

**CHOOSE
MY PCC**

Candidates for the Avon & Somerset Police Force Area

On 6th May, you will be able to vote for
your police and crime commissioner.

Find out who your local candidates are
and how to vote



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About Police and Crime Commissioners

On 6th May, you will be able to vote for your Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The role of the PCC is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. Elections will be taking place in England and Wales. In London, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire, there will be elections at the same time for Mayors who exercise PCC functions.

PCCs are responsible for the totality of policing in their force area and aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service.

39 PCCs will be elected across England and Wales, of which 4 are also responsible for overseeing the fire and rescue authority for their area and are called Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCC) – these PFCCs are found in Essex, Staffordshire, North Yorkshire and Northamptonshire). There will also be 3 Mayors with PCC functions elected in London, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

PCCs are elected by you and aim to cut crime and hold the force to account on behalf of the public. PCCs bring a public voice to policing, and they do this by:

- engaging with the public and victims of crime to help set the policing priorities for the area and consulting on their Police and Crime plans;
- ensuring the police force budget is spent where it matters most; and
- appointing the Chief Constable, holding them to account for delivery of their objectives and if necessary, dismissing them.

Work with others

PCCs, PFCCs and Mayors who exercise PCC functions also work with your council and other organisations to promote and enable joined up working on community safety and criminal justice.

The PCC, PFCC or Mayor who exercises PCC functions does not 'run' the police force or fire service. Chief Constables and Chief Fire Officers are operationally independent, and they are responsible for the day to day operations of the police, but they are accountable to the public via the Police and Crime Commissioner.

PCCs, PFCCs and Mayors who exercise PCC functions are single, directly elected individuals ensuring the public are protected, providing greater opportunities for collaboration and more effective scrutiny of public services.

They ensure that there is an effective policing contribution to national partnership arrangements to protect the public from other national and cross-boundary threats.

Represent the entire community

PCCs, PFCCs and Combined Authority Mayors who exercise PCC functions are required to swear an oath of impartiality when they are elected to office.

The oath is designed so that they can publicly set out their commitment to: serve all of the people in their police force area; act with integrity and diligence; give a voice to the public; act with transparency so that they may be effectively held to account; and not interfere with the operational independence of police officers.

Find your candidate

This booklet contains information on the candidates standing for election in the Avon & Somerset police force area. You can also order a copy of this booklet in the following formats: large print, braille and audio.

To place your order visit **www.choosemypcc.org.uk** or call **0808 196 2170**.

About your vote

You need to be registered to be able to vote.

If you are not registered visit **www.gov.uk/register-to-vote** or contact your local council.

If you are registered, and eligible to vote you can either vote in person at a polling station, by post, or by proxy (allowing someone you trust to vote on your behalf).

In this election you can vote for a first and second preference of who you want to win.

For more information about your vote and other elections taking place on 6th May visit **www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter**

Kerry Barker

Labour Party



Election statement:

In 2012, when the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was first elected 17,968 violent and sexual offences were reported to Avon and Somerset Police. In 8,388 of those cases the culprits were identified, and formal action taken against them by the police (a detection rate of 47%). The formal action ranged from warnings to prosecution. By 2019, the last normal year before the Coronavirus pandemic, the number of violent and sexual offences reported had surged to 47,656 and yet the number of cases detected fell to 5,630 (a detection rate of just 12%).

This awful detection rate was due to strategic decisions to reduce the number of police officers dedicated to community policing, closing police stations and disbanding specialist teams of detectives such as those specialising in sexual assaults. Decisions made in part in response to the cuts to police budgets made by the Coalition government of the Tories and Lib Dems.

Contrary to promises made these strategic changes did not make the police more effective. Throughout the whole region the detection rate for crimes such as burglary, robbery, criminal damage and disorder are very low.

Quite clearly the welfare and safety of women was not a priority for the local decision makers or for government. Their promises to do so in future are worthless.

If elected,

- I will improve neighbourhood policing with more officers dedicated to community policing (more police officers on the beat in your area);
- stop the closure of police stations; and
- bring back the specialist teams.

At the heart of those priorities will be the safety and welfare of all women.

Prepared by Philip Raymond Walsh, Election Agent,
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Cleo Alberta Lake

Green Party



Election statement:

I am a brave, determined, caring woman who is committed to listening, action, cohesion and justice. 'With communities for communities' is my simple and sincere pledge.

I am Bristol born with family connections in Somerset and have over two decades of community development and political experience. I have been an elected Councillor in Bristol since 2016, and was Lord Mayor of Bristol 2018/19.

My highlight in local government has been my service with Avon Fire Authority, chairing the Diversity Inclusion Cohesion and Equalities Committee from its inception in 2017. As such, I have first hand experience of supporting and positively scrutinising a major institutional culture change.

If elected as your Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset I will:

- Appoint a Deputy experienced in delivering systemic change and budget scrutiny, **ensuring systemic reform and value for money**
- **Have a 'prevention' approach to crime** – allocating budgets towards interventions
- **Improve diversity and gender balance**

- **Support victims**
- **Reduce the use of Stop and Search**, in part through developing new guidelines regarding the easing of policing of personal drug use
- Complete setting up the **Ethics Committee** and support their work
- Ensure our police force **recognise the widespread nature of covert racism in society** as a whole and take steps to reduce this
- Work with the Police Federation to **listen to the concerns of police officers**, and with unions to listen to the concerns of civilian employees
- Authorise a cultural **survey to assess racism, sexism, bullying** and any other systemic problems within our police force
- **Empower the Independent Advisory Groups** and create an IAG led by young people
- Require senior commanders to give a **monthly verbal update at public meetings** in each local or district authority area

Prepared by Bryher Bloor, Election Agent, 33 Ambrose Road, Bristol, BS8 4RJ

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Heather Shearer

Liberal Democrat



Election statement:

As your Police & Crime Commissioner, my priorities will be:

- Set Neighbourhood police priorities locally not centrally, with the involvement of the community and its leaders
- Increase prosecution and conviction rates for serious violence and sexual offences and improve the treatment of victims
- Policing with integrity, consent and without discrimination
- Strengthen trust in the police by increasing openness and transparency

Instead of simply focusing on arrests and enforcement, I will focus on preventing and reducing crime in the first place. We can cut crime more effectively by doing what consistent research evidence shows works best. I will therefore put more resources into:

- preventing first-time offenders from going on to reoffend
- helping recently-released prisoners who want to go straight and stay out of trouble
- focusing attention on offenders who don't want to give up their life of crime

I would ensure that these aims are prioritised and that public money, our money, is well spent.

I am not a career politician. I have worked in a range of different jobs so can see the world from many viewpoints. As a member of the Police and Crime Panel I have experience of supporting and scrutinising the Police & Crime Commissioner and I am an elected district councillor.

Being Police & Crime Commissioner is a more than full-time job. If elected as your Commissioner I will undertake no other employment.

Prepared by Halliday James MacFie, Election Agent,
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Mark Grosvenor McNeill Shelford

The Conservative Party Candidate



Election statement:

The best Police Forces deliver **low crime**, not high arrests. I will focus on prevention and deterrence, supporting victims and be tough on criminals.

I spent over 30 years in the Army, working with Police Forces around the world to fight crime, bringing peace and order to diverse communities. I will bring the skills and experience I gained to make all of our region safer as we rebuild from COVID.

I've served as a member of the regional Police and Crime Panel, and as an elected local Councillor have run major local authority programmes: so I understand what our local Police need to be effective. I also understand how important it is to listen to local people and be sure to meet their needs.

I know what good leadership of men and women in uniform looks like. Frontline police officers do a difficult and sometimes dangerous job with great courage and commitment. They must be backed by strong, supportive and challenging leadership that enables them to be the best they can be.

My plan to make Avon and Somerset safer:

Increase visible policing – to reassure residents and rebuild belief that the Police are there for them by proactive and preventative policing.

More focus on rural crime – tackling anti-social behaviour, burglaries, reckless driving, dognapping, attacks on livestock and criminal trespassing.

Tougher action on serious crime – targeting organised crime, drugs and gang leadership, violent crime, child sexual exploitation, online crime and fraud.

More Police. Cutting Crime. Making Communities Safer.

Voters can be sure what they will get from me. I will work with Government to deliver the excellent policing and law and order that residents want and deserve.

On Thursday 6th May, vote SHELFORD to make Avon and Somerset safer.

Prepared by Max Hopfl, Election Agent, 16 Northgate, Bridgwater, TA6 3EU

Contact details

www.markshelford.org.uk

John Smith

Independent



Election statement:

I am John Smith, an independent candidate for Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner. As an independent, I vow to keep the party politics out of policing and if elected, I would only answer to Avon and Somerset residents, not to any political bosses in Westminster.

I have lived with my wife, three children and dog, Evie, in Bristol for 20 years. In my spare time, I enjoy walking Evie and watching and coaching football. Over the last 12 years, I have dedicated myself to community safety and working with the police and partners. I was Chief Executive of the Avon and Somerset PCC team for eight years, working alongside the current independent Police and Crime Commissioner. To help meet the unique challenges of policing during the Covid-19 pandemic, I served for a year as Deputy PCC before stepping down to focus on this campaign.

My priorities reflect my experience and engagement with communities across the diverse Avon and Somerset area. They cover inner city crime as well as the concerns of people from more rural areas:

- Supporting the police to **enforce the Covid-19 regulations appropriately so we can get back to living normally** as soon as possible
- Tackling **knife and drug crime**
- Catching **burglars and reducing burglaries**

- Protecting the **most vulnerable in society and supporting victims**
- Combating **anti-social behaviour**
- Championing Avon and Somerset to become **the most inclusive police force in the country**
- Improving **road safety**
- Preventing **fraud and cyber-crime**
- Addressing **rural crime and supporting rural communities**
- Working in partnership to address **business crime**

If Avon and Somerset residents elect me as their next Police and Crime Commissioner, I will work hard every day to keep all residents safe and free from crime.

Prepared by John Smith, Election Agent, The Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0HE

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Statement by the Police Area Returning Officer for Avon & Somerset

This booklet contains more information about those candidates (where provided) and other information useful to voters. The information provided by a candidate is their responsibility, and may not reflect the opinions of myself or my council.

As Police Area Returning Officer I am responsible for coordinating the election and announcing the result in Avon & Somerset.

Police and Crime Commissioner Elections will be held in Avon & Somerset on 6th May 2021; the candidates standing in that election, alphabetically by surname (as they will appear on the ballot paper), are:

- BARKER, Kerry – Labour Party
- LAKE, Cleo Alberta – Green Party
- SHEARER, Heather – Liberal Democrat
- SHELFORD, Mark Grosvenor McNeill – The Conservative Party Candidate
- SMITH, John – Independent

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