



Promoting improvements  
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# PEEL: Police effectiveness 2016

An inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary



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## Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assesses the effectiveness of police forces across England and Wales.

### **What is police effectiveness and why is it important?**

An effective police force is one which keeps people safe and reduces crime. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and the principal measures by which the public judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

To reach a judgment on the extent of each force's effectiveness, our inspection answered the following overall question:

- How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

To answer this question HMIC explores five 'core' questions, which reflect those areas of policing that we consider to be of particular interest and concern to the public:<sup>1</sup>

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?
2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?
3. How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?
4. How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?
5. How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?

HMIC's effectiveness inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/)). This report sets out our findings for Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Reports on the force's efficiency, legitimacy and leadership inspections are available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/hertfordshire/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/hertfordshire/)).

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<sup>1</sup> HMIC assessed forces against these questions between September and December 2016, except for Kent Police – our pilot force – which we inspected in June 2016.

## Force in numbers



### Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**231**

England and Wales

**240**



### Crime (excluding fraud)

Crimes recorded per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**56**

England and Wales

**68**

Change in recorded crime 12 months to 30 June 2015 against 12 months to 30 June 2016

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**+11.8%**

England and Wales

**+7.8%**

Change in recorded crime for the 5 years to the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**-1.0%**

England and Wales

**-3.4%**



### Crime outcomes\*

Charged/summonsed

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**12.8%**

England and Wales

**12.1%**

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**11.3%**

England and Wales

**10.6%**

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**41.9%**

England and Wales

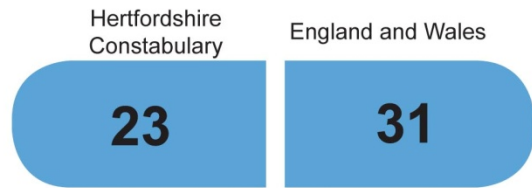
**47.4%**

\*Figures are shown as proportions of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016.

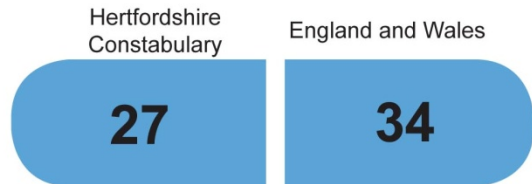


## Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

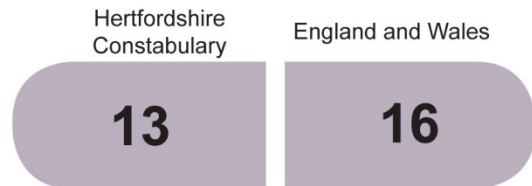


Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015



## Domestic abuse

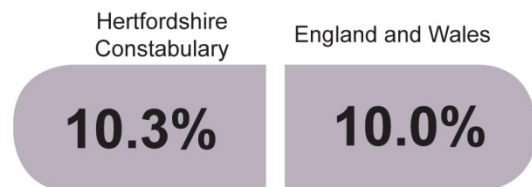
Domestic abuse calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016



Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2016

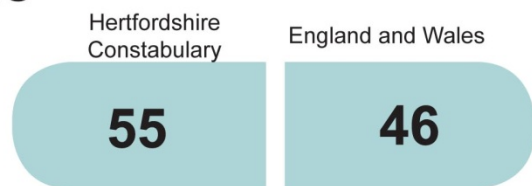


Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2015



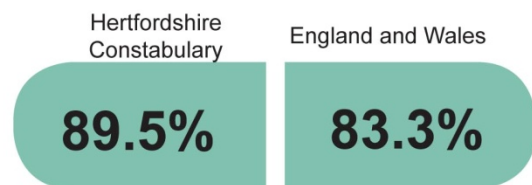
## Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 1 July 2016



## Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction with the overall service provided by the police 12 months to 30 June 2016



For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

# Overview – How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

## Overall judgment<sup>2</sup>



Hertfordshire Constabulary has been assessed as requires improvement in respect of its effectiveness at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Our overall judgement is a deterioration on last year, when we judged the force to be good. The force’s approach to preventing crime and to tackling anti-social behaviour and serious and organised crime is effective; how it investigates crime and reduces re-offending needs to improve. However, the force’s response to vulnerable people<sup>3</sup> is inadequate because of serious weaknesses in the way the force assesses risk and how it supports some victims.

## Overall summary

How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?



How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?



How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?



How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?



How effective are the force’s specialist capabilities?

Ungraded

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. It has devoted resources specifically to policing its community. The force works well with the local community and partner

<sup>2</sup> HMIC judgments are outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

<sup>3</sup> A vulnerable person is someone who is in need of special care, support or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect.

organisations to ensure it has a good understanding of the threats to all sections of its community. But the workforce lacks an evidence base to share good practice on the most effective ways to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

The force's approach to investigating crime and reducing re-offending requires improvement, particularly its initial response, compliance with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, and offender management. While most subsequent investigations are effective, supervisors are not reviewing investigations consistently, and we found weaknesses in how the force investigates stalking and harassment cases. The force needs to do more to improve compliance with the code, especially regarding the completion of victims' personal statements, victim contracts and victim updates. The force is good at protecting the public from the most harmful offenders, but it needs to increase its focus on violent offenders, understand how effective its approach is and have a clear overall direction.

Hertfordshire Constabulary's effectiveness at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims, is inadequate. There are serious weaknesses in the way that the force assesses risk at the first point of contact, when the police receive a call. The force implemented the THRIVES<sup>4</sup> risk assessment process in March this year, but without enough quality assurance or supervision to ensure it is being used effectively. This means that some victims are not getting the support that they need when they need it, and evidence may be lost because officers are not attending incidents in a timely manner. Consequently, the force is not adequately protecting the vulnerable or supporting victims in the way it should.

HMIC also has concerns about how the force supports some of the victims in its area: the victim does not support police action in 41.0 percent of domestic abuse investigations, which is higher than the figure for England and Wales of 35.8 percent. The force is working hard to understand why this is. It has introduced a domestic abuse victim survey and is reviewing its use of the appointment service for domestic abuse victims (which includes scheduled appointments at locations and times that suit the victim, made by officers driving so-called 'diary' cars). In the control room we found that in some cases incorrect categorisation of incidents indicated that the right questions had not been asked of the victim. This, together with a lack of searches for additional information and intelligence, means some vulnerable victims may not have been identified and that the provision of safeguarding and investigations delayed. In some instances, we found specialist support should have been provided.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at tackling serious and organised crime. The force works well with national and local partner organisations, for example housing,

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<sup>4</sup> The threat, harm, risk, investigation, intelligence, vulnerability, engagement, specific need (THRIVES) model is used to assess the appropriate initial police response to a call for service. It allows a judgment to be made of the relative risk posed by the call and places the individual needs of the victim at the centre of that decision.



the National Crime Agency, immigration enforcement, youth offending teams and probation services, to tackle organised crime. The force has the ability not just to pursue and disrupt organised criminals, but also to prevent organised crime from taking root in communities. The force is starting to use its neighbourhood officers to prevent people from becoming involved in organised crime, but it needs to make better use of its powers to prevent organised criminals causing further harm. The force also needs to improve how it gathers and uses intelligence, particularly that held by partner organisations such as HM Revenue and Customs and UK Visas and Immigration. Frontline officers' knowledge of local organised crime groups could be improved.

The force's plans for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities are appropriate. The force regularly tests its public order, firearms and civil emergencies response across the region and with partner organisations. It is well prepared to respond to a firearms attack and is increasing its firearms capacity and capability to provide resilience and to support the national response.

## **How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?**

The police's ability to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to keep people safe is a principal measure of its effectiveness. Crime prevention is more effective than investigating crime, stops people being victims in the first place and makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other policing organisations and organisations such as health, housing and children's services have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter therefore depends on their ability to work closely with other policing organisations and other interested parties to understand local problems and to use a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

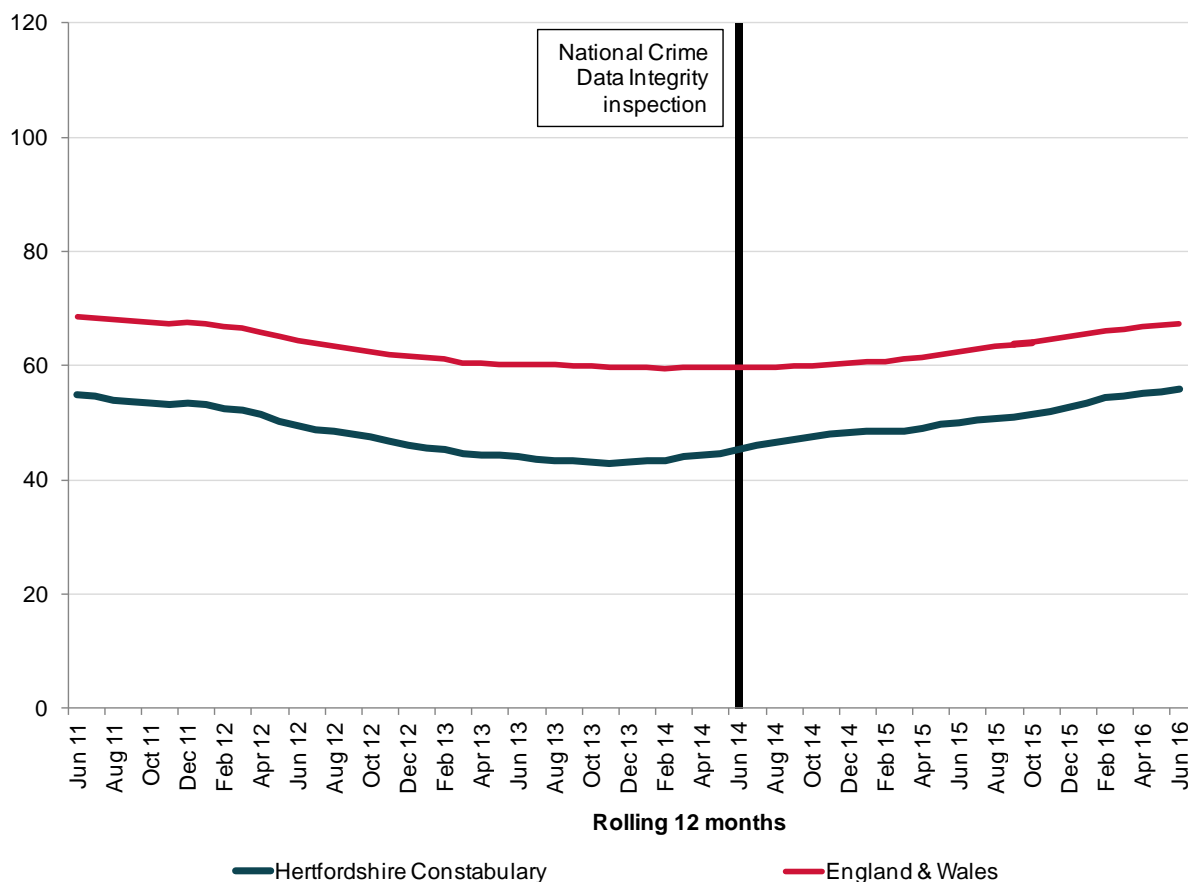
## **How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Hertfordshire?**

Although police-recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a partial indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as the number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (crimes involving a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) and other crimes against society (e.g. possession of drugs). In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the majority of forces (39 out of 43 forces) showed an annual increase in total police-recorded crime (excluding fraud). This increase in police-recorded crime may have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's 2014 inspection of crime data in all forces across England and Wales.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. Figure 1 shows how police-recorded crime has fluctuated over the longer term. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2011, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 has decreased by 1.0 percent in Hertfordshire compared with a decrease of 3.4 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime increased by 1.9 percent in Hertfordshire, compared with a decrease of 0.5 percent for England and Wales as a whole.

**Figure 1: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) in Hertfordshire, for the five-year period to 30 June 2016**



**Source: Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

More recently, when compared with the previous 12 month period, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Hertfordshire increased by 11.8 percent for the year ending 30 June 2016. This is compared with an increase of 7.8 percent across all forces in England and Wales over the same period.

The rate of police-recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour per head of population indicates how safe it is for the public in that police area. Figures 2 and 3 show crime rates (per 1,000 population) and the change in the rate (per 1,000 population) of anti-social behaviour in Hertfordshire compared with England and Wales.

HMIC used a broad selection of crime types to indicate crime levels in the police force area during the inspection. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police-recorded crime rates only. The figure below shows police-recorded crime rates in the force area for a small selection of crime types.

**Figure 2: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) in Hertfordshire, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

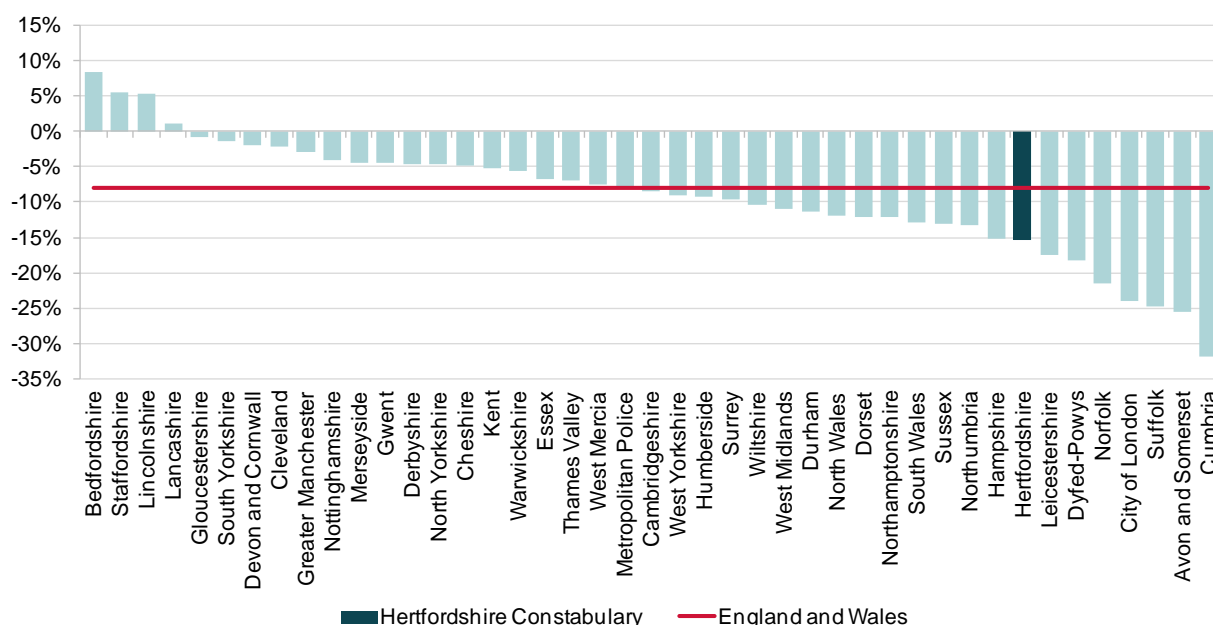
Rates per 1,000 population	Hertfordshire Constabulary	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	55.8	68.2
Victim-based crime	48.2	60.4
Sexual offences	1.3	1.9
Assault with injury	5.7	7.0
Burglary in a dwelling*	6.0	8.1

\* The rate of burglary in a dwelling is the rate for 1,000 households, rather than population

Source: Home Office data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

**Figure 3: Percentage change in the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents (per 1,000 population), by force, comparing the 12 months to 31 March 2016 with the 12 months to 31 March 2015**



Source: Home Office data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary recorded 23 incidents of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population. This is 15 percent fewer incidents per 1,000 population than the force recorded during the previous 12 months. In England and Wales as a whole, there were 8 percent fewer incidents per

1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016, than were recorded during the previous 12 months.

## **How effectively does the force understand the threat or risk of harm within the communities it serves?**

It is vital that forces have a detailed understanding of the communities they serve in order to protect them from harm. This understanding should include those communities which may – for a variety of reasons – need the police to work differently to understand their requirements, for example migrant communities, elderly people or groups which might be mistrustful towards the police. A good understanding of what matters to these communities helps the police to gain their confidence and create safer neighbourhoods for citizens.

In order to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, police forces need to understand the threat and risk faced by communities. Forces must also operate a model of local policing in which police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) have sufficient time for community engagement, visible targeted foot patrols and working with other policing organisations and other interested parties to promote resolutions that protect communities and prevent crime. Successfully undertaking these three activities leads to crime reduction and increased public confidence.

### **Does Hertfordshire Police understand the risk posed to its communities?**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at using intelligence to identify threat or risk of harm in its communities. It has a dedicated local policing model. This means that in every neighbourhood a team of named police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) should spend most of their time carrying out community engagement and prevention activity. The public report seeing both foot and vehicle patrols in Hertfordshire to the same level as they did last year.

HMIC conducted a short survey of police staff across forces in England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and the suitability of tasks assigned to them. The survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample, so results were explored further during fieldwork rather than being used to singularly assess force performance. In Hertfordshire Constabulary, 225 officers and staff responded to our survey. HMIC also visited neighbourhood teams, and talked to and observed officers, and found that police officers are regularly taken away from their neighbourhoods to undertake other activities. The force does not have a policy on this type of redeployment, or any way of identifying how frequently and in which location(s) it is happening. As a result, neighbourhood officers' availability in some areas of the force has decreased, which compromises the quality of neighbourhood policing. The force is reviewing its approach to gain a better understanding of how its officers spend their time; at the time of the inspection it was developing activity analysis for local neighbourhood teams.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a clear understanding of the threats facing the communities it serves. It is good at analysing both traditional crimes (such as burglary and robbery) and so-called emerging threats (such as child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime). It has developed its understanding of threats with partner organisations to develop the best picture. It has introduced a more sophisticated approach to assessing individual risk that also assesses impact on the communities of Hertfordshire, how likely these threats are to affect them, and what level of harm they would cause. This has allowed the force to develop responses tailored to individual types of crime or to threats that pose a risk to the community.<sup>5</sup> This assessment is linked to the force and local community safety partnership (CSP) priorities.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the development of this threat assessment the force has maintained a welcome focus on keeping vulnerable people safe. However, it needs to update its problem profiles for child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, and it has increased its analytical capacity and capability to do so by recruiting a principle analyst. The force also makes effective use of its own intelligence to identify threat or risk of harm within communities, using traditional national intelligence model (NIM)<sup>7</sup> products to map local crime trends.

### **How does Hertfordshire Police engage with the public?**

The force understands the importance of involving the public in identifying new and emerging risks, and to find out what matters most to them. It uses a range of methods to do so. These include online and more traditional face-to-face meetings, and deployments of mobile police stations. Community safety teams are at the core of community work and public engagement. These teams of police officers and PCSOs work closely with the public, gathering information and acting on local concerns. The force has established good links with the Traveller and Eastern European communities, and it is developing its key individuals network to identify individuals and groups with which it needs to develop better contacts, such as the

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<sup>5</sup>The force is using a tool called MoRiLE. It uses a range of methods to assist decision-makers in identifying and prioritising threat, risk and harm, and link these assessments to organisational capacity and capability to respond.

<sup>6</sup> Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) set up as statutory bodies under sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Each CSP is made up of representatives from the police and police authority, the local council, and the fire, health and probation services (the 'responsible authorities'). Their mandate is to enable organisations to work together to resolve instances of crime and anti-social behaviour.

<sup>7</sup> The National Intelligence Model (NIM) is a well-established and recognised policing model that managers use for setting strategic direction, making prioritised and defensible resourcing decisions, allocating resources intelligently, formulating tactical plans, allocating and co-ordinating resulting activity, and managing the associated risks. It is important to note that the NIM is not just about crime and not just about intelligence – it is a business and decision-making model that can be used for most areas of policing. It provides a standardised approach to gathering, co-ordinating and disseminating intelligence that can be integrated across all forces and law enforcement agencies.

Somali community. It makes good use of faith groups and watch schemes across Hertfordshire to identify emerging communities. One in three homes is signed up to the extensive Neighbourhood Watch network.

The force communicates with the public regularly on activity to tackle their concerns, using a wide range of media. Its website includes the picture, name and contact details of the local officer or PCSO. HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a survey of attitudes towards policing between July and August 2016. The survey indicated that there has been an increase in public satisfaction with Hertfordshire Constabulary. Some 403 people were interviewed and 58 percent were very or fairly satisfied with local policing in their area. This is a 6 percent increase on 2015.

## **How effectively do force actions and activities prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?**

Effective forces use a range of options to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. They use structured approaches to solving local problems which aim to rid communities of criminal and anti-social behaviour. They also use a range of legal powers and specific tactics which vary depending on the situation. HMIC expects forces to review their activity as well as other sources of evidence in order to improve their ability to protect people over the long term.

### **Does the force have a problem-solving approach?**

The force has a structured approach to problem solving, using nationally recognised models: its principal method of problem solving is the SARA model,<sup>8</sup> although officers and staff also spoke of using the PIERS model<sup>9</sup> and the national decision-making model (NDM).<sup>10</sup> The force works with community safety partner organisations, systematically sharing effective practice and information about anti-social behaviour cases and planning joint activity. A shared database, also used by relevant staff in the local authority, enables the force to obtain and share information about progress on cases, and improve the outcomes for people and communities.

The force has a good preventative policing strategy and works with established crime prevention partnerships, including the county community safety unit, the

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<sup>8</sup> SARA is an acronym for scanning, analysis, response, and assess. The process is aimed at identifying legal and ethical solutions to policing problems such as anti-social behaviour.

<sup>9</sup> The PIERS model (prevent, intelligence, enforcement, reassurance and support) is a way to bring a comprehensive police response to an identified problem.

<sup>10</sup> National decision model (NDM) is specific to policing. It provides a consistent framework in which decisions can be examined and challenged, both at the time and afterwards. It is composed of six main elements: the police code of ethics being central to the decision; gather information; assess threat and risk; consider powers and force policy; identify options; and, take action and review what happened.

responsible authorities group and local joint action groups, to implement it. It has three specialist crime prevention officers and a dedicated team of Home Office-trained crime prevention design advisors (CPDAs). The CPDAs work closely with all ten district council planning departments. The councils supply details of all new applications to build homes and commercial properties to the CPDAs for advice on incorporating proven crime prevention features as part of the construction. The force shares new crime trends and good practice through the national networking group that it leads. An annual review of burglary rates shows a good reduction of crime in these accredited buildings.

### **Does the force use effective approaches and tactics to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour?**

Hertfordshire Constabulary uses a range of approaches to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour effectively. Examples of problem-solving and preventative tactics are evident when officers receive their directions and work priorities for the day, and these are supported by relevant and up-to-date intelligence. We found evidence of multi-agency plans to prevent people becoming victims of crimes such as domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, rape, and sexual assault. Neighbourhood staff have specific responsibilities for keeping some vulnerable people and repeat victims safe. We found that officers and staff in the community safety partnerships (CSPs) know who is vulnerable or a victim in their area. The force runs regular 'Street Safe' initiatives with local partner organisations: for example, trading standards officers and the fire service visit areas designated as having higher than average crime rates to offer crime prevention advice.

We found good examples of crime prevention: for example, Operation Stomp, which is targeted at identifying vulnerable people or premises. Funded by a CSP grant, items such as shed alarms, locks, timers for lighting, and purse bells are provided to those identified as being at risk of being a victim of crime. Over a six-month period officers and PCSOs visited Little Berkhamsted, Much Hadham, Furneux Pelham and Stanstead Abbots. During these operations, colleagues from East Hertfordshire CSP attended with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, who provide advice and fit smoke alarms. The rural team has all-terrain vehicles to enable it to target rural problems such as hare coursing, off-road motorcycles, poaching, and missing persons, as well as to support police operations at large music events such as Standon Calling. This additional capability reassures the rural community that their concerns are important to the police and to their partner organisations, and that they are taking action on them. The force also makes good use of volunteers: one example of this is Operation Agrarian, which entails the special constables and other police volunteers conducting stop checks on vehicles on minor routes during evening periods.



Hertfordshire Constabulary is a significant partner in the Families First programme, which aims to identify and solve problems through early intervention. We found good information and intelligence sharing to identify new families who may need support.

The frontline officers we spoke to have a good understanding of crime prevention and advise communities on how they can avoid becoming victims of crime. All the CSPs use the 'Spread the Word' campaign to generate messages about crime prevention and encourage the public to get involved in it. Police officers and staff are also encouraged to get prevention messages out to communities, especially after a crime report, to provide clear advice. The force is currently developing a prevention 'toolkit' that officers can access online through a handheld device, which gives them support for ideas and resources.

Officers and staff provide good advice to the public about how to stay safe online. Local officers provide this advice to educational establishments, and it is also communicated through Neighbourhood Watch's Online Watch link, which provides members with the latest police information, local alerts and crime prevention advice by email, telephone or text. We also found a good range of crime prevention advice available to the public on the Hertfordshire Constabulary website.

Officers use their discretion when deciding how best to deal with anti-social behaviour perpetrators using criminal behaviour orders, dispersal orders and exclusion notices. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary used anti-social behaviour powers 148 times per one million population, which is below the England and Wales rate of 320 times per one million population. Hertfordshire Constabulary should ensure that it is maximising the use of these powers. The local authority also uses these powers, and overall use of them is being reviewed at a high-level meeting between the police and partner organisations to identify greater opportunities to use them.

### **Does the force use evidence of best practice and its own learning to improve the service to the public?**

The force is starting to improve how it learns from best practice and the established evidence to provide better services for the public. The force has invested heavily in neighbourhood policing across the ten CSPs in Hertfordshire, but it needs to ensure that officers and PCSOs are not routinely redeployed or used for work that is not aligned with their role, as this reduces the service to the local community. The force needs to do more to evaluate 'what works' and share good practice across Hertfordshire. Senior staff have attended courses on evidence-based policing, but in our inspection we could not find any examples of this learning being put into practice.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we recommended that the force should continuously use evidence of 'what works' drawn from other forces, academics and partner organisations to improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. It should also routinely evaluate tactics and share effective

practice. While we did find evidence that the force makes use of the College of Policing to identify good practice and exchanges ideas locally with partner organisations as part of effective multi-agency working, we did not see a systematic approach or any improvement in the analysis of what works. Partner organisations also commented that it would be helpful to share this information. This does not mean that Hertfordshire Constabulary is not problem solving effectively, just that it is not being as effective as it could be with the joint police and partnership resources available to it.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. It uses information from across the force and from other local partner organisations to make sure that it has a good understanding of the threats to all sections of its community. Community safety teams work closely with the public, gathering information and acting on local concerns. The force works closely with its key individual network to establish links with communities which may not traditionally have had a high degree of contact with, or trust in, the police.

The force works well with partner organisations to protect communities and victims. It needs to share effective practice more systematically, so that officers and staff have easy access to proven methods of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. The neighbourhood teams focus on keeping people safe. Officers in these teams have particular responsibilities for vulnerable people in their neighbourhoods, working with partner organisations to tackle crimes such as child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

The force does not have enough evidence to show that it is tackling crime and anti-social behaviour effectively. It is working with other partner organisations and the academic community to continue to learn and improve.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that local policing teams routinely engage with all sections of their local communities and undertake structured problem solving alongside partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The force should routinely evaluate and share effective practice, both internally and with partner organisations, to improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour.

## How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?

When a crime occurs, the public must have confidence that the police will investigate it effectively, take seriously their concerns as victims, and bring offenders to justice. To be effective, investigations should be well planned and supervised, based on approved practice, and carried out by appropriately-trained staff. In co-operation with other organisations, forces must also manage the risk posed by those who are identified as being the most prolific or dangerous offenders, to minimise the chances of continued harm to individuals and communities.

## How well does the force bring offenders to justice?

Since April 2014, police forces in England and Wales have been required to record how investigations are concluded in a new way, known as 'outcomes'. Replacing what was known as 'detections', the outcomes framework gives a fuller picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime and over time all crimes will be assigned an outcome. The broader outcomes framework (currently containing 21 different types of outcomes) is designed to support police officers in using their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely resolution. The resolution should reflect the harm caused to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community and deter future offending.

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for various reasons. Forces face a different mix of crime types in their policing areas, so the outcomes they assign will also vary depending on the nature of the crime. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted; typically these include types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in the force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat<sup>11</sup> warning' outcomes would be greater. Other offences such as those involving domestic abuse or serious sexual offences, are unlikely to result in a high usage of the 'cautions' outcome.

The frequency of outcomes may also reflect the force's policing priorities. For example, some forces work hard with partners to ensure that first time and low-level offenders are channelled away from the criminal justice system. In these areas locally-based community resolutions are likely to be more prevalent than elsewhere.

It is also important to understand that not all of the crimes recorded in the year will have been assigned an outcome as some will still be under investigation. For some crime types such as sexual offences, the delay between a crime being recorded and

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<sup>11</sup> A plant native to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the leaves of which are frequently chewed as a stimulant. The possession and supply of khat became a criminal offence in England and Wales in 2014.

an outcome being assigned may be particularly pronounced, as these may involve complex and lengthy investigations.

**Figure 4: Proportion of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in Hertfordshire Constabulary, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type<sup>12,13</sup>**

Outcome number	Outcome type / group	Hertfordshire Constabulary	England and Wales
1	<b>Charged/Summoned</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>12.1</b>
4	<b>Taken into consideration</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.2</b>
	<b>Out-of-court (formal)</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>
2	Cautions - youths	0.3	0.4
3	Cautions - adults	3.9	2.3
6	Penalty Notices for Disorder	1.5	0.6
	<b>Out-of-court (informal)</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.6</b>
7	Cannabis/Khat warning	1.8	0.9
8	Community Resolution	1.1	2.8
*	<b>Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>1.8</b>
	<b>Evidential difficulties (victim supports police action)</b>		
15	Suspect identified	6.5	8.3
	<b>Evidential difficulties (victim does not support police action)</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>13.8</b>
16	Suspect identified	11.3	10.6
14	Suspect not identified	3.3	3.2
<b>18</b>	<b>Investigation complete – no suspect identified</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>47.4</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Action undertaken by another body / agency</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>
	<b>Total offences assigned an outcome</b>	<b>85.5</b>	<b>91.3</b>
	<b>Not yet assigned an outcome</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>8.7</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*Includes the following outcome types: Offender died, Not in public interest (CPS), Prosecution prevented – suspect under age, Prosecution prevented – suspect too ill, Prosecution prevented – victim/key witness dead/too ill, Prosecution time limit expired

Source: Home Office crime outcomes data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

<sup>12</sup> Dorset Police is excluded from the table. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further details see annex A.

<sup>13</sup> 'Taken into consideration' is when an offender admits committing other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary's use of 'prosecution prevented or not in the public interest' was among the lowest in England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how it deals with offenders for different crimes.

## **How effective is the force's initial investigative response?**

The initial investigative response is critical for an effective investigation. From the moment victims and witnesses make contact with the police the investigative process should start, so that accurate information and evidence can be gathered. It is important that forces record evidence as soon as possible after a crime. The longer it takes for evidence-recording to begin, the more likely it is that evidence will be destroyed, damaged or lost. Recording this evidence is usually the responsibility of the first officer who attends the scene. After the officer has completed this initial investigation the case may be handed over to a different police officer or team in the force. This process must ensure that the right people with the right skills investigate the right crimes.

### **Control room response**

Hertfordshire Constabulary needs to improve its initial investigative response. Since March 2016, the force has used THRIIVES in its control room, and all staff have received training in this model. A well-established grading policy is designed to ensure that officers are sent quickly to an incident if they are needed. All the force's intelligence systems are available in the control room to help assess the response that a call requires. However, we were concerned to find that the force applies THRIIVES inconsistently. In some instances, intelligence was available, but staff were not using it to inform risk assessments. This means that they are not taking action as quickly as they should, or not attending incidents as quickly as they should.

The force is dealing with 35 percent of calls for assistance over the phone or in a police station, which is above the England and Wales rate of 27 percent. When a crime has been committed and the call handler, using THRIIVES, decides that police attendance is not needed, they will log the details of the crime and consider whether there is scope for gathering forensic evidence. The incident resolution team, based in the control room, supports telephone investigations by carrying out enquiries over the phone. The community focus desk, also based in the control room, records and coordinates the assessment and response to anti-social behaviour incidents. It liaises directly with the safer neighbourhood team for attendance at non-priority incidents, and with partner agencies, who may be the more appropriate authority to resolve an incident.

The force has systems intended to ensure that it responds effectively at the site of more serious incidents during the 'golden hour' (the time immediately after a crime

has occurred, when evidence retrieval is more likely). This includes access to Quicksilver, a web-based information library that the call handler can use to identify what specific questions to ask the victim, what needs to be recorded, and what advice to give. However, the force cannot achieve consistently effective responses if risk assessments are either not being conducted or are inadequate, and officers are not attending the scene. We also found that call handlers are not consistent in giving advice on scene preservation or in offering crime prevention advice. The force must address this, particularly as it has many new staff who are less experienced, and require additional support and supervision.

### **How well do response officers investigate?**

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we said the force should ensure that all those carrying out investigations have appropriate training and support, and the force subsequently provided training for frontline officers. This year the quality of the response officers' initial investigations remains mixed. In some cases, the first officers to attend the scene record valuable evidence in a supervised process, but this is not consistent. We were disappointed to find too few cases being handed over from frontline officers to specialist teams with written evidence of supervision. However, we found that the departments who received the handovers from frontline officers had seen an improvement since last year, which means that investigations make progress more quickly as far as the victim is concerned. We also found that initial response teams and subsequent investigative officers feed back well to each other. This means that those who undertake or approve poor initial investigations receive feedback on any weakness in the first response.

The force passes crimes promptly to the most appropriate officers for continuing investigations. Our inspectors generally found that the right teams with the correct level of skills and experience are investigating the right crimes. However, we are concerned about the force's use of the appointment service when the risk assessment has not been applied effectively. We also found evidence that the force is using the appointment service inappropriately, when a police resource is not available. This does not provide an effective response to victims, and means that there is an unnecessary delay in obtaining evidence. Overall, Hertfordshire's gathering of evidence and initial investigation need improvement.

### **How effective is the force's subsequent investigation?**

Every day police forces across England and Wales investigate a wide range of crimes. These range from non-complex crimes such as some burglary and assault cases through to complex and sensitive investigations such as rape and murder. HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well forces allocate and investigate the full range of crimes, including how officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations. These include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as more recently developed techniques

like gathering digital evidence from mobile telephones or computers to find evidence of online abuse.

### **Quality of the investigation**

Overall the public can have confidence that Hertfordshire Constabulary investigates crimes effectively. HMIC reviewed 60 police case files across crime types for: robbery, common assault (flagged as domestic abuse), grievous bodily harm (GBH), stalking, harassment, rape and domestic burglary. Files were randomly selected from crimes recorded between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 and were assessed against several criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected, we have not used results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance but alongside other evidence gathered. So-called volume crimes such as theft, burglary and common assault are investigated effectively, although there is mixed evidence of written support from supervisors. We also found that specialists investigate the more complex cases effectively, including those with specialist technical elements such as online child sexual abuse. However, we found weaknesses in how the force investigates stalking and harassment cases. The force needs to ensure that it is identifying the risk in such cases correctly and that people with the right skills are investigating them.

### **Support to investigations**

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a well-managed high-tech crime unit (HTCU), which prioritises the most serious offences effectively. In high-risk cases involving vulnerable children and adults, the HTCU examines vital evidence immediately. The force has improved its management of backlogs, increased the number of staff in the HTCU, and identified processes that can be allocated to administrative staff, allowing specialists to focus on more technical and advanced analysis. HTCU staff make every effort to accompany investigators to assist with search warrants, and raise awareness across the force of the specialist support they can provide. The force uses software to triage computer equipment at a crime scene, to identify only those devices that are suspected of containing evidential files. The average time taken to examine a computer for evidential purposes is three months.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has trained 246 local staff to examine mobile phone devices in lower priority cases, to retrieve intelligence and information without having to submit them to the HTCU. The force recognises that it will have to update its technical equipment and retrain local staff by October 2017 to comply with the new national ISO standard.

Hertfordshire Constabulary shares a forensic unit with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. The current system cannot differentiate between the three forces to identify how many forensic submissions awaiting processing each has. However, in the 12 months to June 2016 the three forces had submitted 14,884 forensic recoveries and 248 were outstanding. The force is buying a new system to



improve its management information. During our inspection, we found an effective approach to arresting offenders identified as a result of forensic analysis: they are reviewed at the daily management meeting and responsibility for their arrest passed to the most appropriate officer.

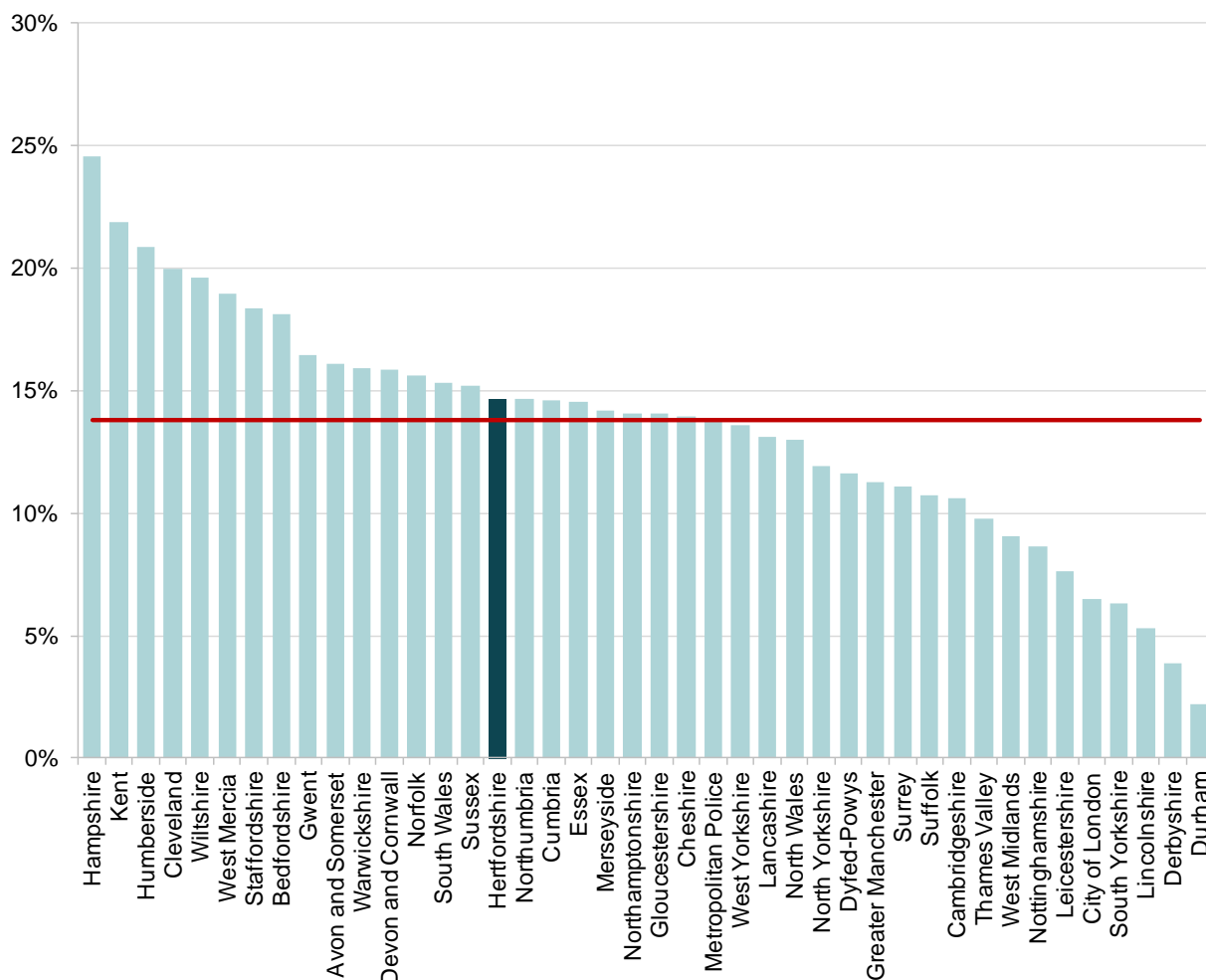
### **Supporting victims**

The new outcomes framework introduced in 2014 includes some outcomes where there were evidential difficulties,<sup>14</sup> which had not previously been recorded. This was to gain an insight into the scale of crimes that the police could not progress further through the criminal justice process due to limited evidence. Furthermore, these outcomes can be thought of as an indicator for how effective the police are at working with victims and supporting them through investigative and judicial processes, as they record when victims are unwilling or unable to support continued investigations or when they have withdrawn their support for police action.

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<sup>14</sup> Evidential difficulties also includes where a suspect has been identified and the victim supports police action, but evidential difficulties prevent further action being taken.

**Figure 5: Percentage of 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support action' outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, by force<sup>15,16</sup>**



**Source: Home Office crime outcomes data**  
**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

For all offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary recorded 14.6 percent as 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support police action'. This compares with 13.8 percent for England and Wales over the same period. However, it should be noted that not all of the offences committed in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 were assigned an outcome and consequently, these figures are subject to change over time.

<sup>15</sup> Percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences.

<sup>16</sup> Dorset Police is excluded from the graph. Therefore, figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further details see annex A.

The force needs to improve how it supports victims. In 2015, HMIC identified that the force should improve its compliance with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*,<sup>17</sup> in particular by offering victims the opportunity to complete a personal statement – completing it for them if necessary – and by keeping them informed of the progress of their case.

During our inspection, we found that not enough officers and staff understood what they needed to do to comply with the code. The force has useful information on its intranet and a dedicated victim service team, but frontline officers and staff told us that they had not received any training for some time. The force has a good system for reminding investigators to update victims on the progress of their investigation, but we were told that sometimes it could be overridden to stop the reminders appearing. We also found that victim contracts are not used consistently, other than in the domestic abuse investigation unit, which means that not all victims receive the same quality of service.

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Hertfordshire in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 89.5 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is higher than the England and Wales victim satisfaction rate of 83.3 percent over the same period. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the proportion of offences assigned an outcome where there are evidential difficulties and the victim does not support police action is in line with England and Wales as a whole. However, in the control room we found that in some cases incorrect categorisation of incidents indicated that the right questions had not been asked of the victim. This, together with a lack of searches for additional information and intelligence, means some vulnerable victims may not have been identified and that the provision of safeguarding and investigations delayed. In some instances we found, specialist support should have been provided. This is considered in more detail in the next chapter of this report.

## **How effectively does the force reduce re-offending?**

We assessed how well the force works with other policing authorities and other interested parties to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, dangerous or sexual offenders.

## **How well does the force pursue suspects and offenders?**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at pursuing known suspects and identifies foreign national offenders to protect the public. It completes a Police National Computer

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<sup>17</sup> *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, 2015. Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/476900/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime.PDF](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/476900/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime.PDF)

check on all arrested suspects. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the force made 18,702 arrests, 3,297 of whom were foreign nationals. The force's policy is that all arrested foreign nationals should be subject to an ACRO check,<sup>18</sup> which provides enhanced information on criminality and allows the force to identify and manage risk better. It implements this policy consistently. The rate of outstanding suspects per 1,000 population that the force has is below the rate for England and Wales. The force has a good system for actively managing outstanding suspects and during our inspection we saw evidence of it working effectively through daily management meetings to prioritise high-risk offenders and ensure action to apprehend outstanding suspects. The force should review its policy for circulating offenders who need to be arrested on the Police National Computer as offenders may be dealt with for other forces or by other forces and outstanding offences may be missed, because they are not circulated as wanted.

### **How well does the force protect the public from the most harmful offenders?**

The force is good at protecting the public from the most harmful offenders, but it needs to focus more on violent offenders, understand how effective its approach is, and have a clear strategic direction. The integrated offender management team (IOM),<sup>19</sup> which consists of two sergeants, nine officers and three probation staff, shares information and intelligence about offenders effectively. The IOM team, working across three geographical areas, is dedicated and enthusiastic. It identifies and reviews the IOM cohort at a bi-monthly multi-agency meeting that includes representatives from housing, drug rehabilitation, mental health, and the county council. At 1 July 2016 there were 106 individuals on the IOM scheme which is 20 fewer than for the same period last year.

The scheme remains almost exclusively concerned with serious acquisitive crime offenders<sup>20</sup> and does not include violent offenders, despite the force having the prevention of harm and keeping people safe as priorities. The scheme has included one domestic violence offender, by way of a pilot, but this has not progressed any further. The force recognises that it needs to review its IOM cohort, and the lack of clear high-level oversight is being addressed at chief officer level.

Hertfordshire Constabulary also operates the C2 (Consequences and Choices) initiative, which is part of the IOM programme. It is staffed by five detective constables, one sergeant and a probation officer. The aim of the initiative is to

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<sup>18</sup> ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and is able to receive/share information with foreign countries in relation to foreign offenders arrested within the United Kingdom.

<sup>19</sup> Integrated offender management brings a multi-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.

<sup>20</sup> Serious acquisitive crime is defined as domestic burglary, car crime (theft of or from a vehicle) and robbery.

prevent prolific offenders re-offending. It consists of voluntary tagging, a bail element (during which there can be no breach of conditions), and a deferred custodial sentence element for which they must have admitted all offences; this is reduced to a non-custodial sentence should they continue to comply. The C2 teams manage the individuals, working closely with partner organisations that may be able to help the offenders, such as housing and substance abuse agencies. At the time of the inspection there were ten people on the scheme. The scheme demonstrates good multi-agency working, with clear criteria on how individuals are selected. The final decision on who is selected for the project is made by a crown court judge. The offender compliance is closely monitored and where offenders successfully engage with the programme their sentence is deferred to a community order. At the time of the inspection the offender cohort have complied with their conditions. The force also runs Project Torch, which is a voluntary global positioning system (GPS) tracking scheme. The system, which enables sharing of information about offenders, is used in many forces across England and Wales. Operation Acorn included a new trial in Stevenage for domestic abuse offenders: the offender was voluntarily fitted with a tracker and an exclusion area identified; the force warned the victim if the offender was nearby. The results of this trial are currently being assessed to identify how successful this approach has been.

The force identifies and monitors well those who pose the greatest risk to the community, although we consider it could involve local teams more fully. There are 805 registered sex offenders in Hertfordshire, of whom 21 are very high risk and 19 high risk.

Sexual harm prevention orders (SHPOs) are designed to protect the public from serious sexual harm by an offender by detailing a series of prohibitions designed to protect the community from his/her future offending. For example, it may prohibit certain activities on the internet or a particular type of employment, such as working with children or young people. Breach of an SHPO is criminal offence.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary issued 80 SHPOs, and it reports that 5 orders have been breached. Sex offenders with restrictions that require enforcement (for example, not going to certain addresses or associating with certain people) are flagged up in briefings to officers, with instructions to conduct compliance checks. Despite this, we found that local officers have only limited knowledge of the sex offenders living in their neighbourhoods. The overall management of sex offenders is adequate, but the lack of continuous involvement of safer neighbourhood teams in monitoring activity and undertaking enforcement could result in an increased risk of harm to potential victims. The force is using the polygraph, an electronic method of identifying if someone is lying, to help with the risk assessment and risk management of offenders. This approach appears to show real promise and it has resulted in one individual being sent straight back to prison.

Hertfordshire Constabulary's multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) are well managed.<sup>21</sup> They enable the force and partner organisations, including prisons and probation, to monitor offenders assessed as presenting a high risk to the public, and to stop them re-offending. The total caseload of offenders being managed in the community is 730, and there are 226 in custody. This works out at an acceptable ratio of 40.5 offenders in the community per offender manager. Officers and staff working in this area are skilled and accredited, and they develop clear plans to reduce the risk from registered sex offenders with supervision and governance arrangements.

## Summary of findings



**Requires improvement**

Hertfordshire Constabulary's approach to investigating crime and reducing re-offending requires improvement. The force's performance has deteriorated since 2015, when HMIC judged it to be good.

The force's initial investigative response needs to improve. How the control room ensures that it collects and preserves evidence is inconsistent. HMIC is worried about how the force assesses whether officers should attend a call. While most investigations are effective, supervision could be better. The force does, however, prioritise the examination of computers and phones effectively.

The force has invested in the service it offers victims and has developed good processes, but training is not up to date and compliance with aspects of the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* is incomplete.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at protecting the public from serious and dangerous offenders, but its management of the most prolific criminals needs to improve. Its integrated offender management scheme has a narrow focus on offenders who commit large numbers of offences rather than on those who cause the most harm. It has good processes for managing the most dangerous offenders and registered sex offenders and works well with other organisations in doing so, but could involve its local neighbourhood teams more.

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<sup>21</sup> Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders. Agencies involved include as responsible bodies the police, probation trusts and the Prison Service. Other agencies may become involved, for example, the Youth Offending Teams will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that it responds with appropriate promptness to reports of crime to enable the effective collection and preservation of evidence.
- The force should ensure that there is regular and active supervision of investigations, to improve quality and progress.
- The force should ensure that it is fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.
- The force should consider widening its approach to integrated offender management to increase its ability to reduce threat, harm and risk.
- The force should ensure that frontline staff are aware of the registered sex offenders in their area, so that they can play a part in monitoring and managing them.

## How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?

Protecting the public, particularly those who are most vulnerable, is one of the most important duties placed on police forces. People can be vulnerable for many reasons and the extent of their vulnerability can change during the time they are in contact with the police. Last year HMIC had concerns about how well many forces were protecting those who were vulnerable. In this section of the report we set out how the force's performance has changed since last year.

### **Has the force improved since HMIC's 2015 vulnerability inspection?**

Since HMIC's 2015 effectiveness (vulnerability) report Hertfordshire Constabulary has improved in the areas we specified. In that inspection, we judged Hertfordshire Constabulary to require improvement because it needed to enhance the service it provided to keep vulnerable people (particularly children) consistently safe.

However, despite the improvement, this year we found a deterioration in the way that the force assesses risk at the first point of contact with the public. This means that some victims are not getting the support when they need it and evidence may be lost because officers are not attending some incidents promptly. Given the level of risk these weaknesses pose to vulnerable victims, the force is not adequately protecting all vulnerable victims from harm or supporting victims.

Last year we said that the force should improve the consistency of its safeguarding of children subject to protection plans by ensuring staff with appropriate skills and experience conduct visits as part of the agreement with Hertfordshire County Council. This year we found that this agreement is no longer in use and these visits are not taking place.

In 2015, we also found that the force needed to improve its response to missing and absent children by developing further its understanding of the scale and nature of the problem, ensuring that its frontline staff and supervisors were aware of their responsibility for investigating and safeguarding, and that case management systems were used effectively. This year we found that the force has improved its analytical capability with the addition of a senior analyst, and that it has identified funding to increase its understanding of child sexual exploitation. The force has reviewed its approach to missing and absent people and decided not to use the 'absent' category, as it has not led to the most appropriate support for vulnerable children. Officers and staff have received continued training to support them in their roles and responsibilities, and to improve the management of missing children on the force's systems.



The quality and supervision in the investigation of cases involving vulnerable victims is poor. We found an inconsistent number of written supervisor reviews across all investigation types. In particular, in the sexual offences investigation team we noted the high number of investigations without timely reviews. Investigations are taking longer to complete than they should, so the victim is not seeing justice done in a timely manner.

The force's compliance with the duties under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime is incomplete, specifically in relation to victims' personal statements and keeping victims informed regarding the progress of their case.

## **How effectively does the force identify those who are vulnerable and assess their level of risk and need?**

In order to protect those who are vulnerable effectively forces need to understand comprehensively the scale of vulnerability in the communities they police. This requires forces to work with a range of communities, including those whose voices may not often be heard. It is important that forces understand fully what it means to be vulnerable, what might make someone vulnerable and that officers and staff who come into contact with the public can recognise this vulnerability. This means that forces can identify vulnerable people early on and can provide them with an appropriate service.

### **Understanding the risk**

Forces define a vulnerable victim in different ways. This is because there is not a standard requirement on forces to record whether a victim is vulnerable on crime recording systems. Some forces use the definition from the government's *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*,<sup>22</sup> others use the definition referred to in ACPO guidance<sup>23</sup> and the remainder use their own definition.

Hertfordshire Constabulary uses the definition from the ACPO guidance and defines a vulnerable adult as:

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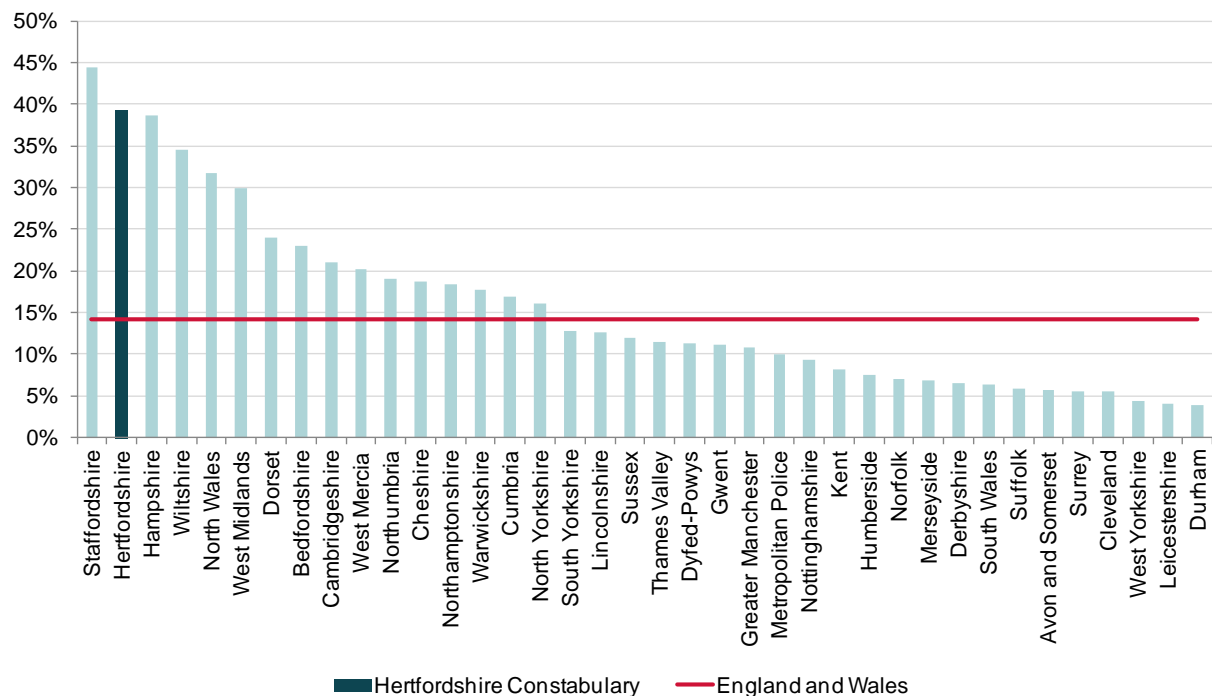
<sup>22</sup> *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, 2013. Available from [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/254459/code-of-practicevictims-of-crime.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practicevictims-of-crime.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is now the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). ACPO Guidance on Safeguarding and Investigating the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults, NPIA, 2012. Available from: [www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/](http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/)

“any person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental, physical, or learning disability, age or illness AND is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”

Data returned by forces to HMIC show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the proportion of crime recorded which involves a vulnerable victim varies considerably between forces, from 3.9 percent to 44.4 percent. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 39.3 percent of all recorded crime in Hertfordshire was identified as having a vulnerable victim, which is above the England and Wales figure of 14.3 percent.

**Figure 6: Percentage of police-recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016<sup>24</sup>**



**Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

Hertfordshire Constabulary has the second highest identification of vulnerable victims nationally, which means that it is able to offer more comprehensive support to those that need it.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability in its local areas. However, urgent improvements are needed in the way that it assesses risk at first point of contact with a victim. This is discussed in detail below. The force has developed several problem profiles for vulnerable people, such as those at risk of child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse. The force child

<sup>24</sup> City of London, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Gloucestershire and Lancashire forces were unable to provide data for recorded crimes with a vulnerable victim identified. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

sexual exploitation profile is also supplemented by the regional profile produced by the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU). A problem profile uses intelligence and information to enhance understanding of a particular crime type or emerging issue. Bringing together data and intelligence in a problem profile can help the force to identify possible victims, intelligence gaps, and prevention or reassurance opportunities. The force's problem profiles are good, giving data broken down by victim, offender and location, and contain a wealth of information and intelligence. However, the force's child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse problem profiles were produced 18 months ago and need to be updated to ensure they provide information on new and emerging problems.

The force has made good progress in implementing its domestic abuse action plan and it has achieved improvements in most areas. The domestic abuse arrest rate is above the England and Wales rate. However, the charge rate has reduced, from 26.5 percent in 2015 to 18.3 percent in 2016. This is lower than the England and Wales rate of 23.3 percent. The force needs to understand why there has been such a significant drop. It has enlarged the domestic abuse investigation support unit and continued to provide comprehensive vulnerability and safeguarding training for frontline staff, supplementing the extensive College of Policing training last year. While most of the actions in the plan have been completed, the force is still keen to:

- ensure appropriate resourcing for specialist units;
- revise the IOM cohort to include domestic abuse offenders;
- improve serial offender management;
- introduce a domestic abuse victim survey;
- refresh the force strategic assessment to include domestic abuse and harassment;
- further improve safety planning and safeguarding; and
- provide more clarity and guidance as well as specific direction to safer neighbourhood teams to improve the protection of domestic abuse victims and management of perpetrators on their area.

Hertfordshire Constabulary also uses the definition of a vulnerable person found in the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*. A victim should be classified as vulnerable if they have a significant impairment of social functioning and intelligence, if they are under 18 years of age, if they have a mental disorder, and/or if they have a physical disability or disorder.

The force is good at identifying those with mental health problems. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 2.9 percent of incidents in Hertfordshire were flagged to identify mental health. A priority for the police and crime commissioner is the protection of

those most at risk of harm, which includes a focus on mental health. He supports the force's approach, which includes mental health practitioners working in the control room to provide expert advice and assistance the first time someone with a mental health problem contacts the police. In April 2016, the force introduced a pilot mental health triage car, staffed by a police officer and a mental health practitioner who attend incidents to provide advice and support to frontline officers dealing with members of the public who appear to be suffering from a mental health condition. This approach was extended to the whole force area in August 2016, and it has resulted in a more appropriate response for vulnerable adults who may need treatment rather than protective custody or arrest for an offence. Hertfordshire Constabulary and its partner organisations have good arrangements to ensure that vulnerable people detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act are not held in police cells.

Staff in the control room have received training to identify risk through a structured process known as THRIIVES (threat, harm, risk, investigation, intelligence, vulnerability, engagement, specific need), introduced in March 2016. They also have access to a search tool, which provides access to additional information, including warning markers on individuals, so they can use a wide range of information when deciding whether someone is vulnerable. However, last year we noted that the computer system used by call handlers does not automatically flag up whether a caller is already known to the police as a vulnerable person. This means that the call handler may miss important information about an individual's vulnerability, and therefore not understand fully the risks. This in turn means that the call handler may not give the response the priority it needs, and the response officers may not be fully aware of the situation when they make their judgments on risk and safeguarding at the scene. Last year the force recognised the limitations of its IT systems and, together with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police, was due to implement a new crime and intelligence system in 2016, which it expected would address this issue. However, this has been delayed and is now due for implementation in January 2018.

The force can identify repeat victims, but by address and telephone number rather than name. This means that if a repeat victim calls from a new location or uses a new telephone, they will not necessarily be recognised immediately as a repeat victim. The consequent risk is reduced by call handlers using specific question sets for some crime types, such as domestic abuse and burglary, and use of a search tool to access additional information.

HMIC is seriously concerned about the risk assessment and management of the 'unresolved' backlog of incidents in the control room. At the time of our inspection we found 279 unresolved incidents, and, while this number will change on a daily basis, it included 22 incidents of domestic abuse which were yet to be attended by the force, the oldest of which was 12 days old. Other incidents of concern included some involving vulnerable young children and a potential firearms incident; the initial

assessments of risk for these had not been completed adequately or were missing altogether, resulting in responses that were either delayed unnecessarily or deployed the wrong resource. This means that the force is not giving vulnerable victims support when they need it and is missing valuable opportunities to collect evidence and progress an investigation. During our inspection the examples of inadequate risk assessments shared with the force include:

- a one-year-old child swallowing cleaning fluid, telephoned in by a health worker. The call taker did not apply the full THRIIVES assessment, although the child was identified as vulnerable due to age and harm from the cleaning fluid, and did not consider criminal offences of child abuse or neglect or refer the incident to the child protection team. Therefore no checks were conducted with other agencies for additional information about the child or family. The child was not seen by the police as safe and well. This incident was referred to the force for immediate action and the incident re-opened and safeguarding addressed;
- a threat to kidnap and kill a child. The force did not conduct searches to identify if the victim was already known to the police. The victim said she had previously been assaulted by the offender and he had previous convictions for assault. The victim stated that she wanted to see the police the following day. The incident was downgraded and deferred to the following day. We found no evidence of immediate safeguarding considerations for the adult victim or child. An accurate assessment of risk in this case should have resulted in police immediate attendance to check the safety and welfare of the mother and child, and to put in place immediate safeguarding. This incident was referred to the force for immediate action; and
- a 14-year-old boy who contacted the police at 2.00am to state that he had left his home address after his mother's partner had verbally abused him. The boy was electronically tagged due to his previous offending behaviour and the conditions were breached when he left his home address. The police did not attend the address until 8.00am the following morning. The boy was not identified as a missing person or risk assessed, and no checks were made with other agencies. This incident was referred to the force to review and take action.

The force should review immediately its approach to its daily assessment of unresolved incidents and institute an effective management and review process that identifies priority risks. Currently each of the 279 incidents has to be opened to review the individual risk assessment.

The force does not have adequate means to test whether the new THRIIVES risk assessment process is effective. Our inspection found that only a few supervisors

are conducting audits of how well the call handlers are managing calls. We also found that some staff believed that they are expected to complete calls in six minutes. This affects the decisions some call handlers make as to the police response, with a bias towards scheduled appointments. The force has recently become aware of this potential bias towards the scheduled appointment service and has analysed use of the appointment service. It is also aware of the lower number of court outcomes, which may indicate that a delay in attendance has caused the victim to lose confidence in the criminal justice process. The force recognises how serious this issue is and it is taking immediate steps to ensure that it improves its risk assessment process and provides victims with a better service in the future.

## **How effectively does the force initially respond to vulnerable victims?**

The initial work of officers responding to a vulnerable person is vital, because failure to carry out the correct actions may make future work with the victim or further investigation very difficult. This could be the first time victims have contacted the police after suffering years of victimisation or they may have had repeated contact with the police; either way, the response of officers is crucial. The initial response to a vulnerable victim must inspire confidence that the victim's concerns are being taken seriously as well as provide practical actions and support to keep the victim safe. The officer should also assess the risk to the victim at that moment and others in the same household, and collect sufficient information to support the longer-term response of the force and other partner organisations.

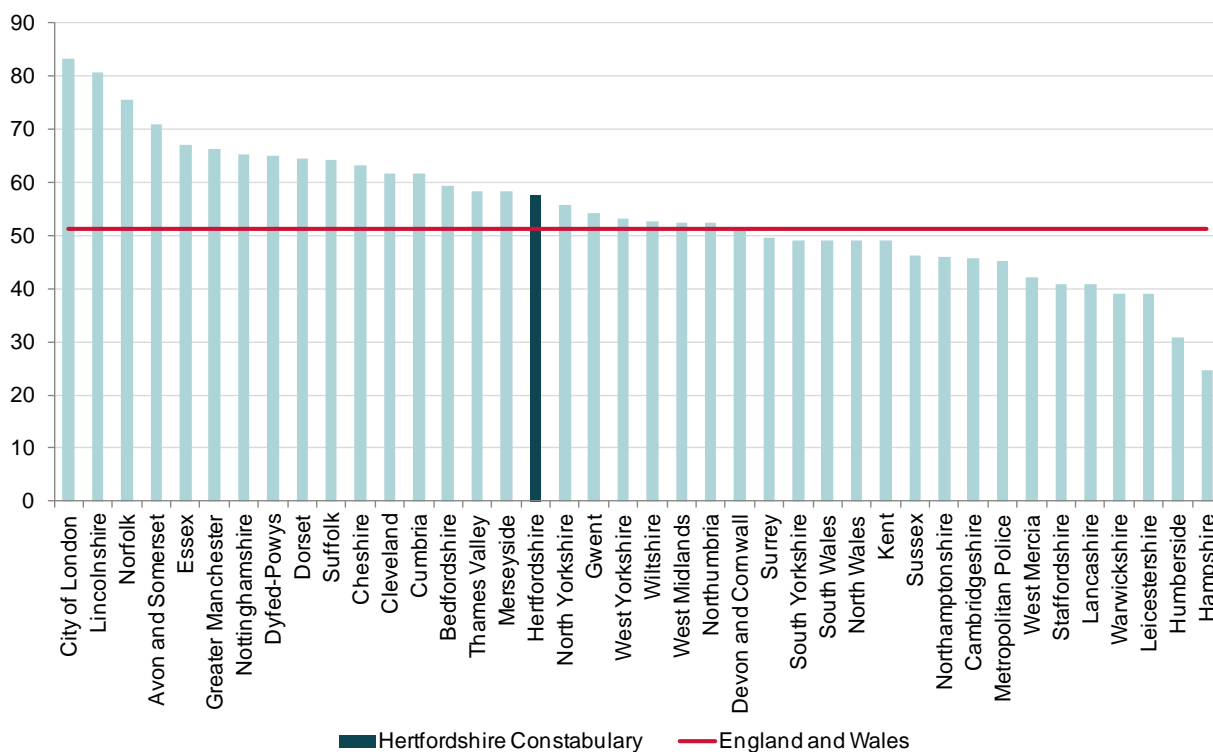
### **Do officers assess risk correctly and keep victims safe?**

The Home Office has shared domestic abuse related offences data, recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, with HMIC. These are more recent figures than those previously published by the Office for National Statistics. These data shows that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, police-recorded domestic abuse in Hertfordshire increased by 41 percent compared with the 12 months to 31 March 2015. This compares with an increase of 23 percent across England and Wales. In the same period, police-recorded domestic abuse accounted for 13 percent of all police-recorded crime in Hertfordshire, compared with 11 percent of all police-recorded crime across England and Wales.

The rate of arrest for domestic abuse offences can provide an indication of a force's approach to handling domestic abuse offenders. Although for the purpose of this calculation arrests are not directly tracked to offences, a high arrest rate may suggest that a force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential form of action (for further details, see annex A). HMIC has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

In Hertfordshire Constabulary, for every 100 domestic abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, there were 57 arrests made in the same period.

**Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016<sup>25</sup>**



**Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

Hertfordshire Constabulary generally responds well to the immediate and longer-term needs of vulnerable victims. The force has established processes to ensure that officers’ response to vulnerable victims is appropriate and reflects their needs. These include the procedures within specialist units such as the joint child protection investigation unit, adult safeguarding, and the missing persons unit, who share information quickly and efficiently with partner organisations. The link between missing children and the risks of child sexual exploitation and human trafficking has been recognised across the force. It has given its workforce training on domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, mental health, and wider safeguarding considerations. The ‘Think Child’ campaign reminds frontline officers to look out for risk and threat to children when attending any incident. Officers are encouraged to identify where a child may need help. This is supported by posters and intranet communication.

<sup>25</sup> Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were not able to provide domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces’ data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

Frontline staff follow a clear process when assessing risk and addressing the nature of a victim's vulnerability. Staff identify safeguarding measures through the DASH form,<sup>26</sup> which officers complete at all domestic abuse incidents, including making a record of children on the same form, to allow for suitable consideration of their needs. The forms are subject to supervision and scrutiny, to ensure accuracy and assessment of safeguarding options for the victim. Officers are also continuing to use risk assessment forms to report mental health concerns through the adult safeguarding team, meaning that vulnerable victims are likely to receive an effective multi-agency response when appropriate.

In January 2016 the force ran safeguarding<sup>27</sup> training days for all frontline officers and detectives. The training covered the significant areas of concern, including missing persons and the links to child sexual exploitation and human trafficking, domestic abuse, managing sex offenders, responding to sexual offences, safeguarding children, and mental health. Mental health awareness training has also been supplemented with online training packages, updated to ensure the guidance is current. Mental health advice and guidance for all officers and staff is available on the force intranet, with helpful links to the College of Policing mental health newsletters.

The force has invested in body-worn video cameras, and all frontline officers have a handheld digital device for accessing force systems at the scene of an incident. The officers we spoke to acknowledged the value of the body-worn video cameras and the handheld devices. The force reports improvements in the evidence gathered at the scene of domestic abuse incidents, and the officers we spoke to recognise the value of the cameras.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a positive arrest policy for domestic abuse incidents. Officers are following this policy. The arrest rate for domestic abuse incidents has fallen slightly, to 57.4 percent in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 compared to 58.9 percent in the 12 months to 30 March 2015. Within the same periods, cases identified as domestic abuse have increased from 5,856 cases to 8,282 cases. The domestic abuse charge rate has dropped by 8.2 percentage points, and the force is taking action to understand why this is.

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<sup>26</sup> Domestic abuse, stalking and harassment (DASH 2009). DASH is a risk identification, assessment and management model adopted by UK police forces and partner agencies in 2009. The aim of the DASH assessment is to help front-line practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and so-called honour-based violence.

<sup>27</sup> The term safeguarding is applied when protecting children and other vulnerable people. The UK Government has defined the term 'safeguarding children' as: "The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully."



Hertfordshire Constabulary has recently introduced specialist domestic abuse assessors to support frontline officers. All officers attend a three-day domestic abuse course, and individuals are selected to attend an additional day's training to become a domestic abuse assessor. The assessors are expected to share their knowledge to support their colleagues in assuring the quality of attendance at domestic abuse incidents. The assessors carry out this process and report their findings to their line manager. While it is too early to identify how this has improved services to victims, it is a promising development.

To offer further support for frontline officers to keep victims of domestic abuse safe, the force has provided extensive training to help officers assess vulnerability and consider options for protecting victims such as fitting alarms, locks, bolts and cameras; and referral to other specialist services. Officers attending crime scenes are able to use their electronic devices to refer vulnerable adults and children to other agencies immediately, such as the National Centre for Domestic Violence.

The force refers vulnerable adults and children to the local authority through the various specialist units. However, there are too many referral options, and the force should simplify its current approach. This will also allow it to identify patterns and trends in referrals, and address any areas that need to improve.

The force is working hard with partner organisations to support children and young people who witness domestic abuse. In many forces there is a domestic abuse notification scheme that notifies schools of children who are in households where domestic abuse incidents have been reported. This allows the school to look out for the children or young people while they are at school and provide additional support and safeguarding where appropriate. However, disappointingly, this scheme has not yet been implemented in Hertfordshire, and the force is addressing this with children's services.

The local neighbourhood teams are responsible for supporting all standard and non-intimate medium-risk domestic abuse victims in their area and making sure they are safe. Neighbourhood officers are able to give advice to victims on getting help urgently, in some cases providing alarms and carrying out 'safe and well' checks. The domestic abuse investigation team deals with all investigations and co-ordinates all safeguarding in high-risk domestic abuse cases. It works closely with partner organisations such as children's social services and adult social care to provide effective safeguarding, and provides guidance and advice to frontline officers.

## **How effectively does the force investigate offences involving vulnerable victims and work with external partners to keep victims safe?**

Those who are vulnerable often have complex and multiple needs that a police response alone cannot always meet. They may need support with housing, access to mental health services or support from social services. Nonetheless, the police still have an important responsibility to keep victims safe and investigate crimes. These crimes can be serious and complex (such as rape or violent offences). Their victims may appear to be reluctant to support the work of the police, often because they are being controlled by the perpetrator (such as victims of domestic abuse or child sexual exploitation).

Hertfordshire Constabulary needs to improve the way it investigates offences involving vulnerable victims. In particular, it needs to improve its initial risk assessment at the first point of contact with the victim and ensure that its response is timely, consistently providing advice on preservation of evidence and crime prevention. Our review of stalking and harassment case files found that the investigations in these cases were less effective than for other offences. We also found that rape investigations are taking a long time and the force is not completing reviews in a timely manner, in part because of a lack of capacity and support for the reviewing officer.

Accredited investigators or officers undertaking continuous professional development to become detectives are responsible for investigating offences affecting vulnerable people in need of protection. The force provides a 24-hour service that enhances the force's capability to safeguard the most vulnerable victims whenever the need arises. The force has processes for monitoring the caseloads of detectives and of those in the public protection command.

HMIC examined the force's use of legal powers to protect victims. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 23 Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) were granted. Applications for 21 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) were made, with 21 being granted by the courts; 8 have been breached by the offender.<sup>28</sup> The force's

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<sup>28</sup> A DVPN is the initial notice issued by the police to provide emergency protection to an individual believed to be the victim of domestic violence. This notice, which must be authorised by a police superintendent, contains prohibitions that effectively bar the suspected perpetrator from returning to the victim's home or otherwise contacting the victim. A DVPN may be issued to a person aged 18 years and over if the police superintendent has reasonable grounds for believing that the individual has been violent towards, or has threatened violence towards an associated person, and the DVPN is necessary to protect that person from violence or a threat of violence by the intended recipient of the DVPN. DVPOs are designed to provide protection to victims by enabling the police and magistrates' courts to put in place protection in the immediate aftermath of a domestic abuse incident. Where there is insufficient evidence to charge a perpetrator and provide protection to a victim via bail conditions, a DVPO can prevent the perpetrator from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing victims time to consider their options and get the support they need.

use of DVPNs and DVPOs has decreased since HMIC's 2015 effectiveness (vulnerability) inspection, which means that fewer victims are being afforded protection. The force recognises that it needs to do more to ensure that officers know how to apply for the notices and orders, and encourage them to do so.

Hertfordshire Constabulary also uses the domestic violence disclosure scheme (Clare's Law).<sup>29</sup> In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the force used the right to ask if a partner has a violent past 41 times and the force has informed potential victims of a partner's violent past under 'the right to know' 47 times. The public protection unit's detective inspector receives Clare's Law applications and gives them an initial review before they are discussed and a decision taken at a multi-agency panel. The aim is to complete the review within 31 days. The force will also make an urgent disclosure, with a detective inspector's authority, to potential victims. Clare's Law applications are also considered at the MARAC.<sup>30</sup>

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness (vulnerability) report on Hertfordshire Constabulary we said that the force needed to apply its referral criteria consistently to ensure high-risk victims are receiving the support they need. We are pleased that the force has increased the number of MARAC co-ordinators from one to three, and appointed an experienced researcher. It has good processes and committed teams who share information effectively to identify risk and draw up safeguarding plans to protect vulnerable victims.

The force contributes effectively to multi-agency work with partner agencies to safeguard vulnerable victims. It has a multi-agency domestic abuse investigation unit, a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), led by children's services, and a joint child protection investigation team. The teams are located in different buildings across the force. While we found good evidence of sharing 'live time' information to safeguard vulnerable victims, the force and its partner organisations should consider how they could bring teams together in the same location to build on this approach. Partner organisations were positive about the staffing increase in domestic abuse investigation unit. They also told us that the domestic abuse partnership board is starting to review repeat victims in order to evaluate these initiatives. This operation has led to an increase in confidence among victims reporting crimes and subsequently an increase in demand on resources; the aim now is to be able to predict future demand in this area to identify the resources they will need.

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<sup>29</sup> The domestic violence disclosure scheme (DVDS), also known as Clare's Law, increases protection for domestic abuse victims and enables the police to better identify domestic abuse perpetrators. For more information, see: [www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/domestic-abuse/leadership-strategic-oversight-and-management/#domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law](http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/domestic-abuse/leadership-strategic-oversight-and-management/#domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law)

<sup>30</sup> MARACs (multi-agency risk assessment conferences) are local meetings where information about high-risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies.

The force has improved the way it interviews children missing from children's homes when they return, using missing people caseworkers. Colleagues from partner organisations spoke positively about the 80 percent increase in the uptake of return interviews, leading to a better understanding of why children are going missing and how this can be prevented in the future.

The implementation of the mental health triage car is also regarded as a success. Colleagues from partner organisations made positive comments about officers making regular visits to the mental health unit to improve their understanding of this particular type of vulnerability and increase their awareness of the support options available.

There is a new initiative to tackle offending adults in families and encourage them to recognise their effect on the children in their family, emphasising the need to change their behaviour to improve the children's welfare. Partner organisations explained the need for evidence to demonstrate that the initiative is effective to ensure continued funding. The force and its partner organisations are sharing data with children's services for analysis to support the evidence and their bid for additional funding.

### **Victims of domestic abuse**

In April 2015, the Home Office began collecting information from the police on whether recorded offences were related to domestic abuse. Crimes are identified by the police as domestic abuse related if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse.<sup>31</sup>

The rate of outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic abuse offences is shown in figure 8. Domestic abuse crimes used in this calculation are not necessarily those to which the outcomes have been assigned and are only linked by the fact that they both occur in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes in figure 4, where each crime is linked to its associated outcome (for further details see annex A).

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<sup>31</sup> Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

**Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences in Hertfordshire Constabulary<sup>32</sup>**

Outcome type / group	Hertfordshire Constabulary	England and Wales
Charged / Summoned	18.3	23.2
Caution – adults	7.9	5.6
Caution – youths	0.3	0.3
Community resolution	0.4	1.4
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim supports police action	17.1	24.1
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support police action	41.0	35.4

**Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary's use of outcomes for domestic abuse flagged offences was in line with those in England and Wales as a whole. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how it deals with offenders for different crimes.

The force's response to domestic abuse is generally good, with effective support to victims of high-risk domestic abuse, positive action at the scene, structured joint agency safeguarding and better outcomes for victims.

However, as set out in the table above, the rate at which domestic abuse related crimes are assigned an outcome where the victim does not support police action is higher in Hertfordshire than in England and Wales as a whole. The force needs to understand why victims of domestic abuse lack confidence in the service it provides. Since fewer victims support the police in progressing cases, fewer domestic abuse suspects are charged and tried in court. The force is about to introduce a pilot scheme asking victims of domestic abuse how well the police treated them and what could be done to improve their treatment. It is also reviewing its diary car and scheduled response to standard/medium-risk victims, to identify how it can improve its support and secure better court outcomes. This includes the force's approach to the pursuit of prosecutions where the victim withdraws support, but the police and the Crown Prosecution Service decide that it is in the interests of the victim and the public to progress the case to court.

<sup>32</sup> Dorset Police and Nottinghamshire Police were unable to submit domestic abuse outcomes data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

## Summary of findings



**Inadequate**

The way in which Hertfordshire Constabulary supports vulnerable victims is inadequate. Its assessment of risk when a call is made to the police is a cause of concern. It has been implementing a recognised risk assessment process since March 2016, but without enough quality assurance and supervision to ensure that it is doing so effectively. This means that some victims are not getting the support when they need it and evidence may be lost because officers are not attending incidents promptly. The force is not protecting all vulnerable victims from harm or supporting victims adequately.

Hertfordshire Constabulary does some things well to protect vulnerable people. It understands the nature and scale of vulnerability in its local areas, but needs to update its profiles. Most officers we spoke to have a good understanding of vulnerable people. Frontline staff have received extensive training on vulnerability, as well as support from specialists and external organisations, and reference documents and briefing notes on the intranet. The force works closely with partner organisations to share information and develop initiatives to protect and support vulnerable people. It has invested substantial additional resources in the domestic abuse investigation unit to provide a better service to victims. The force discusses referrals quickly and efficiently with partner organisations and contributes effectively to multi-agency work with external partner organisations.

## **Cause of concern**

It is a cause of concern to HMIC that some call handlers are not correctly identifying or categorising the level of risk associated with incidents involving vulnerable people. As a result, the force is not responding to these incidents within the appropriate timescales and putting victims at risk.

## **Recommendations**

To address this cause of concern HMIC recommends that the force should take immediate steps to ensure that:

- it improves its initial assessment and response to incidents involving all vulnerable people, but particularly victims of domestic abuse, by ensuring that call handlers understand and consistently apply the THRIIVES (threat, harm, risk, investigation, intelligence, vulnerability, engagement, specific need) decision-making model, and are supervised effectively;
- it responds to all incidents on the basis of an initial assessment of risk rather than on the availability of response officers, to ensure victims are kept safe; and
- it improves its initial response to reports of domestic incidents, specifically to cases where police have been unable to attend or attendance has been delayed, so that it reassesses risk and takes appropriate safeguarding action in a timely manner.

## **Areas for improvement**

- The force still needs to improve the investigation of cases involving vulnerable victims, specifically the quality of investigations and how effectively they are supervised.
- The force should review its use of domestic violence prevention orders, domestic violence prevention notices, and Clare's Law to ensure that it is making best use of these powers to safeguard victims of domestic abuse.
- The force should review its process for sharing information with schools about children affected by domestic abuse incidents so that it can do so as quickly and effectively as possible.

## How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. Police forces have a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCU), the National Crime Agency (NCA) and other partner organisations. Police forces that are effective in this area of policing tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level.

### **How effectively does the force understand the threat and risk posed by serious and organised crime?**

In order to tackle serious and organised crime effectively forces must first have a good understanding of the threats it poses to their communities. Forces should be using a range of intelligence (not just from the police but also from other partner organisations) to understand threats and risks, from traditional organised crime such as drug dealing and money laundering to the more recently-understood threats such as cyber-crime and child sexual exploitation.

As at 1 July 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 55 organised crime groups (OCGs) per one million of the population. This compares to 46 OCGs per one million of the population across England and Wales.

The force is good at assessing the threat to its communities posed by serious and organised crime. It has an effective threat assessment process that draws on information from partner organisations and it has created a good 'local profile' for serious and organised crime, in line with national guidance. This provides the force and its partner organisations with a better understanding of serious and organised crime across Hertfordshire. However, we found intelligence gaps for child sexual exploitation and modern day slavery. The force is currently addressing this gap in its understanding by increasing its analytical capability to ensure this work is completed. The profile could include more assessment related to organised immigration crime, fraud against the public sector and counterfeiting. It could be improved by better understanding of pathways into serious and organised crime and of its effect on Hertfordshire's communities. The force could also broaden considerably the range of partner organisations that contribute to the profile, for example, HM Revenue & Customs, and local trading standards teams.

The force uses intelligence from a range of sources to help it understand serious and organised crime. These include covert methods, and we found numerous examples



of surveillance techniques being used to identify drug suppliers. The force's intelligence function is complemented by a regional intelligence team, which is part of the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU). This regional unit can add further intelligence from other forces and partner organisations to that held by the force. ERSOU has a good understanding of national and regional threats, and is rigorous and inclusive in its approach to assessing them, drawing on intelligence held by partner organisations, other forces, and other regions. This helps it to produce a more accurate and detailed picture of serious and organised criminality in the eastern region.

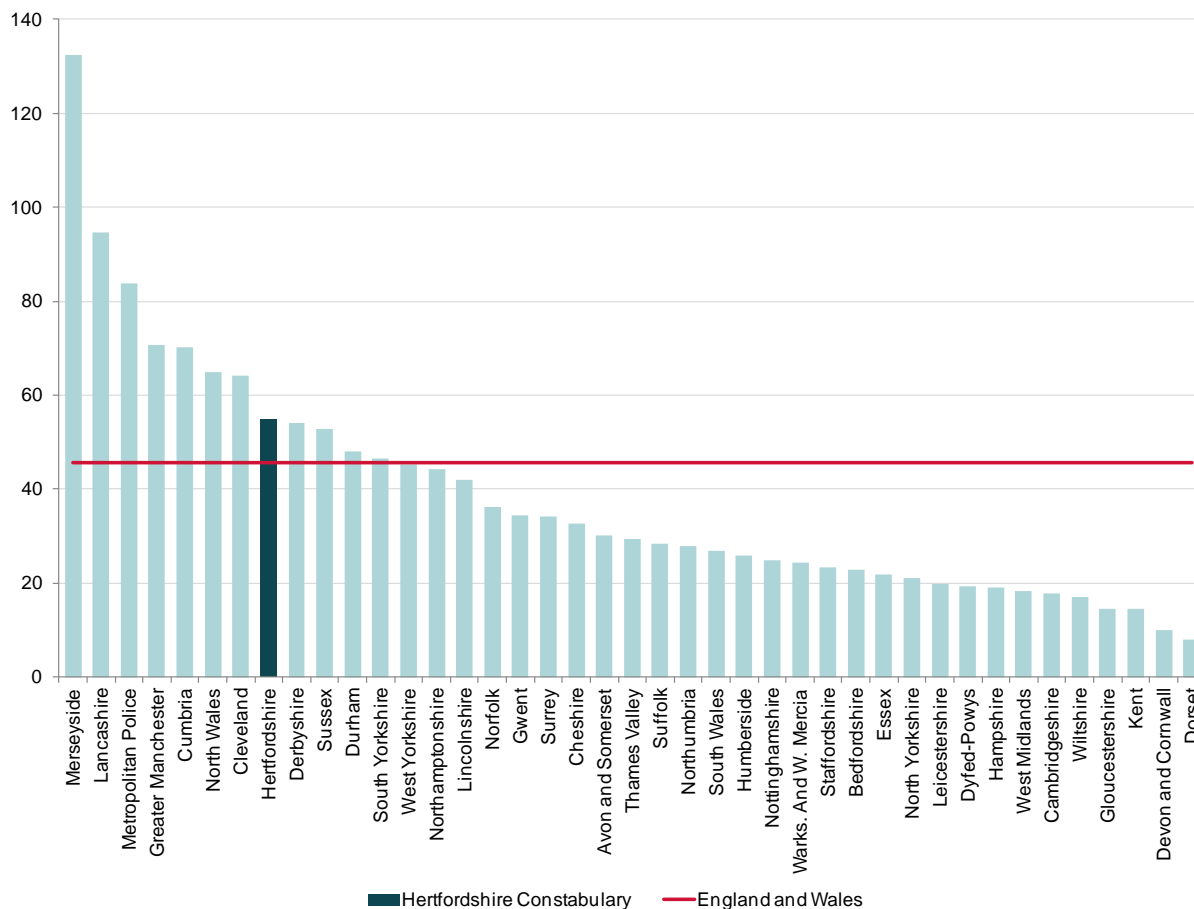
The force is good at tackling OCGs that are the responsibility of other forces, but have an impact in Hertfordshire. Operation Paramata is good evidence of liaison with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on members of an OCG resident in Hertfordshire, some of whom had been identified as OCG members by the MPS. We found good intelligence sharing and joint evidence gathering and sharing, for example, of surveillance and telephone intelligence. Another example of the force working across county lines is the Metropolitan Police Service's Operation Trident,<sup>33</sup> as some of these OCG members commit crime in the Hertfordshire area.

This means that the force is working successfully to understand serious and harmful criminality, and sharing information about it with other organisations. The force effectively maps, scores, reviews and archives, where appropriate (removes from the list of active groups), all OCGs effectively and appropriately, using the national assessment tool.

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<sup>33</sup> The Metropolitan Police Service runs Operation Trident, which tackles gang violence, investigates all non-fatal shootings in London and is responsible for preventing gun crime.

**Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016<sup>34</sup>**



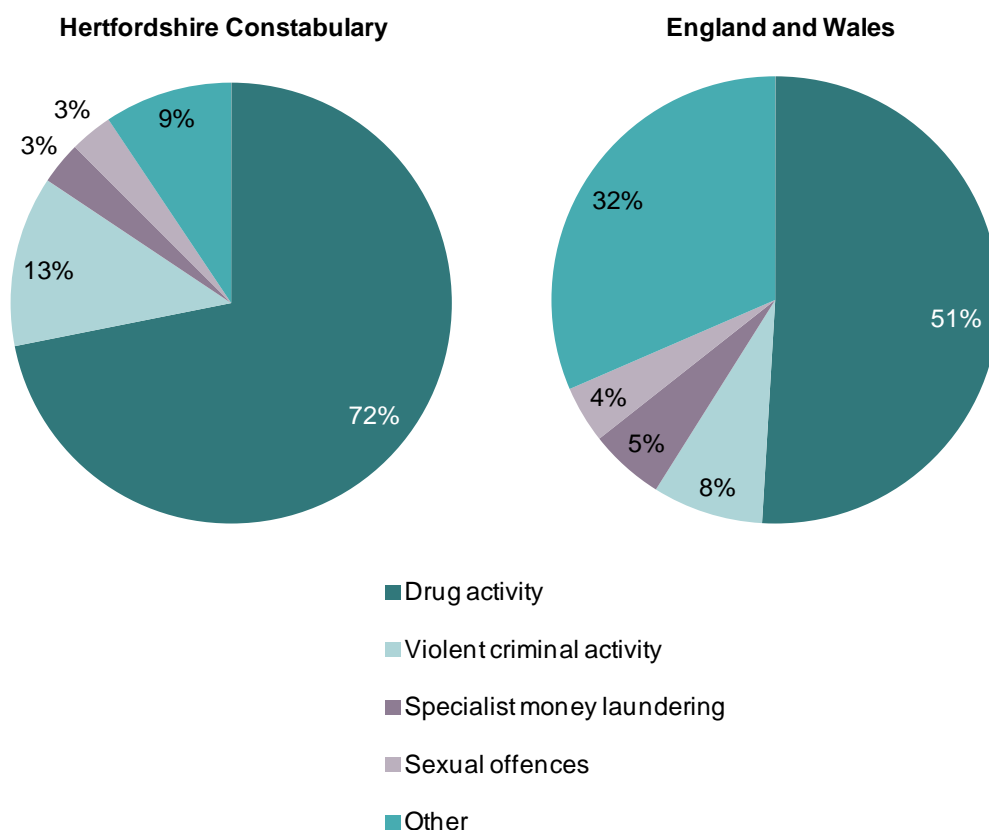
**Source: HMIC data return**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality (for example groups supplying drugs may also be supplying firearms and be involved in money laundering), this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the most common predominant crime type of the OCGs managed by Hertfordshire Constabulary as at 1 July 2016. This was also the most common OCG crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales.

<sup>34</sup> City of London Police data have been removed from the chart and the England and Wales rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

**Figure 10: Active organised crime groups by predominant crime type in Hertfordshire, as at 1 July 2016**



Source: HMIC data return

Note: Figures may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. For further information about these data, please see annex A.

## How effectively does the force respond to serious and organised crime?

An effective force will pursue and prosecute offenders and disrupt organised criminality at a local level. The force will use specialist capabilities, both in the force and at regional level, and non-specialist capabilities such as its neighbourhood teams. While it can be complex for a force to assess the success of its actions against serious and organised crime, it is important that the force understands the extent to which it disrupts this crime and reduces harm.

Hertfordshire Constabulary responds well to serious and organised crime and has good arrangements for prioritising activity aimed at tackling OCGs. The force holds a monthly OCG review meeting, supplemented by a weekly meeting between the senior analyst and the head of the serious crimes unit. This is supported by analytical reports that score OCGs against national criteria to assess the risk and harm they could cause to communities.

The force does not have a force-wide partnership board to oversee joint actions arising out of the serious and organised crime local profile, and it is currently exploring good practice in other forces to address this gap.

At a tactical level, the force works well with national and local partner organisations and agencies, for example housing, the National Crime Agency (NCA), Immigration Enforcement, youth offending teams and probation. However, in the neighbourhood teams we found a mixed picture of knowledge of OCG management. The force has recently provided training to neighbourhood and response officers to raise awareness of OCGs, with particular reference to Operation Manhunt, which focuses on distraction burglaries involving elderly victims. The force intranet briefing systems contain information about OCGs, but we found that too few frontline officers and staff knew about the OCG members active in their area. The force needs to do more to raise awareness among frontline officers and staff, to achieve a 'whole force' approach to tackling organised crime.

The force could also do more to improve the intelligence it collects from other agencies. Hertfordshire made 5.9 referrals for every 100 OCGs (active and archived between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016) to the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This is below the rate of 26.4 percent for England and Wales as a whole. While this is not the only method of obtaining intelligence that the force uses, it is an opportunity that should be used more.

Hertfordshire Constabulary did not produce an action plan for making best use of specialist regional capabilities and minimising duplication at force level. This response to HMIC's recommendation is not good enough, and the force has failed to demonstrate how it intends to enhance this aspect of its collaborative response to serious and organised crime.

## **How effectively does the force prevent serious and organised crime?**

A force that effectively tackles serious and organised crime needs to be able to stop people being drawn in to this crime. Many of these people may be vulnerable and already involved in gang and youth violence. It should also be using a range of approaches and powers to prevent those known criminals continuing to cause harm. HMIC expects a force's approach to prevention to be a significant element of its overall strategy to tackle the harm that serious and organised crime causes communities.

The force is conducting work to identify people at risk of being drawn into organised crime and to intervene to deter offending. It conducts work through the C2 project, which entails targeting individuals involved in constant reoffending and diverting them into work. Although the force is involved in initiatives with partner agencies, the

serious and organised crime department does not carry out any preventative work locally, and does not understand the issues at present because of an intelligence gap.

The force is good at managing offenders to help prevent serious and organised crime. It uses ancillary orders such as serious crime prevention orders (SCPOs)<sup>35</sup> and provides teams within the force with clear guidance and good practice published on the force intranet. We found good management of SCPOs and monitoring of compliance, with any breaches referred through the force task assignment process for action. However, it could do more to make the best use of these orders. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Hertfordshire applied for 9.4 serious crime prevention orders per 100 OCGs (active and archived between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016). This is below the rate of 15.6 for England and Wales as a whole.

Offenders identified as part of an OCG are mapped on a tracker for life by three analysts, who each has around 60–75 offenders. We found good examples of lifetime plans for offenders released from prison. These included subject profiles, and liaison with probation and other agencies to establish conditions for offenders, with information recorded on the local force Herts Offender Tracking System (HOTS) list for local officers to view.

The force is effective at communicating with the public, including vulnerable people, about serious and organised crime. It offers protective advice to at-risk groups, such as elderly people, who may be more likely to be targeted by distraction burglars and rogue traders. The communications officer attends daily management meetings and regularly speaks to local officers both to identify opportunities to communicate local successes in reducing crime and to alert communities to particular types of crime or individuals. The force internet manager uses social media to issue messages, including timed messages providing 24-hour coverage, and actively searches for emerging issues involving vulnerability, for example, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, hate crime, honour-based abuse and modern day slavery. A jointly-funded force/council press officer ensures co-ordination with the community safety partnerships (CSPs) for media opportunities, and a contract with a local news agency guarantees coverage of court cases to publicise convictions.

Operation Policy, an investigation into an organised series of telephone courier frauds, has been communicated to elderly people through local events run jointly with the council through Older People Action Liaison. The force has also used these channels to communicate with the public about Operation Manhunt and to inform local watch schemes about what they can do to prevent themselves and their

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<sup>35</sup> SCPO is a court order that is used to protect the public by preventing, restricting or disrupting a person's involvement in serious crime. An SCPO can prevent involvement in serious crime by imposing various conditions on a person; for example, restricting who he or she can associate with, restricting his or her travel, or placing an obligation to report his or her financial affairs to the police.

neighbours becoming victims. Local officers carry out visits to offer reassuring messages and practical support, including fixing cameras to vulnerable victims' properties and checking that they are using locks, bolts and other devices effectively to deter offenders.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at tackling serious and organised crime. It is improving its response to newer organised crime threats such as human trafficking, cyber-crime and child sexual exploitation. The force tackles high-level serious and organised crime, working closely with the Regional Organised Crime Unit. This ensures well-managed investigations and enables the force to target the most harmful organised crime groups (OCGs) with a range of activity, from prosecuting OCG members to making it harder for the OCG to operate.

How the force gathers and uses intelligence, particularly that held by partner organisations such as HM Revenue and Customs and UK Visas and Immigration, needs to improve. The force tackles OGCs proportionately. Its policy on scoring these OGCs for the harm they cause and revisiting this scoring is consistent with national guidance.

The force takes a longer-term approach to OCG management, but could do more to realise the benefits of this approach. Despite good information available on police systems, frontline officers do not have a good knowledge of local OCGs. Raising their awareness could help to achieve a 'whole force' approach to tackling organised crime.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should further develop its serious and organised crime local profile in conjunction with partner organisations, to enhance its understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime and inform joint activity aimed at reducing this threat.
- The force should engage routinely with partner agencies at a senior level to enhance intelligence sharing and promote an effective, multi-agency response to serious and organised crime.
- The force should complete an action plan for making the best use of the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU), reducing duplication at force level and ensuring that the use of shared ROCU resources is prioritised effectively between forces in the Eastern region.
- The force should identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime, and establish preventative initiatives alongside partner organisations to deter them from offending.

## How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?

Some complex threats require both a specialist capability and forces to work together to respond to them. This question assesses both the overall preparedness of forces to work together on a number of strategic threats and whether forces have a good understanding of the threat presented by firearms incidents and how equipped they are to meet this threat.

## How effective are the force's arrangements to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

The *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR)<sup>36</sup> specifies six national threats. These are complex threats and forces need to be able to work together if they are to respond to them effectively. These include serious and organised crime, terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to these national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have made the necessary arrangements to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats should they materialise.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has the necessary arrangements to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. These include a joint protective services board for the 'strategic alliance' forces: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. Chief officers understand their responsibilities under the SPR and take responsibility for specific threats. The force has assessed the national threats specified in the SPR.

Analysis is conducted on all the national threats at both force and regional level to identify and assess vulnerabilities; the findings of this analysis are recorded in a document called a problem profile. ERSOU has a good understanding of regional threats and is rigorous and inclusive in its approach to assessing them. We found good alignment of activity with national and regional priorities. At force level, the profiles bring together intelligence and make sound assessments.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has good procedures for testing its own preparedness for responding to national threats specified within the SPR. It regularly exercises and

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<sup>36</sup> The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary, setting out the latest national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from a number of police forces. Forces often need to work collaboratively, and with other partners, national agencies or national arrangements, to ensure such threats are tackled effectively. *Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available at:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417116/The\\_Strategic\\_Policing\\_Requirement.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf)



tests its public order, firearms and civil emergencies response across the region and with partner organisations. As part of the local resilience forum, a community risk register for Hertfordshire provides guidance to the community on a range of potential risks and includes detailed local plans to respond to flooding and fuel shortages. The force has business continuity plans for critical areas, for example, in its control room, so that 999 and 101 calls can still be answered if there is a loss of power or IT systems, or if a pandemic prevents staff attending the workplace. The force tests its IT systems regularly, to ensure they cannot be compromised and are resilient to a cyber attack.

## **How well prepared is the force to respond to a firearms attack?**

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, the government allocated £143 million to the 43 England and Wales police forces to increase their armed capability. This funding has enabled some forces to increase the number of armed police officers able to respond to a terrorist attack. These attacks include those committed by heavily armed terrorists across multiple sites in quick succession, as in Paris. These attacks are known as marauding terrorist firearms attacks. The funding is for those forces considered to be at greatest risk of a terrorist attack. This also has the effect of increasing the ability of the police service to respond to other forms of terrorist attacks (and another incident requiring an armed policing response). Forces have begun to recruit and train new armed officers. This process is due to be completed by March 2018.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is well prepared to respond to attacks requiring an armed response. The force is part of a well-established collaboration with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police (called the strategic alliance). Specialist firearms, roads policing and dog patrol officers and staff from the three forces work together as part of the joint protective services (JPS). Their strategic threat and risk assessment is compliant with College of Policing guidelines and Home Office codes of practice. It uses all appropriate intelligence sources to assess threat and risk, and includes an analysis of iconic sites and crowded places. It refers to the increase in threat levels and national plans to increase armed response vehicles, and makes specific reference to risks from terrorism. The assessment was last reviewed in January 2016, in the light of revised armed policing assumptions following the attacks in Paris in October 2015. Although the strategic alliance is not part of the national armed policing uplift programme, it has made a decision to have more armed firearms officers (to provide resilience and to support the national response). The JPS roads policing unit will provide the additional capability, and the training is already well under way.

The force's armed policing strategic threat assessment addresses the threat of a marauding terrorist firearms attack (MTFA) at multiple sites. The strategic alliance

tests its response to that threat and regularly conducts terrorist firearms exercises. Regular tabletop and live exercises involving the military and emergency services provide testing of skills and interoperability. We found that call handlers are confident that they would recognise an MTFA incident and immediately refer it to a supervisor, but the exercises conducted so far have not tested the control room function. The forces in the strategic alliance should ensure that the question prompts for call handlers are sufficient to support them in the event of an MTFA. Although the initial firearms commanders in control rooms are confident in their response and know the requirements to provide mutual aid to respond to regional and national threats, they should receive additional support to ensure that they have more concise instructions and memoranda. The force is addressing this. We found good awareness and testing of plans for when resources are required from outside the strategic alliance area.

## Summary of findings

### Ungraded

Hertfordshire Constabulary has effective plans for mobilising specialist resources in response to *Strategic Policing Requirement* threats. These plans are tested on a regular basis and amendments made following the lessons learned from such tests.

The force is well prepared for attacks requiring an armed response. It has recently reviewed its assessment of threat, risk and harm and this now explicitly includes the threats posed by marauding firearms terrorists. The force, together with its strategic alliance partners Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, is increasing its firearms capacity and capability, and is making good progress in doing so.

### Areas for improvement

The forces in the strategic alliance should ensure that:

- question prompts for call takers are sufficient to support them in the event of a marauding terrorist firearms attack;
- control room staff take part in local and regional exercises to test the control room response; and
- control room inspectors have access to more concise instructions and memorandums.

## Next steps

HMIC assesses progress on causes of concern and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We receive updates through our regular conversations with forces, re-assess as part of our annual PEEL programme, and, in the most serious cases, revisit forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across England and Wales and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements can be made at a national level.

Findings and judgments from this year's PEEL effectiveness inspection will be used to direct the design of the next cycle of PEEL effectiveness assessments. The specific areas for assessment are yet to be confirmed, based on further consultation, but we will continue to assess how forces keep people safe and reduce crime to ensure our findings are comparable year on year.

## Annex A – About the data

The information presented in this report comes from a range of sources, including published data by the Home Office and Office for National Statistics, inspection fieldwork and data collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales.

Where HMIC has collected data directly from police forces, we have taken reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other relevant interested parties such as the Home Office. We have given forces several opportunities to check and validate the data they have provided us to ensure the accuracy of our evidence. For instance:

- We checked the data that forces submitted and queried with forces where figures were notably different from other forces or were internally inconsistent.
- We asked all forces to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors identified.

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is set out in more detail in this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

### Methodology

#### Data in the report

The British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Therefore any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data and numbers will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Where other forces have been unable to supply data, this is mentioned under the relevant sections below.

#### Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2015 population estimates. These were the most recent data available at the time of the inspection.

For the specific case of City of London Police, we include both resident and transient population within our calculations. This is to account for the unique nature and demographics of this force's responsibility.

## **Survey of police staff**

HMIC conducted a short survey of police staff across forces in England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and the suitability of tasks assigned to them. The survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample which means that results may not be representative of the population. The number of responses varied between 8 and 2,471 across forces. Therefore, we treated results with caution and used them for exploring further during fieldwork rather than to assess individual force performance.

## **Ipsos MORI survey of public attitudes towards policing**

HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a survey of attitudes towards policing between July and August 2016. Respondents were drawn from an online panel and results were weighted by age, gender and work status to match the population profile of the force area. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, varying between 331 to 429 in each force area. Therefore, any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

The findings of this survey will be shared on our website by summer 2017:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/data/peel-assessments/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/data/peel-assessments/)

## **Review of crime files**

HMIC reviewed 60 police case files across crime types for: robbery, common assault (flagged as domestic abuse), grievous bodily harm (GBH), stalking, harassment, rape and domestic burglary. The file review was designed to provide a broad overview of the identification of vulnerability, the effectiveness of investigations and to understand how victims are treated through police processes. Files were randomly selected from crimes recorded between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 and were assessed against several criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected, we have not used results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance but alongside other evidence gathered.

## **Force in numbers**

A dash in this graphic indicates that a force was not able to supply HMIC with data.

### **Calls for assistance (including those for domestic abuse)**

These data were collected directly from all 43 forces. In 2016, the questions contained a different breakdown of instances where the police were called to an incident compared to the 2015 data collection, so direct comparisons to the equivalent 2015 data are not advised.

## Recorded crime and crime outcomes

These data are obtained from Home Office police-recorded crime and outcomes data tables for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 and are taken from the October 2016 Home Office data release, which is available from:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables)

Total police-recorded crime includes all crime (excluding fraud offences) recorded by police forces in England and Wales. Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime and outcomes include the British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMIC inspection. Therefore, England and Wales rates in this report will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Figures about police-recorded crime should be treated with care, as recent increases are likely to have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's national inspection of crime data in 2014.

For crime outcomes, Dorset Police has been excluded from the England and Wales figure. Dorset Police experienced difficulties with the recording of crime outcomes for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was due to the force introducing the Niche records management system in Spring 2015. Problems with the implementation of Niche meant that crime outcomes were not reliably recorded. The failure to file investigations properly meant that a higher than normal proportion of offences were allocated to 'Not yet assigned an outcome'. During 2016, the force conducted additional work to solve the problem. In doing so, some crime outcomes from the 12 months to 30 June 2016 were updated after that date and are reflected in a later period. This makes Dorset Police's crime outcome data inconsistent with that provided by other forces. HMIC has decided not to use Dorset Police's outcome data in the interests of consistency of data use and to maintain fairness to all forces.

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcome data are listed below and also apply to figure 4.

- For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see Crime Outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2016, Home Office, July 2016. Available from:  
[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539447/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539447/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf)
- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome.
- These data are subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time. These data are taken from the October 2016 Home Office data release.

- Providing outcomes data under the new framework is voluntary if not provided directly through the Home Office Data Hub. However, as proportions are used, calculations can be based on fewer than four quarters of data. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Derbyshire Constabulary and Suffolk Constabulary were unable to provide the last quarter of data. Therefore, their figures are based on the first three quarters of the year.
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces are participating in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. This means these forces no longer issue simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and they restrict their use of penalty notices for disorder as disposal options for adult offenders, as part of the pilot. Therefore, their outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.
- It is important to note that the outcomes that are displayed in figure 8 are based on the number of outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, irrespective of when the crime was recorded. Therefore, the crimes and outcomes recorded in the reporting year are not tracked, so direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes and domestic abuse related outcomes in this report. For more details about the methodology for domestic abuse outcomes please see explanatory notes below, under figure 8.

### **Anti-social behaviour**

These data are obtained from Office for National Statistics data tables, available from:

[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables)

All police forces record incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to them in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Incidents are recorded under NSIR in accordance with the same 'victim focused' approach that applies for recorded crime, although these figures are not subject to the same level of quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection. Incident counts should be interpreted as incidents recorded by the police, rather than reflecting the true level of victimisation. Other agencies also deal with anti-social behaviour incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords); incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police figures.

When viewing this data the user should be aware of the following:

- Warwickshire Police had a problem with its incident recording. For a small percentage of all incidents reported during 2014-15 and 2015-16 it was not possible for the force to identify whether these were anti-social behaviour or other types of incident. These incidents have been distributed pro rata for

Warwickshire, so that one percent of anti-social behaviour in 2014-15 and two percent of anti-social behaviour in 2015-16 are estimated.

- From May 2014, South Yorkshire Police experienced difficulties in reporting those incidents of anti-social behaviour that resulted from how it processed calls for assistance, specifically for scheduled appointments. In November 2016, South Yorkshire Police resolved this problem and resubmitted anti-social behaviour data to Office for National Statistics. HMIC has used corrected data for South Yorkshire Police which are available in the November 2016 release of anti-social behaviour incidents data in the link above.
- Bedfordshire Police resubmitted anti-social behaviour data to Office for National Statistics for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was because data had been double counted for the second quarter of the financial year. HMIC has used corrected data for Bedfordshire Police which are available in the November 2016 release of anti-social behaviour incidents data in the link above.

### **Domestic abuse**

Data for domestic abuse flagged offences were provided by the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. These are more recent figures than those previously published by Office for National Statistics.

Data relating to domestic abuse arrests, charges and outcomes were collected through the HMIC data collection.

Further information about the domestic abuse statistics and recent releases are available from:

[www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016](http://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016)

### **Organised crime groups (OCGs)**

These data were collected directly from all 43 forces. City of London Police is excluded from the England and Wales rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

The number of OCGs in the Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per one million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population figures.

OCGs which are no longer active – for example because they have been dismantled by the police – can be archived. This means that they are no longer subject to disruption, investigation or monitoring. From 1 September 2014 to 31 December 2015, forces were given a directive by the National Police Chiefs' Council to suspend archiving, pending a review of OCG recording policy. This directive was removed on



1 January 2016, but resulted in many forces archiving more OCGs than they otherwise would have in the 12 months to June 2016. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made with OCG figures from previous years.

### **Victim satisfaction**

Forces were required by the Home Office to conduct satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups. Force victim satisfaction surveys are structured around principal questions exploring satisfaction responses across four stages of interactions:

- initial contact;
- actions;
- follow-up;
- treatment plus the whole experience.

The data used in this report use the results to the question relating to the victim's whole experience, which specifically asks, "Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied, dissatisfied, or neither with the service provided by the police in this case?"

The England and Wales average is calculated based on the average of the rates of satisfaction in all 43 forces.

### **Figures throughout the report**

#### **Figure 1: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

#### **Figure 2: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

#### **Figure 3: Percentage change in the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents (per 1,000 population), by force, comparing the 12 months to 31 March 2016 with the 12 months to 31 March 2015**

Please see 'Anti-social behaviour' above.

#### **Figure 4: Proportion of outcomes assigned to offences recorded, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

The outcome number has been provided to improve usability across multiple publications and is in line with Home Office categorisation.

For these data, we state whether the force's value is 'one of the highest', 'one of the lowest' or 'broadly in line with' all forces in England and Wales. This is calculated by ranking the usage of outcomes and then highlighting the top and bottom 25 percent of forces. All other forces will be broadly in line with England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how the force deals with offenders for different crimes.

This methodology is not comparable with figure 8, so direct comparisons should not be made between the two tables.

**Figure 5: Percentage of 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support action' outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, by force**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

In addition, it is important to understand that the percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences. The category of evidential difficulties also includes where a suspect has been identified and the victim supports police action, but evidential difficulties prevent further action being taken.

**Figure 6: Percentage of police recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

The number of offences identified with a vulnerable victim in a force is dependent on the force's definition of vulnerability.

City of London, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Gloucestershire and Lancashire forces were unable to provide data for the number of recorded crimes with a vulnerable victim identified. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

When viewing this data the user should be aware of the following:

- Suffolk Constabulary was only able to provide eight months of vulnerability data to the 30 June 2016 due to transferring to a different crime management system. Its previous system did not record vulnerability. Therefore, these are the most reliable data it can provide.

### **Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

The arrest rate is calculated using a common time period for arrests and offences. It is important to note that each arrest is not necessarily directly linked to its specific domestic abuse offence recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 in this calculation. It is also possible to have more than one arrest per offence although this is rare. In addition, the reader should note the increase in police-recorded crime which has affected the majority of forces over the last year (39 out of 43). This may have the effect of arrest rates actually being higher than the figures suggest. Despite this, the calculation still indicates whether the force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action. HMIC has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures (such as use of voluntary attendance or body-worn video cameras) during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

When viewing this data the user should be aware of the following:

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary identified a recording issue and that it could only obtain accurate data from a manual audit of its custody records. This means its data may indicate a lower arrest rate. However, at the time of publication this was the most reliable figure the force could provide for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force plans to conduct regular manual audits while the recording issue is resolved. HMIC will conduct a further review to test this evidence when more data are available.
- Lancashire Constabulary experienced difficulties in identifying all domestic abuse flagged arrests. This affected 23 days in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force investigated this and confirmed that the impact on data provided to HMIC would be marginal and that these are the most reliable figures it can provide.

### **Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences**

Please see 'Domestic Abuse' above.

Dorset Police is excluded from our data for the reasons described under 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Nottinghamshire Police has been excluded from domestic abuse outcomes data. The force experienced difficulties with the conversion of some crime data when it

moved to a new crime recording system. This means that the force did not record reliably some crime outcomes for domestic abuse related offences. The force subsequently solved the problem and provided updated outcomes figures. However, this makes Nottinghamshire Police's outcomes data for domestic abuse related offences inconsistent with that provided by other forces. HMIC has decided not to use Nottinghamshire Police's outcomes data for domestic abuse related offences in the interests of consistency of data use and to maintain fairness to all forces.

In April 2015, the Home Office began collecting information from the police on whether recorded offences were related to domestic abuse. Crimes are identified by the police as domestic abuse related if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

In figure 8, the rate is calculated by the number of each outcome recorded for domestic abuse flagged offences in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, divided by the total number of domestic abuse offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The domestic abuse-related crimes used in this calculation are not necessarily those to which the outcomes have been assigned. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes in figure 4, where each crime is linked to its associated outcome, and domestic abuse outcomes in figure 8.

For these data, we state whether the force's value is 'one of the highest', 'one of the lowest' or 'broadly in line with' all forces in England and Wales. This is calculated by ranking the usage of outcomes and then highlighting the top and bottom 25 percent of forces. All other forces will be broadly in line with England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how the force deals with offenders for different crimes.

### **Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016**

Please see 'Organised Crime Groups' above.

### **Figure 10: Active organised crime groups by predominant crime type, as at 1 July 2016**

Humberside Police was unable to provide the full data for predominant crime types in the time available. Therefore, this force's data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales proportion.

Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.