

# **Safer in Kent Plan 2017 – 2021**

## **End of Term Report**

### **1. Introduction**

In 2017, the Kent Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner set out their priorities in a Police and Crime Plan, the 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan 2017-2021'. This sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner's vision and priorities for policing and community safety, as well as the objectives and ambitions that Kent Police will be held to account on.

The Safer in Kent Plan complements the joint Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities and in order to drive operational and long-term priorities for crime prevention, intelligence and enforcement, the Chief Constable sets out a Control Strategy each year. The Control Strategy is set out based on intelligence analysis, outlining key areas of policing. This currently being a focus on exploitation, abuse and sexual offences, serious violence, high harm crime and terrorism and domestic extremism. Child centred policing is a thread which runs throughout the heart of the Control Strategy, protecting those who are arguably the most vulnerable in our society. This report centres around the 6 priorities of the Safer in Kent Plan and provides headline figures and information relevant since the inception of the plan, demonstrating the delivery achieved during this time.

It is worthy of note that the performance outlined within this paper, is within the context of Kent Police undertaking significant savings, responding to rises in demand in an evolving crime landscape, and in the past year, operating within an unprecedented global health emergency. The force is still required to make ongoing savings and since 2010 this has amounted to more than £100m; during this period it has been vital to develop and invest in areas of vulnerability, visibility and contact. The Police and Crime Commissioner has supported the force's request to provide additional funding and the precept has been raised accordingly over past years which has allowed opportunity, breadth and expanse within the force. It is therefore testament to the hard work, determination and dedication of our committed workforce, that Kent Police has maintained consistency in its priorities of providing a quality service, putting victims and witnesses at the heart of everything we do, and to always do the right thing.

### **Put Victims First**

#### **1.1. Victim Satisfaction**

The force conducts three satisfaction surveys: Hate Crime, Domestic Abuse and Rape; not all satisfaction data sets are based on the same time period, therefore an explanation is provided for each respectively. The results of all the Force surveys are analysed and utilised as part of a continuous feedback, learning and improvement process, to ensure the quality of our service to victims and witnesses is first-class.

#### **1.2. Hate Crime Satisfaction**

The overall victim satisfaction for financial year to December 2020 is **79.4%**; this is a continuing increase on previous years, with 78.7% in 2019 and 74% in 2018.

Hate crime satisfaction is broken down into 4 elements:

- **Making contact** – 94.2% of victims were satisfied with the service received from the first person who initially took the details. This is an average 4.4% improvement on the previous 2 years.
- **Action taken** – 78.3% of victims were satisfied with the action taken by officers. This is an average improvement of 2.5% on the previous 2 years.
- **Kept informed** – 70.2% of victims were satisfied with being kept informed by officers which is an average 0.75% improvement on the previous 2 years.
- **Treatment** – 85.1% of victims were satisfied with the treatment by officers; this is an average decrease of 0.55% on the previous 2 years.

### 1.3. Domestic Abuse (DA) Satisfaction

The Overall Victim Satisfaction for those victims surveyed in 2020 is **87.7%**; this is an increase of 2.5% on the previous comparable 2019 period (85.2%). The following DA victim satisfaction data provides a breakdown of the specific areas surveyed:

- **Initial Contact** – 91.5% of victims were satisfied with the initial contact made by officers, this is a decrease of 2.9% (2019)
- **Action taken** – 90.1% of DA victims were satisfied with the action taken by officers, this is an increase of 2.9% (87.2% 2019)
- **Kept informed** – 81.0% of DA victims were satisfied with how they were kept informed of the progress of their investigation, this is an increase of 5.7% (2019)

### 1.4. Rape Satisfaction

The rape satisfaction survey was implemented in 2019, and there are two key elements based upon whether the victim felt that they had been treated with dignity and respect, and whether they felt they had been treated fairly throughout the case.

In the financial year to December 2020, **97.2%** of victims felt that officers treated them with dignity and respect which is an increase on the same period last year (97.1%).

In the financial year to December 2020, **87.7%** of victims (186 out of a total 212) were satisfied that they had been treated fairly throughout the case; this is a decrease of 4.9% on the same period last year where 92.6% were satisfied (126 out of a total 136).

Responses are recorded as Yes, No and Partly and Partly is included in the 'No' category.

On further analysis the proportion of 'No' responses increased from 5/136 (3.7%) to 14/212 (6.6%) which overall is a decrease of 2.9%.

In seeking to continually improve, the contextual data from these important victim surveys is now available within the force intranet, accessible to those responsible for the delivery of rape investigations to better understand the service victims have received. Rape satisfaction features in the key Force Performance Committee, which is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and meets on a monthly basis.

Overall, victims provided many positive comments about the service they received in both periods; many felt listened to, understood, and that officers were supportive and empathetic. It is also worthy of note that there has been specific and positive mention of the role that Sexual Offence Liaison Officers (SOLOs) undertake in supporting victims, as part of dedicated investment into this area.

### 1.5. Case File Quality Improvement

In December 2018, a systematic review of the Victim Justice Unit was undertaken to redesign the force's approach to casefile standards, providing an improved service to victims and witnesses and seeking the best possible outcomes. The key improvements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The introduction of an extensive Quality Performance Framework to inform the direction of travel and thematic areas of improvement which are monitored through the creation of a Victim Justice Board.
- Court Support Officers dedicated to quality assurance and transfer of remand cases to the CPS, resulting in **100%** of remand case submissions on time, compared to only **8%** in December 2018.
- The creation of a Casefile Allocations Officer has seen improvements in timeliness for both GAP (**92%**, compared to 6% in December 2018) and NGAP (**87%**, compared to 0 in December 2018) cases.
- Investment in two in-house Training Coaches has professionalised the delivery, knowledge, understanding and skills required of Case Worker functions and provides consistency in supporting and developing staff.
- Consistent operating practices and policy for Local VJUs.
- The development of an interactive assistance tool (Atlas) to guide investigators through each stage of case building has been unanimously well received and a milestone in the improvement of file quality.
- Successful implementation of 'Egress' and 'Evidence.com' to facilitate the transfer of digital evidence between Police and CPS, and enhanced knowledge and understanding of Disclosure using examples provided by CPS colleagues.

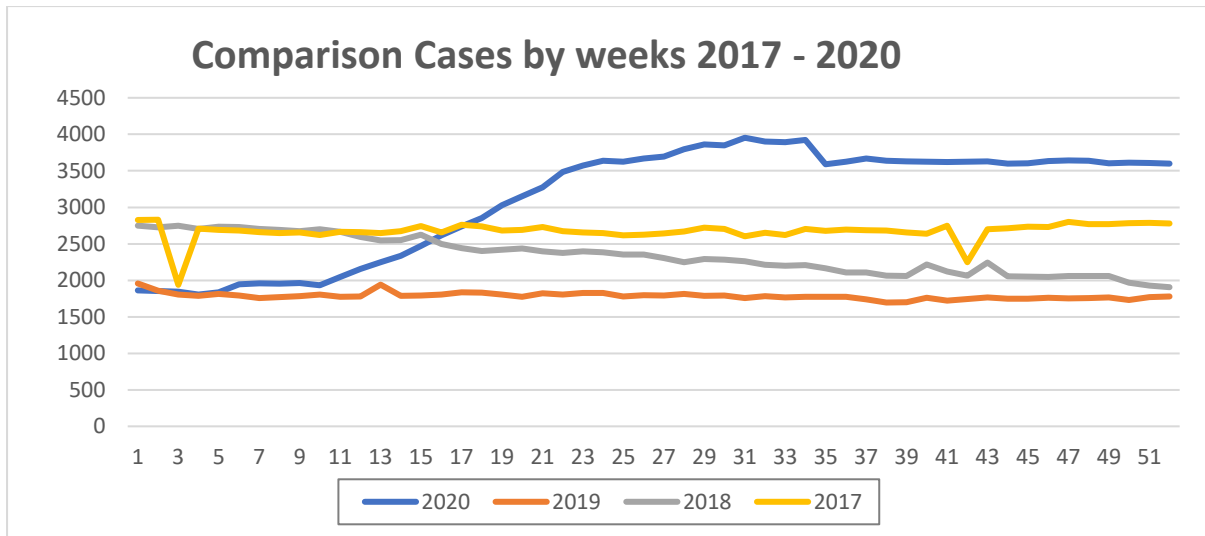
Through the hard work and dedication of the Victim Justice Leadership Team, the Victim Justice Unit staff and the Change Team in support, this significant redesign has led to the following outstanding performance, leading to an enhanced service to victims overall:

	<b>Dec 2018</b>	<b>Jan 2021</b>
Caseworker Quality Assurance (CQA) Error rate	56% - Ranked 44/44	11.2% - Ranked 3/44
Transforming Summary Justice	Ranked 42/42 forces	Ranked 24/42 forces
Prosecution Team Performance Management	Ranked 42/43 forces	Ranked 12/44 forces
Judge's Order compliance	79.1%	95.3%

### 1.6. Witness Care Unit/Victim Support

Over the last 4 years, the Witness Care Unit (WCU) in Kent have strived to be a centre of victim excellence, consistently managing a high number of cases, covering all offence types, from low level theft to those involving loss of life. The unit supports a multitude of victims and witnesses with a range of vulnerabilities.

The below chart highlights the overall caseload for the team in the previous 4 years. Clearly, the Covid-19 pandemic has had very significant impact on the court system, resulting in a sharp rise in caseloads which continue to be at an all-time high.



The WCU is co-located in Compass House, Ashford with a variety of local victim centred services such as Victim Support (a commissioned service provider for victim care), Family Matters (a sexual violence advisory and support service), Counselling services, Restorative Solutions and Witness Service Outreach team (supporting the most vulnerable victims at court).

Throughout the last 4 years, the relationship with co-located teams has continued to develop and there is an established training attachment between Victim Support and WCU to ensure staff from both teams can better understand one another’s role. This allows a first-class delivery of service and appropriate signposting to support for victims and witnesses.

Kent can be considered the leading force in terms of utilising virtual evidence (live links) for both officers and victims. The individual Witness Care Officers (WCOs) build a strong rapport with victims and witnesses, providing excellent support and managing the process of giving remote live-link evidence. Kent has 4 remote vulnerable victim suites for those victims requiring an enhanced service and are too vulnerable to give evidence in a court setting. Kent WCU have also managed several home-links where victims can give evidence from a safe environment, along with arranging live links from around the world, including Australia, Egypt and Germany in order to give the victims the best service possible and reduce any concerns they may have about travel.

The working relationship with Kent Witness Service (WS) remains outstanding. Kent WCU have a bespoke Handover Pack, beyond the national process, which enables a full assessment of individual needs to be presented. The WS provide regular training inputs to the team and support new starters in their initial training stages by conducting pre-trial visits and facilitating visits to the court rooms. The Enhanced Witness Service Team have direct access to the WCOs and maintain regular contact to provide updates of when victims are supported at court and after.

The WCU swiftly adapted processes during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Myriad challenges such as court closures, case backlogs and repeated hearing cancellations had a significant impact for victims and witnesses, as the criminal justice system slowed considerably. The WCU

ensured a Covid-19 safe approach to witness attendance; including revision of the bespoke Needs Assessment to include a Covid-19 health check questionnaire. The WCU management team engage with HMCTS regularly, including the Crown Court listings team, to ensure the most up to date information and approach to trial listings is confirmed, allowing the WCOs to manage the expectations of witnesses in terms of trial timeliness.

There have been many positive examples of the partnership between the WCU and Victim Support, who also now host Kent Police student officer placements. This has increased knowledge of our frontline staff and resulted in a lot of positive feedback.

Overall, the Witness Care Unit and Victim Support have continued to provide a very high level of service and support during this Safer in Kent plan period. The response to an unprecedented health emergency has been exemplary, with a clear focus on supporting victims and witnesses despite historically high workloads and considerable challenges.

### 1.7. Crime Data Integrity

The legitimacy of our service is key to retaining the trust and confidence of our communities, and central to this is ensuring that our Crime Data Integrity (CDI) operates in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules and the National Crime Recording Standards.

In the most recent HMICFRS inspection (2019), the force was graded as **outstanding**. HMICFRS estimated that the force recorded 96.6% of crimes reported to it, which to date remains (one of the) highest in the country.

In order to sustain this level of accuracy, the force has implemented an enhanced all crime audit regime, with the most recent audit in May 2020, resulting in 94.5% accuracy; together with the roll out of a training programme to all officers and staff engaged in crime recording, to provide ongoing learning and support.

## 2. **Fight Crime and ASB**

### 2.1. Victim Based Crime

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2017	147081	27%	31117
2018	166238	13%	19157
2019	166199	0.0%	-39
2020	146958	-12%	-19241
4-year difference		-0.1%	-123

Victim based crime has experienced a decrease of 0.1%, with 123 less victims over the 4-year period. The current year has seen a 12% decrease, with 19,241 less victims.

This is a significant reduction in victims and when comparing 2020 with 2019, 17.8% more suspects have been arrested and interviewed, (5,378), 27% more offenders have been charged, (2,041), and 30.6% more solved outcomes have been achieved for victims (3,218).

## 2.2. Burglary Residential & Business and Community

### **Burglary Residential**

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2018	8544		
2019	7914	-7.4%	-630
2020	5660	-28.5%	-2254

3-year difference	-33.8%	-2884
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Note: Data only available from 2018 due to changes in recording classifications.

Burglary Residential offences have seen a significant 33.8% decrease, with 2884 less offences over the last 3 years. The current year has seen a notable 28.5% decrease, with 2254 less offences.

### **Burglary Residential Dwelling**

Burglary Residential is further broken down by excluding sheds and garages, detailing those that have occurred in relation to dwellings only.

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2018	6136		
2019	5542	-9.7%	-594
2020	3806	-31.3%	-1736

3-year difference	-38.0%	3806
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Note: Data only available from 2018 due to changes in recording classifications.

Burglary residential dwelling offences have experienced a significant 38% decrease, with 3806 less offences, over the last 3 years. The current year has seen a 31.3% decrease, with 1736 less offences.

Covid-19 and national lockdowns have impacted on reported offences with more people staying and working at home, resulting in less opportunities for offenders.

In terms of the focus of Kent Police on combatting this offending, comparing the same period in 2019, the arrest rate has increased by 1.4% and the charge rate by 1.9%.

### Burglary Business and Community

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2018	3302		
2019	3186	-3.5%	-116
2020	1997	-37.3%	-1189

3-year difference	-39.5%	-1997
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Note: Data only available from 2018 due to changes in recording classifications.

Burglary Business and Community offences have experienced a similar reducing trend. These offences have also seen a significant 39.5% decrease, with 1,997 less victims over the last 3 years. The current year has seen a notable 37.3% decrease, with 1,189 less victims.

#### 2.3. Chief Constable's Crime Squad

With the support of the Police & Crime Commissioner in February 2019, the force recruited additional officers to create and implement the Chief Constable's Crime Squad - a dedicated team of 32 officers who investigate linked offences of burglary and robbery. The implementation of this team led to proactive officers having ownership and responsibility for complex investigations, working alongside colleagues in Local Policing and other teams to target those causing harm in our communities.

The impact of this small team in just 2 years has been outstanding, as outlined in the table:

	<b>2019/20 Year 1 total</b>	<b>2020/21 Year 2 total</b>	<b>Overall Total</b>
<b>Arrests</b>	315	256	572
<b>Prisoners dealt with</b>	444	385	829
<b>Warrants executed (Inc S32/18 searches)</b>	87	169	256
<b>Charges</b>	1,050	730	1,780
<b>Stop searches</b>	201	74	275
<b>Intelligence submitted</b>	925	740	1,780
<b>Court Sentences</b>	377 years	459 years	836 years

In the financial year to date, offences of Burglary Residential have reduced by 34.9%, which is 1,414 less victims when compared to the same period last year. Similarly, offences of Robbery have reduced by 32.2%, which equates to 458 less victims.

## 2.4. ASB figures

January - December	Recorded Incidents	% Change	Number change
2017	40151	-13%	-5885
2018	31353	-22%	-8798
2019	34452	10%	3099
2020	51652	50%	17200
4-year difference		28.6%	11501

Anti-Social Behaviour has experienced an overall 28.6% increase over 4 years, with 11,501 more incidents. Following two years of reductions, and a marginal increase in 2019, the current year has seen a 50% increase, with 17,200 more recorded incidents.

Since March 2020, incidents have averaged 4,853 per month, with the highest volume recorded in May 20 (7161), prior to this, incidents averaged 2900 per month. A third of all ASB incidents in 2020 have been Covid-19 related.

There are three key ASB types that have accounted for the majority of ASB incidents in 2020:

- **Rowdy or nuisance gatherings in public/impeding public access** - 19946 incidents recorded. This is an 83.6% increase (9081) on the same period in 2019. Volumes peaked in the first lockdown with April and May recording over 3000 each per month; the highest volumes in over 8 years. Those associated with Covid-19 account for 44% of incidents.
- **Neighbour disputes/nuisance, including noise** – 11052 incidents recorded. This has almost doubled compared to the same period in 2019 (5710 incidents). Volumes peaked at 1699 incidents in May 2020. Those associated with Covid-19 account for a third of incidents.
- **Noisy party/organised event/rave** – 676 incidents recorded; this is the highest volume in over 4 years. Reported incidents peaked at 103 in May 2020; the highest volume in 5 years. Those associated with Covid-19 account for 51% of incidents.

## 3. Tackle Abuse, Exploitation and Violence

### 3.1. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT) Team was formed in March 2019 and comprises of one DS, eight DC's and four Investigating Officers. In the last calendar year (2020) there was an average of 33 recorded Modern Slavery Offences each month.

Modern slavery concerns the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, criminal exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of modern slavery can be any age, gender, nationality and ethnicity. They are tricked or threatened into work and may feel unable to leave or report the crime through fear or intimidation. They may not recognise themselves as a victim.



The top three main areas of concerns in Kent over the past 2 years are Criminal Exploitation, Sexual Exploitation and Forced Labour. The victims have been a variety of nationalities with British being the majority. The team have been involved in many investigations since their inception and are currently in the enforcement stage of several large operations involving Organised Crime Groups (OCGs), brothels and people being exploited within the sex trade.

The MSHT team are currently piloting a 24/7 (on-call) contact number which has been highly effective and has resulted in positive action at the potential scenes of MSHT, including the adoption of an investigation resulting in the first charge for trafficking. Charges for this crime type are incredibly hard to achieve and exceedingly rare nationally.

Some of the wider operational activity of the team recently include working with victims of forced labour in local car wash venues, forced marriages and sexual exploitation, trafficking of family members to other countries for sexual and labour exploitation and criminal exploitation.

### 3.2. Domestic Abuse (DA)

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2017	25893	32.4%	6338
2018	34685	34.0%	8792
2019	34914	0.7%	229
2020	38147	9.3%	3233

4-year difference	47.3%	12254
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Domestic Abuse offences have experienced an increase of 47.3%, with 12,254 more offences over the 4-year period. The current year has seen a 9.3% increase, with 3,233 more offences.

DA offences stabilised in 2019 after increases being seen in both 2017 and 2018. The impact of changes in the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) had an effect on these increases in recorded offences, where the requirement for a behavioural crime, as well as any substantive offences to be recorded, was implemented. Additionally, there has been increased awareness and training for officers in this area.

The current increase can be attributed to a 12.9% increase (3,495) in Violence Against the Person (VAP) offences. Within VAP, controlling and coercive behaviour offences have equated to a 330% increase, (3,102). Stalking and harassment offences have increased by 10.7%, (816), with other VAP offences decreasing by 2.3% (423). These two key offences are considered behavioural crimes.

Kent Police responded strongly to the increase in DA crime; when comparing 2020 with 2019, they have arrested or interviewed 3,982 more suspects, charged 570 more offenders and secured 898 more solved outcomes for victims.

Kent Police has also been innovative in terms of ongoing safeguarding and support for victims, working together with partner agencies and charitable organisations, to deliver initiatives such as food packages to vulnerable families throughout the pandemic, and enhancing assessment of those most at risk known as the 'Hidden Harm' initiative. The 'Hidden Harms' initiative was developed in-house and led to the completion of visits by specialist DA officers to in excess of 200 couples identified for intervention or contact, leading to further engagement of the survivors through the police service, or through IDVAs and Victim Support.

### 3.3. Major Crime

The strong collaborative function of the Kent Police and Essex Police Serious Crime Directorate continues to provide a quality service to victims and their families, often in the most harrowing of circumstances.

One of the most renowned cases in Kent over the past 4 years was the investigation into the death of Sarah Wellgreen, whose body has never been found. The investigation began on 11th October 2018 following Sarah's ex-partner, Ben Lacomba reporting her missing. For the next six days police worked with Lacomba to try and find Sarah as a missing person. During this period suspicions of his account and the circumstances of Sarah's disappearance were raised, and the investigation was referred to the Major Crime team. Lacomba was later deemed to be a suspect in Sarah's murder and he was arrested. He remained silent throughout seven hours of interviews and was released on bail.

There followed an extensive search to locate Sarah's body and enquiries carried out on a national scale were required to show Sarah was no longer alive and gather evidence to prove Lacomba was responsible for her murder and disappearance.

The proactive search operation continued for 22 months, across all types of terrain and in all weather conditions. This resulted in 2771 areas identified that Sarah could have been hidden and further groundwork resulted in over 1400 areas physically being searched. This was the largest police search operation in Kent for many years. Although the proactive search has sadly ended, the force continue to respond to any new information or opportunities to find Sarah.

The investigation into Sarah's murder, movements and disproving the account given from Lacomba ran parallel. A large feature in this work was the identification and seizure of 22,000 hours of CCTV footage for the relevant time over a 10-mile radius of the home address.

Lacomba was rearrested in December 2018 and CPS authorised charge for murder, something that is almost unheard of where no body has been found. Lacomba maintained his innocence but following a 9-week trial he was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life with a minimum term of 27 years imprisonment. This is testament to the skill, dedication and tenacity of the investigative team.

### 3.4. Rape Offences.

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2017	2354	60.8%	890
2018	2552	8.4%	198
2019	2096	-17.9%	-456
2020	2009	-4.2%	-87
4-year difference		-14.7%	-345

Rape offences have experienced a decrease of 14.7%, with 345 less victims over the 4-year period. The current year has seen a 4.2% decrease, with 87 less victims; this is the lowest recorded volume in 5 years.

The force has established specific Rape Investigation (Phoenix) Teams to concentrate on this crime type; these are significantly harmful crimes that have a huge impact, not only on victims, but on how safe communities feel.

There has been the investment of Sexual Offences Liaison Officers (SOLOs) to ensure victims receive the highest standards of care, and so there is a single point of contact for any victim entering into the Criminal Justice System. The SOLOs attend reports of rape, securing and overseeing initial evidence capture, providing key support, and safeguarding victims all the way through the investigative process, culminating in attending and remaining with them through the duration of court hearings.

Improvements have been seen in 2020 in terms of both an 11.6% increase in the number of suspects arrested, and a 1.3% increase in the charge rate of offenders when compared with 2019.

### 3.5. Violent Crime

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2017	68827	47.4%	22138
2018	86600	25.8%	17773
2019	85187	-1.6%	-1413
2020	83766	-1.7%	-1421
4-year difference		21.7%	14939

With regards to the Home Office counting rules Violent Crime includes a broad range of offences, across a spectrum of non-injury reports to the most serious violence, including homicide. The force's Control Strategy areas also feature quite heavily in this category, such as Sexual Offences Domestic Abuse and Robbery.

Violent crime has experienced an increase of 21.7%, with 14,939 more offences over the 4-year period. The current year has seen a 1.7% decrease, with 1,421 less victims.

The decreases can be mainly attributed to reductions in Robbery and Sexual Offences.

### 3.6. Robbery

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2017	1479	35%	384
2018	1851	25%	372
2019	1949	5%	98
2020	1419	-27%	-530
4-year difference		-4.1%	-60

Robbery offences have experienced a decrease of 4.1%, with 60 less victims over the 4-year period. The current year has seen a marked 27% decrease, with 530 less victims.

In terms of the focus of Kent Police on combatting this offending, improvements have been seen in 2020 in terms of both a 4.8% increase in the arrest rate, and a 4.6% increase in the charge rate of offenders, when compared with 2019.

### 3.7. Sexual Offences

January - December	Recorded Crime	% Change	Number change
2017	6002	57%	2178
2018	7182	20%	1180
2019	6549	-9%	-633
2020	5809	-11%	-740
4-year difference		-3.2%	-193

Sexual offences have experienced a decrease of 3.2%, with 193 less victims over the 4-year period. The current year has seen an 11% decrease, with 740 less victims.

Improvements have been seen in 2020 in terms of both an 3.8% increase in the number of suspects arrested, and a 1.7% increase in the charge rate of offenders when compared with 2019.

### 3.8. Violence Against the Person (VAP)

January – December	number of crimes	% Change	Number change
2017	61346	47%	19576
2018	77567	26%	16221
2019	76689	-1%	-878
2020	76538	0%	-151
4-year difference		24.8%	15192

This group of offences has experienced an increase of 24.8%, with 15,192 more offences over the 4-year period. The current year percentage change has remained static, with 151 less victims.

Approximately 40% of VAP is Domestic Abuse related with increases in DA reflective in overall VAP numbers. Of note there has been an increase in the volume of assault on emergency workers in 2020; a crime type that is also defined within VAP. Between March and December 2020, 1,315 offences were recorded, an increase of 42.8% (+394) on the same period in 2019.

### 3.9. Knife Crime - Operation Eminent

Knife crime continues to be a focus of our policing activity and in addition to the targeted investment that the Force has made as outlined thus far, the Home Office also provides funding to the force to tackle and reduce knife crime; known locally as Operation Eminent. Knife crime is recorded under a Tier system:

Tier I	Homicide
Tier II	Violent Crime with Injury
Tier III	Violent Crime Without Injury

Tier IV	All Knife Related Crime
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In the last financial year, the Force has recorded a reduction of -12.8%, which equates to 44 less victims for Tiers I and II crimes; and a -22.6% reduction for Tiers III and IV crimes, which equates to 392 less victims. A total of 436 less victims of violence in this priority crime area. The Operation Eminent funding has been focused on a broad range of enforcement activity and has yielded the following results between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021:

<b>Arrests</b>	3,685
<b>Warrants executed (Inc S32/18 searches)</b>	511
<b>Stop and Search</b>	5,932
<b>ANPR Stops</b>	865
<b>No of Cash Seizures</b>	419
<b>Total Cash Seized</b>	£2,551,176
<b>Drug Seizures</b>	3,421
<b>Weapon Seizures</b>	1,825

#### **4. Combat Organised Crime and Gangs**

##### 4.1. County Lines and Gangs

Given Kent's position being the gateway to Europe and bordering London, County Lines and Gangs remain within the force's Control Strategy. Through ongoing analysis of County Lines, we currently have 59 county lines which is a reduction from 82, of which 85% of the County Lines known to us, come from London. 25% of those County Lines have individuals within them who have been connected to carrying weapons in the past 6 months. It is therefore imperative that this type of criminality, which often looks to exploit those most vulnerable in our communities, remains a clear focus and as such was subject to additional investment by way of a new and dedicated County Lines and Gangs Team, created in April 2020. Since their creation they have demonstrated outstanding results:

	<b>Rolling Year Total 2020/21</b>
<b>Arrests</b>	256
<b>Prisoners dealt with</b>	213
<b>Warrants executed (Inc S32/S18 searches)</b>	155
<b>Total Charges</b>	305

<b>Drugs seizures</b>	135
<b>Cash seizures</b>	£157,071
<b>Weapon seizures</b>	62
<b>Stop searches</b>	362
<b>Intelligence submitted</b>	920
<b>Sentences obtained</b>	135 years 10 months

As a result of this sustained and targeted proactive activity, we have also been able to declare that two Districts within Kent – namely Swale and Tonbridge and Malling – are now County Lines free and have been so for 3 consecutive months. This is a significant achievement and has been recognised nationally by the Policing Minister. This does not mean we are complacent, however and proactive activity remains in all of our districts. Likewise, in terms of Gangs, Kent currently has no established Gangs in existence across Kent, however work continues in this regard to prevent and deter such activity.

To achieve this success, the teams have developed strong working relationships with the Metropolitan Police Service and the British Transport Police, with their operations often attracting local, national and Cabinet Office attention. Indeed, the Home Secretary visited the North Division towards the end of 2020 and was greatly impressed by the relentless dedication and results that the team have demonstrated. One of the investigative teams has also been the subject of four months of filming by BBC Panorama which will help demonstrate the complexity of the challenge the team faces.

Demonstrating the harm that these criminals can pose to communities, and the exploitation often involved of those most vulnerable, the teams also work closely with the community to tackle this threat. This includes the creation of a County Line Independent Police Advisory Group, consisting of current IPAG members and former gang members, to ensure education, awareness and welfare provision where it is most needed.

In addition, the force has a monthly County Line Protect, Prepare and Prevent Board where multi agency partners share intelligence obtained from our Violence Reduction Unit, regarding young people on the periphery of county line criminality. This intelligence is then shared with Community Safety Units and the Violence Reduction Unit Co-ordinators, and acted upon with our partners, to ensure a multi-agency approach is taken to support vulnerable families.

#### 4.2. Organised Crime Groups (OCGs)

In the past four years, OCGs have been relentlessly targeted across the force by local policing teams and the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD). Following the introduction of an operation which took a multi agency approach, local Serious Organised Crime Partnership Boards mobilise partners across the 4 pillars of Prevent, Protect, Prepare and Pursue elements to protect communities. Pursue continues to be the main disruption option as this is a national trend, but over 60 disruptions have taken place led by partner agencies against organised crime. SCD lead on tackling the most challenging and high-harm OCG offenders

and using a range of tactics the department have achieved numerous convictions for serious crimes committed by Kent OCG nominals.

Since 2019 a summary of results achieved by the Serious and Organised Crime Team within the SCD, against OCGs is as follows:

- 255 arrests with 191 offenders charged and remanded.
- 88.7 kilos of Class A drugs recovered with a street value of approximately £10m.
- 160 kilos of Class B drugs recovered with a street value of approximately £960,000.
- Numerous Cannabis Factories raided with a combined annual yield of in excess of £3.5m
- 24 viable, illegally held firearms recovered including loaded handguns and shotguns.
- Cash seizures totalling approximately £1.6m
- In excess of £1.8m of other assets seized.
- In support of OCG investigations, 1,260 covert deployments.
- Sentences handed down during this time period total 821 years imprisonment.

Examples include:

- The conviction and sentence of 3 males running a drugs line into Medway. They used kidnap and witness intimidation to conduct their criminal enterprise and were sentenced to 15, 14 and 10 years respectively.
- Investigation of a drugs line supplying Class A drugs in Kent, Essex and the Metropolitan Police area, with an estimated turnover of approximately £1.5m. Thirteen defendants were convicted at Maidstone Crown Court with custodial sentences totalling 69 years.
- Investigation into Modern Slavery and the Trafficking of vulnerable Czech nationals into the UK where they were held in servitude and exploited by an OCG from Dover. Following a protracted covert investigation 2 males were convicted of trafficking and slavery offences and sentenced to a total of 13 years.
- Undercover infiltration across Dover and Canterbury, targeting Class A drug supply. During this operation 86 arrests made and 203 charges laid against 73 of those arrested. To date there have been 58 convictions totalling 148 years. 5 County Drug Lines were dismantled and 13 disrupted.
- Intensified response to the threat presented by county line networks, primarily originating from London. 6 county drug lines were disrupted.

### OCG Disruptions

Kent Police carry out an activity to disrupt Organised Crime, on average, every 36 hours. With over 1,115 enforcement activities undertaken against OCGs in the last 4 years. This has resulted in:

- Over £6.5m seized from OCGs impacting on Kent communities utilising the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) to pursue assets obtained by OCG members through illegal earnings.
- Guns, knives and weapons seized.
- Over £5m seized in counterfeit currency (largest seizure ever recorded in the UK).
- Large quantities of illegal drugs seized from OCGs including individual seizures of 4kg of Amphetamine, 10kg of cocaine with an estimated street value of £800,000 and over 1,000 cannabis plants, all destined for dealing on the streets of Kent.

Over the last 4 years more OCGs have been identified operating within modern slavery, human trafficking and child exploitation, including sexual exploitation. With the increased use of criminal groups using online platforms and technology enabling communication to be more instant and encrypted, a lot of OCGs operate in the cyber space. Kent Police have invested in technology, knowledge and training to enable their investigators and intelligence officers to pursue OCGs online. The development of the digital forensics unit (DFU) and creation of the new Internet Intelligence and Investigations team (III) have been crucial in this endeavour. The III team was created to conduct advanced open source research, looking at proactive ways in which they can tackle policing priorities in Kent. The emerging and evolving ways that organised criminals use to commit serious organised crime in Kent, means that the continued development in the capability and capacity is essential to prevent harm caused to the communities. Continuous scanning, intelligence gathering, and analysis is needed to ensure that Kent remains ahead of the criminals in the prevention of serious and organised crime.

#### 4.2. The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) was established in November 2019 to encourage a preventative partnership approach to reducing serious youth violence, including the vulnerability of young people to criminal exploitation through emerging gang and county line activity. The unit has established procedures to early identify those at risk, using police and partner data, as well as identifying locations of risk by using police and public health data. Focus in 2020/2021 has been on serious violence, knife crime and county line activity.

So far this year, around 450 young people have been reached by our VRU service despite the challenges of Covid-19 restrictions. Levels of serious violence, knife crime and detected county lines activity in Kent and Medway have fallen over the past 12 months which is partly due to the effect of national lockdowns, however early indications based on the journeys of young people subject to VRU interventions suggest that activity is having a positive impact upon those young people and their involvement in serious violence. For example, following a series of incidents involving groups of young people knife carrying in Swale and the authorisation of a Section 60 Order, the VRU initiated a contextual review of the problem, inviting partners to a problem solving meeting. Interventions were put in place by the force, the Borough Council and Specialist Children's Services and as a result levels of reported youth violence in Swale reduced by around 50% in subsequent months.

#### 4.3. POCA seizures and distribution



Over the past 4 years, Kent Police have been consistently in the top ten performing forces in relation to POCA forfeitures and confiscations and are often in the top 5, close behind the large metropolitan forces.

POCA Performance Summary 2017 – 2021:

<b>Cash Seizures</b>				
<b>Year</b>	2017 – 2018	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020	2020 – Jan 2021
<b>Number</b>	153	254	313	250
<b>Estimated Value</b>	£2,243,673	£2,831,141	£3,016,359	£4,378,041

<b>Forfeiture Orders (From Cash Seizures)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	2017 – 2018	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020	2020 – Jan 2021
<b>Number</b>	63	79	139	125
<b>Value</b>	£445,368	£840,341	£1,146,885	£767,446

<b>Confiscation Orders (Following Conviction)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	2017 – 2018	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020	2020 – Jan 2021
<b>Number</b>	104	118	89	55
<b>Total Value</b>	£2,296,027	£1,185,683	£2,461,344	£1,661,811
<b>Compensation</b>	£1,158,060	£249,598	£658,369	£146,011

The dedicated team work proactively, particularly in relation to understanding and utilising new legislation and provide training for new officers and those on detective courses, which has resulted in exponential growth in cash seizures between 2018 and 2020.

The impact of Covid-19 lockdowns during 2020 impacted the team considerably with the initial lockdown creating a perfect storm in relation to cash seizures. The closure of the night-time economy meant that patrols were able to be more proactive and the majority of the country were remaining at home. This resulted in less people on the streets with a high proportion of those out being involved in criminality. Criminals, particularly OCGs still needed to move large quantities of cash and this was being identified by proactive policing.

Whilst the issues seen within the Courts backlogs will not provide for a completely accurate picture around the team's performance for cash seizures in 2020/21, the Financial Investigation Unit has provided an exceptional level of service over the past 4 years.

## **5. Provide Visible Neighbourhood Policing and Effective Roads Policing**

### 5.1. Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

In the four year period 2017-2021, there has been a growth in the number of PCSOs in Kent Police, with funding largely being assigned to the creation of more specialist roles such as the Missing and Child Exploitation PCSO, Domestic Abuse PCSO, Vulnerable Adult Intervention PCSO and Youth Engagement PCSO. The Problem Solving Task Force, a team of 21 PCSOs, has also recently been implemented and will work in identified areas of concern across the county and be deployed within communities, in order to help solve complex social issues and prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. PCSOs are a vital asset to visible neighbourhood policing, with 'District PCSOs' being assigned several wards or 'Beat codes' to cover. They are often on foot patrol and are key to engagement with local communities, building strong relationships with community leaders, vulnerable people and victims of crime.

### 5.2. Schools PCs

Announced in late 2020, the newly formed Schools Officers Team will work across Kent under the direction of an Inspector. The team will provide a visible and accessible policing function in the heart of communities, being a single point of contact for the staff, students and parents. Whilst primarily focussing on secondary schools and their cohorts, the team will have a footprint in primary settings as well as higher education. The team is currently being recruited and is expected to begin a phased launch from April 2021. The Schools Officers are being entirely funded by the Kent Police allocation of the officer uplift funding from central government.

### 5.3. Town Centre PCs

Town Centre PCs, or Town Beat Units, were launched in Kent in October 2019. The teams of constables provide a local, neighbourhood officer for communities within each district of Kent. The 56 officers throughout the force work closely with PCSO colleagues and are often on foot patrol, responding to issues and calls on local high streets as a priority. The team have provided a highly visible neighbourhood policing presence and as with their PCSO colleagues have been able to build strong relationships with members of the public who require additional support and safeguarding such as repeat callers and the vulnerable.

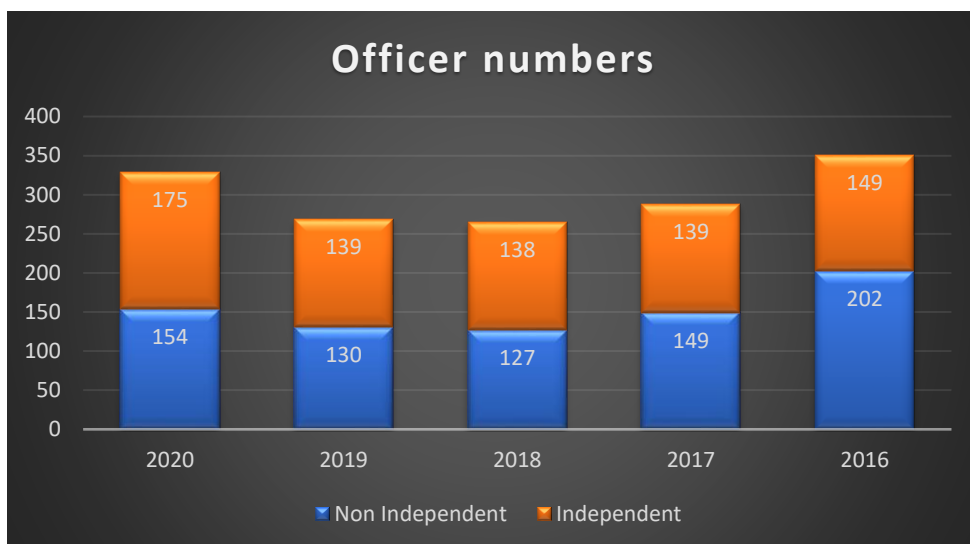
### 5.4. Citizens in Policing

Kent Police has seen the numbers of volunteers grow to over 1000 personnel over the past 4 years. These include over 350 Cadets, 349 Special Constables, 198 volunteers and close to 100 Community Police Volunteers (CPVs). This period has also seen the implementation of SE 4x4 and Kent Search and Rescue.

#### Kent Special Constabulary

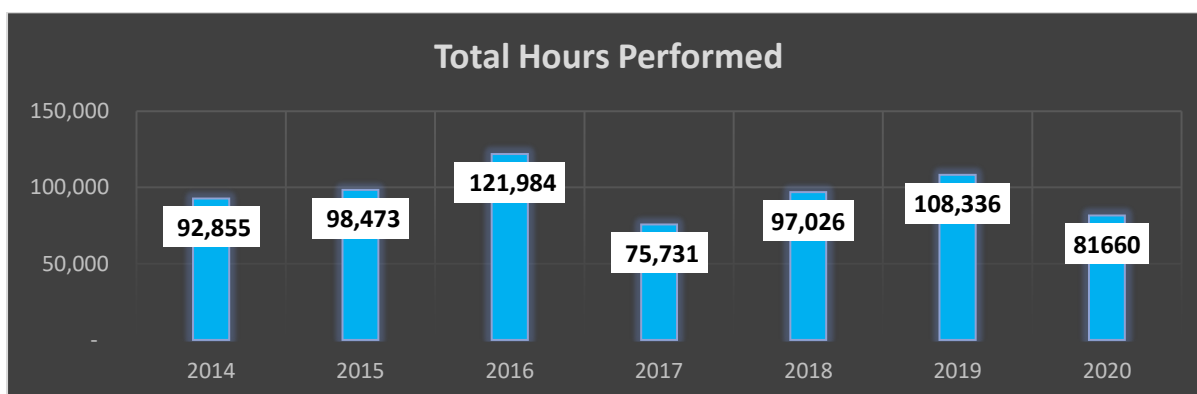
The Kent Special Constabulary has developed significantly during this period and is recognised as a leader in its field by other forces for the work it has undertaken.

Special Constabulary numbers have increased steadily over the years as can be seen from the table below and even during the pandemic, the force were able to review its processes and moved assessment and recruitment information events online, allowing it to be more accessible. This has been evidenced with an increase in enquiries and intakes doubling from 20 to 40 for the last two intakes with a further 30 joining in February.



Some of the significant changes over the past 4 years is the volume of Special Constables that join the regular force, where specific programmes have been developed to encourage and support this. The opportunities available to Special Constables has also developed during this period and include the Search and Marine unit, Roads Policing Unit, Special Branch – Channel Tunnel and Community Safety Units.

Throughout the last 4 years the volume of hours given by Specials has remained outstanding as seen in the table below, and they are invaluable to supporting the Force in achieving our key priorities. It is the Force's intention to continue marketing campaigns throughout the coming years, with a view to increasing the Special Constabulary establishment to as close to 500 as possible, by April 2022.



#### Police Volunteer Cadet Programme.

Since the inception of the Cadet programme in October 2016, the number of active units has increased from three to ten with a minimum of three units in each Division. The programme launched with approximately 75 Cadets and has now increased to 367 active cadets across the county, supported by 130 leaders, both internal and external and the aspiration is to increase the number in the future.

The programme of Mini Cadets, a programme run in schools for children aged between 8-11 years, is due to launch in Dartford around Easter time, to coincide with the schools reopening as part of the Covid-19 measures gradually easing. It is planned that by the end of the year, this will be rolled out to many more schools. The Citizens in Policing team are

also working in conjunction with Busters Book Club and Acorns, to support the Busters Very Important Person (VIP) project which will run alongside mini cadets in any school who wish to participate. This is a charity which helps young children to read.

The transition pathway will be launched in March 2021 for cadets aged 16 and over with aspirations to join Kent Police in any capacity. This will initially be a virtual programme delivering application and interview workshops as well as an insight into working for Kent Police including interviews with Chief Officers. This will give the cadets the confidence and support they need to successfully complete the recruitment process and secure either an operational role or a PSE role. Support will also be provided to cadets who wish to pursue a role outside of the Police.

The Cadets also continue to support numerous charities and much of what they do is not quantifiable in monetary terms, for example little picking, donations to food banks and giving up their spare time to help in the community and at fund raising events. Since the inception of the Cadet programme an amount in excess of £5000 has been raised by the cadets for their respective charities.

### Police Support Volunteers

The force currently has 179 volunteers registered. The roles that these volunteers are involved in are broad and include assisting the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, Community Safety Units, Community Speed Watch, the Rural Team and the Mental Health team.

The South East 4x4 Response support KSAR on a regular basis and have been given both training/powers for road closures, assisting with searches. The force is now looking to train them to become Community Policing Volunteers, which will mean that their presence and assistance will grow within Kent Police.

The issuing of laptops to approximately 20 volunteers has been a major success and one that potentially could continue after the pandemic as it provides flexibility to volunteers and may see an increase in the number as a result of this in the future.

### Community Police Volunteers

A Community Policing Volunteer (CPV) is an evolving role which allows Kent Police to utilise members of the public in a variety of volunteering roles.

In 2017 the CPV PCSO role was launched and the force identified the potential of giving Police Support Volunteers powers and looked at widening the VPCSO remit and capability across various areas of business and recreational activities, whilst working in partnership with others. Since then, this area of volunteering has expanded and adapted and developed in response to the ever-increasing demands on the police service. It has now diversified into a plethora of strands, such as CPV Security, Joint Response Unit (JRU), Equine, Aviation, Security, South East 4X4, Canine and Coastal. Each of these strands have their own unique focus, specialism and benefits to operational policing.

The programme provides a unique opportunity for individuals to use their personal and/or technical skills, abilities, experience, and local knowledge to make a positive contribution by supporting Kent Police and assist us in providing a wider-skilled service representation.

The force has 106 CPVs in total to date, however we are recruiting 4-5 CPV's per month at the current rate and this is likely to increase, particularly with the inception of the marketing campaign to run throughout the Spring.

Future streams of work include assisting in Mental Health policing and there is also scope for an opportunity to develop a Lifeguard CPV role working with RLNI and local councils and waterways.

The Citizens in Policing directorate will continue to grow over time, with many more exciting workstreams being developed. It is to the credit of all of the Kent Police volunteers that the annual amount of hours undertaken by them collectively continues to increase, and their commitment and dedication to supporting the Force in our priorities has not waived even in this time of global pandemic.

### 5.5. Task Force Initiatives

Building upon the success of the Margate Task Force, the past 4 years have seen an increase in the Task Force initiatives that we now have in place in the county, working alongside the relevant Local Authorities and other partner agencies such as Housing, Environmental Health and HMRC. The priorities of the individual Task Forces have been developed in line with the PCC's Safer in Kent Plan, the Force Control Strategy and the Community Safety Partnership objectives. The teams strive to achieve their goals through being proactive, high-profile and innovative, utilising effective problem-solving skills to prevent harm in communities and make them a safe place to live, work and visit.

The second Task Force to be formally launched in February 2020 was the Medway Task Force, which replicates the multi-agency team approach focused on reducing crime and ASB, reducing vulnerability and building resilient communities for the future.

Since its launch, the Medway Task Force has focused on two priority wards within Medway, namely Luton & Wayfield Ward and Gillingham North, whilst concurrently undertaking joint projects and safeguarding work across Medway in line with their objectives. During the pandemic, the team has adapted to new ways of working. For example, during the first lockdown, the team worked with the Medway Youth Offending Team (YOT) in providing additional support and supervision to a cohort of young people.

With schools closed during the summer term, the Task Force was unable to run the Safety in Action initiative, which brings Year 6 pupils together to learn about road, internet, water, fire and personal safety. However, through Medway Council's Task Force officer, funding has been secured via the PCC's office to run this initiative virtually and filming has commenced. To date over 1000 pupils from 20 schools, including home schooled pupils, are signed up to receive this innovative training, set to be delivered in March where a safety booklet will be also distributed to every year 6 pupil across all 63 primary schools.

Reducing vulnerability through multi-agency problem solving has never been so important than during a pandemic. The implementation of the Medway Vulnerability Panel has brought together key agencies to support some of the most vulnerable within Medway. Through funding secured by the PCC, the Home Office Safer Streets initiative was launched in October 2020 in Gillingham. £111K was obtained to prevent acquisitive crime and help keep people safe in a residential area close to the town centre; improve the street scene

and develop a sense of community involvement and confidence within their local neighbourhood. Through partnership working, a CCTV camera has been purchased and installed; during a 5-month period, 29.5 tonnes of waste has been removed with 152 enforcement and warning notices issued. Joint enforcement operations have also taken place to combat fly-tipping and those seeking to blight the landscape with anti-social behaviour. Over 30 incidents of graffiti have been removed; 366 households have been visited to date by the Task Force, with 144 forensic property marking kits registered and accompanying signs erected on lampposts warning prospective criminals away from the area. Other crime prevention items, such as anti-climb devices, have been distributed free of charge to those households. Feedback from the local community has been positive and has developed a richer picture in understanding issues effecting local neighbourhoods.

The most recent Task Force to be implemented is the Maidstone Task Force, which was formally launched in October 2020. Since this date the team have responded to the concerns of the community, making over 100 arrests, 200 stop searches and completing over 200 intelligence reports. Six warrants have been developed and executed by the team and those identified as causing the community most harm have had their behaviour restricted through a variety of tactics and powers. Seizures of quantities of Class A and B drugs, weapons being taken off the streets and over £17000 seized under the proceeds of crime act are some of the successes of this activity.

The team works with local people to build community resilience and prevent harm from re-occurring. Days of action are supported by the Violence Reduction Unit to blend awareness and education with highly visible presence. There have been other themed days of action to target Waste Crime, Substance Misuse and Domestic abuse. These days have involved targeting repeat and high harm offenders as well as proactively engaging with the community to offer education and diversion. A further day of action for Exploitation is planned.

The Task Force initiatives, now operating in 3 of our district areas, are achieving notable successes. Strong partnership working and community-led initiatives result in an integrated approach that positively responds to local priorities, prevents harm and improves feelings of safety.

#### 5.6. Roads Policing

The Road Safety Unit was formed in December 2018 and comprises a team of a Sergeant and 7 Constables with the aim to promote road safety and reduce the number of people Killed and Seriously Injured (KSIs) on the roads in Kent. The team provide a visible and high-profile presence delivering enforcement and education relating to the fatal four (Mobile Phones, Seatbelts, Drink/Drug Driving and Speeding) focusing their operations in conjunction with national events and Commercial Vehicle Unit operations.

Since the team were formed, KSI's have reduced as can be seen from the table below:

Year	Fatal	Serious	Slight
2017	62	843	5721
2018	51	794	5328
2019	51	844	4832
2020* not yet validated by DfT	49	794	3599

Although, of course this reduction will not be completely attributable to the implementation of the team, the increase in resources have allowed for a growth in engaging, enforcing and educating communities which will undoubtedly have had a positive effect.

The unit also has responsibility for liaising with Community Safety Units (CSUs) around the county to support initiatives and address road safety related matters. They are not dedicated responders like the Roads Policing Unit (RPU) response teams, they are the dedicated resource for responding to national monthly operations and are tasked to predictive hotspot KSI locations to carry out road safety checks and assist the CSUs with their specialist skills. They also visit Community Speed Watch (CSW) sites and advise and guide CSW groups which has had a really positive impact and has been much appreciated by local parish councils and members of the public.

The below table illustrates some of the work that the RSU have undertaken since its inception. The figures for 2020 are less than those of 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown period where there were considerably fewer cars on Kent roads.

	Speed	S/Belt	M/Phone	TOR Other	GFPN Other	Other process	Seizures	Arrest
Dec-18	114	22	10	32	5	0	0	0
2019	750	285	393	278	1262	468	75	15
2020	734	131	85	201	521	593	74	83

## **6. Deliver an Efficient and Accessible Service**

### **6.1. Mental Health and s136 Detentions**

Within the past 4 years, the Force has invested in the dedicated Mental Health Team, recognising the need for specialist and sustainable provision in this regard. The importance of this work cannot be overstated, particularly given the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The team works closely with partner agencies to ensure that the right agency is providing the right support, for those most in need, at the right time.

The table below shows the number of Section 136 detentions for the past 4 years. Detentions have stabilised with the force seeing a reduction since December 2019. This is against a backdrop of rising calls to police where a MH tag is added. Driven by the Crisis Care Board there has been investment in 836 street triage, introduction of Safe Havens and delivery of training to call handlers and first responders. Consequently there is better

management of risk, increased ability to signpost people in crisis to the appropriate care and more proportionate use of powers to detain under S136 of the Mental Health Act. While lockdown was a contributory factor early in 2020, the focus is now on latent demand and potential hidden harms driven by the cumulative impact of restrictions.

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>1</b>	114	117	152	146
<b>2</b>	117	101	148	155
<b>3</b>	117	152	155	138
<b>4</b>	117	147	161	113
<b>5</b>	144	141	205	160
<b>6</b>	129	146	149	150
<b>7</b>	147	159	200	189
<b>8</b>	151	166	194	201
<b>9</b>	146	146	196	157
<b>10</b>	125	156	200	150
<b>11</b>	109	139	170	125
<b>12</b>	97	127	136	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>1513</b>	<b>1697</b>	<b>2066</b>	<b>1797</b>

Kent Police remains one of the highest users of the s.136 power nationally. An extensive study led by colleagues in Health has resulted in a joint-agency improvement plan that will reduce the need for officers to attend Accident and Emergency Departments. Use of these locations over the past 4 years has been high, resulting in significant delays where patients require medical clearance before a Mental Health Act assessment can take place. The time spent in the department is dependent on the type of injury, the treatment required and other demands and priorities within the A&E department at the time of attendance. Additional time is spent in the s.136 suite handing over to the NHS as well as waiting for a s.136 suite to become available.

The force have worked closely with colleagues from Kent and Medway Partnership Trust (KMPT) to improve the attendance of the Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) service, where the injury is very minor and assessment can take place prior to being medically cleared and in circumstances where a place of safety is not readily available.

Several initiatives have been designed and set up to assist in reducing the time officers spend dealing with s.136 detentions which include the 836-advice line which was implemented in December 2019 and improved by KMPT with additional dedicated staff during office hours to provide tactical advice to officers around detention decisions. This enhanced service coincided with the start of a reduction in s.136 numbers. The service remains under continual review with the intention to develop the service with a recorded system and access to patient crisis care plans, building confidence between mental health professionals and the police at the scene on the best outcome for service users.



There are now also 5 Safe Haven sites in Kent to provide support 7 evenings a week. Safe Havens provide a resource for officers to support individuals who present in distress and mental health crisis. Utilisation of the Safe Havens means that officers have another option that lessens reliance on using powers of detention under the Mental Health Act.

## 6.2. FCR and IMU

Force Control Room (FCR) Contact:

999 Emergency call handling:

<b>999 call totals:</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Calls Received</b>	315,372	327,181	343,732	326,210
<b>Calls Answered</b>	310,858	324,353	340,771	323,830
<b>Calls Not Answered</b>	4,514	2,828	2,961	2,380
<b>% Not Answered</b>	1.43%	0.86%	0.86%	0.73%
<b>Average Queuing Time</b>	13 seconds	9 seconds	12 seconds	9 seconds
<b>Average Talk Time</b>	5 minutes	5 minutes 5 seconds	5 minutes 34 seconds	5 minutes 21 seconds

The volumes of 999 emergency calls received and answered increased during the years 2017, 2018 and 2019. While COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions have reduced these volumes in 2020, a new monthly peak occurred in Aug-20 when 34,504 calls were received, at the point when some covid-19 regulations had been relaxed. There has always been a seasonal trend with the highest volumes occurring in the peak summer months of June, July and August.

The percentage of calls not answered has reduced over the 4-year period from 1.43% to 0.73%, while the average queuing time has fluctuated between 9 seconds (in 2018 and 2020) and 13 seconds (back in 2017). Average talk time has remained between 5 minutes (in 2017) and 5 minutes, 34 seconds (in 2019), with a reduction to 5 minutes, 21 seconds in 2020.

101 Public Non-Emergency call handling:

<b>101 call totals:</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Calls Received</b>	557,262	476,188	463,918	400,270
<b>Calls Answered</b>	454,526	414,082	416,801	379,068
<b>Calls Not Answered</b>	102,736	62,106	47,117	21,202
<b>% Not Answered</b>	18.44%	13.04%	10.16%	5.30%
<b>Average Queuing Time</b>	3 minutes	1 minute 53 seconds	1 minute 40 seconds	55 seconds
<b>Average Talk Time</b>	6 minutes 3 seconds	6 minutes 48 seconds	8 minutes 2 seconds	7 minutes 49 seconds

The yearly volumes of 101 public non-emergency calls received have followed a national trend downwards, with reductions over the 4-year period, as the public now have a number

of alternatives for contacting the force. Channel shift has seen them moving to email, online reporting and live chat.

The percentage of calls not answered has improved over the period too, from 18.44% call attrition in 2017 to 5.30% call attrition in 2020. Average call queuing times are reducing; from 3 minutes (in 2017) to 55 seconds in 2020.

### Channel Shift

#### Online Crime Reporting (OCR):

This was introduced in September 2017 (data from the 5<sup>th</sup>).

<b>OCR totals:</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Number of 'Report a Crime' Submissions</b>	4,255	27,447	25,178	29,865

2020 saw the highest yearly volume of online crime reports since the system was introduced in September 2017. The monthly volumes peaked in August 2020 at 3,049, mirroring the demand seen with 999 calls.

### Live Chat

This was introduced in November 2018 (data from the 13<sup>th</sup>).

<b>Live Chat totals:</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>LC volumes</b>	n/a	1,162	15,100	44,292

The Live Chat use has increased year on year and saw record volumes in 2020. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and during the first lockdown period, the daily volume peaked at 363 chats on the 7<sup>th</sup> April, with that month averaging 198 chats per day. This demonstrates the volume of channel shift and evidences how the addition of digital reporting channels offers channel choice to the public, enabling them to report matters to the police in the way that best suits their needs.

### Investigation Management Unit (IMU)

The table below demonstrates activity in the past 4 years:

<b>IMU &amp; Crime totals:</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Recorded Crime</b>	167,291	197,035	192,841	172,670
<b>Cancelled Crime</b>	4,970	6,145	6,378	6,271
<b>% of Total</b>	3.0%	3.1%	3.3%	3.6%

Recorded crime peaked in 2018 at 197,035 and has reduced over the past couple of years to 172,670 in 2020.

### 6.3. Technology

Technology has been significantly enhanced and developed since 2017 and now all officers have their own mobile device which enables them to undertake their role via the Mobile First app to the extent as if they were in a police station. To ensure we continue to provide a first class service to victims and witnesses officers have the ability to submit Investigations and Witness Statement from their devices. On submission of the investigation report the officer is able to share the investigation number with the victim immediately. The digital statement is captured electronically and signed which includes the ability to also submit a Victim Personal Statement, ensuring that the impact of the incident is captured at first point.

The Mobile First application enables officers to search policing databases using names, date of births and fingerprint scanning. This allows for the identification of wanted suspects locally or nationally and accessing real time information while out of the station. Mobile ID fingerprint scanners have also been introduced which help identify suspects quickly saving the officer and back office function a huge amount of time whilst instant results are obtained.

To support tackling anti-social behaviour, officers and staff can submit a Restorative Justice request to facilitate a positive outcome for the community. In addition to help fight anti-social behaviour, to capture the use of Stop Search powers, officers can submit their Stop Search record using their device. Officers can conduct the Stop Search and complete all the mandatory questions enabling a lawful stop to happen, this is an important power, when used proportionately and lawfully it increases community confident and interrupts offenders' activity.

To protect the public from those who continue to flaunt the Covid-19 restrictions imposed by the Government. A new Covid-19 4E application was developed to ensure the Engage, Explain and Encourage approach are recorded. The last option of Enforcement is available to the officers, but we continue to police with consent. The application is continuously updated with the latest Government legislation when we have changed from Tiers to Lockdown.

On submission of investigation reports, officers can ask Adult and Child protection vulnerability questions to ensure potential vulnerable people are identified and enable appropriate safeguarding measures to be put into place.

The application also enables real time Stalking and Harassment risk assessments to be taken and submitted to ensure the force has early information and can act on that information to assess the best way to reduce the potential threat to the victim.

Officers can submit Intelligence reports in real time and submit to the force's Central Intelligence teams in Kent. This allows the officers to submit at the time of discovery, rather back at the station, this allows a clearer picture of intelligence to be built and avoids duplication for officers.

Officers and staff in frontline policing roles have been equipped with smartphones, this enables self-service out of the station to provide a visible presence in the communities. Without returning to the station officers and staff are able submit several forms and reports. This includes Witness Statements, Investigations, Intelligence, Stop Search, Use of Force, Traffic Offence Reports and Restorative Justice processes. Enabling the information to be submitted on scene, without duplicating effort required at the station.

Roads Policing utilise the devices to identify uninsured vehicles and disqualified drivers, using information directly available on their devices. Digital Traffic Offence Tickets can be submitted for several offences such as speeding, mobile phone or seatbelts. This has enabled less duplication for our back-office teams and improved data quality and ensured officers are able to spend more time within and interacting with the communities of Kent.

The requirements and functionality of the application have been influenced directly by operational officers and staff. To ensure the application supports our policing vision by empowering officers to become more local, visible and accessible using mobile technology. A feedback loop is in place for officers and staff to suggest improvements to the application, and where applicable are implemented or influence new processes in the future.

In a recent survey of Mobile First users in 2020, 75% felt they receive sufficient engagement and information from the Mobile First programme team and rated the application 3.3 of out 5 stars. In receipt of the survey, we reviewed each piece of individual feedback and updated our communications, self-service help and future development of the application. Future changes, enhancement and modules have been developed from the feedback from the user community.

The self-service of accessing policing information on the street, rather than calling the control room for the same information has released time for the officers and FCR staff, this has allowed the control room to redirect resources to our public 101 and 999 phones, delivering a more efficient service.

The International Crime Coordination Centre (ICCC) App has also just been made available to officers and offers straightforward help and guidance for anyone dealing with a foreign national, whether as a suspect, witness or victim. International enquiries can become part of any policing investigation, ranging from volume crime to Serious and Complex cases. Foreign National Offenders make up 18 % of all UK arrests.

#### 6.4. Athena.

The Athena programme represented one of the largest and most complex IT business changes for Kent Police in a generation, impacting upon the entire force.

Athena is a Record Management System (RMS) using a single shared IT solution integrating and linking the business functions of Investigation, Intelligence, Custody and Case. Unlike most other police enterprise applications, it is externally managed and hosted by a third-party supplier. It has been live in Kent since November 2018 joining the eight other forces that collaborate within the Athena Consortium.

Genesis, the previous RMS, in place since 1996, was at end of life. To ensure Kent Police maintained the knowledge and intelligence built up over the last 22 years much of the data was into transferred into Athena following a major programme of back record conversion. This meant Officers and staff retained the depth and breadth of the previously held information and intelligence without the need to spend time accessing multiple systems and made it immediately accessible to the other eight forces.

Working on a secure shared data principle, data is shared between Athena forces, using a single business process. Authorised users can instantly access information from other Athena forces instead of having to request it, saving time and unnecessary bureaucracy, supporting the delivery of an efficient and accessible service.

Athena is a web-based application supporting the use of mobile devices. Accessibility to Athena via the mobile application enables officers to spend more time with victims and witnesses as they are able record, report, access and add information at the scene. It enables users to log details, check PNC via Athena and create and update crime reports while maintaining frontline productivity and public visibility.

The community we serve benefits from the access to other force's intelligence or information with positive outcomes for victims and a reduction in the time taken to identify suspects and offenders. There are many accounts where shared intelligence and information gives tangible results with reports of offenders being apprehended in other forces and crime series being identified with travelling criminals.

Prior to Athena it would have taken many hours of investigation and cross border liaison to identify individual reports but Athena enables the swift identification of victims of crime across the Consortium ensuring they can be appropriately supported.

Athena automatically supports compliance with the new Code of Practice for Victims (April 2021) enabling Kent Police to provide the appropriate level of care and support to victims.

The continued success of Athena is dependent upon it being an enabler to support and enhance the effective delivery of policing. Kent is building on the investment made in Athena by utilising the current functionality provided within the Problem Sharing Profile (PSP) module to replace existing databases and/or processes to allow merged case-based data to be produced.

The force are piloting this in two areas, one dealing with Antisocial Behaviour and the other managing offenders, associates and places specifically engaged in County Line activity supporting the Force's Vision in dealing effectively with anti-social behaviour and combating organised crime.

Athena is ever evolving and improving with the application of future versions providing new capability. A major technical refresh of hardware and move to a new Data Centre has been successfully achieved in January 2021 providing ongoing stability, security and performance to the system. This was a massive operation requiring coordinated planning across the 9 Force Consortium. Within the next two years will be the introduction of Athena Express which provides the platform for the National Digital Case File Programme.

#### 6.5. Estates, Accessibility and Fleet

The force strategy in relation to the policing estate has been to critically examine the footprint across the county and identify and maintain buildings of operational benefit whilst examining the benefits of expenditure on those buildings considered no longer fit for purpose. As a result, some buildings have been sold, with the capital receipt and revenue savings being reinvested into frontline policing.

One of the key force principles is to maintain a visible and accessible footprint in all our main towns and where possible, work with our partners cooperatively to maintain or enhance accessibility of public enquiry counter provision. Kent Police has been on the front foot in embracing digital technology to increase accessibility to our communities with online crime recording and live chat available from our Force Control Room but we recognise the value our communities place in accessing our services physically, particularly in town centres.

Most recently the public enquiry counter at Deal has been relocated as the counter at the police station was on the periphery of the Town, some way from the centre and only open for a limited time during the day between 12 and 2pm. Working closely with partners at the local Town Council, Kent Police have been able to create a new Police Office at the Town Hall in the heart of the Town Centre adjacent to the High Street with opening hours extended from 12 to 4pm.

Kent Police actively manages its estate to ensure best use of space and over the plan period has been able to identify over 13,000 sq. ft. of space to be vacated. Since 2016, through more efficient management practices, average space use per head across the estate has reduced by over 15% and the Estate Spend per Head across the estate has reduced by over 16%. By reducing the occupied space Kent Police have been able to make savings of more than £102,000 per annum.

Following a thorough review of its estate in 2019 Kent Police were able, in 2020, to commence an exciting project which will rationalise the portfolio, dispose of surplus accommodation and deliver more efficient use of the remaining estate. This has included a decision to sell the estate at Sutton Road, Maidstone and relocate the Command Team to existing estate at Northfleet. Other departments at Sutton Road will also be relocated to other parts of the county's estate in line with smarter working protocols. The force will continue to explore collaborative working opportunities with our partners and will progress these where they deliver financial savings and/or improved service delivery.

The project will deliver an innovative reconfiguration of the estate, relocating services to ensure maximisation and efficiency of all assets held in the portfolio. Surplus assets will be refurbished and repurposed or disposed of to create a flexible, future facing portfolio redesigned to accommodate agile working practices and deliver the key frontline policing priorities into the future. The project will deliver a significant reduction of 190,000 sq. ft. in space used with targeted savings in excess of £2m per annum, therefore enabling reinvestment into frontline policing.

### Fleet

Over the past four years, the Kent Police fleet establishment has reduced from 872 vehicles (April 2017) to 857 (February 2021) vehicles. This reduction is balanced against an overall increase in operational capability, whereby some lower utilised vehicles have been withdrawn in favour of additional marked response and dog vehicles. The overall net effect has been the same capital investment but with the benefit of increased operational response capability.

Improved vehicle utilisation and efficiency has been achieved through the use of Telematics which was installed in all vehicles in January 2018. Telematics reports on vehicle usage and has enabled the force to understand how its officer deployments can be maximised and where operationally they are most beneficial. With more officers now in the force this has meant an increase in fleet use and telematics has been used to good effect to ensure these additional officers have access to vehicles as required. This technology is also being used to support the pooling of the unmarked fleet at key locations, further increasing access to officers and staff whilst reducing reliance on private user mileage and hire. Thinking innovatively has led to better use of the vehicles and therefore improving the service to the public.

The fleet is complimented by three marine vessels, forty-five trailers and pods and 150 bicycles to support community policing and in 2020, the force made a significant investment in a new Marine RHIB that has been used during the process of EU Exit and to partner the Border Force in policing the Medway and surrounding waters.

Looking to the future, Kent Police are initiating a project to assess how it will transition the fleet following the government's announcement of the abolition of wholly diesel and petrol engines by 2030. This will present some challenges and opportunities for policing in order to maintain full operational capability whilst moving quickly towards a more environmentally effective fleet but Kent are working nationally with other forces and vehicle manufacturers to ensure practical solutions are in place as technology continues to evolve over the next few years.

## **Conclusion**

The force has experienced some unprecedented times during the past 4 years, steadfastly operating during a global pandemic for the last year, proactively responding to a rise in demand and continuing to provide a first-class service whilst delivering against a continuous savings plan. Staff and officers have maintained putting victims and witnesses at the heart of everything they do, protecting and serving the people of Kent during these challenging times, using their resources wisely whilst adopting an innovative approach. There has been significant investment in a number of policing teams which have been targeting the Safer in Kent Plan and Control Strategy areas, as detailed in the report such as burglary, robbery, knife crime, County Lines, domestic abuse and sexual offences.

Vulnerability, visibility and contact has been a constant thread within the Force's considerations of those areas that have required dedicated investment over the past four years, whilst balancing the need to deliver upon substantial savings.

Innovation has been key to constantly review and improve our systems and processes in order to be as effective and efficient as possible, while all the time providing a quality service to the public. Technology is one such example of innovation that continues to expand and will continue to be a key enabler to our delivery of every day business during this term. Mobile First has enabled officers to undertake their role more efficiently whilst out and about and away from police premises, saving an enormous amount of time and resources. Estates is another such example of where innovations in buildings and partnership working, have proven to provide demonstrable benefits, making better use of space and reducing occupancy, whilst reducing the effects of its carbon footprint.

Over a 4 year term, through continued investment from the Police and Crime Commissioner and Home Office funding, the Kent Police Officer establishment has uplifted from 3261.78 to 3825.90. With a projected establishment of 3970.90 for 2021/2022, this will be the highest at which it has ever been in Kent Police history. This has been as a result of a hugely successful recruitment campaign, attracting in record numbers of applicants for police officer, police staff and volunteer roles.

Whilst the Force will always seek to continuously improve, and this is evident through very recent initiatives such as the Quality Policing Programme, the performance delivery by the Kent Police workforce during this term has been nothing short of outstanding. Indeed, our independent assessors, HMICFRS, have consistently provided scrutiny over our efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy and Kent Police remains the only force in the country to be

judged as Outstanding for its legitimacy 4 years in a row, and are considered to be one of the best performing forces in the country.

Looking ahead to the next 4 years, the Force will be consistent in its approach to the 3 pillars of providing a quality service, putting victims and witnesses at the heart of everything we do and to always do the right thing. In applying this consistency of approach, the force aspires to move from outstanding to exemplary; this being indicative of the most recent Covid-19 HMICFRS Inspection. They concluded their inspection, held in October 2020, by stating that Kent had provided an “exemplary and high quality policing response to the pandemic”. This is a fitting accolade to all officers, staff and volunteers who have remained steadfast in their professionalism, dedication and loyalty to Kent Police, and its communities, even in the most challenging of times. They should all feel incredibly proud.