

Avon & Somerset Participation Strategy

2017-2020



Our commitment to you



Andy Marsh
Chief Constable
Avon & Somerset Constabulary

In 1829 Sir Robert Peel invented what is called the British model of policing. This model is based on a philosophy that the power of the police comes from the common consent of the public as opposed to being imposed by the power of the state. The nine principles that underpin this philosophy are called the Peelian Principles. I would like to highlight just one of these:

“The Police will maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence”.

I believe that police and public alike all have a responsibility for keeping our communities safe. Our model of policing by consent depends upon it. My commitment is to support and enable fellow citizens to participate in the policing mission and make it a worthwhile and rewarding experience for the individual and a true benefit for the communities in which we all live.

Our Vision:

Citizens in Policing will be representative of our communities and their voice will help shape the services we provide.

There will be a wide range of opportunities available for the public to deploy and develop their skills, knowledge and experience to the level and extent they want and feel comfortable with.

The opportunities will be sufficiently flexible to meet the changing needs of policing and enable our Citizens in Policing to feel valued, engaged and integrated into our policing family.

Aim 1: Closing the Gap:

We will provide opportunities for local people and organisations to become actively involved in shaping our police service.

Aim 2: Developing the experience of our Citizens in Policing:

We will release the full potential of our Citizens in Policing to help us achieve our policing aims. We will work hard to show them how they enrich and enhance our policing service.

Aim 3: Making Citizens in Policing Integrated:

We will embrace our Citizens in Policing into our police family and provide ways of working that genuinely embed them within our organisation.

Participation locally, regionally and nationally



What is participation?

Participation, or Citizens in Policing, is the Police Service's term for the opportunities that exist for the community to contribute towards policing objectives. It means taking some sort of action, with varying degrees of involvement.

Background

We are proud to have a long established Special Constabulary. Since 2007 we have also had a thriving Police Support Volunteer Programme. Our Volunteer Police Cadet schemes for young people have been growing in strength since we introduced them in 2011. These schemes are complemented by a variety of other volunteering opportunities such as Neighbourhood Watch, Community SpeedWatch and Independent Advisory Groups. The contribution of the active citizens who participate in them is invaluable and our communities are safer because of it.

Building upon this strong foundation, we will develop a cohesive framework that offers greater opportunities based on our shared interests in making our communities safe. We will work with our fellow citizens to encourage, enable and support them to climb the ladder of engagement to the level they can or want. This strategy has been developed through consultation with key stakeholders, including the Special Constabulary, Cadets and Police Support Volunteers themselves.



National

This strategy is mindful of the national context that encourages greater citizen participation:

- Greater emphasis on communities shaping solutions to local problems.
- The National Citizens in Policing Strategy 2016: 'Connecting Communities to Policing and Policing to Communities'
- The Policing and Crime Act 2016 which makes designated legal powers available to Police Support Volunteers
- Employer Supported Policing Scheme

Regional

We will continue working with regional forces, sharing best practice and building consistency. A regional co-ordination board will support this work and drive collaborative opportunities.

Local

This strategy supports and aims to fulfil the ambitions of:

- The Police and Crime Plan 2016-2021
- Our Citizen and Community Engagement Strategy
- Our Children and Young Person Strategy

'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has'.

Margaret Mead

What are our aims?

Closing the Gap


We will provide opportunities for local people and organisations to actively participate in shaping our policing service.

We will:

- Provide a variety of opportunities to attract and engage a wider cross section of the public to participate with us in our shared mission.
- Build upon existing schemes e.g. Special Constabulary, Police Support Volunteers, Volunteer Police Cadets whilst providing new and innovative ways to participate such as our new Citizen Academy programme.
- Ensure that all our volunteering roles are focussed on community priorities.
- Collaborate with statutory and non statutory partners who share our aims and values, including Blue Light partner services, the new Avon Community Resilience Team and emerging 999 Cadet Academies.
- Endeavour to build a Citizens In Policing family that is representative of the communities we serve and has a strong voice to influence and shape our policing service.



“I joined the Specials because I wanted to help support vulnerable people”



Our Specials volunteered more than 72,000 hours in 2016.

What are our aims?



Developing the experience of our Citizens in Policing

We will release the full potential of our Citizens in Policing to help us achieve our policing aims. We will work hard to show them how they enrich and enhance our policing service.

We will:

- Better understand the motivations and talents of our Citizens in Policing, providing them opportunities to deploy their skills, expertise, perspectives and passion to improve and enhance our service.
- Support and enable them to fully realise their potential through a broad range of training and development opportunities.
- Celebrate their contribution and ensure they understand how much their efforts are valued.
- Raise their profile within and outside the Constabulary, actively communicating to our communities the contribution of our Citizens in Policing.



"I feel proud that I am able to help people"



What are our aims?



Making Citizens in Policing Integrated

We will embrace our Citizens in Policing into our police family and provide ways of working that genuinely embed them within our organisation.

We will:

- Ensure that Citizens in Policing are fully integrated into our team, working with us side by side in fulfilling our policing mission and acting always in accordance with our Values and Code of Ethics.
- Give access to a broad range of departments and specialisms within our Constabulary to realise the potential of our Citizens in Policing.
- Ensure that we always provide effective, capable and engaged and leadership of our Citizens in Policing programme.
- Provide our Citizens in Policing with the tools, systems and processes they need to fulfil their role and realise their potential.
- Ensure our Citizens in Policing programme is sustainable by being flexible to the changing needs of the Constabulary, community and our Citizens in Policing themselves.

“Volunteers reflect who we are and what we can do. Their support and input to our daily business is vital for us to deliver a quality level of service to the community. It is humbling to see our volunteers becoming future employees. Their voice should always be heard”.

Chief Constable Andy Marsh



What will success look like in 2020?



This strategy will be supported by a comprehensive Delivery Plan, detailing how we will deliver the strategic aims in order to achieve the vision.

Citizens in Policing will be:

- **Actively participating** in and **shaping** our policing services.
- **Increasing the value and quality** of the services we provide to our communities.
- **Confident** in their local police service, seeing us as **legitimate** and **willing to work with** them.
- **Actively involved** in community safety, **volunteering** within partner organisations or in their communities.
- **Contributing to identifying, defining and solving problems within our communities.**
- **Reflective of** the communities we serve.

Citizens in Policing will have:

- A **range of opportunities to participate** that are flexible and enable us to **listen to** and **hear from** all our communities.

We will be working closely with Citizens in Policing and our partners to:

- **Identify, understand and solve problems** in our communities **together.**
- **Make the most of the skills, talents and resources** available to us.
- Provide an **efficient, effective and integrated** service that enables us to fulfil our **Service Promise**, inspires **trust and confidence** in the police service and, most important of all, **helps to make our communities safer and stronger.**

“We value the worth of every volunteer as they underpin our engagement with the community of Avon and Somerset. They are enablers for so many good initiatives involving the Constabulary. The reach they have into the community is immeasurable and invaluable”.

Chief Constable Andy Marsh