

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg



Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021/22

Introduction

Welcome to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (OPCC's) second annual report for the joint OPCC and Gwent Police Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-24. It highlights some of our activities during 2021/22 that have contributed towards the equality objectives set out in the SEP.

Understanding our data has underpinned our activity during the first two years of the SEP. There has been a particular focus on race and ethnicity data; however, we have sought to improve collection and recording across all protected characteristics. We have continued to work with Gwent Police to develop a new performance framework and data pack. This helps to further our understanding and scrutiny of how Gwent Police is delivering against the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) Police and Crime Plan and priorities for 2021-25.

We have continued to work with partners and communities to address ongoing issues and challenges such as the abuse of police powers, racial disparity and systemic racism, and trust and confidence in the police service. This work will continue through 2022/23, as referenced in this document.

A further relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions allowed a return to face-to-face community engagement. During the year we have been out and about across Gwent, raising awareness of the PCC's role in policing and growing our understanding of matters that affect our communities.

We have continued to welcome new police officers into Gwent under Operation Uplift. Engagement with our diverse communities has contributed to the number of new officers from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds.

We have been heavily involved in the development of the Criminal Justice Anti Racism Action Plan for Wales. This will further inform work in Gwent to tackle racism and embed racial equality into our systems, policies, and practices, helping to strengthen public confidence in the policing services we provide.

During the year the SEP was updated to reflect new Police and Crime Plan priorities. No changes to the equality objectives were necessary.

More information on the work of the OPCC and the initiatives mentioned in this report can be found on our website [The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent | Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner \(pcc.police.uk\)](https://www.pcc.police.uk).

Supporting Vulnerable People

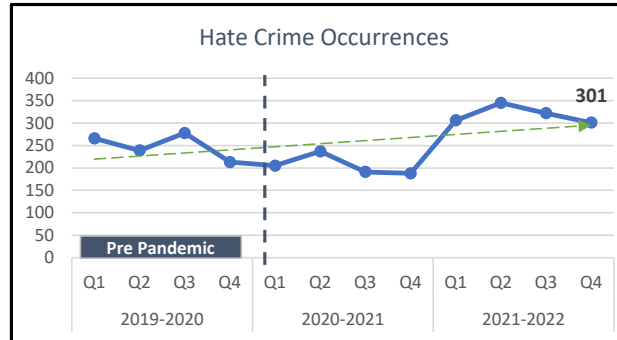


Hate Crime

Police recorded hate crime increased to above pre-pandemic levels. Community and partner engagement and local and national events contributed to the increase.

1,342
hate crimes
recorded

55% race
20% disability
19% homophobic
1% religious
5% transphobic



Victims' Code Of Practice

The compliance pilot between Gwent and South Wales OPCCs measures criminal justice performance against the victim's 12 rights. The dip sample focuses on domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences, hate crime and offences against the person. The pilot will be rolled out across Wales in 2022/23 and monitored at the Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board (CJSB) and the All-Wales Victim and Witness Taskforce.

New Remote Evidence Site

Launched in March 2022, the site allows vulnerable and intimidated witnesses (predominantly women) to make their voice heard in court, reducing the fear, stress and anxiety commonly associated with giving evidence in person. Usage will be monitored at the Gwent CJSB, chaired by the PCC.



Raising Awareness of Elder Abuse

An online webinar for frontline professionals, hosted by the PCC, highlighted the devastating impact of abuse on older people. Marking World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in June, attendees gained insight and understanding of the types of abuse and the complex barriers commonly experienced by older people when trying seeking help.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse And Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Taskforce For Wales

Co-chaired by Gwent's Deputy PCC, the VAWDASV Taskforce for policing in Wales initially aims to change the police response to violence against women and girls. Working with key partners, including Welsh Government and Public Health along with other criminal justice partners, the Taskforce will also seek to improve public trust in all public servants.

Diversion Of Female And Young Adult Offenders

Independent evaluation of the Women's Whole System approach and 18-25 Early Intervention Service shows that participants have greater engagement with the criminal justice system and other support services. The programmes also contribute to women and young people being diverted away from future contact with the criminal justice system.

Over 2000
referrals received for
early intervention
and intensive
support

Supporting Vulnerable People

2,761
victims supported in first 100 days

Over 30,000
victim referrals received to 31st March

New Victim Care Unit (VCU)

The VCU launched in July 2021 within the multi-agency victims' hub, Connect Gwent (funded by the OPCC). 19 victim care officers act as the central contact for victims, from the point of reporting a crime to the conclusion of the criminal justice process. They work closely with officers to ensure victims are fully updated on the investigation they are involved in.

The victim care officers are all trained to assess victim's individual needs and offer tailored support. This may be linked to protected characteristics or specific vulnerabilities. The Victim Care Unit works with partner agencies to refer victims for enhanced support if needed.

Mental Health Intervention And Support

Based in the Force Control Room, the Mental Health Triage Team continues to be an invaluable asset to Gwent Police and our communities, providing only early intervention support and preventing unnecessary police deployments. The Team has been instrumental in the development of the practice to recognise and address incidents involving Acute Behavioural Disorder (ABD).

A Mental Health Wellbeing Practitioner is also based in Connect Gwent, providing advice and support to victims with mental health needs. Most individuals reported feeling better able to cope and more informed and empowered to act as a result of the support received.

177
victims supported

Connect Gwent

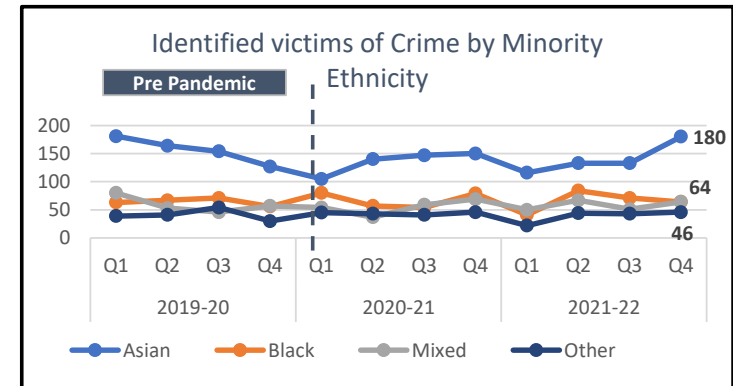
Victim services commissioned by the OPCC also include:

Age Cymru Older People's Caseworker:
100

victims supported

Umbrella Cymru's Children and Young People's Service:
267

victims supported



VAWDASV Services

The OPCC is a member of Gwent's VAWDASV Regional Board and Strategic Commissioning Group. The PCC continues to provide funding support for Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) services

£857,956

funding awarded for VAWDASV services

BAWSO Outreach Project

BAWSO provides support for Black and Minority Ethnic communities and individuals who are affected by abuse, violence and exploitation and may not report their experiences to the police.

28
women supported to date

Supported by funding from the OPCC, the project began in late 2021. Referrals for external support such as housing, IDVA services, health or legal services were also made by the project.

Legitimacy and Fairness

Legitimacy Scrutiny Panel (LSP)

The OPCC's independent LSP comprised of members of the Independent Advisory Group met 4 times during the year, reviewing police powers for stop and search and use of force and focusing on race disproportionality. A random selection of police body worn video and stop and search records were reviewed.

Feedback on the quality of stop and search grounds was given to Gwent Police and used to support continuous improvement. Themes included lack of detail in the grounds, weak grounds provided for 'smell of cannabis' stops, and more justification needed for the purpose of the encounter.

48%	38%	14%
strong grounds	moderate grounds	weak grounds

Full reports are published on the OPCC website, along with an annual LSP summary document.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Tackling Racism In Criminal Justice

The Gwent CJSB contributes to the Criminal Justice Race Equality Taskforce for Wales. Members engaged with the development of the Criminal Justice Anti-Racism Action Plan for Wales, with senior leaders from the OPCC and Gwent Police leading on task and finish groups for community engagement and race data.

The Action Plan is due to be published later in 2022. Appropriate actions and outcomes will form part of the Race Equality priority of the Gwent CJSB's Delivery Plan for 2022/23.



6 requests for support from other force areas regarding establishing and conducting independent scrutiny of stop and search.

Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

We continue to engage with and support the IAG's involvement in independent scrutiny and critical friend support and challenge.

As well as the long-established LSP, we have worked with Gwent Police to review existing and establish new scrutiny processes, including hate crime, custody, out of court disposals and other activities that may disproportionately affect our diverse communities.

Child Centred Policing Approaches

Further work with Gwent Police and partners has developed our child centred policing approaches. A Child Centred Policing Strategy will be published in 2022/23 that aims to:

- Build better relationships and breakdown barriers between Gwent Police and children and young people
- Prevent children and young people from being drawn into crime and the criminal justice system
- Improve criminal justice outcomes for children and young people
- Enhance services for child victims of crime and those exposed to domestic abuse.

Youth Scrutiny Group Pilot

The OPCC worked with Gwent Police and John Frost School to pilot a Youth Scrutiny Group during 2021/22. 9 volunteers from years 10 and 11 took part. Feedback was given on situations captured on body worn cameras, including stop and search and use of force, such as handcuffing, during arrest. This is used alongside LSP feedback to support Gwent Police's continuous improvement processes.

The pilot will be reviewed ready for the 2022/23 school year with learning from this year used to improve the process.

Legitimacy and Fairness

Third Sector Engagement

The OPCC co-ordinated a collective response on behalf of the four Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables in Wales to the draft Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST) report 'Black and Minority Ethnic Children and Young People in Wales After COVID-19: Themes emerging from the BME Children and Young People's Round Tables and EYST COVID Fora'. The response outlined the collective activities and actions being taken across Wales to address the themes raised. We also encouraged and supported ongoing engagement between policing and EYST to help improve some of the issues raised.

Vetting Appeals Panel

The OPCC is a member of the Vetting Appeals Panel. The Panel reviews all cases where applicants with protected characteristics linked to ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and gender reassignment have failed the vetting process. The Panel helps to provide transparency around vetting processes and decisions. The review of refusals for people with protected characteristics is an additional focus of the Panel, rather than the main purpose.

Disproportionality In Police Custody

We worked with Gwent Police to establish a Disproportionality in Police Custody Scrutiny Panel. The Panel scrutinises police powers such as strip search, use of force, and detention in custody, particularly when involving people from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. The legitimacy of these actions is also considered. Feedback is provided where opportunities for improved practice, oversight or other learning are identified.



Transfer Of Children from Police Custody

Transfers are monitored at the Gwent CJSB. Annual reports provide oversight of the continued scrutiny and good practice undertaken between Gwent Police and the Youth Offending Service.

12 under 18's detained post- charge	4 under 18's detained in lieu of secure accommodation
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Stop And Search Independent Review

An independent review into stop and search was commissioned by Gwent Police to support continuous improvement and help address ongoing challenges linked to disproportionality. As part of this, the role of the OPCC's LSP process was considered. Positive feedback was received regarding the contributions made, the effectiveness of the arrangements in place and the outcomes of the scrutiny work. In addition, the findings from the review were consistent with the outcomes of LSP sessions.

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

We continue to co-ordinate an effective Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme. ICV Volunteers check the welfare of detainees to ensure their needs are met. The condition of cells and custody areas are also checked, and any concerns or issues reported or escalated for resolution. Face to face visits resumed in 2021 as COVID restrictions eased.

A Scheme Performance Framework records the outcomes of visits during the year. Reports and minutes are published on the OPCC website.

8,990 people detained in custody during 2021/22	123 detainees required translation services	180 detainees interviewed by ICV volunteers during visits or calls
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ICV feedback confirms that good performance is evidenced by Gwent Police through the year.

Access, Engagement and Cohesion

Performance Framework

We have continued to work with Gwent Police to develop an effective Performance Framework that demonstrates both Gwent Police and the OPCC's performance. In developing the Performance Framework, we have regularly engaged with the Police and Crime Panel that holds the PCC to account, to ensure that the information provided supports transparency and wider public accountability.

In developing the Framework, we have also continued to focus on organisational data quality and integrity, including diversity monitoring. The Framework has also been used to inform the production of this report.

Accessible Documents

We have undertaken a full accessibility review, supported by an action plan, to ensure the information and publications we produce are accessible to the public, particularly people with different disabilities. This review includes reports, publications, and our website. The resulting work will be completed during 2022/23.



Heddlu Bach

The OPCC initiated Heddlu Bach (Mini Police) programme continues to grow. The programme is offered to all primary school-age children in Gwent, including those with Additional Learning Needs and includes young members of the Berea Mosque community. The Scheme is a fun, interactive way for children to learn new skills, gain confidence in their abilities and play an active part in their community. Building trust and confidence between the police and children, it also helps to create a greater sense of community cohesion within the wider community.

Over **100** schools and **1,600** 9 to 11-year olds participate in Heddlu Bach, including those from our diverse communities.

Police And Crime Plan Engagement

To develop the Police and Crime Plan 2021-25, we undertook extensive engagement with the public and key stakeholders. **1,892** responses were received in total. **14%** of responses were from victims of crime. This activity helps to ensure the Plan reflects a range of views from our diverse communities and allows the PCC to better understand what matters to the people of Gwent, key stakeholders, and our policing partners.

58% provided diversity information	10% ethnic minority respondents	14% declared disability	1.7% homosexual 1.8% non-binary gender respondents
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SPOTLIGHT ON...

Working With Communities

During National Hate Crime Awareness Week, we partnered with local disability friendship group, My Mates, to explore people's understanding and experiences of hate crime. The group participated in a workshop with the OPCC and Mencap Cymru to co-produce Easy Read materials designed to help people with disabilities better understand how to report hate incidents and seek support.

Following on from a meeting with the Children's Commissioner for Wales, Sally Holland, and the Deputy PCC, we facilitated a Safe Spaces workshop with Roma pupils from Maindee Primary School to identify places in the community where they feel safe and unsafe. Gwent Police officers supported the workshop, listening to pupils' concerns and providing reassurance when needed. This forms part of our wider work to put children and young people at the heart of decision-making and the information will be used when developing local policing plans.

Access, Engagement and Cohesion

Commemoration And Celebration

Together with Gwent Police, partners, and our communities we commemorated and celebrated several key events, including:

- Stephen Lawrence Day
- Holocaust Memorial Day
- White Ribbon Day (domestic abuse)
- Remembering Srebrenica (victims of genocide)
- LGBT+ History Month
- Black History Month
- International Women's Day

Youth Question Time

Held in partnership with the Gwent Regional Youth Forum, our 4th Youth Question Time enabled young people to put their questions to a panel of public service decision makers.

Themes included the safety of women and girls, mental health services for young people, and hate crime in our communities.

Feedback from the session will be used to help drive improvements in the policing services we deliver.



Over
60
participants
from across
Gwent

Community Dial-In

We continued to participate in Gwent Police's monthly Community Dial-Ins, ensuring consistent engagement throughout the transition out of COVID restrictions. The Dial-Ins helped to provide support and reassurance to our Black and Asian communities throughout the pandemic and will be reviewed during 2022/23 to determine their role in our engagement and communication processes.

Working With Partners

The OPCC participates in a range of strategic partnership Boards that support our communities, including:

- Welsh Government's Hate and Community Tensions Board Cymru
- The three Youth Offending Service Local Management Boards in Gwent
- Gwent's VAWDASV Regional Board and Strategic Commissioning Group
- Criminal Justice Board for Wales Steering Group
- Gwent Public Service Board
- Safer Gwent (community safety)
- Children and Adult Safeguarding Board

Breaking Down Barriers

We continue to fund initiatives that aim to build trust and forge positive relationships with communities while diverting people away from crime and anti-social behaviour, including:

- Weekly football sessions for young refugees in Newport (via The Gap Wales and Positive Futures)
- A boxing session for Roma children in Maindee (via Positive Futures)
- Dance workshops for children and young people in Abertillery (via Ffin Dance and Off the Streets)
- Halloween workshops for children and young people in Newport (via Urban Circle)

Sessions also help to raise awareness of drug and knife crime, anti-social behaviour and other issues that affect our communities

Creating and Inclusive Workforce and Promoting Fairness

Employer Schemes

We remain committed to being a Chwarae Teg FairPlay Employer and have received a Silver award. The scheme encourages inclusive working practices and employee development. We continue to develop and embed the outcomes and recommendations, regularly engaging with staff to ensure they are involved in business planning and decision-making.

We have retained our Disability Confident Committed status and will continue to work to identify opportunities to improve this.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Increasing Workforce Diversity

We continue to support Gwent Police in working towards workforce ethnic minority representation of 5.1%. Recruitment processes remain on track at the end of year 2 of Operation Uplift.

We will further engage with the College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) to maximise recruitment and retention opportunities for officers and staff.

OPCC workforce data is published on our website and we recognise a lack of diversity within the organisation. We continue to engage with our communities, raising awareness of the roles and responsibilities of OPCC staff and any vacancies. We will also use positive action to help attract applicants from diverse backgrounds.

3.4%

Gwent Police officers from ethnic minority backgrounds

1.3%

police staff from ethnic minority backgrounds

Becoming An Informed Workforce

We work with Gwent Police to ensure planning and delivery of effective and sustainable equality, diversity and inclusion training programme for all officers and staff (including the OPCC, where appropriate). This will be supplemented by the Criminal Justice for Wales race work which includes a focus on education and training to develop culturally competent and informed workforces.

The OPCC is committed to being a learning organisation and identifies investment each year for staff development. We also use our 'Away Day' sessions to support and develop staff learning and awareness of equality and diversity matters.



Developing Our Commitment

An OPCC workshop focused on the SEP objectives and staff and team contributions to equality, diversity, and inclusion. All staff contributed and their feedback was used to further inform the OPCC Equality Delivery Plan. All heads of business areas further reviewed and contributed to the Delivery Plan, ensuring that organisational activities support the objectives.

Workforce Wellbeing

A Wellbeing Annual Strategy sets out the wellbeing vision for all officers and staff. This is delivered through 'Lunch & Learn' sessions, and a range of wellbeing events and inputs including menopause, mental health, male and female cancers, and financial matters. A Wellbeing Toolkit has been created and is available to support people in and outside the workplace.

A new Men's Health Network provides greater awareness and support of male health conditions, linked to the Staff Support Networks.

Dyslexia screening is now undertaken for all new starters to identify where additional support may be required.

Creating and Inclusive Workforce and Promoting Fairness

Dare To Share

Colleagues living with disability, neurodiversity, and mental health conditions shared their stories as part of the new Dare to Share campaign. Dare to Share aims to tackle the stigma associated with such conditions. It provides a platform for colleagues to talk more openly about issues they have been affected by.

The campaign forms part of our collective commitment with Gwent Police to create a compassionate workplace that values and respects every individual's contributions.

Dare to Share was launched during UK Disability Month.

New Police Headquarters

Staff began moving into the new Headquarters in January. A modern, accessible, and sustainable workplace, the building offers gender neutral, accessible facilities including toilets and changing areas and a contemplation room.

Agile working arrangements also contribute to staff wellbeing allowing more flexible time management.



Welsh Language

We remain committed to developing and delivering a bilingual policing service in Gwent. Our joint OPCC and Gwent Police Welsh Language Strategy sets out our aims for the Welsh language. We continue to work to the Welsh Language Standards imposed on the PCC in delivering our Welsh language services. The OPCC's Annual Welsh Language Standards Compliance Report is published every September.

During the year, our compliance against the Standards was reviewed by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. Feedback was positive, and our governance processes were recognised as effective in supporting organisational compliance.



Staff Support Networks

We regularly engage with Gwent Police's Staff Support Networks to ensure our understanding of specific workplace issues. Feedback is used to inform our discussions with Gwent Police and any related decision-making.

Network membership is also open to OPCC staff.

Improving Workforce Data

As part of the 'Safe To Say' campaign, data quality for officer and staff protected characteristics has greatly improved.

6.1% of police officers have now declared a disability compared to 2.2% in 2020/21. This is a significant improvement providing better insight into how the workforce is made up. Gwent Police and the OPCC will continue to encourage and support officers and staff to disclose their personal information to support our understanding of workplace needs.

Understanding workforce data relating to race and ethnicity also forms part of our commitment under the new Criminal Justice Anti-Racism Action Plan.

OPCC Summary Activities for Phase 2, Year 3: 2022/23

General Activities

- Determine how the OPCC governance review will support greater visibility and reporting of our work as it relates to equality, diversity, and inclusion under the SEP objectives
- Undertake a strategic assessment exercise to better understand the impact of the Criminal Justice Board for Wales and Welsh Government's anti-racism work on the SEP, identifying any additional action required
- Undertake a strategic analysis of plans based on the NPCC race action plan and Black Police Association report / plan and any other associated local, regional or national plans

<p>Equality Objective 1 – Supporting Vulnerable People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with partners to maximise community awareness of the new Remote Evidence Site and encourage usage by victims and witnesses ➤ Work with Gwent Police and partners to improve hate crime monitoring and service improvement processes ➤ Support the roll-out of Victims' Code compliance monitoring processes across Wales ➤ Further develop local work to understand and address the vulnerability and / or multiple complex needs of people who offend 	<p>Equality Objective 2 – Legitimacy and Fairness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Further support the delivery of outcomes aligned to the criminal justice disproportionality work as set out in the Criminal Justice Anti Racism Action Plan for Wales ➤ Review the outcomes and learning from the Youth Scrutiny Group and use to inform the process for year 2 ➤ Identify opportunities to improve diversity monitoring within OPCC police complaints review processes ➤ Ensure that the Custody Scrutiny Panel provides effective monitoring and learning outcomes in relation to key issues
<p>Equality Objective 3 – Access, Engagement and Cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Further develop equality data recording and embed as part of performance monitoring mechanisms ➤ Ensure the outcomes of the Estates governance review contribute to improved reporting and transparency of decisions ➤ Work with Gwent Police and partners to raise awareness of and embed the new Child Centred Policing Strategy ➤ Work with partners to incorporate the socioeconomic duty into policing in Wales 	<p>Equality Objective 4 – Creating an Inclusive Workforce and Promoting Fairness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain and, where possible, improve current employer scheme compliance ➤ Identify opportunities to further OPCC equality, diversity and inclusion learning and development to support organisational awareness and cultural competency ➤ Support Gwent Police to achieve the workforce diversity aims of year 3 of Operation Uplift ➤ Work with Gwent Police to ensure delivery of an effective and sustainable equality, diversity and inclusion training and education programme for all officers and staff

Contact Details

For more information on our work related to equality, diversity, and inclusion, please contact:

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