Chief Constable fortnightly update to the Police and Crime Commissioner - 7 November 2025

Dear Police and Crime Commissioner Philip Wilkinson,

Improving the service we provide to women and girls affected by any forms of violence is a key priority for Wiltshire Police, working with our partners.

In the latest quarterly report from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (Crime in England and Wales, year ending June 2025) we have seen a 12.3% increase in reported sexual offences, from 1,958 to 2,199 incidents. We cautiously welcome this rise in reporting, which appears to reflect our work to raise awareness, increasing trust and confidence for victims to come forward, improve recording and ensure that offences are robustly investigated.

October was our focussed month of action to improve our front line response to any report or concern of domestic abuse; to ensure our investigations are victim centred, and proactively locate and arrest any named suspects for domestic abuse to ensure we are managing risk and keeping people safe.

Throughout the month we delivered a training programme that combined bite-size learning modules and mandatory sessions with a strong emphasis on collaboration with victim advocates.

An essential part of our improved service to tackle domestic abuse has been the integration of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs). Their expertise has been instrumental in helping to shape a more effective and compassionate approach to investigations.

These highly skilled professionals have worked alongside our teams from the outset of enquiries, offering guidance, safeguarding support and continuity of care through the custody process and beyond. Feedback from officers has been overwhelmingly positive, and we are now exploring how this model can be embedded more permanently across our stations. You can read more about the work here.

We also recognise the need to work with perpetrators. As part of this commitment, we have strengthened links with partners delivering perpetrator programmes such as Open

2 Change, providing tailored support to those who wish to engage and change their behaviour.

Looking more broadly at the delivery on our priority of 'Safer Public Spaces', we continue to tackle harmful and criminal predatory behaviours in the nighttime economy. Project Vigilant has been established within Wiltshire Police for over four years. Our Force leads, Detective Inspector Troy Smith and Detective Sergeant Jen Jeffcoat-Marsh, recently delivered specialist training to other police forces, including colleagues from South Wales Police, who joined our most recent deployment in Swindon to put their learning into practice.

Across the county, our three Police Alcohol Licensing Officers (PALOs) continue to carry out excellent preventative work alongside your office and local authority partners. They deliver Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) training to licensed premises, support the Ask for Angela scheme, lead Pubwatch groups, and conduct routine licensing visits with neighbourhood policing teams (NPT) and local authority licensing teams. This collaborative approach is helping to ensure that our licensed premises remain safe and well managed.

A specific example of the success of this approach is Operation Armania, which was implemented in Salisbury to tackle anti-social behaviour and serious violence in the night-time economy. You can watch some of the operational activity here.

Our commitment to improving town centres can also be seen in Chippenham where neighbourhood policing teams have been working in partnership with businesses and local authorities by supporting venues, engaging with door staff, and those enjoying the town to help keep antisocial behaviour and crime low. I would like to congratulate Chippenham for once again being recognised with Purple Flag status, an international accreditation for towns and cities offering a safe and welcoming night out.

Inspector Ho Tsang from the Trowbridge NPT joined you last week at the Trowbridge Shopwatch meeting, one of many ways in which our neighbourhood policing teams are building stronger relationships with local businesses. These conversations help us to better understand the challenges they face and to ensure that we are responding effectively.

Further data from the ONS report shows Theft offences have also declined by 6.5%, from 11,648 to 10,896 incidents, contrasting with a 1.9% increase across the region. This reflects the impact of increased patrols in retail areas, improved CCTV coverage and joint work with businesses to deter opportunistic theft and repeat offending.

In Swindon, our commitment to tackling serious and organised crime continues. You joined our neighbourhood policing teams during Operation Sacramento, an intelligence-led initiative aimed at dismantling criminal networks and protecting vulnerable people from exploitation. Through high-visibility patrols, targeted raids and strong community engagement, our officers are sending a clear message that Wiltshire will not tolerate those who seek to profit from harm.

Earlier this year, a multi-agency knife crime summit was launched in Swindon. The summit brought together police, youth services, local leaders, and community organisations to address the root causes of violence and strengthen preventative measures.

Following the summit, the latest quarterly report from ONS shows a significant reduction in possession of weapons - a 4.5% reduction in weapon offences in the year

ending June 2025 compared to the previous year — a reduction from 420 incidents to 401.

Together, these examples demonstrate the breadth of work carried out by officers and our partners each day, from preventing crime, tackling antisocial behaviour, and supporting local businesses to protecting the most vulnerable in our communities.

Next week marks Safer Business Action Week, during which your office will be leading on the launch of the Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) in Salisbury. This will be an excellent opportunity for our partners to work together to tackle issues affecting business owners, share intelligence, bring more offenders to justice and make our town and city centres safer places to be. Our neighbourhood policing teams will be carrying out engagement activity across the county, including increased proactive patrols to support local business owners.

From the area boards and community engagement, my colleagues and I are conscious of concerns with regards to vehicle crime. Officers from the Local Police Tasking Team (LPTT) and Roads Policing Unit (RPU) took part in Operation Alliance between 13-19 October, a national week of activity targeting the organised theft of vehicles. Led by the policing national intelligence unit Opal and the National Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (NaVCIS), this operation resulted in one arrest and the recovery of a stolen vehicle.

Four officers from our Forensic Collisions Investigation Unit (FCIU) have also received Stolen Vehicle Examiner training and specialist equipment, which will enhance our capability to examine and identify vehicles and provide high-quality evidence to support prosecutions.

In addition, our neighbourhood officers engaged with members of the public who were more vulnerable to vehicle theft, providing forensic DNA marking kits designed to deter offenders and assist in returning vehicles to their rightful owners.

I was also pleased to see our younger communities recognising the significance of road safety during our recent Scouts day at Devizes Police Headquarters. The Scouts designed a series of social media graphics inspired by the national “Is Your Eyesight Roadworthy?” campaign and Operation Dark Night, our annual initiative promoting visibility and road safety. Three of their designs have since been digitally recreated and shared on our Force’s social media channels which you can view here.

It was wonderful to see young people taking such pride in their work and helping us to share such an important message. My thanks go to the Scouts, their leaders, and our dedicated staff and officers who ensured the event was such a positive and memorable experience.

I am delighted that my contract as Wiltshire Police Chief Constable has been extended to 2030. I would like to publicly thank you, Commissioner, for your ongoing support and belief in my leadership of policing for Wiltshire.

Policing is a privilege, and to serve the communities of this incredible county is a role I treasure.

I remain fully committed to continue improving Wiltshire Police. Having made some significant progress over the last few years, we are still navigating some real challenges – not least the financial pressures on our organisation – but I aspire for us to be a truly outstanding force, providing the best possible service.

I look forward with the same determination and ambition for the Force I had when I was appointed in 2023 and pledge to do all I can to ensure we are Keeping Wiltshire Safe.

Finally, as Remembrance Day approaches, I am reminded of the immense courage and sacrifice of those who have served our country. It is a moment to reflect and to ensure that their legacy lives on.

In Wiltshire, we will come together as a community to honour those who gave their lives and in remembering them, it inspires all of us in policing to serve with dedication, commitment and care.

Kindest regards,

Catherine Roper

Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police

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