



NORTHUMBRIA
**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

violence
reduction
unit

Improving lives to prevent crime

KIM MCGUINNESS

NEWSLETTER

WELCOME TO MY NEWSLETTER

Well, February was a busy month with the launch of 'Fighting Crime, Preventing Crime' - my new Police and Crime Plan.

Last year was all about adapting and rethinking as the pandemic took hold and presented new challenges across our communities and of course, our police force. So, pulling this plan together has provided a great opportunity to focus on the future and prepare for the aftermath, as best we can. I am thankful to everyone who shared their views to make sure this plan reflects the needs of local people and if you haven't taken a look, you can have a [read here](#). Earlier this month I also invited the Chief Constable to join me for a [Facebook Live Q and A event](#). Thank you to everyone who watched or submitted questions. It was a great way to explain the new priorities and how these commitments will be delivered locally. If you missed it you can watch it here and if you have a question that wasn't covered, do drop me a line - enquiries@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk

Anyway, thankfully, things are looking up. More and more loved ones are getting the vaccines, the case numbers are falling and it's important that we continue doing our bit to prevent the virus spreading, we're still not out of the woods yet. We know as lockdown eases and the economy feels the impact of the past 12 months, unfortunately crime has the potential to rise so we need to be doing everything to prevent this. I want to make sure that when we come out the other side of this pandemic Northumbria remains one of the safest places to live in the country. I'm very aware that this fact mustn't be taken for granted though - it takes a lot of dedication and hard work from us all and I look forward to keeping you updated on all our progress in future newsletters.

Best wishes



Kim McGuinness
Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner

[Read the Police and Crime Plan clicking here](#)



[Watch our Facebook Live on Fighting Crime and Preventing Crime here](#)

FIGHTING CRIME



£1.6 MILLION TO BE INVESTED IN TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE ACROSS NORTHUMBRIA

Finally, I am able to confirm that we've secured a further 12 months funding to tackle serious violence and its root causes through my Violence Reduction

I'm very proud of everything the unit has achieved since launching and the significant role it has played contributing to the region's decline in crime, serious violence, and the 10 per cent fall in knife crime. As pleased as I am that this work has been given the green light to continue for another year, I can't help but think of what could be done if the Government committed to a much longer term approach rather than this year-on-year drip feeding of funding. We have big plans for next year. We are looking at life changing work - this is not something that can just be delivered with a few weeks' notice and a short term approach. There's no quick fix when it comes to stopping vulnerable young people from being exploited and diverting them into positive futures, far from it. I only hope the Government will come to realise this.

PERPETRATOR STRATEGY TO FORM PART OF THE NEW DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY

I'm pleased that our recent campaigning for a perpetrator strategy has paid off and the Home Office is starting to take this seriously by promising it will form part of the new Domestic Abuse strategy.

We need long term solutions to prevent the crime that is domestic abuse and hopefully a step in the right direction is coming.



GREAT RAIDS HAVE LED TO SOME GREAT RESULTS ACROSS NORTHUMBERLAND AND SOUTH TYNESIDE



Criminals targeting our rural communities need to think again. Officers are taking a really robust approach to fighting crime in our more remote neighbourhoods and some recent raids have had some worthwhile results stopping organised crime groups in their tracks.

Police arrested five men after a mini digger was among a haul of suspected stolen goods seized during dawn raids across the region. Three of those men, who have been targeting our rural areas, have since been charged with the theft of a hydraulic breaker. This is a real warning to anyone making money from serious and organised crime – they will be brought to justice.

PREVENTING CRIME



BOXING CLUBS ARE VITAL FOR IMPROVING LIVES TO PREVENT CRIME AND NEED GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Sadly, boxing clubs and the vital youth support they offer are set to suffer after being excluded from the Government's £300 million Sports Winter Survival Package.

That's why in our region I decided to join forces with our boxing clubs and local fire fighters to call on the government to do more, something we put in writing to the sports minister, calling for action.

Through my Violence Reduction Unit, my office works with a number of boxing clubs to deliver youth diversion and mentoring programmes, providing a safe space and a positive focus. I have seen first-hand how boxing can give young people a structure to their lives, whilst engaging in activity that develops them both physically and mentally.

One of the organisations we work with, Jobes Boxing & Fitness Gym, which is based in the West End of Newcastle, have told me that young people who would usually be attending the gym have reverted back to criminal behaviour as a result of the closure and lack of engagement. Clearly this decision by Government needs a re-think and we'll continue the fight for this.

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE RECEIVES TOP AWARD FOR TACKLING DRUG CRIME IN BERWICK



Fantastic news from Northumberland this month where an operation to tackle drug crime in Berwick has been recognised as the top investigation of the year by a national policing awards body.

The Tilley Awards celebrate success in resolving issues faced by the police and wider community. The winning operations centred around putting a stop to County Lines networks and saw officers target drug dealers from Liverpool who had embedded themselves within our region to supply Class A drugs such as crack cocaine and heroin.

Drug addiction destroys lives. It spreads crime and fear. Part of the answer to this misery is tough direct police action - exactly like these successful operations demonstrate. The other part of the response has to be around supporting those with addictions. Preventing them from turning to crime to fund addictions is key and this is a focus area for my Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit in the months ahead.



REDUCING HARM ON OUR ROADS

You asked for road safety to be a priority and I've committed to reducing harm and promoting safer driving in my new Police & Crime Plan that's why I joined our motor patrols department recently to see the range of tools at their disposal.

We discussed work that is happening to keep our roads safe in both our urban and rural areas. Officers will continue to educate but will also carry out targeted enforcement for those unwilling to follow the rules.

IMPROVING LIVES

MANY LOCAL ORGANISATIONS ARE TRAINING UP DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKPLACE CHAMPIONS AHEAD OF THE NATION'S RETURN TO WORK



Supporting staff with their physical and mental well-being has been high on the priority list for many businesses during lockdown, and based on the rise in reported cases of DA many are now increasing their focus on domestic abuse and wanted to help.

So I'm pleased my office is responding to this need with a virtual roll-out of our popular Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions scheme. The scheme, which raises awareness of domestic abuse and guides people towards specialist services, has switched to digital delivery. So far, 140 people have signed up, and the course is now fully subscribed until the end of May, with further dates to be scheduled.

To ensure the training reaches as many people as possible, we've teamed up with the Better Health at Work Award, coordinated by the Northern TUC, to offer the specialist training to the hundreds of employers who are committed to the health and wellbeing of their workforce, including making domestic abuse their business.

Domestic abuse is very much a hidden crime and lockdowns have meant survivors have had less opportunity to escape. It's more important than ever that we have this scheme up and running and that people know about it. If you want further information, please contact enquiries@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk.



SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE OVER HALF-TERM AND BEYOND

My office and the Violence Reduction Unit have been working closely with several organisations who have made it their mission to support some of the region's young people in recent months and over the half term period.

Best of Bensham and the Alive Wires youth group has been working none stop to keep local young people entertained with everything from writing sessions to creative arts kits, which have gone down a storm.

The Foundation of Light is another organisation that has been busy offering a range of activities to young people in Sunderland ranging from engineering to physical activities, to mentoring and more. I caught up with the team at the Foundation last week and was pleased to hear more about their work supporting young people with their mental health - an area in which many people, young and old have struggled during lockdowns - something which I am committed to tackling further. Whilst many things have changed over the past year, one thing has not - our commitment to supporting the region's young people and the most vulnerable.

NEW FUNDING TO HELP SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE



I'm pleased to announce that a one-off pot of money totalling £354,126 is to be awarded throughout our region to services who currently support survivors of domestic abuse (DA) and sexual violence (SV).

This is going to help enable a lot of good work that has been happening to continue. We want this to help victims cope with the impacts of these horrific crimes, and, as far as possible, recover from the harm they have experienced. For more information on how to apply please visit my website.



ADVICE SURGERIES TO DISCUSS WHAT MATTERS TO YOU

This month I will be holding advice surgeries with MPs from across the region. Want to know more about local policing priorities in your area and discuss any issues you may have? Look out for more information on my social media channels in the coming weeks.

Let's Talk...

Follow me

You can follow my work as Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria.



@NorthumbriaPCC



@pcc_kim_mcguinness



@KiMcGuinness

Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit

I now have a dedicated Facebook page on the work of my Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit - you can like it here - [@NorthumbriaVRU](#)