

# PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of Devon and Cornwall Police



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

## Overall judgment<sup>1</sup>



**Good**

Overall, Devon and Cornwall Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. In terms of preventing crime, the force is effective; it also sets high standards for investigations and the management of offenders. However, when protecting the vulnerable, improvements are required in how the force responds to young people who are at risk of sexual abuse and missing children. Good arrangements are in place to tackle serious and organised crime. This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their overall effectiveness, so a year-on-year comparison is not possible.

## Summary

Devon and Cornwall Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. The force has a clear commitment to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and officers and staff understand that prevention is everyone's responsibility. The force ensures that neighbourhood teams are well resourced, many of them are co-located with partner agencies. These teams share information with partners effectively; this leads to productive joint working and the development of a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

However, a better evaluation of tactics and the sharing of organisational learning with the workforce is an area where the force could do more.

Crime investigations are generally of a good standard and conducted in a timely manner, with effective supervision, direction and scrutiny. HMIC found that the force generally provides an effective service to victims at the point of initial contact and throughout the life of an investigation. The force has effective specialist units that deal with more serious and complex crime, and it can draw on regional investigative resource and expertise as required. The force has good arrangements to tackle repeat offenders and to manage those individuals who present a risk to the public.

The force effectively identifies vulnerable victims, and sexual offences and domestic abuse investigation teams provide a specialised service to victims. However, the teams are not yet fully resourced which means that some vulnerable victims do not receive this tailored support.

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<sup>1</sup> Outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate – see Annex A for definitions.

The force has taken steps to improve the service to vulnerable victims by introducing a victim care unit and specific victim's needs assessments. However, HMIC's inspection of vulnerability<sup>2</sup> in 2015 found that improvements are required in assessing the needs of victims.

The force understands the threat and risk posed by organised crime and has effective processes in place to work with partner organisations to tackle organised crime groups. The force can draw on additional capacity and expertise from neighbouring forces when required. The force is also well prepared to fulfil its national policing responsibilities.

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



#### **Good**

Devon and Cornwall Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe.

The force allocates resources to prevention with locally based neighbourhood policing teams delivering policing across the force area. The work of these teams is focussed on threat, risk and harm in communities.

In HMIC's 2014 crime inspection, we judged the force to be good at reducing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour and this continues to be the case. The force has a good understanding of local communities and a range of effective methods to engage with communities and partner agencies which helps it to

### **How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?**



#### **Good**

Devon and Cornwall Police's approach to investigating crime and managing offenders is good. This is consistent with HMIC's crime inspection in 2014, which assessed the force as good at investigating offending.

Crime investigations are well managed and closely supervised. The arrest of high risk offenders is a priority for all staff and activity is monitored through daily management meetings.

Investigators are appropriately trained and equipped to conduct investigations and the force is taking action to ensure that it will have sufficient trained staff when a large number leave due to retirement. Forensic analysis provides

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<sup>2</sup> PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Devon and Cornwall Police, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-devon-and-cornwall/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-devon-and-cornwall/)

respond to community needs and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

Officers and staff clearly understand that they all have a responsibility for the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and operational activity supports both force level and local prevention priorities.

HMIC found good examples of a broad range of tactics being used to tackle emerging issues of anti-social behaviour.

Information sharing with partner agencies is productive and is an effective method of taking joint responsibility to solve problems. Some forces have taken information sharing a step further by introducing a joint integrated information-sharing database. Devon and Cornwall Police may wish to consider exploring this opportunity.

good support for investigations; however there are significant delays in the retrieval of digital evidence from smartphones, tablets and other devices.

Good procedures are in place to identify and focus activity on those offenders committing the most crime and anti-social behaviour in communities. Senior police managers take an active role in making sure that these procedures are effective.

Integrated offender management (IOM) arrangements are good with effective IOM multi-agency teams actively managing offenders in each policing area.

Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) and domestic abuse serial and serious perpetrators (DASSP) arrangements are effective at dealing with sexual and other dangerous offenders.

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



### Requires improvement

Devon and Cornwall Police generally provides a good service in identifying vulnerable people and responds well to them. However, there are several areas where improvement is needed to ensure that the service is consistent and vulnerable people are kept safe. Given the scale of the challenge in this area and risk that is posed to some of the most vulnerable people, overall HMIC judges that the force requires improvement.

HMIC acknowledges that the force has committed significant effort and resource to improve the service to the public on vulnerability and supporting victims.

The force effectively identifies vulnerable victims. Its sexual offences and domestic abuse investigation teams provide a specialist response to crimes committed against vulnerable victims. However, the teams are not yet fully resourced which means that some vulnerable victims do not receive this tailored support.

Reports of missing and absent children are a priority for the force, with clearly-understood and well-supervised processes for finding missing or absent

## How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?



### Good

Devon and Cornwall Police is good at identifying and tackling serious and organised crime groups.

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threat posed to the public by serious and organised crime. A number of analytical products such as strategic assessments and themed organised crime local profiles have provided the force with a good understanding of this threat.

The force has specialist resources and techniques available at both a force and regional level, which it can draw upon as required to tackle serious and organised crime.

The force effectively disrupts and investigates serious and organised crime in collaboration with a range of partners and also works with them to prevent those at risk from being drawn into serious and organised crime.

The force actively contributes to multi-agency intelligence sharing through the government agency intelligence network, however criminal records checks for arrested foreign nationals could improve.

children. Professionals in the multi-agency safeguarding hubs assess vulnerability to child sexual exploitation and take early action to reduce the risks to victims. The force is making progress on its ability to respond effectively to cases of child sexual exploitation.

The force response to domestic abuse is thorough with an action plan that has accountability at senior officer level and a clear process for tracking progress of actions against areas identified for improvement so that officers are correctly assessing risk and taking effective action to keep victims safe.

The force is able to test its ability to meet its responsibilities under the Strategic Policing Requirement. It ensures that it has sufficient resources with the necessary skills to deal with most public order and other major incidents.

This is the first year that HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

## Force in numbers



### Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015

Devon and Cornwall  
Police

**149**

England and Wales

**350**



### Crime

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015

Devon and Cornwall  
Police

**46.6**

England and Wales

**63.0**

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

Devon and Cornwall  
Police

**49.5**

England and Wales

**60.3**

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2014 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

Devon and Cornwall  
Police

**-5.7%**

England and Wales

**+4.5%**

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2010 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

Devon and Cornwall  
Police

**-9.6%**

England and Wales

**-12.6%**



### Charge rate

Charge rate as a percentage of all crimes recorded (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2015

Devon and Cornwall  
Police

**14.7%**

England and Wales

**16.0%**



## Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015

Devon and Cornwall Police

**26.5**

England and Wales

**32.9**

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

Devon and Cornwall Police

**27.1**

England and Wales

**36.2**



## Domestic abuse

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

Devon and Cornwall Police

**12.6%**

England and Wales

**10.0%**

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2014

Devon and Cornwall Police

**11.7%**

England and Wales

**8.5%**



## Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015

Devon and Cornwall Police

**10.0**

England and Wales

**74.7**



## Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015

Devon and Cornwall Police

**82.3%**

England and Wales

**83.8%**

## Introduction

The public expects their local police force to:

- Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and, when crime occurs, to investigate it properly and provide support to victims.
- Use appropriately-trained officers and staff and approved practice when investigating crime, gathering evidence and building cases to ensure offenders are brought to justice.
- Support victims of crime by responding to calls for service, identifying and putting in place the right help at the first point of contact, keeping them informed and consulting them about the possible outcomes of their case.
- Ensure that vulnerable people who might not have been a victim of crime are identified and given appropriate support, for example people at risk of domestic abuse, children at risk of sexual exploitation and missing or absent children.
- Understand and be prepared to respond to threats beyond their own force boundaries, including national threats such as terrorism, serious and organised crime and cyber-crime.
- Work effectively with local partner organisations and other bodies to prevent all types of crime and re-offending and to protect the public.

HMIC's annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), consider whether forces keep people safe and reduce crime (how effective a force is), whether these activities are being carried out at the most appropriate cost (how efficient a force is) and how forces are ensuring they have the confidence of their communities (the public legitimacy of a force).

All forces are subject to significant cost reductions; this is reflected in our efficiency reports published in October 2015. The judgments we are making in this effectiveness report are made understanding the financial challenges forces are facing. Reports on Devon and Cornwall Police's efficiency and legitimacy inspections are available from the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/)).

HMIC's effectiveness inspections make an assessment of how well forces are preventing and investigating crime and anti-social behaviour; tackling serious and organised crime; and protecting victims and those who are vulnerable. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and are the principal measures by which the public will judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

Our effectiveness inspection focused on the overall question: “How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?”

To answer this question we looked at four in-depth questions, three of which are discussed in more detail within this report:<sup>3</sup>

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?
2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?
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, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

During our inspection we collected data from forces, reviewed case files and surveyed the public to seek their views on the effectiveness of the force. We also surveyed and interviewed representatives from partner organisations to gather evidence about the effectiveness of their working relationships with the force. We interviewed chief constables and chief officers and held focus groups of officers and staff at all grades and ranks. We also made numerous unannounced visits to police stations to talk to frontline officers and staff about their work. This report sets out the findings from this wide-ranging inspection of Devon and Cornwall Police.

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<sup>3</sup> HMIC inspected forces on questions 1, 2 and 4 between September and November 2015. Question 3 was inspected between June and August 2015, and a separate report was published in December 2015 (available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-devon-and-cornwall/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-devon-and-cornwall/)). In 2014, in preparation for the PEEL programme, forces were inspected to assess how effective they are at cutting crime (available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/crime-inspection-force-reports/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/crime-inspection-force-reports/)).

## **How effective is the force at preventing crime and 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 can be cheaper and more effective than investigating crime, and it makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other statutory and non-statutory bodies have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter is therefore dependent on their ability to work closely with other partner organisations to understand local problems and have access to a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

## **How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Devon & Cornwall?**

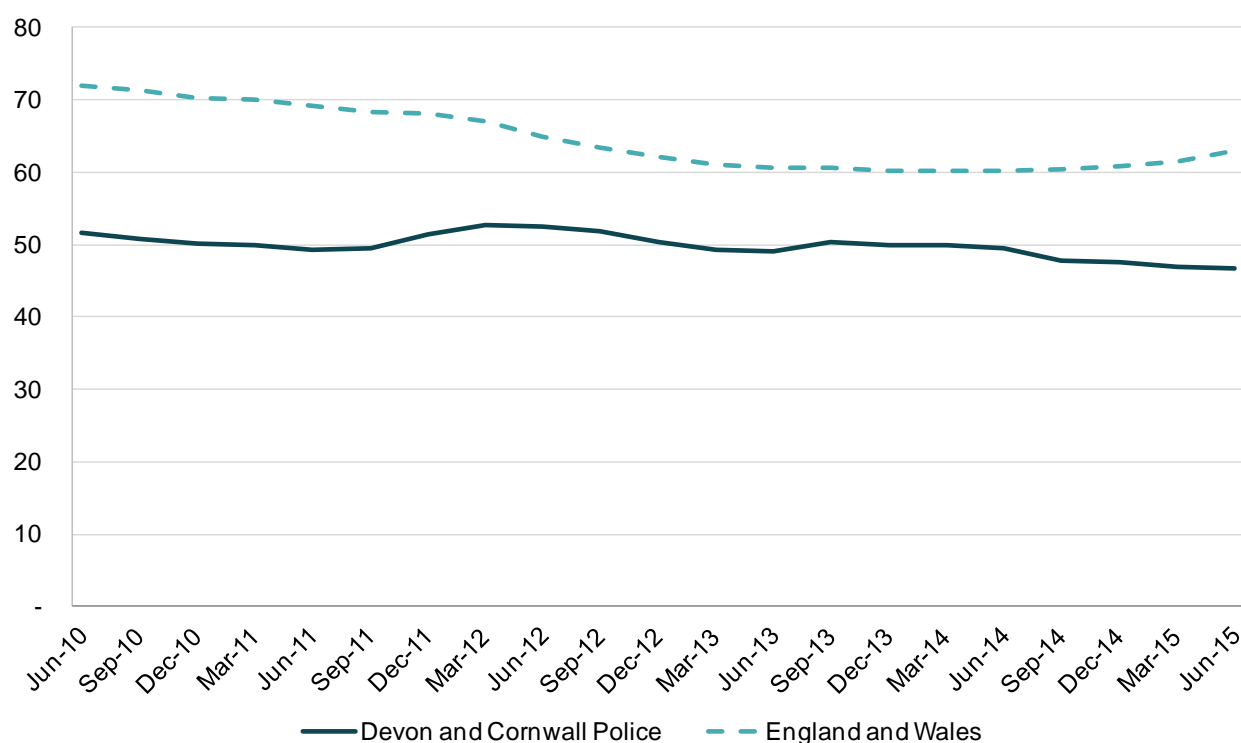
Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a comparable indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (e.g. theft) and non victim-based crime (e.g. possession of drugs). More than two-thirds of forces showed an annual increase in total police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to 30 June 2015. 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 national inspection of crime data in 2014.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2010, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015 fell by 10 percent in Devon and Cornwall compared with a reduction of 13 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime (i.e. crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 10 percent in Devon and Cornwall, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Devon and Cornwall decreased by 6 percent for the 12 months to 30 June 2015. This is compared with an increase of 4 percent across England and Wales over the same period.

**Figure 1: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2015**



**Source: Home Office data**

The volume 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. Figure 2 shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Devon and Cornwall (per 1,000 population) compared with England and Wales.

**Figure 2: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015**

Rates per 1,000 population	Devon and Cornwall Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	46.6	63.0
Victim-based crime	40.7	56.0
Sexual offences	1.6	1.6
Assault with injury	6.1	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	3.8	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	26.5	32.9

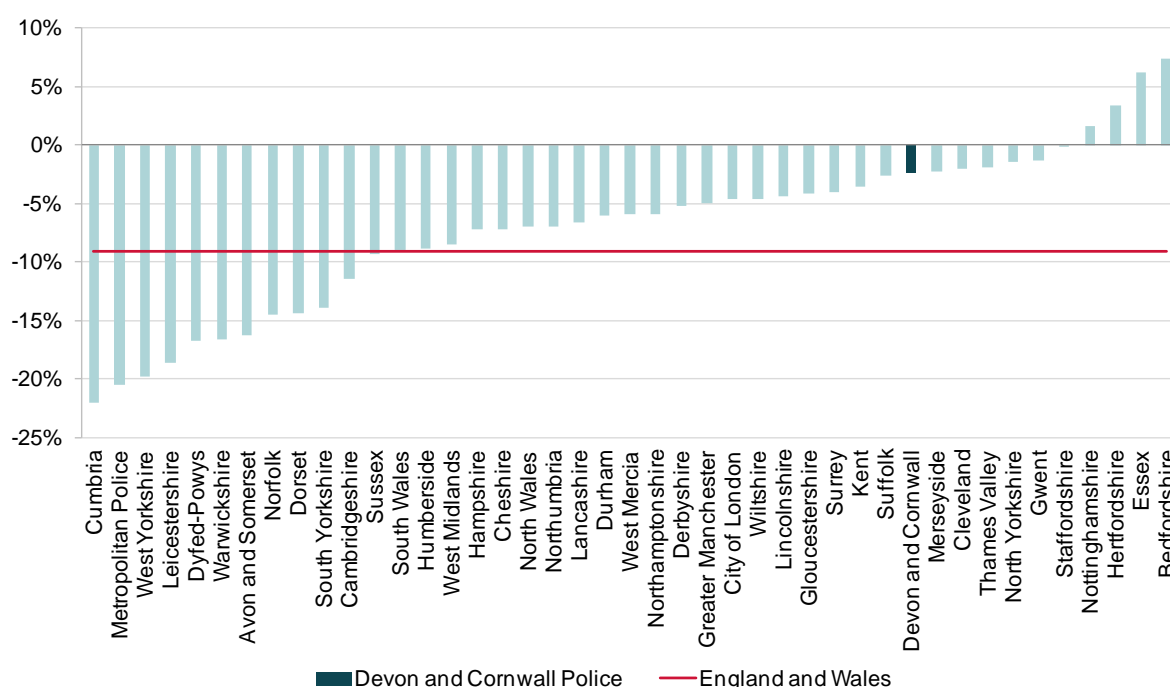
**Source: Home Office data, HMIC data return**

\*Anti-social behaviour data is from the force's data return and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.

HMIC has chosen these types of crime to indicate offending levels in the force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police recorded crime rates only.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2015, Devon and Cornwall Police recorded 45,213 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 2 percent fewer incidents than the force recorded during the previous 12 months. When considering all forces across England and Wales, there were 9 percent fewer incidents in the 12 months to 30 June 2015, than recorded during the previous 12 months.

**Figure 3: Percentage change in the volume of anti-social behaviour incidents, by force, comparing the 12 months to 30 June 2015 with the 12 months to 30 June 2014**



Source: HMIC data collection

## How well does the force work to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

### How well is the force prioritising the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour?

Devon and Cornwall Police prioritises the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. The force analyses crime data, as well as information from public consultation, to identify the threats and risks facing communities as part of an annual assessment process. The public consultation includes telephone surveys, focus groups and website questions and feedback. In addition neighbourhood teams use social media to engage with communities which helps to inform the force of local issues.

This work is then used to inform the priorities set out in the police and crime commissioner's police and crime plan. These priorities support the force's mission to detect and prevent harm, protect the vulnerable and reduce crime. The force is developing a joint approach to prevention with Dorset Police as part of a strategic alliance, commencing with the formation of a joint prevention directorate and a draft prevention strategy. Chief officers are clear that all officers and staff have a responsibility to support the force mission and that they must deliver a style of policing activity that will complement it. The officers and staff spoken to by HMIC clearly understood that they all had responsibility for the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and operational activity supports both force level and local prevention priorities.

### **How well are resources allocated to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?**

Devon and Cornwall Police has allocated resources effectively to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. These resources are predominantly allocated to neighbourhood policing teams, whose main function is to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. However, these teams can occasionally be given the task of responding to calls requiring police attendance, which may take them away from their neighbourhood policing role. HMIC's crime inspection in 2014<sup>4</sup> recommended that the force review this approach, to satisfy itself that there was no adverse effect on its ability to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour effectively. The force has since reviewed this position and is satisfied that its approach remains effective. HMIC found no evidence that the requirement to respond to calls for service was having a significant impact on the role of neighbourhood officers.

Neighbourhood teams use their local knowledge and undertake a variety of effective engagement activities with local communities to identify and solve short and long term problems relating to crime and anti-social behaviour. These teams engage with the public through regular local police and crime together meetings (PACT) and public engagement surgeries held at football matches. Public consultation carried out by the office of the police and crime commissioner also identifies local issues.

Problem-solving plans are put in place for repeat victims of crime or anti-social behaviour or those identified as vulnerable. HMIC reviewed a small sample of two problem-solving plans developed by neighbourhood teams. These both demonstrated effective problem-solving and the involvement of partners from local agencies.

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<sup>4</sup> *Crime inspection 2014 – Devon and Cornwall Police*, HMIC, November 2014. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/devon-and-cornwall-crime-inspection-2014.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/devon-and-cornwall-crime-inspection-2014.pdf)

## **How well is the force using a broad range of effective tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?**

Neighbourhood policing teams use a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. This includes the use of anti-social behaviour powers, for example dispersal orders, premises and crack house closures and drink banning orders.

Neighbourhood policing teams record their crime prevention activity within problem-solving plans or specific tasks in relation to identified crime or anti-social behaviour hot spots. These plans and tasks are placed on the force IT briefing system so that all officers and staff, for example those responsible for initial attendance at calls for service, have access to this information and are given the task of assisting in problem-solving alongside neighbourhood officers.

In HMIC's crime inspection report in 2014<sup>5</sup> we recommended that the force introduce a review process to evaluate the benefits of established and new crime fighting and anti-social behaviour initiatives, capture best practice around crime prevention and problem-solving, and share best practice across the force. HMIC found that although problem-solving plans are accessible to all staff, there is an inconsistent approach to evaluation of 'what works' and sharing of best practice and this remains an area for improvement for the force.

## **How well does the force work with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?**

### **How committed is the force to working with partner organisations?**

Devon and Cornwall Police is strongly committed to working with partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. At a strategic level, the force engages well with all local authorities. A good example of this is the Peninsula Strategic Assessment, which has developed with partners to identify threat, risk and harm to communities across the whole force area. It also forms the basis for the publication and updating of the force's police and crime plan.

The peninsula-wide Anti-Social Behaviour Group has been established as the delivery group for a joint partnership approach to tackle anti-social behaviour in Devon and Cornwall and is a good example of effective work with partner organisations at a strategic level. This group is chaired by a county council lead and involves all of the local authorities, local policing teams, community watch members and invited attendees. Existing and emerging anti-social behaviour issues are

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<sup>5</sup> *Crime inspection 2014 – Devon and Cornwall Police*, HMIC, November 2014. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/devon-and-cornwall-crime-inspection-2014.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/devon-and-cornwall-crime-inspection-2014.pdf)

discussed and responses agreed. The strategic group directs the responses, which are delivered at a local level.

There is strong evidence of anti-social behaviour as a shared priority across the statutory, community and business sectors. Neighbourhood officers and staff work effectively with partner agencies to keep people safe and tackle problems at an early stage. An example of this is the co-located anti-social behaviour team in Cornwall, whose work has been recognised nationally as being effective in tackling anti-social behaviour. The Plymouth community safety partnerships have recently adopted the principles of the Cornwall model to tackle anti-social behaviour. The force also has a range of well-established partnership and locality tasking groups which form the backbone of successful responses to locally identified crime and anti-social behaviour issues. HMIC spoke with representatives from a number of partner agencies who were very positive regarding the way in which local policing teams work with partners to understand and deal with identified neighbourhood issues.

The force is currently working collaboratively with Dorset Police to identify good practice in partnership prevention activity. This work is being led by the force's partnership prevention lead, and is supported by senior officers, with the aim of ensuring that they share best practice, to work jointly to manage offenders and to support a joint commitment to prevention.

### **How well does the force share and use information with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?**

The force effectively uses partner information to develop its force level priorities, and also locally, to understand and respond to local crime and anti-social behaviour issues. HMIC found examples of effective information sharing and use of partnership data including the peninsula-wide Anti-Social Behaviour Group which is supported by analysis which collects local engagement data and produces a high level understanding of activity and issues. An example of information sharing and effective response are the force-wide community speed watch schemes which were established following identified widespread local concerns regarding speeding. These were developed locally and supported with a high level multi-agency response resulting in over 300 schemes with links to safety camera activity.

The force and its partners have effective information exchange processes and these arrangements work well. There are good examples of information sharing with partners, such as the dedicated children's information sharing officer, based within the force public protection unit whose role is to exchange information with key partners such children's services, housing and probation. Neighbourhood teams actively share information with partners in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour and there are long standing community safety group meetings where information is shared at a strategic level.

### **How well is the force working with partner organisations to keep people safe and tackle anti-social behaviour in local neighbourhoods?**

The force works well with partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. HMIC found good examples of effective problem solving with partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. These included using a range of powers to keep people safe in public places including dispersal orders to prevent anti-social behaviour having an impact on local communities and drink banning orders to prevent violent behaviour in town centres. HMIC also found examples of orders being used for the closure of premises used for selling controlled drugs.

Further examples of joint working to keep people safe are the multi-agency anti-social behaviour meetings (ASBAT), which are held monthly across the force area by local neighbourhood officers. Information is shared with partners at these meetings and joint problem-solving plans are developed and joint activity undertaken to tackle anti-social behaviour. Further specific examples identified include: a dedicated police community support officer (PCSO) working jointly with Falmouth University to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour incidents; a 'tri-service officer', employed by Cornwall Council who is a retained fire officer who has also been trained as a first responder for the ambulance service and has received limited PCSO training; and effective work between police and the local authority in Newton Abbot which eradicated anti-social behaviour issues linked to a housing development.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Devon and Cornwall Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe.

The force allocates resources to prevention with locally based neighbourhood policing teams delivering policing across the force area. The work of these teams is focussed on threat, risk and harm in communities.

In HMIC's 2014 crime inspection, we judged the force to be good at reducing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour and this continues to be the case. The force has a good understanding of local communities and a range of effective methods to engage with communities and partner agencies which helps it to respond to community needs and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

Officers and staff clearly understand that they all have a responsibility for the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and operational activity supports both force level and local prevention priorities.

HMIC found good examples of a broad range of tactics being used to tackle emerging issues of anti-social behaviour.

Information sharing with partner agencies is productive and is an effective method of taking joint responsibility to solve problems. Some forces have taken information sharing a step further by introducing a joint integrated information-sharing database. Devon and Cornwall Police may wish to consider exploring this opportunity.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should use evidence of 'what works' drawn from other forces, academics and partners to continually improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. There needs to be routine evaluation of tactics and sharing of effective practice.

## How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?

When a crime occurs, the public must have confidence that the police will investigate it effectively, take their concerns as victims seriously, 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. The risk posed by those who are identified as being the most prolific or dangerous offenders must also be properly managed (in partnership with other organisations), to minimise the chances of continued harm to individuals and communities.

HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well the force allocates and investigates both complex and non-complex (e.g. burglary, robbery and assault) crime, including the full range of ways police officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations (these include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as digital sweeps to find evidence of online abuse, for instance).

We also looked at how well the force works with partners to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, and dangerous and sexual offenders.

## 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 'sanction detections', the new outcomes framework gives a fuller picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime. The new broader framework (now containing twenty 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.

Given the work involved in amending police force crime-recording systems to accommodate fully the new outcomes framework, two forces have not yet been able to provide a full year of data for all new outcomes types. Devon and Cornwall Police, however, has been providing the Home Office with full data since April 2014. The complete range of new outcome types will be used in future HMIC inspections, once all forces have provided a full year of data. Figure 4 shows only those outcome types for which full data is available for all forces in England and Wales.

**Figure 4: Outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2015 for all police recorded crime (excluding fraud)<sup>6 7 8</sup>**

Outcome type/group	Devon and Cornwall Police Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
<b>Charged/Summoned</b>	<b>11,736</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>577,678</b>	<b>16.0</b>
<b>Taken into consideration</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>21,318</b>	<b>0.6</b>
<b>Out-of-court (formal)</b>	<b>4,491</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>165,384</b>	<b>4.6</b>
Caution - youths	779	1.0	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	3,290	4.1	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	422	0.5	30,681	0.8
<b>Out-of-court (informal)</b>	<b>6,675</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>159,915</b>	<b>4.4</b>
Cannabis/Khat warning	1,265	1.6	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	5,410	6.8	117,951	3.3

**Source: Home Office crime outcomes data**

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for a number of reasons. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted; typically including types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in a force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat<sup>9</sup> warning' outcomes would be greater.

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. Devon and Cornwall Police has one of the highest rates for 'community resolution', of all forces in England and Wales.

<sup>6</sup> Rate based on number of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015 divided by number of offences recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015.

<sup>7</sup> For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see *Crime Outcomes in England and Wales 2014/15*, Home Office, London, July 2015. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/445753/hosb0115.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445753/hosb0115.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Community resolutions are an out-of-court disposal the police can use to deal with anti-social behaviour and low-level crime. 'Taken into consideration' is when an offender admits the commission of other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

<sup>9</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.

## **How well does the force investigate crime and keep victims safe and informed?**

### **How well does the force initially investigate and allocate cases?**

It is important that when the police are called to an incident they respond in a timely manner, with officers or staff who are trained and competent to keep people safe, and who can take steps to apprehend offenders and investigate the circumstances if a crime has occurred. An effective initial response by the police increases the likelihood of a successful outcome for both the victim and the criminal justice system. Subsequent investigation by detectives and other specialist police staff also needs to be well managed and resourced.

Devon and Cornwall Police is good at responding to incidents, gathering evidence where a crime has occurred and in providing the necessary care and support to victims of crime.

The force has good processes for initial investigation and subsequent allocation of crimes for further investigation. The initial response and investigation of crime is based on threat, harm and risk rather than the type of crime involved. The subsequent allocation of crime for further investigation is based on an evaluation of a number of factors including; threat, risk and harm, consideration of the victims wishes, safeguarding<sup>10</sup> requirements, public interest and gravity of the offence, local priorities, prevention, suspects and evidence.

### **How well does the force investigate different types of crime?**

The force investigates different types of crime well. Once allocated, the force undertakes effective investigations into those crimes that occur most frequently. A central team, known as the crime hub, reviews non-complex crime cases, for example criminal damage and theft, and produces investigation plans for the investigating officers to follow. The investigation of these crimes is then carried out by those officers who respond to calls for service. The management of these crime investigations is supported by the sergeants who supervise the investigating officers. HMIC viewed a small number of these cases, and found that the investigation plans were basic but adequate for an effective investigation of non-complex crime.

Crimes assessed as being of higher risk or more complex such as burglary, robbery and serious assault are predominantly investigated by more experienced and appropriately trained investigators. These officers generally prepare their own investigation plans which are then reviewed by supervisors during two weekly workload reviews. Supervisors also review victim contact plans and updates.

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<sup>10</sup> The term safeguarding means providing protection and support to ensure the safety of a vulnerable person and to prevent further harm.

The force has also trained officers to investigate more complex and serious crime, such as homicide and serious and organised crime. They can call on additional specialist investigators from neighbouring forces if required and are putting measures in place to ensure it has sufficient specialist resources to investigate more complex crime in the future. The force has identified that over the next four years 250 trained investigators will leave the force due to retirement. As a result, it has prioritised the recruitment of transferee detectives and has developed a skills bank for retiring officers so that it can retain their services for times of extraordinary demand.

Crime investigations are well supported by specialist resources. For example, crime scene investigators (CSI) will be deployed either directly by the force control room or requested to attend by officers attending calls for service. Crime scene investigators work between seven o'clock in the morning and ten o'clock at night each day and can be called out outside these hours. In addition, the force have two dedicated forensic investigation quality supervisors (FIQS) who review forensic submissions and crimes to identify gaps and highlight forensic opportunities that may have been missed or provide recommendations for future activity.

Data held by the force shows that its use of criminal record office checks (ACRO)<sup>11</sup> for foreign nationals arrested in the United Kingdom is inconsistent. To address this, the force has introduced IT software within its custody facilities as this is the place where all foreign nationals will be taken when arrested. Custody officers are able to conduct checks on both EU and non-EU detainees. The force needs to ensure that future processes improve the rate at which ACRO checks are conducted. A failure to conduct ACRO checks means that important information in relation to foreign nationals arrested in the force area may be missed.

### **How well does the force gather digital evidence?**

Increasingly crime in England and Wales is committed online and through the use of digital devices such as tablets, computers or mobile phones. All forces have to retrieve data from these devices and examine them for evidence; staff, in what may be known as high tech crime units (HTCU), carry out these examinations.

The force is collaborating with Avon and Somerset Constabulary on the provision of an HTCU for both forces. HMIC found that currently there is a back log of up to one year in relation to the recovery of digital evidence in the force HTCU. The force has identified this issue, has recorded it on the force risk register and is invoking a number of measures in an effort to address the backlog. The force has recruited an additional 15 staff to work in the HTCU, has introduced a revised triage process for prioritising examinations based on threat, risk and harm, and is outsourcing

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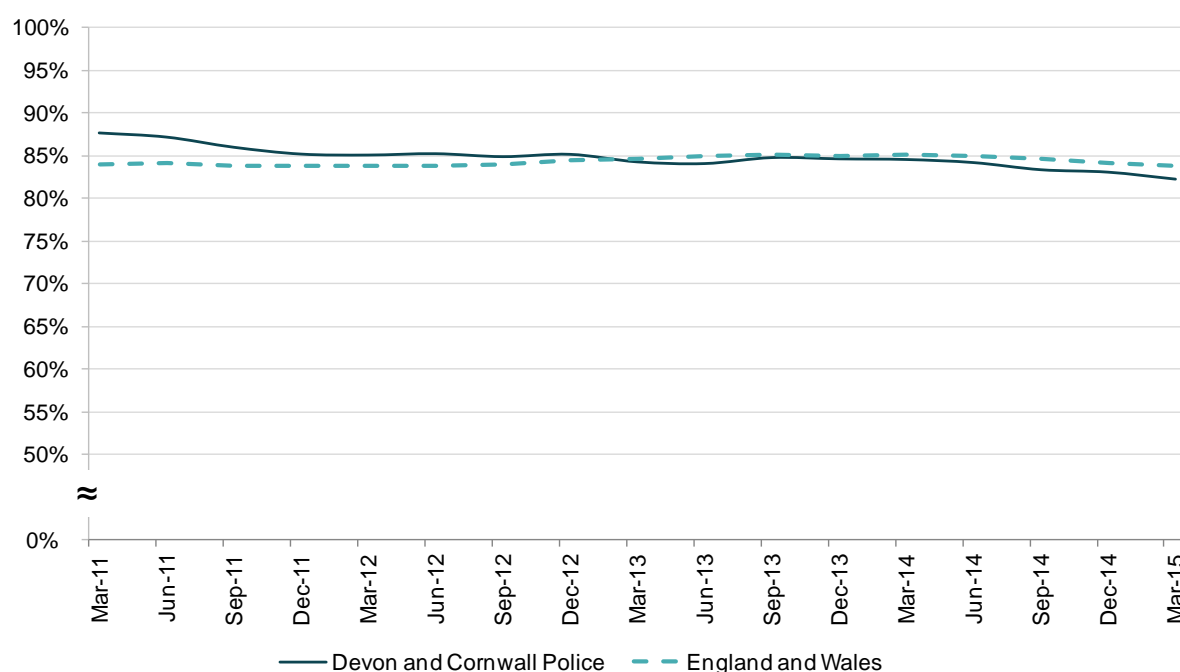
<sup>11</sup> ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and is able to receive/share information with foreign countries in relation to foreign offenders arrested within the United Kingdom.

examinations where appropriate. HMIC considers that the force should review the proposed actions to satisfy itself that the issues are being addressed sufficiently to minimise risk.

### How satisfied are victims of crime with the service provided by the force?

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Devon and Cornwall in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 82.3 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is similar to the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent over the same time period. The victim satisfaction rate in Devon and Cornwall for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 is significantly lower than both the previous year's rate and the rate for the 12 months to 31 March 2011.

**Figure 5: Percentage of victims satisfied with the overall service provided by the police, for the four year period to 31 March 2015**



**Source: Home Office data provided by forces**

Devon and Cornwall Police has made it a clear priority to improve the quality of service to victims of crime, in particular those assessed as vulnerable. The force has recently invested resources in a victim care unit (VCU). The VCU shares information with 72 commissioned service organisations to provide a bespoke service to victims of crime and meet their diverse needs. This approach has been complemented by the introduction of victim's needs assessments which are completed by officers attending reports of crime. The victim's needs assessments are used by the VCU to determine the service required. While this approach is in its early stages the force intends that this approach will increase the quality of its service to victims, and result in an increase in victim satisfaction.

## **How well does the force identify and manage offenders to prevent re-offending?**

### **How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?**

The force identifies and seeks to divert offenders out of the criminal justice system and prevent further offending through its integrated offender management (IOM)<sup>12</sup> programme. The force has effective IOM teams made up of officers and staff from the force and partner agencies including, probation, social services, housing, department for work and pensions, health, as well as some charities. The teams work together to deal with offenders who are being released from prison and those prolific offenders who frequently commit serious theft and violence offences. There are well established provisions to identify and manage offenders in order to prevent re-offending; multi-agency meetings use a scoring matrix and professional judgement to determine if the IOM programme is likely to be suitable for an individual. This is positive as it allows for greater opportunity to prevent an escalation of offending and to address any safeguarding and vulnerability issues from a multi-agency position.

HMIC found that the daily management meetings (DMMs) held in each policing area are effective in ensuring that high risk offenders are identified and tasked to relevant teams to carry out early arrests, intelligence gathering or partnership interventions. Longer term offender management is carried out by the established IOM teams that exist in each policing area. The teams prepare management plans for each individual selected for inclusion in the IOM programme and make these plans accessible to frontline staff. This ensures that all relevant officers and staff can identify those individuals included in the IOM programme and recognise the need to gather intelligence in relation to them. The force is currently reviewing the selection criteria for IOM to ensure that they reflect force priorities. HMIC spoke with police and partnership staff involved in IOM and found that they displayed a positive attitude to partnership working.

The force works well with partners to prevent those at risk from being drawn into crime. The Channel Panel Project, a multi-agency team comprising health, education, social services, housing, probation, and police identifies and seeks to work with those individuals believed to be vulnerable to radicalisation. An example was given of work with two individuals who had previously featured within the Troubled Families programme. An example was found in Plymouth where information was being shared with partners to identify interventions and diversionary activities for young people associating with an individual involved in serious organised crime.

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<sup>12</sup> Integrated offender management (IOM) 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.

## **How well does the force deal with repeat offenders?**

The force uses a number of approaches to identify repeat offenders and prevent them re-offending. Like most forces, Devon and Cornwall has several groups of offenders ranging from serious sexual and violent offenders to those committing burglary and theft. There are formal arrangements for identifying and managing repeat and high risk offenders such as IOM and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs).<sup>13</sup>

HMIC observed a number of daily management meetings in local policing areas and it was clear that high risk offenders are identified and priority is given to arrest them at the earliest opportunity if offences have been committed, or to work with partner agencies to divert them from crime. From neighbourhood officers we spoke to, it is clear that frontline staff also play an important role to gather intelligence about criminals who are known to be active in communities.

HMIC also found good evidence of the force working productively with the prison service. Serving inmates at prisons throughout the UK are relocated to prisons in Devon and Cornwall towards the end of their sentence. This gives IOM teams the opportunity to work closely with them prior to their release. Frequently this involves building in support for housing, employment and personal finances; this is aimed at providing a stable environment for them to be released into and reduces the likelihood of them re-offending.

## **How well does the force deal with sexual and other dangerous offenders?**

Devon and Cornwall Police has well developed and effective procedures for identifying and monitoring sexual and other dangerous offenders. MAPPAs and domestic abuse serial and serious perpetrators (DASSP) arrangements are effective at dealing with sexual and other dangerous offenders, including perpetrators of domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation. The police and their partners demonstrate strong working relationships and effective shared practices. Repeat offenders are identified by intelligence staff and assigned to local officers to deal with through daily tasking processes. Progress is scrutinised by the senior managers within each policing area who ensure that serious and repeat high-risk offenders are known to local staff and robustly managed.

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<sup>13</sup> 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 prison service. Other agencies may become involved, for example the Youth Justice Board will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Devon and Cornwall Police's approach to investigating crime and managing offenders is good. This is consistent with HMIC's crime inspection in 2014, which assessed the force as good at investigating offending.

Crime investigations are well managed and closely supervised. The arrest of high-risk offenders is a priority for all staff and activity is monitored through daily management meetings.

Investigators are appropriately trained and equipped to conduct investigations and the force is taking action to ensure that it will have sufficient trained staff when a large number leave due to retirement. Forensic analysis provides good support for investigations; however there are significant delays in the retrieval of digital evidence from smartphones, tablets and other devices.

Good procedures are in place to identify and focus activity on those offenders committing the most crime and anti-social behaviour in communities. Senior police managers take an active role in making sure that these procedures are effective.

Integrated offender management (IOM) arrangements are good with effective IOM multi-agency teams actively managing offenders in each policing area.

Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) and domestic abuse serial and serious perpetrators (DASSP) arrangements are effective at dealing with sexual and other dangerous offenders.

### **Areas for improvement**

- 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 that checks are routinely conducted to verify the identity, nationality and overseas convictions of arrested foreign nationals.

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

This question was inspected between June and August 2015, and the full report was published in December 2015.<sup>14</sup> The following is a summary of the findings.

## Summary of findings



**Requires improvement**

Devon and Cornwall Police generally provides a good service in identifying vulnerable people and responds well to their calls. However, there are several areas where the force needs to improve to ensure that its service is consistent and that vulnerable people are kept safe. Given the scale of the challenge in this area and the risk that is posed to some of the most vulnerable people, overall HMIC judges that the force requires improvement.

HMIC acknowledges that the force has committed significant effort and resource to improve its service to the public in relation to vulnerability issues and supporting victims.

The force effectively identifies vulnerable victims, and its sexual offences and domestic abuse investigation teams provide a specialist response to crimes committed against vulnerable victims. These specialist teams are under continual review and resourced according to demand.

Missing and absent children are a priority for the force. There are clearly understood and well-supervised processes for finding missing or absent children. Professionals in the multi-agency safeguarding hubs assess victims' vulnerability to child sexual exploitation and they take early action to reduce the risks to victims.

The force is improving its response to cases of child sexual exploitation, although force computer systems cannot readily identify victims or perpetrators of child sexual exploitation. However, this inspection only considered how well prepared the force is to tackle child sexual exploitation. HMIC also inspected the force's child protection

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<sup>14</sup> *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability)* – Devon and Cornwall Police, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-devon-and-cornwall/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-devon-and-cornwall/)

services. The more detailed findings from that inspection<sup>15</sup> should be read in conjunction with this inspection report.

Tackling domestic abuse is a clear priority for the force. Officers and staff understand this priority and their initial response to domestic abuse and risk is thorough with officers assessing risk and taking effective action to keep victims safe. During crime inspection in 2014, we identified that the force needed to improve the quality of the service and contact it had with the victim. The force has improved this by introducing a victim care unit and specific victim's needs assessments. However, this is a relatively new process and the use of victim's needs assessments is inconsistent. Staff do not always recognise those victims who are entitled to additional measures and support.

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<sup>15</sup> *National Child Protection Inspections – Devon and Cornwall Police*, HMIC, September 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/devon-and-cornwall-national-child-protection-inspection.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/devon-and-cornwall-national-child-protection-inspection.pdf)

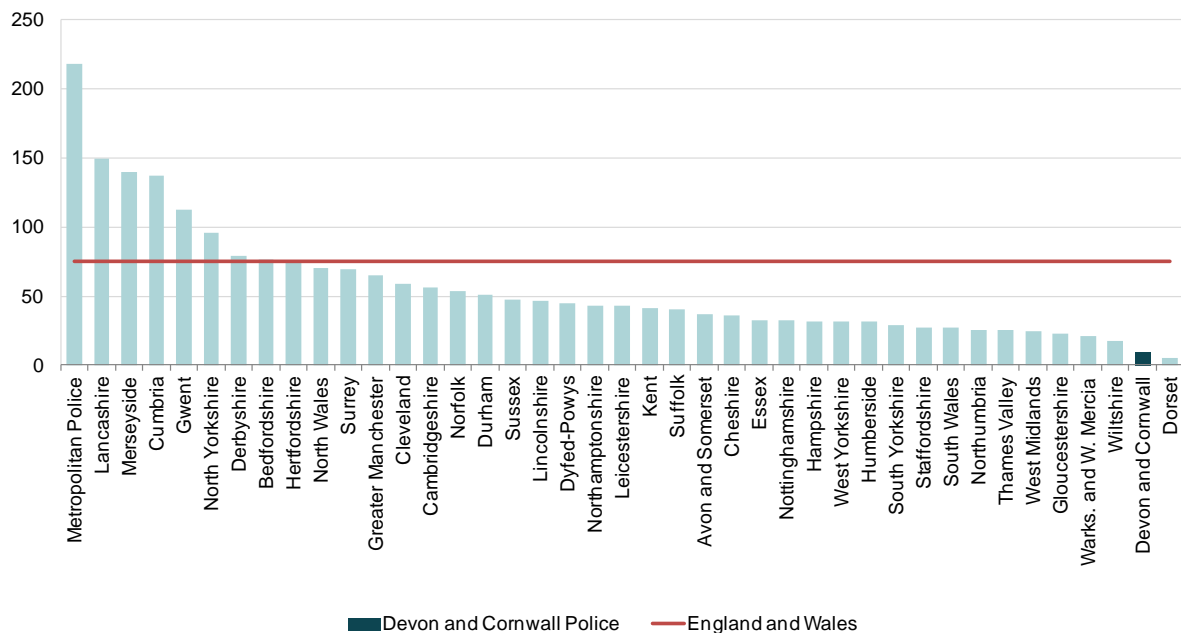
## **How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?**

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Its damaging effects are felt by individuals, communities and businesses. Police forces play 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 tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level. They also use specialist capabilities (for example surveillance and covert policing) where appropriate in order to protect the public from highly sophisticated and rapidly changing organised criminal threats. Specialist capabilities are often shared by a number of forces within a regional area as this provides better value for money and is a more efficient way of working.

As at 30 June 2015, Devon and Cornwall Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 17 organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents 10 OCGs per one million of the population, which is low compared with other forces in England and Wales.

**Figure 6: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 30 June 2015**<sup>16 17</sup>



**Source: HMIC data collection**

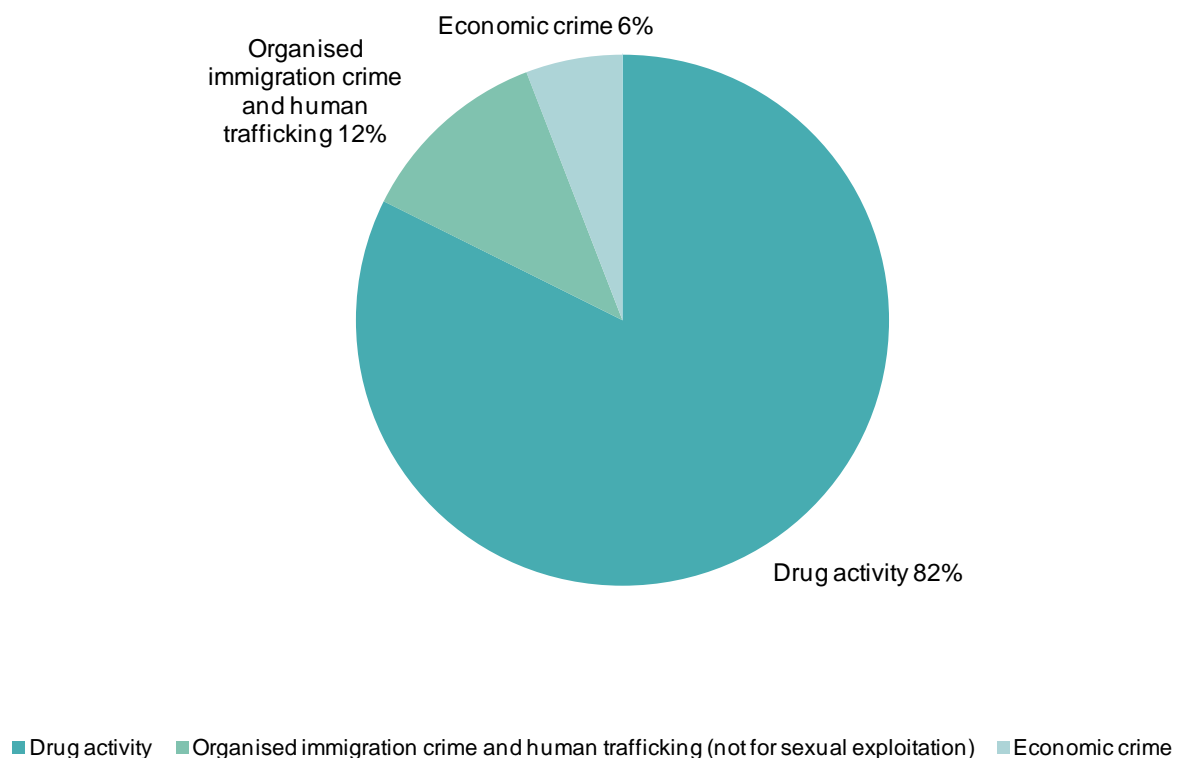
Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality, this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the predominant crime type (82 percent) of the OCGs managed by Devon and Cornwall Police as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,<sup>18</sup> with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way

<sup>16</sup> City of London Police data has been removed from the chart as its OCG data is not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> The Metropolitan Police Service is not included in the England and Wales figure because it does not categorise in the same way as other forces; by the predominant form of criminal activity.

**Figure 7: Force organised crime groups by the predominant crime type, as at 30 June 2015<sup>19</sup>**



**Source: HMIC data collection**

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement*.<sup>20</sup> These are terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber-crime incidents, threats to public order or public safety, civil emergencies, and child sexual abuse. These are complex threats which means that forces must work together to respond to them effectively. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to the six national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the necessary arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

<sup>19</sup> Figures may not sum to 100 percent, due to rounding.

<sup>20</sup> *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).

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.

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

The force understands the threat and risk posed by serious and organised crime groups across the force area. This is achieved through detailed analysis and assessment of local organised crime groups which result in the production of serious and organised crime local profiles<sup>21</sup> which are used by officers to plan appropriate responses. These profiles are theme based and include data from partner agencies, for example modern slavery, and as such differ from the national guidance on the format of organised crime profiles. The force uses this information to gather intelligence and provide local officers with comprehensive information, through regular intelligence and tasking meetings, which are used to gather local intelligence and tackle and disrupt those involved in serious and organised crime.

Intelligence requirements are identified at the force sensitive intelligence meetings that take place at local and force level and which then form part of regional intelligence group meetings (RIG). The force actively contributes to multi-agency intelligence sharing through the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN)<sup>22</sup> and has a dedicated officer to liaise with these external partners. Further ad hoc meetings regularly take place between other agencies as and when required.

From our fieldwork, HMIC found that the force is firmly committed to tackling serious and organised crime. Organised crime groups (OCGs) are consistently 'mapped' and scored in line with national guidance. This involves entering details of the group's known and suspected activity, associates and capability on computer software, which assigns a numerical score to each OCG. It also places each OCG into one of several 'bands' which reflect the range and severity of crime in which a group is involved as well as its level of capability and sophistication. This helps the force to make informed decisions about how to prioritise its activity.

Despite the use of standard software and methods, forces carry out OCG mapping inconsistently and there is significant variation in the number of mapped OCGs per head of population across England and Wales. This inconsistency is partly due to the unavoidably subjective nature of some aspects of the mapping procedure, which relies on human judgment as well as computer algorithms. Sometimes, groups exhibiting similar characteristics are scored in different ways, and forces do not always use the full range of information available to generate OCG scores, which can compromise their accuracy and usefulness. For these reasons, HMIC has

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<sup>21</sup> A local profile is a report that outlines the threat from serious and organised crime within a specific local area. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/371602/Serious\\_and\\_Organised\\_Crime\\_local\\_profiles.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371602/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_local_profiles.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> The Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) is a large network of partners, including all police forces in England and Wales, which shares information about organised criminals.

recommended that ROCUs assume responsibility for OCG mapping on behalf of their constituent forces.<sup>23</sup>

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

Devon and Cornwall Police has an effective process for responding to serious and organised crime groups. The force appoints a lead responsible officer (LRO) for each OCG, to oversee and direct all activity against that OCG. Low-risk OCGs are managed by local policing officers, while higher profile OCGs (including those involved in human trafficking and exploitation) are managed within the force dedicated serious and organised crime unit. Cases are reviewed monthly so they can be re-assigned if risk levels change. There is activity at all tiers<sup>24</sup> from level one to four and LROs are assigned to each OCG together with senior investigating officers.

The force retains a range of specialist capabilities such as surveillance teams that allow it to progress serious crime investigations. These are in addition to the specialist capabilities provided by the ROCU. At force level, there are some highly experienced specialist officers, and staff are trained to conduct covert policing operations and support investigations using a range of methods. These specialist resources are supported by the South West regional organised crime unit (ROCU) which provides additional investigative and surveillance capability for tackling high risk cases. The ROCU has embedded all four aspects of the serious and organised crime (SOC) strategy as part of intelligence and operational plans. The discussions follow national guidance on prevention, protection, pursuing criminals and preparedness against these threats. HMIC observed tasking arrangements for serious and organised crime and found them to be effective with clear processes for identifying and assessing threat, risk and harm. Arrangements included referrals to external agencies and regional teams with the predominant focus remaining on the pursuit of criminals.

The force is good at working with partner agencies to address serious and organised crime, including sharing intelligence and undertaking joint action to tackle OCGs.

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<sup>23</sup> *Regional Organised Crime Units: A Review of Capability and Effectiveness*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Activity in response to OCGs is categorised into four tiers – tier 1 is comprehensive operational or investigative intervention; tier 2 is a limited plan or action that prevents or disrupts; tier 3 is proactive intelligence development; and tier 4 is developing opportunities for action.

Regular partnership meetings focus on identifying appropriate action to disrupt or dismantle OCGs, and this work is monitored at local or regional tasking and co-ordination meetings.

The force does learn from investigations into serious and organised crime. One example of this involved identifying every activity involved in a particular investigation into an organised crime group, from the receipt of the initial intelligence through to enforcement activity and the conclusion of the investigation. The force then shared these findings with partner agencies including HM Revenue & Customs, local authorities and immigration to consider interventions that these partners could have made at key points during the investigation. The force is using this learning to improve the effectiveness of future investigations into serious and organised crime.

## **How effectively is the force working with partners to prevent serious and organised crime?**

Neighbourhood policing teams work closely with schools and youth clubs to prevent young people from becoming involved with gangs. HMIC found a good example of multi-agency activity that was successful in diverting two individuals at risk of being drawn into serious crime.

When OCG operations are undertaken the force communicates effectively with the community to highlight activity and successes. For example, during a counter fraud operation, community based media messages were delivered through Twitter and Facebook to highlight the criminal activity in order to raise community awareness and prevent further offences. Further examples included press briefings held to highlight successful prosecutions.

The force also makes good use of the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN). This network facilitates the sharing of information and co-operation in support of law enforcement; participating organisations include HM Revenue and Customs, the Department of Work and Pensions and Action Fraud. The GAIN enriches the force's understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime, the network is also useful in helping to disrupt OCGs. HMIC are aware of instances when the GAIN has been instrumental in the closure of certain premises being used by OCGs.

## How effective are the arrangements in place to ensure that the force can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to the six national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the necessary arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

The force is meeting its responsibilities in respect of *The Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR).<sup>25</sup>

The force has a strategic assessment that covers the six SPR threats. There is clear governance in this area with chief officer oversight. The force is an active contributor to the local resilience forum, conducting regular joint exercises with partners and other emergency services, for example 'trapezium' which was a joint exercise involving public order and cyber threats. Following this exercise, a series of recommendations were made in relation to information sharing and the need for joint strategies for public order and proposals for a regional public order commander to ensure some consistency in approach.

The south west regional information and co-ordination centre (SWRICC) is based in Exeter and acts as a single point of contact for the five south west police forces with links into the national co-ordination centre (NPoCC). The unit manages mutual aid resource requests for police assets within and outside the region. The SWRICC team has the responsibility of completing a quarterly submission with details of officers with specialist skills such as family liaison and public order training. The intention of this information is to contribute to the national picture and overcome the issues of double counting officers with multiple skills. In the last 12 months SWRICC has provided mutual aid from the region for 27 operations. The force has an up-to-date skills database to support these requirements.

The cyber-crime team within the ROCU is available to provide expert advice to both the region and forces and includes involvement in operational activity such as warrants. There have been two (of four nationally) mapped and scored cyber-dependant OCGs within the region, which demonstrates acknowledgement of emerging threat areas. The region has established a strategic governance sub-group to inform and direct the regional response to cyber-crime across the south west region and chaired by a chief officer.

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<sup>25</sup> *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: [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)

The force contributes to the regional counter-terrorism intelligence unit (CTIU) and the CTIU is well-established within the peninsula and offers a model for the development of multi-agency responses.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threat posed to the public by serious and organised crime. A number of analytical products such as strategic assessments and themed organised crime local profiles have provided the force with a good understanding of this threat.

The force has specialist resources and techniques available at both a force and regional level, which it can draw upon as required to tackle serious and organised crime.

The force effectively disrupts and investigates serious and organised crime in collaboration with a range of partners and also works with them to prevent those at risk from being drawn into serious and organised crime.

The force actively contributes to multi-agency intelligence sharing through the government agency intelligence network, however criminal records checks for arrested foreign nationals could improve.

The force is able to test its ability to meet its responsibilities under *The Strategic Policing Requirement*. It ensures that it has sufficient resources with the necessary skills to deal with most public order and other major incidents.

This is the first year that HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

## Annex A – HMIC judgments

### Our judgments

The judgment categories are:

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

Judgment is made against how effective the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime; it is not an assessment of the overall effectiveness of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the effectiveness the force is achieving is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the effectiveness of the force requires improvement, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the effectiveness of the force is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.