

Our priority

Community Cohesion is vital to ensure that our diverse communities across West Yorkshire feel safe. The impact of local, national and international incidents continues to affect our communities and undermine feelings of safety. The principle of 'policing by consent' can be challenged if our communities do not reflect a cohesive society. We need to do all that we can to strengthen our own relationships with communities so we can better understand the threats to cohesion and provide local communities with the support to overcome them.

How we are going to deliver

Our main objective must be to work *with* communities to improve community cohesion and we need to do this by empowering them to build resilience against divisive influences. We also have a responsibility to build relationships between communities and those involved in wider community safety (including the police and partners), to ensure that people in West Yorkshire have confidence in those working to keep them safe and feeling safe. To do this effectively we will:

- Open up engagement opportunities around the wider issues in each diverse district. By listening to communities and their representatives, and organisations working at local level, we will be able to identify key opportunities and challenges, and what works well. ***Listening to people.***
- We need to fully understand the barriers to cohesion by using all information available to us. Crucially we must understand our communities' view of what is needed to improve cohesion across all groups, including those defined by ethnicity, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, wealth, or political orientation. ***Understanding our communities.***
- We will identify opportunities for communities to lead on cohesion initiatives with our support and will involve community members in the relevant partnership forums. Communities must be given the opportunity to lead on community cohesion initiatives with the support of the police and partners. ***Working together.***
- Education is key to improving community cohesion and preventing obstacles from forming in the first place. We will work with young people to educate, raise awareness and celebrate the diversity of people who constitute West Yorkshire's communities. ***Preventing and intervening earlier.***
- Ensure our police service is adequately structured to tackle issues, including providing appropriate and relevant community liaison, visibility and engagement. Empowerment of, and engagement with communities will feature in police training programmes. ***Improving our services.***
- We will encourage the police, partners and community groups to support each other at local level by establishing a network across West Yorkshire. Partner and community collaboration will map and share existing resources across groups. ***Providing resources.***

How we will know whether we've delivered

We will measure our progress against this priority through our Community Outcome Meetings, in which an in-depth report into Community Cohesion will present the progress of the OPCC, West Yorkshire Police, and relevant partners against the objectives above. It will draw on a range of information available including HMIC inspection reports, national guidance, and statistical indicators including those listed below. In addition to this, we will monitor performance through our Delivery Quarterly report, which will monitor measures on related topics (for example on the safeguarding of vulnerable victims), and through our county-wide 'Your Views' survey of public opinion.

- More people will feel that *'people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area'*
- Fewer people will feel that *'hate crime is a problem in their local area'*
- More people will feel that *'the police in their local area would treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are'*