

PRESS RELEASE



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IMPRESSIVE REFURBISHED AND EXTENDED STEVENAGE POLICE STATION OFFICIALLY OPENED

Following a prolonged design and construction project, the highly impressive refurbished and extended Stevenage police station was officially opened on Monday (6 July), marking the completion of a £13 million project.

The station benefits from a four-storey extension to the former building and a refurbished interior, and now features a new state-of-the-art custody suite, office accommodation and public enquiry office.

The police station was officially opened by Chair of Hertfordshire Police Authority, Stuart Nagler, who unveiled the plaque. Stuart said: "It was a real pleasure to be given the task of formally opening such an iconic police station. The station will vastly improve public access and police visibility across the county, and brings with it a host of benefits that will not only assist the Constabulary, but the public too.

"Both the Police Authority and the Constabulary are continuing to make dramatic improvements to policing in Hertfordshire and it is our aim to ensure we continue to be placed within the top performing police forces in England and Wales. The renovations and improvements made to the building have taken us one step further in our long-term review of our estates, and in making our buildings fit for policing in the 21st century.

Chief Inspector for Stevenage, Fiona Gaskell, said: "Stevenage is a rapidly growing town, and the expansion of our police station means that we can

keep pace of the challenges we are faced with as we continue policing in the 21st century.

“The investment in this building is for the benefit of our community, to provide them with a better service and one in accordance with our commitment under the Policing Pledge.”

The striking and eye-catching design of the extension, as well as the refurbished interior, is the result of months of dedication from Chartered Architects and Town Planners, Vincent and Goring, who are based in Stevenage.

The project was completed in two stages. In the first phase, the main contractor for the project, Carillion, demolished unused buildings to make way for a new custody suite, modern offices and much-improved public enquiry office. The second part of the project was completed earlier this year.

The new building also provides an increased number of police cells and a new home for the Eastern Area Headquarters. The Crown Prosecution Service is based at the station, improving file preparation and charging processes.

A distinctive feature of the extension to the building is the *bris soleil*. The eye-catching steel fins serve a purpose to allow natural daylight into the building, at the same time providing shade from harsh sunlight.

The opening ceremony was attended by Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, the Countess of Verulam, Mayor of Stevenage, Sue Myson and Councillor Richard Henry, Community Safety Portfolio Holder at Stevenage Borough Council, amongst others.

Guests were invited to enjoy tours of the station, hear about TASER and ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) technology, visit the brand new

public enquiry office, and find out how video conferencing operates. VIP guests were also taken into the new custody suites.

Guests also said farewell to the long-standing Chief Superintendent Al Thomas, who retired from the force and his role as Eastern Area Commander on the day of the opening. Al dedicated his entire career to policing and spent three years as a police cadet before he joined the Constabulary in February 1979. His thirty-year career has seen him take on a wide range of roles, having served in St Albans, the Western Area and twice in Stevenage, the first time in 1998 as Chief Inspector and more recently returning as the Eastern Area Commander.

For further information please contact Emily Anderson, Hertfordshire Police Authority, on 01992 555628 or email emily.anderson.hpa@herts.pnn.police.uk

Notes to Editors:

- Hertfordshire Police Authority is investing over £45m in improvements to its estate, aimed at improving public access and visibility to police services.

Hertfordshire Police Authority is made up of 17 local people comprising a mixture of councillors and independent members. It is responsible for:

- Managing all police property
- Setting the budget for the police force, including raising local taxes for policing
- Scrutinising and managing local police performance
- Setting the strategic direction for policing locally, deciding local priorities for policing and setting the Constabulary challenging targets to drive performance higher
- Consulting and engaging with local communities to find out what they want the local police to tackle
- Appointing (and, if necessary, dismissing) the Chief Constable and senior police officers