

Update from Surrey Police Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave

December 2016



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As the year comes to an end I would like to take the time to reflect on my first year as Chief Constable, on some of the challenges the Force has faced and on our achievements.

Following my appointment as Chief Constable in July I am pleased to be forming a solid and stable leadership team. I was delighted to appoint Gavin Stephens as Deputy Chief Constable, and as mentioned last month, confirm the postings for the Superintendents and Chief Superintendents. The last piece of the jigsaw is the post of Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing which I hope to confirm in the New Year. During the course of the year we have moved from a temporary team to an almost fully substantive one and I hope this will bring stability and continuity for the Force.



On the topic of leadership, during the last few months Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) David Munro and I have got off to a good start and our relationship is one of support but also challenge in terms of the PCC holding me and my leadership team to account. Together, as we move forward, the PCC and I have agreed to review Surrey Police's estate strategy. It is an exciting opportunity for the Force to try and create a modern estate that is fit for the future. Whilst this is something that will take time, we are hopeful to have a plan by the end of the financial year and I am looking forward to sharing that with you.

Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave

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Performance

Looking back to when I took over as Temporary Chief Constable toward the end of December 2015 we had come through a really difficult year, particularly in the areas of public protection and efficiency. Under the leadership of Chief Constable Lynne Owens we had begun working hard to mitigate some of the shortcomings. However, we knew there was still more to do and we have built on the foundations laid by Lynne throughout this year, continuing to deliver real improvements to ensure the people of Surrey are getting a better service. I am proud to say that our recent inspection by HMIC found us to have achieved a grading of “good” for our efficiency and legitimacy, and this is down to the hard work of the officers, staff and volunteers of Surrey Police to keep the most vulnerable members of society safe.

This year also saw the implementation of Policing In Your Neighbourhood (PIYN) in April, which was a huge cultural change for the Force. In November I shared some of the findings with you from the six month review, and how I was pleased the new model was beginning to have a positive impact. Whilst there are still tweaks and improvements to be made, ultimately I think it will enable us to deliver a better service to the public, ensuring we can protect those most vulnerable in community and continue to bring more offenders to justice.

The improvements in our service can also be seen when looking at where Surrey now sits in the national picture. I am delighted that over the financial year our national position compared with other Forces has increased significantly. In particular, our detection rates around serious sexual offences have improved, moving us up 17 places to 20th in the country, meaning we are achieving justice for even more victims, albeit we continue to strive to make further improvements.

Volunteer Cadet Units

This month saw the launch of our Volunteer Cadet Units which is a fantastic initiative for the Force. I am pleased to report that we have 88 young people signed up from across Surrey, including from communities that perhaps wouldn't traditionally have thought of policing as a career which is a great step for the future. The scheme aims to inspire young people to participate positively in their community, give them a chance to be heard, as well as promote a practical understanding of policing, all whilst support policing priorities through volunteering. I can't wait to see the cadets develop over the coming year and hope the scheme will develop to give more young people a chance to get involved.

Merry Christmas

On behalf of the Force I hope you have a very Merry Christmas and wish you a safe and happy New Year. Please take the time to watch our Christmas message which features one of our newest recruits who will be working during the festive period. We hope you won't need to call us, but if you do remember we will be here.

Click on the image to view our Christmas message.



Operational successes

Just some of our recent successes have included:

- A 38-year-old man has been jailed for 28 years after being found guilty of a string of sexual offences against girls. He was found guilty of a total of 28 charges for multiple child sex offences against nine girls, which took place between 2008 and 2013.
- A teenage victim has been commended for her bravery following the trial of a man who raped and assaulted her in June this year. The 33-year-old man was found guilty of two counts of rape, kidnap, two counts of wounding with intent to cause Grievous Bodily Harm, possession of an offensive weapon, one count of threatening to kill and one count of intimidating a witness. He awaits sentencing in January.
- A 57-year-old man who was the focus of an eight hour armed police siege in Smallfield has been sentenced to three years behind bars. He pleaded guilty to possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear.
- Surrey and Sussex Roads Policing Units have been carrying out dedicated patrols to put the brakes on those who drive under the influence as part of the “Go cold turkey” campaign which is running until 1 January 2017. In Surrey the initiative has seen 41 drivers arrested on suspicion of drink or drug driving in the first two weeks.



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