

# **PEEL: Police effectiveness 2017**

An inspection of Northamptonshire Police



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## Force in numbers



### Calls for assistance

Incidents per 1,000  
population 12 months to 30  
June 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**272**

England and Wales

**282**



### Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)  
incidents per 1,000 population  
12 months to 31 March 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**44**

England and Wales

**31**

Change in ASB incidents  
12 months to 31 March 2016  
against 12 months to  
31 March 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**+8%**

England and Wales

**-0.05%**



### Crime (excluding fraud)

Crimes recorded per 1,000  
population 12 months to  
30 June 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**76**

England and Wales

**77**

Change in recorded crime  
12 months to 30 June 2016  
against 12 months to 30  
June 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**+13%**

England and Wales

**+14%**



## Crime outcomes\*

Charged/summonsed

Northamptonshire  
Police

**9%**

England and Wales

**10%**

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Northamptonshire  
Police

**12%**

England and Wales

**13%**

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Northamptonshire  
Police

**49%**

England and Wales

**48%**



## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**17**

England and Wales

**15**

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**13%**

England and Wales

**11%**



## Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per 1 million population as at 1 July 2017

Northamptonshire  
Police

**33**

England and Wales

**47**

\*Figures are shown as proportions of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A.

## Risk-based inspection

HMICFRS adopted an interim risk-based approach to inspection in 2017 in order to focus more closely on areas of policing where risk to the public is most acute.<sup>1</sup>

Under this approach, not all forces are assessed against every part of the PEEL effectiveness programme every year. Northamptonshire Police was assessed against the following areas in 2017:

- Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour;
- Investigating crime and reducing re-offending;
- Protecting vulnerable people;
- Tackling serious and organised crime; and
- Specialist capabilities.

Judgments from 2016<sup>2</sup> remain in place for areas which were not re-inspected in 2017. HMICFRS will continue to monitor areas for improvement identified in previous inspections and will assess how well each force has responded in future reports.


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<sup>1</sup> Full details of the interim risk-based approach are available from the HMICFRS website: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based)

<sup>2</sup> The 2016 effectiveness report for Northamptonshire Police can be found on the HMICFRS website: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-effectiveness-2016-northamptonshire](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-effectiveness-2016-northamptonshire)

## Effectiveness overview

### Judgments

Overall effectiveness 2017  Requires improvement

Question	Grade	Last inspected
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	 Requires improvement	2017
Investigating crime and reducing re-offending	 Requires improvement	2017
Protecting vulnerable people	 Requires improvement	2017
Tackling serious and organised crime	 Requires improvement	2017
Specialist capabilities	Ungraded	2017

### Summary

Northamptonshire Police requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The force has made considerable efforts to respond to previous HMICFRS recommendations and has improved in some areas, but some of the changes have yet to result in tangible improvements in the service to the public. Now the building blocks for more effective policing have been put in place, the force recognises the need to sustain its efforts in order to further improve the services it provides.

Many of the problems identified in this year's inspection stem from the configuration of the workforce, which is unable to meet the demand it faces. This has resulted in excessive workloads for officers and staff, inhibiting their ability to provide the public

with a consistently good service. Supervisors are not given the right information to allow them to manage their areas of responsibility effectively, and structures vital for holding people to account are missing.

The force's change programme, known as the service delivery model (SDM), aims to resolve many of these problems. This new model is expected to align resources to meet demand better, allowing officers and staff to concentrate more on dealing with the priorities of the force and its communities.

Northamptonshire Police has made some improvements to the way it prevents crime and tackles anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood teams are no longer redeployed routinely to support response colleagues; this has increased their ability to carry out preventative work, such as problem solving. However, the force could still improve the way it works with local partner organisations to deal with the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour; it could also improve the way it evaluates the success of its activities, to learn from what works and share good practice.

The quality of the force's investigations remains inconsistent. It does not always allocate them to appropriately trained staff or supervise them fully. As a result, victims of crime sometimes receive a poor service. However, the force is improving its understanding of those who are most vulnerable, and it now identifies repeat and vulnerable callers swiftly. The force needs to improve its management of registered sex offenders, ensuring it completes visits with appropriate timescales to protect the public.

The force still needs to improve its approach to tackling serious and organised crime. Its understanding of the threats and risks that serious and organised crime pose is limited, and it is failing to identify or properly assess organised crime groups. The way it prioritises its activity in this area is weak, and it operates almost entirely reactively. We were pleased to find that it is undertaking some operational activity with partner agencies to tackle modern slavery. However, we found little evidence of partnership or preventative work aimed at deterring people from becoming organised criminals or monitoring existing offenders.

The force has adequate arrangements in place to test its preparedness for meeting its national responsibilities under the Strategic Policing Requirement.

# Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



**Requires improvement**

## Prioritising prevention

Northamptonshire Police understands the importance of preventing crime and is developing a clear approach to enable it to do this more effectively. However, it has not translated this vision into practice yet, nor do frontline officers and staff understand it well. The force is in the process of putting a new policing model into operation as part of a change programme, known as the service delivery model (SDM). It reflects the force's ambition to focus dedicated local policing resources on working with local partner organisations in order to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and solve problems in local communities. Once the SDM is operating fully, the force expects its neighbourhood teams to spend almost all their time on their core functions of community engagement, problem solving and crime prevention. Although HMICFRS is encouraged by this ambitious vision, it is not yet a reality in Northamptonshire.

The force is moving in the right direction; neighbourhood policing officers concentrate on preventing crime and are not redeployed routinely to react to emergencies. However, in general, we found that the current operating model does not provide the force's communities with a consistent and effective crime prevention service. The way the force directs the activity and tasks of its workforce does not put enough emphasis on prevention, and the force does not involve partner agencies much in local problem solving. As a result, it is missing opportunities to prevent crime from occurring in the first place.

## Understanding communities

The force has an incomplete understanding of the threats its communities face. Although it carries out some analysis of these threats, it needs to do more to obtain a sufficiently detailed picture, particularly of threats such as modern slavery, which often are less visible. Through 'MiPad', the force makes socio-economic data and crime trends for every neighbourhood available to the workforce. This new IT system allows all officers and staff to view information and analysis that are relevant to their local area. MiPad is not used consistently yet, but the force intends neighbourhood teams to use it, and build up a more accurate picture of current and emerging threats within communities.



Northamptonshire Police has a good force-wide strategy for engaging with the community. Comprehensive local plans support this strategy, and provide neighbourhood teams with practical and relevant guidance. Officers and staff use a range of methods to engage with the public, such as beat surgeries and attending parish council meetings. They also adapt their methods to suit the needs of a particular community. For example, police and community support officers (PCSOs) have secured the free use of a vacant shop in Swansgate shopping centre for one or two hours a day. The local neighbourhood team uses this as a base to meet members of the community and hear their concerns. The force makes some use also of social media, although its local policing teams' approach to this is not consistent. Better use of the MiPad system would enable the force to give its communities good quality feedback, and update them on action it has taken to protect them from harm.

## **Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour**

The force's approach to problem solving has got better since 2016, but its recording and evaluation processes need to improve. The force is improving its approach to the long-term planning of prevention and deterrence initiatives and it has set up a prevention and intervention board, which the assistant chief constable chairs. Northamptonshire Police uses the OSARA<sup>3</sup> model for problem solving and we found good examples of problem-solving plans that were subject to review and supervision. The force saves these plans on its crime and intelligence IT system. However, it is unclear how the force records good practice and makes that available for future reference. Proactive problem solving and crime prevention do not form a consistent part of the force's task assignment processes, and senior oversight of problem-solving plans is limited. This means the force may be missing chances to tackle the underlying causes of crime.

The force's involvement with partner organisations in problem solving is limited. It leads some problem-solving initiatives in local communities, and shares some of these plans with partner agencies through a system called E-CINs.<sup>4</sup> However, the success of a long-term approach to problem solving depends on a stronger contribution from partner agencies. The force shares plans with partner agencies about specific individuals or about known problem addresses, but we did not find much evidence of police and partner agencies working together to tackle long-standing crime or anti-social behaviour hot spots. The force is starting to look into this, however; it has invited partner agencies to attend the new prevention and intervention board.

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<sup>3</sup> A simple problem-solving approach used by many police forces. OSARA refers to the five stages used in the approach: objective, scanning, analysis, review and assess.

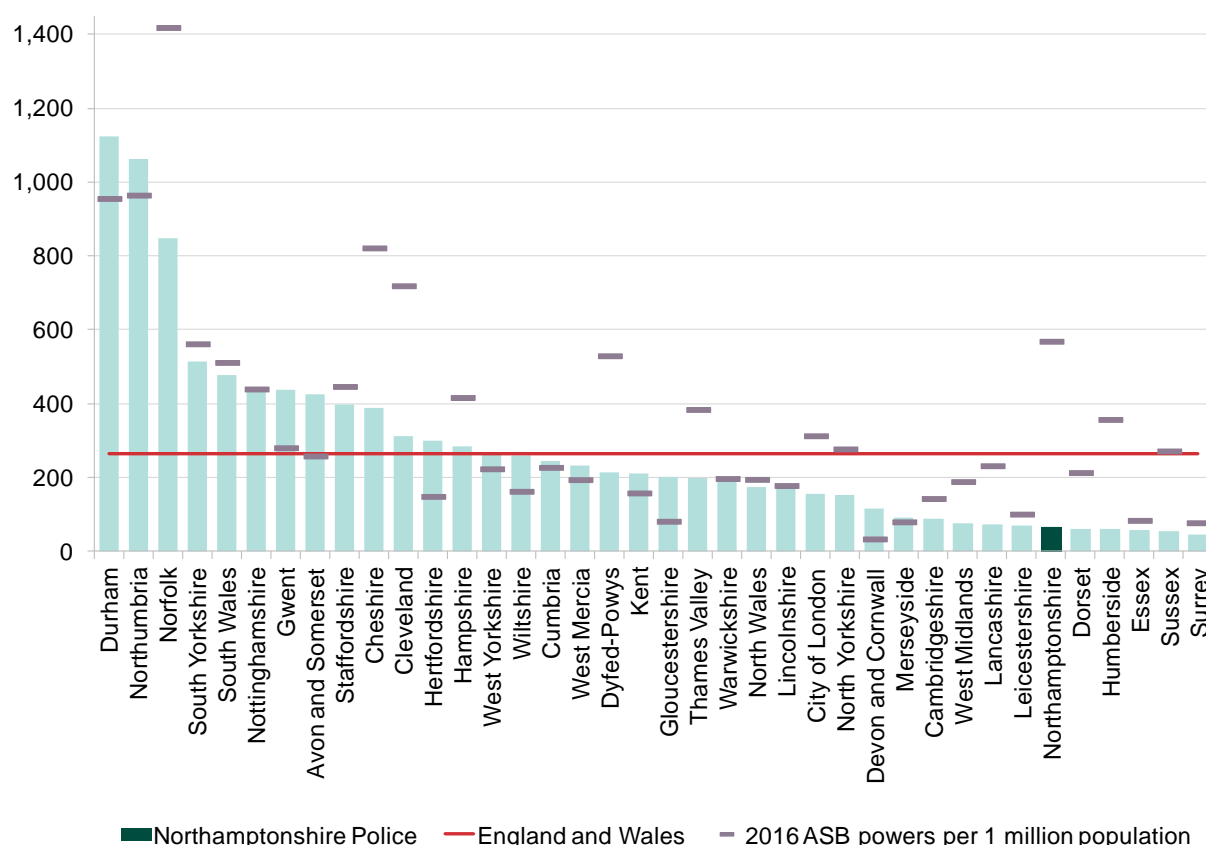
<sup>4</sup> E-CINs is a web-based case-recording system used by police forces and partner organisations to share information.

Neighbourhood officers and staff have the skills they need to perform effective crime prevention and problem solving. Neighbourhood teams have received high quality training in problem solving, which has been well received. The force aims to professionalise the role of neighbourhood officers and staff, and it plans to improve the continuous professional development (CPD) of these teams. This will give officers and staff the skills and knowledge they need to perform their roles more effectively.

The force does not make consistent use of its wider powers to deal with anti-social behaviour. Officers and staff display a reasonable knowledge of dispersal powers but do not actively or routinely make use of the full range of powers available to them. The force authorised the use of anti-social behaviour powers on many occasions, but is not able to provide accurate data that demonstrate the use of these powers. The force is looking at this omission, to gain a better understanding of how effective their use is. The force has the fifth highest rate of anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population. This rate has risen in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 compared to the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The rate of repeat victimisation has also risen over the same period, although this is because it has improved its approach to identifying repeat victims, reducing the threshold from three repeat incidents to two. As a result, the force can identify repeat victims of anti-social behaviour faster, enabling it to make support available earlier on, and so prevent further incidents and protect people from harm.

The force rarely evaluates its activity, and we did not come across any examples of when it had evaluated the effectiveness of different powers or tactics. It does not identify and share good practice, or learning from anti-social behaviour interventions, either. This means it may be missing opportunities to learn lessons and share good practice. It has convened the new prevention and intervention board to address this failing, however.

**Figure 1: Rate of anti-social behaviour (ASB) powers per 1 million population, by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017<sup>5</sup>**



**Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return**

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

### Areas for improvement

- The force should improve its ability to analyse information and intelligence, to provide a better understanding of crime and anti-social behaviour in Northamptonshire and enable it to focus activity effectively.
- The force should adopt a more collaborative problem-solving approach, to enable it to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour effectively.
- The force should evaluate and share effective practice routinely, both internally and with partner organisations, to improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour continually.

<sup>5</sup> Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Greater Manchester, the Metropolitan Police and Suffolk forces were unable to provide any 2017 ASB use of powers data. Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Humberside and Merseyside forces were only able to provide partial 2017 ASB use of powers data. Greater Manchester Police was unable to provide any 2016 ASB use of powers data.

# Investigating crime and reducing re-offending



Requires improvement

## Initial investigation

Northamptonshire Police needs to improve its initial investigation of crime. Sometimes the force assesses incidents incorrectly, which can result in officers failing to provide the correct response. It uses the risk assessment process (THRIVE)<sup>6</sup> but on some occasions the process is not recorded appropriately on STORM<sup>7</sup> or NICHE.<sup>8</sup> It is important that risk assessments are recorded on the right computer systems; this can help build up a picture in specific cases involving repeat victims and inform future analytical work, such as demand analysis.

The force resolves a high proportion (45.1 percent) of calls by telephone, or in a police station, without sending an officer to investigate at the scene. The equivalent figure across England and Wales is 30.3 percent. Moreover, the force intends to increase the proportion of investigations it conducts by telephone still further. In some cases, a telephone investigation is entirely appropriate, and makes the best use of police resources. However, during our inspection, we found several incidents that had been wrongly assigned to the telephone investigation team because not enough response officers were available to attend immediately. The force plans to improve the way it assesses incidents and, through implementation of its new operating model, ensure that the quality of investigations and victim care is consistently good.

We found that when officers attend a crime scene, generally they collect the evidence that is needed to allow investigations to progress. However, in some less serious investigations, we found them not completing initial enquiries satisfactorily. This undermines the quality and timeliness of some investigations. The force has realigned its officers, increasing the strength of response policing as part of the SDM model in order to deal with this.

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<sup>6</sup> The threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) 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.

<sup>7</sup> The System for Tasking and Operational Resource Management (STORM) is used within the force's Area Control Rooms to create and manage incidents reported by members of the public, but also to manage the deployment of operational resources.

<sup>8</sup> NICHE is an IT system with a number of functions which allow forces to manage crime recoding, intelligence, case file preparation, property and general incident management.

The force also needs to improve the way it allocates crimes for investigation. It allocates crime by type and complexity but does not give enough consideration to threat, risk or harm to the victim. Some victims may face a greater risk of harm from 'lower level' crime because of their vulnerability. We found examples of crimes being allocated inappropriately, either to insufficiently trained officers, or to officers whose workloads were excessive already. High-risk domestic abuse cases are given often to response officers rather than to specialist investigators; we also found instances of trainee detectives investigating rape cases. Supervision of workloads and investigation plans is often poor. The force is aware of these problems and intends to resolve them through the new service delivery model (SDM).

The force's approach to fraud is adequate. The force's figures show that, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, Northamptonshire Police received 204 fraud cases from the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). These were broken down into 179 cases for enforcement and 25 cases for victim care. A variety of officers and staff investigate frauds; in some cases, this is appropriate but it also means that some complex and time-consuming fraud cases are assigned to staff with insufficient skills. As part of the new SDM, the force is improving its approach and moving towards deploying a dedicated team of specialists to investigate fraud cases. The force has also introduced a banking protocol to protect vulnerable adults from fraud. Banks now are required to contact the force control room immediately if they spot a vulnerable person attempting to withdraw cash in suspicious circumstances. Control room staff received specific training before this protocol was put into effect. The protocol has been used several times since its launch, and the changes are expected to give the force more opportunities to investigate fraud effectively.

## **Investigation quality**

The quality of investigations that Northamptonshire Police has carried out is inconsistent. Our review of 60 recent investigation files showed that while the force investigated the vast majority of cases effectively, the quality of supervisory direction and oversight varied. The file review showed that the force conducted an effective investigation in 53 of the 60 cases, while supervision was effective or appropriate in 41 cases. Of the 40 cases that required an investigative plan, a plan was found in 25 cases. Forensics were considered, and generally the retrieval and analysis of CCTV to support investigations was conducted effectively. During our fieldwork, we found investigators with very high workloads – some were responsible for investigating over 30 high-risk crimes. There was a lack of effective supervision of, or support for, officers with high workloads, while the evidence that detective inspectors were reviewing serious cases was limited. The shortage of investigators is serious, and the force estimates that it needs almost 40 percent more to meet investigative demand (as of 1 July 2017). The force is increasing the number of trained investigators. It is giving some existing officers further training, is recruiting and

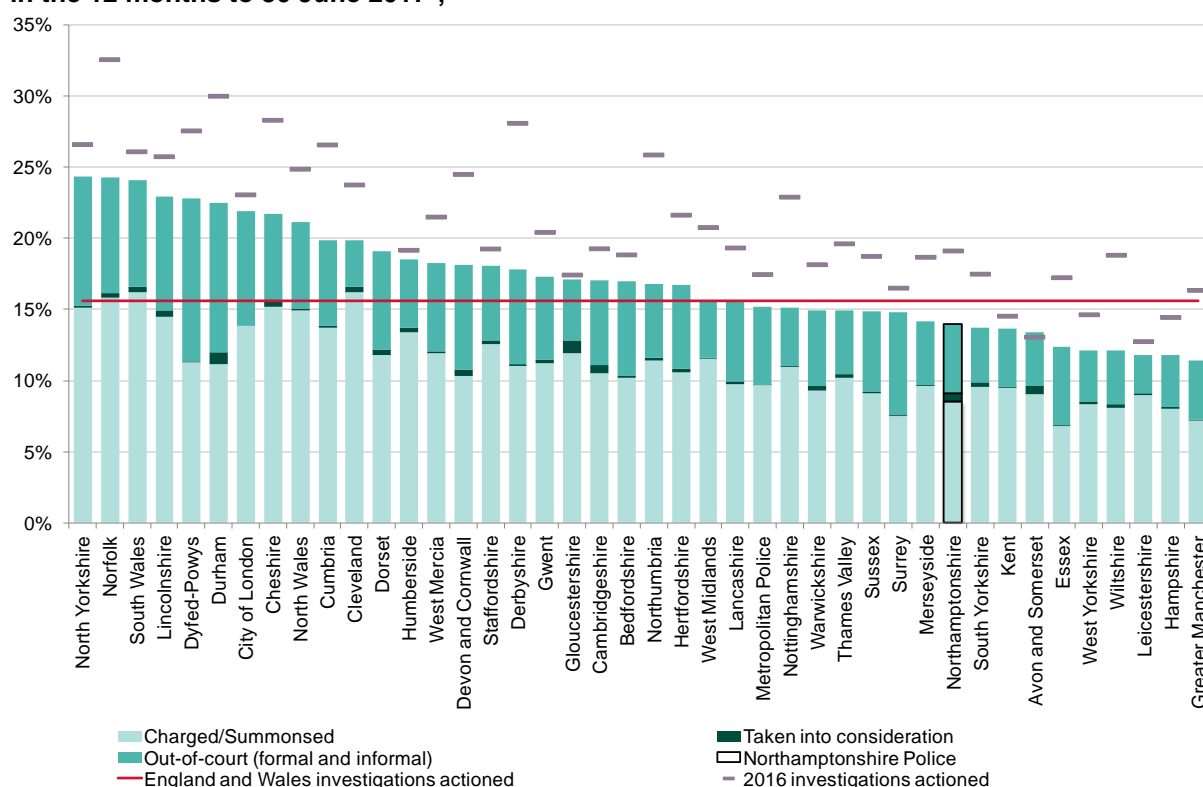
training police staff investigators and is recruiting transferees from other police forces. Meanwhile, the current shortage is hampering the quality and timeliness of investigations, and is putting officers under too much pressure.

The force needs to improve the way it examines digital devices for evidence in support of investigations, such as mobile phones and computers. It manages the examination of digital devices in order of their priority, which means that some lower-risk incidents take longer to be examined. The force has identified that it needs to improve these processes in support of investigations. As of 1 July 2017, a backlog of 588 devices awaited examination in the high-tech crime unit. This backlog is smaller than it was in 2016. Cases have been prioritised depending on risk, and the plan is to reduce the backlog further. However, we are concerned that the force estimates it will take about 18 months to clear the backlog completely. We found officers and staff in the high-tech unit to be capable and professional, but the delay in examinations is having a damaging effect on many investigations. Officers and staff in several units voiced frustration about this, and about the lack of equipment available now to download mobile phone data in local stations. The force has identified a need to improve these processes. It plans to increase capacity within the high-tech crime unit and introduce equipment to enable mobile phone data to be downloaded at local stations.

The force's approach to initial victim care is good, but aftercare could improve. Of the 60 investigation files we reviewed, we found good victim care in 57 cases. However, during our fieldwork, we found many examples of cases where victims had not been kept up to date. We also found inconsistencies in the recording of victim updates on the relevant IT system. Recently, the force commissioned a victim satisfaction survey that the University of Northampton will carry out. The force will receive monthly findings, which it can use to regularly assess and review its approach to the care of victims.

The number of cases formally passing through the criminal justice system in Northamptonshire has fallen. The force's data on investigative outcomes (such as charge or no further action) also show a decline in the number of investigations resulting in action being taken against a suspect (such as a charge or caution). In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, only 8.5 percent of cases resulted in a charged/summonsed outcome. This is one of the lowest rates for forces in England and Wales, and the proportion has fallen compared to 12 months to 30 June 2016. This means that some perpetrators may not be being brought to justice, and fewer victims may have the outcomes they should have been able to expect.

**Figure 2: Proportion of investigations where action was taken, by force, for offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017<sup>9,10</sup>**



Source: 2016 and 2017 Home Office Outcomes Data

For further information about this data, please see annex A

## Reducing re-offending

Our 2015 and our 2016 effectiveness inspections identified the management of suspects as an area where the force needed to improve.<sup>11</sup> We are disappointed to find only limited evidence of progress being made. The force's approach to the management of offenders who pose a risk to the public remains largely passive. All forces measure the number of suspects wanted for arrest who have not yet been found and arrested. In July 2017, Northamptonshire had 12.8 wanted records per 10,000 population on the Police National Computer (PNC), which is a high rate

<sup>9</sup> Investigations where action was taken includes the outcome categories of Charged/Summoned, Taken into consideration and Out-of-court (formal and informal).

<sup>10</sup> Suffolk Constabulary was unable to provide 2017 crime outcomes data. Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crime outcomes data. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further information about this data, please see annex A.

<sup>11</sup> *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2016 – An inspection of Northamptonshire Police*, HMIC, 2017.

Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-effectiveness-2016-northamptonshire/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-effectiveness-2016-northamptonshire/)

*PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 – An inspection of Northamptonshire Police*, HMIC, 2016. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/police-effectiveness-2015-northamptonshire/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/police-effectiveness-2015-northamptonshire/)

compared with the England and Wales rate of 10.4 per 10,000 population. This is an increase of 7.5 percent on the number of records in August 2016. Limited governance arrangements have been made to manage and prioritise policing activity, in order to locate these people. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, Northamptonshire Police arrested 2,242 foreign national offenders. Of these, 549 referrals were made to Immigration Enforcement's command and control unit, which represents a compliance rate of 24.5 percent. This is also low compared to the rate in England and Wales as a whole.

The force has no policy for dealing with wanted people, and does not actively manage the number of outstanding named suspects. There is little supervisory oversight through daily management meetings, for example, to understand the risks. We found several cases in which potentially high-risk individuals were not being actively pursued because of high workloads. The force needs to ensure that its senior managers understand and prioritise organisational and operational risk and have ways to reallocate resources swiftly to manage risks.

We are pleased that the force has improved its approach to making the best use of forensic evidence. It now has a dedicated 'forensic hit manager' to link any analysis of forensic evidence gathered to known offenders in a timely way. We are also impressed with the work that the AIM<sup>12</sup> team is developing, as a revised approach to the former integrated offender management scheme. The AIM team is staffed by dedicated, committed individuals who work with a variety of partners, including drug rehabilitation services, housing providers and local authorities, to reduce re-offending.

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<sup>12</sup> AIM (achieve, inspire, maintain) is a development from the force's response to integrated offender management. The initiative is aimed at supporting offenders, enabling them to understand how the police and other partner agencies can support them in breaking the offending cycle.



### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that all crimes are allocated promptly to investigators with the appropriate skills, accreditation and support to investigate them to a good standard, in a timely manner.
- The force should ensure regular and active supervision of investigations to improve their quality and progress.
- The force should increase the number of qualified detectives to improve the quality of its investigations and ensure that workloads are manageable.
- The force should improve its ability to retrieve digital evidence from mobile phones, computers and other electronic devices, quickly enough to ensure that investigations are not delayed.
- The force should ensure the swift location and arrest of those who are circulated as wanted on the Police National Computer, of those who fail to appear on police bail, of named and outstanding suspects and of suspects identified through forensic evidence.

# Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims



Requires improvement

## Identifying vulnerability

Northamptonshire Police demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of vulnerability and the workforce has a good awareness of this matter. The force lacks a clear vulnerability strategy but it has a definition, which most of the workforce understand.<sup>13</sup> The force has developed its command and control system to automatically highlight people known to be vulnerable and repeat callers. This means that call handlers can identify these people more quickly and reliably. This also informs the THRIVE risk-assessment process (see above) and supports decision making about whether to deploy police officers to the scene of a crime. On some occasions, we found the risk assessments (and/or subsequent re-assessments of risk) were not recorded properly on the command and control system, and that vulnerability was not documented consistently. This means that the scale of vulnerability may not be fully understood, and that analysis is not as complete as it should be.

In most cases, the force identifies vulnerable people well when they first contact the police; this includes victims of domestic abuse. In our 2016 effectiveness inspection, we found that some domestic abuse cases were not being graded as requiring an immediate or prompt response, and were being managed instead through scheduled appointments. We are pleased that the force is now managing domestic abuse cases in the control room better, and we came across processes designed to monitor and assess this activity. Only an inspector may decide to downgrade a domestic abuse incident to a scheduled appointment, which means that such decisions are subjected to the right levels of scrutiny.

However, a shortage of resources in response teams means the force cannot provide all vulnerable victims with a prompt response to. We found a small number of incidents in which the deployment of response officers was awaited, but too few were available. This means that some vulnerable people do not receive the service they need, and may be put in danger. The force manages some of this demand by scheduling appointments over the following three days. Although this is appropriate in some cases, during our inspection, we came across a small number of incidents in

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<sup>13</sup> Northamptonshire Police uses the definition from the ACPO guidance and defines a vulnerable adult as: "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".

which a scheduled appointment was not the right course of action. These included an allegation of rape by a vulnerable victim with a mental health condition. The effect of this is that the force may not be identifying risks at the earliest opportunity. The force recognises this and intends to resolve this problem by realigning its resources as part of the new service delivery model (SDM).

## **Initial response**

The force assesses vulnerability well at initial response. The DASH<sup>14</sup> risk assessment process is well established and effective; officers complete DASH forms face to face in all domestic abuse cases. DASH forms are subjected to consistent supervisory review; staff in the 'sunflower unit' (a partnership-funded service providing specialist support to victims of domestic abuse) additionally review high-risk cases.

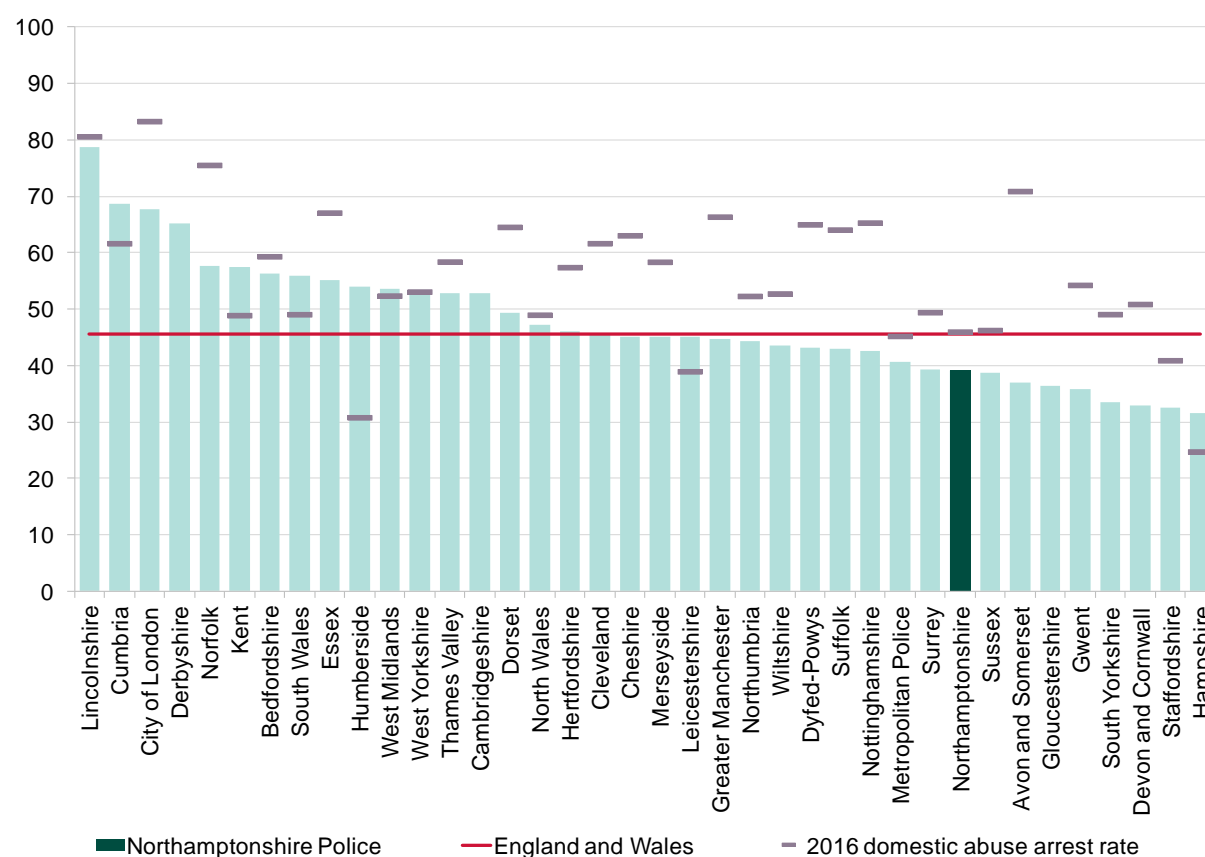
When responding, response officers usually look for, and identify, any risks relating to other vulnerable groups within a household. They know how to look for hidden signs of vulnerability. For example, officers submit public protection notices to instigate safeguarding activities for people who may be subject to forced labour. The force's well-publicised vision, to 'protect people from harm', has raised awareness among officers and staff of the need to identify potentially vulnerable people.

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 linked directly to offences, a high arrest rate may suggest that a force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action (for further information, please see annex A). HMICFRS has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

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<sup>14</sup> 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 frontline practitioners identify high-risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and so-called honour-based violence.

**Figure 3: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse-related offences), by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017<sup>15, 16</sup>**



**Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return, 2016 and 2017 Home Office domestic abuse crime data<sup>17</sup>**

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

In Northamptonshire Police, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, the arrest rate for domestic abuse was 39.1 arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes. This is a decrease compared to the 12 months to 30 June 2016 when the rate was 46.0 arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes. This is also below the England and Wales rate of 45.5 arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes; the chief officer team has commissioned work to understand the causes of this decline. Early findings indicate contributory factors such as delays in the first police response. The force aims to attend all domestic abuse cases within 24 hours but is unable to achieve this now owing to the problem with resources. It makes good use of

<sup>15</sup> Durham, Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces were unable to provide 2017 domestic abuse arrest data. Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data.

<sup>16</sup> North Yorkshire Police was unable to provide comparable domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, it has been removed from the graph. For further information, please see annex A.

<sup>17</sup> The Home Office has provided HMICFRS with data on domestic abuse-related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These data are more recent than those published by the Office for National Statistics.

body-worn video cameras whose use is compulsory for domestic abuse incidents. It reviews some footage from domestic abuse cases to determine whether the actions of first responders are having an impact on the attitude of victims and on future criminal justice outcomes. However, this work is in its infancy; HMICFRS will monitor its progress.

Recently, the force commissioned detailed analysis of domestic abuse in Northamptonshire, known as a problem profile, which will improve its understanding of the issue as a whole. It is introducing a new domestic abuse prevention and interventions team (DAPIT), which will have more resources and will deal with all high-risk domestic abuse cases, and with cases of female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. Other cases will be allocated to suitably trained investigators, while some lower-risk cases will still be assigned to response officers. The DAPIT will also act as experts and advisers, providing specialist guidance with the aim of further improving the force's response to domestic abuse.

The force consistently conducts the necessary immediate safeguarding actions at initial response. After initial response, neighbourhood teams who are involved with the continuing safeguarding of vulnerable victims provide further support. These officers and staff make follow-up visits, work with partner agencies and undertake preventative activities.

## **Mental health**

Mental health demand is having a significant impact on the frontline at times; police officers have to deal often for long periods with people suffering from mental health crises. The force is aware of these issues, and is represented at meetings with health and social care partners. However, discussions about the provision of mental health services have not made any real difference yet. The force understands its role in responding to vulnerable people with mental health problems but is not working closely enough with partner organisations to resolve incidents that involve mental health. The police and crime commissioner (PCC) is running a 'Time 2 Listen' survey. This is designed to elicit the views and experiences of people with mental illness who have had contact with the police or with the criminal justice system. It demonstrates the ambition of the PCC and force to engage with, and learn from, users of the service that the force provides to those suffering from mental ill health.

The force assesses the risk to callers with mental health problems when they first contact in the control room using an initiative known as 'operation alloy'. This is a partnership approach, involving the force and the local mental health trust, to jointly support people with mental health needs. Mental health triage nurses, with access to police and NHS data, are stationed in the force control room between 7am and midnight each day. They identify incidents related to mental health and provide support to officers – and to callers who may be suffering from mental health issues. Where resources allow, mental health nurses are sent out with officers in a triage car

in some urgent cases, or speak to callers on the telephone. Operation alloy staff make referrals and doctor's appointments and arrange mental health assessments with partner agencies. Staff within the control room are very appreciative of the initiative and say it is improving the quality of service to the public. The University of Northampton's institute for public safety, crime and justice is evaluating the operation.

The force has a small team of experienced police officers based in St Andrews mental health facility, which is located in Northampton and is the largest private mental health facility in Europe; it part-funds these officers. However, it has been taking on work beyond its remit and the force is reviewing the arrangements to be sure they remain effective. Officers can take people who have been detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act<sup>18</sup> to two other mental health units in the county: St Marys and Berrywood. But waiting times to process such admissions are often long. We were given examples of officers waiting for hours with people in crisis before the right service provider could attend to them.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, Northamptonshire Police detained 430 individuals under section 136 of the Act. The detention rate per 1 million population is slightly higher than the England and Wales rate. We were pleased to find that the force rarely uses police custody facilities as a place of safety, and used it only eight times in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. However, as a result of this, officers and staff are spending large amounts of time with people experiencing mental health crises. Some officers and staff have received training in dealing with mental health as part of their annual personal safety training; others have completed an online learning package.

## **Investigating crimes involving vulnerable people**

The quality of Northamptonshire Police's investigations involving vulnerable people is inconsistent. The force's structures and staffing levels mean that the standard of investigation that victims receive is not consistent. Some investigations involving vulnerable victims are not allocated to investigators with the right skills. We found a number of investigations being given to inappropriately skilled staff because of the staff shortage in CID. In our 2016 effectiveness inspection, we found inconsistencies in the quality of domestic abuse investigations. We are pleased to find that the quality of domestic abuse investigations is generally good now, although investigation plans are sometimes missing and supervision remains inconsistent. The new service delivery model (SDM) is expected to resolve many of these problems once it is functional.

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<sup>18</sup> Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 enables a police officer to remove, from a place other than where they live, someone who they believe to be suffering from a mental disorder and in need of immediate care and control, and take them to a place of safety – for example, a health or social care facility, or the home of a relative or friend.

The force makes appropriate use of legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse. The provisions available through Clare's Law<sup>19</sup> are managed well, with timely disclosures. The number of domestic violence protection orders (DVPOs)<sup>20</sup> granted in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 has decreased when compared to the same period in 2016; however, this may be due to the force IT systems not recording their use accurately. Officers we spoke to talked with confidence about DVPNs and DVPOs – but were not aware that their use must be recorded. The force should continue to promote the use of the DVPOs so that the number of orders does not continue to fall. It should also make sure accurate records of their use are kept.

The force has a charged/summonsed rate of 15.7 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales rate of 18.6 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences. The rates of domestic abuse offences where the prosecution is prevented due to evidential difficulties are: 30.9 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences for cases where the victim supports police action; and 46.7 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences for cases where the victim does not support police action. Both rates are above those for England and Wales. This may indicate that, compared with England and Wales, fewer cases are formally passing through the criminal justice system and that fewer victims get the outcomes they might have been entitled to expect.

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<sup>19</sup> Clare's Law, or the domestic violence disclosure scheme, has two functions: the 'right to ask' the police about a partner's previous history of domestic abuse or violent acts; and the 'right to know' – police can proactively disclose information in prescribed circumstances.

<sup>20</sup> Domestic violence protection notices (DVPNs) may be issued by an authorised police officer to prevent a suspected perpetrator from returning to a victim's home or contacting the victim. After a DVPN has been issued, the police must apply to the magistrates for a domestic violence protection order (DVPO). The DVPO will be granted for a period of up to 28 days.

## Partnership working

Northamptonshire Police works with partner agencies to ensure that the correct safeguarding arrangements are made for vulnerable people. The force's multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)<sup>21</sup> deals with children's safeguarding matters and a different team deals with safeguarding adults. The children's MASH is effective, involving comprehensive information-sharing arrangements that all the agencies within the hub can access. Officers who attend incidents complete a public protection notice (PPN). This summarises the vulnerabilities of victims and is then sent to the MASH. Staff in the MASH share PPNs with social care, who also send the information to other partner agencies, if certain criteria are met.

The adult safeguarding team quality assures adult referrals to Northamptonshire County Council. This team also undertakes a number of investigations, into such matters as alleged neglect and sexual offences at care homes. The force aims to bring the children's and adult MASH structures and processes closer together, so that safeguarding responsibilities are managed in the most efficient, effective way.

Management of registered sex offenders (RSOs) remains an area in which the force needs to improve. Our 2016 effectiveness inspection highlighted this issue; we found the management of sexual or violent offenders (MOSOVO) unit was understaffed, while a large backlog of visits awaited completion. This is still the case, although the backlog is being prioritised now according to risk. The force has an action plan to clear the backlog by September 2018. Officers and staff in the unit cannot meet the requirements about timescales for visits and often miss targets because of the number of cases for which each of them is responsible. This means the RSOs are not being monitored properly and, therefore, the public may not be properly protected, either. Breaches of sexual harm prevention orders (SHPOs) are low and appear to have decreased – but this is due more likely to a lack of monitoring than to greater compliance.

The force's multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) processes are adequate. There are six MARACs in Northamptonshire; they meet every fortnight for Northampton and every month in the rest of the county. Each meeting reviews about 16 cases and high-risk cases are always reviewed. In the 12 months to 31 March 2017, Northamptonshire Police discussed 40.9 cases per 10,000 adult females at a MARAC, which is above the rate for England and Wales.

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<sup>21</sup> A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) is a location in which staff from the police, local authority and other safeguarding agencies share data, research and decision making about local children and adults who are vulnerable; the purpose is to ensure a timely and joined-up response for children and vulnerable adults who require protection.



### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should take steps immediately to ensure that all incidents are thoroughly assessed to identify risk and harm at initial contact. It should use this assessment – not the availability of response officers – to determine an appropriate response, to ensure victims are kept safe.
- The force should improve the quality of investigations involving vulnerable people, ensuring that the workloads of specialist investigators are manageable at all times and that such investigations are subject to regular and active supervision.
- The force should improve its understanding of the reasons for the declining domestic abuse arrest and charge/summons rate and take appropriate action to address it.
- The force should ensure that it manages the risks posed by registered sex offenders effectively.

# Tackling serious and organised crime



Requires improvement

## Understanding threats

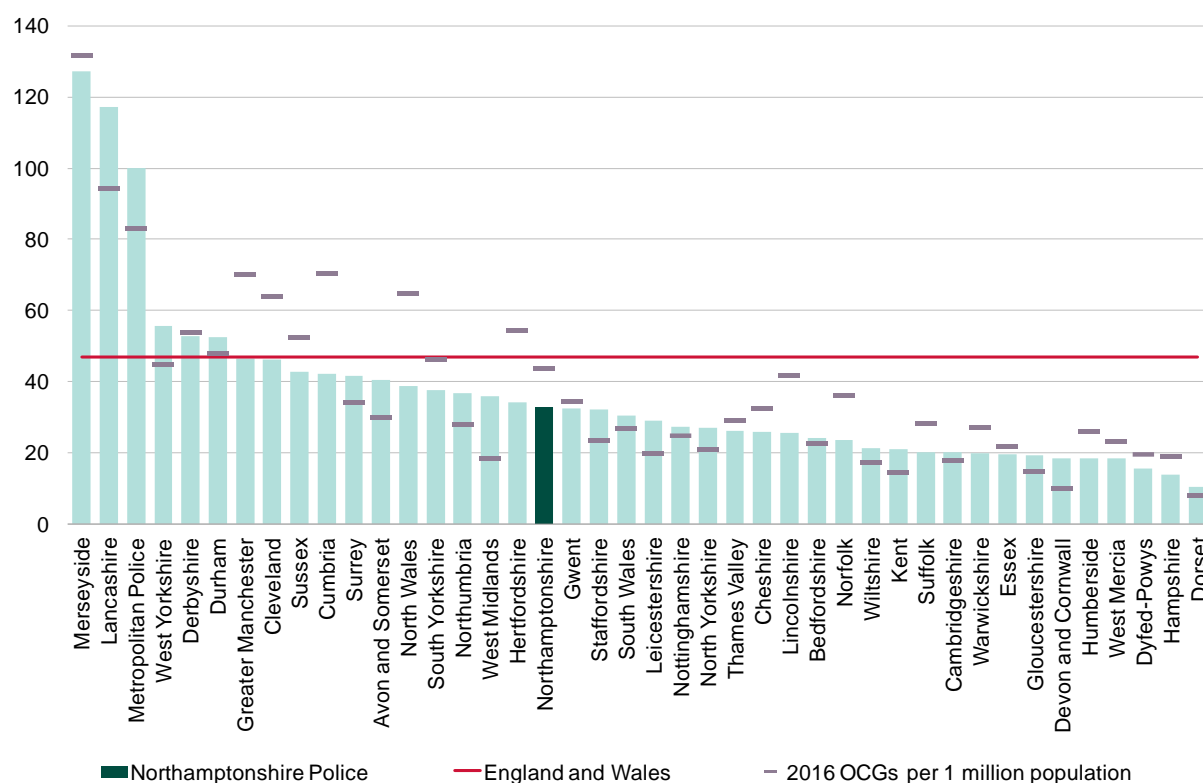
The force has a partial understanding of the threats and risks serious and organised crime pose in Northamptonshire and it has completed a local profile of serious and organised crime. However, as this does not include data from partner agencies, and other law enforcement agencies do not appear to have been consulted, its usefulness is limited. The force has produced some good quality intelligence products, such as analytical reports on illegal firearms, modern slavery and human trafficking. These identify the main threats to its communities as well as help to improve its understanding of organised crime. But the force has not yet acted on this intelligence picture, or taken adequate steps to mitigate the threats that this analysis has identified.

We were pleased to find the force now makes information on organised crime groups (OCGs) available to neighbourhood policing teams; this represents progress since our 2016 effectiveness inspection. Neighbourhood teams have access now to this information, and can brief themselves about the organised criminals that operate in their local areas via the force's briefing system.

Forces identify and assess all OCGs using a nationally standardised technique, called 'mapping'. The East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU) completes this on behalf of the five forces in the East Midlands region, including Northamptonshire Police. Our inspections have found that this regional approach has improved the consistency of OCG mapping. However, it also causes some delays. This means that forces are making decisions on which OCGs to disrupt or investigate that are not properly informed by the mapping method.

The force does not identify and assess all OCGs consistently. As of 1 July 2017, Northamptonshire Police had mapped 32.7 OCGs per one million of the population, which is below the rate for England and Wales. This is a reduction compared to 1 July 2016, when the figure was 43.6 OCGs per one million population. Those OCGs that the force has identified are also not necessarily those that pose the greatest threat, or the most active. By not proactively identifying and mapping OCGs, the force is limiting its own understanding of serious and organised crime as well as undermining the regional and national threat picture.

**Figure 4: Rate of organised crime groups (OCGs) per 1 million population, by force, as at 1 July 2017<sup>22</sup>**



**Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return**

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

## Disrupting and investigating serious and organised crime

The force's approach to managing and prioritising its activity in order to tackle serious and organised crime is not structured enough. It has not used the information it has obtained about serious and organised crime in Northamptonshire to produce an intelligence requirement for its workforce, or identify which specific threats should be the main focus of its activity. It does not base the processes of determining which OCGs to target for disruption on accurate, recent information that includes OCG mapping data as well as the professional judgment of officers and staff.

The force has a partnership board, but it formed this only recently, and its partner organisations do not understand their responsibilities for tackling serious and organised crime. The force and its partner organisations, such as HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and probation services, do not share information or intelligence on serious and organised criminals

<sup>22</sup> The City of London Police has been removed from the graph as its organised crime group data are not comparable with other forces due to its size and its wider national remit. For further information, please see annex A.

routinely, as no information-sharing agreements have been drawn up. The force should involve partner organisations more closely to prevent harm from occurring within communities.

The force's approach to serious and organised crime is very reactive. Last year, we found that the force was concentrating a significant proportion of its intelligence and investigative officers on tackling gang violence in response to the threat that these groups pose. That remains the case this year as well. This reduces the resources available to identify, tackle and disrupt other types of serious and organised crime. This should change when the service delivery model (SDM) is implemented and more resources are set aside to deal with serious and organised crime.

We were pleased to find that the force has taken some action against individuals suspected of involvement in modern slavery. We were told about an operation that the force developed after it received intelligence about modern slavery at several travellers' sites within the county and in other parts of the country. With support from partner organisations, such as immigration, the local authority and the National Crime Agency, the force took action against suspects and rescued seven people; an investigation is under way.

The force has assigned detective inspectors as lead responsible officers (LROs) to each OCG, but they have assumed this responsibility in addition to their core roles. They also receive little training or support and lack the capacity to carry out this responsibility effectively. LROs are expected to use a structure to manage OCGs based on the national 4Ps<sup>23</sup> framework (pursue, prevent, protect, prepare) when developing plans to confront OCGs. However, the OCG management plans that we examined concentrated almost exclusively on pursuit. We found no plans in place to ensure that the force can act quickly to tackle OCGs that may appear inactive, but which may subsequently re-form and begin committing crime again.

The force's range of tactics to tackle serious and organised crime is limited. It receives some specialist support from EMSOU (see above), although we found several cases where regional support would have helped – but the force had not requested it. The force should draw on regional support more often in order to act more effectively. At a local level, although the role that neighbourhood teams play in submitting intelligence about organised criminals has been strengthened, they do not fully understand the role they can play in the management and disruption of OCGs. The force also needs to develop a much better understanding of its impact on

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<sup>23</sup> 4Ps is a national framework for tackling serious and organised crime, developed for national counter-terrorist work. It has four thematic pillars, often referred to as the 4Ps: pursue – prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime; prevent – preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime; protect – increasing protection against serious and organised crime; and prepare – reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place.

serious and organised crime. While investigations such as Operation Worcester<sup>24</sup> have disrupted some OCGs, the force does not monitor such disruption or otherwise evaluate the impact of its actions. It is, therefore, missing opportunities to learn from what works and share good practice more widely.

## **Preventing serious and organised crime**

Northamptonshire Police has undertaken limited initiatives to identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime or deter them from offending. Effective partnership arrangements have been developed as part of Operation Worcester (see above) to prevent siblings, family members and children from being at risk of personal injury. However, these arrangements do not include ways to deter these people who are vulnerable from becoming involved in committing serious and organised crime. The force has not applied for any gang injunctions in the last year. Operation Worcester is considered a success locally because several offenders received long custodial sentences. But the force has not yet sought to deal with the associated causes of gang violence or firearms supply.

Operational officers and staff know of the requirement to consider the safeguarding of those involved in, and at risk of being drawn into, serious and organised crime. Officers and staff submit police protection notices (PPNs), using the crime, intelligence, custody and case preparation system, so that safeguarding interventions can be put in place through the MASH (see above). The force is also developing its long-term approach to preventing people from becoming involved in serious and organised crime as part of a long-term initiative – the early intervention scheme, which the police and crime commissioner (PCC) champions. The scheme will be put into effect as part of the service delivery model (SDM) and will involve partner agencies, such as education and social services, in preventing young people from becoming involved in crime.

Not enough basic arrangements have been put in place to manage serious and organised criminals, to prevent them from re-offending. The force has obtained several serious crime prevention orders. However, it has not put in place any lifetime management arrangements, which can be used to restrict the activities of persistent offenders, manage their behaviour and prevent re-offending. These restrictions are not imposed as an additional punishment but can restrict their ability to plan, fund and commit serious crime in future.

The force's communications department publicises successful criminal justice outcomes but the force does not communicate with the public to raise awareness, provide reassurance or deter people from becoming involved in serious and organised crime.

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<sup>24</sup> Operation Worcester was established in October 2015. It is the force's reactive investigation into gangs and gang violence.

### **Cause of concern**

The force needs to strengthen its response to serious and organised crime in order to provide the public with the best possible protection from harm.

### **Recommendations**

The force should immediately take steps to:

- act on the information it currently holds to understand and prioritise the threats that organised criminals in Northamptonshire pose;
- define an intelligence requirement for serious and organised crime and communicate this to officers and staff so they can enhance the force's understanding of current threats;
- 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;
- begin to measure its activity on serious and organised crime across the four Ps, and ensure that it learns from experience to maximise the disruptive effect of this activity;
- identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime, and ensure that preventative initiatives are put in place with partner organisations to deter them from offending; and
- enhance its approach to the 'lifetime management' of organised criminals to minimise the risk they pose to local communities. This approach should include routine consideration of ancillary orders, partner agency powers and other tools to deter organised criminals from continuing to offend.

# Specialist capabilities

## Ungraded

### National policing responsibilities

*The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)*<sup>25</sup> specifies six national threats: terrorism, cyber-crime, public order, civil emergencies, child sexual abuse and serious and organised crime.

Northamptonshire Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. The force has assessed its capability to respond to the six national threats included in the SPR. The assessment takes place both within the force and as part of joint assessments with other forces in the region.

Responsibility for the national threats is assigned to chief officers who lead programmes to develop the force's capacity to respond to each of them. The force has identified areas where it needs to increase its preparedness to respond effectively to national threats. For example, the force is increasing the number of officers who are trained to manage civil disorder and respond to chemical, biological or nuclear attacks.

Northamptonshire Police has established a comprehensive programme to test its response to national threats. Recent training exercises have been completed to test the force's response to a marauding terrorist attack.

### Firearms capability

HMICFRS inspected how well forces were prepared to manage firearms attacks in our 2016 effectiveness inspections. Subsequent terrorist attacks in the UK and Europe have meant that the police service maintains a firm focus on armed capability in England and Wales.

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of OCGs or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. *The Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*<sup>26</sup> makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of

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<sup>25</sup> The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary. It sets out the latest national threats and appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter them. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from police forces, national agencies or other partners. *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417116/The\\_Strategic\\_Policin\\_g\\_Requirement.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policin_g_Requirement.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> *Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*, Home Office, 2003.

armed policing. The code stipulates that a chief officer be designated to oversee these standards. This requires the chief officer to set out the firearms threat in an armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment (APSTRA). The chief officer must also set out clear rationales for the number of armed officers (armed capacity) and the level to which they are trained (armed capability).

Northamptonshire Police operates joint arrangements with Leicestershire Police, Lincolnshire Police and Nottinghamshire Police to provide armed policing. Armed policing is one of several services provided jointly by the forces as part of a collaborative unit known as East Midlands Operational Support Services (EMOpSS).

The force has a good understanding of the potential harm facing the public; its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code of practice and the guidance issued by the College of Policing.<sup>27</sup> The force last reviewed its APSTRA in March 2017.

We found that the designated chief officer scrutinises the APSTRA closely. She formally approves its content, which includes the levels of armed capability and capacity that the threats require. Her decisions and the rationale on which they are based are clearly auditable.

In common with all forces that contribute to EMOpSS, Northamptonshire Police receives additional Home Office funding as part of a national programme to boost armed capacity in England and Wales. We established that the force has fulfilled its commitment to the programme by increasing the availability of armed response vehicles by the target date set for April 2017.

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<sup>27</sup> College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on armed policing is available at: [www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/?s](http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/?s)



## Annex A – About the data

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

Where HMICFRS collected data directly from police forces, we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other interested parties such as the Home Office. We gave forces several opportunities to quality assure and validate the data they provided us, to ensure the accuracy of the evidence presented. For instance:

- Data that forces submitted were checked and queried with those forces where data were notably different from other forces or were internally inconsistent; and
- All forces were asked 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 within this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

## Methodology

### Data in the report

British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data, so 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-2016 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**

HMICFRS surveyed the police workforce across forces in England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and the suitability of assigned tasks. This survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample which means that results may not be representative of the workforce population. The number of responses varied between 16 and 1,678 across forces. Therefore, we treated results with caution and used them for identifying themes that could be explored further during fieldwork rather than to assess individual force performance.

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

HMICFRS commissioned Ipsos MORI to survey attitudes towards policing between 21 July and 15 August 2017. 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 300 and 321 individuals in each force area. Therefore, any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

The findings of this survey are available on our website:

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

## **Review of crime files**

HMICFRS reviewed 2,700<sup>28</sup> police case files across crime types for:

- theft from person;
- rape (including attempts);
- stalking;
- harassment;
- common assault;
- grievous bodily harm (wounding); and
- actual bodily harm.

Our 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. We randomly selected files from crimes recorded between 1 January 2017 and 31 March 2017 and assessed them against several

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<sup>28</sup> 60 case files were reviewed in each force, with the exception of the Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police and West Yorkshire Police where 90 case files were reviewed.

criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected per force, we did not use 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 HMICFRS with data or the data supplied by the forces were not comparable.

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

These data were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales. In 2017, the data requested from forces contained a different breakdown of occurrences where the police were called to an incident.

### **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 2017 and are taken from the October 2017 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, except fraud offences, recorded by all police forces in England and Wales. Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime and outcomes include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMICFRS inspection. Therefore, England and Wales rates in this report will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Data referring to police-recorded crime should be treated with care, as recent increases may be attributed to the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMICFRS' national inspection of crime data in 2014.

Suffolk Constabulary was unable to submit 2017 outcomes data to the Home Office due to data quality issues, relating to the changing of its crime recording system to Athena. Therefore Suffolk Constabulary has been excluded from the England and Wales figure

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcomes data are listed below.

- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. Therefore these data are subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time;

- Under the new framework, 37 police forces in England and Wales provide outcomes data through the Home Office data hub (HODH) on a monthly basis. All other forces provide these data via a manual return also occurring on a monthly basis;
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces participated in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. This means they no longer issued 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. These three pilot forces continued to operate in accordance with the pilot conditions since the pilot ended in November 2015. Other forces subsequently also limited their use of some out of court disposals. Therefore, the outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind;
- Direct comparisons should not be made between general crime outcomes and domestic abuse-related outcomes. Domestic abuse-related outcomes are based on the number of outcomes for domestic-abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, irrespective of when the crime was recorded. Therefore, the domestic abuse-related crimes and outcomes recorded in the reporting year are not tracked, whereas the general outcomes are tracked; and
- For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see Crime Outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2017, Home Office, July 2017. Available from:  
[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/633048/crime-outcomes-hosb0917.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633048/crime-outcomes-hosb0917.pdf)

### **Anti-social behaviour**

These data are obtained from Office for National Statistics data tables (year ending 31 March 2017), 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 (ASB) reported to them in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Forces record incidents under NSIR in accordance with the same victim-focused approach that applies for recorded crime, although these data are not subject to the same 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 ASB incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords), but incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police data.

When viewing this data the reader should be aware that Warwickshire Police had a problem with its incident recording. For a small percentage of all incidents reported during 2015-16 the force could not identify whether these were ASB or other types of incident. These incidents have been distributed pro rata for Warwickshire, so that two percent of ASB incidents in the reporting year for 2015-16 is estimated.

## **Domestic abuse**

Data relating to domestic abuse-flagged offences is obtained through the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These are more recent data than those previously published by Office for National Statistics. The Home Office collects these data regularly and requires all forces to record accurately and flag domestic abuse crimes. Domestic abuse flags should be applied in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules<sup>29</sup> to ensure consistency across forces, and within published data sets.

Data relating to domestic abuse arrests and outcomes were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales.

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

[www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2017](http://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2017)

When viewing this data the reader should be aware that North Yorkshire Police was unable to give the Home Office comparable data on domestic abuse-flagged crimes. The force extracted data for HMICFRS on the powers and outcomes used to deal with these offences by using an enhanced search. This search examined additional factors (such as the victim / suspect relationship) and included a keyword search to identify additional domestic abuse crimes which may not have been flagged.

The force used a simpler search, which identified domestic abuse crimes by flagging alone, to extract data it supplied to the Home Office. As North Yorkshire Police's data on domestic abuse are not comparable with other forces, we have excluded the data.

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<sup>29</sup> Home Office Counting Rules are rules in accordance with which crime data – required to be submitted to the Home Secretary under sections 44 and 45 of the Police Act 1996 – must be collected. They set down how the police service in England and Wales must record crime, how crimes must be classified according to crime type and categories, whether and when to record crime, how many crimes to record in respect of a single incident and the regime for the re-classification of crimes as no-crimes.

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

These data were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales. 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.

As at 1 July 2017 City of London Police had recorded 46 OCGs. However during the inspection we found that only six OCGs were within the force's geographical area and the remaining 40 were part of the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau's remit.

## **Figures in the report**

Not all forces' reports will contain all the figures we mention in the sections below. This is because some forces' data was incomplete or not comparable with England and Wales data, and in 2017 HMICFRS undertook risk-based inspections.

More details about our risk-based approach can be found here:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based)

### **Rate of anti-social behaviour (ASB) powers per 1 million population, by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017**

These data were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales. HMICFRS collected data on anti-social behaviour powers, including:

- criminal behaviour orders;
- community protection notices;
- civil injunctions; and
- dispersal orders.

Together these powers form the anti-social behaviour (ASB) powers considered in this report.

The Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced ASB powers which can be applied by both local authorities and the police. The ASB powers data provided in this report covers police data. Therefore, results should be treated with caution as they may not include instances where local authorities exercised these powers.

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

- Bedfordshire Police, Greater Manchester Police and the Metropolitan Police Service were unable to provide data on anti-social behaviour powers as the data are not held centrally within each force;

- Greater Manchester Police was unable to provide any 2016 ASB use of powers data. Greater Manchester Police intends for its new integrated operational policing system to incorporate recording of ASB powers;
- Suffolk Constabulary was only able to provide data for the southern area of the force in 2017. Therefore its data are excluded;
- The forces highlighted above are not included in the figure or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate;
- Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Humberside and Merseyside forces were only able to provide partial 2017 ASB use of powers data;
- Gloucestershire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary were unable to obtain data regarding the number of civil injunctions as their local authorities lead the application of these;
- Humberside Police was unable to provide data on community protection notices and civil injunction notices as its local authorities lead the application of these. The force does not collect data on criminal behaviour orders and dispersal orders; and
- Merseyside Police was unable to provide data on dispersal orders as these orders are attached to individual crime files.

**Proportion of investigations where action was taken, by force, for offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Suffolk Constabulary was unable to provide 2017 crime outcomes data. Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crime outcomes data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the figure.

Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crimes outcome data, because it had difficulty 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.

**Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse-related offences), by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017**

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

- 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 2017 in this calculation. It is also possible to have more than one arrest

per offence. In addition, the reader should note the increase in police-recorded crime which affected the majority of forces over the last year. This may mean arrest rates are 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. HMICFRS 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 reader should be aware of the following:

- Durham, Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces were unable to provide domestic abuse arrest data. North Yorkshire Police was unable to provide comparable domestic abuse crime and arrest data, so a rate could not be calculated. Therefore, these forces are not included in the figure.
- Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces do not have 2016 data included in the figure.

When viewing domestic abuse arrest data for 2016, the reader should be aware of the following:

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary was unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data due to a recording problem that meant it could only obtain accurate data from a manual audit of its custody records.
- Lancashire Constabulary had difficulty 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 the 2016 data provided to HMICFRS would be marginal and that these are the most reliable data it can provide.

### **Rate of organised crime groups (OCGs) per 1 million population, by force, as at 1 July 2017**

Please see 'Organised crime groups' above.

Organised crime group data from City of London Police are not comparable with other forces. Therefore, its data are not included in the figure.

For data relating to 2016 the number of OCGs in Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per 1 million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population. For the 2017 data Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force split their OCGs into two separate force areas.