

**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**



IOPC YOUTH PANEL
2030 MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE

FOREWORD

"NO CONVERSATIONS ABOUT US, WITHOUT US"

This document has been **co-produced by members of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) Youth Panel** across England and Wales.

The IOPC Youth Panel is comprised of 42 young people **aged 16-25 from diverse communities** across England and Wales. We are dedicated to **identifying solutions** to increase young people's **trust and confidence in policing** and the **police complaints system** and undertaking national influencing work to **drive systems change**.

Since 2022, the IOPC Youth Panel has conducted **three annual surveys** of young people aged between 16-25 in England and Wales, comprising **nearly 6,700 young voices**. Our annual report outlining the results can be found at: www.policeconduct.gov.uk/about-us/engaging-with-communities/our-youth-panel

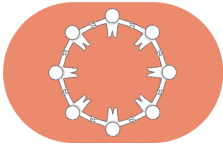
In 2024, we decided to take these solutions further, and began developing our **national influencing** work to **make these recommendations a reality**.

The IOPC Youth Panel 2030 Manifesto for change for policing and the police complaints system has been developed from 2023-2025, and reflects years of our national findings and research, extensive future-focused discussions, and **consultation with organisations from all sectors** involved in policing and the police complaints system. These recommendations are designed to **drive systems change** in the areas which will have the most tangible improvements for young and vulnerable people.

The work of the IOPC Youth Panel is **youth-led at every stage**. The process was facilitated by social enterprise Leaders Unlocked, which works to empower and enable young people to have a voice on the issues which affect them.

www.leaders-unlocked.org

IOPC YOUTH PANEL: 2030 Manifesto



01 — More **proactive community engagement** from police services, led by co-production with young people.



02 — The **Right to Complain** should be included in the majority of **police interactions**.



03 — All officers should receive **training** in trauma-informed approaches, neurodiversity and mental health.



04 — The use of **body worn video** should be **mandatory** and **fully resourced**.



05 — **All cases** involving young people and vulnerable adults should be **referred to the IOPC**.



06 — Better **engagement with all sectors of education** on the complaints system and IOPC.



07 — An **advocacy service** to provide tailored support to individuals making a complaint.



08 - A **Community Complaints system** for communities and organisations at the grassroots level.



09 - Investigations need to be **victim-centred** and include a **Complainant Impact Statement**.



10 - The complaints system should be **accessible** for children and young people, including an **online dashboard**.

01 — More proactive community engagement from police services, led by co-production with young people.

By 2030 all police services should have a youth commission, scrutiny, or advisory group in place to improve connection between police and young people, and to help address systemic issues.

Young people want to see an **increased non-punitive presence** in town centres, enabling young people to know local officers by name and therefore **increase understanding and trust**. Positive interactions will empower young people to **approach the police** when they need help and **assist the police** during investigations. Neighbourhood events and initiatives should be co-produced with young people and community leaders- returning to a **policing by consent model**. Not only would this provide **accountability**, but a **direct channel for positive policing stories** and examples of good practice.

An example of engagement through co-production is our current work **providing youth-led police training** to services across England and Wales. Prior to the training, we **speak to local community groups of young people** to understand the key issues faced in the region. These training sessions are designed to **form connections**, be a **safe space to discuss neighbourhood issues** and to **encourage mutual understanding** of one-another's experiences. Sensitive community engagement has a large impact on both the community and police staff taking part, evidenced by the quotes below.

"It was great to converse amongst the different professionals and to hear a wide range of different perspectives on tackling the same issues young people are facing with the police"

Ilana & Jason, IOPC Youth Panel Members

"The... unique perspective that young people offer is essential in shaping the way officers engage with them in our communities. Enabling young people to have a voice that influences police actions, response for service and training is the right thing to do."

Al Cheyne, West Yorkshire Police Detective Inspector

Young people have **mixed opinions on police officers in schools**. However, the majority of young people felt that they would benefit from **educational sessions** on the law and their rights from **specially trained officers**. This would best be realised as an elective role for officers, who were truly **passionate about young people**.



02 — The Right to Complain should be included in the majority of police interactions

In 2030, the Panel wants to see police services across England and Wales take an active role in raising awareness of the police complaints system, and the right to complain included in the rights read out to individuals being detained in custody.

In 2025, we found **only 35%** of young people **knew how to make a complaint** about the police, whilst this is improving (26% in our 2024 survey) it highlights that young people are **one of the least likely demographic groups to make a complaint** about their treatment by the police (IOPC's [Public Perceptions Tracker 2024/25](#)). Moreover, a **cultural change** is needed for all police services to embrace feedback as an asset, **ensure instances of misconduct are heard**, to highlight gaps in training or when **personal prejudices and misconceptions** have gone unchecked.

03 — All officers should receive training in trauma-informed approaches, neurodiversity and mental health.

By 2030, there should be mandatory training programmes for frontline police in the areas of trauma-informed techniques, de-escalatory approaches, mental health, and neurodiversity.

The importance of police **understanding of trauma** for an **effective and compassionate response** cannot be understated. Last year, we called for all police officers to receive **mandatory trauma-informed training**, in addition to training on mental health and neurodiversity to better utilise **de-escalation techniques** and **reduce police-related trauma**. This would also **improve communication and engagement** between police and young people, and empower officer decision-making and **prevent unnecessary contact** between young people and the criminal justice system.

It is crucial that this training is **highly interactive**, recognises the **intersectionality** of these topics, and is **co-produced** with those who have **lived experience** of these issues, all to ensure that it has a **tangible impact** for interactions between police and young people.

04 — The use of body worn video should be mandatory and fully resourced.

By 2030 body worn video (BWV) should be mandatory in all police services across England and Wales, with sufficient resourcing provided.

The current **inconsistent use** of BWV is detrimental to public confidence in the police. BWV footage provides **protection for both the police and the public** and is crucial for **accountability**. It should be used at **all stages** of police-public interactions including on-the-street interactions, interviews, and during investigations. This is **already the norm** in some policing regions, yet national mandated use would ensure that **adequate resources are provided** for all services to make this move.



05 — All cases involving young people and vulnerable adults should be referred to the IOPC.

By 2030, the IOPC Youth Panel wants all cases involving young people and vulnerable adults to be referred to the IOPC.

Under the current complaints system, **complaints are viewed by the police service** in question's professional standard department (PSD) **in the first instance**, with **only the most 'serious and sensitive' cases reviewed by the IOPC**. The IOPC Youth Panel believes the IOPC's scope should be expanded to **provide oversight for all cases concerning children and vulnerable adults**. This change could be achieved initially through voluntary referrals by police PSDs, and in the long-term by **amending the classification of 'serious and sensitive'**. This would require a sufficient commitment to resourcing by government.

As mentioned in the Manifesto item 3, **vulnerable groups**, such as neurodivergent people, may face **unnecessary escalation** of a police interaction due to **lack of sufficient training** and understanding across the police service. It is important that **trends** relating to these groups are **observed and scrutinised**, in order to safeguard these communities.

Moreover, as **highlighted in the quote above**, many young people are disincentivised from making a complaint as complaining directly to the police service in question feels **counter-intuitive**, some **feel the police will 'protect their own'**. Therefore, this move will **empower young people and vulnerable adults** when deciding whether to engage with the police complaints system.





06 — Better engagement with all sectors of education on the complaints system and IOPC.

By 2030, the IOPC Youth Panel wants all educational institutions in England and Wales to have run engagement sessions with their students on the police complaints system.

All sectors of education, from primary schools up to university, need **greater engagement on the police complaints system** to ensure the majority of young people in England and Wales are **aware of how to make a complaint**. The IOPC Youth Panel is looking to launch a **poster awareness campaign** to **every secondary school, college, and university** in England and Wales. The IOPC already raises awareness through their **stakeholder engagement** work, but this needs to be **extended to those outside traditional education**, such as young people who are not in education, employment or training.

The IOPC should go one step further in this work through **co-producing a resource pack with the Youth Panel**, which will enable our engagement workshops to be **delivered independently** of the Youth Panel, such as by a form tutor, teacher, or lecturer, with different resources for different age groups, such as those in primary, secondary, or higher education.

07 — An advocacy service to provide tailored support to individuals making a complaint.

By 2030, the IOPC Youth Panel wants an advocacy service to support those engaging with the police complaints system, and for this service to be trusted by the individuals it represents.

The IOPC Youth Panel has repeatedly heard that **many young people would only make a complaint with support from a family member or trusted adult.** What happens if that young person doesn't have a trusted adult they can rely on? **An advocacy service** would make the **complaints system more accessible** for all young people, particularly vulnerable young people such as those who have special educational needs and disabilities or speak English as a second language. Being **supported by a trusted organisation** may enable young people who have a distrust of police or authority **to make a complaint** and would create more **opportunities to safeguard** that young person.

Within the current framework, there is a **power imbalance between police and complainants** as during investigations by the IOPC (in 'sensitive and serious' cases) police have legal and police federation support in most cases, whereas complainants do not.





08 - A Community Complaints system for communities and organisations at the grassroots level.

By 2030, the IOPC Youth Panel wants to co-produce a pilot of the Community Complaints system with the IOPC and a police service, to create an evidence base for a national programme.

Within the current complaints system, **super-complaints** allow advocacy groups to bring complaints on **systemic issues**, but it is **very complex**. The current 16 appointed super-complaint bodies **do not represent all vulnerable groups**, such as autistic people or people with disabilities. Moreover, grassroots organisations can **only flag systemic issues** relating to policing by **collaborating** with the designated bodies. The current **super-complaints system is not fully accessible to all**.

The IOPC Youth Panel proposes an additional **middle tier of Community Complaints**, between individual complaints and super-complaints. **Grassroot advocate organisations** who are **embedded in the community** could utilise the complaints system to **represent communities** who wish to make a complaint. This should see a broader definition of community than employed within the super-complaints system, to include people with **shared experiences** who may be from different areas, **including online communities**.

Potential learning from Community Complaint investigations could be used to **initiate immediate regional change**. This would enable the police to implement a '**you said, we did**' model, which is highly valued by the Youth Panel for its potential to **improve police-community relationships** in the long term.

09 - Investigations need to be victim-centred and include a Complainant Impact Statement.

By 2030, the IOPC Youth Panel wants to see a stronger voice of the complainant in IOPC investigations and police records of complaints, including through the use of a Complainant Impact Statement.

The IOPC Youth Panel would like to see a **stronger voice for the complainant in all IOPC investigations**. A **Complainant Impact Statement**, outlining the **impact on the individual** and/or their family (similar to the right afforded under the Victim's Code), should be included in complaints cases. This would ensure that an investigation's **recommendations** were better **able to address the impact** on the victim. As a **priority**, this should be included in **'serious and sensitive' cases** investigated by the IOPC, perhaps when they are referred from police services' professional standards departments, followed by **all complaints** lodged to **any police service** in England and Wales.



10 - The complaints system should be accessible for children and young people, including an online dashboard system.

The current police complaints system **highly complex**. How complaints are handled **differ between each of the 43 police services** in England and Wales, and sometimes complaints go **unrecorded**. Young people who have made complaints **speak about the lack of communication**, and if a complaint is **'worth it'**. The IOPC Youth Panel has several proposals to **reform the accessibility of the police complaints system**:

- **Multiple ways to make a report beyond an online form:** e.g., being able to make a complaint over the phone, in another language (including British Sign Language), in-person at community venues, or through social media.
- **Guidance on the process:** when someone submits a complaint, they are emailed or sent an information pack, including tailored resources relating to the complaint's foundational, and information on support services.
- **All complaints** made to police services **are recorded**, and complainants are **safeguarded** at the point of first reporting.
- There needs to be **consistent procedure** for complaints to all police services across England and Wales.

The Panel believes this would **best be achieved by an online dashboard system**, where the public will be able to access information relating to the police complaints system, view community or super-complaints, access support services, and log in and track the progress of their complaint. This would **bring the police complaints system into the 21st century** and would ensure accessibility of all its components. This dashboard could be used to **greater monitor 'low-level' complaints are included in police officer vetting systems**, to ensure that poor behaviour does not go unnoticed and is allowed to fester, and that this **information is communicated to the public to grow confidence** that they will be taken seriously.

INSPIRED?

**WANT TO GET INVOLVED AND JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN FOR
A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN POLICING
AND THE POLICE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM?**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



info@leaders-unlocked.org, or
youthpanel@policeconduct.gov.uk



www.leaders-unlocked.org



@leadersunlocked



**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**



Independent
Office for
Police Conduct