

**CHOOSE
MY PCC**

Candidates for the Thames Valley Police Force Area

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
elections are taking place on 2nd May in
England and Wales.

Find out who your local candidates are
and how to vote.



the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are illiterate has increased from 1.2 billion to 1.5 billion.

There are many reasons for this. One is that the population of the world is growing so fast that the number of people who are illiterate is increasing. Another reason is that the quality of education is so poor that many people who are literate are unable to read and write. A third reason is that many people who are literate are unable to use their skills in a way that is useful to them. For example, many people who are literate are unable to read a newspaper or a book, or to write a letter or a document.

There are many ways to improve literacy. One way is to provide more schools and teachers. Another way is to improve the quality of education. A third way is to provide more opportunities for people to use their skills. For example, many people who are literate are unable to find a job or to start a business. If they could, they would be able to use their skills in a way that is useful to them.

There are many reasons why people are illiterate. One is that they do not have enough time to go to school. Another reason is that they do not have enough money to pay for school. A third reason is that they do not have enough interest in learning. For example, many people who are illiterate do not know how to read or write, and they do not know why they should learn. They do not see the value of education, and they do not see how it can help them in their lives.

There are many ways to help people who are illiterate. One way is to provide more schools and teachers. Another way is to provide more opportunities for people to use their skills. A third way is to provide more information about the benefits of education. For example, many people who are illiterate do not know how to read or write, and they do not know why they should learn. They do not see the value of education, and they do not see how it can help them in their lives.

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About Police and Crime Commissioners

On 2nd 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 to hold the police to account.

Police and Crime Commissioners are elected to hold your police force to account for delivering the kind of policing you want to see. 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. PCCs bring a public voice to policing and they do this by:

- Engaging with the public and victims of crime to help set 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.

The PCC does not “run” the police force. Chief constables continue to be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the police, but they are accountable to the public via the PCC.

In some Police Force Areas, PCCs are also responsible for Fire and Rescue Services, and are known as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCCs). Furthermore, in some areas, neither a PCC nor PFCC is elected – instead there will be an election for a Mayor who will hold the PCC, PFCC or equivalent powers.

37 PCCs will be elected across England and Wales, of which 4 will be PFCCs – PFCCs are found in Cumbria, Essex, Staffordshire, and Northamptonshire.

Work with others

PCCs also work with your council and other organisations to promote and enable joined up working on community safety and criminal justice. As directly elected individuals, they provide opportunities for greater collaboration and effective scrutiny of public services. In doing so, PCCs also have regard to national cross border threats, and ensure there is an effective policing response.

Represent the entire community

PCCs 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 Thames Valley 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.choosmypcc.org.uk** or call **0300 1311323**.

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).

PCCs are elected using the first past the post voting system, where the candidate with the most votes, wins. Voters will vote by choosing a single candidate on the ballot paper. This is the same system as UK Parliamentary elections.

For more information about your vote visit:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections>.

Matthew Barber

Conservative Candidate –
More Police, Safer Streets



Election statement:

I've been privileged to serve you as Police & Crime Commissioner since 2021. Since then I've appointed the new Chief Constable, delivered record numbers of police officers and we've seen crime at levels well below that prior to the pandemic.

But there's more work to do and whoever you choose as your next Police & Crime Commissioner will need a clear plan and understanding of the challenges ahead. As well as being a strong voice for the public and holding the Chief Constable to account, the Police & Crime Commissioner is responsible for a record budget of over £584m.

I am proud of what we have achieved together so far:

- Thames Valley now has 5,120 police officers – over 600 higher than 2010

and compared to before the pandemic, we have seen crime fall:

- Knife crime DOWN by 20.1%

- Residential burglary DOWN by 29.2%
- Robbery DOWN by 23.8%
- Vehicle crime DOWN by 16.9%

In the last year alone I have worked with the police to:

- DOUBLE the number of neighbourhood police officers
- Tackle shoplifting with charges more than DOUBLING
- Continued our zero-tolerance approach to knife possession which sees criminals getting longer sentences

I've got a clear plan for how I will work to make Thames Valley safer.

- Continuing to deliver more officers than ever before
- More officers in neighbourhood policing
- Saving lives on our roads with better enforcement
- Keeping women safe in our public places
- Improving CCTV across Thames Valley
- A tough approach to knife crime
- Tackling shoplifting working with businesses
- Preventing cybercrime and fraud
- Improving 101 call times
- Visible local patrols

I'm asking for your support on Thursday 2nd May to back my plan for a safer Thames Valley.

Prepared by Joseph Clarke of Park Street Offices, Park Street, Newbury, RG14 1EA.

Contact details

Website: <https://matthewbarber.co.uk/>

Email: matthew@matthewbarber.co.uk

Facebook: [fb.com/matthewbarberpcc](https://www.facebook.com/matthewbarberpcc)

X: [matthew@matthewbarber.co.uk](https://twitter.com/matthew@matthewbarber.co.uk)

Instagram: [matthew@matthewbarber.co.uk](https://www.instagram.com/matthew@matthewbarber.co.uk)

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Tim Bearder

Liberal Democrats



Election statement:

Tim Bearder has a wealth of experience serving the area and managing big budgets with a number of important cabinet positions on Oxfordshire County Council. He has an in-depth knowledge of the wider patch and its problems, having worked as a journalist for BBC South.

As the election date of the 2nd of May looms, it is anticipated to be a hotly contested battle between the Liberal Democrats and the Conservative Party.

Responding to his selection, Councillor Bearder highlighted his key priorities:

“Communities across the Thames Valley are yearning for substantive change. The Conservative Party has consistently fallen short on recruitment goals and made cutbacks to community policing, notably in areas like Oxford and Reading.

This has led to increased response times and a concerning drop in convictions, particularly for offences such as domestic burglary which are close to an all-time low. Residents have

lost faith in the Conservative Party's ability to effectively manage our police force, underscoring the urgent need for an alternative approach.

The Liberal Democrats are committed to restoring community policing, providing residents the assurance that law enforcement will be present and responsive when needed.”

Layla Moran MP, Member of Parliament for Oxford West and Abingdon, applauded Cllr Bearder's candidacy:

“With Tim Bearder at the helm, we have the opportunity to elect a passionate community advocate who will champion tough, innovative policing in one of the nation's largest forces.

This election address has been prepared by me the agent Richard Cole at C5 Grange Court Business Park, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3NB.

Contact details

Tel: 07789754727

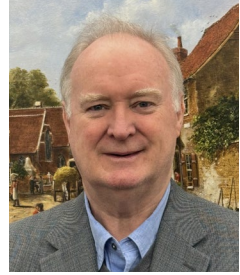
Website: <https://www.southcentrallibdems.org.uk/pcc-2024>

X/Twitter: tim@bearder.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TimBearderUK>

Russell Douglas Fowler

Independent



Election statement:

International senior businessman operating on boards with top companies, now leading a Bucks based security product company supplying global automotive manufacturers. Degree in geochemistry, diamond explorer, Kalahari adventurer, photographer, San (Bushmen) supporter and Police anti-corruption champion.

Association of Police and Crime Commissioners “The role of the PCC is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. They are responsible for the totality of policing”.

- **Taking politics out of policing.** The PCC must never be compromised in executing the above remit by any considerations to the political stance of his supporting party, either regionally or nationally. The PCC must be seen to challenge the force and not be seen as the force’s PR department.
- **Driving out corruption from Thames Valley Police (TVP), driving in better police management.** Corruption to highest levels, including Professional Standards Department (PSD). Officers must be tackled by the PCC, with offenders removed from the force. Chief Constable must be challenged with stretching performance targets reportable monthly and publicly.

- **Bobbies on the beat not on their bums.** Leadership within TVP has to be strengthened with improved management skills, attitude and technology.
- **Better value for taxpayers from the police and PCC office.** PCC's office is large and costly. Must improve skillsets, legal knowledge and culture to independently investigate police misconduct and better challenge TVP. The force stating "Perverting the course of justice is not a serious offence" is not good enough for the public.
- **Victim first policing.** Obvious, but missing in TVP.
- **Dignity and justice for sex crime victims.** Non negotiable.
- **Protect our communities and shops.** Increase police visibility to deter crime and to investigate crime thoroughly and quickly.

Russell Douglas Fowler's election address has been prepared by his Election Agent: Sally Ross, 1 Leachcroft, Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire, SL9 9LD.

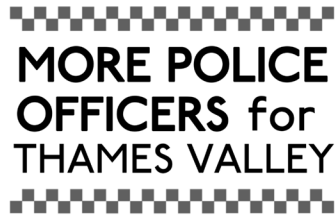
Contact details

Tel: 01753 889539

Email: russell.fowlerpcc@gmail.com

Ben Holden-Crowther

More Police Officers for Thames Valley



Election statement:

More Police Officers for Thames Valley — is an independent democratic initiative, backed by local people, with the goal of improving your police force in the Thames Valley.

- **More police officers for YOUR LOCAL AREA**

We simply do not have enough police officers in the Thames Valley, meaning that relatively serious crimes such as shoplifting and burglary are being routinely overlooked. Money being wasted in other areas needs to be urgently directed towards strong local policing for your area.

- **Stop wasting YOUR TAXES**

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner spends almost £2 million annually on around 40 members of staff. We will ensure financial prudence and greatly reduce wasteful office expenditure (including the £18,000 recently spent on a pointless website rebranding).

- **Keep POLITICS out of OUR POLICE**

Considering the current state of our police force, it's clear that short-term focused political parties should not be tasked with setting the policing priorities for our local area. Your vote for our independent local candidate will help us wrestle back control of policing from inept and uninspiring politicians.

- **Don't throw away YOUR VOTE**

In the last election for Police and Crime Commissioner, the turnout in the Thames Valley was just 35.8%, meaning that 1,173,265 people in our area lost their opportunity to vote at this really important election. By voting for More Police Officers for Thames Valley, you can show that you care about making our local area a safer place to live.

Our official website — <https://www.morepolice.uk> — provides more information on our plan for improving policing in the Thames Valley.

[X] — Vote for Ben Holden-Crowther on 2nd May 2024 — for a more efficient and more effective Thames Valley Police.

Prepared by Ben Holden-Crowther of 400 Thames Valley Park Drive, Reading, RG6 1PT.

Tim Starkey

Labour and Co-operative Party



Election statement:

For 22 years Tim has worked with police as a prosecution barrister in cases ranging from child sex abuse to drug dealing. He has seen first hand how the system fails people, and what needs to change. Tim says: “Despite the dedication of its hard working officers, TVP is under performing. Recently inspected, it ranked “inadequate” for protecting vulnerable people and “requiring improvement” for investigating crime, responding to the public, managing offenders and leadership.

My priorities:

Rebuilding trust in police by a) strengthening neighbourhood policing, restoring the link between police and the communities they serve, b) overhauling vetting and misconduct procedures.

Cutting knife crime – not youth services. Working with schools and targeted interventions, including 1:1 mentoring to divert young people away from gangs and county lines, and provide positive role models.

Stopping the surge in shoplifting, working with local businesses to identify repeat offenders and ban them from crime hotspots.

Protecting women and girls from violence. Rape cases often take 5 years from being reported to coming to trial, causing many victims to drop out. Fast track sexual and domestic abuse cases, improve the sharing of information with women at risk from a violent partner (highlighted in the recent inspection) and work to change the behaviour of perpetrators.

Keeping us safe online. Online grooming has quadrupled since 2016, whilst AI drives ever more sophisticated scams. Use innovative ways of working with our thriving local tech industry to prevent fraud and keep kids safe.

Keeping all road users safe. TVP was one of only two forces to see a rise in road traffic incidents last year. Through better enforcement and use of third party reporting, TVP can play its part in ending deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

Prepared by Brian Gammage, 1 Parliament Close, Prestwood, Bucks, HP16 9DT.

Contact details

Website: <https://timstarkeylabour.wordpress.com>

Email: TimStarkeyLabour@gmail.com

X/Twitter: <https://X.com/TimLabour>

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/TimStarkeyforThamesValleyPCC)

TimStarkeyforThamesValleyPCC

Statement by the Police Area Returning Officer for Thames Valley

This website 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 Thames Valley.

Police and Crime Commissioner Elections will be held in Thames Valley on 2nd May 2024; the candidates standing in that election, alphabetically by surname (as they will appear on the ballot paper), are:

- BARBER, Matthew – Conservative Candidate – More Police, Safer Streets
- BEARDER, Tim – Liberal Democrats
- FOWLER, Russell Douglas – Independent
- HOLDEN-CROWTHER, Ben – More Police Officers for Thames Valley
- STARKEY, Tim – Labour and Co-operative Party

I can be contacted at:

Nigel Lynn
West Berkshire Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

paro@westberks.gov.uk

01635 519464

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/pcc-election-2024>

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