



Police Support Volunteer National Strategy 2019 – 2023

“Connecting communities to policing and policing to communities”

Citizens
in policing



 **NPCC**
National Police Chiefs' Council

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Foreword

Having started my policing career in 1993 as a Special Constable in the City of York, I have a clear understanding of the importance that volunteers play within policing culture and the benefits that they bring. The Police Support Volunteer (PSV) programme is so diverse in nature given the skills of volunteers and the roles they perform across a variety of policing functions.

Through the contribution they make, volunteers play a key part in enhancing policing capacity and capability. A sustainable PSV programme is critical to ensuring we are prepared for the future and able to meet demand. This demand is increasingly challenging and ever more complex and the skills and experiences that our communities can offer will help the police deliver an enhanced professional service.

In alignment with the imperatives of the National Citizens in Policing (CiP) strategy, the PSV strategy is designed to raise the profile and widen the opportunities for PSVs as well as developing the overall programme itself. It is important that a firmly embedded volunteering culture is an integral part of the police service.

I am proud to be leading the PSV work stream of the CiP portfolio and delighted to be part of the delivery of the 2019 PSV strategy. May I extend my thanks to the practitioners and the volunteers who are providing a significant contribution to the policing service and I look forward to working with you as we continue to develop this programme.

Lisa Winward
Chief Constable
Police Support Volunteer Lead



VISION, MISSION, PRIORITIES - “Together we will”

In developing the PSV strategy the document looks to highlight our collective responsibilities as ‘we’ the policing family work together to deliver against its aspirations and provide a clear steer to enable force leaders and practitioners to:

- recognise and articulate the importance and benefits of involving volunteers.
- support the development of their own PSV strategies.

Vision

To create together a future in which the enormous potential of volunteers in policing is fully realised.

Mission

We believe a large and thriving volunteer contribution across policing is key to achieving an open, engaged and effective police service. We see volunteers in policing as having a critical part to play in meeting the unprecedented challenges of complexity and demand which policing faces.

In building together a new future for police volunteering we will be creative, we will build strong partnerships, we will champion diversity, we will empower and 'give a voice' to our volunteers, and we will celebrate their contribution and service. Above all, our new future for police volunteering will be built upon making the experience of being a volunteer in policing the best it can possibly be.

Priorities

- **Growing the impact of our Police Support Volunteers** – increasing the scale and breadth of their contribution across policing, and ensuring it is focused on policing priorities locally and nationally.
- **Recognising the contribution of our Police Support Volunteers** – seeing PSVs as integral to our wider policing vision: critical, integrated, invested in and valued.
- **Achieving excellence across our volunteering programmes** – programmes which are well managed, resourced, innovative, professionalised and evidence-based, which achieve diversity and reach across all communities, and which attract into the police service the experience and skills which policing needs.





Introduction

Volunteers are a key link in connecting communities to policing and policing to communities. This very much reflects what is widely known as one of Sir Robert Peel's principles; “the police are the public and that the public are the police”.

Citizens in Policing (CiP) is the umbrella term used to describe thousands of people across the UK who regularly give up their time to support the police. The role of CiP is absolutely vital – volunteers increase the capacity and capability of our constabularies, bringing valuable skills and expertise; while creating closer and more effective working relationships with our communities.

The results of the recent benchmarking exercise of 2018 provide us with the current picture of PSVs in policing. The picture we have is a snap shot in time, helping us to understand where we are at, indicating trends and providing feedback, which can be used to help plan for the future.

“The role of CiP is absolutely vital”

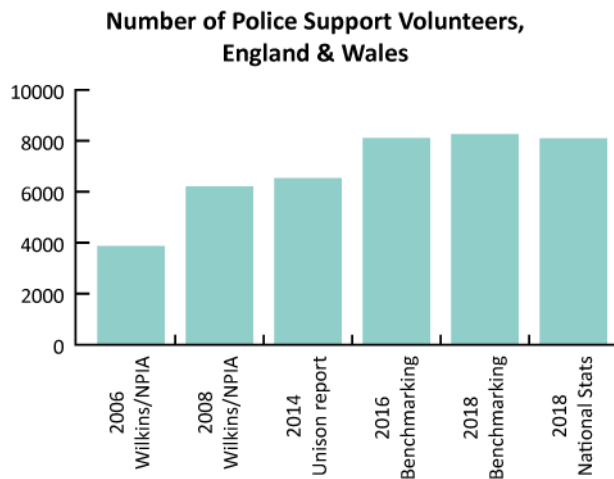


What is the current picture?



In the recent national benchmarking exercise of 2018 it was reported that there are 8,265 PSVs in the police service across England and Wales.

It has been highlighted that some forces report certain roles as PSVs and others do not include them in their numbers. This relates to roles such as Chaplains, Community Speed Watch, Victim Support and Volunteer Police Cadet roles. It is therefore important that greater clarity is provided in respect of what a PSV is, to ensure consistency of approach across forces.



So, what is a Police Support Volunteer?

Our aim for the future encourages a wide diversity and vibrancy of models of volunteering, contributing to policing in a wide range of ways and helping to build safer communities for all. The focus of this strategy is on those individuals who volunteer directly with the police service. PSVs sit as volunteers within policing, alongside warranted Special Constables and Volunteer Police Cadets. They form an important part of a much wider landscape of voluntarism and civil society contributing to policing.

Police Support Volunteers will be defined as:

- those volunteers who serve within the direction and control of the police service;
- who are recruited by the police service;
- who in most cases are vetted;
- those volunteers who are managed, supervised and supported by the police service and
- those for whom the police service is directly accountable and responsible for the activities they undertake.



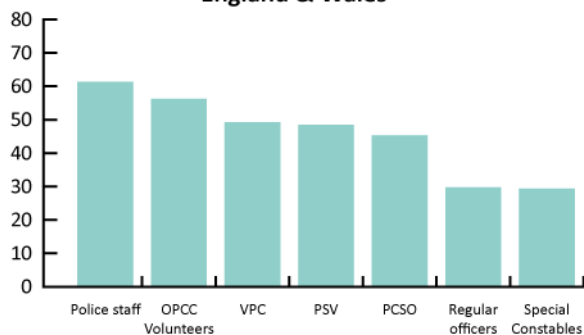
Diversity

Diversity is an important factor when it comes to reassuring and engaging with our communities.

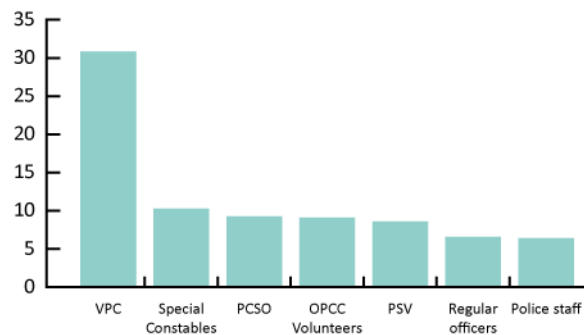
Data from the 2018 benchmarking report provides statistical information in respect of the proportion of BME and female PSVs with a comparison against other volunteers, regular staff and officers. This shows us that PSVs are broadly 50:50 in terms of gender representation. The data for PSVs and BME representation remains patchy and poor nationally, but suggests that comparably there is less BME representation in PSVs than PCSOs, Special Constables and in particular for Volunteer Police Cadets.



Proportion female, across the police family, England & Wales



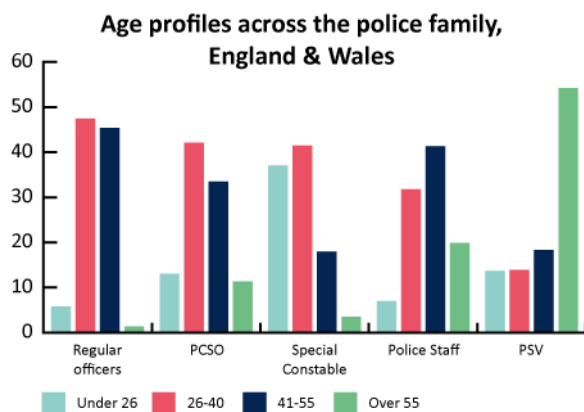
Proportion of BME, across the police family, England & Wales





The age profile of volunteers has also been captured with a comparison against other volunteers, regular staff and officers. It indicates that the current PSV programme is very strong at engaging with those 55+, but that there is currently significantly less engagement in age groups of 30-49.

The data suggests that diversity should continue to be a priority area of focus throughout the delivery of this strategy.



Roles



Roles

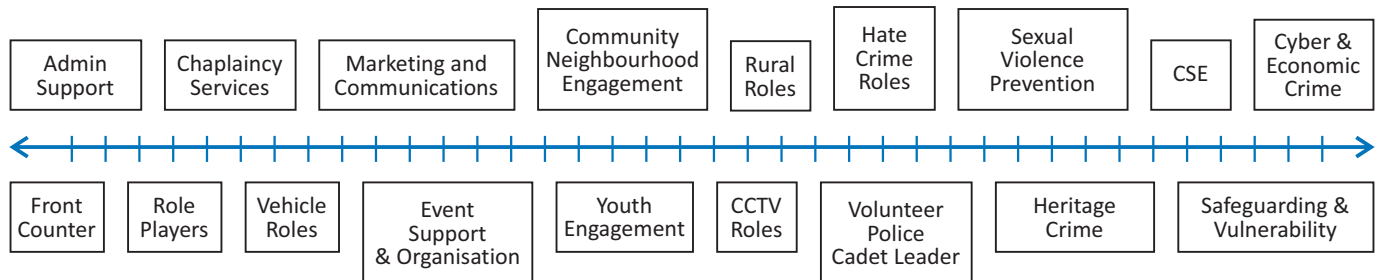
The benchmarking exercise reports that we currently have a total of 1100 different role titles, a huge increase from 2016 (which reported 200). Whilst there may be a reported increase in the number of different roles, it should be noted many of these will be similar or identical with differing titles. It is also suspected the increase is linked to better reporting.

However, the benchmarking report suggests the spectrum of roles performed by PSVs across England & Wales is widening and growing. There is real scope and potential to build on the current success of PSVs in building capacity and capability to meet current and future demand. The type of roles we are seeing can be split into three categories.

- **Enabling Roles** – Free up time of regular staff and officers allowing them to focus on core duties.
- **Preventative Roles** – Reducing demand in the first instance.
- **Specialist Roles** – Skill sets to meet specialist policing demand.

The enabling roles are some of the more commonly known roles that are being seen, but in addition to these there are a variety of new, interesting and innovative roles emerging in more specialist areas.

Enabling Roles..... Preventative Roles.....Specialist Roles



What are volunteers telling us?



People choose to volunteer for a number of different reasons. It is therefore important meaningful roles are available with a solid infrastructure in place to support the volunteer, to ensure they feel an integral part of the policing family. Data from the 2018 volunteer survey provides a very healthy picture in terms of volunteer feedback. However it also identifies areas where improvement can be made in order to support volunteers in the right way. Key points from the survey tell us that:

- **Volunteering is a positive experience for PSVs** – 94% of volunteers agree that their morale is good and 85% feel appreciated for their contribution.
- **There is an identified need for improvement in the management and support of volunteers** – only 66% agree they are receiving ongoing training to remain effective in their role and 78% say the force is good at managing volunteers.
- **Underutilisation is a key factor having an impact on retention** – only 68% agree that the force has given them opportunities to utilise their full range of skills and experience. 38% say that the force is not using them to their full potential.
- **PSV role development and growth is critical.**





Drivers and Indicators for Change

The Policing Vision 2025

will shape decisions around transformation and how resources are deployed to help keep people safe and provide an effective, accessible and value for money service that can be trusted. The PSV programme is a key enabler of this vision.

The communities we serve are increasingly diverse and complex, necessitating a more sophisticated response to the challenges we face now and in the future. It is important that we recognise and acknowledge that if we are to meet community needs, the service has to continue to adapt to the modern policing environment. The drafting of this strategy is a timely and important opportunity to expand our imagination as to how PSVs can benefit from and contribute to the wider aims of policing and society. It is intended that PSVs will be integrated with the wider workforce and strategic priorities in support of achieving this vision, coupled with their integration into the communities they live, work and serve. Our volunteers should be very much community facing, representative of the communities we serve and promote social responsibility in aiding resilience within communities.



Civil Society Strategy

Initial scoping work has highlighted the breadth and potential of the PSV programme, how this contributes to policing objectives and complements the government's **Civil Society Strategy**. Some key quotes which demonstrate government support for volunteering in policing are outlined in the ministerial statement within this strategy:

“As the demand on policing changes and becomes increasingly complex, the additional skills and experiences that volunteers bring to police teams are much more important than ever”

“As well as bringing different skills and backgrounds to policing, volunteers help to forge vital links between the police and local communities”





The Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines reflect that our volunteers should be a key link within neighbourhood policing.

The defining features of Neighbourhood Policing are:

- Police officers, staff and volunteers accessible to, responsible for and accountable to communities.
- Community engagement that builds trust and develops a sophisticated understanding of community needs.
- Collaborative problem solving supported by integrated working with private, public and voluntary sectors.

This recognises that those volunteers and others involved in a neighbourhood policing capacity need time and space to work in a proactive and preventative capacity. This is an ideal area for expansion of volunteer roles in supporting that connection of communities to policing and vice versa.

NPCC National CiP Strategy 2016 – 2019

The PSV strategy is clearly aligned to and supports the NPCC National CiP Strategy 2016 – 2019. It is envisaged that this strategy will be an ever evolving document that enables the delivery of PSV programmes nationally, regionally and locally in order to make the

greatest possible contribution. Progress in respect of the delivery of this strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the work stream lead with oversight from the National CiP Board.

The national CiP strategy is geared towards two main goals: reflecting volunteers' wishes and motivations and maximising the benefits to communities. We need to ensure that our PSVs benefit from being part of the policing family and that in turn their involvement enriches their lives as well as the communities they serve.

Policing and Crime Act 2017

The commencement of regulations under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 now enables Chief Officers to designate powers to PSVs in a way that was not available before, where the Chief Officer is satisfied that the volunteer is suitable, capable and adequately trained. An exciting development which provides greater and significant opportunity for volunteers. This is a unique selling point for the programme as in addition to fully warranted Specials, Regulars or Staff, forces will have the option to use PSVs to carry out roles that may only require a select number of devolved powers, thus providing additional flexibility. Chief Officers will be able to choose where, how (and if) they intend to use the regulations to support the delivery of their plans and objectives.



Office for National Statistics

The Office for National Statistics reports that although crime figures indicate that the level of crime has started to fall compared with the previous year, this picture varied across different types of crimes and not all offence types showed a fall. There was evidence of rise in some of the low incidence, but more harmful categories.

The National Strategic Assessment by the National Crime Agency provides evidence that the scale and complexity of organised crime is continuing to grow, despite operational successes. It also states that investment is required to increase capacity and capability to make the best possible impact in those identified areas of threat.

The Strategic Policing Requirement sets out the national threat and what is required to counter those threats.

Given the challenges now facing the police service, the timing is right to take a broader view of the involvement and deployment of volunteers. In addition to the more traditional roles PSVs will be an increasingly valuable resource in providing skills and support in helping to tackle emerging demand and challenges.

Crime by its nature is often hidden, for example online crime. There has been a notable shift towards investigating those hidden offences and increasingly fulfilling a more protective role in order to safeguard the public. Domestic abuse, modern day slavery and recognising and dealing with vulnerability, coupled with the increase in online offending and technological advances are only some of the significant challenges that characterise policing in the 21st century.

The increasing complexity of crime, more and more, requires the skills and expertise of specific specialists e.g. IT, Forensic Accounting. It is wholly appropriate to seek to attract volunteers from disciplines who have the necessary skills and experience to support specialist functions within the service. Maximising the skills of talented individuals will enhance and support the delivery and achievement of policing objectives.



Meeting the Priorities - Looking to the Future

Based on the feedback and drivers, it is essential that as we look to continue to develop successful PSV opportunities and programmes and to ensure that we value and retain our volunteers at a local, regional and national level, there is a clear need to:

- Create meaningful volunteer roles that meet business need/demand with a positive outcome for both the volunteer and force.
- Provide the right training and development opportunities, to enable volunteers to thrive and flourish.
- Recognise the vast array of skills, knowledge and experiences that volunteers bring to the policing service to ensure that volunteers contribution and skills are valued and developed.
- Develop focused and targeted marketing, recruitment and selection processes, reaching into and engaging with all communities to increase diversity across PSV programmes.





5Cs Overview – CiP Formula

To address the priorities of the strategy we will adopt the 5Cs from the National CiP Strategy to guide us as we move forward: **Capacity, Contribution, Capability, Consistency and Connectivity.**

Through the 5Cs, a number of key objectives have been identified which are outlined under the “together we will” sections. In implementing the strategy a national working group will be established to develop a clear delivery plan that will consider and identify the work that will need to be undertaken, to deliver against the outcomes and measure the impact of the strategy.

So what are we responding to?

- ✓ Key strategic documents.
- ✓ Identified gaps.
- ✓ What volunteers are telling us.
- ✓ The changes in the types of crime and demand that is being seen.
- ✓ Priorities of the PSV strategy.

This strategy aims to provide clarity to ensure forces are clear about their involvement of PSVs in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness to focus on areas where the best possible contribution of PSVs could be made. Other considerations should include; the needs and

priorities of individual forces across England and Wales. These can vary greatly due to a variety of different factors, for example geography, composition, demographics. This strategy should be used to determine how PSVs can be involved in supporting local plans and priorities. It is essential that the national strategy is considered against local requirements.

We want our Police Support Volunteers to:

- Feel valued and that their contribution is recognised.
- Feel able to represent the communities they serve and bring new opportunities to delivering an improved service.
- Be empowered to enhance community engagement and participation.
- Be part of our ambition to increase our social responsibility.
- Help us to build public confidence.
- Add value and enhance service delivery.



Our Approach



Our approach should be to ensure that:

- We are inclusive and open to PSVs who are integrated and seen as part of the wider policing family.
- When considering how we recruit and train, we should be aware of our need to consider Equality Impact Assessments to ensure we remain inclusive.
- PSVs who make a tangible difference should be rewarded and recognised.
- PSVs should feel empowered to play an active role in shaping the future of policing.
- We should strive to have adequate support and opportunities in place that allow PSVs to flourish.
- We should work with partners and the wider voluntary sector to develop closer relations and communication channels.
- We should provide clear direction, leadership and coordination, to ensure volunteers deliver tangible business benefits.





CAPACITY

We want our PSVs to provide additional capacity to enable us to enhance and improve the quality of service we provide to our communities. PSVs will help to provide forces with a skilled resource, delivering additional capacity to tackle and respond to new and complex demand.

The success of this approach must be judged by the value added to policing through greater citizen involvement, rather than by an increase in the number of PSVs. This is not about increasing numbers, but ensuring PSVs are recruited into meaningful roles that support policing priorities where there is an identified need.

Our capacity is by no means full and there is potential for a wider variety of opportunity and more innovative practices through the development of PSV roles to enhance policing service delivery.



TOGETHER WE WILL...

- Actively share PSV role profiles across force areas to reduce duplication of effort.
- Develop sustainable delivery models that will recruit, manage, support and train the PSV to fulfil the requirements of their role.
- Raise the profile of PSVs within forces to ensure that the capacity and capability of the PSV is incorporated within workforce planning processes.
- Utilise national and regional arrangements to ensure there exists positive support and advocacy for PSVs at local, regional and national levels.

“Potential for a wider variety of opportunity”

CONTRIBUTION



Volunteering for the police service is hugely rewarding on many levels. Those who contribute time and skills irrespective of their role are proud to be volunteers, and recognise and celebrate this title. We want our PSVs to feel valued and that their contribution to serving local communities is recognised, appreciated and celebrated.



TOGETHER WE WILL...

- Identify those areas where volunteers make the positive contribution to addressing needs and demands.
- Keep abreast of PSV practices through the regions to understand the type of roles being adopted and the contribution being made.
- Develop stronger data across the activity and contribution of PSVs, build evaluation around PSV roles and develop evidence-based approaches.
- Seek to ensure the contribution made by volunteers is recognised and rewarded, ensuring that there are a variety of appropriate methods available for this.

“We want our PSVs to feel valued”



CAPABILITY

Preparing our capabilities for the future

Designated Powers – Policing and Crime Act 2017, Section 38

Previously designating powers to volunteers within policing was an “all or nothing” approach, with the Special Constabulary being the key product of this methodology. The enactment of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 as mentioned earlier now enables chief officers to designate a wide range of powers on the Police Support Volunteer. Where a volunteering role is identified that indicates a need for powers it will be important to ask ourselves whether or not the volunteering role requires full warranted powers or simply a designation of a limited set of those powers.

Recruitment of specialist skill sets

PSVs should be recruited into defined roles with a clear understanding of their role profile and requirements; whilst considering the benefits of the role against the forces plans and priorities. By defining the role and its requirements, specified skill sets can be identified and through a clear marketing strategy, the right volunteers can be recruited.

Enhance capacity, capability and the level of service delivered

Ever increasing demands and pressures on policing budgets provide ongoing challenges for the policing service, meaning that forces have to re-evaluate how they work to meet community needs. Integrating

PSVs will provide an enhancement to the service that is already delivered in securing and maintaining the confidence of the public.

Providing a preventative capability by way of proactivity and promoting social responsibility

PSVs involvement in proactive community work can enhance a preventative capability with a view to educating communities and promoting social responsibility and community resilience. Providing that key link between communities and the police.

Representative of communities helping to meet community needs, promoting social responsibility

This very much links into the volunteer playing a key role in reassuring and engaging with our communities. Diversity is an important factor in this regard. The policing family should be reflective of the communities we serve. The Police Support Volunteer should be fully embedded as part of the policing family and form part of the force's positive action programme - thus supporting the policing service in being more reflective of its communities and helping in the provision of a better service in the round. As well as bringing different skills and backgrounds to policing, volunteers help to forge vital links between the police and local communities.



TOGETHER WE WILL...

- Work with forces and the regions to identify new and innovative roles utilising the Policing and Crime Act 2017 powers provisions, to build an evidence base for future advice and guidance.
- Ensure PSVs are supported, trained, equipped and allocated where appropriate with relevant policing powers to have the capability to make a real difference to policing.
- Work with the Home Office and other policing stakeholders to look for a future sustainable solution around effective, accessible representation for PSVs with designated powers.
- Look at ways to capture and record the skills of volunteers and provide opportunities to use these in a more diverse way.
- Explore the potential to introduce volunteer management training within mainstream training programmes.
- Look to actively recruit from across the 9 protected characteristics where gaps are identified through a defined marketing / attraction strategy.
- Better understand the diversity of our volunteers through the improved collection of data from across the 9 protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation) to inform best practice; including attraction strategies.



CONSISTENCY

We want our PSVs to add value to service delivery against strategic priorities in a consistent way across England and Wales, taking into account the operational autonomy of Chief Constables and local force areas. This strategy accepts that it is for Chief Constables to determine local priorities and to determine the involvement of their available resources. However, the involvement of volunteers should be considered against the wider available resource and be viewed as a collective asset.

Forces have the ability to deliver their own PSV programmes and to quickly develop new and innovative roles. From benchmarking data it is clear there are an increased number of roles, however it is suspected in some cases there is a duplication of effort. There is a need for national direction in respect of consistency across the board, with clear links required across national, regional and local levels to standardise roles.



TOGETHER WE WILL...

- Work with national and regional arrangements to support an integrated and consistent approach to the management and development of the PSV programme.
- Utilise new and existing places (e.g. CIP website <https://www.citizensinpolicing.net>) to showcase and share key resources in a structured way to support forces with their PSV programmes.
- Reflect on current roles to categorise and standardise the variety of roles identified. (This is not intended to inhibit the creation of new roles but will support consistency of approach across England and Wales in key areas).
- Develop a Valuing Volunteers Framework (VVF) to support forces in making an assessment of their volunteering programmes that also measures a return on investment. The VVF will also aid forces in the completion of their force management statements.
- We will work with the College of Policing to ensure the Police Support Volunteer Practitioner Policy Manual remains current and is refreshed and updated as appropriate.



CONNECTIVITY

We want our PSVs to be connected to the communities they serve and bring new opportunities for delivering services. We want to increase our social responsibility by connecting with communities and delivering two-way benefits. Volunteering roles will help the police to develop a proactive and sophisticated understanding of community needs to

keep people safe, particularly as communities become more complex and diverse.

In addition we want our PSV programme to be connected and engaged with others; including business, voluntary and statutory sectors to strengthen connectivity in support of policing objectives in building resilience.

TOGETHER WE WILL...

- Explore how we further improve our connection and communication with PSVs to encourage feedback about their role in helping us to improve the volunteer experience and enhance the service.
- Continue to understand developments within PSV programmes and carry out benchmarking and survey activity.
- Actively involve, engage and collaborate with others; including business, voluntary and statutory sectors in order to strengthen connectivity to tackle common themes and issues.
- Ensure that PSVs feel connected to the wider policing family and are empowered to play an active role in shaping the future of the service. We must promote a culture and environment where the PSV has a voice that is heard.
- Work to secure a sustainable PSV data management system suitable for all forces. This will provide one platform where the key skills of PSVs can be recorded to enable forces to maximise their volunteer involvement.
- Extend the Employer Supported Policing (ESP) scheme to include PSV's. Seek out new opportunities locally, regionally and nationally for employees to be engaged with this.
- Look to identify flexible pathways for progression, where appropriate, should volunteers wish to further their involvement in the policing service.



For CiP national enquiries please email
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<https://www.citizensinpolicing.net>