

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2017

An inspection of Bedfordshire Police



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Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

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

Bedfordshire Police

199

England and Wales

282



Anti-social behaviour

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

Bedfordshire Police

35

England and Wales

31

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

Bedfordshire Police

-5%

England and Wales

-0.05%



Crime (excluding fraud)

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

Bedfordshire Police

67

England and Wales

77

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

Bedfordshire Police

+10%

England and Wales

+14%



Crime outcomes*

Charged/summonsed

Bedfordshire Police

England and Wales

10%

10%

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Bedfordshire Police

England and Wales

11%

13%

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Bedfordshire Police

England and Wales

53%

48%



Domestic abuse

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

Bedfordshire Police

England and Wales

16

15

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

Bedfordshire Police

England and Wales

10%

11%



Organised crime groups

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

Bedfordshire Police

England and Wales

24

47

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

Risk-based inspection

HMICFRS adopted an interim risk-based approach to inspection in 2017 in order to focus more closely on areas of policing where risk to the public is most acute.¹ Under this approach, not all forces are assessed against every part of the PEEL effectiveness programme every year. Bedfordshire Police was assessed against the following areas in 2017:

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

Judgments from 2016² remain in place for areas which were not re-inspected in 2017. HMICFRS will continue to monitor areas for improvement identified in previous inspections and will assess how well each force has responded in future reports.

¹ Full details of the interim risk-based approach are available from the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based

² The 2016 effectiveness report for Bedfordshire Police can be found on the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-effectiveness-2016-bedfordshire

Effectiveness overview

Judgments

Overall effectiveness 2017  Requires improvement

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

Summary

Bedfordshire Police requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Since HMICFRS' 2016 effectiveness inspection the force has made solid progress in most areas, and HMICFRS is pleased to see that efforts have been made to ensure that improvements have been made throughout the force. However, further action is needed in a number of areas set out below in order to provide the public with an effective service and to continue its recent improvements.

The force does not yet have an effective approach to preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour. Although it has made progress since 2016, it needs to resource local policing teams fully and continue to develop staff skills in crime

prevention and problem solving. At the time of the inspection the force was ahead of schedule for its resourcing plans. The force is improving its understanding of what matters to local communities and is improving its response to their needs. The force works proactively with other organisations to solve problems and address the underlying causes of crime. It is developing more sophisticated analysis, to focus staff activity and maximise its positive effect.

Bedfordshire Police needs to improve its investigation of crimes. The force needs to improve the timeliness of its initial response to victims, as we found the current model does not always provide victims with a good service when they need it. The force also needs to improve its approach to the examination of digital devices in support of investigations, such as mobile phones and computers, and ensure arrested foreign nationals are subjected to checks for overseas convictions to understand and manage the risk they may pose more effectively. Positively, crimes are generally investigated to a good standard. The force makes good use of intelligence, and victims are regularly updated as investigations progress. The force has some understanding of those who cause the most harm in communities, and has a good approach to reducing re-offending.

The force must improve its ability to protect vulnerable people. It does not consistently identify vulnerable people when they initially contact the police via the force control room. Subsequent risk assessments are also of inconsistent quality. The force investigates most crimes involving vulnerable victims to a good standard. However, officers and staff are dealing with unacceptably high workloads. There are increased sickness absence rates, which compromises the force's ability to conduct high-quality investigations and provide tailored support to victims.

The force responds well to serious and organised crime. It has improved its understanding of organised crime threats, and works well with partner organisations to tackle organised crime groups, although it should do more to involve local policing teams in disrupting organised criminals. The force also needs to enhance its ability to prevent serious and organised crime, for example by identifying and supporting young people who are at risk of being drawn into gang violence.

Bedfordshire Police has the necessary arrangements in place to fulfil its national policing responsibilities, and to initially respond to an attack requiring an armed response.

Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



Requires improvement

Prioritising prevention

Bedfordshire Police is making progress towards its aim of prevention being central to reducing crime and keeping people safe. The force recognises that, in order to be fully effective, it must properly resource its community policing model and develop the prevention and problem-solving skills of its staff. In 2016 we had serious concerns that community policing teams in Bedfordshire were insufficiently resourced to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. To address this concern, we recommended that the force should increase the number of officers and staff carrying out active preventative policing and problem-solving activity, and monitor the effect of this increase to ensure that it improves the quality of service provided to the public.

This year, we found that this is no longer such a concern, although some problems persist. The force is increasing the size of local policing teams, developing the skills of its staff and providing the support they need to prevent crime effectively and carry out consistently high-quality problem solving and community engagement at a local level. Force leaders have a clear vision for local policing, which is understood by most officers and staff. Supervisors show good leadership, promote wellbeing and support their staff when required. The public receives a better service as a result, but the force needs to implement and resource its local policing model fully, in order for this service to reach a satisfactory standard that is more focused on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour from happening in the first place, and not simply reacting when they occur.

The force is in the process of ensuring its local policing model is fully staffed, by increasing the numbers of police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) permanently deployed to defined geographical areas. It has accelerated its original plans and aims to complete this process by April 2018. The force has a policy of limiting the redeployment of staff away from the areas they normally patrol. While this currently applies only to PCSOs, we found no evidence of police officers being taken away from their community role in order to cover reactive duties elsewhere.

Understanding communities

The force is developing its understanding of the communities it serves to tailor its activities effectively, but it still needs to improve in this respect. The local population is ethnically diverse, and the force has established strong relationships with faith communities, particularly through its community cohesion team. For example, it has an effective independent advisory group (IAG) which allows members of local faith communities to explain their concerns and priorities to force representatives. These relationships enable the force to identify and respond early to community tensions when they arise. The rural crime team, established in February 2017, together with the developing local community hub teams of police and PCSOs, are getting to know their local areas and building a better understanding of the people that live in them.

Community policing leaders recognise that new officers and staff need to have a better understanding of the communities they police. To achieve this there is a commitment to increase key individual networks, known as KINs. Officers are encouraged to identify new contacts in locations such as community care homes, charities for the homeless and elderly, and among communities such as eastern European migrant workers. This is a positive development, and in addition to the work led by the established community cohesion team, it should help the force to identify problems earlier and put in place preventative measures.

The force is improving the way it assesses threats to the communities it polices, and how it gathers community intelligence, helping to develop further its understanding of where harm is most likely to occur. The force has recently introduced community profiles which identify the main risks in local geographic areas. Officers and staff are learning how to use and apply the profiles to focus their day-to-day activities.

The force has worked hard to improve its understanding of what matters to local people across Bedfordshire, as well as providing opportunities for residents to influence policing priorities in their area. However, the force recognises that the effectiveness of its engagement varies across the county, and is developing a more effective and standardised approach, working closely with local partner organisations. A priority is to build on this approach to understand a wider range of community concerns, in addition to maintaining contacts with local councillors, watch schemes and faith groups. It could also do more to exploit digital means of engagement, for example to convey preventative messages.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

The force also requires improvement in its approach to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. In 2016 the force recorded high levels of anti-social behaviour compared with other forces in England and Wales. At the time, it did not understand the cause of this volume of anti-social behaviour. HMICFRS found that the force was not accurately categorising anti-social behaviour when first reported and said that, “the force should review how it records anti-social behaviour to ensure that it has an accurate picture to inform a more structured and consistent problem-solving approach, so that it can identify worsening behaviour and provide effective interventions to protect vulnerable victims”. Since 2016 the force has completed a programme of training for call handlers, to improve the categorisation of anti-social behaviour, and has reviewed its systems and processes. Officers and staff in community teams have seen a sharp fall in anti-social behaviour referrals, with an improvement in categorisation by call handlers at first point of contact. The improvement is supported by a dedicated anti-social behaviour co-ordinator. The priority anti-social behaviour team continues to deal effectively with high-risk incidents and it also assesses all anti-social behaviour to ensure the right team addresses the problem effectively. For example, community policing teams undertake longer-term problem-solving activity.

The force has provided a programme of problem-solving training to officers, staff and representatives from partner organisations. In most areas, staff are developing their skills in long-term problem solving aimed at addressing the underlying causes of crime and anti-social behaviour, rather than reacting to the symptoms. Partner organisations such as local authorities are involved in the problem-solving process, helping the force to maximise its effectiveness.

Recently, the force conducted its own problem-solving quality-assurance audit, and found a mixed picture, which is in accord with HMICFRS’ findings. Alongside its problem-solving activity, the force makes use of the range of powers and tactics that are available to help tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. However, it has identified an inconsistent approach to recording the use of these powers and tactics, and is seeking to understand better how well they are used. Initially the force was unable to provide HMICFRS with anti-social behaviour use of powers data however on inspection it was found that the force issues a high number of criminal behaviour orders. This forms part of a coherent overall approach combining enforcement with prevention and engagement activities.

Officers and staff make some use of analysis and evidence to inform their day-to-day activity, but the force needs to improve this process. Between April and June 2017 the force used a range of different powers and tactics: it issued 15 community protection notices (CPNs), 13 CPN warnings and 16 dispersal orders. It also issued a number of premises closure orders and football-related orders. However, these powers and tactics are not routinely evaluated and the force does not have a good

understanding of their effects. Developing this area would greatly enhance the force's ability to focus its efforts on the preventative approaches which have been shown to be the most successful, and improve services to the public. Positively, the force has recently implemented a new online 'What Works' intranet site, which should help staff to share good practice and effective crime-prevention initiatives.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that local teams are sufficiently well resourced to prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour effectively.
- The force should work with local people and partner organisations to improve its understanding of local communities, including those which are less likely to communicate with the police, such as migrant communities or elderly people.
- The force should adopt a structured and consistent problem-solving process to enable it to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour more effectively.
- The force should evaluate and share effective practice routinely, both internally and with partners, to continually improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Investigating crime and reducing re-offending



Requires improvement

Initial investigation

Bedfordshire Police needs to improve its initial investigation of crimes. The force's response model is based on a 'fast' and 'fixed' model. 'Fast' incidents are attended within one hour, while a 'fixed' response is an appointment arranged with a victim. This approach differs from the approach used in most forces of providing an immediate response within 15 minutes, a 'prompt' response within one hour or a scheduled appointment. As with other forces, demand has risen and the proportion of 'fast' incidents in Bedfordshire has increased by approximately 20 percent since the model was introduced. As a result, response teams now report being under-resourced and are working high levels of overtime to meet the demand for service.

There is also evidence that 'fixed' scheduled appointments are having a negative effect on victims. Staff in the community crime team (CCT) who attend 'fixed' appointments report that they are spending time trying to follow up investigation opportunities or undertaking victim-care activity that would have been more effective if a 'fast' or 'prompt' response had been provided. The negative effect of scheduled appointments for victims of domestic abuse is described further in the vulnerability chapter of this report. The force should ensure that 'fixed' appointments are only used in appropriate circumstances. The force has increased supervision in the control room to help monitor the appointment system, and it is reviewing how effectively it uses this process.

The force does not have an effective means to ensure that those incidents that require the fastest response are always accurately assessed and attended. While it is satisfied that on average it is attending 'fast' incidents within 18 minutes, it is relying on the call handler's risk assessment at the first point of contact to determine whether a call needs an immediate response or can wait for a later appointment. The force recognises that some 'fast' response incidents are not risk assessed using THRIVE³, and this is an area for improvement for the force. Once officers arrive at the scene, they take appropriate steps to identify and secure evidence as part of the

³ The threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) model is used to assess the appropriate initial police response to a call for service. It allows a judgment to be made of the relative risk posed by the call and places the individual needs of the victim at the centre of that decision.

'golden hour'⁴ immediately after an incident. However, where police attendance has been delayed through the use of a 'fixed' appointment, opportunities to gather the best evidence may have been lost.

The force needs to improve its initial investigation of fraud which is reported by members of the public. The force's figures show that, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB)⁵ referred 2,314 cases to it, including cases for both further investigation and for victim care. All of these referrals were subject to a proper examination to determine whether further investigation was necessary and victim support provided. During the same period, Bedfordshire Police received a total of 328 reports of fraud crimes, made directly to the force as a new 'call for service'. Of these direct calls, 70 percent were immediately processed as a non-judicial outcome⁶. However the force does appropriately signpost members of the public to Action Fraud⁷, and all crime reports are allocated to local community crime teams who investigate and determine the relevant outcome. The force should ensure that its approach is effective for direct calls.

During our inspection we also found that some of the NFIB-referred fraud investigations are being allocated to unaccredited investigators in the community crime team (CCT). In addition, we found some CCT officers do not know what preventative advice they should provide to victims, to help protect them from becoming a victim again in the future. The force lead recognises that more support should be provided to community crime investigators to improve their understanding and provide better support to victims. Financial investigators and detective constables promoted to the rank of sergeant are available to provide some advice to investigators. Action Fraud, the national fraud and cyber-crime reporting centre, has produced a document for the force to help it to understand its victim profile better, and the force uses this to identify vulnerable fraud victims and provide them with preventative messages. The force is planning to contact all victims aged 65 years and over, to provide victim care. The force is also a member of a new initiative, known as the cyber trust scheme, which is being developed with partners such as insurance companies and a university to support fraud prevention.

⁴ Golden hour refers to the time after a crime has been committed during which there is maximum potential for recovery of forensic evidence.

⁵ The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau is a police unit based at City of London Police responsible for gathering and analysing intelligence relating to fraud and financially-motivated cyber-crime.

⁶ Non-judicial outcomes are a range of disposals available to the police to deal with offenders and secure an effective justice outcome as an alternative to the formal justice system. For more information see: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/prosecution-and-case-management/justice-outcomes/

⁷ ActionFraud is the UK's national fraud and cyber-crime reporting centre. It provides a central point of contact for information about fraud and cyber- crime. For more information see: www.actionfraud.police.uk

The force investigates some crimes over the telephone (28 percent of the total recorded incidents in the 12 months to 30 June 2017). In some instances this is wholly appropriate and the most efficient way of resolving less-serious crimes where it is immediately apparent that there are no viable lines of enquiry. We reviewed a small sample of telephone investigations during our inspection and found them to be appropriate for this type of resolution.

Investigation quality

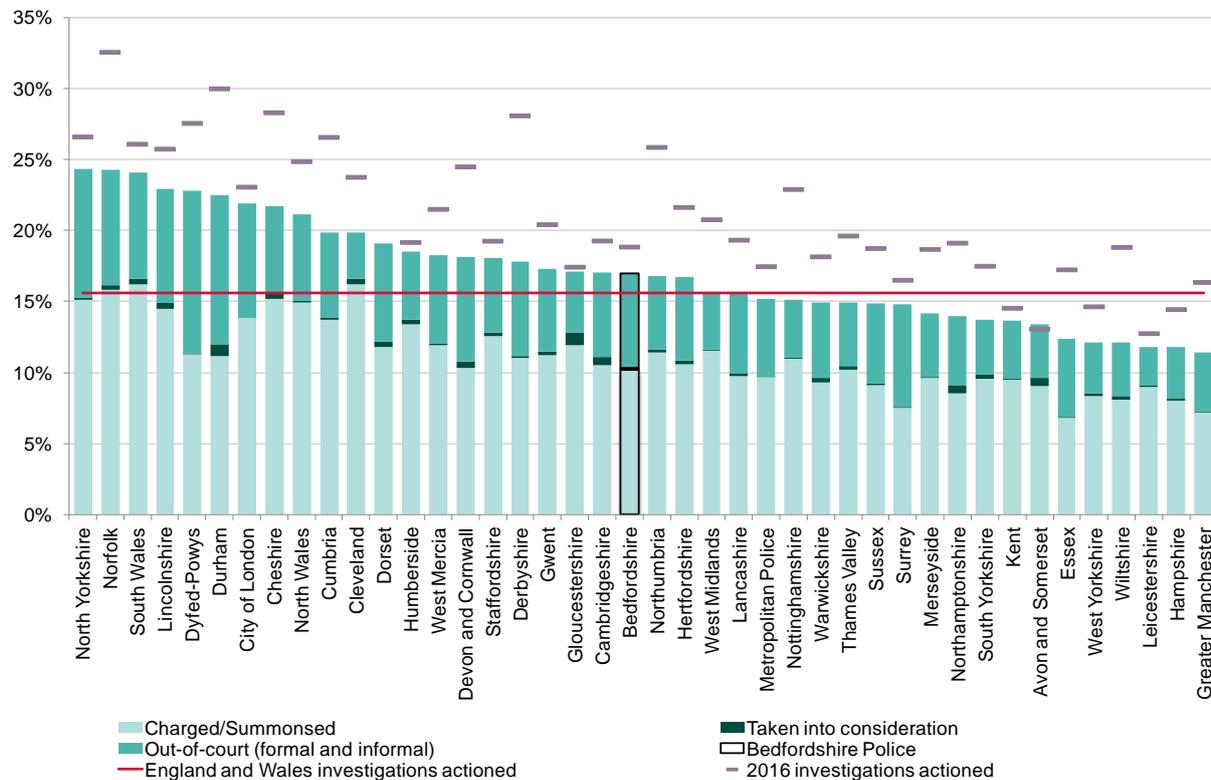
Investigations conducted by Bedfordshire Police are generally of good quality. Inspectors reviewed 60 files from recent investigations and found 46 to be of a good standard. Investigators generally receive good supervision to ensure that lines of enquiry are pursued and progress is maintained. However we found that within these 60 crime files those that were more straightforward or less serious in nature were less effectively supervised. So, during the inspection we reviewed a further 40 less-serious volume crime investigations, and found a positive improvement in supervision since the crime file review. We also reviewed a small number of investigations where responsibility was passed from one officer to another, to ensure important information was not missing, following the recent introduction of a new handover template which is beginning to have a positive effect. While the quality of handovers and supervision is mixed, there has been progress, which the force needs to embed. Good handovers between departments mean that investigations can be progressed quickly, without the need for further work that should have been completed by the first officer attending the incident. The force has achieved good investigative outcomes (such as charge or no further action) in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 and are broadly in line with the England and Wales rate. The force takes appropriate steps to ensure that investigations are not wrongly or prematurely cut short when victims withdraw their support for police action.

The force provides victims of crime with a good service. The quality of victim contact is positive, and follow-up contact has improved with greater scrutiny and governance by supervisors. Bedfordshire Police seeks the views of victims, using surveys to improve services. This is particularly evident for vulnerable victims and is described in more detail in the vulnerability chapter of this report. In April 2018 the force is planning to introduce a victims' hub, similar to other forces, which aims to provide a more co-ordinated service to victims.

The force needs to improve its approach to the examination of digital devices such as mobile phones and computers in support of investigations. On some occasions this process takes several months, although the force prioritises devices relating to urgent investigations. The force's digital forensic unit (DFU) currently has four examiners and one dedicated mobile phone examiner. The triage system is ineffective, as it is being staffed by two officers on restricted duties, who do not have the necessary technical knowledge or training to carry out this work, which is causing

a backlog before devices get to the digital forensic team. The force has recently approved, but not yet appointed, a specific post for this function. High-risk cases are being treated as a priority and are being managed effectively, with no outstanding or unallocated cases.

Figure 1: Proportion of investigations where action was taken, by force, for offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017^{8,9}



Source: 2016 and 2017 Home Office Outcomes Data

For further information about this data, please see annex A

Reducing re-offending

Bedfordshire Police has a good approach to reducing re-offending. Details of wanted people are quickly entered on the police national computer (PNC), so that other police forces are able to help to find or apprehend these people, and the risk to the public is reduced. There is a high (and increasing) number of wanted people on the PNC in Bedfordshire, relative to the size of its population, but the force has effective processes in place for ensuring that they are swiftly located and arrested whenever possible.

⁸ Investigations where action was taken includes the outcome categories of Charged/Summonsed, Taken into consideration and Out-of-court (formal and informal).

⁹ Suffolk Constabulary was unable to provide 2017 crime outcomes data. Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crime outcomes data. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further information about this data, please see annex A.

The force is improving its ability to identify and manage arrested foreign nationals. It is developing a partnership approach with Immigration Enforcement¹⁰ to check their identity and nationality when they are arrested, as well as to consider options to remove or deport those who have committed serious crimes or pose a threat to communities. We are pleased to note that the number of European arrest warrants (EAWs) executed in Bedfordshire is very high, at 118.9 warrants per million population, compared with the England and Wales rate of 21.8 warrants per million population.

However, there are areas where improvement is needed. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, Bedfordshire Police arrested 2,470 foreign national offenders, but made only 472 referrals to the Immigration Enforcement command and control unit. This represents a low compliance rate of 19.1 percent in Bedfordshire, compared with England and Wales compliance rate of 56.8 percent. The force should also do more to ensure arrested foreign nationals are subjected to checks for overseas convictions, using the ACRO system.¹¹ ACRO checks by Bedfordshire Police have reduced by 23 percent since 2016, compared with the England and Wales reduction of just under 6 percent. The force believes this is due to an IT glitch in how the custody system records officer collar identification data, which it is working to resolve. Making these improvements will help the force to understand and manage the risk posed by foreign national offenders more effectively.

The force has a number of initiatives in place to reduce re-offending in Bedfordshire and Luton. It uses the integrated offender management (IOM) model, which enables it to work with partner organisations such as the probation service to tackle the behaviour of prolific criminals. The IOM team cohort now includes 50 percent domestic abuse offenders. The force is in the process of combining the IOM and violent and sex offender management (VSOM) teams to increase capacity and further improve the speed at which offenders are apprehended. Offender managers regularly visit community and response teams to explain the systems, and what IOM and VSOM do. All sex offenders are mapped on the new community profiles, identifying the police and probation offender manager together with details of the sex offender's orders. The awareness and involvement of frontline officers has improved since 2016, although the force recognises this is not yet evident in an increase in intelligence submissions. The force is able to demonstrate some reductions in re-offending as a result of its activity. In Bedfordshire, 40 percent of the offenders being managed through IOM re-offended in the 12 months to 31 March 2017.

¹⁰ Part of the Home Office, Immigration Enforcement is responsible for preventing abuse, tracking immigration offenders and increasing compliance with immigration law. It works with partners such as the police to regulate migration in line with government policy, while supporting economic growth.

¹¹ ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and improves the exchange of criminal records and biometric information.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that it assesses incidents thoroughly and provides an appropriate response which keeps victims safe.
- The force should improve its ability to retrieve evidence from mobile phones, computers and other electronic devices quickly enough to ensure that investigations are not delayed.
- The force should ensure that checks are routinely conducted to verify the identity, nationality and overseas convictions of arrested foreign nationals.

Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims



Requires improvement

Identifying vulnerability

Bedfordshire Police has a clear definition of what vulnerability is, and a plan for protecting vulnerable people – people who are vulnerable through their age, disability, or because they have been subjected to repeated offences, or are at high risk of abuse, for example. The force communicates this plan effectively; all officers and staff have been provided with a vulnerability handbook in addition to their vulnerability training, which supports a growing understanding of what vulnerability means.

Bedfordshire Police has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability in the force area. The force works closely with local authorities and other partner agencies to analyse data, helping it to see where harm is concentrated and what forms of exploitation exist in communities. The force uses the THRIVE risk assessment process to help decide how to respond to incidents involving vulnerable people, and where appropriate trigger additional or specific services – for example, specially trained officers to support vulnerable victims of serious sexual offences or domestic abuse. We found some good examples of the force's response to sexual exploitation, which is dealt with by a team of specialist investigators, with a child sexual exploitation and missing people investigation team (CMIT), focusing on how the force and partners can better identify and reduce child sexual exploitation.

To increase its understanding of vulnerability, the force continues to invest in its community policing teams, including a rural crime team, and it is increasing its visibility in schools. The force plans to complete the resourcing of community policing by April 2018. New and existing officers and staff are being trained to develop skills to identify vulnerability, particularly hidden harm such as vulnerable people being trafficked or subjected to forced labour.

The force's identification of vulnerable people when they contact the police in the force control room is inconsistent. However, subsequent action taken by attending officers to safeguard individuals is good. Call handlers respond quickly to calls, but do not always follow THRIVE, the structured risk assessment process, to ensure that they recognise vulnerable people at the earliest opportunity. We identified some incidents where the THRIVE assessments had not been completed, particularly for 'fast' incidents (attended within one hour), and the force attendance time had not been met. Where a 'fixed' incident (appointment) had been identified as the appropriate response for domestic abuse, we found delays between the original

appointment and attendance of a police officer of up to 16 days. In such cases, the original risk assessment had not been reviewed, which means that not all vulnerable victims are being adequately safeguarded.

The force's IT systems enable cases involving vulnerable or repeat victims to be readily identified so that this information is clearly visible to staff who need it. However, in many of the cases we reviewed, incidents were not flagged where there was a vulnerable victim. This means that the force is missing opportunities to ensure that the real risk faced by victims can be fully assessed and that officers attending incidents can be made aware of any previous history which might assist them in properly safeguarding vulnerable victims. Positively, the crime system identified that when officers attended, they addressed vulnerability appropriately. The force should ensure that it is using the vulnerability flagging system effectively. At the time of our inspection in October 2017, the force and local partners had launched a new pilot vulnerability risk assessment conference and it had appointed a co-ordinator.

Initial response

Bedfordshire Police needs to improve its initial response to incidents involving vulnerable people, particularly victims of domestic abuse and those with mental health conditions. The DASH¹² risk assessment form has been modified to include additional questions. However, the force's investment in domestic abuse training does not always translate into high-quality DASH assessments being completed. Supervisory oversight of this process is also limited. This means remedial work is often required as part of the secondary risk-assessment process, because the risk has not been properly assessed and victims properly safeguarded in the first instance. This extra work is exacerbating the lack of capacity and also means that there could be hidden risk in the resulting backlog of domestic abuse, vulnerable adult and child protection referrals. This is affecting the ability of the force to safeguard some vulnerable people.

In HMICFRS' 2016 effectiveness inspection, we identified as a cause of concern that the force's response to missing and absent children and young people – in particular, the way it determines whether a case should be treated as 'missing' or 'absent' – is exposing some children and young people to potential risk of harm. We recommended that to address this cause of concern, the force should immediately review its approach to reports of missing children and ensure they risk assess them correctly and respond appropriately. In addition, we recommended that the force should make better use of trigger plans for persistently missing children, adults, and children at risk of sexual exploitation, to improve its response.

¹² DASH is a risk identification, assessment and management model adopted by UK police forces and partner agencies in 2009. The aim of the DASH assessment is to help frontline practitioners identify high-risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and so-called honour-based violence.

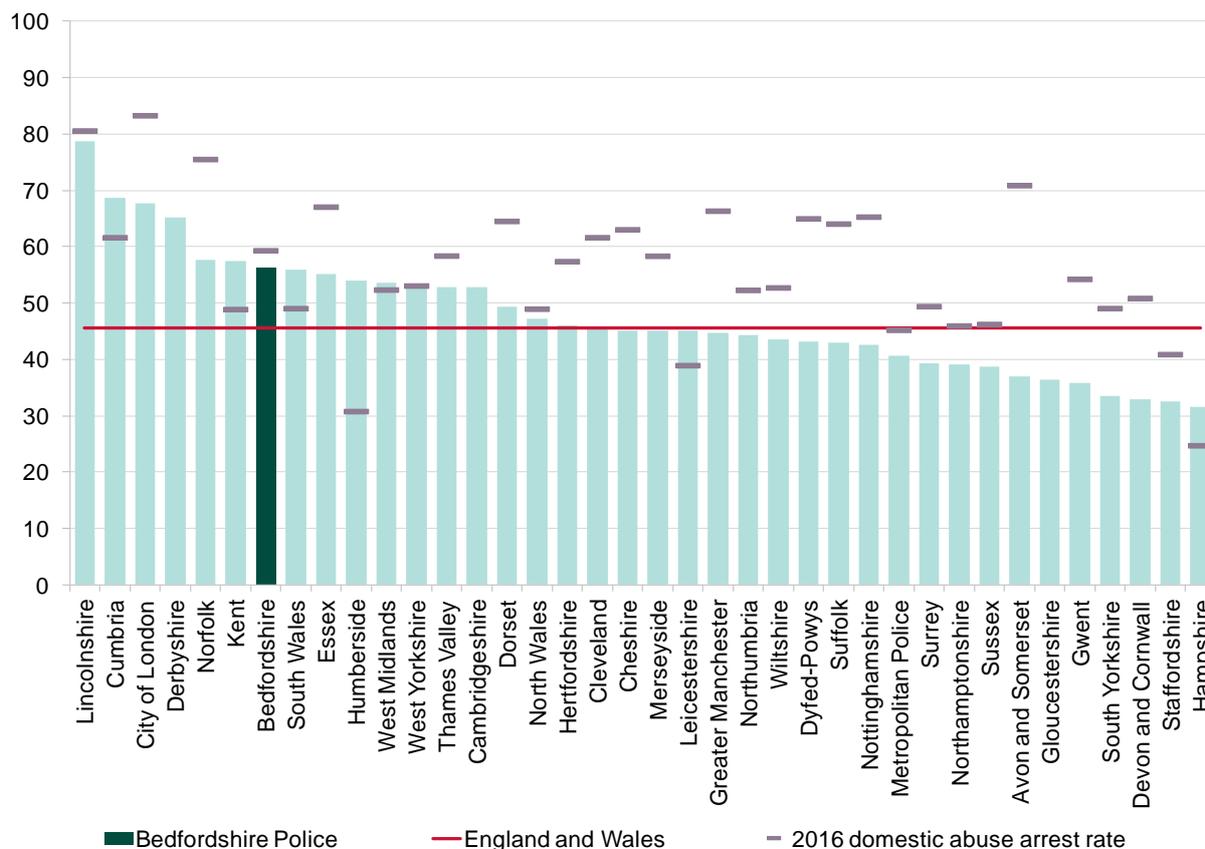
In the spring of 2017 we reviewed the force's progress again and we were pleased to find that the force had made some positive progress. In this autumn inspection we found further improvement with officers' use of trigger plans containing detailed intelligence on missing children to direct their golden hour enquiries for missing persons. The CMIT is working with several partner organisations to tackle the issues of young people who frequently go missing (and who may be at risk of sexual exploitation), and we found the response to and management of missing people, particularly children, improving. We conclude that this is no longer a cause of concern for the force.

Since the majority of cases now involve children who are assessed as missing rather than absent, the force is dealing with a higher number of missing person enquiries. While this is positive, we found that on occasions, demand outstrips resources, particularly for response teams who are under-resourced. This sometimes means actions are not taken as quickly as the force intends, and some children may not be safeguarded as quickly as they should be.

The force arrests a relatively high proportion of domestic abuse suspects. For every 100 domestic abuse-related offences recorded by Bedfordshire Police in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, 56.3 arrests were made, compared with the England and Wales rate of 45.5 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences in the same period. This is positive progress compared with 2016, when HMICFRS identified this as an area for improvement. The force mandatorily requires officers to use body-worn video cameras while attending domestic abuse incidents, which has improved the quality of evidence-gathering and provided safeguarding benefits, especially in domestic abuse incidents.

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

Figure 2: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse-related offences), by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017^{13, 14}



Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return, 2016 and 2017 Home Office domestic abuse crime data¹⁵

For further information about this data, please see annex A

Mental health

Bedfordshire Police recognises that the role of the police in supporting people with mental health conditions is increasing, and the force has enhanced its arrangements for working with partner organisations in order to provide a more effective service. Officers and staff in the control room have a good understanding of the importance of taking immediate action where necessary to protect those with mental health conditions. There are also good processes in place for assessing risk which enable

¹³ Durham, Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces were unable to provide 2017 domestic abuse arrest data. Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data.

¹⁴ North Yorkshire Police was unable to provide comparable domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, it has been removed from the graph. For further information, please see annex A.

¹⁵ The Home Office has provided HMICFRS with data on domestic abuse-related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These data are more recent than those published by the Office for National Statistics.

staff to make effective decisions. Frontline staff have received training and understand their responsibilities, and trained mental health professionals are available to help them identify and assist those who require additional or specialist support. The force is considering basing mental health practitioners in the control room, to further enhance the response.

The force has developed a mental health triage scheme¹⁶, funded jointly by the police and local NHS health trust. Under this scheme, a mental health nurse and paramedic accompany police officers on patrol to help them identify and support people with mental health conditions. The force introduced this scheme based on an analysis of the number of people approaching the police in need of specialist support for mental health. Initial findings of the scheme show it has reduced the number of emergency admissions to the local hospital and helped to ensure that people with mental health conditions can be offered more immediate and effective support. For example, a mental health monitoring form is used to record information on attendance. Details of the concerns recorded, action taken and any subsequent referrals are collected and analysed to evaluate the effectiveness of the triage scheme, and how well it is reducing overall demand for health and police services. Where the triage car is repeatedly going back to the same callers, multi-agency meetings are organised to discuss the individual and put a care plan and management plan in place, to reduce demand and respond more effectively to the person.

Investigating crimes involving vulnerable people

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

The force investigates most crimes involving vulnerable victims to a good standard. On most occasions, these crimes are allocated to specialist staff within the force's public protection unit. Although the timeliness of crime reports being allocated to the

¹⁶ Mental health triage is a partnership scheme between police and mental health professionals to provide advice and support for people experiencing mental health crisis. This advice can include an opinion on a person's condition, or appropriate information sharing about a person's health history. The aim is, where possible, to help police officers make appropriate decisions, based on a clear understanding of the background to these situations. This should lead to people receiving appropriate care more quickly, leading to better outcomes and a reduction in the use of section 136. It is not necessarily street-based but can be control room-based or via a helpline.

force's Emerald team¹⁷ has improved, supervisors are not allocating medium and lower-risk cases to their staff, because workloads are too high. This means that there are delays, and offenders are not being dealt with as quickly as they should be. Staff receive appropriate levels of training and supervision from more senior investigators, with opportunities for continuing professional development, although these were often not taken due to high workloads. We found that investigators in the Emerald team had excessive workloads at the time of our inspection. Wellbeing is considered, but sickness rates among staff in the team are still high, which puts additional pressure on tired investigators. This compromises their ability to conduct high-quality investigations and provide tailored support to victims. Positively, the force recognises the increase in demand and the effect on staff; it has recently identified the need for 40 additional staff but has yet to identify how this increase in resources will be achieved. The force should ensure that workloads are kept manageable at all times to provide vulnerable victims with the best possible service, and limit excessive pressure on staff.

Similarly, increasing demand is outstripping resources in the digital forensics unit (DFU), which, among many other things, is responsible for examining digital devices for evidence in cases of child abuse and exploitation. The lack of capacity within the team to triage and process devices effectively, causes delays which mean that children may be inadequately safeguarded. The force is aware of this, and is increasing resources in the DFU.

Resource shortages are also affecting the internet child abuse investigation team (ICAIT) which deals with internet child abuse, online paedophilia and the distribution of indecent images. The team is struggling to process packages prepared by the central intelligence team vulnerabilities and exploitation desk, despite working regular overtime. At the time of inspection there were ten packages incorporating warrants sworn out waiting for execution with ICAIT. In addition, there were 16 further cases with prepared packages and drafted warrants but not yet sworn out and held back due to the existing backlog within ICAIT. Positively, any high-risk cases are prioritised.

¹⁷ Bedfordshire Police set up its Emerald team in September 2016 to tackle domestic abuse, rape, and serious sexual assaults.

The force makes little use of the range of legal powers available to protect victims of domestic abuse, such as domestic violence protection notices (DVPNs) and orders (DVPOs)¹⁸ and Clare's Law¹⁹. The force should ensure that effective training, systems and processes are in place to enhance its ability to provide protection for victims. The rate at which Bedfordshire Police charges domestic abuse-related offenders with a crime is in line with the rate for England and Wales. This is an increase of 8.5 percent for the 12 months to 30 June, compared with the same period in 2016.

Bedfordshire Police is good at managing sex offenders. HMICFRS' 2017 child protection inspection found that the ratio of offenders to managers is within acceptable boundaries to effectively manage those offenders. However, case audits found some examples where visits are considerably overdue and where opportunities to prosecute offenders for incidents such as breach of a sexual harm prevention order²⁰ (SHPO) or notification are not being pursued. Since our child protection inspection, the force has taken action to address this, and the number of breaches identified by the force has increased, reflecting an improvement in offender management. The force has also combined the integrated offender management (IOM) and violent and sexual offender management (VSOM) teams, to increase resources and resilience. This should help to improve the timeliness of risk assessments and visits, to check whether offenders are complying with the conditions of their orders.

The change of command for the VSOMT (from public protection to local policing), is also helping to increase officer awareness and understanding. The force has improved frontline officers' understanding of registered sex offenders (RSOs), with face-to-face briefings from the offender managers, and mapping of sex offenders on community profiles. This includes the details of the police and probation manager and the orders the offender must adhere to. The force recognises that, while the education of frontline staff has improved in the last 12 months, this is not reflected in an increase in intelligence submissions about the activities of high-risk sex offenders. Not all local officers we spoke to knew the identities of the sex offenders living in the areas they policed.

¹⁸ DVPNs may be issued by an authorised police officer to prevent a suspected perpetrator from returning to a victim's home and/or contacting the victim. Following the issue of the DVPN, the police must apply to the magistrates for a DVPO. The DVPO will be granted for a period of up to 28 days.

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

²⁰ Sexual harm prevention order (SHPO) is a measure given by the magistrates' court or crown court to a person who poses a risk of sexual harm to the public or an individual person. The SHPO prohibits the offender from a range of activity including overseas travel, restrictions on certain types of employment and limiting internet use.

Partnership working

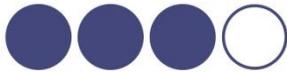
Bedfordshire Police has well-developed relationships with partner organisations which enable it to support vulnerable people and address the needs of victims. The force plays a leading role across three multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASHs²¹), with a number of partner agencies co-located to maximise opportunities for information-sharing. This means that it can develop effective safety plans for both victims and offenders who need support.

There is also an established multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) process in place. A MARAC is a meeting where information about the highest-risk domestic abuse cases is shared between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, independent domestic violence advisers (IDVAs)²², probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. In Luton, there are daily domestic abuse meetings involving all partners, who review every DASH risk assessment confirm the level of risk and then run a mini-MARAC for all cases where a victim is identified as high risk, to ensure continuous safeguarding is in place. We reviewed the MARAC process and found the system to be effective.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that call-handling staff are appropriately trained, understand and complete assessments of threat, risk and harm to appropriate standards, consistently record them on force systems and are supervised effectively.
- The force should ensure that frontline officers become more proficient in completing DASH risk assessments at initial response, and that there is sufficient supervisory oversight to ensure opportunities to safeguard vulnerable victims are not missed.
- The force should ensure that it increases the number of qualified detectives within its high-risk departments, and should ensure workloads are manageable.
- The force should review its use of DVPOs/DVPNs and Clare's Law, to ensure that it is making best use of these powers to safeguard victims of domestic abuse.
- The force should ensure it improves its response to incidents involving all vulnerable people, but particularly victims of domestic abuse in relation to cases where police have been unable to attend or attendance is delayed, so that it reassesses risks and takes appropriate safeguarding action in a timely manner.

Tackling serious and organised crime



Good

Understanding threats

The force has made progress in its approach to tackling serious and organised crime²³ and now has a good understanding of the threat posed. This is an improvement on 2016, when we said the force should further develop its serious and organised crime local profile²⁴ to enhance its understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime and to provide the basis for joint activity aimed at reducing this threat. The force uses structured methods to assess threats from such crimes as drug trafficking, modern slavery and cyber-crime. It shares data with partner organisations such as local authorities, and has produced a local profile of serious and organised crime in Bedfordshire and Luton. It recognises that further development, to produce richer and more detailed local geographic profiles, will enhance its understanding. It would also benefit from the development of a gang profile, to coincide with the publication of future serious and organised crime profiles. The force uses a wide range of intelligence sources, including communities, partner organisations and digital sources, to develop its understanding of serious and organised crime. It understands where gaps exist in its intelligence, and initiates appropriate activity in order to fill these.

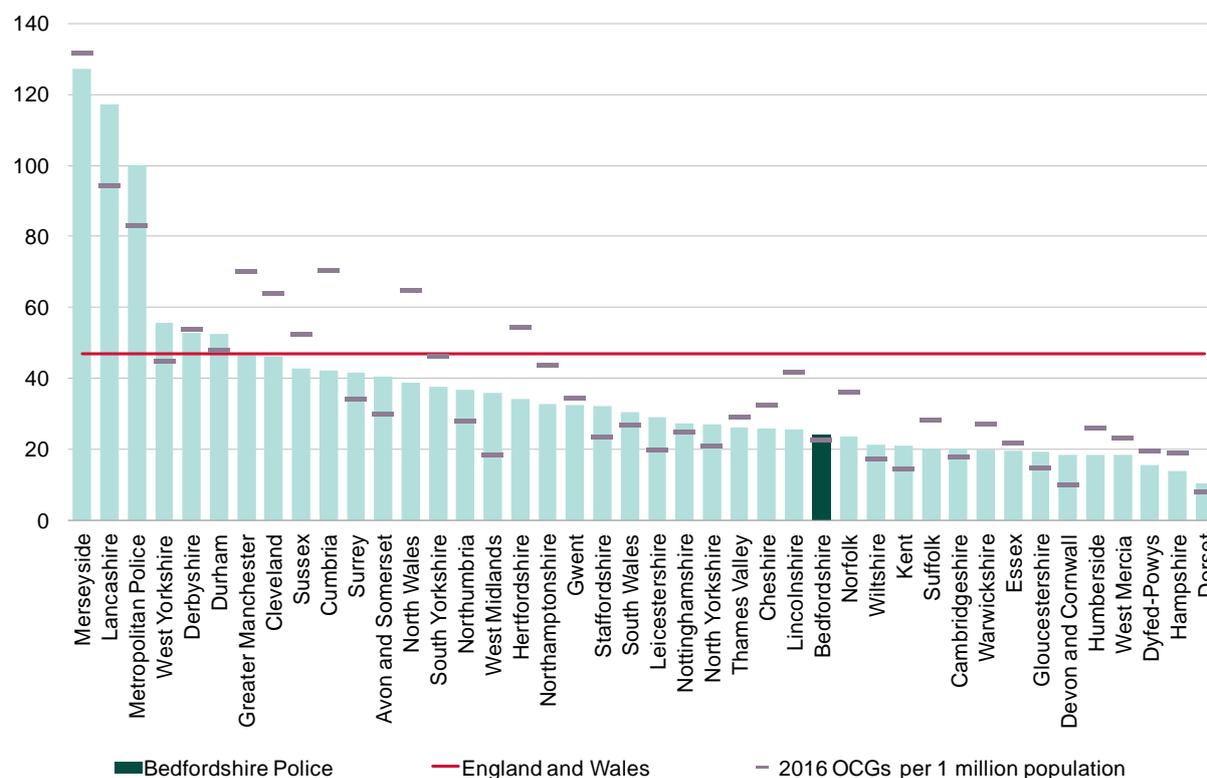
The force has also improved its approach to identifying organised crime groups (OCGs). The force has further developed the 'intelligence desk' system, introduced a year ago to provide a focus on specific themes, which has improved its understanding of emerging threats as well as traditional serious and organised crime. The force takes proactive steps to search for organised criminal activity, and local officers and staff have received training and online support to develop their knowledge and understanding of how to recognise the signs of organised crime. With the additional resources and training in community teams, the force is increasing its capacity and capability to identify OCGs. The right processes are now in place to ensure that new OCGs are properly assessed as soon as they have been

²³ Serious and organised crime is when serious crime is planned, co-ordinated and conducted by people working together on a continuing basis. Their motivation is often, but not always, financial gain.

²⁴ A SOC local profile is a report that outlines the threat from serious and organised crime within a specific local area. As a minimum, local profiles should be produced at force level but it may be decided that it would be most effective for them to cover even more localised areas (for example, in larger forces these might be at local authority, borough operational command unit, basic command unit or community safety partnership level).

identified – this assessment is known as OCG ‘mapping’. This is an improvement on 2016. As at 1 July 2017, Bedfordshire Police had mapped a broadly similar number of OCGs relative to other forces, indicating that it has an adequate approach to identifying these groups.

Figure 3: Rate of organised crime groups (OCGs) per 1 million population, by force, as at 1 July 2017²⁵



Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return

For further information about this data, please see annex A

Disrupting and investigating serious and organised crime

Bedfordshire Police is good at disrupting and investigating serious and organised crime. It is systematic in its approach to deciding which OCGs to target for intervention, using objective information and professional judgment. A new partnership board structure is in place to provide direction and oversight of activity aimed at tackling serious and organised crime.

Capable lead responsible officers (LROs) take responsibility for tackling individual OCGs over the long term, and the force scrutinises their activity and progress on a regular basis. LROs use a range of tactics, including those which are provided by the

²⁵ City of London Police has been removed from the graph as its organised crime group data are not comparable with other forces due to its size and its wider national remit. For further information, please see annex A.

regional organised crime unit²⁶, such as specialist surveillance and undercover policing. For example, Operation Defend is drawing on national and regional assets to disrupt an OCG involved in modern day slavery and to protect vulnerable victims. The force has improved the way it makes use of the intelligence and powers of partner organisation: for example, since 2016 it has increased the number of referrals to the Government Agency Intelligence Network. The force is doing more to involve local policing teams in disrupting OCG activities. It has recently introduced community profiles, 'OCGs on a page', and online support which identify them. However, several local teams we visited had little awareness of OCGs active in their area, despite these innovations. This means the force is missing opportunities to target these groups. However, the force recognises that it will take time to educate new officers and staff in community policing teams to become more effective.

The force has achieved some impairment of serious and organised crime, as a result of its activity. The force could still do more to develop an approach to serious and organised crime based more clearly on the national 'four Ps' framework (pursue, prevent, prepare and protect). The force has a good system in place for scrutinising these before they are recorded to ensure accuracy and consistency. However, the force's understanding of its longer-term ability to weaken serious and organised crime is more limited, and needs to improve.

Preventing serious and organised crime

Bedfordshire Police needs to improve its ability to prevent serious and organised crime. The force has some initiatives in place aimed at identifying and supporting those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime. The Boson team refers individuals to the multi-agency gang panel (MAGPAN) for early intervention opportunities, particularly through schools, youth offending schemes and the MASHs.

Although the force had seen some successes from referrals into diversion programmes, LROs felt that recent diversion initiatives with potential Home Office funding had not been as successful, and therefore opportunities had been missed to obtain additional support for diverting girls away from gangs. The force is planning to put in place a dedicated police presence in schools to help to identify those who are vulnerable, such as the younger siblings of criminals involved in organised crime. However, these initiatives are on a small scale and there is little evidence to suggest that they are effective. The force has made positive steps towards mapping and

²⁶ Regional organised crime units (ROCU) provide police forces with access to a standardised range of capabilities to help them tackle serious and organised crime. These capabilities encompass specialist areas such as undercover policing, surveillance and cyber-crime investigation. The regional provision of these capabilities can reduce or remove the need for forces to maintain specialist capabilities of their own, many of which are expensive to maintain and only required on relatively rare occasions.

understanding the threat posed by urban street gangs²⁷, but could do more to understand how many urban street gangs are operating in Bedfordshire. This would allow the force to focus efforts on intervening to divert young people away from gang crime. Positively, the police and crime commissioner is considering funding a gang co-ordinator working with a public health lead to prevent individuals being drawn into organised crime.

The force has done some work to improve the way it prevents offending among established organised criminals, but this remains an area for development. Lifetime offender management is now managed by the vulnerability threat desk, with a dedicated field intelligence officer who monitors activity. The force is working with other public services and third-sector organisations to increase the use of ancillary orders to prevent re-offending. This was identified in 2016 as an area for improvement, and the force should do more to achieve this aim.

Those who have been imprisoned are subject to adequate monitoring to prevent them from continuing to commit organised crime while in prison, and there is some co-ordination with local policing teams to make sure that the behaviour of harmful criminals can be managed properly once they are released. The force is part of a regional plan to implement a regional prison intelligence unit, to include counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime, by 2018.

The force makes some use of serious crime prevention orders (SCPOs),²⁸ and inspectors found some understanding of their potential among officers and staff responsible for tackling serious and organised crime.

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 take steps to identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime, and ensure that preventative initiatives are put in place with partner organisations to deter them from offending.

²⁷ Urban street gangs and many other gangs evolve into organised crime groups (OCGs). Gangs tend to be less organised than OCGs and more concerned with perpetuating a threat of violence or harm across a particular geographical area related to the gang's main activities (Serious and Organised Crime Act 2015).

²⁸ SCPOs are court orders that protect the public by preventing, restricting or disrupting a person's involvement in serious crime. An SCPO can prevent involvement in serious crime by imposing various conditions on a person – for example, restricting who he or she can associate with, restricting his or her travel, or imposing an obligation to report his or her financial affairs to the police.

Specialist capabilities

Ungraded

National policing responsibilities

*The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)*²⁹ specifies six national threats: terrorism, cyber-crime, public order, civil emergencies, child sexual abuse and serious and organised crime.

Bedfordshire Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. The force has assessed its capability to respond to the six national threats included in the SPR.

A chief officer has been appointed to lead a programme to build the force's capacity to respond to each threat – we found the programme to be an effective means of engaging the workforce and developing the skills and experience it requires.

The force has established a comprehensive programme to test its response to national threats – this is run in conjunction with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The three forces have recently completed a training exercise with other organisations to assess their ability to provide humanitarian relief should there be serious flooding in the area. Working constructively with other forces in the region ensures that large numbers of officers can be mobilised should a major incident be beyond the control of a single force.

Firearms capability

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

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of organised crime groups or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. The *Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*³⁰ makes forces responsible for implementing national

²⁹ The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary. It sets out the latest national threats and appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter them. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from police forces, national agencies or other partners.

The Strategic Policing Requirement, Home Office, March 2015. Available from:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

³⁰ *Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*, Home Office, 2003.

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

Bedfordshire Police operates joint arrangements with Hertfordshire Constabulary and Cambridgeshire Constabulary to provide armed policing. The force has a good understanding of the potential harm facing the public; its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code of practice and the guidance issued by the College of Policing.³¹ The APSTRA was last reviewed on 10 July 2017.

We consider that the APSTRA could be improved if it included more analysis of how quickly armed response vehicles (ARVs) respond to armed incidents. This helps forces understand whether they have sufficient armed officers to meet operational demands. We are aware that the force collects this data but it does not currently form part of the APSTRA.

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

³¹ College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on armed policing, available at: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/?s

Annex A – About the data

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

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

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

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

Methodology

Data in the report

British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data, so will differ from those published by the Home Office.

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

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2016 population estimates. These were the most recent data available at the time of the inspection.

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

Survey of police staff

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

Ipsos MORI survey of public attitudes towards policing

HMICFRS commissioned Ipsos MORI to survey attitudes towards policing between 21 July and 15 August 2017. Respondents were drawn from an online panel and results were weighted by age, gender and work status to match the population profile of the force area. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, varying between 300 and 321 individuals in each force area. Therefore, any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

The findings of this survey are available on our website:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/data/peel-assessments

Review of crime files

HMICFRS reviewed 2,700³² police case files across crime types for:

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

Our file review was designed to provide a broad overview of the identification of vulnerability, the effectiveness of investigations and to understand how victims are treated through police processes. We randomly selected files from crimes recorded between 1 January 2017 and 31 March 2017 and assessed them against several

³² 60 case files were reviewed in each force, with the exception of the Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police and West Yorkshire Police where 90 case files were reviewed.

criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected per force, we did not use results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance, but alongside other evidence gathered.

Force in numbers

A dash in this graphic indicates that a force was not able to supply HMICFRS with data or the data supplied by the forces were not comparable.

Calls for assistance (including those for domestic abuse)

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

Recorded crime and crime outcomes

These data are obtained from Home Office police recorded crime and outcomes data tables for the 12 months to 30 June 2017 and are taken from the October 2017 Home Office data release, which is available from:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anti-social behaviour

These data are obtained from Office for National Statistics data tables (year ending 31 March 2017), available from:

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables

All police forces record incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported to them in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Forces record incidents under NSIR in accordance with the same victim-focused approach that applies for recorded crime, although these data are not subject to the same quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection.

Incident counts should be interpreted as incidents recorded by the police, rather than reflecting the true level of victimisation. Other agencies also deal with ASB incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords), but incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police data.

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

Domestic abuse

Data relating to domestic abuse-flagged offences is obtained through the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These are more recent data than those previously published by Office for National Statistics. The Home Office collects these data regularly and requires all forces to record accurately and flag domestic abuse crimes. Domestic abuse flags should be applied in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules³³ to ensure consistency across forces, and within published data sets.

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

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

www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2017

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

³³ Home Office Counting Rules are rules in accordance with which crime data – required to be submitted to the Home Secretary under sections 44 and 45 of the Police Act 1996 – must be collected. They set down how the police service in England and Wales must record crime, how crimes must be classified according to crime type and categories, whether and when to record crime, how many crimes to record in respect of a single incident and the regime for the re-classification of crimes as no-crimes.

Organised crime groups (OCGs)

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

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

Figures in the report

Not all forces' reports will contain all the figures we mention in the sections below. This is because some forces' data was incomplete or not comparable with England and Wales data, and in 2017 HMICFRS undertook risk-based inspections. More details about our risk-based approach can be found here:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

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

Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crimes outcome data, because it had difficulty with the recording of crime outcomes for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was due to the force introducing the Niche records management system in spring 2015. Problems with the implementation of Niche meant that crime outcomes were not reliably recorded.

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

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

- The arrest rate is calculated using a common time period for arrests and offences. It is important to note that each arrest is not necessarily directly linked to its specific domestic abuse offence recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 in this calculation. It is also possible to have more than one arrest

per offence. In addition, the reader should note the increase in police-recorded crime which affected the majority of forces over the last year. This may mean arrest rates are higher than the figures suggest. Despite this, the calculation still indicates whether the force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action. HMICFRS evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures (such as use of voluntary attendance or body-worn video cameras) during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

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

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

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

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary was unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data due to a recording problem that meant it could only obtain accurate data from a manual audit of its custody records.
- Lancashire Constabulary had difficulty in identifying all domestic abuse-flagged arrests. This affected 23 days in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force investigated this and confirmed that the impact on the 2016 data provided to HMICFRS would be marginal and that these are the most reliable data it can provide.

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

Please see 'Organised crime groups' above.

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

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