

From: Ann Barnes, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner  
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel  
Subject: Impact of Police Contact Points

**Summary:**

This paper provides an overview of existing Police Contact Point arrangements, an analysis of visitor numbers and outlines future developments to make the scheme more responsive to community needs.

**Background:**

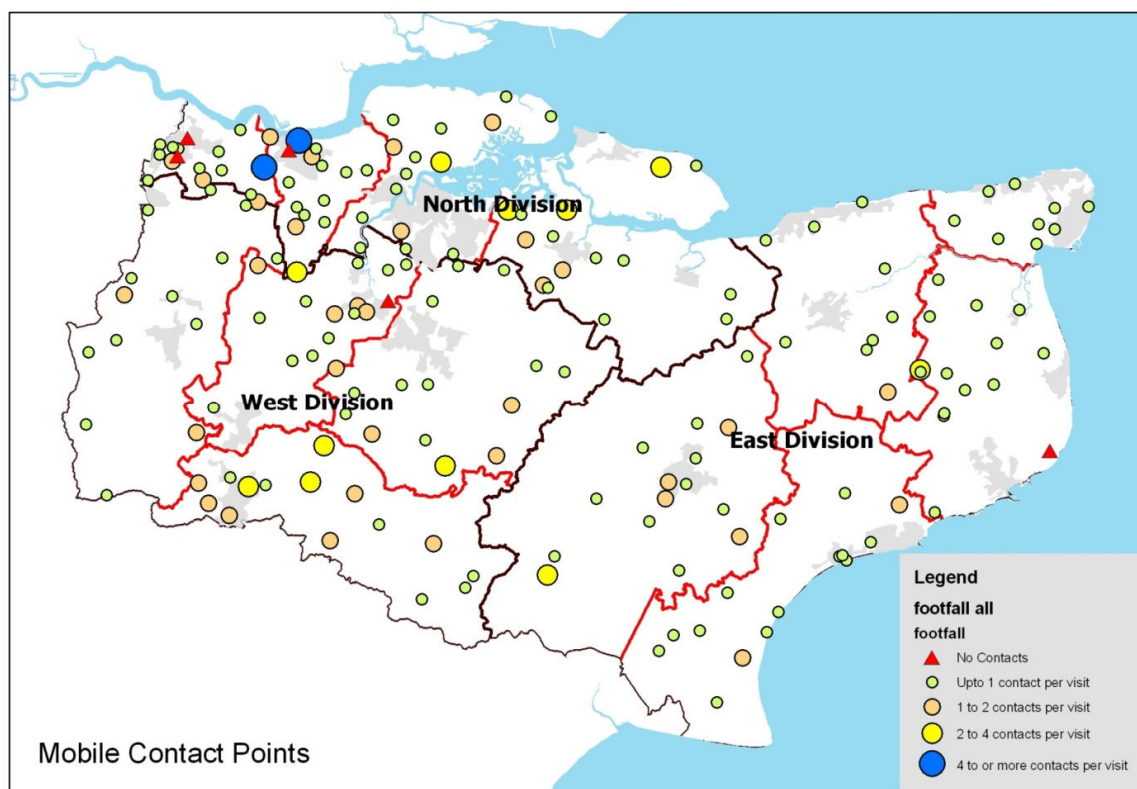
1. As part of my Police and Crime Commissioner Election Manifesto I pledged to introduce a fleet of Mobile Police Stations (Police Contact Points) to help boost rural policing and make it easier for communities to access policing services.
2. This paper, prepared by the force, provides an overview of the existing arrangements, an analysis of visitor numbers, and importantly outlines how the force intends to develop Police Contact Points (PCP's) to make them more responsive to community needs.

**Introduction:**

3. The forces existing fleet of Mercedes Sprinter vans were used and a phased county roll out of PCP's was completed on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013.
4. The scheme currently runs from Wednesday to Sunday each week with a fixed schedule over a fortnightly period. The aim is for each of the six vehicles to achieve three engagements each shift over the fortnightly schedule.
5. District Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) are used to staff PCP's, but a dedicated team of fifteen PCSO's has been recruited and are currently being trained; they will take up responsibility for the program in April 2014.

**Review:**

6. As at 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013, PCP's had visited 1,555 scheduled locations with a total of 1,308 visitors - an average of 0.84 visitors per location. Further analysis showed that people travelled less than one mile to each venue.
7. The following map shows the number of visitors to each location from the start of the project on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013 until December 2013.
8. From the beginning it was recognised that locations would need to be reviewed in the light of experience. Data from the map, as well as crime, ASB and activity data, together with feedback from staff and users are now being used to make improvements to the scheme.



### **Moving forward:**

9. In the light of experience from the first phase, the force is working towards a number of changes which will give the project a new look and make it more responsive to community needs. The positive approach to developing and evolving the delivery of the PCPs should be recognised. The PCPs can provide a flexible resource for communities to access policing services and the actions for moving forward highlight developments to this scheme.
10. The developments include:-
  - a. A dedicated team of fifteen PCSO's – recruitment is now complete and the team is being trained. They will be deployed to Divisions on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014, where there will be a further period of tutoring and training. All being well, they will assume responsibility for the program in April 2014.
  - b. Broadening locations to include a combination of fixed venues, dynamic response to daily business priorities, partnership working and ring-fenced weekends to attend community events.
  - c. Reviewing shift patterns to try and extend coverage from 5 to 7 days each week. In addition, adjusting and amending deployment times to provide greater weekday coverage.
  - d. Amending routes and venues. Experience has shown that some existing locations do not attract sufficient visitor numbers so new routes will be created, these will include some existing popular venues but also carefully chosen larger venues taking into account issues of crime, ASB, visibility and confidence. The emphasis will be on visible patrol when there are no visitors to the PCP.
  - e. Building in flexibility to respond to changing crime and ASB hotspots, repeat crime locations and areas vulnerable to seasonal crime trends. The PCP range will be extended into some urban locations.
  - f. Exploring ways to work with other agencies in areas of mutual interest. Partner agencies have shown an interest in joining forces and much was learnt from the Bluewater Safety shop. Although there are many options to explore, PCP's could work with youth workers in

- high risk locations to reduce crime and ASB; Kent Fire & Rescue Service in areas of high fire risk; and KCC Libraries who already have mobile operating routes throughout the county.
- g. Offering crime prevention material at vulnerable locations. This presents a good opportunity to engage with the public and provide crime prevention advice. Distributing purse chain alarms and similar items to the right people in the right place can be a cost effective crime prevention measure. All PCP's were stocked with such items in support of the forces latest burglary campaign, Operation Castle. Whenever possible we will continue to do so for future campaigns.
  - h. Attending fetes, fairs, and other community events. This provides an excellent opportunity for public engagement and bespoke crime prevention advice. Weekends will be kept free to attend such events.
  - i. Constantly reviewing and assessing routes and venues to ensure the best outcomes.
  - j. Advising Parish Councils of the changes whilst continuing to use the Kent Police website to advertise the service.