

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Gwent

# Annual Report 2014 - 2015

# CONTENTS

Welcome	3
Delivering the Best Quality of Service Available	4
Preventing and reducing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	9
Protecting People from Serious Harm	15
To make best use of resources and provide value for money	17
Looking Forward	18

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# WELCOME



**I am pleased to present my Annual Report summarising and highlighting progress of key initiatives of my office for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. This is a statutory document which is required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.**

My Police and Crime Plan sets out the following priorities:

- To deliver the best quality of service available
- To prevent and reduce crime
- To take more effective action to tackle anti-social behaviour
- To protect people from serious harm
- To make the best use of resources and provide value for money

I have worked closely with my team, Chief Constable, partners and the public in developing these objectives. In preparing this report I have considered, formal and informal feedback from the public, force performance, regulators' reports, the challenges of on-going financial cuts and a changing criminal justice system. Whilst we have seen an increase in recorded crime there has been an overall reduction in actual crime and anti-social behaviour which demonstrates the professionalism, commitment and dedication of officers and staff.

I have regular meetings with the Chief Constable and his officers to hold the force to account for its performance and I engage with other agencies and partnerships to ensure that we work together effectively.

In addition, this year saw Gwent Police leading on the safe and secure policing for the NATO Summit. I would like to take this opportunity to thank every single police officer, staff member and volunteer from Gwent who worked tirelessly during the summit and in the build up to it. They can be proud of themselves; their hard work and efforts ultimately ensured this historic and momentous occasion for Gwent and Wales ran smoothly.

During the last year I have conducted a wide ranging engagement programme and feedback from the public on the way they wish to be policed was used by the Chief Constable in his operational delivery review resulting in more visible police officers in our communities.

I have also developed my commitment to put victims at the heart of everything we do and used my voice in the community to raise awareness on areas of concern.

One of the most pleasing aspects of my role is having the ability to commission services and award grants to organisations or bodies that support my policing priorities. You can read more about this on the following pages.

I hope you enjoy reading my Annual Report. As always I welcome your feedback on the information as well as your thoughts on the Policing service you receive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Johnston'.

**Ian Johnston QPM**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent**

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## DELIVERING THE BEST QUALITY OF SERVICE AVAILABLE

We have continued to work hard to listen and engage with the community to ensure that the people of Gwent are satisfied that the police provide a service which meets their requirements. We have also seen an increase in public confidence in the last year, but need to work with the Force and partners to continue to improve the service we deliver.

### Engaging with our Communities

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My staff and I have continued to meet with you and provide opportunities for you discuss the things that matter to you locally.

357 public engagement activities have been carried out across my office this financial year. This includes meeting with local residents at my public surgeries and during my community walkabouts and meeting with third sector organisations to find out how we can support each other. We have also met with special interest groups

including older people's forums, youth groups and various other community groups to see how we can best work together.

### 'Your Voice'

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Engagement between the public and Gwent Police is paramount. Following feedback from numerous areas of Gwent that the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings weren't as effective as they could be, I worked with the Force to review the way it interacts with the public. In March 2015 we saw the launch of 'Your Voice' and view this as a welcome improvement in the way Gwent Police Neighbourhood Teams interact with the communities they serve. The Force consulted widely with local partners and the public to ensure this new process effectively meets the requirements of the community. The new process aims to give the public greater opportunities to have their voices heard. Residents can meet with their local Inspectors every four months and Community Support Officers will continue to run a range of regular police surgeries in local communities. My team and I will now be working with Police colleagues to embed this new approach and I will be monitoring its progress closely over the next 12 months as part of my remit to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of local policing.

### Have Your Say

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My 'Have Your Say' survey asked you for feedback on three areas which were:

1. Where we should set the level of the policing element of your council tax;
2. The relevance of my police and crime priorities; and
3. Your thoughts around access to police stations.



We also spoke directly to some of our communities including Ashiana Asian Women's Group and Newport People First, whose valuable contributions helped inform the final evaluation of the consultation.

The survey helped inform the review of my police and crime priorities and the overall support for my decision to set the council tax that Gwent residents pay for their policing in 2015/16 at 3.99%.



## Our Online Community

We have also seen a general increase in online activity:

	March 2014	March 2015	Increase / Decrease
 Twitter	1,333	2,196	62.41% increase
 Facebook	1,040	1,107	6.4% increase

- **Website:** The highest number of visits in one month to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) website was 2,765, coinciding with the announcement of my Partnership Fund.
- **Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) App:** We now have Just over 300 App downloads, and we continue to promote this facility to encourage to public to engage with us in a variety of ways.
- **OWL:** The Online Watch Link system which I fund and support now has 50,000 registered members in Gwent. The system has been used to great effect to disseminate PCC related messages and updates on initiatives to as wide an audience as possible.

## They're Staying Open

The results from the 'Have your Say' survey and feedback from the public and partners throughout the year also informed my decision to keep open front counter services at several police stations which had been closed or had limited opening hours. Front counters at stations in Caerphilly, Chepstow, Maindee, Monmouth, Pontypool, Risca and Ystrad Mynach now remain open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

We also worked with local authority partners to open a police desk at Caerphilly Library and a new police office at the social enterprise development in Trevethin.

I have been keen to see the use of police stations maximised to ensure they are a hub for local people and improved community engagement and that Gwent Police has a strong presence in the heart of the communities it serves. This is why I approved plans to allow Bargoed Town Council to relocate their office to the old court house next to Bargoed Police Station. I'm delighted that we were able to accommodate the Town Council and provide them with a centralised base in the town.



## Engaging with Children and Young People

I have continued to engage with our young people. The quarterly regional meetings with the Gwent Youth Forum allow for discussions on the things that matter to them, including perceptions of and relationships with local police. In February I provided a residential workshop for 25 Youth Forum members from across Gwent to discuss these issues.

From working with the young people I found that they valued the Schools Liaison Programme delivered by Police Officers and they also expressed specific views on their experiences and the quality of interaction with Gwent Police.



Many of the young people wanted more mutual respect between them and the Police and they felt that Officers needed more training around meeting young people's needs, particularly on Equality and Children's Rights (United Nations Convention on Rights for Children). Most Young People commented that they would like more opportunities for social interactions with Gwent Police and Police Cadets. A report of the workshop outcomes is being shared with the Force to help develop further work in the areas discussed.

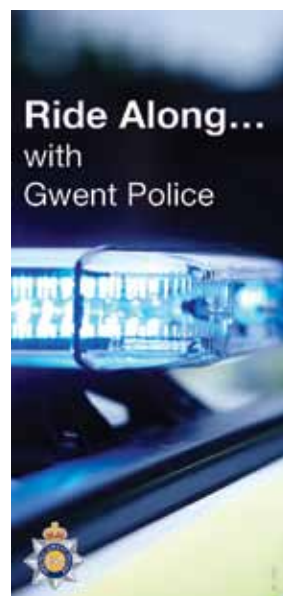
I also took part in a 'Youth Question Time' hosted by the Caerphilly Youth Forum, where my fellow panellists and I answered questions on domestic abuse, mental health, work experience and relationships with the Police. Once again, the discussions will allow us to develop initiatives with the force to help address perceived and actual inequalities the young people highlighted and help me hold the Chief

Constable to account for the policing services delivered locally.

## Stop and Search

I continue to monitor how police officers use stop and search powers in Gwent, to ensure that they are used proportionately and fairly. In 2014, the Chief Constable signed up to the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme which allows members of the public to observe interactions between officers and the individuals being stopped and searched.

Two 'ride along' exercises took place during the year with the observers providing feedback to the Force on what they saw to help improve the quality of service provided to the public during these encounters. They viewed it as a valuable tool for the public to better understand the process and the Force will continue with the scheme and explore its use and value in the resolution of related complaints. Every complaint Gwent Police received about stop and search activates the Stop and Search Community Trigger process (Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme), and is reported both to the Office of the Chief Constable (OCC) and OPCC. In the last two years there have been 8 recorded complaints made as a direct result of stop and search and this continues to be monitored.



## Public Confidence

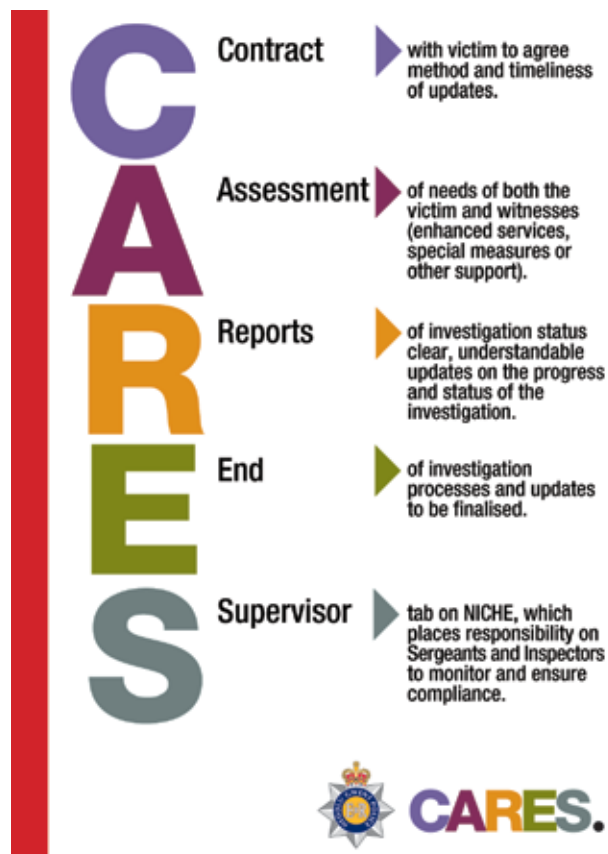
For the 12 month period to December 2014, public confidence in Gwent Police continued to show an upward trend. This is monitored through the Crime Survey for England and Wales and our own internal satisfaction survey.

Theme	CSEW National Average 12 months to Dec 14	Gwent 12 months to Dec 14
Police deal with community priorities	61.9%	59.8% (up 3.9% on Dec 13)
Police do a good job	62.1%	52.9% (down 0.9% on Dec 13)
Treat you with respect	86.5%	83.9% (up 0.1% on Dec 13)
Treat everyone fairly	65.7%	62.1% (up 4.1% on Dec 2013)

## Victim Satisfaction

I have continued to monitor Gwent Police's performance relating to victim satisfaction. Satisfaction for victims of crime in Gwent has remained the same; however we have seen a decrease in satisfaction for victims of anti-social behaviour during the last year with people reporting that *'being kept informed'* remains the biggest issue.

This is why in November 2014 I supported and endorsed the launch of Gwent Police's CARES service standard and victims' booklet. By providing the right resources CARES aims to assist officers in identifying the level of support required by victims of crime to ensure we do what we should be doing in compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice.



A steady improvement in CARES recording was seen from November and this will be closely monitored through our Victim Satisfaction Survey and my representation on the Gwent Police Service That Works Board. The Chief Officer Team continued to contact 5 victims of crime each per month to ensure that the service they had received was appropriate, with Sergeants contacting every victim of crime. This ensured that one of the biggest criticisms faced by the force of not keeping people informed continues to improve.

Improving the way that victim services are delivered in Gwent is a key priority and is at the heart of what the public want and deserve. If we get the interaction with victims right, it will further improve the public confidence in Gwent Police.

## Putting Victims at the Heart of Everything We Do

The Victims' Charter has been developed and publicised to demonstrate my commitment to drive forward and improve victim services and satisfaction in Gwent, which is fully supported by the Chief Officer Team at Gwent Police.

October 2014 saw one the biggest changes to how we provide support to victims. Funding previously provided directly from the Ministry of Justice to Victim Support is now distributed to Police and Crime Commissioners to commission improved and enhanced services for victims. Preparations for this change began in August 2014 with the decision to create Connect Gwent - a new multi-agency hub for all victims of crime and ASB in Gwent.



Since then, we have been working very hard to engage with partners to establish the new model which went live in April 2015 and officially launched at the end of May 2015. Victim Support have been awarded a contract to provide triage services for three years. At the 31st March 2015 we had received commitments from New Pathways, Embrace (Child Victims of Crime), Umbrella Gwent and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), who will work out of the hub building. A dedicated Victim Satisfaction Survey team is provided by Gwent Police and is also located in the service hub.

My Victims' Charter will sit above the performance framework for Connect Gwent with the aim of further embedding it within the wider multi-agency working arrangements.

## A New Police Service Model for Gwent

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The Chief Constable and I discussed at the beginning of the year the need to relook at the way the people of Gwent were being policed. The concerns I had raised about the disconnect between the various teams and the communities they were supposed to serve and the impact on public confidence was accepted and a new policing model was developed which I supported and was implemented on 1st April 2015.

A move to the new Force operating model introduces a new era in the way that Gwent Police delivers services to the public and how they conduct their day-to-day business.

The changes are not simply about saving money; they are about offering the best service to the public within the financial and staffing resource they have available and to ensure they are fit for purpose to deliver on my priorities.

## Accountability

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I continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for Force performance to ensure an efficient and effective police service for Gwent in line with his commitment to delivering a 'service that works'. In addition to receiving regular reports from the Force on performance, I hold weekly one-to-one meetings with the Chief Constable to address any matters arising in Gwent.

Though my Strategy and Performance Board (SPB), which met 11 times in 2014/15, I monitor the performance of Gwent Police and how it effectively delivers its service against my Police and Crime Plan. To support the effectiveness of these meetings and provide better transparency and public accountability, I have reviewed the monitoring requirements and decided to reduce the frequency of Strategy and Performance Board meetings for 2015/16.

I have a responsibility to monitor public complaints made against Gwent Police officers that have been dealt with by the Professional Standards Department. During the year, my office provided responses to and co-ordination of 209 quality of service requests raised by members of the public, a slight increase on the previous year (200 received 2013/14). We engage with the Force to be able to provide appropriate responses to these issues. In addition, I am required to deal with complaints made against the Chief Constable.

The [Gwent Police and Crime Panel](http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/transparency/police-and-crime-panel/)<sup>1</sup> examines my actions and decisions as Commissioner. The Panel makes sure that information is available for the public to assess whether they are holding me to account and providing support and challenge when they carry out their functions. During 2014/15, I met with the Panel five times to discuss matters such as finance, the work that the OPCC is carrying out in support of my duties, and how I am holding the Chief Constable to account.

I am also subject to auditing procedures carried out by the Wales Audit Office and internal auditors that examine how I am carrying out my financial, governance and other processes. Gwent Police is regularly inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). HMIC is independent of the Commissioner, the Force and the UK and Welsh Governments, and assesses the work of police forces in different areas of business, including neighbourhood policing, serious and organised crime, anti-social behaviour and tackling major threats such

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/transparency/police-and-crime-panel/>



as terrorism. The Inspectorate, in conjunction with the WAO, also actively monitors the performance of the Force in relation to their plans for ensuring the sustainability of an efficient and effective police service in light of the significant grant reductions announced in the Comprehensive Spending Reviews.

## Supporting Volunteers



Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the Independent Custody Visiting and Animal Welfare Schemes in Gwent. The schemes are maintained by the OPCC and my staff work with our volunteers to ensure that they are able to effectively carry out their responsibilities. Their feedback is important in helping me hold the Chief Constable to account for custody facilities and the welfare of detainees as well as the wellbeing of police dogs in Gwent.

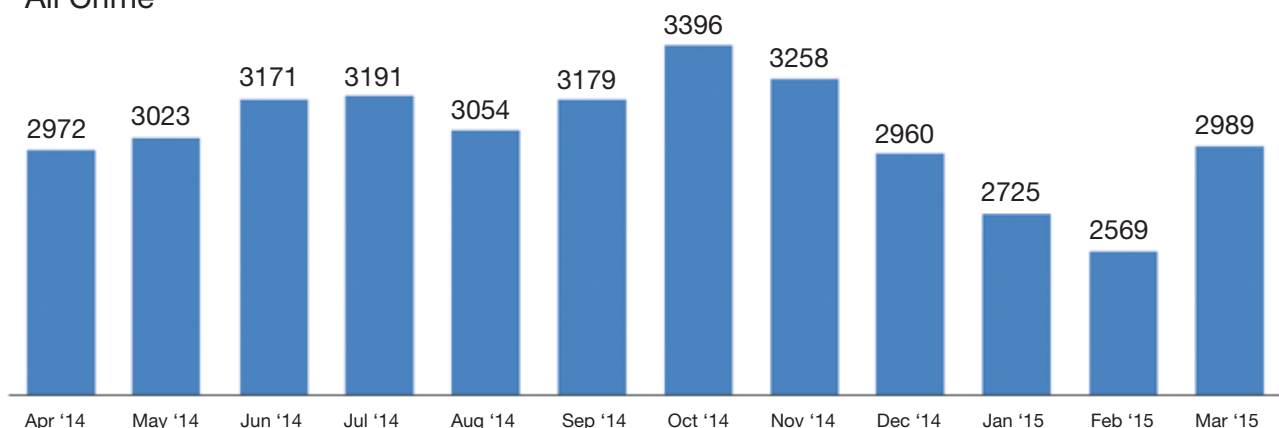
## PREVENTING AND REDUCING CRIME AND TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

I will continue to work productively with partners in delivering crime prevention and reduction and tackling ASB and wider community safety issues whilst supporting individuals and their communities when they become victims. I am represented on all five Local Service Boards within the Force area and my officers link in to the various networks to ensure that all partner priorities are considered within planning and delivery processes.

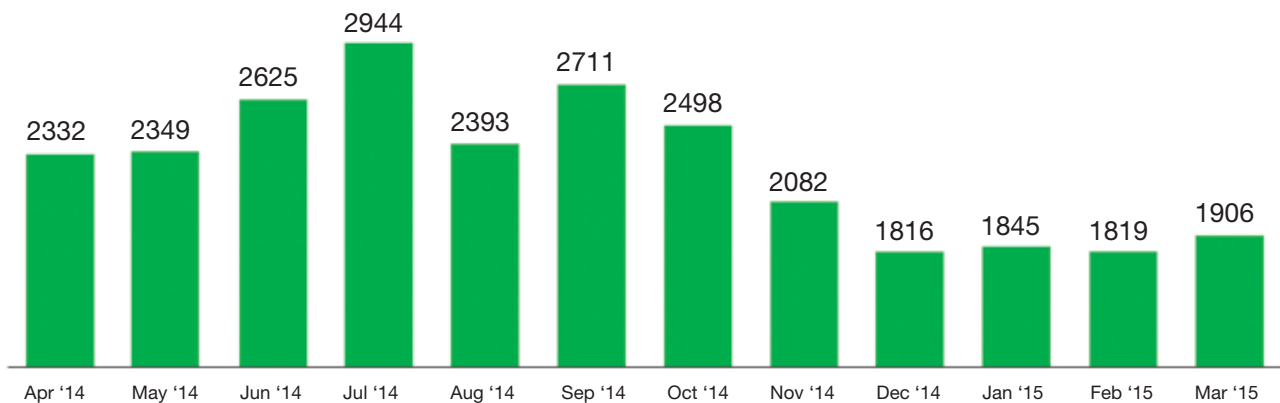
A continued focus on accurate (ethical) crime recording over the last 12 months has seen an increase in the numbers of recorded crimes whilst experiencing a downward trend in overall crimes within Gwent. National Crime Recording Rates compliance has improved in the last year from 75% to 88% which is very positive. Gwent had experienced a 3.6% increase in crime during 2014/15 which was less than predicted and remained in 30th position out of the 43 Forces in England and Wales for crimes per 1000 people. However, in order to drive down crime in our communities and support this priority, this needs to remain a focus during the next year.

I continue to monitor crime and ASB data to hold the Chief Constable to account for effective recording process.

All Crime



## ASB Incidents



Closer scrutiny of Force performance areas is carried out as required through dip-sampling undertaken by staff of the OPCC and, where appropriate, with our community volunteers.

## More Bobbies on the Beat

Continued work towards preventing and reducing crime and tackling ASB has seen a greater focus on resolving the issues identified through community engagement. This includes an improved police presence in communities and redeployment of 15 Police Officers and 5 Police Sergeants from Custody Units back into the community in the last year. I believe that this decision has had a positive impact on public confidence across our communities.



## Preventing Substance Misuse

I continue to fund the Gwent Drugs Interventions Programme (DIP) to support people involved in the criminal justice system (CJS) due to substance misuse. Gwent DIP works to reduce further harm arising from reoffending and continued substance misuse, including the use of psychoactive substances. 592 referrals were received into the service in the period April 2014 to March 2015 with a total of 83 people successfully concluding their treatment. Prison provided the primary source of referrals (50%) followed by Gwent Police (21%).

### Quality - Is Anyone Better Off?

Completions	83	Percentage of completions of all closures	27%
- Drug/Crime Free	46	- Drug/Crime Free	15%
- Crime Free only	2	- Crime Free only	0.7%
- Drug Free only	35	- Drug Free only	12%

In March, we supported DIP in launching a range of new [online resources](#)<sup>2</sup> to support substance misusers who come into contact with the CJS.

A considerable amount of work has also been undertaken with partners on the Gwent Area Planning Board to deliver the first ever Gwent-wide integrated drug, alcohol and family intervention service for individuals, including offenders and communities affected by substance misuse. This is the first time in Wales that a single contract has been tendered joining up criminal justice providers with community led drug and alcohol services. The new provider will work closely with the Gwent DIP to deliver bespoke drug and alcohol services for adults across Gwent.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gwentdip.org.uk/>



In February 2015 I took up the position of Chair of the local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) to further my commitment to improving criminal justice processes across Gwent including partnership support for victims. Work continues between agencies to improve file quality for court and this is evidenced by the performance seen over the last year.

During the last year, we have seen developing involvement with Integrated Offender Management (IOM) processes and I am represented on both the Gwent and the Wales IOM boards. Since 2013 there has been an increase of 330% in persons managed under the IOM umbrella with an all-Wales figure of 1,940 with a 34% reduction in the rate of re-offending amongst the Cohort across Wales. This trend is similarly reflected in Gwent.

On behalf of PCC colleagues in Wales I was successful in securing Home Office funding for a pan-Wales Women's Triage Scheme, to help divert women that have been arrested away from criminality and provide them with a 'restorative' approach to their rehabilitation. So far, 170 women have been diverted from the CJS with a reduced offending rate of just 5%. The Women's Pathfinder 'Diversion Scheme' was officially launched in March 2015 and Newport has been selected as one of the extended pilot sites. I will continue to monitor progress of the scheme through the Board and look forward to seeing further successes in the future.

### Safer Gwent

I have progressed my commitment to strategic community safety through the establishment of a new multi-agency board entitled Safer Gwent. Safer Gwent will co-ordinate joint initiatives and activities throughout the region but will not replace the statutory Community Safety Partnerships that exist and operate through each of the five local authority's Local Service Boards.

Safer Gwent is made up of representatives from the local authorities, the Local Health Board, Registered Social Landlords, Voluntary Sector, Youth Offending Services and the probation and rehabilitation services. The group aims to develop a collective community engagement approach to enhance partnership working with a view to achieving better outcomes in tackling ASB, preventing re-offending and supporting victims. Whilst currently in its infancy, the Board has already developed a comprehensive programme of work to support this and I look forward to working with these partners to develop initiatives that support safer communities whilst tackling issues relating to crime and ASB.

### Community Remedy

To prepare for the launch of the Community Remedy, in July 2014 the public were invited to help choose the options available for victims of low-level crime and anti-social behaviour to have more of a say in how offenders are dealt with outside of court. 835 people accessed the survey and



their responses were used to inform the approach which has now been adopted by Gwent Police and our other partners. The measures have been in use since October 2014.

The four options agreed by the Chief Constable and I were:

1. Reparation to damage caused, e.g. repairing damage to property, cleaning graffiti, returning stolen property;
2. Paying for the damage caused to be repaired or for the property stolen to be replaced;
3. A verbal or written apology; or
4. A restorative approach which allows victims and offenders to put their views to each other without meeting face-to-face.

The new measures mean that the police now have a faster and more flexible toolkit to deal with low level crime and disorder. The victims get justice quickly and the offender has to face the consequences of their actions, which should provide a positive impact on victim satisfaction in the future. Between October 2014 and March 2015, 68 community resolutions were used across Gwent for a variety of offences.

The Community Trigger gives the same victims the chance to request a review of agency actions when they are dissatisfied with the way their issues have been dealt with. I have a role in providing a route for dissatisfied victims to query how their Community Trigger review has been carried out. I did not receive any review requests during this reporting period.

## Tackling Rural Crime

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Last year, I was one of 28 PCCs across England and Wales that signed up to participate in and support the National Rural Crime Network. This initiative aims to act as a collaborative think tank, to research and implement ways to reduce rural crime. The Home Office provided a start-up investment of £39,200 and each Commissioner pledged £1,000 per year for the first two years as part of localised funding commitments to the project.

The multi-award winning Gwent Police Farm Watch Scheme, which I support, continues to make a big impact.

Highlighted as a model of best practice by the National Rural Crime Network, thanks to the hard work of the Farm Watch team farm related crime in Gwent has reduced by 27%. This has resulted in increased confidence and satisfaction in Gwent Police within our rural communities. Membership of the Farm Watch scheme on OWL (Online Watch Link) has increased from 300 to over 1,000 and intelligence gained has led to the arrest of a series of criminals. The Farm Watch Coordinator was used as a tactical advisor during the NATO Summit in September 2014 and his intelligence helped in the case against a farmer who was sentenced to 4 years for farm slavery in 2014. The Farm Watch scheme has been recognised nationally, winning awards such as NFU Mutual Rural Crime Fighters award 2014.

## Investing in our Communities

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I am delighted to see the positive impacts that the Partnership 2013/14 funding has had on local



communities and individuals accessing the projects, including better engagement with young people, and an increase in people using these facilities which has led to a perceived reduction in ASB in these areas.

Building on the success of previous years, my Partnership Fund 2014/15 saw over 40 projects across Gwent receive a share of over £150,000. Following a sustained period of publicity, over 500 applications were submitted compared to a total of 50 projects which applied for funding in 2013. The competition was extremely tough and it was humbling to see how many projects genuinely need this money in Gwent. We recognise the vital role these projects can play in complementing the work of Gwent Police and other local partners in the community.

## The Restorative Approach

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During the last year I was pleased to provide continued funding support to the Restorative Approaches Project. Originating in Monmouth Comprehensive School, the project had already proved to be a successful model with significant improvements in pupil behaviour and a reduction in the number of school exclusions (suspensions) seen from 148 pupils in 2013 to 100 2014.



The funding I have provided over two years has allowed for a number of facilitation training opportunities including Police and Community Support Officers across Monmouthshire. Use of restorative approaches has led to total drop of 81% in referrals to Crime and Disorder Reduction Officers (CADROs) for 2013 to 2015 in Monmouthshire. In February 2015, a Restorative Approaches Leadership training programme was attended by members of the OPCC, including myself, Gwent Police colleagues and several partner organisations across Gwent. Work is now on-going to look at how this can be applied within the Force Restorative Action Plan and my staff are involved with these processes.

In continuing to work with partners to encourage their take-up of the programme, I was also pleased to support HMP Prescoed in establishing a Restorative Justice and Restorative Approaches project. The project aims to provide victims with the chance to meet offenders to explain the real impacts of crimes and also helps offenders to account for their actions while enabling them to take responsibility and make amends for their crimes. I look forward to this project becoming more established over the coming months.

## Positive Futures

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I continue to promote initiatives that provide inclusion and diversion for young people at risk of becoming criminalised and entering into the CJS. In 2014/15 I supported the uptake of the Positive Futures programme by other organisations across Gwent to extend the positive impacts of the initiative in diverting behaviour linked to ASB to other communities.

Positive Futures has been running since 2002 over the last two years I have supported the project with £280,000 core funding from my Community Safety Fund. Additional financial support is received from Sports Wales, Education (High Schools) and alternative education and units, local authorities (including Youth Offending Services) and Barnardo's Young Carers. There are also a number of non-funding partners that work in close partnership with the initiative.

The project uses sport and physical activity to help inspire young people, some of whom might be at risk of committing ASB. It provides one to one mentoring for young people and diversionary engagement programmes, training and personal development opportunities which can lead to qualifications or employment.

In 2014-15 the project saw Gwent-wide engagement with just under 2,500 young people, an increase of around 50 per cent on the previous year. This activity has seen a variety of positive outcomes for the individuals involved, including gaining a number of qualifications.

Within 2014-15 each of the local authorities established Positive Futures projects. Some are developed further than others and have already begun to generate income. It is my sincere hope that related projects will be guided and led by Community Safety aims and objectives within 2015-16.

### Engagement Usage Figures for Newport Positive Futures

2013 / 14			2014 / 15		
Males	Females	Volunteers	Males	Females	Volunteers
1186	439	11	1209	364	35
<b>Total : 1636</b>			<b>Total : 2460</b>		

### Wings to Fly

I have also supported targeted crime prevention work. As part of this I provided a further year's funding to the 'Wings to Fly' initiative that highlights and addresses the dangers and tragic consequences of substance abuse. Around 2000 pupils across 50 schools across Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent participated during 2014/15 and plans for the next year include pupils in Torfaen. Now in its 20th year, I provide the sole support to the programme.

The programme is regularly evaluated and participants are encouraged to provide feedback on their experience.

Pupils who have seen it said:

*"I took Wings to Fly Seriously because it was real and dramatic."*

*"I learned more about drugs than I already knew and about how dangerous they are."*

*"It's better in the theatre because it's real acting and you get to ask questions afterwards."*

Staff who have seen it said:

*"The pupils can relate to the characters in the play as they are only a few years older than them. The children will soon be entering secondary school and may be subject to increased peer pressure."*

*"I always enjoy the play and find it very beneficial towards teaching pupils about drugs awareness."*

### Gwent Partnership Bureau

As a member of the Local Criminal Justice Board, I monitor progress of the Gwent Partnership Bureau model established between Gwent Police and the local Youth Offending Services. The Bureau aims to encourage joint decision-making, effective outcomes and restorative justice interventions for young people. Between April 2013 to September 2014, re-offending rates across Gwent remain low. During this period, a total of 956 young people were referred to the Youth Offending Services across Gwent; 207 individuals were recorded as reoffending during an 18-month period following the intervention or disposal provided.

Victims that have participated in restorative justice interventions in Gwent consistently report high satisfaction rates; between September and March, over 98% of individuals engaged stated their satisfaction with the process. We are currently working with the Force, the Welsh Government and other partners to integrate the Bureau method into a streamlined restorative justice process across Gwent and I will continue to monitor progress of the programme.

Cybercrime, which is a recognised national issue of importance, presents a growing challenge to society and work with partners to tackle this issue continues in Gwent. I continue to monitor developments in this area and the Force response to it through attendance at their Strategic Policing Requirement Governance Board which has included oversight of and involvement of the development of the Gwent Police Cybercrime Strategy in 2014/15. To further inform and support scrutiny and oversight of this area, I am represented at Home Office meetings to ensure an understanding of national policy requirements. To ensure progress in tackling this issue I have included a specific focus on Cybercrime within the Police and Crime Plan Priorities refresh for 2015/16 and will monitor the outcomes during that year.

I will continue to work with the Force to meet the needs of our communities and victims of crime and ASB, and to raise public satisfaction in Gwent Police, and I will monitor progress throughout the coming year.

## PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM SERIOUS HARM

In support of this priority to protect people from serious harm, I carry out regular monitoring of all Public Protection services carried out by Gwent Police. This forms an integral part of my Performance Monitoring Framework and I have made arrangements to receive quarterly public reports on:

- Safeguarding Children and the associated Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA);
- Rape and Serious Sexual Incidents;
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults;
- Human Trafficking and Domestic Abuse; and
- Honour Based Violence (HBV).

Over the past year we have made significant advances with related offences in these categories including successes such as significant reductions in 'Most Serious Violence Against the Person' in the period November 2014 to March 2015. 'Domestic Violence' reports remained below average. However, from January 2015 we saw an increase in reports of rape and sexual assault, although it should be noted that 40% of these remain historic in nature.

I also receive updates and reports from the Head of the Public Protection Unit for Gwent Police on activity and work undertaken by associated strategic and operational partnership groups that provide services in each of these areas.

Working with the Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts there has been an overall improving trend for the year in domestic abuse and guilty plea at first hearing in the magistrates' court, also guilty plea rates in both the Crown and magistrates' court which are key areas for the LCJB.

I am linked into the work of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) via the force lead officer and last year provided them with an overview of how the OPCC discharges my safeguarding duties. My staff have been briefed on the responsibilities placed on me as Commissioner, and regular meetings are held with the Head of Gwent Police's Public Protection Unit to ensure effective oversight of related matters.

I will continue to monitor force performance and work with these partners to reduce the level of offences committed in Gwent.

## Collaboration

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I continue to work with my fellow Welsh Police and Crime Commissioners and their Chief Constables on regional issues, including supporting vulnerable individuals and communities at risk of serious harm. Consideration is always given to national policing requirements when planning local priorities and supporting activities.

I am represented on the South Wales Health Collaborative Sexual Assault Service Board that provides governance and scrutiny of the services for victims of rape and sexual assault across the Gwent, South Wales and Dyfed Powys policing areas. I was also represented on the 'Finance' task and finish sub-group which looked to address current risks and sustainability issues identified by the Board. A number of options regarding the future of services have been shortlisted and the preferred option will be explored in upcoming Project Board meetings during 2015/16.

I work closely with New Pathways, the organisation commissioned to support victims of sexual assault through our local Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). As part of this, I provided funding to assess the needs of individuals waiting for counselling services. The work undertaken helped re-prioritise and reduce the backlog of clients and the process has now been incorporated into SARC standard procedures. In addition, we welcomed New Pathways as one of our key partners in the Connect Gwent victims' hub to ensure that the needs of any individuals affected by sexual assault can be fully assessed and met as early as possible.

I continue to work with the Force and partners to support work on related areas. This includes working with the South East Wales Domestic Abuse and Serious Violence Board; Gwent Human Trafficking Co-ordination Group; Older People's Commissioner for Wales; Age Cymru; Wales Against Scams; Prevent and the Child Sexual Exploitation Partnership.

## Improving Mental Health Provision in Gwent

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A particular focus during the past year has been on the standard of mental health provision within the police and CJS. As part of this, I have been working with police and ABUHB colleagues on the draft Mental Health Concordat for Wales. This will be launched during 2015.

I am a member of the pan-Gwent Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership Board which is exploring opportunities for joint working in this area. Among other activities, the Board is in the process of developing a regional commissioning implementation plan to commence during 2015.

During the past year, Gwent Police with my support have reviewed the use of police custody units as places of safety for individuals with mental health-related issues (under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA)) and our discussions with ABUHB around reducing this practice are on-going. Over the last year there has been a 9% increase in the number of section 136 detentions compared to the previous year (231 to 251). However the numbers of individuals transferred to health-based places of safety and those that received some kind of health follow-up has increased (12%) with those remaining in Police Custody down by 13%, suggesting the detention in the first instance was appropriate.

## Street Triage Pilot

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A Mental Health Street Triage Pilot was trialled in Gwent during January 2015 as part of an all-Wales project. 15 incidents were attended over the two weekends which has been identified through historic incident logs as being amongst the quietest weekends in the calendar year. Two potential section 136 patients were diverted from custody and one was admitted to St Cadoc's Hospital after recommendation and referral. Options for the most efficient and cost effective provisions of support to individuals with mental health needs are being actively explored with the Force Mental Health lead officer.

## Training for Police

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To support the Force response to mental health issues, four mental health training sessions for Police Sergeants took place last year, attended by a total of 50 Officers. The training covered section 136 and 135, dealing with missing persons with mental health problems, and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Further training will be planned for the next year.



## Working with Local Partners

I am also committed to supporting Dementia Friendly Communities within Gwent, and the OPCC is working with Blaenau Gwent Local Service Board (LSB) and Gwent Police in establishing a partnership approach to this issue. In particular, we will be working with Blaenau Gwent LSB as they initiate a pilot Dementia Friendly Community project within the County Borough. As part of my commitment, members of the OPCC will also undertake training to become Dementia Friends during 2015.

As previously mentioned, through my Partnership Fund I have supported a number of projects in the last year that support the delivery of this priority area. Some of those projects involve working with sex offenders and their families, supporting services to children exposed to domestic violence and supporting rehabilitation of adults affected by addiction, crime and imprisonment. Over the last few years I have been supporting the provision of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) through the allocation of Community Safety Funding to local authorities in Gwent. I have been working with Newport City Council on the implementation of the Gwent Domestic Abuse Pathfinder Project. This pilot is supported by the Welsh Government and my staff have been working with project leads regarding the parallel development of the Connect Gwent hub and the Pathfinder Project. To ensure this area of victim services remains a priority the OPCC will continue to link into the project as it develops. This will also form part of the work being progressed with the help of Safer Gwent and partners.

## Road Safety

We have also seen a 38% reduction in the number of road fatalities due to a focus on safety campaigns around:

- Use of mobile phones whilst driving
- Drink / drug driving
- Use of seatbelts
- Speeding
- Careless driving

This includes a 100% reduction in child (under 16 years of age) fatalities during this time. Specific work to target related offenders through enforcement and education is being undertaken to further reduce the casualty rate and improve public confidence and satisfaction. I will continue to monitor the progress of road safety campaigns in support of preventing and reducing crime.

## TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF RESOURCES AND PROVIDE VALUE FOR MONEY

I receive regular reports as part of budget monitoring to help me ensure that the people of Gwent are provided with a police service that is value for money.

During this period I have:

- Agreed a budget requirement for Gwent Police for 2015/16 of £ 117,774,000 (2014/15 budget was £119,656,328)
- Set the council tax increase at 3.99% (2014/15 increase was 2.66%)
- Agreed a capital budget of £6,195,000
- Continued to monitor how the Chief Constable is managing budget and austerity pressures (through Staying Ahead 8, the force transformational change programme). From 2008/9 to date, £32m of efficiency savings have been delivered.

During the last year we received the HMIC Valuing the Police 4 report which raised some concerns on the ability of the Force to deliver the saving required by the end of this comprehensive spending review. However, a follow up report confirmed that the force has well developed plans to meet these challenges.

## What does Gwent Police cost?

For 2014/15, the following was spent on revenue policing services in Gwent:

- Police Officers - £67.3m
- PCSO - £6.3m
- Police Staff - £23.1m
- Major Incidents and Proactive Incentives – £0.3m
- Commissioned Services and Grant Awards - £2.7m
- Supplies and Services/Contracts and Capital Charges - £15.5m
- Transport - £2.8m
- Estates - £5.1m
- Other Employee-Related Costs, e.g. training, injury pensions, etc. - £2.5m

In addition, for 2014/15 the following was spent on capital in Gwent:

- Estate - £0.3m
- Vehicles - £1.3m
- Information and Communication Systems - £0.4m
- Other Capital Projects and Schemes - £1.1m

There are a several mechanisms in place to ensure that value for money is being delivered, including:

- Annually Benchmark costs with other Forces via HMIC's Value For Money profiles
- Annual assurance from the internal auditors (Deloitte) that the overall system of internal control was 'Limited'
- My multi-agency Strategic Commissioning Board

In November 2014 the HMIC published its first annual PEEL assessment. This was only a partial assessment as the Home Secretary commissioned the work midway through 2014. The Force was rated one of three as 'requiring improvement' in response to the spending review which was very disappointing. However, I am working with the Chief Constable to ensure that the recommendations from the assessment are implemented.

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) undertakes an annual audit of our Statement of Accounts in July of each year, reporting their findings in the following September. Over many years, the WAO has consistently provided an 'unqualified' audit opinion of the statutory Statement of Accounts and also a positive statement on the arrangements to secure value for money." This means that the financial statements give a 'true and fair' view and have been prepared properly in accordance with relevant legislation, direction or regulations, and applicable accounting standards and furthermore that I have robust systems and processes to deliver value for money.

## LOOKING FORWARD

I continue to be committed to working with the Chief Constable and other partners to ensure that the communities of Gwent receive a high quality, effective and value for money police service. I believe we have made some great progress over the past year and intend to build on these in the next period to realise the Police and Crime Priorities. A part of this I will continue to embed and develop the role of Safer Gwent and initiatives such as Positive Futures.

Providing accessible policing amid on-going cuts to the Police budget is one of the biggest challenges we face and we are in a position where we have to achieve more with the resources we currently have. As part of this, we will be working to make another £26m savings in order to meet our targets.

From April 2015 the Force will have implemented the new police operating model. The changes include more Officers with local knowledge based in the community, working in the areas in which they are needed the most. Neighbourhood Support Inspectors will be based in each Local Policing Area managing incidents as they occur, and there will be more specialist resources

available locally meaning a faster response with a greater understanding of local issues. I will be monitoring the impact of these changes closely. However, the expectation is that this will improve satisfaction levels and provide a more effective and efficient service.

With the growing threat of cybercrime and challenges with safeguarding children online, I am aware that we need to be more collaborative and innovative in our approach to tackling crime and in ensuring our officers have access to the latest technology in support of their demanding roles. That is why I am pleased to support collaborative work across Gwent, South Wales and Dyfed Powys Police to assess and reduce the demands currently placed on our Forces. This project is being funded by money from the Home Office Police Innovation Fund and will take place during 2015. The results of the project will help us to function more efficiently with a better understanding of what the public needs from the service we provide.

We are already planning targeted pieces of work around the impacts of Stop and Search on our communities and have begun working with Gwent Domestic Abuse Service (GDAS) around improving support services for domestic abuse perpetrators to provide earlier interventions. Having successfully launched Connect Gwent in May I truly believe that through better partnership working we can significantly improve the experience of victims. We will continue to evolve the service provided during the coming months and expand the support available as it progresses. As always, your feedback will be essential in helping me ensure Connect Gwent meets your needs.

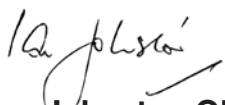
I have also provided funding to support joined up working on victim-related areas during 2015/16, in particular to provide training between Gwent Police and the Crown Prosecution Service to increase the number of successful disability Hate Crime prosecutions in Gwent. I will be monitoring the outcome of this training via the LCJB.

There is currently no requirement on police forces to keep data on use of section 135 of the Mental Health Act (police entry of a private place, for example, someone's home, and taking an individual to a place of safety) but as of next year there will be statutory reporting responsibility which will be monitored through the Force Mental Health Steering Group, at which I am represented. The group has developed an Action Plan that collates all current activity to drive measured improvements both internally and externally with key partners. We will also continue to work with ABUHB on the local implementation of the Mental Health Concordat.

To improve the way complaints are initially dealt with, the OPCC, in agreement with the Chief Constable, is leading on work to establish an Initial Complaints Handling Service which will sit within my office. This will support a more effective way of working and ensure that complaints are dealt with appropriately.

I will continue to engage with the communities of Gwent to ensure that public opinions and perceptions on the policing services received are taken into consideration as part of service evaluation and future planning processes.

It's been a challenging yet fulfilling year but I'm now looking forward to the next 12 months and will continue to work hard on improving policing and driving forward essential partnerships to keep our communities safe. My focus, as always, will remain on putting victims first and in ensuring the people of Gwent have the best service possible.



**Ian Johnston QPM**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent**

