

# WILTSHIRE POLICE



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-2025



Proud to serve and protect our communities



# CONTENTS

WHY WE ENGAGE	4 - 5
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW	6 - 7
OUR ENGAGEMENT VISION	8 - 9
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	10
OUR FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY	11
PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DELIVERY	12 - 13
OUR VALUES	14
WHO WE ENGAGE WITH	15
HOW WE ENGAGE	16 - 17
TOPICS OF ENGAGEMENT	18
EVALUATION	19



# WHY WE ENGAGE

The Chief Constable's vision for Wiltshire Police is to be an outstanding police service, trusted by our communities.

To achieve this, the Force will focus on nine key outcomes:

We will effectively engage with our communities to understand their needs and priorities

We will, through our community neighbourhood teams, work in partnership to prevent, problem solve and deter crime

We will effectively respond to the public, tailoring our service to meet their needs

We will effectively investigate crimes providing a consistently high quality of service to victims

We will effectively identify and protect those who are vulnerable and work with partners to keep them safe

We will proactively bring offenders to justice and manage the risk they pose to our communities

We will proactively identify and disrupt the threat of organised criminality, reducing the risk and harm it poses to our communities

We will effectively train, equip and build our workforce so it can provide a first-class policing service

We will effectively plan, develop, and continually innovate to ensure Wiltshire Police can efficiently meet the policing demands we face today and in the future.

This strategy aims to help empower and involve communities, with the ultimate aim being to support and realise the Chief Constable's vision and help deliver the described outcomes.

Engagement with the public has never been more important than it is now. There are high expectations of public services, alongside low trust and confidence within some communities. In addition, newer ways of communicating means that expectations are higher in terms of quick, easy and unhindered access to information. The public are entering conversations

on subjects of importance to them or to others on their behalf. It is important that we, as a police service, harness this public desire to engage and be heard, and provide people with platforms to do so.

Effective engagement is about working with our local communities, creating opportunities to be involved and helping develop the skills and confidence needed to influence decisions. Meaningful and regular consultation at local level within our communities will enable us to discuss the things that really matter to them; what works well, what could be improved and how we can make those improvements together. This in turn builds trust and confidence that are vital to having strong and positive relationships between the police and the public.

We want our communities to know we are listening. Through talking to the people who live and work in our county, by asking them what they need and want, by showing them how their information helps shape their police service, and by telling them about the positive outcomes we have achieved, we hope to further improve our relationship with the people we serve. This also shows we are listening, responding, and, ultimately, can be held accountable.

Complementing this is a commitment to regular communications with our communities to inform them of the things we are doing on their behalf to: ensure our police service meets the needs of our communities, reduce violence and serious harm, tackle crimes that matter to local communities and improve the experience of victims and deliver justice. This is in line with the Wiltshire Police Purpose of 'Proud to Serve and Protect our communities' and the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2022-25.

We recognise that it is only through working together with our communities, and by encouraging their active engagement, that we can help deliver a service that meets the needs of local people.

This strategy outlines our commitment to ensuring that local communities and local accountability are at the heart of policing in the county. It is vital that our policing priorities and style are responsive to the public's needs so that we can provide the best possible service.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

**A cornerstone of British policing is the ethos of 'policing by consent'. This stems from Sir Robert Peel's nine principles and the most notable of which is the observation that 'the police are the public and the public are the police'.**



In order to maintain legitimacy and an ability to police by consent, it is vital that the public support policing at every level. To achieve this there must be underlying trust and confidence in policing and this can only be built and maintained through engaging with the public.

In their Authorised Professional Practice for Engagement and Communication, the College of Policing provide a useful definition for community engagement:

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**“** The process of **enabling citizens and communities to participate in policing at their chosen level** is known as engagement. This ranges from providing information and assurance, to empowering them to identify and implement solutions to local problems and influence strategic priorities and decisions.

Community engagement may be one-off or repeated over a long period of time. It can be formal or informal, focused on a specific issue or incident, a neighbourhood, on service delivery, or more broadly, on policing strategy. **”**

College of Policing – Authorised Professional Practice:  
Engagement and Communication

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How, when and where we engage is a vital element in the success of policing. Open and regular engagement gives the people of Wiltshire and Swindon a voice in how we police and we should use every opportunity to be creative in finding new and effective ways of building positive and meaningful relationships with our local communities.

The purpose of engagement, as well as the level at which people and communities are to be involved, should be clear, and the below seeks to identify the various levels of engagement.



## DEMOCRATIC

At democratic level, the public have the opportunity to question and better understand the legitimacy of police actions and to hold the police to account for the effectiveness and quality of their services.



## OPERATIONAL

Engaging communities in service delivery enables greater understanding of how policing may affect individuals and communities, either as part of equality analysis or to influence strategic priorities and decisions. This can be used to design and deliver effective and efficient services.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD

This level focuses on securing community participation in relation to local priorities and problems. Public confidence in local policing is very likely to improve when local people are involved in decisions about the issues that most concern them.

The range of communities impacted by policing has arguably never been broader, more complex or more diverse. In order to be effective, policing has to consider all its communities (from members of the public to

partner organisations and scrutiny groups) and enable all communities to have the opportunity to work alongside them to develop services that meet community needs.

The definition of a community has also changed. Communities are now less about the place people live and more about their shared characteristics, beliefs and interests. This means we have to make use of different ways of engaging with certain groups that are not based around traditional face-to-face methods.

One of the fundamental principles of good policing is to truly listen to our communities. Both Wiltshire Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon (OPCC) have a clear and defined role when it comes to public engagement, but it is recognised that the two are intrinsically linked. By working together and combining effort in these areas we are able to have a far broader view of the public's concerns, opinions and views of policing services within Wiltshire.

This strategy will aim to provide a consistent structure for Wiltshire Police's engagement activity, providing a framework and guiding principles that can be used by all colleagues, and ensure Wiltshire Police is seen as a trusted and professional organisation.

This strategy's timeline aligns with that of the Police and Crime Plan and the Wiltshire Police Strategic Operational Delivery Plan, both of which will be reviewed in 2025.





# OUR ENGAGEMENT VISION

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPACTS ON EVERYTHING WE DO

- We will use a range of techniques and channels to best connect with our communities to obtain their views on policing in the county, and ensure these techniques and channels are visible and accessible
- We will work collaboratively with a variety of partners to engage with communities where it makes sense to do so
- We will actively encourage and enable people to be part of our policing conversations to help shape our approach, response, policy, and delivery
- We will ensure our diverse and under-represented communities have a voice and are represented in conversations
- We will demonstrate where we have listened and where we have changed our service as a result of what our communities are telling us
- We will evaluate the success of our engagement activity and learn lessons to improve future engagement.

The delivery of this strategy will be as follows:

## YEAR 1 – FOCUS ON BUILDING FOUNDATIONS

We will seek to better understand our audiences, the make-up of our communities and the channels to reach them, both on and offline. We will equip our staff with the tools, training and equipment to undertake effective engagement with their communities. We will set a clear and consistent standard of service for engagement at neighbourhood level. We will be more visible across our communities and put in place additional opportunities for the public to give their views on local service delivery.

## YEAR 2 – FOCUS ON DELIVERY

We will embed the use of engagement toolkits in the day-to-day work of Community Policing Teams. We will align engagement activities with operational activities. We will monitor the feedback we are receiving from our communities on the service they are receiving and use this insight to improve the way we deliver local services. We will monitor the consistency of engagement across our teams to ensure that we are achieving high standards at all times.

## YEAR 3 – FOCUS ON FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

We will build upon the work of year 1 and 2 of this strategy. We will look to provide new ways for our communities to engage with us. We will ensure our officers and staff are competent and knowledgeable on how to engage with their diverse communities and offer wide-ranging engagement opportunities that are accessible and in line with their needs. We will use our learning to develop our future strategy.



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**Building visibility, accessibility and familiarity with policing is a core objective of this strategy as it helps to support, engender and maintain public trust and confidence – vital components in ensuring that policing by consent can be achieved.**

- The public should know what services are available and what standards they can expect in respect of their interactions with policing both online and in a physical setting.
- Our communities should have a means of feeding back what issues are important to them so that services can be tailored effectively.
- The public should feel able and confident to challenge the level of service they receive if it falls short of expectations.
- Our communities should be able to play an active role in a range of ways including volunteering, reporting crime, submitting intelligence and providing scrutiny.
- The public should have opportunities to represent and reflect their communities within policing - bringing their diverse backgrounds and experiences forward to provide fresh insight and perspective to policing (either through paid employment or on a voluntary basis).

To enable the delivery of our strategic objectives we must have a visible, accessible and familiar policing service that the public have trust and confidence in. This extends beyond our officers and staff to the engagement channels we provide.



## VISIBLE

We will be more visible across our communities, both face to face and virtually, and put in place additional opportunities for the public to give their views on local service delivery.



## FAMILIAR

We will ensure our policing service is familiar to the public so that our communities are able to know the names of their local officers and how to contact them so they can raise any concerns with their neighbourhood officers directly. We will promote our full range of services so that our communities are aware of the many ways they can access support, advice and services.



## ACCESSIBLE

We will ensure that our services are accessible and wherever possible we will tailor our engagement to meet the needs of diverse communities. We will ensure access to Wiltshire Police digitally through the national online website platform, enabling the public to access a range of interactive police services in one place.

# OUR FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

## INFORM



- We will keep our communities up to date with local issues, priorities and performance as well as telling them how they can get more involved in helping us to cut crime in their neighbourhoods.
- Our communities also need to know the different ways they can access policing services or play their part in supporting policing within their community (for example through volunteering, careers, intel submissions etc).

## ENGAGE



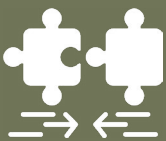
- We will equip officers and staff with the tools, equipment and training to engage and consult more effectively and consistently with communities at a hyper-local level. This will develop higher levels of trust, knowledge, understanding, legitimacy, influence and respect.

## LISTEN



- We will listen to what the public tell us are the issues that matter most to them, so services can be provided that are responsive to the needs of local communities.
- Communities should also feel confident in challenging the level of service they are receiving if they do not feel it has met the required standard.

## INVOLVE



- We will encourage participation and involvement to develop 'active citizenship' – working in a collaborative way with our communities to build relationships, solve problems, make improvements and support recruitment of officers, staff and volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

## EMPOWER



- We will empower the public and our stakeholders in appropriate areas of decision-making through direct involvement such as being a member of an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) or scrutiny panel.

# PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DELIVERY



## RESPONSIVE

- Being proactive in our approach wherever possible
- Consulting on topical issues - for example Violence Against Women and Girls
- Being consistent and professional in all of our interactions with our communities.

## INSIGHT LED

- Listening to our communities and using their feedback to develop our policing model
- Use evidence and data to support planning and activity
- Reviewing what we do and learning from it so we can improve the way we engage with communities in the future
- Seek to improve engagement with need to reach groups and under-represented communities by having a better understanding of our demographic make-up.

## TRANSPARENT

- Proactively publish our performance around issues that matter to our communities (for example officer misconduct, stop and search data etc.)
- Ensuring balance in our communications - both celebrating our achievements and acknowledging where we need to do better
- Publish the findings of surveys and tell communities what we have done based on what they have told us.

## TARGETED

- Direct our engagement activity to the right people, at the right time, using the right channel
- Make our content as good as it can be in order to maximise reach and engagement with our communities
  - Engage with our internal and external stakeholders to help us achieve our strategic objectives.

## ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE

- Provide a range of accessible channels for our communities to engage with, both on and offline
- Ensure our content is accessible - complying with relevant legislation and guidance
- Break down barriers that prevent our communities from engaging with us (for example providing translation of documents).

## EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

- Build our range of channels to enable us to reach communities where they are - for example new social media platforms
- Develop online services that align with the needs of our communities.

## COST EFFECTIVE

- Ensure good value for money in the way we engage with the public
- Invest in the channels that are most preferred by our communities
- Work together with other partners and public services where we can to ensure efficiency.

## WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Work with partners (including other police forces, other public sector and emergency services, local authorities, third sector organisations etc) towards a shared goal of protecting communities and building a better place for people to live, work and visit
- Ensure close and regular working with the OPCC (in particular with regards to surveying of the public around trust and confidence issues).



# OUR VALUES

The National College of Policing Competency and Values Framework (CVF) aims to support all policing professionals. It sets out nationally recognised behaviours and values, which provide a consistent foundation for a range of local and national processes. This framework ensures that there are clear expectations of everyone working in policing which in turn will lead to standards being raised for the benefit and safety of the public.

This framework is underpinned by four values:

## PUBLIC SERVICE



As individuals and as part of a wider organisation, we have a responsibility to ensure that we act in the best interests of society as a whole. Improving the safety and wellbeing of the public underpins all that we do. We constantly think about how to create the best possible outcomes for those we serve and we take personal responsibility for delivering these. We show resilience and determination to overcome barriers and to provide the best outcome. We are dedicated to work in the public interest, engaging and listening to their needs and concerns. We work to make sure that the public feel valued and engaged, which helps to build confidence in the police service. We are respectful to the needs and concerns of different individuals and groups.

## TRANSPARENCY



We are transparent in our actions, decisions and communications with both the people we work with and those we serve. This ensures that we are honest and open in our interactions and decision making. We are genuine with those we communicate with and endeavour to create trusting relationships. We accept feedback and are comfortable in responding to criticism and finding ways to improve. We build trust with our colleagues, partners and communities by being open about what we have done and why we have done it and by keeping our promises so communities can rely on us when needed.

## IMPARTIALITY



As a police service, we must show impartiality throughout all our dealings with colleagues, partners and members of the public by being unprejudiced, fair and objective. We consider different sides of a situation and ensure that each side is given equal consideration. We do not favour one person or group over another, acknowledging that discrimination increases feelings of unfairness and makes our jobs harder to do. We must not allow personal feelings, beliefs or opinions to unfairly influence our actions in any situation. We assess each situation based on its own merits ensuring we are fair and consistent in our actions. We are clear in our rationale for the decisions or actions we take ensuring they are clear and evidence based.

## INTEGRITY



We understand and reinforce expectations of professional behaviour and openly recognise good and bad performance. We maintain the highest levels of professionalism, making sure that we always uphold the values and ethical standards of the police service. We need to build and maintain confidence with the public, colleagues and partners if we are to deliver a modern and effective police service. Doing the right thing is about becoming a role model and upholding public trust.

# WHO WE ENGAGE WITH

In order to successfully achieve the objectives of this strategy, Wiltshire Police will aim to engage and work with a wide range of partners and stakeholders.

The below outlines some of the main groups and individuals who will be crucial in terms of developing and delivering activity underpinning this strategy.

## Our officers, staff and volunteers

We will work closely with our officers, staff and volunteers, particularly those within our Community Policing Teams, supporting them in engaging with their audiences in a consistent and planned way.

## Community volunteers

Our engagement with community volunteers will include groups such as Watch schemes, Independent Advisory Groups and other voluntary groups who help to provide vital support, local scrutiny and advice to policing.

## Communities

Our engagement activity will focus on members of public within our local communities, and will also be broken down in to specific target demographic groups, such as transient communities, young people, need to reach groups, for example.

## Partners and stakeholders

There are a broad range of partners that we need to work with to support a whole-system approach to community issues. These range from residents associations, parish councils, community groups and local businesses through to multi-agency groups such as Community Safety Partnerships and the Local Resilience Forum. In addition, we will engage with local key opinion formers, such as MPs and Local Councillors.

## The media

The current day media landscape extends from more traditional local, regional and national organisations through to influencers, commentators and citizen journalists. They all play a crucial role in amplifying our messaging and creating a narrative around policing.

## Scrutiny and oversight

There are a number of groups and organisations that Wiltshire Police works with to provide reassurance to communities around our standards and performance. These include local bodies such as the Police and Crime Panel to national organisations including the College of Policing, Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services, Independent Office for Police Conduct and the National Police Chiefs' Council.

# HOW WE ENGAGE

This strategy focuses on the delivery of engagement activity through a number of key strands, as detailed below.



## NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Engaging and working with our communities is critical to the concept of policing with consent. Neighbourhood policing is the bedrock of operational policing and therefore our frontline teams need the tools, equipment and skills to support them in understanding the make-up and needs of their communities so that they can effectively engage with them.
- Teams will be equipped with the tools to develop consistent and planned engagement through an engagement toolkit, which will be accessible to all our officers and staff.



## ONLINE

- Advances in technology and wider access to the internet, social media and other digital channels provides a number of opportunities to engage in two-way conversation with the public on a range of policing issues. It is also changing the way that policing services are accessed by the public. It is important therefore that we continue to maintain, develop and improve our channels for digital engagement so that we are able to meet public expectations, warn and inform our communities and reach as broad and diverse a range of communities as possible.



## NEED TO REACH GROUPS

- Need to reach groups are those who are traditionally less likely to be engaged with by policing. There are a number of reasons why this may happen – some of these relate to barriers that may make engagement with these groups more difficult (for example, language, culture, history, or other accessibility issues) and some are down to the choice of the group in question (for example negative encounters with policing or other public authorities in the past may have led to lack of trust in these bodies).
- Because these groups rarely articulate their views on policing, they are also known as 'less visible, 'hidden' or 'seldom heard' communities. Building and maintaining relationships and trust with these communities is vital as they can often be amongst those who are most impacted by policing policy and practice. Their views are therefore crucial.



## RECRUITMENT

- In order to maximise effectiveness, trust and confidence, the demographic make-up of the Force must reflect and be representative of the communities it serves as well as attracting the very best people possible. Therefore, the attraction and retention of people across policing roles (whether paid or voluntary) is critically important.



## PARTNERSHIP WORKING, SCRUTINY AND OVERSIGHT

- The range of partners and stakeholder groups that interact with policing has arguably never been broader. Likewise the importance of working in partnership has never been greater.
- A crucial element of engagement is to facilitate and encourage scrutiny from third parties. The long term benefit of being open, transparent and receptive to feedback (both positive and negative) is clear in terms of helping to build and maintain public trust and confidence.
- Seeing scrutiny as an opportunity is a critical component of developing a high performing organisation but it is not enough to simply have scrutiny mechanisms in place – there needs to be transparency in terms of the outcomes of these interactions too.



# TOPICS OF ENGAGEMENT

The priority for delivery under this strategy will be local engagement with our communities communities. There are also other areas that impact on policing at a national level that we address with our activity as it has the ability to impact our communities.



## HYPER LOCAL

- This is the core of our activity and includes the day-to-day work carried out by our Community Policing Teams in raising awareness of and responding to matters of importance to our communities. For example, there may be a spate of farm machinery thefts in a particular rural community or instances of 'cuckooing' by county lines drug gangs operating in one of our towns. Activity is centred on meeting a specific community need.



## GENERAL LOCAL

- These are the priority areas for our Force that impact all our communities. For example road safety issues from an operational perspective or increasing the diversity of our workforce through Positive Action. It will also include force wide campaigns and events.



## NATIONAL

- There are a number of issues that impact policing at a national level. Whilst our community make-up may be very different from other larger forces, the issues that impact are similar – for example Violence Against Women and Girls, Modern Slavery, drug related crime.
- We have an important role to play in educating our communities on these important issues so they can be aware of how they can help prevent crime, protect themselves or report concerns. They will also have a greater understanding of the complexity, scale and scope of modern policing and the competing demands placed upon forces.



# EVALUATION

Evaluation is a valuable tool which will allow us to learn from our engagement experiences and help inform our future approach.

There are two main ways we can approach evaluation:

## QUANTITATIVE

This method relates to the number of people we engage with and what impact our engagement activities have had on them.

## QUALITATIVE

This method is about understanding the narrative of any feedback and helps us in understanding the 'why' around any particular effective or ineffective activities.

We will ensure that evaluation measures are in place both at an overall organisational level and at local level through our Community Policing Teams (CPTs) to help evaluate and measure the success of our engagement work.

For example, through methods such as:

- Regular liaison with our CPTs
- Focus groups, consultation and surveys
- Digital analytics (local social media and online channels)
- Direct contact with the public
- Media coverage
- 'Formal' contact opportunities within communities (such as beat surgeries)
- Liaison with local teams regarding public sentiment in their area

Where our engagement activity is aimed at long-term change, our evaluation activity will be carried out through regular monitoring.



# WILTSHIRE POLICE



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