



# Oxfordshire

Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

Providing independent community advice to Thames Valley Police (TVP)





# Leadership Messages

## Chair David Orpwood

- I am a retired farmer and businessman and now run a small commercial property company. I'm married, with three children and five grandchildren, and I enjoy country life - looking after my dogs, spending time outdoors, and caring for our garden.
- Before the Oxfordshire Local Command Unit Independent Advisory Group (LCU IAG) was created in October 2024, I chaired both the South & Vale IAG and the Thames Valley Police Rural Crime Partnership. I have also served as Chair of my local Parish Council. Over the first year of the Oxfordshire LCU IAG, we have worked to include a wider range of voices so Thames Valley Police can better understand how policing decisions affect different communities. I'm grateful to TVP and my fellow members for their dedication to supporting safer, stronger communities.





# A message from Chief Superintendent Ben Clark

I want to thank the Oxfordshire IAG for their continued commitment and the constructive challenge they provide. The IAG is a really valuable group who provide insights to help us improve service, respond to community concerns and help build trust and confidence across Oxfordshire. The work of the IAG has helped to inform our decisions and priorities as well as provide a valuable touch point in understanding community sentiment.





# About the Oxfordshire Independent Advisory Group

The Oxfordshire Independent Advisory Group (IAG) is a group of local people who volunteer their time to support Thames Valley Police by sharing independent community insight, providing honest feedback and helping the police identify areas where improvements or clearer explanations are needed. Members bring a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, cultures and perspectives and act as a “critical friend,” helping the police understand how decisions, actions and policies may impact communities differently. Furthermore, Members receives regular briefings and updates on TVP’s Policy and operational initiatives which they disseminate to their local communities. Insight from the group informs Thames Valley Police’s Trust & Confidence governance structures, helping senior leaders understand local priorities



# Meetings & membership

- Four meetings during 2025/26
- Average attendance: 8 members
- TVP representation: 4 per meeting
- 16 members as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

Oxfordshire IAG is privileged to have a diverse group of mixed religions, people from different ethnic backgrounds, representative from different gender groups and different educational backgrounds. As a rural county we also have representation from that sector. I believe that despite being a small group we have been very successful in reaching out a wide mixed group. We are, however, seeking to develop our geographical reach and keen to promote involvement of young people in the group.





# What we focused on



# Local command unit development and policing model

- Review of the first year of the new Oxfordshire Local Command Unit.
- Increase in neighbourhood officers, following Government funding, and adoption of engagement and patrol-data analysis.
- Public reassurance activity following changes in officer deployment across the counties.
- Welcomed the TVP's new Trust and Confidence strategy.
- Reviewed changes to the Police and Crime Commissioner role.



# Policing and community engagement

- Activity to strengthen trust with farmers and landowners including use of WhatsApp groups and outreach to young farmers improving confidence and reporting.
- Discussions on widening engagement, including Parish-aligned “bite-size” sessions and event attendance such as Black History Month.
- Work to improve communication and highlight positive policing activity including Oxfordshire social media trial to improve online visibility and counter misinformation and incorrect narratives.





# Stop and search disproportionality

- Detailed review of disproportionality affecting Black and minority communities.
- Commitment from policing leads to improved recording, narrative reporting and scrutiny.
- Improved scrutiny of Section 60 Criminal Justice & Public Order Act powers, which allow searches without individual suspicion when there is a risk of serious violence. Any new authorisation is shared with the IAG chair at the earliest opportunity to ensure transparency and public reassurance.





# What we heard from the Community





# Fear of extremism and hate crime

- Anxiety across communities that overseas tensions could spill over locally
- 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 behaviour as suspicious.
- Discussion on training and understanding of neurodiverse needs.
- Commitment from police to explore issues in detail.



# Key Messages for the Community

- TVP is closely monitoring national and international events to provide reassurance
- Oxfordshire remains a low-crime area, but fear of crime is high.
- Communities are asked to support accurate narratives and challenge misinformation.





# Reflections on how the panel is working

## **What worked well:**

As a new group, our first priority was to bring members together and establish shared objectives and themes. The group is fortunate to have a diverse membership representing different communities, experiences, and professional backgrounds, which has enabled constructive and inclusive discussion and meaningful contributions. We noted strong commitment from senior leadership through to operational officers, who regularly attended meetings and provided briefings on important local and national developments.

## **What we will improve:**

Looking ahead, the IAG will focus on involving a wider geographical mix of Oxfordshire and young people to inform policing practice and build trust.



# Areas of Future Focus

| IAG Cycle  | Proposed Areas of Focus   |
|------------|---|
| June 2026  | Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) consultation; TVP Trust & Confidence Strategy delivery plans |
| Sept 2026  | Anti Social Behaviour Action Plan; Neighbourhood priority setting and progress              |
| Dec 2026   | Neighbourhood Engagement Plan; update on Trust & Confidence sentiment survey                |
| March 2027 | 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](mailto: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.