, such as delays in securing Appropriate Adults and issues with stock management, these were raised with Kent Police to drive further improvement. Overall, ICVs reported high standards of care, dignity and professionalism, providing reassurance that detainees are treated appropriately and humanely.

The OPCC continued to fund Kent Police's contribution to the coordination and delivery of Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews across the county by Kent County Council. In 2025/26, eight new notifications were received and partners continued to implement recommendations arising from completed reviews, with 103 actions signed off as complete.



Key area: Protecting Places

Safe and confident communities are fundamental to the quality of life enjoyed by residents across Kent and Medway. The Plan recognises that those who live, work and visit the county want to feel safe, and that visible policing, responsive services and effective partnership working are critical to maintaining public confidence and preventing crime.

Throughout the year, Kent Police and local partners worked together to address issues that matter most to residents. Activity focused on responding to public concerns, tackling crime and ASB, improving accessibility to policing services and ensuring communities receive a visible and effective policing presence. This work was underpinned by a problem-solving approach that emphasised prevention, early intervention and partnership collaboration.

The Plan sets out five priorities under Protecting Places. The following is an overview of the progress made against each priority during the year.

➢ Public contact

Summary:

- Management of high levels of demand while offering a range of contact channels to meet different public needs.
- Over 90% of 999 calls consistently answered within 10 seconds, making the Force Control Room one of the best performing in the country.
- Increase in volume of digital contacts, providing an accessible and convenient channel through which to access Kent Police services 24/7.
- More emergency incidents attended within 20 minutes, and a reduction in the average attendance time.
- Plans to transform public contact through introduction of Salesforce technologies progressed.

Kent Police continued to build on improvements within its Force Control Room, which is recognised as one of the best performing in the country. During the year, 889,653 total calls for service were received, an increase of more than 15,000 compared to 2024/25. While the volume of non-emergency 101 calls reduced by 2.4% to just under 250,000, emergency 999 calls increased by 2.6% to 373,000.

Use of digital services, giving the public more choice in how they engage with the force, also continued to expand. Digital contact, such as through Live Chat and the Single Online Home platform, increased by 4.8% to around 267,000, reflecting growing public demand for convenient, accessible and responsive online services. It also helped Kent Police manage demand more effectively, and supported faster information gathering, greater efficiency through self-service, and enhanced communication, contributing to a more responsive policing service.

Kent Police continued to progress the development of Salesforce technologies, which will enable faster, more accessible communication with the public, more consistent victim updates, and more efficient management of demand within the Force Control Room.

While officers will never be expected to exceed their training, the ability of Kent Police to attend emergencies promptly is fundamental to public safety. In 2025/26, the percentage of emergencies attended within 20 minutes was 62.8% - an increase of 11.3 percentage points on 2024/25. The median attendance time also fell by over three minutes, to 16 minutes and 21 seconds. A prompt, safe and effective response helps protect those at immediate risk, supports victims when they need the police most, prevents harm from escalating, and improves opportunities to identify and apprehend offenders.

➢ Neighbourhood policing

Summary:
- A named dedicated Beat Officer for every ward with responsibility for addressing local concerns and providing visible reassurance.
- Investment in additional Neighbourhood Officers.
- Continued delivery of visible neighbourhood policing, with regular foot patrols in neighbourhoods, town centres and rural communities.
- Targeted operations in response to community concerns, resulting in preventative orders and enforcement action.
- Strengthened community engagement through face-to-face meetings, neighbourhood events and My Community Voice.

Kent Police is committed to ensuring officers are accessible and visible within communities, enabling engagement and a focus on the issues that matter most to local people. Every community in Kent is supported by a team of Neighbourhood Officers, focused on engagement, identification of recurring issues, development of long-term solutions, and improving public confidence. The key features include:

- A named, dedicated Beat Officer for every ward, providing clear local ownership for problem solving and consistent officer visibility.
- Regular foot patrols, engagement in neighbourhoods and town centres, and targeted enforcement operations.
- Close working with residents, councils, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), schools, businesses and voluntary organisations.
- Publication of forthcoming meetings and engagement opportunities.
- Two-way engagement with communities through My Community Voice.

Neighbourhood Task Forces also continued to operate in every District, targeting hotspots and persistent problems. Dedicated town centre coverage ensured regular, visible patrols in high footfall areas and night-time economy locations, the targeting of repeat offenders and greater partnership working, providing reassurance and confidence to both the public and businesses experiencing persistent ASB or retail crime.

Examples of activity during the year included the Winter of Action initiative, which saw increased patrols in identified hotspot locations affected by ASB, serious violence and other community concerns. Neighbourhood officers in Dover worked with partners to tackle street drinking and associated ASB, resulting in preventative orders and enforcement action, and in Ashford, neighbourhood teams worked with partners to address issues involving e-scooters, retail crime and ASB.

In 2025/26, Kent Police also invested in neighbourhood policing, with 65 new frontline Neighbourhood Officers delivering across the county. This additional capacity provided officers with more time to patrol neighbourhoods and town centres, engage directly with communities, and prevent crime and ASB before issues escalated.

➢ Anti-social behaviour

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded ASB incidents increased by 22.1% (5,985 more incidents).
- Increased visibility and enforcement in communities most affected by ASB, with officers conducting thousands of proactive patrol hours.
- Dedicated action taken against nuisance vehicles and e-scooters, including joint operations with local authorities.
- Persistent ASB offenders targeted through the use of preventative and enforcement powers.
- Continued provision of a mediation service to support those impacted by neighbour disputes.

Kent Police maintained an active and visible presence in hotspot areas and continued to use neighbourhood policing as the foundation for tackling ASB. Activity was also supported by a dedicated lead officer for ASB, and a specialist function within the Strategic Prevention Command which provided tactical advice, analytical support, problem-solving guidance and assistance with enforcement powers.

ASB in coastal locations was a particular focus over the summer, with Dispersal Orders being issued in a number of locations and officers visiting the homes of 65 children to engage with their parents and carers. Partnership working was also vital, with officers working alongside councils, schools, transport operators and local communities to deliver more effective, targeted interventions. Collaborative working with local authorities addressed street drinking and rough sleeping, while licensing agreements with local stores helped reduce alcohol-related ASB. This approach enabled swift enforcement, including the issuing of five notices banning problematic youths from all Shop Safe premises, eight Criminal Behaviour Orders being submitted to the CPS, and 41 Community Protection Notices being issued.

The Winter of Action initiative saw patrols intensified in areas with higher levels of violence, knife crime and ASB, with officers conducting thousands of proactive patrol hours across town centres and transport hubs. This included targeted patrols in Gillingham, and Public Space Protection Orders to address e-scooters and catapults.

Across the county, Kent Police used education, prevention and targeted enforcement to address the illegal and anti-social use of e-scooters, e-bikes and nuisance vehicles. Activity was led locally in response to community concerns, supported by partnership working, intelligence-led patrols and the use of available road traffic and ASB powers. In Tonbridge, officers targeted nuisance vehicle activity, resulting in 56 Community Protection Warnings, 27 Fixed Penalty Notices, Section 59 warnings and vehicle seizures. Officers in Thanet tackled illegal e-scooter use linked to ASB and organised criminality through targeted days of action, seizures of e-scooters and use of visible and specialist policing resources. In 2025/26, the force seized a total of 450 illegal e-scooters.

The Special Constabulary also made a significant contribution, including vehicle seizures and Traffic Offence Reports, helping maintain visible enforcement against persistent vehicle-related ASB and other nuisance behaviour.

I continued to commission a Restorative Justice (RJ) and Mediation Service. Delivered by Restorative Solutions, it consisted of the following elements:

- Direct, indirect, and informal RJ interventions.
- Adolescent Parent Violence and Conflict (APVC) interventions.
- Mediation for repeat and persistent neighbour and community based ASB and crime issues.

The service received a total of 558 referrals - 181 RJ, 331 APVC and 46 Mediation - a 23% increase on 2024/25. APVC referrals increased by 30% from 2024/25, and Mediation referrals by 64%.

➢ Rural crime

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, based on those wards defined as rural, the number of recorded offences reduced by 6.0% (1,355 fewer offences).
- The solved rate increased to 13.4%, compared to 11.8% in 2024/25.
- Strengthened engagement with rural communities and sustained enforcement activity by the Rural Task Force.
- Coordinated enforcement activity to tackle rural crime, including fly-tipping.
- Expansion of the Rural Crime Board, providing partnership oversight and a forum to discuss emerging threats and joint solutions.

Kent Police's Rural Task Force (RTF) continued to provide a dedicated response to the unique challenges facing rural communities. During the year, they undertook targeted activity with partners against agricultural theft, plant and machinery crime, cable theft and wildlife offences, while also supporting farmers and rural businesses through crime prevention and engagement initiatives. Examples included checks at the Port of Dover which recovered six suspected stolen cars and an excavator, the recovery of a stolen £80,000 Telehandler following information from a FarmWatch member, and visits to stables offering safeguarding and crime prevention advice, including property marking.

Work also continued to address environmental offences, with activity focused on prevention, intelligence sharing and targeted enforcement to disrupt offending and improve confidence within rural communities. This included work with partners to tackle unlawful waste removal and scrap metal collection, resulting in vehicles being seized, the issuing of fines, cautions and prohibition notices, and warnings being given for overweight vehicles.

The force also strengthened its understanding of rural concerns through extensive engagement. A rural crime survey attracted around 1,000 responses, helping to identify priorities and inform future policing activity.

Bringing together Kent Police, rural stakeholders including farmers, and representatives of national bodies such as the National Farmers Union, my Rural Crime Board continued to ensure a robust response by providing strategic oversight and facilitating collaborative action. A wide range of topics were discussed, such as fly-tipping, agricultural theft, GPS thefts from farm machinery, wildlife crime, heritage crime. It also focused on emerging threats, including catapult-related offences, wildfire risks, illegal waste disposal and heritage crime.

I also invited my colleagues from Thames Valley, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex to a roundtable event with representatives from the police, the Environment Agency, local government, land owning and farming groups, and the private sector. It was an opportunity to discuss how, by combining resources and capabilities in partnership, we could collectively better fight waste crime across the South East.

➢ Road danger and Vision Zero

Summary:
- Continued support for Vision Zero through a coordinated approach.
- Strong focus on tackling the ‘Fatal Four’, supported by high levels of enforcement activity and targeted interventions.
- Identification of road safety risks and targeting of dangerous behaviours through intelligence-led activity, proactive patrols and partnership working.
- Support for national and local road safety initiatives, combining enforcement with public awareness and educational activity.
- Specialist officers and volunteers continued to play an important role in road safety enforcement and supporting those affected by collisions.

Kent Police continued to work alongside Kent County Council and other road safety partners to deliver the Vision Zero Strategy, which aims to eliminate fatalities and life changing injuries by 2050.

The approach is embedded across a range of specialist policing functions, including the Roads Policing Unit, Road Safety Unit, Safety Camera Team, Serious Collision Investigation Unit, and Community Speedwatch, ensuring road safety remained a core part of operational activity.

Throughout the year, enforcement and prevention activity focused on addressing the 'Fatal Four': speeding, impairment due to drink/drugs, mobile phone use/distraction and failure to wear a seatbelt. The following table shows enforcement activity conducted in 2025/26:

Speeding	Mobile phone use / distraction	Seatbelt	Impairment arrests
77,336	1,532	2,096	3,571

The force worked closely with partners to identify and address risks at high-harm locations, and officers maintained a visible presence on the road network through proactive patrols, targeted operations and intelligence-led activity. Examples include patrols where vehicles and pedestrians commonly interact, including public transport hubs and town centre locations, a dedicated Commercial Vehicle campaign during which over 100 UK and EU vehicles were stopped and checked, and support for major events such as the Archbishop's enthronement. Activity was also supported by automated and mobile speed enforcement.

The force supported national roads policing campaigns such as Operation Limit which resulted in 312 people being prosecuted for impairment offences, and Operation Dark Night, where officers conducted 93 eyesight checks. Specialist officers also used marked and unmarked vehicles and motorcycles to target high-risk road users. Alongside enforcement, the Road Safety Unit continued to deliver public awareness campaigns and educational activity, recognising that long-term reductions in road deaths and serious injuries requires both behavioural change and effective deterrence.

Kent also benefitted from a dedicated Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit whose members receive training and equipment equivalent to that of their regular officer counterparts.

I continued to provide funding to support Brake's National Road Victim Service, which provides emotional and practical support to people affected by road death and serious injury, and the professionals supporting them.



Key area: Protecting Property

Protecting people's homes, businesses, vehicles and personal possessions remains a fundamental responsibility of policing. Property crime can have a profound impact on victims, affecting not only their finances but also their sense of security, wellbeing and confidence. For many victims, the consequences of a crime can extend far beyond the immediate loss incurred, having a lasting effect on how safe they feel within their communities.

The Plan recognises that reducing property crime requires a balanced approach built around prevention, enforcement, victim support and partnership working. Throughout the year, Kent Police, the OPCC and partner organisations worked collaboratively to prevent offending, identify and pursue offenders, support victims and strengthen public awareness of crime prevention measures.

The Plan sets out five priorities under Protecting Property. The following is an overview of the progress made against each priority during the year.

➢ Burglary

Summary:

- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded residential burglary offences reduced by 8.9% (229 fewer offences).
- The solved rate was 8.8%, compared to 9.3% in 2024/25.
- Continued focus on identifying and targeting offenders, with opportunities to bring them to justice maximised.
- Exceptionally high attendance rate, demonstrating continued delivery of the NPCC House Burglary Pledge.
- Continued delivery of crime prevention advice to help residents protect their homes.

The force continued to tackle offences through proactive investigation, forensic examination, CCTV, digital enquiries, and targeted work to identify repeat or travelling offenders.

A key element of the force's approach was a commitment to the NPCC House Burglary Pledge, which requires attendance at every residential burglary and a victim-focused investigative response. In 2025/26, officers attended 98.1% of residential burglaries, ensuring victims received a prompt policing response and that investigative opportunities were maximised.

Kent Police also continued to target burglary offenders robustly through investigations, arrests and offender management activity. For example, a prolific serial burglar was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment following a complex investigation. He was linked to offences committed across Kent and the south of England between December 2023 and November 2025, where jewellery and other valuables worth approximately £600,000 were stolen. Forensic evidence, including

blood recovered from crime scenes, helped identify him; he was charged with 33 offences and pleaded guilty to 19.

Alongside enforcement activity, Kent Police delivered preventative crime reduction work designed to help residents protect their homes and reduce opportunities for offenders. The force continued to promote burglary prevention advice, neighbourhood engagement activity and seasonal crime prevention campaigns, supporting communities to take practical steps to enhance security and reduce risk. Dedicated burglary investigation guidance, first responder procedures and crime prevention resources remained available to officers to ensure a consistent and effective response across the county.

I continued to commission Victim Support to deliver the Kent Advocacy and Support Service to provide trauma informed, needs and risk led support to help victims cope with the impact and rebuild confidence following what can be a highly traumatic experience.

➢ Retail crime

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded shoplifting offences increased by 0.6% (93 more offences).
- The solved rate increased to 35.2%, compared to 31.7% in 2024/25.
- Continued delivery of the Retail Crime Action Plan.
- Expansion of the Retail Crime Board, providing partnership oversight and a forum to discuss emerging threats and joint solutions.
- Continued support for retail workers who experience abusive or violent behaviour.

A key element of the response was the continued delivery of the Retail Crime Action Plan, which focuses on improving investigations, increasing offender accountability, supporting victims and strengthening partnership approaches.

Kent Police continued to prioritise shoplifting and business crime offences through intelligence-led enforcement and closer working with businesses. This included work to identify prolific offenders, monitor organised crime group activity, improve evidential standards and strengthen offender management arrangements for repeat offenders operating within retail environments. The force also utilised Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) and developed innovative crime prevention tools, such as Early Intervention Workbooks.

Examples of activity during the year included intensified engagement and targeted enforcement during Safer Business Action Week, including patrols with the Street Pastors, business briefings on prolific offenders and organised crime groups, and crime prevention advice to retailers. The targeting of individuals linked to organised crime, with one operation resulting in the arrest of two offenders for thefts exceeding £1,200 worth of stock, and the development of a SelectaDNA pilot in Canterbury, to deter offending, assist in identifying offenders and strengthen evidential opportunities when crimes occur.

By bringing together Kent Police, local retailers and representatives from the customer service industry, Business Improvement Districts, and Business Crime Partnerships, my Retail Crime Board continued to ensure a robust response by providing strategic oversight and facilitating collaborative action. The Board considered issues including prolific shoplifters, organised crime groups, evidence gathering, crime reporting systems, offender management, business support and prevention initiatives. It also progressed work with retailers to explore improvements in the crime reporting process.

I also continued to support retail workers through commissioned services for those affected by abusive, threatening or violent behaviour. This was through the Kent Advocacy and Support Service delivered by Victim Support, and also My Support Space, an online resource with interactive guides designed by Victim Support to help victims cope and recover.

➢ Vehicle crime

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of recorded vehicle crime offences reduced by 18.0% (1,379 fewer offences).
- The solved rate was 3.9%, compared to 4.9% in 2024/25.
- Theft of motor vehicle reduced by 13.9% (539 fewer offences), and theft from motor vehicle reduced by 22.3% (840 fewer offences).
- Ongoing work with vehicle owners, representative groups and manufacturers helped improve awareness of vehicle security measures and crime prevention.
- Officers continued to pursue all evidential opportunities to identify offenders and recover stolen vehicles.

Alongside public awareness activity, officers continued to investigate offences with reasonable lines of inquiry and pursued all evidential opportunities, including intelligence, CCTV, house-to-house, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), forensic examination, and other investigative techniques to identify offenders and recover stolen vehicles.

Identification of emerging crime trends and vulnerabilities, also helped to direct policing activity and prevention efforts towards those most at risk of becoming victims of vehicle crime.

In 2025/26, vehicle crime continued to fall across Kent. Overall, there were 6,275 offences recorded, a reduction of 18.0% (1,379 fewer offences) compared to 2024/25. This included a 13.9% reduction in theft of motor vehicle (539 fewer offences), and a 22.3% reduction in theft from motor vehicle (840 fewer offences). Unfortunately, with the continued reduction in recorded offences, the solved rate also decreased to 3.9% compared to 4.9% in 2024/25.

➢ Robbery

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of personal robbery offences recorded reduced by 14.2% (126 fewer offences).
- The solved rate was 11.6%, compared to 16.5% in 2024/25.
- Increased visibility and proactive patrol activity in identified hotspot locations.
- Targeted activity to identify and disrupt repeat and high-harm offenders.
- Partnership work continued to support the identification and arrest of offenders.

Kent Police focused on identifying and disrupting those responsible for offences, particularly repeat and high-harm offenders. Enforcement activity was supported by intelligence gathering, proactive patrols and targeted operations in areas identified as having the greatest concentration of crime and harm. Visible policing activity in hotspot locations helped deter offending, provided public reassurance and increased opportunities to identify suspects and gather intelligence.

Examples of activity included the continued delivery of hotspot patrols through initiatives such as the Winter of Action, which targeted locations experiencing higher levels of serious violence and knife crime. This resulted in reductions in both serious violence and associated harm across hotspot areas during the period, reflecting the benefits of sustained visible policing and proactive enforcement.

Partnership working also contributed to the response. Through Business Crime Reduction Partnerships and local policing activity, intelligence sharing helped identify offenders responsible for a series of knife-point robberies in Gravesham, leading to arrests and evidencing the value of coordinated action between retailers, security staff and the police. Information sharing and community engagement also supported efforts to identify emerging risks and target resources effectively.

➢ Cybercrime and fraud

Summary:
- Compared to 2024/25, the number of offences with an online marker increased by 8.6% (1,019 more offences).
- Continued investment in specialist capability to tackle cybercrime, digital offending and cryptocurrency-related offences.
- Development of safeguarding materials to help people protect themselves from online abuse and cyber-related harm.
- Engagement with young people around smartphone use and online safety.
- Continued support for victims of fraud to help them cope and build resilience.

The Cyber Crime Unit continued to develop innovative approaches to preventing, disrupting and investigating cyber offending while supporting vulnerable victims and safeguarding communities. A notable operation targeted a group responsible for sophisticated SIM takeover frauds that enabled offenders to gain control of victims' mobile phone accounts and access financial services. The investigation resulted in the arrest and charging of the two principal offenders for fraud and Computer Misuse Act offences, both of whom subsequently pleaded guilty at court. Analysis of seized digital devices identified a further five suspects, all of whom were arrested. The operation contributed to a significant reduction in reported SIM takeover offences across Kent.

Examples of other activity included the development of processes to manage cryptocurrency-related investigations and seizures, the creation of safeguarding materials to help vulnerable groups protect themselves from online abuse, and ongoing delivery of cybercrime and digital investigation training to officers and staff. Kent Police also maintained dedicated capability to investigate offences involving the online exploitation of children, supported by specialist teams and strengthened partnership arrangements.

Prevention and education were also key elements. I continued to work with schools, young people and parents to raise awareness of online safety and the risks associated with smartphone use, social media and other online activity. Internet safety sessions delivered in schools focused on protecting children from online harm, understanding digital risks and promoting responsible online behaviour, helping young people and families build resilience in an increasingly digital world.

Through the Kent Advocacy and Support Service delivered by Victim Support, I also ensured victims of fraud and cybercrime continued to have access to support to help them cope with the financial and emotional impact of offending and reduce the risk of repeat victimisation.



Key area: Productive Partnerships

The Plan recognises that policing alone cannot address all the factors that contribute to crime, vulnerability and community safety. Many of the challenges facing Kent and Medway require coordinated action across multiple organisations. Productive Partnerships therefore reflects the importance of collaboration in delivering safer communities and better outcomes for residents.

Throughout the year, the OPCC, Kent Police and a range of local, regional and national partners worked together to prevent crime, reduce reoffending and address vulnerability. This included collaboration with criminal justice agencies, local authorities, health organisations, schools, businesses, voluntary and community sector organisations, and representatives from local communities.

The strength of these partnerships enabled resources, expertise and information to be brought together to address complex issues more effectively than any single organisation could achieve alone. Through collective leadership, shared responsibility and a focus on prevention, partners have contributed significantly to the delivery of the Plan during the reporting year.

The Plan sets out eight priorities under Productive Partnerships. The following is an overview of the progress made against each priority during the year.

➢ Criminal justice

Summary:

- Strengthened governance, accountability and performance oversight.
- Focus on improving the experiences of victims and witnesses, recognising the impact delays have on engagement, wellbeing and confidence in the CJS.
- Identification of shared priorities aimed at improving the efficiency, effectiveness and resilience of the CJS.
- Investment in initiatives designed to improve efficiency, reduce delays, increase capacity and promote better outcomes across the CJS.
- Commissioning and funding of programmes to address offender behaviour, safeguard vulnerable individuals and support rehabilitation.

I continued to chair the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB), and to work closely with partners to address growing system pressures caused by increasing demand, court backlogs and workforce shortages.

Through the KCJB, a review of governance structures and accountability was undertaken to clarify responsibilities and improve oversight of performance. In addition, two multi-agency workshops were held to develop a shared understanding of the challenges, a new KCJB Data Pack developed, and enhanced horizon-scanning arrangements introduced to help partners prepare for the impact of national policy reforms and legislative changes.

Improving outcomes for victims remained a key priority. A dedicated workshop explored the experiences of victims and organisations supporting them, leading to the reinstatement of the KCJB Victim and Witness Subgroup. This strengthened partnership oversight of issues affecting victims, and will coordinate work in preparation for reforms to the Victims' Code. Alongside this, I continued to raise Kent's concerns nationally, lobbying Government on court capacity pressures and the need to expand Crown Court provision in Kent.

Unfortunately, longer waiting times for court hearings continued to have a profound impact on victims and witnesses. Therefore, several practical initiatives were implemented, including additional Crown Court capacity through a London court committal pathway, and the introduction of a Virtual Remand Hearing pilot to reduce delays linked to prisoner transport issues.

I also provided £25,000 seed funding for Prisoners Building Homes (PBH), a UK programme where prisoners construct low-cost, low-carbon modular homes, gaining qualifications that reduce reoffending while addressing housing shortages. To date, planning is underway for 25 homes to be built through PBH in Thanet, with active interest from other local authorities.

My Office secured Home Office funding until January 2027 to continue delivering DA and stalking perpetrator programmes. Delivery is a collaborative approach between Interventions Alliance, Kent Police, Look Ahead and Victim Support and provides the following:

- Intensive multi-agency case management.
- Early response to target motivation, denial and minimisation work and aligned to conditional cautions.
- Behaviour Change interventions: Healthy Relationships (HR) - a 10 session 1:1 programme; Compulsive Obsessive Behaviour Intervention (COBI) - an intensive 1:1 programme consisting of 12 sessions; and Healthy Emotions and Attitudes in Relationships for Teens (HEART) for those aged 14-17 who have caused harm to someone they are personally connected with (e.g. partner or family member).
- A dedicated Victim Link Worker (Qualified IDVA) and Step-Down Worker to support victims through personalised risk and support approaches. The Stalking Advocacy Service also provides dedicated support to victims of stalking where the perpetrator is participating in COBI.

239 referrals were received, compared with 144 in 2024/25, representing a 66% increase. The number of sessions delivered also increased from 345 in 2024/25 to 1,047, an uplift of approximately 203%, demonstrating a considerable expansion in service capacity and delivery.

In addition, my Office continued to commission an Appropriate Adult (AA) Service to support all juveniles (aged under 18), and vulnerable adults detained in police custody or attending voluntary interviews when family or friends were unable to. The service ensures their rights, entitlements and welfare are effectively safeguarded. Delivered by The Appropriate Adult service, between October 2025 and March 2026, the service provided AAs to 808 vulnerable adults and 26 juveniles in Kent, and 13 vulnerable adults and 8 juveniles in Medway.

➢ Citizens in Policing

Summary:
- Continued development of the Citizens in Policing programme, recognising the valuable role of volunteers.
- Volunteering opportunities maximised through recruitment and engagement activity.
- Continued investment in Special Constables, recognising their valuable support to communities and significant contribution to frontline policing.
- Support for young people to develop skills, confidence and a sense of civic responsibility.
- Volunteers continued to support efforts to keep people safe across Kent and enhance community resilience.

Kent Police continued to develop and support its Citizens in Policing programme, recognising the important contribution that volunteers make to keeping communities safe and strengthening public trust in policing. The programme brings together a wide range of opportunities, including Special Constables, Police Cadets, Community Policing Volunteers, Police Support Volunteers and Community Speedwatch, enabling members of the public to play an active role in supporting policing and community safety.

Throughout the year, the force invested in recruitment, training and engagement to promote volunteering opportunities and broaden participation. For example, a series of Citizens in Policing discovery events were held across the county to raise awareness of roles, attract new volunteers, and showcase the diverse skills and experience that community members can bring to policing.

As at 31 March 2026, there were 168 Special Constables; unpaid volunteers who wear a uniform, have the same powers and equipment as regular officers, and put themselves in harm's way like their paid colleagues - but all because they just want to give something back to their communities. With only a handful of policing roles not open to Special Constables, they provided valuable support to frontline policing, including responding to incidents, engaging with local communities and contributing to specialist policing activities, such as through the dedicated Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit.

With 518 Police Cadets across the county as at 31 March 2026, the award winning scheme remained a key part of the force's commitment to developing responsible citizenship among young people. As the only force in the country to operate Mini, Junior and Senior Cadet programmes covering ages 8 to 18, Kent Police continued

to provide opportunities for young people to learn new skills, support community projects and build positive relationships with policing. Cadets engaged in a range of volunteering and community activities, helping to develop confidence, teamwork and public service values while contributing positively to their local communities.

Community Policing Volunteers, fulfilling specific roles such as equine, canine and security, provided direct support to specialist policing teams and helped maintain a police presence in local communities. Police Support Volunteers also played a vital role behind the scenes, taking on non-operational, office-based tasks so officers and staff could focus on frontline duties.

I would like to thank all volunteers, including those who do not wear a police logo, such as South East 4x4 Response and Kent Search and Rescue, for their time and hard work in protecting the vulnerable and keeping the county safe.

➢ Education

Summary:
- Continued delivery of a coordinated programme of education and prevention activity.
- Provision of consistent safety messaging through schools and other youth engagement opportunities.
- Targeted engagement and prevention activity in response to emerging local concerns, helping to address ASB and promote safe behaviours.
- Development of educational and diversionary interventions aimed at improving understanding of legal responsibilities and reducing risk-taking behaviour.
- Support for wider youth education initiatives focused on digital safety, resilience and responsible behaviours.

Kent Police delivered e-scooter and e-bike safety education through countywide prevention campaigns, Pol-Ed (a police-supported educational programme) resources, transition inputs and targeted local activity. An annual safety leaflet was issued to schools ahead of Christmas, highlighting the legal restrictions, safety risks and consequences of illegal or irresponsible use.

Pol-Ed has replaced previous school ASB packages and provides a consistent educational offer across Kent. It includes e-scooter and e-bike resources for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils. Safety messaging is also delivered through Year 6 transition sessions, supporting pupils as they move into secondary education and begin to travel more independently.

Targeted local engagement was also undertaken where issues emerged. For example, roadshows reaching every secondary school in some districts, engaging Year 9 pupils on ASB, e-scooter and e-bike safety, and antisocial cycling.

Kent Police is also developing an e-scooter intervention workbook to provide a structured educational and diversionary intervention for young people involved in e-scooter or e-bike related incidents. The aim is to improve understanding of the law, encourage safer choices and reduce repeat offending.

I continued to commission a Young People's Prevention Service to deliver educational programmes to help C&YP make informed and positive life choices.

I also supported educational initiatives focused on raising awareness of issues including online safety and the risks associated with smartphone use, social media and other online activity, and responsible decision-making. My internet safety sessions delivered in schools, focused on protecting children from online harm, understanding digital risks and promoting responsible online behaviour, helping young people to build resilience in an increasingly digital world.

➢ Violence reduction

Summary:
- Strategic leadership and partnership coordination to deliver a public health approach to tackling serious violence.
- Continued focus on prevention and early intervention by addressing the underlying factors associated with violence, alongside enforcement.
- Engagement with partners and communities to better understand the experiences of those affected by violence.
- Commissioned services that combined education, awareness raising and tailored support to help C&YP make positive choices.
- Strengthened partnership response by providing a continuum of support, ranging from universal prevention activity to targeted interventions.

As Chair of the Serious Violence Duty Board, I brought partners together to ensure a coordinated public health approach to serious violence, supported by the Kent and Medway VRU. During the year, the Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment was refreshed, while the VRU worked with Kent Police analysts to align preventative activity with identified hotspot locations. This ensured partnership activity was informed by evidence and focused on those communities and individuals at greatest risk.

This partnership approach recognises that serious violence cannot be addressed through enforcement alone. Alongside action against those responsible for serious harm, partners focused on prevention and early intervention by addressing factors associated with violence, including vulnerability, exploitation, adverse childhood experiences and social exclusion. Community insight also shaped the work, with Participation Workers capturing the voices and experiences of young people. By combining analytical evidence, community engagement and multi-agency expertise, the partnership intervened earlier, reduced vulnerability and prevented violence before it occurred.

I commissioned the Young People's Prevention Service, with St Giles Trust delivering educational inputs on gangs, county lines, violence, knife crime and

criminal exploitation. Delivered through assemblies, classroom sessions and smaller groups, the programme engaged with over 2,700 C&YP, helping them recognise risk and make informed, positive choices.

I also commissioned the Gangs and County Lines Preventative and Protective Interventions Service, which provided age-appropriate, trauma-informed and needs-led support to C&YP. Its preventative element supported those aged up to 25 who were at risk of serious youth violence, knife offences, drug supply, criminal exploitation or gang involvement, while its protective element worked with those already involved in such forms of harm. The service received 134 referrals and supported 204 young people, of whom 162 were identified as experiencing child criminal exploitation.

Through my commissioned services the wider partnership approach was strengthened, combining universal education, with targeted prevention and more intensive intervention for those facing the greatest risk.

➢ Mental health

Summary:

- Continued support for those experiencing crisis through a partnership approach that ensured the right support from the right organisation.
- Close working with health and other partners to improve pathways into services and deliver a coordinated response.
- Embedding of Right Care Right Person, reducing unnecessary police involvement while ensuring the vulnerable receive timely support.
- Promoted a more effective and sustainable approach to managing mental health demand.
- Through scrutiny and oversight, monitored the need to protect vulnerable individuals against the efficient use of public resources.

Kent Police data highlights the scale of demand associated with mental health and welfare-related incidents. In 2025/26, the force recorded 39,233 concern for welfare incidents and 12,644 missing person or absconder incidents linked to care or hospital settings.

769 individuals experiencing a mental health crisis were also detained by officers under Section 136 for their own protection or that of others - a significant decrease to only four years ago - with Right Care Right Person (RCRP) continuing to transform the response to such incidents. RCRP ensures individuals receive the right care from the right organisation, with the police only responding where there is a crime, an immediate threat to life or a serious risk of harm. RCRP helps vulnerable people access appropriate, compassionate and specialist support, reducing the likelihood they will feel criminalised or experience distress. It also allows policing to focus on the core responsibilities of preventing and detecting crime, protecting life and property, and keeping the peace.

Successful implementation of RCRP has been underpinned by strong established partnerships between Kent Police, health services, local authorities and wider safeguarding partners. This has also seen the development of Safe Havens across the county that provide a safe and supportive space for officers to take those experiencing mental health difficulties, and also accept self-referrals.

As PCC, I used strategic forums to bring partners together, develop a shared understanding of responsibilities and support the delivery of joined-up services. This collaborative working has improved pathways into health and social care support, and reinforced a collective commitment to ensuring people receive the right support from the right organisation at the right time.

By building on established relationships, partners have better aligned services and reduced unnecessary police involvement in incidents that are more appropriately managed by health agencies. This has helped ensure vulnerable individuals are supported by professionals with the right expertise, while allowing police resources to remain focused on protecting the public and responding to crime. The result is a more sustainable, effective and person-centred approach that benefits policing, partners and those experiencing crisis alike.

➢ Safer roads

Summary:

- Continued support for Vision Zero by working with partners to reduce deaths and serious injuries on Kent's roads.
- Strengthened collaboration and partnership working to help identify and address the causes of road danger.
- Encouraged the alignment of prevention, education and enforcement activity.
- Promoted community involvement in road safety initiatives, recognising the important role residents and volunteers play in influencing behaviour.
- Increased public participation and shared responsibility for road safety, helping to build awareness and encourage safer road user behaviour.

Partnership working is central to delivering the Vision Zero Strategy, which aims to eliminate fatalities and life changing injuries by 2050. Throughout the year, I continued to encourage partners to develop targeted initiatives, share learning and coordinate activity where it could have the greatest impact. This preventative approach recognises that reducing road harm requires action across multiple organisations and communities, with each partner contributing their expertise, resources and local insight.

Road safety is also a shared responsibility with residents and communities, and through my Communications Team I championed volunteering opportunities that enable local people to play an active role. Community involvement not only helps address local concerns but also supports wider efforts to influence behaviour, increase public awareness and build confidence in road safety initiatives. Through

support for community-led activity, residents were empowered to work alongside policing and local partners to promote safer driving and encourage compliance with speed limits.

A key example is Community Speedwatch, a road safety initiative coordinated by Kent Police and delivered by trained volunteers within local communities. As at 31 March 2026, there were 98 active Community Speedwatch groups across Kent, with volunteers monitoring vehicle speeds using approved speed indication devices. The initiative aims to reduce death and injury on the roads, improve quality of life for local communities, encourage compliance with speed limits and increase public awareness of the dangers associated with inappropriate speed.

By supporting Community Speedwatch and other volunteering opportunities, I helped strengthen community participation in road safety and reinforced the shared commitment to delivering Vision Zero.

➢ Community safety

Summary:
- Continued investment in CSPs and other statutory partners, enabling delivery of projects to tackle crime, disorder and ASB.
- Identification of local issues and delivery of a coordinated response through closer partnership working.
- Support for voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver projects that strengthen community resilience and address local issues.
- Promoted a collaborative approach by bringing together the resources, expertise and knowledge of partners to achieve sustainable outcomes.
- Strengthened engagement with residents, community groups and stakeholders to understand concerns and help shape future community safety activity.

Through CSPs and other multi-agency forums, partners shared intelligence, identified emerging issues and coordinated activity to address the underlying causes of offending and vulnerability. This collaborative approach enabled resources and expertise to be aligned to support prevention, safeguarding and early intervention, helping to deliver more effective and sustainable solutions to local community safety issues.

A key element of this partnership approach was the use of grant funding to support local initiatives. Through my Crime Reduction Grant, £558,383 was allocated to the 14 CSPs across Kent and Medway, and a further £724,521 to other statutory partners to deliver projects aligned to the Plan priorities. Activity included the deployment of CCTV, high-visibility community engagement, youth hub initiatives and safe spaces, alongside programmes to reduce reoffending through substance misuse services, support for young offenders, one-to-one interventions and community payback. Training, awareness campaigns and community safety learning events also helped to build local capacity and strengthen the partnership response.

I also supported community-based projects through the Police Property Act Fund, which provides charitable and voluntary organisations with funding to deliver projects that benefit local communities and are aligned to the Plan priorities. In total, more than £88,000 was awarded to 49 projects, with examples including:
- A structured activities programme for adults (18+) experiencing homelessness or insecure housing.
- Individually tailored riding and therapy sessions for children and adults with physical and mental disabilities, vulnerabilities and special educational needs.
- Support for disadvantaged young people to take part in fun and creative physical activities to improve confidence, self-esteem, and well-being.
- Transforming a newly donated building into a vibrant creative hub.

The projects helped strengthen community resilience, supported vulnerable people and addressed some of the wider social factors that contribute to crime and ASB.

Alongside partnership activity, I engaged directly with communities by attending a wide range of events and meetings, including armed forces and veterans' coffee mornings, Seniors of Stone, Inner Wheel of Canterbury, and the Love Your Community event in Sandwich. I also visited some of my commissioned victim services, and met with voluntary, faith and community organisations, including Dartford Community Chaplaincy. In addition, I held street stalls across the county in high streets, colleges and universities, and joined Kent Police officers and staff on Rural Task Force engagements and road safety initiatives.

These conversations provided valuable insight into the issues affecting communities and helped shape the work undertaken with partners to keep Kent and Medway safe.

➢ Environmental crime and fly-tipping

Summary:
- Continued strategic leadership and advocate for stronger national and local action to tackle environmental crime and waste crime.
- Worked closely with policing, regulatory bodies, local authorities and other partners to strengthen the collective response to environmental crime.
- Supported partnership governance arrangements to improve oversight of emerging threats, promote collaboration and encourage earlier intervention.
- Encouraged regional cooperation and joint problem-solving across agencies and geographic areas.
- Maintained a strong commitment to protecting communities and the environment through prevention, disruption and enforcement.

Environmental crime and fly-tipping are not issues that Kent Police or my Office can tackle alone; they cross organisational and geographical boundaries. I was

therefore pleased to be invited to give evidence at the House of Lords Environment and Change Committee Inquiry into serious and organised waste crime. I welcome the Committee's call for the Government to get tough on the issue and support its recommendations, which include the need to ensure the Environment Agency is appropriately funded and staffed.

Activity by Kent Police's Rural Task Force demonstrates that it is possible to tackle the problem, but policing nationally needs to show leadership and demonstrate what they are doing to tackle the problem and support other agencies.

I continued to work closely with Kent Police, local authorities, the Environment Agency, rural stakeholders and a range of partner organisations through my Rural Crime Board. The Board provided strategic oversight and facilitated collaborative action, strengthening the collective response to fly-tipping, illegal waste disposal, unlawful waste collection, scrap metal offences and other environmental crimes. This collaborative approach resulted in prevention, enforcement and engagement activity, helping to protect communities and local environments. In the future, the Board will also receive updates on the Environment Agency's Waste Crime 10 Point Plan, which promotes intelligence sharing, earlier intervention and closer partnership working to prevent offending and disrupt organised criminality.

I also brought together fellow PCCs from Thames Valley, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex, alongside representatives from policing, local government, the Environment Agency, farming organisations and the private sector, to explore how resources and capabilities could be aligned to better tackle waste crime across the South East. By encouraging regional cooperation and a shared approach to problem-solving, this work helped strengthen efforts to prevent environmental crime, protect legitimate businesses and improve the quality of life for those who live and work across our communities.

I am committed to working with partners and to ensuring that everything possible is done to prevent illegal fly tipping and organised waste crime, and that the relevant agencies respond in a timely manner to prevent further offending and bring those responsible to justice.

Supporting delivery across the Plan

The Plan sets out four key areas that guide policing, victim support and community safety activity across Kent and Medway. Successful delivery of these depends not only on operational activity, but also on the strength of the governance, financial and partnership arrangements that underpin the entire policing system. The Plan therefore identifies three core enablers:

- Effective monitoring and accountability
- A sustainable budget
- Effective national and regional working

These cross-cutting themes provide the foundations that enable Kent Police, the OPCC and partner organisations to deliver services effectively, respond to emerging challenges and remain accountable to the public. Throughout the year, significant work was undertaken to ensure robust governance arrangements, sound financial stewardship and strong collaboration continued to support delivery of the Plan.

Effective monitoring and accountability

Transparent governance and effective scrutiny are essential to maintaining public confidence in policing and ensuring that resources are used efficiently and effectively. As PCC, one of my principal responsibilities is to hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Kent Police and delivery of the priorities set out within the Plan.

Throughout the year, performance against the Plan was monitored through a comprehensive framework that combined operational performance information, public accountability and independent scrutiny. Regular Performance and Delivery Board meetings provided the opportunity to review progress, examine performance trends, identify emerging risks and challenge where improvement was required.

I was also supported in this through the work of the Independent Custody Visitors, the Joint Audit Committee and scrutiny undertaken by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. Together, these arrangements provided assurance regarding governance, risk management, financial stewardship, ethical standards and organisational performance. Progress against the Plan will continue to be informed by force performance data, HMICFRS inspections, audit findings, national performance measures, partner information and public feedback.

A sustainable budget

Effective financial management is critical to maintaining policing services, supporting victims and investment in community safety. The Plan acknowledges that policing faces significant financial challenges and that careful stewardship of public resources is required to ensure that services remain sustainable over its lifetime.

The OPCC maintained a strong focus on financial resilience, balancing investment in frontline services with the need to prepare for future financial pressures. This was reflected in the National Audit Office report on Police Productivity, published in November 2025, which identified Kent as one of only six police forces to increase its financial reserves, strengthening the ability to respond to future challenges without impacting frontline services. Strong financial management was also recognised in HMICFRS' latest PEEL assessment, which concluded 'The force can show how it aligns finances to its priorities and how it decides if its expenditure offers value for money'.

During the year, the OPCC maintained oversight of a total policing and community safety budget of £536.2m. Funding continued to support frontline policing, specialist operational capabilities, victim services, crime prevention initiatives and partnership activity. The majority of funding continued to be allocated to the Chief Constable for the delivery of operational policing, whilst I retained responsibility for commissioning victim services and wider community safety initiatives.

Financial planning continued to be informed by the Medium-Term Financial Plan, ensuring resources remain aligned to strategic priorities whilst addressing inflationary pressures, changing demand and national funding uncertainties. There was also a focus on delivering efficiencies and identifying opportunities to maximise value for money without compromising public service outcomes.

Effective national and regional working

Many of the threats facing communities today extend beyond county boundaries and require a coordinated response at regional and national level. The Plan recognises the importance of collaboration in responding to serious and organised crime, terrorism, cybercrime, VAWG, child sexual abuse, public disorder and other significant threats identified within the Strategic Policing Requirement.

Throughout the year, Kent Police worked closely with regional and national partners to strengthen resilience, improve operational effectiveness and share specialist resources. Collaboration is a key feature of policing in Kent, including established joint working arrangements with Essex Police and participation in wider regional policing structures such as the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU). These arrangements enable access to specialist capabilities and enhance the ability to prevent, disrupt and investigate serious criminal activity.

Partnership working has also extended beyond operational policing. Engagement with national bodies such as BlueLight Commercial and the Police Digital Service contributed towards improved efficiency, innovation and the effective use of technology. At a local level, I also continued to engage with government, policing partners and stakeholders to ensure Kent's interests are represented within discussions regarding future governance, devolution and national policing reforms.

Listening to Kent and Medway residents

The Plan was developed following extensive engagement with residents, community groups, businesses, partners and stakeholders across Kent and Medway. Listening to local people remains central to my role and is essential to ensuring police and community safety services reflect the needs, concerns and expectations of the communities they serve.

The key areas and priorities within the Plan were informed by direct feedback from residents, who identified issues such as rape and sexual offences, knife crime, child sexual exploitation, violence and drugs as matters of greatest concern. Alongside these, residents highlighted the importance of getting the basics right through accessible policing services, visible neighbourhood policing, effective investigations and a prompt response when help is needed.

Throughout the year, I continued to place public engagement at the centre of decision-making, ensuring the experiences, concerns and views of local residents informed both strategic priorities and operational scrutiny. Engagement activity helped provide valuable insight into how communities experienced crime, victimisation and policing services, enabling resources and attention to be directed towards areas of greatest need.

Understanding community priorities

The findings from my Police and Crime Plan Survey informed the development of the Plan, and evidenced that residents continue to place high importance on personal safety, visible policing and effective action against crime and ASB. The survey also highlighted improvements in feelings of safety and trust in Kent Police compared with previous years.

My Annual Policing Survey is one of the most important mechanisms for continuing to understand residents' perceptions of crime, safety and policing. The findings will continue to inform my scrutiny of policing performance and help to identify opportunities for further improvement. It will also provide an important measure of public confidence and trust, both of which remain central objectives of the Plan.

Engaging with communities across Kent and Medway

Recognising that different communities can experience crime and policing in different ways, my Office and I engaged with residents and stakeholders through a range of channels, ensuring that voices from across Kent and Medway were heard and considered.

Engagement activity included:

- Public meetings and community events.
- Visits to towns, villages and neighbourhoods.
- Discussions with victims and victim support organisations.
- Meetings with local authorities, businesses and community groups.
- Discussions with representatives from rural communities.
- Engagement with schools, young people and parents.
- Consultation with voluntary, faith and charitable organisations.
- Online engagement through surveys and digital platforms.

This broad programme of engagement helped ensure policing priorities remained grounded in local experience and that communities had a direct opportunity to influence the services delivered on their behalf.

Listening to victims

Victims provide a unique perspective on how effectively policing and support services are working. Their experiences helped inform decisions about commissioning, service improvement and performance scrutiny.

Throughout the year, feedback from victims was used to understand:

- The quality and timeliness of police responses.
- Victims' experiences of the criminal justice process.
- Accessibility and effectiveness of support services.
- Barriers to reporting crime.
- Opportunities to improve safeguarding and victim care.

The insights provided by victims played an important role in shaping both commissioned services and discussions with Kent Police regarding operational performance and service delivery.

Using feedback to drive improvement

Listening alone is not enough. Public engagement must lead to meaningful action and tangible improvements. Feedback from residents and stakeholders was therefore routinely considered alongside performance information, inspection findings and partner intelligence when assessing progress against the Plan.

Community feedback informed scrutiny activity throughout the year, helping to shape discussions around:

- Neighbourhood policing
- ASB
- VAWG
- Rural crime
- Victim services
- Public contact and communication

This ensured performance monitoring reflected not only what the data showed, but also how policing and community safety services were experienced by those who rely upon them.

Building trust through engagement

One of the central ambitions of the Plan is to build trust in policing. Meaningful engagement with residents and communities is fundamental to achieving this goal. Listening to concerns, responding to feedback and demonstrating accountability helps strengthen confidence that policing services are responsive, transparent and focused on the issues that matter most to local people.

As communities and expectations continue to evolve, ongoing engagement will remain a vital component of my approach to governance, accountability and service improvement. The views of residents will continue to inform decision-making and help shape delivery of the Plan and my work to cut crime, support victims and build trust.

Police reform and the future of police governance

PCCs have been elected by the public in England and Wales since 2012, when they were introduced to replace police authorities. The role was established by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to give the public a single, elected representative to be their voice in local policing.

Abolition of PCCs

On 13 November 2025, the Policing Minister announced the role of PCC will be abolished across England and Wales. The change will happen at the end of the next electoral cycle in May 2028, when my current term of office expires.

Where possible, the PCC role will be absorbed by elected mayors. In areas not covered by a regional mayor, Policing and Crime Boards will be established. They will be made up of local government leaders.

Policing Reform White Paper

In January 2026, the Government published the policing reform White Paper, titled ‘From Local to National: A New Model for Policing’.

The scope of the reforms includes the creation of a National Police Service by merging the National Crime Agency, College of Policing, and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). It will be led by a National Police Commissioner to tackle counter-terrorism and serious organised crime.

The paper also sets out plans to review the number of forces operating in England and Wales, with a view to reducing the number. Other reforms include stronger national standards, restoring neighbourhood policing and overhauling performance measures.

Police force structure reform

In March 2026, it was announced that former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe, would lead an independent review on how to restructure policing.

The review will identify the optimum number of forces and their geographic areas.

My role and that of the OPCC

My Office and I are engaged in local and national conversations regarding police reform.

My Office will support the transition to a new Policing and Crime Board, as well as any new future model identified for the Kent Police force area.

The Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and the national policing capabilities needed to counter them. It supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to the threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

The revised SPR was published in February 2023 and provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. It identifies seven national threats:

- VAWG
- Serious and Organised Crime
- Terrorism
- Cyber
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Public Disorder
- Civil Emergencies

I took full account of the SPR in developing the Plan, with a number of the threats included as priorities, such as VAWG and cybercrime.

The Chief Constable is responsible for having due regard to both the Plan and the SPR when exercising their functions, and I hold the Chief Constable accountable for doing so through my governance arrangements.

I am confident I have given due regard to the threats in my role of holding the Chief Constable to account. I am equally assured, as outlined below, that Kent Police has sufficient capacity and capability to meet the responsibilities associated with the threats.

VAWG: Activity is focused on prevention, early identification of risk, safeguarding, enforcement and partnership problem-solving. The force continues to work with communities and local partners to improve safety and confidence, using named dedicated Beat Officers in every ward, My Community Voice, Walk and Talk activity, and VAWG community forums for targeted engagement to better understand where women and girls feel unsafe and what action is needed locally. This is supported by visible patrols in hotspot locations, using project Vigilant tactics, bystander training with taxi firms, work with licensed premises through Best Bar None, and wider night-time economy activity to identify and disrupt harmful behaviour.

This work is governed through the Force Performance Management Committee and Force Vulnerability Board, providing oversight of victim experience, investigative standards, repeat victimisation and offender management across DA, rape, serious sexual offences, stalking, harassment, predatory behaviour and emerging forms of sexual harm. The approach is deliberately whole system: it brings together prevention, public confidence, investigative quality, safeguarding, offender disruption and partner accountability rather than treating VAWG as a single crime type.

Kent has strengthened its response to DA through specialist teams which safeguard victims while targeting those who present the greatest risk. Since their introduction in October 2025, the Proactive DA Teams have arrested more than 500 DA suspects, including high-risk and prolific offenders. This proactive model is supported by an emphasis on evidence-led investigations, including maximising opportunities for victimless prosecutions where appropriate, securing early victim accounts, improving supervision and reinforcing the importance of taking positive action at first contact.

The Proactive Orders and Safeguarding Team is a central part of the force's safeguarding and disruption activity. Kent is also preparing for the introduction of DA Protection Orders, with systems, governance and partnership arrangements being developed so the new legislation can be used effectively once implemented. This sits alongside wider use of preventative and protective powers, including stalking-related orders where the risk profile supports their use.

The force remains committed to Operation Soteria and its principles are now embedded through investigative practice, supervision, governance and specialist training. Rape and serious sexual offence investigations are supported by a victim-centred, suspect-focused and context-led model, with closer working with the Crown Prosecution Service and continued attention to procedural justice. Independent assessment has recognised Kent's governance, strategic leadership and commitment to cultural change, while specialist rape and DA investigation teams provide trained investigators for some of the most complex and harmful offences.

Serious and Organised Crime: The force continues to implement the 4P strategy (prevent, pursue, protect, prepare) in its efforts to combat Serious and Organised Crime.

The Serious and Organised Crime Unit achieved significant operational results, including 172 arrests, the execution of over 100 warrants and secured 199 charges.

A robust partnership with the Regional Special Operations Unit further strengthens intelligence gathering, facilitates the identification of organised crime groups, and ensures a coordinated response to the most critical threats.

Terrorism: Kent Counter Terrorism Policing Borders (CTPB) provides a 24/7 presence at the Kent Border. Working in collaboration with law enforcement partners, officers remain vigilant to threats of international terrorism and any associated travel through the Kent border in order to disrupt, prevent and gather

information/intelligence. Officers also continue to prioritise working with partners to help deal with small boat arrivals on the Kent coast.

Kent CT officers form part of the Channel Tunnel Policing Unit, delivering policing at the channel tunnel and are part of the underground incident response. They also work at the Port of Dover alongside other law enforcement agencies, providing a policing presence and initial incident response.

Kent CTPB is part of the wider CT Policing network, working alongside the CT Policing South East Region which provides safeguarding, intelligence and investigative capabilities locally, regionally and nationally. Kent CTPB senior leaders report to both the Regional and Kent CONTEST Boards to deliver the CONTEST Strategy locally and regionally.

Cyber: The Cyber Crime Unit provides specialist capability in the investigation of cyber-dependent and cyber-enabled offending, as well as expert advice to officers and staff dealing with digital lines of enquiry. The unit brings significant technical knowledge in relation to the use of computers, digital devices and cryptocurrency within criminality.

Demand on the team has increased, with Cyber reviewing a growing number of cases that were initially assessed by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau as requiring protective advice only. Further specialist examination has identified viable investigative opportunities and potential suspects, ensuring that offences are progressed where they may otherwise have remained unresolved.

The unit has also produced practical safeguarding guidance to help women and girls protect themselves from online abuse; this has now been incorporated into the Victim Needs Assessment process and circulated across all divisions.

Child Sexual Abuse: Child protection investigation teams work closely with Child Centred Policing and Missing Persons teams to ensure a swift response to safeguarding concerns. This will be further strengthened through a new Child Centred Policing and Youth Justice model, supporting stronger multi-agency working and more effective sharing of information around vulnerability, offending behaviour and safeguarding. Operation Makesafe deployments also continue to test and improve how hotels identify and report child exploitation concerns.

Grant funding provided through a National Crime Agency-led review of group-based child sexual exploitation is being used to develop a targeted communications campaign to improve awareness of child sexual exploitation, help young people recognise risk and make reporting and support routes clearer. Interactive online content will show the possible outcomes of different responses when young people receive contact that causes concern, with the aim of improving recognition of risk and confidence in reporting. Face-to-face engagement is also being planned, including at locations such as Bluewater.

In 2025/26, the Paedophile Online Investigation Team undertook 481 enforcement activities, achieved 469 charges and uploaded 360 cases to the Child Abuse Image Database. The database helps law enforcement identify and categorise abuse imagery and supports national and international work to detect victims and offenders.

Kent is also using ECHO, a national survivor support hub for victims of child sexual abuse material and their families. ECHO provides emotional support, guidance and access to specialist services. It also works with the Internet Watch Foundation to help identify and remove abuse imagery, which is important for victims whose abuse may continue to be shared online long after the original offending.

Public Disorder: The Training and Tactical Public Order Unit provides specialist capability to protect communities across the county and maintains a readiness to respond to regional and national demands.

The unit brings together trained public order officers and specialist teams who can respond to planned events and spontaneous incidents, including major sporting fixtures, large public gatherings, protests and critical incidents. Its approach is focused on keeping people safe, preventing disorder and maintaining public confidence. Specialist capabilities include evidence gathering teams, public order medics, protest removal teams and working at height teams.

Working with communities, partner agencies and regional policing colleagues, officers use intelligence-led planning and engagement to anticipate risks, reduce tension and facilitate lawful protest while protecting life and property. Command training also ensures the force has accredited commanders and advisers able to lead operations safely and effectively.

Civil Emergencies: The force works as part of a wider multi-agency partnership to prepare for, respond to and recover from civil emergencies.

Alongside other responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the force continually reviews and strengthens its ability to respond both as an organisation and as a partner within the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum. The forum brings together local public services, including emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency, utility providers and transport partners.

The Kent and Medway Resilience Forum supports planning, risk assessment, training, testing, exercising and learning from incidents. The force provides strategic and tactical command facilities for major incidents and has a dedicated Contingency Planning team to support preparation, response and recovery arrangements. This includes contingency plans, business continuity planning and multi-agency exercises involving different roles, ranks, disciplines and partner organisations.