

Update from Surrey Police Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave

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As many of you will know from my previous updates, last year we introduced a new way of working to ensure that as a Force, we can tackle the current crime challenges facing the county and be there for those who need us most, whilst maintaining local policing services.

The crime challenges of today mean that more and more police work is being undertaken behind the scenes, whether that's in the office investigating online crimes or behind the closed doors of someone's home. This may mean you aren't always aware of when we are in your local neighbourhood or what we are doing to keep your community safe. I hope that this month's bulletin can give you some reassurance to share within your communities, that we continue to be there protecting you, preventing and detecting crime to keep Surrey safe.

Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave

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Changing Nature of Crime

In the last five years we have seen a 29% reduction in burglary, whilst vehicle crime has fallen by 35%. In contrast, over the same five years we have seen an increase in the number of serious sexual offences, including rape, which has tripled, and an increase in domestic abuse with now approximately 2000 offences per year. This reflects what is being seen across the country.

The increase in reported crime in these areas may be due to increased confidence to report to the police rather than actual crime being higher. However, they tend to be far more complex to investigate and require significantly more partnership work to ensure the protection of victims, than the types of crimes that are in decline.

We have invested heavily in training our staff and allocating additional officers to focus on responding to these changes. Our Safeguarding Investigation Units alone have seen a 46% increase in detectives working to protect the most vulnerable members of society from domestic abuse, child abuse and sexual offences. I'm pleased to be able to report that we are seeing some positive results – the recent independent inspection into our child abuse response has reported on significant improvements, albeit recognising that some of the changes we have made are still bedding in.

At the same time we are still tackling more traditional problems such as burglary and anti-social behaviour in your neighbourhoods and keeping the roads safe as you can see by the snapshot of some of our recent activity below.

So how can you help us?

1. Keep an eye out and report any concerns to us

For non-emergencies you can call us on 101 or use our report online system. As you're aware, our response times for 101 calls have significantly improved and this is something we are continuing to work on, however, the online reporting option which is available via our website may be an alternative, more convenient way for getting in touch when you need us. If your policing matter is an emergency, always call us on 999.

2. Know what is going on in your local area and keep in touch with us

There are a number of ways of keeping in touch with us, both for county-wide updates and those from your local teams. Each of our 11 boroughs and districts have a dedicated neighbourhood team of staff and officers working to keep the communities safe and you can find your local team on the map below.

Technology is a huge asset for our neighbourhood teams and the wider Force, giving us new ways to keep in touch with our Surrey communities. You may have heard of In The Know which is a new initiative by both Surrey Police and Sussex Police that allows members of the public to sign up and receive tailored, local messaging from the Force direct to your email. Messaging comes direct from your local neighbourhood team and when you sign up you specify where you live, as well as subjects of interest which mean you'll only be updated when it's relevant to you. I would encourage you, and others within your community, to sign up online at [InTheKnow.Community](#) to help us keep you up to date.

Each borough or district also has a Twitter page which posts updates from the local area and the wider county. You can find your local page on Twitter by searching your borough or district name followed by "beat". Or if you are a Facebook user, you can find both local and county-wide updates on our Force account at www.Facebook.com/SurreyPolice.

3. Protect yourself and others

We need your support to ensure our communities are keeping themselves and others safe. Crime prevention advice and tips can be found on our website so, please feel free to link to our pages and share with your communities where relevant.

Operational successes

Just some of our recent successes have included:

- Three men have been charged in connection with a string of burglaries across North and West Surrey. Michael Assante Di Cupillo, 34, from Raynham Close, Guildford was charged with 10 burglaries, as well as perverting the course of justice and possession of a false identity document in relation to a stolen passport. Luke Smith, 27 was charged with one count of burglary, one count of robbery and one count of false imprisonment. Sam Edwards, 23 from St. Michaels Road, Ashford was charged for burglary and further criminal offences.
- A victim has been commended for her strength and courage throughout the court process which resulted in a 67-year-old man being sentenced to 17 years behind bars. He was found guilty of one count of rape, three counts of indecent assault and two counts of gross indecency involving a young girl aged 6-9 years old between 1998 and 2000.
- A dedicated team of Surrey Police officers have arrested 33 people so far as part of a new initiative called Operation Viking to disrupt cross border drug dealing. Since October, the team have seized a high number of phones, £15,000 in cash and Class A drugs including cocaine and heroin. Proactive work to crackdown on dealers travelling to Surrey to commit crime will be continuing.
- More than 300 motorists who were spotted using their mobile phone behind the wheel were stopped during a week-long focus to stop the dangerous driving habit. As a result of the dedicated activity 249 fixed penalty notices were issued, 42 drivers were given verbal warnings, 14 have been summonsed to court and five will be attending education courses.

Operational successes continued...

- A 32-year-old former maths teacher has been sentenced to more than eight years behind bars for multiple serious sexual offenses against teenager girls in Godalming, Croydon and online. His Honour Judge Jonathan Black also gave him a three year extended licence, a sexual harm prevention order and ordered a £120 victim surcharge due to the extent and seriousness of the crimes.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour team has successfully obtained a Closure Order on a property in Grovelands, West Molesey. The tenant was found to have verbally abused his neighbour, harassed him in his garden and even urinated in his own bedroom, so it flowed into the neighbours flat below (damaging his property). Together with Paragon Housing Group, officers worked with the victim and other neighbours to prepare statements and provide reassurance. The overwhelming evidence ensured the closure order went through uncontested.



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