



Local Policing Community Charter

All policing begins and ends in a neighbourhood.



Together we can and will make our communities safer and stronger and protect people from harm.

The concepts of neighbourhood and community will mean different things to different people. However, there remains that very real, place-based experience of shared surroundings and interests for those who live and work as neighbours, and with it a shared desire to be safe, and feel safe.

Our ambition is to provide a local policing service of which you, and we, can be proud. Prevention will be at the heart of our work, through well-informed collaborative problem-solving, building participation with and strengthening the links to the communities we serve. We will remain part of those communities, known and accessible to you, and policing in a way that both prevents harm and enhances your trust in us.

All of our officers and staff have a significant part to play in the service we deliver in your neighbourhoods. But policing is too important a task to be left to the police alone, and we recognise the enormous amount of strength in our communities. We will strive to involve you as citizens, and uphold the tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police.

Rachel Jones

Assistant Chief Constable Local Policing and Operations



West Mercia Police will focus on its three core priorities: Safer Homes, Safer People and Safer Roads. To help achieve success, we will enhance links with local people, while playing our part in the broader effort to tackle the concerns and challenges facing society.

We recognise that in spite of the changing nature of crime and demand for policing, globalisation and the growth of the internet, the effects are always felt by real people in real places.

We will use all the assets, skills, technologies, partnerships and people available to us to keep you safe in your neighbourhood, in your homes and on the roads.

Within this charter, we will outline how we will use our range of different assets, such as our patrol officers, criminal investigation departments and our operations department, to respond to emergencies, investigate crime, develop and analyse

intelligence, prosecute offenders, examine crime scenes and much more besides.

All functions will contribute towards tackling the force's priorities. We will also provide bespoke local, neighbourhood policing to the people and communities of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire.

West Mercia Police is committed to neighbourhood policing, which remains firmly at the heart of the organisation and is fundamental to our effort to protect people from harm. This charter reinforces further our commitment to West Mercia Police's core priorities: Safer Roads, Safer Homes and Safer People.

It has been built in consultation with our staff, our partners and our communities.

It is shaped by six key themes which will underpin all areas of our service:

- a) **Visibility & accessibility**
- b) **Responding to our communities**
- c) **Prevention**
- d) **Vulnerability**
- e) **Relationships**
- f) **Partnerships**





a) Visibility & Accessibility

Our Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) are based locally. They undertake the more traditional 'local policing' role within communities, including engagement, problem solving and dealing with longer term local issues.

Our structures and processes will offer greater visibility on our roads and in our communities and improved accessibility through dedicated, identifiable, knowledgeable and connected SNTs.

We will:

- Focus on persistent problems affecting people in our counties
- Dedicate problem-solving time to tackle core problems in every parish
- Prioritise a sense of local ownership by officers who are known to you
- Let you know who is policing your neighbourhood and what they are doing
- Increase our roads policing capacity to ensure we can enhance the safety on our road network.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that our contact centre offers all available methods to contact us, via the telephone, our website or various social media platforms

- Ensuring that there is a dedicated, named, neighbourhood policing team made up of police constables (PCs) and police community support officers (PCSOs) for your area, who will continue to work to understand local issues and provide consistency in your area
- Ensuring that the teams are led by a named sergeant and inspector, dedicated to their roles
- Ensuring that your SNTs' photographs and contact details, including mobile phone numbers, are accurate, up-to-date and easily accessible via our website and on social media platforms. This will enable you to contact the teams directly when they are on duty
- Promoting what we are doing in your local community, providing up-to-date information about policing in your neighbourhood on the West Mercia Police website*, on social media, via traditional print and broadcast media and in your community via clear, easy to read posters
- Modernising how the public access our officers and our services at our main police stations, developing more universal digital provision
- Being available to meet with you in key public spaces and in your communities through our engagement vehicles, at least once a week across each of our five Local Policing Areas (Herefordshire, North Worcestershire, Shropshire, , South Worcestershire and Telford & Wrekin)
- Advertising our teams' availability with the use of A-boards placed outside our stations to show

when we're in and available to help

- Attending local district or parish council meetings virtually or in person. The frequency of this will be proportionate to the size of the local community served, as agreed with the chairs or clerks, to report publicly on policing performance, answer questions and take away any problems or concerns you raise
- Engaging and agreeing a contract with each local district and parish council to provide consistent, timely, informative and good quality updates. The frequency will be proportionate to the size of the local community served, as agreed with the chairs or clerks
- Ensuring that our teams are regularly visiting and are visible and accessible within school settings
- Implementing a new Neighbourhood Alerts System to share information in a way that suits you, and to enable you to sign up to tailored neighbourhood alerts and updates
- Attending a range of agreed larger scale public events within your county, where we will set up and staff a West Mercia Police stand to engage with our communities, offer advice and listen to your concerns.

* Dependent upon Nationally agreed amendments to Single Online Home

Social media

Recognising the enduring use of traditional print and broadcast media, we will also enhance our use of social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to further improve our communications with all our different communities. Engaging proactively across our communities through our active involvement in the National Digital Youth Engagement Programme will also allow us to better engage with, safeguard, update and inform younger people across our force area.



b) Responding to our communities

We will use the most effective methods to understand key concerns across the wide range of our urban and rural communities, and feedback about the issues that most impact on them. We will make sure that we are able to respond both proactively and reactively to issues and update communities, keeping people informed and updating them on what work is being done to tackle the issues raised.

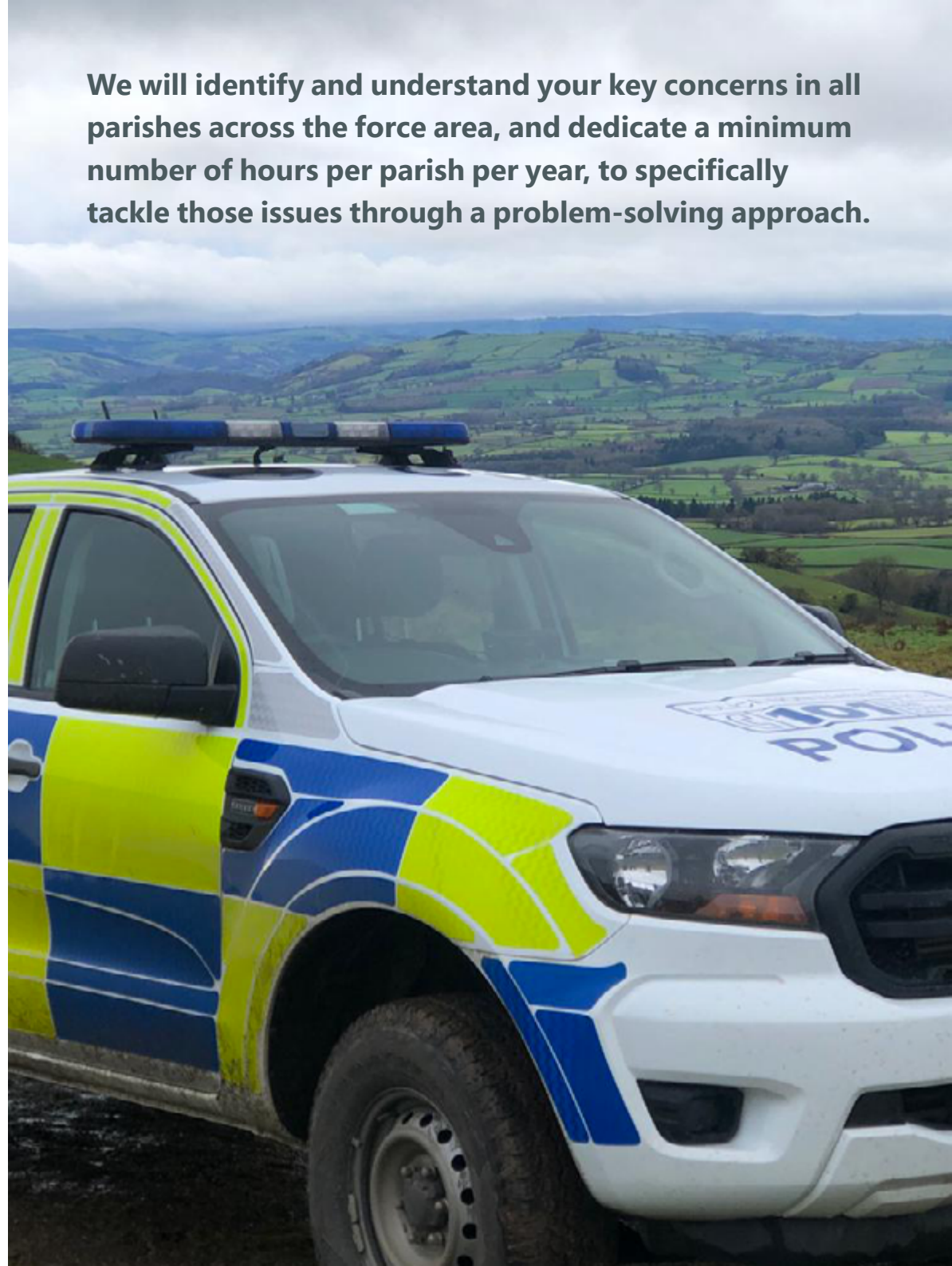
We will:

- Seek to utilise all available means of communication to ensure that we fully understand the issues that impact you and your communities
- Engage with a wide and varied cross-section of our communities to ensure that we are tackling the issues which the majority feel are of most concern.

This will be achieved by:

- Undertaking surveys and arranging drop-in sessions to hear concerns directly from local residents
- Focussing effort on engagement with harder to reach communities and with those who would not necessarily feel comfortable engaging with the police
- Responding to feedback and written correspondence efficiently, with suitable timeframes agreed with the writer
- Liaising closely with MPs and unitary and parish councillors to deal directly with concerns from constituents
- Harnessing the power of social media and the internet to seek views from the local community
- Utilising all forms of media and communication means to ensure that communities are kept as up-to-date as possible on policing activities in their area.

We will identify and understand your key concerns in all parishes across the force area, and dedicate a minimum number of hours per parish per year, to specifically tackle those issues through a problem-solving approach.





c) Prevention

The prevention and reduction of crime and harm on our roads, in our homes and across our communities will be embedded in everything we do. Our local teams will work with communities and partners, supported by our specialist departments, to undertake primary, secondary and tertiary prevention through a consistent problem-solving approach.

We are committed to tackling recurrent and connected problems in communities, and working proactively with those communities and partners to prevent them taking root in the first place.

We will:

- Work with communities, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector to prevent crime, harm and anti-social behaviour through a consistent problem-solving approach, supported by the Problem Solving Hubs based in each of the five Local Policing Areas
- Use innovative, evidence-based practice to intervene as early as possible
- Focus on repeat victims, repeat locations and repeat offenders to reduce the recurrence of problems that affect our communities.

This will be achieved by:

- Utilising our established, innovative Problem Solving Support Team** and our locally based Problem Solving Hubs to consistently adopt nationally recognised effective practice, prevent local problems developing and tackle established issues effectively and swiftly
- Expanding our team of locally based problem solving police constables to focus on early intervention and prevention with children and young people, and to deal with emerging community problems with our partners at the earliest opportunity
- Ensuring that our staff are trained and skilled in identifying the complexities of harm and vulnerability, and use an evidence-based problem-solving approach to everything they do
- Developing a consistent framework to analyse problems, intervene effectively to tackle them and evaluate the impact of the response
- Preventing organised crime groups from becoming established in communities and relentlessly disrupting them where they have
- Identifying and providing supportive interventions to the most vulnerable within our communities.

**PSST – A small team of officers and staff dedicated to reducing crime, vulnerability and anti-social behaviour through proactive preventative approaches, early intervention and innovative problem solving.

d) Vulnerability

We will focus on our priorities of Safer People and Safer Homes, ensuring that we identify the vulnerable and target our response and resources at communities where the risk of harm is the greatest, thus affording the greatest priority to our most vulnerable people.

The nature of communities and the crimes which affect them has changed and continues to change. Our population is ageing, and the growth of the internet has led to a globalised society where people have fewer interactions with their communities than previously. There is also a greater awareness of the hidden threats that face people living within our neighbourhoods, such as the exploitation of children and adults, domestic abuse, organised crime and radicalisation.

Our investment in police officers whose role will focus on early help and intervention will ensure that we can better work with partners to intervene quickly and proactively where any vulnerability is identified. We will develop more sophisticated data to enable us to better identify vulnerability and to better track the impact that our interventions will have in reducing it.

We will continue to refine and enhance the support that our established Victim Advice Line offers to vulnerable victims, improving and sustaining referral rates and ensuring that referrals lead to enhanced support for victims of crime when they most need it.

We will:

- Ensure that we adopt a trauma-informed approach and with partners, recognise and support those who have suffered adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- Afford the greatest priority to the most vulnerable people in society
- Police bases within our neighbourhoods where harm is hidden, as well as public places where it is most visible
- Target our response and resources at the locations where the risk of harm is greatest.

This will be achieved by:

- Using sophisticated intelligence and analysis to identify the threats facing our communities, not simply those which are highly visible, but also those which are hidden
- Ensuring that our Safer Neighbourhood Teams develop a thorough understanding of the most vulnerable people in their areas
- Using our Victim Advice Line team to best support vulnerable victims through help, signposting and practical support
- Effectively and consistently identifying and managing those people who cause recurring harm to those around them
- Focusing with our partners on things that make people vulnerable and intervening early to prevent them.



e) Relationships

Our Safer Neighbourhood Teams will continue to build strong relationships with communities to prevent and address problems. We police by consent and to maintain that consent, we will remain connected and part of the communities we serve.

We recognise that socially inclusive and well-connected communities are safer places to live and as part of them, the police are well-placed to support their communities to work together in positive association to make change happen.

We will:

- Focus on the strengths of our diverse communities and support the growth of cohesion within them
- Engage local people to prioritise persistent problems which cause the most harm and build the participation of local people in addressing them
- Listen to what communities say about us and act on what we hear
- Be honest with you and not create expectations that we cannot fulfil.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that our neighbourhood policing staff are all trained to deliver a comprehensive problem solving approach to deliver excellent solutions alongside their partners and communities
- Ensuring that our PCs and PCSOs understand and are known at the key places within their neighbourhoods, such as town and parish council offices, schools, community centres, doctors' surgeries, care homes and places of worship
- Building up the profile and value of our police staff volunteers, our Special Constabulary and our police cadets so they can help us to reach out to our communities even more effectively
- Investing in community-based watch schemes, such as Neighbourhood Watch, Rural Watch, Horse Watch and Community Speed Watch, which allow people in communities to look out for each other
- Ensuring that we maintain a robust and diverse Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and custody lay visitor scheme on every Local Policing Area
- Ensuring that we promote and support ride-along schemes where members of the public can join our officers and experience first-hand some time on a shift.



f) Partnerships

The police have primary responsibility for preventing and detecting crime, and keeping people safe from harm within our communities and on our roads. However, we don't always hold all the relevant information about the nature and causes of the problems affecting communities, nor the powers or means to solve them. As those problems become more complex and diverse, so the need for creative collaborative solutions to address them becomes more vital.

We will work together with all our partners to drive a better understanding of our communities and the issues they face, and to deliver collective solutions and better confidence in our policing services.

We will:

- Align ourselves closely with other partners and third sector agencies and look to co-locate resources where possible
- Harness the collective resources of partners and communities to provide a sustainable approach to reducing crime and harm and improving road safety
- Share information effectively to keep people safe and seek information from others to further this aim.

This will be achieved by:

- Working closely with public safety partners to provide the most cohesive and effective response to issues wherever and whenever the opportunities arise
- Reviewing our data-sharing agreements so that we always 'dare to share' within the boundaries of the law
- Using innovative analytical tools to draw together data, integrate our knowledge and make better decisions
- Participating fully in the counties' multi-agency partnership forums, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnerships, the Serious Organised Crime Joint Agency Group – a multiagency partnership group designed to address serious and organised crime - and the Local Safeguarding Boards.

These six core areas form the basis of our neighbourhood policing charter for the communities of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire.

Metrics and measurement

This charter will be reinforced with a set of metrics by which we will be able to measure the force's progress against each of the six core areas set out.

Our Teams

The teams who will deliver this charter include:

Safer Neighbourhood Team inspectors will be the senior managers responsible for a geographical area which will encompass a number of individual SNTs. They will be the coordinator of core activity and the individuals tasked with ensuring that they and their teams work closely with communities and other partners to ensure effective delivery of this charter. They will be visible in their local communities to improve confidence and understand issues on a local level.

Safer Neighbourhood Team sergeants will be dedicated to supervising the SNTs. They will provide continuity of direction to local PCs and PCSOs on a daily basis to address the most important issues, and ensure that strong relationships exist between their officers and local people. They will be visible and accessible, ensuring that the local community knows who they are.

Safer Neighbourhood Team PCs will be dedicated to neighbourhood policing within their team. They will deliver sophisticated problem-solving to prevent harm in communities based on a thorough

understanding of local strengths, and use their warranted powers proactively to tackle local threats, demand and vulnerability.

Safer Neighbourhood Team Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) will be aligned to our SNTs. Together with our PCs, they will be our most familiar faces, tackling issues of concern in communities, maintaining a consistent personal connection with local people and building sustainable links between them.

Special Constables will provide an additional and valued capability to solve problems in communities. They will provide a highly visible presence through well-informed patrol and enforcement activity which tackles prevalent issues of local concern.

Police cadets will assist other neighbourhood officers in engaging with communities at events and playing an important role in preventative initiatives and campaigns. They will enhance our relationships with young people across our communities, while developing their own skills and self-confidence.

Police volunteers will be a crucial link between communities and the police, sharing information and broadening the involvement of citizens in policing through initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch and Community Speedwatch.

Our other specialists will operate in neighbourhoods, sometimes recognised and sometimes not, but all in the common mission of protecting our communities from harm. This diverse and skilled workforce includes our response officers, detectives, roads policing units, dog handlers, child protection specialists, covert teams and firearms officers, all of whom will provide the additional comprehensive support to our Safer Neighbourhood Teams when needed.