

# WILTSHIRE POLICE



Police and Crime Commissioner,  
Philip Wilkinson.

**Chief Constable Catherine Roper**  
**Police Headquarters**  
London Road  
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8 December 2023.

Dear Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson,

Later today, I will be issuing an update regarding our ongoing review into applications made to us under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (known as Clare's Law) further to failings we uncovered earlier this year. This follows my commitment to keep our communities informed on the progress of this crucial work.

As previously outlined, we have commenced a review into more than 3,500 Clare's Law applications and disclosures handled by Wiltshire Police between April 2015 – August 2023. This is further to the Force making a voluntary referral in October to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) regarding concerns linked to disclosures made under the scheme by one member of Wiltshire Police staff, which is now subject to an independent investigation by the IOPC.

I would like to repeat my heartfelt apology to anyone who we have let down.

To ensure there is the required strategic leadership of this review, I have appointed a Chief Officer to oversee this work and, in turn, they have appointed a dedicated Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) to provide investigative direction and accountability. We have increased the dedicated resources on this review to over 36 members of staff who are being supported by the wider organisation to ensure this review is conducted expediently. We have also bolstered the number of staff who support with any new Clare's Law application made to us.

Since the review began, we have made an additional three IOPC referrals regarding this matter – two relating to service failures and one in relation to how the organisation responded to two previous IOPC investigations.

I can assure you, and our communities, that where we are identifying any risk, we are taking immediate steps to make contact with the applicant. Additionally, wherever we are identifying any failures in our service, we are referring these immediately to the IOPC. We have also brought together local and national stakeholders to provide critical advice on the review process, including other police forces, national government agencies and our Independent Advisory Groups.

Once again, I ask that if anyone is concerned regarding people at risk of domestic abuse, or may be concerned having made an application to Wiltshire Police under Clare's Law between April 2015 and August 2023, to contact us directly by emailing [clareslaw@wiltshire.police.uk](mailto:clareslaw@wiltshire.police.uk). If anyone feels they are in immediate danger, they should call us on the police emergency number 999.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Whilst it feels uncomfortable to move onto other operational updates in this letter after discussing such a catastrophic service failure, it is important to outline other policing updates from across the county.

In December 2022, 18-year-old Owen Dunn died from a fatal stab wound after an attack in broad daylight in Swindon. Last Thursday, at Bristol Crown Court, Tyler Hunt, 18, of Park South and a 15-year-old boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, were convicted of Owen's murder and will be sentenced in January. I would like to pay tribute to Owen's family and friends who have conducted themselves with the utmost dignity throughout what has been an incredibly difficult and harrowing time for them. I would also like to thank my officers and staff, led by Detective Chief Inspector Phil Walker, for their commitment, tenacity, and determination in bringing these two offenders to justice.


Our communities have been clear with us – they want to see a consistent focus on visible, neighbourhood policing. In support of this and underpinning my operational priority of Safer Public Spaces, I am pleased to say we have launched an initiative to target crime and anti-social behaviour in Swindon.

My officers and staff will be working with partners, conducting high visibility patrolling in the town centre and at out-of-town shopping locations, and providing crime prevention advice. [You can read more about this initiative here.](#)

In follow up to our road safety campaign in the summer, we've also launched our annual Christmas drink drive campaign. During this period, we will be stepping up our patrols to target those who get behind the wheel of a car having drunk alcohol or consumed illegal drugs. We will have a zero tolerance approach to anyone who chooses to put theirs, and others, lives at risk on our roads.

Finally, I would like to reinforce your invite to our communities to take part in the [Use Your Voice](#) survey which your office has launched this week. This asks the public their views around policing priorities and budgets. I look forward to reading their feedback.

Kindest regards to you,



**Catherine Roper**

**Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police**