



Hello everyone,

Last month, I launched my 2021-2022 Grant Fund to support offenders to turn their lives around with alcohol and drug dependency projects and early diversion schemes to support our young people.

Helping to stop the revolving door back to prison, focussing on those with addictions that drive prolific crimes like burglary, street robbery and vehicle theft to get the cash to pay for the next fix or drink and building on the successful interventions that have driven down serious youth violence in this county by 9% in the year to March 2020 are all my key priorities for the 2020-21 grant process along with innovation to help victims of Domestic Abuse.

I have found myself in circumstances where the election of a new PCC was delayed for a year. As a result, I am absolutely delivering business as usual, albeit remotely, as wins during the pandemic including a £2.9m Special Grant, £882k in Safer Streets bids for Midland Road Bedford and High Town Luton, £880k repeat funding for the VERU and £46k for emergency Domestic Abuse support, all prove conclusively. I plan to support key partners and charities to help victims of crime and improve community safety through my normal commissioning process, but I was determined not to restrict my successor to my programme of commissions for what would be one third of his or her term (as the delayed election means the next PCC will serve for three years not five like me). As a result, I am setting aside £300k for them to distribute after coming into office.

October has been the month for many important issues to be highlighted through awareness events for Mental Health and Hate Crime, as well as Black History Month. I offered the chance to share my platforms and take part in our first Twitter Takeover for Black History Month. Conroy Downer is a Project Manager for Reactiv8, an organisation which works for me on both sides of the door of Bedford Prison. They also support individuals suffering Domestic Abuse, help the long term unemployed back into the workplace and develop the confidence and skill sets of young people in schools. If you missed Conroy's posts, please do have a look at them on Twitter @Bedspcc.

Mental health is always important, but World Mental Health Day this year made us all stop and consider what a tough year this has been so far and how quickly this can take a toll on our mental health. I attend the national Covid-19 strategic meetings on behalf of all policing alongside all blue lights, the military, health service and government departments which, just today, referred to the need to provide "psychological PPE" for our exhausted teams when experiencing mental fragility. Ensuring appropriate care is in place for Bedfordshire Police was a very early focus of my Police and Crime Plan and I will shortly be opening a post trauma recovery area called "Breathing Space" at Luton Police Station to match one which is in very regular use at Kempston HQ. A Wellbeing Support Advisor will be housed in the room next door. Where our communities are concerned, I also fund a Mental Health Hub within the Force, providing named officers and mental health nurses to the most frequent users of blue light services to provide alternative support, plus specialist nurses in force control and my

victim support service, Signpost, to advise officers and victim care specialists alike.

Access to mental health services is as essential for those in emergency roles as it is to the people they are supporting. I want everyone in the public sector as well as the public themselves to be aware of avenues to support, which is why I have used my social platform to spread word of World Mental Health Day. For mental health support and services, please visit [www.elft.nhs.uk/service/329/Bedfordshire-Mental-Health-and-Wellbeing-Service](http://www.elft.nhs.uk/service/329/Bedfordshire-Mental-Health-and-Wellbeing-Service)

I am delighted to report that, following the news that our two bids to the Safer Streets Fund had been accepted, the projects in High Town in Luton and Midland Road in Bedford are progressing well. My office is working closely with the local authorities to make sure every penny is spent effectively and has a lasting impact on the area. It makes perfect sense to me that we work closely with residents and business owners who live and work in the area every single day, to join the project and influence how the money is spent and how we move forward to create lasting change for the better. My project manager is being co-located in Bedford Borough's Safer Streets office to help with this.

The new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for High Town is a fantastic way the community can come together to help us achieve this goal and I hope many more residents come on board. They are clearly the eyes and ears on the ground for us. They know the area best and can provide vital information to the project and of course to the police. If you live there, and especially if you are a local representative or community leader, please do spread the word about the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in High Town and ask anyone interested to please email: [SSFCoordinator@luton.gov.uk](mailto:SSFCoordinator@luton.gov.uk).

Last month, the force carried out its 100<sup>th</sup> cannabis factory raid since the start of the coronavirus lockdown. The factory was discovered in a commercial building located in a rural industrial estate near Shefford. The number of cannabis factories discovered by the force this year is up by more than 50 per cent compared to the same period last year. Bedfordshire is genuinely becoming a very hostile place in which to ply drugs.

Finally, victim care is at the heart of much of what I and my office do and I am so pleased with how Signpost, the service I launched in 2018 to support victims of crime across the county, has worked to provide an essential service to those affected by crime throughout the pandemic. From the beginning of lockdown to the end of September, the Specialist Victim Care Co-ordinators (VCCs) have provided support to 1,427 victims. The impact of crime is not just emotional of course; our expert VCCs also help victims deal with practical problems such as damage to property, by working with partner agencies on the victim's behalf to get repairs done and make properties secure.

However, we are aware that there are many more victims out there who might benefit from the support of the free and confidential service. Please remember to refer victims when dealing with incidents linked to crime and help to spread the word of Signpost (on freephone 0800 0282 887. Please visit [www.signpostforbedfordshire.com](http://www.signpostforbedfordshire.com) for further information.

Until next month, please take care and stay safe.

Yours,  
Kathryn



**Kathryn Holloway**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire**



## News from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner



### **PCC launches new Grant Fund for 2021-22 – 07/10/20**

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has this week launched her Grant Fund for the next year and is inviting applications to help pay for projects to help offenders succeed in living a crime-free life, with support for drug and alcohol dependency and early intervention programmes to help children and young people avoid gangs and serious youth violence.

The PCC's Grant Fund of approximately £170,000 is an annual opportunity to support innovative and collaborative working across Bedfordshire to help support victims and improve community safety. This year, as Commissioner Holloway is voluntarily stepping down from her role at the next election, she is leaving £300,000 for her successor to run their own funding process when they are elected into office in May 2021.



### **PCC teams up with organisations in Bedfordshire to promote routes to support for World Mental Health Day – 09/10/20**

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has teamed up with organisations across the county to promote the importance of mental health and highlight access to greater support ahead of World Mental Health Day (Saturday 10 October).

This year's theme set by the World Federation for Mental Health is 'mental health for all'. The organisation is highlighting the need for greater access to specialist services for everyone, everywhere, in response to the 'unprecedented impact of the current global health emergency due to Covid-19 that has impacted the mental health of millions of people'.



### **PCC offers her platforms to community leaders in support of Black History Month – 14/10/20**

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has given her communication platforms over to community leaders from the Black community in support of Black History Month.

Black History Month in the UK has been celebrated for over 30 years, originally founded to recognise the contributions that people of African and Caribbean backgrounds have made in the country over generations. Now Black History Month has been expanded to include the history of all black people and highlighting their contributions and achievements.



### **PCC says education is the key to reducing hate crime in Bedfordshire – 15/10/20**

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, is recognising Hate Crime week (10-17 October) and the impact that these crimes have on vulnerable people by sharing how she has supported education in our community at a time when hate crime is on the rise. Bedfordshire has seen over 950 recorded hate related incidents across Bedfordshire since the beginning of the year. Bedfordshire Police has responded by taking positive steps to ensure reporting this crime is easier for the victim, which includes third party reporting.

### [Signpost service for victims of crime supports almost 1,500 in Bedfordshire during the pandemic – 20/10/20](#)

Signpost - the service introduced by Bedfordshire PCC, Kathryn Holloway, to support victims of crime across the county - has worked with 1,427 victims from the beginning of lockdown (23 March to 30 September 2020).

Victims are referred into the Signpost service by police officers and partner agencies after being assessed as requiring extra support and self-referrals from the public are also welcomed on a confidential freephone number **0800 0282 887**. Signpost also offers a route to appropriate high quality support organisations, depending on the crime type, to those affected by a crime who are not the main victim, such as parents, children and partners.

### [PCC calls for local residents to support Safer Streets Project and join a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme – 22/10/20](#)

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, is calling for the residents of High Town in Luton, to join a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for their area and get involved with the Safer Streets Project.

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme will enable the community to join the project and be a key factor in helping the community feel safe and united in the fight against crime and anti-social behaviour. Members of the scheme will be asked to work in pairs at a safe distance (unless they are from the same household) to patrol their community and maintain a presence to discourage crime and pass on vital information which will help Bedfordshire Police and Luton Borough Council to identify areas of concern.

### [PCC's Bedfordshire Youth Council continues to gain followers as it continues to empower young people with 'Know Your Rights' campaign – 29/10/20](#)

In August, Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, launched a new partnership group, called the Bedfordshire Youth Council (BYC), which works to ensure that the voices of young people are heard, understood and responded to in the county.

This month sees the 'Know Your Rights' series focus on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), with posts explaining the change in law and outlining an individual's rights with regard to their data and how it can be stored and used. Previous campaigns have focused on police powers to stop and search, consumer rights and a person's rights if they are detained in a police cell.

### [One month left to apply for PCC's 2021-22 Grant Fund to support offenders with alcohol and drug dependency and early diversion schemes to keep children out of gangs – 30/10/20](#)

There is just one month left to apply for the 2021-22 Grant Fund which is designed to help pay for projects in the area of Offender management, specifically supporting the removal of drug and alcohol dependency and for Early Intervention programmes which will support the work of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU).

Earlier this month (7 October) Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, announced her Grant Fund of approximately £170,000 to support innovative and collaborative working across Bedfordshire to help support victims and improve community safety.

## Social Media Highlights



## Dates for the diary

### PCC's Grant Fund 21/22

One month left to apply. The application process will close on Friday 27 November 2020 at 4pm.

### 100 Conversations

The PCC would like to invite members of the community, in particular those from the African Caribbean community, for a one to one conversation regarding their experience with and thoughts on discrimination and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Please sign up [here](#) where a range of dates are available.

## Police and Crime Plan

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