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PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of Nottinghamshire Police



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

Overall judgment¹



HMIC judges that Nottinghamshire Police is good overall at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The force works well to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and to prevent offending and there are strong local partnership arrangements in place to support this work. The force's approach to investigating crime has improved overall, but the way it supports some vulnerable victims requires improvement,² particularly its services to protect vulnerable children and victims of domestic abuse. The force is good at disrupting the activity of organised crime groups. This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their overall effectiveness so comparison of their year-on-year effectiveness is not possible.

Summary

HMIC judges that Nottinghamshire Police is good overall at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Nottinghamshire Police has a strong focus on the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. Staff throughout the organisation understand the importance of tackling these issues and there are strong partnership arrangements in place which bring local partners together to work jointly. The police and partners have a shared commitment to directing activities to areas of greatest risk. The force has a guiding principle to support neighbourhood policing and ensure it is making the most impact on preventing crime.

The way the force is investigating crime is changing. It has improved the quality of investigation and when a crime has occurred it makes sure most victims are safe and keeps them informed about how their cases are progressing. The force works well to identify, investigate and bring to justice repeat and dangerous offenders and to stop them re-offending.

Increasingly the force focuses on so-called hidden crimes such as domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation with a view to protecting the most vulnerable members of the community.

¹ Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate – see Annex A for definitions.

² A vulnerable person is someone who is in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect.

It is increasing the number of specialist staff and officers who investigate these offences but workloads are sometimes still high, putting at risk the service provided to some of the most vulnerable victims.

The force has an in-depth understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime. Supported by highly skilled and experienced staff and a good relationship with the East Midlands Special Operations Unit, which provides additional specialist skills and resources, the force is good at disrupting the activity of organised crime groups.

The leadership has strong oversight of the force's ability to respond to national threats, such as terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. Its own arrangements for ensuring it can meet its national obligations in this regard (such as planning, testing and exercising) are good.

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



Good

Nottinghamshire Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. Although crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Nottinghamshire remain higher than those seen in England and Wales as a whole, the area has seen a relatively large reduction in crime since 2010. HMIC found a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing, but a planned reduction in the number of police and community support officers (PCSOs) means some preventative work may be at risk.

The force has strong partnership arrangements to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and effective processes enable it to assess the extent of current and emerging threats and risks to its communities. The police and partner agencies have a shared commitment to

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?



Good

Nottinghamshire Police has made progress and is generally good at investigating crime and managing offenders. Since HMIC's 2014 crime inspection, the quality of investigations has improved. Investigations are generally carried out by the right staff with the right levels of skills and qualifications and there is better monitoring and supervision.

The force has also made some progress in addressing HMIC's previous concern about the quality of some public protection investigations. The force has reviewed the way it is structured to ensure that vulnerable victims are given the right level of support. It has plans to increase the number of staff in specialist units. However, there are still high workloads in some specialist public protection teams and significant gaps in

directing activities to areas of greatest risk and tackling the crimes that matter most to local people. The force has the right processes in place alongside a range of powers and tactics to work together with partner organisations to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

In the 2014 crime inspection HMIC recommended that the force needed to improve the way it learned from what works and shared good practice. There has been some improvement with the force working towards an evidence-based policing approach to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, however, the new database of 'what works' is not widely known and is therefore not used by frontline staff.

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



Requires improvement

Nottinghamshire Police generally provides a good service in identifying and assessing the risks to vulnerable people. The force works well in partnership with other organisations. However, we found some areas where improvement is needed to ensure that the force can provide the best possible service to keep safe vulnerable people, particularly children.

accreditation for temporary detectives and constables. The force recognises this and has established a training and accreditation plan for these staff.

Forensic and digital specialists are used effectively to support investigations, although some backlogs do exist for phone investigation.

Arrangements for identifying and managing offenders to prevent them from re-offending is good and the force works well with other organisations to provide support to prevent re-offending.

How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?



Good

Nottinghamshire Police is good at identifying and tackling serious and organised crime groups in its area. This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

When frontline officers identify a victim is vulnerable, they generally provide good safeguarding for the victim, however, we sometimes found confusion as to whether a risk assessment or a child referral needs to take place. We also found backlogs in assessments, some involving children, awaiting referral to other organisations.

The force has improved its approach to tackling domestic abuse but still has work to do. In addition, it has decided not to refer all cases assessed as high risk to multi-agency risk assessment conferences.

The force responds well to missing and absent children, however, it is not yet sufficiently prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation. The force is planning to increase the number of staff in the public protection team but it needs to ensure that staff are fully trained and skilled in dealing with vulnerable victims. In addition, the force has only provided limited training to staff in frontline roles on domestic abuse, missing and absent children and child sexual exploitation.

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime, and an effective multi-agency response to it, including work to prevent people from becoming involved.

The force needs to further develop its local profile for serious and organised crime with partners. Raising awareness among frontline officers and staff on organised crime group activity in their local areas is also needed to ensure co-ordinated and better intelligence.

The force has its own specialist officers to tackle serious and organised crime and it has access to an extensive range of specialist policing capabilities provided by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit.

The leadership has strong oversight of the force's ability to respond to national threats, such as terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. Its own arrangements for ensuring it can meet its national obligations in this regard (such as planning, testing and exercising) are good.

Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015

Nottinghamshire Police

287

England and Wales

350



Crime

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015

Nottinghamshire Police

66.3

England and Wales

63.0

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

Nottinghamshire Police

61.4

England and Wales

60.3

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2014 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

Nottinghamshire Police

+7.9%

England and Wales

+4.5%

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2010 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

Nottinghamshire Police

-20.9%

England and Wales

-12.6%



Charge rate

Charge rate as a percentage of all crimes recorded (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2015

Nottinghamshire Police

19.5%

England and Wales

16.0%

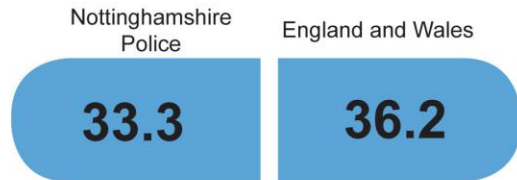


Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015



Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

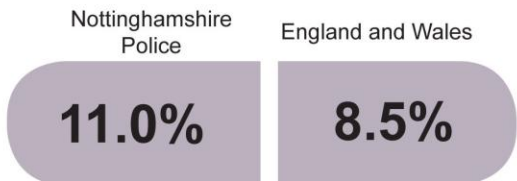


Domestic abuse

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



Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2014



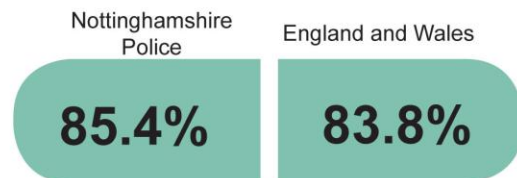
Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015



Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015



Introduction

The public expects their local police force to:

- Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and, when crime occurs, to investigate it properly and provide support to victims.
- Use appropriately trained officers and staff and approved practice when investigating crime, gathering evidence and building cases to ensure offenders are brought to justice.
- Support victims of crime by responding to calls for service, identifying and putting in place the right help at the first point of contact, keeping them informed and consulting them about the possible outcomes of their case.
- Ensure that vulnerable people who might not have been a victim of crime are identified and given appropriate support, for example people at risk of domestic abuse, children at risk of sexual exploitation and missing or absent children.
- Understand and be prepared to respond to threats beyond their own force boundaries, including national threats such as terrorism, serious and organised crime and cyber-crime.
- Work effectively with local partner organisations and other bodies to prevent all types of crime and re-offending and to protect the public.

HMIC's annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) consider whether forces keep people safe and reduce crime (how effective a force is), whether these activities are being carried out at the most appropriate cost (how efficient a force is), and how forces are ensuring they have the confidence of their communities (the public legitimacy of a force).

All forces are subject to significant cost reductions; this is reflected in our efficiency reports published in October 2015. The judgments we are making in this effectiveness report are made understanding the financial challenges forces are facing. Reports on the efficiency and legitimacy of Nottinghamshire Police are available from the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/).

HMIC's effectiveness inspections make an assessment of how well forces are preventing and investigating crime and anti-social behaviour; tackling serious and organised crime; and protecting victims and those who are vulnerable. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and are the principal measures by which the public will judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

Our effectiveness inspection focused on the overall question: "How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?"

To answer this question we looked at four in-depth questions, three of which are discussed in more detail within this report:³

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?
2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?
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, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

During our inspection, we collected data from forces, reviewed case files and surveyed the public to seek their views on the effectiveness of the force. We also surveyed and interviewed representatives from partner organisations to gather evidence about the effectiveness of their working relationships with the force. We interviewed chief constables and chief officers and held focus groups of officers and staff at all grades and ranks. We also made numerous unannounced visits to police stations to talk to frontline officers and staff about their work. This report sets out the findings from this wide-ranging inspection of Nottinghamshire Police.

³ HMIC inspected forces on questions 1, 2 and 4 between September and November 2015. Question 3 was inspected between June and August 2015, and a separate report was published in December 2015 (available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-nottinghamshire/). In 2014, in preparation for the PEEL programme, forces were inspected to assess how effective they are at cutting crime (available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/crime-inspection-force-reports/).

How effective is the force at preventing crime and 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 can be cheaper and more effective than investigating crime, and it makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other statutory and non-statutory bodies have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter is therefore dependent on their ability to work closely with other partner organisations to understand local problems and have access to a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Nottinghamshire?

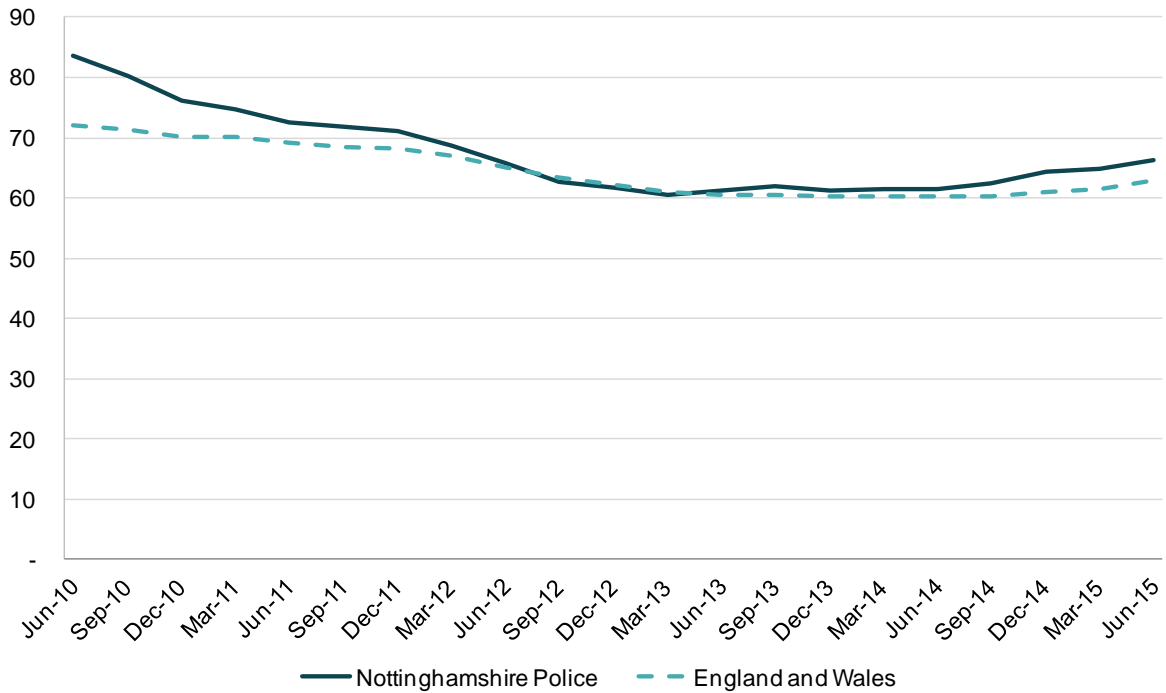
Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a comparable indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (e.g. theft) and non victim-based crime (e.g. possession of drugs). More than two-thirds of forces showed an annual increase in total police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to 30 June 2015. 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 national inspection of crime data in 2014.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2010, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015 fell by 21 percent in Nottinghamshire compared with a reduction of 13 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime (i.e. crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 21 percent in Nottinghamshire, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Nottinghamshire increased by 8 percent for the 12 months to 30 June 2015. This is compared with an increase of 4 percent across England and Wales over the same period.

Figure 1: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2015



Source: Home Office data

The force attributes some of the increase in crime over the last 12 months, to its new approach of making greater use of data from different partner agencies. For example, previously unreported current and historic crimes identified in data provided by health and social services are now recorded, and this in part, explains the increases in crime.

The volume 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. Figure 2 shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Nottinghamshire (per 1,000 population) compared with England and Wales.

Figure 2: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015

Rates per 1,000 population	Nottinghamshire Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	66.3	63.0
Victim-based crime	59.6	56.0
Sexual offences	1.8	1.6
Assault with injury	8.5	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	8.5	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	33.9	32.9

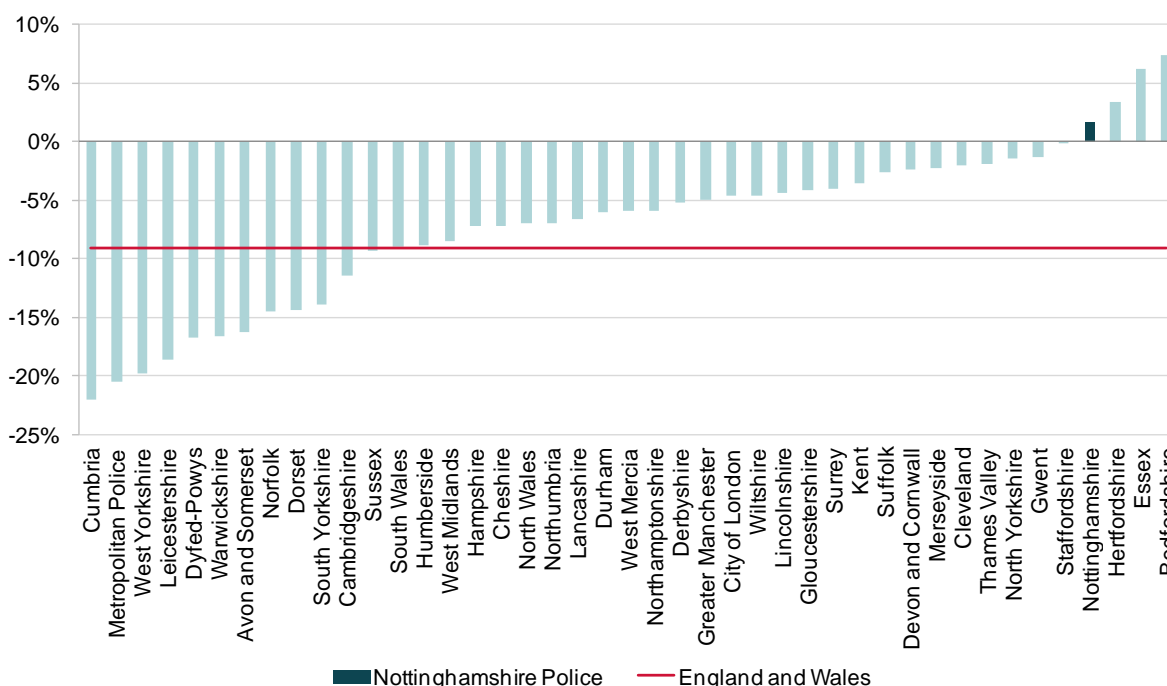
Source: Home Office data, HMIC data return

*Anti-social behaviour data is from the force’s data return and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.

HMIC has chosen these types of crime to indicate offending levels in the force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police recorded crime rates only.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2015, Nottinghamshire Police recorded 37,785 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 2 percent more incidents than the force recorded during the previous 12 months. When considering all forces across England and Wales, there were 9 percent fewer incidents in the 12 months to 30 June 2015, than recorded during the previous 12 months.

Figure 3: Percentage change in the volume of anti-social behaviour incidents, by force, comparing the 12 months to 30 June 2015 with the 12 months to 30 June 2014



Source: HMIC data collection

How well does the force work to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

How well is the force prioritising the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour?

Nottinghamshire Police is focused on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, reducing offending and supporting victims. The force's annual assessment looks at and agrees the priorities for the year ahead. Current force priorities reflect the police and crime commissioner's police and crime plan priorities to reduce violent crime, which has the highest physical and psychological harm on individuals, and to combat crime in an increasingly digitised world.

Current and predicted high level threats to the communities of Nottinghamshire are risk assessed using a variety of police data sources including the results from the force's and the police and crime commissioner's surveys. Partners from, for example, the local authorities and representatives from community safety partnership groups, are involved in setting strategic priorities. This understanding of current and future risk helps to ensure that police and partner resources are directed at the areas of greatest risk and need.

Analysts provide performance information at force, departmental, team and individual level to ensure resources are in the right place. Regular meetings take place to check crime priorities are current against new and emerging information. Monitoring of progress against priorities, takes place on a daily, weekly and monthly basis which means senior leaders are aware of what is happening across the force and identify emerging issues. A monthly performance board, chaired by the assistant chief constable, identifies longer term trends and patterns, scrutinises operations and focuses on problem solving.

Officers and staff understand the importance of the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. There are daily briefings that help ensure officers and staff know their priorities, understand those in the community who are most vulnerable and identify opportunities to gather intelligence. There is a monthly local crime and disorder meeting, attended by the neighbourhood team along with council and partner agencies, to look specifically at tackling anti-social behaviour and intervening earlier to stop problems escalating.

How well are resources allocated to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

Resources are allocated effectively to communities to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. As soon as a call for police help is received, customer service assistants in the control room use the national decision model,⁴

⁴ The national decision model (NDM) is specific to policing. It provides a consistent framework in which decisions can be examined and challenged, both at the time and afterwards. It is composed of six main elements: the police code of ethics being central to the decision; gather information; assess threat and risk; consider powers and force policy; identify options; and, take action and review what happened.

which considers the threat, harm and risk posed to the victim. Calls decided as a high priority are dealt with immediately by response officers. How the force responds to other victims has changed and a dedicated team works alongside control room staff to help resolve and investigate crimes and incidents at the first point of contact.

Neighbourhood officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) are involved in both traditional areas of crime prevention, for example, by providing household security advice, as well as identifying crime patterns to be able to prevent further problems. They refer people who are the victims of anti-social behaviour to meetings, which involve community safety partners, to help solve problems. For vulnerable people who may need extra support, there are further panel meetings that focus on solving their specific crime and anti-social behaviour problems. While response officers do not work as closely with partners, they are generally well briefed to patrol crime hotspots and use their powers to stop and search people suspected of being involved in criminal activity where appropriate, for example, in areas suffering from high rates of burglary.

HMIC found a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing but a planned reduction in the number of PCSOs means this work may be at risk. There are advanced plans to re-structure neighbourhood teams to better reflect the needs of different communities with the aim of allocating the right officer resources and directing the remaining PCSOs to those areas with the highest need. Demand profiling has been conducted to fully understand where the most impact can be made on preventing crime with limited resources.

How well is the force using a broad range of effective tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

Nottinghamshire Police uses a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and reduce anti-social behaviour, such as:

- campaigns, for example, the ‘alliance against violence’;
- joint anti-social behaviour patrols with community protection officers employed by the city council;
- community triggers;⁵
- use of CCTV and neighbourhood alert messaging; and
- restorative justice and mediation initiatives.

The force also uses its extensive police powers, including civil injunctions. For example, between October 2014 and June 2015 the force issued 41 criminal behaviour orders, 280 dispersal notices and 82 direction to leave notices.⁶

⁵ The community trigger gives victims of anti-social behaviour the ability to demand action, starting with a review of their case. The focus of a community trigger case review is on bringing agencies together to take a more joined-up, problem-solving approach to find a solution for the victim.

Nottinghamshire Police undertakes analysis to check how its performance compares with other forces and to help it better identify which approaches are most effective. There are several examples of specific operations designed to deal with longer-term problems, for example, street drinkers and tackling violent crime in the city area. The force also works well with partners in activities to divert offenders away from criminality with local problem-solving plans reviewed and outcomes evaluated.

In the 2014 crime inspection, HMIC recommended that the force put methods in place to review and evaluate the benefits of current and new tactics and initiatives, and capture and share learning and good practice. Progress is being made and the force is working towards an evidence-based policing approach to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. While there is good evidence of a wide variety of police related tactics being used across the force, the recently re-launched problem-solving database, essentially a library of 'what works', is not well known and is therefore not widely used by frontline staff. A check of the database did not find any problem-solving initiatives entered on it. This limits how well officers and staff can identify effective tactics to tackle specific crime and anti-social behaviour problems. Neighbourhood inspectors do share good practice and discuss a broad range of tactics at meetings but this expertise and knowledge is not yet accessible to all.

How well does the force work with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

How committed is the force to working with partner organisations?

The force has strong arrangements to bring together all principal partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. It is strongly committed to preventative activity across a range of functions and areas, such as domestic abuse, offender management, tackling organised crime groups, and addressing mental health issues. Senior police leaders play an important role in working with other organisations, for example, the chief constable chairs the local resilience forum and the assistant chief constable attends the Nottinghamshire safeguarding board. There is a commitment to tackling joint crime prevention priorities and resolving community issues together.

This investment of time and resource in working with partner organisations, with their additional skills, powers and resources, means the force is effective at keeping people safe in their everyday lives, and solving problems as and when they occur.

⁶ The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 includes two new measures which are designed to give victims and communities a say in the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with: Community Trigger and Community Remedy as well as early and informal interventions such as Civil injunction; Criminal behaviour order; Dispersal power; Community protection notice; Public spaces protection order; and Closure power.

Officers and staff describe partnership working as being well established; they recognise that co-locating teams has been a major contributor to effective working relationships. Staff from partner organisations value the effective working relationships with Nottinghamshire Police, which they describe as positive and productive.

There are mature and constructive relationships with key professionals in other agencies which creates the right environment for effective joint work. In particular, the long-standing partnership with the city council's community protection directorate has benefited from the secondment of a number of police officers and staff. Together they work efficiently and effectively pooling resources and using the full range of civil and criminal powers available to them, for example, anti-social behaviour co-ordinators, trading standards and alcohol licensing experts.

How well does the force share and use information with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

There are effective partnership arrangements in place to share information appropriately with statutory and voluntary partners and there is a formal, information-sharing protocol in place. There are generally good arrangements with partner agencies to keep victims safe. The force continues to improve working practices through its multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and domestic abuse referral unit. A number of teams, for example, anti-social behaviour co-ordinators and neighbourhood teams are co-located at other local authority and police buildings which ensures decisions are made with partners and enables closer working relationships towards providing a more victim-focused service.

The police and crime commissioner has invested in an online case management system which is increasingly being used by both the police and local partner organisations to share information, carry out joint risk assessments and capture subsequent partnership activity. Progress is being made with the rollout of the system although this has been slow. Once complete, it is expected to provide the force, as well as partners, with clearer information that can be used to tackle anti-social behaviour issues.

How well is the force working with partner organisations to keep people safe and tackle anti-social behaviour in local neighbourhoods?

Nottinghamshire Police engages well and works innovatively with partners to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. HMIC saw good examples of joint working including;

- tackling business crime: for example, examining alcohol licensing issues and how this affects violent crime as part of the night-time economy;
- crime prevention and joined-up enforcement: for example, a nine-year partnership between the Nottingham city police division and city council community protection directorate to provide a more seamless and single point of contact for the public;

- preventing and reducing offending of urban street gang members: for example, by diversionary activity within schools aimed at ending gang and youth violence as well as spotting the early signs of organised crime group activity and vulnerable offenders who may themselves become victims of crime;
- reducing burglaries: for example, Operation Graduate to safeguard the student community of Nottingham who have intermittently been the target of burglars. This activity has been conducted in partnership with the city council and has been successful in reducing the number of these crimes being committed against the student community; and
- tackling violent crime associated with Nottingham city's thriving night-time economy: for example, through pub watch schemes and exclusion orders.

Summary of findings



Good

Nottinghamshire Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. Although crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Nottinghamshire remain higher than those seen in England and Wales as a whole, the area has seen a relatively large reduction in crime since 2010. HMIC found a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing, but a planned reduction in the number of police and community support officers (PCSOs) means some preventative work may be at risk.

The force has strong partnership arrangements to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and effective processes enable it to assess the extent of current and emerging threats and risks to its communities. The police and partner agencies have a shared commitment to directing activities to areas of greatest risk and tackling the crimes that matter most to local people. The force has the right processes in place alongside a range of powers and tactics to work together with partner organisations to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

In the 2014 crime inspection HMIC recommended that the force needed to improve the way it learned from what works and shared good practice. There has been some improvement with the force working towards an evidence-based policing approach to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, however, the new database of 'what works' is not widely known and is therefore not used by frontline staff.

Areas for improvement

- The force should evaluate tactics and share effective practice routinely – both internally and with partners – to continually improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour.

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?

When a crime occurs, the public must have confidence that the police will investigate it effectively, take their concerns as victims seriously, 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. The risk posed by those who are identified as being the most prolific or dangerous offenders must also be properly managed (in partnership with other organisations), to minimise the chances of continued harm to individuals and communities.

HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well the force allocates and investigates both complex and non-complex (e.g., burglary, robbery and assault) crime, including the full range of ways police officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations (these include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as digital sweeps to find evidence of online abuse, for instance).

We also looked at how well the force works with partners to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, and dangerous and sexual offenders.

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 'sanction detections', the new outcomes framework gives a fuller picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime. The new broader framework (now containing twenty 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.

Given the work involved in amending police force crime-recording systems to accommodate fully the new outcomes framework, two forces have not yet been able to provide a full year of data for all new outcomes types. Nottinghamshire Police, however, has been providing the Home Office with full data since April 2014. The complete range of new outcome types will be used in future HMIC inspections, once all forces have provided a full year of data. Figure 4 shows only those outcome types for which full data is available for all forces in England and Wales.

Figure 4: Outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2015 for all police recorded crime (excluding fraud)^{7 8 9}

Outcome type/group	Nottinghamshire Police Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
Charged/Summoned	14,381	19.5	577,678	16.0
Taken into consideration	298	0.4	21,318	0.6
Out-of-court (formal)	2,828	3.8	165,384	4.6
Caution - youths	430	0.6	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	2,193	3.0	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	205	0.3	30,681	0.8
Out-of-court (informal)	3,991	5.4	159,915	4.4
Cannabis/Khat warning	580	0.8	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	3,411	4.6	117,951	3.3

Source: Home Office crime outcomes data

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for a number of reasons. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted, typically including types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in a force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat¹⁰ warning' outcomes would be greater.

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. Nottinghamshire Police has one of the lowest 'penalty notices for disorder' rates of all forces in England and Wales.

⁷ Rate based on number of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015 divided by number of offences recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015.

⁸ For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see *Crime Outcomes in England and Wales 2014/15*, Home Office, London, July 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445753/hosb0115.pdf

⁹ Community resolutions are an out-of-court disposal the police can use to deal with anti-social behaviour and low-level crime. *Taken into consideration* is when an offender admits the commission of other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

¹⁰ 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.

Restorative justice¹¹ and mediation initiatives are used extensively and there are officers seconded to the youth offending teams to work with young people who have been referred from the restorative justice system or from other partners, such as housing and troubled families teams.

How well does the force investigate crime and keep victims safe and informed?

How well does the force initially investigate and allocate cases?

It is important that when the police are called to an incident they respond in a timely manner, with officers or staff who are trained and competent to keep people safe, and who can take steps to apprehend offenders and investigate the circumstances if a crime has occurred. An effective initial response by the police increases the likelihood of a successful outcome for both the victim and the criminal justice system. Subsequent investigation by detectives and other specialist police staff also needs to be well managed and resourced.

Every call for help is assessed on the individual needs of the victim. Customer service assistants in the control room make this initial assessment weighing up the threat and risk to the victim and their vulnerability. They then assign a response officer to every immediate or urgent call. Not all incidents of crime are attended and in appropriate cases the incident is passed to the telephone investigation bureau to carry out a desktop investigation. Sometimes it still proves necessary to attend these incidents and an appointment is made during the next 24-48 hours to see the victim. This new way of working has been evaluated by the force and a high number of incidents are now being investigated by the bureau which reduces demand on the frontline and means these resources can be redirected to other high demand areas such as public protection.

Nottinghamshire Police has well-established processes in place to allocate and investigate cases. All officers attending incidents are trained in initial investigation techniques and evidence gathering. After the initial attendance and primary investigation there are clear processes to allocate and further investigate the crime.

Officers are victim-focused when they attend a call a needs assessment is carried out and a leaflet on the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*¹² given out. Priority victims are identified as those who feel they are vulnerable or intimidated or who are being persistently targeted or who are victims of serious crimes, including hate crime. They receive an enhanced service and support to meet their needs.

¹¹ Restorative justice brings together people harmed by crime or conflict with those responsible for the harm, to find a positive way forward.

¹² *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf

In the 2014 crime inspection, HMIC found room for improvement in the quality of service to victims in Nottinghamshire which included victim contact and its timeliness. The force has made good progress in this area and in April 2015 introduced monthly monitoring of compliance with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* which has shown steady month-on-month improvement. There are dedicated points of contact for the victim who must be regularly updated on progress, more often if needed. This means victims are being kept better informed on progress of investigations.

The force also carries out victim surveys of those who have suffered domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour and these results are used to provide feedback to individual officers. However, there is inconsistency as to when a victim is invited to provide a personal statement to support a prosecution case. HMIC found in Nottinghamshire that investigators typically wait to take these until after the suspect has been charged with an offence or when requested by the Crown Prosecution Service. The force should ensure they are being offered at the initial reporting stage, as required by the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, and if necessary take another one at a later stage.

How well does the force investigate different types of crime?

Nottinghamshire Police has made progress in improving the quality of its investigations. In HMIC's 2014 crime inspection, a number of areas for improvement were identified, including: ensuring officers have the necessary professional skills and expertise; and ensuring supervisors drive up standards through carrying out appropriate monitoring and oversight of investigations. An examination of a sample of non-complex cases showed that all the initial investigative activities are properly completed and there are effective investigative standards in place, including an investigation plan and effective supervisory oversight and direction.

Once allocated, non-complex crimes or volume crimes such as theft, assaults, standard and medium risk domestic abuse cases, fraud and less complex drugs offences are generally assigned to the prisoner handling teams or the criminal investigation department (CID). Separate violence teams working in the CID tackle more complex assault cases and public protection teams deal with crimes such as high risk domestic abuse, child abuse, attempted murder and rape.

Officers and staff investigating more complex and serious crimes in CID demonstrate they carry out effective investigations. We found a satisfactory standard of investigation and supervision in the majority of these crimes and officers involved in investigations demonstrate appropriate skills and training or are working towards an appropriate accreditation. In CID, the force is aware that more needs to be done to ensure there are appropriate accreditation levels in some detective inspector posts but progress is being made to have all police staff investigators appropriately accredited within the next six months.

HMIC found good evidence that showed investigative opportunities are followed up in a timely fashion and that the use of specialist officers with appropriate skills and training to conduct complex investigations means the best outcomes for victims are being achieved.

In the 2014 crime inspection HMIC also recommended that the force take immediate action to ensure public protection cases were conducted in an effective and timely manner by officers and staff with the appropriate accredited skills or the necessary learning and development to fulfil their investigative duties. The force has made some progress and it has reviewed the way it is structured to ensure that vulnerable victims are given the right level of support. At the time of inspection, the force has plans to increase the number of staff in specialist units, including public protection, for example, in domestic abuse teams. However, there are still high workloads being experienced by some teams – for example, rape teams – and there are still significant gaps in accreditation for temporary detectives and constables. This means that crimes related to domestic and child abuse and other vulnerable groups may not be investigated as effectively as possible. The force recognises this and has established a training and accreditation plan for these staff.

The force works collaboratively at a regional level with crime scene investigators (CSIs); there is a common approach for attendance, although discretion can be used by CSIs where it is justified. Forensic specialists are used effectively, appropriately and consistently to support investigations and the full range of forensic opportunities are considered.

There is clear demarcation of regional and force responsibilities in relation to serious and complex crime investigation. All serious crimes such as murder or kidnap are investigated by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU), a regional unit made up of officers from all forces across the region, while specialist teams within the force investigate serious sexual offences, high risk cases of domestic abuse and other complex crimes. Crime managers also oversee all serious offences, including a range of digital offences. Overall, this is an effective division of responsibility, ensuring that appropriately trained officers undertake the most complex investigations.

The force places considerable focus on improving investigations with coaching activity and regular checking by supervisors and managers. Where necessary, crimes are reallocated if it is thought a different investigating officer would be more appropriate. Learning also takes place from serious case and domestic homicide reviews. Recommendations from these reviews are considered and if the learning concerns something that can be immediately implemented it goes on to the lessons learned page on the force intranet. Other longer-term recommendations, such as those from domestic homicides, go to a regional review meeting. Every year all detectives attend a whole day seminar to examine new techniques and discuss new ways of investigating offences.

How well does the force gather digital evidence?

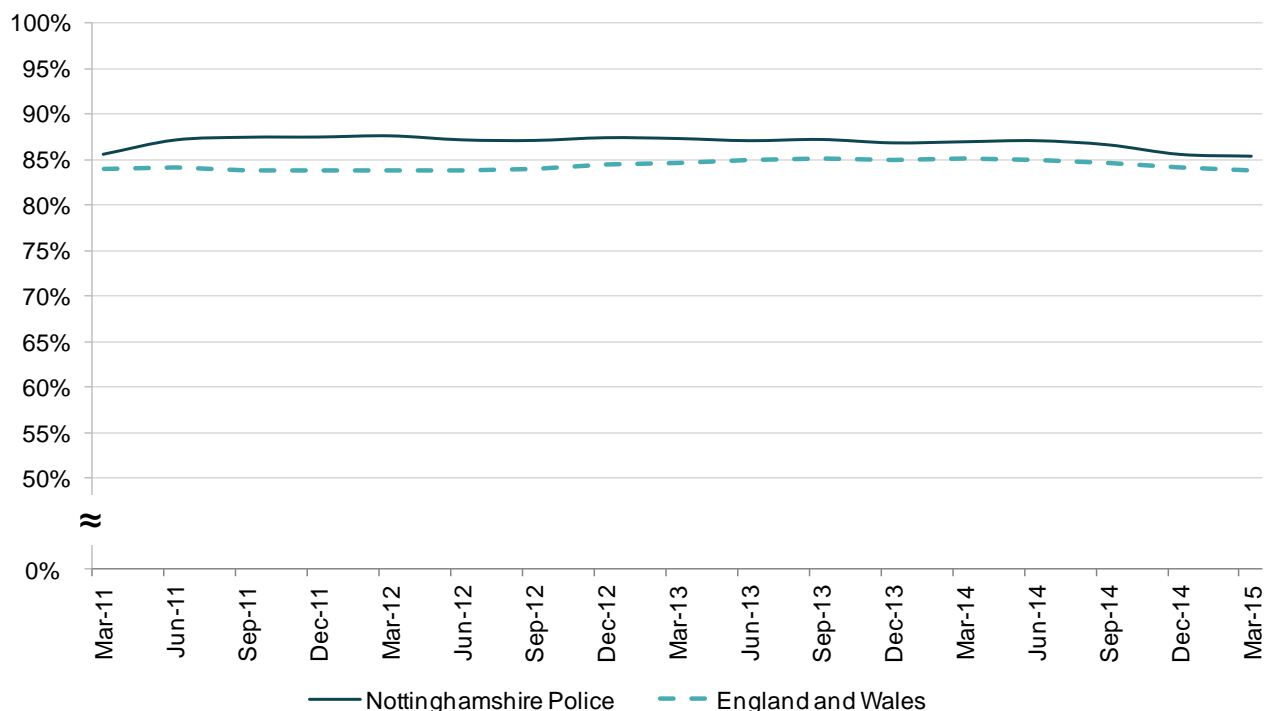
Increasingly, crime in England and Wales is committed online and through the use of digital devices such as tablets, computers or mobile phones. All forces have to retrieve data from these devices and examine them for evidence; staff, in what may be known as high tech crime units (HTCU), carry out these examinations. In Nottinghamshire this unit is known as the digital investigation team.

Nottinghamshire Police has a full range of digital evidence recovery techniques to support investigations. A specialist team of 12 officers and staff, which includes digital media investigators, uses a grading approach in order to prioritise the level of urgency given to any digital submission. Currently, there is a small backlog of lower risk cases of about three months, but all higher risk cases are dealt with quickly if required. There is a planned future increase in the number of staff in the digital investigation team and their working hours are designed to enhance performance and provide better guidance for officers.

How satisfied are victims of crime with the service provided by the force?

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Nottinghamshire in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 85.4 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is higher than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent over the same time period. The victim satisfaction rate in Nottinghamshire for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 is significantly lower than the previous year's rate, while it is broadly in line with the rate for the 12 months to 31 March 2011.

Figure 5: Percentage of victims satisfied with the overall service provided by the police, for the four year period to 31 March 2015



Source: Home Office data provided by forces

The force has conducted research to try to understand this recent significant fall in the victim satisfaction rate which included a review of the telephone investigation bureau. It found that it produces successful outcomes and reduces the workload of frontline officers without a detrimental impact being experienced in victim satisfaction. The force is as yet unable to fully understand the decline and continues to examine the reasons.

How well does the force identify and manage offenders to prevent re-offending?

How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?

The force works well with external agencies, for example, health, fire service and housing providers, to divert offenders away from crime. For example, there are monthly 'vulnerable or complex person panels', run by victim support, where partner organisations can refer an issue to discuss and share information. This enables a joint approach to identify and provide the right support for those offenders who need help to reduce their offending behaviour.

The force has set up a street triage team, which consists of a police officer and a psychiatric nurse; they either attend or give advice at incidents where mental health is a concern. This has resulted in a substantial fall in the cases where people are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983.

In January 2012, Operation Vanguard Plus was set up bringing together expertise from the probation service, police, youth offending teams, housing, social services and other charities such as the Prince's Trust, to tackle the long-standing problem of gangs and gun crime in Nottingham. Offenders and potential offenders are offered lifestyle support and mentoring, training opportunities and help with accommodation and application for benefits. This support network gives offenders greater stability and allows them greater opportunities to make positive lifestyle choices and turn away from crime. The team works closely with the integrated offender management (IOM) team¹³ and puts in place longer-term problem-solving with individuals to divert their criminal activity and break the cycle of re-offending. There are also dedicated PCSOs who work in local primary schools to encourage young people to avoid becoming involved in gang-related activity. HMIC heard many anecdotal examples of offending being stopped as evidence that this team is having a positive impact.

How well does the force deal with repeat offenders?

The force has effective processes in place to identify repeat offenders and prevent them re-offending. An established IOM team is responsible for the management of identified prolific, serious and acquisitive¹⁴ crime offenders. This involves managing offenders who are being released from prison and who need to reintegrate back into the general community or other prolific offenders who, because of the level or nature of their offending, pose a risk to public safety. Each offender on the programme is case managed by a police officer within the IOM who works together with other partner organisations such as the probation service and housing officers to help clients avoid returning to criminality, by assisting and supporting them in adjusting back to community living. The police contribution towards the multi-agency effort to manage offenders and divert them away from crime is described as very effective by partnership representatives.

Like most forces, Nottinghamshire Police has several groups of offenders ranging from serious sexual and violent offenders to prolific burglars. Referrals reflect the national picture and shows that they are predominantly perpetrators of theft, burglary and robbery. The scheme's focus on these crime types limits its ability to support force priorities to keep people safe, as serial violent perpetrators – for example, repeat domestic abuse offenders – are not commonly included. Although some active management of those domestic abuse offenders assessed as posing a high risk is undertaken, the lack of co-ordinated activity with other violent offenders gives limited opportunity for early intervention by police and partner organisations to prevent them re-offending.

¹³ Integrated offender management (IOM) 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.

¹⁴ Serious acquisitive crime is defined as domestic burglary, car crime (theft of a vehicle and theft from a vehicle) and robbery.

The IOM measures its success through reducing reoffending rates. It has been subject to academic review by Nottingham Trent University who identified significant reductions in reoffending rates among some offenders, particularly those prolific shoplifters within the city centre area which has led to a 73 percent reduction in offending. In addition, cases studies looked at by HMIC demonstrate reductions in repeat offending.

How well does the force deal with sexual and other dangerous offenders?

Nottinghamshire Police has effective processes for identifying and monitoring sexual and other dangerous offenders. Such offenders are identified and are now managed by the management of sexual offenders and violence offender unit. The team is also responsible for high risk violent domestic abuse offenders. Since the introduction of a new national risk assessment process, which focuses on present and future risk, the number of sexual offenders assessed as high risk has been reduced. These offenders are suitable for the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) process. This is used by the force and partner organisations, including prisons and probation, to monitor those offenders assessed as presenting a high risk to the public, and to stop them re-offending.

Despite a small increase in staff in the new team, the increase in high-risk violent domestic abuse offenders now means that workloads are high. At the time of inspection it is too early to assess the impact of this increasing workload.

Summary of findings



Good

Nottinghamshire Police has made progress and is generally good at investigating crime and managing offenders. Since HMIC's 2014 crime inspection, the quality of investigations has improved. Investigations are generally carried out by the right staff with the right levels of skills and qualifications and there is better monitoring and supervision.

The force has also made some progress in addressing HMIC's previous concern about the quality of some public protection investigations. The force has reviewed the way it is structured to ensure that vulnerable victims are given the right level of support. It has plans to increase the number of staff in specialist units. However, there are still high workloads in some specialist public protection teams and significant gaps in accreditation for temporary detectives and constables. The force recognises this and has established a training and accreditation plan for these staff.

Forensic and digital specialists are used effectively to support investigations, although some backlogs do exist for phone investigation.

Arrangements for identifying and managing offenders to prevent them from re-offending is good and the force works well with other organisations to provide support to prevent re-offending.

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

This question was inspected between June and August 2015, and the full report was published in December 2015.¹⁵ The following is a summary of the findings.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Protecting vulnerable people is a high priority for Nottinghamshire Police and is reinforced by senior leaders and the police and crime commissioner. The force works well in partnership with other organisations to protect and support many victims. However, HMIC found some areas where improvement is needed to ensure that the force has the necessary capacity and is sufficiently well prepared to provide the best possible service to keep safe vulnerable people, particularly children. HMIC judges that overall, Nottinghamshire Police requires improvement in the way it protects from harm some of the most vulnerable members of its community.

The force has good processes in place to identify repeat and vulnerable victims and generally responds well to them. Officers have a good understanding of vulnerability and the need to provide enhanced levels of service to protect the most vulnerable. Assessments of risk effectively lead police safeguarding activity particularly in the case of missing persons. However, the force has recently changed its approach to completing risk assessments and making referrals to other agencies about children present when a domestic abuse incident takes place. Despite guidance being available to officers, HMIC found confusion among frontline officers about when an assessment or referral form should be completed which leads to an inconsistent response.

The force is working to understand better the scale and nature of crimes involving vulnerable people such as domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation, but it needs to do more to include all relevant information in its analysis to ensure it plans its services based on the full picture. This inspection only considered how well prepared the force is to tackle child sexual exploitation. The force was subject to a child protection inspection and subsequent re-visit by HMIC to establish if progress had been made.

Following a recent review the force is planning to increase the number of staff in specialist units, including public protection, to ensure investigators provide tailored

¹⁵ *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Nottinghamshire Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-nottinghamshire/.

support to victims who are most at risk or are assessed as vulnerable. Although many staff within the specialist units are accredited detectives, there remain gaps in accreditation for temporary detectives and constables. This issue was highlighted in HMIC's domestic abuse inspection in 2014 and it means that crimes relating to domestic abuse victims and other vulnerable groups are still not investigated as effectively as possible by staff with the appropriate skills and levels of understanding. In addition, the force provides training to student officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) on vulnerability issues, such as child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse. Control room and front-office staff have also received domestic abuse training. However, we found limited recent training to all other staff in frontline roles that protect vulnerable people from harm, although computer-based training and guidance is on the force intranet system while the force develops new training programmes.

Nottinghamshire Police has generally good arrangements with partner agencies to keep victims safe and the force is continually seeking to improve working practices. For example, a monthly survey is carried out to monitor levels of satisfaction with police services among victims of domestic abuse and the results used to improve the service provided. The force reports that these satisfaction rates are above 90 percent.

However, the force has decided not to refer all domestic abuse cases assessed as high risk to multi-agency risk assessment conferences, as happens in other forces, and there are different criteria between the county and city areas for those cases that will and will not be considered.

Overall, the force responds well to missing and absent children, however, it is not yet sufficiently prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation; although progress has been made since HMIC's domestic abuse inspection in 2014, the force still has more work to do to tackle domestic abuse.

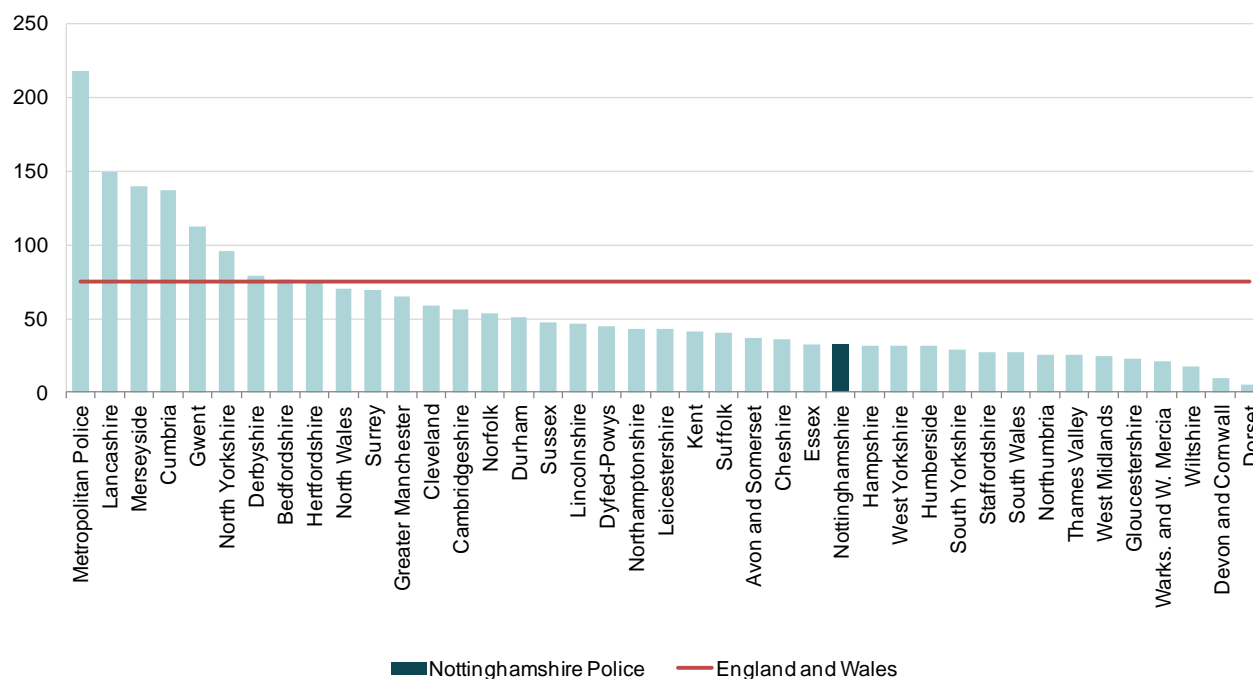
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

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 play a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCUs), the National Crime Agency (NCA) and other partner organisations.

Police forces that are effective tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level. They also use specialist capabilities (for example surveillance and covert policing) where appropriate in order to protect the public from highly sophisticated and rapidly changing organised criminal threats. A number of forces within a regional area often share specialist capabilities as this provides better value for money and is a more efficient way of working.

As at 30 June 2015, Nottinghamshire Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 36 organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents 32 OCGs per one million of the population.

Figure 6: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 30 June 2015^{16 17}



Source: HMIC data collection

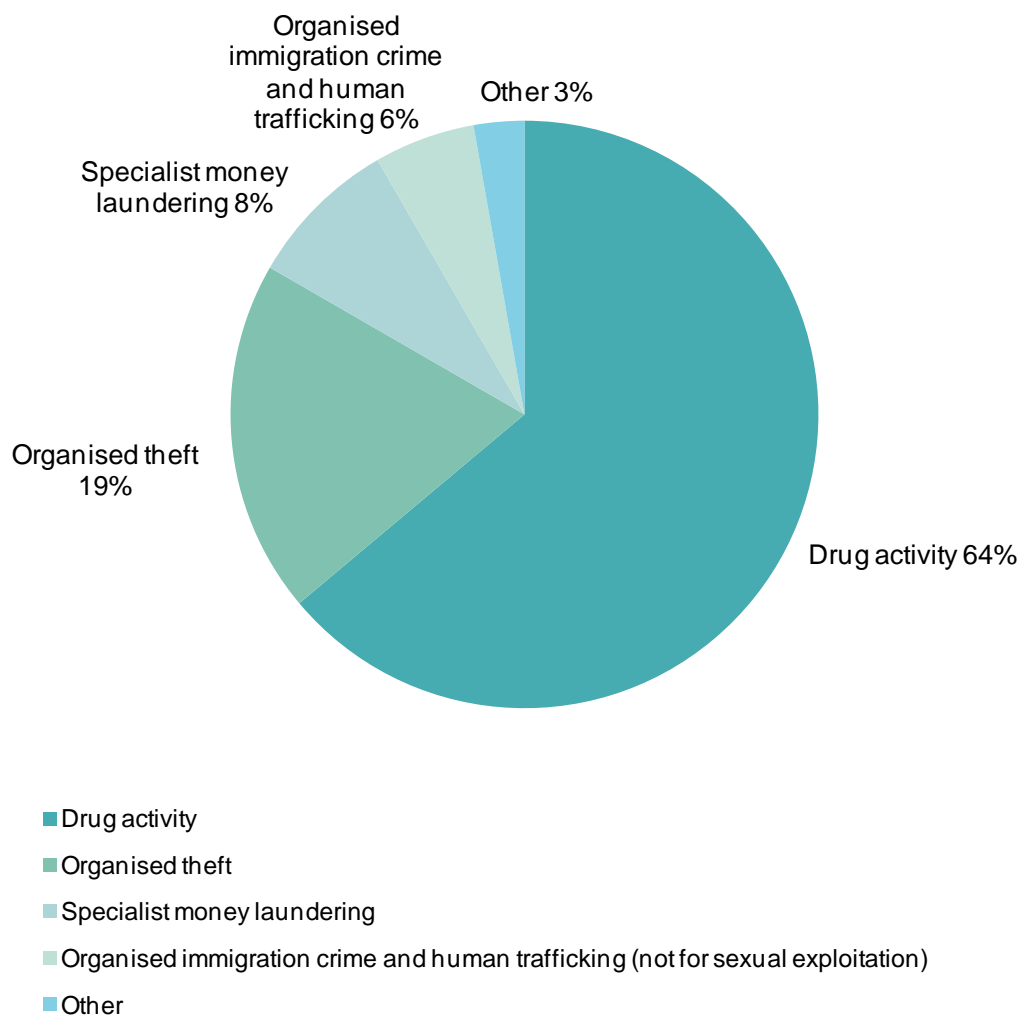
Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality, this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the predominant crime type (64 percent) of the OCGs managed by Nottinghamshire Police as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,¹⁸ with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way.

¹⁶ City of London Police data has been removed from the chart as its OCG data is not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ The Metropolitan Police Service is not included in the England and Wales figure because it does not categorise in the same way as other forces; by the predominant form of criminal activity.

Figure 7: Force organised crime groups by the predominant crime type, as at 30 June 2015¹⁹



Source: HMIC data collection

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement*.²⁰ These are terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber-crime incidents, threats to public order or public safety, civil emergencies, and child sexual abuse. These are complex threats which means that forces must work together to respond to them effectively. 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 the necessary

¹⁹ Figures may not sum to 100 percent, due to rounding.

²⁰ *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. The Home Secretary issues the SPR annually, 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.

arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

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

Nottinghamshire Police has a good understanding of serious and organised crime. Its mechanisms to receive, develop and assess risk in relation to OCG activity are effective. The force makes good use of intelligence to develop the organisational understanding of the threat posed by OCGs. The intelligence is predominantly cultivated through specialist officers, some of whom are specially trained in gathering information from online sources. Intelligence submitted by other frontline resources is also considered. There are police officers working in the four prisons located in the force area so Nottinghamshire Police is also able to better monitor offenders and maximise opportunities for disruption of OCGs within prisons.

The force's intelligence function is complemented by a regional intelligence team, which is part of the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU). This regional team adds further intelligence to that held by the force, sometimes from other forces and partner organisations. This helps Nottinghamshire Police to produce a more accurate and detailed picture of serious and organised criminality in the force area.

When a police force identifies a group of individuals whom it suspects may be involved in organised crime, it goes through a nationally standardised 'mapping' procedure. This involves entering details of the group's known and suspected activity, associates and capability into a computer system, which assigns a numerical score to each OCG. It also places each OCG into one of several 'bands' which reflect the range and severity of crime in which a group is involved as well as its level of capability and sophistication. Police forces, ROCUs, the NCA and a number of non-police organisations such as Border Force, use OCG mapping.

Most forces carry out OCG mapping independently and despite the use of standard software and methods, this has led to inconsistency with significant variation in the number of mapped OCGs per head of population across England and Wales. This inconsistency is partly due to the unavoidably subjective nature of some aspects of the mapping procedure, which relies on human judgment as well as computer algorithms. Sometimes, groups exhibiting similar characteristics are scored in different ways, and forces do not always use the full range of information available to generate OCG scores, which can compromise their accuracy and usefulness.

For these reasons, HMIC has recommended that ROCUs assume responsibility for OCG mapping on behalf of their constituent forces.²¹

²¹ *Regional Organised Crime Units: A Review of Capability and Effectiveness*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf

Encouragingly, Nottinghamshire is one of five forces within the East Midlands that already gathers and submits intelligence to the East Midlands Special Operations Unit which assumes responsibility for their OCG mapping. This affords a good degree of consistency, enhanced intelligence sharing, and a better understanding of the threats across the region. However, although the mapping process is carried out thoroughly by the regional team, it is sometimes unnecessarily lengthy. Force-level OCG investigations would be better informed by the mapping process if it were completed more quickly.

Response and neighbourhood officers have access to limited OCG-related information through force intelligence systems so unless they are specifically briefed on an individual or address, they have limited awareness of OCG activity in the areas they are policing. As a result, submissions from response and neighbourhood policing teams are made in circumstances where they are generally unaware that they are dealing with an organised crime group member. Much of the intelligence gathering and enforcement activity is done by the Operation Vanguard team with local officers having little involvement as the force chooses to maintain a degree of confidentiality.

The force has created a 'local profile' of serious and organised crime, in line with national guidance. The document identifies OCGs and the type of criminality which is in operation within specific geographical locations within the force area. This has recently been shared with local partners to develop a better understanding of serious and organised crime in Nottinghamshire, however, at this time the force has not received any form of response. This will be progressed through the serious and organised crime partnerships board.

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

Nottinghamshire Police's response to serious and organised crime is good. Governance and oversight of serious and organised crime is at chief officer level. An established serious and organised crime partnership board sits bi-monthly and the force has developed excellent working relationships with both EMSOU and the National Crime Agency.

Meetings at force level are used effectively to assign tasks and monitor progress. Teams of dedicated detectives are responsible for producing plans for tackling every OCG and the force has access to specialist regional capabilities such as surveillance, covert policing and asset recovery in order to disrupt OCGs. Nottinghamshire Police has some specialist capabilities in these areas which are additional to those provided at a regional level and they include an international liaison officer who focuses on foreign national offending.

All OCGs that are identified in the Nottinghamshire Police area and who remain under the management of the force have a lead responsible officer (LRO) assigned

to them of at least detective inspector level who is involved in all intelligence requirement decisions.

Force activity is having a positive impact on serious and organised crime. An investigation observed as part of the inspection spanned many years, and the co-ordinated long-term approach taken ensures that disruption activity is sustained and there is effective intelligence captured. This is used to identify groups of individuals who have the capability and propensity to impact on local communities.

The force ensures that the intent and capability of each crime group, together with the impact on local communities, determines the level of response.

How effectively is the force working with partners to prevent serious and organised crime?

The force works well with partners to disrupt, dismantle and investigate OCGs. An investigation observed as part of this inspection looked at a crime group which has been in existence for many years with multiple levels of the group having been arrested and convicted. Due to the significant impact on local communities, the force has developed a bespoke multi-agency meeting process based on the MAPPA structure. This includes representatives from the probation service, Nottinghamshire County Council, housing authorities, children's social care and HMP Nottingham.

There are also good examples of working with partner organisations to tackle the activities of OCGs including the involvement of local authority trading standards officers in joint operations with police relating to the supply of illegal tobacco, illegal highs and alcohol. The force also works closely with the probation service in order to divert some of the peripheral and more vulnerable members of organised crime groups away from a life of crime. Officers and staff working within Operation Vanguard Plus have an important role working with younger gang members to deter them from committing serious and organised crime.

In contrast to the Operation Vanguard Plus team, the Operation Vanguard team primarily deal with the intelligence mapping and enforcement requirements that emerge from organised crime group activity. HMIC is concerned that the Operation Vanguard team does not currently use a structured approach to risk management to identify priority targets. As a result those potential offenders who pose the most risk to the community may not be identified nor effectively risk managed.

The force effectively publicises the tangible improvements and preventative steps it is taking on serious and organised crime with local communities. For example, a recent documentary made with the Vanguard Plus team for a news channel about an organised crime group murder was then followed up on social media to highlight awareness of other murders linked to OCGs.

The force always publicises convictions – for example, convictions relating to the seizure of high powered motor vehicles – and uses TV's Crimestoppers regularly for appeals. The decision on when information is released and its relevance to how well

it provides community reassurance is made on a case-by-case basis. For example, an investigation observed as part of the inspection has a comprehensive media strategy aligned to it. Working alongside the investigation arm of the operation, the LRO determines what media coverage takes place following a successful intervention if it is deemed appropriate by the senior investigating officer. This decision is based on the level of impact against ongoing operational activity.

How effective are the arrangements in place to ensure that the force can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to the six national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the basic arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

Nottinghamshire Police has the necessary arrangements to ensure it fulfils its national policing responsibilities and can test its preparedness. The national threats are included in the annual strategic intelligence assessment and chief officers take responsibility for threats specified within the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) at both force and regional level. For example, the force has developed a cyber-crime profile and a cyber-crime strategic assessment that provides a clear picture of crime patterns, threats and gaps in intelligence in this area of policing and this means there is a good level of understanding of cyber-crime and digital crime.

The EMSOU has a good understanding of regional threats, and is rigorous and inclusive in its approach to assessing these by drawing on intelligence held by partner organisations, other forces and the regional organised crime unit. There is good alignment of activity with national and regional priorities. The force has conducted appropriate assessments of national policing threats and there are good procedures in place which enable Nottinghamshire Police to test its own preparedness for responding to national threats specified within the SPR.

As part of the local resilience forum, a community risk register for Nottingham city and Nottinghamshire provides excellent advice and guidance to the community on a range of potential risks. The document provides practical guidance and details simple actions that can be taken to improve resilience across the county. This means that, if effectively distributed, the community is well placed to respond to such emergencies. There is also a comprehensive and practical guide for operational staff and leaders in how to respond in the event of a major incident. It includes police and partner roles and responsibilities; it also refers to national guidance and detailed local plans, for example flooding and fuel shortage plans. This means that staff who use the guidance are better equipped to respond to such incidents and maximise their ability to protect and safeguard the community.

Appropriate levels of specially trained staff are in place to enable the force to contribute and respond to national policing demands. There are also succession

plans to ensure that the levels of appropriately trained and skilled resources are maintained in the future.

The force undertakes regular exercises to test its preparedness in responding to these national responsibilities and a database is maintained to show the experience and accreditation of commanders. This ensures individuals remain skilled and learning gained through exercises is acted upon locally. For example, the force took part in a mobilisation exercise of its public support units initiated by the National Police Co-ordination Centre (Operation Quartz). The force met the target timings for mobilisation of police support and was able to demonstrate its ability to meet the national commitment.

Summary of findings



Good

Nottinghamshire Police is good at identifying and tackling serious and organised crime groups in its area. This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime, and an effective multi-agency response to it, including work to prevent people from becoming involved.

The force needs to further develop its local profile for serious and organised crime with partners. Raising awareness among frontline officers and staff on organised crime group activity in their local areas is also needed to ensure co-ordinated and better intelligence.

The force has its own specialist officers to tackle serious and organised crime and it has access to an extensive range of specialist policing capabilities provided by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit.

The leadership has strong oversight of the force's ability to respond to national threats, such as terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. Its own arrangements for ensuring it can meet its national obligations in this regard (such as planning, testing and exercising) are good.

Areas for improvement

- The force should add relevant data from partner agencies to its serious and organised crime local profile, and ensure that it has a local partnership structure in place with responsibility for tackling serious and organised crime.
- The force should improve the awareness of organised crime groups among neighbourhood teams to ensure that they can reliably identify these groups, collect intelligence and disrupt their activity.

Annex A – HMIC judgments

Our judgments

The judgment categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how effective the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime; it is not an assessment of the overall effectiveness of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the effectiveness the force is achieving is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the effectiveness of the force requires improvement, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the effectiveness of the force is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.