

29 Jan 2024

PCC says operational priorities set by Chief Constable are working as residential burglary and violence decreases



Police and Crime Commissioner Philip Wilkinson has said that significant decreases in recorded instances of residential burglary and violence across Wiltshire are testament to the 'dedication and focus' of officers and staff on the ground.

Clear operational priorities were set by Chief Constable, Catherine Roper last year to improve the Wiltshire Police response to burglary, violence and to make safer public spaces.

According to the latest report from the Office for National Statistics issued this week - Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2023, residential burglary, violence, and drug offences in Wiltshire all show a significant decrease on the previous 12 months.

Decreases were seen across the board for violent and sexual offences:

- A five per cent decrease in violence against the person
- A decrease of eight per cent in violence with injury
- A decrease of five per cent in reported sexual offences

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is currently working to reduce serious violence by working with partners including: the Wiltshire and Swindon Youth Commission to engage with young people and their families, as well as securing Safer Streets funding which is used for projects including more street lighting and extra CCTV.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson said: "I'm really pleased to see the operational priorities set by the Chief Constable and the proactive policing from dedicated and focused officers, staff and volunteers on the ground has been reflected in this report.

"But while these statistics paint a positive picture, it's our communities that are really feeling the effects and residents tell me that they aren't feeling the impact of this progress, and we must now bridge this gap.

"My office is ensuring all key stakeholders are working together - through the work of our Serious Violence Duty Co-ordinator – to develop a serious violence strategy for the county and commission specialist services to prevent serious violence and knife crime, with the core focus of making Wiltshire safer."

Following the introduction of the burglary team last summer to help target prolific offenders, investigate series offences and out of force offenders who travel to Wiltshire to commit crime, the county has recorded a drop of 12% in residential burglaries.

Alongside proactive policing and enforcement to tackle burglary the Force have also committed to attend 100% of all reported residential burglaries and improving the service that victims receive.

These decreases in recorded crime reflect Chief Constable Catherine Roper's operational priorities of tackling Violence, Burglary and creating Safer Spaces.

Reflecting on the latest statistics, Assistant Chief Constable Mark Cooper said: "It is clear that Wiltshire Police continues to face high demand in a range of areas, however I cautiously welcome the statistics which appear to support the positive progress that has resulted from renewed focus on tackling the most serious crime types.

"Our Chief Constable, Catherine Roper, has been very clear about her operational priorities of tackling violence, burglary and safer public spaces and as an organisation we are steadfast in our determination to meet this challenge.

"We are determined to continue building from this foundation, working closely with partnership organisations, with the support and scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner Phillip Wilkinson - to address the broader issues that fuel criminality.

"Protecting the community and prioritising victims underpins our decision making and we are constantly reviewing our approach through oversight, engagement, and reflection to best serve the people of Swindon and Wiltshire."

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