

PM praises “firepower” of new police recruits in fight against crime: 31 August 2022

The Prime Minister will today (Wednesday 31st August) join new police officers working on the frontline to make our streets safer.

After joining on operations, he will speak to officers from one of the 20 Violence Reduction Units set up by this government and see first hand the work they are doing to prevent crime in the community by intervening earlier and working closely with health and education partners.

His visit comes as new Home Office figures will show a 90% satisfaction rate among new recruits brought in under the government’s recruitment drive, with almost 80% reporting that the job met or exceeded their expectations.

So far, over 13,790 extra police officers have been hired across England and Wales as part of the manifesto commitment to put 20,000 additional officers on our streets.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Making our streets safer has always been central to my mission to level up this country, because everyone should have the security, confidence and opportunity that comes from having a safe street and a safe home, wherever they live.

We are cracking down on vile gangs and putting dangerous offenders behind bars for longer – and at the heart of these efforts are the 20,000 new officers who will be out on the streets providing the firepower for years to come in the fight against crime.

Located in the areas hardest hit by violent crime, Violence Reduction Units bring together key local partners, including health, education and policing organisations, to target the underlying causes of violence and prevent children and young people being exploited by criminal gangs – helping rid communities of the long lasting impacts of violent crime.

Backed by £170m of government funding and combined with targeted enforcement activity, they have prevented over 49,000 violent offences in their first two years, and supported over 260,000 vulnerable young people in their second year alone.

Since 2019 the police have removed over 72,000 knives and dangerous weapons through stop and search, surrender programmes and other targeted police action.

The government has also significantly stepped up action against county lines gangs and launched a first of its kind Drug Strategy – backed by record investment – to deliver a whole system approach to tackling supply and demand. Since November 2019, more than 2,400 drug dealing lines have been shut down, 8,000 arrests made, and supported over 9,500 individuals at risk of exploitation.

The government's Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, which passed into law last year, equips the police with the powers and tools they need to crack down on crime, including through lifting restrictions on stop and search and introducing new court orders to help target known knife carriers.

The Act has also brought in tougher sentences to keep serious sexual and violent offenders behind bars for longer, so that they pay the full price of their crimes.