



Police and Crime Panel

Date: Thursday, 1 October 2026
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)

Alasdair Keddie (Chair), Louise Bown (Vice Chair), Cameron Adams, Patrick Canavan, David Flagg, Simon Gibson, Louie O'Leary, Peter Sidaway, Sarah Williams and Carl Woode

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic & Governance Services Meeting Contact 01305 224709 - megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. MINUTES	5 - 10
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2 nd July 2026	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either one question or one statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting.

The first eight questions and the first eight statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below. For further information please see [Public Participation - Dorset Council](#)

All submissions must be emailed in full to megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by **8.30am on Tuesday 29th September 2026**.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit one question or one statement.
- A question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question, and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to three minutes to present your question.
- When submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g. the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- Questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- All questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) - Procedure Rule 9

Councillor Questions

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to
megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
by **8.30am on Tuesday 29th September 2026.**

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) – Procedure Rule 13

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|------------|--|---------|
| 5. | Q4 MONITORING REPORT 2026/27 | 11 - 22 |
| | To receive the Q4 Monitoring Report 2026/27 | |
| 6. | HATE CRIME AND HATE INCIDENTS | 23 - 46 |
| | To consider a report on hate crime and hate incidents in Dorset, including Dorset Police's response, victim support and the key lines of enquiry. | |
| 7. | ILLEGAL E-MOBILITY VEHICLES | 47 - 58 |
| | To receive an update on road safety matters relating to the illegal use of e-mobility vehicles. | |
| 8. | COMPLAINTS UPDATE | |
| | To receive a verbal update from the Service Manager for Assurance. | |
| 9. | FORWARD WORKPLAN | |
| | To discuss the Forward Workplan. | |
| 10. | URGENT ITEMS | |
| | To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes. | |
| 11. | EXEMPT BUSINESS | |
| | To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered. | |

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

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POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2 JULY 2026

Present: Cllrs Alasdair Keddie (Chair), Louise Bown (Vice-Chair), Cameron Adams, Patrick Canavan, David Flagg, Simon Gibson, Peter Sidaway and Carl Woode

Apologies: Cllrs Louie O'Leary and Sarah Williams

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Simon Bullock (Chief Executive, OPCC), Marc Eyre (Service Manager for Assurance), Adam Harrold (OPCC Director of Operations), Jonathan Mair (Director - Assurance (Monitoring Officer)), Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer), David Sidwick (Police and Crime Commissioner), Julie Strange (OPCC Chief Finance Officer), Louis Wicks (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice) and Heather Williamson (HR Business Partner).

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Friday 6th February 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting

3. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

4. **Confirmation Hearing - Chief Constable Appointment (00:11:31 on the recording)**

Cllr Keddie welcomed Deputy Chief Constable Farrell (DCC Farrell), the preferred candidate for the position of Chief Constable and outlined the process of the confirmation hearing.

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) introduced DCC Farrell and advised that the Chief Constable role was integral to the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and the priorities identified by the public. The PCC paid tribute to the previous Chief Constable, thanking her for her dedicated service and significant contribution to Dorset Police. Members were informed that a full recruitment process had been undertaken to identify a candidate capable of supporting the force in reducing crime and delivering the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan. The PCC noted that a recruitment video had been produced as part of the process and that

attracting candidates to Chief Constable roles remained an ongoing challenge. The PCC then outlined the recruitment process that had been followed in making the appointment.

DCC Farrell was invited to introduce herself to the Panel. She provided members with an overview of her background and outlined her reasons for seeking appointment as Chief Constable of Dorset Police (00:34:08 on recording). DCC Farrell stated that she cared deeply about public service and was proud of Dorset Police, highlighting the talent and dedication of its officers and staff in achieving strong outcomes for communities. She described Dorset Police as a “small but mighty” force and advised that, if appointed, her role would be to support and empower officers and staff to protect the communities they served. She also emphasised the importance of investing in people, strengthening trust and confidence within communities, maintaining a visible and connected presence across Dorset, and ensuring that Dorset Police continued to strive for improvement in its pursuit of keeping Dorset safe.

Panel Members were then given the opportunity to put forward questions to the PCC and DCC Farrell (00:38:09 on recording).

Cllr Keddle felt the process had been conducted well but would have welcomed more candidates. He noted wider national issues relating to the selection of Chief Constables, which were beyond the Panel’s remit but felt that it should be noted.

The Chief Executive (OPCC) confirmed that the candidate met the criteria for the post as set out in the role profile.

DCC Farrell responded to questions (01:02:56 on recording) and welcomed scrutiny, recognising the importance of accountability and confirming that she would work constructively with the Panel. She stated that governance arrangements enabled the force to monitor delivery effectively and provided clear expectations, adding that she welcomed discussions on where improvements were needed. DCC Farrell highlighted neighbourhood policing as a key strength and noted that neighbourhood engagement was subject to robust oversight arrangements.

Cllr Keddle thanked DCC Farrell for attending the meeting and for her detailed responses to Members’ questions. Thanks, were also extended to officers for their work in supporting the recruitment process.

5. **Exempt Part of Confirmation Hearing - Chief Constable Appointment**

Proposed by, Cllr David Flagg, seconded by Cllr Peter Sideaway

Decision: That the press and the public be excluded for the following item(s) in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The Panel members retired to make their decision.

Proposed by: Cllr Alasdair Keddle, seconded by Cllr Simon Gibson

Decision: That the appointment of Ms Rachell Farrell to the role of Chief Constable was approved.

6. **Election for Chair/Vice-Chair (02:16:09 on the recording)**

It was Proposed by Cllr David Flagg and seconded by Cllr Peter Sideaway that Cllr Alasdair Keddie be elected as Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

It was proposed by Cllr Alasdair Keddie and seconded by Cllr Carl Woode that Cllr Louise Bown be appointed Vice-Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

Decision: that Cllr Alasdair Keddie and Cllr Louise Bown was appointed as chair and Vice Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

7. **Q4 Monitoring Report 2025/26 (02:20:20 on the recording)**

The Police and Crime Commissioner reported that total crime had fallen, with burglary and acquisitive crime significantly reduced. He noted that, despite the closure of the Hotspot Action Fund, Dorset Police remained accountable for delivery. Reference was also made to national data on vehicle crime.

The Panel heard that regular road safety enforcement campaigns had taken place, including a joint operation with the DVLA earlier in the year. The PCC also highlighted a recent blog on protecting Dorset businesses and ongoing work to improve outcomes in tackling shoplifting.

A review of mobile police stations had been completed, identifying areas for further consideration, with a further review requested following the busy summer period. Progress was also reported on the implementation of the High-Risk Victim Service, with future updates to be provided to the Panel.

The PCC outlined work to address substance misuse, including campaigns aimed at young people to raise awareness of the risks associated with ketamine, alongside continued lobbying for a change in its classification. Through Operation Scorpion, 92 arrests had been made and illegal drugs and weapons removed from the streets.

Members were also informed about support for domestic abuse victims through the provision of emergency “grab bags”, increased enforcement activity relating to waste crime and fly-tipping, and locally funded educational initiatives in schools to help prevent crime among young people. Reference was made to work supporting restrictions on smartphone use in schools, with 14 schools in Dorset having introduced a ban.

The PCC concluded by reiterating efforts to secure fairer funding for Dorset.

Questions from the Priority leads and Panel Members for Priority one – Cut Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (02:35:23 on the recording).

- Anticipated effect of hotspot action fund closure, future plans to sustain the positive effects that's had?
- How does Dorset track against the national data in relation to vehicle crime and theft offences?
- How does the prevention of escalating neighbourhood disputes feature within your Police and Crime Plan, and what strategic measures are you driving to address risks such as intimidation and criminal damage?
- Can the commissioner provide an overview of what level of funding is attributed to the community initiative Operation Relentless; how much has been spent and on what?
- With regards to scooters and bikes, the Force were considering trialling a scheme run in Manchester. Is there any progress to report? Also, how successful were the days of action at Kinson, and are the schemes going to be rolled out more widely?

Follow on panel questions and responses from PCC (02:56:50 on recording) and at appendix 1.

In accordance with Procedural Rule 8.1 the committee voted to extend the duration of the meeting.

Questions from the Priority leads and Panel Members for Priority two – Make Policing More Visible and Connected (03:14:44 on the recording).

- What action is the PCC taking to ensure that policing has a digital evidence management system that is fit for purpose based on current technology

Follow on panel questions and responses from PCC (03:16:45 on recording) and at appendix 1.

Questions from the Priority leads and Panel Members for Priority three – Fight Violent Crime and High Harm (03:06:43 on the recording).

- There have been a recent number of sexual assault incidents in Bournemouth, on the seafront and associated areas. What data does the Police have on these incidents? Do the stats follow a seasonal pattern with previous years or is there a spike in figures for this year? To what extent is resourcing on proactive visible policing subject to a strategic assessment based on seasonal trend information? Can the PCC expand on the role of the dedicated VAWG officer with his team on horizon scanning and proactive work on sexual assault prevention?

Follow on panel questions and responses from PCC (03:08:25 on recording) and at appendix 1.

Questions from the Priority leads and Panel Members for Priority four – Cut Fight Rural Crime (03:24:34) on the recording

- The performance report refers to educating dog owners in relation to disturbance of animal stock. Can the PCC provide us with further data on number of reports and response?

Follow on panel questions and responses from PCC (03:25:08 on recording) and at appendix 1.

Questions from the Priority leads and Panel Members for Priority five – Put Victim and Communities First (03:32:07 on the recording).

- The effects of seasonality are happening in real time, with neighbourhood policing seemingly abstracted. How is this being quantified so that impacts on neighbourhood policing can be assessed? The intention from central government was that extra funding in neighbourhood policing should provide a dedicated resource. However, in practice is this resource being abstracted to meet seasonal demands?
- Could details be given of data collected in relation to Op Ford? How many incidents have been logged in the last 12 months and is any action taken in relation to these cases other than recording the individual details?

Follow on panel questions and responses from PCC (03:34:32 on recording) and at appendix 1.

Questions from the Priority leads and Panel Members for Priority six – Make Every Penny Count (03:50:57 on the recording).

- Can the PCC provide an update on those grant funding issues that were unclear at the time of the precept meeting?
- The absence rates for officers was noted. Can the PCC provide detail of the impacts across the force and the extent that the impacts are on particular age profiles/ demographics/ roles? How closely are the drivers for absence being assessed and what prevention measures are taken to the key issues identified? As a point of clarity, do these absence rates include PCSOs?
- Could the OPCC consider providing clearer breakdown of this headline figure on a regular basis

Follow on panel questions and responses from PCC (03:52:01 on recording) and at appendix 1.

8. Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report (00:17:48 on the recording)

The Police and Crime Commissioner updated the Panel and reported that progress had been good. Members were informed that Dorset was now ranked as the fourth safest area, having previously been ranked tenth. It was also noted that levels of antisocial behaviour were at their lowest since 2008. The Commissioner commended the report and confirmed that performance would continue to be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Cllr Keddie stated that he had read the report and commended the effort and level of detail contained within it. He noted the positive figures relating to antisocial behaviour and referenced the lived experiences of residents within communities. He emphasised the importance of continuing to highlight such issues and maintain appropriate scrutiny. Cllr Keddie thanked Dorset Police for their continued efforts.

9. **Complaints Update (04:10:47 on the recording)**

The Panel received an update on complaints since the last meeting. One complaint had been investigated by the Monitoring Officer and was not upheld, while a further complaint had recently been received and would be investigated.

The Complaints Sub-Committee had met following the Panel meeting on 6 February 2025 and concluded that a complaint had been managed in accordance with the Complaints Protocol, except in relation to timeliness. It also agreed that an explanatory letter should be issued to clarify the escalation process for an unresolved element of the complaint.

The Panel considered proposed amendments to the Complaints Protocol, aligned with Dorset Council's complaints policy, to improve the management of AI-generated complaints, including requiring submission via the existing e-form and allowing lengthy submissions to be summarised.

It was Proposed by Cllr Alasdair Keddie, and seconded by Cllr Cameron Adams, that the adoption of the proposed revisions be agreed.

Decision: The proposed revisions to the Complaints Protocol were agreed.

10. **Forward Workplan (04:14:32 on the recording)**

The forward workplan was noted and members agreed the focus for the next meeting.

11. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

12. **Exempt Business**

There was no additional exempt business.

Appendix 1

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 2.10 pm

Chairman

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Cut Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour

Crime & ASB	Burglary	Fraud & Cyber	Road Safety	Business & Retail

- PCC awarded Op Relentless Community Grants to 11 community-based organisations.
- Officers used drones in Sandbanks road safety campaign to identify bad driving.

Make Policing More Visible & Connected

Uplift and Visibility	Connectivity and Engagement	Customer Service

- PCC published a Communication and Engagement leaflet and a Five Year On leaflet.
- The PCC launched a live facial recognition technology survey.

Fight Violent Crime and High Harm

Addiction	Violence Reduction	VAWG	DA & Stalking	Child Abuse	RASSO

- Parent webinar 'Keeping Our Children Safe' delivered to 60 parents.
- Specialist honour-based abuse training was delivered by Karma Nirvana.

Make Every Penny Count

Funding	Efficiency	Evidence Based Policing	Philosophy & Co-operation

- PCC wrote to the Home Secretary regarding the police funding formula.
- PCC confirmed his preferred candidate for Chief Constable of Dorset Police.

Put Victims & Communities First

Philosophy	CJS & RJ	Vulnerability	Hate Crime	Young People

- PCC launched the second Youth Survey, inviting young people to share their views.
- PCC signed a Gambling charter, recognising the harm inflicted by gambling.

Fight Rural Crime

Rural Resources	Country Watch	Fly-tipping	Wildlife Crime	Heritage Crime

- PCC responded to DEFRA's consultation on the proposal to ban trail hunting.
- The Heritage Watch membership continued to increase to during the quarter.

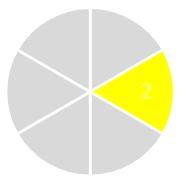
RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q4	Q1
"I am committed to empowering communities across Dorset to deliver the solutions they know will be most effective locally, strengthening neighbourhoods and safeguarding vulnerable people... Help be a part of the positive action being taken in our county to tackle ASB – and keep Dorset one of the safest places in the country to live, work and visit." PCC, 2 April 2026	Total Crime	↓	↔ 12336	Non-dwelling burglary 25/26	166		↔
				Dwelling burglary 25/26	224		↔
	Total Police recorded ASB incidents	↓	↔ 4356	Killed or Seriously Injured (Q1)	71		↓
				Business Crime (Q1)	1693		↑
	Public Opinion	↑	-- 45%	Commissioning: Crime Prevention 25/26	£713k		

Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail	Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail
Crime and ASB			The PCC funded 11 community-based organisations through the <u>latest round</u> of the Op Relentless Community Fund, awarding £44,871, bringing the total to 53 projects and over £210,000. The PCC <u>welcomed</u> the Crime and Policing Act, which introduces expansion of drug testing on arrest and combating ASB.	Burglary & Acquisitive Crime			Performance data shows a 4% reduction in burglary from residential buildings over the proceeding 12-month period.
				Fraud & Cyber Crime			The PCC received an update from the call-blocker pilot , with data showing that nearly 2,000 calls have been blocked, with most clients reporting that the devices have stopped scam calls and improved their quality of life.
Road Safety			The OPCC completed a government consultation on the drink drive limit, supporting a position of lowering the drink drive limit to as close to zero as feasible. Officers used drones to help spot bad driving as part of a Sandbanks road safety campaign, with 70 motorists identified as offending and two arrests made.	Business & Retail Crime			181 businesses are now registered on the NICE Investigate system, enabling quicker uploading of CCTV evidence and statements and a key issue identified by the business community. Changes now mean that magistrates can consider Criminal Behaviour Orders as part of court cases, instead of prosecutors needing to make a specific application to court.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q4	Q1
"I want to thank Dorset's residents. Community safety is a shared responsibility, and neighbourhood policing is strongest when policing and communities work together. By reporting concerns, engaging with local teams and helping shape local priorities, residents play a crucial role in keeping Dorset safe." PCC, 18 June 2026	Number of full-time equivalent police officers	↑	↑ (1,443)	Victim Satisfaction (Whole Experience)	73.7%		↑
				Victim Satisfaction (Actions Taken)	72%		↑
	Percentage of People who feel Dorset Police do a good job in their area	↑ 80%	-- 60%	Average 101 Triage Answer Time	54 secs		↓
				Average 101 SCH Answer Time	23.9 mins		↔
	Percentage of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds	↑ 90%	↓ 84%	Complaints received by Dorset Police (Q1)	424		↑
				Complaint Reviews received by OPCC (Q1)	27		↔

Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail
Uplift and Visibility			Ahead of the summer, the PCC scrutinised – and provided reassurance to the public about – the Force's planning for summer policing . The Force launched the <u>Good Safe Summer campaign</u> in May, bringing together the police, local authorities, businesses and community partners to help ensure that residents and visitors can enjoy everything the county has to offer safely and responsibly.
Engagement and Connectivity			The PCC launched two consultations this quarter – the second round of the youth engagement survey and a survey focussed on <u>live facial recognition</u> , with the latter asking members of the public what they think about the technology ahead of its first deployment within the county this summer.
Customer Service			The Communication and Engagement leaflet and a <u>Five Year On leaflet</u> were produced and are downloadable from the OPCC website – for ease of access, links to both leaflets are on the 'scrolling banner' prominently placed on the homepage. The PCC has personally given out more than 300 of these leaflets this year at community talks and the OPCC team also handed out a further 200 at events during this quarter. Dorset Police has also launched a 'Making the right call' <u>campaign</u> centred on encouraging the public to report incidents correctly to the relevant authority. For instance, not reporting dog fouling to the police. The OPCC has also supported and promoted the Force campaign via a PCC Newsletter.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q4	Q1
“Given the increasing prevalence of ketamine use and the serious harm it causes, I urge the Government to provide clarity and act without further delay. Our communities deserve a response that reflects the scale of this growing threat, not dither and delay.” PCC, 23 June 2026	Most Serious Violence	↓	↔ 57	Domestic Abuse Crimes	2166		↑
				Domestic Abuse Incidents	2841		↔
	Domestic Abuse Crime and Incident Reports	↑	↔ 5,007	Violence Against the Person	4703		↔
				Domestic Violence, Sexual Harm and Stalking Prevention Orders 26/27	48		↑
	Effectiveness assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	Commissioning: Reducing Reoffending 25/26	£283k		

Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail	Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail
Domestic Abuse & Stalking			The PCC supported National Stalking Awareness Week 2026 , which took place from 20-26 April. This focused on communications material raising awareness of stalking behaviour, reducing risks and highlighting the link between stalking and homicide.	Violence Reduction			The parent webinar ‘ Keeping Our Children Safe ’ was delivered to 60 parents on the dangers of knife carrying, in partnership with Dorset Police. Parents received information on <u>knife crime</u> , the expected response, and practical advice on how to support children.
RASSO			The SARC provider considered recommendations following a UKAS assessment relating to the Forensic Science Regulator standards . The OPCC, Police and NHS England are working with the provider to enable delivery of these recommendations and achieve accreditation.	Child Abuse			The final needs assessment report was shared following the NHS commissioned Bluestar review . The finding are being considered by respective agencies prior to action being taken to make service improvements.
Addiction and Substance Misuse			The PCC met the Policing Minister to discuss Illegal Gateway Drugs and wrote to the ACMD about cannabis harm and enforcement. The ‘ Forget the Ket ’ campaign was viewed 198,000 times, with a 28% increase in treatment referrals.	Violence Against Women and Girls			Specialist honour-based abuse training was delivered by Karma Nirvana following the <u>successful funding bid</u> . The training gave insights to help officers understand the warning signs and sensitivities surrounding this type of offending.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q4	Q1
"I am hugely proud of Dorset's beautiful countryside. It supports livelihoods, provides spaces for recreation and wellbeing, and forms an essential part of our heritage. Protecting it from waste crime and fly-tipping must remain a shared responsibility." PCC, 4 June 2026	Total Rural Crime and Incidents	↓	↓ 22	Number of fly tipping scenes attended by coordinator	60		↔
	Rural Resources	↔	↔	Rural Crime Team Engagement events in County LPA	19		↔
	Rural Public Opinion	↑	-- 53%	Poaching incidents and crimes	12		↓

Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail	Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail
Rural Resources			Dorset Police published guidance on establishing rural WhatsApp Groups and both the PCC and Force continue to <u>promote</u> the use of the Country Watch Dorset website . The Force also added a Rural Crime Community Engagement page to their website with a link to the guidance on Country Watch .	Country Watch			The pilot rural Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is targeting rural areas around Bridport. The local Crime Prevention Panel lead attended the Mobile Police Station and Community Contact points, which will continue over the summer.
Wildlife Crime			The PCC responded to DEFRA's consultation on the proposal to ban trail hunting and received a formal update on the Force's activity to tackle wildlife offences, including the destruction of bat habitats.				The Force considered a paper on the progress to better engage with rural communities – the plan is to identify SPOCs within each local area to promote the other Neighbourhood Watch Schemes across the county.
Waste Crime and Fly-Tipping			A trial began with covert CCTV cameras being deployed in two locations in East Dorset in partnership with Forestry England. The cameras were positioned in areas known for fly tipping to identify perpetrators.	Heritage Crime			The Heritage Watch membership increased to 138 during the quarter. Work is ongoing to continually increase membership, with over 150 emails/letters still to send out, and additional communications through the re-launch of the Dorset Alert system.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q4	Q1
“Last year’s survey gave us valuable insight into the experiences and concerns of young people in Dorset. It has directly informed the work of my Violence Reduction and Prevention Team and enabled investment in initiatives that are already making a difference.” PCC, 21 May 2026	Number of victims supported by OPCC commissioned services	↑	↑	Victim Support – Cases Created	1794	↓	↓
				No. of Restorative Interventions	49	↓	↓
	Victim Satisfaction	↑	↑ (73.7%)	Recorded Hate Crime	274	↔	↔
				Recorded Hate Incidents	69	↑	↑
	Legitimacy Assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	% people feeling safe in Dorset	88%	↔	↔
				Commissioning: Victim Services 25/26	£2.79m		

Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail	Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail
Criminal Justice Service and Restorative Justice			The PCC approved a pilot programme for an Out of Court Resolution (OoCR) with <u>100 and First</u> . The intervention, for individuals aged 18-25, will combine gym-based mentoring, group sessions, and one-to-one support to drive sustained behaviour change among 18 to 25-year-olds at risk of serious violence and repeat offending.	Support for Young People			The PCC <u>launched</u> the second OPCC Youth Survey , inviting young people across Dorset who are aged under 25 to share their views. This survey is a key part of our youth participation strategy, ensuring young people’s voices directly shape our work, particularly around preventing violence and reducing harm.
Victims and Community			The OPCC provided a response to the MOJ Victim Code Consultation . OPCC provided a response to the Victim Code Consultation run by APCC to inform their national response.	Vulnerability			The PCC <u>signed</u> a Gambling charter , recognising the harm inflicted by gambling and pledging support for those affected. This charter is the first of its kind to be signed by any police force in the southwest.
				Hate Crime			Launch of the use of the Restorative Dorset Hate Crime Awareness Course as a conditional caution from the 1 April 2026.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q4	Q1
“Public confidence, transparency, and accountability are central to effective policing, and your feedback plays an important role in shaping how Dorset Police continue to serve our communities. Thank you for your help in keeping Dorset one of the safest places in the country.” PCC, 16 April 2026	Money secured from competitive national funds	↑	-- £1.1m	Total Commissioning Spend by OPCC (2025/26)	£3.79m		
	Budget Forecast	SEE FINANCE SLIDES	SEE FINANCE SLIDES	Absence Rates for Officers (Q4)	3.6		↔
				Absence Rates for Staff (Q4)	2.9		↔
	Efficiency assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	Small Grant Bids Awarded 2025/26	11		↔

Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail	Theme	RAG Q4	RAG Q1	Detail
Evidence Based Policing			Alongside the launch of a survey regarding the rollout of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) in the county, the OPCC has robustly scrutinised the development of policies, reporting of data and wider governance surrounding LFR technology.	Philosophy and Co-Operation			As chair of the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, the PCC was delighted to <u>invite residents</u> to the Bournemouth Crown Court Open Day . Professionals from a wide range of agencies were available to share their experiences, answer questions and raise awareness.
Funding			The PCC agreed to write to the Home Secretary with a pre-action letter regarding the police funding formula. The OPCC and PCC liaised with legal experts to collect data and evidence to prepare said letter. The PCC supported a bid to the Woman’s Diversionary Fund through the charity Footprints and the Force Out of Court Resolution Team.	Efficiency			The PCC <u>announced</u> his preferred candidate for Chief Constable of Dorset Police following a detailed recruitment and selection process. As part of the ongoing Project Evolve work, OPCC attended the first round of Productivity and Efficiency Reviews (PERs) designed to identify opportunities to reduce process and bureaucracy, to make time and cash savings, and to find ways to improve public service.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

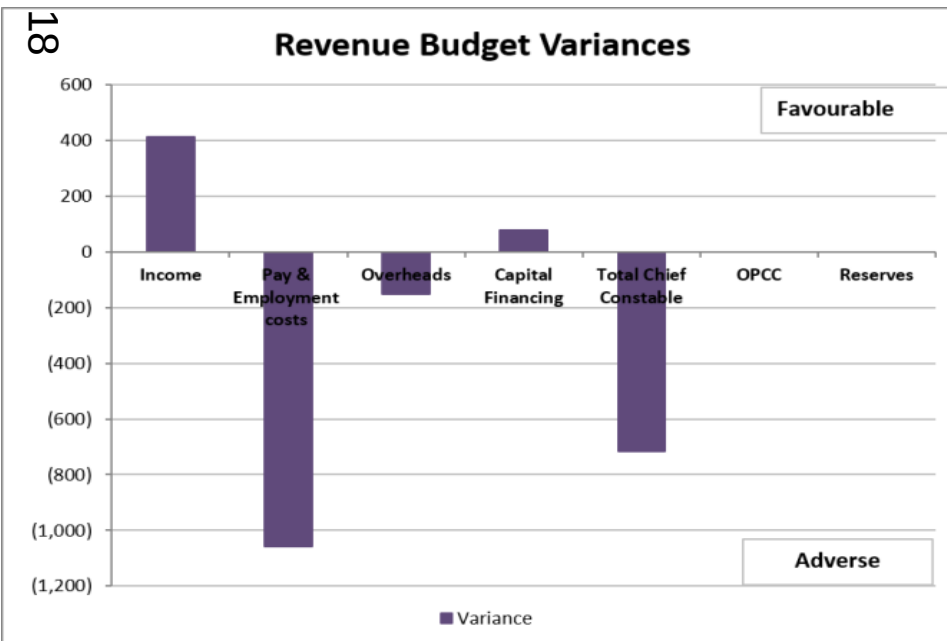


2026/27 QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL REPORT- OVERVIEW

The overall revenue spend for the year is forecast to be £194.8m against a budget of £194.1m, an adverse variance of £0.717m or 0.37%, based on the position as at 30 June 2026.

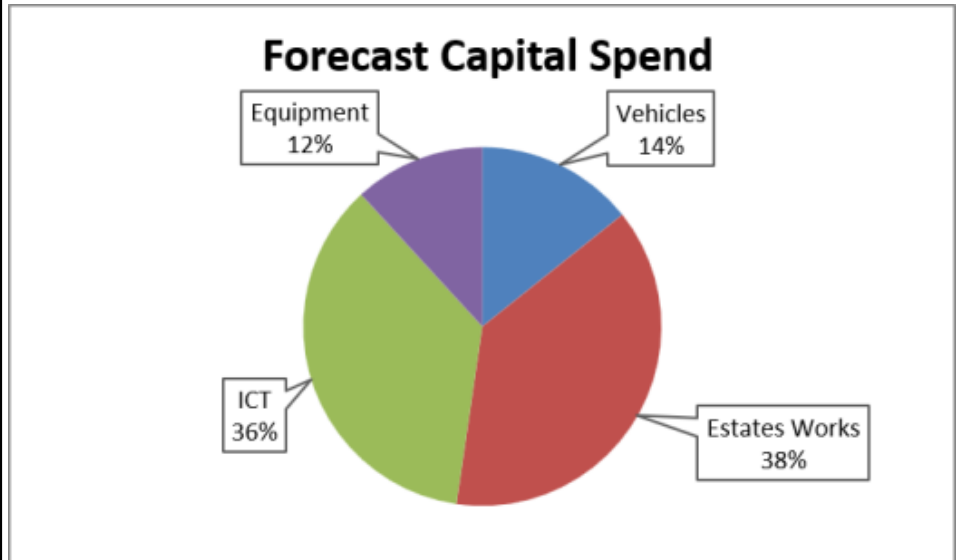
The current forecast would reduce the General Fund Balance to £7.256m, equivalent to 3.74% of Net Revenue Expenditure which is above the minimum level of reserves of 3%.

The graph below summarises the outturn revenue variances for the year to 31 March 2027.



CAPITAL

The Capital Programme is currently predicting expenditure of £12.094m against a current budget of £15,378m for the year, after including budgets carried forward from 2025/26. The variance of £3.284m represents slippage of £2.870m and an underspend of £0.414m. The graph below shows the allocation of the capital spend for 2026/27.



Funding for the programme will come primarily from revenue contributions and the capital financing reserve with the balance being funded from borrowing.

Further information on the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves can be found on the following pages.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

2026/27	Current Budget	Actual to Date	Forecast Outturn	Variance fav / (adverse)	Ref	Revenue Commentary
Chief Constable	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		
Income	(32,893)	(6,364)	(33,308)	415	R1	R1. Forecast increased income from Proceeds of Crime Act and income from other forces.
Pay & Employment costs	168,467	41,966	169,526	(1,059)	R2	R2. Increased costs of Police Officer overtime, higher than budgeted ill health retirements and slightly higher numbers of police officers to ensure compliance with Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee conditions.
Overheads	48,844	12,381	48,996	(152)	R3	R3. Increased costs relating to fuel, motor insurance and liability claims. Partially offset by reduced costs relating to PFI contracts as inflation was less than budgeted, savings in business rates and reduced rental sites.
Capital Financing	7,382	293	7,303	79	R4	R4. Reduced cost of Minimum Revenue Provision as a result of slippage in the capital programme from 2025/26.
Total Chief Constable	191,800	48,276	192,517	(717)		R5. The forecast variance of £0.717m is equivalent to 0.37% of the total net budget.
OPCC	4,112	598	4,112	0		
Total Net Revenue Expenditure	195,912	48,874	196,629	(717)		
Reserves	(1,853)	(1,034)	(1,853)	0		
Net Budget	194,059	47,840	194,776	(717)	R5	

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

2026/27	Current Budget	Actual to Date	Forecast Outturn	Variance Fav / (Adverse)	Capital Programme Commentary
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Capital Investment					
Vehicles	1,580	12	1,728	(148)	The forecast year end variance is made up of £2.870m slippage and £0.414m of underspend, after offsetting the budgeted slippage assumption.
Estates Works	6,417	218	4,599	1,818	Vehicle replacement costs are currently forecasting a small overspend due to a higher number of write off replacements than anticipated.
ICT	5,750	180	4,336	1,414	Two re-roofing projects are due to start later in the financial year and work on installing the next phase of solar panels is not due to start until 2027/28 leading to slippage of £1.172m within Estates. Underspends on two projects, primarily the SEC roofing project, amount to £0.646m.
Equipment	1,831	54	1,431	400	The ICT forecast variance is almost entirely slippage, primarily relating to network development and resilience projects and issues with suppliers.
Slippage	(200)	0	0	(200)	
Total Capital Programme	15,378	464	12,094	3,284	The Equipment variance is made up of £0.335mn slippage and underspends of £0.065m. The slippage is largely relating to regional South West Forensics projects and therefore also relates to lower contributions from regional forces, shown within the 'Other Grants' funding line.
Sources of Finance					
Capital Financing Reserve	1,570	-	1,899	(329)	Budgeted slippage is currently being offset against planned underspends.
Government grants	-	-	-	-	
Other Grants	245	-	21	224	The full balance of the Capital Financing Reserve is now forecast to be used in 2026/27 to minimise the amount of borrowing used to fund shorter life assets. However there is still over £2m of borrowing on assets with estimated lives of 10 years forecast to be required.
Revenue contributions	5,335	246	5,335	-	
Borrowing	8,228	218	4,839	3,389	
Total Capital Funding	15,378	464	12,094	3,284	

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



USABLE RESERVES					
2026/27	Opening Balance at 1/4/26	Planned transfer to/(from) reserves	Actual Transfer to/(from) reserves	Forecast Closing Balance at 31/3/27	Reserves Commentary
Reserve	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Budget Management Fund	3,691	(1,544)	(1,034)	2,147	- This table sets out the reserves position at the start of the year and the planned transfers to and from reserves. - Some transfers relating to carry forwards have been made with others to be made during the year. - Transfers relating to OPCC reserves will be made nearer the year end once actual costs are known. - If the forecast variance remains at the year end, this would reduce the General Fund Balance to £7.256m or 3.74%, above the 3% minimum level required. - Some capital receipts are anticipated during this year from the sale of former police houses but these will only be accounted for once the proceeds have been received.
Police and Crime Plan Reserve	1,324	(39)	0	1,285	
Violence Reduction Reserve	500	(220)	0	280	
OPCC Legal Reserve	250	0	0	250	
OPCC Reserve	334	(50)	0	284	
Regional Collaboration Reserve	13	0	0	13	
Strategic Change Reserve	324	0	0	324	
Revenue Funding for capital	1,890	0	0	1,890	
Forensic Capability Network Reserve	209	0	0	209	
Workforce Change Reserve	343	0	0	343	
Learning & Development Reserve	37	0	0	37	
Invest to Save Reserve	250	0	0	250	
Total Earmarked Reserves	9,165	(1,853)	(1,034)	7,312	
General Fund Balance (incl. forecast variance)	7,973	(717)	0	7,256	
Total Revenue Reserves	17,138	(2,570)	(1,034)	14,568	
Capital Receipts Reserve	2,979	0	0	2,979	
Total Usable Reserves	20,117	(2,570)	(1,034)	17,547	

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HATE CRIME

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of hate crime and hate incidents in Dorset, the arrangements in place to scrutinise Dorset Police's response, and the work being undertaken by the Force and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to support victims, improve investigative standards and strengthen community confidence. It also addresses the key lines of enquiry raised by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel.

Hate crime remains a relatively low-volume but high-harm area of policing. Local data shows overall offending has remained broadly stable in volume in recent years, although racially and religiously motivated hate crime have increased. Victims can experience significant and lasting impacts, making effective prevention, investigation and support essential.

The report highlights a range of activity designed to improve outcomes for victims and communities, including enhanced victim support arrangements, strengthened governance and scrutiny processes, the introduction of the Hate Crime Review Panel, targeted work with schools and communities, and activity to address online abuse and social media harms. It also outlines efforts to support officers and staff who are victims of hate crime through Op Hampshire.

While progress has been made, challenges remain around under-reporting, community confidence, online harms and wider community tensions. The OPCC will continue to scrutinise Force performance and delivery of the commitments within the Dorset Police and Crime Plan to ensure there is a robust response to hate crime and effective support for victims across Dorset.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide members with an update on hate crimes and incidents in Dorset and outline the work undertaken to hold Dorset Police to account for dealing with perpetrators and responding to victims. This paper will also seek to address the following Key Lines of Enquiry, as provided by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel:

- I. What categories of hate crime and incidents are being considered? Is there information on incidents linked to race, religion, gender and sexual orientation?*
- II. Could more detail be provided about the Force Hate Crime Panel in terms of its composition and available data being examined?*
- III. Is there any ongoing work in relation to abuse and intimidation faced by both adults and children on social media?*
- IV. To what extent is bullying, body shaming or discriminatory language from in and outside of a school setting categorised as 'Hate Crime' when reported to the police? What prevention and response measures has the PCC and Force taken to combat this risk*

area? What data is available relating to police referrals in reference to school related incidents?

- V. How does the Victims Champion link with victims of hate crime, what support is offered, and how do the police respond to this in terms of actions against perpetrators?
- VI. How is Dorset Police working internally and in collaboration with others to deliver Op Hampshire? What outcomes have been delivered? How is verbal abuse or predatory behaviour dealt with within this? Does Op Hampshire data separate out assaults from online hate crime etc?

1. INTRODUCTION

Definitions

- 1.1. Hate crimes and hate incidents are harmful actions or behaviours that target individuals or groups, or their property, because of their actual or perceived identity.
- 1.2. A hate crime is a criminal offence that is motivated by hostility, prejudice or bias directed at a person or their property because of their actual or perceived identity, and that meets a criminal threshold (i.e. it would be a criminal offence even without the hate element).
- 1.3. A hate incident is an incident that is motivated by hostility, prejudice or bias directed at a person or their property because of their actual or perceived identity, that does not meet a criminal threshold (i.e. would be recordable by police as an incident even without the hate element).
- 1.4. The law¹ recognises five types of hate crime: race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and transgender identity. The police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes:

“Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person’s disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.”
- 1.5. CPS advise that as there is no legal definition of hostility, they rely on the everyday understanding of the word which includes ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike.
- 1.6. In hate crime cases the CPS is also responsible for asking the courts to increase the sentence that an offender receives – to reflect the fact that the crime they committed was a hate crime.

Offences

- 1.7. Hate crimes can include offences such as assault, criminal damage, harassment, threatening behaviour, online abuse (including social media), or vandalism where hostility towards a protected characteristic is a motivating factor. Hate incidents may involve offensive comments, derogatory language, exclusion, or other actions that create fear, distress, or humiliation but do not necessarily breach criminal law. The distinction between the two can sometimes be complex, particularly where intent, context, and evidence of hostility are difficult to establish.
- 1.8. Furthermore, a series of offences linked to racially and religiously aggravated crime also exist. These serve to uplift the possible sentencing linked to the basic offence to recognise the additional aggravating factor. For example, the maximum penalty of the basic form of actual

¹ [Hate crime | The Crown Prosecution Service](#)

bodily harm is five years imprisonment. This maximum penalty increases to seven years in the case of an aggravated form of the offence (racially or religiously aggravated actual bodily harm).

- 1.9. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 legislates to extend the existing racially and religiously aggravated offences to cover also hostility related to disability, sex, sexual orientation and transgender identity. While Commencement Regulations relating to specific provisions in the Act regarding police powers, ASB and safeguarding have now been enacted the hate crime provisions remain pending an official start date.

Impact

- 1.10. The complexities surrounding hate crime and hate incidents extend beyond legal definitions. Victims may be reluctant to report incidents due to a significant lack of confidence in policing and the wider justice system, concerns about not being believed, the fear of retaliation or previous negative experiences.
- 1.11. Whether a hate crime or incident, the impact on victims can be profound and long-lasting, with victims potentially experiencing issues such as anxiety, depression, loss of confidence, social isolation, and an increased sense of vulnerability. As hate crimes and incidents target a person's identity or perceived identity, victims often report feeling personally attacked for who they are, rather than for something they have done. This can make the emotional and psychological effects particularly severe.
- 1.12. Consequences of hate crimes and incidents extend beyond individual victims to wider communities as they often create fear among people who share the targeted characteristic, damage community cohesion, and increase tensions between different groups. This can lead to a lack of reporting and further exacerbate mistrust in policing and other agencies.
- 1.13. Hate crime is also observed at a societal level. When hate-motivated violence occurs repeatedly, it ceases to be just an isolated criminal act and becomes a deeper social strain. This strain can be compounded when initiatives specifically designed to promote equality, inclusion, and support for marginalised groups are stigmatised potentially reinforcing resistance to measures intended to reduce discrimination and improve community wellbeing.
- 1.14. Over time, this contributes to an ongoing climate of threat and exclusion and can erode trust, reduce community cohesion, and leave lasting impacts on wellbeing, opportunity, and community resilience. Effective responses therefore require not only enforcement and support for victims but also education, prevention, community engagement, and efforts to promote understanding and inclusion. It is therefore paramount that victims are appropriately supported, and scrutiny is effective, meaningful and learning is reviewed and put into practice.

2. GOVERNANCE

- 2.1. There is a wide variety of work ongoing across both Dorset Police and the OPCC to improve all aspects of the response to hate crime and incidents. In this digital age, it is especially important to get this right, with the ability for police activity to be recorded and shared for the world to see and for commentators to provide instant analysis and opinion based on a limited understanding of the law and/or circumstances of the case.
- 2.2. Such factors can often lead to misinformation, hate and bias to be widely shared without any factual basis. This means that the impact on victims of hate crime can be worsened by ill-informed debate, a trivialisation of the issues, or even a repeat of the behaviour that had been reported. Members of the Police and Crime Panel will be aware of several high-profile cases both in the UK and other countries which have caused social divide, as well as ongoing debates about non-crime hate incidents.

A. NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

- 2.3. Hate crime does not have a single governance structure. It sits across several structures at the national level – central government, policing, criminal justice and prosecution, local government/community safety and victim support – with the Home Office holding the principal strategic responsibility on hate crime policy, and the police holding the principal operational responsibility for recording and investigating criminal hate crime.
- 2.4. The College of Policing provides the professional framework for operational policing, through its Authorised Professional Practice (APP). Its current guidance on hate crime² includes, as a selection, guidance on:
- Community engagement and tension
 - Partnership working
 - Responding to hate crimes
 - Responding to hate incidents
 - Intelligence
 - Victim and witness care and support
 - Criminal justice processes
 - Online hate
 - Hate crime and counter terrorism
 - Performance management
 - Supervision and oversight
 - Strategic leadership

² [Hate crime | College of Policing](#)

2.5. This guidance, according to the College, is for police officers and staff at all levels of the police service, working alongside partners where appropriate, to deliver a consistent, proportionate and robust policing response to hate crime and hate incidents.

2.6. There are also significant tranches of national work focused on individual protected strands, for example:

- Race – Police Race Action Plan
- Religion – Antisemitism, Islamophobia
- Gender – Violence Against Women and Girls

Other strands including disability, sexual orientation, and transgender identity are more fragmented, and not necessarily subject to a nationally coordinated workplan. This does not, however, in any way diminish their priority or effort.

B. LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Strategic

2.7. The Police and Crime Plan contains five key commitments relating to hate crime, under the priority of Putting Victims and Communities First, these are:

- Continue to raise awareness of the support available to victims of all types of hate crime and work with partners to not only encourage better levels of reporting, but to make reporting easier too;
- Work with people across communities to understand and identify concerns and ensure that policing feels a part of those communities, rather than something that is happening to them;
- Provide additional specialist training so that officers and staff are best equipped to not only tackle hate crime, but communicate with victims in a way that is sensitive to their needs;
- Use the real-life experience of the workforce to ensure that the Force is understanding of hate crime victims' needs; and
- Continue to work with partner agencies to address discrimination.

2.8. These commitments provide the strategic basis and direction for the OPCC to engage with the police and other key agencies.

Operational

2.9. At the local level, Dorset Police has detailed policies and procedures for the management of hate crime and incidents. These collectively aim to:

- enable officers and staff to correctly identify hate crimes and incidents;
- ensure that all such crimes and incidents are recorded correctly;
- ensure that all such crimes and incidents are investigated thoroughly and professionally, and wherever possible perpetrators are brought to justice;
- ensure that the level of support offered is appropriate to the needs of victims and witnesses;
- ensure that public confidence and satisfaction in the way Dorset Police investigates and deals with the victims of hate crime is high; and
- ensure that staff who are subjected to hate crimes and incidents receive appropriate support and that hate crimes and incidents against staff are treated in the same way as any hate crimes and incidents reported by members of the public.

2.10. The corporate policies convey high priority to the investigation of hate crime and that a wide range of investigative and forensic tactics will be considered and deployed as appropriate.

These also confirm that such offences will receive an especially high level of scrutiny and victims a high level of care.

2.11. Dorset Police has set out several Hate Crime Objectives:

- Increase public awareness about hate crime, impact, and importance of reporting
- Provide effective support to communities and police employees affected by hate crime
- Improve data collection and analysis collection methods to track hate crime
- Foster relationships with diverse community groups to build trust and confidence, encouraging collaboration in addressing hate crimes.

2.12. Operationally, these objectives are understood and managed through a standard 4P plan that Members may have seen used elsewhere in policing:

Prevent	Protect	Prepare	Pursue
• Education and awareness • Community engagement • Training • Secure positive outcomes	• Support victims • Safeguard communities • Improve reporting mechanisms • Multi-agency work • Engage internal networks	• Ensure partner support • Foster resilience within communities • Ensure suitable communication • Build relationships with communities and internal networks • Improve working with Neighbourhood Policing Teams	• Ensure robust investigations • Enhance investigative practices • Collaborate better with CPS • Introduce internal and external scrutiny panels • Ensure compliant recording processes • Review investigation standards

2.13. This approach enables a clear view of progress to be taken at any point and quickly identifies areas of potential opportunity. This model is also well understood by policing and its partners, which proves helpful to delivery.

Tactical

2.14. Finally, the strategic objectives and operational activity are tactically delivered through the **Hate Crime Delivery Plan 2025-26**. This plan sets out three phases of delivery within the current year and is the primary mechanism through which the hate crime work is overseen (current position in brackets).



3. DELIVERY

- 3.1. As outlined above, hate crime and incidents are an area of focus and critical importance to both the OPCC and Force, with a considerable amount of activity undertaken to tackle perpetrators, support victims and improve community relations. The following section of this report seeks to summarise key activity undertaken by both the OPCC and Force but is not intended to be exhaustive.

Victim Support

- 3.2. Victims of hate crime can access support through the OPCC commissioned victim service with Victim Support, who provide practical and emotional support. While the service may not be specific for hate crime, it is staffed by a professional team with experience supporting a wide range of victims with a variety of needs. Victim Support will also help victims understand their rights and the services available to them. Victim Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is available regardless of whether the crime has been reported to police. Victim Support continuously collect feedback from victims, review and ensure learning is considered and put into practice.

Process Improvement

- 3.3. Hate Crime Review Panels have been established with themed focus areas to review victim experiences and identify lessons learned, with attendance and support from the Victim Champion. Victim withdrawal data and Victim Needs Assessment (VNA) compliance data for

hate crime is presented quarterly by the Victim Champion at this panel to better understand why victims disengage and to identify opportunities for improvement.

- 3.4. Victim feedback is actively reviewed through existing victim satisfaction mechanisms and the Hate Crime Review Panel, ensuring that the voice of hate crime victims informs service improvements.
- 3.5. Victim Needs Assessment reviews are regularly conducted to ensure victims' needs are properly identified, understood, and supported. This helps deliver a more victim-centred response to hate crime victims. Staff training, guidance and resources have been enhanced through Victims Code of Practice (VCoP) training, Victim Focus sessions, VNA briefing materials and the Victims Toolkit, helping officers and staff better understand victims' needs and deliver a consistent service to hate crime victims.
- 3.6. Dorset Police has also worked to improve the VNAs – now including mandatory fields and improved quality controls, helping ensure hate crime victims' individual needs, risks and support requirements are identified and addressed from the outset. The latest victim satisfaction performance on hate crime (rolling 12-months to Quarter 4 2025/26) reflects:
 - Whole experience: improvement to 85.3% (increase from 66.7% in Q3)
 - Ease of contact: improvement to 100% (increase from 84.6%)
 - Actions taken: improvement to 83.3 (increase from 60.0%)
 - Kept informed of progress: stable at 82.4% (from 83.3%)
 - Treatment by staff: improvement to 94.1% (from 73.3%)

Victim Champion

- 3.7. The role of the PCC-funded Victim Champion is to embed an improved process of victim-first policing and to ensure the Force adheres to the VCoP rights from the start of the victim's journey and throughout. The role is working to create a workforce where every officer and staff member recognises their role in delivering a victim-first service – one where victims are informed, empowered, and given a voice. This extends to all victims of crime.
- 3.8. The Victim Champion does not directly engage with victims of crime, rather works to implement systemic changes within the organisation to ensure the collective response is victim centric. Support for victims of hate crime is delivered by the PCC commissioned provider, Victim Support, who provide practical and emotional support.
- 3.9. The work of the Victim Champion also includes:
 - Strengthening of Victim Needs Assessments to include mandatory fields and improved quality controls, helping ensure hate crime victims' individual needs, risks and support requirements are identified and addressed from the outset.
 - Ensuring victim withdrawal data is being monitored and analysed, helping the force understand why victims disengage from investigations and develop targeted improvements to reduce attrition.
 - Expanding victim satisfaction and feedback mechanisms, to provide greater understanding of victims' experiences, allowing themes and learning from hate crime victims to be identified and acted upon. The Victim Champion now provides advice and support to Inspectors when dealing with complaints involving VCoP.
 - Improving victim information provision through refreshed victim-focused correspondence, enhanced guidance for officers and the development of digital solutions to ensure victims receive clearer and more consistent information throughout their journey.

- Supporting the enhancement of staff training, guidance and resources through VCoP training, Victim Focus sessions, VNA briefing materials and the Victims Toolkit, helping officers and staff better understand victims' needs and deliver a consistent service.

Conditional Cautions

- 3.10. Additionally, from April 2026, Dorset is a pilot force for conditional cautions for certain hate crime. Previously all cases of hate crime would have to be submitted to CPS for a charging decision (unless a community resolution was suitable). The new process allows a conditional caution with a mandatory offender rehabilitation programme delivered by Restorative Justice Dorset, a new scheme funded by the PCC.
- 3.11. This scheme enables swift justice for the victim, mandatory offender rehabilitation and avoids lengthy court processes. It also prevents the victim having to attend court but offers victims the choice to have an input on the rehabilitation within the restorative course process – which can be particularly beneficial to recovering from the incident should it be agreed that the offender will offer a personal apology to the victim.

Restorative Justice

- 3.12. Through the PCC-commissioned Restorative Justice contract, the Force and OPCC, following a pilot, agreed to formally roll out the Hate Crime Awareness Course, to be used as part of an Out of Court Resolution. The course aims to challenge perpetrators on the impact of their behaviour both on victims, and themselves, using examples of hate crime and how it affected victims, and it works with perpetrators to identify how they might behave differently in future.
- 3.13. In the last 12 months, there have been 31 referrals into the Restorative Justice service in Dorset, of which has resulted in 18 Hate Crime Awareness Course being delivered. In cases where the perpetrator did not attend a course, they were provided in intervention through other restorative pathways, such as meetings, mediation or written correspondence with the perpetrator.
- 3.14. For one incident, by way of example, following attendance of the awareness course, the perpetrator was remorseful and asked whether they could write a letter of apology to the victim, which was facilitated by Restorative Solutions. The individual also spoke of their struggles with alcohol abuse and Restorative Solutions was able to signpost them to a substance misuse support provider.

Children and Schools

- 3.15. Dorset Police's Safer Schools and Communities Team (SSCT) are vital in the response to incidents relating to children and incidents in the school environment. There is a particular nuance to dealing with young people as they may not entirely understand the impact of their words and actions.
- 3.16. Available data from the Dorset SSCT over the last full school year evidences a stable demand, with slight fluctuations that mainly appear around school holidays and half-terms. SSCT has also identified that Poole and Bournemouth North are areas of concern, accounting for 43% of incidents (21% and 22% respectively).

Chart 1: Hate crime notified to the Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team



- 3.17. The distinction between hate crime, malicious communications, bullying, body shaming and other forms of abuse can be particularly complex in relation to children and young people, especially when conducted online. Social media platforms, messaging applications and online gaming environments can expose children to a wide spectrum of harmful behaviour, ranging from teasing, exclusion and cyberbullying through to targeted harassment and hate-motivated abuse. While much of this behaviour may not meet the criminal threshold, it can still have a significant and cumulative impact on wellbeing, mental health, educational attainment and feelings of safety.
- 3.18. Children may be both victims and perpetrators of harmful online behaviour, often without fully understanding the potential consequences of their actions. Content shared impulsively between peers can quickly escalate, becoming widely distributed and causing substantial distress. In some cases, behaviour that begins as bullying or online conflict may involve hostility towards a protected characteristic, thereby crossing into hate-related behaviour and potentially constituting a criminal offence.
- 3.19. The online environment can also normalise prejudicial attitudes through repeated exposure to discriminatory language, harmful stereotypes and hostile content. As a result, effective prevention requires a whole-system approach involving parents, schools, policing, social media platforms and community organisations, with a focus on education, early intervention and safeguarding alongside criminal justice responses where appropriate.
- 3.20. Although, policing is not responsible for managing bullying that does not meet relevant thresholds, SSCT routinely attend schools to undertake preventative education and to speak one-to-one with students who have bullied others, or used discriminatory language, if the communication constitutes a hate crime or incident. Often the tactic would be to engage and inform to increase their understanding and reduce the likelihood of repeat use.

Abuse on Social Media

For cases that involve the use of derogatory language on social media platforms to abuse or cause distress, the Force will actively review and respond if the threshold of a crime has been met or there is a belief that the victim may be at risk of further harm. Officers would utilise the THRIVE risk assessment. THRIVE is an acronym for 'Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, Engagement' which is used to determine an appropriate response considering all potential risks to the recipient/victim.

Dorset Police review every hate crime matter reported and ascertain if a hate crime is made out. If not, other offences may be relevant, for example:

Malicious Communications Act 1988

Sending electronic communications that are: grossly offensive, indecent or obscene, threatening, or known to be false and sent with intent to cause distress or anxiety.

Communications Act 2003

Using a public electronic communications network to send messages that are: grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or menacing.

Fear of Violence / Stalking Offences

More serious offences can arise where conduct causes: fear of violence, serious alarm or distress, or is otherwise linked to stalking behaviour.

Public Order Act 1986

Online communications can amount to public order where messages are threatening, abusive, or intended to stir up racial or religious hatred.

- 3.21. The Online Safety Act 2023 may yet help address the increasingly blurred boundaries between online hate crime, malicious communications and cyberbullying affecting children and young people. By placing legal duties on online platforms to assess and mitigate risks to children, remove illegal content and restrict children's access to harmful material, the Act shifts greater responsibility onto service providers to create safer online environments. While the Act is not solely focused on hate crime, its provisions have the potential to reduce exposure to online abuse, discriminatory content and harmful behaviours that can contribute to victimisation, poor wellbeing and community tensions.

Third Party Reporting

- 3.22. Due to funding challenges affecting the wider voluntary and community sector, the national network of third-party centres for reporting hate crime has undergone some changes in recent years, with many centres moving their provision largely, or solely, online.
- 3.23. Third party reporting remain hugely important given the reticence for many victims of hate crime to engage with policing, where they feel they might be further traumatised. Dorset Police and the OPCC now therefore emphasise both direct online reporting and signposting to national specialist organisations such as Crimestoppers, Tell MAMA, Community Security Trust (CST) and Galop, as well as highlighting the existing local third-party centres including Dorset Race Equality Council and Prejudice Free Dorset.

Op Hampshire

- 3.24. Op Hampshire is the national policing approach to improving the reporting, investigation and support provided to officers and staff who experience assaults, abuse or hate crime in the course of their duties. The programme is based on the principle that violence, threats, harassment and hate directed towards police personnel should never be regarded as 'part of the job'.

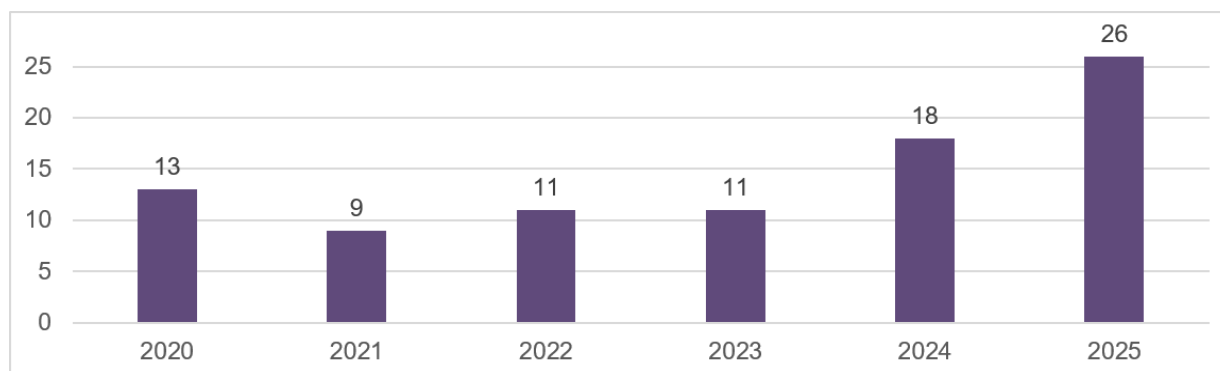
3.25. Within Dorset Police, the Op Hampshire principles include:

- Encouraging the reporting of assaults, threats, verbal abuse and hate directed to staff
- Supervisory oversight to ensure incidents are reviewed and investigated proportionately
- Victim-centred welfare support, recognising both the physical and psychological impacts
- Pursuing criminal justice outcomes where evidential and public interest tests are met
- Identification of trends, repeat victims, locations and opportunities for prevention
- Embedding learning into operational practice, officer safety training and wellbeing
- Strategic board oversight attended by Force leads, OPCC and staff associations
- Specific markers for those who target officers and staff, and for those who are known to abuse officers and staff on the basis of their protected characteristics.

3.26. The Force also works with criminal justice partners, including the CPS, occupational health and staff associations, to maximise opportunities for offender accountability and ensure appropriate support is available to affected staff.

3.27. However, local data shows that there has been an increase in hate crime experienced by officers and staff in recent years – with the prevalence rising from around one offence per month from 2020/21 through 2023/24 (noting Covid), to around 1.5 offences per month in 2024/25, and then further to a little over 2 offences per month in 2025/26. Data for 2026 thus far suggests there will be a further increase this by the end of this calendar year.

Chart 2: Hate crime* against Dorset Police officers, staff and volunteers, by calendar year



3.28. *It is important to note that the definitions used by Op Hampshire specifically relate to those officers, staff and volunteers who are victims of hate crime whilst on duty only. The vast majority of these offences (circa 90%) were recorded under Section 4A of the Public Order Act 1986, which makes it an offence to use threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour, with the intent to cause a person harassment, alarm, or distress, and which actually causes that or another person harassment, alarm, or distress.

3.29. Whilst national data on Op Hampshire is not available, Police Oracle estimated³ – through Freedom of Information requests – that there has been a 24% increase in reported hate crimes with a police officer victim between 2024/25 and 2025/26, and that the true figure was likely to be higher.

3.30. Op Hampshire is not limited to physical assaults. The national guidance specifically references verbal abuse and hate-related abuse directed towards officers and staff, recognising that these behaviours can have a significant psychological impact. Where verbal abuse constitutes a criminal offence, the matter should be recorded, investigated and where the evidential threshold is met, progressed through appropriate criminal justice routes.

³ [‘Racist abuse of officers appears to be accepted in pockets of society’ - Police Oracle](#)

- 3.31. While the ethnicity of the victim is not always recorded (and ongoing work is underway to improve this) the data show that all offences committed were racially or religiously aggravated. Given the very small number of Black and Asian officers and staff within Dorset Police (2.1% of total) this means that a significant proportion of Black and Asian officers are repeat victims of hate crime whilst on duty, with some operational colleagues in visible frontline roles experiencing hate crime monthly.
- 3.32. Police officer and staff victims of hate crime also note that Dorset Police's response to their victimisation does not always meet the expected standards as laid out through the Op Hampshire principles. The Op Hampshire Improvement Group is tasked with turning this around and is significantly supported in this by practical work being proposed, led and delivered by the staff support network.

'Blue on Blue' Hate Crime

As part of the Police Race Action Plan, for the past three years a national survey has been conducted to monitor the perceptions and experiences of Black officers and staff.

Most respondents felt positively about aspects of their workplace culture, such as being proud to represent their racial or ethnic community in the police. However, many acknowledged that more progress was needed towards anti-racism and creating a lasting change. Respondents also reported challenges such as not feeling like they belonged or being able to progress within their force.

Racial discrimination, microaggressions and bullying and harassment were disclosed at a relatively high level. Microaggressions and discrimination were more frequently reported than bullying and harassment – aligning with local findings in Dorset.

45% of respondents reported experiencing racial discrimination or bias from the public in the previous 12 months, however, 62% of respondents reported experiencing the same from colleagues in the previous 12 months, with 42% of respondents furthermore stating that they had personally experienced racial discrimination from colleagues in the previous 12 months.

Those officers and staff who had had experienced racial discrimination from their colleagues in the last 12 months most frequently said that:

- their supervisors or line managers had contributed to the racial discrimination they had experienced (56%),
- the racial discrimination they had experienced had led to them being treated unfairly in relation to promotion or development opportunities (45%), therefore, as a result
- around one-third (32%) said that they did not report their experiences of racial discrimination.

These findings reflect a recent survey undertaken by the Dorset Ethnic Police Association (DEPA) which extended the national survey locally to include the perceptions and experiences of all ethnic minority officers and staff within Dorset.

That local survey found that, within the workplace, within the previous two years, respondents reported the following experiences of discrimination from colleagues:

- almost 90% (87%) experienced racial bias of some sort,
- two-thirds (67%) had heard racist language being used,
- just under two-thirds (63%) had experienced microaggressions, and
- a little under half (44%) had experienced discrimination or abusive behaviour which was not explicitly racist, but which respondents suspect was motivated by ethnicity.

4. PERFORMANCE

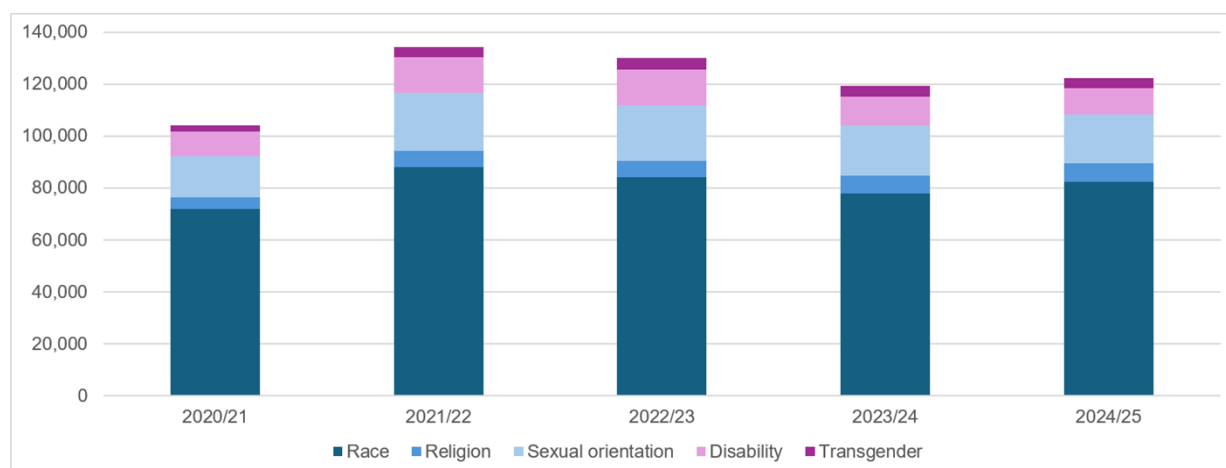
- 4.1. It is widely recognised that hate crime and hate incident data do not fully reflect the true scale of the problem. This is due to several factors, including under-reporting by victims, lack of confidence in policing and the wider criminal justice system, fear of reprisals, fear of exposure of personal details (notably sexual or gender identity), practical concerns about accessibility barriers to reporting (such as communication skills), and, in some cases, a lack of awareness that the behaviour experienced may constitute a hate incident or criminal offence.

A. NATIONAL TRENDS

- 4.2. In the year ending March 2025, the latest period for which national data are available⁴, there was a 2% increase in police recorded hate crime compared to the previous year. However, within this, there was a 6% increase in race hate crimes and a 3% increase in religious hate crimes recorded by the police over the last year, and falls in the other three strands, sexual orientation (down 2%), disability (down 8%) and transgender (down 11%).
- 4.3. As with previous years, over a half (56%) of hate crime offences were recorded as being either racially or religiously aggravated offences. Within religious hate crimes there was a 19% increase in hate crimes targeted at Muslims, with a spike seen in these offences following the Southport murders and subsequent disorder.

Table 1: Hate crimes recorded by the police by monitored strand, year ending March 2021 to year ending March 2025, England and Wales (excluding MPS)

Hate crime strand	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Race	71,995	87,905	84,039	77,901	82,490
Religion	4,527	6,510	6,513	6,973	7,164
Sexual orientation	15,668	22,317	21,306	19,127	18,702
Disability	9,418	13,611	13,637	11,131	10,224
Transgender	2,510	3,920	4,477	4,258	3,809



Source: Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2025 (Home Office)

- 4.4. The most recent pattern of offending is similar in previous years, with most offences being associated with racially or religiously motivated prejudice. Offending motivated by the victims' sexual orientation or disability tends to fall comparatively more within the other notifiable offences category, which include offending such theft, burglary, fraud and sexual offences.

⁴ [Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2026 - Official statistics announcement - GOV.UK](#)

Table 2: Hate crimes by monitored strand and offence subgroups, year ending March 2025

Hate crime strand	Violence against the person with injury	Violence against the person without injury	Stalking and harassment	Public order offences	Criminal damage and arson	Other notifiable offences
Race	64%	72%	56%	73%	65%	57%
Religion	6%	6%	7%	6%	19%	7%
Sexual orient.	18%	14%	17%	14%	8%	17%
Disability	9%	6%	15%	4%	7%	15%
Transgender	4%	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%

Source: Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2025 (Home Office)

- 4.5. As in previous years, Table 2 shows that racially and religiously motivated hate crimes (which tend to be considered together) accounted for the majority of police recorded hate crimes, therefore a further breakdown has been provided below. Details on the targeted religion of the victim(s) were provided in around 90% of cases:

Table 3: Proportion of religious hate crimes recorded by the police, by the perceived targeted religion, year ending March 2025

Perceived religion of the victim	Proportion of religious hate crimes 2024/25 (%)
Buddhist	0%
Christian	5%
Hindu	2%
Jewish	29%
Muslim	45%
Sikh	3%
Other	6%
Unknown	11%

Source: Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2025 (Home Office)

Health Warnings

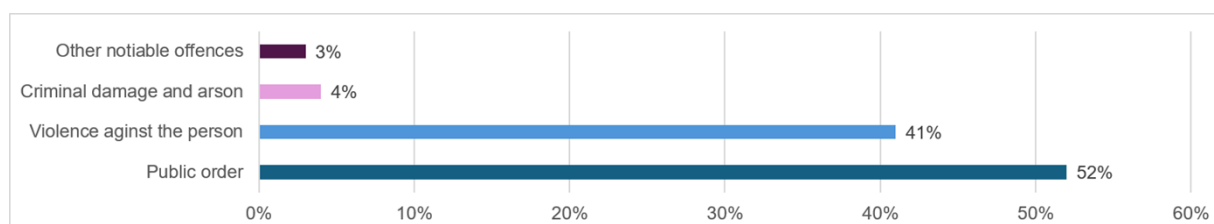
- 4.6. ONS advise caution when interpreting hate crime statistics. Indeed, OPCC would take this a step further and advise that national hate crime statistics not be considered a direct and absolute measure of the amount of hatred or hostility in society at any one point. Furthermore, we reflect the Home Office view that police-recorded hate crime is not a good measure of prevalence but is a useful indicator of hate crime related demand on the police over time.
- 4.7. Police recorded crime does not equal actual prevalence – police figures tell us about crimes that come to police attention only. They cannot tell us how much hate crime actually occurs.
- 4.8. Victim motivation matters – changes in the number of recorded hate crimes can reflect changes in victims' willingness to report, the availability of third-party reporting mechanisms, community awareness or confidence in the police – not necessarily changes in offending.

- 4.9. Police process matters – changes systems, processes, training and the identification and accurate recording of hate crime affect the numbers independently of changes in offending.
- 4.10. One crime does not equal one victim, or one motivation – an offence can be flagged against more than one monitored strand. Therefore, strand totals cannot simply be added together to produce a total number of hate crimes. Equally, one person can experience more than one offence at the same time, and a single incident can generate multiple recorded offences (this is particularly true of protests or criminal damage carried out on places of religious worship).
- 4.11. Hate crime is victim based – offences are perceived by the victim or witness to have been motivated by hostility or prejudice. It does not necessarily require the offender to admit the same. This definition can be criticised by some because a hate crime can be recorded without the offender accepting that motivation. However, this is not unusual in criminal justice, as offences are not dependent on an offender admitting that they committed them or accepting the victim's account. Indeed, the focus on the perception of the victim or others can be a strength, ensuring that potentially hate-motivated offending is identified and recorded rather than allowing the offender's denial to determine whether it is recognised as such.

Recording Improvements

- 4.12. The number of hate crimes recorded by the police increased from 31,844 offences in the year ending March 2013 to 128,485 in the year ending March 2022 (the high point). This rise was thought to have been driven by improvements in crime recording by the police following a critical inspection by HMICFRS in 2014.
- 4.13. The 2025 HMICFRS report *'How effectively do the police record crime?'*⁵ estimated the proportion of hate crime that is reported and ultimately recorded by the police. This estimate increased from 80.5% in 2014, to 94.8% for the 2023-25 period. This compares to their estimation, for example of police recording 66.9% of violent crime and 74.2% of sexual offences in 2014, compared to 93.6% of violent crime and 95.9% of sexual offences in the 2023-25 period.
- 4.14. This report found that improved crime recording has had a particular marked impact on violent crime and on public order offences. This is important given that these two offences account for 93% of hate crime offences recorded in 2024/25:

Chart 3: Distribution of offences recorded by the police flagged as hate crimes, England and Wales, year ending March 2025



Source: *Police Recorded Crime (Home Office)*

Prevalence and Victimisation

- 4.15. National data on prevalence and victimisation are taken from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and are based on an aggregation of the last three years – so the surveys for the years ending March 2023, March 2024 and March 2025. The latest CSEW estimate is that there are around 176,000 hate incidents per year.

⁵ [How effectively do the police record crime? - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

4.16. As a victim-led survey, the CSEW can derive useful information on victimisation, and the most recent data shows that 0.2% of adults were the victim of a personal hate crime (an offence that is directed against an individual person rather than a household or general property). To put these figures in context, across all CSEW crime, 2.8% of adults were victims of personal crime.

4.17. The risk of becoming a victim of hate crime was highest among:

- those whose gender identity was different from the sex registered at birth (1.3% were a victim) compared with those whose gender was same as the sex registered at birth (0.2%),
- gay and lesbian individuals (0.9%) compared with straight individuals (0.1%),
- Asian/Asian British adults (0.6%) compared with White adults (0.1%),
- Muslims (0.6%) and Sikhs (0.5%) compared with, e.g. Christians (0.1%) or Jews (0.1%),
- men aged 16 to 24 (0.4%) compared with all adults (0.2%), and
- disabled individuals (0.3%) compared with not disabled people (0.1%).

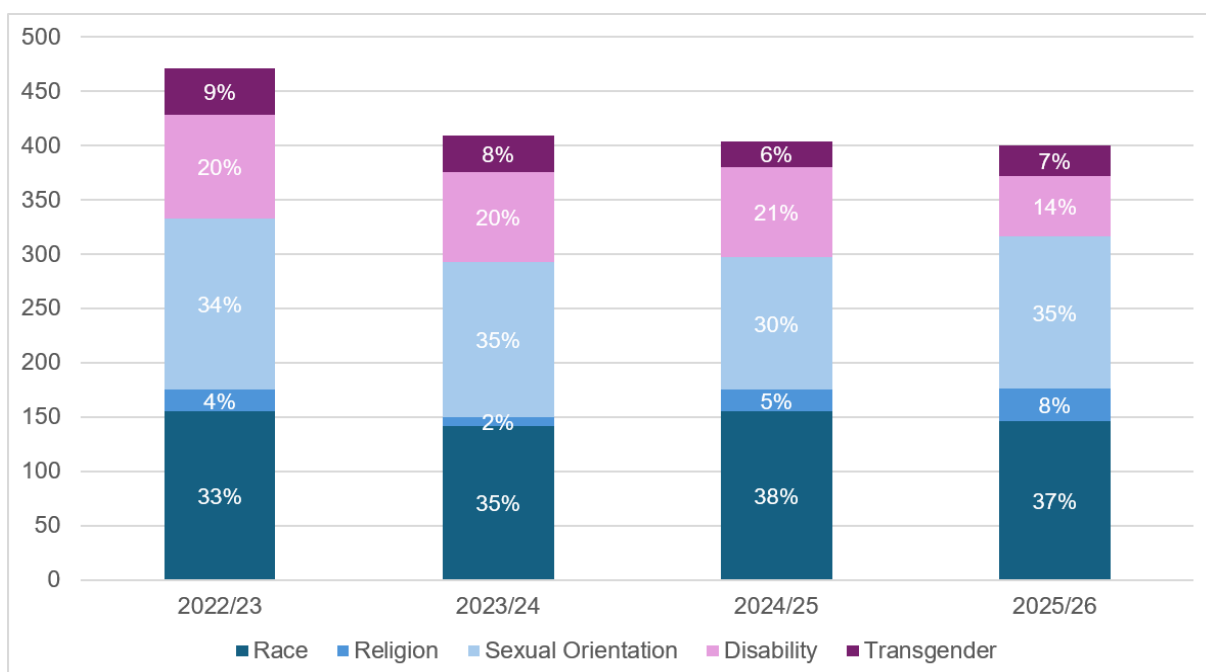
B. LOCAL TRENDS

Hate crime

4.18. Locally, the available data relating to hate crime in Dorset is as follows:

Table 4: Hate crimes recorded by Dorset Police, by monitoring strand, by year

	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	Crimes	Solved Rate*	Crimes	Solved Rate	Crimes	Solved Rate	Crimes	Solved Rate
Race	155	22.6%	142	14.8%	155	12.9%	146	14.4%
Religion	20	25%	8	12.5%	20	5%	30	6.7%
Sexual Orientation	158	17.7%	143	12.6%	122	20.5%	140	18.6%
Disability	95	7.4%	83	7.2%	83	9.6%	56	7.1%
Transgender	43	7%	33	9.1%	24	25%	28	10.7%



*The provided statistics are ‘solved rates’ which were previously known as ‘positive outcomes’. These include where an outcome for the victim has been achieved in line with National Crime Recording Standards NCRS (i.e. a charge, summon, caution, community resolution, etc.).

- 4.19. The local hate crime data largely mirror the national in that they have reduced from a higher period around 2021 to 2023 to a more stable (and slightly lower) position now. While the overall volume of (non-aggravated) hate crime has remained steady since 2023/24, there has been a reduction in the number of hate crimes that have been motivated by the victim’s disability and a significant increase in the number of hate crimes motivated by religion.
- 4.20. Whereas analysis by Dorset Police has not identified a reason for the reduction in disability hate crime, the uptick in the number of religiously motivated hate crimes does appear to align with the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Specifically, 29 antisemitic hate crimes were reported in the most recent year, which were subject to increased oversight and internal review process reviews, along with proactive patrols where places of worship had been targeted. Community engagement at the time reported a positive police response.
- 4.21. Race hate crime remains a persistent issue, with little overall reduction in offending levels and a notable deterioration in investigative outcomes compared with 2022/23. Although the volumes of religiously-motivated hate crime remain comparatively low, the increase in 2025/26 coupled with low detection rates indicate an emerging area of concern.
- 4.22. Sexual orientation continues to account for the greatest number of hate crimes throughout the reporting period. While volumes fluctuate, investigative outcomes have generally improved since 2023/24.

Aggravated hate crime

- 4.23. In terms of aggravated offences, these have seen a significant increase in recent years:

Table 5: Aggravated hate crimes recorded by Dorset Police, by monitoring strand, by year

	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	Crimes	Solved Rate	Crimes	Solved Rate	Crimes	Solved Rate	Crimes	Solved Rate
Racially/Religiously Aggravated	408	17.6%	447	20.6%	551	15.1%	560	22.7%

- 4.24. Table 5 shows that racially and/or religiously aggravated hate crime has increased by 37% in the four years to 2025/26. The data show a modest improving trend in the solved rate.
- 4.25. Nationally, racially or religiously aggravated harassment increased by 21% in the year ending March 2025, and racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury increased by 10%.
- 4.26. Dorset Police has no specific explanation for this increase other than what has been suggested elsewhere in this paper (global threats and concerns manifesting in increased local tension and community unrest) and noting the parallel increase in the national statistics. As a result, it is reasonable to consider this to reflect a true increase in aggravated hate crime, rather than any reporting or recording artefact.

Hate incidents

- 4.27. The available data relating to hate incidents in Dorset is as follows:

Table 6: Hate incidents recorded by Dorset Police, by monitoring stand, by year

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Race	8	18	22	27
Religion	28	37	22	26
Sexual Orientation	75	98	93	103
Disability	17	13	23	12
Transgender	4	4	11	10
Total Incidents	126	151	156	166

- 4.28. Police-recorded hate incidents have increased overall from 126 incidents in 2022/23 to 166 in 2025/26, a rise of 40 incidents (31.7%) over the four-year period. The increase has been driven primarily by growth in incidents related to sexual orientation and race, while incidents relating to religion and disability have fluctuated.
- 4.29. Incidents motivated by sexual orientation remain the most prevalent form of hate incident and account for around three-fifths of all recorded incidents.
- 4.30. Race-motivated hate incidents have increased steadily year-on-year, and more than triple over the four years. Although these numbers remain lower than those for sexual orientation and religion, race-related incidents show the strongest and most consistent upward trend and warrant closer monitoring.
- 4.31. Religiously-motivated hate incidents fluctuate considerably from year to year, with no clear long-term upward or downward trend. This again support the apparent link of these offences to wider global tensions and conflicts.
- 4.32. While the volume of transgender-motivated hate incidents remains low, they have more than doubled compared with the start of the period.

Summary

- 4.33. In summary, Dorset Police-recorded hate crime levels have remained relatively stable over the four-year period, although significant variation exists between monitoring strands. Sexual orientation and race continue to account for the majority of offences recorded by police. Disability and transgender hate crime have shown a downward trend in recorded volumes, while religious hate crime increased during 2025/26. Detection rates remain variable and have generally declined since 2022/23, particularly for race and religion-related offences.
- 4.34. At the same time, however, racially and/or religiously aggravated hate crime has increased by 37% over the reporting period. This suggests that any change in hate crime may not necessarily be linked improvements in public confidence in reporting and awareness of hate-related behaviour within local communities.
- 4.35. A notable feature of the data is the contrast between the rise in reported hate incidents and the more stable or declining levels of recorded hate crimes. Given that the number of aggravated hate crime appear to be increasing, this has been flagged with Dorst Police for further analysis and consideration.
- 4.36. Dorset experiences comparatively low levels of recorded hate crime relative both to England and Wales as a whole and to many comparable police force areas. While neighbouring forces with larger urban populations typically record higher rates of hate crime, Dorset consistently

reports among the lowest rates nationally. However, as already stated, caution should be exercised when interpreting these figures, as hate crime is known to be under-reported and police-recorded data do not necessarily reflect the true prevalence of victimisation.

Recording of Non-Crime Hate Incidents (NCHIs)

The police recording of NCHIs has been the subject of national debate over the past few years.

The concept of recording NCHIs originates from recommendations following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (1999) which sought to improve the identification and monitoring of hostility and prejudice within communities. The inquiry argued that policing required a mechanism by which to gather and codify valuable intelligence, help identify escalating tensions, and allow early intervention before more serious offences occur.

Critics, however, have in recent years raised concerns about freedom of expression, proportionality and the potential impact on individuals who have not committed a criminal offence. This has led to increased dialogue from elected officials and the media, in particular, resulting in the College of Policing issuing revised national guidance that seeks to balance the prevention of hate-related harm with the protection of lawful speech.

Aside from the debate, policing continues to act against leaflets, posters, and graffiti that spread hate because of its ability to divide communities and incite violence. On that basis, it is reasonable to suggest that social media posts should not be held to a different legal test, especially given that their speed and reach arguably make them more dangerous.

A revised Statutory Code of Practice and corresponding authorised professional practice (APP) was introduced for officers and staff responding to reports of NCHIs and recommendations to further change APP remain under review at a national level. Dorset Police adheres to the APP, which is reflected in Force policy.

Not all incidents that are perceived by the complainant as being motivated by hostility or prejudice are recorded as a NCHI. Records are only made where specific requirements under the Code of Practice on the Recording and Retention of Personal Data ('the Code') are met – specifically where the incident: *“presents a real risk of significant harm to individuals with a particular characteristic(s) and/or a real risk that a future criminal offence may be committed against individuals or groups with a particular characteristic(s)”*.

For the purposes of the Code, a 'particular characteristic' means race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity, as defined in legislation. This test will enable the police to intervene where necessary to safeguard vulnerable individuals and communities.

The Code seeks to strike a balance between the need to protect people from harm, especially individuals, groups and communities that may be subject to abuse, and protecting free speech. The Code and APP, taken together, along with the supporting materials are intended to help forces and their officers and staff to strike this balance.

5. SCRUTINY AND OVERSIGHT

- 5.1. Hate crime data and performance is subject to considerable scrutiny, with a well-established oversight process.

Force Governance

- 5.2. Oversight of the Force performance in relation to hate crimes and incidents, is undertaken by the Strategic Performance Board. This is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and attended

by the OPCC Chief Executive. Significant developments are subject to deep dives at this Board to ensure a wider awareness of the issues and a collaborative approach to problem solving.

- 5.3. Performance about the service provided to victims is also considered at the Strategic Performance Board, most recently in relation to VNAs and VCoP compliance – with an update being provided by the Force Victim Champion. Naturally, VCoP compliance is a matter considered by the Victims and Witnesses subgroup of the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, chaired by the PCC.
- 5.4. As the Force's handling of hate crime and hate incidents is a core component of the Force's overall legitimacy and the work to inform an inclusive culture, updates are also provided to the Legitimacy Board – chaired by the Chief Constable and attended by the Chief Executive and Director of Operations – and the Executive Culture and Inclusivity Group – chaired by the Assistant Chief Officer and attended by the Chief Executive and Director of Operations.

Police and Crime Plan Delivery

- 5.5. The priorities and commitments within the Police and Crime Plan are underpinned by a detailed delivery framework and as required, supporting project and/or programme plans. These are monitored through Force Boards, quarterly data updates, PCC-led scrutiny panels and other arrangements as might be necessary and appropriate.
- 5.6. As outlined at paragraph 2.7 the Plan contains several commitments under the theme of hate crime including to “Work with people across communities to understand and identify concerns and to ensure that policing feels a part of those communities, rather than something that is happening to them” and “use the real-life experience of the workforce to ensure that the Force is understanding of hate crime victims’ needs”. This paper, although not an exhaustive list of activity, provides evidence of both the action taken by the Force and, additionally, the data and information monitored by the OPCC.
- 5.7. In addition to that routine monitoring activity, the Force and OPCC undertake deep dive meetings so that Police and Crime Plan priorities can be considered in greater depth. Priority Five of the Police and Crime Plan – Putting Victims and Communities First – was subject to one such meeting on Tuesday 1 September, at which the PCC and his Senior Management Team considered a detailed Force hate crime progress update.
- 5.8. This deeper dive complements ongoing OPCC-led activity, including the PCC chaired Use of Police Powers and Scrutiny Panel and ongoing monitoring of relevant contracts, such as Victim Support and the Restorative Justice service.

Hate Crime Review Panel

- 5.9. Dorset Police implemented a Hate Crime Review Panel in January 2026 to hold a level of internal scrutiny into the operational responses to reports of hate crime. This is not a formal scrutiny panel, rather a panel used by the Force to review responses and identify potential failures and/or good practice.
- 5.10. The panel is chaired by the Force Hate Crime Lead, as was developed in conjunction with the OPCC. It is held quarterly, in person at different stations across the Force but has the option of Teams to ensure improved attendance.
- 5.11. The Panel is supported by a diverse network of Hate Crime ambassadors. These are volunteers who have received bespoke hate crime training from a specialised external provider (Stop Hate UK) to ensure that all had the confidence to discuss the topics sensitively and accurately, as well as to ensure that members had a good grounding in the legislation and authorised professional practice. Around 50 staff were trained and are a blend of police officers, and Force and OPCC staff. Future Panels will also bring in external expertise as needed, for example, an

upcoming Panel will look at hate crimes that have been flagged as 'no further action' by the Police and CPS, and CPS representatives will attend.

- 5.12. The Panels have been established with themed focus areas to review victim experiences and identify lessons learned, which rotate on a quarterly basis. With support from the Victim Champion, victim withdrawal data and VNA compliance data for hate crime is presented quarterly at this panel to better understand why victims disengage and to identify opportunities for improvement.
- 5.13. Each attendee is allocated one hate crime to review. They do so and complete a feedback form and then present their findings to the group to stimulate further discussions and testing. Examples of good work are fed back by the Chair, and any learning or improvement opportunities are fed back to the Force via Investigational Standards or local policing performance teams. Significant changes have been made to reporting process directly identified through the panel.

6. NEXT STEPS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

- 6.1. Given the scale of the issue and the breadth of work being undertaken currently, the opportunities, next steps and challenges could warrant a separate detailed report. However, a summary of some key areas has been outlined below.

Opportunities

- 6.2. Looking ahead, the aims of both the OPCC and Force are continuous improvement and to grow as an organisation to serve all of Dorset's communities with fairness and respect. This improvement will be delivered through the existing structures and programmes of work, including:
- Further communication activity – utilising effective communications techniques to distribute more tailored information into local communities.
 - Continuation of the work under the Dorset Race Action Plan, driving forward systemic change both in internal policy and process and externally.
 - Engagement with DEPA and community-based organisations to help build trust in policing.
 - Engagement with third party reporting centres, encouraging reporting directly to Policing, but also via the centres.
 - Progression of the Hate Crime Review Panel to improve organisational learning, best practice and implement change
 - Undertaking a formal needs assessment, reviewing all areas of engagement with communities, how contact is responded to, how the Force responds to hate crime, and undertake a survey of victims and community members to better understand their views and experiences of policing.

Challenges

- 6.3. As set out in this paper, many hate crime victims do not report incidents because they lack confidence that the police will take effective action, fear reprisals from offenders, or have had previous negative experiences with policing. This is particularly relevant among minority ethnic, faith, LGBTQ+ and migrant communities, where hate incidents may become normalised or where cultural and accessibility barriers can make engagement with public services more difficult. As a result, official hate crime data is likely to represent only a proportion of actual victimisation, limiting understanding of the true scale and impact of the issue.
- 6.4. Addressing under-reporting requires a whole-system response and cannot be achieved by policing alone. While an effective police service is essential, trust and confidence are shaped by wider experiences across communities and public services. Local authorities, schools, health

providers, employers, housing organisations, faith groups and community partners all have a role in supporting victims, encouraging reporting and challenging the prejudice that underpins hate incidents. Strong partnership working can help create multiple routes to support, improve the quality of intelligence and data, and build the confidence needed for victims to come forward.

Community Tension

- 6.5. Hate crime happens everywhere, and therefore victims of hate crime live, work, study or socialise in the same communities as those responsible for their abuse, meaning that reporting an incident can carry significant personal risks. Many victims' fear retaliation, further harassment, damage to relationships, social exclusion, or becoming more visible within their community as a result of coming forward. These concerns can be particularly acute in close-knit communities, schools and workplaces, where victims may have ongoing contact with perpetrators and may feel that reporting will worsen an already difficult situation.
- 6.6. These fears contribute to under-reporting and can allow harmful behaviour to continue unchecked, potentially increasing community tensions and exacerbating the impact on victims. While encouraging reporting remains important, policing must carefully balance this objective with the need to safeguard those affected from further harm. Effective responses therefore require close partnership working with schools, local authorities, housing providers, employers, community groups and support services to ensure that victims receive appropriate protection and support. A coordinated approach can help reduce the risks associated with reporting, improve victim confidence and contribute to safer, more cohesive communities.

Social Media Impact

- 6.7. An increasing proportion of hate-related behaviour now takes place online, where social media and other digital platforms can enable harmful content, misinformation and hostility to spread rapidly and reach large audiences. Online abuse can have a significant impact on victims, particularly as content may be repeatedly shared, amplified and remain accessible over time. This can intensify feelings of fear, isolation and vulnerability, while also contributing to wider community tensions by reinforcing stereotypes, prejudice and division between different groups.
- 6.8. The speed and reach of online communication, plus the amplification by politicians, commentators or other activists can also create false narratives, including misrepresentations of police activity and decision-making. Where police take positive action to support vulnerable communities or respond to hate incidents, these actions may be portrayed by some online commentators as pandering to particular groups, regardless of the facts. These false narratives can undermine public confidence, increase mistrust between communities and authorities, and contribute to further hostility both online and offline. Addressing these challenges requires effective partnership working between policing, education providers, community organisations, regulators and technology companies to promote digital resilience, challenge misinformation and support safer online environments. Such work is, however, hampered by the increasing demand and ongoing challenges with resources.

Cumulative Impacts

- 6.9. It is helpful to recognise that the impact of hate crime may extend beyond the immediate incident. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this paper to consider the potential cumulative effects of prolonged exposure to discrimination, disadvantage and chronic stress on physical and psychological health, in the context of hate crime, it is important to note that repeated or sustained experiences of discrimination are often raised by those with lived experience as having direct and compounding effects on their wellbeing and trust, with some of those effects being transmitted across generations without clear experiences to the contrary.

Institutional Change

- 6.10. Policing continues to face scrutiny regarding the disproportionate outcomes and experiences reported by some minority communities. In late 2024, the then Chief Constable, supported by the current Chief Constable, took the decision to accept institutional racism, acknowledging that Force systems, processes, policies, structures and unwitting actions based upon unconscious bias influenced how policing services are delivered, meaning Black people are over-policed, under-protected, under-represented and have more negative experiences of policing in Dorset both internally and externally.
- 6.11. Such public recognition can help build trust by demonstrating a willingness to confront difficult issues, but it also raises expectations that meaningful and measurable change will follow. While this acknowledgement of institutional racism is focused on a single protected characteristic, given this acknowledges inherent biases in Force systems, processes, policies, structures and actions, it is expected that improvement brought about by this acknowledgement will – in time – be of benefit to policing services experienced by everyone.
- 6.12. Transforming organisational culture is a complex, long-term process that extends beyond policy changes alone. While procedures, training and oversight can be revised relatively quickly, lasting change requires sustained effort to address established behaviours, assumptions and working practices that may have developed over many years. Success will depend on strong leadership, effective scrutiny, engagement with affected communities and a commitment from staff at all levels to embrace new approaches. Maintaining public confidence will require evidence of continuous improvement and a willingness to learn from feedback, challenge and lived experience.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. As set out within this document, there is a considerable and sustained focus on hate crime and incidents within policing. This is demonstrated through activity, plans and strategies from the local through to the national level.
- 7.2. The PCC is clear that there is no place for hate and has set out his approach within the Dorset Police and Crime Plan. He recognises the need to improve not only the police response to those crimes and incidents reported to the police, but also to improving the confidence that communities have in the police and need to protect the protectors from the impacts of hate crime and incidents too.
- 7.3. The PCC, along with his office, will continue to scrutinise Force performance in this area to ensure delivery of the commitments within the Police and Crime Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1. Members are recommended to note the paper.

LEWIS GOOL
HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMISSIONING

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ROAD SAFETY UPDATE: ILLEGAL E-MOBILITY VEHICLES

For the purpose of this report, 'illegal e-mobility vehicles' refers to e-mobility vehicles that are either being used unlawfully or do not meet the relevant legal requirements for use on public roads and public places, including vehicles that have been modified or are otherwise non-compliant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Illegal e-mobility vehicles, including non-compliant or modified e-bikes, privately owned e-scooters and illegal e-scooters, are an increasing concern nationally and within Dorset. The scale of the issue varies significantly across the country, with the most significant problems currently evident in major urban areas such as London, Birmingham and Manchester. The scale of the issue in Dorset is considerably lower, but there is evidence of increasing use, rising police seizures, associated anti-social behaviour and growing community concern.

A key challenge is the difficulty in accurately measuring prevalence. There is currently no reliable data showing the number of illegal e-bikes or privately owned e-scooters being used illegally. Police seizures, reported incidents and collisions provide useful indicators, but largely measure detection and reporting rather than the true number of vehicles in circulation. This makes it difficult to determine the full scale of the problem or predict how rapidly it may develop.

The availability of illegal and non-compliant vehicles is a significant contributing factor. E-bikes can be modified using relatively simple aftermarket or bolt-on components to increase power or remove speed restrictions. Illegal and compliant vehicles can also be sold alongside each other through mainstream retailers and online marketplaces, creating challenges for consumers in understanding what can legally be used on public roads and in public places.

Within Dorset, illegal e-mobility is most closely associated with anti-social behaviour, dangerous or intimidating riding and road safety concerns. There is evidence that e-mobility use broadly reflects established ASB hotspots and, in some areas, accounts for up to 20% of reported nuisance ASB. There is also emerging evidence of higher-powered and modified e-bikes being used in connection with wider criminality. In BCP, a small number of incidents have involved knives and individuals associated with criminal gangs. However, these incidents remain rare and there is currently insufficient evidence to suggest that wider serious criminality, as seen in other areas around the country, is representative of illegal e-mobility use across Dorset.

Illegal e-mobility is generating additional demand for policing through incident response, hotspot patrols, enforcement, vehicle seizure and disposal, offender identification, investigation and community reassurance. The quiet operation and high speeds of some modified vehicles, together with riders attempting to evade officers or conceal their identities, create particular operational and officer-safety challenges.

Dorset Police has a range of enforcement and preventative measures in place. Operation Think provides a coordinated operational response, combining enforcement, vehicle seizures, high-visibility patrols, community engagement and education. Neighbourhood Policing Teams also work with Local Authorities, Housing Associations and other partners to address persistent ASB and

identified hotspots. Forensic tagging spray using SMART water is being trialled in BCP as an additional tactic to assist in identifying riders and linking individuals to illegally used e-bikes, although its operational application is limited.

The strengthening of police powers through the Crime and Policing Act 2026, which came into force on 29 June 2026, has provided officers with a more immediate response by removing the previous requirement to issue a warning before certain vehicles can be seized. This is expected to increase enforcement activity and seizures. The Government has also confirmed its intention to reduce the period vehicles seized for anti-social use must be retained before disposal, although the proposed changes to a seven-calendar-day disposal timeframe require secondary legislation before they come into force.

A multi-agency approach remains essential. Dorset Police, Local Authorities, Community Safety and ASB teams, Youth Services and other partners are already working together through enforcement, intelligence sharing, hotspot activity, education and preventative measures. However, enforcement alone cannot address the availability of illegal vehicles or the underlying causes of their use.

Overall, the evidence indicates that illegal e-mobility represents a growing but currently proportionate policing and community safety issue in Dorset. The current priority is to maintain targeted and intelligence-led enforcement, improve the quality of local data, continue preventative and educational activity, and work with partners to address the availability of illegal and non-compliant vehicles. The position is kept under review as strengthened police powers, changes to vehicle disposal arrangements and potential future legislative reform take effect.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This paper provides an overview of illegal e-mobility vehicles in Dorset and what action is being taken to reduce the impact on our communities. This paper also seeks to address the following six Key Lines of Enquiry, as provided by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel:

- I. How significant is the issue of illegal e-mobility across Dorset and BCP?
- II. What hotspots and patterns have been identified?
- III. What evidence exists of links between the use of illegal two-wheeled vehicles and wider criminality?
- IV. How effective are current enforcement powers and operational tactics in tackling illegal use of these vehicles?
- V. What initiatives are in place to prevent offending, reduce harm and improve public confidence?
- VI. How does the OPCC work with partner agencies to respond to the issues, in terms of both intelligence and delivery?

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 For the purpose of this report, illegal e-mobility vehicles refer to small, electrically powered vehicles used for personal mobility or transport and includes vehicles such as illegal e-bikes, electrically assisted pedal cycles, e-scooters or e-scramblers.
- 2.2 The use of illegal e-mobility has surged nationally in recent years. These illegal vehicles exceed legal power and speed limits, do not comply with the law or safety standards governing electrically assisted vehicles and are becoming an increasing issue within our communities.
- 2.3 Across the country, the use of these types of illegal e-mobility vehicles has led to pedestrian collisions; have been used to cause anti-social behaviour (ASB); and used in street crimes

such as phone snatching and, in some cases, to facilitate organised crime.

- 2.4 E-bikes can easily be modified using bolt-on or aftermarket components to increase motor power or remove or alter speed restrictions, enabling vehicles to exceed the legal limits for electrically assisted cycles and travel at significantly higher speeds. The availability of relatively simple, removable, modifications mean that a vehicle may appear compliant when purchased but subsequently be altered for illegal use. The increased speed and quiet operation of these vehicles can present additional risks to pedestrians and other road users, while making detection and enforcement more challenging.
- 2.5 Some riders of illegal e-mobility may also conceal their identities using masks or balaclavas and ride at speed on footpaths and through pedestrian areas, causing alarm and increasing the risk to pedestrians and other road users and contribute towards intimidating or threatening behaviour.
- 2.6 Evidence from across the country indicates an increasing use of illegal e-mobility vehicles, although the scale and severity of the issue vary considerably between areas. London currently provides the strongest evidence of a significant problem involving illegal and high-powered e-bikes and e-scooters, with the Metropolitan Police having seized more than 2,500 such vehicles from January to July 2026 so far. Birmingham and Manchester are also experiencing significant and high-level issues. In comparison, the scale of the issue in Dorset is currently significantly lower and is not comparable with that being experienced in London, Birmingham and Manchester.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 E-scooters became increasingly visible and widely used in the UK from 2020, following the Government's introduction of regulated rental trials in July that year. While rental e-scooters were permitted within designated trial areas, privately owned e-scooters remained illegal to use in public places. The rapid growth in availability and use since 2020 has created new challenges for policing, particularly around illegal use, road safety and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.2 Electric bicycles have been available in the UK for several decades, with the legal framework for electrically assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs) dating back to 1983. This established a category of electrically assisted cycles that could be treated as pedal cycles rather than motor vehicles, provided they met the relevant legal requirements. Commercial availability developed further in 1997, when Raleigh launched an electric bike in the UK. Since then, e-bikes have become increasingly common, with significant growth in availability, technology and public use.
- 3.3 The current legal framework was substantially revised in 2015, when the UK introduced requirements broadly aligned with European standards. The rider must generally be required to pedal for the motor to provide assistance. From 2016, additional type-approval requirements were introduced for certain 'Twist and Go' electrically assisted cycles capable of providing motor assistance without pedalling.
- 3.4 The distinction between compliant EAPCs and higher-powered or modified e-bikes is therefore important. An e-bike that exceeds the prescribed power or assistance limits or has been modified to provide motor assistance outside the permitted conditions, may no longer legally be treated as a pedal cycle and can instead fall within the regulatory framework applying to motor vehicles.
- 3.5 In more recent years, the more concerning issue is the manner in which the higher-powered or modified e-bikes and e-scooters are being ridden and the increased risk these vehicles pose to public safety.

- 3.6 Despite continued educational messaging and communications, evidence shows that public understanding of the law is still poor. In the Department for Transport's Autumn 2025 Technology Tracker, only 32% of respondents correctly identified that privately owned e-scooters cannot legally be ridden on roads and cycle lanes, while 32% incorrectly thought they could. This potentially contributes to illegal use.
- 3.7 The issue of illegal e-mobility is relevant to the wider Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) agenda, particularly through its focus on anti-social behaviour and community confidence. While illegal e-mobility is not currently identified as a standalone CSP priority, the Partnership's assessment shows increasing public concern about both ASB and illegal e-scooter use. This issue is already being considered within the wider multi-agency response to ASB and community safety, reflecting the growing impact of illegal e-mobility on local communities.

4 E-MOBILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

ELECTRICALLY POWERED PEDAL CYCLE (EAPC)

- 4.1 Electrically assisted pedal cycle (EAPC) is the legal term for an e-bike or e-cycle that can be treated the same as a conventional pedal cycle, provided the user is age 14 or over. There are many products known as 'e-bikes' or 'e-cycles' available on the market.
- 4.2 To be classified as an EAPC under the EAPC regulations, the cycle must:
- be fitted with pedals that can propel it;
 - have an electric motor with a maximum continuous rated power not exceeding 250 watts; and
 - cut off electrical assistance when it reaches 15.5 miles per hour (mph)
- 4.3 EAPCs that comply with the regulations do not need to be registered, insured or taxed (Vehicle Excise Duty). Any e-bike that falls outside of this is not an EAPC.
- 4.4 If an EAPC does not comply with the regulations, it is treated as a motor vehicle under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Road Traffic Act 1988. Such vehicles need to be registered, insured and taxed as a motor vehicle. The rider will need an appropriate driving licence and will have to wear an approved motorcycle safety helmet.
- 4.5 Pedal cycles providing electrical assistance without the rider needing to use the pedals are usually called 'Twist and Go'. 'Twist and Go' cycles are classified as EAPCs provided they meet the EAPC regulations as listed in 4.2. 'Twist and Go' EAPCs placed on the market or entering into service after 1 January 2016 have to meet a range of technical requirements before they can be used on roads. If a 'Twist and Go' EAPC has not been 'type approved' it falls into the 250W LPM (Low Powered Moped) category of vehicle.
- 4.6 Some electric cycles offer a temporary increase in top speed that is often advertised as 'off road' mode. When 'off road' mode is activated, the vehicle can be propelled by the motor at a speed greater than 15.5 mph. Vehicles that have this feature do not comply with the EAPC regulations and are considered motor vehicles.
- 4.7 E-bikes can be, and in some cases are, modified to increase their speed or power beyond the limits permitted for legally compliant EAPCs. Such modifications can include increasing motor power or altering speed limiters, resulting in vehicles that no longer meet the legal requirements for use as an EAPC.

ELECTRICALLY POWERED E-SCOOTERS

- 4.8 Electrical scooters (known as e-scooters) come under the category of 'powered transporters' and fall within the legal definition of a motor vehicle under the Road Traffic Act 1998. This means the rules that apply to motor vehicles also apply to e-scooters, including the need to have a driving licence and insurance.
- 4.9 There are two legal ways of using an e-scooter:
- i. **by renting one through an authorised rental scheme i.e. Beryl.** In areas where a rental trial scheme is running, rental e-scooters can be used on public roads, some cycle lanes, and other public spaces. But the rider must follow the relevant road traffic laws, or the rider will face prosecution. To use a rental e-scooter in an approved area the rider must hold the correct driving licence, have insurance (which the rental company provides when the e-scooter is hired from them) and the rider must meet the minimum age limit.
 - ii. **by privately owning one** – Privately owned e-scooters can only be used on private land with permission from the landowner. It is not currently possible to get insurance for privately owned e-scooters which means it is illegal to use them on the road or in public spaces, such as parks, street pavements, and shopping centres.

ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES

- 4.10 An e-motorbike is a two-wheeled motor vehicle powered by an electric motor and designed to operate as a motorcycle or moped. Unlike a legally compliant EAPC, an e-motorbike is subject to the legal requirements applicable to motor vehicles, including type approval, registration, insurance, appropriate driving licence requirements and, where applicable, vehicle excise duty and MOT testing. Some smaller electric two-wheelers may fall within the moped category rather than being classified as motorcycles.
- 4.11 The term “e-scambler” is not itself a legal classification. Some e-scamblers can potentially be road legal if they have been manufactured, type-approved, registered, insured and operated in accordance with the requirements applying to their vehicle category.
- 4.12 An illegal e-scambler is generally an electrically powered two-wheeled vehicle styled like a small off-road motorcycle or “scrambler” that does not meet the legal requirements for an electrically assisted pedal cycle (EAPC) and is being used on public roads or other places where motor vehicles are required to be road legal.

5 PREVALENCE / AVAILABILITY

- 5.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) estimated in 2025 that between 760,000 and 1.2 million people aged 16 and over in England owned a private e-scooter. As privately owned e-scooters cannot currently be legally used in public places, this represents a substantial pool of vehicles potentially available for illegal use. However, there is no national data showing how many are actually being used illegally. The scale of illegal e-bike use is even more difficult to quantify, with no national estimate of the number of illegally modified or non-compliant e-bikes in circulation.
- 5.2 The national scale of the problem is currently measured largely through outputs such as seizures, collisions and enforcement activity, rather than reliable measures of prevalence. Seizures are currently one of the best available indicators, but reflect police detection and enforcement rather than the actual number of illegal e-mobility vehicles in circulation. For example, the Metropolitan Police seized more than 2,500 illegal e-bikes and e-scooters in the first seven months of 2026, but this cannot be used to estimate the total number in circulation across London.

- 5.3 It is important to distinguish between the legality of an e-mobility vehicle and how it is ridden. These are separate issues: a vehicle may be illegal because it does not meet the relevant legal requirements, while the rider's behaviour may create additional risks through excessive speed, dangerous or careless riding, use of pavements or pedestrian areas, or behaviour linked to other criminality. These factors should therefore be considered separately when assessing prevalence, harm, and the appropriate policing and preventative response.

6 ILLEGAL E-MOBILITY USE IN DORSET

- 6.1 Like other areas of the country, Dorset has experienced a steady visible increase in the use of illegal e-mobility vehicles in recent years. The key concerns are:

- Availability and consumer awareness;
- Anti-social behaviour;
- Dangerous and intimidating riding;
- Links to wider criminality;
- Increasing enforcement demand; and
- Community confidence and fear.

- 6.2 **Availability and consumer awareness** – A key concern is their widespread availability through mainstream retailers and online marketplaces, where products can be presented alongside legal vehicles and may reference UK legal requirements, but are often available to purchase without meaningful checks at the point of sale.

Online marketplaces create particular challenges because illegal or non-compliant vehicles can be sold alongside legitimate products, making it difficult for consumers to understand what is legal to use on public roads. Consumers may therefore purchase vehicles or modification equipment without fully understanding the legal restrictions on their use in public places.

This presents a significant challenge and highlights the need for legislative and regulatory changes to prevent illegal or non-compliant vehicles and modification equipment from reaching consumers in the first place. In the meantime, education and consumer awareness remain important in helping the public understand the legal requirements and risks associated with these products.

- 6.3 **Anti-social behaviour** – The use of illegal e-mobility vehicles, combined with the behaviour of riders, has a strong associated link with anti-social behaviour (ASB). In Dorset, the prevalence of illegal e-mobility use broadly mirrors established ASB hotspots, with these vehicles frequently being used in connection with ASB offending. This is a growing concern within the community and, in some areas, accounts for up to 20% of reported nuisance ASB. The response is through multi-agency partnership working.
- 6.4 **Dangerous and intimidating riding** – An increasing concern is the way in which higher-powered or modified e-bikes and e-scooters are being ridden, and the resulting risks to public and road safety. The use of face coverings or balaclavas to conceal identity can further increase feelings of intimidation and concern within the community. It is important to recognise that not all riders who cover their faces are involved in wider criminality; however, face coverings may be used deliberately to intimidate or cause alarm and distress, or to avoid identification where the rider is involved in other criminal activity. Their use can therefore heighten public concern and create additional challenges for police in identifying riders and investigating offences.
- 6.5 **Links to wider criminality** – A more recent emerging issue is the use of illegal e-mobility that have been adapted to significantly exceed the legal speed limit, with some reportedly capable of reaching speeds of up to 70 mph. These vehicles are being used by criminal

gangs, with individuals often wearing balaclavas to conceal their identities. In BCP, there have been a small number of incidents involving the use of knives, including incidents targeting other gang members. However, such incidents in Dorset remain rare.

- 6.6 **Increasing enforcement demand** – The increasing use of illegal e-mobility vehicles is generating additional policing demand through incident response, hotspot patrols, enforcement activity, vehicle seizures, criminal investigations and community reassurance. Where illegal e-mobility use is associated with ASB or wider criminality, this can create further demand across neighbourhood policing, roads policing and investigative teams.
- 6.7 **Community confidence and fear** – Illegal e-mobility can have a disproportionate impact on community confidence and perceptions of safety. 29% of Dorset residents identified illegal e-scooter use as a crime affecting their local area in 2025, up 3.3 percentage points from 2024. Dangerous or anti-social riding, particularly at speed or in pedestrian areas, can cause alarm, intimidation and fear among residents. Repeated and highly visible incidents can undermine confidence in the safety of local public spaces and increase demand for police reassurance and enforcement.

7. POLICE ENFORCEMENT / RESPONSE

- 7.1 Legislation within the Road Traffic Act 1988 enables police to deal with offences associated to the riding of illegal e-mobility vehicles on public roads.

- 7.1 Where Dorset Police stop individuals using illegal e-mobility, the officer assesses the situation based on:
- Whether the illegal vehicle is being ridden with insufficient knowledge that they are illegal;
 - Whether the illegal vehicle is being ridden with knowledge that they are illegal;
 - Rider behaviour and whether it is being used to commit other criminal offences.

- 7.2 **Illegal vehicles being ridden with insufficient knowledge that they are illegal** – For several years, Dorset Police and the OPCC have provided the public with clear and consistent educational messaging aimed at e-mobility vehicles and their use on public roads. This messaging is targeted at all age groups, including parents and carers who may consider purchasing an e-mobility vehicle as a birthday or Christmas present for a child.

Despite sustained communication campaign efforts, there are still instances where individuals appear to have limited knowledge or understanding of the legal restrictions surrounding the use of e-mobility vehicles on public roads. To support the re-education of the public, Dorset Police previously developed a leaflet, 'Why am I being given this flyer?', which provided information on the legal requirements and risks associated with illegal e-mobility vehicles. However, as public awareness has increased and police have increased powers, the use of these leaflets has reduced considerably, and they are now issued infrequently.

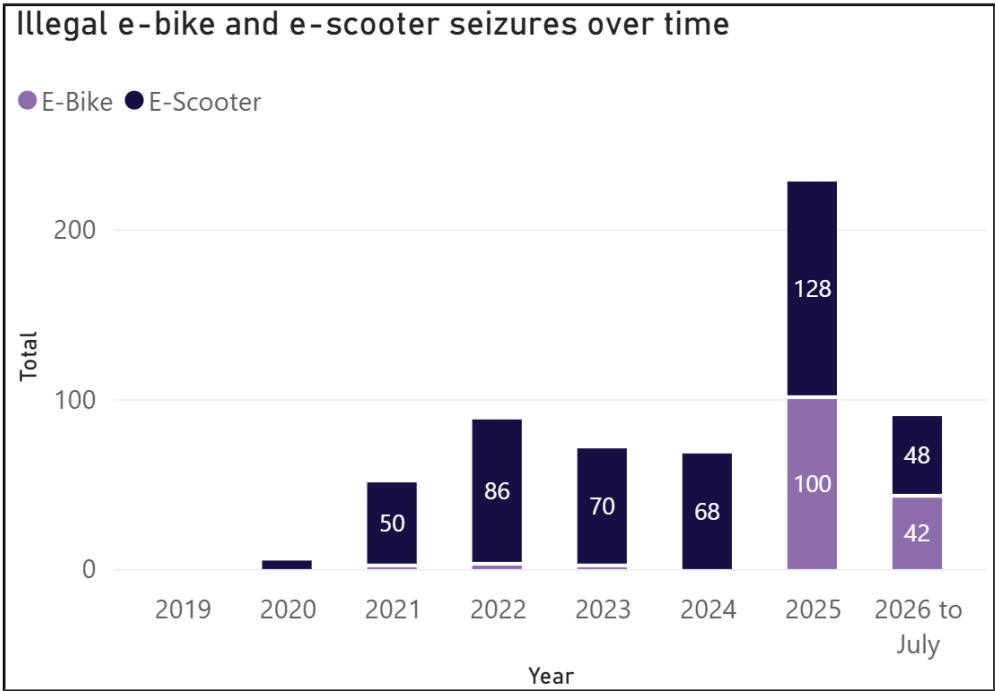
- 7.3 **Illegal vehicle being ridden with the knowledge that they are illegal** – The changes to the Crime and Policing Act, which came into force on 29 June 2026, have strengthened police enforcement powers in relation to illegally modified e-bikes and other vehicles being used anti-socially. The changes removed the requirement for police to issue a warning before seizing such vehicles, enabling officers to seize illegal e-mobility vehicles immediately when encountered on the public highway and, where appropriate, pursue prosecution for relevant road traffic offences.

For younger riders, cases can be referred to the Youth Justice Out of Court Resolution Team for consideration of the appropriate disposal. Seizure prevents the vehicle from

continuing to be used illegally and, where applicable, it is subsequently destroyed in accordance with police property disposal procedures.

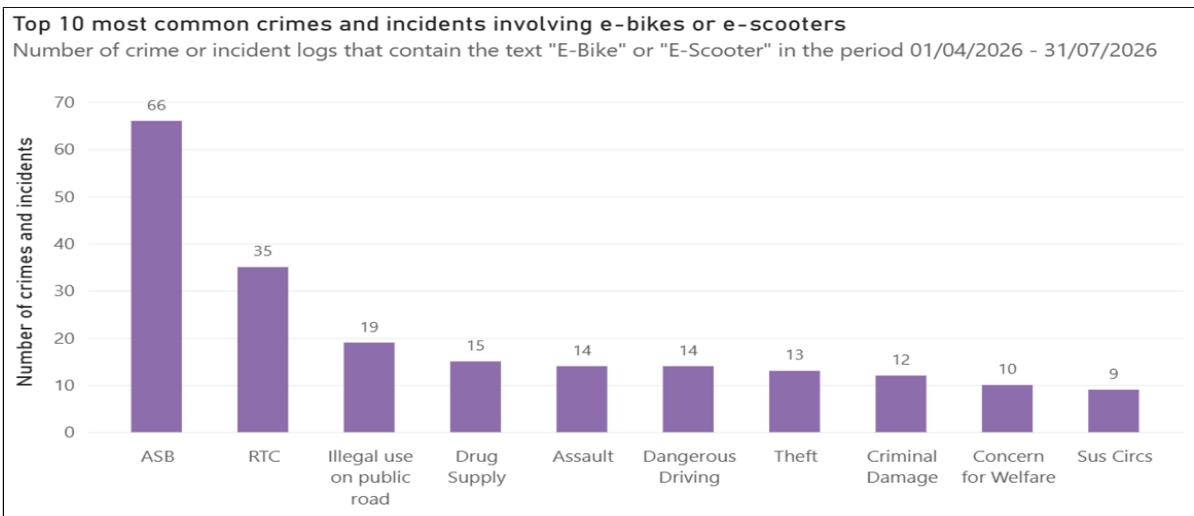
Dorset Police welcomed the strengthened powers, which provide officers with a more immediate and robust response to the illegal and anti-social use of e-mobility vehicles.

7.4 The chart below shows the number of e-bike and e-scooter Dorset Police seizures by year.



There has been a notable increase in police seizures of illegal e-mobility vehicles during 2025 and 2026. The rise in e-bike seizures is likely to reflect both the growing prevalence of illegal use and increased police focus on tackling the issue. Seizure numbers are also expected to increase following the strengthening of police powers in June 2026, which removed the requirement for officers to issue a warning before seizing certain illegally used or modified vehicles.

7.5 **Rider behaviour and whether it is being used to commit other criminal offences** – The chart below shows the 10 most common crimes and incident types involving e-scooters and e-bikes.



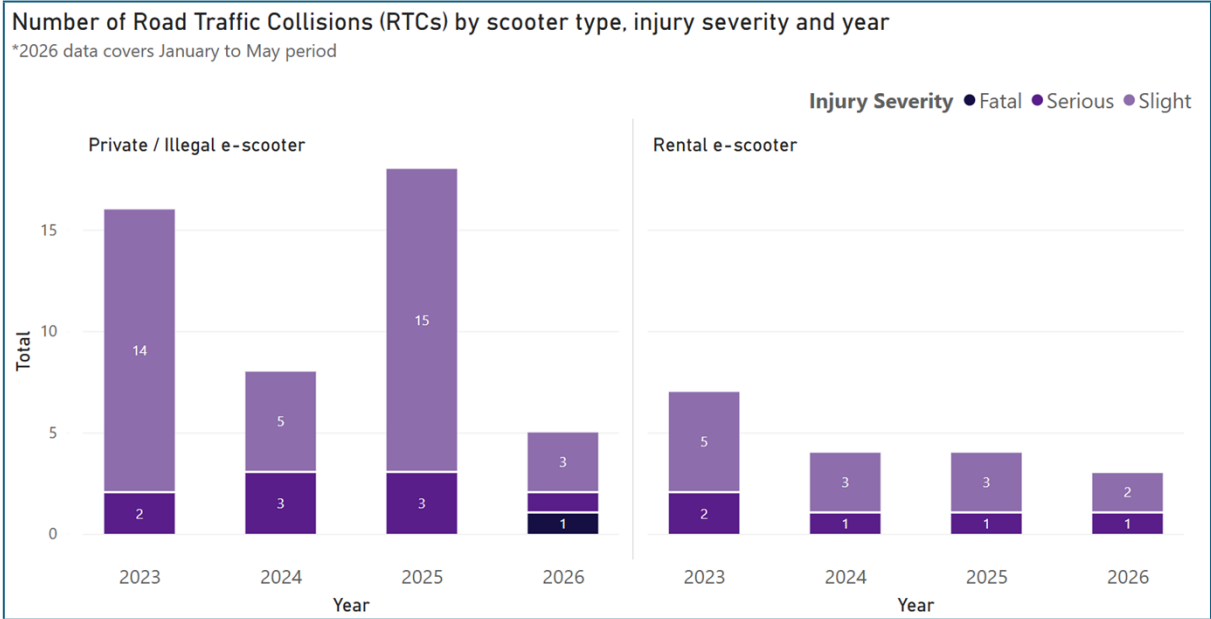
**** Please note that, whilst the data identifies incidents 'involving' e-mobility vehicles, it does not provide information on the legal status of the vehicle itself. For example, in relation**

to ASB incidents, the data does not indicate how many reports involved privately owned e-mobility vehicles, as opposed to legally permitted vehicles. Caution therefore should be exercised when interpreting this data, as it is heavily reliant on information recorded within free-text fields.

The chart above shows that ASB is the highest crime and incident type and represents a significant portion of e-mobility use in Dorset. ASB associated with the irresponsible use of E-mobility is a growing area and represents up to 20% of all reported nuisance ASB in some areas of Dorset.

Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) is the second highest crime and incident type recorded. Collisions and casualties are recorded in accordance with STATS19 requirements, the data standard used across Great Britain to record personal-injury road traffic collisions reported to the police. Current STATS19 data and police collision reporting systems do not distinguish between legal e-mobility vehicles and illegal or modified vehicles. As a result, it is difficult to accurately identify collision and casualty rates specifically involving **illegal** e-mobility vehicles.

It is possible to identify whether an e-scooter involved in an RTC was privately owned or was part of a rental scheme, which is the closest determinate for legal / illegal use, but still needs to be used with a degree of caution.



Based on the data available, between 1 January 2023 and 31 May 2026, there were 65 e-scooter collisions. 47 of the 65 injury collisions involved a private e-scooter and 18 involved a rental e-scooter. The numbers presented are very low compared to other vehicles involved in collisions. The data does tell us that 72% of the e-scooter collisions recorded within the given timeframe, involved privately owned e-scooters.

- 7.6
- When looking at the available data for e-bikes and specifically illegal e-bikes, only three collisions in both 2025 and 2026 specifically mentioned an illegally modified bicycle. The data was insufficient to provide any meaningful analysis and has not been included as a chart for this report.
- 7.7
- Operation Think is Dorset Police’s ongoing response to the illegal and anti-social use of e-mobility vehicles. The operation combines proactive enforcement and vehicle seizures with high-visibility patrols, community engagement and preventative activity. It aims to disrupt offending, reduce the impact of illegal e-mobility on communities and improve public

awareness of the associated risks and legal requirements.

- 7.8 Under Operation Think, forensic tagging spray using SMART water is an available method in which to target individuals seen riding e-bikes illegally. Each cannister costs in the region of £60 which includes the forensic recovery. Dorset Police purchased 10 sprays for a trial in BCP. As of August 2026, two cannisters have been used. The use of the tagging spray does rely heavily on knowing or suspecting the identity of the rider and being close enough to the rider to deploy the spray. When an individual is identified and the tagging spray is used, officers then attend the home address and seize the e-bike and clothing for forensic comparison. A core strand of this product is the linked media campaign which was launched late 2025 and seeks to educate the public and provide deterrence. The use of tagging spray has restrictions and operational challenges, which are considered in further detail in Section 8.4.
- 7.9 Dorset Police Neighbourhood Teams (NPTs) work in partnership with Local Authorities and Housing Associations and use tenancy agreements, where appropriate, as leverage if the identity of an individual is known or suspected and they are using e-mobility vehicles illegally. Where there are hotspots of reported ASB, NPTs provide high-visibility presence and seek to educate the public and seize illegal e-mobility vehicles.
- 7.10 Dorset Police Crime Prevention Advisors provide advice to communities and Local Authorities on measures to restrict the movement of e-mobility vehicles in open spaces and parks. This can include the use of physical barriers to create controlled or 'pinch point' access. However, these measures can be costly, particularly across large or open areas, and may also create additional safety, accessibility and maintenance considerations.

8. POLICE ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES

- 8.1 As mentioned previously in this report, the continuing number of illegal e-mobility vehicles available to consumers on the open market and the number being used in communities across Dorset continues to place significant demand on policing. For policing, this includes responding to reports of dangerous and anti-social riding, targeted patrols in hotspot areas, vehicle seizures and disposal, identification and investigation of offenders, and community reassurance. Where illegal e-mobility is associated with wider criminality, including drug dealing or serious violence, the demand extends beyond road safety enforcement into neighbourhood policing and criminal investigation. The increasing requirement for proactive enforcement and partnership activity also places additional demands on policing resources.
- 8.2 Where riders cannot immediately be identified, police may need to review CCTV, develop intelligence, identify repeat offenders and undertake follow-up enquiries. This is particularly relevant where vehicles are associated with ASB or wider criminality.
- 8.3 While officers have the power to stop riders of illegal e-mobility, Police rely on the rider complying with instructions to do so. Where the rider refuses to stop there is no current safe way to compel them without placing the rider and officer at risk of serious harm.
- 8.4 Tools such as the forensic SMART water tagging spray is currently being trialled but it will not be a complete solution to illegal e-mobility. There are several challenges which restrict its use:
- **Identifying the tagged person:** SmartTag provides a forensic link, but the spray itself does not identify the offender immediately. Officers still need to locate the suspect and subsequently use UV equipment to identify the marking which can be then used as evidence.

- **Getting close enough to deploy it safely:** Illegal e-bikes can be travelling at high speed, and riders will attempt to evade officers. Deploying a spray accurately from a moving police vehicle or at distance can therefore be difficult and may create additional safety risks.
- **Officer safety and proportionality:** Officers need to assess whether deploying the spray is proportionate and safe in the circumstances, particularly where a rider is aggressive, carrying a weapon, or travelling at speed. The College of Policing has identified concerns around the potential for forensic spray interventions to escalate violence in some circumstances.
- **Evidence and continuity:** If the marking is to support a prosecution, officers need to recover, preserve and submit the evidence appropriately and establish the link between the unique forensic code, the location and the individual. This creates additional investigative and evidential requirements.
- **Equipment and training:** Effective use requires officers to have access to the spray and UV detection equipment, together with appropriate training and understanding of when it can be deployed. The College of Policing has specifically highlighted the importance of ensuring officers have access to UV torches when using forensic marking. Each cannister costs £60 which includes the forensic recovery.
- **Limited opportunity in spontaneous incidents:** In many e-mobility incidents, officers may only have seconds to make a decision. A rider travelling at speed may disappear before officers can safely deploy the spray, meaning it is likely to be more effective as part of a planned, intelligence-led operation than as a response to every incident.

9. MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE

9.1 Illegal e-mobility is being tackled through a multi-agency approach involving Dorset Police, Local Authorities, Community Safety and ASB teams, Youth Services and other partners. The response combines enforcement and vehicle seizure with intelligence sharing, hotspot patrols, community engagement, education and preventative measures. Where illegal e-mobility is linked to persistent ASB or wider criminality, partners can also use wider ASB and safeguarding powers to address the underlying behaviour and individuals involved. This approach recognises that enforcement alone will not address the full extent of the problem and that effective prevention requires coordinated activity across policing, local government and communities.

9.2 The widespread availability of illegal e-mobility vehicles remains a significant concern and contributes to their increasing use. In March 2026, the Dorset PCC responded to the Government's consultation on consumer product safety. The consultation, led by the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) and the Department for Business and Trade, proposed strengthening responsibilities across the product supply chain, including for products sold through online marketplaces.

In the PCC's response, he highlighted the urgent need to address the sale and availability of illegal e-mobility vehicles and supported the proposed changes to consumer product legislation.

9.3 The Government has committed to pursuing legislative reform to create safe, legal routes for the use of micromobility vehicles like e-scooters when parliamentary time allows. However, this continued delay in legislative control is not assisting or reducing the demand for police enforcement.

- 9.4 In May 2025, the Government consulted on proposals to reduce the time vehicles seized for anti-social use must be retained before disposal, initially proposing a reduction from 14 days to 48 hours. Following consultation, the Government published its response in June 2026 and confirmed that it will instead legislate to reduce and align the disposal timeframe to 7 calendar days. The changes require amendments to secondary legislation before they come into force.
- 9.5 The evidence indicates that illegal e-mobility is an emerging and increasing issue in Dorset, particularly where vehicles are associated with ASB, dangerous riding and, in a small number of cases, wider criminality. While the scale of the problem is considerably lower than that seen in larger urban areas such as London, Birmingham and Manchester, the increase in seizures, reported incidents and community concern demonstrates the need for continued monitoring and a coordinated response. Effective management requires a combination of proportionate enforcement, prevention, education, intelligence sharing and action with partners to address the availability of illegal vehicles. The position continues to be reviewed as the impact of strengthened police powers and forthcoming legislative changes becomes clearer.

10. RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 Members are recommended to note the illegal e-mobility update.

DESNEY RENDLE
OPCC POLICY MANAGER

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