



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest

# Crime inspection 2014

Lancashire Constabulary

November 2014

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# How effective is the force at cutting crime?

## Overall summary

Lancashire Constabulary demonstrates good and consistent standards of victim care and investigation.

Partnership working is strong in both short and long term initiatives to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour, and there is continual development of multi-agency teams.

There is a positive culture across the constabulary focused on putting the victim at the centre of decisions and activity.

This year, HMIC undertook an inspection into the crime data integrity of all 43 police forces, to determine the extent to which police-recorded crime information can be trusted at a national level. HMIC found Lancashire Constabulary's approach to crime recording is good, with a high degree of accuracy. Individual force reports are available at <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/>

**How effective is the constabulary at reducing crime and preventing offending?**

**Good**

Lancashire Constabulary has a victim-centred approach underpinned by a performance culture that is based on doing the right thing for the victim, rather than one based on specific targets for crime and anti-social behaviour.

Victim contact and reassurance is a priority for staff and the constabulary has been re-accredited with a customer service award.

Partnership working is generally good, although the capacity of officers to carry out work is a concern in some areas, particularly at times of peak demand.

**How effective is the constabulary at investigating offending?**

**Good**

There is a clear focus on providing a good service to victims in Lancashire, in particular identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring the risks to them are properly understood and addressed by both police and partners.

There are good standards of investigation with officers appropriately trained and supported by their supervisors.

There is a comprehensive range of opportunities for continuing professional development, shared learning and debate about policing issues.

**How effective is the constabulary at tackling anti-social behaviour?**

**Good**

Lancashire Constabulary has a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing, and neighbourhood teams have a good understanding of local concerns and priorities. Neighbourhood officers work well with local people in tackling anti-social behaviour.

The anti-social behaviour risk assessment conference involving police and partners works well and provides a timely and effective response to growing issues.

The constabulary is focused on early intervention and has invested in proactive work to influence young people, and intelligence to develop a more in-depth understanding of troubled families.

# Introduction



This inspection looks at how effective police forces are at cutting crime. The public expects the police to reduce, prevent and investigate crime, bring suspects to justice and, in conjunction with other services and agencies, care for victims. To assess each force's effectiveness, we looked at three specific areas:

- How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?
- How effective is the force at investigating offending?
- How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

# Methodology

During our inspection we analysed data and documents from forces, and conducted in-force inspections. We interviewed the senior officers responsible for crime, neighbourhood policing and victim care in each force. We held focus groups with frontline police officers, investigators and police staff, and observed their activities first hand. We also reviewed 20 crime investigations in each force and interviewed heads of partner organisations such as local authorities. We focused on anti-social behaviour and the offences of: burglary dwelling; serious sexual offences; and violence with injury on this inspection. We chose to focus on these offences because they cover the areas of acquisitive and violent crime and the protection of vulnerable people. This has allowed us to make an assessment of how well the constabulary treated the victim throughout the investigation – examining in particular how well officers gathered evidence and how well they were supervised.

Victims are at the heart of this inspection. Victims are entitled to a service from the police; this includes regular information about their case, an opportunity to provide an impact statement where relevant and to be consulted on potential criminal justice outcomes. When the police provide this service to victims, it increases victim satisfaction and builds trust and confidence in the police.

As part of this inspection, we considered how well forces deal with domestic abuse, alongside other offence types. HMIC published a report in March 2014 on how well forces tackled domestic abuse and provided support to victims. As a result of that inspection all forces were asked to provide an action plan setting out how they were improving services to victims of domestic abuse and we have reviewed the action plans developed by forces. The action plans have not informed the judgments made in these reports.

The crime inspection provides HMIC with the first opportunity to test whether the force's approach to improving how it tackles domestic abuse is beginning to have an effect and this forms part of our overall assessment of the force.

# How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?

HMIC looked at how the leadership of the constabulary deploys its resources to reduce the volume of crimes being committed, maximise the quality of victim contact, and ensure that the constabulary focuses on community priorities whilst mitigating national threats.

We looked at how the constabulary prevents crime, how it uses police tactics such as stop and search powers to prevent and detect crime and reduce offending. We also looked at how the police work with other agencies such as social services to reduce crime.

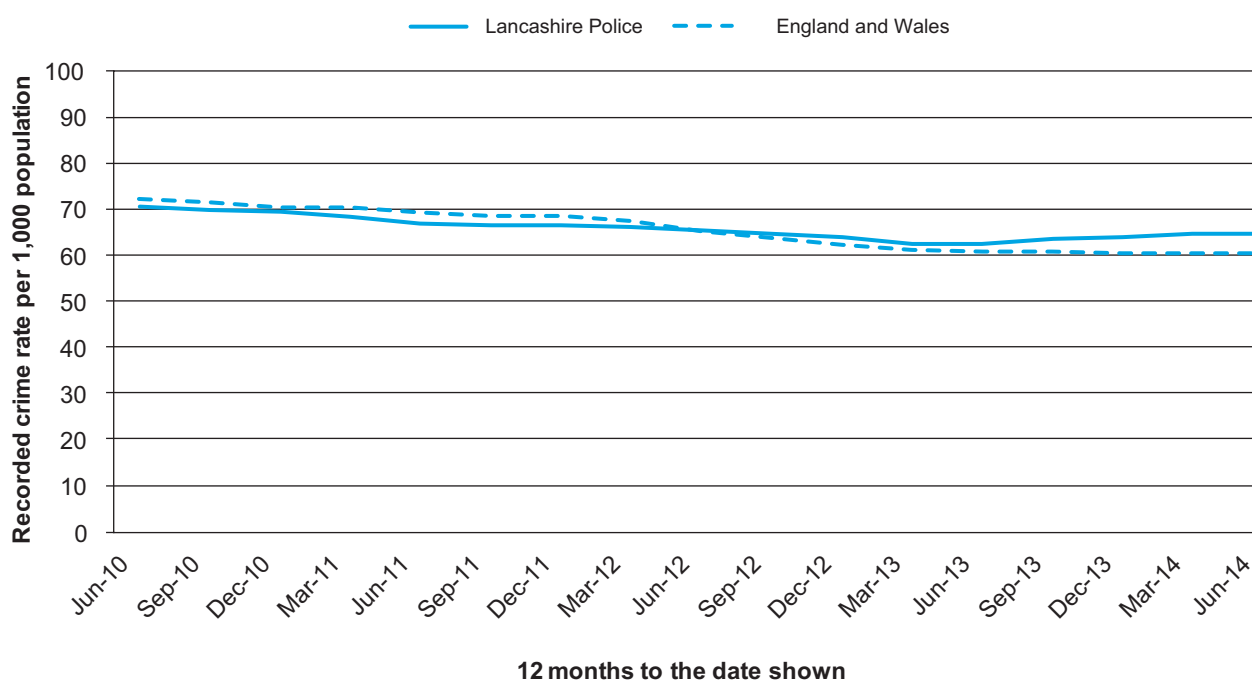
## Crime

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to June 2010, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to June 2014 reduced by 8 percent in Lancashire compared with a reduction of 16 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this period, victim-based crime (i.e., crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 6 percent in Lancashire, compared with a reduction of 16 percent across England and Wales.

During the 12 months prior to the end of June 2014, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Lancashire increased by 4 percent, compared with a 1 percent reduction across England and Wales.

Figure: Recorded crime rate (per 1,000 population) between June 2010 and June 2014.





By looking at how many recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour occur per 1,000 population, we get an indication of how safe it is for the public in that police area. The table below shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Lancashire (per 1,000 population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

<b>12 months to June 2014</b>	<b>Lancashire Constabulary rate (per 1,000 population)</b>	<b>England and Wales total rate (per 1,000 population)</b>
Crime excluding fraud	65.1	60.7
Victim-based crime	59.9	53.9
Sexual offences	1.3	1.2
Violence with injury	7.4	5.9
Burglary in a dwelling*	7.7	8.9
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	57.1	36.8

**\*Note that anti-social behaviour data is for the 12 months to March 2014 and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population**

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the constabulary area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the constabulary on recorded crime rates only. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/crime-and-policing-comparator](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/crime-and-policing-comparator)

Lancashire's detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud), for the 12 months to the end of March 2014, was 29 percent which was higher than the 26 percent for England and Wales.

The new crime outcomes framework was introduced in April 2014. It replaces a previous framework for recording how the police finalise investigations through what was known as 'sanction detections' (e.g. charges and/or summons). The new crime outcomes framework is designed to support police officers to use their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely outcome which reflects the harm to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community, and which deters future offending. Data on the full range of outcomes achieved as a result of investigations (not just detections but also, for example, community resolutions such as mediation known as restorative justice) will be available from July 2015 and used in future HMIC inspections.

## Meeting the needs of the community

Lancashire Constabulary carries out a comprehensive assessment of threat, risk and harm to identify priorities for crime, anti-social behaviour and victim focus. These are set out in the police and crime commissioner's four year police and crime plan. HMIC found that the constabulary priorities are strongly supported by the workforce which showed a good understanding of what is important to the communities of Lancashire. This is evident at all levels in the organisation, with staff demonstrating an understanding of threat, harm and risks to victims and the community. The constabulary has developed an appreciation of what matters to the people of Lancashire by using a wide range of methods to engage with the public such as social media, street surgeries, station open days, online surveys and face-to-face community meetings. The constabulary has recently piloted the use of an online police and community together (e-PACT) meeting that interacts with over 300 online attendees.

In order to develop engagement with communities, the constabulary is increasing recruitment of police cadets, special constables and volunteers who will be selected to engage actively with local communities. The police cadet recruitment campaign received an overwhelming response and resulted in the recruitment of 250 cadets. The cadets were recruited from families across a wide geographic area within Lancashire. The constabulary believes that this is a clear sign that communities care about policing and want to participate. Cadets, along with volunteers and members of the Special Constabulary, will be involved in crime prevention initiatives within those areas identified as having the greatest need.

The constabulary has strong oversight of activity to ensure that resources are aligned to tackling the priorities. These priorities are reviewed at quarterly performance meetings, with an agenda focused on threat, risk and harm. Risk and threat meetings are held daily by local leaders across the constabulary area. These are used to determine progress and hold managers to account for performance against the priorities. Daily briefings to police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) contain intelligence that is relevant and up to date. Officers are directed on the basis of the intelligence available and in line with constabulary priorities and emerging local risks - for example a local operation to tackle an increase in burglary. Frontline officers and specialist staff know the locations where incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour are occurring regularly, and the areas which they are expected to patrol. The arrest of people suspected of committing crime is prioritised on a daily basis, and HMIC found clear evidence of people wanted for burglary and violent crime who were being sought actively.

## Quality of victim contact

Lancashire Constabulary has a strong victim focus. Staff understanding of the importance of victim care and their responsibilities in meeting victims' needs is consistent. One of the constabulary's IT systems, Sleuth, is used by officers to record victim contact. Some of the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime are built into this system, helping to encourage victim-centred behaviour and embedding victim contact within day to day processes. Supervisors are also able to use this system to check whether victims have been updated according to their wishes. The constabulary is making further improvements to the way in which victims of crime are kept updated on progress by introducing the "track my crime" facility later this year. "Track my crime" automatically sends victims an email when officers add updates to electronic crime records. In recognition of the efforts that it has made to improve the experience of victims, the constabulary has recently been re-accredited for a customer service award used across other public sector organisations and private industry.<sup>1</sup>

The constabulary uses a wide range of techniques to communicate with victims, and to obtain feedback from the public. These include Facebook, email, web forums, telephone and face-to-face contact through neighbourhood policing teams. The constabulary uses a number of surveys to gauge user satisfaction, and analyses the results to improve the services that it provides to the public.

In spite of these efforts however, victim satisfaction in Lancashire is below the England and Wales level and has declined in the last year.

An important measure of the impact of changes to service delivery for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance. In the 12 months to the end of June 2014, Lancashire had a victim satisfaction rate of 82.3 percent ( $\pm 0.8$  percent) which is lower than the satisfaction rate in England and Wales of 85.0 percent ( $\pm 0.2$  percent). Its current rate is also lower the 86.8 percent ( $\pm 0.6$  percent) recorded for Lancashire Constabulary in the previous year.

## Use of police tactics

The constabulary uses a broad range of effective tactics to prevent crime and reduce re-offending; for example, policing methods such as problem orientated policing that consider the victim, offender and the location in problem solving activities. An example of this was noted in Blackpool where police are working closely with partners to reduce the number of street sex workers. This approach has proved to be successful, and has reduced the number of clients and workers. Offenders are being managed through the integrated offender management (IOM) process. The women's centres in particular make a significant contribution to the successful results of this initiative.

1 Customer Service Excellence Award is a trademark of the Cabinet Office.

HMIC found evidence that the constabulary is using a range of powers and tactics to disrupt crime and divert offenders. Organised crime groups are tackled and disrupted through a number of operations involving both police resources and those from other organisations, including local authorities. Officers and staff working in neighbourhood policing and response teams are aware of organised crime activity within their areas, have good knowledge of relevant intelligence and are assigned tasks to disrupt the activities of groups and individuals, such as home visits, electronic tagging and the use of stop and search powers.

In some areas of the constabulary, preventative measures such as the use of orders to prevent gang members from associating with each other are employed, with clear evidence that offenders are assessed. This identifies high risk individuals who need to be subject to more intense police activity to prevent offending. The constabulary also carries out assessments of threat, harm and risks to communities following serious incidents, and it makes use of specific resources to provide reassurance and prevent further occurrences. An example was provided where officers and staff were given the task of preventing violence and reassuring the public following a murder.

The constabulary aims to prevent crime and divert potential offenders in the long term by educating and influencing young people through early intervention. Examples include police involvement with the development of basketball and cricket clubs during the summer months.

The constabulary conducts a range of work to prevent crime. In Blackpool, response officers provide a visible presence by conducting checks at licensed premises. Officers are in constant contact with licensees and their staff as part of an initiative called nightsafe; one of the aims of the initiative is to identify people who may be vulnerable due to intoxication and take steps to ensure their safety. Another example includes the work the constabulary does during freshers' week. The constabulary runs a large awareness campaign with partners with the aim of reducing sexual assaults as the universities start a new term.

Officers working within response teams provide patrols to prevent crime whenever possible, although in some areas of the constabulary this facility is reduced when vacancies, created by promotion or sickness, are not addressed as a priority.

## Partnership working and information sharing

Lancashire Constabulary has effective partnership working with both public and private sector organisations across the constabulary area. Victims of domestic abuse receive joint visits from police and independent domestic violence advisors to progress investigations and provide support. Partners reported that the officers working within specialist teams to investigate serious sexual assaults, such as rape and domestic abuse, provide a good service and have the right skills to identify vulnerability and support victims.

The constabulary has three multi agency safeguarding hubs (MASH). Representatives from across a number of public sector organisations such as health, social services and the police are co-located to work together and provide a more cohesive response for victims of domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation. Partners confirmed that the processes were generally working well, although there is an issue with the capacity of officers in some areas especially at peak times, and some cases take longer than necessary to be acted upon across the MASH.

Funding reductions for partner agencies and other support organisations are beginning to have an impact on the service provided in some areas. Managers across the constabulary provided examples where robust discussions with partners are becoming more frequent to make sure that risks are being managed and safeguarding measures are in place. In particular the number of repeat calls in relation to victims and offenders as a result of mental health issues is a concern across the constabulary. A recurring issue is the extended amount of time that it takes response teams to deal with some incidents of this type, whilst waiting for an individual in their care to be assessed by an appropriate medical examiner. The constabulary has taken steps with partners to address some of these issues through the introduction of an early action response officer, a mental health specialist who attends incidents with response officers to provide an early assessment of individuals. This is currently being piloted, and, if successful, will be implemented across the constabulary.

## Domestic abuse

In March 2014 HMIC published the results of its inspection of 43 forces on the effectiveness of the police approach to domestic violence, with a focus on outcomes for victims and whether risks to victims are adequately managed. This included clear recommendations for each force about improvements it should make. As a result of this inspection all forces were required to produce and publish an action plan setting out the steps they were taking to improve the services to victims of domestic abuse. This plan should demonstrate that HMIC recommendations are being addressed and also explain how:

- the leadership will ensure the changes necessary and hold the right people to account;
- the police response when a victim first contacts them (by a 999 call or by visiting a police station) and when they first attend the scene of the incident is improved;
- the force will ensure there is a high quality investigation of all domestic abuse crime;
- victims will be properly supported and offenders properly managed; and
- the training and learning provided to officers ensures they can give the best available response to the victim.

HMIC has made an initial consideration of the action plan submitted by Lancashire Constabulary. We found the action plan contains activity that is in line with the agreed

national priorities outlined above. The plan also details activity required to respond to the specific HMIC recommendations for the force.

The crime inspection provided us with our first opportunity to test whether changes in the force's approach to domestic abuse were beginning to have a positive effect.

HMIC found evidence that tackling domestic abuse is still a priority for the constabulary although improvements could be made.

The daily threat and risk meetings have a clear victim focus. HMIC heard evidence of robust allocation of tasks to ensure bail conditions were met, with officers attending court to support prosecutors at bail hearings. HMIC also found that initial actions taken at the scene of domestic abuse incidents are generally good with positive action being taken. The introduction of body worn video cameras to record evidence of injuries and the demeanour of parties present is having a positive impact. The subsequent investigations are being completed to a high standard by specialist teams, with victims receiving a good service. However, there are threats to this provision: specialist officers are being used for other investigations, and some domestic violence units have become under- resourced; non-specialist officers are investigating cases but not always updating victims, and on one occasion officers were not able to attend an incident due to other emergency calls.

HMIC also found evidence of a lack of understanding by frontline officers on the use of independent domestic violence advisors. This means the constabulary cannot be sure that victims are always getting a good service, and additional training may be required.

## Recommendations

- Lancashire Constabulary should review immediately the resourcing and process for prioritising tasks coming from the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). By January 2015 the constabulary should begin implementing a plan to improve the prioritisation and timeliness of these tasks.

## Summary

Good

- Lancashire Constabulary has a victim-centred approach underpinned by a performance culture that is based on doing the right thing for the victim, rather than one based on specific targets for crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Victim contact and reassurance is a priority for staff and the constabulary has been re-accredited with a customer service award.
- Partnership working is generally good, although the capacity of officers to carry out work is a concern in some areas, particularly at times of peak demand.



# How effective is the force at investigating offending?

HMIC looked at the range of police tactics and powers used by the constabulary to investigate offending, including how investigations are conducted, whether persistent offenders are diverted from crime and how people vulnerable to repeat crime are supported. We looked at how the constabulary learns from experience in order to improve professionalism in operational practice and leadership.

## Vulnerability, risk and victims

Victim care and reassurance is a priority for the constabulary. The removal of targets for crimes such as theft and burglary has helped staff to work with victims to find the best and most appropriate result rather than to seek prosecution in the first instance. On a daily basis, decisions about how to make the best use of resources and which tactics to use are made at local threat and risk meetings.

HMIC found good evidence that the views of victims are prioritised when officers decide what to do about a crime or incident, including the decision to pursue a prosecution. In some cases, victims do not wish for crimes to be investigated and the constabulary is beginning to become more confident in supporting this where it is appropriate to do so and in the best interests of the victim. This leaves the crime undetected, with no further action taken.

In addition to sending officers to urgent calls for service, the constabulary also sends officers to visit victims at home by scheduled appointment for non-urgent incidents. The officers who conduct these visits do not form part of the general immediate response teams that normally respond to emergency calls. However they will respond to emergency incidents if they are the nearest available resource or if immediate response officers are unavailable. Staff recognise the importance of carrying out scheduled appointments, but sometimes the time allocated to complete the appointments is insufficient due to factors such as additional crimes being reported or additional witness statements that need to be taken. This has a negative impact on the quality of service that the victim receives and reduces the time remaining for subsequent appointments.

The constabulary uses an IT system called Sleuth to record and hold information about how victims have been supported. This system helps officers to carry out their responsibilities to victims under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, for example by sending automatic prompts when action or a victim update is required. A sample of 20 case files reviewed by HMIC provided clear evidence of the use of victim personal statements and specific victim care plans. Constabulary staff demonstrate a good awareness of the requirements of the Code, and it is clear that victim care is embedded within the organisation rather than being driven by a national requirement. This is one of Lancashire Constabulary's principal strengths.

The constabulary works closely with communities to resolve local issues and provide a victim-focused approach. For instance alternative legislation and civil remedies are used together with partners such as registered social landlords to investigate and resolve issues together.

## Investigation

The constabulary makes decisions regarding attendance to calls for service based upon victim needs, levels of risk and vulnerability. Question sets are used by call handlers working in the police contact centre to help them to identify levels of risk and vulnerability, and decide the most appropriate response. Repeat callers and vulnerable victims are flagged electronically on the constabulary IT systems. Staff know who repeat callers are, and where to find information about previous incidents. Local threat and risk meetings include reviews of repeat victims, locations and offenders to reassess constantly levels of threat, harm and risk. Where required, these discussions lead to enhanced levels of service being provided, including additional reassurance activity and engagement with partners.

The constabulary has a demand reduction unit which is used to resolve issues by telephone where it is appropriate to do so, freeing up officer time to attend those incidents where there is an urgent need.

Investigation plans are effective, in particular for more serious crimes where supervision is of a good standard. The constabulary's approach to investigation planning works well, supervisors provide support to investigating officers and ensure actions are carried out in a timely way. The supervision of crimes and the safeguarding of victims also form part of the daily threat and risk meetings. The case files reviewed demonstrated good standards of investigation including rationale for actions taken as well as evidence of problem solving.

Staff have the skills and accreditation that they need to carry out their core responsibilities. Staff are well trained, particularly in specialist teams, and provide a good service to victims. Officers with enhanced investigative training are also used by the constabulary to investigate specific types of crime. For example, a burglary team consisting of detectives attend reports of burglary to improve the service to victims and pursue all opportunities to solve the crime.

The constabulary has recently made changes to the way in which crime scene investigation teams are deployed. A crime scene investigator (CSI) based within the police control room assists control room staff in making decisions about the use of CSIs, making a professional judgement to determine if there are forensic opportunities. There was evidence however that some forensic samples are not being submitted for examination and as a result some viable investigations are not being progressed.



## Tackling repeat and prolific offenders

The constabulary identifies repeat offenders<sup>1</sup> as those who have committed one or more of four specified offences over a 12 month period, but allows flexibility to manage offenders based on the risks that they pose to the community. Assessments are made with partner organisations to develop a shared view of how offenders will be managed. According to the constabulary's definition<sup>2</sup>, Lancashire Constabulary had 221 prolific offenders as of 31 July 2014.

HMIC found that the integrated offender management (IOM) programme in Lancashire Constabulary has an appropriate and manageable cohort of offenders who are well supervised by the dedicated staff working within the IOM teams. There is regular communication between services to assess risk and plan future actions. Offenders are clearly identified and assigned to officers to be managed on a daily basis. There is good use of tactics to reduce re-offending, such as regular visits and voluntary tagging of offenders.

## Learning from experience

The constabulary has processes in place to provide learning and development to staff of all grades and ranks as part of a programme of continuing professional development (CPD). Examples were provided by officers and staff who regularly attend CPD days for mandatory training and sharing of good practice.

Opportunities for staff to shadow colleagues in other roles across the constabulary and to share information are evident. In addition, the constabulary holds a number of force-wide events to share good practice. Officers know how to find experienced people who can help them in areas where their own knowledge is limited. Information is shared by staff other than supervisors. For example, police community support officers (PCSO) spend short periods of time with the public protection unit to improve their knowledge of vulnerability. There are also examples of partner agencies spending time working alongside officers in the constabulary to improve collective knowledge and understanding. Staff spoke positively about CPD days and the support they receive from supervisors to help their personal development. Coaching and mentoring has been provided to over 400 staff in the last two years.

<sup>1</sup> There is no standard national definition of who should be considered for Integrated Offender Management(IOM) arrangements. Lancashire Constabulary uses the following criteria to decide if an offender should be part of the IOM programme: Acquisitive crime - four offences over a 12 month period or as per shared professional judgement of partners.

<sup>2</sup> Lancashire Constabulary defines a priority and prolific offender as: "Lancashire Constabulary uses the criteria of four offences over a 12 month period. We may also choose to manage an offender as a PPO even if they do not fit the specified criteria. These decisions are based on professional judgement and documented evidence, in cases where partners have a shared view that this is the appropriate course of action."

Formal training is available face to face, although it can take a long time for staff to be allocated to a course. Online lessons are also used, although this varies in effectiveness. The constabulary is addressing this by training teams rather than individuals in e-learning modules to generate debate, and assist in a higher degree of understanding.

The constabulary has an online staff forum called 'The Buzz'. This is regularly used to highlight good practice, areas of development and in some cases it is used as a means to debate constabulary policy. An example of this is a debate regarding attendance at reports of retail crime (shoplifting) at those commercial premises where there has been a refusal or failure to put crime prevention measures in place.

The constabulary has a what works database which officers can search using key words to provide them with guidance. For example, an entry in relation to burglary includes guidance on conducting house-to-house enquiries, taking a statement and checking for CCTV evidence. Learning from serious case or domestic homicide reviews is discussed at constabulary performance meetings where actions are developed and implementation monitored. In the 12 months to the end of 31 July 2014, Lancashire Constabulary opened six serious case reviews. During the same period it had completed three, including an action plan to ensure the implementation of any recommendations that are made.

## Recommendations

- Within three months Lancashire Constabulary should review the decision making process for forensic examination submissions. If considered necessary, by March 2015 the constabulary should commence the implementation of a plan to improve the submission process or communicate to staff the rationale behind submissions not being sent for examination.

## Summary

Good

- There is a clear focus on providing a good service to victims in Lancashire, in particular identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring that the risks to them are properly understood and addressed by both police and partners.
- There are good standards of investigation with officers appropriately trained and supported by their supervisors.
- There is a comprehensive range of opportunities for continuing professional development, shared learning and debate about policing issues.

# How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

HMIC looked at how the constabulary prevents and tackles anti-social behaviour; in particular the way victims are treated. We looked at the quality and consistency of victim contact across the constabulary and whether victims of anti-social behaviour were dealt with in a comparable way to victims of other crimes.

## Community contact and victim care

Lancashire Constabulary uses a range of tools and techniques to engage with the public and victims of anti-social behaviour. The constabulary uses these techniques with a good understanding of how effective they will be. For example, the constabulary has improved engagement with elderly people through over 60s groups, and with younger communities through social media. The constabulary has a commitment for neighbourhood policing teams to contact every victim of anti-social behaviour within 24 hours to assess their needs and provide reassurance.

It is clear that for many of the officers and PCSOs in the constabulary, social media such as Facebook and Twitter are regular methods of engagement due to the number of people that interact through these channels. For example, the constabulary hosted a question and answer session on Facebook in which over 300 people joined the discussion. It has held similar debates on what the public wanted officers to tackle as part of their Friday night priorities, which included anti-social behaviour, drugs, alcohol and speeding. The police shared the results on Twitter.

The constabulary plans to introduce an online messaging system called neighbourhood alert, and has been aiming to sign up as many members of the community, including neighbourhood watch schemes, as possible. This includes an open day held at police headquarters to show the community what the police do. Neighbourhood alert is an online tool that will allow the constabulary to update the public through a chosen mechanism such as email or text message.

The constabulary also use community members and groups to provide updates on their behalf and a number of examples were provided such as farm watch, neighbourhood watch and rural watch.

Officers and staff know who the repeat victims of anti-social behaviour are within their communities, and also where they can find information on IT systems if they need to check anything. This also includes an understanding of perpetrators who are also vulnerable, such as elderly people suffering from the early stages of dementia who are awaiting assessment. This is managed in a supportive and caring manner.

## Partnership working

The constabulary works closely with partners to deal with anti-social behaviour and prevent it from increasing. This is done through the anti-social behaviour risk assessment conference (ASBRAC) that brings together a number of organisations to discuss cases and decide on the best approach, irrespective of whether the case refers to an individual or family. This is working well in Lancashire, and ASBRACs can be set up quickly in response to issues that are emerging. Risk assessments in particular are of a good standard.

Community safety partnerships (CSPs) are used to identify emerging issues and develop problem solving approaches. An example was provided where crime and anti-social behaviour were increasing in a community and officers involved the CSP due to concerns that the community was being targeted. By engaging with younger members of the community and by the police and partners providing additional support, more individuals are now reporting issues. As a result there has been an increase in key individual networks (KINS) – individuals with whom the constabulary exchanges information regularly in order to develop its understanding of particular communities and build trusting relationships.

Another example was a two day event which was held in a high priority area to reduce anti-social behaviour. The event involved staff from across a number of public sector agencies. This involved cleaning up the neighbourhood, street surgeries, provision of leaflets and marketing of the event on both Twitter and Facebook. It also involved the community, with feedback indicating that people subsequently felt more confident that the police would take action.

## Improving services to the public

In the 12 months to March 2014, Lancashire Constabulary recorded 83,840 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is a reduction of 7 percent against the previous 12 months.

The constabulary is continuing to improve the ways by which feedback from the community can be obtained. User satisfaction surveys are a way to understand where service is good, where improvements can be made and to develop a more meaningful and detailed view of satisfaction. For example the constabulary has invested in a survey seeking the views of those involved in road traffic collisions to improve their understanding of the levels of service provided by their staff. The constabulary is able to get individual satisfaction data down to an officer level to understand better how an individual officer provides a service and tailor any training requirements to address areas for improvement.

The constabulary has a long term view of managing offending, not just by working with specific individuals but by investing in groups such as young people and children to influence them in such a way that an alternative is chosen to committing crime or anti-social behaviour as they get older. A superintendent has been allocated specifically to the development of early intervention approaches in the constabulary, and an intelligence analyst has been seconded to the council to develop a more meaningful understanding of families who regularly require support (troubled families).

Restorative justice is used regularly to improve results for the victims of anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood panels are in place and include representatives from partner agencies who provide guidance to the police on community resolutions. This helps the constabulary to develop and educate young people, and where possible keep them out of the criminal justice system.

## Summary

Good

- Lancashire Constabulary has a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing, and neighbourhood teams have a good understanding of local concerns and priorities. Neighbourhood officers work well with local people in tackling anti-social behaviour.
- The anti-social behaviour risk assessment conference involving police and partners works well and provides a timely and effective response to growing issues.
- The constabulary is focused on early intervention and has invested in proactive work to influence young people, and intelligence to develop a more in-depth understanding of troubled families.

## What each judgment means

HMIC uses four categories for making judgments, two are positive and two are negative. The categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how well the constabulary cuts crime. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the way the constabulary is cutting crime and reducing offending is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the constabulary requires improvement in the way it cuts crime, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the constabulary's effectiveness at cutting crime is inadequate because it is significantly lower than is expected.