

# Thematic Briefing

## Citizens in Policing

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## 1.0 Background / Context

1.1 Lincolnshire has a long and proud history of local citizens supporting the policing of the county. In 2012 the force set out its ambition to have 1000 volunteers, to include an increase in the number of Specials, Police Support Volunteers (PSVs), cadets and to introduce the role of Volunteer PCSO. From a starting point of 423, 600 volunteers had been recruited by 2016. Since then, the total number of volunteers at any time has averaged about 500 before reducing slightly due to the impact of the pandemic. The numbers since 2014 are as follows:

	Mar-14	Mar-15	Mar-16	Mar-17	Mar-18	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-21	Mar-22
Specials	250	221	195	161	145	135	135	117	141
VPCSOs	11	30	60	41	21	15	16	11	7
PSVs	91	146	202	214	221	237	219	176	161
Cadets	153	151	146	107	118	123	124	105	123
<b>Total</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>432</b>

1.2 New roles and opportunities have been and continue to be developed to support different areas of police service delivery; to maximise the volunteer contribution and promote community engagement with policing.

1.3 The force has continued to support the volunteer cadet programme for 13–18-year-olds and is now more closely aligned with the principles and operating standards of the national Volunteer Police Cadets.

1.4 In 2017 the force introduced Mini Police, and neighbourhood policing teams now work with over 100 primary schools to deliver key safety and good citizenship messages to year 6 and 7 pupils.

1.5 The force has continued to acknowledge the contribution of volunteers in supporting front line officers and staff, predominantly through the deployment of Specials and VPCSOs and the additionality that Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) can provide to policing support services.

1.6 Volunteers bring a citizen's perspective to policing and provide a degree of connectivity between the police and local communities. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in the

development of the Citizens in Policing agenda through the respective internal volunteer steering groups and to provide a citizen's perspective to other force programmes; volunteers are routinely included in force consultation exercises.

- 1.7 COVID impacted significantly on the deployment of volunteers. The early stages of the pandemic saw an increased contribution from the Special Constabulary, however there was a reduction in the hours contributed by PSVs and other volunteers as a consequence to minimise access to police premises and the risk of infection to front line staff. Things are slowly getting back to pre-COVID levels, as volunteers themselves feel comfortable returning to stations.
- 1.8 The force continues to promote the recruitment and deployment of volunteers to provide additional resources across a broad spectrum of policing services.; maximising the skills and qualities that volunteers bring to the force, providing the volunteers with meaningful roles and acknowledging their valued contribution.

## **2.0 Developments over last 6-12 months**

- 2.1 The recent focus for the Special Constabulary (SC) has been to maximise their contribution by increasing the number of SC officers, in part to offset the impact of increased police officer recruitment, but also to acknowledge the additionality that they provide to front-line policing. In 2021/22 the force recruited three intakes, providing 61 additional Specials, and taking the number of Specials to 150 (Feb 2022); above the national target of 10% of regular officer establishment.
- 2.2 The force has provided opportunities for SC development and progression, either through promotion or by offering more specialist roles in Criminal Investigations (CID) and Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP). Additional training has been offered to the Safer Roads Team Specials to support their work on the Fatal 4, and 6 Specials have successfully completed the Standard Driving Course, increasing the force's capacity and capability to deploy to urgent incidents.
- 2.3 Although PSV recruitment was put on hold during the worst of the pandemic, there has been a gradual increase in applicants and 35 members of the public have joined as Volunteers in the last 6 months.

2.4 New PSV roles have been developed in Crime departments to provide additional administrative support and steps have been taken to adapt roles to staff flexible working arrangements.

### 3.0 Current Position / Performance (where applicable)

3.1 During 2021/22 the Special Constabulary contributed 35,050 hours giving an average of just over 24hrs per month per Special (the widely accepted norm is 16hrs per month). The hours for 2021/22 are down from 51,671 in the previous year, but 2020/21 was an exceptional year when SCs stepped up to the mark to support their regular colleagues through the worst of the first wave of the pandemic.

3.2 Key SC activity during 21/22 is shown in the following table:

Activity	Number
Arrests/Assist arrests	557
Crimes recorded	340
Public Protection Notices	165
Incidents attended	4228
Fatal 4 – Fixed Penalty Notices	307
Fatal 4 – words of advice	392
Stop Searches	64
SOCAP Vehicle Seizures – No Insurance etc.	72
Other traffic offence reports	172

In addition, the small SC Rural Crime Team supported Operation Galileo (harecoursing) activity and carried out other independent rural crime patrols, including 59 fishing licence checks, 2 dog seizures and 1 vehicle seizure.

3.3 PSVs (including VPCSOs) contributed over 10,000 hours including:

Activity	Number
Cadet Training	1178
Role Play	922
Smart Rider - Motor cycle safety training	601
Chaplaincy	205
Restorative Justice	599
Events	199
VPCSO	1328

**4.0 Forward look 6-12 months**

- 4.1 We are looking at closer integration of the SC Safer Roads Team, currently based at Boston and Headquarters, with Roads Policing units.
- 4.2 We will continue to develop PSV roles as required, focusing on those areas of business to support achievement of force objectives and target recruitment to ensure we maximise the skills and experience offered from volunteers.
- 4.3 We continue to develop our existing partnerships with the voluntary sector and with local businesses/organisations through the Employer Supported Policing (ESP) Scheme.

**5.0 Issues of Exception – Opportunities / Risks**

- 5.1 Through the development of specialist roles for both Specials and PSVs we have tapped into the rich pool of skills and expertise that volunteers bring to policing and we will continue to explore opportunities to maximise the contribution, reduce attrition and demonstrate a real appreciation of the value volunteers bring to policing.
- 5.2 The recently approved Volunteer Police Cadet Safe Operating Standards will be a focus to ensure compliance with the national standards.

**6.0 Key Public Messages**

- 6.1 If you are interested in volunteering with Lincolnshire Police, please contact Jackie Rowe at [volunteers@lincs.police.uk](mailto:volunteers@lincs.police.uk) or check out current vacancies on the Lincolnshire Police [website](#)
- 6.2 If you have an interest in helping young people to achieve their best and would like to become involved with the Volunteer Police Cadet programme as a leader, please contact as above.