



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

CONTENTS:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Performance against the Police and Crime Plan**
- 3. Annexes**

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1. Introduction and Foreword

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) have a [legal duty](#) to publish an annual report covering two topics: the exercise of the PCC's functions, and the progress which has been made in meeting the police and crime objectives in the Police and Crime Plan.

The PCC is responsible for the totality of policing and it is the role of the PCC to be the voice of the people. Key duties of the role are to:

- secure an efficient and effective local police service
- appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the police service, and if necessary dismiss them
- set the police and crime objectives through a police and crime plan
- set the police service's budget and determine the precept
- contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary
- bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up

This is the annual report of the Avon and Somerset PCC which covers the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Throughout this report you will see how the PCC fulfilled their duties and how they link to delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. It is important to note that as this reports on the previous year, references to the PCC relate to the former PCC Mark Shelford.

It is important to note that as well as this report an Annual Governance Statement is written as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts. To gain a different and fuller insight into how the governance framework helped discharge the PCC's duties the reports should be read together.

As this is an annual report it aims to focus on significant achievements, developments or improvements within the last year rather than describing in general terms how policing and crime services are being delivered.

However, it is important to provide an indication of just how much work Avon and Somerset Police are doing every day which helps achieve the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan.

A single day in Avon and Somerset Police			
411	recorded crimes	952	999 calls
63	domestic abuse crimes	1,715	101 calls
7	rapes	853	incidents
39	offences of violence with injury	200	anti-social behaviour incidents
253	victims	127	calls relating to concern for safety
118	suspects/offenders	19	missing people
5	assaults on officers/staff	138	calls relating to road traffic incidents

The figures in this table are calculated based on the total crimes/incidents/calls for the year 2023/24 divided by the 366 days of the year.

2. Performance Against the Police and Crime Plan

Priority 1 – Preventing and fighting crime

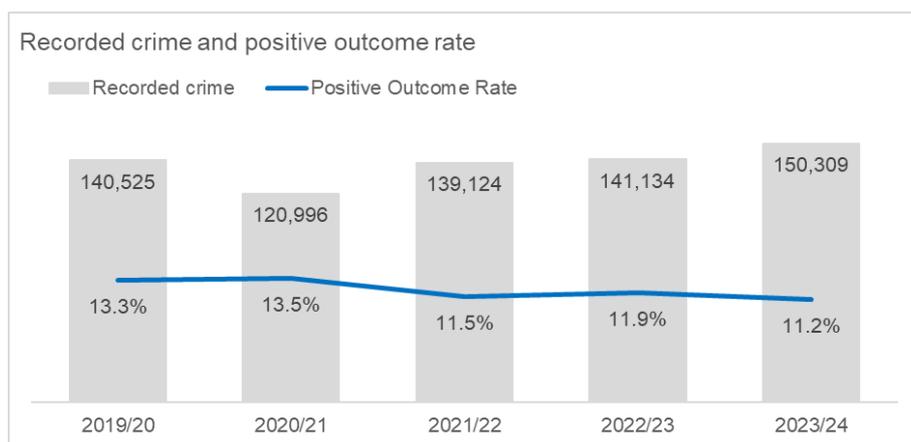


Figure 1: Avon and Somerset Police recorded crime and positive outcome rate for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

Recorded crime and positive outcome rates are important to consider across the whole of priority one. There is variation seen across different crime types which will be explored more below.

In the last year recorded crime has increased, largely due to better crime recording e.g. stalking and harassment.

There has been a small decrease in the positive outcome rate in the most recent year, compared to the last year. While there were more positive outcomes (in volume) than two years ago, the rate is lower due to the increase in recorded crime.

Based on the most recent Crime Survey for England and Wales (year ending December 2023) an estimated 48.2% of people aged 16 and over in Avon and Somerset agree that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the local area; this is compared to 47.5% nationally.

Commissioner's Crime Prevention Fund

This year a total of £124,680 was awarded through the Commissioner's Crime Prevention Fund to smaller projects and community groups within the Avon and Somerset locality. The fund is administered by the [Quartet Community Foundation](#) and [Somerset Community Foundation](#). Five projects were recipients of grants in B&NES, eight in Bristol, one in North Somerset and 14 in Somerset. The largest age demographic to benefit from this fund were teenagers (13-17) as 15 projects were designed specifically to support those within this age group. The estimated number of beneficiaries from this fund was 27,674. Types of projects which received funding included: youth groups arranging workshops and activities primarily targeting young

Black and Ethnic minority young people, equine facilitated support for survivors of domestic abuse in and around Frome, through to psychoeducation programmes offering 8-week mental health skills course for vulnerable adults.

1. Vulnerable children and adults

Operation Jade – reducing harm to missing children

Avon and Somerset Police's Topaz team is a proactive, perpetrator focused team protecting the highest risk child exploitation victims by developing opportunities to disrupt those suspected of exploiting children while evidence is gathered to bring the offenders to justice. Topaz officers are experts in child protection, exploitation contextual safeguarding and trauma.

In the last year the Constabulary piloted a new approach called Operation Jade. This is where Topaz officers own and progress high-risk missing child investigations. To help better protect a high-risk missing child from harm, Topaz officers get to know and understand the missing child as an individual young person with their own story.

Operation Jade has helped improve intelligence gathering, information sharing and partnership working to identify exploitation and safeguard children. Operation Jade works with colleagues across the Constabulary, with Children and Young People's Services, education and health to understand the reasons which led a child to go missing, establish whether the child is being exploited and ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.

Topaz officers carry out Police Prevention Interviews with children in high-risk missing investigations once they are found, or return, which helps to continually improve understanding of what caused the child to go missing. By conducting these interviews, Topaz has been able to identify exploitation which might otherwise have been missed.

Following the success of Op Jade, Topaz continues to oversee high-risk missing child investigations.

PCC Commissioning

The OPCC commissions a number of specialist support services. These include:

- Independent advocacy service for adult victims of crime and ASB who need additional support;
- Children and young people advocacy service;
- Specialist therapeutic services for survivors of sexual assault and abuse;
- Contribution to Local Authority-commissioned services for victims of child exploitation;
- Specialist support for victims of modern slavery to enhance nationally commissioned services;
- Emergency Services Mental Health Triage;
- Contribution to the Mental Health Treatment requirement;

- Liaison and Diversion Services (known as Advice and Support in Custody and Courts – supporting individuals whose offending is linked to substance and alcohol misuse), and
- Appropriate Adults service - supporting and safeguarding the welfare and rights of vulnerable adults detained or interviewed by the police.

The Appropriate Adult service and child exploitation services were recommissioned during 2022/23, with new contracts commencing on 1 April 2023. A full breakdown of commissioned services can be found at Annex 1.

The Advice Support Custody and Courts (ASCC) service continues to identify and signpost vulnerable individuals to support and provide information to support charging and sentencing decisions.

- A tailored pathway for children and young people is also available for out of court resolutions.
- The Drug Education Programme (DEP) continues to provide a health-based education and prevention programme for first time drug possession offences. DEP now offers a hybrid approach, available online or in person, with a 60-70% success rate in attendance from 50-100 referrals per month.
- The service has delivered around 200-300 meaningful engagements per month. The service is unique in offering peer support, providing a mentor with lived-experience to give continuity of support and guide them in the community. Volunteers are in turn able to develop skills and take steps into paid apprenticeships within the service.

ASCC is in its final year of delivering against the contract led by NHS England and co-commissioned with the OPCC. Re-commissioning commenced in March 2024 and will see the service built into a wider integrated model for health and justice services. Avon and Somerset is currently the only OPCC in the country taking this approach. The new integrated system will launch on 1st April 2025.

Emergency Service Triage continues to be delivered through the Integrated Access Partnership (IAP), delivered by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership. Collaboration funding with the OPCC provides:

- Mental Health Specialist Desk (triaging 999 calls) – Ensuring appropriate support and reducing unnecessary police attendance to mental health incidents, enhanced through the development of a police officer 'link role' supporting the clinical team with triage. The impact of this role can be seen in a 30% reduction in police deployment and a reduction in the use of Section 136 from 30% to 12%.
- Mental Health Response Vehicles (blue light response to patients in crisis) – Key development in 2023, operating across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. 85% of patients were supported at the scene, with around 300 attendances from October-December 2023.
- Emergency Services Professionals line (remote support for responders at scene) – received over 12,000 calls in 2023, 30% concerning individuals with suicidal thoughts.

The IAP has worked hard to manage resource challenges, supported by the evolving link officer role. The local ambition of the IAP is realised by the national agenda of [Right Care Right Person](#). The focus in Avon and Somerset is building on the IAP and

positive working relationships to shape and implement Right Care Right Person and address local challenges, specifically high use of Section 136 powers.

2. Male violence against women and girls (VAWG) specifically domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment

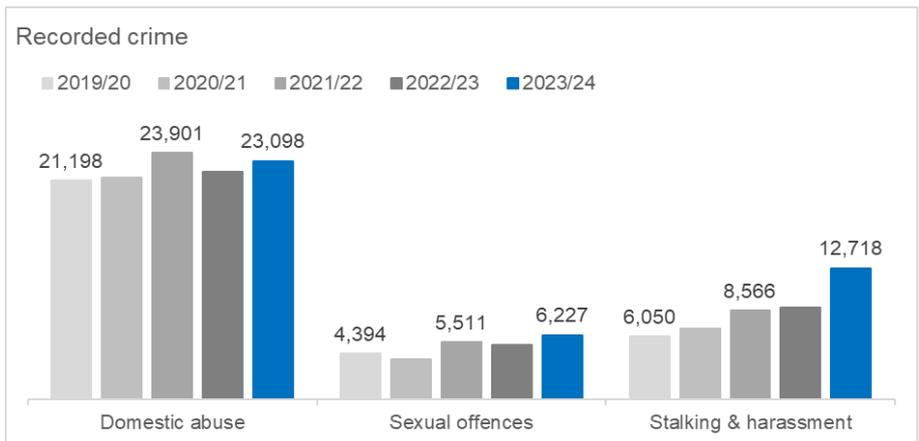


Figure 2: Avon and Somerset Police recorded crime for domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

There has been a 43% increase, 3,800 more, stalking and harassment crimes recorded this year which can be attributed to better crime recording. This improved crime recording has also had a smaller impact on the number of sexual offences recorded.

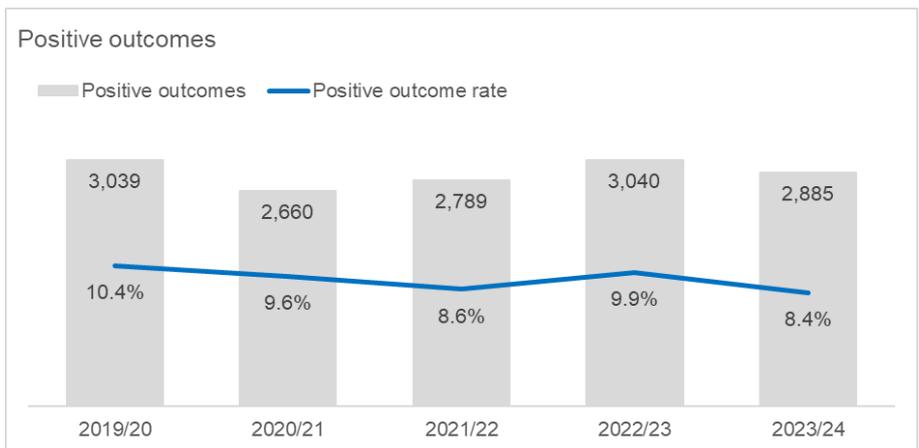


Figure 3: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; combined positive outcomes (and rate) for domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

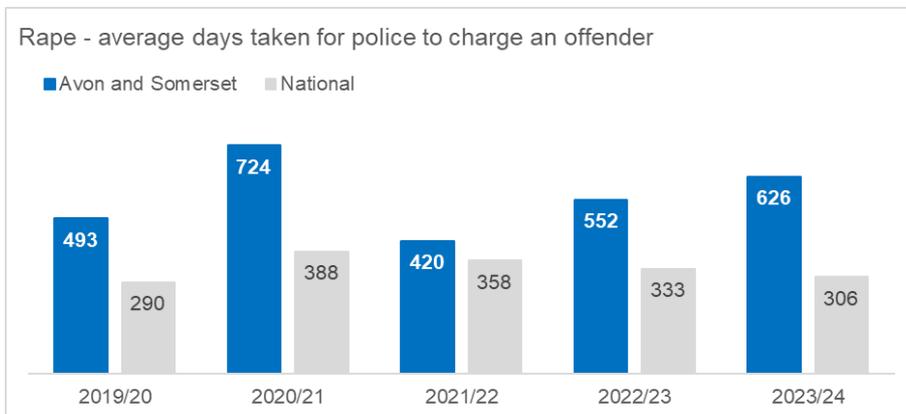


Figure 4: Avon & Somerset and national; median days from offence recorded to police charge (in adult rape cases) for the years 2019/20 – 2023 (full year data was not available for 2023/24: the most recent data is for the calendar year 2023).

The time it takes to charge an adult rape case in Avon and Somerset has increased in the most recent year and remains above the national average. While cases are taking longer to charge, the positive outcome number and rate has increased again this year.

Sexual Misconduct Service

In 2021 Avon and Somerset Police commissioned LimeCulture, a national specialist sexual violence and safeguarding organisation, to support the response to sexual misconduct and ensure internal responses are effective, appropriate, and understood by staff across the organisation.

As part of this work, LimeCulture ran a series of focus groups with police officers, police staff and senior leaders to gather views, experiences, and suggestions.

The review showed a need for change to address internal culture and provide support for an individual who witnessed or experienced sexual misconduct.

Having the right culture is essential for people working in the Constabulary to feel supported and respected and is a vital part in helping maintain legitimacy within communities. The public, and people working in the Constabulary need to be able to trust that perpetrators will be dealt with robustly, especially when public confidence around the police handling of violence against women and girls is low.

Within the last year the Constabulary created a new role of Sexual Misconduct Liaison Officer who specialises in providing expertise on sexual misconduct issues both internally and externally.

The role has two purposes. The first purpose is to work towards an internal prevent strategy which looks at various methods of preventing sexual misconduct, misogynistic behaviour, sexism and harassment, but also working with external

agencies, charities and support services around highlighting sexual misconduct which involves members of the public, the warning signs, how to report and how they can support the member of public.

The second part is creating and co-ordinating a brand-new support service for victims of sexual misconduct who are within Avon and Somerset Police, providing welfare support, advice, signposting and referrals.

A new network of support has also been set up called The Sexual Misconduct Advocates. This is a group of 20 volunteers consisting of officers and staff from across the Constabulary who are passionate about supporting victims and making a positive difference and take on the advocate role alongside their employed role.

The volunteers will receive bespoke accredited training from Lime Culture which ensures they clearly understand sexual violence/misconduct, the need for being trauma informed and how they can provide that support. They can then provide tailored end-to-end support including giving advice, referring and signposting to specialist services, be an advocate during processes and be a single point of contact for victims.

You can read more about victim support under Priority 2.

PCC Commissioning

The OPCC's ability to support victims and survivors and tackle VAWG has been enhanced by success in securing additional funding, effective collaboration with health and local authority commissioners, and greater join up between providers to strengthen services.

A total of 11,732 survivors were supported through specialist domestic or sexual abuse services (including modern slavery) funded by the OPCC in 2023/24.

This year the OPCC reinvigorated the Sexual Assault and Abuse Strategy (SAAS) Board for Avon and Somerset chaired by the then Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC). This brings together strategic leads from health, policing, and local authorities across Avon & Somerset to provide strategic direction, escalate issues and ensure integrated and consistent care pathways for victims and survivors. The Board has received evidence from the specialist sector on issues facing survivors, with a focus on specialist therapeutic provision, demand compared to capacity and health inequalities that survivors experience.

The Specialist Sexual Violence Therapy Service went live in April 2023 as part of a six-year contract following the collaboration between commissioners (NHS England – lead, OPCC, Bristol North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Bristol City Council) and the subsequent collaborative proposal from the specialist sector. The new service brings together provision from SARSAS (lead), the Greenhouse, Kinergy, Southmead Project and Womankind. Somerset ICB has since joined the contract as a co-commissioner.

Recommissioning of the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service commenced this year. The ISVA service currently out to tender sees an increase in

the overall budget allocated in the new contract period to over £1m p.a., reflecting the increase in referrals by 53% over the last five years (alongside a 29% increase in RASSO incidents reported to the Constabulary following the introduction of Operation Bluestone Soteria). Bristol City Council have committed to investing in the new ISVA contract demonstrating the commitment to and value of collaborative commissioning.

The Strategic Violence Alliance was awarded £1,193,923 from the Ministry of Justice Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Services Fund 2023-25, supported by evidence from commissioners. One-off investment was also secured this year for initiatives to reduce waiting lists.

Through the Preventing Victims Fund administered by Community Foundations on behalf of the OPCC, £54,500 was awarded to Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Service, Southside Family Project and Missing Link to support projects and workshops focusing on reducing risk of sexual violence for adults with learning disabilities and autism, and providing education on healthy relationships to young people in schools.

The OPCC secured £212,000 from the Home Office Safer Streets 5 Fund to tackle VAWG and misogyny in public space and the nighttime economy. It will do this by delivering bystander intervention training to nighttime economy staff, so they are better equipped to spot and challenge misogynistic behaviour and create safer spaces for women and girls. Two providers have been appointed to deliver approximately 38 training sessions, across Avon and Somerset, in 2024/25.

3. Drug crime and serious violence

Drug crime

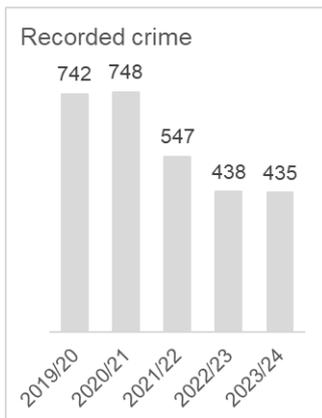


Figure 5: Avon and Somerset Police recorded drug trafficking crime for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

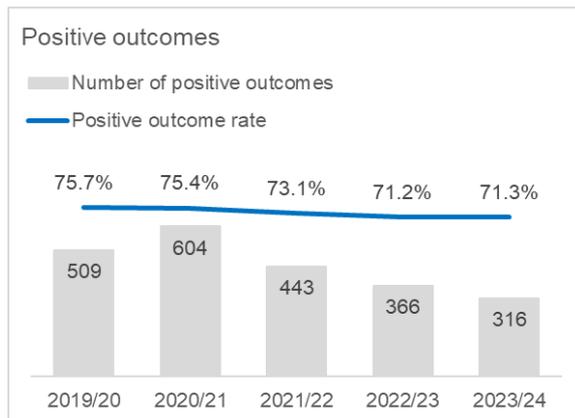


Figure 6: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for drug trafficking; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

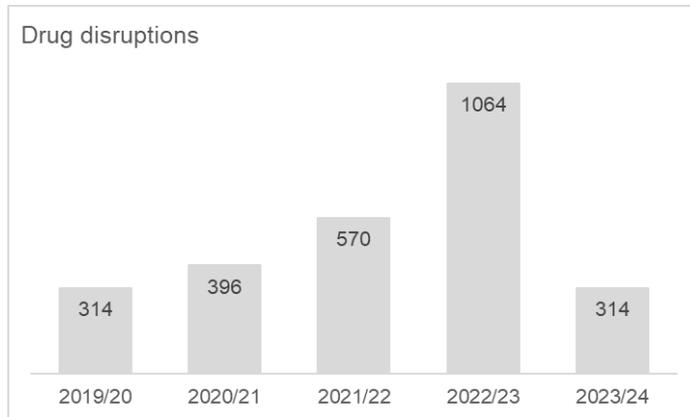


Figure 7: Avon and Somerset Police recorded drug disruptions for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

Unlike many crimes drug trafficking is detected more through proactive policing rather than being reported to them. In this context a reduction in drug trafficking offences would tend to indicate less proactive policing targeting drug dealing. In trying to understand and improve this performance the Constabulary have dip-sampled some cases and found that drug trafficking crimes have not been properly recorded and this will be part of the reason why the number of recorded crimes has decreased. These issue will be reviewed and corrected. Recorded disruptions have also decreased.

Project ADDER (Addiction Diversion Disruption Enforcement Recovery) is a Home Office funded project that takes a holistic approach to tackling drug misuse, drug related deaths and crime. It is specifically for areas that suffer from high levels of drug related harms, Bristol being one.

Specialist ‘drugs focus desks’ are considered best practice nationally but only a small number of police services are structured in this way. Through Project ADDER the Constabulary have supported a version of this – with additional posts in the Detainee Investigation Team – with increased charge rates in custody, making investigations more efficient and providing swifter justice through early guilty pleas. However, the Constabulary will not be able to maintain this approach in the long term and need to consider how they can adapt their ways of working.

A core role of the police is to protect life. This applies to all people irrespective of why the police come into contact with them. One way this is seen with drug crime is that people who use drugs can overdose and die as a result of this. Naloxone is a fast acting antidote to opioid drug overdoses (such as from Heroin) and has the potential to save lives. The Constabulary started the roll-out of Naloxone in the previous year, and in the most recent year have doubled the number of police officers and PCSOs who are trained to use it to 430 and this is now deployable across the whole of the Avon and Somerset area.

Operation Scorpion is an important joint operation targeting drugs including County Lines and you can read more about this in Priority 2, below.

Serious violence

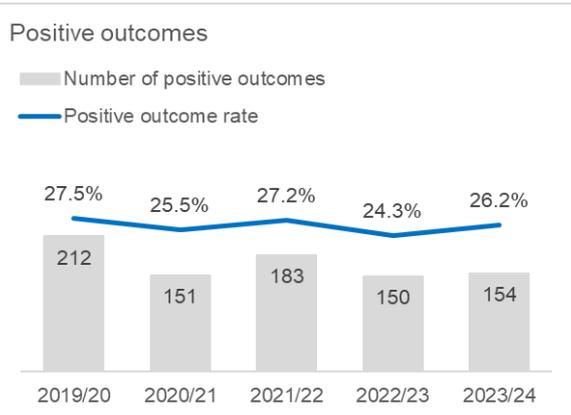
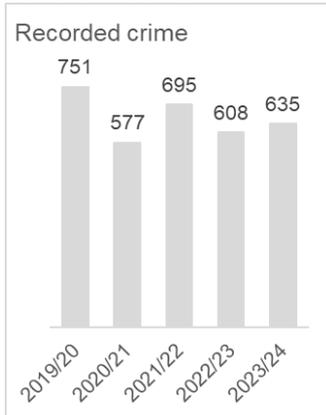


Figure 8: Avon and Somerset Police recorded serious violence crimes for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

Figure 9: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for serious violence; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

N.B. this is the Home Office definition of serious violence which are offences that result in the death of a person, "endanger life" or "wounding offences".

There has been a small increase in serious violence offences in the most recent year although this is still considerably lower than before the pandemic. There has been a small increase in the positive outcome rate but not the levels seen before the pandemic.

Operation Sceptre

Operation Sceptre is the national initiative to tackle knife crime. Avon and Somerset Police were early adopters of this. Since its launch in 2016 there have been new tactics and ways of working to tackle and reduce knife crime including large 'test purchase' operations testing if retailers will sell knives to underage people; the knife surrender campaign that has taken over 5,000 knives off the streets; and education and diversion sessions delivered in schools and communities.

In order to preserve life and reduce harm the Constabulary have led the way, in 2023, and created a partnership with HeartSafe to install bleed kits in areas which can be accessed by the public at any time. The bleed kits allow members of the public to administer vital first-aid to stop a catastrophic bleed and maximise the chance of saving life before a medical professional arrives.

Designing and creating two bespoke dispensers that can attach to the side of HeartSafe defibrillator cabinets and another that can attach to any surface independently, with approved bleed kit content that can be immediately deployed by the public, had never been done before in the UK. These are installed at nearly 300 locations across Avon and Somerset with a target of over 500 sites by the end of

2024.

This has been possible because of a collaboration with local NHS partners, local authorities, private business, Violence Reduction Partnerships, charities and communities themselves. This partnership is also developing training that will be free for all communities and will inform people how to respond to a catastrophic bleed situation. The Constabulary are also working with the charity Life Skills, donating dispensers with kits and this training session into their Bristol centre which educates over 10,000 children every year.

One of these kits was used in 2024, by a member of the public in Somerset to help stop a catastrophic bleed before an ambulance arrived, this already showing the value of having this life saving provision available to the public.

Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)

In 2023/24 Avon & Somerset continued to receive support from the Home Office from the Violence Reduction Unit Grant, providing £1.5M in additional funding to prevent serious violence across the area. Avon and Somerset have continued to operate a Hub and Spoke model with violence reduction activities and interventions delivered through local partnerships, aligned to the five local authority areas.

The partnership was remodelled following a review conducted by Crest Advisory, a crime and justice consultancy, in summer 2023. The new Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership model maintains the Hub and Spoke approach and strengthens the partnership's strategic function through the establishment of a new Executive Level Partnership Board chaired by the then Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner, and the appointment of a VRP Director who took up post in January 2024. New structures and working arrangements have been put in place during the year to support the model, including a data and performance group as well as a new website and a unified branding strategy.

The VRP has continued to prioritise a focus on children and young people aged up to 25 years. Over the past year, serious violence has continued to have a devastating impact in the communities of Avon and Somerset. All of the Violence Reduction Partnerships continue to work with partners to offer support for young people and those affected by serious violence and prevent serious violence from occurring.

The Avon and Somerset Serious Violence Partnership Strategy for 2024/25 was published in January 2024, setting out nine Strategic VRP Commitments:

People	Interventions – Commission and fund interventions and responses that address the causes of serious violence, reduce known risk factors and strengthen protective factors. Risk identification – Ensure that the right people and places are being identified and that people can access the right support. Hotspots and contextual responses – develop and embed multi-agency responses to serious violence hotspots and build the evidence base for contextual safeguarding responses.
Places	Engagement – Build and develop meaningful engagement approaches

	<p>and offer coproduction opportunities to involve those with lived experience.</p> <p>Local opportunities – Contribute to building opportunities for young people and tackling disproportionality within our most affected communities facing serious violence.</p> <p>Awareness and resilience – Build awareness and drive community led counternarratives to serious violence.</p>
Partners	<p>Leadership – drive system changes through implementation of coordinated and shared responsibility of key partners.</p> <p>Data and evidence – Develop and build multi-agency data, insights, and evidence to increase our ability to make an impact.</p> <p>Sustainability – drive cultural and financial sustainability consideration to continue the work of the VRP beyond 2025.</p>

In 2023/24 the Local VRPs have delivered 56 different interventions, providing support to 18,698 young people and 2,031 parents/carers and over 25's as well as 1,578 professionals working with young people. This includes:

- 1-2-1 Mentoring support
- Outreach youth work
- Parenting support programmes
- Cognitive behavioural therapy
- Knife crime awareness sessions
- Additional support for young people to prevent school exclusions
- Social skills training and relationship violence prevention lessons
- Sports mentoring and other diversionary activities
- Specialist support workers in A&E departments

In February 2024, the PCC convened an Extraordinary Meeting, bringing together VRP executive members, elected member leads from the Local Authorities and organisations working in the education and youth sectors to reflect on serious violence incidents across Avon and Somerset and share views on what more can be done to prevent knife crime and serious youth violence in the local area. The police response to knife crime has also been a significant focus of PCC scrutiny activity, as a key topic at the March Performance and Accountability Board. A new police operation to tackle knife crime and serious youth violence in Bristol was launched in February 2024. Under Operation Hardy a team of police officers and staff from the Criminal Investigation Department, intelligence, and proactive response teams focus on identifying those who pose the biggest risk in Bristol in a bid to divert, disrupt or detain them. Activities include high-visibility patrols, knife sweeps, and intelligence-led operations used to tackle serious violence and knife crime.

4. Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour specifically burglary, car crime, robbery, theft, hate crime and rural crime

Acquisitive crime

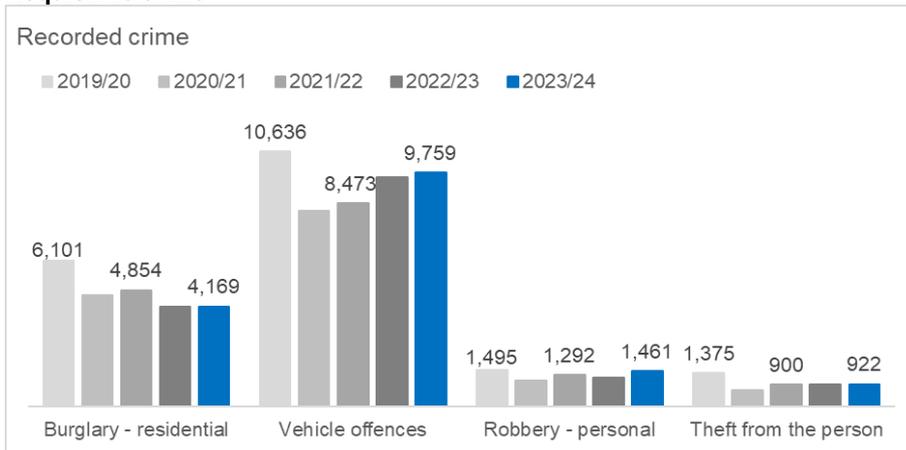


Figure 10: Avon and Somerset Police recorded crime for burglary (residential), vehicle offences, robbery (personal) and theft from the person; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

There was a significant reduction in acquisitive crime as a result of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. Broadly, these recorded crimes have not returned to pre-pandemic levels but there is significant variation across the crime types. In the last year residential burglary was 32% lower than in 2019/20. Whereas robbery is now only 2% lower than in 2019/20.

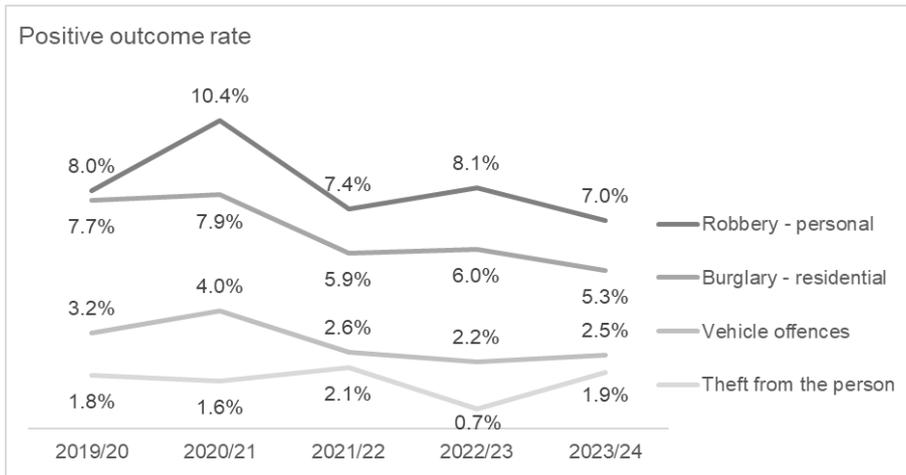


Figure 11: Avon and Somerset Police crime positive outcome rates for burglary (residential), vehicle offences, robbery (personal) and theft from the person; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

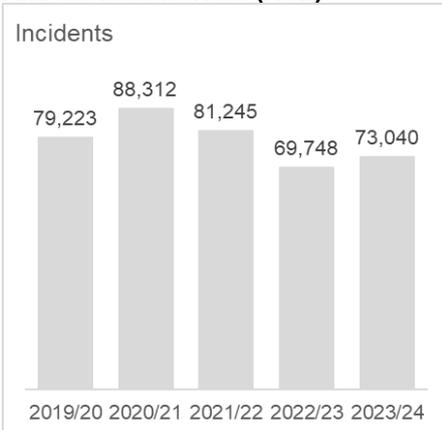


Figure 12: Avon and Somerset Police recorded ASB incidents for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.



Figure 13: Avon and Somerset Police recorded ASB victim satisfaction rate for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

ASB incidents have increased slightly in the most recent year. However, victim satisfaction has also increased.

Based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales an estimated 38.6% of people aged 16 and over in Avon and Somerset had experienced or witnessed ASB; this is higher than the national level which is 34.7%. However, only 5.8% of people in Avon and Somerset perceived there was a high level of ASB; compared to 8.2% nationally.

Case study: Keynsham ASB

Through engagement with the community, it was identified there was a significant increase in ASB and related crime on Keynsham High Street, this included concerns within the community that the police were not visible enough during key times.

This ASB was mainly caused by a group of teenagers, particularly during school holidays and on weekends. Additionally, it was occurring during the evenings in certain locations.

Neighbourhood officers developed closer working relationships with local businesses, schools and the town centre CCTV to identify those involved and obtain evidence of any offences committed.

The local beat team regularly attended the High Street for high visibility patrols and to engage with the groups of children to build positive relationships with them. The team also visited local businesses regularly, with officers encouraging them to provide evidence and support formal action when they reported incidents.

Officers from the wider B&NES Neighbourhood Policing Team assisted with targeted patrols along Keynsham High Street where they were able to address the children causing ASB.

Due to the high levels of ASB related calls for service from the community, dispersal powers have also been used effectively to disrupt and reduce the ASB within the area.

Thanks to effective teamwork between the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) Social Care and Youth Justice Service, the teams have ensured more than 20 children have received interventions from the ASB Team and been provided with ongoing support from appropriate agencies.

Following on from the work, the beat team held a well-attended community meeting to discuss issues facing local businesses and identify possible solutions at a community level, including the local town council. A new solutions-focused group has been created with the intention of developing and implementing some of the community-level ideas. It is a community enabled, solutions focused response that lies at the heart of the problem-solving activity and will ensure ASB can be tackled effectively by working together.

All of this work has seen ASB reduce month on month for the last 6 months, from a high of 51 reported incidents in October 2023 to 25 in February 2024; a 50% reduction. Overall crime is reducing and is back to its lowest level since July 2023.

Additionally, 4 identified persons involved in ongoing ASB have been given relevant ASB orders and, with officers continuing to monitor the High Street and surrounding areas, this approach will be maintained to provide a sustained and meaningful policing response.

Hate crime

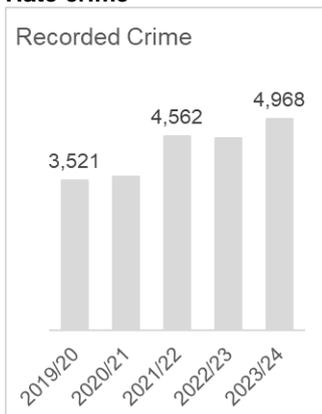


Figure 14: Avon and Somerset Police recorded hate crime for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

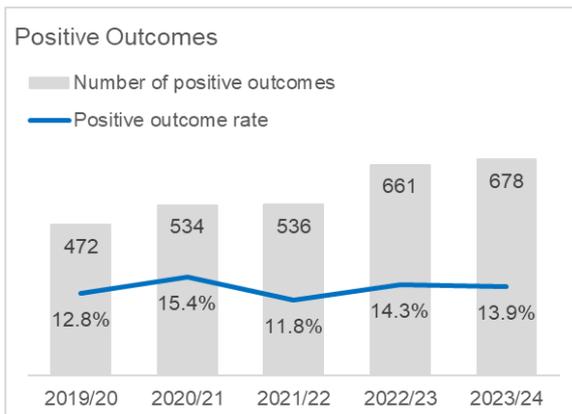


Figure 15: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for hate crime; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

The number of recorded hate crimes increased 10% in 2023/24. Despite achieving a slightly higher number of positive outcomes the rate has decreased due to the increase in the number of crimes.

The Constabulary have recognised that they need to improve the service they provide particularly in relation to disability related hate crime. In October 2023 they held a Disability Listening Hate Crime Event. This event brought together partner organisations from across the public sector and third sector organisations that work with and support disabled people. This event captured key ideas for improvement around training, understanding and communication, reasonable adjustments and partnerships working.

Rural crime

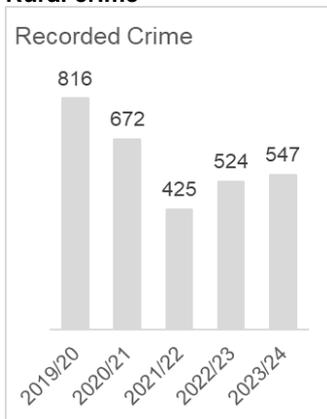


Figure 16: Avon and Somerset Police recorded rural crime for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

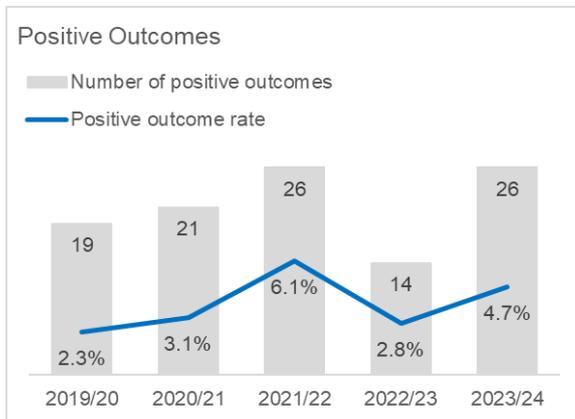


Figure 17: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for rural crime; for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

Over 70% of rural crimes are acquisitive crimes. All acquisitive crimes reduced as a result of COVID lockdowns. However the further significant reduction in rural crime in 2021-22 was not in keeping with other crime and may have been due to some crimes not being flagged as rural when they should have been. Recorded rural crime saw a small 5% increase in the most recent year. In the last year the positive outcome rate for rural crime has improved again.

Over the past 12 months the rural crime team have continued to develop their specialist knowledge, supporting internal departments as well as external partners. The team have reviewed and advised on over 800 crime reports ensuring these are recorded accurately and progressed appropriately. They have reviewed all reports related to hunting and provided specialist advice to those matters that required investigation.

Community engagement and crime prevention are important to the team which have conducted crime prevention surveys, farm walks, attend rural events, send

community alerts through Farm Watch and support victims through their investigations.

The rural crime team have developed drone capability, become specialists in plant (farm machinery) identification and wildlife crime. This has helped to promote rural and wildlife crime awareness through Continual Professional Development events and through the 70 rural crime champions across the organisation.

Tackling wildlife crime is a specialism for the rural crime team which have led to convictions for bat roost destruction and badger set disturbance. They have also assisted RSPCA and the Food Standards Agency in executing warrants to tackle animal cruelty and the selling of illegal meat.

The team continue to work with the National Crime Unit to tackle those cross-border issues. Regular regional meetings take place to share information and co-ordinate joint operations. Operation Ragwort has been adopted by the Constabulary and other regional police services to tackle the most prolific issues across the South West.

Case study: theft of rural machinery

In December 2023 a man was convicted for conspiracy to handle stolen goods and will be pursued for proceeds of crime. The conviction was on the back of a warrant executed in a joint operation between the Rural Crime Team and Operation Remedy. Over 20 pieces of stolen machinery were located during the search.

Neighbourhood Policing

As a team, neighbourhood policing has a much broader role than the crime and ASB covered above; this includes prevention, engagement and 'citizens in policing'. Neighbourhood policing have roles which support the administration and coordination of the Watch schemes. These roles are covered throughout other areas of this plan.

Safer Streets

Following substantial consultation in Summer 2023, the OPCC secured £450,000 Home Office funding in Safer Streets Round 5 for three partnership proposals including two with a focus on tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and neighbourhood crime:

- £190,150 for a Bristol City Council and Somerset Council-led proposal to tackle ASB
- £138,130 for a Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) and North Somerset Council-led proposal to tackle ASB.

To date, delivery has included the following:

- Installation of 5 CCTV cameras
- Installation of 28 streetlights
- 2 targeted educational and awareness initiatives
- 768 additional hours of City Marshalls
- 1 additional policing intervention

- 820 properties visited for diversionary / outreach activities for ASB
- 2 communications campaigns
- Over 1000m² of graffiti clearing
- Cutting of overgrown hedges and trees to allow for greater CCTV coverage.

Delivery will continue in the coming year, with funding due to end in May 2025.

Business Crime

The PCC has continued to work with the business community to drive up reporting and improve the police response to business and retail crime. The Business Crime Forum has met regularly to ensure open dialogue between police, Business Crime Reduction Partnerships and business groups, with concerns and issues informing the Avon and Somerset Business Crime Strategy. The PCC has also met with petrol forecourt operators, major supermarkets across the region and representative organisations. Improved understanding of the causes and impact of underreporting of retail crime have resulted in exploration of ways to make reporting simpler, including sharing of QR codes, as well as targeted operations to address local issues in town centre areas. The PCC commissioned an assurance report to understand and drive improvements to the response to Business Crime, which was also considered by the Police and Crime Panel in March 2024.

5. Fraud and cybercrime

Cyber Escape Room

The Cyber Protect Officers found a new dynamic and engaging approach to cyber security education by introducing the Cyber Escape Room session. Designed to cultivate good online security practices among participants, the session immerses individuals in a series of problem-solving tasks covering crucial topics such as phishing, data breaches, and password security. Participants form teams and compete to escape in the shortest time possible, developing a sense of camaraderie and healthy competition.

Since bringing in the Cyber Escape Room equipment in August 2023, the Cyber Protect Officers have run 16 sessions involving nearly 400 people both internally and externally.

Feedback from attendees consistently shows a positive and enriching experience which was fun, educational, a great team exercise and brought out a competitive side, leaving everyone buzzing with ideas on how to reassess their personal cyber security habits.

The Cyber Escape Room has proven to be an effective tool in promoting cybersecurity awareness and fostering a culture of proactive security measures. Its interactive nature ensures participants, regardless of technical expertise, can actively engage in learning and applying cybersecurity principles. Moving forward, the Cyber Protect Officers will continue to leverage this innovative approach to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the digital landscape safely and securely.

PCC's role

As APCC National Portfolio lead for Economic and Cyber Crime (ECC), the former PCC used his voice to shape national policy, support PCCs in holding their police services to account for their response to fraud, and improve the response to fraud at a local level, including support for victims as well as a wide range of awareness and prevention initiatives.

This work has gained national recognition, with the Security Minister describing Avon and Somerset during a House of Commons debate on fraud prevention as 'doing extremely well' and 'leading on fraud nationally'. The Government Fraud Strategy (published in May 2023) identified Multi Agency Fraud Forums, an innovation established by Avon and Somerset, as best practice in partnership working.

The PCC continued to ensure PCC views were heard in shaping national policy and strategy, including consultation on the Online Safety Bill, Ofcom consultation on online harm and membership of the Fraud and Cyber Crime Reporting and Analysis Service (FCCRAS) Board to influence the revised Action Fraud service, ensuring changes are efficient, effective and victim-focused. Support for victims at a local level has been considered in the recommissioning process for PCC-commissioned victim services.

Fraud and cyber offences are increasingly complex, with a significant level of activity happening overseas meaning that traditional methods employed by law enforcement agencies will not always work in reducing the threat and protecting people. A key focus of the portfolio work has therefore been on equipping the public with the skills and knowledge to better spot and prevent fraud.

The OPCC has played a core role in the co-ordination and dissemination of fraud awareness and protect materials, promoting the new NCA Fraud Communications Toolkit to structure and harmonise messaging, working closely with City of London Police to maintain a single national database of fraud protect materials on the KnowledgeHub (reaching over 400 members across law enforcement, local authorities, third sector and private partners) and developing an annual communications campaign calendar to steer local activity. Campaigns in 2023/24 included the Home Office Stop, Think Fraud campaign, TAKE 5 week, Cyber Awareness week, holiday fraud scams, and awareness raising for TrueCall call blockers. Local activity includes development of an OPCC branded 'fraud business card' including information on what to do if you receive a fraudulent text or email. This proved to be a popular initiative amongst PCCs and the template has been made available for download on the Fraud Protect Knowledge Hub.

Tailored communications and resources to provide accessible information for people with learning disabilities were developed to support internet safety week in February 2024. Fraud protect materials were also translated into Chinese languages to target international students who are at heightened risk of becoming money mules.

The PCC accompanied neighbourhood and fraud protect officers to promote cyber-safety to small and medium businesses. Through this targeted activity over 30 local businesses signed up to the South West Cyber Resilience Centre to protect

themselves against cyber fraud. The PCC spoke with business and tech sector leaders at the Cyber resilience in the South West Conference in September.

6. Road safety

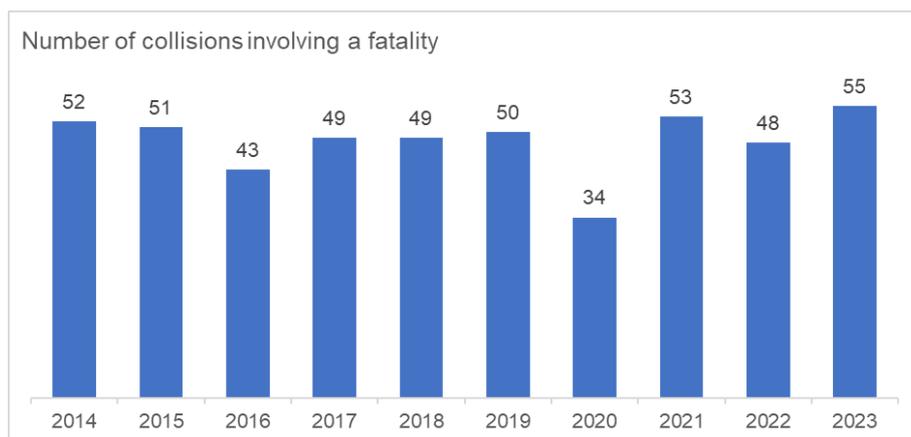


Figure 18: Number of road traffic collisions in Avon and Somerset that resulted in a fatality, for the years 2014 – 2023.

Operation Toro

Operation Toro is a proactive data and intelligence led operation targeting those who pose the greatest risk on our roads while simultaneously carrying out high visibility community engagement to educate and reassure. Set up in September 2023 amid growing concern around an increase in fatal and serious injury collisions in Avon and Somerset, this temporary operation funded by the PCC has offered an opportunity to show what can be achieved with dedicated proactive roads policing patrols.

Alongside community engagement, it aims to proactively identify motorists found committing offences, with a particular focus on targeting matters which contribute most to serious and fatal road traffic collisions, commonly known as the ‘fatal five’: speed, seatbelts, careless driving, use of mobile phones and drink and drug driving.

Areas for deployment are selected based on data and intelligence which identifies locations, vehicles and persons of interest by blending multiple data sets to create an overview of threat, harm, risk. The results are turned into dedicated tasks and an operation hotlist of all road related intelligence for the targeted location and day.

Op Toro patrols can range from one or two Roads Policing vehicles to a “surround a town” full day of action utilising multiple policing teams and partners. The operation is coordinated and led by the Road Policing unit, working collaboratively with:

- Road Safety (Fatal5) Enforcement Team
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- Special Constabulary
- Mounted Unit

- Drone Unit
- Intelligence Unit
- Community SpeedWatch
- Corporate Communications

Operations are conducted across Avon and Somerset and will often be in areas with little roads policing presence. Towns visited by Op Toro to date include:

- Frome
- Weston-super-Mare, Portishead, Clevedon and Nailsea
- Chard and Yeovil
- Exmoor
- Yate, Chipping Sodbury, Bradley Stoke, Thornbury and surrounding villages
- Wellington and Taunton
- Radstock and Bath

North Somerset Inspector Lee Kerslake said: *“On behalf of the North Somerset policing team, I’d like to express my thanks to all officers involved in this operation. Their presence on the roads and in the town centre created a noticeable impact and the fantastic results from the day are helping to make our roads safer for all.”*

Op Toro has helped bring together multiple departments to target a single known risk within a specific area or location and used data and intelligence to lead operations with resources which have been ringfenced. Op Toro has also helped to provide public reassurance and education and increase awareness and knowledge of roads policing and road risk across wider policing teams.

E-scooters

Tackling the illegal use of private e-scooters was a key focus for the PCC, who took the lead in convening a meeting of partners to discuss e-scooter safety, including police, fire and rescue, trading standards, government departments and scooter hire companies. Bristol, Bath and South Gloucestershire is the location of the biggest trial of public hire e-scooters in the UK. Currently, there is no specific legislation governing the use of e-scooters and the group considered how to lobby central government and increase public awareness of issues surrounding the use of both public hire and privately owned e-scooters.

Priority 2 – Engaging, supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations

1. Public engagement - particularly with underrepresented groups

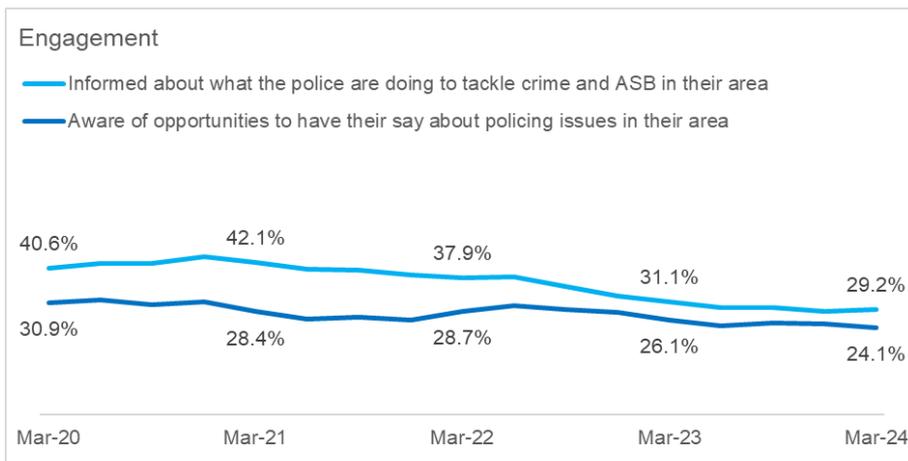


Figure 19: percentage of people that feel informed about what the police are doing to tackle crime and ASB in their area and percentage of people that are aware of opportunities to have their say about policing issues in their area – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2023/24.

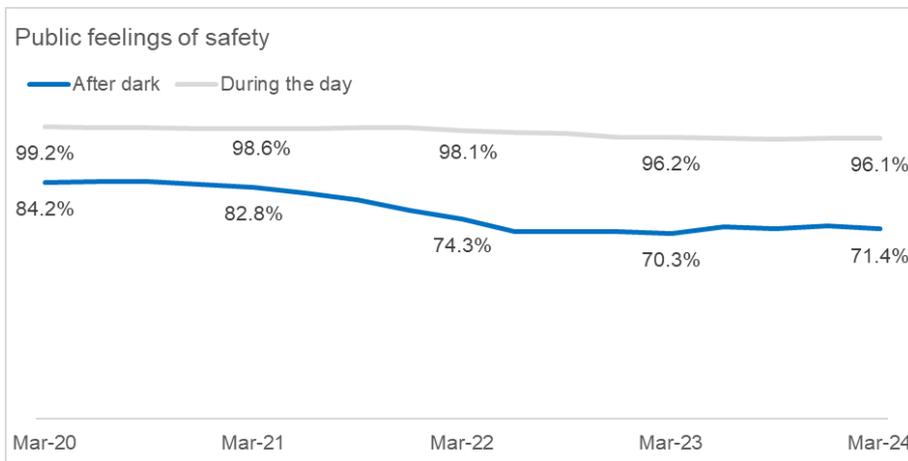


Figure 20: percentage of people that agree they feel safe in their local area – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2023/24.

The proportion of people who feel informed about policing and aware of opportunities to have their say have decreased again this year. Feelings of safety during the day are unchanged but a small increase in feelings of safety after dark can be seen.

Making new connections

Throughout 2023, the Constabulary prioritised engagement with local community groups after it was identified that some of the local connections which had existed previously had waned during the COVID-19 lockdown periods. The different ways of working during the lockdown period had created a disconnect for some, particularly people who were more isolated or vulnerable.

In Bristol, all Neighbourhood officers were set the objective of connecting with at least one new community group from their beat and maintaining regular contact with them, supporting their activities and forging strong ties.

Officers were encouraged to consider groups who represented people who may be under-represented in the established networks, including young people, the elderly and those from minority communities.

More than 90 connections were made, with officers supporting the groups in practical ways as well as linking the new connections to wider benefits which agencies could bring to them. Beat Managers and PCSOs were able to support many of the youth groups in successfully bidding for funding from Bristol Youth Community Action.

In June 2023 the Chief Constable publicly acknowledged that Avon and Somerset Police are institutionally racist (You can read more about this in the area of focus on inequality and disproportionality). Directly linked to this the Constabulary then created a new Community Network of more than 60 people. The network exists to engage members of the public who are interested in being involved in, or better informed on the specific workstreams which are being delivered to tackle the issues which have led to minority communities being over-policed, under-protected and under-represented.

Engaging with the Muslim community

After the statement about institutional racism, the Outreach team arranged an in-person meeting with members of the Muslim community and Chief Constable Sarah Crew.

The meeting allowed the community to share their views on the statement, which were supportive, as well as have an in-person dialogue with the Chief Constable around the statement and related issues. The meeting helped put a human face to Avon and Somerset Police and allowed the Chief Constable to hear about other issues of concern for the community at a grassroots level. Overall feedback from the meeting was very positive. After the meeting, attendees were given a tour of Emergency Communications Centre, where 999 and 101 calls are answered. This helped provide a greater understanding of the control room and encouraged community members to promote job opportunities, within the team, to the wider community.

Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) coffee mornings

The Outreach team began a new series of Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) coffee mornings. The coffee mornings were held in a relaxed and informal setting and allowed local NPTs to build relationships with residents and get to know the local community. Additionally, it has helped to break down barriers between the police and community by building trust and confidence and a more positive relationship.

The sessions are held twice a month and are open to all residents. Attendees can report issues and learn ways to help improve the area they live. This helps the NPTs to identify and address community concerns, which can lead to a more effective and responsive police service. Feedback from the coffee mornings has been overwhelmingly positive.

In addition to this the Outreach team have held sessions for officers and staff around Demystifying Islam and Ramadan. The Demystifying Islam Sessions focussed on increasing the Constabulary's understanding of Islam and the diverse Muslim communities of Bristol and included community engagement tips as well as talking about the role of Mosques within a community.

The Discover Ramadan sessions focussed on why Ramadan was important, what to expect with regards to colleagues who were fasting, and understanding operationally from a local policing perspective changes in local community habits. The Outreach team also held a Lunch and Learn session at Bridewell about the festival of Eid which included traditional food.

PCC as the voice of local people

The PCC's community and stakeholder engagement function was strengthened by the recruitment of two posts: a full-time post to coordinate and develop a programme of community and stakeholder communication and a Communications and Youth Engagement Apprentice. The Apprentice post was created to manage social media and digital channels more effectively and grow and develop youth voice/channels and engagement. The role is a two-year fixed term post that gives on the job experience with a Public Relations and Communications Association qualification at the end of the term.

Engagement visits were conducted over two days a week - Thursdays to police teams and Fridays to public and partners as well as local political leaders in a geographical rotation of each of the Local Authority areas. Activity during 2023/24 focused on areas to engage with partners and the public on areas of key concern within policing and matters relating to legitimacy and confidence in policing. This included:

- A second series of Councillor Forum events held throughout September and November 2023 across five Local Authority areas to strengthen working relationships between police, partners and local authority leaders and improve joint problem-solving approaches to neighbourhood policing issues. Events featured overviews of the Police and Crime Plan priorities and the Violence Reduction Partnership, and an operational update from the relevant Neighbourhood Policing Team. Local Councillors were given an opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns with the PCC and their policing team.

- A recruitment campaign for Independent Panel Members focused on strengthening diversity, building on the success of the Volunteer Recruitment campaign the previous year.
- Targeted engagement through meetings with representatives from Community Interest Companies involved in the support for communities in Bristol East and Bristol South as a result of serious youth violence. Multi-agency meetings of statutory partners were also co-ordinated by the OPCC, Mayor's Office and Bristol City Council to strengthen joint working between detached youth workers and the Violence Reduction Partnership spoke in Bristol (Safer Options). Multiple PCC engagement visits took place to discuss and feed back concerns to the VRP hub and ensure effective and joined up delivery of interventions.
- A focus on vulnerable and under-represented communities. This was delivered through tactics such as engaging with communities through National Rural Crime Awareness Week in September 2023. This included joint activity and communications with ASP and national agencies to highlight the national week of awareness but also work of the Constabulary Rural Affairs Unit and the OPCC to tackle rural crime and support those more isolated and vulnerable communities.

Delivery of the annual precept (police funding) survey supported engaging under-represented and vulnerable communities through its targeted tactics including a postal survey and e-mails to stakeholders. PCC council tax leaflets were also designed and distributed, with a digital version sent to all Local Authority communications teams. A hard copy version was created and sent to all Local Authorities through their postal bills to 705,000 households across Avon and Somerset. A QR code to an online policing priorities survey was included in the leaflet to measure engagement with it as a communications tool and evaluate its efficiency and cost effectiveness. The survey sought views on the policing priorities of local people and will be used to inform the process of creating a new police and crime plan during the new term under the new Police and Crime Commissioner.

Business Crime Forum Engagement

The Business Crime Forum is convened by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It is a platform to discuss policing issues affecting businesses and is made up of retailers and members of the business community. It also brings together partner organisations including council representatives, Avon and Somerset Police, Business Improvement District teams and Business Crime Reduction Partnerships. Activities in 23/24 included:

- Four forum meetings covering topics such as shoplifting, anti-social behaviour and assaults against staff and cyber-crime resilience.
- The business crime survey that was completed by almost 150 local business owners from all over Avon and Somerset.
- Delivering a business crime engagement day that brought together members of the business community and partner to foster discussion and provide a space for business owners and managers to offer first-hand experiences of the impact of business crime.

2. Special Constables and citizens in policing

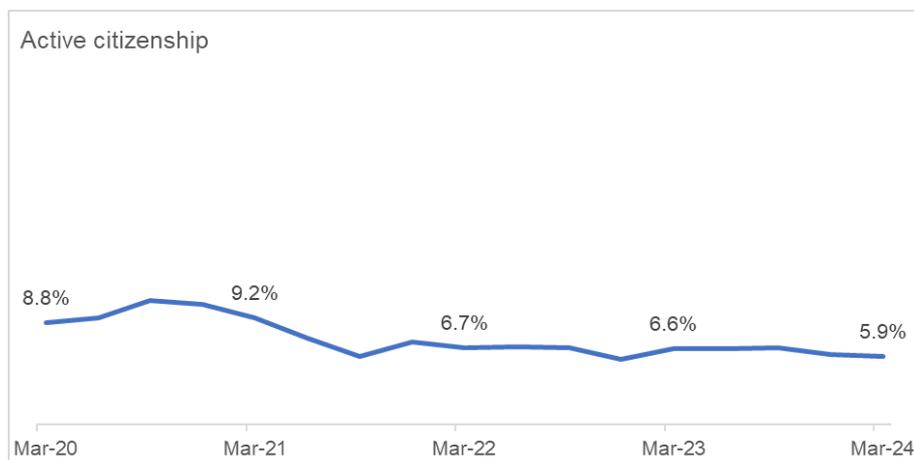


Figure 21: percentage of people engaged in active citizenship (see Anex 5) in Avon and Somerset – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2023/24.

People who volunteer their time are a critical part of policing; enriching the Constabulary with their unique talents, skills and experiences, their ongoing contribution and commitment helping to deliver a better service to the public and make Avon and Somerset a safer place to live, work and visit.

Special Constables are volunteer police officers with the same powers as employed police constables. They perform a range of important frontline policing duties, including responding to calls for help from the public, neighbourhood policing and patrols, executing warrants for outstanding arrests, roads policing duties and supporting policing operations such as night-time economy policing and ASB reduction patrols.

Table 1: total duty hours contributed by Avon and Somerset Police Special Constables and Police Support Volunteers for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Special Constables	73,273	81,823	80,345	71,008	58,982
Police Support Volunteers	12,934	8,611	12,387	14,427	14,586

N.B. These figures exclude volunteer cadet leaders whose hours are counted with cadet hours.

Due to the large number of police officers being recruited over the last four years the Constabulary made the decision to reduce investment in recruiting and training Special Constables; it recognised that the pressures on Patrol teams and Learning & Development were likely to result in a very poor quality experience for Special Constables and this in turn would result in low retention of those new officers. As a result, the number of Special Constables has reduced from over 300, two years ago, to 204 at the end of 2023/24.

The duty hours in the two years of the Pandemic were also substantially inflated by many Special Constables who were either furloughed or released by their employers and able to police for many more hours than normal.

In the light of these changes, the total duty hours are a great contribution from a highly committed and dedicated Special Constabulary.

Case study: driving while unfit through drink or drugs

A multi-disciplinary team of Specials worked together during Easter weekend in 2024 to execute a series of anti-drink/drugs driving operations in East Somerset.

Their impressive list of achievements for the weekend included two drink/drug drive arrests, the seizure of three vehicles, the successful location of a 12-year-old missing person, attending a serious collision and a fire, and the location and successful disruption of a vehicle containing four occupants allegedly impersonating police officers. They also identified three drivers with no insurance, two with no MOT, one insecure load, and other vehicle defects and minor driving offences.

Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) continue to support the Constabulary by adding resource capacity, bringing specialist skills into the organisation and by delivering services the public would not otherwise receive.

The Constabulary has recently recruited a small team of volunteers who are undergoing training to undertake some elements of victim contact for ASB and low-level crime. The benefits of these volunteers should be seen soon through increased victim satisfaction. The Constabulary has also recently recruited volunteers in the Financial Investigation Unit who bring knowledge from their experience of the financial sector to help police against the growing threat from criminals hiding the proceeds of crime and to combat financial related criminal activity. There has been a review of Community Speed Watch which is expected to strengthen and increase community engagement while also supporting the visibility of community policing. The average number of PSVs has decreased in 2023/24 and reflects the challenges faced across the voluntary sector. Despite the slight decrease, the number of volunteered hours has remained higher than in previous years.

The Constabulary Cadet programme volunteered over 3,900 hours last year supporting numerous policing priorities. The cadets have participated in test purchase operations to buy knives and vapes. The cadets have volunteered their time to support local events such as Remembrance parades and emergency services days.

The Constabulary Mini Police scheme has grown again this year with 66 schools now involved and more than 1,000 children participating in the programme. As part of the programme, the children identify a social action project they would like to do and this year the children have identified brilliant projects including tackling graffiti in their local area and supporting the local Farm Watch.

3. Supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour

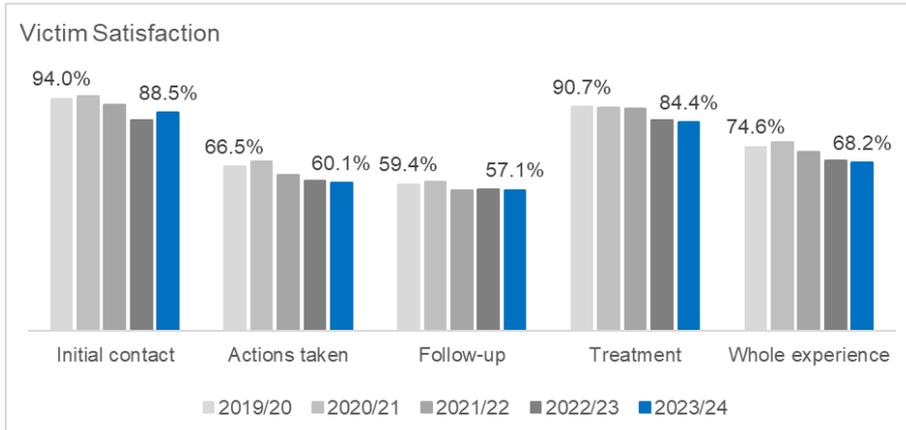


Figure 22: Avon and Somerset Police victim satisfaction for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

2023/24 saw a very small reduction in victims' satisfaction with the exception of initial contact where improvement was slightly higher.

Lighthouse Integrated Victim and Witness Care is a team of staff from the police and victim support organisations, working together to guide, advise and support victims and witnesses. Lighthouse offers an enhanced service to vulnerable, intimidated or persistently targeted victims of crime and ASB, and victims of serious crime. All cases are referred into the service through the police and allocated to a Victim and Witness Care Officer (VWCO).

Case study: supporting victims of domestic abuse

A case, which was particularly challenging, involved a severe attack on a victim of domestic abuse. Lighthouse were compelled to summon a child witness to validate the assault, adding to the complexity of the situation.

Upon arriving at the crown court, the victim was deeply upset after witnessing the defendant's behaviour in the court building. She sought refuge in the restroom and reached out to her VWCO. The VWCO played a crucial role in comforting her, encouraging her to approach the witness service. It was due to the support of the VWCO that the victim mustered the bravery to testify. The victim was on the verge of giving up, but the VWCO's exceptional efforts prevented that.

Case study: providing consistent support

From 2018 to its conclusion in September 2023, a VWCO diligently managed a case, maintaining constant contact with all victims and guiding them through the criminal justice process. Despite numerous trial postponements, largely due to the defendant's actions, the VWCO kept all victims and witnesses informed and

coordinated their nationwide travel and accommodation arrangements. Over the past five years, the VWCO ensured the case was up-to-date and maintained a single point of contact for the victims.

After the defendant was found guilty in early 2023, the VWCO continued to support the victims when the defendant failed to appear for sentencing. They arranged travel and accommodation for multiple sentencing dates, allowing victims to read out their Victim Personal Statements. On the sentencing date, the VWCO personally attended Bristol Crown Court to support the victims, expressing a deep emotional connection due to the extensive contact. After the defendant was finally sentenced to 3.5 years in prison, the VWCO ensured all 54 victims/witnesses were referred to the Victim Contact Scheme for continued support during the defendant's imprisonment.

PCC commissioning

The PCC received £4.2m Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding for OPCC commissioned victim services in 2023/24. This includes core uplift funding totalling £68,967. Despite being around a £100k reduction compared to the previous year, the OPCC was pleased to be able to continue to fund enhanced capacity at both the VOCAS and Young Victims Service. MoJ funding was enhanced by OPCC contributions of £445k and partner funding of £128k. A full breakdown of funding streams and commissioned services can be found in Annex 1. A total of 60,448 victims were supported by OPCC services in Avon and Somerset in 2023/24, including those who accessed support through the Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit. 5,838 of these were supported by commissioned services.

Contracts for core victim services are due to end in March 2025 meaning that throughout 23/24 the OPCC commenced a recommissioning process. This included the completion of a Victim Needs Assessment, publication of our Commissioning Intentions, engagement with stakeholders and receiving feedback specifically from victims of crime and ASB before publishing Commissioning Plan in March 2024. The tender for the procurement of the following services then opened:

1. Children and Young Victims of Crime and ASB Support Service
2. Adult Victims of Crime and ASB Support Service
3. All Age Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service

Throughout the recommissioning process, feedback was received from 674 victims of crime and professionals from Avon and Somerset through work with appointed consultancy Tonic as well as 27 agencies directly at OPCC hosted stakeholder engagement events.

The Victims and Prisoners Act, which will introduce a new commissioning duty as well as a new compliance framework for the Victims Code of Practice, has now received Royal Assent.

4. The criminal justice system

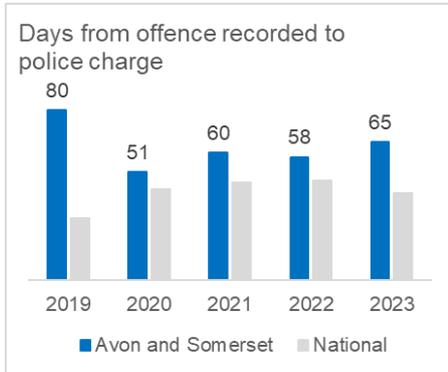


Figure 23: Avon & Somerset and national; average days taken for police to charge an offender (in victim-based cases), for the years 2019 – 2023.

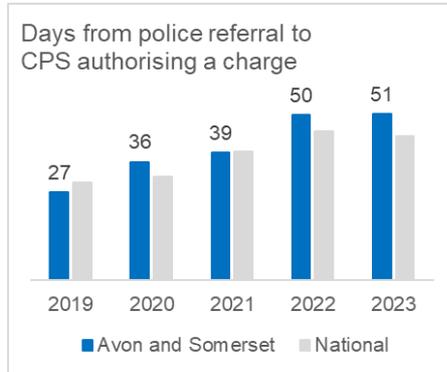


Figure 24: Avon & Somerset and national; average days from police referring a case to the CPS and the CPS authorising a charge, for the years 2019 – 2023.

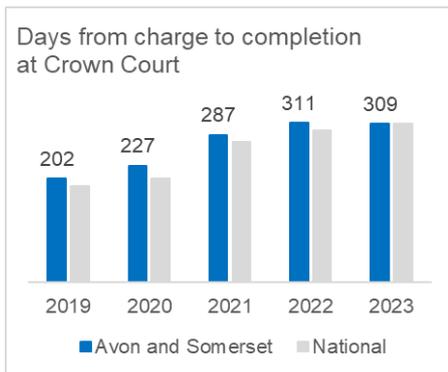


Figure 25: Avon & Somerset and national; average days from charge to case completion at the Crown Court, for the years 2019 – 2023.

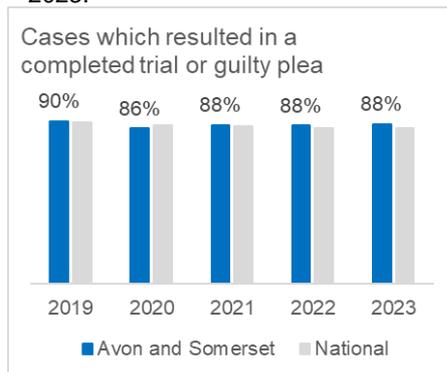


Figure 26: Avon & Somerset and national; percentage of cases which resulted in a completed trial or guilty plea at the Crown Court, for the years 2019 – 2023.

Transforming the Criminal Justice team

In January 2023, the Criminal Justice (CJ) team was changed significantly in order to improve timeliness and efficiency in the system and ultimately improve the service for victims. The aim of the transformation was to improve the relationships with operational officers, offering support and guidance to assist in the processing of case files to the Constabulary’s criminal justice partners.

Part of the change was to take some of the administrative burden off frontline officers allowing them more time to focus on responding to calls and the subsequent investigations. This included the CJ team becoming responsible for sending the case

files to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for decisions on charging, which was previously done by officers. This is a task which the CJ team can do more efficiently than operational officers. It also often meant that CPS would reject the case due to information being inaccurate or missing which created an unnecessary delay. Since making the change, the CJ department has seen a 30% point increase in the success rate of cases being accepted by CPS, meaning they are now consistently above the national average.

The changes also meant moving to a structure that mirrored the Constabulary's operational teams, so the CJ teams could work alongside officers at the times they needed support. In a recent survey of officers, many stated that the CJ team working 24/7 alongside their teams had been an improvement and had helped to build beneficial relationships.

The CJ department continues to work with its the Constabulary colleagues and partners to embed and continuously improve processes.

PCC's role

The PCC has a duty to work with criminal justice partners to ensure an efficient and effective criminal justice system. This duty is fulfilled both through holding the Chief Constable to account and as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). The LCJB brings together senior leaders from local criminal justice agencies, the Judiciary, Defence, Local Authority Youth Offending services, and victim services. In addition to oversight of criminal justice performance, the LCJB provides governance for sub-groups including Identifying Disproportionality, the Reducing Reoffending Board, Victims Code of Practice compliance, the Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel, Violence Against Women and Girls, and Criminal Justice performance. The Board meets quarterly, supported by the LCJB Business Manager, now hosted within the OPCC team.

The focus for 2023/24 has been on strengthening oversight in performance improvement and challenges, including capacity issues in court sitting days and the current victim services model (addressed in planning assumptions for recommissioning). The increase in Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) cases coming forward continues to demonstrate the positive impact of the Bluestone / Soteria model, however capacity challenges remain an area for close scrutiny to improve the experience of victims and timeliness in cases coming to court.

Demand more broadly has returned to pre-pandemic levels and continues to be monitored through bi-monthly Magistrates Court and Crown Court Performance Boards, reporting into the LCJB.

The OPCC has contributed to multiple consultations on what is now the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, which includes revised victims' rights and new Victims Code of Practice (VCOP) compliance requirements. The OPCC have attended Ministry of Justice (MoJ) briefings regarding the Victims Code and will be the link between the relevant partners and MOJ for reporting. There will be 3 reporting channels for VCOP compliance: Data, victim satisfaction surveys, and delivery assessments. In consultation with MOJ, A&S have decided on a dip sample approach to assess compliance on the rights and feedback learning and recommendations to agencies.

A VCOP Compliance Partnership, with participation from services to provide the victim voice, will oversee this work, chaired by the OPCC. The partnership first met in December 2023 to agree terms of reference and preparation for formal reporting to MOJ in Spring 2025.

Funding (£297,045) for the development of a Whole System Approach (WSA) to women in the criminal justice system was awarded in April 2023. The Nelsons Trust were awarded the contract for the delivery and have to date successfully recruited a WSA Strategic Coordinator and two partnership workers. Initial scoping, mapping and a needs assessment have taken place. The Co-ordinator has been proactively approached from across the system to contribute to the development of initiatives that might benefit from a WSA lens and a gendered perspective and has been invited to join steering groups that wish to consider the wider systemic issues in their work. The opportunity to give dedicated focus to the WSA has also ensured that the lived experience of women is amplified and woven through this work stream.

5. Reducing reoffending

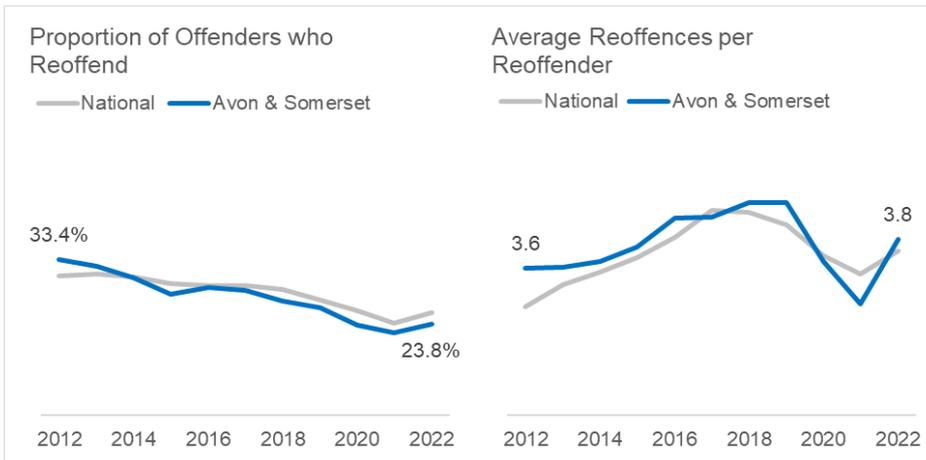


Figure 27: Proportion of offenders who reoffend and average number of reoffences per reoffender – cohort years ending June 2012-2022.

In the most recent year, compared to the year before that, there has been an increase in the proportion of offenders who reoffend and the average number of reoffences both locally and nationally. The overall reoffending rate is still lower than 10 years previously.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)

Over the last year, the Constabulary’s IOM, working with partners, have continued to manage approximately 3,000 people. IOM has introduced new ways of working following the rollout of a transformation programme, embedding new nationally recognised cohorts according to the national IOM strategy. Locally, the cohorts include:

- Fixed (previously known as IMPACT) – perpetrators of neighbourhood crime / serious acquisitive crime including robbery, burglary, theft of/from motor vehicle
- Flex – 18–24-year-olds who are in transition between Youth Offending Team and Adult Services, and electronically monitored offenders (placed on a GPS tag upon release from prison)
- Free (previously known as IRIS) – high-harm and high-risk sex offenders, gang members, Organised Crime Gang members and domestic abuse high-harm cohort. This also includes the high-volume cohort of sex offenders (MOSOVO).

Case study: supporting people's rehabilitation

Since his release from custody, person 'A' has embraced every opportunity of support which has been offered to him. He has completed multiple courses, carried out voluntary work and has recently reached level 3 of a counselling course at a local college. 'A' has been drug and alcohol free since December 2021 and attends regular AA meetings and a church group to support maintaining his sobriety. Lengthy discussions in relation to previous issues with substance misuse have helped to reinforce the positive progress 'A' has made.

'A' has been offered a job to carry out a rehabilitative role for offenders in prison and those recently released into the community. This could lead onto a diploma for 'A'. A reference in relation to his positive engagement with the IOM scheme helped him to secure this job.

A direct line of communication to a Police Offender Manager and regular contact with them helped him to feel supported in the community. It also built trust and meant he regularly asked for advice in relation to decisions in his life.

'A' also asked for help with problems or issues he encountered in relation to accommodation, driving licence issues, jobs, courses, and issues with his GPS tag. The regular contact within IOM and good working relationship built with them meant after his prison release, he was not linked as a suspect to any intelligence or crime and has progressed positively in his life.

The most important factor in ensuring a successful outcome for 'A' was maintaining contact with him and being contactable and approachable for him.

Due to his positive progress, 'A' was taken off IOM but is clear that should he need further support in the future, he can contact his Police Offender Manager.

Data insight

The Constabulary now has access to Idiom data which gives a greater insight into the monetary cost of crime for communities, and with greater insight to the reasons people reoffend and what success looks like for those who have reduced their offending.

Demand continues to rise and workloads are increasing for offender managers. However, the data enables resources to be focussed on areas which are most effective in reducing reoffending. Work is continuing to ensure the right offenders are managed in terms of motivation but also the risk they pose to the public.

PCC's role

The PCC's role in reducing reoffending involves bringing partners together through the local criminal justice system, Local Authority and health, as well as commissioning services to rehabilitate offenders back into society and end the revolving door of crime.

The Avon and Somerset Reducing Reoffending Board has continued to meet quarterly, with a focus on sharing Police Integrated Offender Management, Probation service and national data, and as a forum to discuss learning, best practice and co-commissioning opportunities. The past year saw strong engagement from all partners, with the prison service presenting data for the first time. A Reducing Reoffending Strategy has been developed and is awaiting sign off from Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships.

The OPCC successfully secured Home Office funding from the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Fund to continue the existing DRIVE Service in South Gloucestershire and expand it into Bristol and North Somerset. The incumbent provider, Cranstoun, was successful in gaining the contract and in 2023/24 has worked with:

- 134 high risk perpetrators,
- that have 146 associated victim/survivors and
- 258 associated children.

Data shared at contract management meetings indicates a reduction in severity of abuse from intake to exit of service across all abuse types: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Harassment & Stalking, and jealous, controlling and coercive behaviour. The Local Authorities contribute funding to this service alongside the Home Office and the contract runs until 31 March 2025.

Home Office funding includes an allocation to commission an independent evaluation. Workforce Development Trust were successful in achieving this contract and began this work in quarter three of 2023/24 to evaluate the effectiveness of the Drive service. This evaluation will include a cost benefit analysis and early findings are due in December 2024 which will help to inform future commissioning intentions.

At a regional level, the five South West PCCs have supported Prisoners Building Homes (PBH). Chaired by the then Avon and Somerset PCC, PBH is a national programme which sees prisoners gaining skills and helping solve the housing crisis by constructing affordable, environmentally friendly homes. PBH was recognised at the Government Property Awards for innovative 'Collaboration' and has been described as a 'game-changer' by a former inmate and a 'triple win' by Justice Secretary Alex Chalk.

Two short videos have been produced to capture the essence of this groundbreaking innovative scheme, providing an overview of PBH, how it works and reflections from

those involved as to what it has achieved: [Overview: Prisoners Building Homes Programme](#) [How it works/outcomes](#)

Over this last year PBH has grown from strength to strength; its success has meant it has outgrown its current model and work is underway to transform PBH into a standalone entity capable of attracting both central government-backed grant funding and private investment. This will enable PBH to deliver significant benefits on a national level, including tangible reductions in prisoner reoffending rates, and accelerated delivery of quality affordable housing.

PBH will have 70 serving or recently released prisoners employed under the programme by the end of June 2024, with 100 in employment by autumn and potentially (subject to final agreements/planning on two new build prison workshops being delivered under the Programme) there will be 200 in employment by the end of 2024.

The nationally accredited training Programme was launched at the end of 2023 with the first 10 successfully through and more underway. There will be 10 housebuilders under the programme by June 2024, with 9 prisons currently benefiting from the programme and plans to support additional prisons. The Programme is on track to deliver 82 homes this financial year, with the first five homes due to be delivered in Bristol, and work under way on further pipeline sites.

PCCs have a role to play in supporting Regional Probation Directors to deliver Community Payback schemes that visibly contribute to enhancing communities, as well as supporting the rehabilitation of offenders. National guidance has been published encouraging PCCs to champion Community Payback, canvass views on Community Payback opportunities and convene partners to leverage greater Community Payback opportunities. Proposals for local projects in the Avon and Somerset area are welcomed and can be made via the nominations process: [Nominate a Community Payback project - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

6. Collaboration and partnership working

South West Police Collaboration

As part of Operation Scorpion, Avon and Somerset Police works in partnership with the other four South West regional police services (Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire), the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit (SWROCU), the British Transport Police and the charity Crimestoppers, to tackle drugs supply across force area borders.

In June 2023, under the Operation Scorpion umbrella, a nationally co-ordinated drugs enforcement operation – Operation Mille – targeted cannabis factories linked to organised crime groups. The Constabulary seized over £3 million worth of cannabis and arrested 20 people in relation to crimes linked to the illegal cultivation of the plant.

In October 2023, Operation Scorpion focused on awareness and prevention, as officers and staff continued their work with schools and communities, highlighting

what exploitation looks like and carrying out welfare checks on vulnerable children and young adults. A total of 21 arrests were made, with nine adults and children safeguarded, £236,000 of drugs seized and £44,000 in cash recovered.

In March 2024, and in an operation combining Operation Scorpion and County Lines Intensification Week, the Constabulary executed warrants and conducted stop searches, intelligence-led proactive patrols and drug and weapons sweeps of public areas to send a clear message to criminals that the South West is #NoPlaceForDrugs. Thirteen people were arrested, and evidence and property seized included more than £35,000 of Class A drugs, £145,000 of cannabis, five prohibited weapons, more than £25,000 in cash and luxury watches suspected to be proceeds of crime.

During each operation and throughout the year, the Constabulary made visits, often with partners such as council officers, to addresses where cuckooing has been suspected or previously carried out, to help keep people safe from harm. Cuckooing is a crime where a criminal or crime group exploit vulnerable people, most commonly taking control of a victim's home and using the premises to store, prepare or distribute drugs.

Education, awareness, and engagement events, some in partnership with The Children's Society charity, have been held during the operations and throughout the year. The Constabulary has engaged at schools, colleges, and youth clubs and in public places such as train stations and parks, highlighting the dangers of drugs and county lines. Hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation have been visited to help educate staff on how to spot and report the signs of county lines activity and exploitation.

Communications around operations have included demonstrating to the public how their intelligence has contributed to the police's knowledge and success in bringing offenders to justice and encouraging people to continue sharing information with the police.

During the last year the PCC continued to engage in strategic partnerships. The PCC chaired the Local Criminal Justice Board, the then Deputy PCC chaired the Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board, the OPCC facilitates the Reducing Reoffending Board and attends Community Safety Partnership meetings across the five Local Authorities. The Police and Crime Grant provides funding to the Community Safety Partnerships to deliver the PCC's priorities in local areas. Further information on these activities can be found in the relevant sections of this report and in the Funding Table at Annex 1.

Priority 3 – Leading the police to be efficient and effective

1. Recruiting officers

Table 2: number of full time equivalent (FTE) Avon and Somerset employees at the start and end of 2023/24 (including career breaks).

Full time equivalent	Start of 2023/24	End of 2023/24	Change	Change %
Police Officers	3330.3	3294.7	-35.6	-1.1%
Police Staff	2681.5	2732.5	51.1	1.9%
PCSOs	306.5	281.9	-24.6	-8.0%
Total	6318.2	6309.1	-9.1	-0.1%

Table 3: headcount number of Avon and Somerset employees at the start and end of 2023/24 (including career breaks).

Headcount	Start of 2023/24	End of 2023/24	Growth	Growth %
Police Officers	3,393	3,352	-41	-1.2%
Police Staff	2,966	3,044	78	2.6%
PCSOs	320	294	-26	-8.1%
Total	6,679	6,690	11	0.2%

As can be seen from table 3 Avon and Somerset Police finished the 2023/24 year with fewer officers than at the start of the year. At the end of March 2023 Avon and Somerset Police had a local target of, and funding for 3,371 officers. The actual headcount at the turn of the financial year surpassed this and finished with 3,393 officers at that time. There were new officer intakes in March 2023 which is why the target was surpassed by such a large number.

It had always been the plan to reduce the number of officers (through natural attrition) down to match the funding being received from the Uplift programme.

The funding for 2024/25 is to maintain 3,351 officers. Ending 2023/24 with 3,352 officers is almost exactly the right number to match the funding.

2. Capability including training, wellbeing, leadership, equipment, estate, data and technology

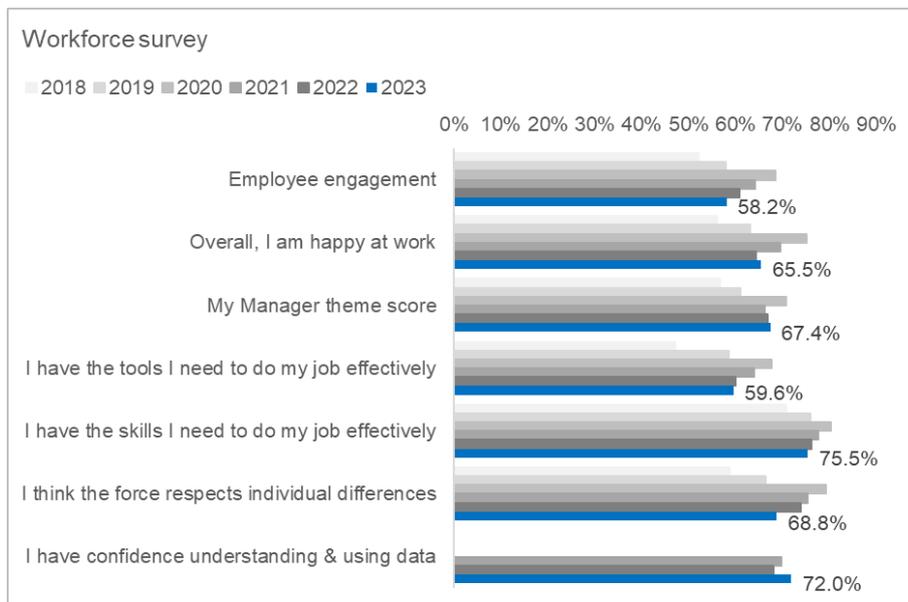


Figure 28: Avon and Somerset Police workforce survey results for the years 2018 – 2023.

The 2023 workforce survey showed mixed results when compared to the previous year. This is seen in two of the key measures with a small reduction in employee engagement but a small increase in the proportion of people happy at work. The results were scrutinised through the most senior governance meetings and individual directorates are taking forward actions based on the results; some teams will also receive support from the People and Organisational Development team.

Leading the way in learning

In 2023/24 nearly 200 new police officers joined the Constabulary. Although there are challenges when recruiting large numbers, all units within the Learning department have found innovative ways to develop and deliver training to ensure the officers are well-equipped for frontline policing.

This includes the support, guidance, mentoring and development through the academic work required for the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship scheme, but also the different entry routes for degree holders into the detective role.

The assessment of the operational and technical skills has been in sharp focus by the Professional Development Units across uniform and Criminal Investigations Department (CID). Supporting staff through the early stages of their careers, throughout their probationary period and beyond, is vital, with several hundred staff currently undergoing various stages of development and assessment.

Leadership within policing is critical which is why the Constabulary created the Leadership Academy. In January 2024, the First Line Leaders programme was mandatory for all newly promoted Sergeants and police staff leaders. In addition, there are now specific courses for aspiring, and existing leaders. More than 240 people have attended these leadership courses, with more planned during the year. All newly promoted Sergeants and Inspectors are supported by their mentors and assessors through their qualifications, professionalising their leadership roles.

A key enabler for operational staff to respond to our public is driver training. The past 12 months saw a record number of response car courses provided. This area of the Learning department will continue to focus on frontline officers, providing vital driving skills to officers so they can respond to calls for service.

The Technology Training team presented at the national Niche user group where delegates from across the country and beyond were present to hear and feed back on the excellent work being conducted by the team at the Constabulary. The associated learning was of great benefit to other police services and the Constabulary is proud to be able to support others to learn from experience, whilst sharing good practices.

The accreditation of trainers and staff is essential to providing a well-trained workforce. A recent external inspection of the Constabulary quality assurance processes and accredited learning programmes identified excellent standards and consistency. This is a real credit to the Learning Department.

Reward and recognition

The PCC took the lead in developing a National Honours and Gallantry awards nomination guide, backed by the Home Office, relating to awards from the King. [The guide](#) is designed to encourage nominations to honour exceptional work in policing and recognise acts that go above and beyond the call of duty. The PCC has promoted the guide to encourage nominations and promote positive examples of police conduct to increase public confidence. This included a [presentation at a national summit](#).

OPCC oversight

The PCC has continued to drive forward and invest in leadership, wellbeing, estates and technology to ensure an efficient and effective police service. Key decisions in 2023/24 included approval to extend the Learning and Development department, create capacity and develop a new counselling function in the Occupational Health Unit, procure a new end-to-end digital evidence management system, and investment in estates at Broadbury Road, Minehead and Chard.

3. Demand management to increase visible policing and time to fight crime

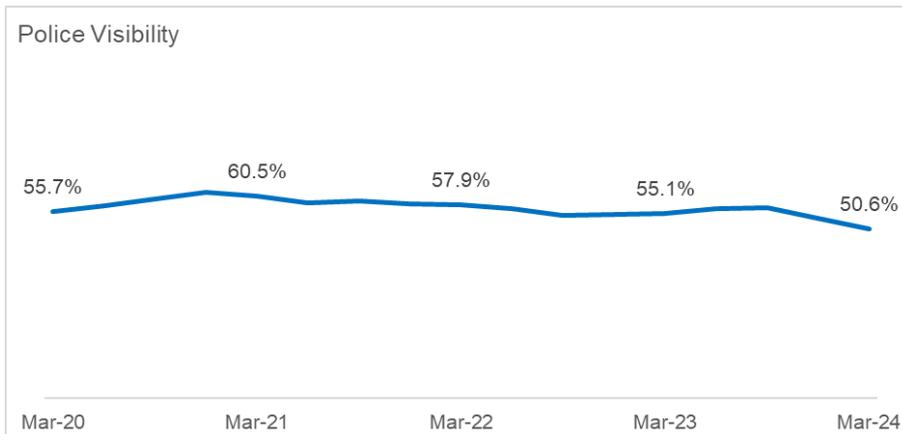


Figure 29: proportion of people who had seen a police officer or PCSO within the last month – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

Police visibility peaked in 2020/21 during the first COVID-19 year: regular demand decreased and the police had to have a much more visible public presence enforcing COVID-19 regulations. The visibility has decreased since this point.

Automation creating efficiency

The Enquiry Office has been working with the Website Team to explore options to improve ways of working in relation to online demand, in the hope this will lead to better response times and outcomes for the public as well as organisational efficiency savings. This collaboration led to a review of the online shop theft report.

Changes were made to the 'Report Shoplifting Online' form to capture information about repeat offenders, enabling the recording of multiple offences by one individual on one Niche crime entry, the crime recording system used by the Constabulary. Bringing this information together on one crime report can result in a more targeted approach where there are multiple crimes and this makes it easier to consider any aggravating factors.

The Website Team at the Constabulary has also automated the linking of personal information for the victim, witnesses and suspect, speeding up the process time and reducing input errors. Last year, the Constabulary received more than 10,000 shop theft reports online. This automation has proven to be successful in reducing the process time from an average of 15-20 minutes to 5-10 minutes. The Enquiry Office team is now working on introducing this automation to another online form, Report a Crime, through which more than 30,000 online reports were received last year.

4. Crime recording and response to calls for service

Crime recording

Crime Data Integrity (CDI) refers to the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of data related to criminal activities and incidents. The importance of CDI cannot be understated; it is crucial for ensuring policing has access to trustworthy information about crime trends and criminal behaviour.

Most importantly, accurate crime recording ensures victims of crime receive both the service and support they expect and deserve. The Constabulary need the public and victims to have confidence and trust in recording and responding to individual needs.

There has been an increase in recorded crime and to meet this demand the Constabulary has implemented strategic measures aimed at future-proofing its CDI framework. Central to these efforts has been the restructuring of internal teams and the growth of specialist skills. Drawing from best practice in other police services, the Constabulary has designed a new interim team structure, underlining efficiency, collaboration, and expertise. These include a dedicated Quality Assurance team to analyse compliance, identify emerging threats and provide live feedback for learning. This proactive approach has produced promising outcomes already, as evidenced by early signs of improvement in sexual offence and ASB crime recording performance.

A key aspect of the Constabulary's strategy involves harnessing technology to enhance CDI capabilities. The introduction of processes to identify and analyse high-risk incidents has emerged as a pivotal tool in streamlining crime recording procedures, particularly for rape offences and where crimes are reported as part of individual victim risk assessments. By leveraging data analytics, the Constabulary has been able to promptly identify and classify incidents, thereby mitigating the risk of underreporting and ensuring the accurate documentation of crimes. Notably, this technological intervention has enabled the Constabulary to record additional crimes which may have otherwise gone unnoticed, including 480 sexual offences and an additional 163 other crime types, including domestic abuse crimes. In addition to this, predictive analytics help to identify records which have initially been classified as non-crime incidents where it is likely that a crime remains unrecorded.

Robotic automation processes have also been embraced to assist with the prompt classification of higher volume crime within 24 hours. These crime types include shoplifting, criminal damage and burglaries. These classifications are then reviewed and ratified by trained members of staff to ensure accuracy. So far in 2024, 10.42% of crimes reported to the Constabulary go through this automation and it is an area earmarked for expansion in the near future.

However, the Constabulary acknowledges that its journey towards outstanding CDI standards is far from complete. To consolidate progress and sustain momentum, the Constabulary is ready to undertake further initiatives. This includes the establishment of a permanent CDI department, planned to be operational later this year. This strategic investment underscores the Constabulary's commitment to upholding the highest standards of data integrity and crime recording. By dedicating specialised resources and expertise to CDI functions, the Constabulary aims to instil confidence

among communities, reinforce the credibility of crime data and ensure the ability to best deploy resources.

Response to calls for service

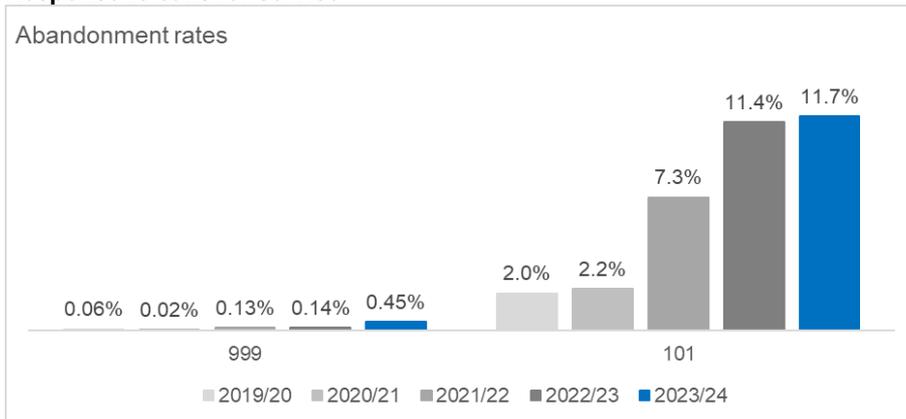


Figure 30: Avon and Somerset Police 999 and 101 abandonment rates, for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

There has been a small decline in performance in the most recent year seen in the slightly higher abandonment rates. Compared to four years' ago the volume of 101 calls has decreased by nearly 90,000 (12.5%) but this has been surpassed by the increase in 999 calls of 107,000 (44.4%). The same call handlers answer 999 and 101 calls and so demand on these is linked.

The primary cause of this reduction in performance is due to staff shortages. In response to this the Constabulary's First Point of Contact team has created a two year development roadmap focussed on people, process and technology.

Several process efficiencies have been identified through a programme of work which included data analysis and process mapping. Exploration and implementation of the changes identified are likely to support with either improved management of existing demand or creation of capacity. The opportunities identified have been prioritised according to impact and ability to resource the required work. High priority activities are:

- Interactive Voice Response review
- In-queue messaging review
- Victim messaging benefit assessment and opportunities for potential expansion
- Online forms – reducing demand on 101
- Online forms workload realignment
- Social media scanning review

Immediate solutions from the Robotics Process Automation (RPA) team include an automated way to update callers via text that their reported incident remained open for attendance, and a more efficient way for supervisors to identify which calls should be quality assured. New functionality is being added to the telephony system to

improve the quality of service the caller receives by expanding the information which is passed from the switchboard staff to the call handlers. Emerging Artificial Intelligence technology is also being explored to provide call transcription, freeing up call handlers to actively listen to each call, and to analyse all incoming demand.

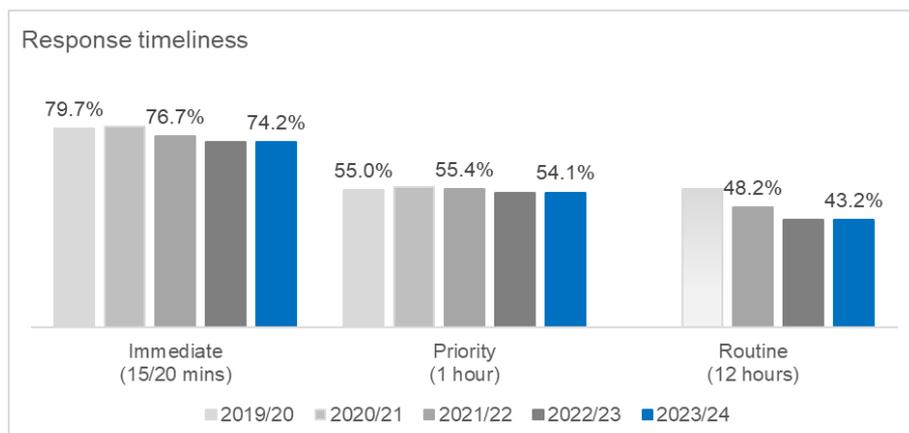


Figure 31: Avon and Somerset Police compliance with response SLAs, for calls graded 1-3, for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24. N.B. The Routine grade was only introduced from October 2020 so the 2020/21 data only represents half a year.

Response timeliness in the latest year remains almost unchanged from the previous year.

5. The Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary’s view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. The SPR supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats. These are as follows:

- Terrorism
- Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)
- National cyber event
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Public disorder
- Civil emergencies
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Whilst many threats can be tackled by individual police services within their own area, national threats can also require a coordinated or aggregated response in which resources need to be brought together from a number of police services. Police services often need to work collaboratively, with other local partners and emergency services, within regional collaborations or with national agencies, to ensure the national threats are tackled efficiently and effectively.

Following revised guidance from the Home Office, the Constabulary have completed an assessment regarding its capacity, capability, contribution, consistency and connectivity against the national threats. For the first time this exercise has been aligned with the Force Management Statement and Strategic Threat Assessment to provide a comprehensive, strategic overview of threats and preparedness to respond. The trio of documents have informed the Constabulary's strategic planning process by enabling the prioritisation of activity and adequate resourcing to support business planning. The SPR self-assessment, and other documents will be scrutinised by the PCC through the Governance and Scrutiny Board.

Serious and Organised Crime has been risk assessed as 'high' in terms of how well the Constabulary are able to deal with this threat. This assessment is based on recent feedback from HMICFRS following a thematic inspection, in Avon and Somerset, which identified a number of areas for improvement. The newly created Operational Support Committee seeks to improve oversight, grip and governance in this area, with a SOC Performance Meeting driving key areas of performance including the identification and mapping of Organised Crime Groups. All other threats and capabilities within the SPR were assessed as medium risk.

National Threats

VAWG is a strategic priority for the Constabulary with a strong governance and reporting structure in place and clear alignment to the national delivery framework, recently adopting the 4P approach (prepare, prevent, protect, pursue). A growing awareness of VAWG has resulted in an increased number of VAWG offences being investigated. Best practice which has developed for rape and serious sexual offences – through Bluestone/Soteria RASSO – is starting to be applied to other VAWG offences. Internally there is clear corporate messaging around inappropriate and sexual behaviour, including the creation of a Sexual Harassment in the Workplace policy, the creation of an upstander culture where people feel safe to report concerns and to root out perpetrators, and the implementation of a sexual misconduct support service. A 'walk and talk' initiative that offers women the opportunity to meet with female Neighbourhood Officers to point out areas of concern in their local community where they feel unsafe or vulnerable has been rolled out across Avon and Somerset.

Strong regional collaboration with partners and other blue light services exists to respond to the threat of terrorism with a real focus on prevention and preparedness, and regular assurance activity around preparedness. This includes a live exercise for testing the command and control function; Armed Response Vehicle training including a recent training exercise to be able to respond to a

Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) threat; and plans in place to respond to a Marauding Terrorism Attack which have been tested in live exercises.

The Constabulary adopts the 4P approach to tackling Serious and Organised Crime and has aligned its local strategy to the new national strategy along with the creation of a new governance structure bringing together leaders from across the organisation to provide a coordinated response. The Constabulary are actively engaged in the Serious Violence Duty and as a pilot site have had Early Intervention Teams (EIT) in place for the last four years bringing all strategic partners together to prevent and protect those getting involved in serious violence and the underlying causes such as county lines and drug offending. A strong relationship exists with the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) to build intelligence, identify organised crime groups and provide a cohesive response to the highest threats.

In the last year, the Financial Investigation team have targeted serious and organised crime using civil and criminal powers to disrupt criminal activity by removing the proceeds of crime. A total of £2.2 million of criminal assets was recovered, with £843,000 being returned directly to the victims of crime. In addition, there is currently £1.6 million of assets in cash seized or frozen in bank accounts suspected to be the proceeds of crime and under investigation.

The Constabulary has a dedicated Cyber Team that investigates cyber dependent and cyber enabled crime, and works closely with digital forensics. Cyber Protect officers engage with victims of cyber crime and there is a strong focus on protect and prevent by carrying out proactive work with individuals, groups and small and medium organisations. The Constabulary has developed expertise in cryptocurrency to support investigations and assist asset recovery, and continually seeks to keep up with the latest digital and technological advances. The Constabulary is well prepared for an incident affecting its own infrastructure with its own Cyber Incident Response Plan. Coordination exists between the Fraud and Cyber Crime Unit and the IT directorate to ensure a coordinated response to an attack.

Tackling Child Sexual Abuse is a strategic priority with good governance in place along with live management and performance information available. Specialist investigators are in place with HMICFRS finding that officers conduct high-quality child-centred investigations and that officers communicate well with child victims and put their voice at the heart of decision-making, handling the diverse needs of victims effectively and with sensitivity to the trauma sustained. This includes appropriate interviewing techniques, the use of intermediaries and following Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) practices. Ongoing work through the development of a problem profile and improvements within offender management teams aims to identify and safeguard children who may be at risk and proactively target, disrupt and manage perpetrators. The Constabulary were subject of a Child Protection Inspection in the last year. They have started making progress against the recommendations from that report and this is overseen through the Governance and Scrutiny Board.

An experienced Public Disorder capability exists to respond to spontaneous and planned events, with Bristol internationally known as a city of Protest and having two regulated football clubs. Following the riots of 2021, the Constabulary has doubled its number of public order medics to provide medical provision in serious disorder, and the dedicated protest liaison officer role has been created and coordinates the selection, training, and deployment of an enhanced protest capability. The Constabulary have also established a Public Order Scrutiny Panel to assist in planning contentious protests and to enable a community led approach to debriefing and learning from public order operations (specifically to protest). This was a national first and recognised with awards from the National Police Chiefs Council and the College of Policing. The Constabulary also contributed to the national Authorised Professional Practice in relation to protestor liaison and able to influence national direction through learned best practice. This strength has led to excellent relationships with national and local protests groups.

The Constabulary continue to lead on Civil Emergencies response for the region, with providing the secretariat support for the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) which is also chaired by their Assistant Chief Constable. The LRF is a collective of organisations that identify, assess and plan for an event or situation that threatens serious harm to human welfare i.e. a natural hazard, disease or act of terrorism. Following a review of Contingency Planning, a dedicated Sergeant post is now focussed on CBRN and Civil Nuclear preparedness, and additional resources are focussed on ensuring the Constabulary are able to undertake their responsibilities to multi-agency planning and preparedness through the LRF. The Constabulary undertake monthly exercises with emergency service partners to test the ability to effectively communicate between control rooms and between commanders. The Constabulary also lead on Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme training for the region.

6. Environmental impact

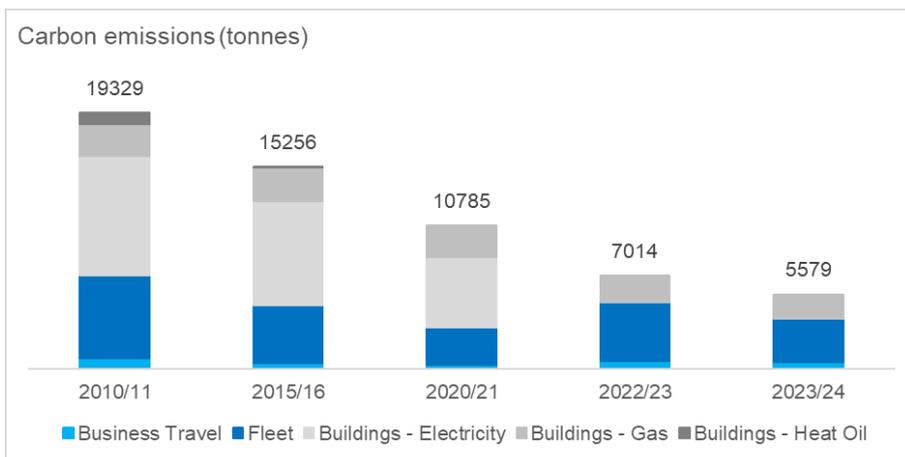


Figure 32: Avon and Somerset Police carbon emissions per year by type.

Total carbon emissions reduced by a fifth in 2023/24: a reduction of 1,435 tonnes on the previous year. It is important to note that the 0 carbon emissions from buildings electricity is because the Constabulary have changed their electricity plan so that the electricity used now comes entirely from renewable sources.

A new strategic plan and roadmap for the Constabulary Estates Team was approved in September 2023. Following an inevitable slow-down during the pandemic and, in response to construction market volatility arising from geo-political uncertainty, a high number of major, transformational estates capital projects are now in concept, design, and delivery stage. These include Yeovil, Trinity Road in Bristol, Bath, and Frome Police Stations at design stage and Broadbury Road in Bristol, Chard, and Minehead Police Stations in delivery stage. Good buildings, in both their design and day-to-day operation, support wellbeing, productivity and inclusion.

A new standard design guide for police buildings in the Constabulary was launched this year and is helping to deliver building projects in an efficient, consistent and standardised way. The guide will be regularly reviewed and improved, drawing learning from the projects which have been delivered and feedback from stakeholders.

A focus for improvement activity during the year has been improving the collection and visualisation of data in support of evidence-based estates decision making. There are many datasets which can help offer insight and a rich understanding of the performance and value of the Constabulary buildings, opportunities for investment and disinvestment, providing they can be overlaid and interpreted in a meaningful way. In collaboration with the IT team, a new geographical information system is now being developed as a system solution to this problem with functionality that will include maps, dashboards, forms, 3D modelling and task management logs. Data will not be limited to buildings specifically and could include response demand data.

The decarbonisation of the car industry and the Constabulary's own targets have seen a continuing transition to Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs). The Constabulary's estate will need to support this transition through appropriate charging infrastructure. Following a regional discovery project which concluded in the autumn of 2023, a new Fleet Electrification Programme was approved in January 2024. The transition to electric for policing will not only require a significant investment in vehicles and infrastructure but also fundamental changes to the way the police service operates, deploys, and trains its people.

Meanwhile, efforts to reduce the carbon emissions from the Constabulary buildings will mean a transition away from natural gas for heating. A Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) grant has been awarded to the Chard Police Station project to help fund an Air Source Heat Pump and make it one of the greenest police stations in the Constabulary to date.

Sustainability performance continues to be reported annually to Estates Board every May. This annual, Constabulary-specific report is also published on the Constabulary website alongside a five-year plan for sustainability. Additionally,

regional sustainability performance data is also collected, analysed, and reported across South West policing and available every autumn. Working regionally on sustainability offers economies of scale, an opportunity to share learning, information and tools, and peer support.

Priority 4 – Increasing the legitimacy of, and public confidence in, the police and criminal justice system

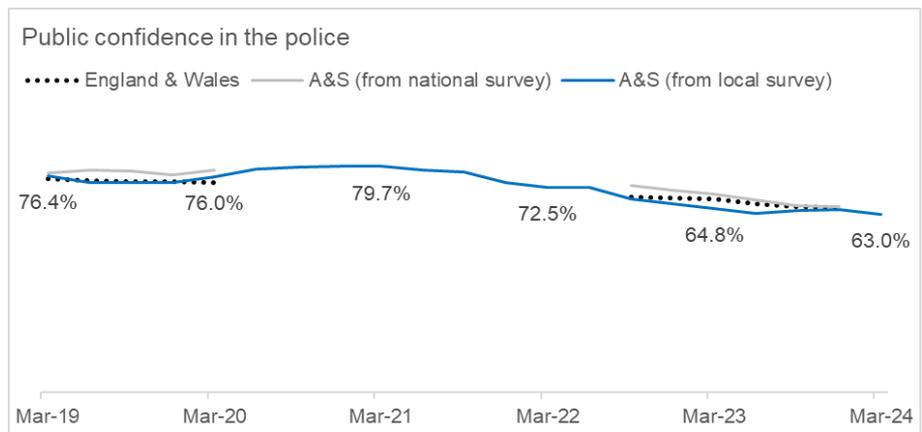


Figure 33: percentage of people that agree they have confidence in the police (Avon and Somerset compared to national) – as measured through the local police and crime survey and the Crime Survey for England and Wales – for the years 2018/19 – 2023/24.

The most recent year shows the lowest levels of confidence in policing for at least the last six years. This is true of Avon and Somerset but also nationally. Avon and Somerset Police are 27th out of 42 police services.

1. Representative workforce

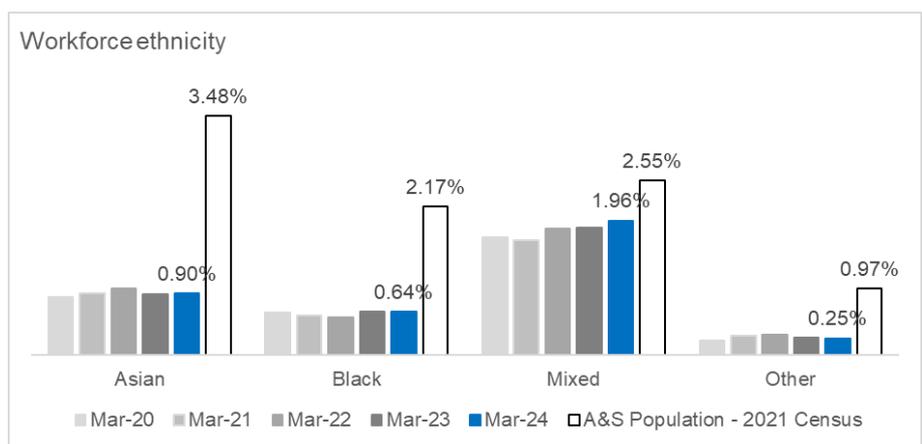


Figure 34: proportion of Avon and Somerset Police workforce whose ethnicity is Asian, Black, Mixed or Other; for the years ending March 2020 – March 2024; compared to the Avon and Somerset Population (2021 Census).

Table 4: number and proportion of Avon and Somerset Police workforce whose ethnicity is Asian, Black, Mixed or other; as at the start and end of 2023/24.

	Asian		Black		Mixed		Other	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
31 March 2023	61	0.88	44	0.64	128	1.85	18	0.26
31 March 2024	62	0.90	44	0.64	135	1.96	17	0.25

2023/24 saw a small increase in the number of people in the workforce whose ethnicity is Other than White, from 251 to 258; this is an increase from 3.63% to 3.75%.

While it is recognised that there are many aspects of diversity and representation that need to be considered, the focus of policing locally and nationally has been on ethnic diversity. This is also the focus set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

The Avon and Somerset Police Outreach team was formed to change and challenge how the organisation does things. Managed by the Inclusion and Diversity lead, the team has been reaching out to new people and diverse communities to build trust, create awareness of opportunities in policing and increase community insight and engagement.

Careers fairs

The Outreach team attend a variety of careers fairs from various sectors which allows the team to reach out to diverse sections of potential candidates from across the protected characteristics. Attending careers fairs has helped to promote the Constabulary as an employer of choice.

Discovery Workshops

Online Discovery Workshops hosted by the Outreach team allow people who are interested in careers with the Constabulary a chance to hear about how they can join as Police Officers, PCSOs, Specials or in staff roles. Discovery Workshops talk about uniformed roles such as Police Officers and PCSOs and promote non-uniformed and staff roles within the organisation and other opportunities available. The workshops promote the Constabulary as an employer of choice and allow attendees to ask questions.

Supporting candidates through application process

Close contact is made with candidates who ask for Positive Action Support during the recruitment process. The Outreach team ensures they are supported and engaged throughout the application process. The personal one-on-one contact with potential candidates is a crucial part of the support and candidates are also offered pre-interview workshops, bespoke to the role, as part of the support process. These allow the Constabulary to share interview tips with candidates as well as how to structure their answers.

Page Park Community Event

A community engagement event was held at Page Park in Bristol during the summer roadshow events, with help from Friends of Page Park. The event hosted a range of activities to engage with members of the public across of all ages. It also had information stalls and hosted various departments as well as bike marking. The Outreach team provided information about various vacancies and opportunities available within the Constabulary. It was also attended by other emergency services. Overall, the event was well attended with lots of positive engagement with the communities.

Community Events and Roadshows

As part of the Constabulary strategy to reach out to a larger number of diverse communities, the Outreach team runs regular Roadshows each year. The Roadshows host activities to engage with members of the public across all age ranges. These events also have information stalls and host various departments, including the mounted team, firearms team as well as the Cyber Crime Unit. The last two major Roadshows were held at Page Park and a second one held in partnership with Gloucestershire Cricket Club at its site. The day consisted of many stalls and activities from various departments within the Constabulary and information stalls from the Outreach team.

Community engagement with pop up stalls

Thanks to community engagement, the Outreach team has been able to attend various community events. The team host pop up stalls at Mosques and other places of worship where they can engage with the public and provide information about opportunities with the Constabulary as well as general information. The pop-up stalls have been well received and have become a regular feature for some of the community.

Understanding the recruitment process

Extensive deep dive analysis has been completed within workforce planning on barriers to recruitment and internal development and progression. The analysis looked for evidence of barriers and disproportionality at each stage of the recruitment process (police staff and officers) and promotion process (officers only). The work showed that there was no evidence of disproportionality in the assessment process but some evidence of disproportionality for minority groups at attraction, eligibility and vetting for police officers, and shortlisting, conditional offers and vetting for police staff. As a result, action plans are in development within the Human Resources department and Organisation Development, including work around eligibility in relation to driving licences.

Local and national reports

You can read more about the work the Constabulary are doing to become an anti-racist police service below in the area of focus on *inequality and disproportionality*; both have actions relating to the workforce.

2. Inequality and disproportionality

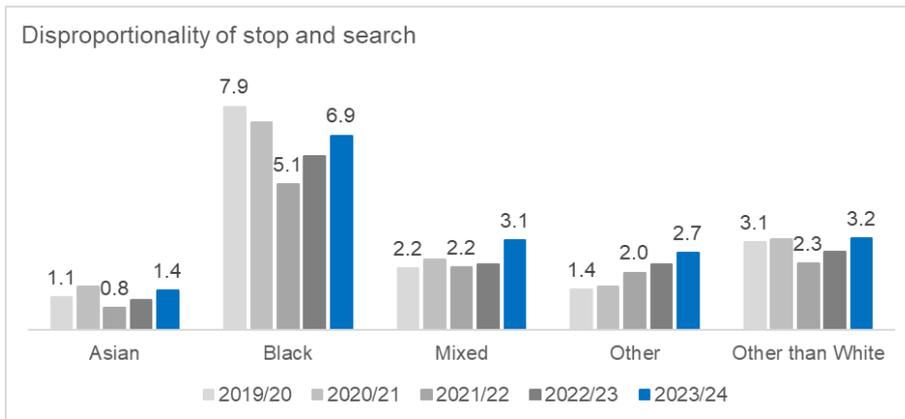


Figure 35: disproportionality of stop and search in Avon and Somerset for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24. This shows how many times more ethnic minority people were stopped and searched compared to White people.

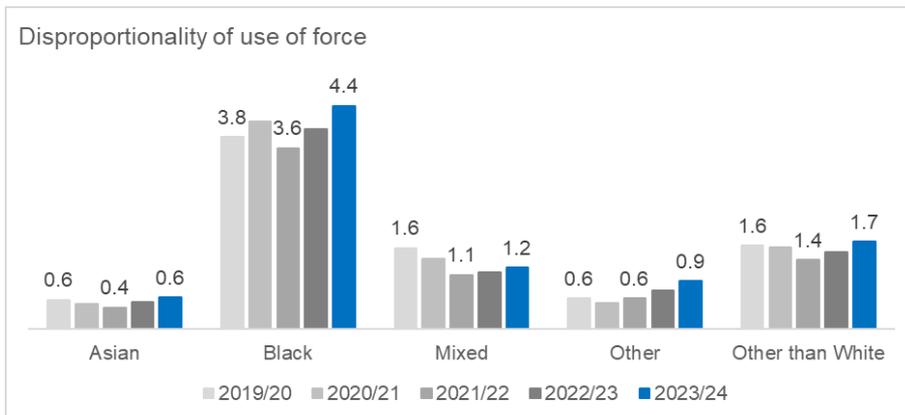


Figure 36: disproportionality of use of force in Avon and Somerset for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24. This shows how many times more ethnic minority people were subject to use of force compared to White people.

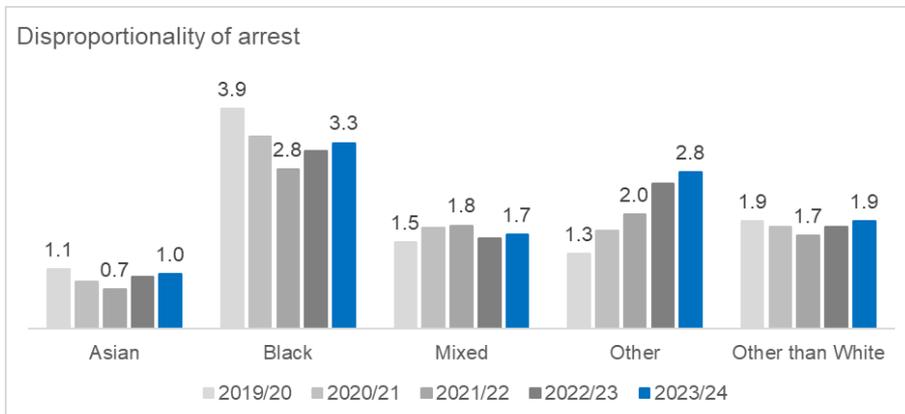


Figure 37: disproportionality of arrest by Avon and Somerset Police for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24. This shows how many times more ethnic minority people were arrested compared to White people.

There is still disproportionality across the use of police powers shown. This is most significant in the use of stop and search. The disparity is also consistently greater for people who are Black. These figures are slightly higher than national data: in the latest year (ending March 2023) Avon and Somerset Police had a stop & search disproportionality rate for people who are other than white of 2.8, compared to 2.5 nationally. For use of force this disproportionality rate for people who are other than white was 1.6, compared to 1.4 nationally.

While inequality and disproportionality may exist for different groups of people with varying characteristics, the focus of policing locally and nationally has been on ethnicity. This is also the focus set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

In February 2022 [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#) was published. There are 83 recommendations in total covering the police, the PCC, CPS, His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, the Local Criminal Justice Board, youth justice and local authorities. The Constabulary had the majority of recommendations; the below list shows the recommendations for each theme that include the police even if not exclusively:

- Stop and search – 13
- Youth justice – 8
- Out of court disposals – 9
- HR – 10

In May 2022 the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing released the national [Police Race Action Plan](#). This plan aims to improve outcomes for people who are Black, or of Black heritage, and has four workstreams:

1. Represented (internal culture and inclusivity)
2. Not over-policed (use of powers)
3. Involved (community engagement and relations)
4. Not under-protected against victimisation.

In June 2023, the Chief Constable made the courageous decision to publicly acknowledge that Avon and Somerset Police are institutionally racist. The Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System report provided evidence to support this position locally. The Chief Constable also considered the definition provided by Sir William Macpherson in The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry and the tests set out in Baroness Casey's review of The Metropolitan Police and found that they applied in Avon & Somerset. The Chief Constable wants Avon and Somerset Police to become an anti-racist police service.

To combat Institutional Racism the Constabulary have brought together the response to both of these reports into one project of work (Race in Policing), which is led by Assistant Chief Constable Will White. This is governed by a monthly delivery group which reports into the Confidence and Legitimacy Committee. Each of the workstreams and themes have senior leads assigned to them.

Community engagement

Following the Chief Constable's statement on institutional racism the Constabulary engaged with the community and invited them to support becoming an actively anti-racist organisation. More than 60 members of the community have signed up to this network and are regularly invited to discussions with the police to consider opportunities for improvement. Discussions to date have included stop and search and the Constabulary policy, how to effectively engage, and conversations following the recent Channel 4 documentaries 'to catch a copper' to name a few. This network has also provided views on a proposed scrutiny and advisory function for Race Matters work which is now moving towards implementation.

The Constabulary have worked with a local community organisation focusing on the creative arts, to create a short film and social media content aimed at young people so they better understand their rights around stop and search and improve relationships between police and young people.

Deferred prosecution

A deferred prosecution model has been developed following extensive research from several 'chance to change' pilots across the country which have been providing out of court opportunities for individual young offenders to avoid unnecessary entry into the criminal justice system. This is intended help reduce reoffending and disproportionality. The model will launch in June 2024, with funding from the PCC.

Race Matters training

Last year, the Constabulary launched an ambitious programme of Race Matters days and events to engage the workforce in become an anti-racist organisation. The work is based on self-reflection, empathy and police culture. It is trauma informed and people-centred rather than looking at everything through the lens of policy, procedure and process. The work is co-designed and co-delivered with key partners in the community. This ensures the voices of our community and staff are the focus. Through conversation, storytelling and sharing lived experiences, it explores disproportionality, history, the National Police Race Action Plan, institutional racism, and other key issues relating to race such as micro-aggressions. The insight provided aims to improve delivery of service to our Black heritage communities and inspires the workforce to think differently. So far, over 1,000 frontline officers have

attended the days, with the programme set to move into its next phase later in 2024, which will see more officers and staff attending Race Matters days. The Constabulary are also building a Race Matters influencer network, engaging people across the organisation in a longer programme of education and self-reflection, so they can influence positive change and culture within policing.

Safe Space Sessions

The Outreach team introduced “Safe Spaces” sessions which allow Constabulary colleagues to discuss diversity and race matters without fear of judgement while developing new skills through shared knowledge. These discussions allow attendees to have sometimes challenging and much needed conversations. The feedback from these sessions have been positive with many saying they felt more educated and enlightened. Since their inception, the Outreach team has delivered safe space sessions to around 1,200 colleagues.

You can read more about what the Constabulary have been doing to address inequality and disproportionality in their report [Race Matters: Action After Words](#).

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PCC's role

The focus of 2023/24 has been on working to restore public confidence through establishing governance arrangements to drive forward multi-agency delivery of the local report recommendations and oversight of the Constabulary's response to the national Police Race Action Plan.

Governance arrangements are now well established, with oversight by the Local Criminal Justice Board. The Steering Committee meets every six weeks and is jointly chaired by the Chief Constable and Asher Craig (former Deputy Mayor of Bristol). Work pillars have been established and a Communications Strategy is in place, with a dedicated lead officer. The most significant milestone for this year was the approval for funding and appointment of the Independent Scrutiny Board, to provide independent scrutiny of partners' delivery of the programme. The recruitment process attracted a high calibre membership of community representatives, all from Black, Asian or other minoritised ethnicities, who met for the first time in December 2023. The OPCC have provided training support to the Board, delivering a training and induction session in February.

The OPCC has successfully implemented all four recommendations solely within the OPCC's remit, and continue to provide oversight and enable delivery of Constabulary-owned recommendations. The PCC's key decision to invest in the Deferred Prosecution model is an important example of how the PCC has enabled delivery in the past year.

3. Use of police powers

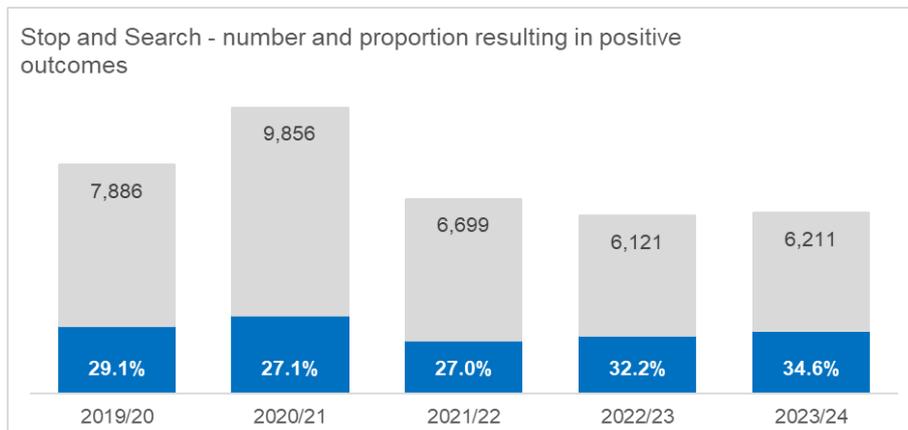


Figure 38: number of stop and searches conducted by Avon and Somerset Police and percentage that resulted in positive outcomes for the years 2019/20 – 2023/24.

The total number of stop and searches conducted in the most recent year is almost unchanged on the previous year. There has been a small increase in positive outcomes resulting from these searches.

The main focus of effort on the use of police powers has been the disproportionate use against Black and ethnic minority people (discussed above). However, it should be noted that improvements through that work will inevitably benefit all communities because at its core it's about ensuring procedural justice and fairness for all. In the last year there have been 878 complaint allegations related to "*Police powers, policies and procedures*". 757 of these were dealt with under Schedule 3 and 41 complaints have been upheld.

Organisational learning following a complaint led to changes in how pelargonic acid vanillylamide (PAVA) irritant spray was monitored and issued to officers. The original investigation identified weaknesses in the process of recording the issuing of PAVA. A technological solution was identified and implemented which is robust and improves the ability for early intervention if some officers are being issued new PAVA on a regular basis, indicating potential overuse of the tactic.

Stop and search

The Constabulary have developed a new stop and search policy. This was informed by an analysis of the use of stop and search, consultation with the officers and staff and community feedback. It also incorporates learning from the Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISoPPP). This includes detailed guidance on what is appropriate when asking members of the public's names and addresses. The ISoPPP had helped the Constabulary to understand the impact it can have on members of the public to be repeatedly asked to provide their details to officers when they have not done anything wrong as part of the stop and search interaction. Another key area is the use of Body Worn Video (BWV). Guidance to officers on how

and when to use BWV during stop and search was lacking in national and local guidance. There are also specific elements on procedural justice, disproportionality, supervision and scrutiny. The stop and search policy will address this and will give officers much needed clarity on how to use their power legitimately.

PCC's role

The Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISOPPP)

The ISOPPP is made up of diverse volunteers from the local community, the Panel scrutinises the use of stop and search, use of force, use of Taser and body worn video. During 2023/24 the panel met three times: in September and December 2023 and March 2024. The panel reviewed the body worn video of over 200 individual cases involving the use of police powers totalling more than 50 hours' worth of footage. Following recruitment, the panel have increased both the total amount of panel members and their diverse representation.

Several cases were referred to the Panel for review by the community, demonstrating awareness of and confidence in the work of the PCC's scrutiny panels. The Panel met with two Independent Office of Police Complaints (IOPC) regional directors to discuss their findings related to a high-profile incident involving a black woman and child on a bus in Bedminster, which also featured on the Channel 4 documentary following the work of the Avon and Somerset Professional Standards Department. The OIPC media team have produced blogs and have raised the awareness and public profile of the ISOPPP to further increase awareness of the work of the PCC's scrutiny panels. The panel have actively influenced and changed police practice and procedures such as the interrogation of mobile phones during a stop and search. The panel have also actively contributed towards new police stop and search operational training scenarios. [Reports are published on the PCC's website.](#)

Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme

Maintaining a local ICV scheme is a legal duty for PCCs. This scheme involves volunteers from the community making unannounced visits to police centres in Patchway, Keynsham and Bridgwater to check on the welfare of detainees in custody, the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. A total of 21 volunteers served as custody visitors during 2023/24 and 148 visits took place. Panel meetings were held in October 2023 and February 2024. Feedback is reported to and actioned by the Custody Inspector or, in more serious instances, with the Head of Custody. Issues identified during 2023/24 include lack of timely transport for detainees to and from prisons; and concerns that detainees are not routinely being offered reading material, distraction toys and use of the exercise yard by custody staff. There were three aborted ICV visits due to custody staffing shortages.

Improvements in response to issues raised by custody visitors include the provision of Health Care Professionals in custody, rectifying mould on the exercise yard floors and ensuring custody records were appropriately redacted following a software upgrade. ICVs have also requested that translation sheets be provided in additional languages to aid communication with foreign national detainees.

In November 2023 the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Office was presented with a Code Complaint quality assurance award by the Independent Custody Visiting Association at a ceremony in Birmingham for its ICV Scheme. A successful ICV recruitment campaign ran from the end of 2023/early 2024 and attracted 37 applicants, with 14 positions offered and 1 being processed.

HMICFRS inspected Avon and Somerset Constabulary's custody provision in January 2024, and the [report is published on the HMICFRS website](#). [Further information and the ICV Annual Report is published on the PCC's website](#).

Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel

Out of court disposals are a means of resolving an investigation without prosecution through the courts. This panel brings together magistrates, professionals from numerous criminal justice agencies and victims services who review the use of out of court disposals. The Panel welcomed new Magistrate members and said farewell to longstanding Chair, Mike Evans.

During 2023/24 the panel met in June, September, December 2023 and March 2024 and reviewed 105 cases on the following themes: Disproportionality (public order youth cases); Knife Possession (youth cases); Domestic Abuse Conditional Cautions; Shop Theft; and use of Community Resolutions. All Community Resolutions used in serious violence and sexual offences cases were reviewed at every meeting. The Panel successfully piloted scrutiny of charged cases that may have been suitable for an Out of Court Disposal, to support work to tackle disproportionality. The Panel has continued to scrutinise charged cases alongside out of court disposals where appropriate to enable comparison.

Changes made as a result of issues identified by the panel include: rescinding local Outcome 22 guidance on knife possession in youth cases; convening a Peer Review group to support work to implement the Child Gravity Matrix and ensure a consistent approach in youth cases; delivery of targeted training in relation to shop theft cases; development of a Decision Making App to support officers in appropriate and effective use of out of court disposals. The Panel continues to support the Constabulary in preparing for implementation of the new Two Tier Plus Framework, expected in late 2024. [Panel reports are published on the PCC's website](#).

4. Complaints

Complaints against the police are either handled by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) for the more serious incidents or internally by Avon and Somerset Police through their Professional Standards Department (PSD). There is a legal framework for handling police complaints. [Data about complaints can be found on the IOPC bulletin](#). This shows in Avon and Somerset there were 743 complaint allegations per 1,000 employees. This is more than the national rate of 599 but in line with the average of most similar forces at 759.

Handling complaints fairly and effectively is fundamental to a legitimate service and maintaining public confidence. The Constabulary's Professional Standards Department (PSD) has developed an assurance framework which has enabled the

department to understand where to focus its improvement activity on the complaint handling procedures.

As a result of an increased number of Police Compliant Assessment Officers within PSD there have been improvements in the recording and handling of issues of dissatisfaction from members of the public. Assessors are continuing to make a positive impact in their resolution of complaints, with the percentage of those resolved outside of schedule 3 (informal) reaching nearly 60%. This means more members of the public are receiving answers to their concerns quickly and, where necessary, apologies are offered to repair the harm caused. In addition, of those recorded as a schedule 3 complaint (formal) there have been improvements in timeliness and quality. Early intervention and complaint resolution leads to improved standards of complaint handling and compliance with regulations, which supports increased confidence in policing.

PCC’s role

The PCC’s role in handling complaints provides a valuable feedback mechanism to listen to concerns and seek continuous improvement and plays an important part in holding the Chief Constable to account, transparency and public confidence.

The OPCC has dealt with queries and casework received via email, telephone calls and correspondence ranging from inviting the PCC to events, enquiries about funding to complex matters such as complaints or community issues raised by MPs. Themes included: concern at lack of police presence, police response to retail crime, illegal fox hunting, illegal encampments, and concern at delays in Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processing. Significant contact was also generated following the Chief Constable’s declaration of institutional racism and in response to the 3-part Channel 4 Documentary following the work of the Avon and Somerset Professional Standards Department.

The PCC and his office had regular meetings with the IOPC and PSD to discuss serious and complex cases, and topical issues such as vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police service following high-profile national cases and the subsequent HMICFRS report. There are two other important workstreams discussed below.

Complaint reviews

Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint they have a right to review. More serious complaints are handled by the IOPC, however, the majority of reviews will be undertaken by the PCC’s office.

Table 5: number of review applications received by the PCC and the outcomes of these for the years 2020/21 to 2023/24.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of review applications	190	221	167	171
% review applications upheld	19%	22%	20%	18%
% review applications not upheld	66%	69%	68%	71%
% review applications void	14%	9%	13%	11%

The number of complaint reviews upheld fluctuates by a small amount each year but has remained broadly similar.

The PCC's Office provides regular feedback to the Constabulary: both individual and organisational in order to improve the complaint handling process. One of the main themes identified is the need to improve communication with complainants so they can better understand the process and the reasons for the particular findings.

Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP)

This ISPCP is made up of volunteers from the local community; the panel doubled their membership from 6 to 12 following a successful recruitment campaign. The Panel met in September and December 2023, and March 2024 and scrutinised themes including discrimination, handling of or damage to property, discreditable conduct and abuse of position and corruption. In total 100 complaint files were reviewed with the panel requesting that 2 complaints were fully re-reviewed. [Reports are published on the PCC's website.](#)

At the request of the Head of Professional Standards, two panel members are assisting the Constabulary in undertaking some additional scrutiny work, reviewing Severity Assessments for PSD. Severity Assessments are decisions that consider whether an officer's conduct would amount to gross misconduct or alternatively some other form of punitive action being taken. This innovative piece of work, which is the first of its kind nationally, will seek to make improvements to the handling of Severity Assessments and to ensure consistent decision making.

Police Dismissals Review

Significant work has been under way to prepare for implementation of reforms to strengthen the disciplinary system following publication of the Police Dismissals Review in September 2023. The OPCC has contributed to developments at a national level. A recruitment campaign for new Independent Panel Members was launched to prepare for new requirements. The campaign was launched following on from the Story Films Channel 4 series to capitalise on the interest in policing and the scrutiny work of the PCC's Office. The recruitment process achieved a diverse range of applicants.

5. Data and information

In the last year the Constabulary processed 88.8% of Freedom of Information Requests within the specified timeframes and 82.2% of Subject Access Requests. Resourcing challenges have led to a reduction in the compliance rates from the previous year of 92% and 89.8% respectively.

Policing Through Robotics: A Year of Collaboration and Efficiency

- The Robot Process Automation (RPA) Team in the Constabulary have continued to drive positive change and elevate service delivery, improving efficiencies and engaging in collaborations to elevate service delivery. Some of the accomplishments this year include:

- Automating 2.1 million cases – the Constabulary robots processed 2.1 million cases which is equivalent to 105,000 hours of work saved, or 81 full-time equivalents, freeing up valuable time for people to focus on more complex tasks.
- Launching 16 new processes – streamlining processes for new areas of the business including Learning, Response and Criminal Justice.
- Niche Award – Niche is the crime recording and case management system used by the Constabulary and many other police services. Through collaborative working across teams the Constabulary created an end-to-end solution which allows Shoplifting to be reported online, with the report being directly inputted and entities linked into Niche. This piece of work garnered the esteemed Niche award for 'Team of the Year'.
- National Recognition – the Constabulary was selected by the Home Office as one of two police services to be an RPA Pathfinder, to expand RPA adoption across policing. The Constabulary partnered with colleagues from Devon & Cornwall, Dorset and Wiltshire, assisting them in crafting robust business cases to commence their RPA journey. The Constabulary's support extended to include establishing centres of excellence, and developing initial processes.
- Self-Defined Ethnicity (SDE) Storm to Niche Process – by enhancing the consistency and accuracy of SDE recording within Niche, the Constabulary achieved a remarkable 60% reduction in recording errors. This not only ensures data integrity but also promotes fairness and inclusivity.
- Text to Public for outstanding calls – the Constabulary developed a process which keeps the public informed about the status of their incident, once it exceeds 24 hours old. This ensures clear communication that fosters trust and transparency.

6. Scrutiny, performance and learning

Constabulary scrutiny, performance and learning

The Constabulary's Integrated Performance and Quality Report (IPQR) is a monthly assessment that provides an overview of performance progress. It highlights key areas for improvement based on the Performance Control Strategy.

During 2024 a new monthly Performance and Quality Assessment (PQA) was implemented. This combined the previous performance reporting with information from the Force Management Statement and PEEL Areas for Improvement (AFIs) (see below). The PQA is also structured around the themes of policing graded during PEEL; with those graded as 'requires improvement' being reviewed more regularly. This new structure allows for a more focused approach and greater insight into the areas inspected.

These reports have continued to be overseen and discussed at the monthly Constabulary Management Board, and the PCC's Governance and Scrutiny Board. These discussions help identify necessary actions and interventions to maintain and improve performance.

Organisational Learning

The Portfolio Management Office are responsible for the organisational learning process. In the last year they have:

- Attended the national Organisational Learning peer network run by the College of Policing.
- Liaised with the Head of Lessons Exploitation Centre for British Transport Police to share best practice.
- Reached out to other areas of the business, such as Professional Standards in order to link into their regular Learning meetings.
- Created a bite size briefing that was then disseminated across the Constabulary to all Inspectors, Chief Inspectors and Superintendents.
- Promoted the process through internal communications.
- Continued oversight of existing records, following up with lesson owners and seeking updates around any outstanding assurance work needed.

PCC holding the Chief Constable to account

One of the main ways in which the PCC discharged this duty was to hold the Chief Constable to account through the Governance and Scrutiny Board, which is also the forum in which the most significant spending and other decisions have been made. This has standing agenda items for performance, assurance and for both organisations to bring forward risks and issues for discussions and questions which forms an important part of the risk management process. [The minutes continue to be published on the PCC website.](#)

During the last year the Performance and Accountability Board (PAB) continued. The purpose of this meeting was to manage performance and for the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account in an open way. The PAB was held on a monthly basis for 30 minutes each time and was broadcast using Facebook.

The PCC also has a statutory duty to [respond to reports published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services](#) (HMICFRS) and in particular any recommendations or areas for improvement within them. There were fifteen responses published in the last year. The recommendations are usually for the Chief Constable and, in writing the response, the Constabulary must provide the PCC with an answer as to how they are responding to those recommendations. This is another important mechanism in holding the Chief Constable to account. Aside from the formal responses, these reports helped shape the scrutiny and questions the PCC asks through the internal assurance process.

PCC securing an efficient and effective police service

In order to determine if Avon and Somerset Constabulary is efficient and effective the PCC takes assurance from a number of activities throughout the year:

- Externally through HMICFRS inspections, particularly PEEL.
- Independent internal audit (jointly commissioned with the Constabulary to provide a risk-led audit programme that focusses on areas of agreed risk in terms of governance and delivery).
- A rolling programme of internal assurance activity (jointly agreed between the OPCC and the Constabulary), carried out by the Constabulary. This work is reflected in reports that are reviewed at the Constabulary Management Board and the Governance and Scrutiny Board.
- OPCC-led assurance activities such as scrutiny panels.
- An Independent Custody Visitors Scheme.

- Feedback from the people who receive the service through surveys and PCC contacts.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) PEEL 2021/22

In March 2023 HMICFRS published their latest PEEL report of Avon and Somerset Police. HMICFRS do not provide an overall grade for the Constabulary but instead grade different areas of policing.

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Treatment of the public	Developing a positive workplace	Preventing crime	Investigating crime	
	Good use of resources	Protecting vulnerable people	Recording data about crime	
			Responding to the public	
			Managing offenders	

Figure 39: HMICFRS PEEL 2021/22 Avon and Somerset Police grades.

HMICFRS also provide areas for improvement (AFIs), of which there were 17 for Avon and Somerset Police:

- The constabulary needs to improve the accuracy of recording rape crimes and incidents of rape.
- The constabulary needs to improve its recording of crimes which involve vulnerable victims.
- The constabulary needs to improve how it records crime when antisocial behaviour is reported.
- The constabulary needs to improve how it records equality data.
- The constabulary should consistently evaluate and share effective problem-solving practice.
- The constabulary needs to ensure that neighbourhood policing officers have access to structured training.
- The constabulary should respond to calls for service within its published time frames based on the prioritisation given to the call. Where delays occur, the rationale should be recorded, and victims should be updated.
- The constabulary should reduce the number of abandoned 101 calls.
- The constabulary should make sure that repeat and vulnerable callers are routinely identified.
- The constabulary should introduce effective processes for timely allocation of crimes of rape and other serious sexual offences to reduce the backlog.
- The constabulary should make sure that an auditable record is kept if a victim withdraws their support for an investigation, and whether an evidence-led prosecution is considered in all such cases.
- The constabulary needs to improve the quality assurance and supervision of investigations.

- The constabulary should ensure that risk assessments are effectively supervised, quality assured, and checked for compliance.
- The constabulary should reduce the backlog of applications waiting to be processed.
- The constabulary should reduce the time taken to conduct visits and risk assessments on registered sex offenders.
- The constabulary should ensure its enforcement action against offenders accessing indecent images of children is robust and conducted in a timely manner.
- The constabulary should ensure it has the capacity and capability to manage demand in the internet child abuse team (ICAT) and ensure backlogs are subject to a review process.

The PEEL report is one of the most important sources of independent assurance to understand how Avon and Somerset are delivering against the Police and Crime Plan. Although improvement was assessed as required in the areas listed above, assurance was taken from the fact that most concerns identified were already known to the Chief Constable and were being addressed.

The Constabulary are being inspected again in 2024 as part of the PEEL process and the next PEEL report is due to be published in early 2025.

Internal Audit

Throughout 2023/24 the Internal Audit function completed 10 substantive audits, six advisory audits as well as contributing towards regional advisory work and conducted follow-up work on previous audits. The 10 substantive audits were:

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Cash Handling
- Corporate Performance Management
- Estates – Compliance with Statutory Obligations
- Personal Development Unit – Tutoring
- Proceeds of Crime and Crypto Currency Seizure
- Strategic Approach to ICT
- Victim Support Services
- Wellbeing

Each internal audit conducted throughout the year receives a graded assurance opinion from the auditors. The assurance levels are: none, limited, reasonable and substantial.

Nine of the audits resulted in a reasonable assurance opinion and one resulted in a limited assurance opinion. The conclusion of our internal auditors was that they were able to offer a reasonable assurance annual opinion.

Each of the audits also provides recommendations for improvement which are categorised into three priority categories reflecting their importance. In total the internal auditors made 34 recommendations during 2023/24, of which:

- 19 were identified as findings that require attention, the lowest grading (priority 3)
- 13 were identified as findings that are important and require the attention of management, the middle grading (priority 2)
- 2 were identified as findings that were fundamental requiring immediate attention (priority 1).

Financial performance

As can be seen in the [published group accounts](#), once year-end adjustments have been made, a break-even position has been achieved during 2023/24. The underlying performance showed a £2.8 million/0.8% underspend. £0.5 million of this underspend will be carried forward for planned expenditure, £1.1 million is for provisions, £0.9 million will go into capital reserves and £0.3 million will be put into general reserves.

The current medium-term financial plan shows an improved position when compared to this time last year. Years 1 and 2 are balanced but the deficits in years 3-5 are £4.3 million, £8.8 million and £12 million respectively.

These deficits will require significant savings across the medium term and this will result in the removal of police staff posts.

4. Annexes

Annex 1 – Summary of Grants Issued and Commissioned Activity in 2023/24

Grant	Recipient	Service / Project
<i>Lighthouse</i> Integrated Victim Care £906,000 (approximately 17% of the total Lighthouse budget)	Avon and Somerset Police who contribute the other 83%	Victims who are vulnerable, intimidated, persistently targeted or experience serious crime are offered practical and emotional support and guided through the criminal justice process by specially-trained staff. The service has teams made up of both police staff and independent support workers and volunteers.
Emotional Support Service for Victims of Crime and ASB £335,862	Victim Support	Emotional and practical support for victims of crime and ASB.
Adult Support Service for victims of any crime or ASB – VOCAS (Victims of Crime Advocacy Service) £261,305	Swan Advocacy	Independent advocacy service for adult victims of crime and ASB who need additional support relating to: race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, mental health issues, learning difficulties, physical disabilities, problems associated with old age and problems associated with isolation. Adult victims can also access practical and emotional support to help them recover.
Children and Young People Advocacy Service – Young Victims' Service £169,125	North Somerset Youth Offending Team	A specialist advocacy support service for victims of crime and ASB up to the age of 18 and victims of crime and ASB aged 18-25 where additional needs are identified.
Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) Service £299,619.50 (plus £128,139 from NHSEngland)	Safelink	A service that offers advice and practical and emotional support including a safe place to talk, access to counselling, support attending Sexual Health Services and help with medical attention. They provide support for all people, irrespective of age or gender, who have been victims of rape and sexual abuse. They also can help with supporting the family and practical problems such as help with housing, benefits, and employers.
A Restorative Justice Service for victims of any crime or ASB £183,475	Resolve West	A holistic approach that supports the victims, their family and communities enabling their voice to be heard and for perpetrators to have greater insight into the impact of their behaviour. The aim of the service is to empower victims to move towards closure and encourage them to explore different ways of coping.
Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) – The Bridge £258,609 (NHS England led contract with contribution from NHS England and Avon and Somerset Police)	University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust	Specialist medical, forensic, practical and emotional support for anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted. Available both to those who report to the Police and those who do not. Includes specialist paediatric support.
Sexual Assault and Abuse Therapies Service (SAAS) £132,248 Annual contribution + £100,000 one off investment paid in 2023/24	Led by NHS England	Specialist therapeutic services for survivors of sexual assault and abuse of any age, provided by an Alliance led by SARSAS with The Greenhouse, Southmead Project, Kinergy and Womankind.

Grant	Recipient	Service / Project
Victims of Exploitation Services £164,903	Contribution to the exploitation services commissioned by four Local Authorities	The OPCC contributes towards individual Local Authority specialist support to victims of child exploitation. Each Local Authority has developed a tailored local area service provision. These services provide a mixture of statutory and preventative provision that sit within multi-agency teams up until the age of 18 years. Within Bristol for Young People and families who are at risk or who have experienced high level of extra-familial harm (inc. radicalisation). The service will respond to those up to the age of 25.
Modern Slavery Support Service £41,962	Unseen UK	Specialist support service for victims of modern slavery before engaging in nationally commissioned services as well as the period after that support ends. Available both to those who report to the police and those who do not.
National Road Victims Service £5,000 contribution	Brake	To provide free, trauma informed and clinically led (where necessary) practical and emotional support to individuals bereaved or catastrophically injured in road collisions, from day one of a crash onwards. Support is provided via a caseworker team, of which there are 27 across the UK including one in Avon and Somerset (and two in the South West of England).
Emergency Services Mental Health Triage (EST) £125,116 (plus contributions from Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Avon Fire and Rescue Service – BNSSG ICB is the Lead Commissioner)	Avon and Wiltshire Partnership NHS Trust (AWP)	Funding for mental health professionals to provide specialist mental health advice to the police. This service is co-located with health partners in the ambulance control room. They have access to relevant health systems, offering advice and support to police officers and partner agencies such as Avon Fire and Rescue Service and South West Ambulance Service Trust with a view to ensuring suitable pathways are identified at the earliest opportunity.
Mental Health Treatment Requirement £10,000 contribution	NHS England	A programme that aims to address an offender's mental health issues by mandating intervention during the court process.
Police and Crime Grant £739,641	Individual grants issued to the five Community Safety Partnerships	Supporting various Community Safety projects which contribute towards delivery of the PCC's priorities. See table under Section 4 objective 4.2.
Liaison and Diversion Services known as Advice and Support in Custody and Courts (ASCC) £567,257 (plus investment from NHS England who are the lead commissioner)	AWP and Sompar	Service supporting individuals at the point of arrest whose offending is linked to substance or alcohol misuse.
Appropriate Adults Service £58,874.77 (plus contributions from the 5 local authorities)	The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS)	Service to support and safeguard the welfare and rights of vulnerable adults detained or interviewed by the police.

Grant	Recipient	Service / Project
Commissioner's Victims Prevention Fund £45,000	Somerset Community Foundation	Provides grants of between £10k – 20k to organisations supporting victims. Supports innovative, collaborative and evidence-led approaches to early intervention and/or prevention.
Commissioner's Community Crime Prevention Fund £200,000	Somerset Community Foundation	Provides small grants (between £1000 - £5000) to organisations in the community as a contribution towards community safety projects to reduce crime and make local communities safer.
PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £24,391 (plus contributions from partners)	DRIVE – Cranstoun Ltd and Next Link	A specialist domestic abuse perpetrator programme for the most prolific and high-harm offenders. A pilot running in South Gloucestershire.
PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £7,635	Court Up – Missing Link and National Probation Service	A programme to divert women away from the short custodial sentences and build and improve networks and referral pathways across mental health, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
Violence Reduction Unit/ Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) £1,352,342 Home Office funded	Grants issued to the five local authorities	Multi-agency work, using a public health approach, to tackle serious violence. Funding is allocated on basis of an agreed funding formula. A range of posts and interventions are funded which work with young people, parents/carers and professionals to prevent and reduce serious violence.
Violence Reduction Unit/VRP £176,326 Home Office Funded	VRP Hub	OPCC centrally retained funding to deliver the VRP Hub strategic co-ordination and grant management functions across Avon & Somerset. Includes staffing costs and branding/communications.
Serious Violence Duty £143,464 Home Office Funded	Grants issued to the five local authorities	Funding to support introduction of new statutory Serious Violence Duty. This funding contributes to staffing costs and interventions working with young people, parents/carers and professionals to prevent and reduce serious violence.
Serious Violence Duty £13,717 Home Office Funded	VRP Hub	OPCC centrally retained funding for VRP Hub staffing costs to support introduction of new statutory Serious Violence Duty.
Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Interventions – DRIVE £355,866 (Home Office Funding £355,866 + Local Authority contributions from Bristol, South Glos and North Somerset £123,000)	Cranstoun Ltd, NextLink and SafeLives	A specialist domestic abuse perpetrator programme for the most prolific and high-harm offenders. Running across South Glos / Bristol and North Somerset. Includes specialist IDVA recruitment to support victims of perpetrators.
Safer Streets £328,280 Home Office Funded	Grants issued to the four top tier local authorities (Bristol, BANES, North Somerset and Somerset)	Home Office funding towards ASB prevention activity in BANES, Bristol Somerset and North Somerset.
Safer Streets £136,720 Home Office Funded	OPCC, Night Time Economy Solutions (NTES) and Bristol City Council	Contribution to OPCC staffing costs and Bystander training.

Grant	Recipient	Service / Project
Local Integration of Women's Services £141,157 Ministry of Justice Funded	The Nelson Trust	The aim of a Whole System Approach is to assess the needs of women at risk of or in contact with the justice system at the earliest opportunity and to provide gender responsive, co-ordinated multi-agency support to divert her away from offending or reoffending. This funding has created a role to understand the ability for this to happen locally in Avon & Somerset.
Ministry of Justice male rape fund £6,966	Trauma Breakthrough	Support for male victims of rape.
Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2023/24 funding – IDVAs & ISVAs £1,417,207 + £35,430 (5% Inflationary Increase funded by the OPCC from October 2023)	Various	See Annex 2
Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2023/24 funding – community based services £490,586 + £12,360 (5% inflationary Increase funded by the OPCC from October 2023)	Various	See Annex 3
Ministry of Justice Victims Commissioning – Formula Funding Uplift 2023/24 £68,967	Various	See Annex 4
Total	£9,315,409	

Please note the 2023/24 MoJ Victims Commissioning Core (formula based) Grant Funding provided was £2,004,649 and part funded some of the above victims services.

Annex 2 – Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2023/24 funding – IDVAs and ISVAs / Additional IDVAs and ISVAs Uplift

Provider	Amount
SafeLink	£365,252
SafeLink - additional uplift funding	£143,126
NextLink	£551,765
NextLink - additional uplift funding	£128,477
Southside	£68,573
Julian House	£41,211
Victim Support	£41,232
You Trust	£113,003
Total	£1,452,637

Annex 3 – Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2023/24 funding – community based services

Provider	Amount
The Green House/ Somerset Phoenix Project	£65,754
WomanKind	£23,529
Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support (SARSAS)	£43,563
ManKind Initiative	£8,200
Southmead Project	£29,655
Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA)	£16,144
Southside Family Project	£22,186
Opoka	£18,963
Voices	£20,500
Kinergy	£36,900
North Somerset Council - Young Victims Service	£46,125
Victim Support	£20,115
NextLink	£26,456
SafeLink	£26,456
Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS)/ Reclaim	£38,950
Trauma Breakthrough	£20,500
The Nelson Trust	£19,475
1625 Independent People	£19,475
Total	£502,946

Annex 4 – Ministry of Justice Victims Commissioning – Formula Funding Uplift 2023/24

Provider	Amount
Swan Advocacy – VOCAS	£26,100
North Somerset Council – Young Victims Service	£42,867
Total	£68,967

Annex 5 – Glossary

4P	4P – prepare, prevent, protect, pursue – a nationally recognised policing strategy for dealing with crime
Active Citizenship	This is measured as the % of those surveyed that has attended or been involved with or as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Watch’ meetings such as Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch or Business Watch • Other police or council Neighbourhood Meetings or forums • Volunteering as a Special Constable • Volunteering in another policing or community safety related way • Community SpeedWatch • Police webchats
ASB	Anti-social behaviour is behaviour which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; or behaviour capable of causing nuisance or annoyance.
Bluestone	Avon and Somerset Police response to rape and serious sexual offences.
County Lines	A type of serious organised crime in which drug dealers in major cities establish networks for the supply and sale of drugs to users in towns and rural areas using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line.” This typically involves exploiting young and/or vulnerable people to carry, store, and sell the drugs as well as being used to carry out violent attacks on behalf of the Organised Crime Group.

CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
Cuckooing	Is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property for some form of exploitation.
Cyber crime	<p>Cyber crime can be put into two distinct categories.</p> <p>Cyber-dependent – crimes that can be committed only through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) devices, where the devices are both the tool for committing the crime, and the target of the crime. For example developing and propagating malware for financial gain or hacking to steal.</p> <p>Cyber-enabled – traditional crimes which can be increased in scale or reach by the use of ICT. This is where fraud and cyber crime significantly overlap.</p>
Disproportionality of the use of police powers	This looks at the number of people subject to the power, in each of the five ethnic groups, and then compares this to the total resident population of that ethnic group in Avon and Somerset (based on 2021 Census data) to give a 'rate'. The disproportionality figure displayed is the ratio of how many times more a person, who is Other than White, has had the power used against them compared with White people. An important point of note is that between 2011 and 2021 the number of people who are White grew at a smaller rate than other ethnic groups. If these growth rates have continued in the same way then the disproportionality figures would be slightly smaller than they are when comparing to the 2021 census data.
Hate crime	A crime where the offender has either demonstrated or been motivated by hostility based on a person's race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity.
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
Local authorities	Top tier local authorities in Avon and Somerset are Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset, South Gloucestershire.
OPCC	Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
Police Visibility	This is measured by a question in the local survey of when did you last see a police officer or a police community support officer in your local area? This is percentage of respondents that have seen an officer within the last month (or more recently).
Positive outcome rate	Positive outcomes are counted as Home Office defined outcomes 1-8 and 22 which are: charge/summons, cautions/conditional cautions for youths or adults, offences taken into consideration, the offender has died, penalty notice for disorder (PND), cannabis/khat warning, community resolution or diversionary, educational or intervention activity. The rate is the percentage of all outcomes which are positive.
Public confidence	This is measured by a question in the local survey; and is the percentage of people who have confidence in their local police.
RASSO	Rape and serious sexual offences
Rural crime	any crime occurring in a rural area which directly or indirectly affects a farming or rural business or the rural communities. Rural means a close association with or dependence upon the land within that location.
Section 136	Section 136 of Mental Health Act 1983 gives the police the power to remove a person to a place of safety if that person appears to be suffering from mental disorder and to be in immediate need of care or control and it is necessary to do so in the interests of that person or for the protection of other persons.
Timeliness of attendance	<p>Calls to the police are graded based on threat harm and risk. There is a service level agreement (SLA) for each grade which states how long attendance should take (below). It is important to note that the SLAs are defined by Avon and Somerset Police, not mandatory. Timeliness is reported as the percentage of those incidents that were attended within the particular SLA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate – 15 minutes for urban areas and 20 minutes for rural areas • Priority – 1 hour • Routine – 12 hours

Victim satisfaction	As measured by a local telephone survey of a sample of victims of ASB, burglary, hate crime and violent crime.
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MORE INFORMATION

 For the full report and an interactive version visit www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk

Avon & Somerset Police & Crime Commissioner

Visit www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk

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