



**NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**



KIM MCGUINNESS

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to my December newsletter.

This has been a busy year, with so much change, but also so much opportunity. This month I announced funding for a project which will ensure we finally start to tackle the causes of crime and hand communities the chance to prevent violent crime taking over.

The team at my specialist Violence Reduction Unit want to ensure Northumbria remains a safe region, and are dedicated to preventing violence among at risk teenagers and adults.

30 organisations across the Northumbria area have been awarded a share of £930,000 as part of joint efforts to reduce violent crime, ensuring much needed investment

in vital youth and community services suffering after ten years of austerity.

The Violence Reduction Unit will build on the techniques first seen on the streets of Glasgow, where police, councils, the NHS and charities worked with communities to treat violence as a public health emergency. This hugely successful approach saw at risk people targeted early in order to prevent crime, and is credited with a 50% reduction in some violent offending

Funding for the Violence Reduction Unit was secured from the Home Office but at present that money is only in place until March 2020. During the General Election I made clear to all political parties that they need to commit to providing a dedicated intervention fund for the years to come, and I look forward to working with the new Government to make this a reality.



STAYING SAFE THIS CHRISTMAS

As we prepare for the festive period, I joined families who have lost a loved one to violent crime as part of a region-wide bid to raise awareness of the devastation one punch can do and urge people to think about the long-term consequences of their actions.

I was honoured to help families launch this year's One Punch event with a stark poster campaign warning of the lives that can be lost to rash actions.

You can find out more information about the campaign at www.onepunch.org.uk

RURAL

VOLUNTEERS

I'm proud to be the Commissioner for a force that stands by its rural communities with dedicated resources. But in an area as large and sometimes sparsely populated as ours, it's great to see local volunteers stepping up to support those policing efforts.

That's why I was delighted to join a fresh-faced group of volunteers as they were sworn in as part of a bid to crackdown on rural crime across Northumberland.

A total of 20 Rural Crime Volunteers officially joined Northumbria Police and will work closely with our officers and other partner agencies to help prevent and disrupt local and cross-border criminal activity.

It was amazing to see so much dedication from these volunteers. They continue to support officers and staff in their work to tackle rural crime and they do it all on their own time and on occasion risking their own personal safety.



STANDING UP TO DOMESTIC ABUSE

Across the Northumbria area, we've made great progress in ensuring women and victims of domestic abuse have a voice and turn from victims to survivors. But despite that hard work, we know domestic violence and coercive control is still widespread.

This month I've joined people dedicated to tackling this so as we ask of ourselves, what more can be done?

Across a variety of projects and learning conferences I've heard how the key to ending domestic violence is to give women a voice. Abuse such as this thrives on secrecy, and standing up to it on behalf of those suffering domestic abuse is incredibly important.

One great example of this was the Digital Me project. Here women used creative digital lessons to show their survival story and give them the opportunity to share their unique perspective. Their video showed the care they received, how the systems in place helped them move on from traumatic experiences and lets them reflect on ways professionals can improve.

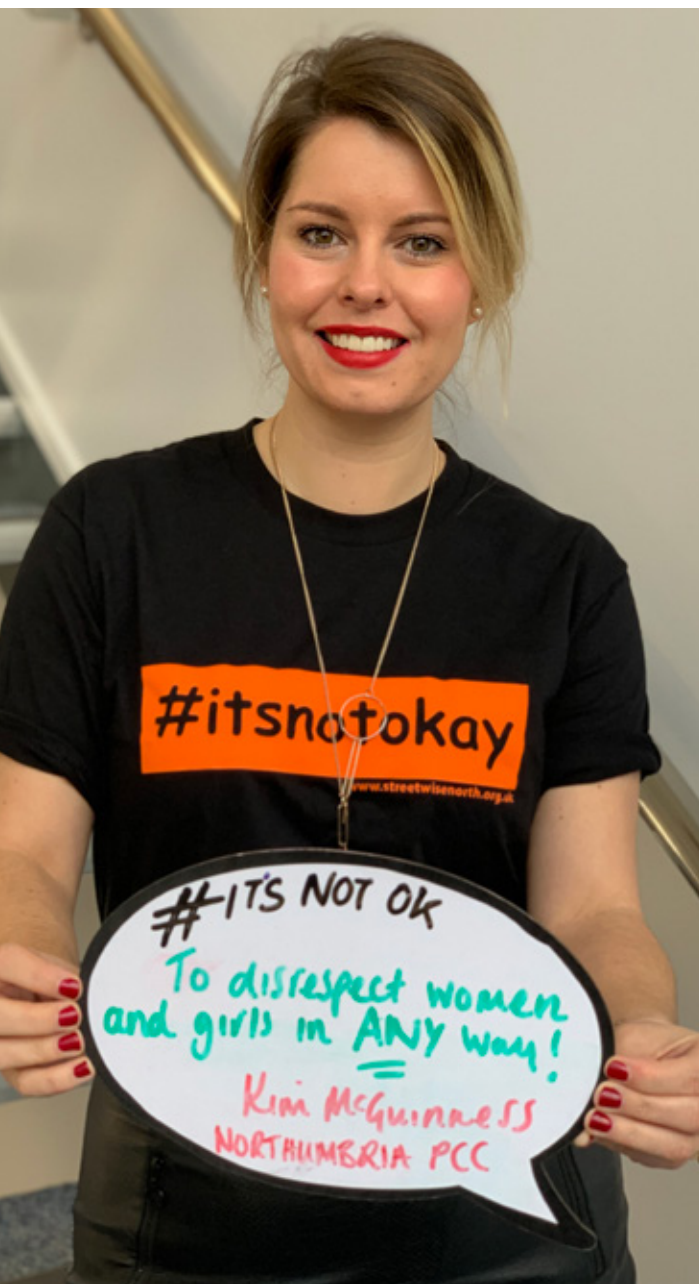
I'm proud my office funds projects such as this, and I'm committed to continuing to champion the survivors escaping domestic abuse the staff and volunteers who help make this happen.

That dedication amongst our public sector was on show when I visited Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service as part of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Firefighters were taking part in the White Ribbon campaign which works to challenge male cultures that lead to harassment, abuse and violence.

That message of respect was repeated on our streets as part of the #itsnotokay campaign. Young people's charity Streetwise invited the public to share the things they feel should not be happening in our city, for example #itsnotokay to grope me, harass me, send me indecent images, with the aim to raise awareness of the ongoing issue.

It was great to see so many young men and women taking part in this project and standing up to discrimination.





MEETING THE FRONT LINE

I've made it my mission to regularly meet with officers on the ground. It's an opportunity to hear first-hand about the challenges they face on a daily basis - what's working and what isn't.

It has also highlighted a strong sense of pride amongst Northumbria Police officers - wanting to deliver the very best service to local people. Most recently I spent some time meeting officers, CSOs and Specials from across the patch and a recent visit to Southern Area Command which covers South Tyneside and Sunderland. There's some really good work happening in this area to tackle anti-social behaviour issues and support our most vulnerable.



Last month I was invited to take part in an event as part of an educational workshop for school children across the region, hosted by anti-racism charity, Show Racism the Red Card. 'Why doesn't racism just stop?' was one of the many thought-provoking questions asked by young attendees and it's with these young people that the future lies.

We need to help them to challenge stereotypes and to respect each other. Bullying of any kind is completely unacceptable and abhorrent in any setting, including in schools. I firmly believe that education is the best way to challenge racism in society. Initiatives such as this, which open up conversation and teach young people about the causes and consequences of racism, will continue to get my full support. We need to teach about the past and inspire young people to change the future.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

It's been a busy year, and there's lots more to do in 2020. I hope you enjoy this festive break, and I look forward to working with you all in the New Year.