# Ambitious plan unveiled to boost community safety across Thames Valley and Sussex



**Ambitious Plan Unveiled to Boost Community Safety Across Thames Valley and Sussex**

**Mathew Barber, Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, Announces Comprehensive Safety Initiative**

Thames Valley, UK - A strategic plan aimed at enhancing community safety and reinforcing criminal justice has been unveiled for the Thames Valley region, covering Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Milton Keynes. The initiative, spearheaded by Matthew Barber, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the area, is focused on three key areas: protecting communities, safeguarding individuals, and securing property.

"As police and crime commissioner, it is my job to be the voice of the public in policing and to ensure that the policing needs of local communities are met," said Barber. The new plan builds on the commitments he made during the recent PCC elections, emphasising a strong stance on neighbourhood policing, combating anti-social behaviour, counteracting violence against women and girls, and establishing a "hostile environment" for criminals operating in rural and retail spaces. “I will now hold the chief constable to account on the delivery of this plan, turning commitments into action and ensuring common-sense policing that is proactive in fighting crime,” Barber added.

**Thames Valley Police Chief Constable Expresses Commitment to the Plan**

Supporting the initiative, Thames Valley Police Chief Constable Jason Hogg commended the comprehensive nature of the plan. "The plan provides a clear vision to protect everyone across the Thames Valley," he stated. He outlined that the efforts of officers and staff focus on reducing anti-social behaviour, combatting violence against women and girls in all forms, and rebuilding trust and confidence in the policing system. Hogg emphasized that the newly announced plan aligns closely with ongoing work within the force to meet these objectives and more.

**Sussex Police Focus on Combatting Violence Against Women and Girls**

Parallel efforts are taking place in Sussex with a particular focus on addressing the troubling issue of violence against women and girls (VAWG). The National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) has labelled this a "national emergency," highlighting that between 2022 and 2023, VAWG accounted for 20 per cent of all police-recorded crimes. Responding to this critical issue, Sussex Police instituted the Complex Domestic Abuse and Stalking Unit, recognised for its significant contributions by the National Police Chiefs’ Council and College of Policing Awards.

Sussex Police are harnessing community partnerships to tackle early signs of criminal behaviour and protect young people. Collaborations with organisations such as Barnardo's and YMCA WiSE focus on improving online safety for young people and engaging Sussex universities in supportive initiatives for students.

**Dedicated Efforts to Enhance Safety in Sussex**

Detective Chief Superintendent Richard McDonagh, head of public protection at Sussex Police, highlighted the intricate nature of VAWG, asserting that a cohesive, multi-agency approach is required to address the underlying problems effectively. "We understand the devastating impact of VAWG on victims and our communities, given greater emphasis by the NPCC’s latest statistics. I want women and girls to feel safe in Sussex, in public and in private, and we will continue to do all we can – alongside our partners - to protect them," said McDonagh.

Deputy Chief Constable Maggie Blyth, also the deputy CEO of the College of Policing and NPCC lead for VAWG, stressed the urgency of addressing this issue nationwide. "Violence against women and girls is a national emergency. We are absolutely determined to turn the tide on violence and abuse faced by women and girls and will continue to work tirelessly to do better for victims. Improvements must be driven nationally, ensuring consistency from force to force to give victims the service they expect and deserve," said Blyth.

**Call for Reporting and Collaboration**

In Sussex, the police encourage victims of crime to report incidents online, via 101, or through emergency services by calling 999. Both regions are heavily invested in bolstering community safety and criminal justice, committing to operational strategies that ensure increased vigilance, preventive measures, and robust actions against criminal activities.

The new plans reflect a concerted effort by law enforcement agencies to create safer environments for all residents, encapsulating a broad spectrum of community safety and protection measures across the Thames Valley and Sussex regions.

## References

* <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/your-pcc/> - This link corroborates Matthew Barber's role as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, covering Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Milton Keynes.
* <https://www.reading.gov.uk/crime-and-safety/readings-community-safety-and-serious-violence-strategy-2023-2026/> - This link supports the initiatives focused on community safety, including combating violence against women and girls, and the alignment with Thames Valley’s Police and Criminal Justice Plan.
* <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-fund/> - This link explains the Community Fund managed by the PCC and Thames Valley Police, which supports community and voluntary groups in preventing crime and keeping communities safe.
* <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/your-pcc/> - This link details Matthew Barber's background and his commitments as the PCC, including his focus on neighbourhood policing and combating anti-social behaviour.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Barber_(politician)> - This link provides information on Matthew Barber's political career, including his roles as Leader of the Vale of White Horse District Council and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.
* <https://www.reading.gov.uk/crime-and-safety/readings-community-safety-and-serious-violence-strategy-2023-2026/> - This link outlines the Community Safety and Serious Violence Strategy for Reading, which includes efforts to combat violence against women and girls and other community safety initiatives.
* <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/your-pcc/> - This link explains the role of the PCC in holding the Chief Constable to account and promoting community safety, aligning with the new plan's objectives.
* <Note: There is no direct link provided in the sources for Sussex Police's specific initiatives. However, general information on police strategies can be inferred from the context.> - While there is no specific link for Sussex Police's initiatives, the context suggests a focus on combating violence against women and girls, which is a common theme in police strategies.
* <https://www.reading.gov.uk/crime-and-safety/readings-community-safety-and-serious-violence-strategy-2023-2026/> - This link supports the multi-agency approach to addressing community safety issues, including the involvement of various partners and agencies.
* <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-fund/> - This link highlights the importance of community partnerships in tackling crime, which is a key aspect of the new safety initiatives.
* <Note: There is no direct link provided in the sources for the National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) statistics on VAWG. However, the context indicates a national focus on this issue.> - While there is no specific link for NPCC statistics, the context emphasizes the national importance of addressing violence against women and girls.