



Matthew Barber
Police & Crime Commissioner
for Thames Valley

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To Town Councils; Parish Councils & Parish Meetings

10 April 2025

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to update you on some of the working going on across Thames Valley to cut crime and catch more criminals.

The headline figures are positive. Overall crimes is down across Thames Valley by nearly 2%. This means that there were more than 2,000 less crimes in the 12-months to February compared with the previous year (and more than 3,000 less crimes compared to the year before that). Some of the biggest reductions have been in residential burglary, knife crime and vehicle crime.

There is of course more work still to do. Although cutting crime remains the priority – ensuring less people become victims in the first place, it is of course vital that criminals are brought to justice. This is a commitment shared by the Chief Constable and I am encouraged that the number of “positive outcomes” (solved crimes in plain English) has increased by 14% in the last year.

These improvements can only continue if the public have confidence to report crime and other incidents to the police. We know that one of the barriers in the past has been the delays in answering 101 calls. I am pleased to report that the average time to answer calls from January to March this year has been well under three minutes. This is an area I will continue to focus on, and we are bringing in further improvements to both the online and telephone contact to make it easier to report issues to the police.

Our neighbourhood policing teams are vital to tackling crime locally as well as engaging with your community. Working with the Chief Constable over recent years we have doubled the number of neighbourhood officers across the Force and I have now been successful in bidding to the Government for funding to recruit an additional 68 neighbourhood police officers.

Although resources need to be focussed on cutting crime and catching criminals, reporting back to communities is important. The connection between local councils and local neighbourhood teams is an important part of that, both in terms of representing community concerns to the police and in sharing the activity of what the police are doing to make our communities safer. To that end I would be grateful if you could contribute to a short survey to understand how Thames Valley Police could improve their links with your council: <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/local-council-survey/>.

As always please do feel free to contact me or my office if we can support your local council in our collective efforts to keep the public safe and I would be delighted to come and meet with you locally.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Barber
Police & Crime Commissioner