



Devon & Cornwall Police
Building safer communities together

Estates Strategy 2022 to 2030

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

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Modernising and investing in our communities

By Police and Crime Commissioner
Alison Hernandez

As Police and Crime Commissioner I own the police estate in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and this wide and varied portfolio of property is managed by my office. Since I was elected, I have sought to support a programme of innovation and modernisation with the aim of producing an estate that is fit for 21st Century Policing, while being cost effective for the taxpayer.

I have also supported changes and investment that have helped to deliver on my Police and Crime Plan principle of creating Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities. With this strategy in mind my first term of office saw several older, inefficient properties sold for redevelopment as part of projects that benefit their local communities, with revenues invested into modern, low carbon buildings. Exeter Police Station is an example of this principle in action. The building replaces one that was too small, with cramped rooms and high energy use. The new building – created using mostly local businesses – sets new standards in terms of environmental sustainability and gives police officers, staff and volunteers the workspaces they deserve, while the old site will be part of Exeter City Council's plans to bring a new type of flexible living accommodation to the city.

While major projects such as these grab the headlines, vital work is carried out by the team each day to ensure our buildings and land are safe and secure. As we move forward my estates team will play a pivotal role in projects such as the reopening of police station front desks and providing facilities for a force that has grown significantly with the national uplift in officer numbers.



Key Facts

146 buildings across the Force area

5,248 Police Officers and Staff accommodated

3 unitary local authorities,
1 top tier unitary county council and **8** district councils

8 partner organisations accommodated

4,000 square miles and
6 inhabited islands - largest policing area in England

13,600 miles of road infrastructure, largest in England and Wales

730 miles of coastline

£11.2m Annual Estates Capital Budget

£16.2m Annual Estates Revenue Budget

1000 fleet vehicles accommodated

79% of estate over 20 years old

£178m Book value

19.5 sqm/space/person equates to 107% against national average 18.2sqm/person.

88% Estates expenditure compared to National Force average (GIA) at £128.22/sqm

46% of buildings are leasehold

54% of buildings are freehold

Our estate – where are we?

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is the legal owner of 146 buildings located across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Over 5,248 Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP) officers and staff colleagues, occupy these safe, secure and accessible buildings, delivering a range of critical Policing services to our communities and partners.

There can be no doubt that we are and will continue to operate in unstable, demanding and challenging times. No matter what happens Policing will require an estate footprint, providing a visible representation of policing in communities. The type, location, form and space requirements will need to adapt but will remain ever present.

This document seeks to update the 2017-2021 Estate Strategy, aid strategic decision making, reflect on our successes but more importantly look ahead to understand our high-stake challenges and future orientation. The rate of change in terms of automation, societal fragmentation, the unregulated digital environment, widening demographics and climate pressures further compresses the needs for clarity of direction and bold leadership.

The OPCC and DCP have worked together to develop clear strategic plans ensuring we can deliver Policing services now and, in the future, underpinned by a robust financial framework and a defined risk appetite, to support our estate services. This strategy seeks to balance the risks of local decision making

The estate portfolio is geographically spread, extensive, complex, and ageing, which despite improvements remains a significant legacy issue for both organisations. After officer and staff salaries, this is our highest area of expenditure. The Estates Strategy will work hard to drive effective property decisions, reassure local partners and empower our leaders.



Where do we want to be?

Our estate is an important enabler in achieving our ambition. Estate assets are traditionally long term, immobile and expensive. This document will provide the following Policing outcomes:

- Safe
- Resilient
- Connected
- World Class
- Sustainable Policing

This Strategy has been predicated on preparing the Policing estate for the short, medium and long-term future.

Current trends and indicators outline a diverse range of issues converging at speed, in both quantity and complexity, including conflict, cost uncertainty, terrorism, social disruption, cyberattacks and climate change. Individually, or more likely a combination of these issues is likely to result in severe and imminent disruption. Being able to provide a rapid response to the unforeseen and unpredictable, will always be a distinguishing feature of modern policing. However, in a world of ever more frequent and disruptive change, we need to ensure the capacity to respond and address emerging challenges and opportunities through a modern, agile and efficient estate footprint. This strategy will also aid strategic decision making and manage the risk of locally based requests for change.



Strategic Context and objectives

Our Estates Strategy seeks to maximise the visibility of policing in communities but also generate efficiencies and savings for the public purse. As we emerge from the pandemic, prepare for new ways of working and embed the uplift in police officer numbers we need to make decisions about how we make the estate flexible and fit for the future. Operational policing requirements vary as the nature and style of policing evolves. This strategy will enable us to meet these challenges head-on and drive change.

The estate and its visibility are key to policing in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It helps deliver the Police and Crime Commissioner's *Police and Crime Plan* and the Chief Constable's *World Class Sustainable Policing* Vision, supporting sustainable operational policing and better connectivity with communities. The shared ambitions will be achieved through the delivery of the following Estate objectives:

	Provision of fit for purpose, safe, and secure buildings	
	Provision of high-quality Policing buildings, which support operational capacity requirements	
	Clear and prioritised capital investment programme	
	Commitment to complying with the Force and OPCC sustainability principles	
	Stock condition and structural survey data providing risk-based asset management decisions	
	Disposal of surplus/underutilised assets and reinvestment into new resources	
	Opportunity to optimise occupancy costs	
	Improved staff retention and community satisfaction levels	

How do we get there?

This strategy will support the Commissioner's vision to maximize local visibility, presence, and public confidence across our urban, rural and remote communities. It will also support our Force operating model, as the driver for change, to adapt to increased demand from our diverse communities.

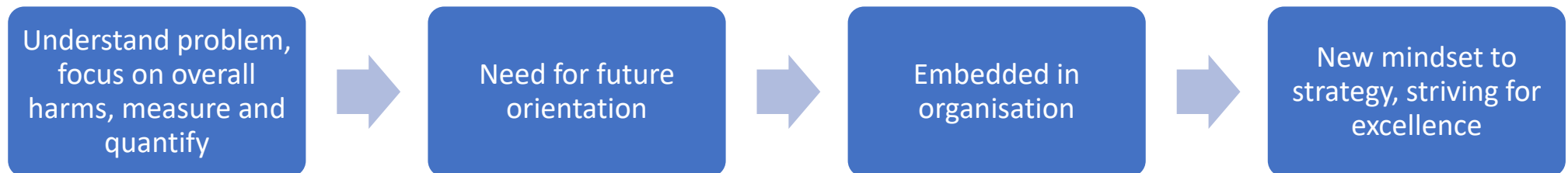
This will be achieved through embedding our established approach to partnership, nurturing and creating vibrant estate solutions which assist in attracting, retaining and the successful delivery of services for our officers, staff and communities.

We need an estate planning process which promotes and enables co-located and collaborative deployment of services in conjunction with our partner agencies.

It needs to consider innovative use of funding models to support our long-term financial sustainability and the drive to continually improve, particularly considering the new swiftly developed ways of working resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic.

The principles within this document will be utilised to shape the joined-up approach to investment planning and prioritisation across the Police estate.

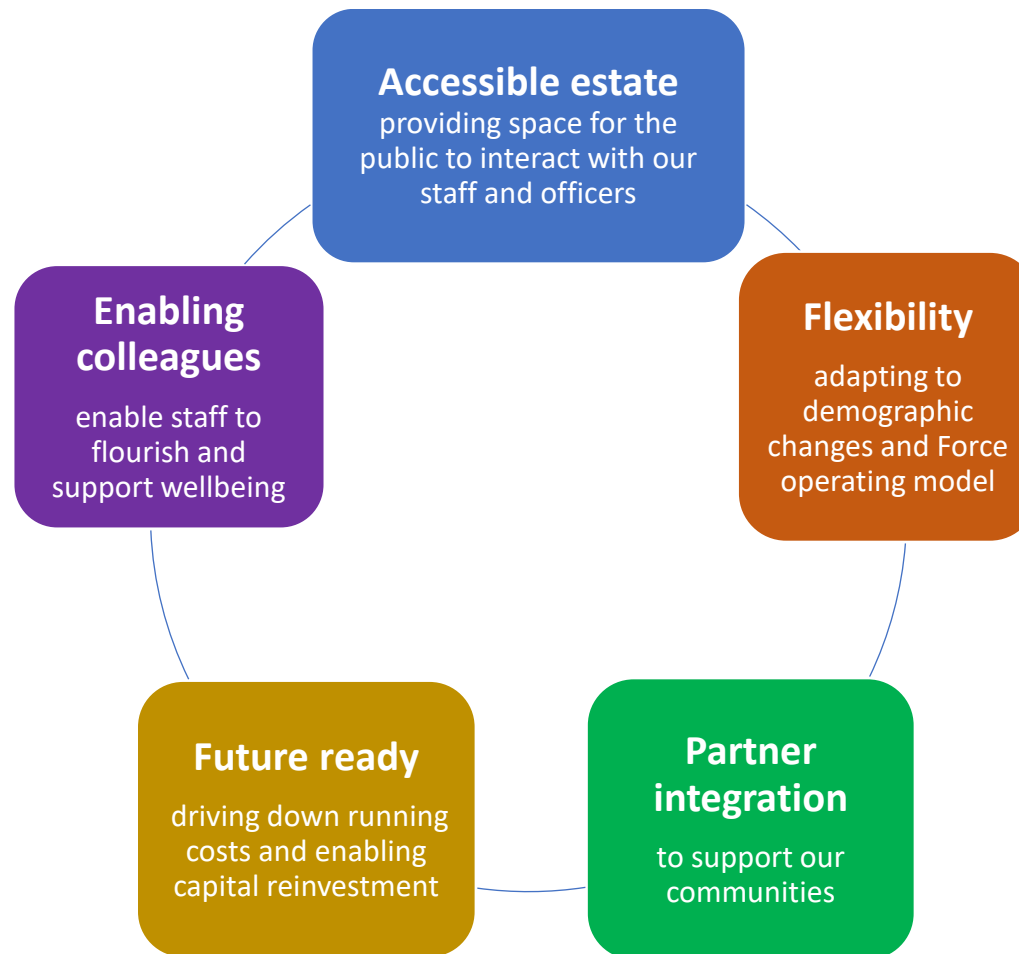
The use of assets is key to policing in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It will enable the delivery of excellence and equity across our footprint. Investment will be focussed on improving the collective outcomes for our staff and communities whilst ensuring our plans are agile and able to respond to the ever-changing world.



Estate Priorities

The 2022 to 2030 Estates Strategy will support the delivery of the Police and Crime plan, Force mission, and our borrowing capacity.

Between now and the end of 2030, we will achieve the following outcomes:



Delivery of Estate Strategy 2022 to 2030

The *Estate Strategy 2022 to 2030* will be delivered in the context of our recovery from the Covid pandemic and its impact on our ways of working, the challenging external construction and pricing markets, increasing estate related legislation and continuing financial pressure including inflation.

Due to the dynamic nature of the external operating market, this strategy will remain a 'live' document, with reviews completed at least annually or following a significant, novel or contentious event.

The changing needs of our current and future communities require a clear strategic plan, ensuring policing operations and specialist functions are able to project into the future, planning for demand in terms of location, space, function and occupancy, rather than simply responding.

Our Estate Strategy has been informed by the needs of our core functions including local policing, specialist divisions and corporate services, along with being an enabler of change.

During this strategy, we will deliver the following estate projects:



Connecting communities and policing

The estate footprint occupies at least 92 sites, these are highly visible to the communities we serve and total the second highest number of buildings for a Police force located in England and Wales (as at 31 March 2021), compared to the National average per Force of 69. Equating to 4% of the total Gross Internal Area (GIA) for all force estate.

46% of our buildings are leasehold, compared to a National Force average of 29%. This is partly due to the need to secure small, community-based premises within our more sparsely populated areas. The remainder of the sites are Freehold, standing at 54%, compared to the National Force average figure of 61%. It is worth highlighting that these figures are based on the number of buildings and when compared to the Gross Internal Area (GIA), it actually equates to 14% for Leasehold and 86% for Freehold.

79% of DCP buildings are over 20 years old and 56% are in excess of 46 years.

The total book value of the estate has risen by 20% since 2017 to £178 million.

Stock condition and structural surveys have been completed across the entire portfolio during 2021-22. This data and information will be analysed during 2022 to formulate a future ready, evidenced based approach to our disposal, retention, capital new build and revenue programmed maintenance plans for the remainder of the strategy period.



Getting the best from assets

The way in which we work and deliver services is changing, our asset portfolio is intrinsic to the success of transformational change. The impact of mobile working devices and the ability to co-locate with partners such as the Ministry of Justice and NHS, reduces the space requirements for our staff and officers.

In addition, the ability to utilise technology to store information, is and will continue to reduce our storage space footprint moving into the medium to long term. All opportunities will be explored with a view to optimising revenue. Long term leases of large premises will continue to be avoided, ensuring value for money and flexibility in our estate.

We will continue to work with public sector partners across the peninsula to collaborate where schemes contribute to accessibility, flexibility, efficiency and wellness. This is already well advanced in Cornwall, through the Blue Light Property Integration Programme Board and we will build on this work, prioritising opportunities with blue light responders in the first instance.

The International Financial Reporting Standard 16 (IFRS16) process will be fully implemented, ensuring our leases are appropriately and accurately recorded within our financial accounts, along with a full review of our valuation methodology and processes. In the future, we are considering valuing 70+ years ahead.

The average space utilisation across all Forces stands DCP at 107%, based on 19.5 sqm/person for DCP, against a national average of 18.2sqm/person. We can and must improve how we use our buildings and deliver services; this will be a key focus. The overall Estates expenditure is 88% of National Force average (GIA) at £128.22/sqm compared to National average of £145.46. This is also reflected in Staff management costs of £10.51, compared to £16.15 National Force average, demonstrating value for money and the likely need for further investment.



Sustainability

Sustainability and environmental considerations have recently undergone a step change. This strategy will actively support the objectives of the newly formed *Energy Policy* and other associated Sustainability documents. DCP recognises the impact that climate change is having economically, environmentally, and socially at a global, national and local level, and consequently are committed to reducing the carbon footprint associated with activities and services, and

transition to net zero. This Estates Strategy will:

- Ensure compliance with the Commercial Minimum Energy Efficient Standards deadline of 1 April 2023 for all affected leased premises. Our Estates aspiration is to achieve at least a C rating by 2030. This is equivalent to a new build constructed between 2006 and 2009.
- Work is being undertaken to understand the cost of moving our existing estate up to a C by 2030. We recognise this will support our sustainability agenda and our asset investment value.
- Electric Vehicle charging points and the associated infrastructure requirements provide both challenges and opportunities for the Force.
- Recruit an Energy Manager.



The three highest Estate related annual revenue costs are:

1	• Business Rates
2	• Utility Costs
3	• Cleaning

The continued pressure on budgets due to increased utility supply volatility and costs will remain a significant demand risk for the Force and OPCC. Key factors relate to significant price increases, the impact of the Climate Change Levy and switching to sustainable tariffs.

Security

The recommendations of the 2015 Force-wide security review have been implemented through the maintenance and capital programmes. All new build and major refurbishment projects aspire to the principles of the national police “Secured by Design” standard.

Map of Devon showing the locations of 35 police stations. The map includes labels for various towns and cities such as Ilfracombe, Braintree, Bideford, Bude Police Station, Launceston, Camelford, St Ives, and Linhay PPU. A legend in the bottom left corner shows the Devon Police crest and the text "Isles of Scilly".

Key Measures

These measures will be used to monitor the success of the strategy:

Completion of the Middlemoor strategy 2024/25	Completion of the Surplus Space Strategy 2025/26	Development of a Third Party Access policy (Telecommunications Code) 2024/25	Stock Condition and structural data analysis to ensure Future ready	Secure Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) and Section 106 (S106) financial contributions
Deliver the OPCC and Force Sustainability aspirations	Deliver Energy monitoring across the estate	2 additional Partner co-locations across the portfolio	opening new Customer Contact Points each year between 2023 and 2025	Secure £5m capital receipts
HQ Middlemoor Sports Hall new build 2023	Devon evidential Property and Information store re-provision 2023	St Ives co-location with Cornwall Fire Service 2024/25	Dartmouth co-location with SWASFT 2022	Camborne refurbishment 2023/24
Barnstaple Northwalk demolition and site disposal 2022/23	Truro Estate review 2022/23	Tiverton Police Station Relocation 2023/24	Exmouth new Police Station and existing site disposal 2025/26	South Devon Estate review 2023/24
Complete 2 space audits each year	Embed New Ways of Working	Support National Policing Estate objectives	Deliver and embed Estate Compliance Framework	Heavitree site disposal 2022/23

Finance position

The estates strategy concentrates on the re-provisioning of stations where the demand exists and where connectivity with the public can be maintained or enhanced, the disposal and development of existing assets to generate capital receipts for re-investment and/or creating new facilities within development schemes.

The PCC requires capital receipts from the sale of surplus assets to be optimised in support of operational policing, within acceptable risk parameters, the following will therefore be explored:

- Sites sold with market facing planning consents
- Redevelopment of the site prior to resale on the open market
- Retaining sites with commercial value to provide a revenue return

The ongoing maintenance of the estate will be continually evaluated to ensure value for money.

The finance focus for this strategy will be on value for money and efficiency. All decision made will be subject to annual funding settlements.

Governance

Decision making on estate projects is subject to a governance structure which facilitates input from both the OPCC and senior operational leaders. Below is a chart showing the estate governance routes. The Chief Constable will have unfettered access to all land and building owned by the PCC in order that the Chief Constable can provide an operational capability. Any decision to acquire dispose of or modify any land or building that forms part of the Estates Portfolio the Police and Crime Commissioner will always consult the Chief Constable.

All estate projects feed into the wider organisational governance by way of the Estates Governance Board and then the Resources Board and, where appropriate, will then be presented to the joint executive board. This strategy will be reviewed annually or by exception and reported internally to the joint executive board and externally to the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel within the *Annual Report*.



