



# WILTSHIRE POLICE

**Catherine Roper**  
**Chief Constable**  
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Mr. Peter Tatchell

23 February 2024

Dear Mr. Tatchell,

Further to our initial response to your letter, I have spent time consulting with the Force LGBTQ+ staff support network to understand how they feel and to consider the points that you raised within your correspondence to me.

British Policing is driven by the ethos of policing by consent. It is essential that we have the trust and confidence of the public so that we can effectively and legitimately police the Law that we are given, without fear or favour. However, it is clear that in the past, the implementation of the Law - and the discretion we are given as Police Officers in the policing of the Law - was in some cases misused and misapplied, whether through processes, systems or behaviour.

I have no doubt that this means there will have been prejudiced behaviour across the history of policing where we haven't got things right and which will have caused discrimination and hurt to many minority groups, including the LGBTQ+ community. This saddens me deeply and I am truly sorry for the harm caused, both to my internal colleagues, and to our communities.

Whilst I cannot change the past, I can influence the future. Since arriving in the Force I have established my key operational priorities – and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion features as a central core component to all that we must do. Over the coming months we will be focusing on cultural change within the Force so that we have the important conversations needed to make change happen. We will also be commencing a six-to-nine-month consultation, working alongside our communities, stakeholders, staff support networks and our Independent Advisory Groups, to develop a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy for the Force, with a view to launching it in early 2025. This consultation will be far-reaching and will seek to understand where we need to do better and provide necessary scrutiny and challenge. We have more to do, but I am determined that discrimination will not feature in the policing of Wiltshire's future. I extend the invite to you to be part of that consultation, as your experiences, views and involvement would be extremely welcome. If this is something that would be of interest to you, please do make contact with my office.

This month is LGBTQ+ History Month – a month of reflection on the past, celebration of the present and creation of the future. During this month, I have been speaking to members within our own LGBTQ+ network more widely to hear some real-life case studies of individuals lived experience and the impacts those experiences have had upon them. With their blessing, these stories are being

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shared across the Force to highlight and educate everyone on the very real challenges that continue to be faced each and every day by our under-represented groups and will be a further catalyst for change within the Force. I have been extremely robust with my officers and staff, and with the public, that I have zero tolerance to any form of discrimination or indeed any form of hateful behaviour, with hate crime incidents within our organisation and across our communities monitored closely on a monthly basis. My message is very clear - if anyone is ever a victim of hate crime or believes that someone else has been subjected to this, or any, abhorrent behaviour, then I need them to report it. They will be listened to – and we will do everything we can to bring the offender to justice.

I look forward to continuing to build strong, consultative and respectful relationships with all communities - in particular those who are under-represented. I would welcome your views and opinions on what more we can do to ensure discrimination has no place in policing within Wiltshire and I repeat the offer that, if you would like to be more involved in the work we have underway, please do make contact at your convenience.

Kindest regards,

Catherine Roper  
**Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police**