

PCC/OPCC Update Bulletin

Response to Coronavirus/COVID-19

A message from Mark – I hope that you're all managing to stay safe and well, and have been enjoying the sunny weather while it lasts and continuing to follow the social distancing measures to keep the spread of COVID-19 down in which we all have a role to play.



This last week, local, national media and social media has been dominated by the death of George Floyd in America. Statements were issued by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners ([APCC](#)), which I endorsed and [NPCC](#) on this matter, which encapsulates what I and other PCCs across England and Wales feel about the senseless death of George Floyd and we remain committed to stand with our diverse communities in these times of difficulty and to condemn any form of racism which is totally unacceptable. To underline my solidarity with those peacefully protesting in America and around the world, I will be joining in #8for8 at 8pm on Monday 8th June in conjunction with colleagues at Leeds Council and WYP.

Monday this week marked the start of National Volunteers' Week and I wanted to pass on a huge thank you to everyone who gives up their time to support others during these unique times, including volunteers across West Yorkshire Police, the Special Constabulary, Police Cadets, Police Support Volunteers and 999 Community Volunteers. I also work with many volunteers through my own office with the Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs), Youth Advisory Group (YAG) and links to the Third Sector Advisory Groups, Neighbourhood Watch Groups and the hundreds of organisations we have supported through the Safer Communities Fund.

This week was also particularly dedicated to those who have stepped forward as we have faced the biggest crisis of our times, with people helping those in isolation with food and essential medical supplies. Also everyone who has put themselves on the frontline of caring for those in their

community and those who have remained crucial to keeping our community spirit up and infrastructure running.

It is National Specials Weekend this coming weekend so please have a look at the West Yorkshire Police (WYP) website if you are interested in any opportunities around volunteering with them once life returns to some semblance of normality.

We launched an extraordinary grant round of my Safer Communities Fund, which is now giving more than £170,000 to 32 projects dealing with the impact and fall out of COVID-19. We are working quickly to pay monies out by the end of this month. One of the many projects includes Behind Closed Doors, which supports people whose lives have been affected by domestic violence and abuse.

My office will also be launching a survey on Monday (8th June) which will be an opportunity for residents and communities in West Yorkshire to give their views on a variety of topics including the current Covid19 situation and the impact it has had on them and their families, police contact and response and community cohesion.

The questionnaire can be found online [here](#) and the closing date for responses for the survey is 29th June.

This week has also seen further important meetings such as the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), which I chair, where we have been having further discussions on the recovery strategies to tackle very challenging issues such as case backlogs arising as a result of Covid19 restrictions. I did another virtual meeting of the new Strategic Assurance Board for the Modern Slavery Organised Immigration Crime Programme, Partnership Executive Group and another virtual meeting with the Home Office Modern Slavery Unit.

This weekend, starting on Sunday (7th June) commences Neighbourhood Watch Week, which aims to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Watch by celebrating its good work. Neighbourhood Watch Week brings together the volunteers and co-ordinators from the five policing districts of West Yorkshire with the wider national Neighbourhood Watch family, to showcase its efforts to create safer, stronger and active communities.

Neighbourhood Watch fosters a community spirit, with residents looking out for each other, not only where crime and crime prevention is concerned but

with practical measure and this has been seen time and time again in this present situation.

Next week is the Police and Crime Panel for West Yorkshire where the Chief Constable and myself will giving full updates on the policing and community safety response to COVID-19, it will again will be held virtually. The papers for the panel meeting will be published on the [website](#) this week and include lots of information and details.

Finally the COVID-19 Extraordinary Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support Services which we have been running for funding expressions and opportunities, will close today (5th June) and we hope to move quickly in supporting key local services once submissions have been assessed.

For now best wishes, stay safe and keep others around you safe.

Mark Burns-Williamson OBE
West Yorkshire's Police and Crime Commissioner

Recognition and Celebration of Volunteers from Restorative Justice

Why do I volunteer?

“I began volunteering for RS five and half years ago and I had not a clue as to the opportunities/ skills and interests that would present themselves to me through this journey. I have experienced more than I thought and used the skills learnt in many areas of my professional and personal life. I volunteer for the connection with victims of crime (I have come to understand some of the absurdity of our current criminal justice system and how victims thoughts, feelings and wishes are lost to the bureaucracy of courts), victims speak of wanting things to return to “normal” and I have found that RJ can allow for that sense of some “normality” to be restored. Having the skills to facilitate this gives me a sense of self worth and confidence. RJ helps me to think that the world is a good place with good people – even if mistake are made there is a path for the harm to be repaired. RJ makes me hopeful for the future although I do wish it was more deeply embedded in more statutory services (which I feel still rely on a culture of blame and shame justice).”

What keeps me volunteering in these unusual times?

“I continue to volunteer in these uncertain times as it allows me to feel that I am giving back to my community using my particular skill set. Being allowed to be present in someone’s life who has been a victim of crime is a privilege. To gain the trust and help a victim understand why (or how) a crime occurred is a humbling experience. As we are hurtled (somewhat unexpectedly) towards a digital experience I look forward to embracing and developing my Restorative skills for this way of communicating. Continuing to place the victim experience, needs and wishes at the heart of all volunteer cases I do, as ultimately the core reasons for volunteering for RS is to repair harm caused to my community. I will continue to volunteer for the skills I can learn and the different that can be made through facilitating RJ conversations. In this time of distancing I think we can use volunteering as a way to reconnect with our communities, shifting our perspective to not what we have lost in these times but to what can be achieved.

Just because the/a virus has arrived does not mean the harm caused by crime in our communities has gone away, and I strongly believe in these turbulent times we have the opportunity to re-evaluate our commitment to our communities and who doesn’t want to make the world (or our small piece of the world) a safer, more enjoyable place to exist.”

Hannah Garforth, Volunteer, Restorative Justice, West Yorkshire



Logo Competition - Youth Advisory Group

KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE
TOGETHER



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police & Crime Commissioner
for West Yorkshire

I have launched a competition for young people to design a new logo for my Youth Advisory Group (YAG). The winning designer will receive a £100 online shopping voucher and of course any young people wanting to join the YAG are more than welcome. If you know of anyone that might like to get involved in the competition or the group please do direct them to my [website](#) where they can find out more. Entries are starting to come in so please encourage any and all children and young people you know/work with to get involved. The competition is open until the end of June.

Leeds Community Foundation Resilience Fund

The Leeds Community Foundation Resilience Fund was launched weeks after the Covid19 crisis started to develop in the UK to help support organisations supporting communities severely affected by the pandemic.

It is an open bid round and they cover Leeds and Bradford, as well as working in partnership in Wakefield with NOVA and Wakefield & District Health & Community Support. The deadline for expressions of interest is 17th June.

For more information please see here:

<https://leedscf.org.uk/grants/resilience-fund/> or search on our Covid19 webpage which has more details of funding opportunities in West Yorkshire

New funding available from Clinks to support voluntary organisations

Clinks have launched a COVID-19 response grant to support voluntary organisations working in criminal justice with an annual income under £500,000 to continue their work through the Covid-19 crisis. For more information visit <https://www.clinks.org/community/blog-posts/new-funding-available-covid-19-response-grants>

Our dedicated coronavirus webpage

Our dedicated coronavirus page on our website contains further support information, volunteering opportunities, links to help and support and much more. Recent updates include funding opportunities from the government for foodbanks and domestic abuse charities, advice on wearing and making your own facemask as well as bereavement support. You can view it here <https://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Our latest statements

See links to recent statements below.

- **Meet West Yorkshire's Very Own 'Paw Patrol'**
<https://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news-events/news/meet-west-yorkshires-very-own-paw-patrol>
- **National Volunteers Week – A big thank you to all those who volunteer for West Yorkshire Police**
<https://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news-events/news/national-volunteers-week-big-thank-you-all-those-who-volunteer-west-yorkshire-police>
- **PCC Delivers Over £170,000 Support for Communities Affected by Covid19**
<https://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news-events/news/pcc-delivers-over-ps170000-support-communities-affected-covid-19>
- **Funding for Virtual Youth Club for Youth Central in Kirklees**
[file:///C:/Users/727710/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/9GCSN7KB/Youth%20Central%20Press%20Release%20\(003\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/727710/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/9GCSN7KB/Youth%20Central%20Press%20Release%20(003).pdf)

Contacting the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

Along with the office I am currently working remotely. This means that face to face meetings at the office and elsewhere will not be taking place and we are not able to deal with correspondence posted through our letter box, either in person or by Royal Mail.

However, you can still get in touch by email contact@westyorkshire.pcc.pnn.gov.uk and telephone 01924 294000 in the usual manner.

