

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report
Hertfordshire Constabulary
Neighbourhood Policing
Developing Citizen Focus Policing

September 2008



Hertfordshire Constabulary – HMIC Inspection

September 2008

ISBN: 978-1-84726-787-0

CROWN COPYRIGHT

FIRST PUBLISHED 2008

Contents

Introduction to HMIC Inspections
HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09
Programmed Frameworks
Statutory Performance Indicators and Key Diagnostic Indicators
Developing Practice
The Grading Process
Force Overview and Context
Force Performance Overview

Findings

Neighbourhood Policing

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

Recommendations

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Appendix 2: Developing Practice

Appendix 3: Assessment of Outcomes Using Statutory Performance Indicator Data

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;

September 2008

- 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:

- 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

Hertfordshire Constabulary has:

- 3 basic command units (BCUs);
- 75 Neighbourhood Policing teams (NPTs);
- 213 officers dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing; and
- 252 PCSOs dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing.

The force is a member of 10 crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) that cover the force area.

Geographical description of force area

Hertfordshire Constabulary's boundaries are congruent with those of the County of Hertfordshire, covering an area of 1,643 square kilometres, with a resident population of over a million. This makes Hertfordshire the second most densely populated county in England. In addition there is also a considerable commuting population that passes through the county every weekday by road and rail, to and from London.

The county comprises a mix of large urban areas, new towns, market towns and villages, and has some of the busiest strategic roads in Europe. Most of the southern areas of the county share characteristics with their neighbouring parts of North London. On the northern and eastern edges of the county, the nature of the area is countryside, and its policing dimensions are therefore similar to the rural context of southern Cambridgeshire and western Essex.

The county continues to grow rapidly, both economically and demographically. Further major housing developments are planned in the coming years, both to the west of Stevenage and in the south east of the county on the Essex border.

There are two international airports less than a mile outside the county's borders (Luton and Stansted), and all of London's airports are easily accessible. The motorway and trunk road network of the M1, M25, M10, A1(M), A41, A10 and A5 provide significant strategic road coverage and policing challenges. There are three mainline rail links (Midlands, East Coast and West Coast) and easy access to the east coast sea ports. This level of infrastructure provides excellent transport links and characterises a highly mobile community.

These features, together with the proximity to London, shape the communities that live, work, travel or spend leisure time in the county. Rail crashes at Watford, Hatfield and Potters Bar in recent years are reminders of the vulnerability to natural, accidental or

terrorist incidents that are caused by such a concentration of transport infrastructure in one place and the Buncefield oil depot explosion in December 2005 reinforced the appreciation of the potential for major incidents in an area of densely populated residential, and light and heavy industrial enterprises.

Many of the county's towns feature a vibrant night life that brings specific policing demands, and championship football is a regular feature of policing on the Western Area. A long history of film production in the county has traditionally had little impact on policing. However, the arrival of the 'Big Brother' house at Elstree has attracted considerable media interest and, on occasions, extra demands on the force's operational and support services.

The proximity to London, together with a number of key Parliamentary seats, leads to extensive and numerous VIP visits and impacts on police resources, particularly when a General Election is called. The impact of the high cost of living and difficulty in finding affordable housing for personnel directly impacts on resources, recruitment and retention. There are a number of venues across the County that are increasingly used for International conferences, major political events and similar gatherings. For example in 2008 the international Heads of Government conference was held in the County and this had a significant impact upon Hertfordshire's policing resources, requiring 'mutual aid' to support the force at the tactical level. It is highly likely that the number of such events is likely to increase over the forthcoming months and years.

Demographic description of force area

With a population of 1,051,000 in 1,643 square kilometres, Hertfordshire contains 19% of the people in the east of England in only 8.6% of the land mass. Some 20.5% of the population is under 16 years of age. There is an 81% employment rate for those of employable age.

The Census Mid Year Estimates for 2005 show the proportion of the population that is from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities is 9%, which is lower than the national average. The largest sector of this group (4.0%) is Asian, predominantly of Indian origin (2.1%). The more concentrated minority communities are predominantly situated in the Western Area, with some notable exceptions – e.g. in Hitchin and St Albans.

The 2007 Indices of Deprivation published by the Communities and Local Government Department demonstrate that the county as a whole is on a par with or ahead of the region, and well ahead of the national achievement figures. However, in the areas where poor health and education are evident, this level of deprivation is felt all the more keenly when compared with the relative comfort of the rest of the county. Economically the county performs well, with the Office of National Statistics showing a 2005 Gross Value Added assessment of just over £23 billion. This represents 24.7% of the gross figure for the six counties in the East of England region.

Local policing is delivered through three basic command units (BCUs): Western, Central and Eastern Areas. The BCUs are divided into ten CDRPs which are co-terminus with the ten Local Councils/Boroughs in the county.

Policing in each CDRP is led by a dedicated Chief Inspector. Neighbourhood Policing is delivered through 75 Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) made up of 12 Inspectors, 29 Sergeants, 172 Constables, and 252 PCSOs (moving to 90 SNTs in August 2008, although retaining the same numbers of personnel).

Strategic priorities

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

The force has five overarching strategic policing priorities:

- Being safe and feeling safe
- Reduce Crime
- Target Criminals
- Increase feelings of safety
- Spend money wisely

Force Performance Overview

Force development since the 2007 inspections

Estates Development

The development of the Police Estate to meet changing policing demands and expected growth in population of the county is a long-term and complex issue. The redevelopment of the Estate is being undertaken as part of the Public Access and Visibility (PAV) Strategy approved by the Police Authority in 2002 and to date has committed expenditure in excess of £33m. The enhanced Custody project at Hoddesdon completed in June 2007 delivered a 16-cell custody suite. The major projects at Hatfield and Stevenage are within the agreed budget and on schedule for delivery in 2008.

Improving Police Performance (IPP)

IPP (working as a subset within the Performance and Development Review system) is of key importance to our ability to improve our overall service delivery. A significant component of overall police performance is the effective management of individual performance. During the 2007-08 business year, a number of business areas have had IPP frameworks constructed to gather qualitative and quantitative data on the performance of staff. These included Intervention, Neighbourhood, Crime Investigation, and Roads Policing Teams. This data is used within the Force PDR process to assist line managers in judging overall performance and in identifying good performance or areas where development activity needs to be put in place. The collection of such data allows comparison between teams with some functions across the force area. A wider roll-out of IPP to other teams and roles will be phased over the coming year.

Force Contact Centre Review

Work continues to identify how best to capture 'real-time' customer satisfaction information and thereby enable early individual "service recovery" and overall service improvement. Provision of meaningful and timely feedback to callers is increasing and IT systems are being enhanced to support this. Process improvement work continues, ensuring performance targets are achieved and releasing substantial efficiency gains over the coming year. These improvements to business processes are linked to delivery of the objectives under the 'Beyond the Call' action plan.

Hertfordshire Area Review Programme (HARP)

This is an extensive Change Management Programme that brings together several significant projects which have elements of shared dependencies and synergy. This includes a radical review of Criminal Justice and Intelligence processes and incorporates

Workforce Modernisation, “Intelligence/Tasking and Co-ordination Hubs” and improved Custody processes. HARP is also delivering improvements across a number of policing activities including Roads Policing, Front Enquiry Counters, VIPER (suspect identification), and Critical Incidents. HARP is progressing the innovative use of Mobile Data in its widest sense, encompassing both the use of technology and efficient and effective use of/access to information.

County Prolific Offender Team (CPOT)

In April 2008, the County Prolific Offender Team (CPOT) was established with the objective to target the county's most prolific acquisitive criminals. The new unit has evolved from the Specialist Interview Unit (SIU) which was established in June 2006 and provided both an investigative function (particularly for forensic identifications), and also a training function whereby all trainee investigators completed an attachment to the SIU to learn key cell skills. This SIU function has now been devolved back to each of the BCUs, and CPOT now concentrates on acquisitive criminals offending in more than one BCU or force area. One of the first investigations taken on by the new unit involved a collaborative working arrangement with Bedfordshire and Thames Valley Police. This investigation resulted in a group of 5 offenders resident in Bedfordshire being charged with a conspiracy to commit in excess of 90 dwelling burglaries across the three force areas.

Other investigations undertaken by the team have included an organised crime group arrested in possession of false police and SOCA identification and equipment. Through the interview skills deployed, CPOT obtained admissions to the effect that criminals were travelling into the MPS to kidnap and rob an individual in possession of several hundred thousand pounds through his employment at a money exchange bureau. CPOT have led further collaborative investigations involving officers from Bedfordshire, Essex, Cambridgeshire, and other Forces involving offences including dwelling burglary, distraction burglary, and motor vehicle crime, and secured in excess of 300 sanction detections in the first 5 months of the policing year.

The PPO Management Units, established on each Area in April 2008, have the responsibility to deliver the PPO Offender Management Strategy through partnership working and close working relationships with Safer Neighbourhood Teams to maintain effective links with PPOs. Of note, the number of PPOs arrested has increased across the Force since these units were established. The units have also developed a Specialist Interview Unit to provide an academy function to train investigators through experiential learning on an attachment basis (a function previously provided by the Force SIU). Debriefs of suspects who having taken the decision to reveal their full extent of criminality, either as part of the C2 programme or for other reasons, are regularly undertaken jointly with staff from the CPOT team to maximise detection opportunities, and to ensure that interview skills are shared.

Records Management

Following the appointment of a Records Manager in March 2007, significant progress has been made in Records Management which was evaluated externally through the MoPI Peer Reviews (led by NPIA) in October 2007 and May 2008. Development under the MoPI project will ensure that Hertfordshire Constabulary has robust records management processes of Retention, Review, and Disposal, which can be monitored through a structured audit programme. There will also be significant improvements in data quality, ensuring that all relevant records can be linked and information is readily available across all types of records - physical and electronic.

Further to this in 2008/9, the Police Authority and Constabulary have agreed to substantial investment in the creation of a completely new centralised records registry. In the summer of 2008 a suitable property was identified for purchase, and the target opening date of the new registry is January 2009. This central registry and complementary policy and process changes are set to revolutionise the way the Constabulary delivers efficient and effective records management.

Key Initiatives to Improve Performance in 2007/08

Provide a Citizen Focused Police Service

Customer Service Desks – changing roles and processes
Re-launch of Victim Charter
Front Enquiry Office review
Satisfaction surveys of improvement initiatives e.g. vehicle scene visits, violent crime
Daily review of service to VEM victims
More comprehensive evaluation of user satisfaction

Reduce Crime

Partnership working in the Night time economy
Targeted “No Cold Calling” zones
Launch of Business Crime Partnerships
Increased youth diversionary activities (e.g. Army outreach programme)
Launch of Choices and Consequences Project (C2) focusing on the detection and long term reduction of acquisitive crime

Investigate Crime

Herts and Beds Major Crime Unit
Volume crime and Workforce modernisation (Operation Pioneer)
CJSSS and Criminal Justice Review Project
Vehicle Crime Attendance
Introduction of Volume Crime Car
Area PPO Units

Promote Public Safety

Growing number of Special Constables and volunteers
Continue to support increased PCSO numbers through partnership incentives
Revised Force website – access to Safer Neighbourhoods Teams
Youth Support Pathfinder initiative
Continuing Road Safety Campaigns

Provide Assistance

Introduction of Victim Pack
Working with the deaf community
Advice to Eastern European Communities
Enhanced Technology in control room
Website Improvement

Manage Resources

Wider collaboration
Bureaucracy (Informants (CHIS) Review).
Scanning of ‘Stops’ forms
Procurement Processes, e.g. contract savings on FMEs, Forensics, Insurance and Catering
Internal Fleet Review - reduction in fleet size
Increased use of Computer Based Training

Overtime Reductions
Lean thinking principles

Key Corporate Initiatives 2007/08

‘Lean thinking’ Principles - The force has started to apply ‘lean thinking’ principles across its numerous corporate change and development programmes. The main aims of lean thinking are to identify and reduce waste in activity, systems, and processes, removing bureaucracy and identifying what adds value to the organisation. These savings are re-invested in improving both services within the Citizen Focus and Protective Services agendas. This approach is being applied across many corporate initiatives, including those detailed below.

Collaboration - In November 2007 Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit was launched, with the set up costs partially off set by a demonstrator site grant secured from the Home Office. The joint unit has 145 police Officers and Police Staff from both forces. Additionally Hertfordshire joined the Chiltern Fleet Consortium (currently serving Bedfordshire and Thames Valley Police), in April 2008 with efficiencies expected through economies of scale, standardisation, and procurement opportunities.

Following a number of meetings between the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire ACPO teams it has been agreed that a number of further opportunities exist for collaboration between the two Forces. A joint project team has been formed to carry out a detailed assessment of the opportunities for collaboration on the following functions:

- Counter Terrorism/Tackling Domestic Extremism
- Firearms
- Dogs
- Civil Contingency
- Operational Planning
- Strategic Roads Policing
- Professional Standards
- Legal services

Further opportunities are being pursued, e.g. collaboration on Human Resources functions; and at a regional level looking at ICT, Scientific Services, Serious and Organised Crime, and Air Support.

Co-Location with County Teams – In June 2008 the Constabulary's Community Safety and Crime Reduction Unit (CSCRU) co-located with the HCC Crime and Drugs Strategy Unit and other departments at Farnham House in Stevenage. As well as bringing together the various strands of the CSCRU team, this co-location provides an excellent platform to build upon the relationships between the partners charged with delivering relevant LAA and other targets. Daily contact brings constant discussion around possibilities for joint working and problem solving. Although still relatively recent, the co-location is considered by all parties to be a significant step towards an even closer and more effective partnership approach to delivery of the citizen focus agenda.

Representative Workforce – Hertfordshire Constabulary wants to employ a workforce that is representative of the community it polices and ensure continuing support from that community. The Policing Plan has a target of 10% of recruits from minority ethnic communities for both officers and staff, and the force achieved this target for minority ethnic officer recruits by end March 2008.

The Home Office 'Dismantling Barriers' targets give Forces until 2010 to achieve a representative workforce. The force had, at year end 2007/08, 3% police officers, 3.6% police staff, and 5.8% special constables from minority ethnic groups.

At the end of September 2007, the force had the 2nd highest proportion of female officers in the country at 28%. Since then this has increased further to 29%.

Workforce Modernisation – The national agenda to develop the workforce has led to Hertfordshire winning a bid to become a demonstration site in relation to the investigation of volume crime across the force, and this is now being carried forward as "Operation Pioneer". This represents a significant programme of work to re-shape the business function of volume crime investigation, and aims to generate improvements in both capacity and capability.

The project will be evaluated internally and externally over a 12 month period by the Home Office to ensure that objectives to improve policing performance and quality of service are achieved.

Protective Services – Hertfordshire Constabulary has undertaken a review of its Protective Services provision and considered how effectively this complements the regional position. The Force is already engaged in significant collaborative work, both at a regional level, and working more specifically with Bedfordshire Police. For 2008-09 some £0.4m has been allocated to further develop collaborative work. The six Eastern Region police forces signed a Memorandum of Understanding in September 2007 confirming their joint commitment to tackling serious and organised crime across the region by sharing resources and expertise for individual operations. Since that time the number of cross-border policing operations has increased substantially. Future developments to increase capacity and resilience against serious and organised crime will be overseen by the six counties' Chief Constables and Authority Chairs.

Protecting Vulnerable People - There is an acknowledgement in the Constabulary that there needs to be better co-ordination across the different elements of Protecting Vulnerable People, which includes tackling child abuse, domestic violence, serious sexual offences, and undertaking missing person enquiries. To this end, Harm Reduction Units, with appropriate specialist training and increased resilience are being introduced in each Area. Furthermore, the Constabulary is working closely with partners across the county to improve the response provided to victims of domestic violence and/or serious sexual assault.

There are now seven Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) in post, with plans to recruit further. Western area has been conducting Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) since September 2007 and there are plans to introduce MARAC across the force by January 2009. There is currently a pilot Specialist Domestic Violence Court in Western area (opened in the summer 2008), and a further specialist court will be introduced across the force January 2009. In July 2008 the County saw the first Sexual Assault referral Centre (SARC) being opened in the Sunflower Domestic Violence Centre in Watford. There are plans to open domestic violence centres with co-located SARCs in the other two BCUs of Hertfordshire.

Neighbourhood Policing

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

Meeting the standard

During this inspection the force was assessed against SGC in a number of key areas of Neighbourhood Policing. To discern between forces, a moderation process has been applied to determine the grading of the force.

Following the moderation process, Hertfordshire Constabulary was assessed as meeting the standard. Neighbourhood policing has been implemented to a consistent standard across the force. Whilst the force is not exceeding the standard, it demonstrates that it is performing significantly better than the average for its MSF in SPI 2a (percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job) and KDI (percentage of people who 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'). Performance in SPI 10b (percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour) is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed (coverage).

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

- Hertfordshire Constabulary safer neighbourhood boundaries were identified, agreed and clearly defined at a local level in 2005. This followed extensive research and consultation with partners. As a general rule, these boundaries adhere to existing ward boundaries, taking into account both crime and Multi-Agency Information & Data Access System (MIDAS) data. (See Work in progress.)
- Neighbourhood Policing is delivered through 75 safer neighbourhood teams (SNTs), made up of 12 inspectors, 29 sergeants, 172 constables and 252 police community support officers (PCSOs). Some 18.49% of the workforce is dedicated to a neighbourhood role. Staffing levels for the SNTs were considered in 2005 as part of the recalibration project that matched supply to demand. In November 2006, further consideration of resourcing was evident when a further five constable posts were added.
- All neighbourhoods have a named contact who, in the majority of cases, is the neighbourhood constable. Succession planning is encouraged by the constabulary's availability policy, which counts a vacant post as an abstraction. In an effort to achieve the availability target, area command teams are constantly planning ahead to ensure that vacancies are filled expediently.
- The force has made significant improvements to its website. The safer neighbourhoods' link is now clearly visible and navigation is straightforward. New search facilities are in place, enabling searches by postcode, district, and ward. The available links section enables users to view SNT profiles, staff photos, contact

details, neighbourhood priorities, and dates of local surgeries. There is also an email facility, enabling users to contact SNT staff directly.

- The force selection and postings policy makes clear an expectation that the time spent in post for neighbourhood constables is at least 24 months. This expectation period serves to provide continuity, consistency, and a return-on-training investment. Staffing levels are reported at the operational performance meeting (OPM) and to the police authority, who then carry out further scrutiny.
- Staff from the focus groups described Neighbourhood Policing as 'having a much higher status than previously', and 'it is where the force is focused'. Officers of all ranks are applying to join Neighbourhood Policing teams and the role is viewed as an important experience that may enhance promotion prospects.
- The force has an availability policy (dated 1 April 2007) to support Neighbourhood Policing. The following 'availability' target for neighbourhood constables was agreed with the police authority and its partners.
- Neighbourhood constables are to spend at least 80% of their working time on duties or tasks directly connected to the day-to-day business or management of their neighbourhoods or in support of their own SNT.'
- An abstraction has been defined as 'any activity that removes a neighbourhood constable from work within their neighbourhood, or work with stakeholders who form part of their SNT'. To enable abstraction to be measured at force and area levels, upgrades to the duty management system (known as 'PROMIS') have been implemented, allowing constables to input their individual abstractions directly. The force has undertaken a substantial degree of work to ensure that data resulting from this policy is accurate.
- In respect of Neighbourhood PCSOs, a visibility target has been set requiring them to spend at least 80% of their working time in their community or on visible patrol in their neighbourhoods. PCSOs complete weekly activity sheets.
- The availability targets for neighbourhood constables and PCSOs are contained in the Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2007/08. Performance against the targets is reported through the force and area performance reports.
- During 2007/08, PCSOs achieved a visibility rate of 82%. The availability target for constables was not met. (See Areas for improvement.)
- The deployment model for PCSOs was established in 2006 as part of the force's Neighbourhood Policing project. It was agreed by chief officers and identifies four levels of deployment:
 - Primary deployment – 88 posts, the foundation tier providing minimum cover for each crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) based on partnership data and deprivation indices.
 - Demand-based deployment – 60 posts, allocated by relative demand using police incident data.

- Match-funded posts – 60 posts, dictated by partner participation in the ‘like-for-like’ incentivisation scheme.
- Specialist posts – 44 posts, including six mobile police station PCSOs and 38 schools PCSOs.
- A large amount of research informed these judgements. Elected members, CDRPs, partners and the police authority were consulted in the process, but there was no direct consultation with the public. The force monitors these deployments regularly due to the complex funding arrangements for PCSOs.
- Good use is made of the ‘wider police family’ to support SNTs, helping to make service delivery more suited to local needs.
- The force appointed a senior member of staff to the post of extended policing family manager in October 2003. The post-holder has been instrumental in driving and managing the PCSO portfolio, the community safety accreditation scheme, Neighbourhood Watch, and the police community volunteer scheme. They have also played a key role in encouraging partner agencies to part-fund PCSO posts within the constabulary.
- Considerable time and opportunity costs have been invested in developing the police community volunteers’ policies, an associated information pack, and a problem resolution procedure. These policies have been shared with other forces.
- The police community volunteer scheme has 75 volunteers who are working in support of SNTs by providing administrative support and staffing police offices as information points; for example, in Abbots Langley a parish council building has been adapted for the use of the SNT with a small police office staffed by a volunteer.
- Under the community accreditation scheme, 12 local organisations have been accredited by the Chief Constable. Training is delivered by the organisation and quality is assured by the force. An example is Park Guard, a Broxbourne-based company, where 12 handlers have been accredited to patrol open spaces with dogs. The handlers’ liaise closely with SNT officers during their patrols.
- There are 266 special police constables (SPCs) working within Hertfordshire Constabulary, and each SNT has SPCs aligned to it. The SPCs are regularly deployed with environmental health officers and trading standards officers on local problem-solving issues such as noise nuisance. It was apparent during the fieldwork that good integration exists between SPCs, PCSOs and neighbourhood constables. During 2007/08, the SPCs worked a total of 89,000 hours, of which 36,000 hours was attributed to Neighbourhood Policing.
- The special constabulary chief officer is a member of the Neighbourhood Policing working group and ensures the effective strategic involvement of special constabulary officers.
- Force commitment to Neighbourhood Policing is reflected in the importance placed on ensuring that all staff deployed to SNTs are equipped with the right skills and abilities to deliver an effective service to their communities. Training for neighbourhood constables is delivered in four modules. All neighbourhood officers have now received the first three modules of the programme:

- Module one is an introduction to Neighbourhood Policing.
 - Module two deals with community engagement and problem solving.
 - Module three introduces the concept of community intelligence.
 - Module four (see Work in progress).
- This training was validated during the fieldwork, when SNT officers stated that they felt adequately trained and equipped to perform their role.
 - Throughout 2007/08, 60 new PCSOs received a five-week training course followed by a local mentoring programme, and all 38 schools PCSOs received update training.
 - During the focus groups, evidence was provided of neighbourhood staff actively putting their training into practice, developing their skills and abilities in running a range of community engagement activities, and working with communities and partners on joint problem-solving initiatives.
 - A good example of partners working together to improve community safety is provided in the case of Batchwood Nightclub. Following local disorder at the nightclub, police worked with partners to introduce a series of measures to reduce crime and disorder, including:
 - introducing plastic glasses;
 - improving internal and external CCTV;
 - pruning trees to facilitate better CCTV coverage;
 - introducing a banning policy enforced by police;
 - using taxi marshals to ensure orderly queues;
 - identification scanning at the entrance; and
 - distributing lanyards to keep mobile phones secure.
 - The management of all 75 neighbourhoods is performed by 12 inspectors. Their role is a demanding one and it requires the effective management of high work loads.
 - Managers seeking promotion are encouraged to gain experience in the Neighbourhood Policing arena, and this adds to the status and importance of the role. The ratio of sergeants to inspectors, of less than three to one, provides for good supervision of first line supervisors.
 - There are systems in place to reward staff for good work. This includes special priority payments for neighbourhood constables.
 - The force hosts a problem-orientated partnership conference where best practice is showcased. Delegates include guests from UK police forces and partner agencies. This is a competitive event and the winners are given the opportunity to visit the US to observe problem-solving initiatives.
 - The force has its own community policing award to recognise multi-agency problem-solving initiatives – the Michael Fogarty Award. The winning initiative becomes the force's representative for the national Tilley Award.
 - The police authority holds an annual award ceremony to recognise neighbourhood police constables (PCs) and PCSOs. There are two categories of award – the

community police officer of the year and the PCSO of the year. The winners are nominated for the annual Jane's Police Review Community Policing Awards.

- At area level, each BCU has a chief superintendent's commendation and award ceremony where neighbourhood staff receive recognition for their work. These are formal ceremonies to which family members and partners are invited.

Work in progress

- There has not been any formal or regular review of the boundaries to date but a review is planned to take place during 2008 following a governmental Boundary Commission report.
- During 2007/08, availability rates for neighbourhood sergeants were not measured. Following requests from the police authority, availability data is now being collected for 2008/09, and the establishment of a baseline has been set within the policing plan. This data will serve to provide a benchmark against which future availability targets for neighbourhood sergeants may be implemented.
- The fourth neighbourhood training module, involving partnership placement activity, has been agreed in principle and is to be implemented in 2008. Groups of staff will be brought together, given specific objectives and will spend time with partners discussing the options. They will then regroup to exchange experiences and learning. Delivery will be balanced against the need to meet availability targets.
- The force is in the process of producing a safer neighbourhood handbook. The handbook is designed to provide advice and guidance on the principles of engagement, partnership working, and problem solving. It contains information on effective communication, posters, media relations, use of the website, and newsletters.
- To improve the sergeant to constable ratio in SNTs, which in some cases is as high as 1 to 19, the force is developing selected neighbourhood constables to become 'neighbourhood managers', attracting higher levels of Special Priority Payment (SPP). Their role will be to co-ordinate local priorities and provide support to sergeants who line manage neighbourhood constables and PCSOs. Consultation with both UNISON and the Police Federation as to how this might be implemented is ongoing.

Area(s) for improvement

- It was evident from the focus group interviews that SNT staff are being abstracted from their core roles; for example, sergeants are performing custody officer duty; constables are being deployed to football duty, public order events, search duties, major incidents and responding to force initiatives. One sergeant claimed to have been abstracted from their neighbourhood role to perform custody officer duty for single nights. It is recognised that occasional abstractions for operational reasons will be necessary. More recently, the practice of using constables in the acting sergeant role has been dispensed with. This has compounded the abstractions of sergeants from their neighbourhood roles.
- The force is not currently meeting its 80% availability target for neighbourhood constables. As of 31 March 2008, the neighbourhood constable availability rate for 2007/08 was 74.1%.

- There is now an easier process for constables to record their abstractions on PROMIS. If officers do not log on to PROMIS when they are on duty, an abstraction is automatically generated. The chief constable specifically requires that any non-compliance with the PROMIS entries be counted as a 100% abstraction, thus providing an incentive for officers and supervisors to correctly adhere to the policy. To ensure this requirement is strictly adhered to, there needs to be more rigorous first-line supervision. Despite area commanders being held to account by chief officers at the monthly OPM, performance against the force's abstraction target of 80% was not met during 2007/08.
- There is no formal policy to deploy staff in accordance with neighbourhood profiles, priorities and demands, and it is not apparent that staff profiles and experience are matched to the areas in which they are deployed. However, where possible, individual's skills and abilities are utilised and newly appointed neighbourhood constables will work in areas they are familiar with.
- With some sergeants managing up to 20 staff operating from different locations, there is little time for 'hands on' supervision, mentoring or undertaking one-to-one development of staff. Consequently, timely completion of supervisory tasks, such as performance development review (PDR) submission, completion of tasking results, crime audits and victim interviews, has proved to be challenging. However, the force is developing 'neighbourhood managers' to alleviate this problem.
- There is no specific neighbourhood training for inspectors or sergeants who are new to the role. However, evidence was provided of supervisors choosing to attend some aspects of the modular training.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should undertake an evaluation of its availability policy, and how it is monitored and enforced, in order that SNT staff are not abstracted in contravention of the policy.

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

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- The Neighbourhood Policing community engagement strategy outlines a framework of engagement techniques and frequency of use of those methods; it also introduces a need/worry matrix to assess fear of crime. Interviews with staff and visits by the inspection team to a range of engagement forums indicated that many of the suggested engagement tactics are being used.
- It is clear that engagement is becoming more widespread. One effective method of engagement that is helping the force to understand and act on views of its diverse

communities is through independent advisory groups (IAGs). There is an individual IAG aligned to each of the three area commands. Group members report a positive working relationship with local police, with well-attended meetings held every two months. These meetings are more than just a 'talking shop'. Actions are raised, allocated and progress is reported at the following meeting. An example of effective engagement that has led to improvement is the increased awareness by police of the concerns of the gay community; this followed a meeting sponsored by IAGs.

- Representatives from the traveller community are actively participating in IAGs.
- There is an identified police authority lead (PAL) for each CDRP, and they join together to form the police authority safer neighbourhoods committee. This arrangement enables the police authority to provide scrutiny and governance of Neighbourhood Policing at force level, while also providing the opportunity for any emerging local issues to be identified.
- SNTs engage with their communities at neighbourhood level through a range of engagement activities. Examples include neighbourhood engagement panels, surgeries, street briefings, and the use of mobile police stations. Two PCSOs for each of the three area commands have specific responsibility for deploying mobile police stations in rural areas. Details of forthcoming neighbourhood meetings and events, and the mobile police station timetables, are circulated on the force website.
- Youth and schools PCSOs, who engage directly with schools, were considered by the police authority to be working effectively in engaging and influencing young people.
- Evidence was provided by neighbourhood staff of the more informal methods used to engage with local communities, such as attendance at local events and festivals. Specific examples of this type of engagement are attendance at Kimpton Village fete, involvement in the Vaisakhi festival, meeting with residents of sheltered accommodation in Hitchin and visits to the Ravidassia Community Centre (a multicultural organisation that offers a variety of services to minority ethnic communities in North Hertfordshire).
- In addition to the neighbourhood policing community engagement strategy, an emerging communities' engagement strategy has been developed with a supporting emerging communities' action plan. (See Work in progress.)
- Neighbourhood Watch is a real strength and the force has invested significantly in the scheme. There are 5,626 active Neighbourhood Watches and each of the ten CDRP areas has a full-time PCSO Neighbourhood Watch liaison officer. The Online Watch Link (OWL), a subscription-funded communications tool, incorporates text messaging, voicemail and email (email is the preferred option). OWL is live in nine out of the ten CDRPs and is being effectively used to circulate widely information across the county. It can be used on a 24/7 basis and increasing numbers of neighbourhood staff are being trained in its use.
- Neighbourhood Watch is supported by Herts Watch, the county steering group, which comprises one lead co-ordinator from each CDRP. Herts Watch meet with the force on a quarterly basis and are moving towards becoming an independent body.

- The 'watch' concept in Hertfordshire has been developed into other areas of engagement, such as business watch, rural watch and pub watch.
- There are numerous facilities for information sharing and providing feedback at neighbourhood level. The safer neighbourhoods section of the force website provides contact telephone numbers and email addresses for neighbourhood constables and PCSOs. This makes it easy to contact SNT staff and they are regularly contacted by members of their communities.
- On the force website there is a non-urgent feedback and enquiry facility, inviting members of the public to make enquiries, report good service or make a complaint. Facilities by way of textphone and fax have been provided for deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired service users.
- Neighbourhood officers use a range of engagement activities, such as street meetings, briefings and surgeries, to identify local issues that affect their communities and to receive feedback. Issues are then taken to neighbourhood engagement panels, which are attended by police, councillors and community representatives; here the issues are discussed and priorities are agreed. Minutes of the meetings are recorded and actions agreed and allocated. Priorities that cannot be resolved locally are elevated to joint action groups (JAGs).
- The three area intelligence units within the force utilise a desk structure aligned to their respective CDRPs. IMS (Intelligence Management System) is the system used for intelligence submission. In January 2008, to encourage greater submission of intelligence reports by neighbourhood staff, the force realigned the responsibility for completing the risk assessment pages of the report from the submitting officer to the intelligence unit staff. Early results of this were an increase in submissions across the force; this was evidenced by the increased number of intelligence submissions relating to the force burglary initiative (Op Relentless).
- In 2007, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) introduced the concept of the extended schools consortium. From October 2007, each of the 38 consortia has its own dedicated youth and schools PCSO to help support and deal with young people across the county. Their role is to develop partnership working with young people and their families in schools and to tackle the issues of crime and disorder in and around the school community. (See Developing practice.)
- The youth and schools PCSOs are supported by ten PC youth crime reduction officers. Their role is to provide guidance and support to youth and schools PCSOs, to develop engagement activities with young people, to develop links with local schools and to oversee the investigation of crimes committed by young people.
- The police authority, through its governance arrangements, has a good awareness of the quality of engagement with young people and is very positive about the youth and schools PCSOs. An example of the level of engagement is demonstrated by the example of intelligence gathered by a PCSO leading to the identification of a local youth responsible for a number of arsons.
- A further good example of youth engagement and diversionary activity is the 'Get Smart' project, based in Stevenage. Initiated by a PCSO, the project is being delivered by the anti-social behaviour unit – a partnership arrangement that includes Stevenage Homes, Stevenage SNT, and Stevenage Borough Council. The project

identifies young people who are at risk of offending, and involves them in problem-solving exercises, and discussions about the dangers of crime, drugs and the effects of anti-social behaviour. They are introduced to a wide range of diversionary activities and are taught how to take responsibility for the choices they make. One aspect involves taking young people to a prison (HMP Coldingley) to take part in a work shop with short-term and long-term prisoners. The project encourages participation and involvement of parents.

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) used reality checks to test this engagement activity by visiting the project and speaking to participants and parents who were involved. Those spoken to particularly praised Hertfordshire police for their work and expressed gratitude that diversionary and awareness-raising activity is being delivered at a local level. This is a good example of effective community engagement with young people. The force may wish to consider promulgating this activity as good practice.
- The force has recognised significant Eastern European immigration into Hertfordshire, through increased numbers of non-British detainees, increased interpreter fees and other police incident data. Through the emerging communities' engagement strategy and supporting action plan, the force has identified Polish community members to attend multi-agency meetings in Royston, Watford and Hatfield. *A newcomer's guide to policing and the law in Hertfordshire* has been produced by the force in six Eastern European languages, providing advice and guidance about living and working in the county. This is a very recent initiative and the inspection team was informed that SNT staff are being relied on to distribute the guide within their communities.

Work in progress

- In 2007/08, the force developed an action plan to improve engagement with new and emerging communities. In line with the strategy, this action plan aims to develop trust and confidence between police and new communities, ensure areas identify and engage with these communities and undertake consultation and exploit recruitment opportunities. In October 2007, an initial scanning exercise conducted across the three areas identified that there is limited engagement with emerging communities. SNT constables are currently developing local engagement initiatives.
- A corporate locality profile template has been circulated to neighbourhoods. The templates have been populated but they are in early stages and need to be reviewed and developed in further detail to reflect emerging community profiles and engagement activity.
- The force is developing corporate-style newsletters and advertising material to promote Neighbourhood Policing across the county. Communication officers are providing advice and guidance to SNT staff to develop corporacy of style and content. The newsletters will be distributed to all 75 neighbourhoods on a quarterly basis and the aim is to make them partnership focused. The corporate-style newsletters and advertising material will complement the annual *Hertsbeat* force newspaper, which is circulated to every household and tailored to each area.
- To make it easier for officers to submit intelligence reports, an initiative is being developed and trialled using a direct link from the force intranet homepage to IMS. Work is under way with an IT company to develop the gateway.

- Continuous review will take place via the CRG to ensure that high-risk issues are addressed and appropriate measures put in place.

Area(s) for improvement

- SNT staff and supervisors must rigorously ensure that pre-arranged engagement activities at neighbourhood level take place as advertised, in order to maintain community confidence. Reality checking revealed an example of where a street meeting had been publicised but would not have taken place without HMIC intervention.
- Locality profiles (neighbourhood profiles) have recently been produced. There was evidence of a lack of awareness across the force that these profiles exist. This was evident in an area intelligence unit and a major crime team investigation, where knowledge of the profiles could have provided a useful tool to develop lines of enquiry. These profiles need to be further developed and marketed.
- In the safer neighbourhoods section of the force website, local community priorities are displayed for each neighbourhood area. However, when the priorities recorded on the website were compared with the priorities recorded on the intranet, inconsistencies were found. While HMIC is confident that community engagement activity is well established, processes for recording activity need to be made clearer. Some neighbourhood officers were unclear where to record priorities and engagement activity.
- Community intelligence is not embedded at the operational level and this is reflected in the limited amount of community intelligence submitted. Area intelligence managers have delivered local initiatives to try to raise awareness concerning the submission of intelligence but have seen little improvement. The force needs to refresh awareness and understanding of intelligence-related issues.
- The force does not use a structured method to test the quality of community engagement. SNTs are engaging with their communities through a variety of methods and feedback from community members shows that this engagement is valued. Community and partner engagement with police is taking place at all levels, from neighbourhood team officers to area commanders. There was no evidence of a force or area level process to test whether the engagement is reaching all sections of the community, and to determine which methods are most effective. The force plans to use a Neighbourhood Watch stakeholder survey to provide a view from co-ordinators as to the level and value of contact with neighbourhood teams. It was reported that other groups will be surveyed throughout the year.
- Tasks set by area intelligence units are disseminated to sergeants via the tasking and briefing system (TABS) for allocation. Only sergeants can update TABS. HMIC were shown examples of where tasks linked to force initiatives had been allocated, but there were lengthy delays in allocation and completion. The force plan to replace TABS to simplify tasking and briefing under the area review programme.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should provide specific training and briefings to all operational officers and staff on community intelligence issues and the significant links to vulnerable communities.

Joint problem solving is established and included within performance regimes.

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- The force uses the SARA model (scanning, analysis, response, assessment) as a framework for problem solving. A problem-solving database, known as TAPS (tasking and problem solving) is used to record initiatives. On 14 May 2008 there were 1,208 records on this database, dating back to 1 May 2002.
- All the records are graded between 0 to 6 depending on completeness, achievement of aims and transferable learning. Examination of the TAPS database revealed that 51% of the entries showed that the aim of the initiative was met, 14% were not met and 35% had no result shown.
- As no records are removed from the database, the force suggested that some of the earlier records, when staff were unfamiliar with the system, may not have been completed satisfactorily. The force is confident that more recent entries have achieved a much higher standard.
- The database has a comprehensive search tool to identify good practice, and each profile contains the facility to record action plans within the 'response' field. As Hertfordshire Constabulary is a small force, good practice is often spread through word of mouth and personal contact.
- Problem-solving training has been delivered and staff are well versed in the various methods available to engage with partners to achieve problem resolutions. A problem-solving guide for police and partners is available on the force intranet.
- The constabulary has produced a problem-solving DVD for Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and Watch liaison officers.
- During the fieldwork, HMIC were provided with considerable evidence of the effective use of problem solving. One example concerned a long-standing problem in Welham Green involving youths engaging in anti-social behaviour. A SARA approach was employed and a problem-solving entry made in the TAPS database. As this was not a problem that police alone could solve, the issue was taken to the JAG. Police delivered enforcement tactics through increased visibility. Partners took on responsibility for prevention. The local housing department made contact with parents of problem youths, with the threat of potential evictions if behaviour did not improve. The local education authority identified the principle offenders by examining behaviour within schools. The University of Hertfordshire supported the initiative with diversionary sports activities. The effectiveness of the initiative was monitored at the JAG and signed off when complete. Following the initiative, there was a 69% annual reduction in anti-social behaviour.

- At area level, there are problem-solving co-ordinators who attend the JAG meetings. They have an overview of problem solving and are able to advise SNTs.
- Policy, direction and good practice are promoted by the community safety and crime reduction department, and a specific chief inspector is responsible for this portfolio. At force level, area command teams can promote good practice at the monthly OPM, and there are CDRP chief inspector meetings every three months where problems and solutions are discussed. An example of this is the issue of sergeants knowing the best time to contact crime victims to complete crime audits and victim interviews. A pilot project has been implemented in North Herts using volunteers to identify the availability of victims; this has led to improved performance. Both the Michael Fogarty Award and the Problem Oriented Policing (POP) Conference are useful forums to share and identify good practice.
- Feedback on joint problem-solving activity is provided to the community during engagement meetings.
- The chief constable meets regularly with all chief executives of local authorities and heads of services (eg the probation service). This group provides the strategic direction on the local strategic partnership, the comprehensive area assessment and the local area agreement. Supporting this upper tier group is a number of sub-groups with senior management or assistant chief officer representation, enabling the force to fully engage at the strategic level with partners.
- The main barriers to effective partnership working have been the levels of resources available to partners such as the probation and health services, as well as the two-tier nature of the local authorities. The force considers that it has overcome this problem and cites a number of examples of situations where police have effectively used their influence to ensure delivery, with supporting partners, SNTs, and the community working together to achieve local outcomes. Examples include the county-wide drug intervention programme, the development of domestic violence multi-agency risk assessment conferences, sexual assault referral centres and taxi marshalling.
- The police authority were of the view that the force has made significant progress in joint working, especially in ensuring partners take on more responsibility for action.
- A night time economy strategy is in place across the county. It was constructed with the help of partners and published in April 2007. The key partners in the scheme include the police, fire and rescue services, the county council, national pub watch and local authorities. The force has invested heavily in this area and has appointed a force champion at inspector level to drive this portfolio. This has proved successful in the following ways:
 - An alcohol diversion scheme has been implemented, whereby those issued with penalty notices for alcohol-related offences are offered a place on an educational session, reducing the cost of their penalty notice to meet the cost of the session.
 - All partners have signed up to an information sharing protocol.
 - Trading Standards and local authority licensing officers have become accredited persons and have been trained by the constabulary in the issuing of penalty notices for licensing offences.

- Crucial cards have been introduced. These are credit card sized cards that contain a list of useful emergency support numbers; they have been designed by the force with the county strategic campaigns group and distributed in custody suites and A&E departments.
- A three strikes scheme is now running in the western area, whereby the first offence receives a warning letter, the second offence receives a three-month ban from the town centre and the third offence results in an Anti-Social Behaviour Order application.
- Recognising the link between anti-social behaviour, deliberate fire-starting and wider crime, the force has seconded a member of staff to the Hertfordshire fire and rescue service arson task force. Problem-solving initiatives have so far included:
 - joint awareness weeks;
 - ten arson road shows, with an estimated 5,000 members of the public in attendance; and
 - eight environmental action days, five arson audits and three action against arson initiatives.
- All forms of deliberate fire-setting have shown very significant reductions and the force has submitted a framework to the fire service to adopt the principles of the National Intelligence Model. Additionally, fire fighters within the county have received personal briefings from constabulary staff on the value of community intelligence and tackling rogue trading and distraction burglary.
- Community safety managers have reported positive relationships with police crime analysts and are able to quickly and readily obtain police data. The formal link between the local authorities and local police is with the CDRP chief inspector.
- Joint strategic assessments have been completed for all ten CDRPs and the force was significantly engaged in this process. Detailed analysis of levels and patterns of local crime and disorder have been included from police and local authority data (MIDAS) and priorities have been identified. These have informed community safety action plans. Priorities are delivered at strategic, tactical and operational level through the responsible authorities group, the JAG and the operational planning group.
- The frequency and structure of the operational meetings varies within each CDRP. For example, at Stevenage CDRP, an operational planning group meets every two weeks and includes partners from licensing, fire and rescue services and the health authority. At St Albans CDRP, the operational meeting takes place monthly. The police analyst provides tactical intelligence and offending data.
- An example of how tasking and co-ordination principles are becoming embedded into the joint problem-solving process concerns an initiative in Stevenage to improve feelings of safety by tackling the impact of alcohol on communities. A night time economy multi-agency tasking group was established; it includes managers of many of the local alcohol retail outlets. The group funds additional police patrols over weekend periods, and taxi marshals to assist in the organised activities of people from the local area. As a result, a significant reduction in violent crime has been achieved.

- The Taxi marshals' scheme derives from Bedfordshire Police Authority. The initiative aims to remove people quickly and safely from town centres during busy periods. It is funded by HCC, was piloted in St Albans CDRP, and is now operating across the county.
- There are local action groups at neighbourhood level and JAGs at CDRP level, which are a key part of the community tasking and co-ordination process. However, National Intelligence Model level one briefing and tasking processes focused predominantly on volume crime targets.
- During the focus groups interviews it was apparent that there is a good level of co-operation between partners, coupled with a real desire to reduce crime and disorder. This was confirmed during interviews with local authority community safety managers. Meetings are attended by individuals from police and partner agencies who are able to make decisions regarding resourcing and funding where appropriate.
- HMIC attendance at partnership meetings witnessed 'sign-off' of priorities by the group as a whole. Members of the community discussed with police the progress made against a specific priority and then collectively agreed whether or not the priority could be closed.

Work in progress

- One of the options arising from the night time economy strategy was the introduction of a safer clubs, pubs and bars scheme. The force has decided to market and pilot the scheme in the St Albans district, prior to extending it county-wide. To date, seven licensed premises have applied for accreditation (five in St Albans, one in North Herts and one in East Herts), and one nightclub has been accredited (Batchwood Nightclub in St Albans). There are approximately 1,000 licensed clubs, pubs and bars in Hertfordshire.

Area(s) for improvement

- There is not a formal process or established mechanism for sharing good practice in problem-solving activities at the neighbourhood team level. Despite the fact that there is a substantial number of problem-solving records contained in the TAPS database, it is searchable, and the records have been graded, practitioners commented that searching for good practice is both time consuming and difficult. At the time of examining the TAPS database, 64% of the records were graded as either 0 (allocated/entered in error/created but never used) or 1 (new record – incomplete and not yet graded).
- Local authority partners are unable to access the TAPS database. The force could consider extending accessibility to TAPS by properly authorised and approved community safety staff.
- HMIC witnessed, at JAGs and at neighbourhood engagement panels, formal sign-off by group members of priorities when they had been resolved or significant progress had been made. The agreed sign-off was recorded in the minutes. However, there was a lack of consistency amongst neighbourhood staff as to where and how these minutes should be stored, albeit they were available at the meetings.
- During the fieldwork there was little evidence that joint problem-solving training had taken place, or that a joint training needs analysis had been conducted. One

community safety manager indicated that there had been joint problem-solving training over 18 months ago, but none had been delivered more recently.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the force should undertake an evaluation of joint problem solving training with partners and put in place a system of joint training that meets the needs of both police and partners.

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
Hertfordshire Constabulary	5.6 pp	5.4 pp	5.4 pp	7.2 pp	0.2 pp	- 3.7 pp

Summary statement

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

The SPI/KDI data also shows that force performance is significantly improved compared with two years ago.

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.

September 2008

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

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

- 58.2% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think that their local police do a good or excellent job, which is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

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

- 55.7% 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 significantly better than the average for the MSF.

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

- 14.5% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.
- Force performance was unchanged by the year ending March 2008 when compared with the previous year. Some 14.5% of people surveyed think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, compared with 18.2% in the year ending March 2006, this fall in perception is statistically different.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

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

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- In the Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2007/08, policing priorities include improving public confidence and satisfaction in the service provided by police. Challenging targets were set in consultation with the police authority and were rigorously monitored

through the monthly force OPM. Each area has its own performance management board meeting shortly before the force OPM. These meetings are supported by a performance review document that includes data on public satisfaction. In addition, CDRP chief inspectors have regular performance meetings with their staff, where they are able to pass on key messages.

- The policing plan also has a key objective to improve public confidence and satisfaction in police services. Targets have been set to increase satisfaction across a range of service delivery areas.
- The force is undertaking many initiatives that have contributed to its continued improving satisfaction and confidence levels. Examples of these include the following:
 - Crime audits (supervisors are required to audit crimes, to quality assure the standard of recording and investigation).
 - Victim interviews (one interview per officer per month).
 - Improving personal performance (IPP). This initiative began in April 2007, with neighbourhood and intervention constables being measured against a suite of 11 performance indicators that are both qualitative and quantitative. IPP contributes to the PDR process and is designed to focus the officer's activities on force priority areas. IPP can be used to identify good practice, areas for improvement and learning opportunities. The system is contributing to achieving greater local accountability. Qualitative measures include victim satisfaction data.
 - Quick time surveys – while collecting survey data on victim satisfaction in respect of motor vehicle crime (Op Repro), the force was able to quickly respond and act on negative customer feedback, improving the customer experience.
- Public confidence and satisfaction performance is included in monthly performance management processes at force-, area- and CDRP-level. iQuanta data and charts are used within the reports. During the fieldwork it was apparent that area-based staff were familiar with Iquanta processes and comparisons.
- The force uses a range of methods to collect feedback from its community to inform service delivery. Examples include:
 - call handling – a real-time telephone survey has been conducted within the force communication centre to evaluate service provision;
 - victim satisfaction surveys – focus groups with victims of crime have been commissioned to establish how services to victims can be improved;
 - professional standards – questionnaires are sent to complainants inviting feedback on the complaints process;
 - electronic feedback facilities are available on the force website;
 - feedback forms are available in station offices; and
 - there is a feedback form contained in the *Hertsbeat* newspaper.
- In order to test and understand the force's treatment of victims of crime, particularly in relation to policing performance assessment framework (PPAF) crime types, the force commissioned an independent research company. The research process

focused on the areas of initial contact and follow up. Twenty-two people participated in the research process, either in person or via telephone interviews. The survey activity was completed in November 2007. Respondents gave a favourable impression of their contact with Hertfordshire Constabulary and reported some elements that could lead to an improved experience. These elements are already being considered by the force within a range of complementary activities, such as improving feedback to callers when incidents are reported, publication of the *Information and Advice* booklet for victims, and keeping victims informed of the progress of investigations.

- At CDRP level, police work closely with local authorities to obtain feedback from communities. Methods used by the local authority include citizen panels, fear of crime surveys, visual audits and local residents' panels, the data from which is shared with police. Emerging issues are raised at JAG meetings. In the longer term, the findings from this consultation feed into joint strategic assessments, from which action plans are agreed.
- At force level there is a survey team of ten staff who carry out Home Office mandated user satisfaction surveys, and have conducted a number of in-house bespoke surveys in fast time. While the survey unit are conducting the surveys, if they are made aware of an expression of dissatisfaction they implement 'Service Recovery'. This involves the details being passed to an area designated liaison officer who will implement the recovery process.
- The force performs bespoke surveys to help them address areas of risk; these are commissioned by the force performance management board. A good example is Operation Repro. The aim of the operation is to improve service delivery to victims of auto crime and improve detection rates. The initial tactic was to attend all vehicle crimes but, as a result of customer feedback, the process was refined. Control room staff now undertake a needs-based assessment before deploying a resource.

Work in progress

- To help the force understand variations in satisfaction and confidence performance, and to be able to assess inputs to outcomes, the force is examining the impact of the various initiatives being undertaken. For example, the IPP framework is being delivered more widely across the force and rolled out to more staff, but will require time to be able to measure outcomes. There is now 12 months worth of IPP data from neighbourhood and intervention officers; the force is analysing this data to influence future learning and development.

Area(s) for improvement

- When the force identifies a problem with service delivery, it has the ability to commission survey work to understand the causes. This is undertaken by the survey department. When asked what outcomes the force achieved as a result of their work, the department heads were unable to specify. There appears to be a lack of feedback to them about how the force has used the information that they have collected and what outcomes have been achieved.

The force demonstrates sustainable plans for Neighbourhood Policing.

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- The force and the police authority have demonstrated, through the 2008–2011 policing plan, their commitment to sustaining Neighbourhood Policing beyond April 2008. Particular emphasis has been placed on improving public confidence and satisfaction in police services, increasing people's feeling of safety and reducing anti-social behaviour (including alcohol-related disorder).
- There is an assistant chief constable lead responsible for delivering Neighbourhood Policing and developing Citizen Focus.
- To support Neighbourhood Policing, the public access and visibility estates strategy, updated in May 2007, identifies that the force has high asset value embedded in its estate, which will be used to deliver improved facilities. The force aims to achieve a smaller, more efficient and more ubiquitous estate, thereby supporting the constabulary's policing style of providing highly visible and accessible policing. Delivery of a 123 work station force communication centre has already been achieved.
- As part of the strategy, area sites have been classified into four types, ranging from area headquarters to community access points. A type 3 site is a neighbourhood police station, which will compose an enquiry office, accommodation for SNTs, and, potentially, partner organisations. The strategy has already delivered an increase in public access points through the new neighbourhood type 3 police stations at The Harlequin, Watford and Abbots Langley. Partnership working opportunities (eg a new neighbourhood police station in Hertfordshire University) are also being explored.
- Originally there was Home Office funding in place to deliver PCSO training. To ensure the force retains a capability to train PCSOs in the future, funds have been diverted from elsewhere in the training budget.
- The 2008/09 learning and development business plan details training to be delivered to maintain and improve safer neighbourhoods policing for officers, police staff and partners.
- The force employs 252 (FTE) PCSO posts, of which 75 are funded by HCC, the local authority and partners. Non-Home Office funding arrangements were initially agreed for two years, but have recently been renegotiated for a further three years. The constabulary also operates a 'match funding' arrangement with any partner or organisation that is able fund, or part-fund, PCSOs. Plans for 2008/09 are to increase PCSO numbers by ten, to 262 under this arrangement; this is at a time when other forces are facing challenges in this area.
- Hertfordshire Police Authority considers that Neighbourhood Policing is embedded and is now 'business as usual'. During the focus groups it became apparent that more officers are applying for posts than posts are available. The role of neighbourhood manager is currently being developed.

- Following the HMIC inspection on Neighbourhood Policing and the NPIA embedding the Neighbourhood Policing report, the force has implemented the safer neighbourhoods programme action plan to track progress. Actions have clear owners and time scales, development areas, outcomes and progress sections.
- The police authority community engagement committee holds a public meeting every quarter. This committee oversees, monitors and examines all functions within Neighbourhood Policing and quality of service delivery, thereby providing governance and scrutiny of Neighbourhood Policing.
- There is a PAL aligned to each CDRP, and they are members of the responsible authorities group. Active community engagement is undertaken by the PALs who work through the local arrangements for consultation and engagement.
- The view of the police authority is that the force has made significant progress in establishing joint working, especially by encouraging and supporting partners to consider policing problems as everyone's responsibility.
- The performance scrutiny committee focuses its scrutiny on performance against the policing plan targets.

Work in progress

- Neighbourhood profiles, at the time of the 2007 HMIC inspection, were described as 'lists of key local community groups and individuals' and of 'limited value in informing strategic assessments or for targeting activity'. The force has designed a template reflecting acorn data, crime data, key individual networks, local scanning, active citizens list and the neighbourhood plan for use to record neighbourhood profiles. The templates were populated in February 2008. The profiles have started to be populated, but require further development and marketing.

Area(s) for improvement

- In the 2007 HMIC report, it was commented that there was no clear protocol to direct the apportioning of work between intervention and neighbourhood officers. The targets set within the 2008/09 policing plan to answer and attend calls are being met. However, during this inspection, it was apparent that the majority of incidents allocated for a scheduled response were assigned to intervention officers, whereby deployment of a neighbourhood resource may have been more appropriate. More flexible use of all available resources is required and with this a culture shift away from intervention officers always being the first choice for deployment. Negotiation with area command teams is ongoing to agree deployment criteria to support this, and enhancements to the force Command and Control system (known as 'Oasis') are planned.

Developing practice

- See Appendix 2.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

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

Exceeding the standard

During this inspection the force was assessed against SGC in a number of key areas of Developing Citizen Focus Policing. To discern between forces, a moderation process has been applied to determine the grading of the force.

Following the moderation process, Hertfordshire Constabulary has been assessed as exceeding the standard, which means that the force demonstrates that it meets the standard and displays innovation in Citizen Focus implementation.

Strengths

- There are indications that the force is innovative in its objective to develop Citizen Focus policing through a range of investments. Contact Centre 6 is a software system that prioritises the routing of calls in the force communication centre according to the number dialled and the availability of staff. Quicksilver is a software system used in the force communication centre to inform call handlers of local priorities and specific requirements, thereby enabling appropriate and accurate call grading and despatch decisions to be made.
- IPP is a force initiative designed to improve performance by staff in accordance with force values. Performance frameworks have been developed and aligned to core roles. IPP takes account of qualitative and quantitative measures, and is used to highlight good practice. At the end of the performance year, staff members receive a personal report that accompanies their development review and identifies good performance and developmental needs. IPP was introduced in 2007 to neighbourhood and intervention teams, and subsequently to roads policing officers, detective constables and PCSOs.
- Six neighbourhood officers have been dedicated to the deployment of mobile police stations in the rural areas of the county, thereby increasing visibility and accessibility.
- The force has redesigned the Stops/Search form by incorporating a quality of service section. The completed forms are analysed to identify performance improvement opportunities.
- All direction and control complaints are examined by the police authority community engagement committee every three months. Complaint investigations are not closed unless they have received police authority sign-off.
- 'Service Recovery' is a process used by the force to address dissatisfaction by customers. A designated liaison officer will contact the complainant to identify the reason for their dissatisfaction and implement remedial action. This process is used in the force communication centre and by area command teams.

- Since 2007, the force has carried out crime audits and victim surveys in order to improve its services to customers. More than 3,000 crimes have been audited and 1,500 victims have been interviewed. The audit process has been broadened to include roads policing officers, and plans are in place to extend the process to dog handlers and firearms officers.
- The 'Get Smart' project, based in Stevenage, is a diversionary scheme aimed at young people who are at risk of offending. The scheme is delivered by the multi-agency anti-social behaviour unit, and includes talks about drug usage, crime and young people taking responsibility for their own choices. The project includes a visit to HMP Coldingley where young people take part in workshops with prisoners. Parents spoken to by HMIC during a visit to Get Smart expressed their gratitude for the project.
- The force is a market leader. It has been developing Citizen Focus policing since 2004, has taken an innovative approach and is now establishing itself as a lead force. However, it could do more to elevate itself to achieve national recognition. The IPP initiative was presented at the Eastern region Neighbourhood Policing managers meeting in February 2008. This initiative has been cited as good practice by the NPIA and is available on its website. IPP was used as a case study in the publication, *Improving Performance – a practical guide to police performance management*, issued by the Home Office in February 2008.
- The development of the Stops/Search form has been the subject of enquiry by the Metropolitan Police Service, and has been presented at the Home Office-sponsored 'Stop and Search community panel', chaired by Doreen Lawrence. The Independent Police Complaints Commission recognises this initiative as good practice and is considering how best to use it to scrutinise performance in other forces. The NPIA, equality, diversity and human rights unit, give advice to forces on how Stops are conducted and praised the force for this initiative, recognising it as good practice.
- Norfolk and Warwickshire Constabularies have independently visited the force to learn about the use of fast-time surveys, and the use of crime audits and victim interviews.
- The role of customer service desks has been presented at the Eastern region Quality of Service forum.
- The force has developed activities that lead to improved outcomes. Citizen Focus policing has continued to feature as a key priority in annual policing plans since 2005. The chief officers and the police authority provide strategic direction for the force through the Statement of Purpose and the service commitment. These objectives are widely publicised across the county through the website, newsletters and the force newspaper (*Hertsbeat*). Within the force, the objectives are circulated, displayed, and staff demonstrate how they work to deliver them. The force strap line – 'The Personal Touch' – is indicative of its commitment to improving confidence and satisfaction.
- The force received a 'Good' grading for reassurance in the 2003/04 baseline assessment. In the 2004/05 and 2005/06 baseline assessments the force received 'Good' gradings in all of the categories that make up the Citizen Focus frameworks.

- A quality of service implementation plan was developed in May 2005, supported by the introduction of a Citizen Focus delivery plan in 2006. By October 2007, 79% of the actions had been implemented, with management of the remaining pieces of work being overseen by the police reform team.
- The force uses a wide range of methods to collect feedback, which it uses to improve service delivery. Survey data has been used by the force to review and amend service delivery, in order to deliver improvement (eg Op Repro, motor vehicle crime initiative). A market research company was used in the force communication centre to gather 'live time' customer feedback. The findings were used to develop call-handling processes in order to improve follow up to callers.
- The force has developed a positive relationship with the IAG. Examples were provided of how independent advice has been sought and changes to publications have been made as a result.
- Customer service desks have been implemented in the three force areas. While initially used to contact victims of crime by way of scheduled appointments, they have now developed to ensure compliance with the Victim's Code of Practice and keeping victims updated.
- The force is performing significantly above its MSF in at least one SPI, namely SPI 1e, satisfaction with the overall service provided. The force value at March 2008 is 85.3%, which is 4.1% above the MSF average.
- The remaining SPIs for the force are all above the MSF average. In the five satisfaction measures – whole experience, ease of contact, police action, follow up and treatment – the force is best performing in its MSF in three of the measures. In relation to the eight confidence measures – confidence in local police, being there when needed, treating with respect, fair treatment, dealing with minor crimes, understanding community issues, dealing with community priorities and overall confidence – the force is best performing in its MSF in six of the measures. In addition, the proportion of officer time available for front-line policing has increased by 1.4% and remains above the national force average.

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

Summary statement

The force fully understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are systematically made to improve local service delivery. The force comprehensively communicates the National Quality of Service Commitment standards, the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime standards and the force corporate/accessibility standards to its communities.

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

Strengths

- Hertfordshire Constabulary has been developing a Citizen Focus approach to policing for a number of years. Citizen Focus has featured as a key priority in the

annual policing plans since 2005. A clear alignment to the ethos is demonstrated in the force's Statement of Purpose, which is widely publicised and familiar to staff. The force's aim 'to work with the people of Hertfordshire to achieve safety, justice and reassurance for all' will be supported by providing a citizen focused police service through:

- taking personal responsibility for delivering a quality of service;
 - promoting diversity by treating individuals with respect and dignity;
 - making each contact professional, responsive and caring; and
 - listening, learning and seeking improvement.
- In order to deliver the Citizen Focus objective of improving public confidence and satisfaction, the force, in consultation with the police authority, has set itself challenging targets.
 - Additionally, the service commitment states how the force will deliver the best possible service to its communities through:
 - listening to and understanding their needs;
 - responding in a professional and caring manner;
 - delivering a service that is sensitive to individual needs;
 - being open about what they can and cannot do; and
 - working together to find solutions.
 - Further supporting the Citizen Focus approach is a leadership charter and a diversity statement.
 - Citizen Focus is very much exemplified by the style and approach of the chief constable and the chief officer team. Within the chief officer team, an assistant chief constable takes the force lead for this portfolio, which also includes Neighbourhood Policing, engaging communities, quality of service and workforce modernisation.
 - Hertfordshire Constabulary employ a wide range of methods, both formal and informal, to collect force- and CDRP-level feedback, which is then used to inform service delivery. These methods include:
 - customer satisfactions surveys;
 - quick time surveys in response to emerging issues;
 - complaints data;
 - victim interviews and call backs;
 - call-handling surveys; and
 - IAGs.
 - The force was able to provide examples of how these have been used.
 - One particularly effective initiative used by the force is quick time surveys. Satisfaction and confidence levels are monitored monthly through the force performance management board and at CDRP through area performance meetings. During 2007, the force identified that victim satisfaction, and the sanctioned detection rate, for motor vehicle crime was an area of risk. A plan to enhance service delivery to victims was introduced (known as Operation Repro) and standard operating procedures were revised.

- To monitor the impact of the revised procedures, quick time surveys with victims were completed. As a result of these surveys, refinements were made to the plan. Instead of attending all motor vehicle crime scenes, a 'needs based assessment' is now carried out by the call handlers to ensure that the police response is more appropriate to the circumstances and the victim's needs. The forensic yield from vehicle crime scenes is generally low. The primary purpose of the change was to raise satisfaction levels, with the secondary objective of raising detection rates. In this case, the primary objective takes precedence.
- During 2007/08, user satisfaction with the follow up provided to victims of vehicle crime (SPI 1c) has improved by 11.5% to 68%, and user satisfaction with overall service to victims of vehicle crime (SPI 3a) has improved by 4.3% to 82.8% (see Developing Practice.)
- While the survey unit are conducting the mandated user satisfaction surveys, should they identify an expression of customer dissatisfaction, they implement 'service recovery'. This process involves the information being passed to a designated area liaison officer who will contact the complainant to establish the reason for their dissatisfaction. This is a good principle that has the potential to improve service delivery and the reputation of the force. However, there are some weaknesses in it (see Areas for improvement).
- On the force website there is a 'quality of service' section that outlines clearly what customers can expect from Hertfordshire police. Within it is a section entitled 'Your Voice Counts'; this provides a facility for citizens to email general feedback and enquiries. Responses are received in the force control centre, recorded, and forwarded to the organisational and intelligence development department (OIDD) for administration. The number of responses from the public is unclear, and it was acknowledged that there is a need to improve the marketing of this facility (see Areas for improvement).
- The force trialled a 'live time' market research survey in the force communication centre to measure the satisfaction rates of callers. An external contractor was used, who focused on two particular operations: telephone resolution and police resource deployment. While 'first contact' achieved comparatively high levels of customer satisfaction, the survey suggested that the service provided beyond the first contact needed to be improved, most notably with regard to the level of feedback that callers receive about their incident. Through changing call-handling processes and implementing a technical fix within Oasis (force command and control system), an improved service is now provided.
- Hertfordshire Constabulary has entered into a collaborative arrangement with HCC and the Primary Care Trust. The 'Hertfordshire Public Engagement Partnership' has been formed to share information and data in order to identify service user views and needs. During 2007, the primary contractor for the partnership commissioned two focus groups with victims of crime to identify improvement opportunities to meet their needs.
- To ensure services are more citizen friendly, members of IAGs have been consulted regarding policies, procedures, publications and campaigns. An IAG member cited examples of where IAG views had been sought on a pamphlet for people with learning difficulties, and a drink/drive campaign that showed the victim of an accident in a wheelchair with a caption suggesting their 'life was over'. The

campaign was well intentioned but, understandably, physically disabled people may have found this insensitive. Views were listened to by the force and changes made.

- More recently the force has developed and launched an information pack for victims of crime. Prior to publication, IAG members provided valuable feedback on how the pack could be refined to ensure it was more informative and user friendly to victims.
- The introduction of SNTs is contributing to a more visible and accessible policing service. Hertfordshire has 75 established SNTs who provide a local and bespoke policing service to their communities. They engage formally and informally with their communities and, through neighbourhood panel meetings, are able to identify local priorities that can be taken forward and dealt with through a joint problem-solving approach.
- To improve the level of service provided by the force communication centre (FCC), a number of initiatives have been introduced:
 - Contact centre 6 is an IT software system that recognises the type of call being made from the number dialled (eg 999, 0845, internal extension). It recognises the skills of staff available and who is best placed to meet the caller's requirements, before routing it to the most appropriate handler. This helps provide a fair and even distribution of the workload which, in turn, contributes to a better customer experience.
 - The FCC has made use of an external company to trial a live time market research survey. A comprehensive report was provided to the force and was used to make improvements to the service provided.
 - An assistant manager within the FCC has responsibility for dealing with complaints. In all circumstances, the complainant is invited to visit the contact centre to understand how it functions. As a result of a visit by a complainant, the force has introduced an emergency and non-emergency text messaging service.
- Mobile police stations are providing greater accessibility and visibility in the more rural areas, helping to increase reassurance among residents. The mobile police stations are staffed by six dedicated PCSOs (two per area), who publish timetables in advance on the force website.

Work in progress

- Quick time surveys have been successfully used to monitor response to new initiatives and this was particularly successful with Operation Repro. A similar approach is now being taken in other areas of activity, such as violent crime, burglary and anti-social behaviour.
- The police authority plays an active role in seeking users' views. This is exemplified by the co-ordination role that they play in a new multi-agency initiative to address the fear of crime – the fear of crime working group. An action plan has been compiled as a result of 'Spotlight' events held in two CDRP areas (Buntingford and Potters Bar) where crime levels are low, to try to understand why the fear of crime is high.

Area(s) for improvement

- There are numerous feedback mechanisms available to members of the public, but the use of them appears limited. Information can be received by the force through

various channels and is dealt with by a number of different departments (eg the PSD, OIDD and SNTs). There is scope to improve the marketing and management of these feedback facilities in order to improve policing services.

- The survey unit has a facility to implement 'service recovery' when necessary. However, no feedback is received by the survey unit who identified the problem, the designated liaison officers are different across the areas, and there is a lack of clarity regarding the role of the customer service desk and the liaison officer.

Quality of service complaints are dealt with effectively

Strengths

- The professional standards department (PSD) manage a process whereby all trend data and follow up action regarding quality of service complaints is recorded. This is further enhanced by the sending of questionnaires to all complainants where complaints are locally resolved or investigated. While quality of service complaints might be dealt with by area command teams, they are overseen by the head of the PSD to ensure that all learning and development opportunities are maximised.
- Data from the quality of service complaints is analysed, trends identified, and, where necessary, action is taken to improve service delivery. In 2007/08, 285 direction and control cases were finalised. The majority of these resulted in individuals either having a policy explained or an apology provided.
- The process is subject to police authority supervision, who scrutinise all direction and control complaints and formal complaints to ensure that action is taken to improve the customer experience and influence organisational change. The authority reviews the process on a quarterly basis, completes direction and control complaints, and signs each one off.
- Wider learning issues identified are presented via service improvement documents and are considered at the force OPM. The force was able to cite a number of examples where lessons have been learnt from direction and control complaints, and process improvements made. This includes the following:
 - Within the strategic roads policing unit, revised instructions and an amended form have been produced regarding the crushing of uninsured vehicles.
 - The policy for dealing with cheque and credit card fraud has been circulated to enquiry officers to ensure clarity on how such allegations are to be investigated.
 - The process of arrest by appointment is now considered, where practical.
- In view of the importance placed on handling this type of complaint, the force target is to achieve closure by managers within 28 days. The force is striving to improve its 2007/08 performance of an average of 53 days. To try and achieve quicker resolution of complaints and meet the requirements of the Taylor Report, a pilot project was implemented in the Eastern Area in October 2007. Additional training regarding local resolution, supported by PSD staff, has been provided to the area command team, inspectors and sergeants, to help ensure a more efficient and effective resolution process.

September 2008

- In May 2007, a mystery shopper process was conducted in the enquiry offices at St Albans, Watford and Stevenage to establish how complaints from members of the public are dealt with. As a result, reminders about the complaint recording process were circulated in *The Standard* (a quarterly internal circulation), on the intranet site and via posters.

Work in progress

- The PSD are sending out questionnaires to all complainants in cases where complaints have been locally resolved or investigated, to seek feedback on customer satisfaction. To date, 309 questionnaires have been sent out and 56 have been returned. More returns are considered necessary before any reliable conclusions can be drawn. The process has the potential to help ensure that the informal resolution procedure is meeting customer needs while also providing useful feedback.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The force is monitoring its compliance with the National Quality of Service Commitment

Strengths

- In May 2005 the force quality of service implementation plan was developed, and agreed by the police authority. The police reform programme board held responsibility for implementation, while the police reform steering group reviewed delivery and oversaw risks and emerging issues. In 2006 a Citizen Focus delivery plan was developed to support the implementation plan, and management was referred to the OIDD. In October 2007, the Citizen Focus delivery plan was closed with 79% of the actions implemented. The remaining 21% of actions were remitted to the relevant departments for final implementation, with supervision from the police reform team within OIDD.
- The police authority is actively involved in the governance and scrutiny of satisfaction and confidence measures through a number of committees and working groups, including:
 - the performance scrutiny committee; and
 - the community engagement committee.
- At the local level, a police authority member is aligned to each of the CDRPs, part of whose role is to engage in extensive community engagement and provide feedback to the force.
- Citizen Focus standards are clearly communicated to the public through a range of communication mediums, including:
 - a comprehensive website that clearly displays the service commitment and feedback facilities;
 - an annual edition of the *Hertsbeat* newspaper, tailored to each of the three policing areas;

- the policing plan 2008–2011; and
- a range of corporate-style posters, pamphlets and newsletters.
- A special edition of *Hertsbeat* helped introduced the force's quality of service commitment in 2006. A further four-page update edition was circulated in February 2008 to outline the achievements and maintain momentum. *Hertsbeat* has a wide internal and external readership.
- Every victim of a crime that is being investigated receives an information and advice pack. This pack includes crime prevention advice, the service commitment, a personal message from the Chief Constable and details of the Victims' Code of Practice. This document is available in nine different languages, as is the policing plan, helping to ensure that vulnerable and minority groups, and new and emerging communities are catered for. A new booklet (*A newcomer's guide to policing and the law in Hertfordshire*), recently distributed across the county, provides essential information and advice about the law in the UK, and includes a section covering help for victims and witnesses.
- Since March 2007, contact cards have been available for officers to give to victims of crime; this ensures that victims have details of their crime and the relevant contact details. Area business development managers are ensuring that the contact cards are readily available and are encouraging their use.
- To ensure continued compliance with the national quality of service commitment, the force has adopted a pragmatic risk-based approach to emerging issues. As risk areas are identified, they are taken to the monthly performance management board where action is agreed and implemented.
- A quality of service improvement manager, a chief inspector in OIDD, has a key role within the organisation for overseeing this process, helping to ensure resultant action plans are monitored and enforced.
- Customer service desks have been introduced across all BCUs to help make services more focused on customer needs. Initially these were called area service desks and were focused on making contact with victims and dealing with scheduled appointments. More recently their role has developed to ensure compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice, concentrating on compliance with victim updates. The staff spoken to consider these to have been beneficial in improving follow up action to victims of crime; this is reflected in improving performance levels.

Work in progress

- In 2007, the force introduced a process to improve crime investigation and victim care using crime audits and victim surveys. To date, almost 3,000 crimes have been audited and 1,500 victims interviewed. This is providing a wealth of data that is now being used to improve internal processes which, in turn, will help improve the customer experience. For example, it was identified that neighbourhood police officers were not attending crime scenes. When investigated, it became apparent that the reason for this was that these officers were not appearing on the resource allocation screen as being available for deployment by dispatchers. This led to a review of call signs for staff so that dispatchers are able to identify all available resources for deployment. (See Developing practice.)

- To improve the service provided to victims of road traffic collisions, roads policing supervisors are now completing online audits of road traffic collision reports and 'stats 19' reports (a statistical report to Hertfordshire Council Highways Department). The audits focus on the key behaviours of traffic officers. A similar process will be introduced for dog handlers and firearm officers, whereby the quality of work audits will be based on incident report books and witness statements, measuring quality of evidence and timely completion.
- To improve initial response, the force is developing a 'single incident management model', ensuring links from the FCC to the mobile data terminals and automatic vehicle location system.
- As part of 'The Personal Touch' – the force's strap line to brand its commitment to improving community confidence and satisfaction – name badges were introduced in 2007. The aim of this is to ensure that every contact leaves a positive impression and provides a friendlier and more open service to the public. The impact and suitability of the different types of badge are currently being assessed.
- A new handbook, *A Guide to Safer Neighbourhoods in Hertfordshire*, gives advice to officers on effective communication, providing guidance to help ensure that every person dealt with is left with a positive impression.
- To identify vulnerable victims, in order to deliver an enhanced service in accordance with the Victims' Code of Practice, the force is enhancing the crime investigation system (CIS). By introducing mandatory fields on particular screens, vulnerable victims can be more easily identified, allowing compliance with the code to be monitored. The technical fix to CIS is currently being developed. However, OIDD are manually monitoring adherence to the code and report an 86.2% compliance rate.

Area(s) for improvement

- The physical environment of enquiry offices varies significantly across the force. During the inspection, three front offices were visited and staff were found to be friendly and helpful. However, the environment was not welcoming. At one location there was no literature available and, except for a SNT poster, there was nothing displayed on the walls. At a second location, there did not appear to be an area for private consultation, seating was damaged and notices, while displayed, were not in any particular order. At a third location, the pictures of the area command team and policing priorities displayed were out of date.
- There are two ongoing and linked projects to improve front counter services: one addresses the staffing of front counters and the other addresses the front office environment. Following a review of enquiry office services by external consultants in March 2007, a report was presented to chief officers and the need to improve the provision of enquiry office services was approved. The provision of the front office enquiry service has been organised on a local scale, with individual members of staff assigned to individual stations. Such small teams have had little resilience and there have been gaps in delivery resulting in enquiry offices being closed or police officers being abstracted from front-line service delivery.
- While there has been some work on developing and introducing a corporate standard, this has yet to be delivered to all stations.

- Improving the front office environment and ensuring a positive experience for all members of the public who visit station enquiry offices is an area for improvement for the force.

The force has 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 fully embedded corporate service standards expected of all staff when dealing with the public. Satisfaction and confidence performance is fully integrated into BCU and force performance management processes.

Strengths

- The force has implemented corporate standards for the way in which staff are expected to deal with everyone through its:
 - Statement of Purpose;
 - service commitment;
 - leadership charter;
 - diversity statement; and
 - organisational control strategy.
- A corporate communications department supports the organisation in communicating the force standards both internally and externally.
- The force used the re-launch of The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (a guide to reporting, initial investigation and keeping victims informed of progress), as an opportunity to review and update the standard operating procedure. Within the guide are details of how the victims' code has been enhanced in order to consider applying vulnerability measures to victims of anti-social behaviour, to ensure the correct level of response and to identify the potential for repeat victimisation.
- The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, re-launched in November 2007, sets out minimum standards that govern service delivery. To assist in compliance with the code, the force has produced an aide memoir card that has been issued to all officers and staff.
- Quality of service commitment training, which seeks to ensure that all staff are aware of the corporate standards, has been delivered throughout the force. The training was tailored, where possible, to the different roles undertaken by staff and delivery was prioritised. First to receive training were staff in the force contact centre and other staff who deal with customers by telephone. Front-line officers and staff with face-to-face contact with the public were then trained, before a final phase of training was delivered to all other staff. During 2007/08, 2,064 staff received this quality of service training.
- Quality of service training is now being incorporated into induction and other training modules.

- Leadership seminars and leadership presentations are used to re-enforce corporate standards and help embed the Citizen Focus approach. Between January 2007 and March 2007, 560 staff attended leadership seminars.
- In championing corporate standards, use is made of the strap line ‘The Personal Touch – bringing more to policing’. This is complemented by widespread publication of the force values, which include ‘making each contact professional, responsive, and caring’.
- The force launched its quality of service commitment in advance of the national Citizen Focus campaign. In July 2006, the widely circulated *Hertsbeat* newspaper included a ‘quality of service special’. This publicised the service commitment, included a message from the chief constable championing the new approach and an article from the deputy chief constable explaining the rationale. This was followed up two years later in a further edition that summarised what the force had achieved since the launch.
- In the central area, the Citizen Focus ethos is promulgated to all staff through annual policing plan awareness sessions. This is a major commitment for the area command team as, to ensure that all staff receive a presentation, a number of events have to be held. The day provides an opportunity for staff to reflect on previous performance and consider the priorities for the year ahead. It also provides a valuable opportunity for the command team members to reinforce corporate values and objectives, and to drive the Citizen Focus agenda.
- There is a much publicised ‘reward’ system operating in the central area, under the banner ‘everyone can make a difference’. Good work is recognised by the chief superintendent in the form of a letter and the awarding of a ‘Starfish’ badge. Numerous examples were provided to the inspection team where members of the public had been in contact following a positive encounter with the police, and the good work had been recognised in this way. It was apparent from the staff spoken to that the system, while simple, was highly valued and that staff were proud to wear their award.
- There are a number of annual awards recognising good work and many nominations are received for these. Internally, the Michael Fogarty Award is given annually for excellence within multi-agency problem solving. Hertfordshire Police Authority hosts its own Neighbourhood Policing Awards, and the winners go forward to the national Neighbourhood Policing event. Other awards include:
 - student officer of the year;
 - intervention officer of the year;
 - police staff individual of the year;
 - roads policing officer of the year;
 - diversity in action (team); and
 - health and safety award.

Work in progress

- A safer neighbourhoods’ handbook is being produced to give guidance on how staff can engage with communities and undertake joint problem solving. Currently being drafted, it contains an introduction from the chief constable, a section that emphasises the importance of leaving a good impression with every contact, and gives ‘top tips’ on how to achieve this.

Area(s) for improvement

- The majority of staff have received quality of service training, to the extent that it is now being incorporated into all aspects of training, rather than as a one-off delivery package.
- With customer satisfaction levels being comparatively high, some staff have questioned the need for quality of service training, and some staff in the focus groups indicated that the training had not made a great impact. It is important that any training delivered is constantly refreshed to ensure it remains up to date.
- Since March 2007, officers attending crime scenes have been required to report the crime from the scene, unless circumstances prevent this. The aim is to improve the quality of service through the provision of accurate information to victims at the time of initial investigation. These changes have improved accuracy in crime reporting and impacted on victim satisfaction. However, compliance by front-line staff across the force is inconsistent, and in January 2008, only 29.7% of crime was reported from the scene.

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

Strengths

- The force aims to ensure that a positive experience is delivered to every person with whom it has contact. An example of how the force has implemented corporate standards to ensure that every customer experience is a positive one is through the redesign of the Stops form. A quality of service section incorporates two questions enabling the force to demonstrate its commitment to those stopped and to obtain immediate customer feedback.
- Following a Stop, the officer is required to ask the individual concerned to indicate whether or not they understand why they have been stopped and whether they feel they have been treated professionally, respectfully and with dignity. The person is then asked to sign the form.
- The data is collated, analysed and used to develop an understanding of what leads to satisfaction and dissatisfaction in encounters. The process has been recognised by the NPIA as good practice and a number of other forces have visited Hertfordshire to learn from this initiative.
- Between 1 April 2007 and 6 March 2008, 72.82% of Stops forms showed positive responses to both questions.
- During 2007, analysis of these forms indicated non-compliance with the process by one section of the force. Workshops were held to give the officers more confidence in using the process, which in turn led to improved compliance rates. The force is of the view that anecdotally there is evidence to suggest that officer behaviour is influenced by a requirement to seek immediate feedback. (See Developing practice.)
- The force utilises an IT software system, Quicksilver, in the force control centre.
- When a call for assistance is received, the call handler is able to access the local priorities in the area, and can make a more informed decision as to the grading of

the call, and what resources to allocate. Every two weeks, Quicksilver is updated by an FCC sergeant with each CDRP's top two priorities, including specific actions for call-handling staff in respect of deployments. This system helps ensure contact centre staff provide a more tailored response to the needs of the customer.

- Both before and during the fieldwork, the inspection team contacted members of staff by email and telephone. Where staff were not immediately accessible, 'out of office' or answer phone messages were in use. Messages left were responded to promptly and efficiently.
- The force has made significant improvements to its website, making it easier for users to identify and contact neighbourhood teams and individual staff members. The neighbourhood site includes staff profiles, photographs, local priorities and dates of police surgeries. The site also provides neighbourhood team email facilities.

Work in progress

- The initiative to improve satisfaction with Stops, by asking those stopped for immediate feedback on their encounter, is providing information to help the force measure the quality of encounters and demonstrate its commitment to quality of service. The data is also helping to inform ongoing work to further understand disproportionality in stop and account.
- The force has installed telephones outside police stations that can be used to contact the police out of hours. These telephones do not take account of diverse needs, particularly the deaf or hearing impaired, those with physical disabilities or those whose first language is not English. The diversity unit, in conjunction with the force contact centre and information and communications technology department, has identified a new style of telephone, with features that comply with the Disability Discrimination Act and which will be trialled at Stevenage Police Station.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

Performance processes include local satisfaction measures, and locally established priorities

Strengths

- IPP is a major initiative by the force to improve the performance of all officers in accordance with the force's values. Overseen by the IPP board and started in April 2007, investment was made in identifying suitable measures to drive performance in critical areas. To this end, mandated development objectives are set, one of which is to: 'Provide a consistent excellent quality of service to the public, in accordance with the IPP measures of victim satisfaction surveys and other quality measures.'
- IPP was initially introduced to neighbourhood teams and intervention teams. During 2007, IPP frameworks have been introduced to roads policing constables, detective constables and PCSOs (see Developing practice.)
- At the end of the performance year, staff receive details of their performance across both qualitative and quantitative measures in an easy-to-understand chart, with an accompanying letter. The chart forms part of their development review and is used to identify good performance and areas for development.

- Staff in focus groups understood what the process is trying to achieve and recognised its potential benefits in ensuring high standards of customer service.
- The IPP process has provided a useful tool for supervisors to manage their teams and raise individual performances. It has been in operation for a year and there is now sufficient data for the force to undertake evaluation with a view to achieving organisational learning. The evaluation is currently being completed and aims to:
 - identify top performers;
 - capture good practice; and
 - provide feedback to inform learning and development.
- IPP is providing a framework to link measures of confidence and satisfaction, and has been used to create a local Citizen Focus index.
- Public confidence and satisfaction performance is included in monthly performance management processes at force-, area- and CDRP-level. iQuanta data and charts are used within the reports. During the fieldwork, it was apparent that area-based staff were familiar with iQuanta processes and comparisons and were making regular use of the information available to inform service delivery.
- At area level, the joint strategic assessments contain crime reduction as a priority and progress on performance is regularly monitored. Within the area monthly performance summary reports, priority and volume crime reduction and detection rates are measured and compared across CDRPs within the area, with the CDRPs in other areas and at force level.
- Performance is also reported and comparisons drawn using iQuanta data covering customer satisfaction. Regularly reported is satisfaction data against SPI 1a to 1e by force-, area- and CDRP-level for the priority crime groups, helping to identify trends across and within CDRP areas.
- Also reported on at area level is satisfaction data on ethnicity, again across CDRPs.
- In the central area, the inspection team noted that dissatisfied user comments are included in the monthly report to help understand why users are dissatisfied. In addition, the response rates for crime audit and victim interviews (processes established to monitor and improve satisfaction levels of victims) are reported at team and officer level, enabling good performance to be rewarded and poor performance to be addressed.
- Citizen panels are used by local authorities to survey residents about local services, but these are not used to test the impact of local initiatives for fear of 'over surveying'. However, the citizens' panels are used to gather feedback on the community safety priorities that emerged from the joint strategic assessments.
- Local authorities across the county use a range of different methods to survey residents and test the impact of local initiatives. While the processes used are different, the common theme is that where the local authority holds meetings to seek feedback, SNTs are in attendance.

September 2008

- For example, in East Herts, CDRP street briefings are carried out (known as 'visual audits'), whereby local authority partners and SNT officers hold meetings in the street with local residents to seek their priorities. Following action to address these priorities, these meetings are also used to test the impact of the actions taken and assess customer satisfaction levels.
- A further example is 'community voice meetings', to which the public are invited. Police attend with partners and are held to account for performance issues at these meetings.
- The force has used its own survey unit to enhance the anti-social behaviour user satisfaction survey questions to test the response to an initiative in the central area. This took place in March 2008.

Work in progress

- Following the initial success of IPP, during 2008/09 the process will be rolled out more widely across the organisation. Detective constables, roads policing constables and PCSOs were set objectives in July 2007. Communications staff, firearms officers and dog handlers were set objectives in April 2008. These will be reported on during 2008/09. Objectives for other staff, such as scene of crime officers, are currently being finalised.
- Using local performance data, the central area identified a problem with follow up to callers complaining of anti-social behaviour. To improve satisfaction levels, an initiative was introduced where every caller was visited by a neighbourhood officer. The force survey unit conducted bespoke survey work in March 2008 to measure the impact of this initiative in St Albans and Hertsmere.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

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
Hertfordshire Constabulary	4.1 pp	- 1.4 pp	82.3 pp	2.3 pp

Summary statement

The SPI data shows that force performance is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

The SPI data also shows that force performance is unchanged compared with two years ago.

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

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 2.3 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 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 Hertfordshire Constabulary’s own user satisfaction surveys, which comply to national standards and thus

allow comparison with other forces. Surveys are based on a sample size of 600 interviews per BCU.

Strengths

SPI 1e – satisfaction with the overall service provided.

- 85.3% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 were satisfied with the overall service provided, which is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

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

- Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 82.3% of users from minority ethnic groups were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 82.5% in the year ending March 2006.
- 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 2.3% less satisfied but this is not statistically significant.
- The force aims to broaden out the measures used to understand and identify user satisfaction levels. In addition to using PPAF data, the force is compiling its own data warehouse from other sources, such as the use of victim interviews, and to date has details from 3,000 victims, which it is analysing and using to improve the customer experience.
- In addition, the force has created its own 'web of satisfaction' (similar to a spidergram). While this needs refinement, diagrams shown to the inspection team clearly highlighted improvement areas for the force, notably the number of incidents of crime reported from the scene, and the crime number being provided and recorded on the CIS. The force views this approach as innovative.
- To help assess its performance, the force compares the results of its own customer satisfaction surveys with similar surveys conducted by other public service agencies, such as local councils, hospitals and housing corporations.
- The force performs well in the iQuanta measurements of confidence and satisfaction in comparison to its MSF. As of March 2008, the force was top of its MSF in three out of the five satisfaction measures and top of its MSF in five out of the eight confidence measures. However, the force is not complacent and the chief officers are of the view that there is room for improvement.
- The force set itself challenging targets within the 2007/08 policing plan to improve public confidence and satisfaction. Notable performance improvement has been achieved in the vehicle crime measurements – satisfaction with overall service (+4.3%), satisfaction with follow up (+11.5%) – which are likely to be as a result of Operation Repro.
- At March 2008, the user satisfaction gap with overall police service between minority ethnic groups and white persons (SPI 3b) had reduced from 3.3% in 2005/06, to 2.3% in 2007/08.

- Over the same time period, the satisfaction rate for minority ethnic groups had reduced by 0.2% (82.5% to 82.3%), while the satisfaction rate for white persons had reduced by 1.2% (85.8% to 84.6%).
- The force has taken action to understand and reduce the satisfaction gap through consultation with Independent Advisory Groups, introduction of locally based Hate Crime Officers, improved compliance with the Hate Crime policy, and initiatives to understand and identify good practice and development opportunities.
- The force has performed well in the service provided at road traffic collisions, with the overall level of satisfaction improved by 1.2% from 94.8% in March 2007 to 96.0% in March 2008; and satisfaction with follow up has improved by 7.1% from 86.5% in March 2007 to 93.6% in March 2008.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force set itself a target to achieve at least 60% user satisfaction with the follow up services provided to victims of anti-social behaviour, and to achieve at least 80% satisfaction with the overall service victims receive. At March 2008, the force achieved 41.3% user satisfaction with the follow up services, which was a reduction of 5.1% from the previous year. In respect of satisfaction with the overall service, the force achieved 72.5%, an improvement of 1.1% from the previous year and top of Hertfordshire's MSF group.
- User satisfaction with the overall police service provided to victims of violent crime has reduced by 5.6%, from 79.0% in March 2007 to 73.4% in March 2008, against a 2007/08 overall satisfaction target of 90%. Yet user satisfaction with the follow up service has improved by 2.7%, from 64.9% to 67.6%, and is top of Hertfordshire's MSF group.

Developing practice

- See Appendix 2.

Recommendations

Neighbourhood Policing

RECOMMENDATION 1

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the force should undertake an evaluation of its availability policy, and how it is monitored and enforced, in order that SNT staff are not abstracted in contravention of the policy.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the force should provide specific training and briefings to all operational officers and staff on community intelligence issues and the significant links to vulnerable communities.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the force should undertake an evaluation of joint problem solving training with partners and put in place a system of joint training that meets the needs of both police and partners.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

B

BCU	basic command unit
BME	black and minority ethnic

C

CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CIS	crime investigation system
CRG	CONTEST review group

H

HCC	Hertfordshire County Council
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

I

IAG	independent advisory group
IPP	improving personal performance

J

JAG	joint action group
-----	--------------------

K

KDI	key diagnostic indicator
-----	--------------------------

M

MIDAS Multi-Agency Information & Data Access System

MSF most similar force(s)

N

NPIA National Policing Improvement Agency

O

OIDD organisational and intelligence development department

OPM operational performance meeting

OWL Online Watch Link

P

PAL police authority lead

PC police constable

PCSO police community support officer

PDR performance development review

PPAF policing performance assessment framework

PSD professional standards department

S

SARA scanning, analysis, response, assessment

SNT safer neighbourhood team

SPC special police constable

SPI statutory performance indicator

T

TABS tasking and briefing system

Appendix 2: Developing Practice

TITLE: Youth and schools PCSOs

PROBLEM:

To re-engage effectively with schools, develop partnership working around schools and tackle the issues of crime and disorder arising in and around the school community and surrounding neighbourhood.

SOLUTION:

Ten schools PCSOs were included in the constabulary's initial PCSO deployment plan in 2004. Initially they only worked with secondary schools.

In 2007, HCC introduced the concept of the extended schools consortium and the constabulary took the decision to increase the number of dedicated PCSOs to 38, in line with the consortium and to extend their roles to youth and schools PCSOs.

The purpose of the role is to provide a patrolling presence in and around schools, build up a close relationship with schools, provide support to pupils, staff and families, and act as a key contact with schools to identify and encourage partnership working involving children, schools and families.

Financial arrangements have been made with the police authority and HCC to support these roles and £1.3 million has been secured from the Council for this purpose.

The youth and schools PCSOs are an integral part of the neighbourhood team.

They now play a key part in the constabulary's contribution to HCC's integrated practice agenda. Their core role includes:

- providing a visible presence;
- patrolling in and around schools;
- patrolling in places where young people congregate;
- problem solving, finding solutions to issues, ranging from nuisance behaviour to supporting initiatives aimed at including young people in the community;
- building relationships with young people;
- acting as a point of contact for school partners in matters such as common assessment framework co-ordination meetings and extended schools consortium forums;
- sharing key messages within the extended schools consortium around issues of crime and disorder affecting the neighbourhood.

Youth and schools PCSOs have a fundamental part to play in delivering the five strands of the *Every Child Matters* agenda (being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being), as part of their involvement in the multi-agency 'team around the child'.

Youth and schools PCSOs are currently being trained by HCC colleagues as part of the ongoing multi-agency support team training and will be prioritised for the in-house training that all operational staff will receive to ensure compliance with the legal duties under *Every Child Matters*.

EXTERNAL VALIDATION:

The extract below comes from *The Developing Role of Police Community Support Officers* by Martin Speed and John Burrows, July 2007, on behalf of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA).

Impact

Before this role was created, PCs had been working in a 'schools liaison' role at a strategic level. When PCSOs were first introduced as part of the Neighbourhood Policing team, they made contact with schools where they could, but it was not possible to dedicate sufficient time to build up these contacts.

In contrast, in the two years that the schools PCSOs have been in place they have been able to build up strong relationships with pupils and staff, resulting in: better reporting of crimes affecting young people, improved intelligence and identification of offenders from CCTV and descriptions.

Examples of specific successes include: using targeted patrols to solve the problem of excluded pupils returning to the school gates to intimidate other pupils, identification of graffiti culprits though linking 'tags' on personal property in school to 'tags' on buildings, obtaining drugs warrants based on intelligence gathered at schools and the identification of criminal damage offenders..

Head teachers are reported to be very happy with the arrangement and the local authority views the scheme as a success and one that should be expanded.

OUTCOME(S):

The outcomes of the initiative were:

- improved partnership working around youth and school issues;
- improved relationships between local youths and police;
- improved targeted multi-agency interventions; and
- increased capacity to deal with anti-social behaviour in and around schools

FORCE CONTACT:

Chief Superintendent Chris Miller, 01438 757402.

TITLE: Operation Repro – Enhanced quality of service for victims of motor vehicle crime.

PROBLEM:

In the spring of 2007, the force recognised that user satisfaction levels for victims of vehicle crime was an area of performance that needed to be improved. It was also recognised that motor vehicle crime detections could be improved if there were an enhanced gathering of forensic evidence from motor vehicle crime scenes.

SOLUTION:

Consequently, in May 2007, Hertfordshire Constabulary commenced Operation Repro, initially as a pilot in the central area, but it was then expanded force-wide from 27 August 2007. The stated aims of Operation Repro were to support the force objectives:

- To 'Improve public confidence and satisfaction in the services provided by the police'.
- To 'Reduce crime' and 'Bring more offences and offenders to justice'. In particular, to increase the number of sanction detections for vehicle crime.

Initially described as a 'mandatory' motor vehicle crime attendance policy, after the piloting phase this evolved into the citizen focus 'needs-based' attendance policy, recognising that not all victims of car crime actually want personal attendance.

Standard operating procedure – quality assurance

Operation Repro was supported by a clear standard operating procedure, which set out the role and responsibilities of each group of police personnel as they supported the 'Customer's journey', ie starting with first point of contact – whether that be by telephone or in person, through to despatch of an investigative unit, forensic examination, crime reporting and (very importantly) keeping victims informed about the progress of their case.

EVALUATION:

It was agreed from the outset of Operation Repro that the impact of the new procedure must be evaluated quickly and thoroughly against its primary objectives.

PPAF data has its uses in monitoring user satisfaction trends, but has long time delays built into it. The constabulary therefore decided to undertake bespoke user satisfaction surveys to examine specifically the impact of Operation Repro. The survey was designed in-house, within the organisational intelligence and development department, and outsourced to a reliable external surveying company.

PPAF data generally indicates why victims of crime are not satisfied with the service they received, but it focuses less on what actions or information would make them **more** satisfied. Instead, this bespoke user survey, in contrast to the PPAF survey, was constructed to measure satisfaction levels and also to elicit more information about what improves victim satisfaction so that this could be fed straight back to service providers.

Bespoke user satisfaction surveying for Operation Repro commenced on 30 August 2007 and ran for three months, closing on to 30 November 2007. Samples were selected, surveys completed and 'quick time' analysis undertaken on a weekly basis to provide up-to-date feedback on the impact that the new business processes were having. Lessons learnt were quickly fed back to service providers to enhance the

'virtuous cycle' of learning.

Formal analysis and evaluation was undertaken by the community safety and crime reduction department and presented at appropriate intervals to the performance management board and OPM, eg June 2007 OPM.

Overall performance with victim satisfaction levels, follow up satisfaction and detections were also tracked continuously and reported on monthly at the OPM.

EXTERNAL VALIDATION:

The police authority took a close interest in Operation Repro from its inception. Members were keen to see user satisfaction rise, but concerned that such a policy would increase demands on operational resources disproportionately. The results of Operation Repro were reported formally to police authority members through the performance scrutiny committee and the OPM (which is always attended by a police authority member).

OUTCOME(S):

Performance in overall customer satisfaction for victims of vehicle crime, and specific follow up satisfaction, has shown a distinct improvement since Operation Repro began. Increased demands on resources have been monitored and found to be manageable. The attendance policy for vehicle crime is now consistently applied.

The force has since used the same model of bespoke user satisfaction surveying to examine several other key areas of user satisfaction, ie Operation Enhance (victims of burglary), anti-social behaviour victims and violent crime victims.

These bespoke areas of research and analysis are combined with PPAF user satisfaction data, and the supervisor auditing and surveying data, to provide a holistic picture of how well the force is serving the public and how best to continually improve that level of service.

Standard operating procedure, survey analysis and performance data are all available on site.

FORCE CONTACT:

DCI Mark Ross – 01707 638018

Superintendent. Simon Hawkins – 01707 354783

INSPECTION AREA: Citizen Focus

TITLE: Crime audit and victim interview

PROBLEM:

How to improve satisfaction levels for victims of crime; in particular through provision of information at an early stage in an investigation (for example providing a crime reference number), and updating victims with progress. In reviewing force practices surrounding this issue, a number of areas for improvement were identified. Research included visiting other forces, where front-line supervisors conducted telephone interviews with victims to establish how well their staff had delivered a service. Two issues became clear at the outset: firstly, that supervisors did not believe this was a task for them and secondly, that the experience of these forces was that the initial momentum was not maintained.

SOLUTION:

In designing a solution, the need for front-line staff to understand what was required of them was taken into account. Thus the process has two strands: to re-invigorate the role of the sergeant in reviewing crime workloads and to assess the quality of the initial investigation using a set of questions to drive the right behaviours and actions. The requirement was for one crime per officer to be audited per month, and then for the associated victims to be contacted and asked for their view, through the use of structured questions, as to their experience of the service delivered. In both cases data is gathered through an online survey tool administered centrally.

A key element to this work is gaining agreement and ownership to this approach by BCU command teams and front-line supervisors themselves. Ensuring that other initiatives and existing processes are aligned to what is trying to be achieved, eg the IPP framework, is an important part of the process.

EVALUATION:

The processes were subject to trials, with the feedback fed into the final version. This feedback loop continues; if a valid contribution to changing the process is made, effort is made to accommodate the idea. This helps to ensure that staff feel they have a say in how these processes work and thus creates a sense of ownership. This was reviewed at the chief officers meeting in October 2007.

This has proved to be a long-term initiative in terms of embedding it into the practice of supervisors, particularly in relation to the victim interviews. The force now has significant data available concerning the way that initial actions are conducted at the scene of a crime and the experiences of victims. This data contributes to ongoing learning programmes delivered to staff, and in the further development of the forces approach to delivering against the obligations of The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

All data connected with the audits is recorded electronically, is auditable and supports the IPP framework.

Satisfaction levels have improved as a result of this and other initiatives, such as IPP, bespoke user satisfaction surveys and Operation REPRO.

EXTERNAL VALIDATION:

The forces experiences and data have been shared with other forces investing effort in this area of activity.

OUTCOME(S):

Improved performance in terms of satisfaction levels of victims of crime can be seen through PPAF figures, particularly in relation to follow up.

The data has been used within BCU performance meetings to understand satisfaction performance.

FORCE CONTACT:

Chief Inspector Roger Barrett, Quality of Service Team Manager, OIDD, Police HQ

TITLE: IPP framework for PCSOs

PROBLEM:

A requirement for a performance framework for PCSOs to support the PDR process.

SOLUTION:

IPP is a project that was first implemented on 1 April 2007 across the force. It seeks to improve the performance of all officers within the policing style. It started with intervention and neighbourhood teams (constables) and moved onto crime group, roads policing and tactical teams.

The first six to nine months of its implementation were about consultation and trying to get the measures absolutely right to drive the required level of performance across quality of service, safer neighbourhoods and other performance measures. To this end there are mandated PDR objectives to be set at the beginning of the policing year.

The IPP for PCSOs is now being developed to go live in April 2008 and consists of a mixture of measures and contextual data as follows:

Measures

- Neighbourhood Watch – contact made with existing watches and new schemes created.
- Stakeholder engagement – stakeholder survey.
- Performance against neighbourhood plans/problem solving – average grading on TAPS database.
- Reassurance – 80% of time visible in their neighbourhood.
- Stop and account – total number carried out.
- Penalty notices for disorder – total number issued.
- Penalty notices for disorder/Stop and account error rate – total number of errors.
- Seizure of vehicles – number seized.

Context

- Intelligence submissions – number of actionable intelligence submissions.
- Crimes reported – number of crimes linked as reporting officer.
- Incidents dispatched/attended – total number attended.
- Hours in role – number of hours actually worked.

The PDR objectives include:

- 1) Provide a consistent excellent quality of service to the public, in accordance with the IPP measures of victim satisfaction surveys and other quality measures.
- 2) Achieve agreed neighbourhood priorities, while providing engagement and reassurance, as measured by TAPS and key stakeholder surveys.
- 3) Improve personal performance against a range of other IPP measures, to levels agreed with supervisor.
- 4) Personal or developmental objective.

September 2008

EVALUATION:

Progress reports and evaluations are presented at regular intervals at chief officer's meetings, the force performance management board, and OPMs.

EXTERNAL VALIDATION:

The police authority is kept informed and is actively involved in scrutinising the activity. This is done via the human resources working group, force OPMs, and the police authority performance scrutiny committee.

OUTCOME(S):

The overall performance of the force is already very strong. However, if each member of the force successfully raises their level of personal performance, the overall performance of the force will continue to rise.

This work will be fully evaluated at the conclusion of the first full year of IPP, which will be 2007/08.

FORCE CONTACT:

Superintendent Jerry Tattersall – 01707 354605

Inspector Paul Lawrence 01707 638854

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.