



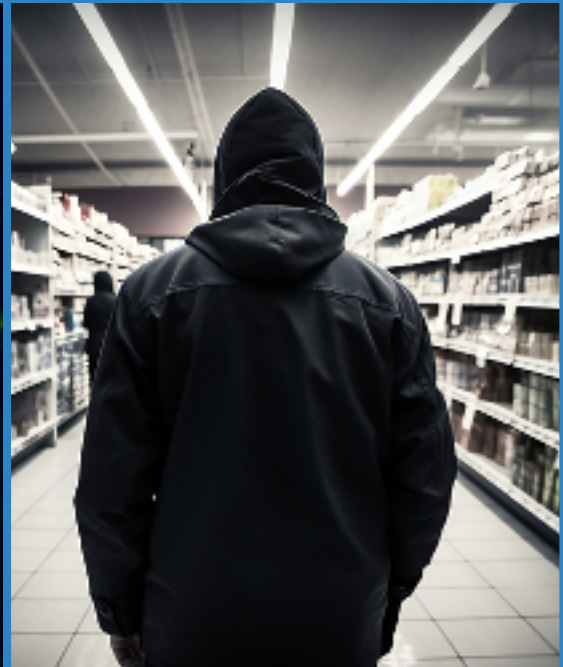
**Matthew Barber**  
Your voice in  
Thames Valley



# PROTECTING THAMES VALLEY

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES | PROTECTING PEOPLE | PROTECTING PROPERTY

**2024 MANIFESTO**  
**MY PLAN FOR A SAFER THAMES VALLEY**



# Foreword

I am proud of the work that has been achieved since I was first elected as Police & Crime Commissioner in May 2021. We have a record number of police officers and key crimes such as burglary are down significantly since before the pandemic.

Serving the public as PCC is a huge privilege and I am passionate about making our communities safer. I have driven forward work such as Op Deter to help tackle knife crime, seeing significant reductions in knife-enabled offences and Thames Valley being recognised as one of the safest parts of the county.

Over the last year I have pushed for increases in neighbourhood policing and improvements in tackling retail crime. We are starting to see the benefits of this work on our streets with more police and more criminals charged; but there is more work to do.

That's why I am asking for your support to back my plan to make Thames Valley safer on Thursday 2nd May.



# Thames Valley Police Snapshot



**MORE POLICE OFFICERS THAN EVER BEFORE**

**OVER 5100** NEARLY 600 MORE THAN IN 2010



**RECORD FUNDING FOR THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

**£584M** 2024/25



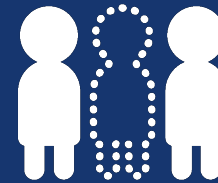
**SHOPLIFTING CHARGES UP**

**134%**



**SOLVED CRIME UP**

**11%**



**MISSING PEOPLE FOUND**

**4547**



**KNIFE CRIME DOWN**

**-13%**



**ALL CRIME DOWN**

**-1.8%**



**INCIDENTS ATTENDED**

**121366**



**BURGLARIES DOWN**

**29.2%**



**VIOLENT CRIME DOWN**

**-3.3%**



**DOMESTIC ABUSE ARRESTS UP**

**27%**

# Protecting Thames Valley

This plans sets out some of the key ways in which I will seek to work with the police, the public and other agencies to protect Thames Valley.

Thames Valley Police is the largest non-metropolitan police force in the country and covers one of the most economically productive parts of the country. Yet we still see significant risks across our increasingly diverse population.

Thames Valley Police will serve all residents, seeking to make every community safer by reducing crime and creating a more resilient society.



**The nature of crime and our expectation of the police have changed - and no doubt will continue to do so.**

**This Police & Crime Plan sets out the areas I will be expecting the Chief Constable to focus on over the coming years, as well as identifying work for the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner with other agencies such as local authorities.**

**It is not an exhaustive list of activity but set outs clear priorities on behalf of the public.**

**This document also covers a number of enabling areas of activity that will be important to delivering the overall goal of reducing crime and keeping the public safe.**

# Protecting Communities

It is too easy to seek to judge effective policing simply by the number of arrests made or by the car chases and dramatic body worn video images that often make for exciting television. At the core of British policing however - since its inception in 1829 - is crime prevention.

This is the mantra that must run through everything we seek to achieve in Thames Valley to keep people safe.

Of course charge rates, arrests and visible policing remain important, but they are the means to an end, rather than the end in itself, which is a community where we can all feel safe as well as actually being safe.



Many of the biggest concerns the public have are not related to serious crime. Anti-social behaviour does not always even have a direct victim, but it can make whole communities feel unsafe. Some of those who pose the greatest risk on our roads often do so through recklessness and negligence rather than criminal intent. Enforcement is important in all of these areas, but the police cannot act alone. Local authorities, schools and of course

all of use as individuals, can and must play a significant role in tackling these issues.

Confidence in policing and the safety of the society we live in really matters. Even in low crime areas, perception can create fear that has a real impact on people's lives. In a social media age the challenges are greater than ever, but the need to build confidence also becomes more important than ever before.

## Crime Prevention

The last of the Peelian principles of policing is a general instruction, "to recognise always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them."

Crime prevention should be core to the work of Thames Valley Police and I will work with public and private sector partners to support both short term and long term crime prevention initiatives.

**Measure: Continued reductions in key crime types**

## Neighbourhood Policing

Visible neighbourhood policing is not important simply to reassure the public, but to ensure the Force become more proactive in fighting crime.

Continued support for neighbourhood teams, building on my Crimefighters strategy published in 2023, I will ensure the police are more accessible to the public by improving reporting and putting more officers into proactive neighbourhood policing roles.

**Measure: Increased PCs and PCSOs in neighbourhood roles**

## Road Safety

Publishing and supporting the delivery of a Road Safety Strategy that better links Roads Policing with the work of highways authorities.

Improving data sharing in order to focus on those areas and issues that present the greatest risk to road safety and seeking to prevent incidents by supporting changes to the road environment. Making better use of technology and ensuring flexibility within Roads Policing to respond to local concerns.

**Measure: Reduced the number of people killed and serious injured**

## Anti-Social Behaviour

Many of the issues of concern raised by residents fall below the criminal threshold, yet we know that anti-social behaviour (ASB) can blight communities and - left unchecked - can often escalate into greater harm and criminality.

Whilst the police have a key role to play in tackling ASB, local authorities often have greater powers to deter and prevent. Increased support through the Partnership fund will strengthen this work.

**Measure: Reduced reports of ASB across agencies**

## Building Confidence

Policing by consent is central to the model of policing in the UK. Recent incidents, a rapidly changing society and the rise of social media all present challenges for the police.

Work must continue to improve communication between the police and the public they serve.

Changes to the police complaints system will increase accountability and a wider range of people will be recruited to assist in the governance of the police.

**Measure: Increased levels of public confidence**

# Protecting People

Although the likelihood of any of us being a victim of serious violence or of a serious sexual offence remains low, the impact can destroy lives.

In order to protect people from the most serious offences we will seek to prevent crime in the first place; relentlessly pursue criminals who pose a threat to others; and support victims to guide them through the criminal justice system and rebuilt their lives.



The police are the only people who can arrest dangerous people and present them to prosecutors in order to protect others. Whether it is domestic abuse, those who carry knives on our streets or predatory sex offenders online that action is vital.

The identification and pursuit of persistent offender is key, as is wider education and prevention, particularly in the world of domestic abuse where we know that child victims and

witnesses of abuse are more likely to go on to be perpetrators themselves. Similarly those who carry weapons with the misguided justification of protection are much more likely to end up being victims themselves.

As well as dealing with individual offenders we must seek to break these cycles in order to see a generational reduction in sexual and serious violence.



## Rape and Sexual Offences

Continuing to support the police, criminal justice partners and victims services to support those who are subject to some of the worst crimes imaginable.

The dedicated RASO Superintendent role within the police has brought clarity and focus to this area with efforts to improve investigations and work closely with the CPS to improve the charge rate.

A relentless focus on perpetrators will help to prevent future offending.

**Measure: Improved charge rates for RASO offences**

## Domestic Abuse

One of the highest volume crimes dealt with by the Force; I will continue to support the police to protect victims and improve data sharing to reduce the risks to others.

Continuing to support victims' charities and working more closely with local authorities to ensure equitable coverage of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) as well as seeking to establish Family Drug & Alcohol Courts (FDACs) across Thames Valley.

**Measure: Improved outcome rates for Domestic Abuse**

## Night Time Economy

Whilst the biggest risk to women is sadly from people they already know, one of the greatest concerns is the risk on a night out.

Expanding the excellent work of Project Vigilant I will work with local authorities and venues to ensure our town and cities remain safe place for people to enjoy themselves.

Focusing on perpetrators the police will seek to reduce drugs, violence and sexual offences in the night time economy.

**Measure: Reduced offending and more interventions**

## Serious Violence

Levels of serious violence in Thames Valley are some of the lowest in the country and the Force has been recognised for its work in reducing homicide, but the devastation serious violence, particularly knife crime, can bring is huge.

I will continue to support the excellent work of Op Deter and Op Deter Youth which has seen big reductions in knife crime; as well as working with other agencies through our Violence Prevention Partnership.

**Measure: Continued low levels of serious violence and homicide**

## Abuse and Exploitation

A more connected world, both physically and digitally has brought huge benefits, but has also increased the risk of abuse and exploitation.

The risks are online, through the sharing of indecent image, or contact abuse committed to order; as well as the *real world* dangers of criminal and sexual exploitation on our streets, particularly linked with county lines drug gangs. Education, prevention and prosecution are all needed to tackle the risk.

**Measure: Increased safeguarding of those being exploited**

# Protecting Property

In recent years the police have focussed resources - for some understandable reasons - on high harm offences. As reflected in this plan those crimes of serious and sexual violence are hugely important and remain a focus for attention; however more traditional, acquisitive crimes remain a real concern for the public.

Although crimes such as burglary are at historically low levels and have fallen since before the pandemic; the impact is significant and public confidence is undermined if the police are not seen to tackle these issues.



Thames Valley Police have a good record of reducing the levels of burglary; the Rural Crime Taskforce have begun to have a real impact in isolated communities and the Retail Crime Strategy is showing signs of a strong start. Nevertheless there is more to be done.

We must redouble our efforts in these areas, ensuring that concerns about vehicle crime are addressed. More visible,

proactive neighbourhood policing teams will help to deter and detect criminals in these important areas.

Traditional policing will however not be adequate to tackle the growing risk of cyber crime and fraud, yet it is one of the biggest challenges we face. I'll continue Investment in specialist resources to bring criminals to justice but prevention is once again the key in order to stop people from becoming victims.

## Residential Burglary

Whilst burglaries remain incredibly low in Thames Valley the impact of an offence on a family can be massive.

That is why burglary must still be prioritised in order to keep crime levels low and to reassure the public.

All residential burglaries will continue to be attended and the response times to these crimes will be monitored.

Through the police working closely with the CPS the charge rate will also be expected to rise.

**Measure: Continued low levels of burglary and more charges**

## Retail Crime

Delivering on the **Retail Crime Strategy** published in early 2024 will see both the levels of recorded crime and the charge rate rise.

In the short term the increase in recorded crime will indicate increased confidence from retailers, before we would hope to see offences start to reduce over time.

Recognising that there is significant risk to shop workers as well as the financial loss caused by retail crime.

**Measure: Short term increased in offences, more arrests & charges**

## Vehicle Crime

Vehicle crime may not just be about the loss of the car or van, but often valuable or important contents. These offences can leave victims feeling vulnerable as well as out of pocket.

A renewed focus to tackle organised crime groups and improving the tactical response to prevent and detect offenders.

Working with vehicle manufacturers to improve vehicle security as new technology has created new risks.

**Measure: Reductions in the levels of vehicle crime**

## Rural Crime

The Rural Crime Taskforce have made a huge impact in reducing crime and building confidence. Over the next financial year they will see their numbers almost double, allowing them to continue proactive policing across Thames Valley.

Important work must continue to increase crime prevention measures, both with the public and manufacturers and to work with all parts of the criminal justice system to understand the risks these offences pose.

**Measure: Reductions in the levels of rural crime**

## Cyber Crime and fraud

One of the biggest risks to us all is cyber crime and fraud, yet it is not generally top of the list of public concerns and it is difficult for individual police forces to tackle

We will continue to support the Central Fraud Team, but also increase investment in education and crime prevention to reduce the risks.

Working with partners nationally we will seek to improve the wider response to cyber crime and fraud by all agencies

**Measure: Levels of cyber crime & fraud; increased prevention activity**

# Enablers

Delivering on the priorities set out in this Police & Crime Plan will require investment and improvements in all areas of the policing and partner agencies. Whilst we strive to maximise the number of police officers serving the public in Thames Valley - particularly in neighbourhood policing - there is also the need to invest in support services and the staff that provide them. Although not exhaustive, the areas listed below highlight key enablers that will require attention from the OPCC and Thames Valley Police in order to deliver the wider strategy.

## Support for Victims

The new operating model for Victims First will improve the breadth and quality of support for victims of crime.

This is in addition to the support for the voluntary and charitable sector.

Working with other commissioners will see a more comprehensive offer for victims across Thames Valley.

## CCTV Partnership

The foundations of the Thames Valley CCTV Partnership have already been laid, but continued support and investment are needed to both expand the coverage to more areas and to fully embed and exploit the technical benefits that can come from a more modern, integrated system.

## Improving public contact

The police are expected to deliver continued improvements to the 101 non-emergency service as well as improving the online offer.

Fully exploiting the benefits of the Victims Portal and continuing to explore the future use of social media for reporting incidents.

## Better data sharing

Working with other strategic leaders in Thames Valley to improve data sharing between agencies and the public. Particularly making full use of the potential benefits of Thames Valley Together.

Exploring improved processes for disclosure in areas including domestic abuse and firearms licensing.

## Early intervention in schools

Reviewing the range of interventions by the police and the OPCC to create a clear strategy for early intervention.

Developing clear messages - for parents as well as children - about the risks faced by young people.

Consistent messages to all families in Thames Valley

## Improving criminal justice

Working through the Local Criminal Justice Board with organisations such as the CPS, prisons, probation and the Courts Service to support partner agencies in reducing backlogs in the criminal justice system, improving charge rates and reducing reoffending.

# Strategic Policing Requirements

1. Violence against women and girls
2. Terrorism
3. Serious and organised crime
4. National cyber incidents
5. Child sexual abuse
6. Public disorder
7. Civil emergencies

# National Crime & Policing Measures

1. Reduce murder and other homicide
2. Reduce serious violence
  - a. Hospital admissions of u25s for assault with a sharp object
  - b. Offences involving discharge of a firearm Police recorded
3. Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
  - a. Drug-related homicides
  - b. Police recorded Police referrals into drug treatment
4. Reduce neighbourhood crime
  - a. Burglary, robbery, theft of and from a vehicle, theft from a person
5. Improve satisfaction among victims, with a particular focus on victims of domestic abuse
  - a. Satisfaction with the police among victims of domestic abuse
  - b. Victim satisfaction with the police
6. Tackle cyber crime
  - a. Confidence in the law enforcement response to cyber crime
  - b. Percentage of businesses experiencing a cyber breach or attack

# COMMON SENSE POLICING MAKING THE POLICE CRIMEFIGHTERS AGAIN

**MORE POLICE OFFICERS  
THAN EVER BEFORE**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
POLICING DOUBLED - WITH  
MORE TO COME**

**SAVING LIVES ON OUR  
ROADS WITH BETTER  
ENFORCEMENT**

**KEEPING WOMEN SAFE IN  
OUR PUBLIC SPACES**

**IMPROVING CCTV ACROSS  
THAMES VALLEY**

**A ZERO-TOLERANCE  
APPROACH TO KNIFE CRIME**

**TACKLING SHOPLIFTING IN  
PARTNERSHIP WITH  
BUSINESSES**

**PREVENTING CYBER CRIME  
AND FRAUD**

**IMPROVING 101 CALL TIMES**

**VISIBLE LOCAL PATROLS**





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March 2024

# STAY IN TOUCH

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**MATTHEW BARBER**  
MORE POLICE, SAFER STREETS



**POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTION - THURSDAY 2 MAY**