

Hertfordshire Policing Plan

2002 - 2003

Creating a safer
Hertfordshire



HERTFORDSHIRE
POLICE AUTHORITY

Everyone in Hertfordshire has the right to be safe and feel safe in their own homes, at work and at leisure. Hertfordshire is already one of the safest counties in the country but we are determined to make it even safer. It is not something we alone can achieve, but this Policing Plan shows what Hertfordshire Constabulary's contribution will be over the coming year to achieving that aim.

The priorities in the Plan reflect what concerns people most and include crimes such as burglary, drug-related crime and vehicle crime, which is Hertfordshire's biggest volume crime. Other crimes, such as robbery, domestic violence and racially motivated crimes, are included because of their seriousness and the impact they have on the victims.

One of the most common concerns raised by people throughout the county is about the lack of visible policing - something the Constabulary's new policing style aims to tackle. The Authority will be monitoring progress over the coming year, with the help of the targets set in this Plan.

Another new objective for 2002/03 is to increase overall detection rates. The Authority has been pleased with the low levels of crime but disappointed with the detection levels achieved in recent years. We expect improvements made to the way crimes are investigated and intelligence gathered and used to enable the Constabulary to meet its target this year.

Advances in technology will also play a major part in improving detection rates; DNA testing has become routine with a wide range of crimes, including vehicle crime. Towards the end of 2002, Hertfordshire takes on the new 'Airwave' communications system. This will significantly improve communications and safety for officers on the front line. Automatic signals will pinpoint the location of officers at all times, making it quicker to assign response units and to send assistance when needed. Handsets will also give direct access to centrally based computer information and be linked to the normal telephone network.

It will be a very challenging year for police forces across England and Wales, with increasing demands, a rising crime trend and the national Police Reform programme. Hertfordshire is also facing major recruitment and retention difficulties. A long-running recruitment campaign is beginning to pay dividends with up to 30 new recruits joining the Force every 6 - 8 weeks. This is helping to increase our numbers but, with a police officer taking two years to fully complete training, it is being offset in the short term by the loss of skills and experience of officers retiring or moving to other forces.

Tackling crime must be a partnership effort - we need the help and support of other agencies, organisations and, most importantly, communities in Hertfordshire. We value the support given by everyone and, in particular, by the many voluntary groups and organisations that provide help to the police and support to the victims of crime. Neighbourhood Watch, Victim Support, Crime Prevention Panels and many more are helping to make Hertfordshire a safer place for everyone.



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Peter Holland DL
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