



Police and Crime Plan Priority: Rebuilding Community Policing

Title: Rebuilding Community Policing

Presented by: ACC Drover and Supt Inglis

Purpose of paper

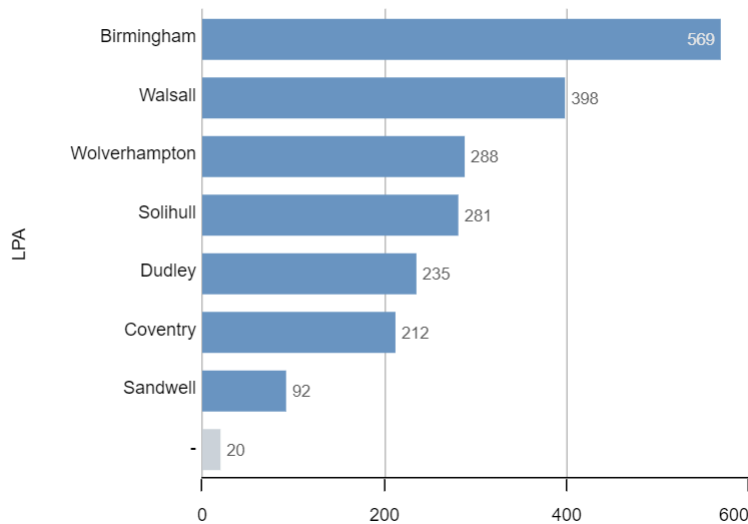
1. This paper will provide an updated position for a number of individual commitments as set out in the wider Rebuilding Community Policing priority within the Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2025. There are five commitments that are currently rag rated as amber and an updated position and future ambition will be set out for each.
2. **WMP will improve its ability to capture officer and staff activity to track and report engagement**
 - 2.1 One of the most important aspects of neighbourhood policing for all communities is the ability to see police officers and PCSO's in their locality, know where they can meet them to discuss local issues and also understand where those officers have been working on behalf of them as a community.
 - 2.2 By being both visible and accessible, neighbourhood officers can inspire confidence in communities as they will feel listened to and informed, especially when activity happens around them but they have not actually seen it take place.
 - 2.3 Therefore it is vital that that police leadership teams can see what type of engagement is taking place, in what manner, who is being engaged with and where, by each and every member of their neighbourhood teams.
 - 2.4 In taking this commitment forward West Midlands police (WMP) have taken an approach that ensures there is clear data available that is up to date, detailed and clear, allowing leadership teams to fully understand not only the engagement that is taking place, but also where there are opportunities for improvement.

- 2.5 In order to achieve this it was important to utilise a technical solution that was both efficient and effective. To deliver against that ambition a dashboard has been built by the force Data Driven Insights Lab that allows for instant access to data that shows exactly where officers have been undertaking engagement activity across their neighbourhoods.
- 2.6 Once this dashboard was built, utilising the engagement tracker functionality in the force Neighbourhood Alerts system (known externally as WMNow) all staff are able to quickly and accurately provide details of all their engagement activity, which is then imported directly into the dashboard.
- 2.7 They simply fill in an app on their mobility device which records a range of details regarding the location, type and method of engagement, along with details regarding who has been engaged with.
- 2.8 Examples of how this is then presented can be seen below:

This first chart shows the number of engagements undertaken by each local policing area across the force. In the dashboard itself, you can click on each bar and it will take you into a further page that shows the breakdown for each neighbourhood team across the respective LPA, then a further breakdown for each individual officer and PCSO on those teams.

Data since recording started in July 2025

Number of Engagements per LPA



When looking at the data, it can be seen that whilst there are some similarities in terms of output, there are also some disparities, certainly when looking the difference between the areas of Sandwell and Wolverhampton, which are similar in terms of staffing, community size and makeup.

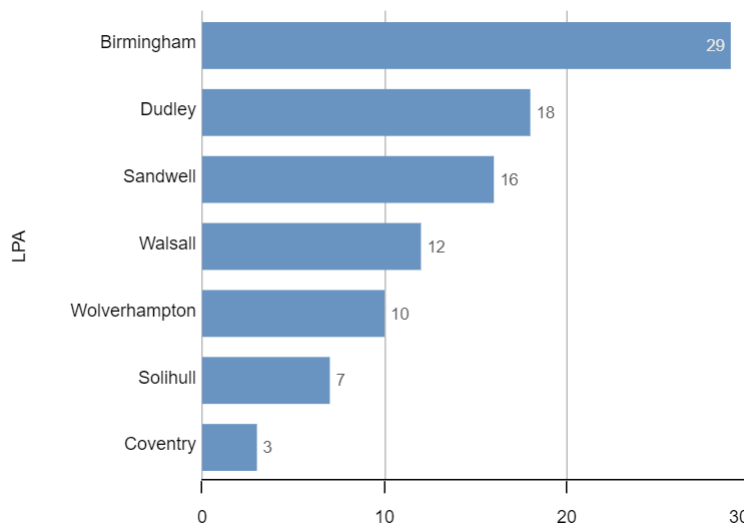
Further investigation into this has identified that whilst there had been similar levels of engagement in Sandwell as Wolverhampton, officers had not been as quick to recognise the need and understand the method of recording it within the WMnow app.

This was discussed at a recent Local Policing Governance board meeting – where all Neighbourhood policing performance is assessed and managed – and activity put in place through training and awareness raising has seen the position improve significantly.

This can be seen from the data below which is just one week of engagement output and shows the revised position.

Data for the week commencing 29th September

Number of Engagements per LPA



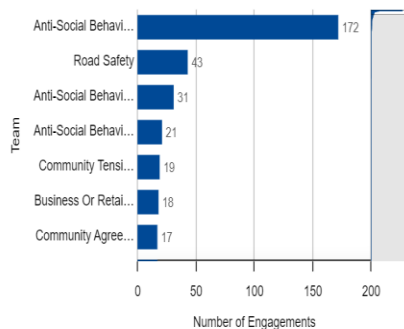
2.9 It is important to note that the data will show specific public engagement activities that have been planned and published or communicated out to the community. However, In addition to this officers and PCSOs carry out many more 'day to day' engagement activities such as targeted patrols, partnership meetings, enforcement and scene management activity, all of which contribute to the overall level of engagement in their communities.

3 Types of Engagement and Reach

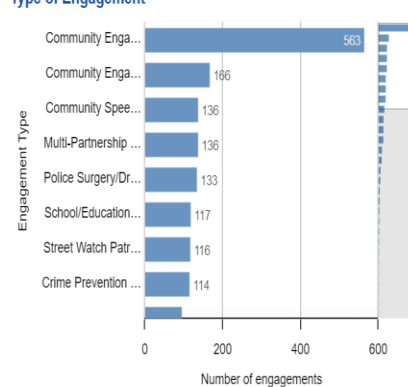
3.1 When it comes to engagement activity, it is also important to know the type that has taken place and which members of our communities we have reached – especially those that are often seen as hard to reach. The data within the dashboard provides this level of detail as well as can be seen below:

Priority Group

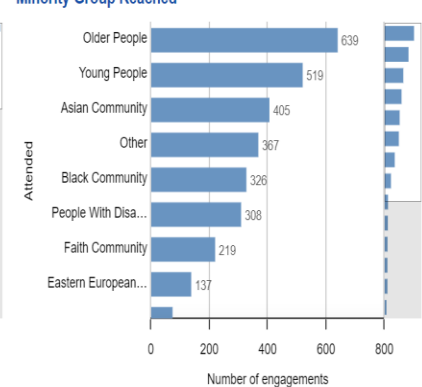
The total number of engagements recorded in WMNow between 25/11/2024 and 06/10/2025



Type of Engagement



Minority Group Reached



- 3.1 The data above is provided by each officer after who recorded it using the app – which then feeds directly into the dashboard. It is important to note that members of the public are not required to provide details of their age, race etc. it is based on the officer recording an assessment of who they engaged with at the particular meeting, event etc.
- 3.2 By having such data it provides the neighbourhood management team, as well as the officers themselves, an opportunity to see the range and breadth of the issues being discussed and addressed as well as the engagement methodology used.
- 3.3 This in turn allows for an informed position to be gathered regarding the overall approach taken by each team, ensuring the engagement is representative, relevant and intelligence based – across each and every neighbourhood in the force.
- 3.4 Finally, in addition to the above, such detailed information, presented in a clear format also provides an opportunity for 'engagement gaps' to be identified and filled, wherever they appear, right across the force.

4. Community Confidence

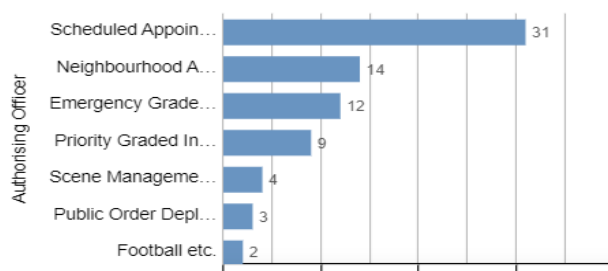
- 4.1 Sharing such data with the community in a clear and coordinated fashion can potentially bring about an increase in confidence as outlined above. Due to this, whilst relatively new, the dashboard is due to be rolled out live across the whole force in the next couple of weeks, ensuring that clear detail is available to all officers regarding the level of engagement that has taken place across all communities.
- 4.2 Offices of all ranks will be able to present data to the public that brings together all the engagement that has taken place in their area, providing reassurance at ward, neighbourhood, sector and LPA level.

5. Neighbourhood officers and police bases will remain located within the communities that they serve

- 5.1 One of the main reasons that officers are diverted out of the communities they serve is to undertake response duties or investigations that stop them undertaking engagement, problem solving and targeted activity in their neighbourhood. This is generally referred to as being 'abstracted' and such abstractions have been a key area of focus for the organisation since the start of the year.
- 5.2 The starting point for this activity was the need to create and publish a clearly defined abstraction policy. This was completed in February 2025 and has recently been reviewed and updated (17th October) to ensure it works in tandem with the new neighbourhood policing operating model.
- 5.3 The abstraction policy not only set out what an abstraction is and is not but also gives clear direction on the need to reduce abstractions for dedicated neighbourhood officers and PCSOs, thus improving the amount of time they remain in their local area dealing with local issues.
- 5.4 The next stage was to build an app in order that officers could record whenever an abstraction takes place, including the authority level, reason for the abstraction, where they were abstracted to, how long for and other data related to each and every abstraction undertaken. This was built by the data insights lab and has been in use since the 27th July.

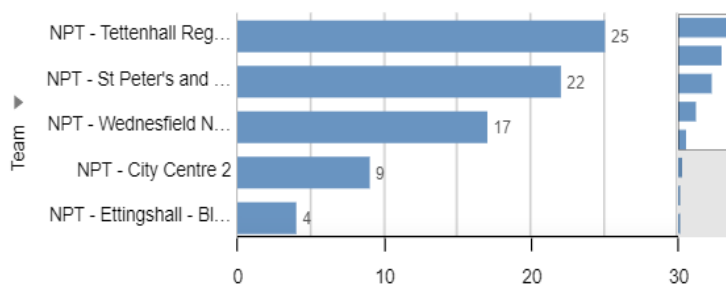
- 5.5 It was then important that every abstraction was fed into the neighbourhood policing performance dashboard in order that the collective position across every LPA was understood, right down to individual officer and PCSO level.
- 5.6 This was achieved in August and since that time all senior leaders have been able to fully understand each abstraction across their local command - the first time this has been possible. It is of course a key requirement that all officers report the abstraction so that they can be counted. However, there is a real incentive for officers to do so as being abstracted is a real concern for them and it provides an opportunity for them to demonstrate it accurately to their senior leaders for the first time.
- 5.7 The next step was to ensure that there was a governance process in place to firstly benchmark the level of abstractions taking place and then set improvement objective criteria for the local area commanders. The first part of this process took place at the Local Policing Governance Board in September with the ACC for Local Policing holding LPA commanders to account and setting out objective criteria.
- 5.8 Now that a benchmark has been established, moving forwards there will be activity at operational, tactical and strategic level, using the newly established mechanisms to take all opportunities to retain DNOs and PCSOs within the communities they serve.
- 5.9 It is important to note that in addition to the DNOs and PCSOs within each neighbourhood, each sector also has a team of neighbourhood Local Action Team (LAT) officers who fully support all neighbourhood policing activity. These officers are a more flexible team who can move more fluidly to address hotspot and targeted activity when it occurs and provides full support to the ASB and problem-solving activity being driven by the DNOs and PCSOs.
- 5.10 Please see below examples of the data now available that is used as management information to understand abstractions and drive activity by leaders.

Type of Abstractions



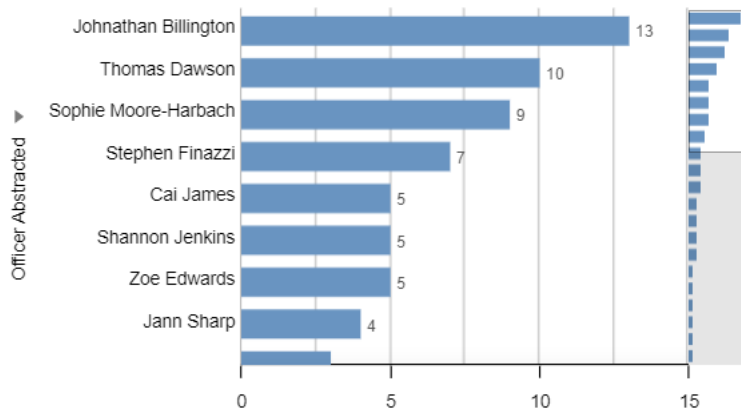
Number of Abstractions per Teams

The number of abstractions per team, calculated via form submissions over the time period 21/09/2025 and 19/10/2025



Number of Abstractions for Officers

Switch between Authorising and Abstracted Officer



All of the blue bars in the graphs can be clicked on for further detail regarding the specific abstraction, allowing for a full understanding of the level and detail of abstractions at all levels and locations across the local policing area.

6. Neighbourhood Police Officers remain in their roles for as long as possible

- 6.1 A common feature of the feedback received by police forces right across the country is the concern communities have with how often officers move off their local area, making it really difficult for them to build a relationship with them and address local concerns
- 6.2 West Midlands police have taken measures to improve the position on this issue in recent months as it is recognised the damage this can cause to community confidence.
- 6.3 Firstly, as reported recently, every ward across the force now has officers that have taken on the newly defined Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer (DNO). All officers undertaking these roles will be in post for a period no less than two years and all officers are made aware of this prior to undertaking the role.
- 6.4 In addition to this, as part of the new modernised neighbourhood policing model, LPA Commanders are aware of direction from the ACC Local Policing that there to be no vacancies held in DNO roles at any time across the force.
- 6.5 It is recognised that there will be natural moves for promotion / retirement etc. within the DNO cohort, however the policy position is that these posts will be instantly filled with staff from the LAT establishment, ensuring there is continuity in the DNO role at all times. In addition, there is a requirement for a full handover to take place prior to any new DNO officer being appointed.
- 6.6 This combined approach (minimum period of tenure and zero vacancy rate, will not only allow for real relationships to be made with residents, partners and businesses, but also provide an opportunity for officers to complete the 2 year Neighbourhood Policing Pathway accredited training qualification – of which a large proportion of the syllabus is focussed on community engagement.

6.7 Due to the new role and approach only being introduced in June of this year, it is too early to define the performance position for this particular area of business, however it will be reviewed on an annual basis via Local Police Governance board.

6.8 In terms of a baseline, each ward across the force has a DNO and also named PCSOs and this is the position that will be compared at the first review. The review will not only confirm there is the same or additional amount of officers in place, but also who the officers are, to ensure that the continuity that the new approach seeks to achieve is being delivered.

7. **Neighbourhood policing activity is targeted towards people and places according to need.**

7.1 The need to focus neighbourhood policing activity in key locations and against specific individuals is a vital component of all targeted activity within neighbourhoods and is governed and managed in a number of ways.

7.2 Firstly, each LPA has a senior leader led monthly or bi-weekly multi agency vulnerability / neighbourhood policing meeting that brings all key stakeholders and wider partners together.

7.3 At that meeting, force intelligence and analytical data is presented that relates to a number of arenas such as repeat and high risk ASB victims, high demand locations (Hotspots), areas of knife crime, serious acquisitive crime and ASB, as well as repeat and high harm offenders. By focussing on the offenders who cause the most harm as well as the locations that are causing the most demand, policing activity has the best possible chance of being reducing and preventing crime in a manner that is both efficient and effective.

7.4 At the meeting a review of current targeted activity is considered along with wider cross agency perspectives on what is working well and how best to collectively target each area and individual in order to drive down crime, demand and harm. Performance outputs from these meetings and subsequent activity undertaken as set out by the chair is then held to account at a senior level via the ACC chaired Local Police governance board and Deputy Chief chaired Performance panel.

7.5 It is also important to note that as well as targeted activity in key locations (including patrols / enforcement / joint operations) and against persistent offenders, it is vital that reassurance activity is undertaken with vulnerable victims.

7.6 By targeting those who have suffered repeated or significant harm. Those victims simply seeing an officer on their street or them receiving a message to tell them they about the work taking place to keep them safe can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of such victims and improve overall levels of confidence in their local police.

8. **Targeted Guardian Patrols**

8.1 When it comes to more specific targeted activity that is focus on particular areas that are affected by knife crime, robbery and ASB, there is additional activity in place via the Targeted Guardian Patrols (TGP)

8.2 The Home Office Hotspot Grant Funding provides West Midlands Police with a supportive budget to undertake such patrols with £3.7 million provided for this performance year.

- 8.3 The WMP force area has a total of 84 Targeted Guardian Patrol (TGP) areas which includes the existing anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspot patrol areas. All TGPs including the ASB hotspots account for 2.2% of the WMP force area.
- 8.4 All 84 TGPs account for 20% of the relevant offences and 21% of harm across the force. Furthermore, the 84 TGPs account for 19% of knife crime across the force. The current ASB patrol areas overlap/intersect with 26 of the 50 violent crime TGPs.
- 7.10 These areas are the focus of our operational activity. Through a data driven methodology using over 2 years-worth of force data – supported by Home Office analytical oversight. WMP are required to deliver a minimum of 33,323 hours visible patrol over the 12-month period. Pro rata being 8,331 hours per quarter.
- 7.11 The WMP delivery model of patrol hours is split across two main methods. LPAs delivering TGP activity across the 50 TGP based on analytical schedule of patrol activity. The largest percentage of dedicated patrol activity is delivered through our proactive Guardian Taskforce teams, with hours of targeted patrol activity leading to many positive outcomes that impact on Knife crime, public place violence suppression, reduction of robbery (all types).
- 7.12 There is a revised automated recording mechanism that has been developed for the Task force patrol calculations. This has been refined to ensure accuracy of data collection. The remaining balance of hours comes from the scheduled hotspot patrols provided by local policing resources and additional patrols from local authorities into ASB hotspots.
- 7.13 The force has funded the expansion of a fifth task force team, that operational from mid-November 2025 and will increase the policing activity for WMP.
- 7.14 The final pillar of our methodology is funded problem-solving activity. Ensuring Local Policing Areas are fully utilising the scanning and analysis products (SYV POP Plans) provided centrally from the Guardian intelligence team, and that the funding is supporting activity in line with the grant agreement, and that meaningful response activity is being delivered to tackle the root causes of the various priorities, founded on the analysis of SYV POP products.

8. **Officers and PCSOs are deployed tactically to maximise and sustain their presence and visibility in the most high-need local areas.**

- 8.1 As outlined earlier in this paper, policing presence and visibility play a key role in overall levels of engagement within communities and can vastly improve community confidence. However, it is important that such visibility and presence is not only seen, but 'felt' by a community.
- 8.2 A key factor when it comes to that visibility and presence being felt is the ability – if desired – to actually speak to an officer or PCSO and discuss local issues or events, even if just for a few minutes as you go about your day. Also, if the community see officers and PCSOs repeatedly, as opposed to just once every now and then, the impact is far greater.
- 8.3 West Midlands police are committed to such repeated and consistent policing and in a manner that allows the public to see and speak to them and officers engaging in a professional yet friendly and supportive manner. There are a number of ways this is

currently being demonstrated and also ways in which this will be delivered and measured further still moving forwards.

8.4 As outlined earlier in this report, by using data and analysis we have identified a number of key areas right across the force which we refer to as Targeted Guardian Patrols. In addition to the update already provided it is important to note that in addition to being present on foot patrol in those locations and undertaking stop and search activities to prevent knife crime, officers are required to actively engage with the public, outlining why they are there and providing updates on key local events and issues.

8.5 By ensuring such engagement takes place on a consistent basis, in these specifically defined areas – including many town and city centres – we can see how West Midlands police is focussing their presence and visibility in the most high-need local areas.

9. **Operations Servator and Advance**

9.1 Another way to demonstrate how the force maximises opportunities to increase presence and visibility is via Operation Servator. This is a police tactic to disrupt criminal activity through unpredictable, highly visible police deployments using a range of policing resources.

9.2 It aims to deter criminals and terrorists while reassuring the public and uses specially trained officers who are able to identify signs of criminal intent and the program works with key partners and businesses to create a network of vigilance and provide reassurance to local communities.

9.3 West Midlands Police are active users of OP Servator tactics and regularly deploy a range of officers including uniformed and plain clothed officers, armed officers, police dogs and horses in key locations right across the force.

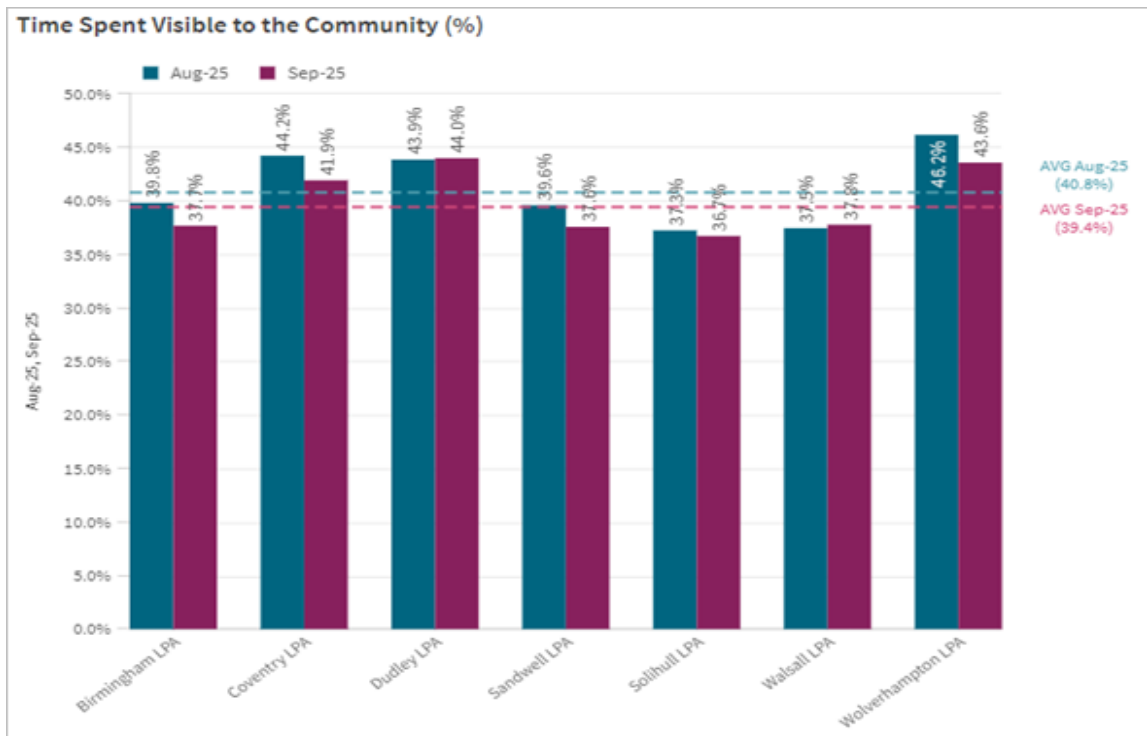
9.4 Op Advance is a further example of how West Midlands police use intelligence and data to ensure there is targeted presence and activity in key locations right across the force. The operation is focussed on a different local policing area each month and rather than using long term data and analysis such as that use or TGPs, the focus is on recent crime trends, disorder and up and coming threats to the community.

9.5 In a similar fashion to Op Servator though, the aim of the operation is to both target key offenders and locations and make proactive arrests of wanted suspects, whilst also providing a high visibility presence in the location throughout the day of action. Supported by a comprehensive communications plan, Op Advance activity complements that of TGP and Servator and contributes to the collective activity to provide presence and visibility in high-need local areas across the force.

10 **Visibility Data**

10.1 As well as the activity outlined above relating to high-need areas, for many people, they will not live, work or visit such locations on a daily or regular basis and so it is important in terms of overall trust and confidence that officers and PCSOs are present and visible in many other locations right across the force area – and at a time that is the most effective in terms of inspiring confidence.

10.2 The below chart shows the most recent levels of visibility across each Local Policing area for the last two full months. As can be seen there are similar levels across the force areas and also between the two months presented.



10.3 Whilst the variations across areas are small, it is important to outline why some of them may occur. An example of this can be when officers take positive action and arrest a suspect for a crime. When this occurs, they are then required to take them to a custody suite to book them in and then carry out an interview and subsequent initial investigation.

10.4 Such activity takes them from the streets and therefore such time is taken from their overall percentage score. In addition, further enquiries such as downloading phone data, reviewing CCTV, taking statements etc. all take the officer temporarily away from patrolling and being present in their community.

10.5 Of course such proactive activity is a key requirement of all police officers and the community would expect it to happen so it is to be encouraged, however the impact on the above data is important to note.

10.6 West Midlands police are taking positive steps moving forwards to increase the amount of visibility and presence in our communities using the new neighbourhood policing model and utilising the DNOs and PCSOs in such roles, whilst still driving arrest and enforcement opportunities via the LAT officers. Both will work together of course, but with less time spent away from the streets by the DNOs, increasing presence and visibility.

11 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee

- 11.1 The commitment to delivering against the 5 pillars of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is a fundamental part of the new neighbourhood policing model and has acted as a key factor in its design of having DNOs, LATs and PCSOs in place in a structured, coordinated manner.
- 11.2 The first two pillars identify the need to have named dedicated officers, locally based, available and visible in our communities. West Midlands police has supported this by having a DNO on every ward across the force, supported by PCSOs and LAT officers.
- 11.3 To support the need to ensure that members of the community can understand who those officers are, can access them and contribute to and understand the priorities being tackled, the force uses the Single Online Home (SOH) platform. The pages with SOH set out exactly who their local officers are – from Inspector to PCSO – which areas they are responsible for, where they can meet them and the local priorities being addressed, with local updates on all activity.
- 11.4 SOH compliance is measured each month at national level and WMP has had a 100% compliance rating since the measurement was first introduced in July 2025. This is a performance level that no other force in the region has attained and is higher than all but one of our most similar group (MSG) forces (with one of those forces also at 100%).
- 11.5 Such clear detail and access to information on who their local officers and PCSOs are, along with clear updates on where to meet them and regular updates on the priorities being tackled, shows how committed the force is to meeting the requirements of those first two pillars.
- 11.6 Pillar 3 of the NPG relates to officers undertaking professional accredited training in order to ensure they become a specialised professional department - being able to draw upon the most advanced tactics and research in neighbourhood policing as they deliver a local service.
- 11.7 The force has not only embraced this new approach, but was actually at the forefront of it by undertaking joint academic partnership work with Staffordshire University in order to design a new professionalisation programme, two years before the new national approach was introduced.
- 11.8 At the time of writing just under 50% of all neighbourhood policing officers (DNOs LATs and PCSOs) have successfully completed the first stage of the new accredited training programme (NPP1) with a trajectory of all officers having completed the course by the end of November 2025.
- 11.8 In addition to this, a number of subject matter experts have been identified from neighbourhood policing teams across the force, and have completed a specialist training course in readiness to deliver NPP2 the further two-year programme for all neighbourhood officers in 2026 / 2027.
- 11.9 Pillars 4 and 5 relate to police forces having clear plans in place to tackle town centre crime and ASB as well as there being a force lead in place to design, produce and deliver a force wide ASB action plan.

- 11.10 The recent Safer Streets Summer Initiative run throughout June to September this year and the positive returns sent to the Home Office outlining the wide range of positive action taken during the operation shows a firm commitment by WMP to support this pillar – now and moving forwards.
- 11.11 Town and City centres feature heavily in all of the operations highlighted above and additional DNO's and PCSOs have been identified and deployed in such locations as part of the new neighbourhood policing model. In addition to this, WMP is now preparing for a winter version of the Safer Streets initiative showing our firm commitment to supporting our towns and centres at all times of the year, not just during the warm summer months.
- 11.12 With regards to the ASB requirements of Pillar 5, an ASB lead officer has been appointed at Superintendent level and even though the ASB action plan does not need to be published until April 2026, a significant amount of joint police, OPCC and Local authority activity has already taken place with a draft plan already created.
- 11.13 The force and PCC will be well equipped and ready to have a publicly informed and clear plan in place to outline the clear commitment to tackling ASB in partnership, well ahead of the April 2026 deadline.