

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report
Bedfordshire Police
Neighbourhood Policing
Developing Citizen Focus Policing

September 2008



Bedfordshire Police – HMIC Inspection

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005, and thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking more probing inspections of fewer topics. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that Neighbourhood Policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents as phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;

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- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and
- the embedding of Neighbourhood Policing.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

The recent Green Paper on policing – *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together* – proposes major changes to the role of HMIC. We are currently working through the implications to chart a way forward, and it will not be until the late Autumn when we are able to communicate how this will impact on the future approach and inspection plans. In the meantime, we have now commenced work covering the areas of critical incident management, public order and civil contingencies/emergency planning – which will conclude in early 2009. In consultation with ACPO portfolio holders and a range of relevant bodies (such as the Cabinet Office in respect of civil contingency work) we have conducted an assessment of risk, threat and demand and, based on this, we will focus on those forces where we can add most value. We will also commence a series of police authority inspections in April 2009, which will follow a pilot process from November 2008 through to January 2009.

Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime, Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing in each of the 43 forces of England and Wales.

This document includes the full graded report for the Neighbourhood Policing inspection and Developing Citizen Focus Policing inspection.

Neighbourhood Policing

The public expect and require a safe and secure society, and it is the role of the police, in partnership, to ensure provision of such a society. The HMIC inspection of Neighbourhood Policing implementation assesses the impact on neighbourhoods together with identified developments for the future.

The piloting of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) between April 2003 and 2005 led to the Neighbourhood Policing programme launch by ACPO in April 2005.

There has been considerable commitment and dedication from key partners, from those in neighbourhood teams and across communities to deliver Neighbourhood Policing in every area. This includes over £1,000 million of government investment (2003–09), although funding provision beyond 2009 is unclear. The NRPP evaluation highlighted three key activities for successful Neighbourhood Policing, namely:

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- the consistent presence of dedicated neighbourhood teams capable of working in the community to establish and maintain control;
- intelligence-led identification of community concerns with prompt, effective, targeted action against those concerns; and
- joint action and problem solving with the community and other local partners, improving the local environment and quality of life.

To date, the Neighbourhood Policing programme has recruited over 16,000 police community support officers (PCSOs), who, together with 13,000 constables and sergeants, are dedicated by forces to 3,600 neighbourhood teams across England and Wales.

This report further supports Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* (2008), which considers that community safety must be at the heart of local partnership working, bringing together different agencies in a wider neighbourhood management approach.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

Citizen Focus policing is about developing a culture where the needs and priorities of the citizen are understood by staff and are always taken into account when designing and delivering policing services.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* emphasised the importance of focusing on the treatment of individuals during existing processes: this is one of the key determinants of satisfaction.

A sustained commitment to quality and customer need is essential to enhance satisfaction and confidence in policing, and to build trust and further opportunities for active engagement with individuals, thereby building safer and more secure communities.

This HMIC inspection of Developing Citizen Focus Policing is the first overall inspection of this agenda and provides a baseline for future progress. One of the key aims of the inspection was to identify those forces that are showing innovation in their approach, to share effective practice and emerging learning. A key challenge for the service is to drive effective practice more widely and consistently, thereby improving the experience for people in different areas.

Latest data reveals that, nationally, there have been improvements in satisfaction with the overall service provided. However, the potential exists to further enhance customer experience and the prospect of victims and other users of the policing service reporting consistently higher satisfaction levels. All the indications show that sustained effort is required over a period of years to deliver the highest levels of satisfaction; this inspection provides an insight into the key aspects to be addressed. It is published in the context of the recent Green Paper *From the Neighbourhood to the National – Policing our Communities Together* and other reports, which all highlight the priorities of being accountable and responsive to local people. The longer-term investment in Neighbourhood Policing and the benefits of Neighbourhood Management have provided an evidence base for the broad Citizen Focus agenda.

Statutory Performance Indicators and Key Diagnostic Indicators

In addition to the inspection of forces, HMIC has drawn on published data in the Policing Performance Assessment Frameworks (PPAFs) published between March 2005 and March 2008 as an indicator of outcomes for both Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing.

The statutory performance indicators (SPIs) and key diagnostic indicator (KDI) that are most appropriate to indicate outcomes for the public and are used to inform this inspection are set out below:

Neighbourhood Policing

- SPI 2a – the percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job.
- KDI – the percentage of people who ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’.
- SPI 10b – the percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour in their area.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

- SPI 1e – satisfaction of victims of domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and road traffic collisions with the overall service provided by the police.
- SPI 3b – a comparison of satisfaction rates for white users with those for users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.

Forces are assessed in terms of their performance compared with the average for their most similar forces (MSF) and whether any difference is statistically significant. Statistical significance can be explained in lay terms as follows: ‘The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’ A more detailed description of how statistical significance has been used is included in Appendix 3 at the end of this report.

Developing Practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC’s key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected (described as a ‘strength’) in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces; each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required. HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

The Grading Process

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to be meeting the standard, exceeding the standard or failing to meet the standard.

Meeting the standard

HMIC uses the standards agreed with key stakeholders including ACPO, the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) and the Home Office as the basis for SGC. The standards for Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing are set out in those sections of this report, together with definitions for exceeding the standard and failing to meet the standard.

Force Overview and Context

Geographical description of force area

The area served by Bedfordshire Police covers the two-tier county of Bedfordshire and the Luton Unitary Authority, with a population of 603,900 (2008 estimate) comprising 239,200 households (2006 estimate) in 120 villages and towns. From April 2009 Bedfordshire County's two-tier local government will be replaced with two unitary authorities; Bedford Borough Unitary Authority and Central Bedfordshire Unitary Authority. The force covers a diverse mix of urban and rural areas. The force area includes the urban areas of Bedford, Dunstable and Luton; smaller towns such as Ampthill, Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard; and a large rural area.

Bedfordshire's transport infrastructure includes sections of the M1 and A1 trunk roads, some of the busiest roads in Europe, and Luton International Airport. In addition, both East and West Coast Mainlines pass through the county.

Local features and amenities include Woburn Abbey and Safari Park, Luton Town Football Club and Whipsnade Zoo. Two major developments are currently proceeding through planning processes: Centre Parcs is planning a new holiday village near Ampthill in Mid Bedfordshire; NIRAH, a proposed tourist/research centre that would be the largest freshwater aquarium in the world, is proposed for former clay pits south of Bedford.

The newly formed University of Bedfordshire has a major campus in Bedford in addition to its Luton base.

Demographic description of force area

There is a wide diversity of communities, particularly in Luton and Bedford, with Luton having a proportionally high number of black and minority ethnic (BME) residents. Projected developments under the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy and the East of England plan identify Bedfordshire as an area for significant growth. A 19% rise in the housing stock is projected between 2006 and 2021. Further significant development is projected beyond this date. Future developments include major expansion of Luton International Airport and new tourist facilities (Centre Parcs and NIRAH).

In 2006, Bedfordshire County had an estimated 165,900 households (from population estimates and forecasts 2008, produced by Bedfordshire County Council and Luton Borough Council). Major housing developments planned for Bedfordshire are now well underway. Between 2006 and 2021, some 40,900 new households are planned to be built

(around a 25% increase on the current housing stock). Approximately 40% of this housing is due to be built in South Bedfordshire, adding considerably to the housing density, which is already greater than across the rest of the county. Accompanying these housing developments the population of Bedfordshire County is anticipated to rise by 15% over the same period.

Luton and Bedford have a significant night-time economy, with a large number of bars and clubs. Dunstable has a smaller night-time economy. Luton and Bedford are also large commercial centres, with a significant number of daytime commercial and retail visitors.

Strategic priorities

The force's strategic priorities for 2008–11 include the following:

Within the 2008–11 three-year policing plan, the force declares its purpose 'To serve communities and make them safe from crime'.

The force's strategic priorities for 2008–11 comprise the following four outcomes:

- people are safer;
- people feel safer;
- people are more satisfied with the service they receive from Bedfordshire Police; and
- people have more confidence in Bedfordshire Police.

Force Performance Overview

Force performance against targets set by the PA has been variable. For the strategic objective of reassurance, the force did not meet its targets for improving the satisfaction of the overall service provided to victims of domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and road traffic collisions. A gap also exists in satisfaction for the whole experience between white and minority ethnic service users of 9%.

However, Bedfordshire has seen an improving trend in terms of public confidence in the local police and public perceptions of the police for reliability, fairness, understanding community issues, dealing with minor crime and addressing community priorities. All of these measures are either above or in line with other forces in Bedfordshire's most similar force (MSF) group.

The parity of arrest rates for Stop and Search between white and minority ethnic people has been within 2% for the past 4 years. During 2007/08, this was 1.3% and is monitored closely.

Force performance was better than target for number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions.

Overall crime was down 10% on the previous year including a 15% reduction in violent crime. Domestic burglary saw an increase in 2007/08 compared to 2006/07 with this being set as a key priority for reduction in 2008/09.

During 2007/08, Bedfordshire focused efforts on improving investigative performance and increased the overall sanction detection rate from 19% at the start of the year to reach 25% in the final quarter of the year. The sanction detection rate outcome for the full 2007/08

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performance year was 22% which improved on the 2006/07 outcome of 20%. There is still more work to do in this area as the force ranked bottom when compared to its MSF.

During 2007/08, Bedfordshire achieved its target for asset recovery as a result of improved case tracking and more co-ordinated use of resources at practitioner and management level. Bedfordshire improved its national rank position from 32nd in 2006/07 to 16th in 2007/08.

For call handling, Bedfordshire achieved 94% of 999 calls answered within the target time of 10 seconds and 95% of non emergency calls answered within the target time of 30 seconds – both exceeding the target of 90%.

Force development since the 2007 inspections

The force has been working on improving its service around domestic violence (DV), graded as Poor in 2007. Since the original inspection the force has tracked activity on DV recommendations and areas for improvement (AFIs) through the domestic abuse steering group, chaired by D/Supt public protection unit (PPU) and closely monitored by the DCC.

The revisit found that the force has carried out significant improvements to the recording process of DV risk assessments and invested in providing additional staff within the dedicated domestic violence units. As a result the force has been assessed to now be providing an acceptable level of service and has been upgraded to Fair.

With the active support of both police authorities, Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary collaborated to establish a new joint major crime capability. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit (BHMCU) commenced November 2007 and brought together 150 officers and police staff from across the two forces into a single and dedicated team serving both areas.

The unit has been very successful for both forces and has achieved Bedfordshire's primary objectives of increasing resilience and capacity in this area of protective services and, at the same time, negating abstractions from territorial policing and supporting efforts to tackle serious and volume crime.

Strong leadership from chief officers from both forces has been instrumental in this groundbreaking initiative advancing to the state where teams are now regularly deployed in tackling major crime.

The creation of the Unit follows on from other similar collaborations with neighbouring forces such as the Chiltern Air Support consortium with Hertfordshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police, and the Chiltern Transport Consortium with Thames Valley Police and, more recently Hertfordshire Constabulary and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary.

Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary have committed to a further programme of work to examine and exploit opportunities for collaboration across other areas of protective services.

Neighbourhood Policing

<p>2007/08 Neighbourhood Policing Summary of judgement</p>	<p>Meeting the standard</p>
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Meeting the standard

Following the moderation process, Bedfordshire Police was assessed as meeting the standard. Neighbourhood policing has been implemented to a consistent standard across the force.

Neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed.

Summary statement

The force is deploying across all its BCUs the right people in the right place at the right time to ensure that its neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed.

Strengths

- Bedfordshire is divided into ten inspector-led neighbourhood areas (ILNAs), three in C division (Luton) and seven in J division (Bedford and Dunstable). Each ILNA is further divided into safer neighbourhood teams (SNTs), of which there are 6 in C and 29 in J.
- SNTs cover a total of 88 neighbourhoods between them.
- At the time of the inspection, the force had achieved the levels for Neighbourhood Policing teams (NPTs) against establishment shown in the first table.

	PCs		PCSOs	
	Actual	Establishment	Actual	Establishment
C division (Luton)	22	28	46	54
J division (Bedford and Dunstable)	46	48	60	68

- Numbers of staff assigned to police community support officer (PCSO) tend to fluctuate more than police constables (PCs); progress has been made to reduce the gap between actual levels and establishment during the last year.
- The position with managers and supervisors is shown in the second table.

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	Inspectors		Sergeants	
	Actual	Establishment	Actual	Establishment
C division	3	3	6	7
J division	7	7	13	13

- Neighbourhoods were originally defined early in 2007 by a mix of joint demand analysis with local councils, area safety committee meetings and public consultation, ie at town centre shopping centres and other public venues.
- Neighbourhoods have been reviewed recently with partners and communities, an example within J division being Bedford town centre, which has been divided from one into three neighbourhoods. Overall, the number of neighbourhoods in Bedfordshire has been reduced from 150 to 88 in the past 12 months.
- All neighbourhoods have been classified from priority 1 to 4. Priority 1 neighbourhoods are generally the more densely populated, with the highest demand, and are given increased coverage by teams.
- Ongoing reviews within C division are being carried out with crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and area safety committee meetings.
- All neighbourhoods have a named point of contact at PC/PCSO level. Evidence was found during fieldwork of calling cards and newsletters being used to publicise names and photographs of staff working within NPTs (see also Work in progress).
- The force website identifies the named contact for neighbourhoods and this is enhanced by a geographical search facility that can be used by the public and also by staff on the internal intranet system. This is supplemented through posters in front offices and other public areas.
- There is a clearly defined and well understood abstraction policy for neighbourhood staff. The force has set a target of no more than 20% abstraction for inspectors, sergeants and Neighbourhood Policing officers (NPOs). For PCSOs the target is no more than 5%.
- Abstractions are recorded on the duty management system (DMS) by supervisors. Staff at all ranks interviewed were adamant that any deployment away from their neighbourhoods would be recorded owing to the importance of NHP.
- The monitoring of abstractions takes place at local basic command unit (BCU) level during performance meetings, and more recently features within the safer neighbourhoods force-level performance monitor report (based on the national Neighbourhood Policing (NHP) performance guide). Abstractions are monitored, at the force level, by the NHP board chaired by the assistant chief constable (ACC) (territorial policing (TP)).
- Since monitoring started, the force has kept within abstraction targets and officers and PCSOs are not routinely deployed to other roles.

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- All of the 88 neighbourhoods covered by the SNTs have profiles, engagement plans and lists of people forming key individual networks (KINs).
- Profiles include priorities for the neighbourhood, forthcoming events, an overview of crimes and anti-social behaviour (ASB), demographic data, key locations, key demand locations, local signal crime information and key sources of community contact (see also Areas for improvement).
- Engagement plans contain lists of different sections of the community for each neighbourhood and planned engagement activity, ranging from street briefings and surgeries to neighbourhood watch (NW) meetings and attending venues to contact youths or elderly people.
- KIN lists are intended to provide the names and contact details of a wide range of members of the community, including representatives of community groups, business owners/workers, schools and other people who have an interest in NHP and who can contribute feedback or information. Of those examined several were comprehensive and provided a broad range of contacts (see also Areas for improvement).
- Training has much improved for NPTs, with the force NHP board and BCU management teams carrying out a monitoring role to ensure staff are fully equipped for the role.
- NPT staff up to and including inspector are completing the core leadership development programme (CLDP) NHP modules, and this is actively supported by the force training and development department. To date 202 staff have registered to complete the Introductory Certificate in Neighbourhood Management. Of these 18 have completed manuals (all 7 modules), which have been internally verified, and 8 have requested 'record of achievement' and verification. (See also Areas for improvement.)
- The force engaged the assistance of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) to help delivery of a one-day force-wide training session in November 2007 for NPTs. Teams were provided with training on the completion of neighbourhood profiles, engagement plans and the scanning, analysis, response, assessment (SARA) problem-solving model.
- Seminars were also held in February 2008 for NPOs and PCSOs. For supervisors, bespoke training sessions were held informing them on how to use a feature on the DMS to record abstractions.
- During interviews and unannounced visits to stations, NPOs and PCSOs were complimentary about the level of training now received, as well as its relevance to the operational environment. This is in complete contrast to, and a significant improvement on, the findings of the 2007 NHP inspection.
- The ratio of supervisors is 1:9 in J division and now down to 1:11 at C. Neighbourhood specialist officers (NSOs) take on a line management role for PCSOs. For this additional responsibility they receive a special priority payment. The deployment and monitoring of supervisory ratios is carried out within BCUs and more recently by the NHP board.

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- Volunteers are used to good effect in the force. There are 130 special constables, who are deployed at ILNA level in J division and predominantly in the town centre in C division.
- Other volunteers, 78 in total, provide support to NPTs by providing a range of services, from administrative support to staffing front-office counters in police stations.
- The force has well-established means of recognising positive contributions by staff to good customer service. Form 84C is used by managers and supervisors to record good work on annual performance development reviews (PDRs), the recognition and meritorious award scheme, and letters of thanks in the force-wide newsletter. An awards ceremony is planned for summer 2008.
- Special constables were nominated by the force and won the 2007 national Ferris trophy award for their contribution to policing. This was for the teamwork they had displayed in supporting BCUs and NPTs in carrying out search warrants on suspected cannabis factories.
- Officers and staff interviewed said, in the main there was a ‘thank you’ culture and viewed recognition by managers as genuine. Despite dealing with competing demands and the force having received some quite negative publicity in some sections of the media, managers and staff were acknowledging and accepting change and intent on providing the best service they could within the limited resources at their disposal.

Work in progress

- While there are no documented force plans for succession planning, suitable NSO candidates are identified by internal BCU resource management processes and supported by SNT recruitment and selection policy/guidelines. Numbers of officers and PCSOs assigned to NHP feature in BCU, force-level and police authority (PA) meetings. The assistant director (people services) is leading a project on overall force-wide succession/workforce planning.
- The manager and a senior member of staff from the diversity unit have held two focus groups with SNTs to establish how they could best support the teams. As a result, a number of road shows have been planned to provide advice and guidance on communities, engagement, language and behaviour. It will also include improving awareness of the force equality and diversity boards, and provide an opportunity to meet members from the diversity unit and division-based community cohesion teams and hate crime units.

Area(s) for improvement

- Neighbourhood profiles require developing to include the mapping of vulnerable and emerging communities. This is particularly important in some of the more urban areas of the county, where the make-up of communities is changing at a fast pace.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that neighbourhood profiles are developed to include vulnerable and emerging communities.

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- The majority of KIN lists examined contained a wide range of community contacts, but a small number were not entirely representative of the community and could have been expanded to include a number of local businesses, especially those catering for emerging communities, ie Polish food retailers.
- The force has yet to find additional funding to secure external assessment of the CLDP NHP modules. It is important that this very useful training is seen to be valued by the force and that assessments take place before the system falls into disrepute.

Effective community engagement is taking place. Representative communities are being routinely consulted and are identifying local priorities and receiving feedback.

Summary statement

Neighbourhoods in the force area are actively engaging with their local police force and its partners.

Strengths

- During the 2007 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assessment of NHP, the force had an engagement strategy in place but little was being delivered, since neighbourhood profiles had not been completed and communities had not been formally defined.
- Since then a review has been carried out and the strategy updated. The key elements contained within the strategy are:
 - neighbourhood definition;
 - neighbourhood profiling and prioritisation;
 - community consultation;
 - identification of priorities;
 - problem solving; and
 - media and marketing.
- Community safety forums (CSFs) are the main formal method of engaging with communities in J division, although there are other meetings where priorities are agreed and signed off (see Areas for improvement). CSFs are held at least once a quarter. The meetings are held by local councils, police and other public service representatives, ie the fire service, and provide an opportunity for communities to state what is important to them and the problems they face. The top three to five priorities are decided at these meetings. Not all of the CSFs are chaired by police, and this is regarded as positive, allowing partners to contribute fully to the process of identifying and solving problems.
- Within C division, area safety committee meetings are the mechanism for engagement with communities and for deciding on actions and reviewing progress on problems previously identified.
- As highlighted earlier in this report, engagement plans exist for each neighbourhood. Good use is made of mobile police stations, with visiting times listed in publicity material at various public locations, ie shops and on the force website.

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- During reality checking the inspection team was able to identify many locations in each BCU where NPTs had engaged with communities, as well as with managers and staff working in shops, business premises and hotels. Evidence was provided of occasions when NPTs had met with young people at youth clubs and with members of minority groups at community centres.
- The Luton-based customer services manager is multi-lingual and broadcasts regularly on Diverse FM, a local community radio station. This allows the BCU to reach a number of diverse groups who might ordinarily not be completely aware of what is being done by the force and BCU to provide a better service.
- NW had its 25th anniversary in 2007. The force was quick to adopt the scheme, being the third in the country to do so. NW schemes are fully involved with NHP and in October they assisted with the 'not in my neighbourhood' week of events against local crime, robbery, burglary, ASB and alcohol and drug misuse.
- As another means of engagement, in C division NSOs and PCSOs are required to contact five members of the community a day to confirm what the public considers to be their priorities. Responses are recorded on a pro forma that contains the ethnicity of the person surveyed. Results are placed on a database, with supervisors proactively checking that the numbers of people surveyed by ethnic background match proportionately the ethnic profile of neighbourhoods.
- Sharing community-related information in Bedfordshire electronically (SCRIBE) is an information technology (IT) solution to the sharing of map-based information and analysis between all of the CDRPs within the force area. The performance manager of the PA is the chair of the SCRIBE working group.
- A new post was created late 2007 of force NHP marketing and communications manager. The contribution made by the post-holder is positive, with far more relevant material being available for divisions and teams. Each division also has a NHP communications officer to support teams at an operational level.
- The NW Ringmaster system is used to share information with communities, and newsletters are distributed by NPTs. Samples of newsletters were examined during the inspection. They were found to be well written, well presented, informative and easy to understand. They also contained photographs of team members and contact details.
- The force website has very recently undergone a complete make-over in terms of the presentation of NHP and the information it contains. NPTs can be identified through a geographical search and details of meetings, ie CSFs and surgeries, are posted (see also Areas for improvement).
- NPTs have not had any formal briefings on organised crime groups (OCGs) or vulnerable communities, although there was evidence of occasions when intelligence submitted by teams led to enforcement activity against OCGs.
- NPTs are fully aware of work carried out by BCU community cohesion teams, who complete a weekly BCU community impact assessment, as well as providing advice to teams on vulnerable communities.

Work in progress

- The force is currently reviewing the structure of the independent advisory group (IAG) to the force. Bedfordshire was the first non-Metropolitan police force to introduce an IAG. Currently the IAG is a force-level group covering the whole county. Consideration is being given to introducing an IAG for each BCU. Although the IAG has had some involvement in the development of NHP, BCU-located IAGs will provide a more effective conduit from and to communities.
- The force is examining ways of electronically gathering intelligence from partners via a web-based form. A pilot is under way at Marsh Farm, where staff from Luton Borough Council are completing and submitting intelligence electronically to the force's crime intelligence bureau for evaluation and dissemination.
- NPIA guidance 'Protecting the public: managing sexual offenders and violent offenders' (2007) makes reference to the part SNTs should play in reducing risk. Work is under way between the headquarters (HQ) NHP project team and the force's public protection unit to identify how best to ensure NPTs fully contribute to this high-risk and sensitive area of policing.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has significantly improved the marketing and publicity of NHP designed to inform different aspects of the community; however, specific BME communities are not included.
- The force website is an improvement, but the force needs to make sure that a corporate standard is maintained around presentation and that the site is updated regularly; at the time of the inspection a number of community meeting dates were listed but the venues were not.
- The force recognises that it needs to introduce some form of testing of the quality of levels of engagement with communities, ie through checking/dip sampling. In the main there is good engagement but the force needs to reassure itself that engagement is being carried out in a consistent way and according to plans.
- The number of 'hits' the self-briefing site has received cannot be counted so it is difficult for the force to satisfy itself that officers and staff are 'self-briefing' using the material provided.
- The meeting structures for NPTs and partners to engage with communities varies not only between the two BCUs but also within the BCUs themselves. In J division the levels vary from CSFs to parish council meetings.
- The cycle also varies, with formal meetings for rural low-demand neighbourhood areas being held every six months; this is not considered to be frequent enough.
- Although there was evidence that problems were being solved, the force should review this process to satisfy itself that the number of different structures is completely fit for purpose.
- There is no single document in place that comprehensively explains the structure of NHP in the force along with a meetings structure. It would be helpful to have one, not only for communities to understand better how NHP works, but also for officers and staff within the force.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends the force produces a single document outlining neighbourhood policing explaining the structure and roles of teams and support staff.

Joint problem solving is established and included within performance regimes.

Summary statement

Joint problem solving involves the police with partners and communities across neighbourhoods. Joint problem-solving activity is partly evaluated and demonstrates moderate problem resolution at neighbourhood level.

Strengths

- There is comprehensive evidence of chief officer involvement at strategic partnership level in Bedfordshire. The Chief Constable chairs the local criminal justice board and contributes, along with the PA chair and J BCU commander, to the county-wide partnership (a strategic group made up with partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors). The ACC (TP), BCU commander and PA are all members of the county-wide consultation group.
- ACC (TP) and the C BCU commander contribute to the Luton forum, an equivalent to the countywide partnership.
- The force held a two-day neighbourhood improvement workshop in February 2008, attended by senior-level partners. This workshop has re-energised relationships with partners and has led to follow-up workshops to progress plans agreed in February.
- C division has a community analyst who is part-funded by Luton Borough Council; J division relies on force-funded analysts to provide products. (See also Work in progress).
- In J division, Operation Cooper was an initiative centred on high levels of burglary, vehicle crime and criminal damage in Parkside estate, Houghton Regis, South Bedfordshire. The estate was also the source of high levels of demand in respect of police attending nuisance behaviour.
- Engagement through street briefings and surgeries, stakeholder policing group and local authority funded development officers identified a number of issues that the community felt partnership involvement could solve.
- A problem profile was prepared, and the police identified as the main organisational stakeholder. A plan was produced with partners, with a period agreed for the operation of three months, October to December 2007. This allowed coverage of critical times such as Halloween, October half-term and the end of British Summer Time.
- Activities were monitored by a steering group for the project comprising partner agencies. The tactics included targeting 700 houses for inclusion with a Smartwater, and the fitting of additional security using the 'Bobby van' scheme.

- A safety week was held, organised by a community development officer, providing advice to children on personal safety, fire safety and drugs. A multi-agency clean-up day was organised, and patrols were carried out by the police and other agencies, ie the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; 224 vehicles were identified containing high value property left visible from outside them.
- The county-wide responsible authorities group contributed £25,000 towards the overall budget of £75,000. The remainder came from South Bedfordshire community safety partnership, match-funded by Government Office East.
- The operation saw an overall reduction in crime and lower levels of rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour.
- Operation Cooper was formally evaluated, and the lessons learnt included the need to ensure more pre-planning and understandings of drivers and outcomes to promote better understanding among partners.
- Although there has been continued positive publicity about the operation, the police and partners have missed an opportunity to formally survey parts of the community.
- In C division at Luton a typical problem-solving session took place to tackle youths trespassing on the Dencora Way industrial estate.
- The site and business owners met with the local NPT and identified key issues as criminal damage, arson, under-age drinking, litter and youths causing a nuisance to staff.
- Analysis was carried out around the problems and what was known about the location, ie physical layout, CCTV coverage and enclosures and a profile of offenders.
- A series of actions were agreed and allocated, with owners assigned. These included increased patrols, engaging with youths, taking positive enforcement action where appropriate, and regular contact with business owners.
- The site owners improved security and took measures to increase CCTV coverage through simple steps of cutting back vegetation.
- The outcome, which was fed back to the business community, was a complete eradication of ASB.
- Joint strategic assessments (JSAs) have been undertaken under the revisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the statutory duty of partnerships to provide annual JSAs. JSAs examined reflected local area agreement and local strategic partnership priorities.
- For Bedford County, each of the three community safety partnerships has an operational delivery group.
- National Intelligence Model (NIM) level 1 meetings are held fortnightly on BCUs and contain elements of community priorities, predominantly ASB and criminal damage. These reflect the two highest priorities across a whole range of problems identified by residents.

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- The safer neighbourhoods force-level performance monitor provides a high level overview of NHP, ie actual numbers of NHP staff against establishment, abstraction data and an overview of confidence and satisfaction data. ASB incident data is provided by each of the four CDRPs.
- While the force has a performance framework that links NHP activity from NPTs through BCUs to the force level, there are a number of data gaps needing to be filled. Work has been under way, as part of the NHP project, to capture and fill these gaps within the framework. This is due for completion by May 2008. As an interim measure, monthly divisional performance meetings monitor abstractions, engagement plans and profiles.
- Call takers from the call-handling centre (CHC) are able to access local priorities of any of the 35 SNTs from dedicated pages (belonging to each team) on the force intranet. This enables callers to be directed to the most appropriate team by telephone or email.
- Within C division, the local authority has co-located its area community safety officers, one to each ILNA. This provides improved communication, but also more timely and effective problem solving.
- Recognising the need to have in place an effective means of recording and monitoring problem-solving activity, the force has very recently purchased a web application based on the SARA problem-solving model called SPARK. This database can be accessed by anyone with a username, password and internet access. The force will be enabling partners to access it, and a number have already attended training sessions.
- SPARK allows the user to view priorities by neighbourhood, enables historic problems to be researched, and allows the identification and sharing of best practice. It also provides data for performance management around problem solving.
- Training for NPTs and supervisors is already under way; staff interviewed during the inspection had been briefed on SPARK and the way it enables the sharing of good practice. To date 70 partners have been trained on SPARK.
- Joint problem-solving activity is recorded in hard-copy packs until the SPARK database is fully online.

Work in progress

- C division is to hold a joint SNT partnership conference in May 2008 for teams and partners. This will include problem-solving training.
- From 1 June 2008 Luton will have a community intelligence desk based within the divisional intelligence unit, with two dedicated staff, one police officer, one police staff to process and action community intelligence and assess the incidence of signal crimes. If successful, this will also be replicated within county BCU.
- Joint partnership tasking exists within the force but different models are used and the effectiveness varies:
- In J division, North and South Beds have partners attend ILNA level tasking meetings that feed once a week into the BCU tactical tasking and co-ordination

group (TTCG); Mid Beds holds a tasking group meeting within the operational delivery group attended by the police, and information is also provided to the BCU TTCG.

- Work is in progress to identify how joint partnership tasking can best be provided when the three district authorities change to two unitary authorities in 2009.
- In C division the single CDRP holds a monthly tasking and coordinating and commissioning group chaired by the council head of democratic services and attended by the BCU operations superintendent. Information from this will link with a new meeting, the BCU safer neighbourhood tactical action group meeting, due to commence in June 2008. This meeting will be chaired by chief inspector community policing, and partners such as housing, the social behaviour unit and licensing have given commitments to attend. (See also Areas for improvement.)
- Neighbourhood profiles have been written for every neighbourhood, primarily using Mosaic data. The force recognises that the profiles are developing and that processes are required to ensure the full integration of information from neighbourhood profiles into NIM products such as the force strategic assessment. This work is being led by the director of intelligence in conjunction with the NHP project team.
- As part of the 2008/09 budget process, the force has built two force-funded analysts for NHP into each of the BCUs, increasing the number of analysts dedicated to NHP to four.
- Within C division a decision has been made for student officers to carry out a three-month attachment before moving to response teams. This will not only allow for a greater understanding of the role of SNTs, but also make student officers far more familiar with problem solving at an earlier stage in their career. This is due to commence in summer 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- Joint problem-solving activity is monitored and reported during CSF meetings, but the extent of evaluation is limited. This will be resolved to a great degree when the SPARK database (see Work in progress) is fully operational.
- Joint tasking and co-ordination meetings within the force are complex to identify. An opportunity exists to simplify the processes, ie introduce a common structure to both BCUs now that J division will be working with two new unitary authorities.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force reviews the structure, processes and cycle of joint tasking and co ordination meetings.

- Although there was evidence of problem solving taking place and of problems having been resolved satisfactorily, the process for formally 'signing off' priorities needs structuring to include a record of acceptance by the person who initially raised the issue.

The outcomes of Neighbourhood policing are being realised by the surveyed public.

	SPI 2a Percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job		KDI Percentage of people who 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'		SPI 10b Percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour	
	Difference from MSF (percentage point pp)	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change
	-0.1 pp	1.5 pp	2.3pp	5.1pp	1.8pp	-1.0 pp

Summary statement

The SPI/KDI data shows that force performance is marginally better than the average for the MSF.

The SPI data also shows that force performance has improved slightly for SPI 2a and reduced slightly for SPI 10b compared with two years ago (although both these figures are insignificant statistically). KDI data performance has improved.

Context

The SPI and KDI statistics are obtained from the PPAFs to March 2008. These figures are survey based and have been analysed for statistical significance, which can be explained in lay terms as follows: 'The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

Note: When comparing the force's performance with previous years, year-on-year statistical significance is explained as follows: 'The difference in force performance between the years compared is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

There is a summary of how statistical significance is used at Appendix 3 at the end of this report.

As part of the BCS, approximately 1,000 interviews are undertaken in each force area in England and Wales. Included in the survey is the individual's assessment of whether the local police are doing a good job, whether the police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in their area, and whether anti-social behaviour in their area is a problem.

Strengths

KDI – percentage of people who 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'.

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- 52.7% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area', which is better than the average of 50.4% for the MSF.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

SPI 2a – percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job.

- Force performance declined slightly in the year ending March 2008 when compared with the previous year; some 52.2% of people surveyed think that their local police do a good or excellent job, which is an improvement when compared with 50.7% in the year ending March 2006.

SPI 10b – percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour.

- 17.2% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, this is slightly higher than the average of 15.4% for the MSF.

Force-level and local satisfaction/confidence measures are used to inform service delivery.

Summary statement

The force understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are frequently made to improve local service delivery.

Strengths

- User satisfaction measures feature in force performance management meetings and within BCUs. Survey results in particular are shared at BCU senior management team meetings by customer service managers (CSMs).
- Performance packs produced for monthly divisional leadership team meetings on BCUs contain survey results on ASB and crime. Within C division IQUANTA data and a quality of service summary sheet are also provided. This would be beneficial for J division.
- Force performance on satisfaction and confidence measures is monitored through the force's bi-monthly performance improvement board and corporate quarterly review process, with reports provided to the PA performance committee and community engagement committees.
- Quality of service complaints are in the main taken on by CSMs. All complaints are recorded on a database and, depending on their nature, will be investigated by the relevant line manager or by CSMs. The target for resolving complaints is 28 days.

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- The force is advanced in its use of technology for NPTs. All team members have access to hand-held BlackBerry devices, and this now includes telephony access. A three-month trial is under way in South Beds, where NPTs are personally visiting KINs and carrying out a 30-question survey direct onto the BlackBerry. Information is downloaded onto a force database and the plan is that KIN lists will be automatically updated, and the information will be used to populate a three-month tactical assessment for each district.

Work in progress

- CSMs are developing a newsletter for their respective divisions, to contain lessons learnt from quality of service complaints.

Area(s) for improvement

- While there is evidence that formal and informal community feedback informs service delivery at neighbourhood level, the force does not have a systematic process to assist organisational learning from community feedback. This should easily be resolved as soon as the SPARK database becomes operational.

The force demonstrates sustainable plans for Neighbourhood Policing.

Summary statement

The force and the police authority have shown how they plan to ensure that Neighbourhood policing will be sustained beyond April 2008.

Strengths

- The force received a Poor grade for NHP in 2007. Shortly after, a newly appointed ACC took over the responsibility for TP.
- The drive and determination of the chief officer lead and the HQ team to deliver NHP has been tangible, with officers and staff fully aware that ACC (TP) is the force champion.
- Following the 2007 assessment, a force implementation group was initiated to ensure progress against HMIC recommendations and areas for improvement.
- A superintendent was assigned full time as tactical lead for NHP to ensure progress was made against the NHP implementation plan and to provide support to the HQ NHP project team.
- Each BCU has an operational superintendent assigned with the responsibility of advancing the BCU NHP delivery plan, with monthly meetings held with staff to monitor progress. These in turn are linked with force plans.
- At an operational level three NHP supervisors in J division and two in C were designated as single points of contact for the HQ based project team. They also fed back progress direct to the team.
- The force has taken full advantage of support offered by the NPIA and commissioned two assessments, December 2007 and February 2008. Both assessments recorded that the force was making good progress.

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- A number of strategic plans map out the future of NHP in the force, including the PA strategic finance report and community engagement strategy and the force's SNT estates and expenditure overview. NHP training and communications have their own strategies.
- The head of estates is now a member of the NHP board. This is a positive move given the need to ensure estates issues are managed in a timely way.
- Human resources (HR) is supporting NHP by carrying out work on succession planning (see earlier in this report).
- Significant progress has been made and once the current work in progress is completed, notably around the complete introduction of an effective system to record and assess problem solving (SPARK), the force will have accelerated, in a very short time, to a much stronger position.
- The single biggest risk regarding the ability to sustain NHP within the force remains the lack of resilience. Competing demands exist from other directorates and the threat of capping remains. However, 2008/09 budget growth is specifically designed to protect resources in NHP by increasing resources in areas of protective services and crime investigation. The PA has decided to protect funding for PCSOs for 2008/09. The force's work on collaboration will contribute to resilience (as demonstrated by the collaborative Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire major crime unit).
- NHP features within the force risk register owned by the director of corporate services.
- After the release of the 2007 HMIC report, PA members visited a number of other authorities, including Lancashire and Northamptonshire, to identify best practice around overview and scrutiny of NHP.
- From a governance aspect, the PA has elevated the community engagement panel to full committee status. The PA community engagement is attended by the ACC (TP). The joint community engagement strategy produced by the PA has been promoted by the Association of Police Authorities as best practice.
- The PA has a lead member for NHP and is represented on the NHP board.
- The PA provided support during a series of roadshows presented to partners, as well as to the two-day workshop held in February 2008.

Work in progress

- For the first time, special constable resource planning has this year been included in the force baseline budget. A fully costed plan exists within the strategic improvement plan to increase numbers of special constables from the current level of 130 to 325 by 2012.
- Detail is provided to the extent that the force knows where it will place the additional special constables recruited, ie with NPTs and to specialist roles such as the economic crime unit. This work is being driven by the ACC (TP) through a special constabulary service improvement group that operates to project principles.

- PA members are already assigned to BCUs and HQ support departments. This is being developed within NHP, with a process under way to link a PA member with each of the ten ILNAs.

Area(s) for improvement

- The risk of experienced officers (including those from NPTs) transferring to other forces is a threat to Bedfordshire and a difficult one to manage given the increase in salary and perceived career opportunities offered to those choosing to do so. Nevertheless the force needs to have in place a robust process to counter this threat.

Developing practice

- See Appendix 2.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

2007/08 Developing Citizen Focus Policing Summary of judgement	Meeting the standard
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Meeting the standard

A Citizen Focus ethos is being embedded across the force, establishing an initial baseline.

Summary statement

The force understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are made to improve local service delivery. The force communicates the National Quality of Service Commitment standards and Code of Practice for Victims of Crime standards to the majority of its communities.

Service users' views are sought and are used to improve service delivery.

Strengths

- Within the 2008–11 three-year policing plan, the force declares its purpose 'To serve communities and make them safe from crime'.
- The force purpose was identified following a number of internal focus groups held with police officers and staff under the banner of 'The future starts now'. This was supported through the use of a citizen's panel survey that informed the force's new three-year strategy.
- The four outcomes desired by the force are that:
 - people are safer;
 - people feel safer;
 - people are more satisfied with the service they receive from Bedfordshire Police; and
 - people have more confidence in Bedfordshire Police.
- The 2008-09 annual policing plan sets out and describes how local consultation informs the specific actions the force will take in the first year of the three-year strategy.
- On 1 April 2007 a new Citizen Focus (CF) division was formed, bringing together criminal justice, CHC, and community safety and diversity.

CF division is responsible for delivering a wide range of service improvement, including:

- quality of service commitment (QoSC);
- all customer service and CF issues
 - victim satisfaction
 - community engagement
 - victims code of practice

- witness charter.

- The division is led by a chief superintendent and sits within the portfolio of ACC (TP).
- On April 1 2008 a CF board was introduced to manage a programme of works to achieve the two outcomes of people being more satisfied with Bedfordshire Police, and having confidence in Bedfordshire Police. The CF board will initially be chaired by the chief superintendent CF division to scope work required, and then it will pass to ACC (TP), who will chair the board at subsequent meetings.
- The force-level monthly SIG commenced in November 2007; it is also chaired by the head of CF division and responsible for monitoring the QoS, assessment of survey data, and CF initiatives, as well as other matters such as the monitoring of complaints and lessons learnt from the Independent Police Complaints Commission. SIGs have also now been introduced for C and J divisions.
- Senior staff attending and contributing to the force SIG include head of professional standards department (PSD), head CHC, IT, a crime recording unit manager, BCU CSMs, head of criminal justice unit, a representative from each of the two BCU senior management teams and a member of the PA.
- The force routinely uses a range of methods to identify users' views from sources such as customer satisfactions surveys, SNT surveys, call management surveys, focus groups (both service users and non-users) and call-backs to service users.
- Monthly telephone surveys are conducted on behalf of the force by a market research company covering statutory performance indicators (SPIs) 1a–1e.
- The force has introduced a Bedfordshire county citizens' panel comprising 5,000 members of the public covering a wide range of characteristics, including age, ethnicity, physical ability and religious belief (see also Work in progress).
- The panel has been consulted on issues that include PCSOs, policing targets, police budget, perceptions of crime and disorder and local policing priorities.
- The PA uses results of council tax surveys, focus groups, consultation groups and comments on its website to gather and elicit views on the service provided. Recognising the need to ensure the collection of views from under-represented sections of the community, it has produced surveys specifically for users with autistic spectrum disorder and attention deficit disorder. The PA is also running an initiative with Mid Beds District Council to engage with young people and seek their opinions on policing. The force has also published a youth strategy.
- All of the 35 SNTs have identified, through consultation with communities, the top three priorities (problems) for their area. ASB features as the main problem for communities and there are many examples of action taken by police, partners and communities to resolve issues identified.
- The Luton BCU commander has held consultation meetings with community groups, including the Irish forum, local Pakistani group, Kashmiri group, youth group and various Muslim groups, including the Council of Mosques. These meetings have been superseded by the weekly consultation by the community cohesion unit in

informing the community impact assessment. County division superintendent has met with partners and the Polish and Italian communities.

- The community engagement department within CF division has a post dedicated to community relations and youth issues. The purpose of this post is to ensure that views from all sections of the community are considered, including hard-to-reach groups and emerging cultures.
- An example is work being undertaken with the immigration service with the Polish–British integration centre in the Luton Airport information project. This piece of work is being designed to provide incoming migrant workers with adequate information on local services.
- As a result of analysis of satisfaction data, the force identified that rates of callers being kept informed were particularly low for ASB. A trial commenced in December 2007 under the title of Operation Swordfish, using call-handling staff to update callers who had reported ASB.
- This was extended in February 2008 to include callers about other incidents/crimes (apart from domestic abuse). A dedicated call-handling team makes three attempts within 48 hours of the original call to contact callers. The call handlers work to standard scripts, with a database to record and manage contacts. Callers are given reassurance and offered advice and updates on their case.
- Supported by £16,000 funding for overtime, this operation is run when CHC staff are available, either during shift or using overtime. Between 27 January 2008 and 9 April 2008, 7,386 calls were loaded onto a database for potential call-back, with 6,162 calls made.
- Although this is a promising initiative, the force needs to consider how sustainable Operation Swordfish is if overtime continues to be the main source of funding (see also Work in progress).
- Public-facing reception areas at force HQ and Dunstable have been refurbished and present a more professional image to visitors. Other reception areas visited during the inspection were found to be clean and tidy and contain publicity and marketing material, including names of NPT officers and information leaflets. Mystery shopping has been carried out at the three main police stations at Luton, Bedford and Dunstable. Results have been subject to action for improvement. Positive comment was made on how a mystery shopper with a disability was dealt with.
- For the year 2007–08, just under 100,000 emergency calls and 240,000 non-emergency calls were received by the force. This is the first and often the most critical point of contact for many service users. The CHC has consistently provided an effective call management function on behalf of the force. Targets were exceeded for 999 calls: 95.3% were answered within 10 seconds against a target of 90%, and 93.9% of non-emergency calls were answered within 30 seconds; this is well above a national average of around 70%.
- Significant evidence was gathered during the inspection of commitment demonstrated by the CHC senior management and staff to providing a quality service. The force is also compliant with national call-handling standards.

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- In March 2008 the force participated in a national benchmarking exercise for call management carried out by the NPIA. The assessment reflected well on the force in terms of qualitative performance (notably the ability of call takers) and of quantitative performance.
- Four calls taken by CHC staff are monitored by supervisors per month. Assessment of whether a call taker meets standards includes opening and closing of call, technical proficiency, problem solving and manner of engagement. A particularly effective part of the process is where call takers monitor their own performance against standards; this forms part of the overall assessment, ie they will score higher if they have proved the ability to increase compliance against standards. Any developmental needs are noted, including in PDRs, and fed into training requirements.
- A similar process exists in the crime investigation bureau (crime recording) for the assessment of performance. Supervisors and staff interviewed were particularly positive about this approach to improving quality.
- The PA and force conducted a best value review of victim and witness care, which concluded in 2005. A number of recommendations were implemented, including training for officers, the production of a victim care DVD, victim care packs and the introduction of CSMs on each BCU.
- The force has two witness care units, one at Bedford and the other at Luton. The units are joint police and Crown Prosecution Service teams responsible for providing support, information on progress of cases and making arrangements for witnesses to attend court. This includes providing witnesses with the opportunity to visit a court to assist them with understanding the process and give them more confidence.
- Witness statement forms have been developed and amended so that comprehensive witness details are recorded on the front instead of the back, ensuring that details of vulnerable victims and/or those requiring victim/witness support are easily identified.
- The strengths highlighted in the above two paragraphs, along with a training DVD produced by the force on witness care, were provided as examples of good practice in the 2007 Home Office publication *Citizen Focus: A Practical Guide to Improving Police Follow-up with Victims and Witnesses*.
- The PA is involved in promoting CF primarily within the community engagement committee. This committee co-ordinates consultation, communication, partnership and other engagement initiatives. It also monitors compliance against the National Quality of Service Commitment (NQoSC) and NHP. The ACC (TP) attends the PA community engagement committee.
- The PA has a dedicated lead for CF; link members to the two BCUs monitor CF data for their areas.
- The PA attends and contributes to the CF board, force SIG and NHP board.
- The force is advanced in its use of technology for NPTs. All team members have access to hand-held BlackBerry devices, and this now includes telephony access. A three-month trial is under way in South Beds, where NPTs are personally visiting

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KINs and carrying out a 30-question survey direct onto the BlackBerry. Information is downloaded onto a force database and the plan is that KIN lists will be automatically updated, and the information will be used to populate a three-month tactical assessment for each district.

Work in progress

- CF has not been project managed into the force and the CF board has only very recently commenced. The force has much to do in the way of embedding CF into all areas of policing. A CF project is to be introduced after April 2008 by the CF board and will be led by chief superintendent CF division.
- The force is considering mapping out the end-to-end process of service users to identify areas for improvement. This work will report to the force SIG.
- The CHC undertakes a six-monthly customer satisfaction survey. Outcomes of the survey inform the input on quarterly training days. The February 2008 survey identified that just over half of callers were not made aware of the outcome of their call. The April 2008 training day will examine the issue and staff will be asked to work towards a solution to improve performance in this area.
- A routine incident appointment system has been on trial since October 2007 in Luton. This allows staff within the CHC to book appointments at Luton police station for callers reporting routine incidents. Callers are offered a specified appointment time, with details recorded on Outlook via the force intranet. Appointments are set no more than 72 hours in advance. As a result of positive feedback from users, the system is under consideration for extension to other urban areas in the county.
- A results analysis evaluation is planned to be conducted on Operation Swordfish, which was initially launched through the use of overtime. The evaluation will inform the force's future approach to customer care.
- A sub-group of the CF board, chaired by head of CF division, has been set up to improve the quality and timeliness of data held on force systems. This has a direct link to the improvement of performance and satisfaction.
- A cultural survey was conducted by the force in November 2007, with 33% of staff responding. Results will be presented to the executive and circulated to staff. The findings will be discussed and actioned by both the Human Resource Management Group and CF board as appropriate
- Following a complaint received in relation to the way officers were dealing with children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), the diversity manager organised a conference involving partners, including the courts and social services, in November 2007, with parents invited to participate. As a result of this conference five trained officers are being appointed as divisional single point of contact for ADHD and will cascade information on this medical condition to all divisional officers.
- Discussions are currently under way between the force and Luton Borough Council and fire and health services to introduce a citizens' panel to Luton (similar to that in Bedfordshire County).
- The force has in the past attempted to hold focus groups of users of the service, ie both victims of crime and those who have not had contact with the force previously.

The numbers attending have been small and unrepresentative of the community. To remedy this, the force has employed a specialist company to hold focus groups on its behalf. Results of the focus groups to date indicate that more work needs to be done to keep people informed and to improve the response to lower-level crime. The force SIG will be considering findings of the report produced by the company.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although CF command is headed by a chief superintendent, the profile and effectiveness of the division in terms of embedding CF throughout the force are well behind those of NHP. This is not surprising given the energy, resources and focus the force has had to give to NHP, but a better co-ordinated effort needs to take place to bring together all the disparate activities being undertaken.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force relaunches Citizen Focus, publicising and marketing critical milestones as they are reached during each phase of the Citizen Focus project.

- The chairing of the CF board by a chief officer should ensure CF is given the prominence it deserves within the force, and should provide the kind of strategic drive found within the latest NHP inspection.
- The head of CF is placed geographically in isolation from the rest of the force at poorly located and dreary rented office accommodation in Kempston. Consideration should be given to relocating the post-holder to more appropriate accommodation to avoid a potentially negative message being given to officers and staff, as well as to external stakeholders.
- Although the force has carried out a review of its neighbourhood profiles, it is important that it also maps vulnerable groups and emerging communities to help inform how it can improve service delivery.
- The use of environmental scanning, including the assessment of media articles, is underdeveloped but could provide a source of information for the force.

Quality of service complaints are/are not dealt with effectively

Strengths

- The NQoSC was introduced into the force in 2006. Information is contained on the force website and intranet, and publicity material is also available. When introduced to the force, sergeants and police staff equivalent and above were provided with a briefing during one of the quarterly law update seminars.
- PSD provides data to BCUs every quarter showing numbers of complaints, analysis and any lessons learnt information. CSMs are fully involved in ensuring BCUs respond to issues picked up by PSD. Examples are where breaches of code C of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (the detention, treatment and questioning of detained persons) were notified to custody officers, and where an update was provided to patrol officers providing clarity on time limits for international driving licences.

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- Numbers of formal complaints listed by type are presented to the PA. The PA has access to all files closed within the reporting period (quarterly). Any supplementary questions on the files are reported back to members by PSD in a written report or provided by one-to-one briefings.

Work in progress

- QoSC complaints are dealt with by CSMs. The SIG is starting to document common themes.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The force is/is not/is partially monitoring its compliance with the National Quality of Service Commitment

Strengths

- A yearly review is carried out to measure compliance with NQoSC; the latest was in February 2008. Recommendations included further examination of the area of Your Voice Counts, and a review of plans for ongoing communication, training and resourcing in support of INFORM 2. INFORM 2 is a relaunch of INFORM, an initiative to ensure officers and staff:
 - Inform the victim of case status in accordance with codes of practice;
 - **Never** assume someone else will do it for you;
 - **Furnish** victims with contact details;
 - **Offer** appropriate advice;
 - **Refer** victims to appropriate agencies and recognise vulnerability;
 - **Make** sure victim's views and opinions are recorded and valued.
- Failure to meet the standards of the NQoSC features within the force strategic risk register; examples listed are of officers failing to log crime details at scenes of crime, and failing to secure the trust and confidence of all minority groups.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has not yet initiated any work to communicate the QoSC or code of practice victims of crime to vulnerable groups or emerging communities.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force introduces a system to effectively communicate the QoSC to vulnerable groups and emerging communities.

The force has partially integrated Citizen Focus and operational activity, such as contact management, response, Neighbourhood Policing, investigation and through the criminal justice process.

Summary statement

The force has yet to identify corporate service standards expected of all staff when dealing with the public. Satisfaction and confidence performance is not/partially/fully integrated into BCU and force performance management processes.

Strengths

- The force has corporate standards but not in the sense of a widely recognised and consistent set of standards for all staff to follow. Standards exist within teams and are more based on function, ie CHC/Central Intelligence Bureau (CIB) and front-office staff (see also Areas for improvement).
- In the absence of a coherent set of standards, it is difficult for chief officers to champion them. All of the chief officers are committed to delivering CF but this needs to be provided in a more tangible, explicit and consistent form. The success of recent improvements around NHP gives confidence to HMIC that the leadership qualities exist to deliver this.

Work in progress

- An example of difference in corporate standards approach is seen between the two BCUs. County BCU has RID as its publicised priorities. RID stands for **R**educing crime and disorder, **I**nvestigating crime and **D**elivering customer focus. Luton uses Dr Q as a means to reinforce messages around crime and customer service: **D**etection, **R**eduction of crime and **Q**uality of Service.
- While it is commendable to introduce easy-to-remember catchphrases such as these, neither really spells out in explicit terms what delivering customer focus or quality of service should look like, although during interviews staff were able to articulate what they all considered providing a good service to be.
- The force, through the SIG, is examining how best to rationalise the two messages and introduce a single message into the organisation.
- The force is considering funding for a new HQ based post of force CSM to co-ordinate the two BCU CSMs and for further development of customer service within the force.
- Bedfordshire is one of the few forces in the country where name badges are not worn, but photographs and names of NPT officers and PCSOs are well publicised. The force-level SIG is considering the issue of officers and staff wearing name badges.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force does not have corporate standards around staff accessibility for out-of-office messages, voicemail, replies to emails or publication of contact details.

- Standards exist for a number of teams, ie CHC and CIB, and NHP staff widely publicise their details, but there is no overall corporate standard; consequently the level of service differs according to the member of staff or team contacted.
- As highlighted earlier, the force does not have a set of corporate standards; literature, however, along with publicity and marketing material, has easy-to-recognise branding, ie force logo and straplines. Various codes and charters are accessible through the force website and intranet. The force does not monitor for compliance on consistency of media and publicity material.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force sets and monitors corporate standards.

The Force is striving to ensure it provides a positive experience to every person with whom it has contact.

Strengths

- Prior to being selected for working within the CHC and CIB, potential recruits are assessed for their customer service skills. Customer service is included in training for successful applicants. CHC staff are provided with the opportunity to take part in national vocational qualification (NVQ) training, and this could be made mandatory as part of the role.
- Interviews as well as calls made to the CHC during HMIC fieldwork provided consistently high results for customer service by call takers.
- All staff within CIB have NVQ level 2 in customer service, and front-office staff at police stations receive training in customer service.
- Voiceconnect is a telephony software system that enables the force to identify and track by extension number any voicemails that have gone unanswered. Monthly reports are produced for divisional commanders. An opportunity will exist to use this data to good effect as soon as the force decides on its standards for voicemail.
- The force has well-established means of recognising positive contributions by staff to good customer service. Form 84C is used by managers and supervisors to record good work on annual PDRs, the recognition and meritorious award scheme, and letters of thanks in the force-wide newsletter.
- The CHC runs a monthly award, with winners recognised through the issue of certificates and photographs placed on a specially designated noticeboard in the CHC. Each month's winner is nominated for the Chief Constable's meritorious award.
- Officers and staff interviewed said in the main that there was a 'thank you' culture and viewed recognition by managers as genuine. Despite dealing with competing demands and the force having received some quite negative publicity in some sections of the media, managers and staff were acknowledging and accepting change and intent on providing the best service they could within the limited resources at their disposal.

Work in progress

- The confidence and performance programme (CPP) was introduced into the force in January 2007, with training starting in October the same year. The programme was intended to deliver training to all sergeants and police staff equivalents on customer satisfaction, challenging behaviours and coaching/mentoring skills. The customer satisfaction element was primarily around diversity and communicating with customers.
- To date 200 staff have been trained; however, the force has been unable to sustain training days dedicated to CPP because of other competing demands. A decision has been made by the force to incorporate CPP into other training sessions, such as NPT and induction courses for new staff. The adjusted approach is to be reviewed in September 2008.
- As a result of feedback from service users, the force will be introducing a text facility into the CHC, with technology used to convert the text into an email to be accessed and dealt with by CHC operators. Although this has potential, the effectiveness of text messaging has not been as successful as anticipated in a number of forces that already have a text facility; this provides an opportunity for the force to learn from others and be innovative in how it uses and publicises the system.

Area(s) for improvement

- Protective services directorate staff have provided evidence of where good customer service has been provided, but CF does not feature as prominently as it does within BCUs or other HQ departments. Unlike the two BCUs, protective services directorate does not have a CSM.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force considers introducing a customer services manager role within protective services directorate.

Performance processes include local satisfaction measures, and locally established priorities.

Strengths

- User satisfaction measures feature in force performance management meetings and within BCUs. Survey results in particular are shared at senior management team meetings by CSMs.
- Force performance around satisfaction is monitored through the bi-monthly force performance improvement board, NHP board and corporate review processes, with reports provided to the PA performance committee and community engagement committee.
- The PA has introduced an action plan for the 2008–09 annual policing plan detailing what actions need to be carried out to improve performance; this includes elements of CF. Two actions are specifically connected with user satisfaction:
- CF4: implement actions to minimise the difference between satisfaction rates of black and minority ethnic (BME) and white users by increasing BME satisfaction.

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- CF5: implement actions to increase the percentage of victims of racist incidents who are satisfied with the overall service provided.

Specific targets, in numerical terms, have been set for:

- satisfaction of victims of racist incidents with the overall service provided by the police;
- comparison of satisfaction between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided by the police.
- Updates on progress will be provided by the force to the performance committee.

Work in progress

- The performance and planning unit is working on a revised NHP performance management framework that will also incorporate satisfaction measures. This will be in place by April 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- No evidence was provided of occasions when the force periodically assesses people’s satisfaction and confidence before and after specific problem-solving activity.

The force can demonstrate that the relevant SPIs remain stable as a minimum.

	SPI 1e Satisfaction with the overall service provided		SPI 3b Satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided	SPI 3b Gap – comparison of satisfaction for white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided
	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	+/-pp
Bedfordshire	-3.0 pp	-1.4 pp	-3.9 pp	9 pp

Summary statement

The SPI data shows that force performance is slightly less than the average for the MSF.

The SPI data also shows that force performance has unchanged (is not different statistically) compared with two years ago.

Satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided is declining.

There is a satisfaction gap between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided. Users from minority ethnic groups are 9 percentage points less satisfied.

Where there is a gap in satisfaction with service delivery between white users and users from minority ethnic groups, the force has evidenced that it is now taking action to understand and narrow the gap.

Context

The SPI statistics are obtained from the PPAFs to March 2008. These statistics are survey based and have been analysed for statistical significance, which can be explained in lay terms as follows: 'The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

Note: When comparing the force's performance with previous years, year-on-year statistical significance is explained as follows: 'the difference in the force performance between the years compared is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

There is a summary of the statistical analysis methodology at Appendix 3 at the end of this report.

Victims of crime and users of police services are surveyed using Bedfordshire Police's own user satisfaction surveys, which comply with national standards and thus allow comparison with other forces. Surveys are based on a sample size of 600 interviews per BCU.

Strengths

- Some work has been carried out in Luton to examine why there should be a gap between BME and white users. Initial findings from surveying BME users were that they wanted to feel as though their complaints about crimes or incidents were being treated seriously. This message was provided in a briefing to teams during training day.
- Calls are being made specifically to BME users to update them of progress in response to crimes or incidents but unless resources are dedicated to the function it will be difficult to sustain.
- The Luton-based CSM is multi-lingual and broadcasts regularly on Diverse FM, a local community radio station. This allows the BCU to reach a number of diverse groups that ordinarily might not be completely aware of what the force and BCU is doing to provide a better service.
- In County and Luton BCUs members of the public who have made service complaints and who are from a BME background are provided with the opportunity to meet with the CSM to establish exactly what the issues are and to receive a personal response. This has been operating for at least two years and is regarded as good practice.

Work in progress

- The force is to carry out a review into the gap between satisfaction levels of white and minority ethnic service users. This work will also be concentrating on analysis of

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satisfaction levels in relation to racially and religiously aggravated crime and racist incidents.

- A report will be presented to the CF programme board and is due for completion in summer 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

SPI 3b – comparison of satisfaction for white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.

- In the year ending March 2008; 70.8% of users from minority ethnic groups were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 74.7% in the year ending March 2006.
- There is a wide satisfaction gap between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided. Users from minority ethnic groups are 9% less satisfied.
- Although the force is aware of the poor performance and has carried out some limited research as to why levels of satisfaction are decreasing and why the satisfaction gap between BME and white users is widening, it has been slow to introduce specific action either within a force plan or by formalising plans within either of the BCUs (see also Work in progress).

RECOMMENDATION 8

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that, notwithstanding current activity, the force accelerates the pace of change in reviewing the widening satisfaction gap between BME and white users.

SPI 1e – satisfaction with the overall service provided.

- Some 78% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 were satisfied with the overall service provided, which is less than the average for the MSF and is statistically significant.
- Force performance decreased slightly in the year ending March 2008; 78% of people surveyed were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 79.4% in the year ending March 2006.

Developing practice

- See Appendix 2.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that neighbourhood profiles are developed to include vulnerable and emerging communities.

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force produces a single document outlining neighbourhood policing explaining the structure and roles of teams and support staff.

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force reviews the structure, processes and cycle of joint tasking and co ordination meetings.

Recommendation 4

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force relaunches Citizen Focus, publicising and marketing critical milestones as they are reached during each phase of the Citizen Focus project.

Recommendation 5

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force introduces a system to effectively communicate the QoSC to vulnerable groups and emerging communities.

Recommendation 6

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force sets and monitors corporate standards.

Recommendation 7

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force considers introducing a customer services manager role within protective services directorate.

Recommendation 8

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that, notwithstanding current activity, the force accelerates the pace of change in reviewing the widening satisfaction gap between BME and white users.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACO	Assistant Chief Officer
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order

B

BCS	British Crime Survey
BCU	Basic Command Unit
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BPA	Black Police Association

C

CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CMU	Crime Management Unit

D

DCC	Deputy Chief Constable
DV	Domestic Violence

G

GO	Government Office
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H

HICT	Head of Information and Communications Technology
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR	Human Resources

HSE Health and Safety Executive

I

IAG Independent Advisory Group

ICT Information and Communications Technology

liP Investors in People

IS&T Information Systems and Technology

L

LCJB Local Criminal Justice Board

LSCB Local Safeguarding Children Board

M

MAPPA Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements

MPR Monthly Performance Review

MSF Most Similar Force(s)

N

NCRS National Crime Recording Standard

NIM National Intelligence Model

NHP Neighbourhood Policing

NPIA National Policing Improvement Agency

NSPIS National Strategy for Police Information Systems

O

OBTJ Offender brought to Justice

P

PCSO Police Community Support Officer

PFI Private Finance Initiative

PI	Performance Indicator
PIP	Professionalising the Investigative Process
PURE	Police Use of Resources Evaluation
Q	
QoSC	Quality of Service Commitment
R	
REG	Race Equality Group
S	
SARA	Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment
SOCA	Serious and Organised Crime Agency
SPG	Strategic Performance Group
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
T	
TCG	Tasking and Co-ordinating Group

Appendix 2: Developing Practice

INSPECTION AREA: NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING
TITLE: SOLUTIONS / OPERATION LUCKWELL
<p>PROBLEM:</p> <p>Neighbourhoods with high demand on the Police and other CDRP partners.</p>
<p>SOLUTION:</p> <p>'soLUTIONns is a series of 'Weeks of Action', intensive partnership activity, co-ordinated by the CDRP, to reduce crime and increase reassurance in specific neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Listening to and actively engaging community members is key. SNT PCSOs and staff from Luton Borough Council conduct a residents survey to identify concerns and needs. This directly informs a police plan of action, which reflects both residents' wishes and police intelligence about crime in the area. Partners' action plans also derive from the surveys.</p> <p>The third, and most recent soLUTIONs week of action was in Lewsey Farm. This area has relatively high recorded crime levels, particularly burglary and theft from motor vehicle, and is a high demand area for other CDRP members. It is intended that other neighbourhoods in Luton will receive SoLUTIONs interventions throughout 2008.</p>
<p>OUTCOME(S):</p> <p>Activities during the Lewsey Farm week of action included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A team of SNT officers played in the Street Football tournament. • SNT Constables, Borough Council Road Safety officers and school teachers patrolled outside lower schools to promote road safety and consideration for residents. Over the week 56 fixed penalty notices were issued, one person arrested, two stop and searches made and one car seized for having no Insurance. • The warrants officer and SNT executed outstanding warrants on persons living in the Lewsey area, resulting in five arrests. • Officers spent over 400 hours on high visibility reassurance patrols in Hotspot areas, including assisting with cleaning and painting of the M1 underpass and assisting youth workers in the Ballistic Zone (a local café). • Officers and PCSOs patrolled on busses to reduce crime on buses and give personal safety and crime prevention advice to people using the bus network. • Two crime prevention officers deployed to the mobile police station, sited at various crime hotspots, giving crime prevention advice, assisting with property marking and securing fourteen number plates to vehicles. • Community Safety Team officers patrolled with street services and fire and rescue partners for the environmental Action Days. • ANPR team deployment resulted in two arrests, eighteen vehicles removed from the road, one other driver reported for having no insurance, thirteen people reported for having unlawful number plates, four for having no licence and two for not wearing seatbelts. • The Tasking Team deployed to a passive drugs dog operation, resulting in eight stop and searches, one street caution and two arrests. • Professional Development Unit officers deployed for high visibility patrols and to assist Customs and Excise officers with diesel testing. This resulted in 40 vehicles being stopped, one vehicle defect rectification scheme referral, five HORT1s, one endorsable fixed penalty notice, one arrest and one vehicle removed from the road as it had no insurance. • Drakes Group (Court appointed Bailiffs) executed twelve warrants and seized two vehicles.

FORCE CONTACT:

Supt. Andy Martin, Supt. Community and Partnerships, Luton Division

INSPECTION AREA: NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING
TITLE: POLICE ‘NEIGHBOURHOOD INFORMATION’ LINK
<p>PROBLEM:</p> <p>Following Neighbourhood Policing implementation it became clear that there were a number of partner agencies holding information of value to Bedfordshire Police that was not being captured.</p>
<p>SOLUTION:</p> <p>A ‘Neighbourhood Information’ Link is being established to facilitate increased intelligence and information sharing among police and partner agencies.</p> <p>A secure web-based form has been designed to enable partner agencies to submit information to the Police via the Internet. The form is designed to gather sufficient information to be processed by police intelligence analysts. It includes fields to collate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the source knows the information; • Who knows the information; • When was the information first known to the source; • The information category; • Free text describing the information. <p>The gathered information feeds into Bedfordshire Police’s intelligence system (MEMEX) as ‘Neighbourhood Information’ (consistent with the approach taken to assessment of all intelligence). Analysis by Neighbourhood Information ‘Gatekeepers’ categorises the information as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful intelligence, to be entered into the main MEMEX system via the Force Central Information Bureau; • Information with the potential to become intelligence, requiring research or development by an Intelligence Development Officer; • Simply ‘Information’ to be retained as Neighbourhood Information; • Information of no use, to be discarded. <p>The Gatekeeper roles are being established within the Central Information Bureau.</p> <p>Partners were approached to pilot the scheme in one urban area (Marsh Farm, Luton) and one Rural area (Mid Bedfordshire). The pilots were launched in March 2008. A staggered roll out will continue over the next three to four months, following assessment of the pilot outcomes.</p>
<p>OUTCOME(S):</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Information Link will enable the Force to capitalise on community intelligence from partner agencies, for example, suspicious vehicles, people, locations, events and activity from non-police sources, leading to enhanced local neighbourhood intelligence.</p> <p>Storing Neighbourhood Information as an entity within MEMEX will allow research by analysts, Intelligence Development Officers, Local Intelligence Officers and SNT officers.</p> <p>Future development will look at how we share this information with partners.</p>
<p>FORCE CONTACT:</p> <p>Sgt. Ted Bloodworth, Mid Bedfordshire Partnership Sergeant</p>

<p>INSPECTION AREA: NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING</p>
<p>TITLE: SPARK JOINT PROBLEM SOLVING SYSTEM</p>
<p>PROBLEM:</p> <p>Even though SNTs are delivering joint problem solving, the police inevitably retain ownership for problem solving initiatives. Partnership working between agencies has been developing, but is hampered by poor communication.</p> <p>The lack of joint ownership perpetuates an environment where agencies continue to take a silo approach to problem solving in some instances.</p>
<p>SOLUTION:</p> <p>Implementation of a joint system for capturing and managing problem solving initiatives.</p> <p>Bedfordshire Police has worked with SPARK Data Systems to launch 'Bedfordshire Community Safety Network Online'. Using this system anyone with a username and password can go to the website and record Neighbourhood Policing problem-solving activity online, from any location.</p> <p>http://beds.sparksafetynet.co.uk</p> <p>Examples of how the website can be used include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewing team priorities, responsibilities and progress; • Viewing the work of other teams in Bedfordshire • Informing partners about priorities and issues; • Sharing previous responses to related issues or problems by other partners; • Provision of performance and management information about problem solving activity. <p>The system is based on the SARA (Scan, Analyse, Respond Assess) Model.</p> <p>A minimum requirement has been set that all neighbourhood priorities will have a corresponding SPARK record with the appropriate owner identified and allocated (who can be from any agency / body participating in the problem solving process).</p> <p>Where teams are engaged in additional activities that would benefit from the application of robust problem solving, these can also be managed via SPARK.</p> <p>SPARK is currently being rolled out across the County. All police SNTs staff will have been trained by end March 2008. A programme of joint training is also scheduled for each CDRP area to gain partner buy-in. These sessions are being run jointly between police and partner representatives and will be complete by end May 2008.</p>
<p>OUTCOME(S):</p> <p>What benefits have been realised or are expected for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedfordshire Police; • Partner agencies; • Neighbourhoods (the public)? <p>The aim of SPARK is to improve communications and joint working between agencies that previously worked in isolation. The main of benefits of SPARK for both police and partners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links users to the rest of their team; • Allows user to keep up to date with their projects; • Allows users to see other work in their Neighbourhood; • Allows users to see what is happening in other Neighbourhoods; • Allows users to Share Best Practice;

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For the public, they will have the opportunity to get involved in specific problem solving initiatives where appropriate.

The use of SPARK will ensure that the public see a visible improvement in effective joint agency problem solving resulting in resolution of those local priorities that they have nominated as the most important.

The key benefit for local communities will be an improved ability to provide detailed feedback about actions that have been taken and the outcomes of these on addressing local priorities.

FORCE CONTACT:

Victoria Harnedy, Neighbourhood Policing Project Manager

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INSPECTION AREA: CITIZEN FOCUS
TITLE: OPERATIONAL SWORDFISH (CALLBACKS TO VICTIMS OF CRIME)
<p>PROBLEM:</p> <p>Victim satisfaction rates for being 'kept informed' are, at around 60%, consistently disproportionately lower than for other aspects of victim satisfaction (all above 75%). This excludes callers reporting anti-social behaviour, who have a satisfaction rate of around 36% and account for the highest volume of calls received (around 57%).</p>
<p>SOLUTION:</p> <p>A trial was set up in December 2007, using Call Handling resources on an ad hoc basis to make reassurance calls back to people who have reported anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>From February 2008 a dedicated Call Handling team was established to make call backs on a formal basis to all callers reporting anti social behaviour plus victims of violence against the person (excluding domestic abuse), theft of motor vehicles, theft from motor vehicles and road traffic collisions. Victims of domestic burglary are excluded, as satisfaction rates are higher (around 73%) and they are likely to have been attended by police officers and/or SOCOs.</p> <p>Call backs are made to all customers in the listed incident/crime types, excluding domestic abuse and other sensitive cases. Calls take place during set customer centric periods throughout the week (including weekends) to increase opportunities for contact. Calls are made within 48 hours of the initial contact by the customer. Where the customer is not contacted in three attempts a message is left inviting them to call back, quoting the name 'Operation Swordfish'. Call handlers use scripts and a spreadsheet system to manage and record the contacts. Call backs give reassurance, offer advice and keep customers updated.</p> <p>Developments being considered to enhance the service include automating population of the callback database, utilising an automatic dialler and further work to determine the optimum call times to maximise contact.</p>
<p>OUTCOME(S):</p> <p>A robust analysis of the results will be conducted via the regular PPAF surveys. These are conducted three months after the incidents occurred, and will therefore not be available before the end of May 2008. Individual survey responses will be reconciled with those customers who have had a call back.</p> <p>Anecdotally, Call Handling staff involved in the call-backs report that calls are positively received, improving the perception that Bedfordshire Police cares, and leading to improved detection opportunities.</p> <p>Referring to the service under the official title of 'Operation Swordfish' assures victims as to the seriousness and credibility with which Bedfordshire Police is treating their incident and acts as a reference point for any returned calls.</p>
<p>FORCE CONTACT:</p> <p>Adam Gould, Call Handling Centre Manager</p>

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INSPECTION AREA: CITIZEN FOCUS

TITLE: POLISH WELCOME PRESENTATION AT LUTON AIRPORT

PROBLEM:

The need to improve service working, in partnership, with non-visible minority groups.

SOLUTION:

Bedfordshire Police is working with the Polish British Integration Centre (PBIC) on work to reach the large numbers of Polish migrants arriving at Luton Airport. The project involved compiling a CD with guidance and advice on various issues including the law and how to stay safe, and run it on a continuous loop on the plasma screens now set up in the Airport's immigration hall. There are around eight daily flights into Luton Airport from various locations in Poland. The presentation is due to be in place by the end of April 2008.

It is planned to produce leaflets, in partnership with PBIC, Luton Airport and the Immigration Service, to support the presentation.

Work is also continuing to provide linkage and possible joint working with the Polish Police service.

OUTCOME(S):

This project is at an early stage, but is anticipated to deliver improved service working with the Polish community. The presentation welcomes Polish migrants to the County, showing an informative and approachable face of policing with which they may be unfamiliar. Anticipated outcomes include:

- Increased awareness of traffic and other laws;
- Reduced numbers of Polish migrants going through the courts system on traffic related charges;
- Reduced incidents of carrying weapons;
- Increased awareness of human trafficking.

This work is delivering improved partnership working with PBIC, who support Polish migrants across Luton and Bedfordshire in a range of issues including policing. PBIC are seeking involvement with the Bedfordshire Police Independent Advisory Group, which will further enhance non-visible minority representation.

The Project is enhancing partnership working with the Immigration Service at Luton Airport. Further partnerships are being fostered with airports and police services in Poland.

FORCE CONTACT:

Mrs Charlie Whiteside, Community Relations and Youth Issues Advisor

Appendix 3: Assessment of Outcomes Using Statutory Performance Indicator Data

Context

The HMIC grading of Neighbourhood Policing and Citizen Focus for each force takes performance on the key SPIs as a starting point. These are derived from the PPAF and are survey based.

The survey results come from two different sources:

- **Neighbourhood Policing**
Results come from the BCS, which questions the general population. The annual sample size for the BCS is usually 1,000 interviews per force.
- **Developing Citizen Focus Policing**
Results come from forces' own user satisfaction surveys. The annual sample size for these user satisfaction surveys is 600 interviews per BCU.

Understanding survey results

The percentage shown for each force represents an estimate of the result if the whole relevant population had been surveyed. Around the estimate there is a margin of error based on the size of the sample surveyed (not on the size of the population).

This margin is known as a **confidence interval** and it will narrow or widen depending on how confident we want to be that the estimate reflects the views of the whole population (a common standard is 95% confident) and therefore how many people have to be interviewed. For example, if we have a survey estimate of 81% from a sample of approximately 1,000 people, the confidence interval would be plus or minus 3 and the appropriate statement would be that we can be 95% confident that the real figure in the population lies between 78% and 84%.

Having more interviewees – a larger sample – means that the estimate will be more precise and the confidence interval will be correspondingly narrower. Generally, user satisfaction surveys will provide a greater degree of precision in their answers than the BCS because the sample size is greater (1,000 for the **whole force** for the BCS, as opposed to 600 **for each BCU** for user satisfaction).

HMIC grading using survey results

In order to **meet the standard**, forces need to show no 'significant' difference between their score and the average for their MSF or against their own data from previous years. Consequently, force performance could be considered to be 'exceeding the standard' or 'failing to meet the standard' if it shows a 'significant' difference from the MSF average or from previous years' data.

HMIC would not consider force performance as 'exceeding the standard' if SPI data were travelling in the wrong direction, ie deteriorating. Likewise, credit has been given for an upward direction in SPI data even if performance falls below the MSF average.

Understanding significant difference

The calculation that determines whether a difference is statistically significant takes into account the force's confidence interval and the confidence interval of its MSF.¹ The results of the calculation indicate, with a specified degree of certainty, whether the result shows a real difference or could have been achieved by chance.

This greater level of precision is the reason why a difference of approximately two percentage points is statistically significant² in the case of the user satisfaction indicator, whereas a difference of around four percentage points is required for the BCS indicators. If the sample size is small, the calculation is still able to show a statistically significant difference but the gap will have to be larger.

[Produced by HMIC based on guidance from the NPIA Research, Analysis and Information Unit, Victoria Street, London.]

¹ The BCS results are also corrected to take account of intentional 'under-sampling' or 'over-sampling' of different groups in the force area.

² It is likely that there is a real, underlying difference between data taken at two different times or between two populations. If sufficient data is collected, the difference may not have to be large to be statistically significant.