

District Commander's Introduction

As the District Commander for Winchester, I am pleased to present this updated Q1–Q3 2025 report to the Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Panel. Our focus remains on visible, connected and trusted policing that relentlessly pursues offenders, puts victims first and delivers exceptional local policing.

Executive Summary (for Scrutiny)

- **Total recorded crime:** up 2.6% (148 offences). Many of the increases align with greater reporting and proactive enforcement, not necessarily increased harm.
 - **Drug offences:** up 33.1%—largely a *positive enforcement indicator* linked to stop/search, warrants and targeted operations. A summer spike in possession and detections is associated with the Boomtown festival period and planned policing activity.
 - **Robbery:** +95.2% off a low baseline; linked to confrontational shop thefts meeting robbery criteria and firmer recording standards/retail engagement.
 - **Sexual offences:** –9.1% with continued focus on safeguarding and investigation quality.
 - **Theft offences:** –2.5% overall; retail partnership work continues, with 41.6% formal action taken for shoplifting and targeted CBO use against repeat offenders.
-

Comparative Crime Table (Q1–Q3)

WINCHESTER	Q1– Q3 2024	Q1– Q3 2025	Variance	% change	Comments (drivers & context)
1 Violence Against the Person	2,165	2,203	+38	+1.8%	Small rise consistent with better reporting and visibility, notably around the NTE and domestic contexts; early intervention and presence can lift recording without increased harm.
2 Sexual Offences	296	269	–27	–9.1%	Reduction aligned with sustained safeguarding focus and investigation quality; continued emphasis on victim-led approaches and VAWG activity in the NTE.
3 Robbery	21	41	+20	+95.2%	Winchester remains a low-robbery district and this

					increase must be viewed in the context of a very low baseline. The rise does not indicate that Winchester has become a robbery hotspot. Instead, it reflects changes in recording practice, reporting behaviour, and policing focus. National policing reforms and the Crime and Policing Bill have reinforced the requirement to record retail confrontations as robbery where force, threat or intimidation is used. In a district that has seen a marked increase in shoplifting, this has resulted in incidents that would previously have been recorded as theft or public order now being correctly classified as robbery (e.g. offenders threatening staff when challenged or pushing past staff to escape). Enhanced neighbourhood policing, stronger engagement with retailers and improved crime recording standards have also increased reporting and accurate classification. In low-volume areas such as Winchester, small absolute increases can present as large percentage changes; therefore, the 95.2% increase reflects a classification and reporting shift rather than a significant increase in underlying risk or offender behaviour.
4 Theft Offences	1,805	1,759	-46	-2.5%	Ongoing retail partnership (CSP/BID Rangers) and offender management; shoplifting FAT 41.6% with spikes in Aug-Sep managed through targeted patrols.
5 Criminal Damage & Arson	427	436	+9	+2.1%	Seasonal ASB-linked damage; early intervention/restorative

					pathways used where proportionate.
6 Drug Offences	287	382	+95	+33.1%	Proactive activity (stop/search, warrants, county lines disruption). Summer spike linked to Boomtown operations ¹ and event-related detections; since April: 354 possession and 60 trafficking offences recorded locally.
7 Possession of Weapons	49	62	+13	+26.5%	Reflects intelligence-led stop/search and youth-safeguarding focus to prevent serious violence; increase consistent with proactive enforcement patterns.
8 Public Order Offences	532	539	+7	+1.3%	Stable demand: robust NTE policing and third-party reporting contribute to steady recording levels.
9 Misc. Crimes Against Society	158	197	+39	+24.7%	Category includes breach of court orders (including CBOs and bail), licensing offences, offences against public justice and prison-related offences. The increase reflects proactive identification and enforcement of breaches, increased licensing compliance activity within the NTE, and continued investigative activity linked to HMP Winchester rather than increased community harm.
Total	5,740	5,888	+148	+2.6%	Overall rise reflects confidence/visibility and targeted enforcement, not simply more harm.

Note: "FAT" = Formal Action Taken.

¹ Boomtown related crime data should be viewed as an indicator of effective and visible policing rather than increased criminality. The festival's presence leads to a temporary, positive spike in detections due to the scale of enforcement activity rather than any decline in local safety.

Why are some offences increasing?

- 1) Visibility & confidence:** When people have more confidence to report crime, more offences come to light. That increases recorded crime, but it does not necessarily mean more crime is being committed.
 - 2) Proactive enforcement:** Stop-search, warrants and targeted operations are designed to detect offences, especially drugs and weapons, so increases here are often *positive indicators* of disruption.
 - 3) Recording & retail engagement:** Firmer classification and partnership with retailers move some confrontational thefts into robbery; low baseline districts see large percentage swings from small absolute changes.
 - 4) Seasonal/event-related demand:** Boomtown contributes to a summer spike in drug possession/detections due to planned event policing and search activity.
-

Operational Delivery & Partnership Work (highlights from attached documents)

Retail crime & city centre ASB

- **Op Compile** (ASB/shoplifting, City Centre): 22 arrests, 2 CBOs in place, 166 weeks of imprisonment secured. Joint patrols with CSP and BID Rangers continue on the High Street.
- **Shoplifting performance:** Since April, 555 reports with 231 formal outcomes (41.6% FAT). Demand peaked August–September, managed through enhanced patrols and problem-solving with retailers.
- **Robbery context:** The increase is closely tied to confrontational retail incidents that now meet robbery criteria.

Drugs, supply and harm reduction

- Since April: 354 possession (FAT 326) and 60 trafficking (FAT 22). Continued warrants and active monitoring/disruption of drug lines, aligned with county lines teams.
- Seasonal uplift during Boomtown with planned operations and searches increasing detections, which is reflected in the Q1–Q3 totals.

HMP Winchester – Op Goliath

- 178 crimes/reports recorded; 74 charge/summons; 45 finalised at court, with almost all resulting in additional imprisonment; 50 ongoing investigations.

ASB

- **River Park:** Building secured (CITEX), Code 9 security from Aug 2025. Ongoing issues: break-ins and fires; plan includes extra patrols, improved

response, internal motion sensors/CCTV and evidence capture for investigation, through a multi partnership response.

- **Youth-related ASB:** Continued PC/PCSO work with repeat offenders supported by council online reporting routes.

Business & parcel crime

- Police have received approximately 100 reports of parcel theft linked to Evri deliveries across Winchester and Test Valley, with around 70 reports concentrated in Winchester in early September.

A 31-year-old man from Swindon was arrested, but the case resulted in no further action due to insufficient evidence.

Local investigations identified a series of incidents affecting a small number of clients in the Winchester and Eastleigh areas, causing significant impact on those affected. Victims raised concerns about Evri's operating processes, particularly the way couriers are commissioned and managed. These concerns were shared publicly with partners through a media release.

Police now have a clearer understanding of Evri's courier model, recognising that Evri is not directly responsible for the individual actions of commissioned couriers. Work is ongoing with the company to improve communication, partnership working, and support for police and victims where offences have occurred.

Roads policing & RTCs

- Notable RTCs: Hyde Street, Battery Hill, Worthy Lane, St Cross Road; one fatal on Stockbridge Road. Middle Brook Street: five reported incidents in 2025 (mostly minor; one e-scooter; one dog struck) with no pattern indicating dangerous conditions. Badger Farm Road: review found limited relevant collisions; no current evidence that speed/volume is a contributory factor (speed data not routinely captured). Speed limit changes rest with Hampshire County Council.

Assurance to the Panel & Next Steps

1. **Sustained visibility:** Continued deployment of the extra rural local bobbies and targeted city-centre patrols with CSP/BID partners.
2. **Focused disruption:** Maintain warrants, stop/search and county-lines work; use CBOs to manage the most harmful repeat offenders.
3. **NTE & VAWG:** Keep enhanced weekend coverage and licensing / Pubwatch governance to support victim-focused outcomes.
4. **Data & scrutiny:** Monitor robbery classification trends with retail partners; continue to track event-related demand (e.g., Boomtown) and assess proportionality.

We remain committed to working with our communities and partners so that people in Winchester are safe and feel safe.

Chief Inspector Korine Bishop
Police District Commander, Winchester