

PEEL

Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy 2018/19

An inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary



Contents

What this report contains	1
Force in context	3
Overall summary	4
Effectiveness	8
Force in context	9
How effectively does the force reduce crime and keep people safe?	11
Summary	11
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	12
Investigating crime	12
Protecting vulnerable people	18
Tackling serious and organised crime	25
Armed policing	25
Efficiency	28
Force in context	29
How efficiently does the force operate and how sustainable are its services?	30
Summary	30
Meeting current demands and using resources	31
Planning for the future	31
Legitimacy	37
Force in context	38
How legitimately does the force treat the public and its workforce?	40
Summary	40
Treating the public fairly	40
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	41
Treating the workforce fairly	44
Annex A – About the data	45

What this report contains

This report is structured in four parts:

1. Our overall assessment of the force's 2018/19 performance.
2. Our judgments and summaries of how effectively, efficiently and legitimately the force keeps people safe and reduces crime.
3. Our judgments and any areas for improvement and causes of concern for each component of our inspection.
4. Our detailed findings for each component.

Our inspection approach

In 2018/19, we adopted an [integrated PEEL assessment](#) (IPA) approach to our existing PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) inspections. IPA combines into a single inspection the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy areas of PEEL. These areas had previously been inspected separately each year.

As well as our inspection findings, our assessment is informed by our analysis of:

- force data and management statements;
- risks to the public;
- progress since previous inspections;
- findings from our non-PEEL inspections;
- how forces tackle serious and organised crime locally and regionally; and
- our regular monitoring work.

We inspected all forces in four areas:

- protecting vulnerable people;
- firearms capability;
- planning for the future; and
- ethical and lawful workforce behaviour.

We consider the risk to the public in these areas important enough to inspect all forces every year.

We extended the risk-based approach that we used in our 2017 effectiveness inspection to the efficiency and legitimacy parts of our IPA inspections. This means that in 2018/19 we didn't inspect all forces against all areas. The table below shows the areas we inspected Hertfordshire Constabulary against.

IPA area	Inspected in 2018/19?
Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour	No
Investigating crime	Yes
Protecting vulnerable people	Yes
Tackling serious and organised crime	No
Firearms capability	Yes
Meeting current demands	No
Planning for the future	Yes
Treating the public fairly	No
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	Yes
Treating the workforce fairly	No

Our 2017 judgments are still in place for the areas we didn't inspect in 2018/19.

Force in context

	Hertfordshire rate	England and Wales rate
999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months ending 31 March 2019	143	175

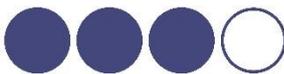
	Hertfordshire rate	Most Similar Forces rate
Recorded crime per 1,000 population 12 months ending 30 September 2018	72	74

Hertfordshire workforce

	FTE in post on 31 March 2019	FTE in post on 31 March 2014	Percentage change
Police Officer	2,009	1,927	4%
Police Community Support Officer	225	190	18%
Police Staff	1,150	1,112	3%

	Hertfordshire spend	England and Wales spend
Spend per head of population 2018/19 projection	£162	£192

Overall summary

	Effectiveness		Last inspected
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	Good		2016
Investigating crime	Good		2018/19
Protecting vulnerable people	Good		2018/19
Tackling serious and organised crime	Good		2016
Armed response capability	Ungraded		2018/19
	Efficiency		Last inspected
Meeting current demands and using resources	Good		2017
Planning for the future	Good		2018/19

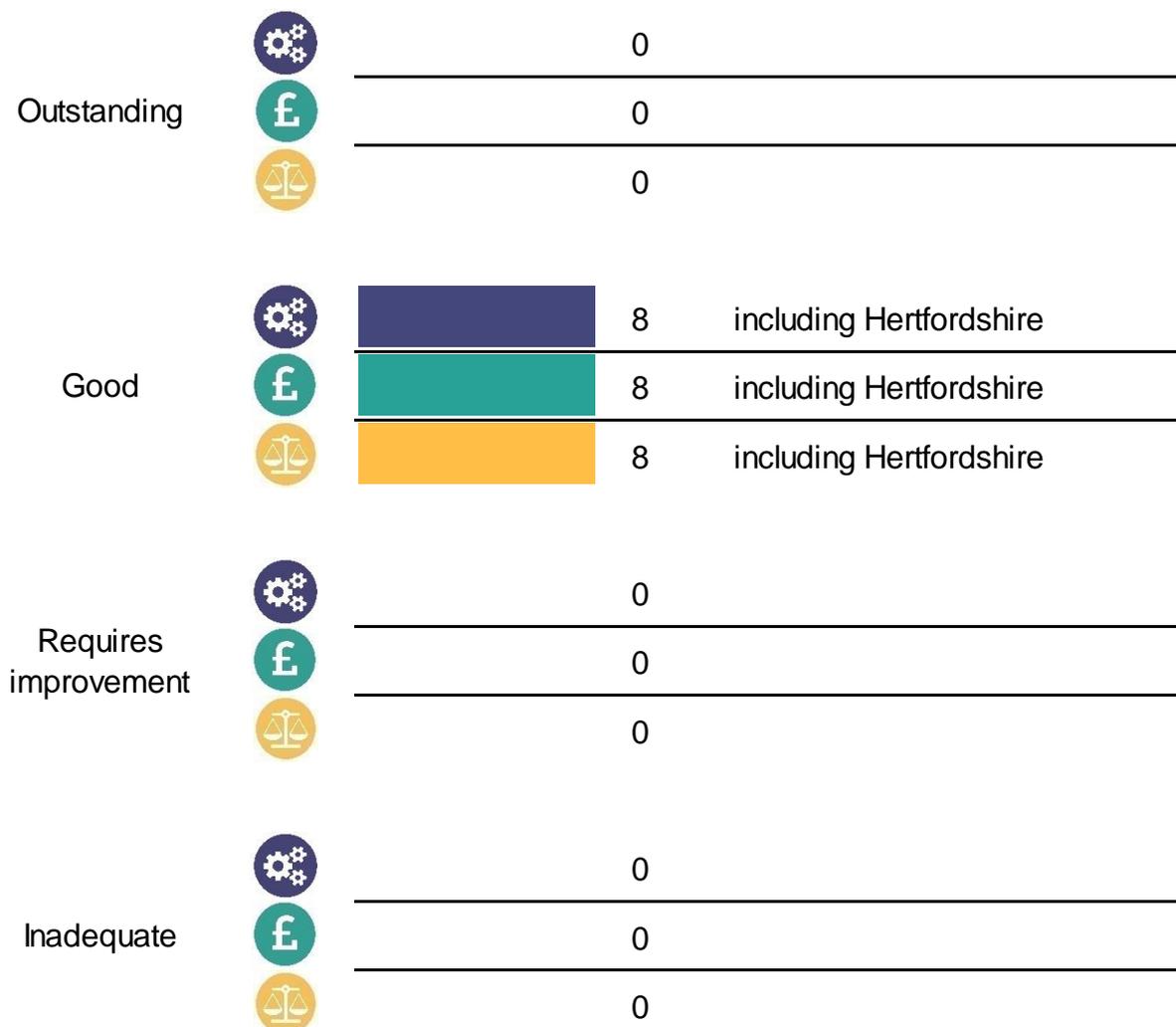
	Legitimacy		Last inspected
Fair treatment of the public	 Good	2017	
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	 Good	2018/19	
Fair treatment of the workforce	 Good	2017	

How does the force compare with similar forces?

We compare Hertfordshire Constabulary's performance with the forces in its most similar group (MSG). MSGs are groups of similar police forces, based on analysis of demographic, social and economic factors. [For more information about MSGs, see our website.](#)

Hertfordshire Constabulary's MSG forces are Hampshire Constabulary, Essex Police, Leicestershire Police, Sussex Police, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Staffordshire Police and Thames Valley Police. We haven't yet inspected Hampshire Constabulary, Sussex Police, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Staffordshire Police as part of IPA 2018/19, so use their graded judgments from our previous PEEL assessment for comparison.

Figure 1: Pillar judgments for Hertfordshire Constabulary, compared with forces in its MSG



HM Inspector's observations

I am pleased with Hertfordshire Constabulary's performance in keeping people safe and reducing crime.

Since our last inspection the force has improved how it handles victims' reports of crime. It now receives and investigates these reports better. It has also improved how it identifies and supports [vulnerable people](#).

Senior leaders understand well the complexity and scale of current and future demand. The force has worked to be more efficient. It has reorganised officers and [staff](#) to better meet demand. Sustainable financial plans are in place, including to increase its officer numbers.

The force is consulting widely with its communities to better understand their concerns. It continues to uphold an ethical culture and promote standards of professional behaviour well.

Overall, I commend Hertfordshire Constabulary for sustaining its positive performance over the past year. I am confident that it is well equipped for this to continue.



Zoë Billingham

HM Inspector of Constabulary

Effectiveness



Force in context

	Hertfordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of officers in a neighbourhood or response function in post on 31 March 2019	49%	40%

Victim-based crime per 1,000 population

12 months ending 30 September 2018

	Hertfordshire rate	Most Similar Forces rate
Violence against the person	21	23
Sexual offences	2	2
Theft Offences / Robbery	31	30
Criminal damage and arson	8	9

Crime Outcomes

12 months ending 30 September 2018

	Hertfordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of crimes where action was taken	15%	13%
Proportion of crimes where suspect was identified	43%	46%
Proportion of crimes where victim did not support police action	24%	23%

Outcomes for crimes flagged as domestic abuse

12 months ending 31 March 2018

	Hertfordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Charge/summonsed	13%	16%
Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support	54%	49%

How effectively does the force reduce crime and keep people safe?



Good

Summary

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at reducing crime and keeping people safe.

It is good at investigating crime. It is organised to meet the growing challenges posed by issues such as [gang](#)-related violence, child sexual exploitation and cyber crime.

The force is well organised in the way it allocates and investigates crimes. However, in our [2017 effectiveness report](#), we noted that the quality of its investigations was variable. This has since improved. It robustly monitors incidents where a victim may be vulnerable. We are impressed by the support it gives to repeat victims of low-level domestic abuse in particular.

Following a peer review, Hertfordshire Constabulary has increased the number of investigators who deal with rape and other serious sexual offences. It is also analysing how it can better serve victims.

Lately, the force has been carrying out more evidence-led prosecutions. This is a result of its officers' skill in building such cases when victims are reluctant to co-operate.

The force is highly effective in pursuing suspects of crime. And it is developing innovative practices involving female offenders and prolific, non-violent offenders.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at protecting [vulnerable people](#). It is good at understanding and identifying vulnerability, including hidden harm. It responds swiftly to incidents involving vulnerable people.

Under the banner of Operation Sceptre, it has adopted a noteworthy approach to preventing knife and gang-related crime. It also seeks to prevent the unnecessary criminalisation of young people in Hertfordshire.

In 2017, the force needed to review its effective use of [body-worn video](#). It now consistently monitors the use and effectiveness of this.

It is making more effective use of police [bail](#) with conditions, leading to better protection for vulnerable victims.

It is well organised in the way it manages convicted, high-risk sexual and violent offenders who pose a risk to vulnerable people.

In 2017, we judged Hertfordshire Constabulary to be good at preventing crime and tackling [anti-social behaviour](#), and at tackling [serious and organised crime](#).

Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 effectiveness inspection has been carried over.

Investigating crime



Good

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at investigating crime. In our [2017 effectiveness report](#), we said it needed to fully comply with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. It also needed to review its use of body-worn video. It has made these improvements.

It robustly monitors incidents where victims may be vulnerable. And it allocates investigations effectively. Good victim care was evident during our inspection. We were impressed with the level of support the force gives to victims.

The force's investment in a range of training also means that officers and [staff](#) are better able to investigate crime and protect victims.

Hertfordshire Constabulary effectively pursues suspects, manages persistent offenders and deals with foreign-national offenders. It is strongly committed to the swift capture of all outstanding suspects.

Its [integrated offender management](#) (IOM) programme reflects its focus on preventing crimes that cause the public most harm.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has some good examples of how it is managing offenders. This includes a programme that offers female offenders different support from that offered to men. The force is also running a scheme in which non-violent offenders are offered prison deferrals in exchange for a six-month programme aimed at long-term behavioural change.

We expect the new specialist [disclosure](#) team to be a substantial asset.

While Hertfordshire has experienced a stabilised increase in crime figures, force data also shows a reduced proportion of positive outcomes. However, the force has detailed plans to improve how it handles serious sexual offences. And its efforts in important areas of policing – such as burglary and gang-related violence – are noteworthy.

Areas for improvement

- The force needs to develop a cyber strategy and delivery plan to support criminal investigations and safeguard victims.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Investigation quality

Hertfordshire Constabulary is structured and resourced to meet the complex and growing challenges of crimes such as gang-related violence and child sexual exploitation. It is well organised in the way it allocates and investigates crimes.

In our [2017 effectiveness report](#), we said that the quality of investigations conducted by Hertfordshire Constabulary was variable. We also set two areas for improvement. The first was to fully comply with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. The second was to review the force's effective use of body-worn video, particularly for domestic abuse incidents. This report will address these matters in detail, but we are satisfied that these improvements have taken place.

In November 2018, we reviewed a sample of 60 completed investigations. We considered 48 of those to be effective. At the time of our inspection, the force's compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime was 41 percent for active cases and 67 percent for closed cases.

Good victim care was evident in 52 of the cases in our file review. Investigators contact victims in all cases, but don't always correctly record this on the crime recording system. And where a victim reports more than one crime, investigators sometimes add updates to a linked crime report.

The force is working with IT suppliers to rectify this systems issue. It has a good understanding of the scale of the problem, and a credible plan to make further improvements, including continuing external scrutiny. Extra training and an interactive dashboard mean that supervisors can chart compliance among their staff.

In April 2018, Hertfordshire Constabulary commissioned a full review of its force control room. The review included demand, resources and training. The control room has strong quality assurance processes. This means that, throughout the response and initial evidence gathering process, the force robustly monitors incidents where a victim may be vulnerable.

The investigation management unit (IMU) deals with almost 40 percent of demand without the need to deploy an officer. The IMU isn't inadvertently suppressing demand, however; we are satisfied that it makes appropriate decisions about whether to investigate further or close a case. The force's own internal audit indicates that 18 percent of incidents, when assessed, didn't need a further response. The remaining 22 percent were investigated by telephone; this included experienced investigators and detective sergeants carrying out dip-sampling and supervision.

Three times daily, the IMU reviews all incidents that haven't been responded to, reassessing the risks involved in each incident. This way, it responds to high-priority incidents more quickly and to all incidents within 24 hours.

Hertfordshire Constabulary allocates investigations effectively. It uses the [THRIVE](#) risk-assessment model to reach decisions. This model is used to review and determine the type of threat or harm caused, degree of risk, investigation method, vulnerability of the victim and appropriate type of engagement.

The victim service team offers all victims a good level of service. The team is well trained to identify factors that cause a victim to become vulnerable, such as addiction and debt. We were impressed by the team's level of support, particularly for people who are repeat victims of low-level domestic abuse.

The team displays a mature understanding that repeat victims are likely to suffer more serious harm in future if they don't receive specialist support to break their dependence on controlling relationships. Where needed, a commissioned third-party service gives victims specialist, tailored help.

The force resolves incidents by deploying officers from the local policing command. They are neighbourhood officers, response (intervention) officers, and local crime unit investigators.

Hertfordshire Constabulary also draws on personnel from Operation Scorpion, a proactive frontline team focused on acquisitive crimes such as domestic burglary. These officers give extra help where high-harm crime offences have been committed. The force also has a range of specialist [safeguarding](#) departments which deal with serious and complex crime. For example, its serious crime investigation team proactively targets violent gangs. Overall, the most appropriate teams carry out investigations, and their caseloads are manageable.

Specialists with enhanced skills investigate complex and sensitive crimes. These include rape, and domestic abuse cases where there is high risk of harm faced by the victim. The force carried out evidence-based research and invested heavily to establish a domestic abuse investigation and safeguarding unit (DAISU). This 60-strong team of investigators deals with all cases of domestic abuse where the victim has an intimate relationship with the suspect. It uses a range of tactics, including covert methods, to bring offenders to justice.

The force has also invested in digital investigators to effectively investigate cyber crime. However, it relies on the regional serious and organised crime strategy instead of its own bespoke cyber crime strategy, and the plan to carry out the strategy was out of date.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has improved its use of body-worn video. It reports that officers activated body-worn video when responding to 93 percent of domestic incidents which needed an emergency response. It is now working with a university graduate to evaluate the effectiveness of body-worn video. Overall, the force understands the value of body-worn video and the importance of complying with its use.

In January 2019, the force commissioned South Wales Police to carry out a peer review of its ability to investigate rape and other serious sexual offences. It did this to build on its learning culture. As a result, it has increased the number of qualified investigators in that department. It has also begun work with the Crown Prosecution Service to improve the low number of cases that get to court. It is also analysing how it can better serve victims and manage their vulnerability, given an increase in stalking and harassment offences.

The force has analysed its own data to make sure that it is taking positive action by arresting all high-risk domestic abuse suspects. This revealed that 89 percent of high-risk suspects were arrested but some were linked to other associated crimes, most notably harassment. The remaining 11 percent relate to crimes that are still being investigated locally or by another police force. We are reassured that the force is working to improve its data recording, and that officers show a good awareness of associated crimes, such as stalking and coercive control, meaning that they can protect victims and respond positively.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is working hard to recruit and keep enough investigators to meet demand. It has set clear tolerance levels so that departments investigating the highest levels of risk are fully staffed with qualified and experienced investigators. Experienced detectives teach a fast-track, comprehensive training and development programme. This makes for effective recruitment into investigator posts.

During our inspection, we spoke with a range of investigators. All felt they had been trained well enough for their roles. Every two months, the force holds development days for detective inspectors; these days include updates on child death investigations, policy keeping and threats to life. It also schedules training days for the wider detective workforce. This means that it has invested in [continuing professional development](#), as well as the central training programmes that it has established through its tri-force collaboration with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire forces.

Regular professional development days have trained the workforce more broadly and deeply. The force's training on vulnerability, problem solving and investigation standards, for example, means that frontline officers are confidently equipped with the right skills to maximise evidence-gathering opportunities at crime scenes. As a result, it is carrying out more evidence-led prosecutions and officers are better able to build a case when victims are reluctant to work with the police, particularly in domestic abuse situations.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has invested in a digital app that gives officers specialist knowledge about a range of technologies, including mobile phones, routers and crypto-currency.

This investment by the force in a range of training means that officers and staff are better able to investigate crime and protect victims.

The quality and completion of handovers between teams has also improved since our last inspection. Investigation plans are clear, and supervisors add value with timely and probing reviews. The force can show that it is attending more incidents and spending more time at them.

In the 12 months to 30 September 2018, the force concluded 26 percent of its recorded crimes due to evidential difficulties; this was mainly because there wasn't enough evidence to support a prosecution. This figure includes cases where a victim did, or did not, support a prosecution (5 and 22 percent of cases¹ respectively).

The force is working hard to safeguard and make it easier for victims of domestic abuse to support a prosecution. [Senior officers](#) contact victims to seek feedback on their team's performance. According to an independent charity, 92 percent of domestic abuse victims who were surveyed about their experience would recommend contacting Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Catching criminals

Hertfordshire Constabulary is highly effective at pursuing suspects of crime, as well as managing persistent offenders and working with other organisations to deal with foreign-national offenders. Its procedures enable it to make effective use of bail during active investigations. It has a culture of continuous learning with regard to increasing the number of cases where offenders are brought to justice.

The force is strongly committed to the swift capture of all outstanding suspects, including those who are recorded as wanted on the [Police National Computer](#). During its daily management meetings, it prioritises high-risk wanted suspects.

Every week, a dedicated bail and warrants team tells supervisors how many suspects are either on police bail or have been [released under investigation](#). In January 2019, the bail and warrants team carried out 150 arrests. The team also monitors suspects who are wanted for investigations where fingerprints or DNA are later linked to a crime scene; likewise, those who are wanted on warrant (including European arrest warrants) or who are in breach of conditions linked to their release from prison. This means that frontline officers and proactive teams can sustain the momentum needed to capture suspects who pose a high risk to themselves or others.

The IOM programme manages offenders who have a series of convictions and are likely to reoffend. The programme is well organised and actively manages high-risk domestic abuse suspects. For Hertfordshire Constabulary, the programme marks a move away from concentrating on offenders who commit mainly acquisitive crimes such as shoplifting. It now focuses on preventing crimes that cause the public most harm.

¹ The data does not add up due to rounding.

The force has worked with the probation and community rehabilitation service to design a choice and consequences programme (known as C2). This involves prolific, non-violent offenders having their prison sentences deferred for up to six months while they undergo an intensive series of activities that support a long-term change in offending behaviour. Offenders have to take a lie detector test and admit to all of their offences before they can take part in the programme. Activities have included restorative justice, to make amends to victims. The force can show the cost benefits of this programme, both in terms of finances and those whose lives have been turned around.

Another good example is Hertfordshire Constabulary's management of a female-only cohort of offenders. This practice is based on research showing that women may need different support from men to address their offending behaviours. The force has invested in an IOM analyst, and its continuous evaluation of the programme includes external scrutiny by SafeLives, an independent domestic abuse charity commissioned by the force.

Hertfordshire Constabulary works well with immigration agencies. With the support of a dedicated co-ordinator, it effectively makes referrals to confirm foreign nationals' entitlement to stay in the United Kingdom. This process includes the force sharing information about people who present a high risk of harm. It has led to some offenders being deported.

In April 2017, the Home Office amended legislation to change the way police bail was granted. As a result, some forces released suspects under investigation. But in these cases, releasing a suspect on bail with conditions may have better protected victims.

In January 2019, the force reinforced its guidance to its workforce: where a suspect's remand in custody isn't sought by officers, police bail with conditions will be primarily considered in cases where a suspect is detained for a violent offence or where the victim is defined as vulnerable. This guidance is supported by good governance and weekly reporting to supervisors. During our inspection, there was good evidence that the workforce has quickly acted on this guidance and follows it routinely.

We were pleased to note that a safeguarding mindset exists within the force's custody suites. Staff consider the risk that detainees pose to victims, themselves and others. Staff also record and scrutinise these considerations.

It is important for officers and staff to understand disclosure rules when preparing cases for court, so that cases don't collapse. The workforce has a good understanding of mandatory disclosure training. Hertfordshire Constabulary has invested in a specialist disclosure team of six officers. The team works across the safeguarding command to support disclosure requirements in complex investigations, such as rape and child sexual abuse. The officers are scheduled to receive enhanced disclosure training. This team should be a substantial asset to the force.

In November 2017, we published our Crime Data Integrity inspection report. We judged that Hertfordshire Constabulary's crime recording compliance was 87 percent. We also identified deficiencies in its understanding of crime recording compliance and processes. The force has since made investments and can now

comprehensively analyse data compliance. Internal audits show its compliance levels at an average of 99 percent for rape offences and 94 percent for domestic abuse offences from April 2019 to present.

Force data for 2018/19 shows that crime in Hertfordshire increased by 1.6 percent. In the previous year, there was an 11 percent increase. The force considers that the stabilised increase in crime figures is a result of its improved and continued accuracy in crime recording. In turn, this means that it is giving victims a better service. It also has a clearer understanding of the types of crime being committed, as well as their frequency and those affected.

Force data also shows that the proportion of positive outcomes (that is, where investigations conclude in a criminal prosecution or other action taken against the offender) has reduced from 14,491 cases to 11,347 cases. While this is disappointing, the force shows an exacting performance culture, particularly in priority areas of policing such as burglary and gang-related violence. Senior leaders work hard to analyse determining factors and improve positive outcomes. Hertfordshire Constabulary has very detailed plans in place to improve outcomes for serious sexual offences, including rape.

It is encouraging to note that crimes of burglary have reduced by 11 percent. This reduction is due to the force's detailed understanding of crime series and its targeting of resources in hotspot areas. It gives all burglary victims practical help to improve their home security, including SmartWater marking and doorbell cameras. These measures have been effective in significantly reducing crimes within those localities.

During the period June 2018 to March 2019, the force also made 50 significant arrests connected to violent crime gangs.

Protecting vulnerable people



Good

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at understanding and identifying vulnerability.

It is ambitious at tackling violent crime, as well as repeat offenders and domestic abuse. The workforce has a good working understanding of vulnerability, including hidden harm.

A restructuring of the serious and organised crime unit should enable the force to better investigate criminal gangs. We note the force's excellent ability to investigate cyber crime.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a serious violence strategy and delivery plan; this includes noteworthy approaches to preventing knife and gang-related crime. The force receives daily referrals to divert young people away from knife crime. Its strategy also builds on national best practice, and aims to prevent the unnecessary criminalisation of young people.

Its approach to mental health triage is both progressive and highly regarded, not only by the workforce but also the NHS and mental health charities. It already gives victims an assured and responsive service, and changes that have followed the triage scheme's formal evaluation will also allow the team to give more support to police officers.

The force continues to be effective in its swift response to incidents involving vulnerable people. It is well organised in the way it manages convicted, high-risk sexual and violent offenders who pose a risk to vulnerable people. It also makes effective use of police bail and other powers to safeguard victims.

It carries out meaningful investigations into all concerns, irrespective of the initial classification of risk.

Areas for improvement

- The force should refresh guidance to staff on processes for managing unconvicted but potentially dangerous people within the community and reassure itself that staff understand this.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Understanding and identifying vulnerability

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at understanding and identifying vulnerability. It has a coherent and proactive vulnerability strategy which recognises that people may be both vulnerable victims and offenders. This translates into ambitious and progressive approaches to tackling violent crime, persistent offenders and domestic abuse. The workforce consistently receives extra training. Officers and staff have a practical understanding of vulnerability and its various strands. They also understand hidden harm factors such as so-called honour-based violence, hate crime, exploitation and female genital mutilation.

The force has restructured its serious and organised crime unit, and given this team specialist training so it can investigate modern slavery and human trafficking offences. This means that it can use more resources to investigate criminal gangs who control and exploit vulnerable people.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has an excellent ability to investigate cyber crime, and has appointed a cyber protection officer. It recognises that 14 percent of fraud victims, which often has a cyber element, are vulnerable members of society, and that these types of crime are set to increase.

To better understand the scale and nature of vulnerability in Hertfordshire, the force is using a harm and risk modelling tool (HARM). This tool layers multiple data sources to produce an overall risk score. The force then uses the score to map risk in relation to certain factors: community demographics, deprivation, unemployment, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, crime and harm. In this way, it can justify allocating resources to risk management and prevention activity through the community safety partnerships across the force.

Communities and partner organisations, including the local authority and the fire and rescue service, take part in initiatives such as street sweeps. With trading standards, the force carries out test purchases for the sale of knives to under-age youngsters.

Hertfordshire Constabulary develops [problem profiles](#) on a range of crime types with other agencies and shares these profiles through them.

It has a serious violence strategy and delivery plan; this includes noteworthy approaches to preventing knife and gang-related crime, under the banner of Operation Sceptre. To encourage amnesty and awareness, the force uses digital technology to target certain age groups in certain areas. This use of technology has achieved over a thousand hours of digital exposure in just one 24-hour period.

Dedicated liaison officers visit schools and show bespoke films to educate children about relevant issues. These officers also form part of an intelligence network with partner organisations that diverts potential offenders from committing crime via an effective outreach and mentoring scheme.

Every day, the force now receives four referrals to divert young people away from knife crime. It keeps its focus on prevention by referring children and young people who have no previous offending history to a panel. The panel assesses suitability for a community resolution as a more effective means of dealing with less serious crime. This strategy builds on national best practice and serves to prevent the unnecessary criminalisation of young people in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has reinvested savings from within its safeguarding command into additional capacity to tackle child and adult vulnerability. Staff in units such as Halo – a team that tackles child sexual exploitation – don't rely solely on victim disclosure; they develop proactive approaches through intelligence that reveals additional victims who weren't initially obvious.

A child sexual exploitation disruption officer runs awareness and prevention campaigns across the county. Referrals shown to us included exploitation concerns raised by taxi drivers. Similarly, the force has invested in a missing persons Locate team. This dedicated team of investigators has halved the time it takes to find vulnerable missing persons. The team also carries out prevention interviews when it finds a missing person. Its work with children's outreach services has successfully reduced the frequency of those who go missing and their exposure to harm.

Where a risk of sexual exploitation is found, the Locate team makes referrals for specialist outreach support to SEARCH (Sexual Exploitation of Adolescents and Runaway Children in Hertfordshire.) The force would benefit from refreshing its child sexual exploitation problem profile, as the one we found was out of date.

When people first call Hertfordshire Constabulary for assistance, call handlers use a THRIVE triage process to assess both the risk presented by the incident and the urgency of the police response needed. They respond to callers quickly and make use of computer system prompts that signify repeat callers or otherwise vulnerable people.

Mental health triage staff are present in the force control room. They regularly intervene to support improved call-handling decisions and a better resolution for callers who are in a mental health crisis. The force has gone to considerable lengths to identify and reduce vulnerability. Victims receive an assured and responsive service.

Responding to incidents

Hertfordshire Constabulary continues to be effective in its swift response to incidents involving vulnerable people. In our [2017 effectiveness report](#), we said that it had identified that further work was needed to improve the completion of risk assessments by officers, and that their use of body-worn video wasn't routinely used to record evidence.

The force now consistently monitors the use and effectiveness of body-worn video. It also has innovative plans to work with television producers to improve the recording of evidence and gain a more comprehensive picture of crime scenes.

We saw that officers routinely complete effective risk assessments, and make referrals to schools when they identify children who are linked to a household where they may be affected by domestic abuse.

Officers routinely use body-worn video and take the time they need to make people feel safe.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a comprehensive mental health strategy. It anticipates that mental health-related demand will increase by 20 percent over the next three years. Its strategic approach recognises that investigations can be complex, and that victims with mental health illnesses may need support well beyond the initial crime scene.

The force's approach to mental health triage is progressive and highly regarded by both its own workforce and partner organisations. Mental health nurses and intervention officers in the control room are available 23 hours daily. They help officers with appropriate patient information to improve the police response. The team frequently deploys to locations to accurately assess those who need additional or specialist support. While this has improved the initial assessment at the scene, officers can experience lengthy delays at healthcare premises where formal assessments take place. This means they are prevented from being usefully deployed to other incidents.

In December 2018, the mental health partnership carried out a formal evaluation of the mental health triage scheme. While the evaluation showed the scheme to be effective, it revealed that the triage team was being burdened by demand that should have been dealt with by other health agencies.

As a result, the Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust has agreed additional investment to meet a target time of one hour for response by mental health professionals. This means that partners should receive a timelier service and their clients won't need to be referred to the triage team. This will leave the team with more capacity to support police officers.

The mental health partnership also has plans to support people who frequently experience mental health crisis by offering them a mentor. The aim is to improve their resilience. This measure should further reduce the impact on both police and partners. This service was due to be launched in spring 2019 and we look forward to seeing the results.

We commend the fact that the force is supplementing the [College of Policing](#) mental health training with suicide intervention training.

Hertfordshire Constabulary reports that domestic abuse-related crimes have risen by 6 percent in the year 2018 to 2019. Much of the increase relates to complaints of harassment rather than physical violence. It is now reviewing its response to stalking and harassment complaints to see what improvements it can make.

Where a prosecution isn't possible, the force makes use of other positive outcomes to reduce the future likelihood of domestic abuse. These include education programmes.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a sophisticated understanding of factors that underpin its approach to dealing with domestic abuse. These include an up-to-date problem profile, peer reviews of its own effectiveness, and work with victims and charities to provide independent scrutiny. This is particularly useful in cases where victims have withdrawn their co-operation.

Independent domestic violence advocate (IDVA) services work alongside officers. They support 96 percent of victims and children within the first 24 hours of the crime. The force recognises the importance of taking positive action within the first 48 hours; evidence-based research shows that victims are more likely to support a prosecution (or some other form of positive outcome) within that timeframe. Ninety-two percent of victims of domestic abuse who were surveyed by SafeLives said they would recommend contacting Hertfordshire Constabulary.

The force used arrest powers to protect victims in 36 percent of cases reported to it. But, having analysed its own data, it reports that, in high-risk cases, the arrest rate is 89 percent. This means that the most vulnerable victims receive a more intense police response. The remaining 11 percent are shown to be a mix of outstanding suspects, out-of-force arrests and counter-complaints.

For the force, capturing outstanding suspects is a high priority; it devotes significant resource to tracing and arresting them.

During our fieldwork, we were encouraged to find that frontline officers have a good understanding of hidden factors in domestic abuse and can identify offences of coercion and control. Where appropriate, the force is trialling an offer of an education programme to help prevent the escalation of potential domestic abuse in low-risk cases where no power of arrest exists. It also offers sanctioned perpetrator programmes to rehabilitate offenders. The police or probation services manages these programmes.

Supporting vulnerable victims

The support that Hertfordshire Constabulary gives to vulnerable victims is effective. It begins with a problem-solving ethos that isn't dependent upon whether a crime is considered solvable. The IMU and victim service team are trained to signpost victims towards sources of assistance. Catch 22, a commissioned victim support service, gives tailored help to those deemed vulnerable.

Neighbourhood officers make good use of mapping facilities on systems which plot the addresses of people who are considered a high risk, such as registered sex offenders and domestic abuse perpetrators. This tool, together with frequent intelligence briefings based on geographic location, means that neighbourhood officers are better able to manage and respond to risk in their policing area.

The specialist safeguarding unit (SSU) is part of the DAISU and deals exclusively with victim safeguarding. The team is an expert resource, advising officers on a range of interventions that support safeguarding victims and families including so-called honour-based violence.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has developed a simplified online application for disclosures under [Clare's Law](#), a domestic abuse disclosure scheme. It made 44 right-to-know disclosures in 2016/17 and 54 disclosures in 2017/18. The SSU deals with all of these applications, meaning that applicants benefit from the disclosure and guidance of staff who are experts in safeguarding. The SSU makes all applications for prevention orders such as [domestic violence prevention orders](#). It also reviews all investigations of stalking and monitors prison releases, contributing to multi-agency public protection meetings.

The force has a clear risk-based rationale for use of police bail to better protect vulnerable victims. The DAISU used bail in five out of six cases that we examined, all of which were appropriate.

In the 12 months from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, Hertfordshire Constabulary issued 27 domestic violence protection notices. This is a reduction on the 56 issued in the previous year, which is the result of the force making more effective use of police bail with conditions.

The force reports that between 22 January to 31st March 2019, its use of police bail in high-risk domestic abuse cases has risen from 18 percent to 32 percent. In medium-risk domestic abuse cases, its use has risen from 6 percent to 16 percent. In cases of sexual offences, its use has risen from 16 percent to 81 percent. The force is also giving more support to victims who apply for civil orders, because these generally remain in place for longer than some protection orders it applies for. This means that Hertfordshire Constabulary makes confident and effective use of police bail and other powers to safeguard victims.

As part of its response to improve safeguarding, Hertfordshire Constabulary has developed a safeguarding referrals hub. This provides a single point of contact for all referrals to and from adult or children's services. The hub has developed a triage process to make sure referrals to the [multi-agency safeguarding hub](#) (MASH) are timely.

We saw that a safeguarding referral involving a three-year-old child meant that an adult who was suspected of indecent exposure was arrested within 24 hours of the referral being made.

Referrals that identify vulnerable children pass through the safeguarding hub to the countywide MASH. The MASH is made up of police and probation officers, safeguarding nurses and children's services staff. They work together to share information and protect children through timely provision of services.

The MASH received favourable feedback during a 2018 Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) inspection, with no recommendations for improvement. We saw good examples of effective practice, including a referral from a sexual health clinic relating to a child. The MASH immediately initiated a joint investigation, which revealed that the partner of a locally based registered sex offender had committed crimes against the child. This means that the voice of the child is recognised by services which co-operate to keep children safe and reduce further harm when it happens.

In Hertfordshire, a domestic abuse executive board oversees a partnership approach. The board sets joint priorities to reduce offences and improve outcomes for victims and their families. Five [multi-agency risk-assessment conferences](#) (MARACs) take place regularly across Hertfordshire districts to discuss high-risk cases of domestic violence.

The MARAC manager is co-located within the DAISU team. Reports of domestic abuse are scrutinised to make sure all high-risk cases are recorded and discussed. During 2018, referrals to MARAC have increased by 14 percent. Many of these referrals came from partner agencies, and there is good partner representation at MARAC meetings by housing, drug and alcohol, and mental health workers. IDVAs give some feedback to the board on the experience of victims. In spring 2019, an independent review of the effectiveness of the five county MARACs was due to be published.

Adults and children who are victims of sexual assault receive swift, specialist support through an independently commissioned sexual assault referral centre (SARC).

SARC asks for feedback from clients to further improve its work. It advertises its services to raise awareness of how it can help. This includes targeted marketing designed by university law students who are involved in the partnership. At SARC, all victims are offered support from a specialist independent sexual violence adviser and onward referrals to partner agencies such as the Talking Therapies pilot, the Beacon victim support service and Rape Crisis.

The SARC governing board is waiting to consider the recommendations of the [police and crime commissioner's](#) recent report into the effectiveness of care to male victims.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is well organised in the way it manages convicted, high-risk sexual and violent offenders who pose a risk to vulnerable people. But it needs to improve its workforce's understanding of processes to assess and manage the risk posed by unconvicted suspects.

The force recognises this and, during our inspection, the nature of our questioning focused on the management of potentially dangerous people and not specifically on sexual risk orders (SROs) and interim sexual risk orders (ISROs). Although the orders are one tool to manage potentially dangerous people, officers didn't make that link. This means that the force cannot be confident that it is managing and mitigating the risk to the public from some potentially dangerous people. That said, the force has considered and successfully applied for SROs and ISROs, and officers in the safeguarding command are aware of both their existence and benefits.

Detectives who manage offenders within a specialist unit have high but manageable workloads. We noted that one detective carried 82 offender management cases, six of which related to high-risk offenders. This particular workload was, in part, due to sickness absence within the department. But it is higher than the reported average of 41.5 cases in the force's 2018 management statement. Still, cases were effectively supervised and there were no overdue tasks. Visits to monitor very high-risk offenders are all authentically unannounced.

The force makes good use of its digital forensic technology. It manages well the risk posed by people sharing indecent images of children online. It makes daily use of technology to track those who seek indecent images and opens investigations into each case discovered.

To Hertfordshire Constabulary's credit, it hasn't adopted the practice of issuing letters to desist to suspects for low-level abuse images. Instead, it carries out enforcement on every such occasion and, in doing so, has uncovered incidents of more serious offending. This shows that it carries out meaningful investigations into all concerns, irrespective of the initial classification of risk.

Tackling serious and organised crime



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 effectiveness inspection has been carried over.

Armed policing

We have previously inspected how well forces provide armed policing. This formed part of our 2016 and 2017 effectiveness inspections. Subsequent terrorist attacks in the UK and Europe have meant that the police service maintains a focus on armed capability in England and Wales.

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of organised crime groups or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. The [Code of Practice on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons](#) makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of armed policing. The code stipulates that a [chief officer](#) be designated to oversee these standards. This requires the chief officer to set out the firearms threat in an [armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment](#) (APSTRA). The chief officer

must also set out clear rationales for the number of armed officers (armed capacity) and the level to which they are trained (armed capability).

Understanding the threat and responding to it

Hertfordshire Constabulary works jointly with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary to provide armed policing. This means that the standards of training, armed deployments and command of armed operations are assured in all three forces.

The force has a good understanding of the potential harm facing communities in Hertfordshire. Its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code and the [College of Policing guidance](#). The APSTRA is published annually and accompanied by a register of risks and other observations. The [designated chief officer](#) reviews the register frequently to maintain the right levels of armed capability and capacity.

Last year, we identified some areas where the force's APSTRA could be improved. For example, it didn't include details of how rapidly [armed response vehicles](#) (ARVs) respond to incidents. This is important to determine whether the force has sufficient armed officers to meet operational demands. The most recent APSTRA includes this detail.

All armed officers in England and Wales are trained to national standards. There are different standards for each role that armed officers perform. Most armed incidents in Hertfordshire Constabulary are attended by officers trained to an ARV standard. However, incidents sometimes occur that require the skills and specialist capabilities of more highly trained officers.

We found that Hertfordshire Constabulary has adequate arrangements in place should specialist capabilities be needed. It has tried-and-tested arrangements with the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire forces mean that specialist officers can be mobilised should their skills be required.

However, we believe there is scope to extend joint working beyond these three forces to include others in the region. This would strengthen operational resilience and bring greater assurance that officers with the right skills are on hand to manage the highest threats anywhere in the east of England.

Working with others

It is important that effective joint working arrangements are in place between neighbouring forces. Armed criminals and terrorists have no respect for county boundaries. As a consequence, armed officers must be prepared to deploy flexibly in the knowledge that they can work seamlessly with officers in other forces. It is also important that any one force can call on support from surrounding forces in times of heightened threat.

As Hertfordshire Constabulary provides armed policing jointly with neighbouring forces, armed officers can deploy effectively into adjoining counties if they need to. This means that greater armed response capacity is available to tackle armed criminals and protect the public.

We also recognise that a programme of work is underway to bring a number of policing services into joint venture in forces in the east of England. The seven-force collaboration programme, as it is known, is designed to make policing services more efficient and economical. We welcome the fact that armed policing forms part of this programme. In addition to our earlier comments about greater sharing of specialist capabilities, we also recognise that the available firearms training facilities available to the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire forces are limited. We believe that improved training facilities and greater sharing of specialist capabilities should be prioritised within the programme.

We examined how well prepared forces are to respond to threats and risks. Armed officers in Hertfordshire Constabulary are trained in tactics that take account of the types of recent terrorist attacks. The force also has an important role in designing training exercises with other organisations that simulate these types of attack. We found that these training exercises are reviewed carefully so that learning points are identified and improvements are made for the future.

In addition to debriefing training exercises, Hertfordshire Constabulary reviews the outcome of all firearms incidents that officers attend. This helps ensure that best practice or areas for improvement are identified. We also found that this knowledge is used to improve training and operational procedures.

Efficiency



Force in context

	Hertfordshire spend	England and Wales spend
Spend per head of population 2018/19 projection	£162	£192

Spend per head of population by category

2018/19 projection

	Hertfordshire spend	England and Wales spend
Visible frontline	£59	£65
Non-visible frontline	£56	£62
Frontline Support	£13	£17
Business support	£32	£41
Other	£2	£8

How efficiently does the force operate and how sustainable are its services?



Good

Summary

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at operating efficiently and providing a sustainable service to the public.

The force has a thorough understanding of demand, including growth in youth-related and cyber-based crime. It uses innovative models, drawing on a range of data, to identify current and emerging demand.

It has a demand management strategy and action plan to 2025 and has worked to understand the county's current and future demographics. Its swift response to the rise in [county lines](#) criminality is noteworthy.

The change team carries out analysis to make improvements within the force. A recent change to shift patterns in the control room will ensure good response times during times of peak demand.

The force keeps a strong and visible local police presence and is active in community safety partnerships. A forthcoming IT project will see it gathering the public's views about what matters to them.

Hertfordshire Constabulary continues to recruit to meet the optimum numbers of personnel for its policing model. Significant investments include the recruitment of 75 officers to local policing roles. These will include county lines, cyber crime and specialist [safeguarding](#) officers.

The force's financial plans are based on prudent assumptions. Its tri-force strategic alliance with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary results in significant savings and adds resilience to each force.

In 2017, we identified understanding of leadership skills and leadership development as areas for improvement. The force now has a plan for these. It has also shown a willingness to adopt new approaches to developing its workforce.

In 2017, we judged Hertfordshire Constabulary as good at meeting current demands and using resources.

Meeting current demands and using resources



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 efficiency inspection has been carried over.

Planning for the future



Good

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a sophisticated understanding of demand and is well placed to assess and predict likely future changes in demand. Its ability to predict and respond quickly to the rise in county lines criminality exemplifies its ability to tackle emerging demand.

It has worked hard to keep a strong and visible local policing presence. Despite financial challenges, it has managed to keep neighbourhood teams in each of its ten local policing areas. Good IT investment has also contributed to officers being able to spend more time being visible and accessible to communities.

The force's new Echo IT project should help it establish what matters to the public. It can then consider how best to respond to the issues the public raises.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is investing significantly in recruitment. It shares its human resources (HR) function with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary as part of their tri-force collaboration. But it needs to assure itself that the HR team can provide an appropriate service to meet current and future demands, and that there is a comprehensive future-skills strategy in place.

The force's [medium-term financial plans](#) are prudent and it has a strong understanding of its future position.

In 2017, we identified understanding of leadership skills and leadership development as areas for improvement. The force has made some progress to date.

Areas for improvement

- The force should make sure that future recruitment and staff development are supported by a functional and adequately resourced human resources team.
- The force should develop a comprehensive skills strategy to identify what future capabilities its workforce will need.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Assessing future demand for services

Hertfordshire Constabulary has stayed focused on improving its understanding of demand. [Senior officers](#) lead and co-ordinate activity through strong and visible leadership. The force has developed a demand management strategy and action plan to 2025, to lead and co-ordinate its activity. It has carried out work to understand the growing and future demographics of the county. It is also developing plans to meet a significant rise in the under-25 age population. Its ability to predict and respond quickly to the rise in county lines criminality is another example of how it anticipates and works effectively with other organisations to shape services, tackle emerging demand and invest in preventing escalation of harm.

Its change team is well resourced, with skilled staff. It supports activity across the force and has analysed and evaluated its many change programmes. For example, as a result of the most recent analysis of demand in the control room, the force is introducing a new shift pattern. This change won't only offer greater efficiency, but also make sure appropriately skilled staff keep good response times during times of peak demand.

Understanding public expectations

Hertfordshire Constabulary has worked hard, even throughout periods of greater financial challenge, to keep a strong and visible local policing presence. It has done this by sharing some back-office functions, better aligning its resources to demand and making more use of telephone investigations. Neighbourhood officers now spend more than 90 percent of their time on solving problems related to their areas, and less than 10 percent supporting response work.

The force's demand management strategy has led to better distribution of resources. Its IT investment has resulted in agile working and improved workflows. All frontline officers have received new-generation laptops and smartphones to replace previous models. Officers value the functionality and ease of use of these new devices. They give officers quick access to forms and functions such as specialist guidance. This means they can spend more time being visible and accessible to their communities.

Improvements in IT are also giving the public more choice when they contact Hertfordshire Constabulary. The force carries out an average of 60 web chats a day and offers an online crime recording facility that saw an average of 26 crimes recorded daily during the last year. The average answer time for 101 calls was 1 minute and 38 seconds. A survey of online users told the force that 93 percent would use the online service again.

Making best use of resources to meet likely future demand

Since 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary has been investing significantly in better understanding the source and nature of demands across all its services. This is especially the case for areas of high-volume demand, such as reports of property theft. The force has hired consultants, bought demand analysis software and trained its workforce in analysing demand. It has also reviewed its operational departments to understand how demand is changing, and where greater resource is needed to meet demand from emerging and growing crime types.

There are more limited examples of the force proactively working with the public to understand their changing expectations. However, it is about to launch its Echo IT project. This will enable it to collect information from the public to understand what matters to them and how it can respond.

Over one third of all homes in Hertfordshire are signed up to the force's Online Watch Link (OWL) Neighbourhood Watch network. As part of its community engagement strategy, the force has plans to use the network to better understand public needs.

Hertfordshire Constabulary remains actively involved in community safety partnerships and receives public feedback through partnership activities and consultations organised by the [police and crime commissioner](#).

Recently, the force upgraded its website to make digital access easier. However, it intends to move its online presence to the Single Online Home standardised national website in early 2020.

Prioritising

There is good governance within the force to match resources to policing priorities. These priorities were set by the police and crime commissioner, who consulted with the public to find out what mattered to them. Currently, the commissioner is updating his 2019/20 police and crime plan. The force will then align its control strategy and delivery plan to meet his objectives.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a rigorous approach to understanding future demand. It uses a range of tools to help it decide where it needs to place its resource, according to the priorities identified. The police and crime commissioner has kept a strong commitment to visible local policing.

Despite austerity measures, the force has managed to keep neighbourhood teams in each of its ten local policing areas. These align with Hertfordshire's ten district and borough councils.

Future workforce

Hertfordshire Constabulary continues to recruit to meet the optimum numbers of personnel to achieve its well-researched policing model. Its planned investment to increase the workforce in 2019/20 is aligned with the police and crime commissioner's priorities.

The force is investing £3.36m to recruit a further 75 officers to local policing roles. These roles will include crime prevention, cyber crime, county lines, proactive

capability and specialist safeguarding officers. An investment of more than £1.2m from the 2019/20 budget is planned for operational support functions, such as the control room, IMU, victim services team, custody and criminal justice collaboration. The force will invest a further £1.22m in organisational structures to produce IT efficiencies. This includes the national enabling programme, which provides cloud services to make information sharing with partner agencies easier. This all amounts to a significant investment aimed at further improving public service and force performance.

Hertfordshire Constabulary understands the skills and capabilities of its workforce and is using this information to plan for its future requirements. This was an area for improvement in 2017. Its workforce capability assessment records current skills against a competency values framework. The force builds on this assessment with information from personal development reviews (PDRs) and promotion processes. Skills such as budgeting and project management are factored in for managers. The force is developing plans to align its capability with its future needs to inform its planning.

Hertfordshire Constabulary shares HR and learning and development functions with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, as part of their collaboration. It recognises that the tri-force HR team has limited capacity to give strategic support and make sure that workforce planning and learning and development aligns fully with the demand for future finances. Therefore, it now has its own workforce, planning and performance and learning development staff to meet more local needs.

Within the force, a learning and development prioritisation board oversees an annual analysis of learning needs across all departments, reviewing skills and planning training requirements. However, training needs are forecast only for the coming year and the skills audit isn't comprehensive or reliable.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is meeting future leadership needs through its talent management and promotion programmes. It reports that these will be expanded in the coming year. It should consider that future plans for achieving continuous improvement and greater efficiency are likely to rely on professional HR support, for which there is no clear capacity.

The force has taken positive steps to encourage the use of the full range of routes for those who wish to join the police service. As well as the fast-track detective programme, the force plans to use the police apprenticeship scheme to appoint new recruits. It acknowledges that it has more work to do to build a comprehensive skills strategy across all areas of its work to be able to meet future challenges, however.

Finance plans

Hertfordshire Constabulary's medium-term financial plans are built on prudent assumptions about known cost pressures. The force has benefited from an increase in funding for 2019/20: its gross expenditure is set to increase by £12m to £221m in 2019/20. The additional funds are mainly a result of an increase in council tax precept and equate to an extra £10.73m for the force.

Despite this increase, Hertfordshire Constabulary is the fourth-lowest precepting police force in England and Wales. It invests 72 percent of its resources in frontline policing. These funds support the growth in additional staffing to raise officer numbers above 2,000 for the first time since the start of austerity measures in 2010.

The force's recent budgets have relied heavily on drawing from [reserves](#) to support budget gaps. It projected that its use of reserves in 2018/19 would be £7.7m, with a reserve balance of £25.5m. It forecasts its use of reserves in 2019/20 to be £4.8m, showing a reduced need to depend on these in the medium term.

The force has a clear plan to make 2 percent efficiency savings in-force over the next three years. It is also looking beyond workforce costs to estates, collaboration and digital opportunities as ways of achieving savings. Comprehensive analysis of its demand is giving it sound evidence for how to prioritise its budgeting. This will change the way it allocates resources, allowing it to be flexible and reprioritise if that demand or its finances change.

The force is identifying and assessing the impact of changes in the capabilities and services it offers. And it works well to make sure that the focus of its partnerships with other organisations is ambitious.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a strong understanding of its future financial position, including contingencies. Its plans are sound, with prudent assumptions about future income and expenditure.

Leadership and workforce development

We identified both understanding of leadership skills and leadership development / talent management as areas for improvement in our [2017 efficiency report](#). The force has made limited progress to date, but is now introducing efficient HR software to develop a coherent plan.

Hertfordshire Constabulary continues to run a programme of workshops called 'valuing our leaders' to develop leadership and supervisory skills. This is supplemented by personnel programmes to develop leadership capability, known as Be You and Further You.

PDRs have been repositioned as My Conversation. This approach recognises that workforce development needs to involve a series of conversations, rather than be a token annual event. My Conversation also gives a route through to promotion, as was the case with the recent superintendent promotion process.

Mentoring Matters is a programme that also emphasises a one-to-one approach. To bridge gaps between the current and desired future workforce, Hertfordshire Constabulary offers promotion development packages. These packages comprise materials, courses, study time and financial support for those studying academic subjects that are aligned with force priorities.

The force has a strategy for its senior leadership requirements. It plans to extend to all supervisory levels the leadership survey that it carried out for those at chief inspector rank and above.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has shown itself willing to adopt new and innovative approaches to developing its workforce. It has embraced [Police Now](#) apprenticeships and is collaborating with other forces to secure a police education qualification framework provider.

Its personnel are generally positive about the opportunities available to them through secondments and lateral development. Those studying for sergeant and inspector exams are supported with extra courses, materials and study time. The force is evaluating the effectiveness of this approach.

It meets gaps in detective recruitment through an effective accelerated recruitment scheme. Recently, it recruited its first [direct-entry](#) superintendent, and it has invested in specialist marketing to attract a more diverse workforce. These new joiners also benefit from mentoring, which supports career development and retains talent.

Ambition to improve

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a tri-force strategic alliance with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. It spends 30 percent of its budget and resource through this alliance. This mature and effective collaboration has saved the force over £15m and adds resilience to each force involved.

The force is now part of a wider seven-force alliance in the eastern region. This will enable it to procure goods and services, bringing further benefits and economies of scale. It also has ambitions to co-locate its safeguarding hub with council services via the existing [MASH](#).

Hertfordshire Constabulary has an ambitious digital strategy and continues to invest in improving its mobile IT systems. The strategy allows the public to access services in the way they choose and gives its workforce the tools to work as productively and efficiently as possible.

The police and crime commissioner has set an efficiency target of 2 percent savings to reinvest in priority areas. The force is now developing its plans to achieve this target. Reassuringly, it doesn't intend to simply top-slice all budgets. Rather, it is planning a well-considered approach to identify areas where it can make savings that will have least effect on those areas that matter to local communities. Some priority areas of growing demand may be excluded from these savings (or may even be subject to growth), whereas other areas will have to make compensatory savings. This will be carried out through the [priority-based budgeting](#) approach described earlier. The precise details of how this plan will be reviewed and evaluated are yet to be determined, but it is expected to be concluded by autumn 2019, in time to inform the budget-setting process for 2020/21. We will watch with interest as this plan unfolds.

Legitimacy

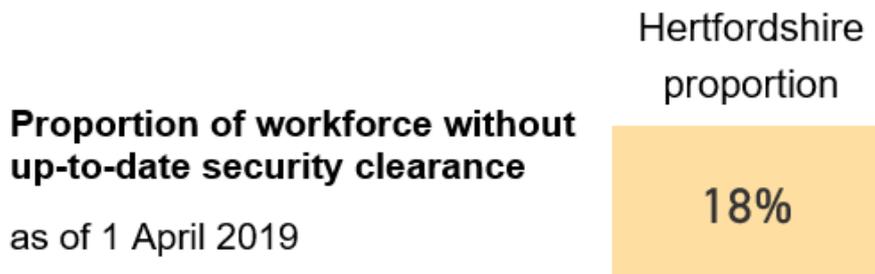


Force in context

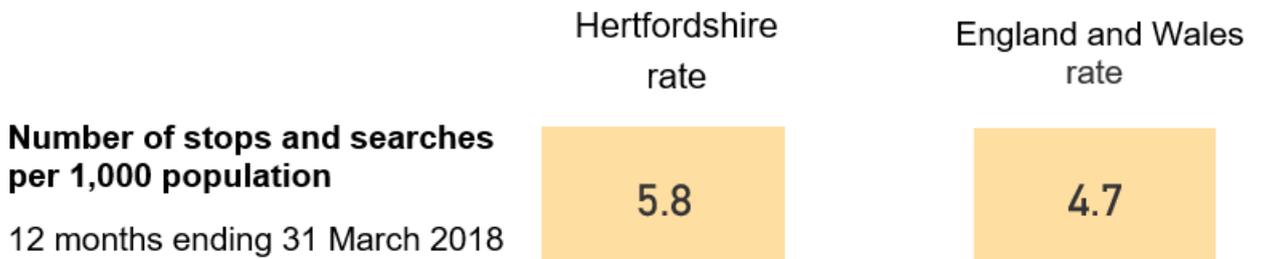
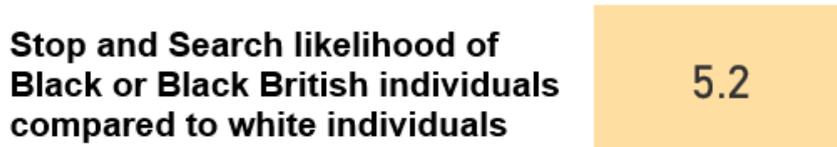
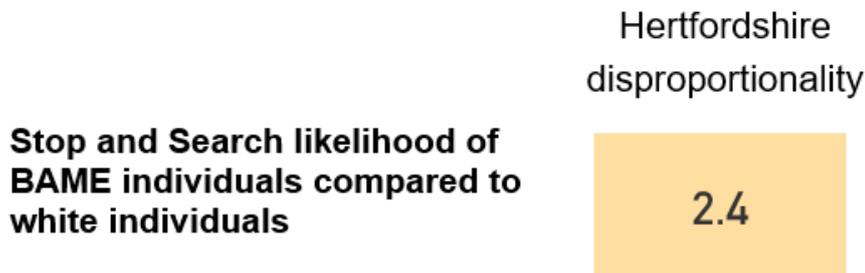
Comparison of Hertfordshire workforce ethnicity with local population as of 31 March 2019

	Hertfordshire proportion	Local population proportion
Black, Asian and minority ethnic as % of those with stated ethnicity	5.3%	12.4%
White as % of those with stated ethnicity	94.7%	87.6%
Not Stated as % of total	1.1%	

	Hertfordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of female officers in post as of 31st March 2019	32%	30%



Stop and search by ethnicity
12 months ending 31 March 2018



How legitimately does the force treat the public and its workforce?



Good

Summary

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at behaving ethically and lawfully. Officers and [staff](#) understand that ethics underpin everything they do. The force emphasises the [Code of Ethics](#), which is a feature in all force training events. A regional ethics board is responsible for governance, but matters addressed don't yet sufficiently involve the views of the workforce.

The force doesn't yet fully comply with all elements of national vetting standards. It does take its vetting responsibilities seriously, however.

It is good at identifying and tackling corruption. While its current staffing levels can deal only reactively with incoming intelligence, it does have enough capacity and capability within specialist teams that seek out and tackle corruption.

At the time of our inspection, the force was re-prioritising part of its corruption prevention work to focus on supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

In 2017, we judged Hertfordshire Constabulary to be good at treating both the public and its workforce fairly.

Treating the public fairly



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over. However, we reviewed a representative sample of 180 stop-and-search records to assess the reasonableness of the recorded grounds. We found that 87 percent of those grounds were reasonable. Our assessment is based on the grounds recorded by the searching officer and not those that existed at the time of the search.

In our [2017 legitimacy report](#), we recommended that all forces should:

- monitor and analyse comprehensive stop-and-search data to understand reasons for disparities;
- take action on those; and
- publish the analysis and the action by July 2018.

We found that the force has complied with some of this recommendation. While it identifies the extent to which [find rates](#) differ across different types of searches, it doesn't do that by ethnicity or separately identify find rates for drug possession and supply-type offences. It also doesn't identify the prevalence of possession-only drug searches or the extent to which these align with local or force-level priorities.

We reviewed the force's website and found a clear explanation of the factors affecting the disproportionality rate. However, there was no obvious mention of the analysis it had carried out to understand and explain the reasons for these disparities or any subsequent action taken.

Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour



Good

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at behaving ethically and lawfully. Ethics are well understood and accepted across the force. Every member of the workforce we spoke to was clear that ethics are at the forefront of everything they do. Force guidance to its workforce is framed by the Code of Ethics, and supervisors personally commit to uphold and carry out certain standards.

The force's video series, designed to raise awareness of ethical dilemmas, is noteworthy. We saw evidence that officers and staff are self-aware, and consulted professional standards when they considered that their integrity may have been compromised.

Hertfordshire Constabulary gives guidance to its workforce about personal behaviour that could compromise their reputation. But from our review of their feedback forums, it seems it could do more to work with its personnel and reflect their concerns.

It may take two years for the force to fully comply with all elements of national vetting standards. However, it does take its vetting responsibilities seriously. We are satisfied that [chief officers](#) frequently monitor plans and will act to ensure full compliance.

The force is good at identifying and tackling corruption. It can identify those who are potentially at risk of being corrupted and is also effective at intervening.

Recently, Hertfordshire Constabulary has sought to increase its workforce's awareness of notifiable associations and the [abuse of position for a sexual purpose](#). It also routinely monitors their use of data, including on mobile devices, for evidence

of misuse. We viewed samples of corruption-related intelligence reports and investigations, and in all cases, the force had taken appropriate action.

Areas for improvement

- The force should take steps to involve its officers and staff in raising ethical issues and evaluate the effectiveness of the process.
- The force should ensure all staff have received at least the lowest level of vetting clearance for their roles and clear any backlogs ensuring it is fully compliant with the national vetting guidelines.
- The force should ensure that its counter-corruption unit has enough capability and capacity to counter corruption effectively and proactively.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Maintaining an ethical culture

During fieldwork, we spoke to many officers and staff in different ranks, roles and parts of the force. Every member of the workforce we spoke to was clear that ethics are at the forefront of everything they do. They showed a practical understanding of their responsibility to act ethically and challenge instances of unprofessional conduct among their colleagues. Force guidance is framed by the Code of Ethics. It includes the aforementioned Valuing our Leaders workshops, which the chief constable presents. Every supervisor in the force attends these workshops, including those in acting posts. They each commit to a signed contract with the chief constable to uphold and carry out the standards set.

The force has rebranded its confidential reporting line to remove any negative bias. We saw evidence that officers are self-aware, and consulted professional standards when they considered their integrity may have been compromised. They knew of force publications communicating outcomes of misconduct cases. Professional standards investigators use frequent training days to present learning and discuss consequences.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has supported two of its master's students through the Cambridge Police executive programme. Both pieces of academic work are contributing to evidence-based approaches and a learning culture within the force. One study seeks to identify the profile of officers who are more likely to abuse their position. The second argues that good performance management processes by local supervisors are more effective at keeping personnel engaged and in the workplace than more traditional investigation methods.

Ethics are well understood and accepted across the force. Its work involving a series of videos designed to raise awareness of ethical dilemmas, including the abuse of position for a sexual purpose, is noteworthy and has been shared with other forces. Hertfordshire Constabulary has taken the bold step of giving guidance to staff about matters that may not be strictly illegal, but could compromise reputation. This includes their use of public sex environments.

A regional ethics board is responsible for governance, which means that learning is maximised across the tri-force collaboration.

Despite the extensive promotion and availability of feedback forums such as Yammer (an online platform that facilitates social-networking communication within organisations), there was no evidence of material suggested by the workforce. The force could do more to evaluate the methods it uses to work with its workforce and reflect their concerns.

Hertfordshire Constabulary does not yet fully comply with all elements of national vetting standards. Workforce vetting checks take place through a collaborative tri-force department. Despite substantial investment in resources last year, capacity has gone into vetting new recruits. Senior leaders have recently responded by investing in an additional four posts specifically to service lapsed vetting checks. This additional investment has reduced outstanding vetting lists from 18 percent to 16 percent in just 12 weeks. Nevertheless, achieving full compliance may still take two years. The force does take its vetting responsibilities seriously, however; it has routinely carried out more extensive pre-employment checks than required, including drug testing new recruits and viewing their social media accounts.

By the nature of their work, those in designated posts need the highest level of vetting. They are suitably vetted. We are satisfied that chief officers frequently monitor plans and will act to ensure full compliance.

The force has trained officers to create [Flagstone records](#). It complies with its obligations to give details to the [College of Policing](#) for the barred and advisory lists. These lists prevent those who have left the service under investigation, or who have been dismissed, from re-joining or working in law enforcement.

All forces need to understand if people's ethnic background disproportionately affects the results of vetting checks. Hertfordshire Constabulary monitors and scrutinises these, which are checked by [senior officers](#) for any bias and to extract any learning. Vetting officers also routinely attend recruitment events to give the best advice and guidance to potential applicants.

Tackling corruption

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at identifying and tackling corruption. It has assessed the threat of corruption and developed a counter-corruption control strategy. It uses information it holds about officers and staff well to identify those who are potentially at risk of being corrupted and is effective at intervention.

During fieldwork, we noted that the force carries out integrity checks during annual performance reviews. This way, personnel have a clear understanding of their obligation to declare a business interest. Recent force communications have also reinforced awareness of notifiable associations and the abuse of position for a sexual purpose.

Hertfordshire Constabulary knows that current staffing levels can only deal reactively with incoming intelligence and there is limited capacity for proactivity. However, departmental leaders are in the process of applying for additional personnel to proactively monitor the broad infrastructure of systems. We saw that the force uses

effective techniques to follow up intelligence and investigate cases. It also routinely monitors its workforce's use of data, including on mobile devices, for evidence of misuse. We reviewed a sample of intelligence reports and investigations linked to corruption and found that the force took appropriate action in all cases.

As well as its own confidential reporting line, Hertfordshire Constabulary makes use of the Crimestoppers reporting line to deal with anonymous reports made by the public. These reports are handled appropriately. The force makes mandatory referrals to the [Independent Office for Police Conduct](#) (IOPC). When necessary, it seeks the IOPC's guidance on less clear cases.

It has appointed a corruption prevention officer, who has given more than 50 presentations to train partner agencies, including victim services, to look for signs of officers and staff potentially abusing their position for a sexual purpose. At the time of our inspection, the force was reprioritising this work to focus on more organisations that support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. We reviewed a sample of investigations into this type of behaviour and found each was dealt with appropriately.

Treating the workforce fairly



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over.

Annex A – About the data

Data in this report is from a range of sources, including:

- Home Office;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS);
- our inspection fieldwork; and
- data we collected directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

When we collected data directly from police forces, we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other interested parties such as the Home Office. We gave forces several opportunities to quality assure and validate the data they gave us, to make sure it was accurate. For instance:

- We shared the submitted data with forces, so they could review their own and other forces' data. This allowed them to analyse where data was notably different from other forces or internally inconsistent.
- We asked all forces to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors.

We set out the source of this report's data below.

Methodology

Data in the report

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

When other forces were unable to supply data, we mention this under the relevant sections below.

Most similar groups

We compare each force's crime rate with the average rate for forces in its most similar group (MSG). MSGs are groups of similar police forces, based on analysis of demographic, social and economic factors which relate to crime. We could not identify any forces similar to City of London Police. Every other force has its own group of up to seven other forces which it is most similar to.

An MSG's crime rate is the sum of the recorded crimes in all the group's forces divided by its total population. All of the most similar forces (including the force being compared) are included in calculating the MSG average.

[More information about MSGs can be found on our website.](#)

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use ONS mid-2018 population estimates.

Survey of police workforce

We surveyed the police workforce across England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and how suitable their assigned tasks were. This survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample so the results may not be representative of the workforce population. The number of responses per force varied between 0 and 920. So we treated results with caution and didn't use them to assess individual force performance. Instead, we identified themes that we could explore further during fieldwork.

BMG survey of public attitudes towards policing (2018)

We commissioned BMG to survey public attitudes towards policing in 2018. Ipsos MORI conducted a similar version of the survey in 2015–2017.

The survey consisted of about 400 respondents for each of the 43 forces. Most surveys were completed online, by members of online research panels. However, a minority of the surveys (around 750) were conducted face-to-face. These face-to-face surveys were specifically targeted to groups that are traditionally under-represented on online panels. This aimed to make sure the survey respondents were as representative as possible of the total adult population of England and Wales. A small number of respondents were also surveyed online via postal invites to the survey.

Results were weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and indices of multiple deprivation to match population profiles. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, which may be more problematic for larger force areas compared to small ones. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

[The findings of this survey, and previous surveys, are available on our website.](#)

Review of crime files

We reviewed police case files for these crime types:

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

Our file review was designed to provide a broad overview of how well the police:

- identify vulnerability;
- conduct investigations; and
- treat victims.

We randomly selected files from crimes recorded between 1 May and 31 July 2018 and assessed them against several criteria. We reviewed 60 case files in each force, except for the Metropolitan Police Service where we reviewed 90.

For our file review, we only selected a small sample size of cases per force. So we didn't use results from as the only basis for assessing individual force performance, but alongside other evidence.

Force in context

999 calls

We collected this data directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

Recorded crime and crime outcomes

We took this data from the July 2019 release of the Home Office [police recorded crime and outcomes data tables](#).

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

Police-recorded crime data should be treated with care. Recent increases may be due to forces' renewed focus on accurate crime recording since our 2014 national crime data inspection.

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

- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months ending 30 September 2018 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. So this data is subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time.
- Under the new framework, 37 police forces in England and Wales provide outcomes data through the HODH every month. All other forces provide this data via a monthly manual return.
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces participated in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. As part of the pilot, they stopped issuing simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and restricted their use of penalty notices for disorder for adult offenders. These three forces continued to follow these procedures since the pilot ended in November 2015. Later, other forces also limited their use of some out of court disposals. So the outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.

For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see the Home Office statistics, [Crime outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2019](#).

Domestic abuse outcomes

In England and Wales, 29 police forces provide domestic abuse outcomes data through the Home Office data hub (HODH) every month. We collected this data directly from the remaining 14 forces.

Domestic abuse outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months ending 31 March 2018 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. So this data is subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time.

Workforce figures (including ethnicity and gender)

This data was obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data is available from the Home Office's published [police workforce England and Wales statistics](#) or the [police workforce open data tables](#). The Home Office may have updated these figures since we obtained them for this report.

The data gives the full-time equivalent workforce figures as at 31 March. The figures include section 38-designated investigation, detention or escort officers, but not section 39-designated detention or escort staff. They include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence but exclude those seconded to other forces.

Spend per head of population

We took this data from the [HMICFRS value for money profiles](#).

These profiles are based on data collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, through the Police Objective Analysis. The spend over time figures are adjusted for inflation. The population figures are ONS mid-year estimates, with the 2018/19 value calculated by assessing the trend for the last five years. [More details on this data can be found on our website](#).

Stop and search

We took this data from the Home Office publication, [Police powers and procedures, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2018](#). Stop and search totals exclude vehicle only searches and searches where the subject's ethnicity was not stated.

Vetting data (workforce without up-to-date security clearance)

We collected this data directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

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