



 **Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

Making the money work

Complete turnaround of gradings at Bedfordshire Police by the police watchdog to “Good” at keeping people safe.

Hello everyone

You will understand why I have delayed this month’s newsletter to you until today. I am absolutely delighted to report to you that Bedfordshire Police has achieved a complete transformation of its gradings by the police watchdog - Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - who have rated us “Good” across the board for Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy and keeping people safe. The report was embargoed until today (Friday 7 February 2020), which is why I have been unable to tell you until now.

I am absolutely delighted, of course, that the Force has been recognised for the progress and continuous improvement that has been delivered by a genuine partnership between me and my Chief Constables, past and present, and every single officer and member of staff; working together shoulder to shoulder to deliver ever stronger service to the public, especially given the small size of Bedfordshire Police compared with the very serious crime challenges it faces.

You will doubtless remember that the watchdog graded the Force ‘Inadequate’ in 2017 (the only force in England and Wales to receive this grade at that time) and as ‘Requires Improvement’ in 2018 - showing the turnaround was underway - although both I and my former Chief Constable, Jon Butcher, challenged the 2017 grade at the time. (Bedfordshire Police had been nowhere near the bottom of the national table for both Victim Satisfaction or Recorded Crime that were the basis for the 2017 inspection. The Force was also heavily criticised for a lack of crime prevention and Neighbourhood Policing and we were not given credit for the delivery of seven Community Hubs (at that time, now 8, plus bases in Ampthill and Toddington) of Inspectors, PCs and PCSOs that were, at that very point, being rolled out across our county to problem solve and prevent crime at neighbourhood level. I took the first complaint in HMICFRS’ history, in part concerning such unfairness. We now have a new Inspector and inspection team. This is now in the past and Bedfordshire Police and I have well and truly moved on.

One difference now, of course, is that Bedfordshire Police can supply the proof to the watchdog of what those Community teams have achieved in terms of problem solving to address the type of lower level crime issues that affect people so much, from drug use to anti-social behaviour and street drinking to homelessness, with this approach being built into crime prevention. As just one isolated example, anti-social behaviour in Houghton Regis has dropped by 49% in the last year and you cannot possibly get that sort of progress in a force which is not stepping up to the plate when it comes to delivery.

Bedfordshire Police can also point to the particular strength of its activities to identify the drugs market, serious organised crime and gang issues, sharing findings with partners and working to tackle them together. This has been so exemplary that other forces now come to learn from us and Government funding has been drawn in as an investment such as my unique Special Grant of 2019/20 of £4.571m to pay for the Force's specialist Operation Bosen response to gang, gun and knife crime. £1.38m for an uplift in policing in this area and £880,000 for the newly created Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit, funding police to work with agencies such as health, local councils and communities to address the causes at grass roots (which is to be repeated this year).

HMICFRS inspectors carried out the latest 'PEEL' assessment in July last year – which covers all of Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy in a new integrated inspection (rather than the previous single subject inspections) and which grades all 43 forces in England and Wales. The Inspectors looked at departments across the Force, focusing on how effectively Bedfordshire Police reduces crime and keeps people safe, how efficiently the Force operates and how sustainable its services are and how legitimately it treats the public and its workforce, giving Bedfordshire Police the overall grading of 'Good'.

Inspectors praised multiple areas, including:-

- Introduction of Victim Engagement Officers in the specialist Emerald team to further improve the service to victims of domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault.
- Understanding, identifying, supporting and safeguarding vulnerable people
- The professionalism, empathy and compassion of call handlers in the Force Contact Centre (control room)
- Use of orders such as dispersal powers and community protection notices to tackle anti-social behaviour
- Responding to people with mental health conditions – particularly through the Mental Health Street Triage team; a partnership approach to helping those in crisis
- Partnership working – particularly around information sharing relating to high-risk victims, offenders and locations

I would like to share with you, our Chief Constable Garry Forsyth's response, saying: "This is fabulous news and is testament to all of the hard work of our officers and staff. The report describes Bedfordshire Police as 'an ambitious force with a positive culture' and I'm delighted that it particularly praised our work around identifying and helping vulnerable people – recognising our dedication to protecting people and keeping them safe.

"While we disagreed with previous gradings, we have worked tirelessly, with the support of HMICFRS, to address their areas of concern and ensure we were as efficient and effective as possible.

"My predecessor Jon Boutcher, should take a huge amount of credit for leading the Force during this time – and I would also like to thank our communities and partners for their ongoing support.

"We continue to strive for excellence and will be going through the report to identify any areas which could be developed further to improve the service to our communities."

The only area of the report that inspectors deemed to 'require improvement' was future planning. The fact that inspectors found the future planning aspect to be an area to be addressed is entirely understandable given the current police funding formula which leaves Bedfordshire Police still under-resourced to deal with the complex crime it faces on a daily basis. In fact, the report makes it abundantly clear that Bedfordshire Police still require an enhanced funding settlement, despite the 36 officers we will receive as part of the first tranche of the national uplift of 20,000 in 2020/21.

The sheer fact that I have had to apply for Special Grant Funding two years running, simply to deal with Bedfordshire's gang, gun and knife crime, shows the enormity of our financial challenges. Thankfully, I am expecting news of a second Special Grant for 2020/21 any day now.

Until the final rebalancing of national police funding, which we've been promised, is secured, full future planning in such an uncertain financial climate is nigh on impossible. However, we did engage the highly respected policing consultancy Crest to map Bedfordshire Police's current and future demand and predict what we will need to deal with it. The findings have informed the Force Management Statements that we have also delivered to the watchdog HMICFRS, along with every other force, which it has subsequently singled out as exemplary.

This is not an achievement for any one person of course, but for everyone at Bedfordshire Police and all its partners, including the readers of this letter. There was a reason why my Police and Crime Plan for my four year term, which ends in mid-May, is titled "Helping Police to help the public" as we cannot tackle the serious and neighbourhood crime issues in this county alone. However, given all those who doubted that Bedfordshire Police could have a future, who called for merger with surrounding forces and said I would never win any further funding from Government, I hope they now accept that there could not be a better end to my term than this.

Yours
Kathryn



Kathryn Holloway
Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire



News from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Funding to tackle serious youth violence making an impact

More than six kilos of drugs and £130,000 in criminal cash have been taken off the streets as the direct result of a Government grant for Bedfordshire Police to tackle serious youth violence.

Activity funded by the £1.38 million surge funding money has also enabled officers on gang patrols to make 145 arrests and secure jail terms of more than 30 years.

Bedfordshire Police were one of 18 police forces with particularly high demand which were handed funding from the Home Office in April to tackle gun and knife crime involving young people.

National figures released this week show that serious knife crime offences increased by around 25% in the 12 months to September in the county, compared to the previous year.

As a direct result of the targeted funding to tackle this issue, officers have been able to...

- Seize dozens of weapons including more than 25 knives as well as firearms
 - Recover 2.5 kilos of Class A and four kilos of Class B drugs
 - Seize around £133,000 in criminal cash
 - Make 145 arrests for offences including attempted murder, grievous bodily harm, robbery, arson and possession with intent to supply drugs
 - Secure prison sentences for 18 people totalling 30 years and four months
-
- Run almost 100 Operation Sparkler patrols to tackle gang activity, as well as other operations targeting serious youth violence
 - Execute 48 warrants
 - Carry out 393 stop searches

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, said: "The policing achievements as a result of the uplift funding from the Home Office prove conclusively what more we can achieve when we are given more; that money invested in Bedfordshire Police and, in particular, in relation to our approach to serious youth violence, is a wise investment indeed.

"This pattern started with the £4.571m Special Grant which I won in December 2018, which has led to 200 years of prison terms by doubling the Force's specialist unit - Op Boson - to create one Boson team for the north to mirror that in the south of the county, which the Policing Minister has promised in writing to repeat this financial year, given their effectiveness.

"The input of Bedfordshire Police's Assistant Chief Constable, Jackie Sebire, cannot be under-estimated in helping to achieve the subsequent £1.38m uplift investment and also £880,000 to set up the county's Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU), co-locating partners from local authorities and drawing together youth offending services, health and charities to tackle youth violence.

"I may be able to robustly put our argument to politicians but Jackie heads up the operational delivery on the ground which is producing these exceptional results.

“Admissions for knife crimes to our hospitals are plateauing out, the most serious offenders are being put away and individuals actively diverted from gang activity. This is policing that is working.”

The surge funding money has enabled Bedfordshire Police to carry out more innovative tactics around enforcement to target those involved in serious youth violence.

Justice McCann, 22, of Ravenhill Way, Luton, was jailed for 22-and-a-half years, with an extended five years on licence, last week after shooting a man in the chest.

Fast track forensics paid for by the grant identified McCann’s fingerprints on both the victim’s car and on the weapon.

This ensured he was identified as the prime suspect within 24 hours of the shooting taking place.

Further use of fast track forensics has helped in prosecutions around the supply of guns, as well as to quickly identify fingerprints on knives and tasers to ensure offenders are swiftly brought to justice.

Part of this funding has also been used to support the force in securing drug dealing telecommunication restriction orders (DDTROs), where phone lines linked to drug dealing can be shut down.

The force has so far shut down 14 phone lines using DDTROs.

Other projects have included boosting the force’s research and analytical capacity to better understand the problem of serious youth violence, including on platforms such as social media.

Assistant Chief Constable Jackie Sebire, the national lead for serious youth violence, said: “This funding has played a huge part in some fantastic work we are doing to tackle this issue and protect our young people.

“The commissioner has been instrumental in securing various funding sources for Bedfordshire and these results speak for themselves. We are unquestionably in a better position now to tackle serious youth violence than we were before we received this grant.

“While all this enforcement activity is a significant element in our strategy to reduce serious violence, sustained reductions will only come through prevention and diversion.

“It is the separate funding for the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) that is most important in solving this issue for the longer term.”



PCC shares news of a 49% cut in Anti-Social Behaviour with Houghton Regis Town Council at public meeting

Bedfordshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, held her first public surgery of the new year for the residents of Houghton Regis (Monday 20th January 2020), announcing a dramatic decrease in Anti-Social Behaviour in the town by almost half since this time last year.

The PCC credited the excellent partnership approach the council has taken to working with Bedfordshire Police's local Community Policing Hub for the 49% fall in such crime.

Accompanied by the head of the Force's Houghton Regis Community Policing Hub, Insp Craig Gurr, the Commissioner said: "This town council shows how every council of its type in the county can achieve results for residents by working more closely in partnership. It holds a monthly Combatting Crime Group with police from the Community Hub and helps pass on crime information and even to guide mobile CCTV cameras into the most useful spots in relation to current issues. I've singled them out before in my annual reports but the slashing of Anti-Social Behaviour by almost half on last year shows, yet again, that this approach works."

The Commissioner opened her address to the Town Council with other good news, amounting to a return of a further visible police presence in the town.

She explained that Bedfordshire Police's new Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (NET), comprised of a Sergeant and nine Police Constables is now being based at the former Houghton Regis Police Station and will be at full strength by April 2020. This team is designed to flex around the county as a trouble shooting taskforce to help stamp out pernicious crime problems emerging at neighbourhood level in support of the local Community Hubs.

Insp Craig Gurr also updated the Houghton Regis Town Council on recent successful policing operations in the town under the title Operation Paxton, which targeted an emerging gang in the town involved in rivalry with another from the Lewsey Farm area of Luton, which has led to individuals now going through the criminal justice process in relation to the firing of a shotgun and two stabbings, plus the successful resettlement of a family out of the county.

The Commissioner also shared the decision to locate Bedfordshire's new Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) at Houghton Regis Police Station too, saying, "The VERU is here to co-locate police, local authority, youth offending and partner services working specifically to stamp out Serious Youth Violence and links to Organised Crime Groups around knife and gun use. There are £350,000 worth of grants going out to community groups that have been distributed by the VERU as we want communities themselves to suggest the best solutions for their own young people."

Commissioner Holloway went on to explain the focus of the £4.571 million Special Grant she achieved from the Home Office last year explaining "The Special Grant helped me support the Chief Constable in literally doubling the response to gang crime in this county through Operation Boson, by creating a second team for the north of the county, to mirror that in the south, which has produced huge measurable results including 200 years of prison terms, when taken together with the outcome of the more recent £1.38m grant for an uplift in policing of Serious Youth Violence in Bedfordshire.

"We are finally seeing a plateauing off of knife crime admissions to our two A&E departments; in Luton and in Bedford, although any single admission is one too many."

Community Inspector Craig Gurr stated "The Community Team have always had an excellent working relationship with Houghton Regis Town Council, and in particular the Combatting Crime Working Group. This has paid dividends in terms of producing some significant results in the reduction of both anti-social behaviour and the more serious criminality which effects the quality of life of local residents and serves as a model of partnership working".

Houghton Regis Town Council welcomed the updates from the Commissioner and took the opportunity to thank her for her "significant contribution to policing in the county over the past four years".

Councillor Susan Goodchild said “I would like to thank the Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, and her team for the public surgery held in Houghton Regis. The benefit of this level of engagement and the wide range of expertise and experience in the room was evident. Bringing together local, regional and national partners in delivering innovative early intervention and preventive projects, protecting our communities and the most vulnerable is greatly appreciated”.

Commissioner Holloway has been holding a series of surgeries with the public around the county, followed by meetings with local town councils, with such events having already taken place in Bedford, Luton, Leighton Buzzard, Shefford and Biggleswade. The next public surgery is due to take place in Sandy on Monday 24th February 2020.

For a full breakdown of public meetings and information on how to book a session with the PCC, please visit the website <https://www.bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk/general.php?id=277> to register.



'Biggest funding boost in a decade' welcomed by Bedfordshire Police

Bedfordshire Police has welcomed the latest police funding settlement from the Government, dubbed by Home Secretary Priti Patel as the 'biggest funding boost in a decade'.

The 2020/21 settlement announcement set out an additional £1.1 billion of funding to all forces – should Police and Crime Commissioners take full advantage of raising the police precept element of council tax by £10 for a Band D home. It is designed to assist with the uplift of 20,000 new officers nationally and was announced in Parliament today (Wednesday).

For Bedfordshire, the new deal could see an increase of around £9 million to its budget for 2020/21 – to £121.9m. The boost will help ensure funds can be invested where they are needed most; in extra officers on the county's stretched frontline.

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway said: “Today's funding settlement is welcome but still requires me to raise the police precept by the maximum allowed without a referendum, of £10 a year for a Band D home - or 84p per month - in order to achieve another £9m for Bedfordshire Police.

"This will allow me to recruit 156 more Police Constables this year, of whom 36 are our share of the national uplift in 2020/21 and 100 are needed to replace leavers but which also allows me to fund 20 additional PCs. (The core grant from Government also includes payment for 18 extra officers who were recruited in the financial year 2019/20 as the first part of the national uplift.)

“There had been rumours that the core grant from Government was going to stand still. If this had been the case I would have had to find some £6m of savings so the extra investment is a relief. It allows me to meet the pressures of pay, pensions, insurance and other rising costs and still deliver the recruitment that both I and central Government had promised.

“I'm also expecting further good news on funding imminently as both the current Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse, and former Minister, Nick Hurd, have pledged in writing to provide me with a second Special Grant this year, to pay for the specialist response of Bedfordshire Police to gang, gun and knife crime in the county, known as Bosen.”

The PCC was previously given a £4.571m Special Grant for Bedfordshire Police for 2018/19 to pay for Boson, allowing it to be doubled with a permanent unit in the north as well as the south of the county.

Chief Constable Garry Forsyth also welcomed the news, saying: "Today's announcement is long overdue for policing.

"It has been our case, for some time, that Bedfordshire Police is not properly funded to meet the complex crime challenges we face. While we continue to lobby for changes to the wider funding formula to ensure we are adequately resourced to meet those challenges and be proactive in preventing crime, we hope today's announcement will mean we are able to properly invest in a new generation of officers our public so desperately want to see.

"We are committed to delivering our part in the national uplift of police officers and these additional funds will be crucial to ensuring we have the necessary infrastructure to attract, train and develop this growing frontline throughout their policing careers.

"It could also assist us in laying the foundations to help plug the gaps in the investigation and prevention of serious and complex crimes associated with the exploitation of the young and vulnerable in Bedfordshire."

Making the settlement announcement, Home Secretary Priti Patel said: "This Government is delivering on the people's priorities by giving policing the biggest funding increase in a decade.

"It will mean more officers tackling the crime blighting our streets, so people can feel safe in their communities.

"The police must now make full use of this significant investment to deliver for the public."

The force will continue to work alongside the Home Office with regard to further details of funding in respect of the 2020/21 budget; in particular the second Special Grant promised to the PCC.



Bedfordshire Police opens its doors for largest recruitment drive in years

Those looking to make a fresh start in 2020 can find out more about a policing career at an information evening this month.

Bedfordshire Police is opening its doors to those interested in joining the police service on Thursday 30 January, and you can [book your place by email now](#).

The force is encouraging people to become one of the 20,000 new police officers driven by the Home Office national uplift and join Bedfordshire Police in its largest recruitment drive for years.

Bedfordshire is a friendly family force with all of the complex policing challenges of a metropolitan area, including tackling serious organised crime and protecting the most vulnerable in our communities.

Throughout 2019, the force received well over 100,000 999 and more than 200,000 101 calls.

Last year the force also made more than 8,000 arrests and secured hundreds of years' worth of jail time for offenders, taking the most dangerous people off the streets.

Deputy Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst said: "We are a small and busy force that offers a lot of experience due to the wide range of policing challenges we see compared our policing counterparts, which makes us unique.

"At Bedfordshire Police you are not just a number, you will develop with the close knit team that surrounds you and there will always be someone to support you through the ups and downs of policing.

"If you're looking for a truly rewarding career where you will grow and develop with multiple opportunities to specialise, join us as an officer."

PC Hayley Hunter will be present at the information evening to answer any questions about a policing career. She said:

"Being a police officer brings a great sense of pride. We are a vital resource the community can call upon in time of need. We help people during some of their darkest moments and keep Bedfordshire safe by taking criminals off the streets.

"New officer recruits will join on a two year probation, and once they graduate they are able to develop within Bedfordshire Police, including specialising as a detective or in firearms, roads policing, counter terrorism or in digital and cybercrime, to name but a few!

"Every shift is different, we tackle new challenges with a mix of people every day. It is a demanding role, but very rewarding when we can make a real impact on someone's life."

New recruits can expect to receive a high level of training and support from colleagues, trainers and the various police support networks that are set up to support colleagues both during their probation and throughout their service.

If you are looking for a rewarding role, where you are constantly learning something new and surrounded by a supportive team, apply for the role at

www.bedfordshire.police.uk/careers

To book a place on our information evening at Bedfordshire Police Headquarters in Woburn Road, Kempston on 30 January, please email your interest or any questions to r.recruitment@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk.



PCC calls for higher penalties for those assaulting police after BBC features PC with leg broken after being rammed by a car and asks for body-worn video to be shown to magistrates as proof of violence to achieve higher sentences

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has appealed for the law to support front-line police officers with greater penalties, following the broadcast of BBC One's 'Critical Incident', which featured PC Hayley Robinson, a Bedfordshire officer whose leg was broken when a suspect deliberately rammed her car.

PC Robinson was injured while responding to reports of concern for an 18-year-old woman in Sandy in April 2018. During the incident, PC Robinson and a colleague encountered a

young driver of an Audi A5 which then drove at them. The officers attempted to take cover in their marked police vehicle before they were hit. The collision caused serious injury to PC Robinson, breaking her leg, while the second officer was unhurt.

After evading police and leaving the county, the teenage driver was eventually caught four months later in Essex and was jailed for two years in October 2018. The incident was broadcast on national BBC television on Monday (13 January) in an episode of 'Critical Incident' which highlights offences against police officers.

"Prime time television programmes like 'Critical Incident' show the reality of what our officers encounter on the streets of our county on a daily basis and it was a miracle that Hayley and her colleague were not even more seriously injured. It's not as though we can say this is a one-off. Before Christmas the Chief Constable, Garry Forsyth, and I appealed for those celebrating, and therefore partying and drinking more, not to take this out on the police officers trying to keep them safe. Yet, in just 11 days this Christmas, 14 officers were assaulted in the execution of their duties. How can that be acceptable?"

"It's my firm belief that an attack on a police officer is not the same as an assault on any other member of the public, because the police are the front-line between those who keep the law and those who seek to break it. Any attack on a police officer should be met with the toughest penalties," said Commissioner Holloway.

"Even though the law governing assaults on emergency workers was recently raised to a year's imprisonment from six months, this is still insufficient to act as the sort of deterrent which will stop this violence from happening. Where Hayley is concerned, she is a quite exemplary officer from all the accounts of colleagues and she is still within the Force but I can entirely understand why any officer would wish to stop working in policing or find themselves under pressure to quit from partners and children. We need to provide a greater umbrella of protection for them and we need to do it now," said the PCC.

The Commissioner recently met with a representative of Bedfordshire's magistrates to urge them to view footage from officers' body worn video of assaults to get the true picture before sentencing.

"When those who assault officers turn up in court they have usually sobered up and put on a suit and are totally unrecognisable from the thug who lashed out at a Bedfordshire Police officer. They've also been shown the body worn video themselves and have concluded that it's pointless to do anything other than to plead guilty. What happens next is that the busy prosecutor simply describes the attack for magistrates. It's my firm belief that if they saw it for themselves they would have a far clearer idea of how unacceptable the violence actually was which could affect sentencing. That's absolutely possible as it's what is done in some other police force areas, like Avon and Somerset. I'm very pleased to say that the responses I have had from both the magistrates here and from the Chief Constable were very supportive of this."

Bedfordshire Police also enhanced the support for officers following an assault by introducing 'Maggie's Law', which is named after the daughter of PC Jon Henry, who was killed on duty in Luton in June 2007. Anyone who is assaulted while on duty receives direct contact from a member of the chief officer team to check on their welfare and to offer any support which is needed.

Officers are urged to complete Victim Impact Statements for the courts to consider at the time of sentencing and the Chief Constable also completes an Impact Statement to reinforce the officer's own.

Chief Constable Garry Forsyth said: "Police officers run towards danger when others might turn the other way. That selfless, public duty is imperative in policing, and it is only right that they are given protection by the courts."

“Bedfordshire Police is committed to supporting our officers and staff and shows an enhanced duty of care, with every assaulted officer given personal contact from a chief officer, and they are provided with a supporting statement for court.

“As we encourage more people to join policing with the national uplift, it is crucial that they understand the support the Force gives to our officers and staff. We will not tolerate any assault on our workforce.”

Bedfordshire Police is set to recruit an additional 54 officers by 2021 in the first phase of the national drive to bring in 20,000 more officers over the next three years. This is in on top of those being recruited to fill existing vacancies and an extra 60 Police Constables being created this financial year through the Commissioner's council tax precept rise and Home Office funding.

The PCC has also been instrumental in securing Government grants worth more than £8million since 2018 to tackle gun and gang crime and maintain recruitment which would otherwise have had to stop and continues to lobby for a fairer funding deal for the county, to add to its stretched front-line.

Commissioner Holloway said: "Policing continues to face unprecedented demands, more so than ever before. That demand far outstrips the resources we have in Bedfordshire, so I consider the protection of our officers, in order to provide a service and protect the public, as the highest priority and have worked throughout my term with the Police Federation to support its 'Protect the Protectors' Campaign wherever I can.

“I made it a genuine priority, set out in my Police and Crime Plan for the county, to show an enhanced duty of care to our officers and staff and, as a result, I am committed to ensuring officers are protected. I fully support the Police Federation campaign, which saw a new law coming into effect in November 2018 doubling the maximum sentence for assaults on police officers and other emergency service workers but, as I say, the penalties need to be higher still.

“It's imperative that the courts hand down the strongest punishments possible for assaults on police officers, both as a deterrent and to ensure emergency workers are treated with the respect they deserve.”

Chairman of Bedfordshire Police Federation, Jim Mallen said: "For too long police officers have become the physical and verbal punch bags of society. The sheer number of assaults and levels of violence that police officers face is now beyond the pale. Dozens of men and women are working on the front-line and being assaulted every single day.

"Our courts should be handing out appropriate sentences for perpetrators who choose to attack police officers. The punishment must fit the crime and police officers must have faith in the Criminal Justice System. As a society we need to protect the protectors."



Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Scheme

The Police and Crime Commissioner has a statutory duty to maintain an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme for Bedfordshire. Independent custody visiting is a well-established system whereby volunteers attend police stations to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. The scheme offers protection and confidentiality to detainees and the police and provides reassurance to the wider community.

Beds OPCC has recruited four new ICVs which will begin training soon. We are still recruiting in Bedfordshire so if you are interested in becoming an ICV, please visit the Police and Crime Commissioner Website to complete an application form - <https://www.bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk/independent-custody-visiting-bedfordshire>

ICV Quarter three data (Oct - Dec) 2019/2020

Total number of detainees through custody	Number of ICV visits	Total number of detainees in custody at time of ICV visits	Total number of detainees unavailable*	Number of detainees observed	Total number of detainees visited
2170	19	129	39	39	90

*for the number of detainees unavailable – detainees were either in interview, asleep, intoxicated or too high risk to be seen.

ICVs have reported on the following:

- Identifying detainees which need additional support within custody and asking the 'critical' questions to whether or not Appropriate Adults have been contacted or whether a Mental Health Assessment was required.
- Reported that staff were helpful
- Asking detainees whether or not they needed to notify family/friends of their detention
- ICVs are ensuring that female detainees are being allocated a female officer and hygiene pack is provided.
- ICVs observe the Health and Safety process whilst in Custody, ensuring detainees are safe.
- The OPCC are trying to recruit more ICVs via social media and Community Voluntary Service (CVS). ICVs have also attended IAG meetings to promote the scheme



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