



Buckinghamshire

Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

Providing independent community advice to Thames Valley Police (TVP)





Leadership messages

The Buckinghamshire IAG was launched at the inaugural meeting on 4 June 2025. As the title of the group suggests we cover the whole of the County of Buckinghamshire.

The aim of the IAG is to strengthen trust, transparency, and collaboration between Thames Valley Police and local communities within the IAG area.

Our purpose is to help and advise the police to understand community-based worries and concerns from a layman's perspective. These include such issues as:

- hate crime
- anti-social behaviour
- drugs
- policing practices





Leadership messages

I would like to thank members of the IAG for giving so freely of their time and experiences in the meetings. Their commitment to both supporting and questioning members of TVP has been exemplary.

I would also like to place on record my sincere thanks to Chief Superintendent Emma Burroughs who leads our Local Command Unit (LCU) on doing such a fantastic and professional job. The support that she gives the IAG is immeasurable. I would also like to thank all our serving officers for the great job they do in protecting and serving us in Buckinghamshire.





A message from Chief Superintendent Emma Burroughs

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Buckinghamshire Independent Advisory Group (IAG) for their commitment, insight, and constructive challenge over the past year and to the Chair Mark Shaw for his exceptional leadership. Since its establishment in June 2025, the IAG has rapidly become a vital forum, strengthening transparency and trust between Thames Valley Police and our diverse communities.

Throughout the reporting year, the IAG has offered invaluable feedback on several significant areas of policing. Their review of Section 60 authorisations in Castlefield helped ensure community perspectives informed how we use sensitive powers. They also provided important challenge around neighbourhood policing, examining how visibility, engagement data and community priorities shape the way we work. Their willingness to question and understand emerging technologies, including Live Facial Recognition, has supported us in clarifying safeguards, legal frameworks and maintaining public confidence.





A message from Chief Superintendent Emma Burroughs

The group's insight into community concerns, ranging from youth violence, Drug supply and anti social behaviour to the rising fear of hate crime, extremism and misinformation has helped us respond more effectively and with greater empathy. Their feedback has strengthened relationships with local faith groups, highlighted the needs of vulnerable individuals, and supported our wish to improve the levels of Trust & Confidence in our communities.

The IAG's contributions have shaped our priorities, enhanced our understanding of local issues, and ensured that the voices of Buckinghamshire residents remain at the centre of policing decisions. I am deeply grateful for the time, expertise and challenge that members bring to this work. Their role is crucial in helping us build stronger, safer and more cohesive communities.





About the Bucks Independent Advisory Group

The Buckinghamshire Independent Advisory Group (IAG) is made up of twenty-three residents that reside throughout the County of Buckinghamshire, who volunteer their time to help support Thames Valley Police (TVP) by providing a community-based insight, honest feedback and helping TVP identify areas where improvements or clear explanations are required. Members act as a critical friend and come from a wide-ranging backgrounds, experiences and cultures. They help the police to have a greater understanding of how their actions and policies affect residents. The views of the group are also fed into the TVP's Trust & Confidence governance structures.



Meetings & membership

- Three meetings were held during 2025/26
- Average attendance is 16 members; all meetings are held on Teams.
- Police representation is at least four per meeting
- There are 24 members of the IAG
- The group consists of a well-balanced representation of male and female, different age groups up to senior citizens and people from variety of ethnic, cultural and professional backgrounds.
- We would like to encourage some more younger people to join the group on a regular basis





What we focused on



Review of Section 60 authorisation

- Given community tensions in the Castlefield area of High Wycombe in April/May 2025 and three Sections 60 had been issued.
- An explanation was given what a section 60 was, why it had been issued and the effectiveness of it within the community.
- The Group reviewed the reasons for it being issued and the positive effects it had had on the Police being able to calm down many of the issues that had been faced by residents. A report was also given on the number of stop and searches and the number of arrests made.
- The Group were also able to discuss the use of Closure Orders and the use of CCTV
- It was also reported the start up of the Castlefield Coalition, to help re-establish and strengthen community ties.



Thames Valley Police Approach to Neighbourhood Policing

- An overview of the Neighbourhood Policing guarantee and engagement was presented.
- Information on the five pillars of increased Neighbourhood Police
- to get more Police back on the streets which would be community led.
- The NH Policing app was discussed and how it can be used by officers whilst they are out of the Station
- We also discussed at length the Trust & Confidence Strategy Pillar – Engagement and Reconciliation – Delivery Plan
- We also reviewed engagement data and how it is used strategically, tactically, operationally and locally.





Live Facial Recognition

- An overview of Live Facial recognition was presented to the group. Members were able to express their concerns about this new system.
- It was reported that 99% accurate
- The legalities and the rules about the use of this technology were discussed fully.
- It was noted that it was a human officer that made the final decisions taken on an individual not the computer





What we heard from the Community





Key Themes

- Positive feedback about reductions in crime, especially the results of operation Grotto
- Ongoing concerns about young people involved in knife crime, drug use and antisocial behaviour.
- Police Officers are engaged with local councillors, community and faith leaders at various levels. We have seen strengthened relationships with many different community groups including Mosques (in High Wycombe and Chesham in particular), followers of the Hindu faith (In Aylesbury) and with the South Bucks Jewish Community.
- Positive comments have been made to several members on Increased police officer visibility through expanded neighbourhood teams.
- Concerns about misleading national debate and social media on grooming gangs and the importance of relying on local data for better-informed decision making.



Fear of extremism and hate crime

- National and international events have caused increased reports of hate crime and tension; particularly relating to anti-migrant/asylum seekers.
- Anxiety across communities that overseas tensions could spill over locally.
- Communities are concerned about safety, particularly women wearing Islamic attire, worshippers, older people, and isolated residents who are feeling vulnerable.
- Fear of crime, protests and threat to community cohesion driven by national and social media narratives and recent surge in flag displays across the UK.
- Assurance from police on preparedness, community reassurance measures and steps to counter misinformation and challenge hate narrative.



Use of policing powers involving vulnerable individuals

- Fear and distrust relating to stop & search powers.
- Concerns about interpreting autistic or neurodiverse behaviours as suspicious.
- TVP is committed to improving training and raising awareness on neurodiverse needs.
- The need to protect vulnerable people, including women, older adults, and cultural groups.



Feedback to Trust & Confidence Board & Responses

- Residents concern about the supply and selling of drugs especially to young people within our communities.
- Importance of careful and sensitive handling of incidents and communications to avoid community tensions.
- Continued focus on the causes of knife and youth crime and appropriate use of Section 60 powers.
- Continued support and understanding to support women to have freedom from Violence and abuse.
- Members welcomed a briefing on retrospective and live facial recognition. Although assurances were provided regarding safeguards and appropriate use, concerns were raised about privacy and misuse.



Key Messages for the Community

- Communities are asked to support accurate narratives and challenge misinformation.
- Neighbourhood Teams are prioritizing visibility and reassurance.
- Buckinghamshire is a low crime area to live but the fear of crime is high.





Reflections on how the panel is working

What worked well:

As a new group, it was important that we developed a strong group dynamic which I believe has been achieved. All the members feel at ease either asking questions or giving their views in an open and honest manner at meetings. We conclude each meeting by asking members if they feel that they have been given the opportunity to participate and contribute to discussions.

What we will improve:

Looking ahead, the IAG will continue to monitor hate crime and increasing transparency around policing data, continue to strengthen engagement with community and faith groups, supporting effective neighbourhood policing, promoting community cohesion, and ensuring members continue to share community perspectives to inform policing practice and build trust.



Areas of Future Focus

IAG Cycle	Proposed Areas of Focus
April 2026	Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) consultation; TVP Trust & Confidence Strategy delivery plans
June 2026	Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan; Neighbourhood priority setting and progress
Sept 2026	Neighbourhood Engagement Plan; update on Trust & Confidence sentiment survey
Nov 2026	ASB Action Plan; T&C Strategy delivery updates



How to get involved

For any enquiries relating to our Independent Advisory Group please contact:
scrutiny@thamesvalley.police.uk.

We are committed to supporting members' learning and development through training and informal learning sessions and seek your valuable input to help shape and improve what and how services are delivered to our communities.

Next meetings planned:

- 13th May,