

## West Alvington Parish Council. 1<sup>st</sup> Councillor Advocate Report.

### Opening of Kingsbridge Police Station.

- On Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 at 10am the opening of Kingsbridge Police station took place, hours of opening daily 10am – 3pm. Met with much pleasure and a feeling it was long overdue. This station covers a wide area, so any crime had to be dealt by an outside Police force or depending on the level of issue sometimes no response. There is also that feeling/comfort in the knowledge that we have our own station to report issues etc.

### Police Surgeries.

- Speaking with an officer regarding the setting up of Police surgeries in V. Halls so parishioners can report, raise concerns etc or give information regarding an issue. These would be held for approx. 1hr. He informed me that 21 PC had been contacted, of which 9 had responded. Wanting to know the criteria for these surgeries, it seemed based on amount of people that attended, crimes reported, if the surgeries were useful both for the parishioner or them, gauged over a 3month period or less. They are not intended for someone to come and have a chat about nothing. I asked whether parishes on their own, would be more likely to be accepted for a surgery visit, not necessarily, again down to how many uses or if needed, as their time could be better spent out and about. Enquired about us, but we both said we are the nearest & the crime rate for our village is almost zero, the average issue we can go & report or phone the station, the response should now be quicker. Think you would agree.

### Drug use.

- We spoke on this issue and how big was the problem in this area. He assured me that hard drugs were not a problem, in this area. It was much more of a problem in Plymouth/Torquay part of the "County Lines" & it seems we have not been that affected & are beyond the border line. Long may it remain that way.
- Recreational drugs are more used but that is the same for most areas but they are aware & we can be sure it is closely monitored.

### Criminal Justice and You, launched (Monday March 04 2024).

- First-of-its-kind resource helps victims through the criminal justice process. A resource which has been developed to help guide a Victim or Witness through the Criminal justice process.
- An 18 step by step guide from Reporting a crime to Parole Board. If you are or have been affected, please visit: [victimcare-dc.org](https://victimcare-dc.org)

## Walk & Talk Scheme.

Walk & Talk is a new initiative in Devon & Cornwall asking women aged 18 & over "Is there a Place you feel UNSAFE"? Take us there. This scheme is in direct response to the very "Tragic Murder of Sarah Everard".

Devon & Cornwall police will be linking up with women in person to understand more about what our region looks like and feels like, seeking to understand more through first-hand experience about the Places & Spaces where women feel Unsafe.

The Walk & Talk initiative will be trialled for 3 months, starting in February in selected locations across the force area. Anyone wishing to take part can apply using the email at the end of this article.

A female Officer will accompany local women as they walk through an area where they have concerns. It could be caused by just a feeling of it being unsafe, poor lighting, anti-social behaviour, enclosed spaces, location.

Police & Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez welcomed the new personal safety initiative for women & girls across the region saying, Quote: "Ensuring the safety of women & girls in Devon & Cornwall is Top Priority of mine" so I wholeheartedly endorse the initiative new Wal& Talk that is being trialled across the peninsula. All women deserve to feel safe.

I have heard my neighbouring Police & Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset, Mark Shelford, speak highly of their Walk & Talk scheme, looking forward to seeing positive results in Devon & Cornwall.

"I Urge local partners to get behind this new initiative & encourage take-up in your pilot areas, particularly amongst vulnerable female groups who may be reluctant to come forward to speak out".

Each Walk & Talk should last around 30mins.

Trial areas: Truro, Falmouth, Plymouth, Barnstaple, Exeter, Exmouth, Torquay, Paignton & Newton Abbot.

I have asked if successful could this be extended to more rural areas, as this seems a scheme where it would be of great benefit. The reply received: we are trialling the initiative across specific areas to evaluate the project at the end of 3-month period at the end of April. I am conscious the D & Cornwall is a geographically diverse region. With large rural areas, and my hope is that if the project is deemed to be successful then at the end of the trial period, we might be in a position to open it up across the whole region.

- To apply. Email: [Walkandtalk@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Walkandtalk@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk) unfortunately the trial is now in its final month it may be too late to apply.

Helen Rnymes

03.04.2024.



## **POLICE ADVOCATE REPORT. WEST ALVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL.**

Dated from 29.09.23

The councillor Advocate Scheme for West Alvington Parish Council came into operation on the 29.09.23 .

Please Note the following is a very condensed account and guide for the Councillor Advocate Scheme. These details are designed to be the framework of the scheme. As this is a new scheme it is good for the Councillors to be given some idea of what your "Elected Councillor Advocate is doing for your Parish Council and importantly your community".

Please take the time to read this report; (as what you think will not be useful, may at some point be useful). The first 2 pages act as a guideline for the Advocate & will not preface on future reports.

1. In brief it offers a direct point of contact within the Commissioner's office.
2. Face to face seminars around policing, crime & victim service matters.
3. Requests to attend seminars online or at a chosen venue.
4. Regular email updates to include media releases.
5. Access to frequently asked information in terms of policing issues.

The Role of OPCC councillor advocate volunteer. Below Just a few of the key points.

- Improve connection between communities, the force, and the PCC.
- Regularly engage with all Councillors from their council & communities to explore what crime and community issues they may be experiencing.
- To encourage all councillors from their councils and communities to register for free neighbourhood alert system at <https://devonandcornwallpcc.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/>;
- Ensure accurate information is cascaded throughout the council.
- Cascade crime prevention info to encourage all communities to take proactive steps to reduce risk of crime and encourage reporting.
- Raise awareness and clarify the most appropriate methods of reporting antisocial behaviour, nuisance issues & crimes within the community.
- Raise awareness within their council of the Victim Care Unit and encourage all councillors to promote within their areas.
- Tell the police about community concerns but also the positive experiences, so that good practices can be captured, and feedback used by the police.

Councillor advocates are invited to volunteer for the scheme from each council in Devon & Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Advocates are welcome from unitary, district, & parish councils. At town & parish level advocates are identified "single points of contact" on behalf of their council. District & unitary councils may have more than one advocate. Councillors who have a desire to act as a positive

& proactive communication conduit between the Police, the Commissioner and the public are invited to volunteer for the scheme. Advocates are not intended to be treated as political appointments.

Quarterly meetings for advocates for each policing area will meet with a representative from Devon & Cornwall Police.

This discussion will enable each councillor advocate to raise issues on behalf of their councils' communities & give police the opportunity to update all advocates on relevant information and /or request support with a specific issue. After the meeting the police representative will send a brief written summary of the meeting, along with any key documents and actions to the councillor advocate. The councillor advocates will then cascade the information discussed to all elected members of their Councils.

Seminars are quarterly, held either online or in person. which will focus on one key priority area such as:

1. Antisocial behaviour.
2. Tackling drugs.
3. Tracking serious violence.
4. Road safety.

There are also thefts, assaults, rape victims, domestic abuse, rural crime, & other crimes to address.

#### Please Note:

The Councillor advocate scheme is new & to this PC and is a very different way of helping the Police, with more pressure placed on the PC & community to do more Policing within their community. Policing will unfortunately never go back to how we knew it or as we would like it. Remember the "Community Police Officer attending your meeting" (Speaking with one retired Kingsbridge Police Officer a few weeks ago, who remarked on how it had changed in the short time he had left. When he served, Kingsbridge had approx. 20 serving officers at the station, now only 1) due to technology, less people joining the force & cutbacks.

It is necessary to understand that where you are geographically will/could influence & determine the subjects covered in the report written by your Advocate & attendance to seminars.

i.e. Living between Plymouth/Torquay to Bristol will probably mean some of the more serious issues will need to be covered, together with online or face to face meetings.

Bristol, London, Manchester, Liverpool etc will report on all the issues stated, + more, will be covered as above.

South Hams is a different scene altogether & we are so lucky, grateful that we live in such a beautiful, quiet, clean, healthy part of the country, with a relatively low crime rate. It has problems but nothing compared to most parts of the country. Fortunately, at the present time, most of the main issues will be little referenced to for the South Hams.

End of Guidelines.