

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of Dorset Police



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

Overall judgment¹



Good

Dorset Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Crime reduction and community safety are central to all force activity and rest on a firm foundation of neighbourhood policing. Dorset Police works well with partners to support vulnerable victims, and its investigation of crime and management of offenders is good. Staff understand organised crime groups and their role in combating them. This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their overall effectiveness so a year-on-year comparison is not possible.

Summary

Dorset Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour are priorities for the chief constable and the police and crime commissioner (PCC). Maintaining a visible presence in local communities is important to the force; constables and police and community support officers (PCSOs) on the front line draw on a broad range of preventative and investigative tactics to keep citizens safe.

When a crime occurs it is effectively allocated and investigated. Investigations are of a good standard and the skills and experience of officers are well matched to the cases they investigate. However the force needs to improve its procedures to retrieve digital evidence from smartphones, tablets and other devices. The force works well to protect the public from prolific and dangerous offenders.

Dorset Police is good at safeguarding specific vulnerable groups, in particular missing and absent children and victims of domestic abuse. The force is adept at understanding and assessing crime trends and patterns to identify potential vulnerable victims, which ensures it designs a tailored response for their needs. The force's investigations into crimes and incidents involving these vulnerable groups were judged as good in an HMIC inspection published in December 2014.²

¹ Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate – see Annex A for definitions.

² *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Dorset Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-dorset/

Staff at all ranks across the force have a good knowledge of organised crime groups and the role they are expected to play to combat them. The force monitors organised crime groups (OCGs) effectively, using a range of tactics to disrupt their criminal activities. All forces are required to develop a serious and organised crime local profile that includes relevant data from partner organisations; Dorset Police is yet to complete this profile.

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



Good

Dorset Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. This is consistent with HMIC's crime inspection in 2014 when the force was judged to be good at reducing crime and preventing offending.

Force priorities are designed to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, keep people safe and provide sustainable neighbourhood policing. The force's workforce understands this well, particularly those involved in neighbourhood policing and the various multi-agency teams across the county. Staff are well trained and use a range of tactics with partners to prevent problems from escalating or re-occurring.

The force is particularly strong in its approach to evidence-based policing and what works best in areas of crime and anti-social behaviour. In major projects learning is shared well across the force. This could be strengthened if the force shared to a similar degree best practice from successful initiatives to tackle crime and disorder at a local level.

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



Good

Dorset Police is good at investigating crime and managing offenders. In HMIC's inspection of crime in 2014, we considered the force to require improvement. This was due to backlogs in processes that the force has to refer vulnerable victims to other service providers for safeguarding support. The force has since addressed this.

The force effectively allocates and investigates complex and non-complex crimes. Investigations are of a good standard and the skills and experience of officers are well matched to the cases they investigate. The force uses forensic evidence well to support investigations, but better arrangements are needed to retrieve digital evidence from smartphones, tablets and other devices. This is causing delays to some investigations.

The force uses restorative justice well and has a successful safer schools and communities team who give presentations in over three hundred schools across the county. The presentations cover a wide range of

issues and are intended to divert children away from crime and anti-social behaviour. The force has effective measures in place to manage repeat and dangerous offenders.

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



Good

Dorset Police has made good progress in putting clear processes in place to identify repeat and vulnerable victims. The force makes accurate assessments of the risks that victims face, its response to them is consistent and it works well with partner organisations to protect vulnerable people. HMIC judges that the force's performance is good.

The force shares information effectively with partner organisations. This takes place either through the force's safeguarding referral unit or in the multi-agency teams established to support missing children and protect young people who are susceptible and at risk of grooming and sexual exploitation. The co-location of the police and statutory bodies in a secure environment is a successful way to provide tailored support to victims in Dorset.

HMIC also noted that the voice of the victim is more prominent than has been the case previously and that adult

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



Good

Dorset Police is good at identifying and tackling serious and organised crime groups. This is the first year 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.

The force has a clear understanding of the threat posed by organised crime. Staff at all ranks across the force have a good knowledge of organised crime groups and the role they are expected to play to combat them. The force maps and monitors effectively organised crime groups, and it works well with other statutory organisations and the business sector to address them.

The force is developing its preventative work through core programmes provided in schools and restorative justice and has the flexibility to address more serious offending. The force envisages that its

safeguarding has developed significantly. Both of these were areas of concern in inspections in 2014.

The standards of investigations are generally a strength, albeit that they are more assured in specialist teams than elsewhere in the force. While not doubting that victims are at the heart of police investigations in Dorset, the force needs to keep better records of contact with victims and of their entitlements, that are compulsory under the victim code of practice. This would be more in line with the outstanding service that the force is striving to achieve.

Prevent Directorate will provide a more comprehensive package that is bespoke to serious crime.

The force has yet to produce a local profile for serious and organised crime. This will further strengthen the understanding of the scale and nature of the problem and will leave the force and its key partners better placed to align resources with areas of need, identify any training requirements and develop operational capability.

Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

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

Dorset Police

230

England and Wales

350



Crime

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

Dorset Police

49.1

England and Wales

63.0

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

Dorset Police

48.0

England and Wales

60.3

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

Dorset Police

+2.2%

England and Wales

+4.5%

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

Dorset Police

-19.0%

England and Wales

-12.6%



Charge rate

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

Dorset Police

17.0%

England and Wales

16.0%



Anti-social behaviour

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

Dorset Police

England and Wales

32.3

32.9

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

Dorset Police

England and Wales

37.7

36.2



Domestic abuse

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

Dorset Police

England and Wales

10.7%

10.0%

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

Dorset Police

England and Wales

6.4%

8.5%



Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015

Dorset Police

England and Wales

5.3

74.7



Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015

Dorset Police

England and Wales

85.8%

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 the efficiency and legitimacy of Dorset Police are available from the HMIC website (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:³

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 from harm those who are vulnerable, 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 Dorset Police.

³ 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-dorset/). 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/).

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 Dorset?

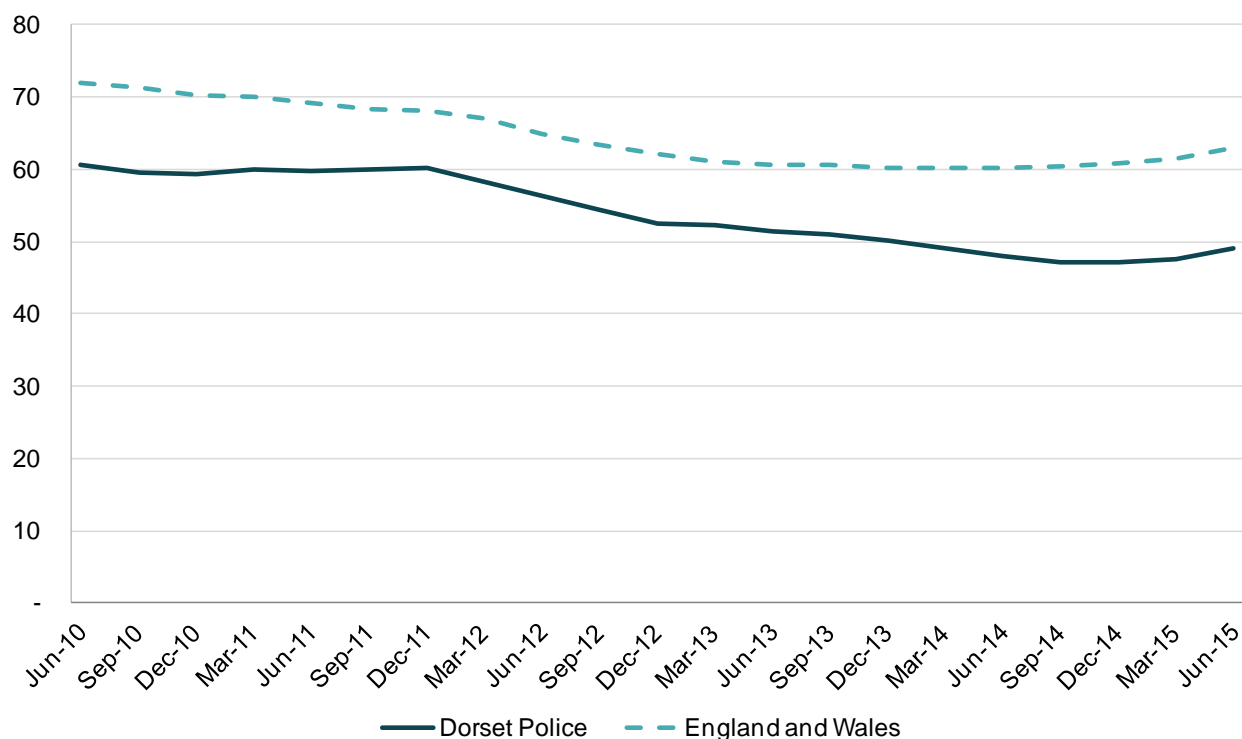
Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a comparable indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable 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 19 percent in Dorset 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 19 percent in Dorset, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Dorset increased by 2 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 Dorset (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	Dorset Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	49.1	63.0
Victim-based crime	44.8	56.0
Sexual offences	1.4	1.6
Assault with injury	5.2	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	4.3	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	32.3	32.9

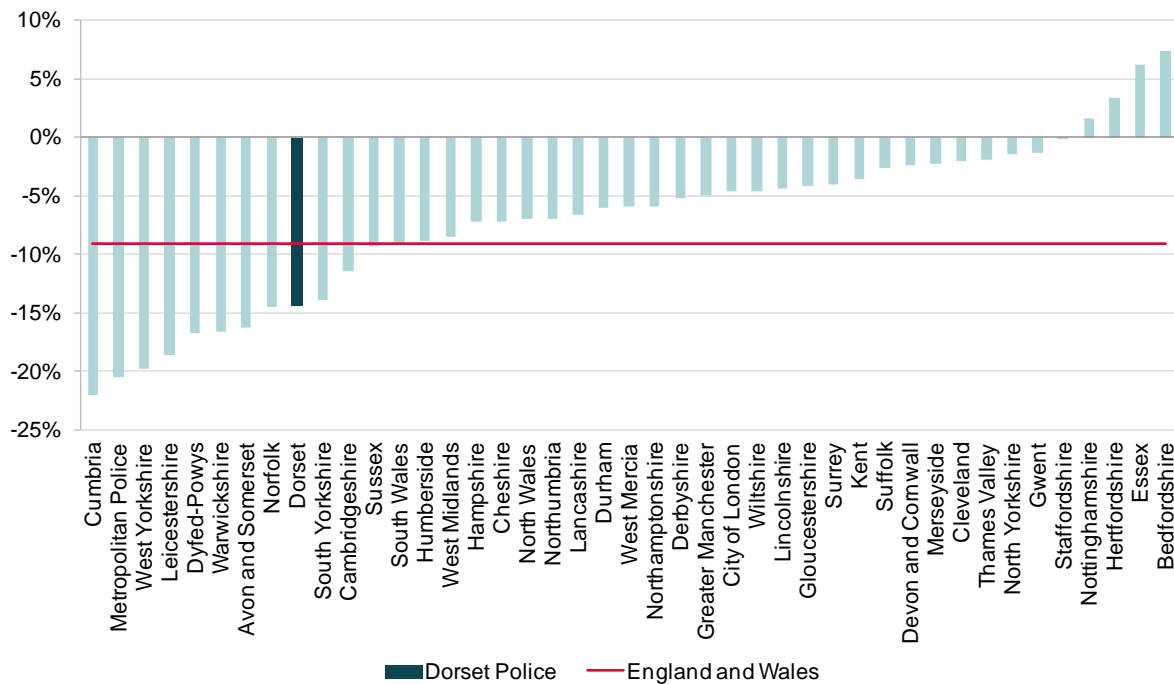
Source: Home Office data, HMIC data return

*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, Dorset Police recorded 24,523 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 14 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?

Dorset Police’s overall plan for reducing crime demonstrates a strong commitment to crime and anti-social behaviour prevention and keeping people safe. It is based on solid research and analysis which identifies key priorities. The force’s plan aligns closely with the PCC’s plan, and priorities are routinely translated into operational activity. The current priorities include reducing victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, keeping people safe and delivering sustainable neighbourhood policing.

Dorset Police conducts detailed analysis alongside partner organisations including local authorities, probation services, the fire and rescue service, voluntary organisations and housing associations to understand crime trends and offending patterns. It combines this understanding with data gathered in public consultation exercises to identify what really matters to local people. This ensures that the force’s

priorities keep pace with the changing nature of crime and are responsive to community concerns.

The importance of preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe is generally well understood throughout the whole force. Operational activity reflects force and local prevention priorities. Neighbourhood teams take the lead on local issues, supported by emergency response officers who are provided with updates on the key priorities in the neighbourhoods they patrol. At the start of each shift, briefings include the tasks they are expected to complete which may be relevant to local crime, serious and organised crime or other matters of community concern.

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

The force allocates effectively officers and staff across Dorset to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. Every local area has a visible and accessible safer neighbourhood team. The distribution of staff is made in conjunction with an annual assessment of demands made of the force, which enables resources to be allocated to areas of most need.

Neighbourhood activity is focused on identifying and resolving both short and longer-term problems relating to victims, offenders and problem locations. At a local level officers and PCSOs carry out the force's crime reduction plan through analysis of crime data and close dialogue with communities in the course of their duties. The force has some challenges to overcome as neighbourhood officers are often extracted from the role to support emergency response teams, which detracts from their problem-solving activities where their local knowledge is invaluable. The force is addressing this through Project Genesis, its review of neighbourhood policing.

Local officers have formed strong alliances with other service providers, undertaking joint work to identify and put plans in place for the vulnerable and individuals prone to repeat victimisation. These interventions are monitored at regular partnership meetings to ensure activity is co-ordinated to prevent further incidents or escalation.

The force also reviews demand and risk at twice-daily tasking meetings. These review meetings are chaired by a senior officer who has the authority to move resources across the county to address emerging issues and the most prevalent risks.

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

Safer neighbourhood teams use a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. These include using legal powers to restrain people from gathering in public or committing other forms of anti-social behaviour, using digital tags to restrict the movement of offenders and using restorative interventions as an alternative to placing offenders before the courts. Restorative interventions focus on the rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large.

HMIC found that the force applies them comprehensively and thoughtfully. The force's performance would improve still further if the impact and benefits of each tactic were available on a central database, which would enable their use to be considered by other operational staff in the county.

The force has a well-established approach to evidence-based policing which is supported by academic research. Dorset Police works with a number of universities and the College of Policing on a variety of projects. Previous work that has benefitted from an academic input include an anti-social behaviour operation in Weymouth, the management of forensics at crime scenes and the tagging of prolific offenders. The force is looking at the use of social media and high visibility patrols. Prior to the start of this project (called Operation Earth); the force mapped zones of high crime and anti-social behaviour and surveyed local residents to gauge community feeling. As the operation unfolds, the force directs officers to patrol in the zones, reinforcing their presence through social media. Operation Earth will conclude with a follow-up survey of residents and analysis of levels of reported crime and anti-social behaviour to evaluate the effectiveness of the tactics used.

The force has appointed a strategic lead for evidence-based policing, and local officers have been trained by staff from Cambridge University to enable them to evaluate their own local initiatives.

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?

A commitment to partnership working was evident to HMIC, at all levels of the force. The deputy chief constable chairs the Local Criminal Justice Board which governs the effective joint working of the police, probation and courts services. Additionally, the assistant chief constable leads a Protecting Vulnerable People Board which brings together heads of service from councils and the charity sector to develop joint action plans to protect the vulnerable and support victims. Partners we spoke to throughout the inspection commented positively on the lead the force takes in securing the benefits of joint working.

At an operational level, the force invests significant time and energy working with partner organisations to translate the force's strategic priorities into practical benefits for communities. Police staff are co-located with colleagues from other agencies at numerous venues across the county. This is seen by all as a positive way to strengthen relationships and improve service delivery to the public. We saw many examples of good practice. For instance, officers work alongside children's services and Barnardo's to provide support to children who are prone to go missing; and joint deployments with NHS psychiatric services ensure that mental health sufferers have immediate access to care pathways.

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

The force has effective systems and processes to collect, share and make use of data held by partner organisations for operational policing.

The force has a number of protocols in place for information sharing. Where the police work with council officers and other service providers in community safety teams, intelligence analysts are a shared resource and have access to all data. HMIC saw a good example of this in Poole where information is shared to discuss vulnerable victims and to agree appropriate interventions and support. This has led to a reduction in the number of victims who are repeatedly targeted.

Similar arrangements exist for the integrated offender management (IOM)⁴ programme, in which Dorset Police and a number of other service providers are co-located to manage criminals who persistently re-offend or who are likely to cause the most harm in society.

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

We found that the force has a structured approach to protecting the vulnerable and preventing anti-social behaviour in Dorset. The approach is one of a genuine integration of public services with the strategic direction being set by community safety partnerships. Typically these are chaired by council officers who are supported by safer neighbourhood inspectors from Dorset Police.

The partnerships follow a common methodology focusing on victims, offenders and problem locations. Initially, the force and partners hold anti-social behaviour conferences locally which identify key issues to be referred to partnerships. High-level issues identified at these meetings then feed into operational groups which are represented by a broader group including third sector service providers.

A good example is Operation Champion in Weymouth, where drug dealers have been targeted in response to concerns about unruly gatherings of drug users. Housing providers have also played an important role in the operation. This followed occasions of vulnerable tenants being intimidated by drug dealers into letting their homes be used for drugs supply. Another good example is the identification of the top ten locations most susceptible to anti-social behaviour. Monthly analysis of crime and disorder in Poole is assessed and a range of interventions is then put in place in these priority locations.

Other effective joint working with partner organisations focuses on protecting the vulnerable in and around late night entertainment venues. Here, the force works with

⁴ 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.

volunteers who care for intoxicated people in a street bus and street pastors are on hand to help people get home safely.

In Dorset, PCSOs provide an instantly recognisable, reassuring and highly-valued presence in communities. Recognising the importance of prevention and steering troublesome youngsters away from the criminal justice system, they use wide-ranging discretion including warnings and anti-social behaviour powers as an alternative to prosecution.

Summary of findings



Good

Dorset Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. This is consistent with HMIC's crime inspection in 2014 when the force was judged to be good at reducing crime and preventing offending.

Force priorities are designed to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, keep people safe and provide sustainable neighbourhood policing. The force's workforce understands this well, particularly those involved in neighbourhood policing and the various multi-agency teams across the county. Staff are well trained and use a range of tactics with partners to prevent problems from escalating or re-occurring.

The force is particularly strong in its approach to evidence-based policing and what works best in areas of crime and anti-social behaviour. In major projects learning is shared well across the force, this could be strengthened if the force shared to a similar degree best practice from successful initiatives to tackle crime and disorder at a local level.

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. This included 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. Dorset 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)^{5 6 7}

Outcome type/group	Dorset Police Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
Charged/Summoned	6,339	17.0	577,678	16.0
Taken into consideration	254	0.7	21,318	0.6
Out-of-court (formal)	1,867	5.0	165,384	4.6
Caution - youths	284	0.8	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	1,336	3.6	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	247	0.7	30,681	0.8
Out-of-court (informal)	1,733	4.6	159,915	4.4
Cannabis/Khat warning	499	1.3	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	1,234	3.3	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/khat⁸ 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. When considering all crimes recorded (excluding fraud), outcome rates for Dorset Police are broadly in line with most other forces in England and Wales.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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

⁷ 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.

⁸ 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.

Callers reporting crimes to the force are answered in the command and control centre, where call-handlers assess calls to determine whether or not a police patrol needs to be dispatched immediately. To assist in this decision-making call-handlers have access to intelligence databases, which makes the force aware of any risk and vulnerability that may have been identified previously or that is historically associated with any individuals involved. This means that the needs of the victim are prominent in determining whether the force's initial investigation of crime requires an immediate attendance or whether a scheduled force response from specialist resources or neighbourhood staff is more appropriate.

Traditionally the type of offence committed has determined how crime is allocated in police forces in England and Wales. This meant that investigations deemed to be more serious were allocated to detectives who are trained to a higher level.

Dorset Police's crime allocation policy has moved away from this tradition to one that is flexible and based on the threat, risk and harm to which the victim is likely to be exposed. More and more this means that the force allocates crimes which are associated with vulnerable victims to detectives irrespective of the type of offence committed. This policy works well, as it means that the force is making the best use of resources available, and that the skills and experience of its investigators are aligned with the needs of victims.

As part of our inspection, we reviewed forty crime investigation files. Our review showed us that Dorset Police conducts initial investigations to a high standard. Generally, the force pursues immediate lines of enquiry, attempts to trace witnesses, takes positive steps to identify offenders and considers forensic opportunities at crime scenes. In cases where investigations were to be passed from the attending officer to specialists, we noted some deficiencies in documenting a comprehensive handover, but otherwise standards are good.

How well does the force investigate different types of crime?

As well as due consideration for the needs of the victim, the force's alignment of the skills and experience of the investigator with the crime is based on the complexity of the allegation. The force frequently assigns those crimes it assesses as less complex, for example motoring offences or criminal damage, to its neighbourhood or

emergency response officers. If an offender is arrested, the case is often taken over by the force's volume crime team, a team which prepares prosecution files allowing frontline staff to return to their duties. This unit is supervised by specialist investigators who offer valuable support and experience.

Dorset Police allocates more complex cases to detectives. The force has ensured that all of its detective investigators are appropriately trained or working towards accredited detective status. In more complex crime, such as serious sexual offences and serious assaults, the force generally allocates cases to detectives in specialist units to investigate. Investigators in these units have enhanced training and are experienced in working with external service providers who support victims.

In the majority of cases HMIC reviewed, the force completed investigations in a timely fashion. However, we found that there were backlogs in the forensic retrieval of data from phones and computers, and in some cases delays in processing fingerprints and DNA evidence.

In the majority of the investigations we reviewed, investigators and their supervisors had agreed clear investigation plans setting out the lines of enquiry. Although the victim's needs are addressed in the course of investigations, HMIC did find that the force's understanding of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime is inconsistent. The code requires all organisations involved in the criminal justice system, including the police, to identify and address the needs of victims. In Dorset, the requirement for the force to establish contracts with victims is not assured. Contracts set out the frequency that victims can expect to be updated on progress and the manner in which they wish to be contacted. This was a shortcoming highlighted in HMIC's inspection of vulnerability published in 2014, and is an area in which the force is aware that it must improve.

The force can draw on forensic specialists on a twenty-four hour basis and we saw evidence that these staff are readily available and are a valued support to investigations. While the force has no defined policy for when a crime scene investigator (CSI) will attend crime scenes, its established practice is that the officer at the scene will discuss cases with the CSI and attendance is decided on a case-by-case basis.

The force has introduced a new record management system, NICHE, for its management of crime, custody/prisoner processes and other functional areas. This has enabled better monitoring of persons suspected of committing crimes in Dorset who have yet to be arrested. The force's robust management of these cases ensures that it tracks down wanted persons as soon as possible. Delays in making arrests allow habitual offenders to continue on their criminal lifestyles, it also exposes potential victims to harm. In Dorset, officers clearly articulated to us the day-to-day priority to bring these people to justice as quickly as possible.

NICHE is widely used by forces around the country and it can be adapted to meet local working practices and requirements. As Dorset Police became more familiar

with NICHE, HMIC found some anomalies in how force investigations of crime and other incidents were finalised and closed by officers. In Dorset this responsibility rested with the investigator whereas elsewhere supervisors undertake this task. Staff are concerned this process may have resulted in crimes requiring further investigation being closed in error. Officers have also been given an unusually high level of access to the system that allows them to amend and delete records. Although we found no evidence of any incorrect closure or deletion of information, the force should review its current use of NICHE.

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 (HTCUs), carry out these examinations.

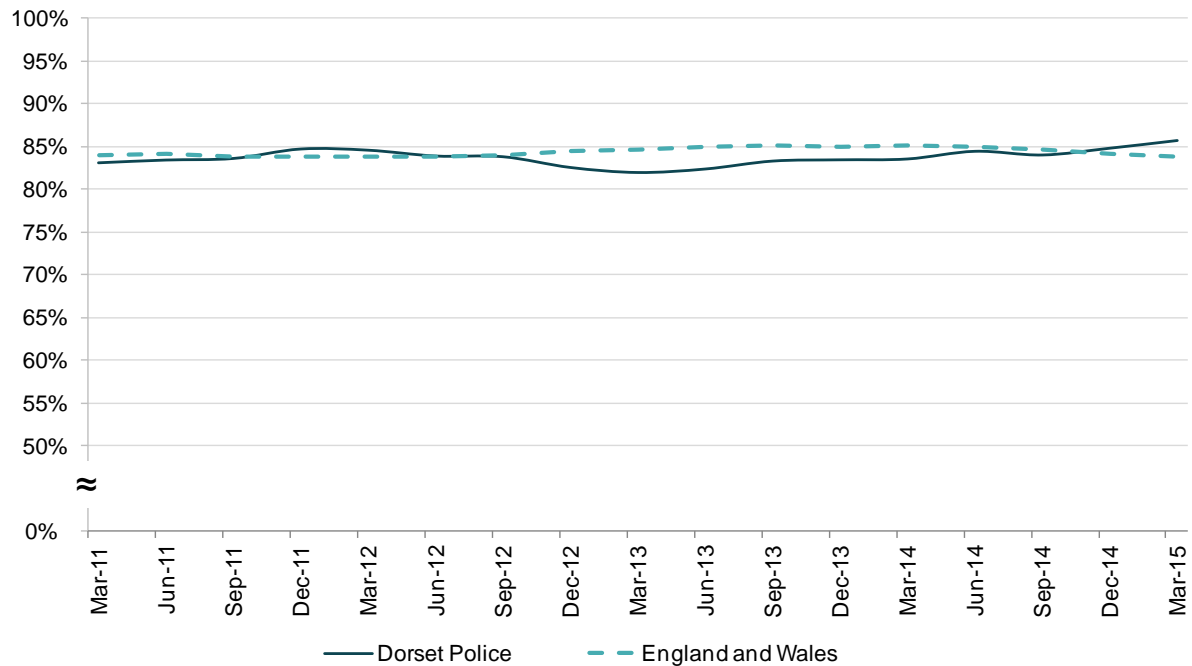
HMIC judges that Dorset Police needs to improve its response to the recovery of digital evidence. We found significant delays in forensic examinations of approximately seven months for computers and approximately nine months for mobile phones.

The force operates a prioritisation process which means that in the most serious cases, such as child abuse, it makes examinations immediately. However, backlogs in forensic retrieval of such a scale delays justice and can undermine the confidence of victims. To rectify this position, the force has entered into a forensic alliance with three other forces and has recently introduced a process whereby staff with lesser training can undertake basic telephone examinations. The force envisages that this will bring more resilience and accelerate the process of digital forensic retrieval.

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

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Dorset in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 85.8 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is higher than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent over the same time period. The victim satisfaction rate in Dorset for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 is significantly higher than both the previous year's rate and the rate for the year ending 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

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

How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?

Dorset Police has effective measures to divert vulnerable offenders away from the criminal justice system and established programmes to reduce re-offending. Mental health and drugs and alcohol teams operate from the force’s custody suites on a daily basis to offer treatment and support to prisoners.

The force has an IOM team split between two sites. Staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about interventions that can divert offenders away from crime. They work alongside probation officers, housing providers and the voluntary sector to support offenders who want to change their lives. Prison inmates who are considered to be vulnerable because their circumstances are not conducive to a life away from crime are identified as part of the IOM programme. They are visited prior to their release to offer support. Some of these individuals have agreed to take part in voluntary electronic tagging so that their movements can be monitored 24 hours a day. This acts as an incentive for the individual not to re-offend and is an innovative use of a measure that is more commonly seen as punitive, to help those who are determined to rehabilitate.

We found good use of restorative justice programmes in Dorset. The programme for young people is managed by the force’s safer schools and communities team (SSCT), which has developed workshops tailored to young offenders' needs. In the last year more than four hundred young people have attended them to help with

coming to terms with the impact and consequences of offending. In addition the SSCT delivers elements of the school curriculum in over three hundred schools. Staff give a range of advice on contemporary issues such as raising awareness of child sexual exploitation, internet safety, anti-bullying, the Keep Dorset Safe programme (which focuses on knives and guns), and the dangers of violent extremism.

How well does the force deal with repeat offenders?

Dorset Police manages its persistent repeat offenders through the IOM programme. The force identifies offenders for entry onto the programme by considering current intelligence of their offending, previous offending history and details such as alcohol or drug abuse. A small team of staff currently manages seventy-two offenders and has access to a range of effective interventions to prevent re-offending, including housing support, counselling, drug and alcohol treatment therapy and advice on how to manage personal finance.

The cohort of offenders predominantly included people with a history of committing burglary offences and other similar acquisitive crimes. The force considers this approach has contributed to the force reducing burglary to the current very low levels in comparison with other forces in England and Wales. Despite this success, HMIC considers that the force should explore further widening the cohort to include, for example, individuals pre-disposed to be violent to their partners or to sexually abuse children.

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

The force adopts a firm leadership role and has good processes to identify and manage dangerous and sexual offenders. The Local Criminal Justice Board is chaired by the deputy chief constable and the force takes an active part in Dorset's multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs).⁹

Suitably skilled officers within the sex offender management unit (SOMU) use nationally-recognised methods of assessing the risks individuals pose. Amongst the control measures in the management of sex offenders are interviews conducted at periodic intervals in their homes. In Dorset these visits are conducted by at least one member of the SOMU with a full knowledge of the individual and a representative from the local safer neighbourhood team. This combines the expertise of the SOMU officer with the local knowledge of the safer neighbourhood team member. This strengthens the capability of Dorset Police to manage sex offenders in its communities.

The SOMU is another exponent of effective integrated joint working in Dorset. The police, probation and other service providers are co-located with access to each

⁹ 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.

other's databases. This facilitates an agile, flexible approach to the management of sexual and dangerous offenders. It also ensures that the force and its partners can address swiftly changes in offending patterns or new risks that are presented to the public.

Summary of findings



Good

Dorset Police is good at investigating crime and managing offenders. In HMIC's inspection of crime in 2014, we considered the force to require improvement. This was due to backlogs in processes that the force has to refer vulnerable victims to other service providers for safeguarding support. The force has since addressed this.

The force effectively allocates and investigates complex and non-complex crimes. Investigations are of a good standard and the skills and experience of officers are well matched to the cases they investigate. The force uses forensic evidence well to support investigations, but better arrangements are needed to retrieve digital evidence from smartphones, tablets and other devices. This is causing delays to some investigations.

The force uses restorative justice well and has a successful safer schools and communities team who give presentations in over three hundred schools across the county. The presentations cover a wide range of issues and are intended to divert children away from crime and anti-social behaviour. The force has effective measures in place to manage repeat and 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 its investigations are not delayed.

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 2015.¹⁰ The following is a summary of the findings.

Summary of findings



Dorset Police's strategic priority to protect vulnerable people from harm and support victims is set out clearly by its chief officer team. Through firm direction, strong supervision and up-to-date training the workforce is well prepared to respond to this challenge. As a result, victims and vulnerable people are placed at the centre of all police activity. Representatives from partner organisations who were interviewed during the course of the inspection were complimentary about the way that Dorset Police embraces and takes forward the benefits of working closely together. HMIC observed productive joint working with statutory bodies and other service providers to safeguard¹¹ vulnerable people at all levels. For these reasons, HMIC judges that the force's performance is good.

The force has in place a clear process of risk assessment for vulnerability issues, which is monitored robustly and managed closely after the initial contact with the police. This ensures long-term support measures are put in place where necessary. Dorset Police take positive steps to ensure that the response to the victim is based on their needs rather than the type of crime which has been committed. This is important as traditionally some police forces have been preoccupied with identifying vulnerability issues only for offences where it is more obvious that these exist, for example domestic abuse. This has occasionally meant that the force has overlooked some victims' needs. However, Dorset Police considers the vulnerability of all individuals who ask for their services, irrespective of the nature of their request.

The force has mature arrangements in place to share important information with other organisations. This means that it gives careful consideration to forming safety plans and it identifies ways to keep vulnerable victims safe.

¹⁰ *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Dorset Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-dorset/

¹¹ The term safeguarding means providing protection and support to ensure the safety of a vulnerable person and prevent further harm.

In spite of this progress, HMIC believes that the force could do more to meet its obligations which are compulsory under the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*.¹² The code sets out the service that victims can expect from all organisations, including the police that have a role in the criminal justice system. In Dorset, the requirement to update victims of critical developments in investigations did not appear to be clearly understood.

This stands in the way of HMIC considering the force's service provision to be outstanding.

¹² *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, October 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf

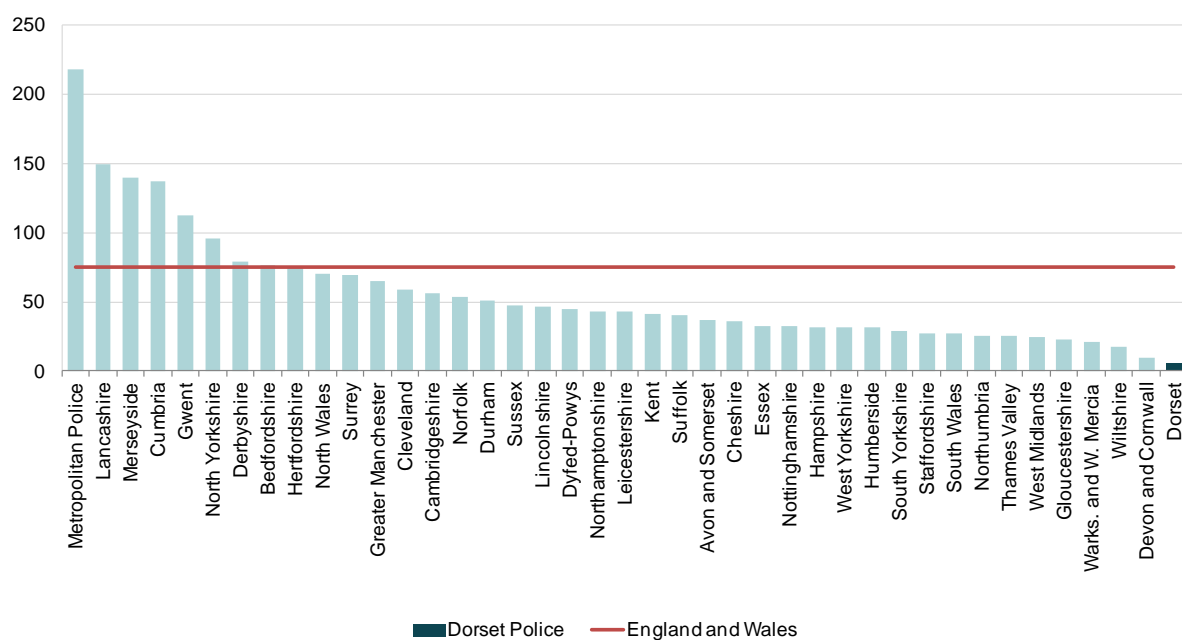
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. 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 undercover policing) where appropriate in order to protect the public from highly sophisticated and rapidly changing organised criminal threats. A number of forces within a regional area often share specialist capabilities as this provides better value for money and is a more efficient way of working.

As at 30 June 2015, Dorset Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring four organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents five 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^{13 14}



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 (100 percent) of the OCGs managed by Dorset Police as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,¹⁵ with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way.

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement*.¹⁶ These include terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents 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

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ *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

The Home Secretary issues the SPR annually, 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.

this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to these 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.

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

Organised crime group (OCG) activity has a limited impact in Dorset. Although there are only a small number of OCGs operating in the area, the force does tackle criminals who have travelled to Dorset from elsewhere. As a consequence, Dorset Police works regularly with other forces to improve its understanding of serious and organised crime.

However, this understanding would be enhanced further if the force produced a serious and organised crime local profile (SOCLP)¹⁷ in line with national guidance. Dorset Police has been forward-thinking in forming a multi-agency forum known as Project Spotlight to co-ordinate partnership activity against OCGs. Project Spotlight includes representatives from trading standards, community safety partners, and the Environment Agency, HM Revenue and Customs, UK Border Agency, and NHS counter-fraud services.

This forum presents a platform from which to complete the SOCLP. In this way the force and its partners will have a better insight into serious and organised crime, which in turn will provide firmer base from which to launch joint enforcement and disruption activity.

There is a commitment to a whole-force approach to tackling OCGs, reinforced by a sound knowledge among frontline officers and PCSOs of the OCGs operating in their area. The force briefs its frontline officers regularly to collect intelligence about organised crime group activity. In line with national guidance, the force has effective processes in place for 'mapping' OCGs which inform its objective decision-making about how each should be tackled.

When a police force identifies a group of individuals whom it suspects may be involved in organised crime, it goes through a nationally standardised mapping procedure. This involves entering details of the group's known and suspected activity, associates and capability into a computer system, 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. Police forces, ROCUs, the NCA and a number of non-police organisations such as Border Force, use OCG mapping.

¹⁷ SOCLPs are reports that outline 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

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 recommended that ROCUs assume responsibility for OCG mapping on behalf of their constituent forces.¹⁸

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

Overall the force's response to OCGs operating in Dorset is good. The force has a well-structured approach to policing OCGs and plays a lead role regionally in tackling this threat. The chief constable chairs the regional organised crime meeting and the assistant chief constable is the regional lead for the ROCU. Additionally, senior representatives from the ROCU help determine whether organised criminals should be addressed at a force or regional level.

Well-structured processes in the force ensure that the management of OCGs is subjected to effective governance. An established tracker system scores OCGs in priority order. The tracker has a real-time facility to update management action plans relevant to OCGs and also automated alerts when deadlines are approaching.

The force identifies appropriate individuals as lead responsible officers (LROs) for each OCG who oversee activity and ensure objectives are met. Dependent upon the threat posed by the group, the LRO could be a senior detective, an intelligence specialist or a neighbourhood inspector. HMIC found that LROs in Dorset successfully co-ordinate and direct OCG activity to keep the public safe. The investigation of OCGs that cause the greatest risk is generally undertaken by a small, dedicated team of specialist detectives. These officers have access to a range of overt and covert policing tactics which lead to outcomes that limit the capacity of the group to commit further crime.

Lower-level disruption activity is also effective. HMIC saw the impact of OCGs being limited through the force's thoughtful use of neighbourhood officers. Enforcing the law against active members of OCGs who flagrantly commit motoring offences is a good example of this.

HMIC examined one investigation in detail and found that although it was concluded successfully, the force did not take opportunities to monitor the principal offenders on

¹⁸ *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

a continuing basis. The activity of criminals involved in serious and organised crime should be tracked beyond the conclusion of court cases, as this would give the force more certainty that individuals do not resume a criminal lifestyle upon their release.

The force has recently adopted the national standards to assess its disruption activity of OCGs. A senior officer chairs a panel to assess the effectiveness of the measures to tackle OCGs, and the panel is also responsible for identifying any learning for future operations.

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

The force considers serious and organised crime to be on a spectrum of offending, prioritising early interventions with young people who offend or are at risk of offending. Ten officers funded by the police and crime commissioner to work in schools are skilled at raising awareness of the consequences of crime through school curricula. The pragmatic, thoughtful use of restorative justice gives every opportunity for young people to see the error of their ways without the stigma of appearing in court. The operational reach of the schools officers extends to youth clubs and other recreational outlets if it is suspected that young people may be tempted into drugs misuse or coerced into sexual abuse.

The force is in the process of setting up a prevent directorate to develop a wide-ranging programme to prevent people being attracted to serious criminal activity. The force is developing this as part of its strategic alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police.

Dorset Police has also recently started working with Dorset Families Matter, a major partnership project that has been set up to achieve commitments made in the Government's troubled families agenda. This development is in its formative stage but the force plans a specific project to engage with people who are at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime.

Communication also plays a prominent role in developing hard-hitting force messages about successful prosecutions to deter would-be criminals in Dorset. The force uses a range of techniques to support these campaigns, including social media, local TV and newspaper coverage as well as the innovative use of a kiosk constructed in the style of an old-fashioned police box that was placed in a high-crime area to deter criminals.

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.

Dorset Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. This is another area where leadership from the top of the organisation is key in setting the agenda, providing strategic direction and bringing together other service providers to ensure that Dorset is in a state of preparedness.

The chief constable chairs a local resilience forum which includes representatives from a broad range of service providers whose services may be called on in times of emergency. These include the fire and rescue service, the coast guard, the Environment Agency and the NHS who can activate their emergency response procedures in the event of major incidents or disasters. These were most recently tested to good effect in response to the floods that hit the region in January and February in 2014. The assistant chief constable is the lead officer appointed to consider the threats articulated in *The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)*,¹⁹ determining their relevance to Dorset and putting measures in place to address them.

The force has developed contingencies for changes to the terrorism threat level. Furthermore in a recent exercise, the force simulated a terrorist attack to test the state of readiness and emergency response procedures of all partner organisations. The force has worked closely with staff and students from Bournemouth University to produce a cyber-crime strategy and has developed joint contingency plans with local major companies in readiness to respond to a cyber-attack. Internally the force has a well-developed business continuity plan which has been stress-tested through a table-top exercise based on an attack on the force's dependent IT infrastructure.

All forces have a standing commitment to mobilise officers for deployments in the event of major incidents or catastrophes that are beyond the capacity of a local force. Dorset Police has measures in place to test these mobilisation arrangements and has recently had to fulfil these commitments by assisting Devon and Cornwall Police and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

¹⁹ *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

Summary of findings



Good

Dorset Police is good at identifying and tackling serious and organised crime groups. This is the first year 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.

The force has a clear understanding of the threat posed by organised crime. Staff at all ranks across the force have a good knowledge of organised crime groups and the role they are expected to play to combat them. The force maps and monitors effectively organised crime groups, and it works well with other statutory organisations and the business sector to address them.

The force is developing its preventative work through core programmes provided in schools and restorative justice, which are also flexible enough to address more serious offending. The force envisages that its prevent directorate will provide a more comprehensive package that is bespoke to serious crime.

The force has yet to produce a local profile for serious and organised crime. This will further strengthen the understanding of the scale and nature of the problem; this will leave the force and its key partners better placed to align resources with areas of need, identify any training requirements and develop operational capability.

Areas for improvement

- The force should complete a serious and organised crime local profile including relevant data from partner agencies, and ensure that it has a local partnership structure in place with responsibility for tackling serious and organised crime.

Annex A – HMIC judgments

Our judgments

The 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.