

# Hampshire and Isle of Wight Youth Commission



# 2023

# RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

DONNA JONES

**POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

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# Foreword

As always I would like to thank everyone involved in this year's Youth Commission. Having met with the Youth Commission at the start of the year, I was excited to see and hear about all the work they were planning. We have seen more than a thousand hours of commitment on hearing the voices of young people and members representing these voices across the constabulary and many other organisations and partner agencies.

I cannot represent young people if I don't know what their thoughts are. The youth voice across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has never been as important as it is now with a growing population of young people, particularly under the age of 25. The harms posed to young people are also continuing to grow and by working closely with the Youth Commission and hearing their views, along with the views of other young people living, studying or working in our two counties, I can ensure that the issues that are important to them are heard both on a local and national level.

It is our duty as a society and as for myself as Police and Crime Commissioner to listen and act on these recommendations.

These recommendations will be shared with all our partners, both locally and nationally.

The three priorities that the Youth Commission have been working on this year are incredibly important: Domestic Abuse, Relationships with The Police and Safe on The Streets. The Youth Commission have worked tirelessly to inform and raise awareness around these topics and I am incredibly thankful for their support in making Hampshire and the IOW a safer place for us all to live and thrive.



Donna Jones  
Police and Crime Commissioner





# Our Members

Aaliyah Ahmed

Adam Lee

Amber Manning

Amelia Jones

Arthur Hide

Bailey Hamilton

Ben Frankland

Benita Raphaels

Brad Phillips

Bryony Tarrant

Caitlin Smedley

Carmen Constantineanu

Chloe Headland

Corey Blackstone

Edward Poynter

Ellie Woods

Emily Woods

Francesca Harris

Georgina Simms Soteras

Grace Coulter

Hannah Bowyer

Harris Haque

Isaac Wahltuch

Izzi Fearnley

Jack Westcott

Japnoor Kaur

Jasper Austin

Julia Dygas

Leon Fletcher

Liberty Young

Lloyd Sheath

Lorna Woodward

Lucy Hewitt

Marika Anszczak

Nyah Graham

Rosie Pybus

Ryan Hall

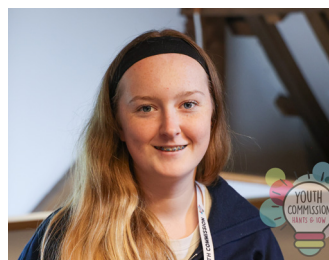
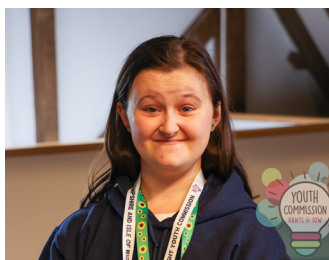
Shannon Adams

Sophie Rimmer

Tillie Lewry

Xander Peace

And OPCC volunteer Jack Dilly





# Introduction



The Youth Commission allows young people aged 14 to 25 to act as a conduit between their peer group and the Police and Crime Commissioner, exploring real experiences on policing and crime, coupled with finding solutions for those issues.



Each year a new cohort of members is recruited, trained, and volunteer to make their communities a safer place to live. For 2023 we had an astonishing 45 members, both a mix of new members and members who chose to stay involved from previous years. They were tasked with:

- Talking with young people in their communities to understand their policing and criminal justice concerns, via The Big Conversation
- Providing opportunities for young people to inform, support and challenge the Police and Crime Commissioner's work
- Identifying the root causes of problems, making recommendations for change and working on solutions



Members are from Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton and come from diverse backgrounds, including some who may have had direct experience of the police and justice systems. We actively encourage applications from young people with these life experiences and our diversity is expanding.



**“Above all we want to amplify the voice of young people on these issues, but further than just getting our voice, and by the extension of young people’s voices being heard, we want to achieve real action and real change through the adoption of all of our recommendations.”**

**Xander – YC member since 2022**

# In 2023

**1 100+**

Hours  
Volunteered

**45**

Youth  
Commission  
Members

**35**

Partners

**38**

Meetings  
Attended  
with  
Partners

**30**

Events,  
Workshops  
and  
Presentations

**82**

Social  
Media  
Posts

The group identified the following priorities that they wanted to address this year:

- Relationships with The Police
- Domestic Abuse
- Safe on the Streets

And we continued the option for young people to tell us about anything else they think is important.



# The Big Conversation



From March to December 2023, the Youth Commission undertook its Big Conversation on their chosen priorities.

This year, we have received over 900 responses to the Big Conversation from young people across the county – which is absolutely amazing. These have been sent in through a mixture of paper feedback from events that we've attended, and online responses, all of which have been kindly sorted through by some of our members – thanks for that.

We also collect data in different ways. Young people are often asked for their feedback and survey fatigue is real – so at any engagement we have been to, where we have spoken to hundreds of young people, we have opened conversations about our priorities and made sure we have included the ideas and suggestions in our data collecting.

A strong majority of the responses to the Big Conversation have been for the “safe on the streets” priority, which outlines the general concerns of young people in Hampshire and the IOW. There was also 25% who chose the domestic abuse priority, 15% who selected relationships with the police priority and 5% who chose something else, which suggests we did a good job of selecting relevant priorities.

These conversations gave us up to date ‘on the ground’ opinions, meaning we could collate responses from the Big Conversation on a quarterly basis. Members used the feedback to influence the thinking of professionals via presentations to boards and meetings throughout the year.

All feedback has been collated into the following recommendations.

# Relationships with the Police



**Hello, my name is Emily, I have been a YC member for 3 years.**

I chose to be in this priority group as I believe that it is so important that there is a cohesive and positive relationship between young people and the police, as it's vital that young people know that the police are there to protect and serve the community and help them if they are ever in need of police support.

Especially as we do not stay young forever, eventually we become adults and for me personally that's why I believe making sure that young people have a positive relationship with the police is so important, as there may be times in our lives, in the future, as well as now, that we, or our family, or children or friends may need the police, and having that positive relationship and attitude towards the police at an early age really helps people access police support for issues before they spiral.



**Hello my name is Lloyd, and I have been in the Youth Commission for 1 year now.**

Well, I joined the YC to help give young people a voice in what crimes are important and to give young people options to speak up about anything. And I picked the Relationships with the Police priority because without a good relationship with the police lots of crimes could go unreported which could lead to more crimes and also I chose it to help people see that the police are also people and not just the uniform.

I attended the mock trial and it was great. We had the opportunity to work with barristers from the CPS to put together either a defence or prosecution argument based on the facts of the case we were presented with. We were then able to present our case in a mock trial with a mock jury, whilst also having the opportunity to put together cross examination questions. I really enjoyed it and felt like I gained skills of more public speaking and getting ideas across.

In the Youth Commission, we currently have 18 members focusing on Relationships with the Police. As a sub group, we have done a lot over the past year. Some of the examples of the work we have done are:

- We created Instagram posts to promote how young people can safely report crimes
- We collaborated with the Child Centred Policing team to create and present a trauma informed video to be shown in Custody to young people
- We attended OPCC Knife Crime Scrutiny workshop
- We are part of Basingstoke's Stop & Search Advocacy Steering Group
- We took part in a CPS mock trial





# Big Conversation Feedback

## What we heard



“Young people often fear the police and see them as negative people as majority of the police’s approaches are very intimidating and the police tend to interrogate people straight away which can make people uncomfortable.”

“The police treat young people unfairly especially when in a group.”

“Young people do not always feel as though they are understood by the Police and they do not feel as though they have positive interactions.”

“Personal opinion is positive on police but you can’t change if no one trusts the police.”

“They aren’t always fully equipped to deal with the impact of mental health issues that young people specifically experience.”

“If young people don’t have a good relationship with the Police, we don’t want to report to them.”

“Too much propaganda that leads to the distrust in the police making them seem like the bad guys.”



## What stood out?

1. The Police need to understand the experiences of young people
2. Young people don’t trust the Police
3. Young people have had some positive interactions with the Police

## What should we do?

### **Relationships**

Relationships are important to us. We need to build better relationships by knowing one another better. Set up informal meetings, make sure we are educated on what the police do and make sure the police are trained to understand our experiences.

### **School and Community Visits**

More Police presence in schools. Build relationships with us in the community and get to know us. Attend community events, especially those run by minority groups so we can get to know one another and break down barriers. Hear our views, experiences and voices when you see us in the community and by coming into our spaces (schools).

### **More Police on the streets**

Bring back cop swap cards! They were a great way to get us to interact with you. More Police on the streets will help prevent crime.

# Domestic Abuse



**Hello, my name is Lucy and I have been a YC member for 2 years. This year I chose to be a member of the Domestic Abuse priority.**

It stood out to me, as, unlike our other priorities, it's much more of a 'taboo', a hidden crime - and this needs to change. As part of the Safe on the Streets priority last year, Domestic Abuse seemed to have the same undercurrents that were especially important to me: preventing crime that targets women, but oppose the notion that they were the only victims.

The idea came to us in the first place for all the wrong reasons, specifically Andrew Tate's influence - his misogynistic views spreading like wildfire through young people via social media, seemingly encouraging abuse between partners, especially towards women, who are the victims in the majority of cases. So, domestic abuse was in the public mind again, but we wanted to oppose his narrative, and show its detrimental consequences and how everyone involved can get help - to remind people that domestic abuse isn't a 'relationship dynamic', it's a crime, and that Andrew Tate is a criminal.

After a year of work, including several online and in-person meetings, what have the 16 young people who are part of this priority achieved?

To spread our message, we have:

- Presented to over 12 secondary schools on Hate & Hostility to the Hampshire's EARA groups (Equality and Rights Advocates)
- Created Social media posts
- Supported the delivery to over 17 College and Uni talks to raise awareness of the OPCC, VRU, YIAG and our priorities,
- Attended various events and Safeguarding Fairs to promote our Domestic Abuse priority through the Big Conversation Survey.
- Co-created the Youth Commission's promotional video.

To support our work by becoming more informed ourselves, we have:

- Received basic Sexual Violence Awareness Training and the Bystander model from Stop Domestic Abuse,
- Attended the CPS presentation on Serious Violence and Stalking Awareness Webinar - being a crime so intrinsically linked with domestic abuse.

To give young people a voice in preventing Domestic abuse, we have:

Had members sit in on the VAWG board, (Violence Against Women and Girls),

- Supported Southampton's Child Friendly City Priority Badges input,
- Given feedback on the Childrens Society Exploitation Strategy Draft,
- Represented young people on Southampton's Relationship and Sex Education Forum,
- Attended Peer Action Collective Recommendations Conference,
- Given feedback on selecting a name for the new Frankie worker counselling/support commissioned service for the OPCC.



# Big Conversation Feedback

## What we heard



"Domestic abuse people normalise things like physically and mentally harming/beating their children saying "it's my child" or that that it'll punish them to 'put them in place.'"

"Friends I know, have suffered."

"There is a lack of awareness amongst young people towards the issue, and the best way to tackle it would be to spread awareness so that young people feel more comfortable talking about it."

"Domestic abuse in under 18s is harder to talk about and should be more encouraged."

"I think young people are afraid to speak up as a lot of the time their abuser is a parent/ someone older."

"I experienced abuse within a relationship when I was younger. It was first verbal and then physical. I never felt brave enough to speak up against him or tell people. My only support was my friends."

"I have had friends and family who have struggled with it."



## What stood out?

1. The signs of abuse are not always clear to young people
2. Young people are worried about asking for help
3. Young people are victims of and witness domestic abuse



## What should we do?

### Education and Awareness training

More awareness among professionals that children are victims of domestic violence too. Education which looks at the consequence of being a perpetrator to deter young people from enacting abusive behaviours. Education and awareness about domestic abuse in LGBTQ+ relationships.

### Harsher Punishments

Harsher punishments to deter perpetrators of domestic violence and encourage victims to report domestic violence. Harsher punishments will make victims feel safer.

### More support for victims

More emotional support for victims when they are reporting domestic violence. More after care for victims of domestic violence. More support for children who witness domestic violence. More funding for support services.

# Safe on the Streets



**Hi, I'm Arthur and I have been a member of the YC for 3 years.**

Another one of the priorities this year was Safe on the Streets. And unsurprisingly, this has come out as the biggest priority for young people in 2023 too!

I chose this as a priority because everyone deserves to feel safe, wherever they are. From our own experiences as young people, we felt more needed to be done to make this happen. There are many reasons why young people don't feel safe on the streets - gang violence, knife crime, stalking, hate crime and anti-social behaviour. These can all cause serious harm to young people's physical and mental wellbeing, which we felt was imperative to stop.

**Hi, I'm Lorna, I chose to work on the 'Safe on the Streets' subgroup because I think it's one of the largest issues we are facing at the moment.**

I find the prevalence of carrying blades, and the resulting crimes, especially around young people, deeply worrying. A lot of young people don't feel safe when out and about, even in their local areas, and I don't think that is acceptable. I hoped that by joining safe on the streets, I could contribute towards positive change in an area that concerns me. Over the last year, we've achieved so much. For example:



- We've presented to 12 secondary schools on Hate and Hostility, as well as over 17 talks at colleges and universities to raise awareness for the OPCC and Youth Commission
- Contributed to the Violence against Women and Girls board
- Attended loads of events to raise awareness of our priorities
- Worked with the CPS – both presenting to them on serious violence and taking part in their mock trial
- We've also provided feedback for different projects and campaigns that involve young people,
- And of course, you can't forget working on our fabulous promotional video.
- In line with our aims, we have used our social media platforms to promote safety in the community. This has included promoting the White Ribbon day campaign in Portsmouth, the work of other organisations such as fearless.org and Rushmoor Borough Council in the work they've done for safer communities and pushing the Op Sceptre campaign run by the constabulary.



**Hello, my name is Chloe and I have been a Youth Commission member for 1 year .**

We have been going out into the community to ask young people what is important to them when thinking about policing and crime. Lots of people told us feeling safe on the street is important to them.

# Big Conversation Feedback

## What we heard



"I have been followed home multiple times, I have been cat called many times, and the worst was when I was in school uniform."

"I feel the culture around gang violence and knife crime in media makes it seem "cool" which makes young people want to get in to these things so they seem cool."

"With today's society I don't feel safe at all on the streets. If a crime was to happen and I was a victim or a witness I don't think I would be able to report it because I would be scared that the suspect would find out and do more damage to me."

"Many young people in these areas are far too susceptible to gangs whether they are victims or recruited so to speak."

"I don't think there are enough police on the streets to protect us from street violence."

"Crowds of young people out on the street late at night with unsociable behaviour."

"Being approached by strangers for money."



## What stood out?

1. Experiencing or witnessing harassment
2. Feeling unsafe due to knife crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour
3. Stalking and cat calling

## What should we do?

### **More Police and surveillance on the streets**

There needs to be more police patrols –especially at night - so if young people feel unsafe they can go to an officer. Having more police on the street will prevent people committing crimes too. There needs to be more, and working CCTV, in public spaces.

### **Education**

More education is needed to increase young people's knowledge about reporting and how to keep themselves safe. Young people should be aware that carrying a knife even for defence means it is more likely for you to get into a crime. Education and awareness should be built into curriculums.

### **More Community Safe Spaces**

There should be more places where young people can go to in the community as a safe space, for activities and so they can seek support. It's important that we feel we have safe spaces and someone to talk to.



# Other Recommendations

Some young people chose to tell us about other things that were a priority to them. These include:

- Vaping - Teach young people the dangers of smoking, spot checks in schools and police confiscating vapes.
- Substance Misuse - Public support groups in schools and colleges, awareness spread about the long lasting effects of drugs, addiction support. Safe spaces where people can go or be taken to when they are not sober.
- Reform - Police using therapy towards the offender to ask why they did it and how they could be reformed to be a better person, eg. volunteering, finding a job, and help with day to day life.



# Working with Partners

This year, we have worked with 35 different partners and with their support we have achieved many big things and spoken to lots of young people about their experience of crime and policing and to make recommendations for support. We would like to say a massive thank you for your support, as without your partnership and involvement, we would not have achieved as much as we have.

- CPS – thank you for delivering the Stalking Webinar, facilitating the incredible Mock Trial for us during the summer, and inviting us to deliver a presentation to all your staff on Serious Violence and Knife Crime.
- Hampshire, IOW, Portsmouth and Southampton Children's Safeguarding Partnership – they give us an incredible opportunity to be part of and inform senior leaders across the county to Safeguard Children and Young People – especially around Exploitation
- Violence Reduction Team – The VRU has been incredibly supportive and welcoming of our views, especially around Serious Violence and Safe On The Streets. They have supported us at events and talks and always invite us to participate and support the incredible work they are doing.
- IOPC – The Independent Office of Police Conduct always reach out to hear our views. They have delivered workshops to help us understand the Police Complaints process so that we can support young people in standing up for their rights.
- The Constabulary's Child Centred Policing – The team has been fantastic in supporting us with our Relationships With The Police priority and have given us an incredible opportunity to support young people who enter custody – more on that later!
- The Constabulary Education Partnership Team – We can always rely on the incredible officers in this team – offering us opportunities to get involved in all aspects of their outreach and engagement with young people, be that at Safeguarding events, Stop & Search Advocacy sessions, Cops n Coffee mornings at colleges, and supporting our stand at Safeguarding Fairs and events! Always with such smiles too – thank you!





# Outreach

- Swanwick Lodge
- Military mentors – alternative education
- Hampshire Hive – Looked after children network
- Stop & Search Advocacy (Basingstoke) Steering group
- Safeguarding Fairs
- Community events and fairs
- Scouts
- Music fusion
- Hampshire music fusion



As well as working with partners, we have also completed outreach work to speak with young people about their experiences of crime and policing and to raise awareness of various topics. For example, we have attended:

- Safeguarding fairs and community events/fairs to hear young people's voices
- We are part of the Stop & Search Advocacy Project Steering Group in Basingstoke. This model sees Police neighbourhood officers going out into schools to raise awareness for young people of their rights if they are stopped and searched, and offers an advocate in their school for support thereafter.
- Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home visit – We heard the views from 6 young people. It's really important that we also hear from those young people who have had lived experience when it comes to the Youth Justice System
- Our outreach work to hear from those young people that we NEED to reach, is something we continue to build upon.



# Highlights from this year

## With the support of our partners



- Represented young people's views at HIPS Exploitation meetings and VAWG Task Boards
- Given feedback to the Children's Society Exploitation Strategy and the HIPS Exploitation partnership strategy
- Presented to the HCC EARA groups on Hate & Hostility
- Facilitated table discussions at the Integrated Care Partnership strategy meeting
- Been involved in creating the outcomes for the priority badges for Southampton Child Friendly City
- On the Steering group for Basingstoke's Stop & Search Advocacy Project
- Created custody video with the CCP team for young people entering custody
- Had our views heard by the OPCC Scrutiny manager on his Knife Crime Scrutiny of the constabulary
- Attended the Peer Action Collective Conference at Westminster to hear views from young people across the country on serious violence
- Created over 80 social media posts to promote all our priorities and signpost young people to support services
- Attended and participated in a CPS Mock Trial
- Attended and supported the Winchester Court open day
- Learning about Trauma informed practices
- Delivered 17 Awareness and Big Conversation sessions with colleges and universities

# Moving into 2024

**We are going to have a slightly different model with our priorities:**

As **Safe on the Streets** has come out as the priority most important to young people, we will be focusing our work around this.

We have chosen three new priorities for The Big Conversation survey of 2024.

These are:

**Substance Misuse**

**Dangerous Driving**

**Stereotyping Young People**

The priority which comes out on top, will be the priority we focus on in 2025.

This allows members to really concentrate our area of focus on what young people want to see change in this area. And we hope to create some meaningful projects with our partners and show young people that we are listening – we hope many of you will support us with this.









# 2023

## RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

Find out more at [www.HantsYC.com](http://www.HantsYC.com)



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