**Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) report on communication and engagement (1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Engaging and communicating with the public is vital in ensuring the successful delivery of OPCC statutory duties and helping to deliver the Police and Crime Plan.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is required to conduct communication and engagement activities, as specified within the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (PRSRA) 2011, Section 14 (PRSRA). These are an integral part of building confidence and legitimacy relating to the role of the Commissioner and that of his office. Therefore, the delivery of comprehensive communications and engagement activities are essential where promoting the role of the Commissioner and the OPCC are concerned.

The Commissioner and Chief Constable approved a joint communications and engagement strategy in summer 2018 that runs until 2022. This provided a new joint approach for the OPCC and Gwent Police in how they communicate and engage with the public.

Key achievements for this year, all of which are highlighted in this report, include:

* A successful summer engagement programme that saw the OPCC engage with more than 7,500 people face-to-face;
* A greater focus on the quality of the face-to-face engagement work around precept resulted in more meaningful conversations and reassurance with residents;
* Expanding and improving work with partners, particularly the VAWDASV regional team, Cyber CSO, Connect Gwent and local councils;
* The quality and scope of BAME engagement has significantly improved and plans are being developed to increase this further;
* The breadth of users to the OPCC channels has increased significantly allowing much greater reach and diversification of audiences; and
* An increased delivery of work around children and young people with partners such as Urban Circle and through initiatives like Youth Question Time.

**CRIME PREVENTION**

**Businesses:**

The OPCC arranged for Gwent Police’s Cyber Protect Officer to deliver information and advice to more than 70 members of the Gwent business community at an event in Ebbw Vale. Companies’ cyber security arrangements were discussed and a series of exercises were run to test participants’ cyber resilience. Businesses were asked to commit to ensuring that their passwords were changed to be more robust and less susceptible to hacking. This was complemented during Business Safety Week with key online safety messages for businesses. Advice about how to stay safe online was written with Gwent Police and published in Torfaen Business Voice magazine.

Representatives from local businesses and business organisations, such as Rotary Clubs and Torfaen Council’s Springboard Business Innovation Centre, were met to discuss their policing needs. These opportunities were also used to raise awareness of cyber-crime and to sign post them to additional services such as Connect Gwent.

**Cyber:**

The OPCC facilitated a visit by Connect Gwent to an Abergavenny retirement complex, where 10 vulnerable residents were given advice on how to avoid cyber and telephone scams. This took place after the complex manager met some of the OPCC team at an engagement event in Abergavenny Market. Additional information was also given on the support Age Cymru can provide, and the role of the OPCC. The feedback from the event was very positive, with the residents thanking both the OPCC and Connect Gwent for their messages of reassurance and advice.

An additional talk was given by Connect Gwent on cyber scams to about 50 people aged 70+ at a computer club in Caldicot. Again, this was facilitated by the OPCC after meeting the club’s organiser at an engagement event.

Throughout the summer and precept engagement events, the OPCC also gave out hundreds of leaflets about staying safe online during conversations with residents about safeguarding. Gwent Police’s Cyber CSO regularly shared the OPCC stand to jointly deliver online safety messages. This was complemented with discussions with young people at a Gwent Safeguarding event at Celtic Manor (see below).

**Early Action Together:**

A [short video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DXjEZrDOEo) about the successes so far in the Early Action Together programme was filmed and edited. It used officers holding cards with information about the project displayed on them. Two versions were made, one in English and one in Welsh. This was done to support Gwent Police, which had capacity issues at the time, and resulted in more than 5,500 views on social media.

In a bid to highlight best practice case further, it was arranged for Wales Audit Office to interview the Commissioner and representatives from Gwent Police for a short film to be played at Wales Audit Office’s national conference.

**Modern Day Slavery**

A meeting with Stephen Chapman (Anti-Slavery Co-ordinator, Welsh Government), Kim Anne Williamson (chair of UK Modern Slavery), the Commissioner (All-Wales PCC lead for Modern Day Slavery) and the Western Mail was arranged to discuss raising the profile of modern slavery in the Welsh news agenda. The OPCC facilitated interviews, resulting in a [double page feature](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/modern-slavery-wales-trafficking-gwent-17225261)) in the Western Mail and coverage on Wales Online. The article was read by more than 20,000 people online alone. A Crimestoppers campaign was also promoted in partnership with the other three Welsh forces and OPCCs.

**Police Community Fund**

The OPCC formally launched its new ‘PCC Police Community Fund’. This aims to enable children and young people in Gwent to be safe and build a better future for them and their community by empowering Gwent Police to tackle community-based issues in a lasting and impactful way. It will ensure that even more of the money recovered from criminals goes back to benefit communities.

Communications and engagement support was offered to all projects. The OPCC has already worked with a number of them, including Alway Boxing Club, Cwmbran Care Centre for Young People, and Urban Circle. Details on these projects are included later in this report. The remaining projects will be promoted in 2020.

**Road Safety:**

The OPCC ran a road safety campaign on its social media channels during Road Safety Week, sharing key road safety messaging and highlighting the work of Go Safe, the Area Support Unit and the Collison Investigation Unit. It also made a short video with Blaenavon Heritage Primary School’s Mini Police who were highlighting road safety messages. (See Mini Police below).

A ‘Surround the Town’ event was held the following week in Cwmbran and brought partners together to engage with the public on a range of road safety issues, including speeding, drink and drug driving, and problem parking. Mini Police from various schools spoke to shoppers in Cwmbran town centre about road safety issues, while Gwent Police Cadets delivered a presentation to future young drivers at the Cwmbran Centre for Young People. The OPCC supported the event via its social media channels and at an engagement event in Cwmbran town centre, organised in partnership with Go Safe, South Wales Fire and Rescue and Torfaen Council. In total, 72 people were engaged face-to-face, each completing a survey, with another 26,536 reached on social media.

Operation Snap, a joined-up response from the four Welsh police forces to the increasing amount of photographic and video evidence recorded by witnesses to driving offences, was also promoted on channels.

The Community Speedwatch organisers were contacted and offered support in highlighting the work of volunteers in Gwent, capturing case studies for promotion and encouraging communities to set up their own schemes. It is hoped that this is progressed further in 2020/21.

School children from Blaenau Gwent launched a [rap video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsqRRi_DMoA&feature=youtu.be) to encourage other pupils and their families to be more aware of road safety. The pupils, who are members of Blaen-Y-Cwm Primary School’s Mini Police, worked with their neighbourhood policing team and local radio station to produce a two minute rap that highlights the dangers of poor road safety. The video, funded by the OPPC, promotes messages including safe parking and speed awareness. [Press coverage](http://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/17771779.blaenau-gwent-schoolchildren-promote-road-safety-fun-rap-video/) of the video was arranged, which equated to £1,714.88 worth of coverage and a combined reach of 79,437, as well as a photoshoot with the pupils.

More than 600 tyre tread gauges were given out to the public at engagement events to ensure their car tyres are safe and legal. When engaging with residents, the importance of maintaining vehicles to a good standard was reinforced, while highlighting the pressures that road traffic incidents can have on policing.

**Romance Fraud:**

A feature on BBC One on [romance fraud](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48639372) was enabled by the OPCC. The aim was to educate viewers that a fraud could easily target them or members of their family. In addition to the usual X-Ray viewing figures (circa 120,000 people), the story had substantial online reach. The story had 340,000 hits and an average view time of 40seconds. This is well above average for content on this BBC channel. The story was also featured prominently on BBC Wales Today and BBC Radio Wales.

**Rural:**

The Rural Crime Team is working with farmers, communities and partner organisations to tackle a wide range of crime in Gwent’s rural areas, including fly-tipping, badger baiting and heritage crime. The OPCC has supported this by holding a surgery with the Rural Crime Team at Gwent’s only livestock market to engage with hard to reach communities such as farmers and rural workers, communicating its good work and visiting rural crime hotspots. The first in a series of guest blogs being published by the OPCC was written about the team, which prompting a request by the BBC to do a piece on their work. Coverage equated to £1,252 and had a reach of 68,859. The [South Wales Argus](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/17957855.patrols-led-reduction-fly-tipping-machen-beauty-spot/) also covered it.

**Serious and Organised Crime**

The OPCC helped arrange the Welsh launch of the government’s [Serious and Organised Crime Strategy](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48193917) in Wales. A key part of the strategy is a pilot programme that introduces a Home Office-funded Community Coordinator in Gwent. Prior to the event, the OPCC collated a series of case studies in support of the work and arranged national coverage, including a feature on BBC Wales Today, which was complemented with coverage on BBC Radio Wales. Photography was also captured for partners on the day.

The OPCC led on communications for the launch of [Crimestoppers’ educational film](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/17722947.new-film-released-by-crimestoppers-to-highlight-the-danger-of-county-lines-drug-gangs/) about county lines. The film is being used in schools to highlight the dangers and realities of county lines drug gangs and challenging any misconceptions around carrying knives. Crimestoppers, working in partnership with the St Giles Trust, has worked with nine comprehensive schools in Newport, engaging with about 6,000 children aged 11–14 to deliver key messages and advice at a crucial time in their development. The launch was covered in the local press.

**Violence in Pharmacies**

Following a presentation by the Pharmacists' Defence Association (PDA) at the All Wales Policing Group, work has begun on an initiative to tackle violence against community pharmacists in Gwent. Internal communications for Gwent Police officers were published on The Beat, while statements of support to pharmacists were issued during the Covid-19 lockdown. Posts reached about 4,500 people on social media and drew praise from pharmacists across Wales. The PDA thanked the OPCC for its support with this, and for enabling a meeting between the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the PDA, which resulted in other PCCs championing this cause. The office is looking to highlight some case studies on this issue in 2020/21 and has offered contributions to the PDA’s internal communications channels.

**SUPPORTING VICTIMS**

**Connect Gwent:**

The OPCC supported Connect Gwent throughout the year, attending events together and sharing information. The OPCC proactively gave out Connect Gwent literature when attending engagement events throughout the year, reaching several thousand people, and directly signposted a number of victims to the services available.  
  
The OPCC acted as the communications lead for a number of issues including the appointment of the new Survivor Engagement Coordinator (see below) and helped to publicise Connect Gwent’s Christmas activities with local schools, which was one of the most popular posts on social media for the year.

**Rape Survey:**

Gwent Police and the OPCC are asking people to tell them about their experiences of the services they received after they reported a rape to Gwent Police. The feedback will be anonymous and will help improve criminal justice agencies’ responses to victims of rape. It will also be used to inform a review on the handling of reported rape cases by Gwent Police. Following a lengthy engagement process to refine the content of the survey, it went live in March and its outcomes will be covered in next year’s report.

**Survivor Engagement Co-ordinator:**

A new Survivor Engagement Coordinator has started work at Gwent Police. The post, the first of its kind in Wales, has been created by Gwent Police following recommendations from the OPCC. The co-ordinator is acting as a vital link between survivors of abuse and strategic partners, providing them with the opportunities to influence positive change within policies and procedures. Working with Gwent Police, this post was highlighted on a range of media, including more than 230,000 people viewing a news report on [BBC Wales Today](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-51369210/abuse-survivor-shares-story-to-help-other-victims). The story reached more than 32,000 people when it was published on [social media](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-51357542).

**Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV):**

The OPCC, Gwent VAWDASV Regional Team and Gwent Police launched a joint campaign to highlight VAWDASV and encourage people experiencing it to seek help. The ‘Don’t Suffer In Silence’ campaign encourages people to report via the Live Fear Free helpline and signposts people to Gwent Safeguarding’s website for information. This is to allow analysis in shifts of use.

The campaign is encouraging partners (particularly public sector and RSLs) to use the resources created and promote the campaign through their channels. In addition, there is already a great deal of engagement work carried out by partners in the communities and this could help inform their conversations.

A ‘proof of concept’ and shared with Gwent VAWDASV comms and engagement group. From this, Llamau created a focus group of 16 women, all of whom were survivors living within its refuge accommodation, to look at the initial draft. The proposal was also shown to the Gwent VAWDASV strategic delivery group, which supported the principle. The above feedback was used to refine the final campaign messaging and targeting. In total 30 survivors informed its content and some of them took part in the actual campaign.

The campaign began a soft roll-out in February to tie-in with Sexual Violence Awareness Week and the promotion of the new survivor engagement co-ordinator post, with full rollout happening over the end of March and start of April. Evaluation will be provided in next year’s report.

In addition to this, the OPCC:

* Supported the male survivors support group (MARS), attending support meetings, featuring survivors in the ‘Don’t Suffer In Silence’ campaign, and designing its logo for use on promotional materials;
* Continued to edit and design the VAWDASV newsletter that goes to all key stakeholders (used as a development opportunity for a member of staff); and
* Led on the comms for the White Ribbon Day event at Caldicot Castle, which saw more than 150 people take part despite the wet conditions.

**COMMUNITY COHESION**

**Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Engagement:**

Race Council Cymru’s Black History Month event in Newport, entitled ‘Movers, Shakers and Legacy Makers’, was sponsored by the office. The Commissioner was one of the keynote speakers at the event, where the OPCC also had an engagement stall. The Commissioner wrote a blog about this, which was promoted on channels.

The OPCC took part in and spoke at the BAME Gwent Regional Forum in November, where more than 50 people were engaged. In total, 32 surveys were completed on the day and more than 100 crime prevention items were given out. Networks were also generated with some Newport-based youth engagement projects, and these have since been utilised to take part in initiatives like the Youth Question Time event (see below).

As a result of attending the regional forum, the OPCC has started working with Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales (EYST) to increase opportunities to engage with BAME residents. This will develop throughout 2020/21.  
  
The OPCC has worked closely and built a good working relationship with Gwent Police’s Positive Action Outreach Worker and its Cohesion Officer. This includes sharing information on engagement events, key messaging and literature, as well as promoting each other’s work to key contacts.

These four examples of community engagement, helped the OPCC significantly increase its BAME representation in this year’s precept survey. Although the majority of people described themselves as White British, 114 people (6.9% of respondents) who completed the survey did not. In total, 77 people said they were BAME (4.63%). The average BAME population of Gwent is 4.57% (ONS, September 2019).

To mark [Stephen Lawrence Memorial Day](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/17598011.gwent-police-mark-stephen-lawrence-day-with-memorial-tree/), Gwent Police and the OPCC welcomed BAME residents to police HQ for a commemorative event. A story and pictures were sent to the press, reaching 10,578 people, equating to £970.47 of coverage.

South Wales Jamaican Alliance, Race Council Cymru and residents held a special event in Cwmbran to mark Windrush Day. The event was a celebration of the contribution the Windrush generation have made, and continue to make, to society in Wales and across the UK. The OPCC addressed attendees at the event, highlighting that one of the key priorities for Gwent is to create a more cohesive community.

The Commissioner attended a Caribbean Heritage Cymru event at the Mission to Sea Farers in Newport, engaging with about 60 people from the local community. Photography was captured throughout and shared with organisers.

A comprehensive engagement plan focusing on BAME residents will be developed and implemented in 2020/21.

**Families Love Newport**

The Families Love Newport event in February was supported by the OPCC. It brought together public services in a central location, with the office engaging with more than 300 people throughout the day on a variety of topics, including the role of the OPCC, crime prevention, and signposting people to Gwent Police recruitment.

**Hate Crime:**

Young people from Brynmawr marked Hate Crime Awareness Week with a one-hour radio show broadcast on BGfm. A group of six young people from Brynfarm and Coed Cae played songs and spoke about their understanding and experiences of hate crime. The OPCC took part in the event, speaking to young people about their experiences and a [short video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nggJdjELVeQ) of this initiative was published following the event.

**Holocaust Memorial Day**

Holocaust Memorial Day was marked with an event at Gwent Police headquarters. The OPCC joined community and faith leaders, police officers and staff to remember the millions who lost their lives in the Holocaust and those killed in genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The PCC spoke at the event and OPCC publicised the event on its website, ebulletin and social media channels.

**LGBTQ+**

The OPCC attended Newport City Council’s LGBTQ+ celebration event at the Riverfront, engaging with approximately 30 residents. The event was a good opportunity to meet with partners, speak to residents, and allowed the office to make useful contacts with Pride Cymru for future work and projects.

The office has worked closely with Umbrella Cymru, which is based at Connect Gwent and provides advice and support on gender, sexual diversity and inclusion. It has shared stands at engagement events and provided emotional and practical support, advice and information about crime and anti-social behaviour.

As part of the precept engagement, local groups were proactively targeted with the support of Umbrella Cymru and encouraged to have their say on the proposal.

**Mosques:**

Visits by the Commissioner to the Shah Poran Bangladeshi Jame Mosque, Newport and the Berea Mosque, Blaina provided valuable insight into issues of concern within these communities. Partners were contacted to help address some of the concerns raised. The office engaged with more than 100 members of the Islamic community during three visits and reassured residents on a number of police and crime issues.

Gwent Police were joined when welcoming the new Mini Police unit at Berea Mosque in Blaina and this was publicised this across multiple channels.

The OPCC also visited Al-Islah Islamic School, which is based at Pillgwenlly Primary in Newport. The team and local PCSOs spent time with the children answering questions and finding out about day-to-day life in their community. The children were interested in finding out about the police service and how to become a police officer. Improving community cohesion is at the heart of the police and crime plan and such interactions between communities and policing services can help build relationships.

**Sanctuary**

The Commissioner visited the Sanctuary, which is a charity supporting refugees in Newport. It received £15,000 from the OPCC to fund a staff member to support service users and more than 50 refugees have been supported by the charity. The OPCC team also put the Sanctuary in contact with Connect Gwent to follow up on an issue concerning two of the young adults that were being supported.

**Strategic Equality Plan**

Consultation began on the OPCC’s new Strategic Equality Plan. The OPCC is developing objectives and an action plan to ensure the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into everything it does. The objectives will aim to challenge discrimination and support the Police and Crime Plan for Gwent.

As part of this, the OPCC asked residents if they agreed with the draft objectives. To achieve this, it contacted 58,000 residents via Gwent NOW, as well as sharing multiple times on all channels. An extensive list of Gwent-based support groups were also contacted, including groups focusing on race, disability, age, LGBTQ+, young people, mental health, Welsh language and volunteers.

The finalised plan, informed by the results of the engagement work, will be published in quarter one of 2020/21.

**Welsh Language:**

The OPCC’s commitment to the Welsh language was further evidenced throughout the year. All planned social media content continues to be published bilingually, with the Welsh text used first in single posts. A library of pre-translated content is being created to allow greater bilingual messaging when away from the office or out of hours when translation isn’t possible.

Every issue of the weekly ebulletin to residents continues to be published in Welsh, although the amount of subscribers remains very low. The website is bilingual.

When undertaking the precept engagement, the majority of responses received were through the medium of English, with 37 received through the medium of Welsh. Last year there were 21 responses in Welsh and the previous year only one. This increase was due to proactively promoting the survey through Welsh language networks in Gwent. This will continue throughout 2020/21.

In March, the office started the process to create a separate Welsh language Facebook account for the OPCC. This will launch in quarter one of 2020/21 and ensure that followers see the content in the language of their choice. This is in-line with the approach undertaken by Welsh Government, Gwent Police and councils.

Both the OPCC and Gwent Police Welsh language standards annual reports were edited and designed by the OPCC, before being publishing online.

**TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

**Alway Amateur Boxing Club**

Alway Amateur Boxing Club in Newport is offering community boxing sessions and one-to-one mentoring, thanks to OPCC funding. The [#Stopstabbingstartjabbin](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqtStjY4aKE) project aims to work with children and young people who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system, or have already become victims of crime. It is teaching people about discipline, physical fitness, nutrition and self-esteem. BBC Wales Today and Wales Online covered the story at the beginning of March.

**Cymru Creations**

Children from Blaenau Gwent are working with a media company to create a series of short films, thanks to OPCC funding. They are working with Tredegar-based Cymru Creations to create the films based on their experiences and are focusing on topics such as dangerous driving, anti-social behaviour and hate crime. The work of Cymru Creations has been aided with communications support from the OPCC.

**Cwmbran Centre for Young People (CCYP)**

CCYP has been given a grant from the OPCC to help tackle anti-social behaviour in Cwmbran town centre. It is now open five nights a week due to the funding and up to 100 people a night have been attending since January. Young people are given the opportunity to take part in a wide range of social activities and are offered support with education and training. In addition to the funding, the office has [visited the facility](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCv6Hb1nxGI), spoken with young people and attended a multi-agency event for partners to understand how anti-social behaviour in Cwmbran town centre can be improved.   
  
**Maindee Youth Project**Maindee Youth Project receives OPCC funding and does important diversionary work with young people, helping to keep them away from crime and anti-social behaviour during the holidays and after school. Activities included dry slope skiing in Pontypool and caving in Monmouthshire, which the OPCC promoted. The young people have also been painting and decorating the room at the Maindee Community House on Eaton Road during their after school club after it was targeted by vandals.  
  
**Duffryn Community Link**Duffryn Community Link launched a new youth club with funding from the OPCC, running projects to engage young people and address anti-social behaviour in the area. The office has visited the facility a number of times through the year to speak with participants, helped set-up Tang Soo Do activities in the club, and has offered communications support for projects throughout 2020/21.

**It's Called Ffasiwn**

Young people from Brynfarm and Coed Cae estates involved in the ‘It’s Called Ffasiwn’ project undertook a three-year project in partnership with photographers Clémentine Schneidermann and Charlotte James. This saw them learn skills such as sewing, customising clothes and styling, before producing a professional photoshoot. The images have since been published around the world by a number of high profile publications, including Vogue and The New Yorker. This was publicised with a media reach of 68,859 and value of £1,252, and complemented by a [short video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUC_O89PQjs) after the Commissioner visited participants to congratulate them.

**Positive Futures**Positive Futures receives funding from the OPCC to run diversionary activities for young people across Gwent. The OPCC has supported Positive Futures on a number of projects, publicising its Fit and Fed offer to children during school holidays and covering its football tournament that saw young people from Newport, Monmouthshire and Torfaen compete in five-a-side games in Caldicot. About 46 children and young people took part including a team from the refugee community in Newport. Press coverage reached more than 12,000 people and was worth £908.03.

**Urban Circle**

Urban Circle organised ‘Summer Fest’ at Tredegar House in August. The festival was devised and organised by young people aged 13–25 as part of Urban Circle’s U-Turn project, which is funded by the OPCC. The project uses the creative arts to tackle social problems affecting young people in Newport. The young people on the event team gained stewarding and first aid qualifications, and about half of them also completed safeguarding and youth work accreditations. The OPCC attended on both days, engaging with 150 people and giving out more than 150 crime prevention items. People were also surveyed on both days.

Urban Circle also organised a Halloween music event that more than 200 young people Newport attended. It was designed to give young people something positive to do on a night that is usually associated with high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Again, this was promoted and participants praised.

**EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY**

**Academic research**

In November, the Police Foundation released its research into understanding public attitudes towards police priorities. Gwent was one of seven OPCCs to take part in the research. The project moved beyond standard surveys that ask people what they think the police should prioritise, without providing information about the realities of modern policing. Instead, it brought together focus groups of local residents to discuss policing in their area, introduced information about the breadth and intensity of police demand and assessed the extent to which, once they understood these competing issues more fully, their views on priorities changed. This research is being used to improve processes locally and to drive best practice nationally.

**All-Wales OPCC communications group**

Having been instrumental in setting up an all-Wales communications and engagement group last year, partnership working continues to allow the sharing of best practice and ideas between the relevant teams. The group creates opportunities to collaborate, and discuss issues relating to policing in Wales.

**Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC):**

The APCC has been supported throughout the year. Content for national campaigns on supporting victims and substance abuse was created, while the OPCC also created the Welsh language infographics to be shared with other forces.

When the APCC was running a survey on police officer safety, the office incorporated this into its online and face-to-face engagement, resulting in more than 800 completed surveys for the APCC. This was in the top five responses for the whole of the UK, which is particularly pleasing given Gwent’s relative size compared to the other forces.

**Behind the Badge:**

The Behind the Badge event was again held around Police HQ, showcasing the incredible work of the emergency services across Gwent. The office helped plan the event, paid for the big screens showing live footage from across the site, and organised the exhibit space at Crownbridge School. Approximately 10,000 people attended throughout the day, with the Commissioner and office staff engaging with more than 800 people. The team also worked closely with Umbrella Cymru and Age Cymru throughout the day, sharing messages and advice to residents.

During the event, the Commissioner presented Justin Johnstone with the first ever ‘OPCC Volunteer of the Year’ award for his commitment to the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme. Photography from across the day was shared on social media and given to Gwent Police for future use.

**Chief Constable recruitment:**

The interviews for the Chief Constable post took place in June. The Commissioner selected Pam Kelly as his preferred candidate, whose proposed appointment was approved by the Police and Crime Panel at a confirmation hearing in August.

To ensure the widest possible promotion of the vacant post, a total of 11 social media posts were published:

* On Twitter, this generated 3,066 impressions and there were 170 engagements;
* The Facebook posts had a reach of 6,717 resulting in 890 engagements and 857 clicks to view the vacancy;
* On LinkedIn, there were 110 impressions resulting in nine clicks to view the vacancy; and
* The OPCC’s website received 683 page visits, of which 507 were unique.

Three expressions of interest were received within the period the vacancy was advertised; all three resulted in completed applications being submitted to the OPCC. This is an increase on the number of applications received during previous Chief Constable recruitment processes.

The OPCC also led on communications for the appointment of the Chief Constable. The story was featured on the BBC and Argus on the day. The Commissioner took part in interviews the following day with media outlets from across Wales. The OPCC supported the Gwent Police’s communications team and provided photography.

**Children and Young People Engagement:**

The OPCC attended Blaenau Gwent Children’s Grand Council to deliver a workshop on safety in the community. The children were asked to put stickers on maps of their area to indicate where they felt safe or unsafe. The results were collated, fed back to local policing teams, and will used to evidence the need for possible diversionary activities and other services in the future.

More than 200 children and young people were engaged at the Gwent Safeguarding Young People conference at Celtic Manor. The event was opened by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales, Sally Holland, with workshops on themes including health, bullying and knife crime. It was an important event delivering key messages of safety at a crucial time in their lives and the office spoke to almost all of the young people in attendance throughout the day.

The office also arranged a visit by the Children's Commissioner for Wales to Gwent to show her the great work being undertaken to support children and young people across the area. As part of the visit, the office took her to Nant Celyn Primary School, St Julian’s High School and the Missing Children's Hub, discussing issues including Mini Police, school exclusions and vulnerable young people at risk of exploitation.

Work started in March on a plan to be assessed for Kitemark accreditation by the end of 2020/21. In Wales, there are seven Children and Young People’s National Participation Standards and, to achieve Kitemark accreditation, a team of young people inspect and assess an organisation’s commitment to these.

**Community Engagement**

Engagement activities were planned throughout the year to provide as diverse a range of opportunities as possible, so that a wide selection of residents from across Gwent had an opportunity to participate. The aim was to support community inclusion and involvement by providing opportunities for people and organisations to link in with the OPCC, with a view to influencing their policing service, accessing support services, and accessing grants for community projects.

By being active in Gwent communities, it allowed the office to explain policing pressures and direct people to other services; sometimes other public bodies, but often to police support services, notably Connect Gwent.

This approach is supported by the Police Foundation’s report, ‘Understanding the Public’s Priorities for Policing’ (see above), which evidences that the more people know about policing priorities, the more they support and understand policing.

Throughout the summer, the OPCC, Gwent Police and Connect Gwent continued to work together on an extensive summer engagement programme. The OPCC attended more than 20 community events across Gwent in the summer, engaging with more than 7,500 people. The team provided people with crime prevention advice and crime prevention items, including anti-skimming card holders, crime prevention booklets and purse bells.

In addition to this, the OPCC also:

* Conducted 13 referrals to the PRU, Connect Gwent or partners;
* Surveyed 234 people; and
* Gained 70 new subscribers to the e-bulletin.

**E-bulletins**

In January 2019, the OPCC released its first e-bulletin, providing subscribers with fortnightly updates regarding the work of the Commissioner and his office. Given the popularity of sign-ups and amount of emails being read, it became weekly in May.

The e-bulletin has proven extremely successful gaining 1,202 subscribers, up from 836 in last year’s report and 58 per cent of the audience is categorised by Mailchimp as ‘highly engaged’. As the number of subscribers increases, it is expected that this figure will decrease, in-line with the open rates of other public sector ebulletins.

**Estates**

Construction has started on Gwent Police’s new headquarters in Llantarnam. A joint communications plan with Gwent Police continues to be rolled out and this is scrutinised by a new Gold HQ Comms meeting, which features a member of the Independent Advisory Group.

The principle of the document is to be proactive to ensure coverage is balanced and key messages are reported. There continues to be considerable stakeholder management and engagement, both internally and externally. Due to some changes in key staff at BAM and the impact of COVID-19, some of these will be harder to deliver and/or will take longer. These are things that are not time-critical and there no major issues. A comms risk register was being created at the end of March.

Coverage of the main milestones relating to the HQ appeared in all key titles. The frequently asked questions document is updated regularly taking into account feedback from all the different estates meetings.

**Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs):**

Two recruitment campaigns were run for new ICVs, with the OPCC utilising GAVO to help promote them. This resulted in six applicants and one successful candidate. A [short video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pw2YwReVxQ) of the ICVs’ work was published on social media. An ICV was also the winner of the first ever ‘OPCC Volunteer of the Year’ award too.

**Media Coverage:**

There were 431 media articles in 2019/20, up from 395 media articles. The total monetary value captured equated to more than £571,000, with a reach totalling 24,470,281. Independent media monitoring service Kantar provides these statistics.

**Mini Police**

Promotion of some of the Mini Police work continued. The office visited recruits at Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael and Blaenavon Heritage Primary School for certificate presentations and photographs.

Children from Blaenavon Heritage School’s Mini Police took part in Road Safety Week by carrying out parking patrols. The pupils helped keep friends and other pedestrians safe by encouraging drivers not to park on yellow lines, in bus bays or on kerbs around the school. This was promoted in the press and via [social media](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IW-oEsCFlZM).

Blaen-Y-Cwm Primary School’s Mini Police launched a rap video to encourage other pupils and their families to be more aware of road safety. The [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsqRRi_DMoA&t=5s), funded by the OPCC, promotes messages including safe parking and speed awareness.

**Newspaper Columns**

The Commissioner’s regular newspaper columns have continued in South Wales Argus (10,000 copies) and Caerphilly Observer (10,000 copies in Caerphilly). Despite an overall trend of people moving to online news, print media still plays an important role in helping public confidence due to the added level of scrutiny compared to broadcast communications channels such as Twitter.

In 2020/21, it is hoped to establish further columns with other traditional print media outlets. These articles are generally reused online, so are multi-purpose. They are also bespoke to the communities served, allowing greater focus on local issues than would sometimes appear on other channels.

**Precept**

The Commissioner has to engage with people on the precept, as it is his responsibility to set the level for Gwent every year. The OPCC launched this year’s precept survey on Monday 14 October 2019 and it ran for 13 weeks until Sunday 12 January 2020. Six of these weeks occurred during the pre-election period. It was repeatedly publicised via social media, local press and the OPCC website, and shared with community groups, partner organisations, and local authorities.

However, the main focus of this year’s surveying was face-to-face engagement. This approach is part of a wider drive by the OPCC to increase public awareness and understanding of the Commissioner’s role and responsibilities, encourage people to give their views on policing, and establish and grow effective working relationships with partners and stakeholders.

The approach of sustained face-to-face engagement allowed consistent pulse-testing of public opinion on the subject matter. It also allowed greater visibility and was a significantly more efficient and holistic approach than in previous years.

The OPCC attended 25 events across Gwent between October 2019 and January 2020. Of these, four dedicated events were delivered in each local authority area (20 in total). The office also attended five additional events to which it was invited. Seven engagement events were held on Saturdays.

In total, the OPCC carried out 145 hours of engagement as part of the precept surveying. In addition to this, surveys were undertaken at eight summer events, meaning an additional 40 hours of engagement.

Combined, this resulted in 1,730 people answering the precept question, “Would you support the principle of a £2 a month increase on your council tax (based on a band D property) to maintain policing provision at current levels?”. In total, 66% of respondents said yes, 22% no and 12% unsure.

It was agreed, prior to the launch of the survey that a representative sample size of 600 would be used. Prior to last year, the OPCC had always struggled to achieve a representative sample, only achieving it twice (606 in 2018/19 and 1,875 in 2019/20). Of the 1,730 respondents, 1,086 people completed the survey at one of the public engagement events, with 644 people choosing to complete the survey online. This means that this year’s precept survey not only achieved a representative sample of respondents, but it had more than the required number of respondents both online and a significantly better number face-to-face.

The majority of responses received were in English, with the exception of 37 in Welsh. Last year there were 21 responses in Welsh and the previous year only one.

As part of this holistic approach to surveying people face-to-face, the OPCC also:

* Gave out 3,177 pieces of crime prevention items and advice;
* Distributed 549 leaflets about the OPCC and Connect Gwent to residents;
* Arranged two talks with Connect Gwent representatives and local groups;
* Sorted four referrals to Public Response Unit to follow-up on cases and one referral to executive team; and
* Signed up more than 240 people to the OPCC e-bulletin.

**Public Service Boards (PSBs):**

The OPCC continued to support the statutory PSBs, which assess the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their areas. The OPCC attends PSB meetings as statutory invitees. It also contributes to the communications and engagement groups, and community-focused engagement activities that are run.

As part of the ‘Blaenau Gwent on the Move’ project, a new trail was built from Sirhowy Hill Woodlands Nature Reserve to Marine Colliery in Cwm. The aim is to help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives by improving access to the natural environment. The OPCC took part in a community event to paint a large mural to promote the nature and wildlife in the area. It also took part in a litter pick, where more than 20 bags of rubbish and fly-tipping were cleared, and led on communications on behalf of Blaenau Gwent PSB.

The OPCC joined members of Torfaen PSB and local residents for a game of walking rugby in Blaenavon. This was part of a new approach by Torfaen PSB to find new, innovative ways for public services to engage with the local community.

Newport City Council’s community assist day at Maes Glas Community Centre saw the OPCC engaging with a lot of residents about the issues that most affect them in the community. It also took part in an Alway community safety event, which saw the office and local Gwent Police team engaging with young people, including a quick FIFA challenge on a games console.

Torfaen PSB’s annual report is going to be filmed and edited by the OPCC, following a request for support from the Torfaen board, while the office live-tweeted on behalf of Caerphilly PSB at its December meeting.

**Social media:**

The Commissioner’s role and OPCC work are communicated with key partners and the public across many media platforms.This includes highlighting daily aspects of work and achievements, as well as highlighting opportunities for residents to engage.

The OPCC continued to use social media as a key communication tool throughout 2019/20. To complement the use of Twitter and Facebook, the OPCC has expanded use of Instagram and YouTube as methods of communicating and engaging with residents. The OPCC currently has the most Twitter and Facebook followers of the four OPCCs in Wales. Some of the statistical increases are large and it is not expected that they will be so high in next year’s report.

*Twitter*

At 31 March, the OPCC had 5,174 followers on Twitter compared to 12 months ago when there were 4,689 (up 10%).

In total, 816 tweets were posted generating 1,073,308 impressions (number of times a user saw the tweet on Twitter). Last year there were 661,762, so this is an increase of 62%. OPCC tweets have been re-tweeted 1,423 times (up from 1,235 last year) and 4,414 of them have been ‘liked’, compared with 3,580 last year (a 23% increase). In total, there were 30,434 engagements with OPCC content on Twitter, compared to 22,245 last year (up 37%).

The OPCC generated tweets that made the most impressions on Twitter were:

* New Chief Constable (14,089 impressions, 21 retweets and 132 likes)
* Information on support services during Covid-19 (13,856 impressions, 36 retweets and 32 likes)
* Launch of police drones (11,577 impressions, 21 retweets and 90 likes)
* Christmas at Connect Gwent (11,279 impressions, 11 retweets and 36 likes)
* Flooding messaging during January storms (10,258 impressions, 14 retweets and 58 likes)

In addition to the main corporate account, the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, OPCC Chief Executive are also all active users of Twitter, as well as a former Communication and Engagement Officer. Statistics on these are not collated.

*Facebook*

Followers of the OPCC Facebook page increased from 1,589 to 1,920 (up 21%). From April 2019 – March 2020, the OPCC provided 392 direct OPCC posts and/or status updates, reaching 379,015 people. This is up from last year, which saw 266 posts, totalling 249,780 impressions (which was a 24% increase on the previous year). This means meaning significantly more people saw and had the ability to engage with content through this channel over the last two years.

*Instagram*

At April 2020, the OPCC Instagram account had 307 followers, up from 206 the year before. Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020:

* 98 posts were uploaded (up from 31);
* There were 307 likes (up from 187 likes); and
* A reach of 11,497 (up from 3,694).

The use of Instagram is becoming more popular within the sector, in particular with young audiences. It allows for more informal engagement, more suited to this demographic. The OPCC will look to continue to grow this channel during 2020/21.

*YouTube and video*

From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, the OPCC YouTube videos attracted:

* 1,439 views (compared to 746 views);
* 1,646 minutes watched (compared to 751); and
* 28 subscribers (compared to 19).

The most popular videos published on YouTube were:

* [Blaen-y-Cwm Heddlu Bach Road Safety Rap](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsqRRi_DMoA&t=5s)
* [It's Called Ffasiwn](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUC_O89PQjs&t=102s)
* [Independent Custody Visitors](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pw2YwReVxQ)
* [Alway Amateur Boxing Club](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqtStjY4aKE)

However, this represents just the amount of views on YouTube. As in-line with best practice, the OPCC also simultaneously uploads content to Facebook and Twitter, where the videos are embedded content. This generates considerably more views and engagement than via YouTube. For example, the Cwmbran Centre for Young People video was viewed by 27 people on YouTube. However, on Twitter the clip gained 14 retweets and was liked by 31 people it reached 6,493.

**Specials**

Booklets detailing the work of the Specials were handed out during the summer and precept engagement events. A total of 75 booklets were given to residents and those interested in becoming a Special were signposted to the Gwent Police website.

**Surgeries**

The Commissioner continued to hold walkabouts in communities across Gwent, including Abergavenny, Caerphilly, Cwmbran, Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Usk and Spytty.

In addition, the Commissioner actively increased his engagement with groups with protected characteristics, attending events organised by BAME communities, Pride Cymru and a number of mosques. He also visited many of the projects funded by the OPCC to speak with the project organisers and services users to better understand the needs of these communities.

At the start of 2020, the OPCC started to complement these with additional activities by the Communications and Engagement team. This was to increase opportunities for the public to engage with the OPCC in a community setting. The content of these events were general engagement; however, in future they will rotate between general engagement and subject specific, eg campaigns or information gathering. These were cancelled in March due to COVID-19, but will return later in the year. However, it is not anticipated that they will resume until quarter two at the earliest.

Information or opinions expressed from this work is fed to the Commissioner to help inform strategic and commissioning decisions, as well as help facilitate conversations when holding the Chief Constable to account.

The Commissioner reintroduced briefings for MPs and AMs. These are an opportunity for elected members to have greater understanding of the work of the OPCC and how it has a positive impact on the communities they represent.

**Youth Question Time:**

The second Youth Question Time event has held in Newport in March and attracted 129 young people and 29 professionals from across Gwent. In total, 158 people attended, up from 81 people at the first event last year.

The panel was made up of a diverse range of professionals who work with and for the young people of Gwent:

* Jeff Cuthbert – Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
* Amanda Blakeman – Deputy Chief Constable, Gwent Police
* Dr Liz Gregory – Joint Head of Child and Family Psychology Service (ABUHB)
* Dr Jane Dickson – Consultant in Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (ABUHB)
* Loren Henry – Co-founder Urban Circle

Prior to the start of the Youth Question Time event, the foyer area of the University of South Wales was utilised as a market place, providing an opportunity for partner organisations and the OPCC to engage with attendees. A number of key partners, including Gwent Police’s Diversity and Inclusion Team and the Cyber Protect Officer, Umbrella Cymru, Fearless and Newport County in the Community, took advantage of this opportunity prior to the start of the main event.

Every young person in attendance received a welcome pack that contained a series of pen portraits of the panel members, information about the OPCC and partners, a Strategic Equality Plan survey and an event feedback form.

During the 90-minute Youth Question Time, 19 young people asked probing questions on a variety of subjects, including knife crime, anti-social behaviour, drugs, mental health, homelessness, the availability of sex and relationship advice in schools, addressing the gender pay gap, and emerging crime trends.

Panel members’ responses saw 95% (18 out of 19) saying they were satisfied with the response that they received. The attendee who said they were not satisfied with their response, asked a question regarding local government processes and there was no-one on the panel who could respond given the context. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive:

* 100% were either satisfied or very satisfied with the event as a whole.
* 100% found the venue good or very good.
* 100% found the event content good or very good.
* 100% found the panellists good or very good.
* 97% found the refreshments good or very good.
* 100% said they would attend an event like this again.

Real time tweets enabled those who were not able to attend to gain information about some of the questions being raised. In total, 15 Tweets were posted gaining:

* 31,207 impressions (the number of people saw the tweets)
* 815 engagements (the number of people who interacted with the tweets)

On Facebook, the English post reached 27,479 people, gained 83 likes and it was shared by 12 people. In addition, 698 people looked at the photos uploaded into a photo album. The Welsh post reached 389 people, gained 12 likes and it was shared by three people. A bilingual post was issued on Twitter, linking to the website story. This resulted in 1,036 impressions and 76 engagements. After the event, a press release was published and sent to all media contacts, with the content also being published on the OPCC website and weekly ebulletin.

The OPCC will continue to work with young people via Regional Youth Forum leads and forums to identify any emerging trends to ensure young people are able to ask questions about the issues that are important.

**Website:**

A new responsive website for the OPCC was launched in February 2019 to strengthen the OPCC’s corporate identity online, provide clear, informative content to visitors, and act as an information repository and platform for signposting to other services.

The following details the performance between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020:

* 17,609 users in total (up from 13,660);
* 24,077 sessions (up from 18,095);
* 65,961 page views (up from 50,286); and
* 1min 51sec average session duration (down nine seconds).

Of the above statistics, the number of total users and how much this has risen is particularly pleasing. This is due to increased referrals from ebulletin and social media. As other communications channels grow, more content will refer to the OPCC website, which should see the above figures grow further.

The website helps ensure that the OPCC continues to remain transparent and that information is easily accessible to the public. The office was awarded a national award for transparency for the fifth year in a row. The Quality Mark is awarded to the OPCCs that are able to demonstrate that they provide the public with key information, in accessible formats, on their website. It is awarded by Comparing Police and Crime Commissioners, an independent national body that monitors police governance, and is sponsored by police assurance provider Grant Thornton.

**Next Steps**

The OPCC will continue to increase engagement opportunities to ensure those who are seldom heard have an opportunity to engage, particularly children and young people in Gwent.

The full implications of COVID-19 are not known, but it will have a significant impact on face-to-face engagement in 2020/21. Many of the planned events have already been cancelled. The team will also look to increase the use of current platforms and develop new ones to increase and improve existing engagement work.

The major work programmes for 2020/21 will be the engagement work for the new police and crime plan, obtaining Kitemark status and creating a new physical publication to share with key partners. There will be further upskilling of the team throughout 2020/21, with an emphasis on Creative Cloud products, photography and video. This will reduce the need for any freelance and/or external providers creating content resulting in financial savings to the OPCC.