

News from the Commissioner

CCTV pods form future plans to tackle retail crime across county

CCTV pods will be rolled out to more shops across the county to help with the fight against retail crime, following a successful pilot.

The mobile security systems will be funded by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and deployed to smaller outlets in Northamptonshire which are repeatedly targeted by thieves.

Currently CCTV pods - or rapid deploy site and asset protection units to give them their proper name - are mainly used in remote locations to protect sites or equipment.

Now, as part of her ongoing public safety strategy, Danielle Stone wants to fund them to combat retail crime, after a successful trial at Vintage Guru in Northampton.

The pods will be used by Police to deploy for up to 28 days in stores that are experiencing high levels of crime. This will give retailers assurance while they work with police to tackle any issues.

Julie Teckman's store supported the trial in December to monitor activity in the lead up to Christmas.

She said: "I was intrigued by the idea of the pods and how they offered support to the staff in the shop where, like most retailers, we fall victim to opportunistic theft at times, especially when we are busy.

"When the pods arrived, I was a bit surprised at the size of them but they fitted in well and were very visible to customers who were extremely curious



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about them - giving us the opportunity to chat about shoplifting deterrents.

"During our busiest time of the year it became apparent that opportunist theft declined in the shop and we are very confident that this was due, in part, to the obvious presence of the pods. They became so much a part of our shop that we were sad to see them leave in January."

The commitment to continue funding the pods was made at one of the Commissioner's regular Retail Crime Roundtables, where business owners and representatives come together with Northamptonshire Police and other agencies to tackle shoplifting and retail crime.

Danielle said: "Addressing retail crime and the impact on our community is one of my top priorities and it's really important that conversations with retailers are meaningful and actions taken away are effective.

"What we want to do here in Northamptonshire is solve problems. We want to understand what drives crime and once we understand that we can begin to find solutions.

"Hosting roundtable meetings with our partners allows us to have really open and honest conversations about what is being done across the county and how we might be able to adopt or change practices."

So far in 2025, Northamptonshire Police's Retail Crime Team has secured prison sentences for prolific shoplifters totalling 17.8 years.

Outcomes for shoplifting offences from March 2024-2025 have also seen 29.8% of offences filed with a positive outcome - meaning offenders have been charged, cautioned or received a community resolution.

New community grants scheme launched

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Danielle Stone has relaunched her grant scheme, to benefit community-led initiatives that make people safer across the county.

Danielle's new Safe and Sound Communities Fund reflects the aims of her five-year public safety plan.

The new scheme complements the Road Safety Community Fund, which will continue and is now open to new applicants.

The Safe and Sound Communities Fund offers grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 for groups to carry out work that reduce crime, make communities safer and stronger or support vulnerable people.

Projects that support children, young people and women and create safer spaces will be particularly welcome.

And for the first time, grant funding is available for projects that take place over more than one year, for a more sustainable approach to problem solving.



Road safety

The Road Safety Community Fund is also relaunching this year as it gears up to welcome new applicants.

The grant supports initiatives that contribute towards the Commissioner's road safety priorities.

Local community groups or schools can apply for grants between £500 and £5,000 to improve road safety where they live. Applicants could use the money to fund programmes such as speed reduction, anti-social road use or improving road safety near school gates.

Danielle said: "During my first year in office, I've been inspired by the vital work of community groups to make their communities safer.

"I have relaunched my grant scheme with a focus on projects that meet my new Safe and Sound public safety plan – whether it's preventing violence against women and girls, creating safe places or preventing victims."

To apply for a grant, visit www.northantspfcc.gov.uk

Safe and Sound grant awarded

The Creative Futures project in Northampton received the first grant awarded under the new Safe and Sound Communities Fund.

The project aims to provide young people in care, isolated school children or youth offenders with a pathway into creative industries through film and podcast training.

Director Ashley Samuels-McKenzie said: "This project specifically targets youths facing significant barriers, including those in care, involved in the criminal justice system or from disadvantaged backgrounds.



"We see there can be great development with young people who come and train with us if they haven't progressed in a mainstream school.

"We are happy that we've been able to secure this funding now, at a time

when technology has never been easier to use. However, there is a real expertise behind it all which, when taught in the right setting, can allow people to learn the skills forever not just for a moment."

Community Justice reaches 1000-hour milestone

A programme that helps to repair damage caused by anti-social behaviour has facilitated over a thousand hours of reparative work in community spaces across the county.

Northamptonshire Community Justice, previously named Immediate Justice, gives people who have committed low-level offences the opportunity to repair harm they have caused to communities by cleaning up and restoring public areas, community spaces and parks.

People who have committed offences such as road rage, criminal damage and possession of drugs have been referred to the programme by Northamptonshire Police.



Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Danielle Stone continued to fund what was initially a pilot project for at least the next year, so that important work to improve our communities and help prevent reoffending can continue.

Danielle said: "I am glad to be able to fund this programme so this work can continue. Community Justice has been able to give many offenders a chance to make a positive contribution to our county and members of the public can see justice being done."

Community allotments benefit from Community Justice

Seventy of the 1000 hours have been spent clearing, weeding and planting at two community allotments in Northamptonshire, the Daylight Veggie Patch in Wollaston, and the Green Patch Community Allotment in Kettering.

Sixteen offenders aged between 14 and 58 who have been stopped by the police for committing low-level offences have been working at the allotments to repair the damage they have caused at locations across the county.

The Green Patch Allotment provides more than 2000kg of food to the local community in Kettering and runs 1,500 specialist workshops and activities per year. Some of the people that have served their Community Justice hours here have even returned to the allotment to volunteer in their own time.

Cliff, a gardener at the Green Patch Community Allotment, was pleased with the impact the Team have had on the allotment.

He said: "The Community Justice Team has integrated seamlessly alongside our volunteer days. Their contributions have truly made a positive impact on our community garden."

"We have had some of the individuals on the programme come back as volunteers, continuing to contribute their time in a positive way."

The Daylight Veggie Patch is a working allotment that provides produce for the Food Bank and Community Café at the Daylight Fellowship Centre in Wellingborough.

Jo West, Allotment Lead for the Daylight Centre Fellowship said having offenders at the Veggie Patch has been rewarding.



She said: "Having the Immediate Justice Team and the offenders coming to the Daylight Veggie Patch has been very rewarding, they do any job I give them and work hard."

"The main aim of the Veggie Patch is to promote mental health and wellbeing, and you can really see the change in people even after just a few hours."

"It has been a privilege having them and I hope we have given them a sense of pride and achievement."

New Scrutiny Panel for police custody

A Panel of representatives from diverse backgrounds and with a range of expertise is set to scrutinise decision-making and actions within Northamptonshire's two Custody centres.

Custody is by its nature, an area of policing that takes place behind closed doors.

Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Marianne Kimani, has introduced a Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel (CDSP) to bring independent scrutiny and give feedback that will improve services where required.

Scrutiny Panels enable members of the community to constructively review police interactions with the public. They can hold them to account for their actions and influence policies that will improve performance and service that the public receive.

The Panel will meet regularly to review cases showing a range of Custody practices such as use of force, strip searches, remand in custody, use of anti-rip clothing, responses to mental health, and other topics at the request of the Panel.



The Panel will give feedback on their findings to the Force and publish an annual report.

Deputy PFCC, Marianne Kimani, said: "It is vital that the public have faith and trust in the police. The launch of this new Panel aims to enhance trust and confidence that police powers are used in a fair, proportionate and ethical way, in an area of policing that takes place behind closed doors."

New Panel members had a tour of the Custody facilities to familiarise themselves with the lay out and environment ahead of their first meeting, which focussed on strip search in Custody.

Marianne continued: "The use of police powers such as strip search is a sensitive subject, and it is vital it receives a high level of scrutiny and analysis. I would like to thank all members of the Panel for their ongoing support in this really critical area of work."

Anyone interested in joining the Panel can find further information by visiting www.northantspfcc.org.uk/custody-detention-scrutiny-panel-cdsp/

Applications are welcome from people who have lived experience of Police Custody.

Meet the CDSP members

Dorcas Emeordi is a 20-year-old law student. She said that she is excited to be involved in this area of scrutiny.

"This role offers a unique chance to gain insight into an important area of the criminal justice system and to use my skills such as critical thinking to ensure the rights and welfare of detainees in custody are protected."

Dorcas said she learned a great deal about the strip search process at the first meeting and said that she was impressed by Northamptonshire Police's openness to feedback.

"I will be balancing this responsibility with my university studies but am



looking forward to the Panel meetings, and I'm committed to making a positive impact in the community," Dorcas said.

Geraldine Newbrook has been an Independent Custody Visitor in Northamptonshire for more than 35 years. She said: "I am pleased to be part of this new scrutiny panel,

carefully examining the custody protocol. I trust it will become a useful extension of the scrutiny ICVs undertake every week at the county's two custody suites, helping all concerned to continue providing the high standard of service those in custody already receive."