



Night time safety operation continues into new year

A Northamptonshire Police operation targeting men who prey on vulnerable women on a night out in Northampton and Kettering will continue into next year.

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold is funding Operation Kayak, where uniformed police officers patrol hotspot areas on Friday and Saturday nights to help reduce crime and keep the public safe. The focus of the operation is particularly on targeting people who are being sexually aggressive, intimidating or whose behaviour causes concern.

Any vehicles seen loitering in or driving around Northampton and Kettering town centres are stopped to see if their reason for being in the area is valid.



OP KAYAK in numbers

100
arrests

25
arrests for
sexual offences

435
vulnerable people
supported

162
other incidents
attended
including assaults
and drink driving

Since the start of the operation earlier this year, officers have made 100 arrests, which includes 25 arrests for sexual offences – including rape and sexual assault – as well as dealing with numerous people seen acting suspiciously.

And more than 435 vulnerable people have been identified and kept safe by the Op Kayak policing team.

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold said: “We need to make sure our town centres are safe and comfortable places not just for women, but everyone to visit at night. I have already funded the SNOvan, which is a safe place that the Northampton Guardians and volunteers use as a base to support people who

need help. This operation focuses on the perpetrators, and it has proved to be very effective. I am pleased to be able to ensure it continues.”

While working on Op Kayak, police officers have also attended 162 unrelated incidents, and made arrests for other offences including drink driving, other driving offences, assaults, and drug possession.

Detective Chief Inspector Nickie Deeks, the Force lead for Violence against Women and Girls said: “I’m really pleased the Commissioner has agreed to fund this operation into 2023. Through Op Kayak, we are reducing offending and protecting the public by being a visible presence, proactively watching out for and challenging suspicious activity or behaviour.”



Engagement on the pitch helps set a positive path

Children and teenagers from two Northamptonshire estates took part in a football tournament which also helped educate them on the dangers of knife crime and joining gangs.

The tournament was organised as part of a Week of Action by Northamptonshire Police targeting serious violence - and saw 75 young people from Blackthorn in Northampton and Hemmingwell in Wellingborough come together for a friendly tournament at Northampton Academy.

Serious violence is a priority for the Force and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC), and the Blackthorn and Hemmingwell estates were selected for the scheme as they have higher levels of gang related activities than many other areas in Northamptonshire.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold went along to lend his support to the tournament and was able to observe the engagement with young people – who were all aged between eight and 18 - and several services during downtime between matches.

These included local PCSOs, the OPFCC Youth Commission and its Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) officers, the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) team, the Youth Offending Service and its Prevention and Diversion Scheme, early intervention service Aquarius and community group Off The Streets.

Young people were educated about the risks of carrying knives, while parents were also given advice on spotting the signs of gang involvement and ensuring they can leave such activity behind safely.

Both West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire councils helped contribute financially towards hosting the event alongside the OPFCC and Northamptonshire Police. And the Premier League Kicks scheme – a project partnership with Northampton Town FC Community Trust - helped to supply staff to run the tournament smoothly alongside volunteers from Northamptonshire Police Football Club.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold said: “It was a pleasure to see organisations working together to

educate young people about the tragic consequences of knife crime and gang involvement, and it was great to see the positive effect this event had on those who attended as well as their parents.”

And Chief Inspector James Willis, who organised the tournament, said: “This was a sterling example of partnership working, and I am grateful to all the organisations and volunteers who gave up their time to assist. It was gratifying to see the children and young people engaging with the service providers and showing off their sporting prowess.”



Investment in new ANPR cameras gives good return

Investment from fines paid by speeding motorists has funded additional ANPR cameras to more than doubled the size of the network in Northamptonshire. This extension has already made a significant contribution to tackling crime in the county.

ANPR technology – automatic number plate recognition – is used to deter, disrupt, and detect criminal activity across the country.

A vehicle's number plate is read when it passes one of the fixed or mobile ANPR cameras, and then checked against a database of records of vehicles of interest.

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold decided to invest in 161 new ANPR cameras at 150 new camera sites, with the specific aim of protecting the county border, increasing the coverage in rural areas, and better covering the major towns.

More specialist staff were also employed as the ANPR Intelligence Team, to analyse the additional information being gathered by the new cameras.

As a result, in the first three months of 2022, the cameras were activated by vehicles of interest almost 268,000 times – and around half of these activations were down to the new cameras.

And their role in tackling major crime and keeping the county safe is significant.

- The enhanced ANPR network has played a key role in the seizure of illegal drugs with an estimated street value of £78 million.
- 439 cloned vehicles have been identified
- 100 vehicles were seized in an operation that also resulted in 19 arrests for offences such as robbery and burglary
- And 242 further arrests have been directly attributable to the work of the ANPR intelligence team and their work in identifying suspect vehicles

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold said: "Northamptonshire has always

been a leader in ANPR technology and I knew that this investment would be put to good use. What makes it ever better is that the investment has been funded entirely through the fines paid by speeding drivers, putting that money back to good use to make our roads – and our whole county – safer."



New training rig keeps firefighters at top of their game



A new rig that helps firefighters train to deal with real life fires has been installed at the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service training centre in Chelveston.

The eight-tonne rig costs roughly £50,000 and is designed to withstand extreme heat as one of the units where firefighters carry out exercises that mimic real life scenarios.

New recruits on their Breathing Apparatus foundation course were among the first to use the new rig, taking part in a fire behaviour training demonstration. The drill sees the unit and contents set on fire by training managers so that trainee firefighters

can see how a fire develops and reaches temperatures of almost 800 degrees Celsius.

Group Commander Mick Berry, a Training Department Manager at NFRS, said: "The new rig will help us to apply the new learning techniques which we've been training our firefighters on so that they can be the best that they can be in a safe environment."

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold added: "This asset will continue to enhance the professional development of our firefighters, and also help the Service carry out its important work in keeping members of our community safe."

Tackling road safety concerns

Patrols tackle poor driving

Northamptonshire Police have carried out patrols to target irresponsible and illegal driving.

Twenty-nine vehicles were stopped over two days last month and 28 offences detected including speeding, not wearing seat belts, using a mobile phone, carrying insecure or dangerous loads and even driving whilst disqualified. All drivers have received appropriate penalties for their actions.

Chair of the NSRA and Head of Northamptonshire Police's Operations team, Superintendent Jen Helm, said: "Every person who dies or is injured on our roads is one too many and we must never forget that behind each statistic is a grieving family or someone coming to terms with a life changing injury. As a partnership we are working hard to improve road safety and reduce the number of people killed



or seriously injured on our roads.

"The introduction of our new road policing team in January will mean there will be more officers patrolling the county's road networks and challenging the behaviour of those who think they are above the law."

Stephen Mold added: "I know that communities want more to be done around road safety and through the Road Safety Grant Scheme, the youth education programmes, police interventions, and via my support for the Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance we are focused on improving safety for all road users."

New video is the centrepiece of road safety education push for teenagers

The Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance (NSRA) a partnership between Northamptonshire Police and Fire and Rescue Service, Northamptonshire Highways and the Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is working hard on programmes to improve road safety within the county. This is particularly urgent given the recent increase in the number of fatalities and serious injuries seen on Northamptonshire's roads over the last few months.

One of the campaigns will focus on educating young people and is being launched this month. The campaign features a road safety education film

called My Pink Trainers, which will be delivered in schools to Year 12 students.

The short, hard-hitting film has been developed in consultation with young people and involves a real incident where a young person lost their life following a road traffic collision. The video sends a stark message to young drivers and passengers that an error of judgment or carelessness can have devastating consequences.

On the video, the three survivors of the collision speak candidly about the incident, the aftermath and the emotional and physical impact it has had on their lives. Students will then participate in discussions

around distractions whilst driving, consequences and strategies to deal with reckless or inconsiderate driving.

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold said: "We need to educate young people in the way that works the best for them and start relevant conversations that reach beyond the students, to parents and wider communities as well.

"Young people are more likely to be injured on our roads than involved in any type of crime, and I want to tackle that. If we can reach every school in the county and save even one life through this engagement, then we are making progress."

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