

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2017

An inspection of North Wales Police



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Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

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

North Wales Police

England and Wales

283

282



Anti-social behaviour

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

North Wales Police

England and Wales

31

31

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

North Wales Police

England and Wales

+5%

-0.05%



Crime (excluding fraud)

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

North Wales Police

England and Wales

61

77

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

North Wales Police

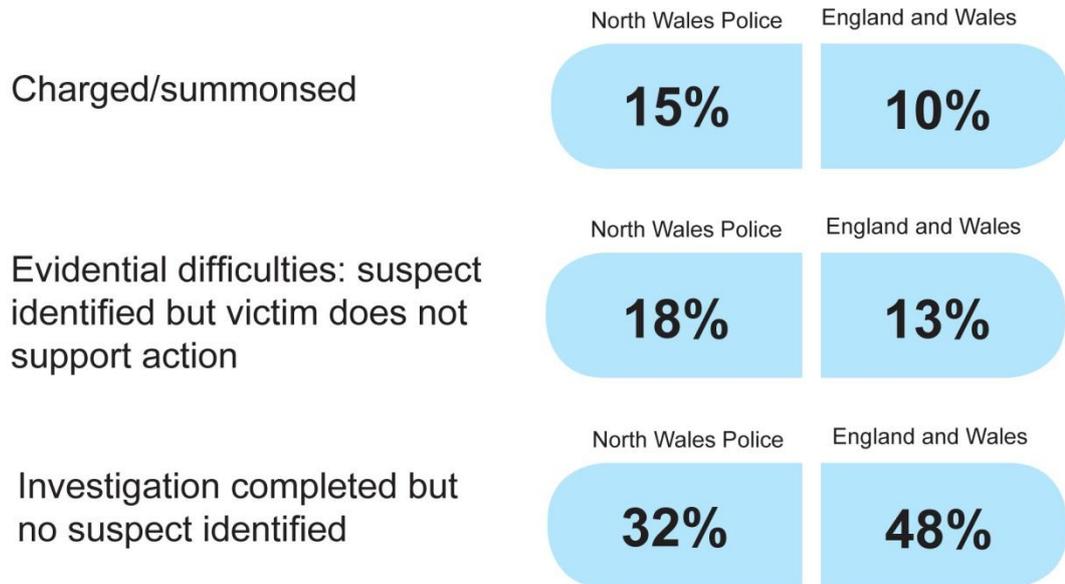
England and Wales

+7%

+14%



Crime outcomes*



Domestic abuse



Organised crime groups



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

Risk-based inspection

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

- Investigating crime and reducing re-offending;
- Protecting vulnerable people; and
- Specialist capabilities.

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

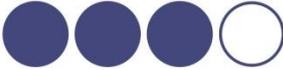
¹ Full details of the interim risk-based approach are available from the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based

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

Effectiveness overview

Judgments

Overall effectiveness 2017  Good

Question	Grade	Last inspected
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	 Good	2016
Investigating crime and reducing re-offending	 Good	2017
Protecting vulnerable people	 Good	2017
Tackling serious and organised crime	 Good	2016
Specialist capabilities	Ungraded	2017

Summary

North Wales Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime, and it has maintained a stable level of performance since our 2016 effectiveness inspection.

The force's initial investigative response is effective. It conducts thorough telephone investigations and investigates cases of fraud well. Most high-risk and complex cases are dealt with by specialist investigators. The force generally conducts thorough investigations, leading to satisfactory outcomes for victims. There is regular supervision and monitoring of cases. The force's investigative capacity is sufficient to

cope with demand, and it is good at keeping victims updated throughout the investigation. However, not all investigators receive regular continuing professional development.

North Wales Police makes reasonable use of a variety of approaches to offender management and achieves reductions in re-offending. However, it is not always good at taking effective action to locate outstanding offenders. HMICFRS also found the force does not always contact Immigration Enforcement to verify the identity and nationality of arrested foreign nationals.

The force has a clear definition of what vulnerability is, and officers and staff understand how to protect people who are vulnerable. It demonstrates a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability, developed in conjunction with partner organisations (such as local authorities, or health and education services) and should develop this joint understanding in respect of hidden demand. The force identifies vulnerable and repeat victims and assesses the risk to victims well. Good quality assurance processes ensure that handovers are effective, and that all immediate safeguarding actions are undertaken.

The force investigates offences involving vulnerable victims to a good standard and it has sufficient capacity to ensure that specialist investigations are allocated to suitably skilled investigators. Cases are supervised closely, to identify risk and vulnerability, and it has adequate safeguarding arrangements in place for the most vulnerable people. However, the force needs to ensure that all high-risk domestic abuse cases are referred to multi-agency risk assessment conferences so that all victims receive the support they need. The force is sufficiently prepared to manage the risk posed by dangerous and sexual offenders.

North Wales Police has the necessary arrangements in place to fulfil its national policing responsibilities.

Investigating crime and reducing re-offending



Good

Initial investigation

North Wales Police is good at providing an initial investigative response. It assesses incidents thoroughly, using an established and structured process. This ensures the provision of an appropriate response in almost all cases. Officers attend incidents promptly, when they should do so; attendance is based on the risk to the victim, using an assessment of threat, risk and harm. Once officers arrive at the scene, they take the correct steps to identify and secure evidence as part of the 'golden hour',³ immediately after an incident.

The force is good at assessing reports of fraud. The force's figures show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, North Wales Police received a total of 295 fraud disseminations from the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB).⁴ HMICFRS found the force has good processes in place to ensure that it examines disseminations from NFIB and investigates cases of fraud well. In August 2017, the force introduced the role of financial abuse safeguarding officer (FASO). The FASO ensures that victims of fraud are identified at the earliest opportunity. For example, call handlers have received guidance from the FASO on how to identify fraud from the moment the victim first contacts the force.

For the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 the force investigated 38 percent of incidents over the telephone. In some instances, this can be the most efficient way of resolving less serious crimes, especially when it is clear immediately that there are no viable lines of enquiry. We reviewed a small sample of the telephone investigations that the managed resource unit dealt with and were satisfied they were of an appropriate standard. The force has responded well to HMICFRS' 2016 effectiveness report, in which we recommended that it take steps to ensure that all crimes are allocated promptly to investigators with the right skills, accreditation and support to investigate them to a good standard. HMICFRS is pleased to note that the force has improved the way it allocates crimes to officers and staff, now giving the vast majority of high-risk and complex cases to specialist investigators. Whenever it is correct for them to do so, specialist investigators attend the initial call for service.

³ Golden hour refers to the time after a crime has been committed during which there is maximum potential for recovery of forensic evidence.

⁴ The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau is a police unit based at City of London Police responsible for gathering and analysing intelligence relating to fraud and financially-motivated cyber-crime.

This means that victims of crime are more likely to receive the right level of service from the outset. Overall, we found that crimes are investigated thoroughly by appropriately skilled and experienced officers and staff.

Investigation quality

Investigations conducted by North Wales Police are of a good quality. During both the inspection and the file review, we found consistently good evidence that investigations are effective, with lines of enquiry identified and completed. There is regular supervision and monitoring of cases, which ensures that handovers and allocation of crimes are effective. The force is able to adjust its investigative capacity and capability in response to increases in demand, or to reductions in the availability of specialist staff.

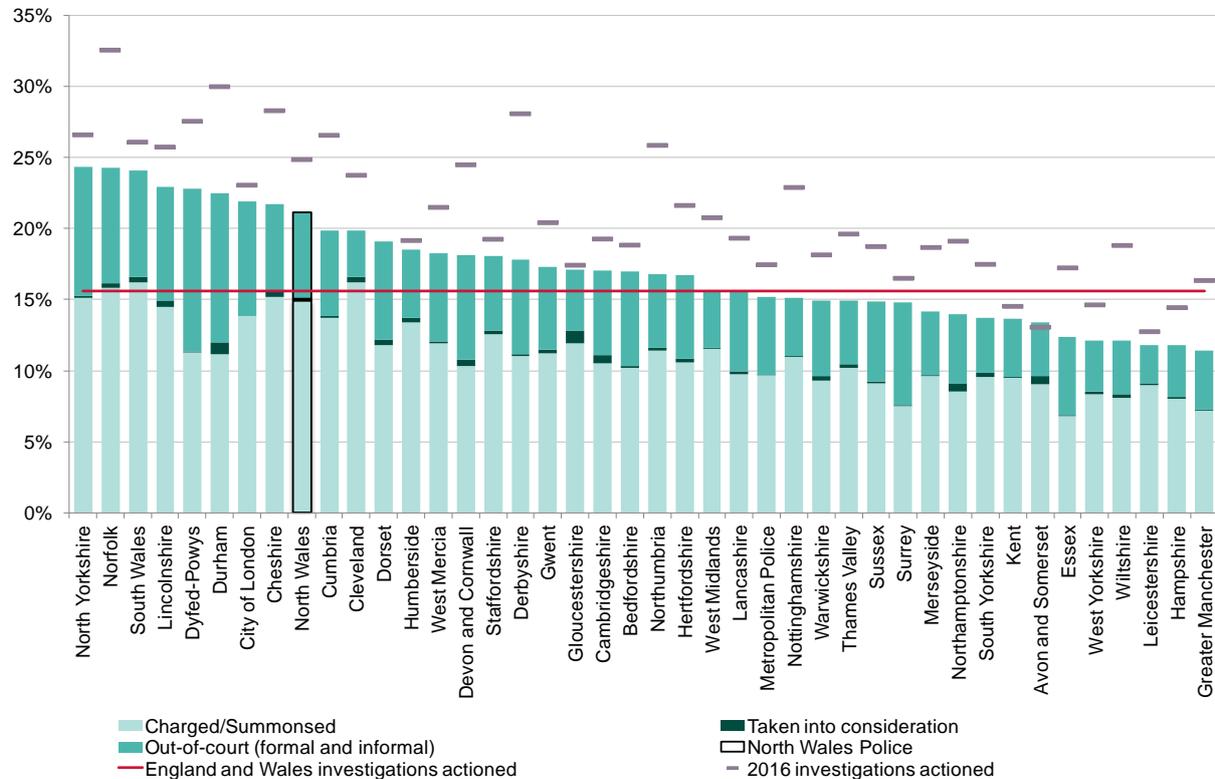
HMICFRS found that specialist investigators and CID officers and staff have sufficient skills and experience to ensure that crimes involving victims are investigated well. Investigators in specialist teams and CID receive training that is commensurate with the activities they undertake. This is encouraging progress since 2016, when we found insufficient capacity within specialist departments, and also that not all investigators had received the appropriate training. However, we did find that not all investigators receive regular, continuing professional development. For example, the force does not routinely allocate training days. These would allow all investigators to develop further their understanding of vulnerability, and their investigative skills.

North Wales Police is good at keeping victims updated throughout the course of investigations. The force is seeking the views of victims through the use of victim satisfaction surveys. It takes appropriate steps to ensure that investigations are not cut short when victims withdraw their support for police action. We also found that victims of fraud are supported well. For example, the FASO attends victims' homes in order to give them advice on how to stay safe and recover lost money. The FASO, or a local neighbourhood officer, also completes a needs assessment for all vulnerable victims of fraud aged 75 or over, so that the force can offer support tailored to the needs of elderly victims of fraud.

The percentage of recorded crimes in North Wales in which the suspect has been identified in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 is 51 percent. This is above the England and Wales rate of 39 percent. The percentage of recorded crimes in North Wales where action was taken by the force in 12 months to 30 June 2017 was 21 percent. This is also above the England and Wales rate of 16 percent. The proportion of offences in which the suspect has been identified, but there are evidential difficulties and the victim does not support police action (outcome 16) for the period 12 months to 30 June 2017 was 18 percent. This is higher than the England and Wales rate of

13 percent. The force is working to understand why its outcome 16 rate is higher than the England and Wales rate. Overall, we found the force provides the vast majority of victims with a satisfactory service.

Figure 1: Proportion of investigations where action was taken, by force, for offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017^{5, 6}



Source: 2016 and 2017 Home Office Outcomes Data
For further information about this data, please see annex A

⁵ Investigations where action was taken includes the outcome categories of Charged/Summonsed, Taken into consideration and Out-of-court (formal and informal).

⁶ Suffolk Constabulary was unable to provide 2017 crime outcomes data. Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crime outcomes data. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further information about this data, please see annex A.

Reducing re-offending

North Wales Police needs to improve its approach to reducing re-offending. The force makes extensive use of integrated offender management (IOM) schemes⁷ and there has been a fall in the rate of re-offending among serial perpetrators. However, it needs to improve the way that it actively manages offenders who pose a risk to the public. Officers spoken to during the inspection are clear about the need to use the power of arrest to protect vulnerable victims. However, the force is not taking effective action to locate outstanding offenders who are listed as wanted on the police national computer (PNC). There are processes to monitor outstanding offenders listed as wanted on PNC, but the force is not always proactive in seeking to arrest them. For example, in all five cases examined during the file review, we did not find evidence that offenders/suspects were being actively sought. Measures such as intelligence checks might have helped to locate the offender more quickly.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, North Wales Police arrested 640 foreign national offenders. It made 65 referrals to Immigration Enforcement,⁸ which represents a compliance rate of just 10 percent. This is very low in comparison to the estimated compliance rate for England and Wales of 57 percent. The force acknowledges that it should be making more referrals and has arranged visits by Immigration Enforcement staff in order to raise awareness of the subject. In addition, posters have been placed in custody suites, explaining the need to refer all arrested foreign nationals to Immigration Enforcement. The situation has improved, and reporting has increased recently as a result of action the force has taken. All arrested foreign nationals are subjected to checks for overseas convictions through the ACRO Criminal Records Office;⁹ this helps the force to understand and manage risk. Despite these improvements, however, some officers are uncertain about the need to contact Immigration Enforcement.

The force works with well-established IOM schemes. The IOM scheme within North Wales is set up and guided in line with the IOM Cymru Strategic framework (2015). IOM practitioners take their guidance from the IOM Cymru Delivery Manual. The force and its partner organisations have reviewed IOM cohorts in order to concentrate on the most dangerous and high-risk harm offenders, such as perpetrators of child sexual exploitation or domestic abuse. The new approach

⁷ 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.

⁸ Part of the Home Office, Immigration Enforcement is responsible for preventing abuse, tracking immigration offenders and increasing compliance with immigration law. It works with partners such as the police to regulate migration in line with government policy, while supporting economic growth.

⁹ ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and improves the exchange of criminal records and biometric information.

focuses more on the vulnerability of victims and on the firm and intrusive management of offenders. HMICFRS found evidence that the force is achieving a reduction in the re-offending rate. At the time of the inspection, November 2017, the re-offending rate was 53 percent, and falling. The force continues to make use of sexual harm prevention orders¹⁰ to deter offenders from re-offending, although there has been a reduction of 14 percent in sexual harm prevention orders in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 compared to the same time period in 2016. The force is proactive in its approach towards identifying and apprehending those who share indecent images of children online. We also found that, since it recruited more officers to the police online investigation team, there are no longer backlogs in cases awaiting Crown Prosecution Service assessment.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that all specialist staff have the opportunity to undertake continuous professional development to be able to fulfil their investigative and safeguarding responsibilities well.
- The force should ensure the swift location and arrest of those that are circulated as wanted on the police national computer, who fail to appear on police bail, named and outstanding suspects and suspects identified through forensic evidence.
- The force should ensure that all arrested foreign nationals are referred to immigration enforcement to verify their identity and nationality.

¹⁰ 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.

Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims



Good

Identifying vulnerability

North Wales Police has a satisfactory understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability, which it has developed in alliance with its partner organisations. The force has a clear definition of what vulnerability is, and a strategy to protect vulnerable people, such as those 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. Frontline officers and staff understand how to identify and protect those who are vulnerable. HMICFRS found that although not all those spoken to could articulate the force's definition of vulnerability, officers and staff understood the force's approach to vulnerable people and knew how to identify and protect those who are vulnerable. Officers and staff demonstrate positive behaviour consistently towards vulnerable people and victims.

North Wales Police has done some analysis to understand the nature and scale of vulnerability in North Wales. For example, it has used admissions data from the NHS to develop a problem profile for victims of domestic abuse. The force has also worked with the NSPCC, probation services, Youth Justice Service and others to develop a strategic assessment of child sexual exploitation. Using some partnership data, it has developed similar assessments on child victims of domestic abuse, on knife crime and on mental health. HMICFRS is aware of the challenges the force faces in obtaining data from some of its partner organisations in North Wales. Nonetheless, we encourage the force to continue to look for new ways to share and develop its understanding of 'hidden harm' through its work with partner organisations.

The force is good at identifying vulnerable people when they contact the police; this was done correctly in all of the cases we examined during our inspection. Call handlers respond to calls quickly and follow a structured risk assessment process to ensure they recognise vulnerable people at the earliest opportunity. The force uses the risk assessment process to help decide how to respond to incidents involving vulnerable people and, wherever that is appropriate, to involve additional or specific services. However, the ability of the force's command and control system to record all types of vulnerability and repeat callers is limited. As a consequence, the proportion of command and control incidents and crimes flagged to identify vulnerable people in North Wales is low compared with other forces in England and Wales. The force recognises it needs to improve in this area; at the time of the inspection, it was upgrading its telephone system. Despite these limitations, we

found that call handlers consistently identified vulnerable and repeat victims, using a variety of force IT systems. When we examined call logs involving domestic abuse, we found that in all cases the victim had been properly identified and immediate safeguarding put in place.

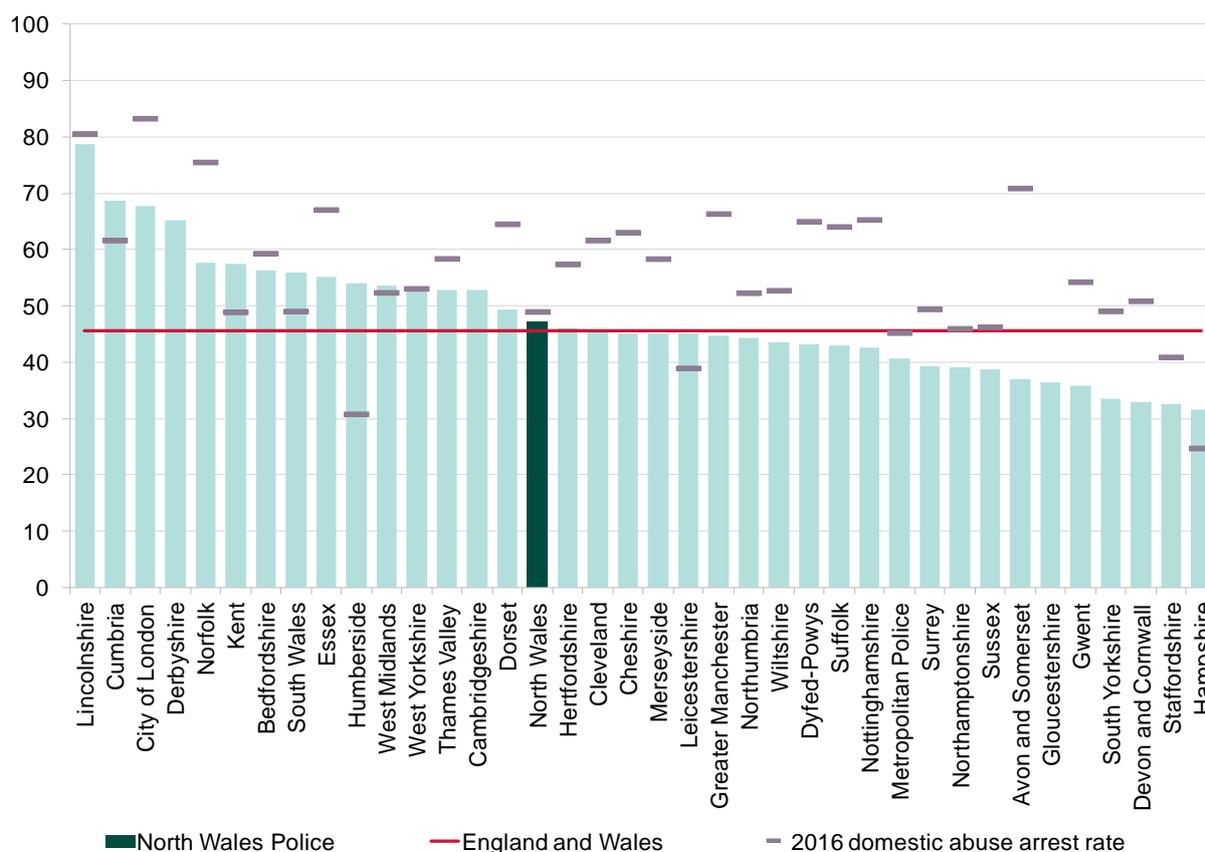
Initial response

North Wales Police assesses vulnerability well during its initial response; it conducts face-to-face risk assessments for all reported domestic abuse incidents. This makes it easier to spot risks, and improves the accuracy of the risk assessment process. The force uses clear processes to assess a victim's vulnerability and risk, using a vulnerability assessment form, including for victims of domestic abuse. There is good supervision of the process; the handover packages contain all the relevant information. Supervisors, the central referral unit (CRU),¹¹ and domestic abuse officers all play a role in making sure that vulnerability is graded and identified correctly at the initial response. As a result, vulnerability assessments and handovers are completed consistently to a high standard. In the vast majority of cases, we found detailed interview summaries, and clear and concise objectives set for the investigation and sergeant reviews.

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

¹¹ North Wales Police's central referral unit (CRU) is the single point of contact for safeguarding referrals across North Wales both internally (referrals from its protecting vulnerable people unit) and externally (referrals from partner agencies). The core function of the unit is to manage referrals in relation to child protection, protection of vulnerable adults and domestic abuse. Some partners are co-located within the CRU.

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



Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return, 2016 and 2017 Home Office domestic abuse crime data¹⁴

For further information about this data, please see annex A

The force makes correct use of its power of arrest in cases of domestic abuse. For example, the arrest rate for domestic abuse has remained stable despite increases in the use of voluntary attendance¹⁵ and the number of domestic abuse crimes recorded by the force. For every 100 domestic abuse-related offences recorded by North Wales Police in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, there were 47.3 arrests made. This is in line with the England and Wales rate of 45.5 arrests. The force policy

¹² Durham, Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces were unable to provide 2017 domestic abuse arrest data. Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data.

¹³ North Yorkshire Police was unable to provide comparable domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, it has been removed from the graph. For further information, please see annex A.

¹⁴ The Home Office has provided HMICFRS with data on domestic abuse-related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These data are more recent than those published by the Office for National Statistics.

¹⁵ A voluntary attendance is a police station interview when the 'volunteer' attends to assist the police with an investigation and they are not under arrest. Volunteers have the right to access independent legal advice and are free to leave the police station at any time unless and until they are arrested.

mandates the use of body-worn video cameras in all cases involving domestic abuse. During the inspection, we found that the footage was consistently used to pursue evidence-led prosecutions, or to help build a stronger case.

The force shares information about immediate safeguarding actions with its external partner organisations, and with other forces, where appropriate. This is conducted by the CRU, and means that immediate safeguarding actions can be tailored to the needs of vulnerable victims. HMICFRS found good evidence that local neighbourhood teams were involved with the longer-term safeguarding of vulnerable victims. These teams are aware of high-risk domestic abuse offenders and registered sex offenders in relation to the targeting of vulnerable people. They share this information regularly with the force's partner organisations.

Mental health

North Wales Police's approach towards the assessment and management of risk for people with mental health conditions is adequate. The force recognises the extra demand, and understands that the police service is taking an increasing role in supporting people with mental health problems. Working with partner organisations, it has developed processes at senior and local levels to provide a more effective service for these people. However, as mentioned, the force's command and control system has only a limited ability to record all types of vulnerability, including those relating to mental health problems. As a result, the number of recorded incidents flagged with mental health concerns in North Wales is low in comparison with other forces in England and Wales. This means there is a risk that the force is under-recording mental health cases. The force is aware of these recording problems and is updating its telephone system at a cost of £2.3m. Despite the current limitations, HMICFRS found that officers and staff in the control room have a good understanding of the importance of taking immediate action wherever necessary to protect people with mental health conditions.

Good processes are in place to assess mental health, helping staff to make effective decisions. Call handlers follow a structured process to assess mental health risk, based on threat, harm and risk. HMICFRS found effective quality assurance processes in place to ensure that call handlers' assessments of vulnerability and risk are accurate. Frontline officers also undertake an assessment of risk, based on threat, harm and risk at the initial response. They complete a separate vulnerability assessment, which ensures that mental health is considered as a priority. We observed a high level of scrutiny and supervision of all immediate safeguarding actions and risk assessments.

While frontline staff understand their responsibilities, trained medical professionals are also available to help them identify and assist those people that may require additional or specialist support. For example, medical professionals from the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST) are co-located in the force control centre. The

force is working also with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) to co-locate mental health professionals in the force control centre. At present, this resource only operates at times of seasonal high demand, such as at Christmas and New Year. Specialist officers also have access to trained medical professionals; a local authority mental health professional works in the protecting vulnerable people unit. Although the force does not have a mental health policy (this was in draft form at the time of the inspection), all officers and staff have access to mental health guidance documents. Officers to whom we spoke during the inspection felt confident that they can identify mental health cases and provide appropriate safeguarding. All control room staff have received mental health training from Diverse Cymru (a Welsh equality charity). Since October 2017, the force mental health lead, who is also a registered mental health nurse, has been training new control room staff. The force is in the process of supplying all officers and staff with mental health training; at the time of the inspection, 40 percent of frontline officers had received some form of training. All new officers receive training in mental health on joining the force.

North Wales Police does not have a permanent mental health triage scheme in place, other than at times of high demand, when mental health professionals are based in the force control room. Mental health triage is a partnership scheme between police and mental health professionals to provide advice and support for people experiencing mental health crisis. At present, WAST clinicians supply immediate mental health support and advice. However, the force is working with BCUHB and other partner organisations to establish a permanent mental health triage scheme. This follows evaluation of a street triage pilot in Wrexham, which noted the benefits that mental health professionals provide in terms of immediate access to patient information and advice. In addition, the victim help centre has a mental health and wellbeing manager who is responsible for vulnerable victims of crime in which mental health has been identified as a factor. They work in partnership with North Wales Police and local health boards to provide a triage service in cases involving mental health concerns.

HMICFRS is concerned that North Wales Police is detaining a high number of individuals using section 136 of the Mental Health Act¹⁶, and in particular a high number of children. The force is detaining more adults and children using section 136 than most forces in England and Wales. The force has analysed its use of section 136, and while hospital admission was not required in 65 percent of the

¹⁶ Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 enables a police officer to remove, from a place other than where they live, someone who they believe to be experiencing a mental health crisis and in need of immediate care and control, and take them to a place of safety (for example, a health or social care facility, or the home of a relative or friend). In exceptional circumstances (for example, if the person's behaviour would pose an unmanageably high risk to others), the place of safety may be police custody. Section 136 also states that the purpose of detention is to enable the person to be assessed by a doctor and an approved mental health professional (for example, a specially trained social worker or nurse), and for the making of any necessary arrangements for treatment or care.

cases it examined, the majority of individuals received some form of treatment or support. HMICFRS found that most such detentions occur in the evenings or weekends, which is when access to out-of-hours mental health services is reduced. Partner organisations told us that the force had limited options when trying to identify local health or social care facilities in North Wales and, as a result, police had little choice but to convey adults and children to hospital, using section 136. Notwithstanding such issues, specific to North Wales, HMICFRS encourages North Wales Police to continue to work with its partner organisations to find a solution to the excessive use of section 136 detentions.

Investigating crimes involving vulnerable people

North Wales Police investigates offences involving vulnerable victims to a good standard. It allocates crimes appropriately to specialist staff within protecting vulnerable people units or CID. HMICFRS found that these officers and staff receive the right levels of training and are accredited to the correct level to investigate crimes involving vulnerable victims effectively. This is encouraging progress since 2016, when we found that some crimes were being allocated to officers and staff who did not have suitable levels of training. Both the file review and the inspection found the force was effective in investigating crimes involving vulnerable people and there was a good focus on identifying offenders and bringing them to justice. We also found evidence of good victim care throughout the investigation.

In general, the workloads of investigative staff are manageable. However, we found that some rape cases were being passed from the specialist rape team (Amethyst unit) to CID officers owing to a temporary shortfall in numbers in Amethyst. This may explain why no plan was recorded in three of the ten rape cases HMICFRS reviewed in July 2017 that required an investigation plan. However, we were reassured during the inspection to find that the quality of inspections that the Amethyst unit undertakes is very good; investigative plans were provided in all the cases we examined. We were also reassured to find that, when cases were passed from specialist units to CID, those officers had the right skills and capacity to undertake effective investigations.

North Wales Police makes some use of legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse, such as domestic violence protection orders (DVPOs).¹⁷ The number of DVPOs applied for in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 was 90; for the same period in 2016 the figure was 29. This is encouraging progress since 2016, when we said that the force needed to review its use of DVPOs to ensure that it was making the best

¹⁷ Domestic violence protection notices (DVPNs) may be issued by an authorised police officer to prevent a suspected perpetrator from returning to a victim's home and/or contacting the victim. Following the issue of the DVPN, the police must apply to magistrates for a domestic violence protection order (DVPO). The DVPO will be granted for a period of up to 28 days.

use of these powers to safeguard victims of domestic abuse. However, disclosures under Clare's Law¹⁸ for both the 'right to know' and the 'right to ask' are lower than the England and Wales rate.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, North Wales Police recorded 1,003 charged / summonsed outcomes for domestic abuse-related offences. This represents a charged / summonsed rate of 16.4 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences in North Wales. This is a decrease of 24.8 percent compared to the 12 months to 30 June 2016. However, the rate of charged / summonsed in North Wales is in line with the England and Wales rate of 18.6.

The force has conducted analysis to understand why the number of recorded cases of domestic abuse has risen without any corresponding increase in arrests. One of the force's possible explanations is that it may be recording more crime from the same number of public calls as a result of improved use of threat, harm and risk assessments at the initial contact. Other routes for the recording of crime have also improved, resulting in the identification of additional crimes from existing incidents, recording offences and third-party reports.

Another hypothesis is that arrest numbers have remained largely consistent despite additional crimes being recorded because they are additionally disclosed, historical or are third-party referrals, and are less likely to result in an arrest; this supports evidence that the number of arrests is not increasing in proportion to the number of domestic abuse cases recorded. The force has also taken note of national trends on the largest component of domestic abuse, violence without injury, which indicate that such increases are not isolated to North Wales Police but are part of a national picture of increased reporting.

North Wales Police manages sex offenders effectively through multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA);¹⁹ the force's partner organisations are fully involved in the process. The number of cases managed with partner groups through MAPPA has increased since 1 July 2016. As of 1 July 2017, the force was managing 823 registered sex offenders (RSOs). This is a decrease of 21 percent since 1 July 2016. The number of cases awaiting assessment has also fallen over the same period, from 132 to 20 as at 1 July 2017. This reflects positive action that the force has taken following the decision to recruit additional staff to manage RSOs.

¹⁸ Clare's Law, or the domestic violence disclosure scheme, has two functions: the 'right to ask' the police about a partner's previous history of domestic abuse or violent acts; and the 'right to know' – police can proactively disclose information in prescribed circumstances.

¹⁹ 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.

During the inspection, HMICFRS found good evidence that the process of managing RSOs is now subject to closer scrutiny and intervention. For example, officers working in the force's police online investigation team apply routinely for serious offences protection orders and sexual harm prevention orders to protect members of the public in North Wales from sexual offenders. Frontline officers told us they are aware of RSOs in their areas as a result of effective daily management meetings and other sources of intelligence, and that they took an active part in monitoring and managing them. The force was also able to provide figures on the number of serious further offences committed by offenders managed by the force and its partner organisations.

Partnership working

North Wales Police works well with partner agencies (such as local authorities, or health and education services) to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people. It is also working with partner organisations to secure the arrest of those who seek to exploit vulnerable people. For example, the force is working with Border Force, Immigration Enforcement, British Red Cross, housing associations and others to develop its understanding of modern slavery. This activity resulted in a number of arrests in April 2017. The force has piloted the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)²⁰ model in one local authority area. However, due to partner agencies' IT problems, and as a result of difficulties in persuading all of the local authorities to participate in the scheme, the force has established the CRU at its headquarters in Colwyn Bay. This is now the single point of contact for safeguarding referrals across North Wales, both internally (protecting vulnerable people unit referrals), and externally (safeguarding referrals from partner agencies). The force's involvement with partner agencies via the CRU – and through other processes, such as the victim help centre – is effective in identifying vulnerable people and in providing them with support and safeguarding. The force is also working with partner agencies to prevent crime and support those people who are vulnerable by participating in local intervention teams.

²⁰ A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) is a location in which staff from the police, local authority and other safeguarding agencies share data, research and decision making about local children and adults who are vulnerable; the purpose is to ensure a timely and joined-up response for children and vulnerable adults who require protection.

HMICFRS found that established multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) processes are in place across North Wales.²¹ Specialists involved in the MARAC include local independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs).²² In the 12 months to 31 March 2017, North Wales discussed 26 cases at MARAC per 10,000 adult females. This represents a decrease of 17.6 percent, when compared to the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The number of cases discussed is low in comparison with most other forces in England and Wales; SafeLives (the national charity working to stop domestic abuse) estimates there would be 40 cases of high-risk domestic abuse for every 10,000 adult females. We found that the force was not referring all high-risk domestic abuse cases to the MARAC. Officers and staff in the protecting vulnerable people unit undertake a pre-screening exercise with the IDVAs to determine which high-risk cases should go forward for consideration at the MARAC. Given the low number of cases being referred, our concern is that some high-risk domestic abuse cases that would benefit from wider discussion at the MARAC are being screened out.

Area for improvement

- The force should ensure that all high-risk domestic abuse cases are referred to multi-agency risk assessment conferences, so that victims receive the support they need.

²¹ A multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, independent domestic violence advisors, probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

²² Independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs) are trained specialists who provide a service to victims, who are at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members, with the aim of securing their safety and the safety of their children; they are also known as independent domestic violence advocates.

Specialist capabilities

Ungraded

National policing responsibilities

*The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)*²³ specifies six national threats: terrorism, cyber-crime, public order, civil emergencies, child sexual abuse and serious and organised crime.

North Wales Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. The force has assessed its capability to respond to the six national threats included in the SPR. This responsibility rests with the assistant chief constable. In addition, a senior manager has been assigned to monitor each of the threats and they report frequently to the assistant chief constable. These arrangements are also subject to annual scrutiny by the police and crime commissioner.

The force has established a comprehensive training programme. Training exercises are routinely completed with other organisations to examine their joint response to civil emergencies and other disasters. The force has recently completed an exercise with the health service, the army and local authorities to test its response to a marauding terrorist firearms attack.

Firearms capability

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

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of organised crime groups or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. *The Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*²⁴ makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of armed policing. The code stipulates that a chief officer be designated to

²³ The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary. It sets out the latest national threats and appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter them. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from police forces, national agencies or other partners. *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

²⁴ *Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*, Home Office, 2003.

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

North Wales Police has joint arrangements with Cheshire Constabulary to provide armed policing. The force also shares firearms training facilities with forces in the North West of England. The force has an adequate understanding of the potential harm facing the public. It shares an APSTRA, which determines the forces' training needs, with other forces in the region. This APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code and the College of Policing guidance;²⁵ it was published in June 2017.

However, the purpose of an APSTRA goes beyond the identification of a force's training requirements. HMICFRS would expect to see an assessment of the threats and risks in each force area, with resources in place to address them. We would advise North Wales Police to develop an APSTRA in conjunction with Cheshire Constabulary; this would bring greater assurance that their joint deployments of armed officers are better aligned to local needs. A chief officer represents all forces in the region in scrutinising the required levels of armed capability and capacity. At the time of the inspection we were encouraged to see that he had extended his responsibilities to include a programme of work to develop APSTRAs for each force area. The programme includes the compilation of a joint APSTRA for North Wales Police and Cheshire Constabulary. We will monitor these developments in future inspection activity in the region.

²⁵ College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on armed policing, available at: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/?s

Annex A – About the data

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

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

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

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

Methodology

Data in the report

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

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

Population

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

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

Survey of police staff

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

Ipsos MORI survey of public attitudes towards policing

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

The findings of this survey are available on our website:

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

Review of crime files

HMICFRS reviewed 2,700²⁶ police case files across crime types for:

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

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

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

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

Force in numbers

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

Calls for assistance (including those for domestic abuse)

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

Recorded crime and crime outcomes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anti-social behaviour

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

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

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

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

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

Domestic abuse

Data relating to domestic abuse-flagged offences is obtained through the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These are more recent data than those previously published by Office for National Statistics. The Home Office collects these data regularly and requires all forces to record accurately and flag domestic abuse crimes. Domestic abuse flags should be applied in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules²⁷ to ensure consistency across forces, and within published data sets.

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

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

www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2017

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

²⁷ Home Office Counting Rules are rules in accordance with which crime data – required to be submitted to the Home Secretary under sections 44 and 45 of the Police Act 1996 – must be collected. They set down how the police service in England and Wales must record crime, how crimes must be classified according to crime type and categories, whether and when to record crime, how many crimes to record in respect of a single incident and the regime for the re-classification of crimes as no-crimes.

Organised crime groups (OCGs)

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

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

Figures in the report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

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

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

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

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please see 'Organised crime groups' above.

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

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