



Promoting improvements  
in policing to make  
everyone safer

# PEEL: Police effectiveness 2016

An inspection of Gwent Police



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## Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assesses the effectiveness of police forces across England and Wales.

### What is police effectiveness and why is it important?

An effective police force is one which keeps people safe and reduces crime. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and the principal measures by which the public judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

To reach a judgment on the extent of each force's effectiveness, our inspection answered the following overall question:

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

To answer this question HMIC explores five 'core' questions, which reflect those areas of policing that we consider to be of particular interest and concern to the public:<sup>1</sup>

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?
2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?
3. How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?
4. How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?
5. How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?

HMIC's effectiveness inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/)). This report sets out our findings for Gwent Police.

Reports on the force's efficiency, legitimacy and leadership inspections are available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/gwent/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/gwent/)).

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<sup>1</sup> HMIC assessed forces against these questions between September and December 2016, except for Kent Police – our pilot force – which we inspected in June 2016.

## Force in numbers



### Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

**252**

England and Wales

**240**



### Crime (excluding fraud)

Crimes recorded per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

**65**

England and Wales

**68**

Change in recorded crime 12 months to 30 June 2015 against 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

**+3.2%**

England and Wales

**+7.8%**

Change in recorded crime for the 5 years to the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

**-14.0%**

England and Wales

**-3.4%**



### Crime outcomes\*

Charged/summonsed

Gwent Police

**12.8%**

England and Wales

**12.1%**

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Gwent Police

**15.4%**

England and Wales

**10.6%**

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Gwent Police

**41.4%**

England and Wales

**47.4%**

\*Figures are shown as proportions of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016.



## Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**45**

**31**

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**47**

**34**



## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**15**

**16**

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**12.0%**

**11.1%**

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

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**11.8%**

**10.0%**



## Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 1 July 2016

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**34**

**46**



## Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction with the overall service provided by the police 12 months to 30 June 2016

Gwent Police

England and Wales

**86.0%**

**83.3%**

For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

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

## Overall judgment<sup>2</sup>



Gwent Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Our overall judgment is the same as last year, when we judged the force to be good. The force has an effective approach to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. It is good at investigating crime and protecting vulnerable people, particularly victims of domestic abuse. The force has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure it can respond to national threats. However, the way it tackles serious and organised crime requires improvement.

## Overall summary

|                                                                                                         |                                                                                      |                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe? |  | <b>Good</b>                 |
| How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?                            |  | <b>Good</b>                 |
| How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?    |  | <b>Good</b>                 |
| How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?                                     |  | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?                                                  | <b>Ungraded</b>                                                                      |                             |

Gwent Police's overall effectiveness at keeping people safe and reducing crime is good. The way the force is organised helps it to engage effectively with its communities and to identify and tackle neighbourhood problems. It works effectively with partner organisations (such as local authorities, or health and education services) to develop solutions that protect communities, prevent or reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

<sup>2</sup> HMIC judgments are outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

The force is generally effective in the way it gathers evidence at the first point of contact. However, the way it uses its risk assessment process is inconsistent. The force continues to place the victim at the centre of any crime investigation.

The force ensures that intelligence professionals provide appropriate support to investigations. It has effective digital forensic support and makes good use of new technology to prevent and reduce crime. But initial supervision of crime investigations is not effective.

The force has a good integrated offender management structure, which is aiming to include serious violence and domestic abuse offenders. Domestic abuse is still a clear priority for the force and it has made good progress against its domestic abuse action plan.

While Gwent Police works hard to understand the nature and scale of vulnerability at a local level, it does not have an automatic system to identify vulnerable and repeat victims. Its response to missing children is good and processes are in place to identify and tackle child sexual exploitation.

The force has a limited understanding of the threat posed to its communities by serious and organised crime but is working with partner organisations to address this.

The force has appropriate arrangements in place to manage its national responsibilities under *Strategic Policing Requirement*. It has a good understanding of the current firearms and terrorist threats facing the Southern Wales region.



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

The police's ability to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to keep people safe is a principal measure of its effectiveness. Crime prevention is more effective than investigating crime, stops people being victims in the first place and makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other policing organisations and organisations such as health, housing and children's services have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter therefore depends on their ability to work closely with other policing organisations and other interested parties to understand local problems and to use a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

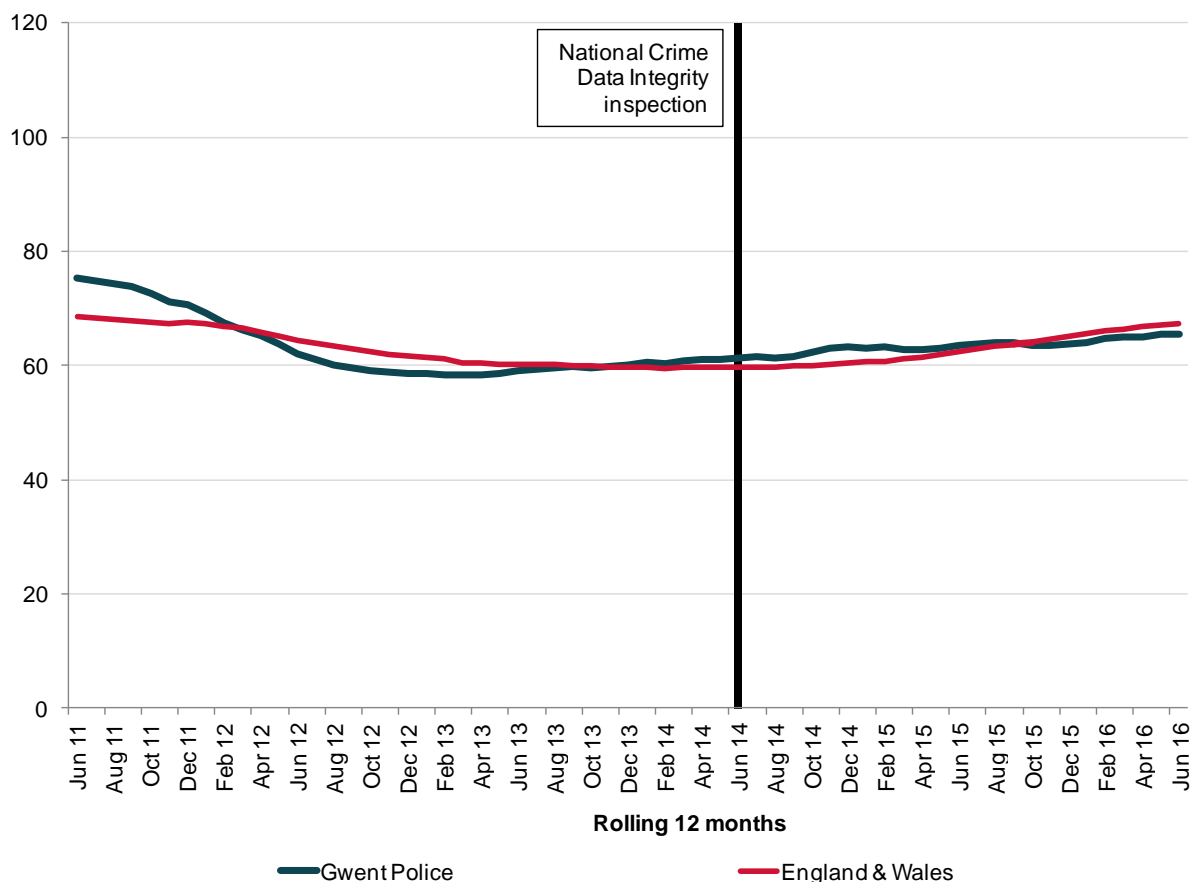
## **How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Gwent?**

Although police-recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a partial indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as the number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (crimes involving a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) and other crimes against society (e.g. possession of drugs). In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the majority of forces (39 out of 43 forces) showed an annual increase in total police-recorded crime (excluding fraud). This increase in police-recorded crime may have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's 2014 inspection of crime data in all forces across England and Wales.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. Figure 1 shows how police-recorded crime has fluctuated over the longer term. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2011, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 has decreased by 14.0 percent in Gwent compared with a decrease of 3.4 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime decreased by 13.9 percent in Gwent, compared with a decrease of 0.5 percent for England and Wales as a whole.

**Figure 1: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) in Gwent, for the five-year period to 30 June 2016**



**Source: Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

More recently, when compared with the previous 12 month period, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Gwent increased by 3.2 percent for the year ending 30 June 2016. This is compared with an increase of 7.8 percent across all forces in England and Wales over the same period.

The rate of police-recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour per head of population indicates how safe it is for the public in that police area. Figures 2 and 3 show crime rates (per 1,000 population) and the change in the rate (per 1,000 population) of anti-social behaviour in Gwent compared with England and Wales.

HMIC used a broad selection of crime types to indicate crime levels in the police force area during the inspection. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police-recorded crime rates only. The figure below shows police-recorded crime rates in the force area for a small selection of crime types.

**Figure 2: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) in Gwent, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

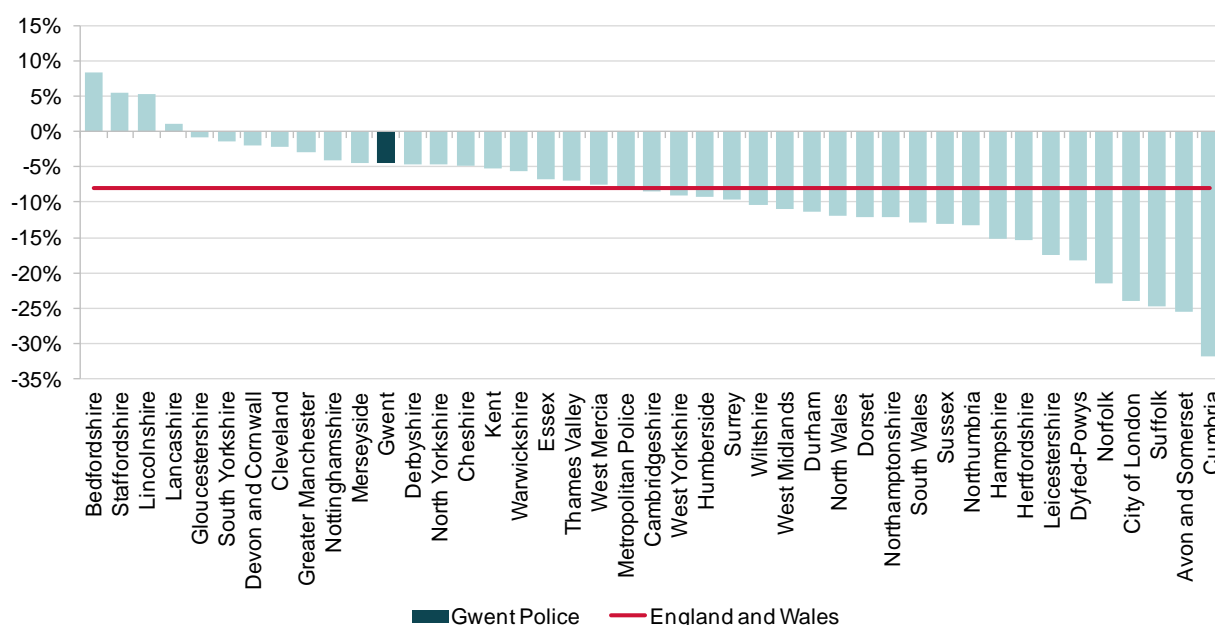
| Rates per 1,000 population       | Gwent Police | England and Wales |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Recorded crime (excluding fraud) | 65.5         | 68.2              |
| Victim-based crime               | 57.7         | 60.4              |
| Sexual offences                  | 1.5          | 1.9               |
| Assault with injury              | 6.2          | 7.0               |
| Burglary in a dwelling*          | 6.4          | 8.1               |

\* The rate of burglary in a dwelling is the rate for 1,000 households, rather than population

Source: Home Office data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

**Figure 3: Percentage change in the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents (per 1,000 population), by force, comparing the 12 months to 31 March 2016 with the 12 months to 31 March 2015**



Source: Home Office data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Gwent Police recorded 45 incidents of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population. This is 4 percent fewer incidents per 1,000 population than the force recorded during the previous 12 months. In England and

Wales as a whole, there were 8 percent fewer incidents per 1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016, than were recorded during the previous 12 months.

## **How effectively does the force understand the threat or risk of harm within the communities it serves?**

It is vital that forces have a detailed understanding of the communities they serve in order to protect them from harm. This understanding should include those communities which may – for a variety of reasons – need the police to work differently to understand their requirements, for example migrant communities, elderly people or groups which might be mistrustful towards the police. A good understanding of what matters to these communities helps the police to gain their confidence and create safer neighbourhoods for citizens.

In order to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, police forces need to understand the threat and risk faced by communities. Forces must also operate a model of local policing in which police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) have sufficient time for community engagement, visible targeted foot patrols and working with other policing organisations and other interested parties to promote resolutions that protect communities and prevent crime. Successfully undertaking these three activities leads to crime reduction and increased public confidence.

### **Does Gwent Police understand the risk posed to its communities?**

Gwent Police engages effectively with its communities and identifies and tackles neighbourhood problems. In April 2015, the force changed its operating model from a service that was centrally managed and locally implemented, made up of five local policing units structured along local authority boundaries, to the current one that divides the force into two local policing areas, one covering the east, the other covering the west. Each local policing area is sub-divided into neighbourhood policing teams, each of which is led by an inspector who has overall responsibility for crime investigations, response policing and performance in that geographic area. Although the number of neighbourhood officers reduced after the force restructure in April 2015, the force has retained neighbourhood police officers who are dedicated to geographical locations. They are led by a neighbourhood sergeant and an inspector who has responsibility for both neighbourhood and response officers. The neighbourhood policing teams are supported by police community support officers (PCSOs). PCSOs engage with local communities and identify and solve local problems in accordance with national guidance. The force recognises the value that PCSOs add to policing local communities and has a strict policy that minimises the time they are used outside their neighbourhood role on tasks such as working on front office desks in police stations.

The force understands well the threats facing the communities it serves. It is good at analysing both traditional (such as burglary and robbery) and so-called emerging threats (such as child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime). Crime and anti-social behaviour levels are monitored monthly through force performance data in the force's database of information on crime profiles and intelligence. This allows comparison of crime trends, crime types and outcomes across the force area and enables local commanders and their teams to understand fully the threats facing its communities and to deal effectively with local issues.

The force completed a strategic assessment in October 2016 to identify the most serious risks to the force and the communities it serves. The strategic assessment is supported by actions contained within its control strategy, which is a document that details actions to mitigate any identified risks and is designed to protect and reassure its community. Gwent Police's control strategy has a particular focus on protecting vulnerable people (people who are vulnerable through their age, disability, or because they have been subjected to repeated offences, or are at high risk of abuse, for example). Although the force is currently working on a new control strategy, it is likely that the new strategy will have very similar priorities.

Effective systems are in place through the force's local management meetings to identify current and emerging trends that have been highlighted through 'Your Voice' (local surveys through which local people can highlight their concerns about community problems) and meetings with local communities. The concerns and trends are discussed and assessed and local priorities are determined. This provides reassurance that the force's high-level intelligence and management processes are co-ordinated and support main force priorities, including the protection of vulnerable people. The daily management meeting is also focused on force priorities, including vulnerable people, and these priorities are widely understood at neighbourhood and local policing area levels. However, important messages, such as information about incidents involving missing people, are not being passed on to staff within the control room, which could result in avoidable risk to the missing person.

The emerging threat posed by cyber-crime is recognised by the force and it has produced a cyber-crime problem profile. The force is also working with the College of Policing and Cardiff University to develop specialist cyber-crime capabilities so that it can employ people with the skills needed to understand and combat cyber-crime.

### **How does Gwent Police engage with the public?**

Gwent Police engages well with local communities. Community engagement forms one of the three pillars that make up the force's policing strategy and links directly to the objectives contained within the chief constable's operational plan. The force has a community engagement strategy that describes a comprehensive set of initiatives to ensure that public engagement and problem-solving aim to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. At a local level, neighbourhood policing teams have a tool called 'Your Voice', which provides communities with a way to make local police aware of

problems that are affecting them. 'Gwent Now' is the force's online system to share police information easily with local residents. In addition, the force gains further information through a group of local people who form the 'key individual network'. This is used by the force to identify local policing concerns and then to consider ways to resolve or reduce them.

At the chief officer team level there are several levels of engagement with communities, including where each month a number of victims of crime are contacted through random dip-samples. The officers involved with the case are then given feedback from chief officers about the quality of contact with victims and compliance with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*.<sup>3</sup> The force takes a structured approach to investigating crime and follows its CARES approach (contract with the victim, assessment of the needs of the victim, report of the investigation, end of investigation and supervision) to standardise its investigations. The CARES process ensures there is an agreed contract and assessment of need, in which responses to and updates for the victim are agreed in terms of time and method, while ensuring compliance with the code.

The force uses a variety of ways to connect with the public to keep informed about new and emerging issues, gauge performance and identify ways to address community problems and improve services. It uses social media, blogs, 'Gwent Now', public service boards and 'Safer Gwent', which is an initiative with partner organisations to inform and redesign community safety in support of local communities. The force also uses strategic assessment panels and police and crime commissioner engagement. This all helps to determine the policing plan priorities and improve public confidence and satisfaction levels in the police.

Local PCSOs conduct surveys of local residents on a rolling six-monthly basis through the 'Your Voice' initiative to identify the main areas of concern in every ward area. The main concerns are adopted as local neighbourhood priorities and neighbourhood officers and PCSOs then concentrate their efforts to resolve them. It is clear that such priorities are set in full consultation with the public, but many of the plans made in response do not focus on the force's priorities detailed in the strategic assessment and control strategy. We were told by staff that a very high percentage of 'Your Voice' plans centre on inconsiderate parking (predominantly around schools) and speeding.

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<sup>3</sup> All police forces have a statutory duty to comply with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, which sets out the service victims of crime can expect from all parts of the criminal justice system. The code states that all victims of crime should be able to make a personal statement, which they can use to explain how the crime has affected them. Victims should also be kept updated about the progress of their case. The code is available from:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf)

While there is evidence of other intelligence-led action taking place across the force, it is clear that local officers, especially PCSOs, focus much of their attention on their ward's 'Your Voice' priorities, which do not always match the force's priorities. No review of the 'Your Voice' initiative has been undertaken, but levels of public satisfaction and confidence have shown a consistent trend of improvement since 'Your Voice' and the force's CARES process were introduced. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, victim satisfaction with Gwent Police is 86.0 percent; the average for England and Wales is 83.3 percent.

At a local level, several additional initiatives take place. Examples include community surgeries and the formulation of neighbourhood profiles. There are also examples of some locally based efforts to ensure the fullest possible engagement with local partners. For example, regular multi-agency school meetings in the South Monmouthshire district to identify children linked to truancy and missing from home who may be at risk of child sexual exploitation.

In other districts, regular engagement with Nepalese, Traveller and black and minority ethnic communities further indicates the force's willingness and determination to ensure vulnerable people or those groups with less trust and confidence in the police have the opportunity to influence local policing priorities.

The force has a joint community engagement strategy with the police and crime commissioner, which sets out how the force engages with its communities. It uses social media and more traditional media and communication channels such as press releases, TV and radio programmes, contact with local police officers and community support officer surgeries in the community. It also ensures information is available for victims of crime and anti-social behaviour about services for victims. The force has developed 'Gwent Now', which is an advanced community messaging network with a membership of over 55,000 people that provides local officers with the capability of sending critical prevention messages or appeals directly to the communities most affected at that time. Work is being undertaken with utility companies, banks and building societies to enable them to circulate messages through their systems on behalf of the force to local contacts on their databases. Updates are also circulated to communities via the force's Facebook site as well as local Twitter accounts.

Since HMIC's 2015 effectiveness inspection, Gwent Police has continued to develop and improve its engagement with the public and to address concerns raised by the community.

HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a survey of attitudes towards policing between July and August 2016. The survey indicated that there has been an increase in public satisfaction with Gwent Police. Some 402 people were interviewed

and 51 percent were very or fairly satisfied with local policing in their area. This is a 20 percent increase on 2015.<sup>4</sup>

## **How effectively do force actions and activities prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?**

Effective forces use a range of options to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. They use structured approaches to solving local problems which aim to rid communities of criminal and anti-social behaviour. They also use a range of legal powers and specific tactics which vary depending on the situation. HMIC expects forces to review their activity as well as other sources of evidence in order to improve their ability to protect people over the long term.

### **Does the force have a problem-solving approach?**

Gwent Police is effective at tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. Managers and supervisors are responsible for all activities and performance in their local policing areas. Neighbourhood inspectors and supervisors are proactive in identifying and addressing crime and disorder within their areas of responsibility and they review and analyse intelligence daily in order to identify and respond to risk or threat of harm. Inspectors hold community surgeries where they speak to members of the public to gauge local concerns and the level of improvement in service provision to communities.

The force has an effective volunteer scheme. In some policing districts volunteers are being used for force priorities, for example crime prevention and measures to reduce the opportunities for offenders to commit crime.

Local policing area commanders hold a daily management meeting each morning, where staff are briefed and held to account regarding local and force priorities concerning problem profiles, prolific offenders and vulnerable people. Crime investigations are overseen and allocated to the most appropriate investigator. Highlighted and emerging risks are identified and actions put in place to address or mitigate those risks.

The force has implemented the National Police Chiefs' Council Crime Prevention Strategy and currently has 24 trained officers in crime prevention and an officer trained to a higher level. All operational officers and staff are expected to offer crime prevention advice when dealing with members of the public. As part of their routine activity when attending incidents or crimes, all officers are aware of what is expected of them and offer basic crime prevention advice to safeguard victims and reduce the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour. The force is working with partner organisations to develop initiatives to improve the identification of problem families.

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<sup>4</sup> For further details, see annex A.



In these families there may be prolific offenders who may be on the integrated offender management scheme.<sup>5</sup> The force and the other agencies can then offer support and try to prevent patterns of behaviour developing in other members of the family that are likely to lead to a life of crime.

The officers we spoke with were aware of the anti-social behaviour legislation and powers available to them. In Gwent Police, officers used anti-social behaviour powers 280 times per one million population.

### **Does the force use effective approaches and tactics to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour?**

Gwent Police is effective at tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. Managers and supervisors are responsible for all activities and performance in their local policing areas. Neighbourhood inspectors and supervisors are proactive in identifying and addressing crime and disorder within their areas of responsibility and they review and analyse intelligence daily in order to identify and respond to risk or threat of harm. Inspectors hold community surgeries where they speak to members of the public to gauge local concerns and the level of improvement in service provision to communities.

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<sup>5</sup> Integrated offender management brings a multi-agency response to the crime and re-offending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.

management scheme.<sup>6</sup> The force and the other agencies can then offer support and try to prevent patterns of behaviour developing in other members of the family that are likely to lead to a life of crime.

The officers we spoke with were aware of the anti-social behaviour legislation and powers available to them. In Gwent Police, officers used anti-social behaviour powers 280 times per one million population.

### **Does the force use evidence of best practice and its own learning to improve the service to the public?**

Gwent Police has looked beyond its own boundaries to find better ways of working. It has the infrastructure and expertise in place to deliver large-scale change. From a previous tendency to look inwards, the force has adopted a highly proactive external focus to ensure that learning from others is a priority for the force. The chief constable is a member of the Public Service Leadership Panel, which includes a focus on good practice and improving public services. The force has undergone peer inspections on crime investigation (Durham Police), tackling anti-social behaviour (South Wales Police) and implementation of the new operating model (Lancashire Police). From these reviews, areas identified for development have been subject to improvement work, overseen and monitored through the force change programme board and the force delivery boards. The force change programme (Staying Ahead 8) has involved work with forces in Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire to gain learning regarding cyber-crime, fraud and financial investigation. The force continues to work with partner organisations towards a local multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH).<sup>7</sup>

Gwent Police is good at reviewing its performance and uses a range of methods to improve services, including researching and visiting other forces and organisations to identify and adopt good practice. The deputy chief constable chairs the Staying Ahead programme board, force resource board and business tasking and co-ordination group to ensure the most effective co-ordination between change activity and expenditure. Implementing the police and crime plan has been central to the Staying Ahead 8 programme and there is a clear link between the change activity and the priorities of the plan.

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<sup>6</sup> Integrated offender management brings a multi-agency response to the crime and re-offending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.

<sup>7</sup> A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) brings together into a single location key safeguarding agencies to better identify risks to children (and in some areas, vulnerable adults), and improve decision-making, interventions, and outcomes. The MASH enables the multi-agency team to share all appropriate information in a secure environment, and ensure that the most appropriate response is provided to effectively safeguard and protect the individual.

The force uses peers independently to review aspects of its services, for example South Wales Police was identified as dealing with anti-social behaviour effectively and was invited to review Gwent Police's practice in this area. The review resulted in a number of changes to improve the force's approach.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Gwent Police is good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. Community engagement is an important component of the force's policing strategy and it links directly to the objectives contained within the police and crime plan and the chief constable's delivery plan. The way the force is organised helps it to engage effectively with its communities and to identify and tackle neighbourhood problems using a recognised problem-solving approach. It has systems in place to identify current and emerging trends and determine local priorities.

The force works well with partner organisations to develop solutions that prevent or reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. It uses social media effectively to update local communities on police activity and outcomes. Gwent Police has looked beyond its own boundaries to learn what works, to find new ways of working and to improve the services it provides to the public.

## How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?

When a crime occurs, the public must have confidence that the police will investigate it effectively, take seriously their concerns as victims, and bring offenders to justice. To be effective, investigations should be well planned and supervised, based on approved practice, and carried out by appropriately-trained staff. In co-operation with other organisations, forces must also manage the risk posed by those who are identified as being the most prolific or dangerous offenders, to minimise the chances of continued harm to individuals and communities.

## How well does the force bring offenders to justice?

Since April 2014, police forces in England and Wales have been required to record how investigations are concluded in a new way, known as 'outcomes'. Replacing what was known as 'detections', the outcomes framework gives a fuller picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime and over time all crimes will be assigned an outcome. The broader outcomes framework (currently containing 21 different types of outcomes) is designed to support police officers in using their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely resolution. The resolution should reflect the harm caused to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community and deter future offending.

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for various reasons. Forces face a different mix of crime types in their policing areas, so the outcomes they assign will also vary depending on the nature of the crime. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted; typically these include types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in the force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat<sup>8</sup> warning' outcomes would be greater. Other offences such as those involving domestic abuse or serious sexual offences, are unlikely to result in a high usage of the 'cautions' outcome.

The frequency of outcomes may also reflect the force's policing priorities. For example, some forces work hard with partners to ensure that first time and low-level offenders are channelled away from the criminal justice system. In these areas locally-based community resolutions are likely to be more prevalent than elsewhere.

It is also important to understand that not all of the crimes recorded in the year will have been assigned an outcome as some will still be under investigation. For some crime types such as sexual offences, the delay between a crime being recorded and

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<sup>8</sup> A plant native to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the leaves of which are frequently chewed as a stimulant. The possession and supply of khat became a criminal offence in England and Wales in 2014.

an outcome being assigned may be particularly pronounced, as these may involve complex and lengthy investigations.

**Figure 4: Proportion of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in Gwent Police, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type<sup>9,10</sup>**

| Outcome number | Outcome type / group                                                      | Gwent Police  | England and Wales |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1              | Charged/Summoned                                                          | 12.8          | 12.1              |
| 4              | Taken into consideration                                                  | 0.2           | 0.2               |
|                | Out-of-court (formal)                                                     | 5.0           | 3.2               |
| 2              | Caution - youths                                                          | 0.5           | 0.4               |
| 3              | Caution - adults                                                          | 3.1           | 2.3               |
| 6              | Penalty Notices for Disorder                                              | 1.3           | 0.6               |
|                | Out-of-court (informal)                                                   | 2.5           | 3.6               |
| 7              | Cannabis/Khat warning                                                     | 0.7           | 0.9               |
| 8              | Community Resolution                                                      | 1.8           | 2.8               |
| *              | Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest                       | 1.0           | 1.8               |
|                | Evidential difficulties (victim supports police action)                   |               |                   |
| 15             | Suspect identified                                                        | 9.8           | 8.3               |
|                | Evidential difficulties (victim does not support police action)           | 16.5          | 13.8              |
| 16             | Suspect identified                                                        | 15.4          | 10.6              |
| 14             | Suspect not identified                                                    | 1.1           | 3.2               |
| 18             | Investigation complete – no suspect identified                            | 41.4          | 47.4              |
| 20             | Action undertaken by another body / agency                                | 0.1           | 0.6               |
| 21             | Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest | 0.0           | 0.1               |
|                | <b>Total offences assigned an outcome</b>                                 | <b>89.2</b>   | <b>91.3</b>       |
|                | <b>Not yet assigned an outcome</b>                                        | <b>10.8</b>   | <b>8.7</b>        |
|                | <b>Total</b>                                                              | <b>100.00</b> | <b>100.00</b>     |

**\*Includes the following outcome types: Offender died, Not in public interest (CPS), Prosecution prevented – suspect under age, Prosecution prevented – suspect too ill, Prosecution prevented – victim/key witness dead/too ill, Prosecution time limit expired**

**Source: Home Office crime outcomes data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

<sup>9</sup> Dorset Police is excluded from the table. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further details see annex A.

<sup>10</sup> 'Taken into consideration' is when an offender admits committing other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Gwent Police's use of outcomes was in line with those in England and Wales as a whole. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how it deals with offenders for different crimes.

## **How effective is the force's initial investigative response?**

The initial investigative response is critical for an effective investigation. From the moment victims and witnesses make contact with the police the investigative process should start, so that accurate information and evidence can be gathered. It is important that forces record evidence as soon as possible after a crime. The longer it takes for evidence-recording to begin, the more likely it is that evidence will be destroyed, damaged or lost. Recording this evidence is usually the responsibility of the first officer who attends the scene. After the officer has completed this initial investigation the case may be handed over to a different police officer or team in the force. This process must ensure that the right people with the right skills investigate the right crimes.

### **Control room response**

Gwent Police is generally effective in the way it gathers evidence at the first point of contact with the public. The force has reviewed the way that it deploys officers to incidents and has implemented a deployment model based on assessing threat and risk of harm, instead of by specific types of crimes. This approach includes resolving calls at the first point of contact and allows staff to spend time with victims and deal with incidents in a more comprehensive way. The focus on quality of service to victims at the initial response stage and then during the investigation is part of the force's CARES programme, which places the victim at the centre of crime investigations. The force uses a nationally recognised risk assessment model to assess calls received from the public (THRIVE).<sup>11</sup> However, this has been introduced since our 2015 inspection and is not yet fully understood and accepted. THRIVE training has been given to staff but at the time of our inspection there was an inconsistency in its use and in the documentation of THRIVE assessments, with some staff stating that they had not been trained in its use and the force unable to confirm who had been trained. This means that although we found the service to victims was generally good, service to some victims may not meet their needs if their level of vulnerability is not assessed using the THRIVE risk assessment tool.

Control room staff have immediate access to information in the force intelligence database and can support frontline officers responding to incidents by providing them with useful information to help them respond to and support victims. We found

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<sup>11</sup> THRIVE is a structured assessment based on the levels of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability faced by the victim, rather than simply by the type of incident or crime being reported in order to help staff determine the appropriate level of response to a call.

that the force assessed calls for its service well and provided an appropriate and timely response, deploying officers and staff with the right skills to attend incidents and crimes. During the inspection, we examined examples of calls where the attendance of an officer was not necessary and found calls were graded appropriately and an appropriate level of response had been applied, including reports suitable for telephone resolution.

### **How well do response officers investigate?**

Response officers in Gwent Police are good at investigating crime. Officers have tablet computers that provide access to force systems, which means that they can conduct initial investigations using up-to-date information and also update force systems quickly. We found that officers experience difficulties with connectivity in certain areas, but overall, officers found this access to information helpful to their initial investigations. The force has a joint forensic investigation unit with South Wales Police to ensure that the force's ability to examine crime scenes using forensics is maintained.

Officers usually have sufficient time to ensure vulnerable victims, particularly victims of domestic abuse, receive a good level of service at first contact and their needs are assessed properly. It was also clear, and confirmed by staff, that officers responding to crimes have the opportunity to complete 'golden hour' enquiries (those conducted immediately after a crime occurs), including activities such as house-to-house enquiries to identify witnesses, obtaining CCTV evidence, conducting searches of the scene and locating offenders where appropriate, to ensure early preservation of evidence.

The force decided not to have a crime allocation policy. This does not have a detrimental effect on allocating crimes to appropriately skilled investigators. We found evidence of clear ownership of more serious and complex crimes by suitably trained and qualified officers. The allocation of the most suitable resource to investigate crime is overseen by the daily management meeting, which is proactive in its approach to deploying resources based on threat and risk of harm. It was clear when we attended the daily management meetings that the correct resources are allocated to deal with the correct level and type of crime and we did not find evidence of frontline officers investigating more serious and complex crimes.

HMIC reviewed 60 police case files across crime types for: robbery, common assault (flagged as domestic abuse), grievous bodily harm (GBH), stalking, harassment, rape and domestic burglary. Files were randomly selected from crimes recorded between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 and were assessed against several criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected, we have not used results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance but alongside other evidence gathered. We did find that investigations of lower level and high-volume crime are allocated correctly to response and neighbourhood officers. This was supported by our review of police case files, in which we found the most

appropriate team led the investigation in the vast majority of the crime investigations reviewed. However, we found that there was limited evidence of effective initial supervision and the majority of files showed there was little supervision throughout the investigation.

## **How effective is the force's subsequent investigation?**

Every day police forces across England and Wales investigate a wide range of crimes. These range from non-complex crimes such as some burglary and assault cases through to complex and sensitive investigations such as rape and murder. HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well forces allocate and investigate the full range of crimes, including how officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations. These include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as more recently developed techniques like gathering digital evidence from mobile telephones or computers to find evidence of online abuse.

### **Quality of the investigation**

Gwent Police is generally good at investigating crime and supports a higher than average conviction rate for England and Wales in both the magistrates' courts (87.5 percent) and the Crown courts (86.3 percent). The specialist officers investigating the most sensitive and serious crimes of rape do this well, with higher than average conviction rates at court. All crime investigations are managed on the force's crime and intelligence system. Staff should use investigation plans to provide a framework for each investigation. However, in around half of the files we examined we did not find investigation plans recorded on the system. Around a third of those with a plan did not find a record of appropriate supervision and direction. There are sufficiently trained officers to ensure the appropriate level of service is offered to vulnerable people and to intimidated and significant witnesses. The force is trying to enhance this by training additional public protection unit staff through the national specialist child abuse investigation development programme.

### **Support to investigations**

Victims who do not support a prosecution are offered the support of partner organisations, including services through Connect Gwent which is a multi-agency hub designed to offer support to victims, and assessments of need and an individual support plan. There is also a service recovery process to deal with any feedback received from victims, in which victims are contacted by supervisors at the earliest opportunity and, if possible, action is taken to rectify any shortfall in the way the service was initially provided.

Good processes are in place to ensure that intelligence professionals are appropriately allocated. They support investigations by researching intelligence and information on offenders, their way of working or offending techniques, including



crime trends. Work allocation processes monitor this support and ensure that it happens.

The force makes good use of examining suspects' phones, computers, tablets and other electronic devices to find evidence that may confirm or disprove their involvement in offences. The force has both overt and covert investigation capability, and it follows NPCC (National Police Chiefs' Council) guidance on how this is used. The intelligence triage team conducts open-source enquiries (assessing information publicly available on the internet), while also risk assessing, researching and developing intelligence from internal and external sources. The force also has a social media monitoring tool that it uses to extract information from a wide range of social media sources, avoiding the need for labour-intensive manual searching. It has a team of investigators using specialist computer systems to track down those who are sharing indecent images of children on the internet and has had some investigative success, with cases brought to court quickly with the assistance of the Crown Prosecution Service. The force has introduced mobile phone kiosks recently, to enable frontline officers to examine the contents of mobile phones without needing to send the devices away for examination.

The force has effective digital forensic support, with two dedicated digital media investigators, ready access to basic mobile phone download technology and sufficient capacity and capability to provide hi-tech support to investigators. Over 200 staff have been trained to the mainstream cyber-crime national standard to support these types of investigations. The digital forensic capability has changed how it operates and is now routinely achieving same-day examinations for high-risk investigations and examinations within 28 days for medium/low-risk investigations. This is good for victims because it removes delay in the investigation process previously caused by backlogs in digital examinations of devices and it reduces the risk of further offending by enabling the early arrest and charge of suspects.

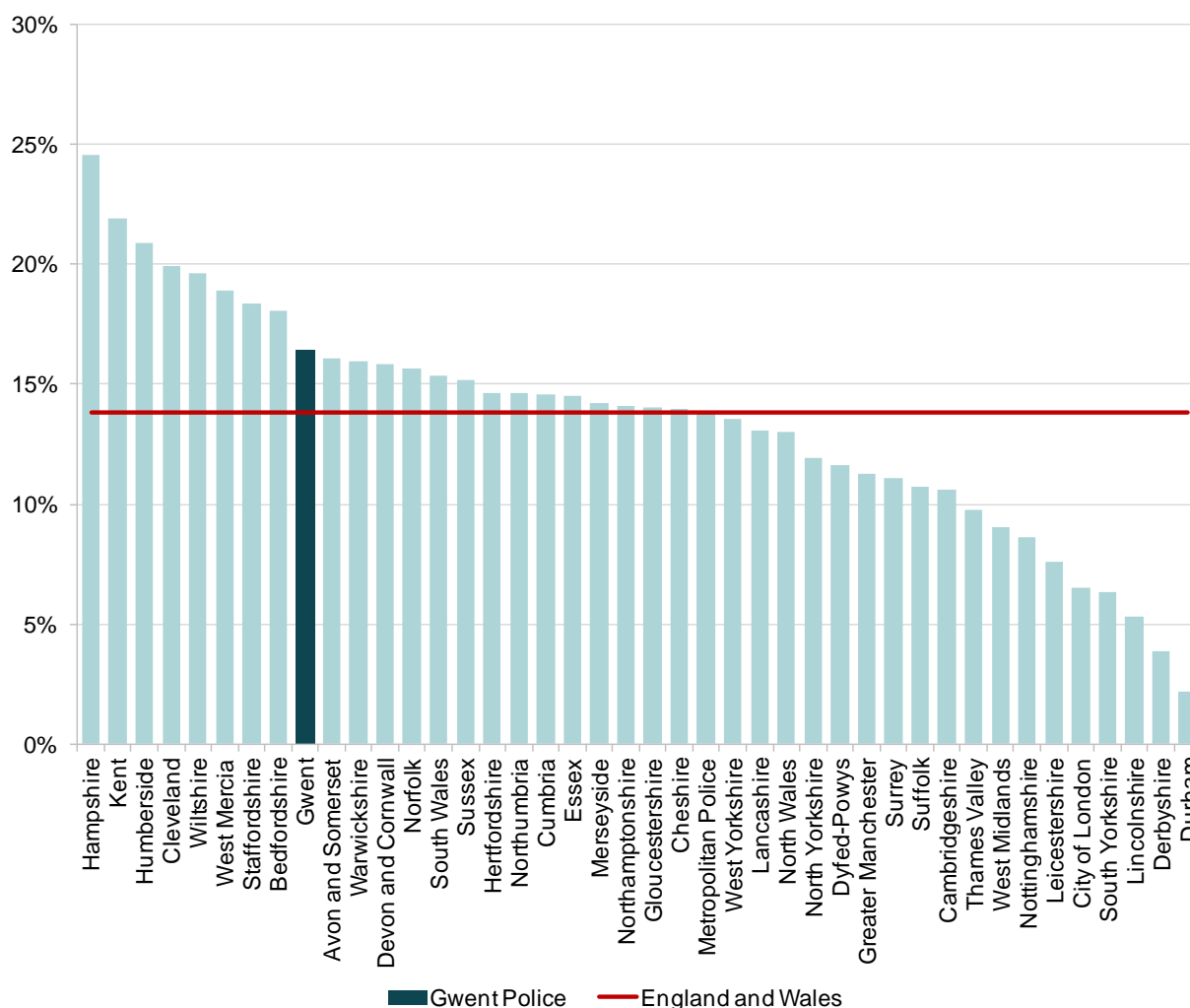
### **Supporting victims**

The new outcomes framework introduced in 2014 includes some outcomes where there were evidential difficulties, which had not previously been recorded. This was to gain an insight into the scale of crimes that the police could not progress further through the criminal justice process due to limited evidence. Furthermore, these outcomes can be thought of as an indicator for how effective the police are at working with victims and supporting them through investigative and judicial processes, as they record when victims are unwilling or unable to support continued investigations or when they have withdrawn their support for police action.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Evidential difficulties also includes where a suspect has been identified and the victim supports police action, but evidential difficulties prevent further action being taken.

**Figure 5: Percentage of ‘Evidential difficulties; victim does not support action’ outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, by force<sup>13,14,15</sup>**



**Source: Home Office data**

**For further information about this data please see annex A**

For all offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Gwent Police recorded 16.5 percent as 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support police action'. This compares with 13.8 percent for England and Wales over the same period. However, it should be noted that not all of the offences committed in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 were assigned an outcome. Consequently, these figures are subject to change over time.

<sup>13</sup> Percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences.

<sup>14</sup> Outcomes data is voluntary if not provided directly through the Home Office Data Hub. However, as proportions are used, calculations can be based on fewer than four quarters of data. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Derbyshire and Suffolk were unable to provide the last quarter of data. Therefore their figures are based on three quarters of the year.

<sup>15</sup> British Transport Police (BTP) and Dorset Police are excluded from the table. Therefore figures will differ to those published by the Home Office. For further details see annex A.

Gwent Police's CARES programme is the method the force uses to apply the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*. The force complies with all elements of the code. A contract is agreed with the victim regarding the frequency and timeliness of updates on the investigation. The officers also assesses the needs of victims and witnesses and reports on the status of the investigation before it is finalised and signed off by a supervisor. The whole process is monitored robustly to ensure full compliance.

The CARES process has improved the quality of service to victims throughout the investigation, but the files we examined had a notable minority which did not fully comply with the code.

## **How effectively does the force reduce re-offending?**

We assessed how well the force works with other policing authorities and other interested parties to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, dangerous or sexual offenders.

### **How well does the force pursue suspects and offenders?**

The force has robust processes in place to ensure that forensic evidence is processed quickly. When a suspect is identified, for example from their fingerprints or DNA, the details are sent to officers so that they can arrest the suspect as soon as possible. If these suspects are not found, their details are circulated on the police national computer as wanted suspects, but the force does not have a robust process to make sure that the activity to arrest them is progressed. The force was unable to tell us how many suspects were wanted for offences, but did inform us that wanted offenders are managed locally by the local policing areas. Some offenders who are not arrested quickly may still be affecting the victim. The force has a lower rate of arrests of foreign national offenders (6 percent) compared with the rate for England and Wales (17 percent); the force plans to increase the use of the national intelligence system to improve this. We found that frontline staff were aware of potentially dangerous offenders and those people under integrated offender management supervision in their areas through daily briefings. Frontline staff routinely contribute to preventing re-offending by gathering intelligence and proactively seeking opportunities to engage with these offenders.

The force was unable to provide the number of ACPO Criminal Records Office<sup>16</sup> checks requested or the number it has acted on. It is devising a database to record all submissions and results of these checks. However, at present it cannot evaluate how effectively it deals with foreign national offenders.

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<sup>16</sup> ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and is able to receive/share information with foreign countries in relation to foreign offenders arrested within the United Kingdom

## **How well does the force protect the public from the most harmful offenders?**

Gwent Police has an effective integrated offender management scheme and works with partner organisations such as social services and the national probation service to reduce the risk posed by dangerous and sexual offenders. Officers and staff from the force and from partner agencies work as a co-located team and in accordance with current authorised professional practice.<sup>17</sup> There are currently 70 offenders on the integrated offender management programme who have been selected jointly with the national probation service. Most of these offenders have a history of serious and acquisitive crime, and there are some violent offenders and members of an organised crime group. There are no domestic abuse perpetrators, which the force acknowledges as a gap and will address in a pilot scheme, extending the principles of integrated offender management to include 20-30 domestic abuse and violent offenders. This pilot was due to start at the beginning of December 2016 through the WISDOM programme (Wales integrated serious and dangerous offender management), a model for managing offenders posing a high risk of harm. This is a positive move by the force. The intention of the pilot is to strengthen the capability and capacity of Gwent Police and the National Probation Service to work with a range of offenders aligned more with the force's priorities. Of people in the force's integrated offender management scheme, 51 percent reoffend, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales rate of 57 percent. We found limited evidence of the force measuring the success of the integrated offender management unit's activities.

The force has effective multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) to manage, with partner organisations, the most high-risk violent offenders and registered sex offenders.<sup>18</sup> There are around 60 registered sex offenders per policer officer or member of staff in the MAPPA unit.

Under the new active risk management system guidelines, the Gwent MAPPA review policy states that each registered sex offender or violent offender will be reviewed based on the level of risk: monthly for very high risk, three-monthly for high risk, every six months for medium risk and annually for low risk. In 12 months to 30 June 2016, 68 sexual harm prevention orders were issued.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Authorised Professional Practice (APP) is developed by the College of Policing (the professional body for policing) and can be accessed online. It is authorised by the College of Policing as the official and most up-to-date source of policing practice.

<sup>18</sup> Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders. Agencies involved include as responsible bodies the police, probation trusts and prison service. Other agencies may become involved, for example the Youth Justice Board will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

<sup>19</sup> Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPO) can be applied to anyone convicted or cautioned for a sexual or violent offence. They can place a range of restrictions on individuals depending on the nature of the case, such as limiting their internet use, preventing them from being alone with a child under 16, or preventing travel abroad.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Gwent Police is good at investigating crime and reducing re-offending. The force is generally effective in the way it gathers evidence at first point of contact and uses a nationally recognised risk assessment model to assess calls received from the public. The force places the victim at the centre of all crime investigation, and victim satisfaction is high.

The force has made considerable investment in providing effective digital forensic support and makes good use of mobile phone download technology and evidence from body-worn video cameras. This has resulted in a reduction in backlogs in analysing data from mobile devices and swifter prosecutions of some of the more serious and harmful offenders.

The force has an effective integrated offender management programme working with partner organisations, which it aims to extend to include serious violence and domestic abuse offenders. It also has effective multi-agency public protection arrangements to manage with partner organisations the most high-risk violent offenders and registered sex offenders. The force does not have a robust process to make sure that it is making progress with its activity to arrest wanted suspects.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that those who are circulated as wanted on the Police National Computer, those who fail to appear on police bail, named and outstanding suspects and suspects identified through forensic evidence are swiftly located and arrested.
- The force should ensure that checks are routinely conducted to verify the identity, nationality and overseas convictions of arrested foreign nationals.

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

Protecting the public, particularly those who are most vulnerable, is one of the most important duties placed on police forces. People can be vulnerable for many reasons and the extent of their vulnerability can change during the time they are in contact with the police. Last year HMIC had concerns about how well many forces were protecting those who were vulnerable. In this section of the report we set out how the force's performance has changed since last year.

### **Has the force improved since HMIC's 2015 vulnerability inspection?**

In 2015, we found Gwent Police to be effective at supporting victims and protecting from harm those who are vulnerable. In 2016, we found this still to be the case and vulnerable people remain a high priority. In 2015, we found that the force was good at identifying repeat and vulnerable victims, and had clear processes in place for assessing risk. Since then, the force has made considerable changes to its control room model and has introduced a new command and control system and a new model to assess threat, risk and harm (THRIVE). THRIVE training has been given to staff but at the time of our inspection there was an inconsistency in its use and in the documentation of THRIVE assessments. Although the incidents we examined appeared to receive the correct response, in many cases this was as a result of the experience of the call taker and not the systems that have been put in place. Staff still consider carefully the appropriate level of police response and its officers work well with partner organisations to manage the risk to victims, as was the case in 2015. For these reasons, we consider the force's operational procedures to protect vulnerable people and to support victims to be good.

In 2015, the force had not developed a comprehensive analysis, sometimes known as a problem profile, for all the main areas of how people may be considered to be vulnerable, and so it did not fully understand the extent of vulnerability in some areas. In 2016 the force has a much clearer view of all the main areas of vulnerability. The force continues to work effectively and shares information with partner agencies, but use of partner data would further enhance the profiles.

## How effectively does the force identify those who are vulnerable and assess their level of risk and need?

In order to protect those who are vulnerable effectively forces need to understand comprehensively the scale of vulnerability in the communities they police. This requires forces to work with a range of communities, including those whose voices may not often be heard. It is important that forces understand fully what it means to be vulnerable, what might make someone vulnerable and that officers and staff who come into contact with the public can recognise this vulnerability. This means that forces can identify vulnerable people early on and can provide them with an appropriate service.

### Understanding the risk

Forces define a vulnerable victim in different ways. This is because there is not a standard requirement on forces to record whether a victim is vulnerable on crime recording systems. Some forces use the definition from the government's *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*,<sup>20</sup> others use the definition referred to in ACPO guidance<sup>21</sup> and the remainder use their own definition.

Gwent Police uses the definition from the ACPO guidance and defines a vulnerable adult as:

“any person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental, physical, or learning disability, age or illness AND is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”

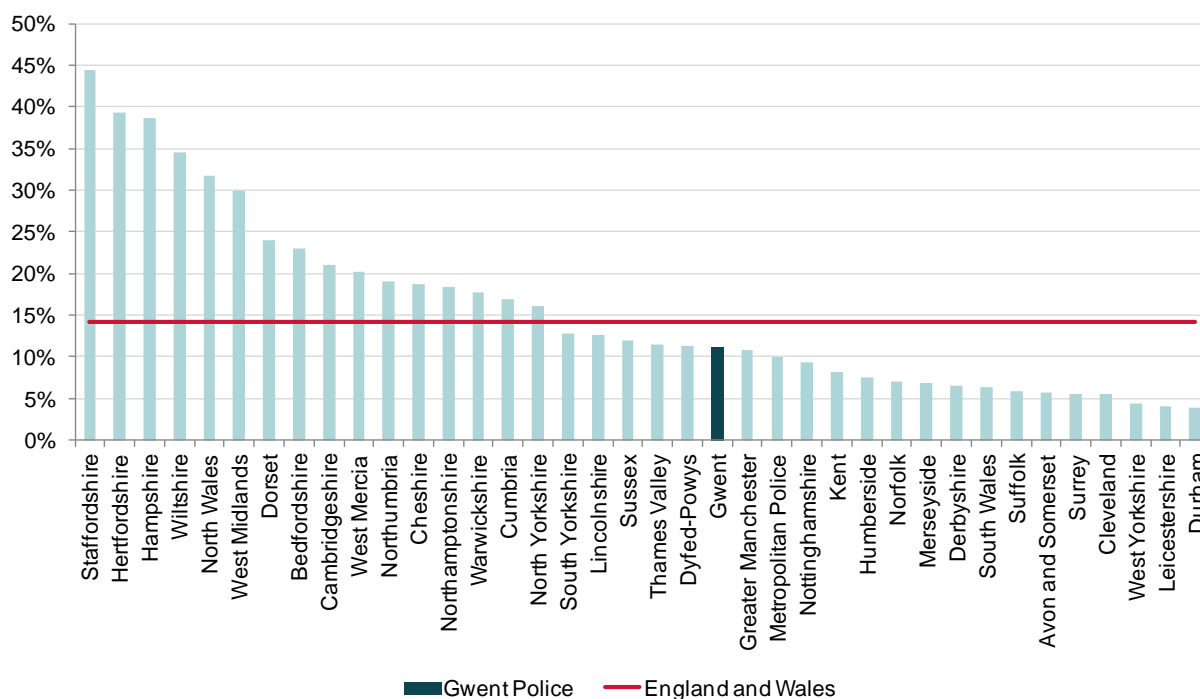
Data returned by forces to HMIC show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the proportion of crime recorded which involves a vulnerable victim varies considerably between forces, from 3.9 percent to 44.4 percent. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 11.2 percent of all recorded crime in Gwent was identified as having a vulnerable victim, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales figure of 14.3 percent.

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<sup>20</sup> *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, 2013. Available from [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/254459/code-of-practicevictims-of-crime.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practicevictims-of-crime.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> 4 The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is now the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). ACPO Guidance on Safeguarding and Investigating the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults, NPIA, 2012. Available from: [www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/](http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/)

**Figure 6: Percentage of police-recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016<sup>22</sup>**



**Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

Gwent Police has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability in its local areas. The force ensures that vulnerability is regularly discussed and reported on by reviewing it as a standard agenda item at the monthly force performance meeting. The force’s database of information on crime profiles and intelligence has a dedicated section for domestic abuse, and allows comparison of crime trends, crime types and outcomes across the force area. This helps to inform local supervisors of what has worked and to inform decisions on the most effective measures to be put in place by police and partners to protect the victim. High-risk victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse are reviewed at a local level and plans made to support victims or tackle offenders.

The force has developed a child sexual exploitation profile, which demonstrates that it has a good understanding of the threat and risk posed by child sexual exploitation to young people in the force area. The current profile only takes account of police data, and could be further enhanced if the force includes data from partner organisations.

Domestic abuse is a priority for the force. Control room call handlers described how the address and personal details of victims of domestic abuse are saved and highlighted on force systems. However, this process is not automated and relies on

<sup>22</sup> City of London, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Gloucestershire and Lancashire forces were unable to provide data for recorded crimes with a vulnerable victim identified. Therefore, these forces’ data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.



the call taker checking to identify repeat and vulnerable victims . Call handlers also demonstrated good knowledge in their decision-making about the grading and response to domestic incidents, recognising the higher levels of threat and risk of harm for these types of calls.

The force uses the Association of Chief Police Officers' definition of a vulnerable person to help determine if a person should be considered vulnerable. Staff understand and translate this into activity to support vulnerable people by providing good safeguarding measures. Vulnerability is a clear priority for the force at both its senior leadership level, when setting strategies to understand and deal with all aspects of vulnerability, and at a tactical level, when officers and staff are providing the service to victims. This is central to the force's work. The force has created comprehensive problem profiles for child sexual exploitation and makes links to children who are 'missing' and 'absent' and human trafficking, using all relevant force data sources. However, the force recognises that some information could be missed because data from partner organisations are not included. Other vulnerable people, such as victims of domestic abuse, people with mental health problems and missing people, are also priorities for the force.

We found that vulnerability is a theme that is discussed at every force daily management meeting, with a further focus on missing children and potential links to child sexual exploitation at a separate daily meeting with partner organisations. The force has definitions for 'absent' and 'missing', but we found that 'absent' was less understood and staff were more likely to grade a case as 'missing' if they were unsure.<sup>23</sup>

Gwent Police is good at identifying people who have mental health problems. Mental health is also a clear area of focus for the force; it estimates that 30 percent of its work has some connection with mental health problems. In order to improve its understanding of the demand and support that is required, the force is using analysis and research. The force wants to provide the most appropriate service to people with mental health conditions and now has a mental health expert from a partner agency in the control room who can give advice to operators and frontline staff. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 1.7 percent of command and control incidents had mental health issues identified. This is lower than the rate for England and Wales (2.4 percent). The force may want to check that it is identifying at the earliest opportunity whether mental health problems are involved.

Gwent Police has continued to improve how it supports victims of domestic abuse. The force has a comprehensive domestic abuse action plan, which covers a wide

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<sup>23</sup> Missing: "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another." Absent: "A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be." Child: "A child is any person who has not yet reached the age of 18".

range of activities dealing with first contact, first response, investigation, leadership and governance, organisational learning and supporting victims and managing offenders. A representative from Women's Aid has been working in the control room to provide advice and appropriate support to victims of domestic abuse at the first point of contact.

The force has introduced the THRIVE risk assessment model to identify the level of vulnerability and risk to victims. Effective use of the THRIVE model in the control room usually means the police attend incidents within the correct timescales. THRIVE training has been given to staff but at the time of our inspection its use was inconsistent, as was the documentation of THRIVE assessments. Some of the '999' call had not been trained in its use; the force was unable to confirm who had been trained. The staff we spoke with did not automatically use THRIVE to assess risk and relied on professional judgment to grade calls. Gwent Police has some systems in place to support the identification of vulnerable people, but improvements are needed. However, during our observation of the control room, for each incident, the correct level and type of response was provided by the force to meet the needs of the victims.

The systems used by Gwent Police to identify vulnerable and repeat victims are poor. There is no automatic flagging on police systems to identify vulnerable and repeat victims. There are critical markers that are recorded on the force incident-recording system, but these have to be uploaded manually and rely on the call taker looking at previous calls to identify other incidents linked to the address or the phone number. The system does not identify a repeat victim from details of the person. The risk is that if a person contacts the police from a different location or phone number and does not identify themselves as a repeat victim, then this could be missed.

Staff in the control room were unclear about missing and absent people and only some of them understood the 'absent' category; most were likely to classify people as missing if they were unsure. Supervisors in the control room review two calls per operator per month and provide feedback to the individual operator, but there is no emphasis on reviewing calls with vulnerable victims. The dip-sampling of calls in the control room could be improved if it included a focus on vulnerability. Quality assurance could also be improved by a more complete and accurate assessment of the standard of an operator's work.

## **How effectively does the force initially respond to vulnerable victims?**

The initial work of officers responding to a vulnerable person is vital, because failure to carry out the correct actions may make future work with the victim or further investigation very difficult. This could be the first time victims have contacted the police after suffering years of victimisation or they may have had repeated contact with the police; either way, the response of officers is crucial. The initial response to a vulnerable victim must inspire confidence that the victim's concerns are being taken seriously as well as provide practical actions and support to keep the victim safe. The officer should also assess the risk to the victim at that moment and others in the same household, and collect sufficient information to support the longer-term response of the force and other partner organisations.

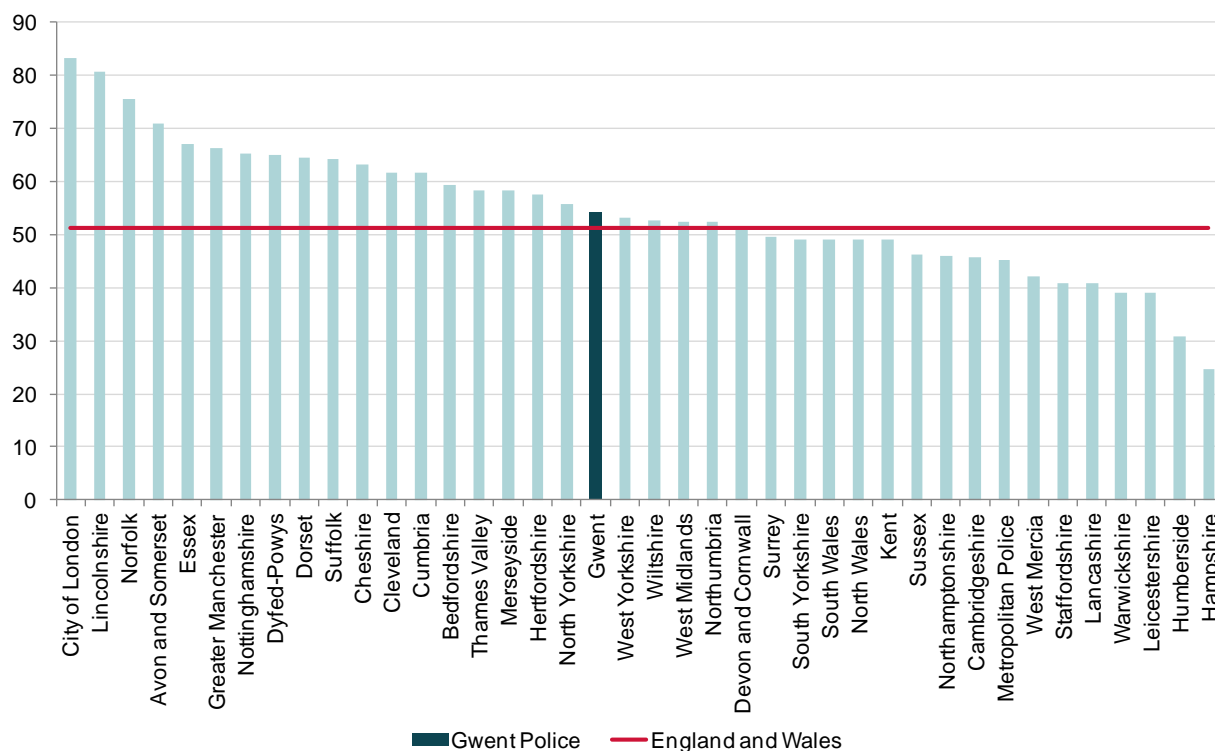
### **Do officers assess risk correctly and keep victims safe?**

The Home Office has shared domestic abuse related offences data, recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, with HMIC. These are more recent figures than those previously published by the Office for National Statistics. These data shows that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, police-recorded domestic abuse in Gwent increased by 6 percent compared with the 12 months to 31 March 2015. This compares with an increase of 23 percent across England and Wales. In the same period, police-recorded domestic abuse accounted for 12 percent of all police-recorded crime in Gwent, compared with 11 percent of all police-recorded crime across England and Wales.

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

In Gwent Police, for every 100 domestic abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, there were 54 arrests made in the same period.

**Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016<sup>24</sup>**



**Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

Gwent Police generally responds well to the immediate and longer term needs of vulnerable victims. The force has a clear risk assessment process for all areas of vulnerability to identify risk and vulnerability when frontline staff attend incidents. While THRIVE training has been given to staff its use and the documentation of THRIVE assessments were inconsistent. Some staff in the control room had not received training and the force was unable to confirm who had been trained. The force uses a multi-agency risk assessment form (MIRAF) for missing people. It can be completed by partner agencies and entered onto the MIRAF database to provide an assessment of the level of risk of harm and exposure to child sexual exploitation when a young person goes missing. The database can be accessed and updated by Gwent Police and partner agencies. The force is working with the five local authority areas to identify an agreed list of young people at high risk of child sexual exploitation and to develop trigger plans that will activate when they go missing. This will be managed by the force’s child sexual exploitation team. Cases of missing children are discussed daily to consider the extent to which they may be vulnerable to child sexual exploitation. These force meetings consider the inherent risks and safeguarding requirements associated with young people and children. Gwent

<sup>24</sup> Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were not able to provide domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces’ data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

Police, working with representatives from education, health and social services, has established a multi-agency team where they share data and multi-agency actions are quickly put in place to reduce the likelihood of repeat missing episodes and to reduce the risk of harm to the child or young person.

Officers told us that on most occasions they have sufficient time to provide vulnerable victims with a good level of initial service, particularly victims of domestic abuse, and to properly assess victims' needs. It was also clear, and confirmed by staff, that officers responding to crimes are able to complete 'golden hour' enquiries where appropriate to ensure early preservation of evidence.

The force is good at assessing the level of risk to victims when they initially attend incidents. When officers attend incidents of domestic abuse they carry out a primary risk assessment by interviewing the victim and any witnesses present at the scene, using the domestic abuse, stalking and harassment (DASH) risk assessment tool.<sup>25</sup> This helps to provide an assessment of the likely level of risk of harm to a victim. This information is discussed in the domestic abuse conference call each weekday morning between the police, social services, Women's Aid and the independent domestic violence adviser. We examined a number of DASH risk assessments and are satisfied that, where appropriate, immediate safeguarding actions were identified and put in place to protect the victim. The DASH risk assessments are initially reviewed by frontline supervisors and then again in the force's central referral unit, where information is shared effectively in a timely manner with partner agencies.

HMIC was reassured to find that children are considered when officers attend domestic abuse incidents and that officers understand the wider implications of vulnerability. Details of children in the household where domestic incidents occur are recorded and shared with partner agencies so that the children receive support if needed.

In a pilot scheme, Women's Aid representatives are available to attend domestic incidents at the request of the police, in addition to the support provided in the control room by a Women's Aid representative. Sergeants ensure that their staff have sufficient time to deal sensitively with the initial response to domestic incidents and with victims. There is good supervision of the case files that need to be handed over to the following shift. These are referred to as handover packages. We found that the quality of handover packages we examined was good and the required documents were available on the crime and intelligence system.

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<sup>25</sup> DASH is a risk identification, assessment and management model adopted by UK police forces and partner agencies in 2009. The aim of the DASH assessment is to help frontline practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and so-called honour-based violence.

The arrest rate for domestic abuse for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 is 54.3 percent which is above the arrest rate of 51.4 percent for England and Wales as a whole. It is based on the assessment of the level of threat and risk of harm to the victim. The charged/summonsed rate over the same period is 53.5 percent, which is considerably above the rate for England and Wales of 23.3 percent. Safeguarding of medium- and standard-risk victims is the responsibility of the officer involved in the case. It mainly involves sharing information with neighbourhood teams for their role in safeguarding the victim and referrals to agencies that can provide expert support, such as Women's Aid and social services.

The force has invested in body-worn video cameras for all frontline officers to enhance its evidence-gathering and investigative capability for crimes such as domestic abuse. These have already proved valuable by recording victims' injuries and the behaviour of perpetrators, evidence that has led to an increase in the number of successful prosecutions.

Most of the DASH risk assessment forms we saw had been supervised and those that had not had an explanation that described why a supervisor had not endorsed them. On large sporting event days, which are times noted for an increase in domestic abuse, the force deploys a car dedicated to respond to incidents of domestic abuse. The car is staffed by a trained person from Women's Aid and a Gwent officer who consider safeguarding responses and referrals to multi-agency support. The funding for this has been authorised on a continuous basis, supported by the police and crime commissioner, who has agreed funding for the next 12 months.

## **How effectively does the force investigate offences involving vulnerable victims and work with external partners to keep victims safe?**

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

Gwent Police is good at allocating the investigation of public protection offences to trained investigators with the right skills to carry out the investigation effectively. Staff within the public protection unit investigate high-risk public protection offences; medium- and standard-risk cases are investigated by officers from response and neighbourhood teams. As part of our police case file review, we assessed some

cases with a vulnerable victim. We found that the force's understanding of crime allocation is effective, with the majority of cases investigated by staff with the relevant skills and experience.

The force does not have a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH),<sup>26</sup> but it does share information effectively with partner organisations. This takes place either through the force's referral unit or the multi-agency teams established to support missing children and protect young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation. Daily domestic abuse conference calls enable partner service providers to put in place safeguarding measures rapidly and for a multi-agency response tailored to meet the needs of the victim.

The force has made effective use of DVPNs (domestic violence protection notices) but needs to understand why only around half are converted to DVPOs (domestic violence protection orders). A DVPN is an emergency non-molestation and eviction notice which can be issued to a perpetrator by the police attending a domestic abuse incident. DVPOs were introduced in England and Wales in 2014 to prevent a suspected offender from returning to a victim's home or contacting the victim. The process is designed to give victims a temporary respite from their abuser and allow referral to support services without interference.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Gwent authorised 16 DVPOs; this is a decrease on the 33 authorised in the 12 months to 31 March 2015. Under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) the 'right to ask' has been used 55 times and the 'right to know' has been used 28 times.<sup>27</sup>

### **Victims of domestic abuse**

In April 2015, the Home Office began collecting information from the police on whether recorded offences were related to domestic abuse. Crimes are identified by the police as domestic abuse related if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse.<sup>28,29,30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> A MASH brings together into a single location key safeguarding agencies to better identify risks to children (and in some areas, vulnerable adults), and improve decision-making, interventions, and outcomes. The MASH enables the multi-agency team to share all appropriate information in a secure environment, and ensure that the most appropriate response is provided to effectively safeguard and protect the individual.

<sup>27</sup> The domestic violence disclosure scheme (DVDS), also known as Clare's Law, increases protection for domestic abuse victims and enables the police to better identify domestic abuse perpetrators. For more information, see: [www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/domestic-abuse/leadership-strategic-oversight-and-management/#domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law](http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/domestic-abuse/leadership-strategic-oversight-and-management/#domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law)

<sup>28</sup> Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

The rate of outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic abuse offences is shown in figure 8. Domestic abuse crimes used in this calculation are not necessarily those to which the outcomes have been assigned and are only linked by the fact that they both occur in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes in figure 4, where each crime is linked to its associated outcome (for further details see annex A).

**Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences in Gwent Police<sup>31</sup>**

| Outcome type / group                                                                  | Gwent Police | England and Wales |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Charged / Summoned                                                                    | 53.5         | 23.2              |
| Caution – adults                                                                      | 6.4          | 5.6               |
| Caution – youths                                                                      | 0.0          | 0.3               |
| Community resolution                                                                  | 0.0          | 1.4               |
| Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim supports police action         | 27.9         | 24.1              |
| Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support police action | 18.7         | 35.4              |

**Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Gwent Police's use of 'charged / summonsed' was among the highest in England and Wales in cases with identified domestic abuse. Its use of 'caution – youths', 'community resolution' and 'evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support police action' was among the lowest in identified domestic abuse cases in England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how it deals with offenders for different crimes.

Gwent Police responds well to victims of domestic abuse. Staff within the public protection unit investigate high-risk public protection offences; medium- and standard-risk cases are investigated by officers from response and neighbourhood

<sup>29</sup> For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types related to domestic abuse please see *Crime Outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2016*, Home Office, July 2016. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539447/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539447/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> [www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016](http://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016)

<sup>31</sup> Dorset Police and Nottinghamshire Police were unable to submit domestic abuse outcomes data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.



teams. Public protection unit staff are trained investigators who have attended the initial crime investigators development programme, although only about half have been trained through the specialist child abuse investigators development programme. A review of public protection cases found inconsistent evidence of supervision across the force. The file review conducted by HMIC found that of the cases involving a vulnerable victim, only around half of investigations were assessed as well supervised. However, the majority of the investigations were judged as effective and having all lines of enquiry identified and pursued. Supervisors need to monitor caseloads more effectively and investigation plans need to be developed to support investigators.

The central referral unit effectively exchanges information between partner organisations to assess risk accurately while the force continues to work to establish a MASH. It is well staffed and has efficient work processes. If the force becomes aware that a victim has moved to another force area, it will share that information with the new force. A multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC)<sup>32</sup> is used for information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken for all those involved in a domestic violence case. These meetings are chaired by a detective inspector from each of the two local policing areas, who both have a public protection background.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Gwent Police is good at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims. The force works hard to understand the nature and scale of vulnerability. At a local level, cases involving high-risk victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse are reviewed and plans are put in place to support victims or tackle offenders. Vulnerable people are a clear priority for the force at both strategic and tactical levels.

The force has implemented new systems recently to improve its service to victims. Some staff have been trained to use a formal risk assessment tool but its use and documentation are inconsistent. The force does not have an automatic system to identify vulnerable and repeat victims, but all calls we examined were correctly graded with an appropriate response.

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<sup>32</sup> Multi-agency risk assessment conference(s) are local meetings where information about high-risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies.

The force's response to missing children is good and processes are in place to identify and tackle child sexual exploitation. Domestic abuse is still a clear priority and good progress has been made against the force's domestic abuse action plan.

Overall, the standards of investigations undertaken by the force are of an acceptable standard. The force has continued to reinforce its commitment to victims and routinely updates victims with the progress of investigations.

#### **Area for improvement**

- The force should improve its initial assessment and response to incidents involving vulnerable people by ensuring that staff working in call handling understand and apply the THRIVE decision-making model consistently.

## How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. Police forces have a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCU), the National Crime Agency (NCA) and other partner organisations. Police forces that are effective in this area of policing tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level.

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

In order to tackle serious and organised crime effectively forces must first have a good understanding of the threats it poses to their communities. Forces should be using a range of intelligence (not just from the police but also from other partner organisations) to understand threats and risks, from traditional organised crime such as drug dealing and money laundering to the more recently-understood threats such as cyber-crime and child sexual exploitation.

As at 1 July 2016, Gwent Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 34 organised crime groups (OCGs) per one million of the population. This compares to 46 OCGs per one million of the population across England and Wales.

Gwent Police has a limited understanding of the threat posed to its communities by serious and organised crime. The force has produced a serious and organised crime local profile within the last 12 months, but this does not address some high-risk areas, including child sexual exploitation, firearms trafficking and fraud, and it does not include any up-to-date data from partner organisations. The force does not use the nationally recognised MoRiLE (management of risk in law enforcement) assessment process,<sup>33</sup> which means that it can only partially compare the relative risk from different organised crime threats against those arising from 'other' crime and demand (such as domestic abuse, missing persons and mental health).

The force has produced a strategic threat assessment that, alongside assessments of other threats to communities, describes the local profile of serious and organised crime. There are a number of serious and organised crime threats that are described in the NCA's national strategic assessment that are not addressed in any detail

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<sup>33</sup> MoRiLE: the 'management of risk in law enforcement' process developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This tool assesses the types of crimes, which most threaten communities and highlights where the force does not currently have the capacity or capability to tackle them effectively.

within the force's strategic assessment, including fraud, money laundering, organised immigration crime, foreign national offenders and online child sexual exploitation. HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report identified that there was limited evidence that data from partner organisations have been collected and analysed to inform the force's strategic assessment. Disappointingly, there has been little change to this position. The current Policing and Crime Plan describes cyber-crime and child sexual exploitation as specific elements of serious and organised crime generally and the strategic assessment does refer to both of these crime types.

Gwent Police acknowledges that it could improve its use of intelligence to understand serious and organised crime; for example, by making better use of the Government Agency Information Network (GAIN).<sup>34</sup> The force made 8.5 GAIN referrals for every 100 organised crime groups (active and archived) between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016. This is well below the England and Wales rate of 26.4 referrals. The force has made efforts to increase its use of covert intelligence collection methods. The unit that oversees this has provided training to neighbourhood and response officers, and as a result there has been an increase in intelligence submitted by local officers. There has also been an increase in the number of referrals to the unit of potential covert human intelligence sources (CHIS), who are people often on the fringes of criminality who supply intelligence or information to the police, often in return for payment. This has ensured that CHIS activity is seen as 'daily business' within the force and is likely to improve the force's understanding of the organised crime threats it faces. Neighbourhood officers are now very important for intelligence collection relating to organised crime groups.

The force is planning to improve its understanding of emerging threats. Lead senior officers for different threats have been appointed and there has been contact with relevant National Police Chiefs' Council leads with specific responsibility for each threat, such as child sexual exploitation. The force wants to collaborate with the ROCU on a regional intelligence collection plan related to child sexual exploitation. It also intends to review the reporting it receives from Action Fraud (the UK's national fraud and cyber-crime reporting centre) as part of a future programme for protecting the public from cyber-crime. The organised crime groups tackled by the force are mainly involved in drugs offences and organised acquisitive crime.<sup>35</sup> It is also taking steps to improve its understanding and mapping of newer threats such as organised child sexual exploitation, foreign national offenders, modern-day slavery and cyber-crime. The force has recognised the growing threat posed by cyber-crime and has introduced a new cyber-crime unit. It identifies and grades intelligence for new threats and has restructured so that there is an intelligence triage function to assess

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<sup>34</sup> The Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) is a large network of partners, including all police forces in England and Wales, which shares information about organised criminals.

<sup>35</sup> Serious acquisitive crime is defined as domestic burglary, car crime (theft of a vehicle and theft from a vehicle), and robbery.

and prioritise intelligence at an early stage. The force currently has operations to improve its response to child sexual exploitation, vulnerable people, modern-day slavery and human trafficking.

The force regularly collaborates with other forces and agencies. There is some evidence that the force shares its strategic intelligence with non-law enforcement organisations, but limited evidence of systems and processes for routinely sharing such reporting. The force does share its understanding of serious and organised crime through a range of partnership meetings and contacts.

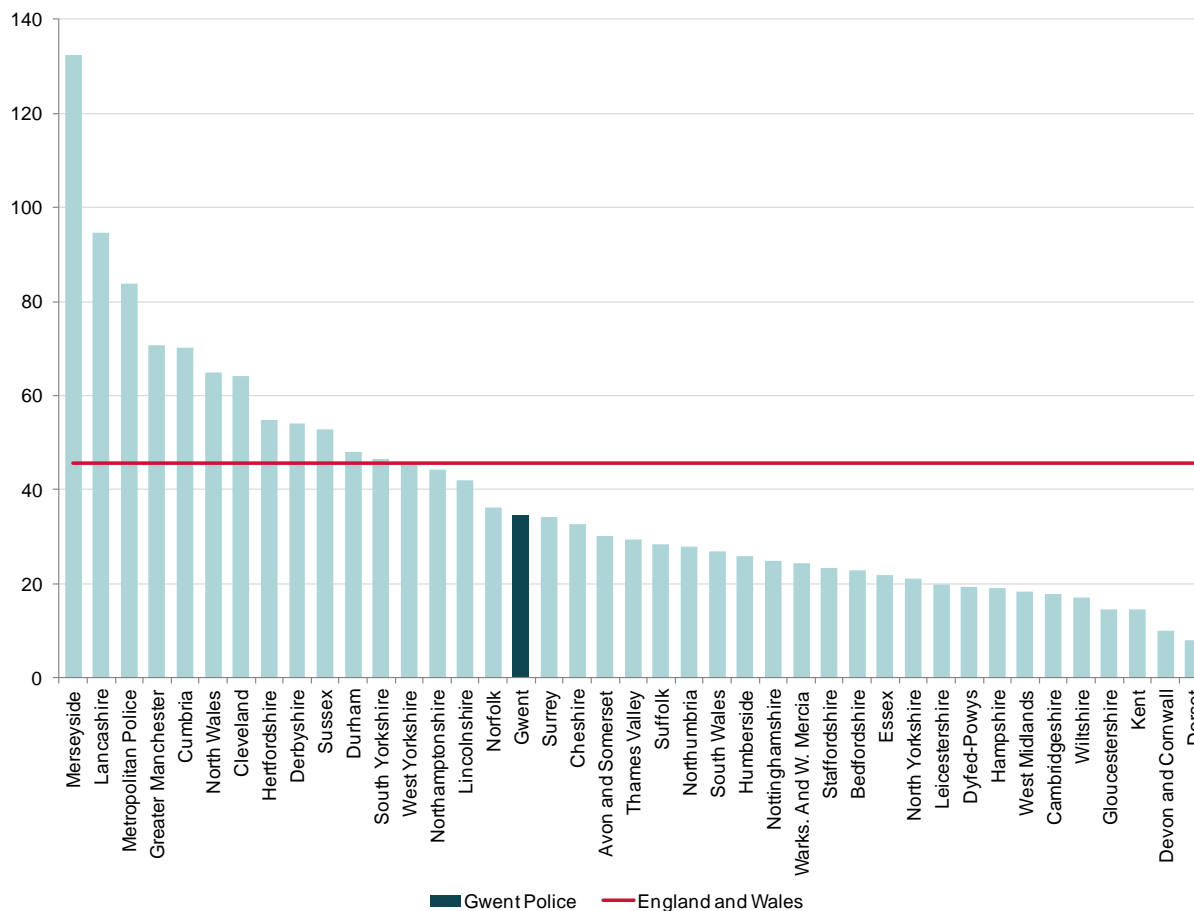
The force makes good use of CHIS. The dedicated source unit was actively involved in a recent review of mapped organised crime groups and is currently planning to extend its intelligence capability by recruiting sources to meet emerging threats. The source unit works effectively to corroborate intelligence received through the Crimestoppers reporting service and some of its work aims to increase the force's understanding of the local serious and organised crime threat, rather than simply respond to its symptoms.

The force has produced a strategic intelligence requirement, as required by authorised professional practice, and in early 2016 conducted a review of its mapped organised crime groups. The review found that information on a number of organised crime groups had been duplicated or there was no intelligence to suggest the group represented a current threat. In response, the force archived a considerable proportion of its mapped organised crime groups. The force intends to review each of its organised crime groups on a monthly basis, which will exceed the requirements set by the national guidelines. However, as at June 2016, only 55 percent had been re-scored within the required periods.

In line with a previous national HMIC recommendation, responsibility for mapping organised crime groups transferred to the Southern Wales ROCU (TARIAN) in July 2016, although Gwent Police has retained a dedicated organised crime group co-ordinator. HMIC found a lack of awareness across the force regarding how organised crime group mapping would be undertaken under the new arrangements, which could lead to some organised crime groups being identified by investigators but not mapped. HMIC welcomes the transfer of the mapping function, but the force should ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities as this work progresses.

Analysis of the force's organised crime group tracker supplied by the force shows there is room for improvement in its organised crime group mapping. Analysis was undertaken for 20 organised crime groups active as at 30 June 2016. Of those, only 11 had been re-scored within the maximum periods recommended by national guidance. Failure to regularly re-assess the threat posed by organised crime groups may mean that the force's decisions on prioritisation and allocation of resources are not based on the most up-to-date information.

**Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016<sup>36</sup>**



**Source: HMIC data return**

**For further information about these data, please see annex A**

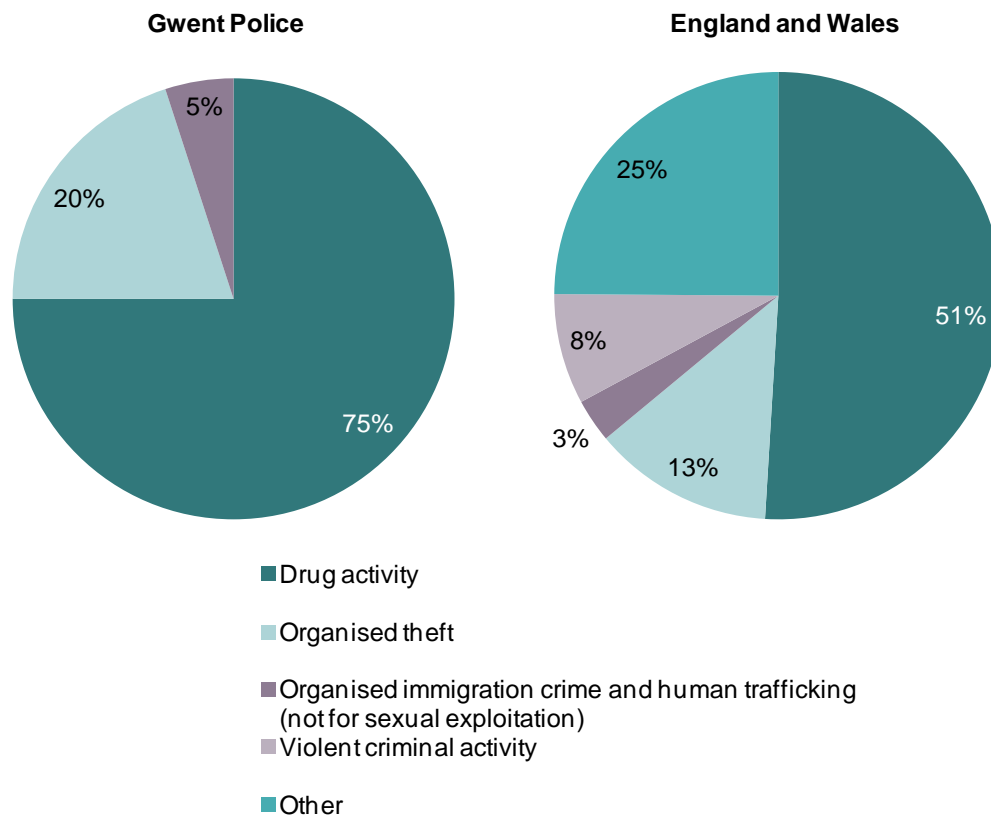
Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality (for example groups supplying drugs may also be supplying firearms and be involved in money laundering), this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the most common predominant crime type of the OCGs managed by Gwent Police as at 1 July 2016. This was also the most common OCG crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales.

The serious and organised crime local profile has limited information or analysis of priority locations and vulnerabilities, reasons why crime occurs, criminal markets or gangs. There was no cohesive strategy for managing street gangs, but there was recent success with an operation called Operation Ironside. This operation brought together force resources to disrupt drug dealing and associated anti-social behaviour. The force may need to develop its understanding of the youth violence threat. It does not have any gang or youth violence initiatives in place because there is no intelligence to suggest any gang or youth violence problem. However, the force

<sup>36</sup> City of London Police data have been removed from the chart and the England and Wales rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

recently worked with the All Wales School Liaison Core programme to inform and educate school children about certain aspects of criminality, including organised crime especially in relation to drugs and child sexual exploitation, and knife crime.

**Figure 10: Active organised crime groups by predominant crime type in Gwent, as at 1 July 2016**



Source: HMIC data return

Note: Figures may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. For further information about these data, please see annex A.

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

An effective force will pursue and prosecute offenders and disrupt organised criminality at a local level. The force will use specialist capabilities, both in the force and at regional level, and non-specialist capabilities such as its neighbourhood teams. While it can be complex for a force to assess the success of its actions against serious and organised crime, it is important that the force understands the extent to which it disrupts this crime and reduces harm.

Gwent Police responds inconsistently to serious and organised crime. The force completed its strategic assessments in January and April 2016 but has yet to set a control strategy for 2016/17. However, during our inspection we found that most

officers understood that the force was continuing to operate on the basis of its 2015/16 control strategy.

The force participates in six regional threat groups to set the strategy for, and to identify and assess, the threat and risk of harm. Within Gwent, a local organised crime partnership board has been set up recently; one meeting had been held and another was planned for November 2016 to determine threats at a more local level. This is co-chaired by the force director of intelligence and a service manager from one of the local authorities. No multi-agency action plans had been developed at the time of the inspection, although the board is involved in the Safer Gwent partnership and so important partner organisations will be kept informed.

Gwent Police recognises areas where it needs to improve and recently has reviewed its arrangements for organised crime group governance. It is to hold its first organised crime group quarterly review meeting in October 2016. An organised crime group improvement plan has been developed that contains a number of actions. However, there is limited evidence of the force using the 4Ps (prevent, prepare, protect, pursue) approach.<sup>37</sup> A new organised crime group management plan template has been introduced and does follow a 4Ps format; we inspected three organised crime group management plans and found them to be up to date.

The force now has a policy that lead responsible officers assigned to organised crime groups should be of at least chief inspector rank, with most organised crime groups managed by local policing area senior detectives. Although this is at an early stage, HMIC is satisfied that capable lead responsible officers are assigned to work on all active organised crime groups and are following 4P plans. Local policing areas are working on a high proportion of the organised crime groups operating in the force's area. They hold fortnightly organised crime group management meetings and discuss these groups routinely as part of daily management meetings. There is good involvement of neighbourhood officers in tackling organised crime groups.

We found examples showing the force identifies children at risk of child sexual exploitation and works with partner organisations to arrange protective interventions.

Gwent Police is working well with the College of Policing and Cardiff University to develop specialist cyber-crime capabilities. These include an innovative plan for the

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<sup>37</sup> 4Ps provides a national framework for tackling serious and organised crime that has been developed for national counter-terrorist work and has four thematic pillars, often referred to as the 4Ps:

- Pursue – prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime
- Prevent – preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime
- Protect – increasing protection against serious and organised crime
- Prepare – reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place



deployment of paid interns within the cyber-crime unit between years two and three of their university studies.

The force has made good use of powers and resources of partner organisations when tackling some organised crime groups. In Operation Ironside, the local authority obtained a premises closure order for one set of commercial premises, and additional partnership working was evidenced in Operations Imperial and Dragonfly regarding human trafficking. Of the 20 organised crime groups active at the time of inspection, however, non-law enforcement agencies were involved in only two cases, meaning there may be potential for further operational work with local partner organisations.

In December 2015, HMIC recommended that all forces produce an action plan by June 2016 to minimise duplication with their ROCU and to maximise use of regional capabilities. In Southern Wales, the forces and the ROCU decided to adopt a common approach, but it has failed to respond fully to the HMIC recommendation and some duplication of activity by the force and the ROCU remains.

The force recognises that it could make better use of GAIN to increase its understanding and awareness through the greater use of intelligence. The force made three national referral mechanism (NRM) referrals to the NCA in the year to June 2016; although this represents a decline on the preceding year, this number is broadly in line with the number of trafficking organised crime groups the force has been tackling. In any event, its close working arrangements with voluntary and other organisations means that organisations other than the police will be the routine submitters of NRM referrals.

The force has not been comprehensively recording all disruption to organised crime groups and has taken steps to improve this. The new organised crime group management plan template has been designed to collect monthly disruption details, which will allow the force to comply with National Police Chiefs' Council policy and start reporting disruptions through the ROCU to update the national picture. The force is also to trial a regular review of entries on its crime and intelligence system by the organised crime group co-ordinator, to look for opportunities for disruption of organised crime groups that might otherwise have been missed.

Gwent Police has not undertaken any analysis of its impact on serious and organised crime.

## How effectively does the force prevent serious and organised crime?

A force that effectively tackles serious and organised crime needs to be able to stop people being drawn in to this crime. Many of these people may be vulnerable and already involved in gang and youth violence. It should also be using a range of approaches and powers to prevent those known criminals continuing to cause harm. HMIC expects a force's approach to prevention to be a significant element of its overall strategy to tackle the harm that serious and organised crime causes communities.

Gwent Police is in the early stages of developing an approach to preventing people from being drawn into serious and organised crime. The police and crime commissioner has recently asked the force to look at the potential for a programme similar to the Troubled Families initiative in England.<sup>38</sup> At the time of the inspection, the 'Families First' programme existed in one local authority area in Gwent and it was unclear whether the proposals related to children and adults in need generally, to victims of crime in need of support, or to people at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime. The force needs to ensure it has a clear understanding of the UK government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy and of the Prevent programme, which is the government's programme to prevent offending behaviour. Otherwise, there is a risk that any initiatives it develops will fail to realise the strategy's intentions.

It is not clear whether the force area is affected by gang and youth violence. The force has not formally recorded the presence of any urban street gangs and some staff reported that street gangs did not present problems locally. Other staff referred to a recent initiative in which the police and crime commissioner funded a video about youth knife crime, and one senior officer described a particular town as having a clear gang problem. We found no evidence of a clear approach to tackling gang and youth violence.

The region is developing an approach for lifetime management of serious and organised crime offenders, although this is limited in scope to the more dangerous offenders and will not address the majority of identified organised crime group members.

The force has been developing its own approach to managing serious and organised crime offenders. In future, lead responsible officers with overall responsibility for the

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<sup>38</sup> Troubled families is a programme of targeted intervention for families with multiple problems, including crime, anti-social behaviour, mental health problems, domestic abuse and unemployment. Local authorities identify 'troubled families' in their area and usually assign a key worker to act as a single point of contact. Central government pays local authorities by results for each family they 'turn around'.

management of organised crime groups will produce management plans for each organised crime group using the 4Ps approach to prevent offending and protect the public from organised crime groups. Local policing area inspectors are responsible for monitoring organised crime group members released from prison who are the subject of an ancillary order. The force uses serious crime prevention orders and other additional orders (formally known as ancillary orders) where appropriate, as part of their approach to managing the most dangerous offenders.

In addition, all organised crime group known criminals are flagged on the force crime and intelligence system. The force's integrated offender management team identifies those who are about to be released and raises this at the next local policing area tasking meeting so that monitoring and intelligence-gathering plans can be put in place.

Gwent Police did not make any applications for serious crime prevention orders<sup>39</sup> in the year to June 2016, but consideration is currently being given to applying for two in connection with Operation Anchor, which is an operation to deal with large-scale vehicle theft and fraud throughout England and Wales. The force has recently obtained slavery and trafficking prevention orders for three known criminals and is currently managing three offenders who are the subject of serious crime prevention orders; a fourth offender who lives outside the force area is managed on the force's behalf by South Wales Police. Another ten known criminals, all of whom are in custody, are the subject of serious crime prevention orders.

In December 2016, the force is planning to expand the existing WISDOM (Wales Integrated Serious and Dangerous Offender Management) programme to include serious and organised crime, violent and high-risk offenders, with an initial cohort of 20-30 domestic abuse perpetrators.

The force has provided advice and support to potential victims of child sexual exploitation through Operation Quartz, which focuses on high-risk vulnerable or missing children. It is currently planning an initiative to assist those at risk of cyber-crime by deploying trained special constables and cadets to help people improve their cyber-security.

The force participates in the All Wales Schools Liaison Programme, which is a crime prevention programme funded jointly by the Welsh Government and the four police forces in Wales. The main aims of the programme are to work towards achieving crime and disorder reduction within young communities through education and to promote the principles of positive citizenship in school and the wider community.

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<sup>39</sup> SCPO is a court order that is used to protect the public by preventing, restricting or disrupting a person's involvement in serious crime. An SCPO can prevent involvement in serious crime by imposing various conditions on a person; for example, restricting who he or she can associate with, restricting his or her travel, or placing an obligation to report his or her financial affairs to the police.

The programme has recently helped the force and its partners to develop a response to new psychoactive substances.

The force uses a range of tools to communicate its successes against serious and organised crime to the public, including local policing area inspectors' blogs, Gwent Now and social media. Gwent Now is an efficient and effective communication system designed to keep the residents of Gwent informed about the latest crime notifications and crime prevention advice for their communities.

## Summary of findings



**Requires improvement**

Gwent Police requires improvement in tackling and preventing serious and organised crime. It has a limited understanding of the threat posed to its communities by serious and organised crime. It is, however, taking steps to improve its understanding and mapping of newer threats such as organised child sexual exploitation, foreign national offenders, modern-day slavery and cyber-crime.

Local officers are now very involved with work and intelligence-gathering on organised crime groups. Gwent Police has been developing its own approach to managing serious and organised crime offenders to prevent offending and to protect the public from organised crime groups. The force reviews each of its organised crime groups on a monthly basis. But its serious and organised crime local profile has limited information or analysis of priority locations and vulnerabilities, criminal markets or gangs.

The force is working well with the College of Policing and Cardiff University to develop specialist cyber-crime capabilities. The force is in the early stages of developing an approach to preventing people from being drawn into serious and organised crime and is looking to expand the existing programme to serious and organised crime, violent and high-risk offenders, with a cohort of domestic abuse perpetrators.

## Areas for improvement

- The force should further develop its serious and organised crime local profile in conjunction with partner organisations to enhance its understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime, and seek to develop police and partner organisation joint activity aimed at reducing this threat.
- The force should ensure that it maps all organised crime groups promptly following identification and re-assesses them at regular intervals in line with national standards.
- The force should enhance its approach to the 'lifetime management' of organised criminals to minimise the risk they pose to local communities. This approach should include routine consideration of ancillary orders, partner agency powers and other tools to deter organised criminals from continuing to offend.
- The force should complete an action plan for making the best use of the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU), reducing duplication at force level and ensuring that the use of shared ROCU resources is prioritised effectively between forces in the Southern Wales region.
- The force should improve its understanding of the impact of its activity on serious and organised crime across the four Ps, and ensure that it learns from experience to maximise the force's disruptive effect on this activity.

## How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?

Some complex threats require both a specialist capability and forces to work together to respond to them. This question assesses both the overall preparedness of forces to work together on a number of strategic threats and whether forces have a good understanding of the threat presented by firearms incidents and how equipped they are to meet this threat.

## How effective are the force's arrangements to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

The *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR)<sup>40</sup> specifies six national threats. These are complex threats and forces need to be able to work together if they are to respond to them effectively. These include serious and organised crime, terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to these national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have made the necessary arrangements to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats should they materialise.

Gwent Police has governance arrangements in place through its SPR governance board to oversee each of its national policing responsibilities. The force has completed threat assessments for some SPR threats (civil emergencies, public order and counter terrorism), but not all. However, it does complete and update reports specific to each SPR threat, to assess threat, risk, capability and capacity, and also reports quarterly to the governance board. An example of this is the quarterly update produced by the force that addresses all elements of child sexual abuse within families, institutions and other settings. The force has also produced a child sexual exploitation problem profile and addresses child sexual exploitation within its strategic assessment.

The force has produced a cyber-crime problem profile that considers national cyber-crime-related issues and covers actions taken for identified threats. It realises it has an inconsistent approach to its national policing responsibilities and the need to develop standard operating procedures.

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<sup>40</sup> The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary, setting out the latest national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from a number of police forces. Forces often need to work collaboratively, and with other partners, national agencies or national arrangements, to ensure such threats are tackled effectively. *Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available at:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417116/The\\_Strategic\\_Policing\\_Requirement.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf)

The security of force information and IT infrastructure is overseen by the information assurance board, which reviews progress on a quarterly basis against the information security work plan. The force regularly tests the security of its infrastructure through the vulnerability management plan and annual IT health check.

The force has tested its response to several SPR threats through a series of comprehensive multi-agency exercises. In response to Operation Protect, the national counter terrorism programme, the force held two exercises, Operation Mulligan and Operation Elba, which involved counter terrorism specialist firearms officers and the region's joint firearms unit for protecting critical national infrastructure sites. The learning from these operations has been fed back in firearms training days and also to Gwent members of the joint firearms unit. In these training operations the force effectively exercised its capability for responding to public order demand and also successfully dealt with a cyber-attack. It had planned for this type of incident with partners in advance of the NATO Summit, which was held in the force area in 2014.

Gwent Police tests its preparedness with South Wales Police and Dyfed-Powys Police to deal with national threats through the tri-force governance arrangements. The governance board has direct links into TARIAN, the Southern Wales Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) which covers the three Southern Welsh forces and plays a crucial role in identifying, disrupting and dismantling organised crime. TARIAN's operating model is supported by a regional intelligence group meeting which is attended by the three forces, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, UK Border Force and the National Crime Agency. The purpose of the regional intelligence group is to carry out an independent assessment of operational plans and requests for covert resources and to make recommendations of approval to the monthly regional tactical tasking and co-ordinating group.

The Welsh Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit (WECTU) provides a collaborative and integrated approach between Welsh police forces, the UK counter-terrorism network and partner organisations to address the requirements of the national counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST) in Wales. WECTU strategic leads for the 4Ps (pursue, prevent, protect and prepare) work in partnership to achieve their required outcomes. The All Wales CONTEST Board is jointly chaired by the Welsh Government and South Wales Police. Key priorities of the governance board are to test the region's preparedness to deal with national threats and to oversee exercises to test all aspects of the region's response. An example of this was Operation Red Kite, a two-day counter-terrorism operation in June 2016 that took place across the region to test part of the Home Office National Counter Terrorism Exercise programme. It involved an attack on a train as well as other marauding terrorist firearms attacks. This tested command and tactical responses.

The force routinely tests its business continuity plans.

## **How well prepared is the force to respond to a firearms attack?**

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, the government allocated £143 million to the 43 England and Wales police forces to increase their armed capability. This funding has enabled some forces to increase the number of armed police officers able to respond to a terrorist attack. These attacks include those committed by heavily armed terrorists across multiple sites in quick succession, as in Paris. These attacks are known as marauding terrorist firearms attacks. The funding is for those forces considered to be at greatest risk of a terrorist attack. This also has the effect of increasing the ability of the police service to respond to other forms of terrorist attacks (and another incident requiring an armed policing response). Forces have begun to recruit and train new armed officers. This process is due to be completed by March 2018.

Gwent Police is well prepared to respond to a firearms attack. The force is part of the tri-force regional joint firearms unit with South Wales Police and Dyfed-Powys Police.

Each year Gwent Police and other forces in the Southern Wales region carry out a comprehensive armed police strategic risk assessment (APSTRA) to enable them to accurately assess the level of threat and risk to the force and the Southern Wales region. In addition, each month the force holds a strategic risk assessment meeting to review all parts of the APSTRA to update the threat and risk and adjust the force and region's response to address any emerging firearms or terrorist risks or threat of harm. The force considers it has appropriate and sufficient command structures in place and sufficient and appropriately trained authorised firearms officers to meet the threat and risk identified within the APSTRA.

The force, as well as the region, refreshed its annual APSTRA in February 2016. There is a new shift pattern for armed officers in the region, which enables a more comprehensive 24/7 armed response. Training of armed officers has also been changed as a result of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris. The region has adopted learning from national operations and has recognised the need to increase the number of rifle-trained officers to meet the requirements of the region with the increased levels of threat identified in the APSTRA. This has enhanced the region's capability and response to attacks similar to those experienced in Paris.

The force is involved in a programme of operations and theoretical exercises as part of the joint firearms unit response, together with partner agencies including the military, fire and ambulance services and local authorities, to test all aspects of the APSTRA including a marauding terrorist firearms attack.

The force and region are working with a wide range of partner organisations at shopping centres and stadiums to develop a multi-agency response through a co-ordinating group. They have tested their counter-terrorism and marauding terrorist



firearms attack response through a series of nationally recognised theoretical exercises.

The force has plans in place for increasing its firearms capability. It is making progress towards implementing these plans and is well advanced in its work on the national armed policing uplift programme.

## **Summary of findings**

### **Ungraded**

Gwent Police has governance arrangements in place through its strategic policing requirement (SPR) governance board to oversee each of its national policing responsibilities.

The force has completed threat assessments for some SPR threats. The force has completed some problem profiles, but accepts that its current approach is inconsistent and there is a need to develop standard operating procedures across the region. It has tested its response to several SPR threats through a series of comprehensive multi-agency exercises, but not all six threats have been tested to this extent.

The governance board has direct links into TARIAN, the Southern Wales Regional Organised Crime Unit, which covers the three Southern Welsh forces and plays a crucial role in identifying, disrupting and dismantling organised crime.

The force and the Southern Wales region carry out a comprehensive armed police strategic risk assessment to enable them to accurately assess the level of threat and risk to the force and the Southern Wales region.

The force is involved in a programme of practical and theoretical exercises as part of the joint firearms unit response, together with partner organisations.

## Next steps

HMIC assesses progress on causes of concern and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We receive updates through our regular conversations with forces, re-assess as part of our annual PEEL programme, and, in the most serious cases, revisit forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across England and Wales and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements can be made at a national level.

Findings and judgments from this year's PEEL effectiveness inspection will be used to direct the design of the next cycle of PEEL effectiveness assessments. The specific areas for assessment are yet to be confirmed, based on further consultation, but we will continue to assess how forces keep people safe and reduce crime to ensure our findings are comparable year on year.

## Annex A – About the data

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

Where HMIC has collected data directly from police forces, we have taken reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other relevant interested parties such as the Home Office. We have given forces several opportunities to check and validate the data they have provided us to ensure the accuracy of our evidence. For instance:

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

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

### Methodology

#### Data in the report

The British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Therefore any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data and numbers will differ from those published by the Home Office.

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

#### Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2015 population estimates. These were the most recent data available at the time of the inspection.

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

## **Survey of police staff**

HMIC conducted a short survey of police staff across forces in England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and the suitability of tasks assigned to them. The survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample which means that results may not be representative of the population. The number of responses varied between 8 and 2,471 across forces. Therefore, we treated results with caution and used them for exploring further during fieldwork rather than to assess individual force performance.

## **Ipsos MORI survey of public attitudes towards policing**

HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a survey of attitudes towards policing between July and August 2016. Respondents were drawn from an online panel and results were weighted by age, gender and work status to match the population profile of the force area. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, varying between 331 to 429 in each force area. Therefore, any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

The findings of this survey will be shared on our website by summer 2017:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/data/peel-assessments/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/data/peel-assessments/)

## **Review of crime files**

HMIC reviewed 60 police case files across crime types for: robbery, common assault (flagged as domestic abuse), grievous bodily harm (GBH), stalking, harassment, rape and domestic burglary. The file review was designed to provide a broad overview of the identification of vulnerability, the effectiveness of investigations and to understand how victims are treated through police processes. Files were randomly selected from crimes recorded between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 and were assessed against several criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected, we have not used results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance but alongside other evidence gathered.

## **Force in numbers**

A dash in this graphic indicates that a force was not able to supply HMIC with data.

### **Calls for assistance (including those for domestic abuse)**

These data were collected directly from all 43 forces. In 2016, the questions contained a different breakdown of instances where the police were called to an incident compared to the 2015 data collection, so direct comparisons to the equivalent 2015 data are not advised.

## Recorded crime and crime outcomes

These data are obtained from Home Office police-recorded crime and outcomes data tables for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 and are taken from the October 2016 Home Office data release, which is available from:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables)

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

Figures about police-recorded crime should be treated with care, as recent increases are likely to have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's national inspection of crime data in 2014.

For crime outcomes, Dorset Police has been excluded from the England and Wales figure. Dorset Police experienced difficulties with the recording of crime outcomes for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was due to the force introducing the Niche records management system in Spring 2015. Problems with the implementation of Niche meant that crime outcomes were not reliably recorded. The failure to file investigations properly meant that a higher than normal proportion of offences were allocated to 'Not yet assigned an outcome'. During 2016, the force conducted additional work to solve the problem. In doing so, some crime outcomes from the 12 months to 30 June 2016 were updated after that date and are reflected in a later period. This makes Dorset Police's crime outcome data inconsistent with that provided by other forces. HMIC has decided not to use Dorset Police's outcome data in the interests of consistency of data use and to maintain fairness to all forces.

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcome data are listed below and also apply to figure 4.

- For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see Crime Outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2016, Home Office, July 2016. Available from:  
[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539447/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539447/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf)
- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome.
- These data are subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time. These data are taken from the October 2016 Home Office data release.

- Providing outcomes data under the new framework is voluntary if not provided directly through the Home Office Data Hub. However, as proportions are used, calculations can be based on fewer than four quarters of data. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Derbyshire Constabulary and Suffolk Constabulary were unable to provide the last quarter of data. Therefore, their figures are based on the first three quarters of the year.
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces are participating in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. This means these forces no longer issue simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and they restrict their use of penalty notices for disorder as disposal options for adult offenders, as part of the pilot. Therefore, their outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.
- It is important to note that the outcomes that are displayed in figure 8 are based on the number of outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, irrespective of when the crime was recorded. Therefore, the crimes and outcomes recorded in the reporting year are not tracked, so direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes and domestic abuse related outcomes in this report. For more details about the methodology for domestic abuse outcomes please see explanatory notes below, under figure 8.

### **Anti-social behaviour**

These data are obtained from Office for National Statistics data tables, available from:

[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables)

All police forces record incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to them in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Incidents are recorded under NSIR in accordance with the same 'victim focused' approach that applies for recorded crime, although these figures are not subject to the same level of quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection. Incident counts should be interpreted as incidents recorded by the police, rather than reflecting the true level of victimisation. Other agencies also deal with anti-social behaviour incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords); incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police figures.

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

- Warwickshire Police had a problem with its incident recording. For a small percentage of all incidents reported during 2014-15 and 2015-16 it was not possible for the force to identify whether these were anti-social behaviour or other types of incident. These incidents have been distributed pro rata for

Warwickshire, so that one percent of anti-social behaviour in 2014-15 and two percent of anti-social behaviour in 2015-16 are estimated.

- From May 2014, South Yorkshire Police experienced difficulties in reporting those incidents of anti-social behaviour that resulted from how it processed calls for assistance, specifically for scheduled appointments. In November 2016, South Yorkshire Police resolved this problem and resubmitted anti-social behaviour data to Office for National Statistics. HMIC has used corrected data for South Yorkshire Police which are available in the November 2016 release of anti-social behaviour incidents data in the link above.
- Bedfordshire Police resubmitted anti-social behaviour data to Office for National Statistics for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was because data had been double counted for the second quarter of the financial year. HMIC has used corrected data for Bedfordshire Police which are available in the November 2016 release of anti-social behaviour incidents data in the link above.

### **Domestic abuse**

Data for domestic abuse flagged offences were provided by the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. These are more recent figures than those previously published by Office for National Statistics.

Data relating to domestic abuse arrests, charges and outcomes were collected through the HMIC data collection.

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

[www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016](http://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016)

### **Organised crime groups (OCGs)**

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

The number of OCGs in the Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per one million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population figures.

OCGs which are no longer active – for example because they have been dismantled by the police – can be archived. This means that they are no longer subject to disruption, investigation or monitoring. From 1 September 2014 to 31 December 2015, forces were given a directive by the National Police Chiefs' Council to suspend archiving, pending a review of OCG recording policy. This directive was removed on

1 January 2016, but resulted in many forces archiving more OCGs than they otherwise would have in the 12 months to June 2016. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made with OCG figures from previous years.

### **Victim satisfaction**

Forces were required by the Home Office to conduct satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups. Force victim satisfaction surveys are structured around principal questions exploring satisfaction responses across four stages of interactions:

- initial contact;
- actions;
- follow-up;
- treatment plus the whole experience.

The data used in this report use the results to the question relating to the victim's whole experience, which specifically asks, "Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied, dissatisfied, or neither with the service provided by the police in this case?"

The England and Wales average is calculated based on the average of the rates of satisfaction in all 43 forces.

## **Figures throughout the report**

### **Figure 1: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

### **Figure 2: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

### **Figure 3: Percentage change in the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents (per 1,000 population), by force, comparing the 12 months to 31 March 2016 with the 12 months to 31 March 2015**

Please see 'Anti-social behaviour' above.

### **Figure 4: Proportion of outcomes assigned to offences recorded, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.



The outcome number has been provided to improve usability across multiple publications and is in line with Home Office categorisation.

For these data, we state whether the force's value is 'one of the highest', 'one of the lowest' or 'broadly in line with' all forces in England and Wales. This is calculated by ranking the usage of outcomes and then highlighting the top and bottom 25 percent of forces. All other forces will be broadly in line with England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how the force deals with offenders for different crimes.

This methodology is not comparable with figure 8, so direct comparisons should not be made between the two tables.

**Figure 5: Percentage of 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support action' outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, by force**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

In addition, it is important to understand that the percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences. The category of evidential difficulties also includes where a suspect has been identified and the victim supports police action, but evidential difficulties prevent further action being taken.

**Figure 6: Percentage of police recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

The number of offences identified with a vulnerable victim in a force is dependent on the force's definition of vulnerability.

City of London, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Gloucestershire and Lancashire forces were unable to provide data for the number of recorded crimes with a vulnerable victim identified. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

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

- Suffolk Constabulary was only able to provide eight months of vulnerability data to the 30 June 2016 due to transferring to a different crime management system. Its previous system did not record vulnerability. Therefore, these are the most reliable data it can provide.

**Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016**

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

The arrest rate is calculated using a common time period for arrests and offences. It is important to note that each arrest is not necessarily directly linked to its specific domestic abuse offence recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 in this calculation. It is also possible to have more than one arrest per offence although this is rare. In addition, the reader should note the increase in police-recorded crime which has affected the majority of forces over the last year (39 out of 43). This may have the effect of arrest rates actually being higher than the figures suggest. Despite this, the calculation still indicates whether the force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action. HMIC has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures (such as use of voluntary attendance or body-worn video cameras) during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

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

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary identified a recording issue and that it could only obtain accurate data from a manual audit of its custody records. This means its data may indicate a lower arrest rate. However, at the time of publication this was the most reliable figure the force could provide for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force plans to conduct regular manual audits while the recording issue is resolved. HMIC will conduct a further review to test this evidence when more data are available.
- Lancashire Constabulary experienced difficulties in identifying all domestic abuse flagged arrests. This affected 23 days in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force investigated this and confirmed that the impact on data provided to HMIC would be marginal and that these are the most reliable figures it can provide.

**Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences**

Please see 'Domestic Abuse' above.

Dorset Police is excluded from our data for the reasons described under 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Nottinghamshire Police has been excluded from domestic abuse outcomes data. The force experienced difficulties with the conversion of some crime data when it

moved to a new crime recording system. This means that the force did not record reliably some crime outcomes for domestic abuse related offences. The force subsequently solved the problem and provided updated outcomes figures. However, this makes Nottinghamshire Police's outcomes data for domestic abuse related offences inconsistent with that provided by other forces. HMIC has decided not to use Nottinghamshire Police's outcomes data for domestic abuse related offences in the interests of consistency of data use and to maintain fairness to all forces.

In April 2015, the Home Office began collecting information from the police on whether recorded offences were related to domestic abuse. Crimes are identified by the police as domestic abuse related if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality."

In figure 8, the rate is calculated by the number of each outcome recorded for domestic abuse flagged offences in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, divided by the total number of domestic abuse offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The domestic abuse-related crimes used in this calculation are not necessarily those to which the outcomes have been assigned. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes in figure 4, where each crime is linked to its associated outcome, and domestic abuse outcomes in figure 8.

For these data, we state whether the force's value is 'one of the highest', 'one of the lowest' or 'broadly in line with' all forces in England and Wales. This is calculated by ranking the usage of outcomes and then highlighting the top and bottom 25 percent of forces. All other forces will be broadly in line with England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how the force deals with offenders for different crimes.

### **Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016**

Please see 'Organised Crime Groups' above.

### **Figure 10: Active organised crime groups by predominant crime type, as at 1 July 2016**

Humberside Police was unable to provide the full data for predominant crime types in the time available. Therefore, this force's data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales proportion.

Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.