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# PCC Dorset News

Keeping you updated on the work of PCC Martyn Underhill

## Crime In Dorset Falls To 15 Year Low



Latest figures show that crime in Dorset is at a 15-year low – with total crime down 11 per cent on last year.

As well as the reduction in total crime, some of the biggest reductions have been seen in violent crime, which is down by 14.6 per cent, and theft – down 15.1 per cent.

Burglary (including dwelling and non-dwelling) is also down by 4.9 per cent.

One of the biggest improvements has been in anti-social behaviour, which fell by 15.8 per cent, compared to 2011/12, to a 10-year low.

The figures come in the latest Office of National Statistics (ONS) report on crime statistics in England and Wales, covering the financial year 2012/13 – which was released on Thursday 18 July 2013.

The report did identify some challenges – with an increase in vehicle offences of 8.5 per cent.

In the latest Home Office report – the sanction detection rate also fell for the sixth year, by a 0.1 percentile point from 2011/12 to 21.6 per cent.



## 12 New Police Officers Join Dorset Police

PCC Martyn Underhill has welcomed the first new police officers in Dorset since 2010, following a three year recruitment freeze. The twelve new officers were sworn in at a ceremony at Winfrith on 5th July 2013.

The Commissioner said: “This recruitment demonstrates our commitment to protecting frontline services and sends a reassuring message to the people of Dorset. I wish the new officers every success in their future careers.”

Chief Constable Debbie Simpson said: “I am delighted to welcome our twelve recruits. Whilst crime trends continue to fall, it is important to ensure we have new officers who will offer balance within our workforce and these officers will help to deliver the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.”

Police Constable William Conroy said: “This is a childhood dream come true. I am looking forward to making my family and Dorset proud.”

Training will conclude on Friday 22nd November, when the new officers take up their new roles under the guidance of their tutor constable. After two years they will be certified as fully fledged police officers.

## PCC and Chief Constable Respond to Funding Cuts

Dorset Police's Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner have responded to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and the likely impacts that the additional cuts will have on the Force.

On Wednesday 26 June 2013, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, announced a further 6% reduction in Home Office funding for 2015/16 on top of the 20% police funding cut previously announced over the three years to 2014/15. He said that the policing budget would be reduced by less than 6%, but did not give an exact figure. Home Secretary Theresa May later confirmed that the police grant will be cut by 4.9%.

Chief Constable Debbie Simpson said: "The announcement equates to further considerable cuts from the Force's budget - this is on top of the £10 million that the Force had anticipated saving over the next two years and the £13 million that has already been taken from the base budget. It is therefore inevitable that additional, significant cuts will need to be made to the Force's infrastructure and support services. Our workforce has already reduced by almost 500 since 2010."

Martyn Underhill, PCC for Dorset, said: "Dorset is already one of the lowest spending and lowest funded Forces in the country. I am disappointed that this is not recognised. This announcement impacts hugely on our ability to deliver further savings. I am also concerned about the level of cuts to local authorities in the county as the Police are often the service of last resort. Reductions that the authorities may be forced to make to balance their budgets, could increase the demand on the Force.

"I am pleased however, to see the introduction of a number of initiatives to help us. I will be looking closely at the Innovation Fund (50m nationally) to see how this can assist us in driving forward improvements and collaborative working. Further investment in the 'Troubled Families' fund is also to be welcomed, as anything that we can do to tackle some of the underlying social issues can only be good for the county as a whole.

"The commitment to maintaining funding levels for counter terrorism and the recognition of how important security is to promoting economic growth are also to be welcomed. I will continue to work with our local MPs to press for a fair share of the funding for Dorset."



CC Simpson added: "Dorset Police has already made significant reductions in its infrastructure and support services - including savings in the buildings and vehicles - and we will continue to examine every opportunity to minimise these costs.

The savings we have made to date have been achieved through the process of review and reshaping to ensure that staff are best placed to deal with the greatest demands and that we make the best use of our reducing resources to deliver a service that reflects the needs of our communities.

"An organisational change programme called 'One Team' continues to run to identify and deliver the savings required, while continuing to put the public first. This programme has identified that additional police stations may need to close and front offices will require reduced opening hours. We will also need to look at collaboration with other Forces.

"While we have done everything possible to protect frontline services, further cuts will, without doubt, start to impinge on our operational capability."

**Sir Robert Peel, The Founder of Modern Policing**  
*"The police are the public and the public are the police"*

## PCC highlights Action Fraud Failings

Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner Martyn Underhill is seeking an urgent review of the national Action Fraud reporting service after failings in victim care were highlighted in a recent phone-in show on BBC Radio Solent.

The Commissioner has raised concerns with senior Government ministers, including the Home Secretary, after becoming aware of a local resident's experience of using Action Fraud to report a costly scam carried out against her. Having recorded the crime, the Christchurch resident was left unaware that a decision had been taken to file the report as no lines of enquiry had been identified. The fraud could potentially see her lose her life savings.

Speaking on BBC Radio Solent, Martyn said "the current Action Fraud system is not good enough. They must become more victim focused. The Home Secretary got this message loud and clear from myself and other PCC's and I shall be monitoring this issue with interest. I also thank the BBC for highlighting a clear gap in victim services and bringing this to my attention."

**ActionFraud**  
Report Fraud & Internet Crime  
**0300 123 2040**

James Brokenshire MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime and Security, stated that "we are looking at how we can raise the effectiveness of Action fraud...I will listen and take away the victim issues you have highlighted."

In response to a question from the PCC, Home Secretary Theresa May commented that "things will get a better focus when the National Crime Agency launches its Economic Crime Command later this year."

## Force Monitors Effects of Street Lights on Crime

Dorset Police is monitoring the effect of switching off street lighting on crime levels – with early indications showing no link to increases in crime as a result of lights being switched off in selected areas.

In some areas of Dorset, street lights are now switched off between 1am and 6.30am (midnight to 05:30am in winter).

Concerns were raised by some members of the public that this would lead to an increase in crime. Monitoring carried out to date has shown no link between lights being switched off and changes in crime and disorder levels.



Deputy Chief Constable, James Vaughan, said: "We take the concerns of our communities very seriously and have worked together with our local authority partners in Dorset County Council to closely monitor the areas where street lights have been switched off in case of any changes in crime levels. I'm pleased to say that we have found there has been no link to an increase in crime, which I hope will offer some reassurance to residents."

"We do understand that people can feel less safe when street lights are off and we will continue to work together with partners to monitor crime levels. Dorset County Council has agreed to reconsider street lighting in cases where crime is seen to increase or where there are local crime and disorder issues that need particular focus."

Police and Crime Commissioner, Martyn Underhill, said: "It is important that we listen to concerns expressed by the public, when they feel they are at risk of crime, which is why I asked the Force to produce this study."

I am pleased that the analysis has shown that there is no correlation between crime levels and changes to street lighting and trust that this finding provides reassurance to the public."

# PCC Dorset

The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner



## The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

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## WHAT IS A PCC?

A Police and Crime Commissioner is an independent elected position that is charged with securing efficient and effective policing over a force area.

This office replaces the role of the Police Authority.

Martyn Underhill was elected as Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset in November 2012.

[www.dorset.pcc.police.uk](http://www.dorset.pcc.police.uk)



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