PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of Wiltshire Police

Contents

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

Overall judgment[1]

● ● ● ○   **Good**

Overall Wiltshire Police is judged to be good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. In terms of preventing crime the force operates effectively and standards of investigation are generally high. Furthermore the force works well with partners to manage the most harmful offenders. The force is clearly committed to protecting the vulnerable; however some improvements are needed in its understanding of, and response to, missing children. There are good arrangements 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

Wiltshire Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe. Force priorities demonstrate a strong commitment to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, protecting the vulnerable and reducing offending. This is well understood across the force at all levels but in particular by those involved in neighbourhood policing.

When a crime occurs it is effectively allocated and investigated. The quality of investigations is generally good and the skills of the officers are well matched to the cases they investigate. The force also has good arrangements to tackle repeat offenders and to manage those individuals who present a risk to the public. Nevertheless there are some areas for improvement; supervision of investigations is inconsistent and there are delays in the force's procedures to retrieve digital evidence from smartphones, tablets and other devices. A backlog in these procedures undermines the effectiveness of investigations. The force has good arrangements to tackle repeat offenders and to manage those individuals who present a risk to the public.

Protecting vulnerable people is a priority for the force. There are systems in place to prioritise resources in areas of risk and vulnerability and to provide care and support for victims of crime. The force has good arrangements with partner services to

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

support vulnerable victims.[2] However the accurate identification of the risks faced by missing children and providing help to frequent absconders are areas where the force could do more. This is an area where the force is judge to require improvement.

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime and is building on current relationships with other agencies to improve its understanding even further. The force has good processes in place to investigate and disrupt those individuals involved in this type of criminality. The force also has good arrangements in place for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities.

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

Good

Wiltshire 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 and good at tackling anti-social behaviour.

The force priorities demonstrate a strong commitment to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, protect the vulnerable and reduce offending. This is well understood by staff across the force at all levels but in particular by those involved in neighbourhood policing.

The force is committed to neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood teams work

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

Good

Wiltshire Police is good at investigating crime and managing offenders. This is consistent with HMIC's inspection of crime in 2014, which assessed the force as good at investigating crime.

The force effectively allocates and investigates crime. Officers understand the importance of making early arrests and tackling repeat offenders. The quality of investigations is good and investigators are trained and equipped to conduct investigations appropriate to their role, although improvements can be made in the supervision and use of investigation plans for non-complex crimes.

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[2] *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Wiltshire Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-wiltshire/).

effectively with partner agencies to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour in local communities. The force is currently piloting a new community policing model to further consolidate this. Staff are trained appropriately and use a range of powers and tactics to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

Evaluation of what works is conducted well at a strategic level. There is room for improvement in the way that the force understands and shares information about effective problem-solving methods at a local level.

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.

Good partnership arrangements are in place to focus activity on those offenders causing the most crime and anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods. Effective partnership working is also integral to the success of the Switch integrated offender management programme. Generally, local officers have a good awareness of and involvement in the management of prolific offenders. Extending the remit beyond the current focus on perpetrators of acquisitive crime would increase the effectiveness of the programme.

Management of offenders under the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) is good with close and effective working between police and partners to reduce risks to the public.

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

⬤⬤◯◯◯

Requires improvement

Wiltshire Police has committed significant effort and resource to offer a high-quality service to the public. It strives to prioritise resources on the basis of threat, risk and harm. Force policies and processes show an emphasis on identifying those who are vulnerable and assessing levels of risk correctly. The force meeting structure assists with the prioritisation of resources to areas of risk and vulnerable people.

The force has made the response to child sexual exploitation a priority and has invested resources into a dedicated child sexual exploitation team. The force's establishment of dedicated co-ordinators for domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation, together with the introduction of information sharing meetings for both demonstrates its prioritisation of vulnerable people.

We found evidence of good processes and behaviours in the force control room in identifying and responding to

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

⬤⬤⬤◯

Good

Wiltshire Police is good at identifying and tackling serious and organised crime groups.[3] This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime. It has produced an initial serious and organised crime local profile and is working with partners to enhance this further and to ensure that a full range of interventions are available to tackle serious and organised crime. The force is developing its intelligence gathering arrangements with government and other partners but this could be further improved.

Organised crimes groups are identified at a local and force level and regularly scored to identify and prioritise those

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[3] Serious and organised crime includes human trafficking, drug trafficking, organised illegal immigration, high value fraud and other serious financial crimes, counterfeiting, organised theft, burglary or robbery and cyber-crime. It is perpetrated by groups of people operating collaboratively on a continuing basis, typically in order to realise substantial financial gain and sometimes involving serious violence. These are known as organised crime groups (OCGs).

vulnerable victims. Vulnerable callers to police buildings are also readily identified.

Partnership working is effective, including within the multi-agency safeguarding hub. High-risk domestic abuse cases are typically managed by specialist staff. We were reassured that specialist staff have manageable workloads and that they are well-supported by supervisors.

HMIC is concerned, however, about the inappropriate grading of risk for some missing and absent children. We also have a concern about the priority given to the investigation and safeguarding of missing and absent children.

groups posing the greatest threat to the communities of Wiltshire. Good systems are in place to tackle organised crime groups using a wide range of policing options. The force is developing strategies and initiatives to deter individuals from becoming involved in serious and organised crime.

The force is meeting its responsibilities under the strategic policing requirement. The force regularly tests its capabilities and has sufficient resources to deal with most public order contingencies.

Force in numbers

Calls for assistance

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
48	350

Crime

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
47.8	63.0

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
46.7	60.3

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
+2.4%	+4.5%

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
-10.7%	-12.6%

Charge rate

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
15.1%	16.0%

Anti-social behaviour

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
30.4	32.9

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
31.9	36.2

Domestic abuse

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
11.5%	10.0%

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

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
10.0%	8.5%

Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
17.2	74.7

Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015

Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
83.8%	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 Wiltshire 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:[4]

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 Wiltshire Police.

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[4] 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-wiltshire/). 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.

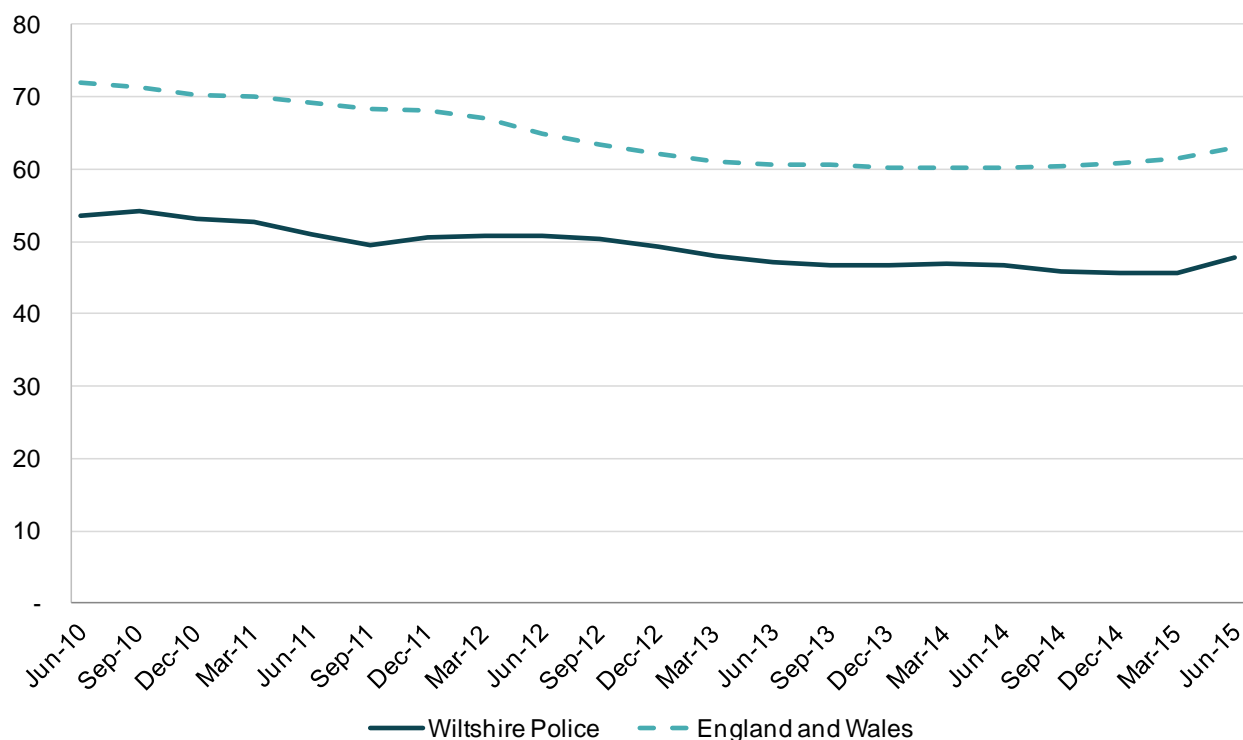## How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Wiltshire?

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 11 percent in Wiltshire 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 12 percent in Wiltshire, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Wiltshire 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 Wiltshire (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	Wiltshire Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	47.8	63.0
Victim-based crime	43.3	56.0
Sexual offences	1.7	1.6
Assault with injury	6.0	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	4.3	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	30.4	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, Wiltshire Police recorded 21,251 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 5 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
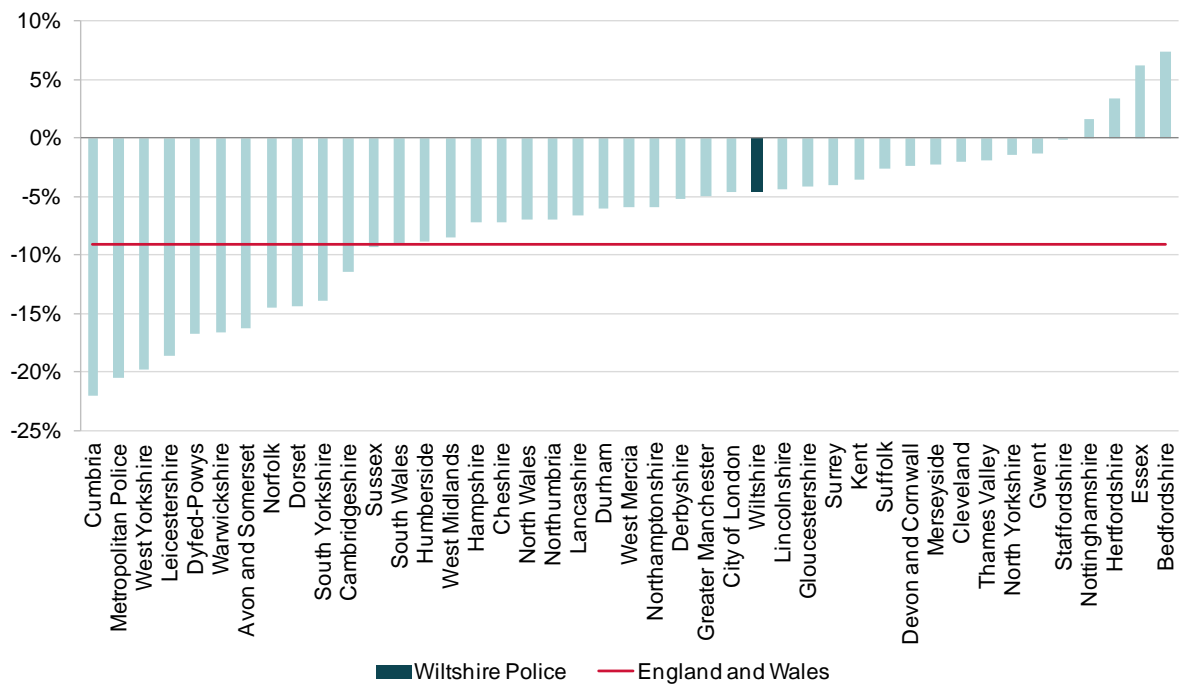
Source: HMIC data collection

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?

Wiltshire police has a strong commitment to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Careful and wide-ranging analysis of police and partner agency data, as well as information from public consultation are used to identify the threats and risks facing the communities of Wiltshire as part of an annual assessment process. This work is then used to inform the priorities set out in the police and crime commissioner's police and crime plan. The force's overall delivery plan for 2013-17 sets out how the force delivers these priorities, which are: reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, protecting the most vulnerable, putting victims and witnesses first, reducing offending and re-offending, driving up standards of customer service, and ensuring a timely response to calls for assistance. The force has also recently developed a crime prevention strategy, due for publication, which focuses on partnership work, people, processes, victims, offenders, and locations as a means of reducing crime.

The workforce of Wiltshire Police understands the importance of preventing crime, anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. Frontline officers spoke confidently and positively about their understanding of the role of the police in initially preventing crime and the necessity of dealing with anti-social behaviour effectively. Operational activity reflects force level and local prevention priorities. Crime prevention is seen as the primary role of neighbourhood teams with support from those officers who respond to calls for service.

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

Wiltshire Police effectively allocates officers and staff in neighbourhoods to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe by ensuring that every local area has a visible and accessible safer neighbourhood team. Three substantial pieces of work conducted over a number of years included a force-wide operational review in 2010, a neighbourhood policing team review and a customer access review. This work, combined with regular assessments of demand, has contributed to the effective allocation of resources to neighbourhood policing.

The force is working to understand the most effective way to prioritise public demand for its services in light of potential further budget cuts. It has commenced a pilot looking to test and develop a community policing based operating model. It is focused on the following elements: community policing team, call handling and dispatch, specific investigations and the integrated prosecution team. The basis for the pilot is the review of 17,000 items of demand identified over a two-year period. An ongoing evaluation is being conducted by a dedicated team and if the final evaluation is positive the new model will be rolled-out force-wide.

The force has effective meeting structures at force and local level to identify risks facing the community. These are supported by the daily management meetings (DMM) where demand is reviewed and significant incidents and risks prioritised. The DMM has the authority to move resources around the force to address emerging issues and identified risks. Neighbourhood staff are able to focus on problem solving with communities and partners and, in general terms, are not abstracted to support their colleagues who respond to calls for service.

Neighbourhood teams use their local knowledge and regularly consult with the public to understand local problems. A variety of engagement activities take place with local communities to identify and solve short and long term problems relating to crime and anti-social behaviour. Problem solving plans are put in place for repeat victims of anti-social behaviour and police work with local partners to target and co-ordinate their resources to intervene early to stop further increases and to reduce risk.

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. These include operations to stop street drinking and reduce anti-social behaviour in town centres and operations to tackle organised shoplifting gangs. These operations involve communities and partner agencies working together using a range of legal powers and partner managed assets such as CCTV. Neighbourhood staff work well with those officers who respond to calls for service to tackle local problems. HMIC found examples of this effective working which included joint activity to disrupt criminals travelling into the county to deal drugs, and the use of overt and covert police tactics to prevent a series of thefts from motor vehicles in the county.

Problem solving work is generally recorded by officers on a computer based system. Other staff involved in that problem-solving work can then research the system to update themselves on the latest developments or to add their own updates. This allows locally-based officers with knowledge of the problem to pass on information. However, it is not easy to search for information unless there is prior knowledge of the specific case and best practice is not routinely identified and shared. HMIC found no evidence of the force carrying out formal evaluation of the tactics used by neighbourhood staff.

In HMIC's crime inspection report in 2014 we recommended that the force ensure that it has methods in place systematically to capture and share learning and good practice in relation to crime prevention, local problem solving and investigation across the force.[5] HMIC is disappointed that the force has not yet introduced such an arrangement and this remains an area for improvement for the force.

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[5] *Crime Inspection 2014 – Wiltshire Police*, HMIC, November 2014. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/wiltshire-crime-inspection-2014.pdf

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?

Wiltshire Police is committed at all levels of the organisation to working with partner agencies, the voluntary sector and private businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. This is demonstrated through the wide range of partnership meetings that the force commits to. At a strategic level, the chief constable chairs the local criminal justice board and the local resilience forum as well as representing the force at eight other key partnership meetings. The two assistant chief constables chair an additional five partnership meetings between them including regional healthcare commissioning meetings and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) meetings, as well as attending other partnership meetings.[6] There is a clear understanding from the chief officer team that, at a time when budgets are being reduced, policing services need to be more closely integrated with strategic partners, where both cost savings and service improvements can be realised. The force is working with the local unitary authorities to share estates which will enable their staff to work together more effectively. The force also collaborates on projects such as IT, finance, human resources and business improvement.

At a local level, there are well-established and effective partnership arrangements in place. Police officers and staff have a good knowledge of local agencies, and demonstrated effective working arrangements to address jointly community issues and concerns. Locally based staff chair and take part in numerous partnership service delivery meetings focused on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Committed joint working includes the anti-social behaviour risk assessment conference (ASBRAC) where partners meet on a monthly basis to address anti-social behaviour and low-level crime in the county. This contributes to the force being effective at keeping communities safe.

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 in place to share and act on partner information to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. A number of information sharing protocols are in place and this information sharing is greatly aided by the many co-located staff in both police and local authority premises. The range of staff co-located includes: neighbourhood teams working on local community concerns; domestic abuse staff who safeguard vulnerable victims of domestic abuse; and

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[6] 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.

integrated offender management (IOM) units who manage criminals who persistently re-offend. Effective sharing of partnership information is vital to this work. In order to improve information sharing between agencies a member of police staff has been employed jointly by partners, to work within the Swindon and Wiltshire troubled families programme. The aim of the programme is to work with families and young children to support them to build their self-resilience and resolve some of the complex issues within their lives with the aim of reducing crime, anti-social behaviour, and ultimately reducing the reliance on public services. Staff working within IOM teams have access to both police and probation IT systems which gives them instant access to all relevant information. Throughout the inspection multi-agency staff were observed working together effectively.

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

HMIC found good examples of effective problem-solving with partner agencies to protect the vulnerable and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. This includes force architectural liaison officers working with developers to design out crime in new buildings and developments and officers working with trading standards staff to reduce anti-social behaviour by stopping under-age alcohol sales. This also includes multi-agency days of action with police, vehicle licensing staff, local authority staff and customs and excise officers working together to tackle the illegal use of vehicles. Powers to tackle anti-social behaviour are used effectively, for example to address street drinking in Trowbridge and Salisbury and for the closure of premises used in the illegal supply of drugs (Operation Dissipate).

The force also holds structured multi-agency problem-solving meetings across the force area, such as local neighbourhood tasking groups, which are attended by partners and members of the local community. At a more strategic level there is a county-wide anti-social behaviour risk assessment conference (ASBRAC) which is chaired by a senior officer from the local authority and meets monthly. This meeting prioritises and co-ordinates multi-agency resources and responses county wide to tackle high level and persistent cases of anti-social behaviour and low level crime. One example of the effectiveness of the ASBRAC was the referral to the meeting of a 13 year old boy with severe behavioural difficulties and for whom there were concerns that he would be drawn into a life of crime. Through the resources available to the meeting, support was provided to the individual, prior to his becoming involved in criminality.

Summary of findings

Good

Wiltshire 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 and good at tackling anti-social behaviour.[7]

The force priorities demonstrate a strong commitment to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, protect the vulnerable and reduce offending. This is well-understood by staff at all levels but in particular by those involved in neighbourhood policing.

The force is committed to neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood teams work effectively with partner agencies to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour in local communities. The force is currently piloting a new community policing model to further consolidate this. Staff are trained appropriately and use a range of powers and tactics to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

Evaluation of what works is conducted well at a strategic level. There is room for improvement in the way that the force understands and shares information about effective problem solving methods at a local level.

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

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[7] *Crime Inspection 2014 – Wiltshire Police*, HMIC, November 2014. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/wiltshire-crime-inspection-2014.pdf

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. Wiltshire 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)[8] [9] [10]

Outcome type/group	Wiltshire Police Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
Charged/Summonsed	**5,054**	**15.1**	**577,678**	**16.0**
Taken into consideration	**170**	**0.5**	**21,318**	**0.6**
Out-of-court (formal)	**1,415**	**4.2**	**165,384**	**4.6**
Caution - youths	353	1.1	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	957	2.9	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	105	0.3	30,681	0.8
Out-of-court (informal)	**1,007**	**3.0**	**159,915**	**4.4**
Cannabis/Khat warning	253	0.8	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	754	2.3	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/khat[11] 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. Wiltshire Police has one of the highest rates for 'caution – youths', of all forces in England and Wales.

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[8] 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.

[9] 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

[10] 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.

[11] 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.

In order to secure evidence from crime scenes, it is imperative that the police respond early and attend scenes to begin an effective investigation and identify the offender as soon as possible. Wiltshire Police is good at responding to incidents, gathering evidence where a crime has occurred and providing care and support to victims of crime.

The force has a clear well-understood process for assessing calls to determine whether incidents require immediate police attendance and if crimes require further investigation. Calls are received in the force contact centre and officers are deployed immediately if circumstances warrant that. To assist in this decision staff have access to intelligence officers based in the control room who provide relevant up-to-date information. This process identifies any risks or vulnerability that may have been identified previously or is historically associated with the individuals involved. This ensures the needs of the victim are prominent from an early stage of the investigation and the most appropriate resource is deployed to the incident. The officers responding to calls for service then carry out the initial crime investigation.

Calls assessed as not requiring an immediate response are reviewed by staff in a crime management unit (CMU). The CMU staff quality assure the immediate action that has been taken, provide initial updates to victims and if possible and appropriate resolve incidents over the phone. The CMU staff receive specific training to equip them for the role and this training is ongoing with additional training provided every five weeks.

The crimes that are not resolved by the CMU are allocated for investigation by staff, usually in neighbourhood teams. Both the staff who respond to calls for service and those allocated a slower time investigation are aware of the importance of completing initial enquiries promptly. They are appropriately supported, when required, by specialist and forensic investigators in more complex cases.

The force daily management meeting, which is chaired by a senior officer, reviews all significant crimes and incidents to ensure they have been effectively allocated and investigated. HMIC observed a meeting and found it to be effective at reviewing

areas of greatest threat, risk and harm in line with the force control strategy. The meeting was well managed, with clear tasking, ownership and update requirements set by the meeting chair.

How well does the force investigate different types of crime?

The force investigates different types of crime well. As well as the victim's needs the complexities of the investigation play a key part in how the force allocates crimes for investigation. Crimes that are less complex to investigate such as minor assaults or criminal damage are investigated by neighbourhood officers and officers who respond to calls for service. Once a suspect has been arrested those officers are assisted by local investigation teams. These teams are dedicated investigators who interview suspects and prepare prosecution files. HMIC found that the cases being investigated by neighbourhood officers and officers who respond to calls for service were appropriate to their skills and training.

In HMIC's crime inspection report in 2014 we recommended that the force develop an action plan to improve the quality of investigations and the supervision of them.[12] HMIC was disappointed to find that despite this very few investigations in relation to less complex crime included the use of investigation plans. An investigation plan sets out clearly what actions are required to ensure that all investigative opportunities are taken. They provide structure to investigations, allow for easy supervision of cases and, if necessary, assist in the handover of cases to other investigators. The force would benefit from ensuring that all investigating officers utilise investigation plans. HMIC also found that there was a lack of supervisory reviews and documented victim care plans for less complex crimes. The force has acknowledged a requirement to improve its supervisory review processes and is planning to provide additional training to address this. HMIC also found some examples of community support officers gathering evidence for minor offences up until the identification of a suspect. They are not trained to investigate crimes and this creates a risk that the quality of the investigation may suffer.

More complex or serious crime, such as child abuse or serious sexual offences and robberies, are generally allocated for detectives to investigate. Staff working within such units are appropriately trained or working towards accredited detective status. There are good levels of specialist support with forensic specialists available 24 hours a day. Fingerprint and DNA evidence are prepared with minimal delays. HMIC carried out a review of complex crime investigation files prior to and during the inspection and found that the majority had clear investigation plans and well documented supervisory reviews. The force has a clear policy that forensic specialists will attend reports of most types of crime. On occasions crime scene investigators may not attend a crime if after speaking to the attending officer it is

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[12] *Crime Inspection 2014 – Wiltshire Police*, HMIC, November 2014. Available from:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/wiltshire-crime-inspection-2014.pdf

obvious that their attendance will not add value. Officers spoken to stated that they were able to access forensic support when required. Wiltshire Police is part of a regional four-force collaboration in relation to forensic evidence. Many of the items recovered are forensically examined by an internal department that is accredited to carry out this work on behalf of the forces.

The force is not able to identify with any degree of real accuracy the number of suspects who have not yet been arrested or are wanted in connection with offences. This also extends to its ability to identify how many people have been arrested as a result of fingerprint or DNA evidence or how many are still awaiting arrest. This makes it harder for the force to assess and evaluate how well it tackles offenders and prevents re-offending. However, HMIC was encouraged to find that officers understand the importance of making early arrests and tackling repeat offenders. There was clear evidence that officers were prioritising the arrest of these individuals, especially prolific offenders managed by integrated offender management (IOM) schemes. The daily management meeting is utilised to manage the arrests of high-risk individuals and has the authority to prioritise and use resources from across the force.

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 well placed to gather and analyse digital evidence from a range of sources to inform investigations in relation to serious offences, however there are significant delays for the examination of computers linked to those cases not assessed as high priority.

In Wiltshire the HTCU does operate a prioritisation process for the examinations of computers and mobile phones, which ensures that those cases considered to be the most serious are dealt with first, for example child abuse cases or those involving significant safeguarding issues.[13] However, if the circumstances of a case do not warrant the examination being treated as a priority then computers, possibly containing important evidence, can be held for a long time in queues while waiting to be examined. At the time of the inspection HMIC found that some computers were waiting over 20 months to be examined and some mobile phones over 3 months. Backlogs such as these cause undue delay to the investigative process and can undermine the confidence of victims. The force has entered into a forensic alliance with three other forces and is working on solutions to these problems. In addition

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[13] Safeguarding means providing protection and support to ensure the safety of a vulnerable person and to prevent further harm.

specialist equipment has been introduced which allows staff with basic training to conduct limited mobile phone examinations, reducing the burden on the specialist officers in the HTCU. The force has also set aside funding to send some computers for examination by external service providers until the backlog has been reduced. The force will need to develop a longer-term solution to these issues for the future.

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

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Wiltshire in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 83.8 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 Wiltshire for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 is significantly lower than the previous year's rate, while it is significantly higher than 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
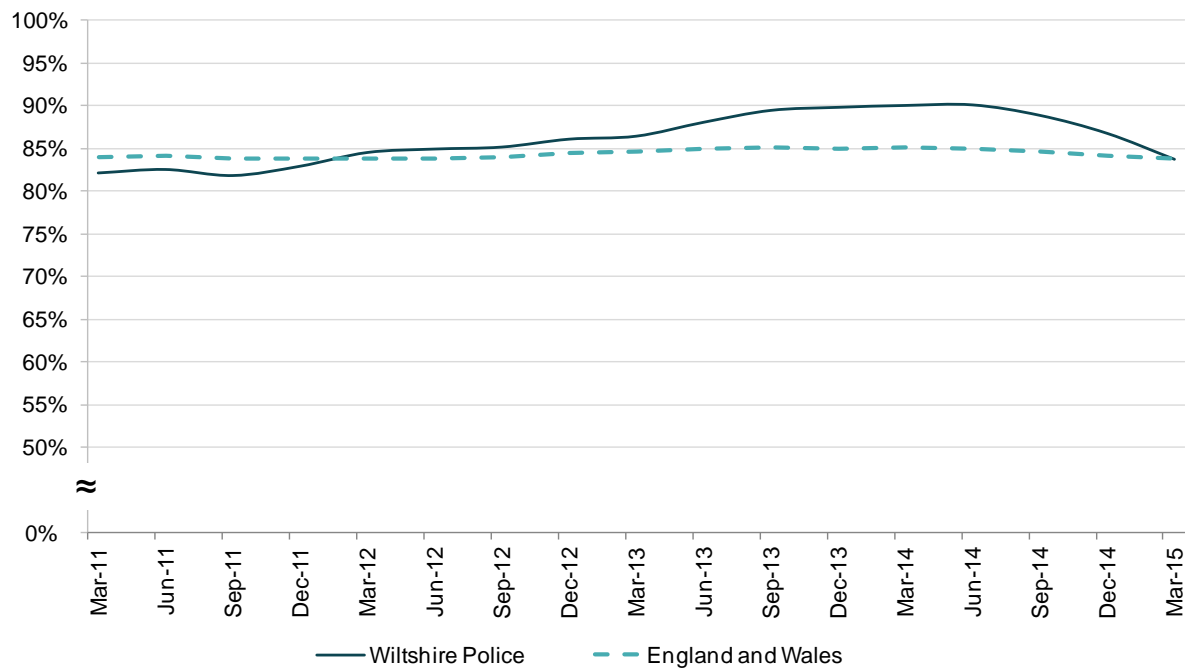
Source: Home Office data provided by forces

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

How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?

Wiltshire Police identifies and seeks to divert offenders out of the criminal justice system through its integrated offender management (IOM) scheme, known as Switch. The Switch programme includes specialists from a range of partner agencies who identify and manage prolific and repeat offenders to prevent them from returning to criminality. Offenders are identified by police and partners for acceptance onto the scheme by considering previous offending history, current intelligence and factors such as alcohol or drug abuse.

HMIC found that partners from different organisations are co-located and have a fully integrated approach to offender management within the Switch programme. Staff use management plans which are regularly reviewed and have developed a number of innovative schemes such as a voluntary tagging scheme and the employment of a pathways officer to develop job opportunities for offenders. In addition, community outreach hubs provide multi-agency services as part of a 'one stop shop' approach in a neutral community setting. This means that all of the possible pathways to support are available to offenders in one place at one time, increasing the likelihood of engagement by reducing the amount of meetings an offender may have to attend.

As of 1 July 2015, 126 offenders were being managed under the Switch programme. The force assesses the effectiveness of the Switch programme by analysing data from police and probation IT systems to understand re-offending frequency, licence completion and action plan compliance rates by those managed within the programme. This information is also used to understand costs and to determine the impact on reducing specific types of offending such as burglary and shoplifting. The programme currently focuses on offenders committing acquisitive crimes such as burglary and theft. Consideration should be given to selecting additional offenders in line with the forces current priorities. This would see perpetrators of domestic abuse, other violent offenders and those engaged in sexual exploitation benefiting from the scheme.

HMIC found that generally neighbourhood officers were aware of the prolific offenders based in their area and would carry out actions in relation to them at the direction of the Switch team and take prompt action when they were identified as being responsible for crime.

The force has established arrangements with partner agencies to divert offenders away from the criminal justice system. These include schemes in custody units to refer detainees to agencies who provide support for drug and alcohol misuse, support for those with mental health issues and support for young persons and other vulnerable persons.

Restorative justice is used by staff, although the force currently uses this method of diverting offenders from the criminal justice system less than most other forces. As a result the force has trained a number of people in the force and probation service to raise the awareness of frontline staff to the benefits of restorative justice. Greater use of this out-of-court disposal will allow more people harmed by crime to meet with those responsible with a view to finding a positive way forward for both parties.[14]

The force supports the work that local authorities undertake with the troubled families programme by providing dedicated police staff who intervene with those families identified to be at high risk of becoming involved in crime. These family members are supported to build their self-resilience and resolve complex issues that may affect the family and so reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and ultimately their reliance on support services.

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, Wiltshire Police 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 the Switch IOM programme and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs).[15] In addition there are localised arrangements within neighbourhoods to identify those repeat offenders, who are committing offences such as theft and anti-social behaviour. HMIC found that daily briefings to officers and staff include details on those individuals who are wanted persons, suspects sought for arrest and repeat offenders. We also found that officers have a good understanding of those individuals causing most concern in the locality and take appropriate action to gather evidence and make arrests.

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[14] Restorative justice gives victims the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime, get answers to their questions and get an apology. Restorative justice holds offenders to account for what they have done. It helps them understand the real impact, take responsibility, and make amends.

[15] 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.

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

The force is developing its processes to identify and monitor sexual and other dangerous offenders and recently increased the number of staff working in this area. A central team consisting of dedicated, skilled and accredited staff carries out all aspects of intelligence gathering, monitoring and risk management in relation to these types of offenders. One way of managing sexual offenders is through the use of Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (formerly known as Sexual Offence Prevention Orders).[16] In the 12 months to the end of June 2015 Wiltshire Police obtained 27 such orders, none of which were reported as being breached.

In common with many other forces, Wiltshire has seen significant increases in the numbers of registered sex offenders it has to manage (over 10% in the last year), and this demand is likely to grow as forces become more effective at tackling online sexual offenders. Registered sex offenders are managed by the force's public protection unit who use appropriate plans to reduce the risk to the public from sex offenders. Specially trained staff conduct visits and complete detailed assessments to understand and reduce the risks posed by registered sex offenders. HMIC found clear evidence of good supervision and governance arrangements. However, increased workloads have impacted on the way in which registered sex offenders are managed. HMIC found that some visits are being done by single officers rather than in pairs and the majority of visits are pre-arranged, which means opportunities to gather evidence are reduced. The force has recently increased the number of staff in the public protection unit in order to address these issues.

Those sex offenders and other offenders considered a significant danger to the public are managed through the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) process. MAPPAs are used by the force and partner organisations including prisons and probation to monitor those offenders assessed as presenting a high risk to the public, and to stop them re-offending. Offenders assessed as presenting the highest level of risk require co-ordinated action with partner organisations to reduce these risks. HMIC found that police staff work closely and effectively with partners. They share intelligence, carry out some visits with probation officers and engage in regular communications with housing providers regarding accommodation and the geographical placement of people on the scheme. Offenders are referred to a mentoring and counselling service. On 1 July 2015 the force and partner agencies were managing 21 individuals through the MAPPA process.

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[16] Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPOs) were introduced by the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and are designed to protect the public or any particular members of the public from serious sexual harm from an offender. As of March 2015, SOPOs were re-named Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs).

Neighbourhood staff have a good awareness of offenders living in their areas and make good use of the tasking and briefing tools available to them to appraise themselves of information on high-risk offenders. Specialist officers provide neighbourhood staff with information on the arrangements for dealing with sexual and other dangerous offenders and how staff can refer offenders to MAPPA for consideration. They also provide them with a greater understanding of offending behaviour so that officers can effectively prevent crime through patrol activity and intelligence-gathering. Officers are provided with similar information during investigative training courses.

Summary of findings

● ● ● ○   **Good**

Wiltshire Police is good at investigating crime and managing offenders. This is consistent with HMIC's inspection of crime in 2014, which assessed the force as good at investigating crime.

The force effectively allocates and investigates crime. Officers understand the importance of making early arrests and tackling repeat offenders. The quality of investigations is good and investigators are trained and equipped to conduct investigations appropriate to their role, although improvements can be made in the supervision and use of investigation plans for non-complex crimes.

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.

Good partnership arrangements are in place to focus activity on those offenders causing the most crime and anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods. Effective partnership working is also integral to the success of the Switch integrated offender management programme. Generally, local officers have a good awareness of and involvement in the management of prolific offenders. Extending the remit beyond the current focus on perpetrators of acquisitive crime would increase the effectiveness of the programme.

Management of offenders under the MAPPA is good with close and effective working between police and partners to reduce risks to the public.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that all those carrying out investigations are provided with appropriate training and support.

- The force should ensure that there is regular and active supervision of investigations to check quality and progress.

- 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 introduce a clear process to ensure that those who are circulated as wanted on the police national computer, those who fail to appear on police bail and named suspects identified through forensic evidence are swiftly arrested.

- 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.[17] The following is a summary of the findings.

Summary of findings

Requires improvement

 Wiltshire Police generally provides a good service in identifying vulnerable people and responds well to them, so the public can be confident that many victims are well supported. However, there are several areas where improvement is needed to ensure that the service is consistent and vulnerable people, particularly children who go missing, 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 the force requires improvement.

HMIC acknowledges that Wiltshire Police has committed significant effort and resource to offer a high-quality service to the public. It strives to prioritise resources on the basis of threat, risk and harm. Force policies and processes show an emphasis on identifying those who are vulnerable and assessing levels of risk correctly. The force meeting structure assists with the prioritisation of resources to areas of risk and vulnerability. We also found clearly defined governance for safeguarding and specialist investigations.

The force has made its response to child sexual exploitation a priority and has invested resources into a dedicated child sexual exploitation team. The establishment of dedicated co-ordinators for domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation, together with the introduction of information-sharing meetings for both again demonstrates the force's prioritisation of vulnerable people.

We found evidence of good processes and behaviours in the force control room in identifying and responding to vulnerable victims. We were reassured that vulnerable callers to police buildings would also be readily identified.

The force is taking the initiative and providing vulnerability-based training to frontline staff. Partnership working is effective, including within the multi-agency safeguarding hub. High-risk domestic abuse cases are typically managed by specialist staff. We

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[17] *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Wiltshire Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-wiltshire/).

were reassured that specialist staff have manageable workloads and that they are well supported by supervisors.

We found evidence of the thorough and timely completion of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment risk assessments, and of investigative and safeguarding plans.

HMIC is concerned about Wiltshire Police's inappropriate grading of risk for some missing and absent children. We are also concerned that the investigation and safeguarding of missing and absent children is not sufficiently prioritised.

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 (ROCUs), 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, Wiltshire Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 12 organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents 17 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[18] [19]
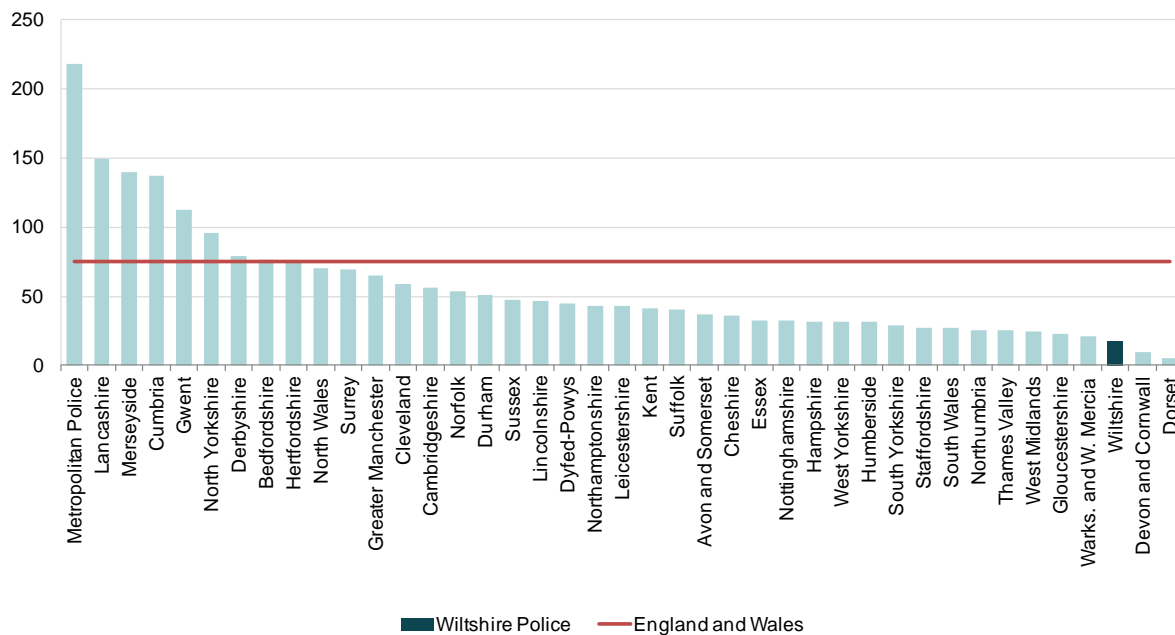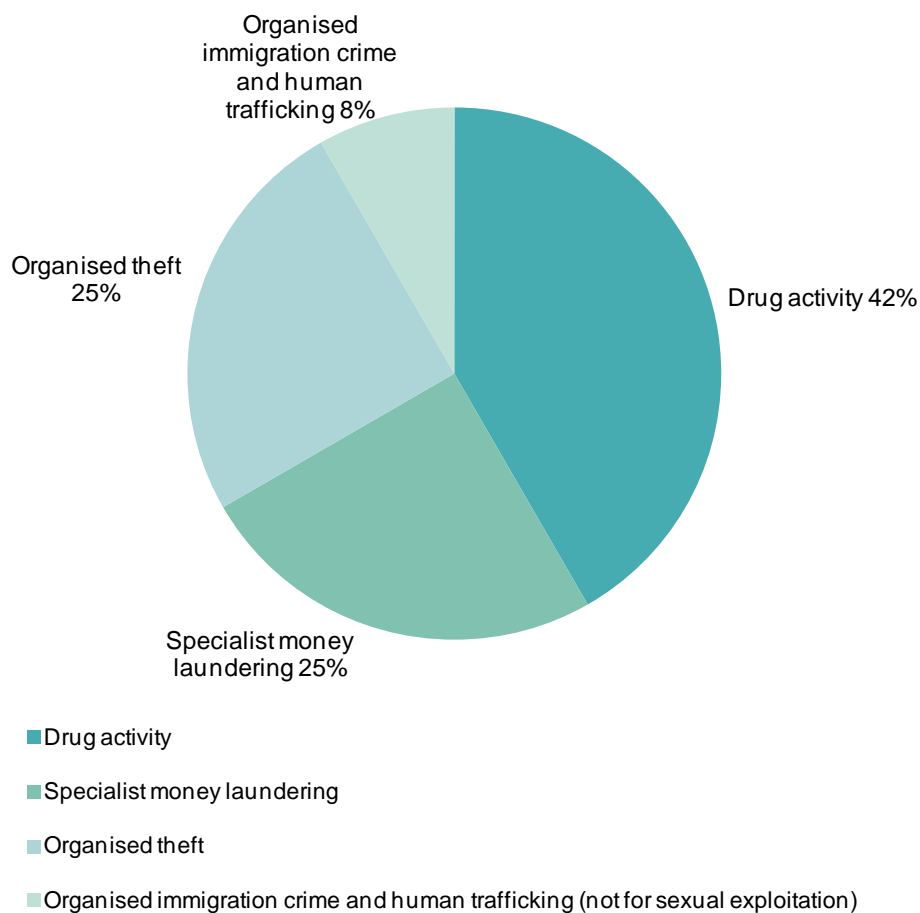

Source: HMIC data collection

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 (42 percent) of the OCGs managed by Wiltshire Police as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,[20] with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way.

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[18] 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.

[19] 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.

[20] 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[21]

Organised immigration crime and human trafficking 8%

Organised theft 25%

Drug activity 42%

Specialist money laundering 25%

- Drug activity
- Specialist money laundering
- Organised theft
- Organised immigration crime and human trafficking (not for sexual exploitation)

Source: HMIC data collection

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement.*[22] 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 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.

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[21] Figures may not sum to 100 percent, due to rounding.

[22] *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.

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

Wiltshire Police effectively assesses the threat from serious and organised crime. It has produced a strategic assessment and control strategy aligned to regional priorities which in turn reflect national priorities.[23] This has provided the force with an increased understanding of emerging crime types such as organised child sexual exploitation, modern slavery and cyber-crime.

Wiltshire Police has produced an initial serious and organised crime local profile.[24] The completion of this profile is important as it is informed by information and data from partners, as well as the force's own intelligence. The force intends to develop this with further work with partners, and they have recently formed a serious and organised crime partnership board (OCPB) designed to bring multi-agency solutions to the problems.

The force has a well-structured approach to tackling serious and organised crime. A series of well-structured meetings ensure intelligence is captured, analysed and acted upon. Cross border threats are addressed at regional intelligence and tasking meetings and a problem-solving approach is adopted aligned to the serious and organised crime strategy of pursue, prevent, prepare and protect.

In line with national guidelines OCGs are consistently 'mapped' and scored to assess their threat to communities.[25] These groups are also re-scored after police and partner activity against the OCG or when new intelligence is received. This process ensures the force is able to accurately assess the threat they pose either locally, regionally or nationally. The force currently manages a relatively low number of OCGs, none of which are assessed as posing a high risk to the public. Therefore none are currently under the management of the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU).

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[23] Each year, a force will carry out a strategic assessment from which a control strategy and intelligence requirement is set. The assessment is reviewed after six months to assess whether the priorities for tackling crime need to be amended and, where necessary, the control strategy updated.

[24] 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

[25] When a police force identifies a group of individuals whom they suspect may be involved in organised crime, an organised crime group or OCG, they go through a nationally standardised 'mapping' procedure. 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 a notable 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.[26]

The force also maintains profiles on the threats posed by dangerous drugs networks that predominantly originate from large metropolitan areas but affect counties such as Wiltshire as a result of their activities.

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

Wiltshire Police activity in response to OCGs is good. They have a clear and consistently applied method of prioritising disruption activity against OCGs. They have a positive working relationship with both the ROCU and the National Crime Agency (NCA) and take an active part in regional meetings and the sharing of intelligence and resources. A detective inspector within the serious crime department (SCD) is the lead responsible officer (LRO) for all OCG activity. The LRO oversees a team who own the disruption and investigation plans for each OCG. The LRO regularly reviews the plan owners' actions and progress made on keeping the public safe. All investigations into OCG activity are undertaken by the dedicated SCD. This team of specialist detectives use a range of overt and covert tactics to limit OCG activities.

There is a developing understanding within the force of the government's four Ps approach of pursue, prevent, protect and prepare. The force is increasing the levels of integrated partnership work which includes, for example, the force working with the prison service and probation staff on the longer-term management of career criminals.

A further example of effective work with partners is Operation Felton, which was a multi-agency approach to tackle modern slavery. The operation involved the police and a range of partners including the NHS, local authority and the environment agency. A number of foreign nationals were rescued from exploitation by unscrupulous employers. A centre was set up to receive these victims to provide

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[26] *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

immediate support and a platform for them to make a fresh start and the OCG was successfully disrupted.

Although when compared to some other forces the number of organised crime groups operating in the county is low, as is their threat to local communities, the force has recognised the threat from dangerous drugs networks (DDN). These are generally linked to OCGs in large metropolitan areas whose activities extend to smaller counties. To address these emerging threats the force uses strong governance and good intelligence gathering plans to guide a team of officers dedicated to tackle this problem.

The force conducts operations, which involve both partner agencies and neighbourhood teams, to tackle DDNs. A tactic used by some DDNs involves exploiting vulnerable individuals in order to use premises to deal drugs. Operation Dissipate is an example of one successful multi-agency operation which used this tactic. This operation led to the arrests of the individuals involved, and provided support from housing associations and mental health services, where appropriate, for the vulnerable individuals being used.

HMIC found that outside of those officers and staff working within the SCD, knowledge of OCGs is limited. Some neighbourhood staff, response officers and detectives have knowledge of OCG activity, but many believe the responsibility for tackling OCGs rests solely with the SCD. Officers are regularly briefed by SCD staff to obtain information in relation to OCGs in their area but do not have a wider understanding of how this relates to activity to tackle those OCGs. The force would benefit from ensuring that all staff have a wider understanding of the activity of OCGs and the work of the SCD in combating them and how they could assist.

The force identified that it was making relatively little use of referrals to the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) [27] or serious crime prevention orders (SCPO) [28] to tackle serious and organised crime. To increase the use of these tools the force invited the ROCU GAIN co-ordinator and the National Crime Agency SCPO co-ordinator into force to conduct a series of presentations to relevant staff. Although the numbers are still low, staff are now utilising these methods to tackle serious and organised crime. Prior to these presentations the force only had one

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[27] 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.

[28] A serious crime prevention order is a court order that is used to protect the public by preventing, restricting or disrupting a person's involvement in serious crime; for example, restricting who he or she can associate with, restricting his or her travel, or placing an obligation to report his or her financial affairs to the police. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415969/Fact_sheet_-_SCPOs_-_Act.pdf

SCPO in place. Since then a further two have been granted and three applications have been prepared. None of the individuals subject to the orders have yet been released from prison.

The force has processes in place within its custody suites to conduct intelligence checks on arrested foreign nationals through ACRO (Criminal Records Office).[29] In the 12 months to June 2015 the force arrested 1,320 foreign nationals, however only 204 of those were subject to ACRO checks. This means that the force cannot understand fully the threat posed by these persons and in turn cannot make an accurate assessment of their criminality.

As part of the inspection, HMIC observed how the force manages activity to tackle OCGs. We found that the force has a good meeting structure, intelligence requirements are clear and OCGs are scored and reassessed in line with national guidelines. There is a dedicated team that tackles organised crime and the force is developing methods to manage long term offenders. The force has recently set up an organised crime partnership board (OCPB) in an effort to further develop partnership work in this area. However, the force needs to do more to communicate with communities across Wiltshire regarding the threats posed by organised crime.

In the year ending 30 June 2015 the force received 999 suspicious activity reports (SARs) regarding financial transactions.[30] The force has two financial intelligence analysts who review each of the reports against force and national databases. If it is believed that any of them involve criminal activity an intelligence package is produced which is forwarded to a financial investigator for further enquiries. In the period highlighted 12 such packages were produced for further investigation.

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

The force works well with partners to improve the joint working towards tackling serious and organised crime. The OCPB has recently been formed, and although in the early stages of development initial signs are positive. The force works well with the NCA and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). A recent multi-agency operation to tackle modern slavery involved a number of partner agencies including the NCA, HMRC, the local authority and NHS England. The force is working with other partner agencies to develop its approach to the lifetime management of offenders and prevention of further offending. One example of this is the force working with the

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[29] 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.

[30] A suspicious activity report (SAR) is a piece of information which alerts law enforcement that certain client/customer activity is in some way suspicious and might indicate money laundering or terrorist financing.

prison and probation services to increase the understanding of officers as to the tactical options available to them. Successful interventions have included effective intelligence sharing that led to prisoners being separated in prison to prevent offending, and the use of civil and criminal orders such as SCPOs, to restrict opportunities for serious criminals on release from prison.

Wiltshire Police are participating in a Home Office project (Operation Holcroft) to tackle gang and youth violence. The force works with partners in the Swindon area to better understand and deter travelling criminal networks operating in the area, specifically to prevent the exploitation of vulnerable persons within the local community. The force analyses information and intelligence to identify vulnerable persons who may be targeted by OCGs. The Anti-Social Behaviour Management Group then provides support to vulnerable individuals, to prevent future engagement with OCGs.

Although the force publicises the results of some successful operations, which include operations against OCGs, through traditional media routes and the neighbourhood social media avenues, this is not done routinely. Publicising results is considered on a case-by-case basis and more could be done to improve communications with the public regarding serious and organised crime. The force could enhance this approach further to provide the public with wider prevention information designed to protect them from becoming victims of organised crime.

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

Wiltshire Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure it can fulfil its responsibilities in respect of the strategic policing requirement.

The force has a nominated assistant chief constable (ACC) who leads on each of the six national threats in the strategic policing requirement and provides structured updates to the rest of the senior management team. The ACC is the lead officer appointed to consider the threats identified in the strategic policing requirement, determine their relevance to Wiltshire and ensure that measures are put in place to address them. The force provides the police and crime commissioner with a strategic overview of the threats facing the force. The ACC also chairs a local strategic contest board which is made up of key individuals from strategic partners such as local councils, the fire service, NHS, the ambulance service, the prison service, the probation service and others. The primary function of the board is to consider and take action in relation to counter terrorism and domestic extremism but other threats related to the strategic policing requirement are also considered.

Civil contingency planning is well established in Wiltshire and regularly tested. The chief constable chairs the Wiltshire local resilience forum (LRF). The LRF is represented by a broad range of service providers whose service may be called

upon at times of emergency. They include the fire service, the NHS, the environment agency and other key service providers. The force has developed contingencies for changes to the terrorism threat level and in a recent exercise the force simulated a terrorist attack to test the state of readiness and emergency response procedures of all partner organisations.

All forces have a standing commitment to mobilise officers for deployments to support other forces in the event of major incidents or catastrophes which are beyond the capacity of the local force. Wiltshire Police's national commitment to public order is to be able to mobilise and deploy three fully trained police support units (PSUs). The force, since April 2015, has successfully tested their mobilisation capacity on three occasions. Within the last twelve months they have deployed PSU trained officers in support of other forces on four occasions. In addition, the force has tested their mutual aid capacity involving firearms officers, search trained officers, negotiators and dog patrols on a further five occasions. They have also provided some of these resources to assist other forces on seven occasions.

The force has recognised the increased threat from cyber-crime. It is included in the current force strategic assessment and is a priority in the force control strategy. The force has appointed an inspector to manage the approach to cyber-crime prevention and the force is currently working on a prevention strategy in conjunction with other forces in the region and Bournemouth University. A detective constable has been appointed to develop further investigative capacity. The head of IT in the force has responsibility for safeguarding and testing the force capability to defend against a cyber-attack. Over 200 control centre staff, including call handlers and call takers have received training in cyber-crime to enable them to appropriately assist and advise members of the public who ring in with concerns.

Summary of findings

●●●○ **Good**

Wiltshire 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 well-developed understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime. It has produced an initial serious and organised crime local profile and is working with partners to enhance this further and to ensure that a full range of interventions are available to tackle serious and organised crime. The force is

developing its intelligence gathering arrangements with government and other partners but this could be further improved.

Organised crimes groups are identified at a local and force level and regularly scored to identify and prioritise those groups posing the greatest threat to the communities of Wiltshire. Good systems are in place to tackle organised crime groups using a wide range of policing options. The force is developing strategies and initiatives to deter individuals from becoming involved in serious and organised crime.

The force is meeting its responsibilities under the strategic policing requirement. The force regularly tests its capabilities and has sufficient resources to deal with most public order contingencies.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve the awareness of organised crime groups among neighbourhood teams to ensure that they can reliably identify these groups, collect intelligence and disrupt their activity.

- The force should ensure that it takes opportunities to communicate with the public about serious and organised crime, in particular to publicise successful operations, offer reassurance and provide advice to help people to protect themselves from serious and organised crime.

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.